

J&K Wins Praise For Healthcare Services During Pandemic

UT Had 100% Functional Community Health Centers, Sub-Centres During Covid-19: NITI Aayog

Zaid Bin Shabir

Srinagar: With Jammu & Kashmir Administration's overarching motivation and constant focus to prioritize effective healthcare, a new report from Government of India has observed that J&K had 100 percent functional Community Health Centers (CHC) and sub-centres in the Covid-19 pandemic times.

The report, by the Indian

Government's Think Tank NITI Aayog, outlines India's progress on the center's flagship Poshan Abhiyan and assesses the implementation of the key inputs and services. It found a marked spike in the utilization of funds between financial year 2017-18 and 2019-20 in J&K.

As per report, J&K had utilized less than 20 percent of funds from 2017-18 to 2018-19. However, the cumulative funds being utilized in J&K for



THE REPORT ALSO SAYS THAT J&K HAS BEEN RANKED fourth among Union Territories in terms of the overall implementation of the Poshan Abhiyan at the National level in 2020. The maximum score given is 100 and UT's score has settled over 70.

Poshan Abhiyaan increased to over 40 percent in the financial year 2019-20.

In terms of Governance and institutional mechanism,

which captures components like fund utilization and constitution of committees and resource groups to develop and follow Convergence

Action Plan (CAP), J&K was among top UTs that scored 10 points or more, the report observed. J&K was also among the UTs where all districts

developed and submitted CAP for Financial year 2020-21.

In 2018, the Government of India launched its flagship programme, the POSHAN (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment) Abhiyaan, to draw national attention to and take action against malnutrition, in a mission-mode.

POSHAN Abhiyaan is the Government of India's flagship programme **More on P10**

Spurt In Beast Attacks Prompt Public Advisory

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The killings of two minors by wild animals in Uri area of Baramulla in the last six days, prompted the wildlife department on Friday to issue an advisory asking people in North Kashmir to remain cautious while venturing out of their houses.

The advisory issued by the Wildlife Warden North Division Sopore has suggested a wide range of safety measures to prevent attack by the beasts in the villages and the forest areas.

Urging the people not to move alone in the forest areas, the advisory says that children and women are more vulnerable to leopard and bear attacks. As a remedial measure, the advisory asks people to move in groups and accompany children by an elderly person to contain attacks by beasts.

The advisory also asks people to always move on regular forest paths and avoid shortcuts.

"Avoid going to forests for collection of wood etc. in early morning or evening hours, which is the peak activity time for leopards. Do not chase or try to go near a wild animal if sighted from a distance in the forest areas," it reads.

It further suggests villagers that livestock taken to pastures inside forests and near crop fields must be attended by three to four persons and any type of bell or sound producing device be put around the neck of few cattle.

"Avoid using bush growths and forest fringe areas for nature calls in late evening or night hours; this time coincides with peak activity of wild animals. It is requested to create community or home toilet facilities to avoid such dangers," the advisory reads.

It also asks people living in the vicinity of forests should also complete their outside activities such as social visits, fetching water from streams, grazing cattle, collection of household items etc. **More on P10**

ARTICLE-370 ABROGATION

SC Agrees To List Petitions After Dussehra Break

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to list after Dussehra vacation the pleas challenging the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 which had given special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Uday Umesh Lalit and justices Indira Banerjee and S Ravindra Bhat took note of the submissions of a counsel that the pleas were assured to be listed after the summer vacation but they could not be listed.

"We will certainly list that," the CJI said.

On April 25 this year, a bench headed by the then CJI N V Ramana, since retired, had agreed to consider listing after the summer vacation the pleas challenging the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370.

The pleas were then mentioned by interveners Radha Kumar (academic and author) and Kapil Kak (retired officer of the Indian Air Force).

The apex court will have to re-constitute a five-judge bench to hear the pleas after Dussehra vacation as the ex-CJI Ramana and Justice R Subhash Reddy, who were part of the five judge bench which had heard the pleas, have retired.

Besides the two former judges, Justices Sanjay Kishan

Kaul, B R Gavai and Surya Kant were part of the bench which, on March 2, 2020, had declined to refer to a larger seven-judge bench the batch of petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 on August 5, 2019.

Several petitions challenging the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which split J-K into two Union Territories Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh were referred to a Constitution Bench headed by Justice Ramana in 2019 by the then CJI Ranjan Gogoi. By abrogating Article 370, the Central government had revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir.

NGO, People's Union of Civil Liberties (PUC), Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association, and an intervenor had sought referring of the matter to a larger bench on grounds that two judgements of the apex court -- Prem Nath Kaul versus Jammu and Kashmir in 1959 and Sampat Prakash versus Jammu and Kashmir in 1970 -- which dealt with the issue of Article 370 conflicted each other and therefore, the current bench of five judges could not hear the issue.

Disagreeing with the petitioners, the bench had said it was of the opinion that "there is no conflict between the judgements".



SEVERAL PETITIONS CHALLENGING THE CENTRE'S DECISION TO ABROGATE provisions of Article 370 and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which split J-K into two Union Territories Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh were referred to a Constitution Bench headed by Justice Ramana in 2019 by the then CJI Ranjan Gogoi.



A migrant worker arranges bricks in a row at a brick kiln in Central Kashmir's Budgam district on Friday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Pakistan's 'Bloody Game' In Kashmir Almost Over: DGP

'Stone Pelting Ceases To Exist, Youth Want To Lead A Peaceful Life'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Coming down heavily on Pakistan for promoting "terrorism" into Jammu and Kashmir, the Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh said on Friday that the elements responsible for playing a "bloody game" in the Union Territory have been wiped off and those left out will also be neutralised sooner.

"I'm happy that those thorns, which wounded our society, wounded our people have been wiped off from here. We're also taking concrete steps to remove the ones left out," Singh said, while talking to reporters on the sidelines of a sports event here on Friday.



"And I'm sure it won't take much time to wipe out such elements, which are left out. We have active support of the people in this," he said, while lauding people for their immense support and cooperation to the police.

Giving more **More on P10**

Using Drones To Keep An Eye On Criminals, Terrorists: Police

Using drones fitted with high resolution cameras for aerial surveillance to keep an eye on criminals and terrorists in Kashmir, police said here on Friday. "Aerial surveillance is going on in suspected localities of Srinagar looking for anti-socials, criminals, terrorists, OGWs etc., using modern drones with high resolution cameras, these may not be visible from ground but be assured that life, property of citizens will be safeguarded," Srinagar Police tweeted.

The police also **More on P10**

Anxiety, Depression Common Among Covid Survivors: Study

Agencies

Srinagar: A cross-sectional study aimed to assess the prevalence of anxiety, depression, post traumatic stress disorder and obsessive compulsive (OC) symptoms among COVID-19 survivors in Kashmir has confirmed the presence of these symptoms among them.

The Department of Psychiatry, Government Medical College Srinagar, under Dr Shabir Ahmad Dar and others, and the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences Kashmir conducted the hospital-based cross-sectional study among Covid survivors in collaboration with the Department of Respiratory Medicine, Government Medical College, Srinagar.

The study revealed that the psychological morbidity in a pandemic not only affects the patients directly but also the general population.

"Knowledge of the risk

factors for COVID-19 mortality can affect a person's perception of the likelihood of death from COVID-19, leading to traumatizing experience and subsequent psychiatric symptoms in patients with COVID-19. PTSD is a stress-related psychological illness that occurs immediately after a trauma, such as a severe accident or exposure to violence," it said.

It said that Covid survivors who were above 50 years of age experienced a greater level of PTSD compared to younger ones. Similar trends were seen in those experiencing OC symptoms.

The study said that 82.4% were obsessed with fears of contamination and an equal percentage (82.4%) had compulsive hand washing. The etiology of OCD is associated with the interplay of multiple risk factors such as genes, environment and life stressors.

It added that OCD contamination **More on P10**

S H O R T T A K E S

Woman Officer Attached For Poor Performance

The Union Territory administration has attached a Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officer over poor performance in implementing SBMG plan, reports said Friday.

"In the interest of administration Nighat Alam, JKAS, Assistant Commissioner (Panchayat) Srinagar is hereby attached in the Directorate of Rural Sanitation, J&K Jammu with immediate effect on poor performance in implementing of SBMG plan in Srinagar district," reads an order issued by Mandeep Kaur, Commissioner Secretary to the government. Kaur further ordered **More on P10**

4 Of Family Drown In Udhampur Nallah

Four members of a family drowned in a nallah in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district on Friday, officials said.

Four people, including children, who had gone to fetch water and grass for their cattle fell in a nallah at Chattrari village of tehsil Ramnagar and drowned in it, they said.

The deceased have been identified as Nishu Devi (16), Anju Devi (22), Yash Pal (24) and Meenakshi (12). Their bodies have been recovered, they added.



J&K Reports 28 New Corona Cases

At least 28 more people tested positive for Coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Friday, taking the number of people infected since the outbreak of pandemic in the Union territory to 479046.

20 fresh cases of novel Coronavirus were registered from Kashmir Valley and the remaining eight from Jammu division, officials said. In the Valley, they said, Srinagar detected the highest eight new cases of virus, Kupwara 5, Pulwama 4, and Budgam 3.

In the winter capital, Samba reported a maximum of 4 new cases of virus, Jammu 3, and Ramban 1. Also, the officials said that the death toll in the pandemic remained unchanged at 4785 in J&K—2352 in **More on P10**

Cab Crushes Motorcyclist To Death

A motorcyclist was killed on Friday after being hit by a passenger taxi in Bijbehara area of South Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Official sources said that a motorcycle (PB35U-8190) was hit by a van passenger taxi (DL5CF 2629) near

Samthan Bijbehara, resulting in critical injuries to Aaqib Ahmad Dar son of Bashir Ahmad Dar, resident of Naina Sangam. The injured

person, they said, was evacuated from the site to SDH Bijbehara, where the doctors declared him dead on arrival. Confirming the incident, **More on P10**



Man's Body Retrieved From River

Rescue teams of police and locals on Friday retrieved the body of a man from a river in Surankote area of Poonch district.

Official sources told a local news agency GNS that a police team along with locals recovered the body of 35-year-old Faiz Akbar from river Suran at Dhundak. A resident of Phagla, the

man, according to locals, had allegedly jumped into the river and his body was recovered about 500ft downstream.

SHO Surankote Rajveer Singh said inquest proceedings have been launched into the incident.



Snake Rescued From Sopore Colony



The Wildlife department on Friday rescued a 3 feet long snake in Sir Syed locality of Sopore in North Kashmir's Baramulla district, officials said here. An official said that the snake was spotted in the area early morning, following which locals informed the wildlife department.

He said that soon after getting the information, a Rapid Response Unit was rushed to the spot, which rescued the snake—(KNO)



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James Webb Telescope Captures Clear Images Of Ringed Neptune

Press Trust Of India

The James Webb Space Telescope has captured its first image of Neptune, revealing the clearest view of the distant planet's rings in more than 30 years, NASA said.

The most striking feature in the image is the crisp view of the planet's rings -- some of which have not been detected since NASA's Voyager 2 became the first spacecraft to observe Neptune during its flyby in 1989, the US space agency said.

In addition to several bright, narrow rings, the Webb image clearly shows Neptune's fainter dust bands.

"It has been three decades since we last saw these faint, dusty rings, and this is the first time we have seen them in the infrared," Heidi Hammel, a Neptune system expert and interdisciplinary scientist for Webb said in a statement.

Neptune is located 30 times farther from



the Sun than Earth, and orbits in the remote, dark region of the outer solar system.

The planet is characterised as an ice giant due to the chemical make-up of its interior. Compared to the gas giants, Jupiter and Saturn, Neptune is much richer in elements heavier than hydrogen and helium.

This is readily apparent in Neptune's signature blue appearance in Hubble Space Telescope images at visible wavelengths, caused by small amounts of gaseous methane. Webb's Near-Infrared Camera (NIRCam) images objects in the near-infrared range from 0.6 to 5 microns, so Neptune does not appear blue to the telescope.

The methane gas so strongly absorbs red and infrared light that the planet is quite dark at these near-infrared wavelengths, except where high-altitude clouds are present, the researchers said.

Images from other observatories, including the Hubble Space Telescope and the W.M. Keck Observatory, have recorded these rapidly evolving cloud features over the years.

A thin line of brightness circling the planet's equator could be a visual signature of global atmospheric circulation that powers Neptune's winds and storms, according to NASA.

The atmosphere descends and warms at the equator, and thus glows at infrared wavelengths more than the surrounding, cooler gases, it said.

A previously-known vortex at the southern pole is evident in Webb's view, but for the first time Webb has revealed a continuous band of high-latitude clouds surrounding it.

Webb also captured seven of Neptune's 14 known moons. A very bright point of light seen in Webb's images is Neptune's large and unusual moon, Triton.

'Productivity Paranoia Making Hybrid Work Unsustainable'

IANS

Amid the debate on moonlighting by tech employees who are working from home after more than two years of the pandemic, a Microsoft report has revealed that 85 per cent of business leaders say that the shift to hybrid work has made it challenging to have confidence that employees are being productive.



As some organisations use technology to track activity rather than impact, employees lack context on how and why they're being tracked, which can undermine trust and lead to "productivity theatre".

"This has led to productivity paranoia: where leaders fear that lost productivity is due to employees not working, even though hours worked, number of meetings, and other activity metrics have increased," according to the Microsoft's 'Work Trend Index Pulse' report.

Several leaders and managers are missing the old visual cues of what it means to be productive because they can't "see" who is hard at work. Indeed, compared to in-person managers, hybrid managers are more likely to say they struggle to trust their employees to do their best work (49 per cent vs. 36 per cent) and report that they have less visibility into the work their employees do (54 per cent vs. 38 per cent).

"And as employees feel the pressure to 'prove' they're working, digital overwhelm is soaring," the findings showed.

Nearly 48 per cent of employees and 53 per cent of managers report that they're already burned out at work.

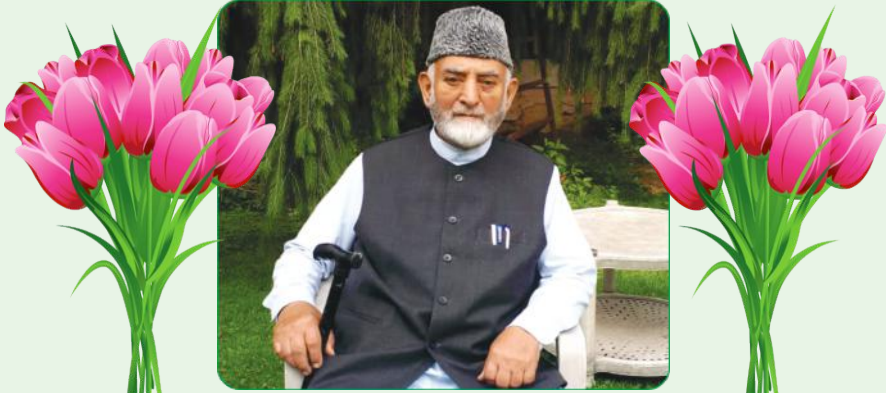
According to the report, leaders need to pivot from worrying about whether their people are working enough to helping them focus on the work that's most important.

Nearly 81 per cent of employees say it's important that their managers help them prioritise their workload, but less than a third (31 per cent) say their managers have ever given clear guidance during one-on-ones.

"Solving this issue needs to start at the top: 74 per cent of people managers say more guidance on prioritising their own work would help their performance, and 80 per cent say they'd personally benefit from more clarity from senior leadership on impactful priorities," said the report.

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I have lost the number plate of my vehicle bearing Regd No: JK01M- 8238 . Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the RTO Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Zameer Ahmad Dar
S/o Ghulam Rasool Dar
R/o Chandanpora Noor Bagh Srinagar

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The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education

Sub Office, Budgam
Attention please

The candidate whose photograph is published in the notice is claiming to have lost her original marks/ Achievement card of class 10th issued by the Jammu and Kashmir State Board of School Education with following particulars:-

Name: Fozia Bashir
Parentage: Bashir Ahmed Ganaie
Class:10th
Roll on:210552
Year/session:2018-19

Now the candidate has applied for the Duplicate marks card. Anybody having any objection may file the same before undersigned within seven days from the date of publication of the notice.besides the original marks card be treated as cancelled.

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pdd

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مضمون درخواست : وسم احمد تیلی ولد عبدالجبار تیلی ساکنہ موضع بیادہ تحصیل کٹرہ مرادعلی
بجٹ خود سائل unemployment certificate
اشتہار برادرہا گاہی ہر خاص و عام
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پٹواری حلقہ سائل مذکورہ موضع بیادہ تحصیل کٹرہ کا مستقل پاشدہ ہے اور وہ ہاے کبھی بھی ترک
سکونت نہیں کی ہے۔ سائل مذکورہ تاحال کسی بھی سرکاری یا غیر سرکاری محکمہ میں کام نہیں کرتا ہے
اور تاحال بے روزگار ہے۔ سائل Unemployment Certificate حاصل
کرنے کی خواہاں ہے اس بارے میں اگر کسی شخص یا شخص کو کوئی تعزیر یا اعتراض جو وودہ اپنا تعزیر یا
اعتراض سات یم کے اندر پیش کریں۔ معاذ کرنے کے بعد کوئی تعزیر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہو
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No Case Against Muslim Woman Who Offered Namaz At Hospital: UP Police

Agenceis

Amid reports of a Muslim woman being booked for offering namaz at a hospital, the Prayagraj police have clarified that no case has been registered and the news is false.

Earlier in the day, a video of a Muslim woman praying at a hospital surfaced on social media. Local media reported that a case had been booked against the woman based on the video that was taken without her consent. The news drew condemnation from Muslims across the country. AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi also slammed the UP police over their alleged action.

However, the UP police in a

We are yet to investigate further details and the validity of the video," a Prayagraj police official told Siasat.com.

According to Hindi news reports, the woman was an attendant to a patient at the Tej Bahadur Sapru Chikitsalaya. As she was offering prayers, a video was recorded without her consent and made viral on the internet.

The Uttar Pradesh government had earlier passed a law that Muslims are forbidden to offer namaz in public places in the state. They can do it only inside a mosque.

Reacting to the incident, All India Majlis-E-Itehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief Asaduddin Owaisi questioned the Uttar Pradesh po-



statement said that anyone praying for the good health of their loved ones is not a crime, be it offering a namaz.

"After the video surfaced on social media, an investigation was launched. However, we have not registered a case against the woman. Based on our investigation, we found that that she was praying for the health of her relative. The prayer hurts no one and hence does not amount to a crime.

lice over the increasing number of cases against Muslims offering Namaz in public spaces.

"If admitted to the hospital, taking care of their relatives, in some corner, without hurting anyone, if they pray according to their religion, then what is the crime in this? Does the UP Police have no other work? Wherever Namaz is offered, FIR is registered against the Namazis," he tweeted

China Demands End Of US Theft Of Syrian Resources

Agenceis

The People's Republic of China called on the US government to stop the plundering of Syria's oil resources, in a press statement on 22 September.

"We call on the United States to respect Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity, unilaterally lift sanctions, and end the theft of Syria's national resources," said China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin in a news briefing.

The call made by the Asian giant comes in light of repeated news that US armed forces have transported oil out of Hasakah governorate to military bases in Iraq.

The Syrian foreign ministry revealed the oil sector has incurred losses of at least \$107.1 billion since the start of the US-sponsored war in 2011.

Meanwhile, Syria suffers from a severe energy crisis with repeated blackouts in various parts of the country.

China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin claimed that "this is not the first time that the United States military has stolen oil from Syria and they seem to be becoming more and more uncontrollable."

Wenbin also called on the US government to investigate the claims made by Syria's foreign ministry and compensate



the country for any damages.

China's foreign ministry spokesman highlighted that the US military has used at least 800 tankers in August alone.

"By June 2022, US military's extraction, smuggling, and illegal transaction of Syrian oil, gas, and mineral resources have brought an estimated \$18.2 bln of direct losses on Syria, making Syria's humanitarian disaster much worse," he added in his statement.

Wenbin described the situation in Syria to other countries such as Libya and Afghanistan, adding that "the rights and lives of the Syrian people are being taken away, instead of being protected."

According to the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), US forces established a third military base in Naqara village, just three kilometers from Qamishli in the northeastern province of Hasakah on 3 September.

Pakistan PM Says 'All Hell Will Break Loose' Without Debt Relief



Agenceis

Islamabad: Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says "all hell will break loose" if his flood-ravaged country is not provided with debt relief by rich nations.

In an interview with Bloomberg TV on Friday morning, Sharif sought a moratorium on Pakistan's debt repayment from the Paris Club (a group of rich creditor countries) and others, saying there is a "yawning gap" between what is being asked for and what is available.

"We have requested (United Nations) secretary-general and European leaders to give us relief. How can the world expect us to stand on our own feet? It is simply impossible," Sharif said in his interview, also aired on Pakistan's state television.

Referring to a visit to the flood-hit nation by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres earlier this month, Sharif said: "He saw this calamity with his own eyes. He said: 'Prime Minister, it is unbelievable'. He is a man who has been

dedicating his life for humanitarian causes for many years ... He said he had never seen this kind of a climatic situation in his life."

"We are among the top 10 most vulnerable countries (to climate change)," he said.

Sharif again thanked US President Joe Biden for speaking about "Pakistan and our plight" at the United Nations General Assembly. "Many world leaders have discussed and openly said that Pakistan needs support more than ever and this shows sincerity of these leaders. But time is running out and we are racing against time," he said.

Sharif is in New York for the annual UNGA, which he is expected to address later on Friday. He has already met several world leaders as part of his appeal to the international community to help Pakistan as it reels from unprecedented floods.

"What the world has done is commendable but it is far from meeting our needs. We can't do it alone," Sharif said in the interview. The floods in Pakistan, trig-

gered by record monsoon rains and melting glaciers, have affected 33 million people, killed nearly 1,600 people and destroyed more than a million homes. The stagnant floodwaters have raised concerns of a "second disaster" as waterborne diseases have killed more than 300 people so far.

The government last month estimated the total loss at \$30bn, creating concerns that Pakistan will not be able to repay \$1bn in international bonds by December.

Sharif's appeal for aid came amid a report by the Financial Times newspaper on Friday, which said the UN Development Programme (UNDP) has prepared a memo suggesting Pakistan should suspend its international debt repayments and restructure loans in the aftermath of the catastrophic floods.

However, a top finance ministry official in Pakistan, requesting anonymity, rejected the report, telling Al Jazeera that "no such proposal is on the table as yet".



WE HAVE REQUESTED (UNITED NATIONS) secretary-general and European leaders to give us relief. How can the world expect us to stand on our own feet? It is simply impossible."

India Warns Its Citizens In Canada Of 'Increase In Hate Crimes'

Agenceis

The Indian government has advised its nationals in Canada to exercise caution, citing "a sharp increase in incidents of hate crimes, sectarian violence and anti-India activities" in the North American country.

In an advisory issued on Friday, the Indian foreign ministry asked the Indians in Canada to "remain vigilant".

"In view of the increasing incidences of crimes ... Indian nationals and students from India in Canada and those proceeding to Canada for travel/education are advised to exercise due caution," it said.

The advisory said New Delhi has requested the Canadian authorities to investigate the crimes and take appropriate action. "The perpetrators of these crimes have not been brought to justice so far in Canada," it said.



The ministry did not detail any alleged hate crimes, nor it did provide information to back up its claim that Canada has seen an increase in such incidents.

Canada's foreign affairs department and a spokesperson for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau did not immediately respond to Al Jazeera's request for comment on Friday morning.

In the advisory, New Delhi

urged its nationals - workers and students - in Canada to register with the Indian mission in Ottawa or consulates in Toronto and Vancouver.

Indian media reports on Friday said the advisory followed reports of a "referendum" purportedly organised by a faction among the Sikhs in Canada, demanding a separate Khalistan nation in the northern Indian state of Punjab.

UAE To Sign First Weapons Deal With Israel: Report

Agenceis

Israel and the United Arab Emirates have agreed to their first advanced-weapons deal since both countries signed the Abraham accords in 2020.

Two sources familiar with the matter told Reuters on 22 September that Israel agreed to sell the advanced Rafael air defense system to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) under the first arms deal between the two countries since the normalization of relations in 2020.

According to Reuters, Israel agreed to supply the UAE with the Rafael-produced Spyder interceptor missiles. However, Israel declined to provide further details due to the sensitivity of the deal.

Spyder missiles can be launched from vehicle-mount-

series of attacks conducted by Yemen's Ansarallah resistance movement. The Ansarallah movement has been retaliating against the UAE for taking part in the destructive war against the people of Yemen since 2014, using self-made drones and missiles to target the country's energy infrastructure.

Foreign diplomats said that the strike had alarmed the leaders of the UAE, who have long boasted of the country's security and stability in the region. Sources familiar with damages caused by the attacks claimed that a terminal under construction at Abu Dhabi Airport was also targeted by the strikes, injuring civilian workers.

In addition, the Turkish defense company Baykar delivered 20 armed drones to the UAE on 21 September.



ed platforms and are used against short- and long-range projectiles.

In response to a question about whether Israel will provide the UAE with air defense systems, the Chairman of the Parliament's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Ram Ben Barak, told Israel Radio on 20 September that there is broad cooperation with the UAE. Yet, refused to make a specific comment on future arms deals.

The UAE needs to bolster its air defense capabilities after a

Yemeni missiles and drones flew at low altitudes to avoid interception by the THAAD and Patriot interceptor missiles that the UAE purchased from the US, according to defense sources.

The gulf state of Bahrain also mended relations with Israel in 2020, after which the two countries reached a security agreement and began efforts to bolster trade.

This year, Israel and the UAE signed a free trade deal, the first of its kind, between Israel and an Arab country.

At least 4 Killed In Blast Near Kabul Mosque



Agenceis

At least four people were killed and 10 injured by a blast near a mosque in the Afghan capital which struck as worshippers were streaming out of afternoon prayers on Friday, a nearby hospital said.

The explosion was the latest of a deadly series targeting Friday prayers at mosques in recent months, some of them claimed by the terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

"After prayers, when people wanted to come out from the mosque, a blast happened," said Kabul police spokesman Khalid

Zadran. "All casualties are civilians, the exact number is not clear yet."

Italian-NGO run Emergency Hospital said it had received 14 people from the blast, of whom four were dead on arrival.

The explosion took place in Wazir Akbar Khan, an area formerly home to the city's 'green zone', the location of many foreign embassies and NATO, but now controlled by the ruling Taliban.

The mosque has been the target of attacks in the past, including a blast in June 2020 before the Taliban returned to power. That attack killed the mosque's imam and wounded several people.

NEWS MAKERS

Iran Leader Cancels Interview With CNN's Amanpour Over Headscarf

Veteran journalist Christiane Amanpour says an interview with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi was scrapped after he insisted she wear a headscarf, the focus of major protests in the country.

Amanpour, the chief international anchor of CNN who also has a show on United States public broadcaster PBS, said she was ready for the interview on Wednesday on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly when an aide to the president insisted she cover her hair.

"I politely declined. We are in New York where there is no law or tradition regarding headscarves," Amanpour, who was born in the United Kingdom to an Iranian father, wrote on Twitter on Thursday.

"I pointed out that no previous Iranian president has required this when I have interviewed them outside Iran. I said that I couldn't agree to this unprecedented and unexpected condition."

She posted a picture of herself - without a headscarf - sitting



in front of an empty chair where Raisi would have been.

"As protests continue in Iran and people are being killed, it would have been an important moment to speak with President Raisi."

An aide to Raisi told Amanpour he was insisting on a headscarf because of "the situation in Iran", she said.

Iran has been swept by nearly a week of protests since the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, who died after being arrested by "moral-police" who enforce the Muslim leaders' rules on how women dress.

At least nine demonstrators have been killed to date based on statements from Iran's state-run and semi-official media, although activist groups say the death toll is higher.

On Thursday, the US Department of the Treasury sanctioned the country's morality police as well as seven leaders of Iranian security organisations that it said "routinely employ violence to suppress peaceful protesters and members of Iranian civil society, political dissidents, women's rights activists, and members of the Iranian Baha'i community".

Man Lost Nose Ring 5 Years Ago. It Was Found In His Lung

Agenceis

A piercing enthusiast in the US discovered a nose ring he lost five years ago at an unusual place - his lung. Till now, 35-year-old Joey Lykins assumed the ring had fallen out when he was sleeping. But he didn't know that it was lodged in his lung all these years, according to a report in New York Post. He had given up and replaced the nasal ornament, the outlet further said. Mr Lykins has 12 other piercings and has kept the current one as a souvenir.

"I thought maybe I'd swallowed it. I looked everywhere. I flipped the bed over. I did everything," he was quoted as saying by the Post.

The man rediscovered the ring in a painful way. One night, he woke up coughing really hard. "I was coughing so hard that my back was starting to hurt," Mr Lykins said. "I felt like something was blocking my airways, and I thought I was sick."



He was taken to a hospital where the doctors initially thought these are the warning signs of pneumonia. But the X-ray shocked them after the results showed a 0.6 inch nose ring embedded inside the upper left lobe of his lung.

"I had an X-ray and the doctor came in and showed me the picture and said 'does this look familiar?' I was like 'you've got to be kidding me? I've been looking for that,'" he told UK-based Metro. The man was lucky that the ring did not puncture his lung.

Mr Lykins has kept the X-ray images as proof for those who cast doubt about the entire thing.

Assets 253% Higher Than His Income Found With Odisha Government Staffer



Agenceis

The Vigilance Directorate arrested an additional teshildar in Odisha's Sundargarh district for allegedly possessing disproportionate assets, officials said on Friday. The assets include a triple-storey building worth around ₹1 crore, a double-storey building worth ₹46 lakh, three residential houses and 21 plots, they said.

Searches were conducted at eight places in Sundargarh on Wednesday following inputs that Kulamani Patel was possessing

assets that were amassed illegally. Movable and immovable assets worth crores of rupees were unearthed in the raids at Kulamani Patel's properties, who is the additional teshildar of Tangarpali, officials said. He was found in possession of disproportionate assets 253 per cent higher than his known sources of income. He has been arrested after he could not satisfactorily account for the disproportionate assets. A case has been registered under the Prevention of Corruption Act and an investigation is on, officials said.

Mainly Dry Weather Forecast In Kashmir

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Weather department on Friday forecast mainly dry weather in Kashmir division and isolated light rain and thunder in Jammu division in next 23 hours.

A meteorological department official here said that isolated to scattered light rain and thunders were expected during the subsequent two days.

Regarding the minimum temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of 13.7°C against 13.3°C on the previous night. The temperature was 0.9°C above normal for the summer capital during this time of the year, he said.

Qazigund recorded a low of 15.0°C against 11.0°C on the previous night. The temperature was 4.5°C above normal there, he said.

In Pahalgam, the mercury set-

ted at 9.6°C against 7.8°C on the previous night and it was 3.4°C above normal for the south Kashmir resort, he said.

Kokernag recorded a low of 13.3°C against 12.2°C the previous night and it was 3.7°C above normal for the place, he said.

World famous Gulmarg resort recorded a low of 8.6°C against 7.5°C on the previous night. It was 1.6°C above normal for the north Kashmir place, he said.

In Kupwara town, the mercury settled at 10.1°C against 10.7°C on the previous night, the official said. It was 0.8°C above normal for the north Kashmir place, he said.

Jammu recorded a low of 22.6°C against 22.5°C on the previous night. It was 0.9°C above normal for J&K's winter capital, he said. Banihal recorded a low of 15.0°C, Batote 15.7°C, Katra 21.0°C and Bhadarwah 14.4°C. (GNS)

Samoon Inspects Dev Projects, Govt Institutions In Kupwara



Observer News Service

KUPWARA: Principal Secretary, Skill Development Department, Dr. A. Samoon, who is also Mentor Secretary for Kupwara, on Friday visited Kupwara to inspect development projects being executed in the district besides assessing working of various government institutions there.

Principal Secretary was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Doifode Sagar Dattatray and other concerned officers during the visit.

Principal Secretary inspected High Density Orchard cum Nursery at Chowgul. He visited various segments of the nursery and received feedback from Chief Horticulture Officer regarding different varieties of fruits being grown there. He directed him to create proper awareness regarding high yielding apple varieties among the farmers so that they can boost their income generation.

At Panchayat halqa Gulgam-C, Principal Secretary inaugurated Konidogur Sar in presence of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara. He was informed that the Sar has been constructed at a cost

of Rs.8.36 lakh under 14th FC in convergence with MGNREGA by Rural Development Department.

ACD Kupwara, BDO and other concerned officers were also present on the occasion.

Principal Secretary also inspected ongoing macadamization work on Khumriyal CRF road and directed the concerned engineers to ensure completion of all macadamization works in the district before onset of winter season.

Dr. Samoon visited ITI Lalpora and inspected functioning of the institute.

Vice Chairman DDC Kupwara, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir and Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Doifode Sagar Dattatray accompanied the Principal Secretary.

Principal Secretary inspected status of all trades of the Institute during which the Superintendent ITI briefed him about various courses being run there including Electrician, Computer Course, COPA etc.

He directed the concerned officers for introduction of latest trades in the ITIs to keep the candidates abreast with the latest industry specific demands.

GeM Joins Hands With PIB Jammu, CBC J&K To Hold 'Seller Samvad'

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Government e-Marketplace (GeM), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India organized a 'Seller Samvad' at Jammu in coordination with Press Information Bureau Jammu and Central Bureau of Communication, J&K.

The 'Seller Samvad' was organized with the aim to interact with the GeM sellers, share their best experiences for learning, inspiring others and make them aware about the new GeM features and functionalities that further make it conducive for them to operate on the portal.

Speaking during the occasion, Joint Director, CBC J&K, Ladakh Region, Gh. Abbas said that such face to face interactions between the GeM officials and sellers is the need of the hour as these interactions are helping on spot in settling seller's grievances and their suggestions are taken on board as well.

Abbas further said that GeM being contactless, paperless, and cashless is standing on three pillars- efficiency, transparency, and inclusivity.

Piyush Kumar, Senior Manager, States & UTs, GeM while interacting with the sellers said that GeM has achieved Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of Rs. 1 lakh crore in the last financial year and is on the path to go beyond Rs. 1.5 lakh crore in the current financial year.

He further said that GeM has now more than sixty two thousand buyer organizations, more than fifty lakh sellers/service providers,

more than ten thousand products and 250 plus service categories.

With these figures, GeM is getting bigger and more comparable to platforms like Konapss of South Korea, Chilecompera from Chile and GeBiz from Singapore.

With GeM Sahay, GeM enables the proprietors across India to attain frictionless uncollateralized working capital loans against purchase orders on GeM, Kumar added. The app, GeM Sahay brings an end to end digital solution for all our proprietors, assists them in availing loans instantly, uncollateralized, in a completely contactless and paperless manner, he informed.

Kumar further said that GeM has been awarded twice in last financial year by CIPS under the category of 'Best use of digital technology' and by Dun and Bradstreet in the category of 'E-Governance Solutions for Public Procurement'. Sheikh Mudasir Amin, Media & Communications Officer, PIB Jammu said that GeM has surpassed the milestone of INR 1 Lakh Crore of procurement value, in a single fiscal year in FY 21-22 which has only been possible with the support of all the stakeholders including buyers and sellers across the country.

Sarthak Khoda, Regional State Business Facilitator, GeM, J&K and Ladakh who was also present during the program said that GeM is known for redefining public procurement and has been able to bring about radical changes in the way procurement was done by Government buyers and public sector undertakings.

Jammu Celebrates Maharaja Hari Singh's Birth Anniversary

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Dressed to the nines, residents of Jammu on Friday took out parades across the city to celebrate the birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh, the last Dogra ruler of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Lieutenant Governor administration had recently declared the birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh, which falls on September 23, as an annual holiday in the Union Territory.

The celebrations started with the great grandsons of Maharaja Hari Singh offering prayers at the Ranbeshwar temple in the city early morning.

"I want to congratulate the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the 127th birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh ji. Grant of holiday on his birth anniversary is a victory of all the people of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly the youth of Jammu," grandson of Maharaja Hari Singh and former legislator Vikramaditya told reporters.

The celebrations by the Yuva Rajput Sabha (YRS) that began on Thursday night continued on Friday while people from all walks of life assembled at Tawi Bridge and Maharaja Hari Singh Park to pay tributes.

Adorning colourful turbans and holding flags of their organisation, several members of the Rajput community on two-wheelers, tractors, cars and even horses took out victory processions in the Ban Talab area of the city.

They raised slogans glorifying



Maharaja Hari Singh and brandished swords as part of the celebrations.

"Our continuous agitation yielded results and the government has announced a holiday on the birth anniversary of the Maharaja after 75 years," YRS leader Arjun Singh said.

The Kashmir-based political parties, which have largely ruled the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, were opposed to the public holiday on the birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh, who signed the instrument of accession with the republic of India on October 26, 1947, he said.

At the Tawi bridge, the BJP leadership led by its president, Ravinder Raina danced to tunes of drum beats amid slogans of 'Maharaja Hari Singh amar rahe'. Sweets were also distributed among the people while medical camps were organised at several places in the city.

"It is victory of people. It is

justice done. We congratulate the people of J&K, particularly Yuva Rajputs for their fight," Raina yold reporters.

Congress party led by its working president Raman Bhal-la also took part in the celebrations and asserted that it was time for the central government to fulfil another demand of restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood.

Former minister and MP Choudhary Lal Singh also took out victory rally and said it was time to fight for restoring Jammu and Kashmir's statehood. A group of displaced Kashmir Pandits took out a rally in Muthi area and raised pro-Maharaja slogans.

Similar celebrations were also held in Kathua, Samba, Udhampur, Reasi, Doda, Kishtwar and Rajouri districts.

In Kathua, some public transporters offered free travel to passengers as a tribute to the Maharaja.

AAP Expels Mankotia Alleging Anti-Party Activities

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Aam Admi Party on Friday terminated former legislator Balwant Singh Mankotia from the party for anti-party activities, AAP election in-charge said on Friday.

Mankotia, who was president of the Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party (JKNPP) before joining AAP in April, has hit out at AAP for deceiving people and said he is yet to decide the next course of his future.

"Party has taken serious note of these issues (anti-party activities) and after investigation, you have been found guilty. Therefore your basic membership with AAP standards terminated from September 23", AAP election in-charge Harjot

Singh Bains said in a letter to Mankotia.

AAP charged him with engaging with other national and regional parties of J&K and failure to engage or participate in any of its political activities besides not performing any task given by the party in the last three months.

As per the letter, Mankotia has also been charged with serious allegations of influencing AAP volunteers to join other parties and offering them positions in other parties and defaming the party on media platforms.

Reacting to the development, he told reporters, "I am not a primary member of the party. I am on their party. What right do they have to expel me?"

The former MLA said, he had

gone there for some days as he felt that the party will do something good for the union territory but within a fortnight he felt that it caused more damage than good to J&K and was not active at all.

He said he has not done any anti-party activity in any way and all the allegations against him are bitter lies.

In the past, he served as the president of the Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party and represented Udhampur in the Legislative Assembly from 2002 to 2014.

Mankotia joined AAP along with ex-MLA Yash Paul Kundal and over 100 other J&K leaders in the presence of Delhi Deputy CM Manish Sisodia and Environment Minister Gopal Rai on April 8.

LG's Advisor Inspects Work On Rehmat Alam Hospital



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar on Friday paid a surprise visit to Rehmat Alam Hospital (RAH) here and inspected the progress of ongoing works at the construction site of the hospital.

During the visit, the Advisor also took stock of arrangements being put in place for smooth shifting of Maternity Care Hospital Anantnag to this building in view of old and congested nature of existing hospital building.

While inspecting the different blocks of the building, Advisor Bhatnagar impressed upon the

officers of executing agency to expedite the pace of ongoing works so that building can be completed at the earliest and the existing Maternity Care Hospital is shifted to the building.

The Advisor further asked the executing agency to make the building compatible for public service delivery and instructed them to obtain the safety audit report and take appropriate measures for rectification at the required places.

Taking strong note of unwarranted delay in the completion of this project for so many years, Advisor Bhatnagar directed the officers to take personal interests

in completing this project as it has vital importance in terms of dealing with the maternal health care.

He also asked the officers to conduct regular reviews regarding progress of works and remove all bottlenecks which hinder the completion of this project in coordination with other agencies so that the existing maternal hospital can be shifted to the building at the earliest.

Chief Engineer, R&B, Kashmir, Chief Medical Officer, Anantnag, General Manager, J&K Projects Construction Corporation, officers of GMC, R&B, health and other concerned departments also accompanied the Advisor during the visit.

Transport Secretary Pitches For Urgent Repairs Along Jammu-Srinagar Highway

Observer News Service

RAMBAN: Secretary Transport, G Prasanna Ramaswamy made a firsthand appraisal of the relevant factors governing traffic movement on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44) in the critical 66-km Nashri to Banihal stretch in Ramban District.

The visit follows the high-level review meeting chaired by Chief Secretary to streamline traffic flow on NH-44 in view of the movement of fruit-laden trucks from Valley and the urgent need for repairs to make critical stretches capable of supporting double carriageway, to reduce travel time.

Deputy Commissioner, Ramban, Mussarat Islam, SDM Ramssoo Viqar Ahmed, SDM Banihal, Zaheer Abbas, ARTO Ramban, Samrinder Singh, DySPs Traffic, Parul Bhardwaj and Asgar Malik besides other officers, were present on the occasion.

Personally assessing the shooting stone zone between Cafeteria Morh and Mehar, near Ramban town, the Transport Secretary, who has taken over the charge recently, also inspected the stretch along Nashri, Dhalwas, Peerah and Chanderkote on which NHAI is currently working to make NH-44 four-laned.

It is notable that pursuant

upon the meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary, NHAI shall take a 4-hour haltage of traffic between 3.00 am and 7.00 am from tomorrow for the next five days to remove accumulated debris to restore double carriageway at critical spots between Nashri and Banihal, including Cafeteria Morh and Mehar and Rampardi towards Ramssoo-Banihal section.

The Transport Secretary, underlining the need to facilitate the movement of fruit trucks from Kashmir said the Government will take all measures for hassle-free movement of fruit HMVs towards their destinations as per timelines.

Briefing the Transport Secretary on issues related to NH-44 traffic and ongoing four-laning works, the Deputy Commissioner handed out an assurance that all decisions taken in the meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary shall be implemented to ensure smooth movement of vehicles.

The Transport Secretary directed the Deputy Commissioner to ensure NHAI carries out all urgent repairs on critical stretches to safeguard the lives of the passengers. He also called for effective synergy between civil, police and traffic police to regulate smooth vehicular movement including fruit trucks and those carrying perishable items.

Dept Of Posts Launches RTN Between Srinagar, Leh

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Department of Posts, Jammu and Kashmir Postal Circle on Friday launched the Leh-Srinagar Road Transport Network (RTN) service. The service will provide daily, regular and reliable parcel connectivity to the people of the two regions.

RTN is operated by Department of Posts to provide end to end, secure transportation to parcels across the country. It was introduced in the country in 2019.

Both Leh and Srinagar are important tourist locations and economic hotspots. The launch of Leh-Srinagar service will help businessmen, craftsmen, artisans, MSME units and others in connecting their products with their markets both within the country and abroad. It will also benefit the local administration in ensuring smooth and regular supply of essential commodities, medical and other equipment, books and other items to the people of Ladakh.

Pharma Covigilance Week Observed At GMC Anantnag



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Department of Pharmacology observed Pharma covigilance week at Govt Medical College Anantnag.

The program was held to impart awareness regarding reporting of adverse drug reactions during routine clinical practice in associated hospitals of GMC Anantnag. The week-long program consisted of ADR awareness among health care workers and public and other activities.

Dr Sami Magray, Head Department of Pharmacology briefed about the activities being undertaken by the Drug Monitoring Centre of GMC Anantnag and gave a detailed presentation about the number of ADR's being reported routinely.

On the final day of awareness week a Quiz, Poster Making and Debate competition was held

among the MBBS and Nursing/ Paramedical students with the aim to impart the knowledge of ADR monitoring at the earlier stages of their career development and hence carve them into better and responsible health care providers.

The programme was attended by a plethora of faculty members, Consultants, Medical Superintendent, Administrators, Nursing and Paramedical Staff etc and ended with distribution of prizes among the winners of the Quiz by Principal GMC Anantnag, Prof (Dr) Tariq Syed Qureshi.

MFF supports such initiatives taken up by the young faculty members and appreciates the support provided by the Principal GMC Anantnag in making these happen which shall go a long way in improving the academic and responsible culture of the institution.

3 Drug Peddlers Arrested In Udhampur

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Three drug peddlers were arrested with over 30 grams of heroin in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district on Friday, police said.

In the first incident, a police party intercepted two motorcy-

cle-borne people, Yonus and Fiaz Ahmed, and recovered 30 grams of heroin from them, they said.

A scooter rider, Mohan Lal, was arrested in Tikri with 7 grams of heroin, police said. Cases have been registered against the arrested accused and investigations have been launched, they said.

ADVENTURES IN ARCHIVES

Modernising
Toursim

Return of domestic tourists to Kashmir has encouraged the state government and it has started thinking a fresh about having a comprehensive tourism policy. Whether the return of tourism is a result of the efforts of Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayed or because of over all change in the security scenario the fact of the matter is that there is a need for putting this industry on a firm pedestal. There is need for stripping of the hacknayed and tradational ideas about this industry. There is need for introducing modern and new concepts for this industry in the state.

Many a cultural tides from different directions swept across Kashmir during thousands of years of its history synthesing its own distinctive culture and ethos. Assmilating influences from far and wide it evolved its own costumes, customs and cusines.

Despite centuries of subjugation Kashmiris al- ways have had an appetite for good food. Mutton was eaten both by Hindus and Muslims. Fowls, ducks and geese for their abundance were constituted an im- portant part of menu on festivals. Hindus would not touch poultry or eggs but they did eat wild fowl and eggs of lake birds. Mutton cooked with turnpis and left over to simmer for whole night made a delicious dish and it was known as Shebdaig.

The history of modern Kashmiri cuisine can be traced to the adevent of Islam in Kashmir. In the wake of Invasion of India by Timur many people of different professions migrated to Kashmir. Mir Syed Ali Ham- dani known as founder of Islam in Kashmir trav- ersing difficulit mountain passes reached this land along with a host of compainions including religious schol- ars, calligraphers, weavers, architects, artisans and weavers. Majority of arts and crafts for which Kash- mir is known the world over were introduced by this great saint and visionary. Many a professional chefs also accompanied the carvan of the great saint and reformist. The descendants of these chefs are known as Wazas. The ultimate formal banquet in Kashmir is the royal Wazwan comprising more than forty cours- es majority of which are meat preprations. Whether Mir Syed Ali Hamadani brougt cooks or chefs known as ‘wazas’ along with him or imparted training in cookery to locals is matter of further research but fact of the matter is that contemporary Kashmir culture is incomplete without this royal banquet. Marketing of this cusine in the international market could have earned a distinctive place to Kashmir in the world of tourism. The state government with huge paraphern- lia of toursim department has failed to keep pace with the changing concept of tourism. Tourism is no more only selling scenic beauty but there new concepts like monument and cultural tourism have gained greater currency in the world. It would be naive to believe that Kashmir with its denuded forests, polluted lakes and dirty roads can attract tourism. The tourism de- partments will have to look for newer concepts like ‘cusine and cultural’ toursim. There is need for or- ganizing food festivals in different parts of counry and impressing upon all leading hotels abroad to in- troduce Kashmir cuisine in their menus, that would serve as a great means of introducing Kashmir to potential tourist in the international market. The In- dian Toursim Development Corporation has not only been playing a negative role but has also been distort- ing Kashmir culture at the international level.

The article is an editorial from KO’s archives and was originally published on 21st April, 2005

Anuraag Khaund

The completion of one year of Taliban’s takeover of Afghanistan on 15 August, 2022 and the recent move by India towards re-opening its em- bassy in a calibrated manner, have thrown open many questions on the foreign policy front, basically its moral and ‘realist’ aspects. For the clarity of readers, I would try to briefly explain the idea of Realism. Realism in International Relations (IR) is a school of thought which owes its origin to classical Greek thinkers like Thucydides and modern scholars like Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Waltz. As per Realism, nation-states are the primary actors and units in an international system marked by anarchy and each state tries to maximize its power (politi- cal, military, economic) for their own survival. At the same time, each state also desires to dominate the international system or become the hegemon at the expanse of the power and security of other states. In the Realist view of IR, moral con- cerns of foreign policy decisions by states are secondary as long as the policy fulfills the latter’s security or strategic objectives.

The realist- moral contention over India’s Afghanistan policy has been evident even before the Tali- ban capture of Kabul in 2021. The very thought about having to deal with Taliban, a hardline Islamic extremist terrorist organisation, when advocated by foreign policy scholars and thinkers observing the power shifts in the region was deemed as an impossible or fantas- tical scenario among the domestic audience. The underlying reason behind such skepticism towards the possibility of Indian outreach to Taliban was the vast difference be- tween the entities in question (India being a nation state with a constitu- tional government and the Taliban a terrorist organisation) as well in the ideological and moral values es- poused by both. But with the arrival of news regarding the rapid capture of surrounding provinces by the Taliban starting from June- July 2021 and finally the fall of Kabul to the latter with the US’s hasty retreat on 15 August, the new reality stared India in the face New Delhi had to speak and engage with the new rul- ers in Kabul. A modicum of resis- tance existed in the Panjshir Valley which was the stronghold of the National Resistance Front (NRF) led by Ahmad Masood, the son of warlord Ahmad Shah Masood and including members such as former Vice President Amrullah Saleh and the remaining forces of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. However, despite early successes, the NRF stood no chance against the over- weening power of the Taliban in the region and the resistance was short- lived with Masood and Saleh being forced to take shelter in Tajikistan. Thus, it became clear to the entire international community including India that the Taliban, earlier dis- missed as ragtag bunch of Islamic fighters, were now the only power ruling the roost in Afghanistan.

A Taliban-led Afghanistan has been interpreted as a victory for ‘Pakistan, especially its military- intelligence apparatus, implying



Picture credits: Reuters

A major source of support and strength for India is the goodwill enjoyed among the Afghan population who still look up to it as a model country in South Asia as well as fondly remember the Indo-Afghan ‘civilizational ties’ going back to ancient past. It was for sustaining this goodwill that India had sent the humanitarian aid to the Afghan population now in dire straits

a more pronounced presence for Islamabad not only in the country but also in the wider Central Asian region. Along with Pakistan, China too has been seeking to deepen its footprint in the region in the wake of the US withdrawal. This was seen in the announcements by Bei- jing to extend the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) into Afghanistan as well as the willing- ness of Chinese companies to tap the region’s rich reservoirs of cop- per and Rare Earth Elements (REE) like lithium. Added to the increas- ing Pakistani and Chinese inroads was the question of India’s internal security, especially Kashmir. This was highlighted by Taliban leader Suhail Shaheen’s reference to Kash- mir in a press conference in 2021 which underlined New Delhi’s ap- prehensions of renewed militancy emerging in the Valley with its ori- gins in an unstable Afghanistan.

Hence given its ‘realist’ compul- sions and concerns of security and geopolitics mentioned above, India did open channels with the Taliban, which were initially of clandestine nature as communications were conducted behind the scenes. New Delhi’s outreach became more evi- dent with the arrival of the Indian ‘technical team’ headed by Joint Secretary (Pakistan- Afghanistan- Iran) from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in Kabul in June 2022 to re-open the embassy and oversee the distribution of Indian humani- tarian aid comprising wheat, medi- cines, n-COVID 19 vaccines and winter clothing to the Afghan popu- lation dealing with the aftermath of multiple crisis including a 6.1 Rich- ter scale earthquake in Paktika in June this year.

While many experts and schol- ars have characterized the Indian outreach as a credible and strategic move in a realist-driven world, yet as per ex-ambassador to Afghanis- tan Gautam Mukhopadhaya, there was resentment among the anti- Taliban circles over New Delhi’s ‘unofficial’ acceptance of the new

regime – a regime that stands in contravention to India’s constitu- tional and republican values and ethos or morality. The moral dilem- ma is further underlined when taken into account the character of the current ruling government in India which, in the eyes of its domes- tic voter base, is being viewed as reaching out to an Islamic extrem- ist group. Coupled with the recent Nupur Sharma controversy and the subsequent ‘knee-bending’ by India in the face of backlash from Gulf countries, the outreach to Taliban and the upgradation of the Indian technical team to the status of mid- ranking diplomat might be inter- preted by a major section of the do- mestic population as initial efforts at recognition of the Islamic Emir- ate and hence, a sign of weakness of the current New Delhi government in the face of ‘Islamist pressure’. In the tussle between moral and real- ist complications and expectations, which path should India take in Af- ghanistan?

In the light of the complex geo- political and fragile situation in Afghanistan impacting Indian in- terests, New Delhi cannot afford to fulfill the expectations of the moral and liberal sections of its domestic population who question the jus- tification of New Delhi’s outreach to Taliban 2.0 in the light of the latter’s treatment of women and religious and ethnic minorities. Nor can it put the expectations of its core domestic voter base before the concerns relat- ed to strategic and security issues. However, as per Mukopadhaya and other analysts, a major source of support and strength for India is the goodwill enjoyed among the Afghan population who still look up to it as a model country in South Asia as well as fondly remember the Indo-Afghan ‘civilizational ties’ go- ing back to ancient past. It was for sustaining this goodwill that India had sent the humanitarian aid to the Afghan population now in dire straits. It is this goodwill that has allowed India to maintain a sig-

nificant presence in Afghanistan in the past despite the distance and the intervening presence of Paki- stan both geographically as well as strategically. But as mentioned ear- lier, the outreach to the Taliban has been seen affecting that goodwill to some extent as it brings into ques- tion India’s image of a moral beacon (as opposed to Pakistan) among the Afghan population. Shall India live up to its moral image among Af- ghans at the expanse of its realist concerns? Critics might point to the fallacy of Non- Aligned Movement (NAM) in the Cold War era for In- dia’s foreign policy goals as opposed to the ‘realist’ Indo- Soviet partner- ship which served New Delhi well. However, at the same time, scholars like Happyman Jacob have advo- cated for India to reclaim its role of moral leadership in the new world marked by the prospects of Sino- US ‘new Cold War’, reminiscent of NAM leadership.

The current path for India would be to maintain a balance between its realist and moral concerns by hav- ing a calibrated engagement with the Taliban but also maintaining its support among the Afghan popu- lation. In the case of the Afghan population, the goodwill could be maintained and even strengthened by gradually allowing its citizens to avail education and health services in India through issuance of Visas. Especially those health patients who have appointments back in In- dia and students who are unable to return back to their campuses. Un- til the Indian diplomatic presence in Kabul becomes fully functional, the Visas could be issued through embassies in third countries like Iran and Tajikistan. This opening up to Afghan patients and students might also serve in ameliorating the Taliban’s attitude towards In- dia to some extent and serve the realist purpose of allowing India to consolidate its presence in Afghanis- tan. Although this might appear unlikely at the moment, the amelio- ration in Taliban’s attitude towards India could also be used by New Delhi to gradually influence them to respect their stated commitments on re-opening of schools for girls above the sixth grade and allowing women to participate in public and economic life. Yet, such a change is hard to come given the previous his- tory and ideology of Taliban as well as the current infighting between the ‘pragmatic’ and the hardliner factions within the group.

As Afghan intellectual Faiz Za- land had said in an interview to the Indian daily The Print in August 2022 that if ‘Afghanistan had failed as a country because it was not able to secure its interests, it also failed because its neighbors had failed it several times’. Listening to this as an Indian, it strikes one hard to some extent.

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 To Tame Inflation

Ashok Gulati

With Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation back at 7% in August, and Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation at 12.4%, one thing is clear: India is still not out of woods on inflation management. And if September inflation also remains higher than the Reserve Bank of India’s upper tolerance limit of 6%, the central bank, or more specifically, its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), will have to explain why inflation shot past 6% for three consecutive quarters, as per the 2016 inflation target- ing policy. And it may not be a comfortable position for RBI and its MPC members, given their credibility is at stake.

However, these are not normal times. First, Covid hit the world, and, then, the Russia-Ukraine conflict. And now, even climate change (heat waves) is impact- ing global commodity prices. In this interconnected world, it would be only rational to look at India’s per- formance in relation to many other major countries. When one compares India with, say, the US and most European countries, where inflation is a tad higher (at 8-12%) and GDP growth likely to be much lower, one can say India has done fairly well. And certainly, In- dia is placed in much better than many other countries like Turkey where inflation in July was raging at 80%, or countries in the neighbourhood like Pakistan (27%) and Sri Lanka (64%). On an average, even compared to India’s own inflation rates in the past, say, during 2004-05 to 2013-14, when average inflation was 7.9%, In- dia’s situation during 2014-15 till now is much better, with average inflation likely to be 5.1%.

Although RBI and its MPC have been tasked with keeping inflation at 4 +/- 2%, from a macro-economic perspective, it can’t be the sole objective. It must be managed keeping in mind its likely impact on GDP growth. And that’s where the balancing act has to be, and that’s where many other actors have to pitch in to tame inflation. No one could have explained it bet- ter than how Union finance minister Nirmala Sithara- man did in a recent conference organised by Icrier on ‘Taming Inflation’. She said very categorically that in- flation management requires an orchestrated play of many policy tools. The monetary policy, though very important, cannot tackle inflation alone. It is because, in the Indian context, food and beverages account for a 45.86% weight in the CPI basket. Therefore, mon- etary policy has to work in tandem with fiscal policy, trade and tariff policy, food and agricultural policy, and even infrastructure policy, which has a multiplier of 2.45. She also mentioned that even the diplomatic deal with Russia for importing crude oil at discounted prices was part of this inflation management strategy. While most economists would agree that inflation management is a complex problem, and it requires various policy instruments to be applied, the question remains who is conducting this orchestra of policies

to create a symphony and not a cacophony? Who is the Zubin Mehta of the inflation management orchestra?

Shankar Acharya, who has served as the chief economic advisor (CEA) in the finance ministry with three governments, rightly pointed out that our fis- cal policy needs tightening as fiscal deficit (the Cen- tre and states combined) has crossed 10% of the GDP for three years in a row. This is too high and causing inflationary pressures besides loose monetary policy. Krishnamurthy Subramanian, who was India’s CEA when Covid hit the world, said that the world has to learn a lot from India’s inflation management while protecting its GDP growth. From how India was not misled into giving excessive stimulus to boost con- sumption demand, and instead chose to spend more on infrastructure building that had high multiplier ef- fect on GDP and also created demand. For developing economies, may be this was the right strategy.

But as we move forward, how fast can India rein- in inflation and bring it down to, say, 4%, and yet keep GDP growth at around 7%? That would be an ideal situation, which India has not been able to achieve on a sustainable basis over the last two decades. First, public policy has to be re-oriented away from ‘free- bies’ towards investments in rural areas with a focus

on creating more and higher productivity jobs, better rural infrastructure, improved competitiveness of agriculture and agro-industry, and the MSME sector. Next, higher allocations to agri-R&D for developing climate-smart agriculture will help improve supply response on food. A stable and higher productivity in agriculture even in the face of harsh climate realities will be critical to tame food inflation, which remains the dominant component of CPI inflation. This would require taking a call on rationalising food and fertil- iser subsidies, which are burgeoning and are likely to cross ‘5 trillion in FY23. It will require an innovative policy mix, and one is not sure whether the govern- ment will be able to devise it in time. One also needs to urgently revise the weights of food and beverages in CPI basket, which are currently based on the 2011-12 consumption expenditure survey.

All said, it seems that inflation will remain defiant in India at least for this year, and may hover around 7%, despite RBI’s tightening of monetary policy. The GDP growth, on the other hand, is likely to come down a bit lower than RBI’s earlier forecast of 7.2%. If India manages 7% growth in GDP along with 7% inflation in FY23, it would still do fairly well, though it may not still be the most desired outcome.

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

In the Aftermath of The Gorgeous Prophet

Mufti Mudassir/ transl. Saaleh Baseer

In the name of Allah, the Mercy-giving, the Compassion-nurturing.
Joy cradle the exalted of Prophets and creation. And his sacred family, his sacred companions.

Honorable listeners, my mothers of sanctity, my brothers, my sisters:
Nūn! By the pen: what it jots down. By the grace of your Lord, you are not crazed. In truth, you (O Prophet) are the master of supreme values.

Allah has spoken, in truth.
A lettered man once said:
(Urdu) *husn-i zāhir mein āp aḡmal hein. mulk ke bāṭin mein āp akmal hein. be-taḡammul 'aql yēi keḡtī hein ke kul khalāṡq mein āp aḡzal hein.*

I offer another line of poetry: *tamattā rahay terē rōḡa ka manzar. salāmat rahay terē rōḡey ki jālī. humein bhi 'aṡā hō voh shawq-i bū ḡar. humein bhi 'aṡā hō voh ḡaḡb-i bilālī.*

(Arabic) *yā ṡāḡib al-jamālī wa yā sayyid al-baḡhar min waḡḡi-ka al-munīr la-ḡad nuwwira al-ḡamar: la yumkin al-thanā kamā kāna ḡaḡḡuḡ*

(Persian) *ba 'd az khudā buzurg tūy qissah mukhtasar:*

“After God it is just you, O Prophet. And here the story ends!”

balagha al-'ulā bi-kamālīhi ḡasunat jamī 'u kḡṡālīhi ṡallā 'alayhi wa ālīhi.

In our symposiums, time and time again, the Prophet's events and the chronicle of his life-stories, life-battles, are documented before us. However, in terms of the outward, the visage, that is, the gorgeousness of the Prophet—I aim to elaborate his beauty. What was his height? The footprint? Hair? The palpable delight of his face? How may we understand them all? This, I reiterate, is not necessarily praxis—i.e., the skin-color of the Prophet, the palm-size of the Prophet—we are not obligated to replicate them. Why? Because physiology is not within our authority to dictate. And (as the Muslim legal theorists inform us) one is not mandated to adopt those attributes which one has no power over (like physical attributes—we are only responsible for cultivating a *sunnah-ic* interior).

But the message is that the gorgeousness of the Prophet is a stroke of blessing, a godsend for us. When we gaze or meditate on the Prophet, we ought to invoke world-honoring gratitude to Allah, saying: “Thank you so much for gifting us a Prophet of wildly dazzling beauty.”

All Prophets are gorgeous—in truth, we may say that the most beautiful (*sarāpā*) human in the past epochs would be the appointed Prophet, the one-called-upon. Because the truth any given Prophet champions, his face, in beauty, testifies to his prophethood, to his truthfulness. And that when they would gaze, glance, at the visage of the Prophet, it would be affectively impossible for them to entertain this man is not truthful. ‘Abdullāh ibn Salām, the famed expert on the Torah, who later adopted Islam, said, after witnessing the Prophet: *inna waḡḡahu laisa bi-waḡḡḡin kazzāb.* “The face of this man is not of a liar.” The Companion Abū Rāfi maintained, again after laying his eyes on the Prophet: *Uḡḡia fī ḡalbi al-Islam.* “Islam was insinuated into my heart.” Another companion testified: *Mā raytu aḡṡana shayan min waḡḡ Rasūlillāh.* “I have never seen anything more breathtaking than the face of the Prophet.” *Ka-anna al-Shamsa tajrī min waḡḡihī.* And remember: the ṡaḡḡabah were not humans of pretension. They embodied the ordinary in an extraordinary way, confessing: “As if the sun was pouring out (*ravān davān*) underneath him.”

Aḡhar al-lawn. His face shimmered with light. *Kāna 'arḡuḡu al-lūlī.* When heat would swarm him, and sweat would form, the sweat-droplets were as living pearls. *Idhā sarra istanāra waḡḡḡu.* “When the Prophet smiled, he would radiate—as if he were light.” *Kannahu ḡiṡah min al-ḡamar:* “As if he were a shard of the moon.” And when soft anger (*nārāḡḡī*) would pulsate through him, the aftermath was the redness of pomegranate seeds (*anār kī surkḡī*). A far onlooker would be thunderingly shaken, moved. And as they closed into the Prophet, they became love and love became them. Praise for Allah, that He has made a protective haze over every dimension, every angle, of our Prophet.

So, we show gratitude to God for his beauty.

This is precisely why there is so much cosmic energy (*bara-kah*) and *rahmah* in his *Sunnah*, and in embodying his practices: guidance. Wonder, placed by Allah, flashes across his face. In reports documenting the medical impact of his blessed saliva, ‘Alī ibn Abī Tālib says his eyes were cinderling during the event of Khaybar, and the Prophet pasted his saliva to ‘Alī's eyes. At once, the burning sensation ended. ‘Utbah ibn ḡharḡah says that, out of illness, “a seed-like material poured out of my body. I visited the holy-Prophet and he applied his curing saliva. I was healed.” He continues: “But with that. Whenever I would stroll the streets, onlookers could detect a sniff of perfume.” For the rest of his life! Such sensations were the



aftermath of the Prophet's beauty, and such cosmic energy pulsed through the *lu āb* of the Prophet.

Mufti Saeed (Pālanpūrī)—who had visited us—has compiled the meta-physical effects of the Prophet's saliva in a book called *Ḥadīth-i Waḡā*. Jābir, the Companion, says that on the day of *Kḡandaḡ*, he saw the Prophet lapping two stones on his stomach, the ṡaḡḡabah having tied one on their bellies. Jābir told his wife. *Aisī (shayḡdār) thē.* The ṡaḡḡabah did not seek to console their hearts with false, alleged truths. *Dekhē bighayr ḡḡēn naḡīn āṡā.*

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abd al-Rabbah was harvesting his fields—when his son came darting to him: “Father, the Prophet of God has exited this world.” He threw his spade (or other harvesting implement) on the dirt, restlessly supplicating: “Oh Allah: snatch my eyesight away! What could the eyes gaze upon after-the-Prophet!” (*merī bīnāyī ko salb karāīn*). The invocation was accepted: for his entire life, he was left blind.

One mother's child passed away, as the baby was fumbling in her lap. The Prophet led the funeral and told her, “Your baby is being cradled by a paradise-dwelling woman in the heavens—do you wish to see for yourself?” Someone murmured in the air: “Mothers like these do not come often (to witness the unseen). Go on and look!” The women silenced the whisperer: “My eyes may see untruth but the voice of the Prophet cannot lie.” (I.e., I do not need to see my baby in paradise, the Prophet's words are enough conviction to know its truth).

Moving back to the story of Jābir, he asked his wife, mentioning the starved condition of the battle-hardened warriors: “Do we have anything to eat?” A baby lamb and some flour, she said. Jābir, confidante to the Prophet, meandered to the Prophet, whispering: “We have some food.” (He said it quietly because there wasn't enough for all the trench-diggers). Hearing the words, the Prophet brightly proclaimed: “Today Jābir is hosting a banquet for us all!” When Jābir relayed that the news that more than a thousand were arriving to eat from the meal of one baby lamb and flour, the wife of Jābir pressed: “Is this from the judgement of yours or the Prophet's? If it is the Prophet, before disgrace Allah will not lay us.”

Jābir said, “How can the decision be mine? I don't want to disgrace myself!” (By not having enough to eat). The wife retorted: “Then why are you worried! We will be fine.” The Prophet applies his saliva to the steaming pot, ordering that the lid of the pot should not be lifted. All thousand ṡaḡḡaba were satiated (by the meal of one lamb). The house was small, and only ten could fit in at once.

If this is the *barakah* of the saliva, imagine the sacrality of his words, his ethics, his praxis, his *sunnah*! You don't think it will leave a trace in your life (*ta thīr*)? The supplications before eating, of sitting, of drinking—consider the *barakah* for a moment!

‘Ubādah ibn al-Sāmīt, a soldier, a witness, to Badr, finished his meal and began to wash his hands. Anas ibn Mālik provided a towel for him to wash his hands. Afterwards, a servant placed the towel inside of an oven (*tannūr*), and all the dirt faded, the towel remaining vanishingly clean. ‘Ubādah ibn al-Sāmīt was a witness to this miraculous feat and asked Anas: “What is this!” seeking an explanation. Anas (ibn Mālik) said: “Once the Prophet lunched here and asked for a towel. Ever since he used this cloth, it refuses to become mucky.” So, think! If we enact the words, the everyday acts of the Prophet, do you truly think the blaze of Jāhannam may cinder us? This was just the hands of the Prophet! Through the skin of our Prophet's hands, the grime of *kufr* is scrubbed away.

Hazrat-i ṡuḡaib (al-Rūmī) is riding in the night, after meeting with his *ma 'shūḡ*, amongst the dirt-lanes of Mecca. “ṡuḡāib you're in such *ḡḡaḡḡah*!” says the Prophet. He then glides his hand on the body of ṡuḡaib, and in the aftermath of this

prophetic touch, this prophetic energy, ṡuḡaib enunciated the proclamation of faith, testifying to the unity of God.

Our tongues? They migrate sensations of sweetness, acidity, bitterness—and so forth. But the exalted tongue of the Prophet: it revealed only *ḡalāl* and *ḡarām*. Once the ṡaḡḡabah and the Prophet were seated for food on a *dastarkḡān*. One mouthful of food neared the mouth of the Prophet, and he spurned it, saying: “*ṡadaḡah* is unlawful for the family of Muḡammad!” What picked up on this? The flesh-tongue of the Prophet. Look, wonder, at our Prophet—his biological nature was paradigmatic guidance—the sensations of his *mubārak* tongue: they were distinctions between lawful and unlawful!

Of the anatomy, of the physique of

“This is precisely why there is so much cosmic energy (barakah) and ra mah in his Sunnah, and in embodying his practices: guidance. Wonder, placed by Allah, flashes across his face

the Prophet, Allah had dressed it, coated it, with sublimity. The sweat dripping down from his hallowed forehead: if a bride had applied it, all the *nikāḡ-goers* would immediately know the scent was from *ḡuḡūr*, the fragrance emerging was so pronounced! Beauty and joy on his soul. Um Sulaym would, in fact, dispatch kids to collect the droplets of sweat in bottles as the Prophet would rest, stirring and fusing the sweat with other perfume, heightening the aroma of her perfume.

In the instruction, the intellectual culture, of the Prophet, there crop up overarching guidance, *rahmah*, and *barakah*—we know this from critically valid (*ṡaḡḡīḡ*) prophetic reports. In light of this, we must read the *Shamāil of Tirmidḡī*. Peace and joy upon the Prophet. Come, let us read the *Shamāil*. It elaborates on the *ḡulḡah* of the Prophet: his teeth, his eyes, his tongue/ language (*zubbān*), his hair, his pace and stride—what was his mode of sitting? How would he engage his time between *'Asr* and *Magḡrib*? From *Magḡrib* until *'Isha*—what were his rituals? All of this was compiled! His favorite *sālan*? His most adored fruit? What clothes were beloved to him? What were his favorite colors? All of this in one short text.

As Allah assigned *ḡidāyah* in his teachings, his beauty reserves a spiritual impact, as well. His biography (*ṡirat*)? Well, it was his biography (i.e., of such grandeur). Passers-by would shift to Islam simply by *encountering* his beauty (*ṡūrat*). His *ṡūrat* authored that influence.

(Now let us turn to) His name? The *barakah* that leaps therein? Cited in *Ḥadīth*, the Prophet said that whoever has a boy, and out of unyielding love of the Prophet and to acquire the *barakah* of the Prophet's name, he names his son *Muḡammad*, Allah makes both son and father paradise-dwellers. Also mentioned in the collections of Hadith: whomsoever is named Muḡammad, be sure to honor and exhibit love to that child. Emphasized further to the father is the prohibition of humiliating treatment, of putting to shame that son named Muḡammad. Why? Because his name is a totem of grandeur.

On Resurrection-day it will be proclaimed: *Oh Muḡammad!* (Joy upon him) *Walk into Paradise without any accountability!* Listening to this proclamation, many who were named after the Prophet will also awaken, and because of the spreading-sanctity of that name, all those who were named Muḡammad will not be forbidden entry. *Go! You enter Paradise, too.* How will they wake up? Do you know? On condition that they were *Muḡammadī*, i.e., those who were sincere to the Prophet. They were *Muḡammadī* to Muḡammad! (*Muḡammad ke sāḡḡ Muḡammadī*

ho). Allah's grace will be colossal on that day. It will be for those named Muḡammad who acted in accordance with the sanctity of the Prophet's name.

What grandeur in a name! Akhtar Shīrānī—have you heard of him? A well-regarded poet. In a state of inebriation (*nasḡe kī 'ḡālat mein*), he was lounging. Akhtar Shīrānī in a drunken state. In this state (of recital of poetry), what happens? Naturally, they are dawdling around, expressing merriment (*taḡḡrīḡ karṡē hain*). Other (poets?) are reclining on cushions around him. *Ab unko lēle.* Someone (sardonically) questioned him: “What do you think about ḡḡālīb?” (The late-Mughal poet). Akhtar retorted: “ḡḡālīb was a fool.” (*bēwaḡḡīḡ*). “What are your thoughts on Zauq?” (These are all (Mughal) poets). “His taste in poetry was poor (*bud-ḡauḡ*—a play on the Arabic name of the poet),” scoffed Shīrānī. “What are your thoughts on the poet Inshā-allāḡ Khan?” Shīrānī said: “His composition (*inshā*) was awful! How did he become a poet?” Another asked his thoughts on (Mirzā Raft) Saudā. Shīrānī said: “His drive (*saudā-sawār*) for poetry was misplaced! If I encountered him, I would have sternly told him: don't aspire to be a poet.” The discussion was underway. A half-witted oaf, in that gathering, asked Shīrānī: “*ḡuḡūr*! What are your thoughts on Muḡammad?” This fool was disadvantaged of any intellect! Shīrānī had a bottle of wine in his hand; he threw it down, cracking it, and struck the questioner, in utter rage: “O worthless one! (*kambakḡḡ*)! How dare you mention such a pure name in this vile gathering? How could you be this shameful?” He slapped him so awfully that the questioner found himself with an open wound. Akhtar Shīrānī, feeling utter graveness that the Prophet's name was mentioned in this assembly of wine, and that he was responsible for the disrespect of the Prophet, swore off wine until the day he died.

Abū Nu 'āym al-Isḡḡḡānī, a celebrated *muḡaddith*, informs us that, in the nation of Mūsā (‘alayhi salām), lived a man seen as utterly unfaithful (*nāḡḡarmān*) to—and by—the laws of Mūsā. When he passed away—do you know what his community did? They cast his body into the waste. In the trash they threw him. Allah commanded Mūsā to lift him out of the trash, wash, shroud, and bury him with reverence. After obeying the order of Allah, after washing, shrouding, burying him, Mūsā

“Of the anatomy, of the physique of the Prophet, Allah had dressed it, coated it, with sublimity. The sweat dripping down from his hallowed forehead: if a bride had applied it, all the nikāḡ-goers would immediately know the scent was from ḡuḡūr, the fragrance emerging was so pronounced! Beauty and joy on his soul

entreated Allah. “O Allah, my people left him out to die. Why did you order me to bury him?” Allah said: “O Mūsā! Every time he sat down with the *Torah*, and found the name *Muḡammad*, he would place a kiss on that word.” Peace and joy upon him, and all the Prophets.

This is the *modus operandi* of Allah's mercy—his *ḡānūn* is something quite different! Remember, this is purely the *barakah* of his name. In his outward beauty, in his name—even his *na 'layn mubārak*! What are the *na 'layn*? His sandals. Did you know they are the equivalent to two legal witnesses (i.e., the *sharī ṡ* requirement of evidence)? This is attested in the prophetic collections. The joy-giving Prophet (said)—narration cited in *Mishḡāt*: “Whosoever declares the unity of God with sincerity, he will step into Paradise.” Abū Hurayrah—he is the narrator—says: “O Prophet of God! Shall I announce this wonderful news (*ḡḡush kḡḡabrī*) to the people?” “Tell them,” said the Prophet, “and take these two sandals with you! Whoever asks you for proof, offer these two sandals.” Legal evidence is exactly what in the

Sharia? A claim requires two witnesses. Take these two witnesses. And whom did Abū Hurayrah encounter on the road? *Hazrat-i 'Umar*. He *had* to meet *Hazrat-i 'Umar*. “Where are you going?” he asked. Abū Hurayrah, in joy, said: “You shall be the first I inform of the wonderful news! Whoever recites the *kalima*, with sincerity, will step into Paradise.” *Hazrat-i 'Umar* said, “Let's go inside,” bringing Abū Hurayrah to the Prophet, and saying: “Oh Apostle of Allah! Tell him to stop. People will listen to this and abandon righteous actions (‘amal), relying only on faith.” The Prophet ordered Abū Hurayrah to desist. The Hadith-critics write that lest they be held accountable (*wabāl na āye*), they essayed on it, further noting that whoever passed away with *imān*, they certainly will enter paradise. However, those who bedrock their faith with righteous actions will be counted from the elite category and step into Paradise. And if they didn't scaffold their faith with actions—what will happen to them? Only Allah knows. But they will undeniably be admitted (into Paradise)—eventually. If Allah's mercy cradles the action-less, then they will prosper with the righteous of the upper-tier; if they are not merced, then (those who had *imān* only) will be treated per the *ḡānūn* of Allah, i.e., with potential punishment, and be admitted, thereafter.

With respect to the *na 'layn-i mubarak, hazrat ḡakīm al-Ummah*, an exceptional friend of God—have you seen the image of the *na 'layn*? Perhaps one of you chanced upon it. He, *ḡakīm al-Ummah*, wrote a book, concerning the sacred-giving effect of the sandals, entitled: *Zād al-Sa 'id fī Dhikr al-ḡaḡīb*. An exceptional book on the biography of the Prophet—a concise, wonderful text.

What is the truth? We have refused to cultivate affability with the friends-of-God (*Allāḡ wāle*). To disrespect the people-of-God, the saints, that is, to abandon them, is to foster misfortune for oneself (*muḡḡasar*). Are you aware of the consequence of this crime, this misfortune? Alienation (*mahrāmī*) from Islam! Alienation manifests in two forms—those who dishonor (*be-ḡurmatī*) the people-of-Allah (*buzurḡon*) are alienated from religion in two ways: either they are lost of the privilege to properly understand, properly access, their religion, or they are unbled to practice their faith. Why? Because these mystics had

anyone was struck with illness, I would set the hair in a cup of water and offer it as a drink to the afflicted. They would be cured!” Khālīd ibn al-Walīd. Islam's exceptional—what shall I say—hero? Two militarily brilliant leaders: Khālīd ibn al-Walīd and ‘Amr ibn al- ‘Āṡ—they testified to Islam's truth in the same day, and they were roaringly successful conquerors. Khālīd ibn al-Walīd said: “I deposited the miracle-giving hair of the Prophet in my helmet, and wherever I campaigned with that strand of hair, Allah humbled me with conquest.”

What a Prophet Allah has gifted us! This was only his flesh-beauty! We are demanded to gratitude-present to Allah that we follow a thunderingly gorgeous, stunning, and flawless (*ḡaṡīn, jamīl, kāmil*) Prophet. Don't you know—we must feel life-shattering pride that we are the *ḡḡulām* of the Prophet. *Hum ḡḡulām-i ḡuzūr. ṡallallāḡ 'alayḡi wa sallam.* Are we not? If anyone's heart resists conceding this fact, then let us present them beyond-doubt proofs! To be a ḡḡulām is to identify with love. Let us now show to you that the ummah, in her totality, is the *ḡḡulām* of the Prophet. The demand of *ḡḡulāmī* is that we bend our will to our Master. *Hazrat-i Zāḡir*, Allah's pleasure cradle him, he accompanied the Prophet. He was a desert-dweller. A village-resident. Whenever he approached the presence of the gorgeous-Prophet, he arrived gift-bearing, *ḡadāyah*-offering. This Companion would forage an item from the Arab wilderness, and, in return, the holy Prophet would gift him an item from the city. *Taḡḡādū Taḡḡabbū. Gift to each other and you will love each other.* It shouldn't be one-way. That you're only taking presents. No! You should be gifting and taking! Love shoots up, roars up, through this act. The gorgeous Prophet said, with a spray of humorousness: *Zāḡir is my village, and I am his city.* Once, *ḡazrat-i Zāḡir* was standing upright in the *baṡār*, in the marketplace. The Prophet, walking, took ahold of him—astern. *Hazrat-i Zāḡir*, puzzled (and unknowingly), squirmed to free himself. *Hazrat-i Anas* says that, when the holy-Prophet demonstrated his physical strength, the flesh of his palms were softer than silk, finer than marble (*marmar*). *Yei āp kī ṡḡān hai.* In terms of his tenacity and physical fortitude, you know the story of the wrestler (*pahawān*)? (Challenged by this non-Muslim wrestler), the holy-Prophet sent him flying into the ground. The Prophet spoke to the wrestler: *Try again! Come, try again, Rukānāḡ!* After the third round of being overthrown, the wrestler testified to the truth of Islam. *Hazrat-i Zāḡir*, seeking to release himself, looked behind, thinking, *Who is holding me? It's the Prophet! This moment of him holding me won't come again. How can I let it slip by?* (Realizing this moment wouldn't offer itself twice), he let himself slide into the grasp of the Prophet. *This moment won't come again.* The gorgeous-Prophet announced, booming: *Who will buy this ḡḡulām?* Hadīth commentators offer a thoroughgoing analysis of this prophetic report. From the sacred-filled mouth of the Prophet, no lie emerges from it, even during instances of humor. Only, and only, truth can, and will, come out. Yet, everyone knew *Hazrat-i Zāḡir* was free!

From this we, and the *dunyā*, conclude that the population of this earth are the *ḡḡulām*s of the holy-Prophet, dignified. *Hum sab ḡuzūr kī ḡḡulāmī ka sharaḡḡ ḡḡāṡil hain.* In the spur of the moment when the Prophet announced, *Who will buy this ḡḡulām, ḡazrat-i Zāḡir* began to weep. *Prophet-of-God, I would be sold for a paltry price in Madina.* Our Prophet, our Prophet of beauty, do you know what he said? *Maybe here, Zāḡir, you might be sold cheap, but in the presence of Allah, how valuable you are! How valuable you are.*

My guests! Please, let us read the prophetic biography (*ṡīrat*) in the *Shamāil*. How many books are out there! What was the beauty of the Prophet? What did he enjoy? In what ethical manner did he arise from sitting—and how would he sit? Learning one mannerism after another, we ought to adopt these life-giving attributes. And hearken back to (my earlier point) and let it sit in your heart: you and I are demanded to embody the mannerisms that are in our capacity to emulate (*ikhṡīyārī*). (I.e., you and I are not asked to mutate our body to the hand-size or the teeth-structure of the holy-Prophet, however much we desire). When we are treated to biographic details of his physical appearance, we ought to experience otherworldly joy (even if we cannot imitate him in this respect).

So, in conclusion, out of the joy of Allah dignifying us with a gorgeous Prophet, the demand of that is we love him, we give our hearts, undyingly, to him. We carry our obedience to him. And in the course of obeying him, we should not experience any frigid restlessness or agitation. Let us cultivate world-defying love in our hearts.

And, so, we weepingly beg Allah that He gifts us providence to obey the Prophet. Ameen.

– Traversing Tradition

Scientists Engineer Mosquitoes That Can't Spread Malaria



Press Trust Of India

Scientists have genetically modified mosquitoes with the ability to slow the growth of malaria-causing parasites in their gut, an advance that can help prevent transmission of the disease to humans.

These engineered mosquitoes produce compounds which impede the growth of malaria-causing parasites, which are then unlikely to reach the mosquitoes' salivary glands and be passed on in a bite before the insects die.

Researchers from the Institute for Disease Modeling at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation developed a model which can assess the impact of such modifications if used in a variety of African settings.

They found that the modification in question could be effective even where transmission is high.

While the technique, described in a paper published in Science Advances journal, has been shown to dramatically reduce the possibility of malaria spread in a lab setting, if proven safe and effective in real-world settings, it could offer a powerful new tool to help eliminate malaria.

The disease is transmitted between people through a female mosquito after it bites someone infected with the malaria

parasite. The parasite then develops into its next stage in the mosquito's gut and travels to its salivary glands, ready to infect the next person the mosquito bites.

However, only around 10 per cent of mosquitoes live long enough for the parasite to develop far enough to be infectious. The team aimed to lengthen the odds even further, by extending the time it takes for the parasite to develop in the gut.

Researchers from the Transmission:Zero team at Imperial College London, UK, genetically modified the main malaria-carrying species of mosquito in sub-Saharan Africa, Anopheles gambiae, such that the mosquito produces antimicrobial peptides in its guts, when it takes a blood meal.

These peptides impair the malarial parasite's development by interfering with the energy metabolism of the parasite and also, causing the mosquitoes to have a shorter lifespan and further hampering their ability to pass on the parasite.

By the time, the next parasite stage could reach the mosquito salivary glands, most mosquitoes in nature are expected to die.

"We need to develop innovative new tools because mosquitoes and the parasites they carry are becoming resistant to available interventions such as insecticides and treatments, and funding has plateaued," said co-first author of the study, Tibebu Habtewold.

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Covid-19 Infection Increases Risk Of Long-Term Brain Problems: Study

Press Trust Of India

People infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus are at increased risk of developing a range of neurological conditions in the first year after the infection, according to a large study conducted in the US.

Such complications include strokes, cognitive and memory problems, depression, anxiety and migraine headaches, the researchers said.

The researchers at Washington University School of Medicine also found that the post-COVID brain is associated with movement disorders, from tremors and involuntary muscle contractions to epileptic seizures, hearing and vision abnormalities.

The infection is also associated with balance and coordination difficulties as well as other symptoms similar to what is experienced with Parkinson's disease, they said. "Our study provides a comprehensive assessment of the long-term neurologic consequences of Covid-19," said Ziyad Al-Aly from Washington University.

"The results show the devastating



long-term effects of Covid-19. These are part and parcel of long COVID. The virus is not always as benign as some people think it is," Al-Aly, senior author of the study published in the

journal Nature Medicine.

The researchers noted that, overall, Covid-19 has contributed to more than 40 million new cases of neurological disorders worldwide. Other than having a COVID infection, specific

risk factors for long-term neurological problems are scarce.

"We are seeing brain problems in previously healthy individuals and those who have had mild infections,"

Al-Aly said.

Few people in the study were vaccinated for Covid-19 because the vaccines were not yet widely available during the time span of the study, from March 2020 through early January 2021.

The data also predates Delta, Omicron and other COVID variants.

A previous study in Nature Medicine found that vaccines slightly reduce -- by about 20 per cent -- the risk of long-term brain problems.

"It is definitely important to get vaccinated but also important to understand that they do not offer complete protection against these long-term neurologic disorders, Al-Aly said.

The researchers analysed about 14 million de-identified medical records in a database maintained by the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the largest integrated health-care system in the US. Patients included all ages, races and sexes.

They created a controlled data set of 154,000 people who had tested positive for Covid-19 sometime from March 1, 2020, through January 15, 2021, and who had survived the first 30 days after infection.

NHDC Ltd, DHH Kashmir Organize Buyer-Seller Meet



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- A buyer-seller meet was Friday organized by the National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC) Ltd in collaboration with Department of Handicrafts & Handloom (DHH) Kashmir at Kashmir Haat Srinagar.

The event witnessed the participation of Exporters, Unit Holders, Members of Cooperative Societies besides various manufacturers among whom Aditya Birla Group, Jayshree Textiles and Balaji Mills are prominent. The representatives of KCCI, PEMA, MEERAS, KPO, KCC also participated in the event. Artisans and unit holders also displayed handicraft and handloom products of national and international repute during the event.

Speaking at the event, the Director Handicrafts and Handloom Kashmir, Mahmood Ahmad Shah said that such programs boost the morale of the artists and also helps the seller to plan his products better. Such events will provide buyers and sellers from Kashmir region a platform to build business relations and showcase products.

He further said that the Department has been facilitating the promotion of GI to help recognize and promote age-old crafts.

Pertinently, Kani Shawl, Pash-

mina, Sozni, Paper-Machie, Walnut Wood Carving, Khatam-band, and Hand Knotted Carpets crafts from Kashmir have already been GI certified whereas five more crafts viz., Kashmir Namda, Wagguv, Shikara, Gabba and Kashmir Willow Bat are in the final process of getting the GI registration.

The department in the last year alone has issued 6500 and 4000 labels in Pashmina and Carpets, respectively. The QR based labelling of all the GI certified crafts shall be achieved in a month's period besides the department is also in process of issuing the hologram labelling of non GI crafts.

Speaking on the sidelines of the event, the Director stressed the need of creating a Raw Material Bank in Kashmir to facilitate easy procurement which can aide the artisans and weavers. The department has registered 2500 Cooperatives alone in the last year which have been provided a financial assistance of 15 Crore rupees.

Certificates were also distributed among the 22 authorized GI carpet exporters by the Director Handicrafts & Handloom Kashmir. The department is presently providing an incentive of 10% of the total volume of Handicraft/Handloom export products with maximum reimbursement up to Rs. 5 Crore.

Economists See RBI Delivering Another 50 Bps Hike Next Week

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Economists are unanimous in forecasting that the central bank has no other option but to deliver a 50 bps rate hike next week and take the terminal rate to 6.25 per cent by December.

Economists from SBI, UBS, Goldman Sachs, Barclays and Bank of Baroda in a rare unanimous call see the RBI-led monetary policy committee delivering a 50 bps hike on September 30, taking the overall repo rate increase 290 bps to 5.90 per cent since May this year.

Soumya Kanti Ghosh, the group chief economist at the nation's largest lender SBI, in a detailed note on Monday said, a half-percentage point hike in the repo rate looks imminent in an aggressive response to external shocks.

"We expect the peak repo rate in the cycle at 6.25 per cent. A final rate hike of 35 bps is expected in December policy," he said.

Liquidity has become deficit after 40 months which looks like another headwind for the central bank, he said, adding this may force the RBI to support the market through a change in the CRR and OMOs.

Echoing the views, Tanvee Gupta-Jain, the chief economist at UBS Securities India, said in the base case, she expects the MPC-RBI to front-load the rate hike cycle and raise the repo rate by another 50 bps (versus



35 bps previously) next week taking the terminal repo rate to 6.25 per cent (previously 6 per cent) by December.

On the positive side, she said the large current account deficit, elevated CPI inflation and a stretched fiscal position are mostly led by supply-side factors rather than easy credit conditions pushing domestic demand.

Rahul Bajoria, the chief economist at Barclays India also raised the repo rate forecast to a 50 bps hike next week (35 bps previously) and a 35 bps hike in the December meeting (25 bps previously), with upside risk to the forecast if commodity prices are higher in Q4.

"We now expect 50 bps of further rate hikes in 2023 (75 bps previously) which would take the repo rate to 6.75 per cent by April 2023." The British lender also expects the MPC-RBI to change its stance to neutral on falling commodity prices

offer as it feels that inflation has peaked. But we think tighter global financial conditions and high inflation will lead the MPC to stick to its front-loaded tightening cycle.

Madan Sabnavis, the chief economist at Bank of Baroda also said the recent developments in the forex market can prompt a higher quantum of 50 bps to stay on track with other markets so as to retain investor interest as a hike of 25-35 bps would have signalled that the RBI is confident that the worst of inflation is over.

Goldman Sachs' Santanu Sengupta said also pencilled in a 50 bps hike (35 bps previously) and a 35 bps hike in December (25 bps previously), with upside risk to the forecast if commodity prices are higher in Q4.

We now expect 50 bps of further rate hikes in 2023 (75 bps previously) which would take the repo rate to 6.75 per cent by April 2023. .

Equity Investors Poorer By Rs 4.90 Lakh Cr



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Investors' wealth eroded by over Rs 4.90 lakh crore on Friday amid a sharp fall in equities.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 1,020.80 points or 1.73 per cent to settle at 58,098.92. During the day, it tumbled 1,137.77 points or 1.92 per cent to 57,981.95.

The market capitalisation of the BSE-listed firms plummeted by Rs 4,90,162.55 crore to Rs 2,76,64,566.79 crore on Friday.

This is the third day of decline for the equity market and the BSE benchmark has fallen by 1,620.82 points or 2.71 per cent during this time.

In three days, investors wealth

has eroded by Rs 6,77,646.74 crore.

"With the latest round of interest rate tinkering by the US central bank, investors have turned risk averse and are dumping shares at will. Traders are also worried about the escalation in Russia-Ukraine conflict, which is prompting them to exit equities and park funds in safe haven dollar assets," said Amol Athawale, Deputy Vice President - Technical Research, Kotak Securities Ltd.

Among the 30-share Sensex pack, Power Grid slumped 7.93 per cent. The other major laggards were Mahindra & Mahindra, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, NTPC, HDFC and IndusInd Bank.

'Govt For Banks To Collaborate With NBFCs And Fintech Companies'

Press Trust Of India

KOLKATA: The government is in favour of banks working closely with the non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and fintech companies for co-lending and also push forward the digital route, an official said.

Speaking at a CII event here on Friday, Hardik Mukesh Sheth, director (banking operations) of the department of financial services, said that the government is pushing the public sector banks (PSBs) to work with the NBFCs and fintech companies to collaborate in the area of co-lending.

He also said that there is also a push towards the digital route, adding that new-age banking using technology has increased.

"There is a rise in loan disbursement using the digital channel," Sheth said.

The official said that all the 12 PSBs are making profits, and their non-performing as-



sets (NPAs) have halved due to recovery. "None of the 12 public sector banks are under the prompt corrective action (PCA) of the RBI," he said.

Echoing the same, MD&CEO of Yes Bank Prashant Kumar said that NBFCs are critical not only for financial inclusion but also for raising credit offtake. He said fintechs are able to understand customer behaviour while the banks enjoy their trust.

According to Kumar, fintechs can help the banks in

raising efficiency and collaboration between them can be way forward on increasing credit of the lenders.

MD of State Bank of India (SBI), international global market, C Sreenivasulu Setty said that it is important to combine the trust of the banks and technology of the fintech companies to serve the customers.

"This has to be on a sustained basis. The banks are spending money to address this issue", he added.

Retail Prices Of Rice To Remain Under Control: Govt

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The government on Friday said retail prices of rice in the domestic market will remain under control, helped by a ban on exports of broken rice and sufficient stocks in its godowns.

The statement by the food ministry came a day after its factsheet alluded to a pricing pressure and rates of rice rising in the near term.

By imposing the ban on export of broken rice, the government has "successfully ensured domestic food security, availability of domestic feed for poultry and cattle feed, while keeping a check over inflation as well as domestic price of rice", the food ministry said in the statement on Friday.

With effect from September 9, the Centre imposed a ban on broken rice exports and also a slapped a 20 per cent export duty on non-basmati rice, except for par-boiled rice.

"The domestic price of rice is in comfortable position and the prices will remain well under control...Due to surplus stock of rice, the domestic price of rice will be under control as compared to international market and neighbouring countries where the price is comparatively high," the ministry said.

The minimum support price (MSP) of paddy has been increased by 5.15 per cent to Rs 2,040 per quintal in 2022-23 compared to Rs 1,940 per quintal in 2021-22.

The ministry highlighted that all-India domestic wholesale prices of rice and wheat decreased by 0.08 per cent and 0.43 per cent respectively over the week.

On Friday, the average retail



price of rice stood at Rs 37.65 per kg, as per the data compiled by the department of consumer affairs.

Regarding the exports ban, the ministry said the restriction has been imposed to ensure adequate availability of broken rice for consumption by domestic poultry industry and for other animal feedstock; and to produce ethanol for successful implementation of EBP (Ethanol Blending Programme).

The government has not made any changes in the policy relating to par-boiled rice and basmati rice. Par-boiled and basmati rice constitute around 55 per cent of total rice exports from India.

"So, the farmers will continue to get good remunerative prices and dependent/vulnerable countries will have adequate availability of par-boiled rice as India has significant share in the global rice export," the ministry said.

Around 217.31 lakh tonnes of rice is in government buffer stock, which is higher than the buffer stock norm and 610 lakh tonnes will be procured in 2022-23 marketing season starting October.

Rupee Slides 30 Paise To Close Below 81-Mark Against Dollar

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: The rupee slumped 30 paise to close at a fresh lifetime low of 81.09 against the US dollar on Friday, weighed down by the strong American currency overseas and risk-off sentiment among investors.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency breached the 81-mark for the first time ever and slumped to 81.23 against the American currency.

It finally ended at 81.09, down 30 paise over its previous close. On Thursday, the rupee plunged by 83 paise -- its biggest single-day loss in nearly seven months -- to close at 80.79, its previous record low.

This is the third straight session of loss for the Indian currency during which it has lost 124 paise against the US dollar.

Forex traders said escalation of geopolitical risk in Ukraine and rate hikes by the US Fed and Bank of England in a bid to contain inflation sapped risk appetite.

Further, the strength of the

American currency in the overseas market, a negative trend in domestic equities, and risk-off mood amid escalation of geopolitical risk in Ukraine weighed on the local unit.

"Rupee fell to fresh all-time lows against the US dollar after the Fed raised rates earlier this week. Most

of the currencies are under pressure as the dollar continues to strengthen," said Gaurang Somaiya, Forex & Bullion Analyst, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

Somaiya further noted that volatility in Yen remained elevated after the Bank of Japan intervened to curb sharp depreciation. The Bank of England raised rates by 50 bps. "We expect the USD-INR (Spot) to trade sideways and quote in the range of 80.40 and 81.20," Somaiya said.

"Indian rupee marked the biggest weekly decline after April 2021 amid a stronger dollar index and risk-off moods. There seems to be no turning back for the dollar as it made a fresh two-decade high and in turn pushed the rupee to a record-low level," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities.

SHORT TAKES

Tata Steel Board Approves Merger Of Six Subsidiary Companies

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Tata Steel will merge with itself six of its subsidiary companies, a statement said on Friday.

A proposal in this regard was approved by the Board of the company on Thursday, it said.

"The Board of Directors of Tata Steel considered and approved schemes for the proposed amalgamation of six subsidiaries into and with Tata Steel," the statement issued by Tata Steel said.

The subsidiaries are Tata Steel Long Products Limited in which Tata Steel holds 74.91 per cent equity, The Tinplate Company of India Limited (74.96 per cent), Tata Metaliks Limited (60.03 per cent), The Indian Steel & Wire Products Limited (95.01 per cent equity holding), Tata Steel Mining Limited and S & T Mining Company Limited (both wholly-owned subsidiaries).

"Tata Steel Board approves the amalgamation of strategic businesses into the company," the statement said.

The Board also approved the amalgamation of TRF Limited (34.11 per cent equity), an associate company of Tata Steel, into Tata Steel Limited.

Tata Steel further said the proposed amalgamation is aimed at driving synergies, simplifying the group holding and management structure, and consolidating and strategically growing downstream operations and engineering capabilities.

'Customers Must Report Unauthorised Transactions Immediately'

Press Trust Of India

BHOPAL: Warning against mounting cyber crime cases across the country, State Bank of India (SBI) Chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara said customers should be informed to report any unauthorised transaction immediately so that it can be checked timely.

Khara asserted that customer service should be given the utmost priority and urged customers of the bank to remain aware for checking the rise of cyber-crime cases.

"They should inform them that unauthorized transactions, if any, should be immediately informed to toll-free number 18001-2-3-4 so that proper action can be taken on time," an SBI release said on Friday.

The SBI chairman arrived here on Thursday to take part in various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives of the lender.

He also explained how the bank is providing a high level of service to customers through the YONO app and other digital mediums.

Khara appreciated the use of YONO among the customers and said "we are giving better service to the customers through digital technology."

Praising the work in the field of social service done by SBI Bhopal Circle, Khara said the bank is very sensitive towards its social responsibilities and has always been at the forefront in this field.

Sensex Sinks 1,020 Pts As Rate Hikes Trigger Global Sell-Off

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: The Sensex tumbled 1,020 points while the Nifty crashed below the 17,350-mark on Friday as a flurry of rate hikes by global central banks spooked investors and sparked a global sell-off.

The rupee breached the 81-mark against the US dollar in intra-day trade for the first time ever, adding to the negative sentiment. Sliding for the third straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 1,020.80 points or 1.73 per cent to close at 58,098.92.

Similarly, the NSE Nifty plummeted 302.45 points or 1.72 per cent to end at 17,327.35.

PowerGrid led the Sensex losers' chart with a drop of 7.93 per cent, followed by M&M, SBI, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, NTPC, HDFC and IndusInd Bank.

Only three counters managed to close in the green -- Sun Pharma, Tata Steel and ITC, spurring up to 1.53 per cent.

"A rise in the US 10-year bond yield and a strong dollar index influenced FILs to flee emerging markets. Fall in liquidity in the banking system, a weak currency and a current premium valuation have set the market outlook bearish for the near term.

"With aggressive monetary policy action by central banks, the global growth engines are in a slowdown mode, whereas India is currently in a better position with a pickup in credit growth and an uptick in tax collection. The current volatility might persist for a while. Investors are advised to wait and watch until the dust settles," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

'New Telecom Bill Likely To Be In Place In 6-10 Months'

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The new telecom bill, which will replace the 137-year-old Indian Telegraph Act, is expected to be in place in 6-10 months but the government is not in a hurry, communications minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Friday. The bill also seeks to replace the Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1933 and the Telegraph Wires (Unlawful Possession) Act, 1950.

"Based on the consultation process, we will create the final draft. That draft will then go through committee processes of Parliament. Then it has to go (to) Parliament. I see a timeline of 6-10 months but we are not in a hurry," Vaishnaw said when asked about a timeline for implementation of the final bill. The minister gave over 36 minutes of detailed presentation on the draft bill.

If the bill gets approved then over-the-top players like Whatsapp, Zoom and Google Duo which provide calling and messaging services may require licences to operate in the country. While the government has sought reference from the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India on licensing framework for internet and calling messages, the bill clearly shows the government intent to bring the OTT apps under the licensing regime.

"OTT already comes under regulation by interpretation of what is a telegraph. The consultation process for its regulation has already started. The focus of this bill is that we have to make a light touch regulatory environment. Wherever required there should be strict effective regulation and in rest of the places there will be light touch regulation," the minister said.

Muslim Scholars' Body Comes Out Against Recommendations For Changes In School Timing In Kerala

Press Trust of India

Thiruvananthapuram: As media reports surfaced that a government-appointed panel proposed changes in the existing school timings in Kerala, a prominent outfit of Muslim scholars in the state on Friday came out against the recommendations saying this would adversely impact the madrasa studies of the community children.

Samastha Kerala Jem-jiyathul Ulama, generally known as Samastha which is an association of Sunni scholars, expressed doubt whether the move was intended to discourage religious studies and said it was not acceptable at any cost.

A senior Samastha leader said though Communism is rooted on the atheistic ideology, the Left government in the state could not bring it as their policy and they can move ahead after accepting and taking everyone together.

"The change in the existing school timings will definitely affect the madrasa studies. Only a limited time, from 7 am to 8.30 am, is available for religious studies even now," the Samastha leader Abdussamad Pookkottur said.

"If the new time schedule is implemented, children won't get any time to devote to

madrassas. That's why the religious outfits are strongly opposing this move," Pookkottur said.

The sharp reaction came a day after the M A Khader committee on school education submitted its report to the state government reportedly with recommendations to change the school timings from 8 am to 1 pm.

Expressing doubt whether the changes were proposed by the people who wanted to "destroy the religious beliefs with an intention to promote the negation of religion", the Samastha leader said the scholars had already conveyed their concerns to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in this regard.

The top leaders of Samastha would formally request the government to reject the recommendations soon, he said.

"When the suggestion for change in school timing comes in front of the government as a recommendation by a panel, naturally there are chances for it to get accepted. That's why we are asking the government in advance to reject it," Pookkottur, also a top office-bearer of the Sunni Yuvajan Sangham (SYS), said.

The second part of the Khader committee report, which focuses on academic matters, was handed over to the government on Thursday.

If 'Jeep In Pangong Lake-Like' Behaviours Continue, Local Community Will Not Welcome Tourists: Tourism Secy



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Citing the shocking incidence of a group of travellers who had driven their car into the pristine Pangong Lake in Ladakh, Union Tourism Secretary Arvind Singh on Friday said unless sustainability and environment-sensitive behaviours are practised by visitors, local communities would "not welcome tourists in the future".

During a panel discussion on "Policy Recipe book for India @100" here, he also said that "green and sustainable tourism" is one of the priorities in the new National Tourism Policy being formulated, which is in the "final stages".

A few months ago, an undated video showing a group of tourists driving their car through the fragile waterbody in Leh had gone viral on the internet, drawing sharp reactions from netizens, many of whom had demanded action against them.

The lake, known for its almost crystal clear water, was popularised by the Bollywood film "3 Idiots". Parts of the movie were shot at the beautiful natural site. The lake, known for its almost crystal clear water, was popularised by the Bollywood film "3 Idiots".

The Union tourism secretary also spoke of 'revenge tourism' and how it led to rise in demand, as also on how tourists had rushed in large numbers to the hills during the last summer when the mercury in the plains had soared.

Revenge travel or revenge tourism refers to the phenomenon wherein people travel to break free from the mundane life in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns that ensued.

It also stems from circumstance that has been described by some as "lockdown fatigue" or exhaustion that follow due to it. Revenge travel or revenge tourism refers to the phenomenon wherein people travel to break free from the mundane life in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns that ensued.

"I do not see a problem as far as the speed and scale is

concerned... and policy tweaks will be required, like access to credit, and flow of credit will have to be facilitated, but what is important is the question of sustainability. The concept of carrying capacity in certain parts of the country is being ignored," Singh said in response to a question during the interaction.

"We saw it in the summers in the plain, everybody running to the hills. There were a lot of anecdotal stories about shortage of rooms, taxis and others things that happened," he said.

So, going ahead, the issue of carrying capacity, and the issue of our destinations becoming sustainable, not only in terms of policy-making, but also on part of the practitioners, the tourists and the local community is very important, the secretary said.

"Because, unless there is sustainability, the community is going to start to hate tourists who are coming. You have seen the example of somebody driving a jeep in the Pangong Lake. So, if you continue with this kind of behaviour, obviously the local community is not going to welcome tourists in the future," Singh cautioned and, added, "we are definitely set for growth (in the sector), but that has to be sustainable".

During the interactive session organised by the Public Affairs Forum of India (PAFI), the top official of the Ministry of Tourism also said that till recent times, the environment in Kashmir was "not very conducive, but I was there few weeks ago, and talking to people in the private sector, and they were all very positive".

A 500-room hotel by a leading hotel chain is coming up at Pehalgam in Jammu and Kashmir, and a leading hotel chain is opening a number of hotels in Jammu and Kashmir, he added.

The tourism sector in Jammu and Kashmir had taken a severe hit in 2019 and beyond due to changing political atmosphere in the erstwhile state, which was bifurcated into two Union territories Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh after abrogation of Article 370.

It was on August 5, 2019 when the Centre had ended the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and restrictions imposed in the region that had severely impacted tourism there.

Union minister G Kishan Reddy, on August 4, had said Jammu and Kashmir registered a "record footfall" of tourists at airports and sightseeing places in the last several months due to "transformative initiatives" of the Narendra Modi government such as the abrogation of Article 370.

The Union tourism secretary also spoke of investments happening on varying scales in the tourism sector in the northeast. "Also, two islands in Lakshwadeep have been awarded to a leading hotel group to develop resorts there, and certain investments are also coming in Diu," he added.

On the new National Tourism Policy, he said it envisions "what kind of tourism we want to give in the future and has five priority areas". "First, tourism should be green and sustainable. There should be more digital penetration, we rank low in this at present, and more skillings has to be there. MSME is also our priority area and the role of the private sector, as its our main investor," Singh said.

The Union tourism secretary also said that a group of secretaries are "working on presenting a vision for the future, within sectors, with targets for the next 25 years". Officials said the meeting for the tourism sector is expected to be held next week when it will be presented to the Council of Ministers. The last national tourism policy was formulated in 2002.

The last national tourism policy was formulated in 2002. The National Tourism Policy has been drafted with a holistic vision and strategy to revive India's tourism sector and targets to achieve USD 1 trillion by the sector in 2047, the tourism ministry had recently said.

Singh said, "In this period, we also wish to see number of arrivals of international tourists rise from 20 million (pre-Covid period in 2019) to 100 million in 2047."

Meet Political Leaders More Often From All Sides: Ex-Vice President Naidu To PM Modi

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: Former vice president M Venkaiah Naidu on Friday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should more often meet political leadership from all sides which may help clear some "misunderstandings" opposition parties might have about his methods.

Naidu, speaking at the launch of a book on the prime minister's speeches, lauded him for achievements across diverse sectors such as healthcare, foreign policy, technology, and asserted the world was now recognising the rise of India.

and more sections of the political leadership this side and that side," the former vice president said.

At the same time, Naidu said political parties should also keep an open mind and respect the mandate of the people.

"They must also be open-minded .. you all should also understand that you are rivals not enemies. All parties must respect each other, the institution of the prime minister, institution of the president, institution of the chief minister. All institutions should be respected that has to be kept in mind by one and all," Naidu said.



"India is now a force to reckon with, its voice is now heard across the world. In such a short span, it is not an ordinary thing. This is because of his actions, because of the guidance he is giving to the people and because of progress that India is making, Naidu said after releasing the book titled "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas Sabka Vishwas Prime Minister Narendra Modi Speaks (May 2019-May 2020)".

Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur and I&B Secretary Apurva Chandra were also present at the function.

Naidu said that despite the prime minister's achievements, some sections still have some reservations about his methods "because of some misunderstandings, maybe out of some political compulsions".

"Over a period of time these misunderstandings will also be cleared. The prime minister should also often meet more

Khan lauded the prime minister for enacting a law to ban the practice of triple talaq among Muslims.

He said even first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru had said his biggest regret was that he could not make laws to alleviate the problems faced by Muslim women.

"Nehru could not take the bold decision to deliver justice to Muslim women. Modi dared to do it. We will understand the importance of this decision only decades later, Khan said.

Thakur said the book, brought out by the Publications Division, focuses on 86 speeches of the prime minister on various subjects.

It is divided into 10 thematic areas Aatmanirbhar Bharat: Economy, People-First Governance, Fight Against COVID-19, Emerging India: Foreign Affairs, Jai Kisan, Tech India-New India, Green India-Resilient India-Clean India, Fit India-Efficient India, Eternal India-Modern India: Cultural Heritage, and Mann Ki Baat.

INDIA IS NOW A FORCE TO RECKON WITH, ITS VOICE IS NOW HEARD ACROSS THE WORLD. In such a short span, it is not an ordinary thing. This is because of his actions, because of the guidance he is giving to the people and because of progress that India is making,

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

J&K Wins Praise

to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers, and adolescents. The Abhiyaan is a multi-ministerial convergence mission with the vision to accelerate India's progress on malnutrition, in a time bound manner with fixed targets.

The report also says that J&K has been ranked fourth among Union Territories in terms of the overall implementation of the Poshan Abhiyan at the National level in 2020. The maximum score given is 100 and UT's score has settled over 70.

However, when it comes to Women and Child Development, J&K has scored only 7 points, lowest among UTs, in the statewide scores for programme activities and intervention coverage. Among UTs, the lowest Take-Home Ration (THR) coverage was also recorded in Jammu and Kashmir where only 49 percent pregnant women, 51 percent lactating women, and 54 percent children were covered under the scheme.

"It is imperative to examine the reasons for low coverage of THR and growth monitoring. States and UTs should assess whether the gaps in THR coverage pertain to supply chain issues or are a result of demand-side challenges. For growth monitoring, states should review if there are gaps in staff training on measuring children, availability of supplies or in community awareness to avail the service, and identify appropriate solutions," the report said.

The report, while citing pandemic woes, said when compared with the pre-pandemic period, the number of pregnant women who received four or more antenatal care check-ups

reduced in most States and UTs (30 out of 35 States/UTs) . "The coverage remained low in Goa, Manipur, Nagaland, Chandigarh, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir," said the report.

According to the analysis, the number of institutional deliveries conducted (including C-section) reduced in most States and UTs (32 out of 35 States/UTs) compared with the pre-pandemic period. "However, in June-September 2020, there was an improvement in 29 States and UTs, which experienced a reduction in the previous quarter. Among these, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Jammu and Kashmir were able to restore to the pre-pandemic level," the report noted.

The report also says that there are 6198 malnourished children in J&K. Besides that, only 65% percent of pregnant women were given 180-Iron & Folic Acid (IFA) tablets and only 3 percent of 5-9 years children were given weekly IFA tablets. However, as per report, 100 percent of lactating women were given 180 IFA Tablets in J&K.

Pertinently, at national level, with 98 percent, J&K was ranked second in the category of home visits to households with pregnant mothers to counsel on appropriate measures. But, the UT was ranked lowest in the category of children (0-59 months) reported with diarrhea cases and treated with ORS & Zinc, as only 29 percent of children had received the necessary care.

This is the fourth progress report on POSHAN Abhiyaan which assesses the progress of POSHAN Abhiyaan implementation, analyses the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on nutrition and health services and provides insights on service delivery restorations and

adaptations and other related needs across India.

The report presents key recommendations to deepen India's efforts to tackle malnutrition, especially in the context of COVID-19. Pertinently, the report also highlights five key lessons learned by the implementation of POSHAN Abhiyaan over the last three years, including following the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

Spurt In Beast

during day time only. "Provide sufficient light around your utilities outside your home so that animals do not feel safe in the vicinity. Do not create kitchen dumping around your houses as this invites stray dogs to the spot which in turn invite leopard movement. As dogs is delicacy for these carnivores," it adds.

The advisory further reads that the villagers must regularly remove all bushes or shrubs from the vicinity of houses in cooperative manner. "Such vegetation clearance wall increase visibility and help to keep the Leopard away from their houses."

It further suggests construction of "leopard proof" sheds for cattle, using wooden material or concrete structure. "It has been observed that whenever leopard is sighted, people make a lot of noise which can prove dangerous and as such the wild animal feels insecure and can cause damage," the advisory reads, adding "It is advisable not to make noise, while leopard is sighted."

Pakistan's 'Bloody

clarity on his thorn analogy, the police chief said that he was hinting

towards those elements promoting terrorism from Pakistani soil and playing into the hands of their agencies.

"There was a big money game involved. And due to this money game, youth were instigated for stone pelting, to take up arms. Such elements, whether they were from Jama'at or Hurriyat and were playing bloody game on the directions of Pakistan, have been cleared to a greater extent, hence no stone pelting," Singh said.

He added that stone pelting has ceased to exist, even in the downtown, where youth want to lead a peaceful life.

Speaking about the cycle race "Pedal for Peace" organised by police, the DGP said that such events encourage children to achieve their goals in different fields and play a very important role in guiding them to stay away from drugs & other paths of destruction.

He said the children and youth have suffered in education and growth in the past and with the large participation of them today it feels that the time has changed now. "Every pedal you do is changing the scenario of Jammu and Kashmir towards a new milestone of a more peaceful environment," Singh said, while addressing the cyclists, as per a police spokesperson.

"Whether in uniform or without uniform we are one family and our mission is one that is bright future for our children, safe and secure life for people of all ages," the DGP said.

Referring to the tourist influx this year, the spokesperson said that the DGP asserted that the beauty and the hospitality of Kashmir is the talk of the world again and he was hopeful that it would continue to be top priority of

the tourists in the coming time.

Singh further said that the cooperation and support Jammu and Kashmir Police is getting from the people will help further in consolidating the prevailing peace.

According to the spokesperson, Financial Commission (Additional Chief Secretary) Home Department R K Goyal said that the events of J&K Police always have a special charm and depict the vibrancy of the department.

Goyal, he said, congratulated DGP J&K, ADGP Armed and IGP Traffic for supervising and conducting the event in a befitting manner.

Earlier in his welcome address, the spokesperson said ADGP Armed SJM Gillani said that Jammu and Kashmir Armed Police is organising a number of sports events and that every passing year participation is increasing.

Using Drones

posted a drone video shot in a densely populated area of the city, highlighting the capabilities of the drone to maneuver in the air without being noticed.

Drone videos of anti-militancy operations have surfaced on the social media in the past, which have revealed the extent of support provided by the gadgetry in neutralising the ultras while reducing the security forces' casualties. (PTI)

Anxiety, Depression

symptoms were associated with age above 50 years and those who were employed in government set up. These findings are in contrast with other studies reporting a significant association of OCD with younger age.

‘Pedal For Peace’ Sees Huge Participation; Here’s The Winners’ List

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: J&K Police on Friday organised its ‘Pedal For Peace’ Cycle Race, which saw a massive participation of 2264 professional and non-professional cyclists.

Director General of Police J&K Dilbag Singh and Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary) Home Department J&K, R K Goyal graced the occasion at the Flag In presentation ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion the DGP expressed his gratitude to the senior officers of Police, Civil administration, people and above all the participants for making today's event a grand success and bigger as compared to its previous seasons.

Addressing cyclists the DGP said that every pedal you do is changing the scenario of Jammu and Kashmir towards a new milestone of a more peaceful environment.

R K Goyal speaking on the occasion said the events of J&K Po-

lice always have a special charm and depict the vibrancy of the department. He congratulated DGP J&K, ADGP Armed and IGP Traffic for supervising and conducting the event in a befitting manner.

Here's a list of all the winners: Senior Men above 17 years (ATB) Professional cyclists 1st prize was bagged by Suhaib Ul Mehraj of Srinagar Chest No.16 ₹50,000, 2nd by Zamin Hassan Mirza of Srinagar Chest No.01 ₹30,000, 3rd by Ameer Shafi of Srinagar Chest No.17 ₹25,000.

Winners among Senior Men above 17 years (MTB) cyclists 1st Dr. Akbar Khan of Budgam Chest No.227 ₹30,000, 2nd Adnan Bashir of Sopore Chest No.405 ₹25,000, 3rd Anish Dubey of Jammu Chest No.498 ₹20,000.

Winners among Girls above 14 years (MTB) cyclists 1st Priyanka of Haryana Chest No. 840 ₹30,000, 2nd Sara of Srinagar Chest No. 808 ₹25,000, 3rd Zoobiya Tariq of Srinagar Chest No. 833 ₹20,000.

Winners among Junior (Boys) U/17 years (MTB) cyclists 1st Jahangir Anger of Budgam Chest No. 728 ₹20,000, 2nd Mir Bahjat Nawaz of Lal Bazar Chest No. 665 ₹15,000, 3rd Parvez Ahmad of Budgam Chest No. 523 ₹10,000.

Winners among Sub Junior (Boys) U/14 years (MTB) cyclists 1st Arfat Bashir of Baramulla Chest No. 1011 ₹15,000, 2nd Ikhlak Hussain of Budgam Chest No. 1102 ₹10,000, 3rd Wasif Ahmad of Srinagar Chest No. 1178 ₹5,000.

Winners among Sub Junior (Girls) U/14 years (MTB) cyclists 1st Yummna Parvaiz of Sgr. Chest No. 1551 ₹15,000/-, 2nd Nabila Khan of Sgr. Chest No. 1587 ₹10,000/-, 3rd Nawreen Zahoor of Ganderbal Chest No. 1575 ₹5,000.

Winners among Veteran (Men) above 40 years (MTB) cyclists 1st Mohd Amin of Sgr. Chest No.1728 ₹5000, 2nd Dr. Sheikh Tariq of Lalbazar Sgr. Chest No.1710 ₹4,000, 3rd Shabir Ahmad of Sgr. Chest No.1726 ₹3,000.



Abid Bhat/KO

Kashmir Cyclothon Enters Day 2



Observer News Service

KULGAM/ANANTNAG: Cyclists who were flagged-off on Thursday from Royal Springs Golf Course by Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta for a 300 km long Kashmir Cyclothon passed through tourist destinations and villages including Tangmarg, Watoo, Manzagam, Nihama and Chawalgam reaching Kulgam Town on Friday in the morning after a night halt at famous tourist destination Aharbal.

On reaching District headquarter Kulgam, these cyclists were welcomed by the Officers from the District Administration and locals.

Later, these cyclists were seen-off by the Deputy Commissioner Kulgam Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat towards Vasaknag spring located in Waltengoo Kund from where they will continue the marathon with night halt at Kokernag

tonight.

All the Cyclist participants of Kashmir Cyclothon were encouraged by officials, locals, shopkeepers at specified stop overs.

The participants were facilitated by the District Administration Kulgam, Tourism and YS&S Departments during their cross-over via Kulgam district.

In Anantnag district, the Kashmir Cyclothon entered Qazigund before noon, and the enthusiastic cyclists visited the famous Verinag spring. From there they continued their journey to Kokernag where they will halt for the night.

The cyclists will continue from Kokernag today, Saturday, and go to Achabal to the famous Mughal Gardens from where they will cross Bijbehara and Sangam to enter Pulwama. At Kokernag, arrangements for the night stay of the cyclists have been made.

Spring Buds Organises Annual Sports Week

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Spring Buds Educational Institute (SBEI) organised an opening ceremony of Annual Sports Week under the motto "Say No To Drugs, Yes To Life".

The ceremony was inaugurated by Chairman SBEI at Om-pura, Budgam and saw a number

of sporting activities like Tug of War, Kho-Kho, Kabaddi, Volleyball, etc. The events were held to motivate the students towards sports activities.

Principal SBEI impressed upon the students to take part in games to maintain physical fitness and to keep away from social evils.

Dilip Tirkey Is New Hockey India President

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Former India captain Dilip Tirkey, who was the front-runner for the post of Hockey India president, was elected unopposed for the top job on Friday.

Hockey India elections were scheduled to be held on October 1 but the results were declared in advance as there were no contestants for any of the posts, paving the way for the incumbent candidates to be elected unopposed as per the federation's Constitution.

Tirkey was elected after Uttar Pradesh Hockey chief Rakesh

Katyal and Hockey Jharkhand's Bhola Nath Singh, who were in the fray for the president's post, withdrew their nominations on Friday.

Bhola Nath has been elected unopposed as secretary general. The International Hockey Federation (FIH) has approved Tirkey and his team's appointments.

In a letter, the FIH said that when the number of contesting candidates for any post is equal to or less than the number of posts, they shall be deemed to have been elected unopposed as per election by-laws on the Hockey India website.



THREE-YEAR-OLD NABI ARHAM KHAN races in J&K Police's 'Pedal For Peace' cycle race on Friday, September 23. Arham was the youngest participant in the race that saw over 2200 cyclists from varied categories compete. The participants were flagged off by ADGP Armed J&K SJM Gillani from Lalit Ghat, Police Golf Course, Srinagar.

KO Photo By Abid Bhat.

2nd T20I: India Beat Australia By 6 Wickets To Level Series 1-1

Press Trust of India

NAGPUR: Skipper Rohit Sharma blazed away to an unbeaten 46 as India registered a series-levelling six-wicket win over Australia in the second T20I here on Friday.

Chasing 91, Rohit scored 46 off 20 balls which included four boundaries and as many sixes to take India over the line with four balls to spare in the rain-affected game.

Earlier, wicketkeeper Matthew Wade scored an unbeaten 43 to power Australia to a challenging 90 for 5.

The match began two-and-a-half hours after its designated time due to a wet outfield and was reduced to an eight-over-a-side contest.

Axar Patel (2/13) bowled a fiery spell, snaring two wickets.

Skipper Aaron Finch, who scored a 15-ball 31, and Wade (43 off 20) were the top contributors for Australia.



tributors for Australia.

Brief Score:
Australia: 90 for 5 in 8 overs (Matthew Wade 43 not out,

Aaron Finch 31; Axar Patel 2/13) India: 92 for 4 in 7.2 overs (Rohit Sharma 46 not out; Adam Zampa 3/16).

Tennis Match Sees Protester Set Arm On Fire On Court

Agencies

A man ran on to the court in London's O2 Arena and set his arm on fire on Friday to protest the use of private jets in Britain, briefly halting the Laver Cup meeting between Stefanos Tsitsipas and Diego Schwartzman.

Security personnel acted quickly to drag the man off the court before play resumed following a quick check of the surface which was not damaged during the bizarre incident.

British media reported that the protester was a member of the End UK Private Jets group, which claims "carbon emissions in 2022 are genocide."



Tsitsipas went on to win the match 6-2 6-1 to give Team Europe a 2-0 lead over the Rest Of The World in the competition after Casper Ruud had earlier beaten Jack Sock 6-4 5-7 10-7.

Swiss great Roger Federer is due to take to the court later in the day for the final match of his career, with the 41-year-old partnering his great rival Rafa Nadal to face the American duo of Sock and Frances Tiafoe.

English FA Charges Ronaldo With Improper Conduct



Agencies

LONDON: Manchester United forward Cristiano Ronaldo has been charged with improper conduct by the Football Association (FA) for smashing a teenage fan's phone to the ground following a defeat at Everton last season.

Ronaldo, 37, apologised to the 14-year-old fan via social media after the incident, which took place after United's 1-0 defeat at Goodison Park in April.

"Cristiano Ronaldo has been charged with a breach of FA Rule E3 for an incident that took place after Manchester United FC's Premier League match

against Everton FC on Saturday 9 April 2022," the FA said in a statement.

"It is alleged that the forward's conduct after the final whistle was improper and/or violent."

United said they would support Ronaldo in his response to the charge.

Ronaldo was cautioned by the police in August regarding the incident.

Video footage appeared to show Ronaldo angrily slapping the phone out of the boy's hand as he walked down the tunnel.

The boy's mother said he had been left with a bruised hand and that his phone screen had been smashed.

New Twist In Paul Pogba Extortion Probe



Agencies

PARIS: A police investigation into allegations that France football star Paul Pogba was targeted by extortionists took a bizarre new twist Friday with the release by one of the suspects, his elder brother Mathias, of a long string of videos taking aim at the 2018 World Cup winner, his entourage and wealthy lifestyle.

More than 30 videos of Mathias Pogba reading face-to-camera from a statement many pages long were posted on Twitter.

It wasn't clear exactly when the videos were filmed. But it may have been before Mathias Pogba turned himself in for police questioning last week. He has reportedly been held in custody since.

His lawyer did not immediately respond to a series of questions by The Associated Press.

"If you are watching this video that will be because my brother Paul Pogba has found a way to silence me," Mathias Pogba claimed in the first of the series. "I record this video so that

whatever happens, everything is revealed."

The words "insurance video, held in a safe place" were written on top of many of the videos.

Mathias Pogba and four others were handed preliminary charges last Saturday and jailed in the extortion probe, French prosecutors have said.

In the latest series of recordings, Mathias Pogba accused his multi-millionaire brother of having abandoned members of their family, leaving them in poverty.

He also claimed that the midfielder mixed with criminals and he repeated claims that Paul Pogba employed a witch doctor. He did not bring any proof to substantiate his accusations.

The videos were also accompanied by a series of Twitter posts and a statement addressed to Paul Pogba. The first post in the long thread said it had been sent automatically by "my bot."

"That also means that I am no longer free," the message read. (AP)

Ukraine Returned Medical Students: Working On Court's Suggestions, Centre To Supreme Court

AGENCEIS

The Centre on Friday told the Supreme Court that they are working on the suggestions given by the court to assist medical students who have returned to India from Ukraine in view of the war with Russia.

The apex court had on September 16 suggested that the Centre assist these medical students by creating a web portal giving details of the foreign universities, where they could complete their courses as per the government's academic mobility programme.

The counsel appearing for the Centre told the top court on Friday that they have written to the secretaries of the ministries of external affairs as well as health on the issue.

"In terms of the last order, we have written to the secretaries of MEA (ministry of external affairs) as well as Health. Our instruction is that they are on it," the counsel told a bench of Justices Hemant Gupta and Sudhanshu Dhulia.

The counsel further said that in the last hearing, the apex court had indicated that a website can be made where information can be put so that there is clarity.

"We are on it," the lawyer said, adding, "It is taken up with utmost priority." The top court posted the matter for hearing on October 11.

When one of the advocates said that final-year medical students can be permitted to take online



education, the bench observed, "We are not saying anything. We will pass a comprehensive order".

At the outset, one of the advocates, appearing for some of the students, said several states have written to the Centre on the issue.

Arguing that around 13,000 medical students are affected, the lawyer said the Centre and the National Medical Commission should talk to these states.

On September 16, the apex court said there should be a transparent system and the web portal should specify complete details of the fees and the number

of seats available in alternative foreign universities from where these students could complete their courses.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, had sought time to get instruction from the government on the suggestions of the bench.

The top court was hearing a batch of petitions filed by students, who are undergraduate medical students of first to fourth-year batches in their respective foreign medical colleges/universities. These students are primarily seeking transfer to medical colleges in India in their

respective semesters.

The Centre, in its affidavit filed last week in the matter, had said they (students) cannot be accommodated in medical colleges here for lack of provisions under the law and till now, no permission has been given by the National Medical Commission (NMC) to transfer or accommodate any foreign medical students in any Indian medical institute/University.

It, however, had said that to aid and assist such returnee students who could not complete their MBBS courses in Ukraine, NMC in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs has issued

a public notice dated September 6, 2022 (academic mobility programme), indicating that NMC would accept completion of their remaining courses in other countries (with the approval of parent university/Institution in Ukraine).

The government had said that after such completion of their remaining courses, the certificate, of course, completion/degree is expected to be issued by the parent institutions in Ukraine.

It had added that in the public notice dated September 6, the phrase "global mobility" cannot be interpreted to mean accommodation of these students in Indian colleges/Universities, as the extant regulations in India do not permit migration of students from foreign universities to India.

The government had further said, "It is humbly submitted that in so far as such students are concerned, there are no such provisions either under the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 or the National Medical Commission Act, 2019 as well as the Regulations to accommodate or transfer medical students from any foreign medical institutes/colleges to Indian medical colleges".

The students have relied upon the report of the Lok Sabha committee on external affairs dated August 3, by which it had recommended to the ministry of health and family welfare to accommodate these students in Indian colleges/universities as a one-time measure.

After 2 Years, Bhutan Welcomes Tourists With Honey, Turmeric And SIM Cards



AGENCEIS

Twenty-three foreign visitors landed in Bhutan on Friday, the first to arrive as the Himalayan kingdom reopened its borders after more than two years following the COVID-19 pandemic, with officials looking to tourism to help revive the local economy.

Wedged between China and India, the country known for its natural beauty and ancient Buddhist culture, first opened to wealthy tourists in 1974. In March 2020 it shut its borders to visitors - a major source of income - after detecting its first case of COVID-19.

The constitutional monarchy of fewer than 800,000 people has reported just over 61,000 infections and only 21 deaths, but the \$3 billion economy contracted in the last two fiscal years, pushing more people into poverty.

"Tourism for us is more than just revenue," said Dorji Dhradhul, Director General of the Tourism Council of Bhutan (TCB), after receiving the first visitors at the country's only international

airport at Paro, near the capital city of Thimphu.

He said the tiny country was keen to be "very much a part of the whole world".

"We feel through tourism we can do that ... take advantage of their support and goodwill," he told Reuters from Bhutan, referring to tourism to help revive the local economy.

Each visitor who arrived aboard the first flight from Kathmandu in neighbouring Nepal was offered small packs of organic honey, tea, Bhutanese turmeric and a local SIM card all in a tote bag as a gift, the authorities said.

In July, Bhutan raised its Sustainable Development Fee to \$200 per visitor per night from the \$65 it had charged for three decades saying it was keen to welcome more tourists who could spend money.

Officials said the fees would be spent on projects like planting trees, upskilling tourism workers, maintaining hiking trails, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and electrifying transportation vehicles to offset tourists' carbon footprints.

Scientists Engineer Mosquitoes That Can't Spread Malaria

AGENCEIS

Scientists have genetically modified mosquitoes with the ability to slow the growth of malaria-causing parasites in their gut, an advance that can help prevent transmission of the disease to humans.

These engineered mosquitoes produce compounds which impede the growth of malaria-causing parasites, which are then unlikely to reach the mosquitoes' salivary glands and be passed on in a bite before the insects die.

Researchers from the Institute for Disease Modeling at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation developed a model which can assess the impact of such modifications if used in a variety of African settings.

They found that the modification in question could be effective even where transmission is high.

While the technique, described in a paper published in Science Advances journal, has been shown to dramatically reduce the possibility of malaria spread in a lab setting, if proven safe and effective in real-world settings, it could offer a powerful new tool to help eliminate malaria.

The disease is transmitted between people through a female mosquito after it bites someone infected with the malaria parasite. The parasite then develops into its next stage in the mosquito's gut and travels to its salivary glands, ready to infect the next person the mosquito bites.

However, only around 10 per cent of mosquitoes live long enough for the parasite to develop far enough to be infectious. The team aimed to lengthen the odds even further, by extending the time it takes for the parasite to develop in the gut.

Researchers from the Transmission:Zero team at Imperial College London, UK, genetically modified the main malaria-carrying species of mosquito in sub-Saharan Africa, Anopheles gambiae, such that the mosquito produces antimicrobial peptides in its guts, when it takes a blood meal.

These peptides impair the malarial parasite's development by interfering with the energy metabolism of the parasite and also, causing the mosquitoes to have a shorter lifespan and further hampering their ability to pass on the parasite.

Mumbai Man Gets Video Call Threatening Bomb Blast In Country; FIR Registered

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The Mumbai police have registered an offence against unidentified persons after a man in suburban Santacruz allegedly received a video call threatening about a bomb blast in the country, an official said on Friday.

Rafat Hussain, 55, allegedly received a video call on Tuesday from unidentified persons who claimed that they would be carrying out a bomb blast in the coun-

try, he said.

Hussain approached the Santacruz police station and lodged a complaint, he said.

An FIR under Sections 505 (statements conducing to public mischief) and 506 (2) (criminal intimidation) of the IPC was registered against unidentified persons, the official said.

The police were verifying the mobile number from which the man received the threat call, he said, adding that a probe is under way.

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