

GOVT'S INVESTMENT PUSH

J&K Pumped Rs 83 Cr Into Two Companies, Corporation: CAG

Zaid Bin Shabir

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Government's commitment to rejuvenate businesses in 'Naya Kashmir' through multiple efforts has proved a reality as the Union Territory administration invested Rs 83.27 crore in two companies and one corporation and had total investment of Rs 162.39 crore as on 31 March 2021.

These details were revealed by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report that was tabled in the month of August

and had pointed out numerous factors in the disbursement of Union Territory Finances.

"Eerstwhile State Government had cumulative investment of Rs 4,617.16 crore in 38 Companies (Rs 4,348.83 crore), three Statutory Corporations (Rs 374.39 crore), eight Co-operative Institutions/ Local Bodies (Rs 47.83 crore), two Rural Banks (Rs 45.82 crore) and two Joint Stock Companies (Rs 0.34 crore) ending 30 October 2019 which had not been divided between Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Union



Territory of Ladakh," it said. The report said that Rs 32.50 crore were granted to J&K State

Road Transport Corporation Limited which already had outstanding loans of Rs 406.73 crore.

"During the year ended 31 March 2021, the Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir disbursed Loans and Advances of Rs 61.64 crore and recovered loans and advances amounting to Rs 1.93 crore. Out of total loans of Rs 61.64 crore disbursed during 2020-21, a loan of Rs 32.50 crore was granted to J&K State Road Transport Corporation Limited which already had outstanding loans of Rs 406.73 crore," reads the data.

These facts were emerging from CAG's 2nd report of the year 2022 for J&K titled, 'Audit

Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on the Union Territory Finances for the year ended 31 March 2021, Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir'.

The report also found that during 2020-21, the balance under Reserve Funds of UT Jammu and Kashmir was Rs 771.13 crore. "There was also a cumulative aggregate balance in Reserve Funds at the end of 30 October 2019 amounting to Rs 2,806 crore which was yet to be bifurcated between the two Union Territories | More on PIO

India, China Agree To Hold Next Round Of Talks Soon



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: India and China agreed on Friday to hold the next round of military-level talks at an early date to resolve the remaining issues in eastern Ladakh and create conditions for the restoration of normalcy in the bilateral ties, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

It was the only decision taken at a meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on the India-China Border Affairs as there was no breakthrough to resolve the issues at the key friction points of Demchok and Depsang.

The MEA said the two sides agreed to continue discussions through diplomatic and military channels to resolve the remaining issues "at the earliest" so as to create conditions for the restoration of normalcy in the bilateral relations.

"To achieve the objective of resolution of remaining issues along the LAC in the Western Sector in accordance with the existing bilateral agreements and protocols, they agreed to hold the next (17th) round of the Senior Commanders meeting at an early date," the MEA said in a statement.

Though the two sides disengaged from Patrolling Point 15 (PP-15) last month, there has been no progress on resolving the standoff in the Demchok and Depsang regions.

The MEA said | More on PIO

EID-E-MILAD

Devout Throng Hazratbal Shrine On Friday Following

AGENCIES

Srinagar: For the first time in the last three years, tens of thousands of devotees from across Kashmir Valley converged at the revered Hazratbal shrine here on Friday following Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi, the day when Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was born.

The number swelled as the day progressed and a sea of devotees was seen at the shrine and its adjacent sprawling lawns along the banks of Dal Lake especially during Zuhr prayers.

It was the largest gathering at Hazratbal after the 2019 disruption after abrogation of Article 370 and subsequent year long

curbs followed by nearly two years of Covid-19 lockdown.

Devout, many of them women, could be seen in tears while having the glimpse of holy relic after every obligatory prayer.

The other shrines across the Valley also witnessed huge gatherings. The congregational prayers were held at many shrines including Khiam Siyahama Anantnag, Asarisharif Kalashpora, Jenab Salab Saura, Pimpura Shopian, Seer Hamadan, Kaba Marg Qaimoh and Aham Sharief Bandipora in north Kashmir where massive gathering of devotees was witnessed.

Meanwhile, authorities had made special | More on PIO



KO Photo | Abid Bhat



Devotees raise their hands in supplication as the unseen cleric of Hazratbal Shrine displays a relic believed to be from beard of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) on Friday following Eid-e-Milad. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Presence Of Brown Bears In Human Habitations Sparks Alarm

Agencies

Srinagar: The wildlife experts have raised alarm bells over common sightings of brown bears in the human habitations across Kashmir as according to them such happenings occur due to rapid urbanisation.

The spotting of critically endangered Himalayan brown bears in parts of Kashmir in the human habitations has delighted wildlife experts who say it indicates the rising population of the rare species. However, they blamed the rapid development and increased tourism activities in high altitudes for the presence of brown bears in

the human habitations.

The brown bear is the biggest animal in Kashmir and an adult weighs more than 2.5 quintals. It is found at an altitude of 2,000 to 2,500 metres mostly above the tree line. Its species are found across the world, but its Himalayan counterpart in the northern mountainous areas of India and Pakistan, is critically endangered.



Wildlife conservationists in Kashmir have noted increasing sightings and spread of the brown bear in the last two to three years in a few of its habitats including the hills of Sonamarg, Drass, Kupwara, Pahalgam, Pir-Panjal range and Gurez area | More on PIO

6 NUMEROUS BEARS STARTED RELYING ON TRASH AND FOOD WASTE generated by humans at campsites, hotels, and restaurants for sustenance."

"We Want Normal Relations With Pak, But...": Centre

Agencies

New Delhi: India on Friday said that it favoured normal relations with Pakistan provided the atmosphere should be conducive and free from terrorism.

During a weekly presser, Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said, "We want normal relations with Pakistan, is a statement that we have always said. But it has to be in an atmosphere that is conducive and free from terrorism. I think that part is pretty well-known. I really don't need to

get into details."

Commenting on a question about Minister of State for External Affairs Meenakshi Lekhi slamming Pakistan for speaking on the Kashmir issue at the CICA summit, Mr Bagchi said that her intervention has been made public and he won't make any further comment on that, as India has made its position clear on terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

Yesterday during the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) summit, MoS | More on PIO

Snake Spotted At HM Shah's Residence

Union Home Minister Amit Shah's residence on Thursday had a reptile visitor, a five-foot-long checkered keelback, commonly known as Asiatic water snake. Security personnel sighted the non-venomous snake near the guard room and informed Wildlife SOS, an NGO working for wildlife protection and conservation. A two-member team from the NGO rescued the distressed snake that had taken shelter between wooden panels. "On Thursday morning, security personnel were shocked to stumble upon a checkered keelback snake on the premises of the Union Home Minister Amit Shah's bungalow in New Delhi. On spotting the reptile near the guard room, they immediately

Six New Corona Cases In J&K

Jammu and Kashmir on Friday recorded 06 fresh Covid cases, taking the number of infected persons to 479241, while no fatality was reported due to the virus in the last 24 hours, officials said. Of the new cases, 00 were from the Jammu division and 06 from the Kashmir division of the union territory, Officials said. There are 44 active cases in the union territory while the number of recoveries so far has been 47412. 03 Covid-19 patients recovered today, 00 from Jammu division and 03 from Kashmir division, they said.

PDD Worker Electrocuted To Death

A Power Development Department (PDD) electricity worker died of electrocution in Khurbanji village of Rajouri district this afternoon, officials said. News agency GNS quoting officials reported that one Harjit Singh son of Jagat Ram, resident of Khurbanji received a high voltage jolt while repairing an electric wire in his native village. The individual, they said, was evacuated to a nearby hospital from where the doctors referred him to GMC Jammu where he was however declared as brought dead on arrival. A police official has in the meantime confirmed about the death of the individual in the incident. Pertinently the deceased said to be serving in the PDD | More on PIO

PDP Gen Secretary's Son Joins Azad

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) General Secretary, G.N Lone Hanjura's son, Advocate Muzaffar Nahi Lone has joined Democratic Azad Party (DAP). Advocate Muzaffar joined the party in Srinagar after holding deliberations with DAP chief Gulam Nabi Azad. Advocate Muzaffar said that the deliberations were already going on and yesterday he met Azad at a guest house in Srinagar and formally joined the party. "I have been associated with politics for a long time. I don't have any rift with PDP or my family, but ideological differences compelled me to join DAP as I believe that only Azad sahib has the capability to fill the present political vacuum in Jammu and Kashmir," he added. (KNO)

Man Arrested For Killing His Son

A man was arrested for allegedly murdering his 25-day-old son in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said. The accused, Mohd Suleiman, had allegedly thrown his son into a gorge in his Sapote-Ang village on Wednesday evening, causing his instant death, a police official said. He said police registered a murder case against the accused who was finally arrested on Thursday evening. "The questioning of the accused is going on," the official said. However, he said preliminary investigations suggest that the accused was planning to marry for the second time and was not happy with the birth of the child.

Truck Mows Down Traffic Policeman

A traffic policeman was crushed to death by a truck in a hit and run accident in Udhampur district of the Jammu region, reports said Friday. The policeman identified as Mohan Lal was manning Gamal Naka in the district on Thursday night when a truck ran over him, reports said. The injured policeman was removed to the hospital for treatment. However, the doctors there declared him dead. The driver, reports said, fled from the scene after crushing the policeman to death. | More on PIO

SHORT TAKES

Police Arrests Two Extortionists

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Friday said that it arrested two extortionists along with a toy pistol, dagger and other valuable items in Lal Bazaar area of Srinagar district.

In a statement, the police said that yesterday, information was received by Lalbazar police station from one complainant named Syed Abbas Hussain son Syed Showkat Hussain resident of Bagwanpora Lalbazar that during the interviewing night of 11/12 oct 2022, he was intercepted at Movi stop Lalbazar by two unknown persons boarding a Alto car and one of them was having a pistol/dagger and the unknown persons threatened the complainant and took him to Nalabai area and scammed with some cash and his valuable belongings. According to the police

spokesman, On the basis of this information case FIR no 64/2022 U/S 365, 392 IPC, 7/251A act was registered at police station Lalbazar and investigation was set into motion. For speedy investigation a special team under the supervision of SDPO Hazratbal Azhar Rashid, SHO Lal Bazaar was constituted. The police team with the help of technical and human sources were able to zero down both the accused involved in this extortion and finally both the accused namely Arsalan Manzoor Dar son of Manzoor Ahmad Dar resident of Awantabawan Soura and Basit Bashir Dar son of Bashir Ahmad Dar resident of Awantabawan Soura were arrested and from their possession one Pistol (seemingly dummy), dagger, mobile phone and other valuable items of victim were recovered, reads the statement.

DPS Declared 1st Among 'Best Schools Of Srinagar'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: DPS Srinagar has been awarded the 1st Rank in the category of Best Schools of Srinagar by Education World India School Ranking. The Education World India School Ranking Awards recognize holistic academic excellence that caters to a transformative educational experience. The award ceremony was held on October 11 at The Leela Ambience, Gurugram.

The school scored the most in all the distinct parameters for the award including environment-friendliness, blended learning excellence, design thinking, campus architecture and design, extraordinary leadership, and social impact. Ms. Syed Sumaira, Coordinator International Affairs, DPS Srinagar received the award on behalf of the school and said "It's an honor for DPS Srinagar to be conferred this prestigious award. Our pedagogy is in sync with the modern practices of the informational era, but rooted in the old world ethic of transforming behaviors towards an equitable and productive society."

Expressing her delight at the award Ms. Shafiq Afshan, Principal DPS Srinagar said, "The award is the recognition of years of hard work. It is indeed a proud occasion for the entire family of DPS Srinagar and it has been possible only because of the support of the entire staff and parents of the students." The Chairman Mr. Vijay Dhar said, "We are delighted but not surprised at the award. It validates our belief and motto that youth are the surest constituency to tackle to achieve excellence and realize the potential of the nation, guiding it to pinnacles of excellence. Diamond needs polishing by a skilled hand to realize its value, just as the raw capital of youth needs guidance to emerge as leaders. Congratulations to the entire school family who makes the motto possible"



KU's Herbarium Declared 3rd Largest In North-Western Himalayas



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Having 6,000 specimens present in it, the herbarium of Centre for Biodiversity and Taxonomy in the Department of Botany at Kashmir University has been declared as 3rd largest in North-western Himalayas by New York-based International Bureau for Plant Taxonomy and Nomenclature under the acronym KASH. Akhtar H Malik, Curator of the Herbarium, said, "KASH is acronym of our herbarium and this year, we have crossed the milestone of sixty thousand specimens, which have been collected by different scientists and botanists from last 60 years from far-off areas of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh." "It is plant heritage of both Union Territories and there are some herbarium specimens in the world, which

are more than 400-year-old and in our herbarium, there are some specimens, which have been collected by British botanists, which are more than one century old," he said. He said that any person, who is interested in the plant wealth of the area, can come to the herbarium and see these specimens. "There are around 1-2 thousand specimens, which are endangered and these specimens can prove a last resort for their restoration," Akhtar said. He said that this herbarium was started with just 500 specimens in 1975 and every year more and more specimens are added to it and this year they have reached to 60,000 specimens. He further said that in the coming five years, they are expecting to cross one lakh specimens. (KNO)



PEOPLE THROG STREET FOOD stalls outside Hazratbal Shrine on Friday following Eid-e-Milad. KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

Gang Of Women Thieves Busted, Three Held

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Friday said that it has busted a gang of women thieves by arresting three accused in Central Kashmir's Srinagar district. A police spokesman said, Police Station Saura received an application from Showkat Ahmed Misger S/o Late Mohd Amin R/o Ellahi bagh Buchpora Saura stating therein that he along with his wife were traveling from Rajbagh to Saura in a local bus. During the trip three unknown masked women were also traveling in the same bus. After deboarding the bus his wife found one gold bangle missing."

The spokesman said that upon this case FIR No 97/22 U/S 379 IPC was registered in Police Station Saura and investigation was taken up. During investigation three suspects namely Kulsoma r/o Noorbagh, Rubina r/o Narbal and Shanoo r/o Narbal were apprehended and put to questioning.

7500 Capsules Of Spasmo-Proxyvon Seized At Srinagar Airport

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: On receiving authentic inputs that anti-social elements responsible for drug menace in the valley are exploring alternate modes of supply, are now resorting to air lifting of such intoxicating drugs, a team of Drug Control Officers of Srinagar and Budgam constituted by the Deputy Drug Controller Kashmir, Nighat Jabeen conducted surprise raid at Airport cargo logistic space of the airport authority of Srinagar, Kashmir.

On the occasion, the team seized 7500 capsules of Spasmo-proxyvon with batch no's XX10160, WAA2015 and XX10172 manufactured by WAACKHARDT limited, plot no 87A, silver industrial estate Bhitnpora Nani Deman-396210 in presence of Manager of Airport Cargo logistic space.

The particulars of consignee and consigner mentioned on the consignment are Interio Healthcare Pvt Ltd, Navjeevan medicos, 50KRI, NO 139, Gali no. 04 New Sarie New Delhi & Bital Ahmad Bhat respectively.

Spasmo-proxyvon is a schedule H1 drug which has tramadol, a psychotropic substance as one of the ingredients. This drug has to be sold against the prescriptions of RMP for medicinal purposes.

The Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940 provides that the record of

sale of this drug has to be maintained by preserving the prescription for record and also maintain records of sale in the shape of cash memo & credit memo.

Of late, it has been observed that this drug among several other drugs like Alprazolam, clonazepam, tramadol, Ketamine, LSD etc are being used by adolescents for addiction purposes.

The above exercise was a coordinated effort with the support of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir and Police authorities. The consignment was being imported into the UT through mis-representation as the outer cover of the parcel mentioned that it contains nebulisers.

The master mind of the drug syndicate namely Bilal Ahmad Bhat R/O Shalpora Sopore is being questioned by the officers of Drug Control Organisation and an exercise to investigate the matter as per legal provisions is underway.

The department is in process of completing the procedure of relevant regulations and all such persons who have connived in the omission and breach shall be booked under law in due course of time.

State Drugs Controller J&K UT, Lotika Khajuria has appreciated the efforts of the enforcement staff and expressed that the department shall bring the matter to its logical end.

DIAL-EMMA

- TRAFFIC POLICE: 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092, 2455883
- POD: 0194-245023
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES: 2479488, 2452222, 2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS

SHIEKH UL ALAM AIRPORT: 019 42303311 ✈

RAILWAYS

- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BUBHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)

Mughal Road - (Open)

Srinagar-Leh - (Open)

PRAYERS

FAJR	5:10
ZUHR	12:18
ASR	4:23
Magrib	6:06
ISHA	7:25

HIJRI CALENDAR

18 - Rabi-ul-Awwal
1444

This Day In History

- 533 - Byzantine General Belisarius makes his formal entry into Carthage, having conquered it from the Vandals
- 1522 - Emperor Karel I names Hernán Cortés governor of Mexico
- 1552 - Khanate of Kazan is conquered by troops of Ivan Grozny.
- 1756 - Saxon army surrenders to Prussia
- 1815 - Napoleon Bonaparte arrives on island of St Helena to begin his exile
- 1842 - Karl Marx becomes editor-in-chief of Rheinische Zeitung
- 1888 - German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche decides to write his autobiography "Ecce Homo" on his 44th birthday
- 1904 - The Russians are driven back by the Japanese in the Battle of Shaho; both sides suffer high casualties: Japanese (16,000) and Russians
- 1914 - Battle of Warsaw, begins (ends Oct 21)
- 1924 - US President Calvin Coolidge declares Statue of Liberty a national monument
- 1932 - Tata Airlines (later to become Air India) makes its first flight.
- 1940 - Heavy German air raid on London, 400 killed
- 1941 - Hideki Tojo appointed Prime Minister of Imperial Japan
- 1946 St Louis Cards beat Boston Red Sox, 4 to 3 in 43rd World Series
- 1948 - China's Red army occupies Chinchow
- 1949 - Administration of territory of Manipur taken over by Indian government
- 1949 - Tripura accedes to Indian union
- 1951 - First synthesis of an oral contraceptive (norethindrone) made by Luis E. Miramontes under direction of Carl Djerassi and George Rosenkrantz at Mexican drug company Syntex
- 1958 - Tunisia drops diplomatic relations with Egypt

From KO Archives

Matric Exams Postponed; Teachers Threaten To Sabotage Govt Move

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (KBSE), this evening announced its decision to postpone the examinations of 10th class soon after the day long negotiations failed to resolve the crisis raised by the teachers boycott of the examinations duty.

The Board authorities while announcing the decision to postpone the examinations said that the fresh date sheet would be issued next week.

Earlier representatives of the Teachers Forum and Lecturers Association held negotiations with the Government to resolve the crisis. The Government was represented by the Commissioner Secretary Education and the Director Education besides Minister of State of Education, Muhammad Sharif Tariq.

Sources said that teachers remained adamant as they demanded that Government should accept all their demands in black and white before they would call off their strike. The Government today showed willingness to resolve the crisis by assuring teachers that their genuine demands will be fulfilled at the earliest. But sources said, the teachers remained adamant saying that their past experience had been bitter. The promises made with them in the past had been hollow as Government backed down from its decision, the teachers representative reportedly told the Government during the meeting.

The representatives of the Government, told the teachers that the decision involving financial implications has to be taken by the Cabinet as nobody from the Government has authority to pass such orders. The Minister of Education, Muhammad Sharif Tariq, earlier in the day appealed the teachers to defer their strike upto October 26 so that the teacher's demands would be decided in the cabinet.

The Government later passed an order asking the Chairman of the State Board of School Education to conduct the examination immediately. The Chairman of the BOSE, Prof Al Muhammad Chauhan told Observer News Service that the examinations would commence from October 10 as they have to re-employ from other departments.

The Chairman said that the Board needs 4405 employees to conduct the exams. The staffers to be taken from the department of Revenue, Agriculture, Engineering, said the Chairman. As the conduct of the examinations is a technical job the results have to be prepared the necessary training, he said. The new staff will be given training in the district head-quarters on October 17, 18 and 19 and the examination would start from October 20, Chairman added. Meanwhile a statement issued by the Joint Co-ordination Committee of Teachers Forum has advised the state government to shun the rigid attitude and issue orders for the implementation of demands put forth by teachers forum so that precious time of the students is not wasted.

The statement said that the government is pursuing a policy of delaying tactics and is trying to fulfill some demands of the Forum. But this time teachers community will not compromise on any of its demands, the statement added.

Statement condemned the rigid attitude of government and made it clear that Teachers Forum will boycott the house examinations of 8th and 10th class as well. If the Government goes ahead with the examination process all the schools in the valley will be locked, said the statement, justified the boycott of teachers and appealed the parents and students' understanding the strike issue.

Statement appealed all trade unions to support the Teachers demands.

(Kashmir Observer, October 15, 1998)

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Unipolar World Order Not Acceptable: Khamenei



Agencies

Tehran: Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei Friday said the unipolar world order in which one or two states impose their will on other countries is no longer accepted. "The political map of the world is changing," Ayatollah Khamenei told Iranian officials and guests of World Muslim Unity Conference in Tehran on Friday.

"The issue of being in a unipolar world where 'one or two countries forcing other states and nations has lost its legitimacy,'" he said, adding, "Nations have been awakened. The unipolar world order is no longer accepted and is gradually losing its legitimacy."

In a unipolar system, he maintained, arrogant powers such as the US, would design their own schemes and dictate them to other countries such as Iraq, Syria, Iran, or Lebanon. "The people of the world are awakening to the truth of those powers and are opposed to one or two states bullying others

into obedience," he said. Ayatollah also said Islamic unity means being united in safeguarding the interests of the Islamic Ummah across the world.

"Unity means being united in protecting the interests of the Islamic Ummah (community)," he said.

It also does not mean geographical unity, he maintained, as some Arab countries tried to get united in the 1960s and 1970s. "This is impossible."

"We should first detect the interests of the Muslim Ummah. Then, nations should come to an agreement on that and see what the Ummah needs at the time; they should seek to whom they should be foes, [and] with whom friends, and how they should engage in friendship."

Unity means implementing "joint actions against the plots of the Arrogance," he added. The annual conference marks Islamic Unity Week which coincides with the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh).

Australia: Indian Student Pursuing PhD Stabbed To Death

Agencies

New Delhi: Indian authorities are in close touch with local authorities in Australia and with the family of the student who was stabbed multiple times in Sydney and have requested expediting travel documents and visa for his family members to travel to Australia.

"We've knowledge of the incident. As per our information, he's in hospital and under treatment. Our High Commission in Canberra and Consulate in Sydney are in close touch with local authorities. We're in contact with the family," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said during a weekly media briefing here today. Bagchi said that some of officials from India had met the injured student in the hospital in Sydney and "we have extended our consular services."

"We have also come to know that a suspect was taken into custody. Australian authorities will give you more details on the investigation. Our expectation is that it's seen seriously and action taken against the perpetrators," the spokesperson said.

The 28-year-old student, Shubham Garg who hails from Agra and is pursuing his doctorate in Mechanical Engineering from the University of NSW, was reportedly stabbed multiple times in Sydney's Artamon by 27-year-old Daniel Norwood, who according to local media reports has been

arrested and is in the custody of the Australian Police.

The Indian mission in Australia is providing consular assistance to Garg, who is in "serious but stable" condition after undergoing surgery at a local hospital.

"The Indian Consulate in Sydney has provided consular assistance to the individual," the Australian High Commission in New Delhi said adding that it is assisting with the facilitation of visa for a family member of the injured student.

The accused Daniel Norwood was arrested and taken to Chatswood Police Station where he was charged with one count of attempted murder, reported local media outlet The Australia Today. Quoting local media reports the outlet said that the incident occurred around 10.30 pm on October 6, when Garg was walking along the Pacific Highway on his way back to his residence.

Garg suffered multiple stabbing injuries on his face, chest and abdomen. A nearby resident took Garg to Royal North Shore Hospital where he underwent surgery. Garg remains in a "serious but stable condition," as per the media report.

Following the incident, the North Shore Police Area Command detectives formed Strike Force Prosy to investigate the incident. Later, a search warrant was executed on a home on the Pacific Highway at Greenwich at about 3.40 pm on October 9.

GYANVAPI CASE

Varanasi Court Rejects Plea For Carbon Dating Of 'Shivling'



Agencies

VARANASI: A Varanasi court on Friday rejected a plea for carbon dating of the 'shivling' claimed to have been found inside Gyanvapi mosque premises, government counsel Rana Sanjay Singh said. District Judge AK Vishvesha turned down the Hindu petition-

ers' plea seeking scientific investigation and carbon dating of the 'shivling', citing Supreme Court directives for its sale keeping so that no tampering can be done.

After completion of hearing of the Hindu side and the mosque committee on Tuesday, the district court had decided to pronounce its verdict on October 14.

Four of the five Hindu parties had sought carbon dating of the 'shivling' found during a court-mandated videography survey of the mosque premises close to the 'wazokhna', a small reservoir used by Muslim devotees to perform ritual ablutions before offering the namaz. The mosque committee had opposed the demand for carbon dating.

Pakistan Not Mentioned In US National Security Strategy 2022



Agencies

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, once considered the key allies of Washington, are not even mentioned in the US National Security Strategy 2022, which identifies China as "America's most consequential geopolitical challenge."

The 48-page document does mention terrorism and other geo-strategic threats in the South and Central Asian region, but unlike the recent past, it does not name Pakistan as an ally needed to tackle those threats, Dawn news reported.

Pakistan was also absent from the 2021 strategy paper.

In Washington, the omission is seen as reflecting a mutual desire to build a separate US relationship with Pakistan. Islamabad has long complained that the US views Pakistan only as a tool to counter threats from Afghanistan and

other nations, Dawn reported.

In recent statements, both the US and Pakistani officials emphasised the need to de-link Pakistan from both Afghanistan and India and give it the separate identity it deserves as a nuclear state of more than 220 million people.

The US officials have also acknowledged Pakistan's desire to maintain its close ties with China and that's why it's not seen as an ally in the US strategy to counter China's influence in the region, Dawn reported.

Russia is mentioned as the second major threat to US global interests after China and is condemned for unleashing a "brutal and unprovoked war" on Ukraine.

Russia and China are the only two nations that have their own chapters in the document.

The two-fold strategy underlines pandemics, climate change, inflation, and economic insecurity, as big a threat to US in-

terests as growing competition with major powers like China and Russia.

"If we lose the time this decade, we will not be able to keep pace with most notably the climate crisis," the document warns.

Saudi Arabia's absence from the document followed the kingdom-led oil cartel's decision to slash production by two million barrels a day, causing an increase in the already-high gas prices in the US, Dawn reported.

"We are re-evaluating the relationship with Saudi Arabia, and this is a relationship that has existed over decades," US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters in Washington when asked to explain the absence.

President Joe Biden was "doing so with the purpose of looking out for US interests and values as we think about the future of the US-Saudi relationship", Sullivan added.

One Year After Elections, Iraqi Lawmakers Name New President And PM

Agencies

Late on 13 October, the Iraqi parliament named Kurdish politician Abdulrahman Rashid as President of the Republic of Iraq, putting an end to 12 months of political deadlock and street chaos since last October's ballots.

Following his election, Rashid immediately named the Coordination Framework (CF) nominee, Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, as Prime Minister. The CF is an ad-hoc group of Shia parties that came together earlier this year to confront the former's biggest bloc in parliament: the Sadrist Movement, led by influential cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

Sudani's nomination to the pre-

an initiative by the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), Masoud Barzani, to withdraw the candidacy of Rebar Ahmed and support Rashid.

Rashid received 162 votes, while his opponent, former president Barham Salih, received 99 votes. The position of president in Iraq is largely ceremonial and has been traditionally held by a Kurd.

Sudani, meanwhile, said in a tweet after being named prime minister: "I promise the Iraqi people that I will meet their expectations by presenting the cabinet formation as soon as possible, and that it will be a strong government capable of building the country, serving citizens, maintaining security and stability, and building



the post by the CF in late July led Sadrists to take over parliament and the federal supreme court, a situation that devolved into violent clashes and Sadr's ninth lifetime retirement from political life.

Thursday's successful parliamentary session came just hours after nine rockets landed around Baghdad's Green Zone district, leaving at least 10 injured.

British-educated Rashid, 78, was the Iraqi minister of water resources from 2003-2010. He rose to prominence among the 40 candidates for president thanks to

balanced international relations."

Sudani has 30 days to form a cabinet and present it to parliament for approval.

Despite a commanding victory at the polls last October, for over eight months the Sadrist Movement failed to form a "majority government" with their Kurdish and Sunni allies, eventually forfeiting all of their seats in parliament.

Since then, Sadrists had been fueling unrest and violence on the streets, demanding the dissolution of parliament and yet another round of anticipated elections.

3 Sikh Recruits Appeal To Wear Turbans, Beards In US Marine Corps: Report

Agencies

Washington: Three prospective Sikh Marine recruits have made an emergency appeal in the US federal court that they are allowed to attend the basic training of the elite forces without having to remove their religiously mandated uncut hair, beards, and turbans, according to media reports.

Judges at the District of Columbia's Court of Appeals heard arguments by the trio of recruits — Aakash Singh, Jaspreet Singh, and Milaap Singh Chahal on Tuesday who is in a lawsuit against Marine Corps Commandant David H Berger.

They appealed to the US Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit in September after a lower-court judge denied their request for a preliminary injunction that would have allowed the men to enter Marine Corps Basic Training with their articles of faith, the Marines Times reported.

The Marines have said that the enforcement of the Corps' rules is necessary to maintain uniformity for the national interest.

Brian Springer, a Justice Department lawyer representing the Marine Corps, said the "country's chief expeditionary force" has the right to insist on greater uniformity among recruits during basic training.

Countering the statement, Judge Patricia Millett, said that the argument "makes no sense, because nobody during boot camp is going out as an expeditionary force." In the Sikh religion, it is mandatory for the male adherents to not trim their hair and beard along with keeping kanga (wooden comb), kirpan (small sword), kara (steel bracelet), and a white cotton undergarment (kachera).

The Marine Corps has fought against the recruits' wishes saying that it is imperative that everyone at boot camp go through a similar experience and have one identity.

The Plaintiffs are seeking extraordinary relief and the alteration of long-standing Marine Corps training policies," Brian Springer, an attorney for the federal government was quoted as saying by Military.com.

"It is perverse to claim that respecting the individual desires of Marines to have full-body tattoos ... is consistent with the Marine Corps' image, but that respecting (the four Sikhs) desires to be faithful to God is somehow antithetical to the idea of cohesiveness and uniformity within the service," read the original complaint filed in April, which included a fourth recruit who is no longer attached to the case, the report said.

NEWS MAKERS

Sex, Money, Betrayal: Odisha Blackmailer's 'Rags-To-Riches' Story

Agencies

Bhubaneswar: Hailing from a poor family in Kalahandi district, once dubbed as the hunger zone of Odisha, Archana Nag now owns a palatial house with imported interior decorations, luxury cars, four high-breed dogs and a white horse.

The rags to riches story of Archana, who was arrested last week on the charge of extortion, was so intriguing that an Odia filmmaker has planned to make a movie on her life.

In the police records, however, the 26-year-old woman is a blackmailer who allegedly extorted money from rich and influential people such as politicians, businessmen and film producers with threats of making public photos and videos of their intimate moments.

Born in Lanjigarh in Kalahandi,



Archana was brought up in Kesinga, a nondescript town in the same district, where her mother was working, before she came to Bhubaneswar in 2015.

Police sources said that Archana initially worked for a private security

firm and later joined a beauty parlour where she met Jagabandhu Chand of Balasore district and married him in 2018. It is alleged that she ran a sex racket while working in the beauty parlour.

Jagabandhu operated a used car showroom and knew moneyed people like politicians, builders, businessmen and others. His and Archana's photographs with influential persons including some MLAs have gone viral on social media creating a statewide hue and cry.

Archana also befriended rich and influential people and is alleged to have provided them with company of women. Police claimed that she then took intimate pictures of these powerful persons and later blackmailed them for money.

In a complaint made at Nayapally police station, a film producer alleged that Archana demanded

3 crore from him after showing him his photos with other girls. She was arrested on October 6 on the basis of another complaint by a girl who accused Archana of using her in this racket.

Ex DU Prof Cleared of Maoist Links

Agencies

Nagpur: The Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court on Friday acquitted former Delhi University professor G N Sababa in an alleged Maoist links case, and ordered his immediate release from jail.

A division bench of Justice Rohit Deo and Anil Pansare allowed the appeal filed by GN Sababa challenging a 2017 order of the trial court convicting him and sentencing him to life imprisonment.

GN Sababa, who is wheelchair-bound due to a physical disability, is currently lodged at the Nagpur central prison.

The bench also allowed the appeal of five other convicts in the case and acquitted them. One of the five died pending hearing of the appeal.



The bench directed for the convicts to be released forthwith

from jail unless they are accused in any other case.

No Action Against Senior Bureaucrats Involved In Corruption: Mufti

Press Trust Of India

"So much corruption is going on in J&K by senior babus, but there is no accountability. The recruitments of SIS or FAA or in Jal Board had to be cancelled because there was corruption. No one was punished, but these low-rank officials have been fired without any investigation or courts. No one thinks about their families. This is wrong, injustice is going on here," she alleged.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief, while referring to the administration's decision of allowing sale of beer at departmental stores, said her party will not allow it.

"The unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir is the highest in the country. They cannot provide employment to the youth, and if recruitment takes place, there is so much corruption that the process has to scrapped later. But, now, they want to hand alcohol bottles to the youth. They want to sell alcohol in general stores so that God forbid, our kids become addicts. This is totally wrong and this is an injustice," she said.

Replacement Of Fossil Fuel With Renewable Energy Needs Perpetual Investment: US Expert

Press Trust Of India

Kong discussed exploring synergies between biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

Dr Viyendral Pal Singh said there is a need to have a fresh look at the research, teaching and extension protocol and develop new ones to suit the current needs. He also said a global bio-energy research support facility needs to be established.

Dr Swayambhu Man Amatya from Nepal said South Asian countries should take a lead role in identifying carbon neutral agro-forestry practices and implement them as appropriate.

He also said international commitment needs to be fulfilled in case of agro-forestry programmes.

Dr Pratap Singh Birlhal, Dr Purnima Menon and Dr Shannon Olsson, speaking during the third keynote session, said nutritional security should be the top most priority of every nation.

Dr Menon said millets can play a vital role in addressing malnutrition problems but it should be done along with cereals and not in isolation.

Prof Martin Qaim from University of Bonn, Germany deliberated on actual and potential effects of genetically modified crops.

Add Economic Advisor Dr. Ashwani Visits PIB, CBC Jammu

Reviews Progress Of 'Swachhta Campaign 2.0'

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Additional Economic Advisor, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Dr. Ashwani Friday visited Press Information Bureau, Jammu and Central Bureau of Communication, Jammu to review the progress of 'Swachhta Campaign 2.0'.

During his visit, Dr. Ashwani identified various items those are to be condemned and auc-

tioned so as to free up extra space in the premises under the campaign.

He also inspected the premises of Radio Colony and identified areas that will be cleaned under Swachhta 2.0. Joint Director CBC, Chulha Abbas and Assistant Director, PIB Jammu, Ayushi Puri welcomed Dr. Ashwani on his visit to PIB, CBC Jammu who was accompanied by DGP AIR and Doordarshan, J. Ravikantha.

Army Inducts High Mobility Troop Carrier For Ladakh Ops



Agencies

NEW DELHI: The Fire and Fury Corps of the Indian Army on Friday inducted indigenous high mobility troop carrier and 4x4 Quick Reaction Force Vehicles for operations in the Ladakh sector, Army officials confirmed.

According to the officials, these vehicles have been made in India by private sector firms.

The Northern Command tweeted, "Northern Command inducts 4x4 Quick Reaction Force Vehicles, an indigenous initiative by Bharat Forge Limited; an all-terrain high mobility combat troop carrier with Armour and Mine Protection. #ArmanirbharBharat #MadeInIndia @adgpi." Northern Command-Indian Army had tweeted.

Union Minister Takes Stock Of Healthcare Facilities In Reasi

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: As part of a public outreach programme, Union Minister of state for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar on Friday took stock of healthcare facilities in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Pawar said the government is committed to develop Jammu and Kashmir and numerous innovative steps are being initiated in this regard which are yielding tangible results.

Bharati inspected district hospital Reasi and stressed on institutional deliveries and Ayushman Bharat Health Scheme benefits for the common masses.

During the inspection, Director Health, Saleem-ul-Rehman gave a detailed powerpoint presentation of various facilities available at district hospital and other

health institutions of the district, an official spokesman said.

He said the minister was briefed about the health indicators, details of the OPDs, IPDs, status of the major operations conducted, details of the benefits provided under Ayushman Bharat and status of oxygen generation plants in the district.

The minister also inspected the blood bank, new emergency room, ICU, CT Scan, Dialysis Centre and Audiology Room and interacted with staff members and patients, the spokesman said.

After the inspection, the minister also inaugurated an exhibition of the General Zorwar Singh Memorial Trust at the district auditorium complex.

The Minister also inspected various stalls setup by different departments related to the schemes and services provided by the departments.

The Minister later distributed small commercial vehicles under Mumin Scheme, a tractor, some agricultural implements and tricycles were also distributed to the specially abled persons, the spokesman said.

The Minister also interacted with the beneficiaries of different schemes and emphasized upon the officers to make sincere and dedicated efforts towards taking the benefits of all government schemes to the targeted sections of the society.

Later on, Bharati Pawar interacted with the District Development Council and took a review meeting with the officers of various departments of Reasi district, the spokesman said.

Vaccinate Children Against HPV To Prevent Cancers: DAK Urges Parents

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: With the approval of India's first indigenous developed Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Friday urged parents to get their children vaccinated against HPV to prevent several types of cancers.

"We have an amazing opportunity to prevent certain types of cancers in future generations through HPV vaccination," said DAK President Dr Nisar ul Hassan.

"According to a Swedish study, HPV vaccine was found to prevent 90 percent of cervical cancers," he said.

Dr Hassan said since the introduction of HPV vaccine, countries like US, UK and Australia have significantly reduced cases of cervical cancer.

"However, it remains the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in low and middle income countries," he said.

According to WHO, India accounts for about a 5TH of global burden for cervical cancer, witnessing 123,000 cases and around 6,700 deaths every year.

The DAK President said about 70 to 80 percent of oropharyngeal cancers, which mostly occur in men, are linked to HPV infection.

In a study published in "JAMA Oncology", it was found that people who were detected to have oral HPV had a sevenfold increase in the risk of subsequent head and neck cancers.

"Use of HPV vaccine would prevent a lot of these cancers and save lives," he said.

Dr Nisar said both boys and girls from the age of 9-14 years of age should receive HPV vaccine.

For adults who have not been vaccinated, they can still be given the vaccine up until age 26.

"Till now, we were depending on two foreign HPV vaccines, which cost about 3,000 per dose. Now the indigenous vaccine will be available at an affordable price of Rs 200-400 per dose," he said.

General Secretary DAK Dr Arshad Ail said WHO recommends that routine HPV vaccination should be included in national immunization programmes.

"Despite recommendations, HPV vaccine is not offered to children putting them at risk of preventable cancers," he said.

"There is an urgent necessity to educate people and make health-care providers aware about the importance of vaccine," he added.

Pakistani Drone Shot Down Along Border In Punjab

Agencies

GURDASPUR: Border Security Force (BSF) troops shot down a drone that entered India in Punjab's Gurdaspur sector from the Pakistan side on the International Border in the early hours of Friday.

A senior BSF officer said that the drone was spotted at 4.35 am by BSF troops on patrolling duty. They immediately opened fire and it was shot down.

According to the BSF official, a massive search operation has been launched in the area to determine whether the drone has dropped any consignment in the area.

A search operation is underway under the supervision of BSF DIG. It is suspected that the drone was carrying a consignment from Pakistan.

"Brave jawans of BSF spotted a drone coming from Pakistan side. As soon as it entered India, jawans fired 17 rounds of bullets at it. One of the blades of the drone was damaged. The entire drone was searched. The drone will be analysed," said BSF DIG, Gurdaspur, Prabhakar Joshi.

Pertinent to mention, in the past nine months, security forces have observed the illegal entry of 191 drones into Indian territory from neighbouring Pakistan, raising major concerns in terms of internal security in the country.

The central government recently shared the input from the security forces deployed at the India-Pakistan border to maintain such illegal attempts from the Pakistan side.

Of the 191 drones observed, 171 entered into Indian territory through the India-Pakistan border along the Punjab sector while 20 were seen in the Jammu sector, a document accessed by the ANI mentions.

As per the document, the "UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) observation in Indo-Pak border was seen in Punjab and Jammu frontier with effect from January 1, 2022, to September 30, 2022".

The documents further reveal that most of these drones or UAVs managed to flee while a total of seven have been shot down by the Border Security Force (BSF) personnel, who are deployed along the India-Pakistan border to keep a tab on such illegal activities being orchestrated by Pakistan's Inter-



Services Intelligence.

Among seven drones shot down this year between January to September 15 were observed in Punjab's Amritsar, Ferozpur and Ahalgar regions.

Officials in the BSF told ANI that drones are being used by Pakistan's side to transport weapons, explosives and narcotics across the international border in Jammu and Punjab from Pakistan.

The increased drone activity across the border was brought to the notice of Home Minister Amit Shah in the security review meeting in Srinagar recently with top security and intelligence chiefs in attendance. White BSF, which monitors the international border with Pakistan in the Jammu sector, believes that it has been able to repel drones carrying arms, ammunition and explosives from Pakistan, the state police and the intelligence agencies differ with this assessment.

The security forces have seized various AK series assault rifles, pistols, MP4 carbines, carbine magazines, high explosive grenades as well as narcotics which were transported into Indian territory from Pakistan from the drones shot down so far.

As per security agencies, BSF intelligence and Jammu and Kashmir Police officials, the drones are also used to drop packets of Afghan heroin for financing terror operations in the Valley and Punjab.

It is learnt that the group behind the transportation of weapons, explosives and drugs was seen in Punjab and Jammu frontier with effect from January 1, 2022, to September 30, 2022".

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People's Unity Crucial For Building India: Dr Farooq

Observer News Service

MUMBAI: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President and Member of Parliament from Srinagar Dr. Farooq Abdullah asked people to stand up against the divisive forces that are trying to weaken the country from within.

This, he said while addressing an event to celebrate the 75th birthday of National Congress Party (NCP) leader Chagan Bhujang in Mumbai. The event was also attended by former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, NCP Supremo Sharad Pawar and party leaders from Janata Dal (United) and DMK, an NCP spokesperson said.

Stressing on working towards ensuring unity in the country, Dr Farooq said, "Our country is diverse, there is diversity of faiths, cultures and climates. What unites us is our faith. Religion doesn't divide people, it unites. We all together can build India by living with camaraderie," he said.

There are no external threats to the country, there are divisive forces within the country that are weakening it, he said adding, "We should stop seeing ourselves as Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs. I'm an Indian Muslim. From Kashmir to Kanyakumari, we have to unite this country, and that can only be achieved by living in friendship."

Meanwhile, the NCP patron drove to Asat-e-Sharief Dargh Hazratbali, after he returned to Srinagar from Maharashtra earlier in the noon.

"He offered Congregational prayers at the revered shrine and prayed for lasting peace and prosperity in B&K, and the rest of the country. He also had a glimpse of Mof-e-Mukadas Sharief," the party spokesperson added.

RATLE HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER PROJECT

ADC Kishtwar Holds Coordination Meet, Inspects Progress Of Work

Observer News Service

KISHTWAR: To ensure proper coordination of all stakeholders and to review the progress of different Works under execution on Ratle Hydro-Electric Power project and to listen to the grievances of labourers and project affected families, Additional Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Kishori Lal Sharma, who is the Collector and Nodal Officer for HEP Ratle, on Thursday chaired a coordination meeting of the stakeholders.

The meeting was attended by authorities of Ratle Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (RHPCL), Mega Engineering and Infrastructure Limited (MIEL) and representatives of the Labour Unions.

During the coordination

meeting, the project authorities apprised the ADC about the salient features of the project, designing and layout plan, timeline of different works, bottlenecks faced in smooth execution of works and progress of R&R Plan.

The issues raised by the project authorities included Problems faced during the execution of work near the habitation area of the project, dumping of excavated material, Transportation facilities demanded by the employees, Co-ordination between the labour unions and project authorities.

After threehour discussion, the ADC Kishtwar assured the Project authorities of extending all possible cooperation from Administration in the smooth execution of the Project. Directions were issued to



project authorities to take all the precautionary measures, including minimum emission of dust during the execution work for the safety of the inhabitants of the area.

Regarding the dumping of muck and excavated material from the project, the executing agency was directed to ensure strict implementation of NGT guidelines and guidelines issued by J&K Pollution Control Committee from time to time.

The Directions were also given to project authorities to workout proper plan for providing transportation facilities

to the workers/employees and ensure the smooth flow of the workers. Besides, implementation and strict adherence to labour laws with special attention towards the working hours and working conditions of the workers/employees, basic facilities for workers/employees including health, drinking water, accommodation etc was also stressed upon.

Several issues were raised by the labour unions, which included recruitment of the locals in the project, transportation (Pick and drop) facilities for the workers/employees, adjustment of unadjusted Land losers in the project, proper implementation of Labour Laws.

After giving patient hearing to the issues raised by the various labourer unions, the ADC

assured full cooperation of the district administration to the workers and issued directions to the project authorities to adopt fair and transparent mode of recruitment in the project and to give priority to locals and land losers and implement the employment ratio of 80:20 in the project during the employment process.

The project authorities apprised that 170 land losers have been provided employment in the project till date and the rest will be adjusted in a phased manner.

Besides, it was informed that a proper plan for providing transportation facilities to the workers is being worked out.

Further providing proper facilities to the workers and ensuring their safety is taken due care by the project authorities.

During the inspection, the ADC visited the work site and took the appraisal of the progress of different Works under execution and directed the executing agencies to expedite the pace of works besides stressed to strictly adhere to the timeline of these projects taken.

The ADC directed Tehsildar Drabshalla to co-ordinate with the stakeholders to ensure the smooth execution of the project. The ADC also assured the Union leaders, PAFs and Land losers that such coordination meetings would be held from time to time in future with project authorities and other stakeholders for ensuring the project work is completed in a time bound manner and sort out the pending issues of labourers and other stakeholders.

ADVENTURES IN ARCHIVES

Awake From Slumber

The state of Jammu and Kashmir seems to be preordained for a catastrophe. Making this alarming statement on the prevailing situation in the state is not being prophetic. It is not being critical. It is not being anti-establishment. It is not being premonitory. It is just giving an expression to a brain wave that has afflicted every denizen of this state, particularly the rural populace. The villagers all over the valley are confronted with a very serious problem of shortage of water for their fields.

The winter of 1999 as also of 2000 has been very dry. There have been scant snowfalls on the higher reaches and almost no snow in the valley. It is always the heavy snowfalls followed by heavy downpour during the months of March, April and May that have been the main source of irrigation to the fields.

Kashmir has long history of famines. Their cause has never been summer draughts. The cause for these draughts in the words of famous historian P.N.K. Bamzai, "Owing to its isolated position it was difficult to obtain grains from other states of India and a failure of crops resulted in a prolonged famine". Besides this the cause of famine has been untimely rains, or melting down of huge glaciers and subsequent deluge and floods. But, it is unheard in the history of Kashmir that famine has been caused due to lack of waters.

In Kashmir thinking of no water is like reciting the verse, water, water everywhere but not a drop to drink. One could understand the cause of deluges and floods in the past. There were no organised water management departments during then. There were no scientific means available for channeling of the waters. But now for past fifty years, the task of water management has been assigned to a full-fledged department.

First, it was the Public Works Department (PWD) that looked after this sector. But for a few decades a full-fledged Irrigation Department has been looking after the job. Hundreds of lakhs of rupees have been pumped into this department during past five decades to provide irrigation facilities to the arid lands. It is a million-dollar question with the analysts if the works executed by the Irrigation Department commensurate with the funds spent on the sector.

If an honest survey or study is conducted about the actual work done by the department and the funds spent by it, the picture that will emerge will be dismal and disappointing. It is not even ten per cent work that this department has done. Unlike in other states of India, the task before the state Irrigation Department was very easy. It had only to tap the water resources and channelize them in a more effective and profitable manner. It is true on papers the department has dug out legendary "Farhad streams" in the most arid and difficult areas. But in reality the department has so far failed even to channelize the gushing streams for irrigation purposes.

While Kashmir valley is confronted with worst ever situation due to shortage of water which could result in a famine, the government in general and the Irrigation Department in particular are napping. It seems that the hoarse cries of the villagers are yet to awake the state government from its deep slumbers.

The state Agriculture Department is yet to respond to this critical situation which can prove very ugly for a state already beset with worst ever-financial crunch. The reason for the state government's survival in office is the prevailing political uncertainty. But in the event of a famine-like situation, it would be difficult for it to survive if it does not address this problem in time. It should have set up a task force for dealing with this grave problem. It is time for the state government to awake from its deep slumber and take appropriate remedial measure.

The article is an editorial from KO's archives and was originally published on August 8, 2001

RIYAZ WANI
On the stump in Gujarat, prime minister Narendra Modi proudly declared that he has resolved the Kashmir issue. The PM added that he accomplished the feat by following in the footsteps of Sardar Patel, while taking an oblique dig at the first prime minister Jawahar Lal Nehru, blaming him for complicating Kashmir's accession to India by taking the issue to the United Nations.

Pakistan in response "categorically rejected" the remarks made by the PM, calling on India to stop making "delusional statements about having resolved the dispute unilaterally," and asking the Indian leadership to "deliver on their commitments to Kashmiris".

The two statements differ in that Modi's is supported by a profound change in the realities on the ground in Kashmir, whereas Pakistan's sounds like boilerplate.

Over three years after the withdrawal of Article 370 which granted Kashmir a special constitutional position within the Indian Union, the region has changed beyond recognition. Once vaunted separatist conglomerate Hurriyat Conference has become extinct. Many of the grouping's top leaders continue to be in jail or are under house arrest. This has hobbled its capacity to organize any political activity.

But even if the separatist leaders were free - and some of them are free - the situation would hardly be different. The government has outlawed any sign of separatist activity in whatever form and disproportionately raised the costs for any leader or an activist to go out and champion the cause.

There have also been far-reaching administrative and legal changes right from the domicile laws to new land laws. As a result, J&K citizenship and the buying of land have been thrown open to outsiders. The government has also overturned the Rojshmi Act whereby occupants of state land were allowed to own it against payment determined by the government. Scores of other laws have been extended to the former state that is aiding the process of fundamentally altering the facts on the ground.

At the same time, the government has changed the electoral map of J&K

T.C.A. Raghavan

As the war in Ukraine stretches into the eighth month, no clear end appears visible and the imponderables preponderate amidst an incremental, but perceptible, escalation. Controversial referendums, the Russian declaration of formal annexation of a chunk of Ukrainian territory, and the announcement of a partial mobilisation of its military reserve amidst what are clearly battlefield reversals of the Russian forces are in the news. The quality and the intensity of Ukrainian resistance are major contributory factors in the fog of war that Russia has had to confront since February this year.

Western analysts almost unanimously see President Vladimir Putin as someone who is embattled and groping in the dark. His language and postures are interpreted as suggesting willingness to escalate to the nuclear weapon dimension. Historical parallels for Putin's motivation in the current conflict are being hunted both deep in Tsarist history as equally in the more recent policies of the former Soviet Union. His rationales are largely understood in terms of how he situates himself in the longer span of Russian history.

Most Western commentary reads this crisis as a replay of an older script - that of Absolutism versus Democracy. In Russia, on the other hand, it is the West that is seen as the real contesting party rather than Ukraine and the contest is also framed in larger ideological terms. The substantive point is that there is not even a remotely workable proposal in sight to end or even reduce the intensity of the present conflict. All sides are, in effect, also trapped by the respective vocabularies and analyses they employ. To us on the outside, these are narcissisms

Has PM Modi Resolved Kashmir?

It is clear that the Modi government has changed the game in Kashmir internally and, as a consequence, externally also



by creating District Development Councils, a third tier of the grass-roots democracy, whose members unlike in any other state in India are being directly elected. The DDCs are expected to not only undermine the role of the gram sabhas and the Block Development Councils - the first and second tier of Panchayati Raj respectively - but also detract from the powers of the Assembly. The 14-member DDC headed by a chairperson is largely in charge of the district. Their decisions override those of a panch, sarpanch, and a BDC member. Similarly, a future Member of Assembly despite being a member of the DDC will have no role in the election or removal of its chairperson.

The only thing that remains constant from pre-August 5, 2019 when J&K's special status was revoked, is the militancy. It has gone on regardless of the far-reaching changes that have overtaken Kashmir despite the killings of more than 500 militants over the last three years. And as long as the local recruitment continues as looks likely and the armed men continue to cross over from Pakistan, the militancy seems here to stay.

Going forward, the current situation is likely to linger on for a while. Though there is talk of an Assembly election being held later this year or early next year, nothing can be said with certainty. Until that time, the DDCs will serve as a replacement for the Assembly.

Similarly, the Centre is unlikely to restore the statehood of J&K. It seems to be subordinate to the cir-

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR KASHMIR? The probability is that it will be more of the same. Even if the BJP loses power in the future, the Article 370 move remains a fait accompli. And if a large number of outsiders acquire citizenship and buy the land, as the new legal regime has made possible, J&K will be a different place a few years down the line

cumstances thrown up by a future elected UT government. The centre, as seems clear, doesn't want its decision to undo Article 370 to be in any way challenged by an Assembly dominated by the parties that have Kashmir as their core base.

The last three years have also shown that the world doesn't care about the withdrawal of Article 370. Even the concern about human rights in the months following the repeal of autonomy has abated. Kashmir is now more or less off the international radar.

Similarly, while Pakistan may not have reconciled to the constitutional changes in Kashmir, it has now kind of gotten used to the new state of af-

fairs in the region. Its protestations about India's actions in Kashmir haven't found adequate traction across the world. In fact, the US and Europe, which largely influence world opinion, have been barely responsive - their attention is now centered on the ongoing war in Ukraine.

What does the future hold for Kashmir? The probability is that it will be more of the same. Even if the BJP loses power in the future, the Article 370 move remains a fait accompli. And if a large number of outsiders acquire citizenship and buy the land, as the new legal regime has made possible, J&K will be a different place a few years down the line.

So, very little that we thought and understood about Kashmir before August 5, 2019, applies now. And if we continue to look at the situation through the same prism, there's no way we can understand what is happening in Naya Kashmir. The new Kashmir needs rethinking our decades-old understandings and narratives to make sense of it.

It is clear that the Modi government has changed the game in Kashmir, internally and, as a consequence, externally also. So, if the PM says he has resolved Kashmir unilaterally and on his own terms, the existing ground reality in the former state bears him out.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The author is the Political Editor at Kashmir Observer

An old script

The shadow of the Cuban missile crisis on Ukraine

that mirror and ricochet off one another. This fresh intensity to the conflict in Ukraine coincides with the 60th anniversary of what was possibly the closest point of great power relations had come to breaking down in the post-War II period. In October 1962, the discovery of nuclear missiles in Cuba by the United States of America initiated the crisis and it ended with the Soviets agreeing to withdraw them. In popular narratives, the entire high-tension-filled drama was compressed into a 13-day period in the second half of October 1962 till the final resolution of the stand-off.

At the time, the outcome was successfully pushed by the US as President John F. Kennedy having successfully stared down his Soviet counterpart, Nikita Khrushchev, and thus checkmated an unnecessary and provocative Soviet move in the US periphery. A more nuanced picture that took into account the Cuban and Soviet perspectives appeared only gradually. A little over a year before the discovery of the missiles, a US-sponsored military invasion of Cuba had been defeated by the Cubans. This was the Bay of Pigs covert operation of April 1961 to bring about regime change in Cuba and reverse the revolution of 1958 which had brought Castro to power. The US threat to Cuba was real. For the Soviets, defending their Cuban ally was also about more than geopolitics. There was a greater sense of socialist solidarity between the two than is generally conceded. The overall context to all this was a new intensity to Cold War contestations

and rhetoric exemplified by the Berlin crisis of the second half of 1961 and the erection of the Berlin wall.

Both the Cubans and the Soviets agreed that the Bay of Pigs humiliation notwithstanding, US efforts to undermine a socialist regime in Cuba would continue unless its defensive capabilities were strengthened. Cuba's capability gap with the US was so overwhelming that the deployment of nuclear missiles was seen as the only way of effectively deterring another invasion. The additional advantage of missile deployment in Cuba for the Soviets was that it brought US territory into range. Existing US nuclear missiles in Turkey had underlined to the Soviets the need for some kind of equalizer via Cuba.

In retrospect, what stands out in the mass of historical material that emerged from the crisis is of both sides often groping in the dark about the other's intentions, having to make decisions on the basis of errant intelligence and relying more on ingrained prejudices and predispositions. The leadership on both sides were also often unable to prevent a number of near-miss-type situations in which tactical calls could have led to an unintended escalation and a nuclear exchange.

There were many takeaways from the crisis after it was finally resolved. The installation of a hotline between the US and Soviet presidents was one - the aim being to ensure that both sides communicated directly and did not act on

the basis of conjecture and supposition alone. To a considerable extent, strategic arms control and the impulse to put some caps on nuclear weapons can also be traced back to the lessons learnt by both great powers from the Cuban crisis.

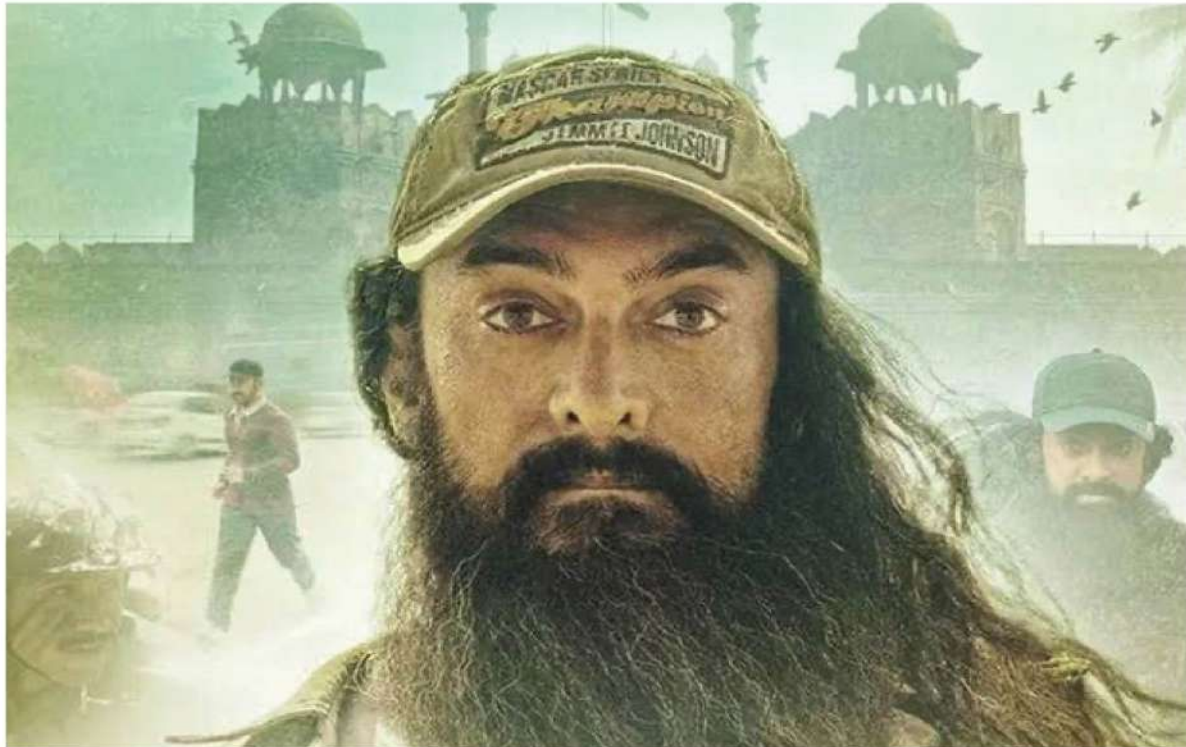
Yet, perhaps most significant is the substance of the agreement reached to resolve the stand-off. The Soviet decision to withdraw the missiles was matched by a US commitment not to invade Cuba. A secret part of the agreement was also that the US would withdraw its missiles from Turkey within a timeframe. A largely hidden and underappreciated part of the story is the diplomatic heavy lifting the Soviets had to do with Cuba to make it accept the agreement reached without any real consultation with it.

The larger point is that the agreement was cast in terms of geopolitical interest rather than in the normative projections of either side in the Free World vs Socialist Solidarity debate. Seeing the crisis for what it was, shorn of rhetorical or ideological flourishes, provided the way forward. In Ukraine today, we are yet to reach that stage. Only on doing so will a mutual adjustment be possible. In the West, such an idea is still an anathema as it amounts to appeasement - a bad word in its diplomatic lexicon. And yet, moving away from epochal and ideological narratives remains the only way forward.

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 Telegraph, India

The author is a former High Commissioner to Pakistan and Singapore

MOVIE REVIEW



LAAL SINGH CHADDHA

Ableism, Masculinity And Nation

Saadia Peerzada

After three decades of getting shut, a multiplex made its way into Srinagar's Sonwar area. The inaugural ceremony closed with the screening of Laal Singh Chaddha, a movie that was to be Bollywood's messiah for commercial resurrection.

Laal Singh Chaddha is a 2022 Indian film directed by Advait Chandan. The film sets out by introducing the protagonist, a boy named Laal who needs leg braces to walk. He faces ableism—discrimination against disabled people in the favor of able-bodied people—in school, both from the students and the administration. Even as his mother helps him build a resilient outlook on his condition, he continues to face sidelining. The film treats Laal's disability as a shackle to break out of. Instead of affirming the disabled protagonist's life and his rights to accessibility, the narrative takes an 'inspirational' turn, treating disability as something to be fixed.

Laal is shown to be chased by bullies as a kid. In order to escape them he starts walking fast. Suddenly, he finds himself running as Rupa, his close friend, watches. This ableist narrative is coupled with music that marks this event as one of rising action. The sunlight falls on his face as he finds himself sprinting. The braces he used as a mobility aid are run over by the bicycles of the boys chasing him, a final discarding. Rupa can't believe her eyes as Laal is 'fixed'.

Laal tells this story later in his life, and follows up his recollection with, "You won't believe it, I run faster than the wind." Not only is a disabled person fixed to match an able-bodied standard, but the expectation is to exceed the standard, to serve as a spectacle of inspiration. The scene is shown as a breakthrough for him, symbolized by him running through sesame fields, saturated with color, like Moses running through the parted Red Sea. Laal says "After that day, I ran everywhere." There is a horizon of expectation where the disabled boy flies out of his 'bindings' and enters a life of possibility. His college coach closes the scene by remarking, "Is that a human or a rocket?" Thereafter, in his adulthood, Laal is shown as expressing his masculinity through races, i.e., through physical and muscular capacity. The film constructs his story such that the rejection he faces due to ableism as a boy is followed up by a recovery arc of masculinisation which culminates in the heterosexual family unit.

Ramaswamy, in her essay, Visualizing India's geo-body argues that when the nation is constructed as a motherly geo-body, the territory falls under the guardianship of her loyal sons, like all women are in a paternalistic world. Laal steps up into dominant masculinity through joining the army,

a masculinist institution. This not only makes him combatant but also heroic, he is shown to rescue his fellow fighters on the battlefield, saving the lives of other men defending the nation. Moreover, Rupa tells Laal he looks handsome in his army uniform. The aesthetic signifier gets attached to him for the first time in the film when he is in the most masculine garb imaginable.

Ableism is an ideology that operates in tandem with capitalism and hence colonialism. This is not to say that there is a linear relationship between them but that the ideas that govern the three are the exact same: the commodification of the human body for capital ends. The nation-state is the colonial manifestation of this ideological triad. Laal instrumentalizes his body for the nation, stepping into dominant masculinity as a result.

MASCULINISED INDIAN VS EMASCULATED PAKISTANI

Mohammad, a Pakistani commander Laal saves from the Kargil war is constructed in opposition to him. Laal is chivalrous enough to carry the enemy to safety while the latter tries to shoot him in the back, Laal offers Mohammad a kulfi while he throws it away.

Mohammad is brought down from a position of aggressive masculinity to one of a person whose life falls apart after he loses his legs in the war. He is shown with disheveled clothes and hair, drinking from a bottle, self-defining as "still a cripple." While this Muslim enemy-of-the-nation is 'brought down' to the level of a meaningless man, Laal is shown to travel around the world as a part of the Indian army, and is even awarded with a medal of valor for saving his comrades. Leaving Mohammad to die would have been too neat a choice in the film. By keeping him alive, he serves as a constant reminder of everything Laal 'rose' out of.

Laal remembers the promise he made to his friend Baala on the battlefield and goes to great lengths to fulfill that promise. Mohammad on the other hand becomes a homeless man without any valor to his name. As opposed to Laal being fashioned out of his own intrinsic goodness as well as the support of those around him—his mother, Rupa, co-combatant Baala—Mohammad is shown as a man who is disposable to his community. After settling down in India, he states, "They (Pakistan) disowned the dead, let alone the living... there was no longer any need for us."

The idea here is that the Indian nation makes moral men and gives back to them, while Pakistan treats its fighters like chattel after reaching ideological ends.

As Mohammad gets a redemption arc through Laal's business ventures, he thanks Laal for saving him, not only physically but from the fate of those involved in the Taj

attack. He asks Lal why he never worships to which he replies, "Religion spreads malaria," an allusion to violence. The villainization of religion in order to create peace is a typical secular-liberal argument that refuses to engage with the colonial history of secularism itself, pitting a changing, secular self against the rigid, fundamentalist other.

Mohammad says he was brought up with the belief that everyone there was an enemy and a disbeliever. But he met Laal which changed him, that he himself was a victim of "malaria," another allusion to extremism. Here we see an articulation of what was manifest visually all along. Mohammad says he plans to become someone who saves others from "malaria" through

to worry about money anymore. Not for a single moment does the film sit in the possibility that Rupa could provide for herself, not until the very end. Joane Nagel, in theorizing the construction of men in relation to the nation states that women are relegated to symbolic roles while men defend their honor, their homeland and their women, in Laal's journey as an army official and later as a businessman, Rupa becomes a beneficiary rather than an agential subject.

Rupa's later separation from Laal due to associations with Abbas, a murdered and gang member, only reinstates their roles with respect to the nation. Laal continues to be a nation wide spectacle of masculinity, this time by running for four years straight. Rupa, as a less threatening yet supportive role to nationalism, testifies against Abbas, the violent Muslim germ in the nation and gets him arrested.

As Laal and Rupa enter the family unit, the one thing Laal asks at the get go is if their kid is smart or 'like him.' Any deviation from being able-bodied is seen as a regression. Rupa assures him that the kid is the smartest in his class.

AKHAND BHARAT

At the tail end of the film, as Rupa lies sick in her deathbed, Laal speaks of how watching the Himalayas glow and witnessing the sunset at Kanyakumari was what took away the fear he felt while in the army. The map of India is affirmed here - from Kashmir to Kanyakumari- a material reality to attach oneself to, to quell fear. Ramaswamy articulates how patriotism requires persuasion and it happens most potently through the map. Rupa's fears are laid to rest through attaching herself to the map of a monolithic, stable entity of the nation, of an akhand bharat. The complexity of illness, death and separation are flattened through the mythos surrounding India as an absolute entity to look up to.

This film visualizes the inseparability of nationalist and masculinist discourses, in the way they articulate each other. Manliness becomes the rhetoric of the nation in the film, becomes an epic of endurance through running, becomes a singular story of a man. Rupa and Laal's mother stay static in their roles and never shift from the margins into the center stage. However, the film moves Laal from disabled, subordinate masculinity into an abled, dominant masculinity characterized by muscularity, valor and patriotism.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer.

Saadia Peerzada is a student of English and Creative Writing at Ashoka University

LAAL TELLS HER ABOUT HIS SUCCESSFUL

endeavours and how she doesn't have to worry about money anymore. Not for a single moment does the film sit in the possibility that Rupa could provide for herself, not until the very end

Laal tells this story later in his life, and follows up his recollection with, "You won't believe it, I run faster than the wind." Not only is a disabled person fixed to match an able-bodied standard, but the expectation is to exceed the standard, to serve as a spectacle of inspiration

Manliness becomes the rhetoric of the nation in the film, becomes an epic of endurance through running, becomes a singular story of a man

schooling. The conversation of 'teaching' them 'there' about 'good friends here' paints Pakistan as a land full of hateful people who don't know better than being brainwashed into violent praxis. Mohammad subscribes to the idea that they then require education about better ways of being from one of them enlightened by a dutiful Indian man. Deepa Srinivas, in her essay on the figure of the Muslim Other in popular culture says that this portrayal has never been free from an underlying anxiety of belonging/ unbelonging to the idea of the nation. The Indian nation and its moral, dutiful citizen, Laal are both constructed through articulating what they aren't, Pakistan and its violent, barbaric citizens.

MAN AS PROVIDER

Rupa's life moves from her father's abuse due to monetary constraints to a gang member Abbas' abuse. As Rupa fails to make the life she wants for herself and is victimized by multiple men, Laal steps in to rescue her. He beats up any man who dares to touch Rupa. He shows up whenever she needs him with an uncanny foresight. Later down the line, Laal tells her about his successful endeavors and how she doesn't have

Fine Particle Pollution Linked Mortality In India May Be Lower Than Thought: Study

Press Trust Of India

Exposure to high levels of fine air pollution particles (PM2.5) in India may have a smaller impact on mortality than previously estimated, according to the first such study to cover the whole of the country.

India has among the highest levels of air pollution in the world, with most people living in areas with fine particulate matter levels (PM2.5) well above the safe limit by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The findings of the Million Death Study (MDS), published in the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*, linked concentrations of PM2.5 derived from satellite-based measurements and deaths in over 7,400 small areas covering a total population of 6.8 million.

The researchers quantified the relationship between PM2.5 exposures over several years to the subsequent mortality risk, focusing on the leading killers of adults: respiratory disease, heart disease, stroke and overall mortality.

Their analyses adjusted for risk factors that make these diseases more common such as smoking, urban or rural residency, and education. Because these diseases and PM2.5 tend to dis-



tribute in some areas but not others, they also adjusted for spatial clustering.

Analysing over 200,000 deaths at ages 15-69 years, the researchers found a nine per cent excess risk in stroke deaths for every 10 micro-

grammes per cubic metre increase in PM2.5 exposure.

However, there were no excess risks for respiratory or heart disease and for total mortality (after excluding stroke), they said.

Study results were broadly similar in different age-groups and in areas with higher or lower use of household solid fuel — which itself is the major contributor to PM2.5 exposure as measured by satellites.

In contrast to these direct observations, earlier estimates of air pollution deaths in India used complex models that assumed a much higher mortality risks from PM2.5 exposure, the researchers said.

"Measuring the health effects of air pollution is complicated," said study lead author Professor Patrick Brown, from the University of Toronto in Canada.

"There are so many things to tease out to establish if a relationship with deaths is true, or just noise in the data. Even the modest excess risks we found for stroke might reflect the uncertainty that is inherent in these types of epidemiological studies," Brown said.

The researchers noted that direct studies like the Million Death Study (MDS) are far preferable to extrapolating from models, many of which take reports from non-Indian settings and apply them to India.

Earlier models have probably overestimated the extent to which air pollution kills adults in India, they said.

"Most existing studies on air quality and health are done in high-income countries, where PM2.5 exposures are far lower and disease patterns are substantially different than in low

and middle-income countries such as India," said study co-author Professor George D'Souza, Dean of St. John's Medical College, Bengaluru, India.

"That needs to change," D'Souza said. The results are one of many insights being generated by MDS one of the largest studies of premature mortality in the world.

The study, covering deaths from 2001 to 2014, is a long-running effort to better understand the causes of mortality in countries such as India, where the vast majority of people die at home without a death certificate.

Launched by Professor Prabhat Jha at Dalla Lana School of Public Health, The University of Toronto, it has helped governments and health providers to better allocate scarce public health funding.

Beside the good news, the researchers said there are many reasons to act on air pollution in India.

"PM2.5 may not be the big killer in India as has been touted, but action to reduce PM2.5 exposure is still necessary," said Jha.

"Air pollution worsens child lung health and lowers quality of life, and that is sufficient justification to act," he added.

'Links Between People Taking Multiple Medications And Dementia Diagnosis'

ANI

A study has provided an in-depth exploration of the links between evolving polypharmacy which involves a patient being prescribed more than one drug at any given time and a dementia diagnosis.

The study is the first to provide an in-depth exploration of the links between evolving polypharmacy — which involves a patient being prescribed more than one drug at any given time — and a dementia diagnosis.

ALSO READ: Schizophrenia might enhance dementia risk 2.5 times: Study

Published in the *Aging and Disease* journal, it is based on an analysis of the records of more than 33,000 dementia patients in Wales between 1990 to 2015.

Experts in e-health used machine learning techniques to identify potentially damaging patterns in a patient's medicine usage, and how these patterns evolve in the run-up to diagnosis.

They found that in the 20 years leading up to them being diagnosed, the proportion of patients taking three or more medications rose from 5.5% (for the period 16 to 20 years prior to diagnosis) to 82.16% among those less than five years from a diagnosis.

Researchers also found that as the development towards dementia progressed, the patterns of polypharmacy shifted from being clearly distinct to being more closely associated

with particular medical conditions.

And of those closest to their diagnosis, almost two-thirds (66.55%) were found to be taking multiple medicines for a combination of respiratory or urinary infections, arthropathies and rheumatism, and cardiovascular disease. A further 22% of patients were found to be taking medicines for infections, arthropathies and rheumatism, cardio-metabolic disease and depression.

The study was supported by the Health Data Research UK and conducted by an international team of researchers from the University of Plymouth, Aptuit (an Evotec company), Swansea University Medical School, and the University of Oxford.

Shangning Zhou, Professor of e-Health at the University of Plymouth, led the study. He said: "Given the rise in dementia cases internationally, the need to understand how patterns of polypharmacy evolve before and after a dementia diagnosis are important for devising a safe treatment programme for each patient. Our aim in this study was to help doctors find ways to prescribe multiple items of dementia medication safely and without reducing their effectiveness.

The use of machine learning has been vital in helping us understand how these patterns develop, and our hope is we can now use this knowledge to treat patients."

Smoking, Diabetes, Obesity Bigger Risk Factors For Covid Death Than Heart Ailment: Study

Press Trust Of India

Risk factors for cardiovascular disease such as obesity, smoking and diabetes, rather than preexisting heart disease, are the main contributors to death and poor outcomes among critically ill COVID-19 patients, according to a study.

Patients with cardiovascular disease were found to have close to a 30 per cent higher mortality rate than critically ill COVID-19 patients without the preexisting condition. However, when adjusted for risk factors — including age, sex, race, smoking and others — that relationship was no longer statistically significant.

"The fact that the association between cardiovascular risk and death was so heavily diminished when accounting for comorbidities suggests that cardiovascular risk factors rather than preexisting heart disease are the main contributors to in-hospital death in patients with severe COVID-19," said senior author Salim Hayek.

The team, led by researchers at the University of Michigan in the US, analysed outcomes for more than 5,100 patients admitted to intensive care units at 88 centers across the US with severe COVID between March and June of 2020.

Of those patients, 1,174 had either preexisting coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure or atrial fibrillation.

A total of 34.6 per cent of patients died within 28 days and nearly 18 per cent suffered a cardiovascular event, such as cardiac arrest or myocardial infarction.

Researchers say the association between such events and death did not differ between patients with and without preexisting heart disease.

The study, published in the *Journal Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes*, found that the presence of myocardial injury was associated with cardiovascular events and death, regardless of whether a patient had preexisting heart disease.

Myocardial injury was common among patients in the ICU, occurring in nearly half of patients who had heightened levels of troponin, a protein released when the heart muscle is damaged.

Patients with the highest troponin measurements were nearly three times more likely to die than those without myocardial injury, the researchers said in a statement.

"While patients with severe COVID commonly had signs of cardiac injury, our findings reinforce COVID-19 as a pulmonary disease with multi-organ injury related to systemic inflammation," Hayek said.

"The evidence of heart damage that we frequently see in patients with severe COVID-19 is more likely a reflection of the severity of the illness and the stress it imposes on all organs, rather than the development of new complications or the exacerbation of preexisting heart disease," he said.

The findings should not minimise the fact that patients with cardiovascular disease are still at risk for death due to COVID-19, as they have a high burden of risk factors for the disease, such as diabetes, hypertension and smoking, says co-first author Alexi Vasbinder.

"We are currently working on studies to further define groups of patients with COVID-19 at highest risk for severe outcomes, such as those with advanced heart failure or coronary artery disease, Vasbinder said.

Cardiovascular disease is a common condition among patients who suffer severe COVID illness, given its prevalence among older adults and associated chronic inflammation.

In the study, age, obesity and diabetes were much stronger predictors of death due to COVID, the researchers added.

'Hot Flashes Can Be Detrimental To Heart Besides Being Uncomfortable'

ANI

Around 70% of women are thought to have hot flashes at some point throughout the menopause transition. Hot flashes have long been recognised as having an impact on women's quality of life and mental health, but mounting evidence connects them to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease. Concerns regarding the connection between hot flashes and heart health will be highlighted in a presentation at the North American Menopause Society (NAMS) Annual Meeting in Atlanta, October 12-15.

The risk increases in midlife during the menopause transition when cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of mortality in women. Evidence associating hot flashes and the risk of heart disease has been found in large epidemiologic cohort studies, clinical investigations utilising physiologic measures of vasomotor symptoms, and other studies.

In particular, women who experience hot flashes more frequently have worsening profiles of cardiovascular risk factors, including hypertension (or raised blood pressure), insulin resistance (or diabetes), dyslipidemia, and a higher chance of underlying atherosclerosis. As women age, having more frequent or persistent hot flashes has also been associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease-related events such as myocardial infarction and stroke.

More recent studies have

connected vasomotor symptoms to markers of small artery disease in the brain as well as other measures of brain health.

The presentation, which will examine potential underlying physiological mechanisms that could connect vasomotor symptoms to cardiovascular risk as well as the clinical consequences of this work, will be led by Dr Rebecca Thurston from the University of Pittsburgh.

"Hot flashes are considered



to be symptoms that can affect one's quality of life, but not always their physical condition. Increasing evidence suggests that frequent or severe hot flashes may indicate women who are at an elevated risk of cardiovascular illness at midlife and beyond, contradicting this long-held conventional wisdom, according to Dr Thurston.

According to Dr Faubion, medical director of NAMS, "this presentation will highlight the most recent thinking regarding how women with a high burden of vasomotor symptoms may particularly benefit from targeted cardiovascular reduction initiatives as they age."



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OR SCAN



THE ALL-INDIA SENIOR SELECTION COMMITTEE HAS NAMED MOHAMMED SHAMI as Jasprit Bumrah's replacement in India's ICC Men's T20 World Cup squad. Shami has reached Australia and will link up with the squad in Brisbane ahead of the warm-up matches."

T20 WORLD CUP

SHAMI Picked As Bumrah Replacement

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The BCCI on Friday named seasoned pacer Mohammed Shami as injured Jasprit Bumrah's replacement in the Indian team for the upcoming T20 World Cup in Australia.

"The All-India Senior Selection Committee has named Mohammed Shami as Jasprit Bumrah's replacement in India's ICC Men's T20 World Cup squad. Shami has reached Australia and will link up with the squad in Brisbane ahead

of the warm-up matches," BCCI secretary Jay Shah was quoted in a press release.

That Shami would replace Bumrah in the main squad was reported by PTI last month.

Mohammed Siraj and Shardul Thakur have been named as backups and will travel to Australia shortly. The tournament will be held from October 16 to November 13.

Bumrah has been ruled out of competitive cricket for an indefinite period due to stress related

injury on his back.

Shami had last played in T20 Internationals during the last edition of the ICC T20 World Cup in the UAE.

He was supposed to play in the six T20is at home against Australia and South Africa but tested positive for COVID-19 and had to remain in isolation. On return he had to prove his fitness before NCA approved his trip to Australia.

Shami has played 17 T20is and has taken 18 wickets.



2023 ODI WC: BCCI Could Lose Rs 955 Crore

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The BCCI could lose around Rs 955 crore (USD 116 million) if the central government sticks to its decision to levy 21.84 percent tax surcharge on ICC's broadcast revenue from the 2023 ODI World Cup, according to a Board report.

India is to host next year's 50-over showpiece in October-November.

Tax surcharge refers to "an additional charge, fee, or tax that is added to the cost of a good or service beyond the initially quoted price." A surcharge is often added to an existing tax and is not included in the stated price of the good or service.

As per ICC norm, the host nation is required to get tax exemption from the government for hosting tournaments organised by the global body.

Since India's tax rules don't allow such exemptions, the BCCI has already lost close to Rs 193 crore (USD 23.5 million) as the government didn't exempt tax surcharge for hosting the 2016 ICC T20 World Cup. The BCCI is still fighting that case in the ICC tribunal.

According to the BCCI document shared with the state bodies, the adverse impact on

the Board's revenue from the ICC if a 21.84 percent tax is paid, would be USD 116.47 million.

It is understood that the BCCI is still trying to negotiate and bring down the tax surcharge percentage to 10.92 percent from the existing demand of 21.84.

If the BCCI can reduce the tax surcharge to 10.92 percent, then the revenue loss would be around Rs 430 crore (USD 52.23 million).

The BCCI is currently working with the Ministry of Finance, Government of India and has represented the very highest level and are hopeful that a 10% (excluding surcharges) tax order at the shorty.

"It is to be noted that any tax cost incurred by the ICC for the 2023 event in India will be adjusted with the BCCI's share of revenue from the ICC," the report further stated.

The BCCI's share from the ICC's central revenue pool for the tenure 2016 to 2023 is USD 405 million (Rs 3336 crore approximately).

The ICC is expecting USD 533.29 million (Rs 4400 crore approx) from the broadcasting revenue of the 2023 event in India.



Nobody Spoke A Word Against Ganguly: Arun Dhumal

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: BCCI's outgoing treasurer and next IPL chairman Arun Dhumal on Friday cleared the air over Sourav Ganguly not getting another term as board president, saying "nobody spoke a word" against the former India captain.

The next set of BCCI office bearers have filed their nomination and will be elected unopposed on October 18.

World Cup winner Roger Binny will replace Ganguly as the president. Jay Shah will remain the secretary. Rajeev Shukla will get another term as vice-president. Ashish Shelar will be the new treasurer and Devraj Saikia the new joint secretary.

Speaking to PTI, Dhumal said Ganguly was party to all the decisions made before the nominations were filed.

"There has been no BCCI president who has served for more than three years in independent India. All this media speculation about Dada being told or a few members were against him, they are all baseless," Dhumal said.

"Nobody spoke a word against him. All the Board members were extremely happy and satisfied with the entire team and how BCCI was run in the last three years despite the challenges posed by COVID-19."

"Dada has had a very distinguished career as an India captain, one of the best ever leaders. As an administrator

he took the entire team along and we worked as one team," he added.

Dhumal also went on to say that he would not have been part of the new team had Ganguly accepted the IPL chairmanship. Ganguly did not take the offer and now Dhumal will replace Brijesh Patel as the next IPL chairman.



"Dada was there along with Roger and the new set of people who went to file the nomination. Everything was discussed and Dada was also spoken to. He was offered IPL chairmanship, else Roger would never have had a chance, he is 67 (age limit being 70)."

"He has been a World Cup winner for us, that was the view of the house. If Dada accepted IPL chairmanship, I would have been okay with that. Roger is a great addition keeping in mind the ODI World Cup at home next year," said Dhumal.



Kashmiri Willow To Feature In T20 World Cup

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The demand for Kashmiri bats has increased in international markets after two international cricket players from Oman played with them in the T20 World Cup last year. Now, four players from UAE have got Kashmiri willow for the T20 World Cup 2022 scheduled to be held in Australia from October 16.

As per the news agency KNO, people who are associated with this industry said they are happy that more countries have started using Kashmiri bats and expect more teams to produce the bats.

They said that there are around 400 bat manufacturing units in the Industrial area from Sangam to

Awantipora in southern Kashmir and a bat of one unit has reached the international stage.

Fawzul Kabir, a 29-year-old MBA pass out from Islamic University of Science and Technology Awantipora who is pursuing PhD from a university in Canada, said that after hectic efforts, a few players of Oman agreed to play with their bats. The bats were manufactured at GR8 sports industry in Hainulla Sangam area of Anantnag.

Kabir, who is owner of unit, said that his late father started the unit in 1974 said demand for Kashmiri bats has increased in international markets.

"We have already sent consignments to around one dozen countries and many orders are also in

queue," he said, adding that this is a new beginning for us and we are hopeful very soon that famous international players will play with our bats.

"We are hopeful that Kashmiri bats will emerge as an alternative to English willow bats as we are the only ones who can produce these bats at much less rate than what English willow costs," he said.

"Now, we are preparing bats here only and now our own manufacturing has reached the international stage as four players from UAE will play with our bats besides other items," he said. "Now our aim is that prolific players like Virat Kohli, Babar Azam and others should play with our Kashmiri made bats." (KNO)

JKSC Wins Gold At SKOCH Awards 2022

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The SKOCH State Award of Best Governance for the year 2022 was announced on Friday in which essential departments from various States / UTs were present from all across the country.

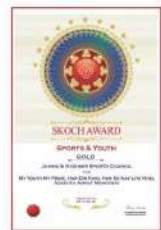
Sameer Kochar, Chairman SKOCH Group, honoured Secretary J&K Sports Council, Nuzhat Gul, for bagging Gold category awards in the field of Sports & Youth Services.

The efforts made by JKSC recognised by the jury were mainly on My Youth My Pride special activities wherein the Council has been able to engage youth in sports especially in tribal, sensitive and rural areas by providing ample opportunities and infrastructural facilities of playing sports.

Secretary J&K Sports Council, Nuzhat Gul, has made a significant contribution towards the promotion of sports and was recognised with a SKOCH Award for her services and contributions, stated Dr. Gursharan, Managing Director, while announcing the awards.

Sports Youth Services & Services, Sarnad Hafiz expressing satisfaction over the achievements of the JKSC, has congratulated the Secretary JKSC and entire staff for this award and thanked LG Manoj Sinha and Chief Secretary Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta for their support to the sports in J&K.

According to Nuzhat Gul, the impetus given by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and LG Manoj Sinha to the sports



infrastructure, sports person and vision of creating positive sports ecosystem has paid off.

J&K Government is leaving no stone unturned for engagement of youth in positive direction. Activities like sports community is coming forward in sports programs, anti drug campaigns, Fit India and other programs being organised under Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav. We are committed along with Youth Services and Sports Department for achieving the target of 75 lakh youth engagement in sports this financial year, said Ms Gul.

India Governance Forum in its twentieth year, is the oldest Governance Leadership Summit. Its recommendations have had a profound policy impact across the center and state governments.

With these awards SKOCH Organization brings together an ecosystem of academic, industry, economists, policy experts, practitioners, and civil society.



NEYMAR Faces 5-Year Jail Term In Fraud Trial

Agencies

MADRID: Brazil forward Neymar will stand trial next week on fraud and corruption charges over his transfer to Barcelona from Santos in 2013 and the complainant, Brazilian investment firm DIS, said on Thursday it was demanding a five-year jail term.

Along with Neymar, the defendants in the trial being brought by Spanish prosecutors, which begins in Barcelona on Monday, are his parents, the two clubs, former Barca presidents Josep Maria Bar-

toomeu and Sandro Rosell, and ex-Santos president Odilio Rodrigues.

The case stems from a complaint by DIS, which owned 40% of the rights to Neymar when he was at Santos. The company argues that it lost out on its rightful cut from the transfer because the true value of the deal was understated.

Neymar, who is a key member of the Brazil team that will be heading to the World Cup in Qatar next month, has denied the allegations but lost an appeal in Spain's High Court in 2017, which paved the way for the trial.

Baker McKenzie, who will be defending Neymar and his family in the trial, told Reuters they will argue that the Spanish courts "lack jurisdiction to prosecute the Neymar family" since the transfer involved Brazilian nationals in Brazil.

Spanish prosecutors want a two-year prison term for Neymar and the payment of a 10 million euros (\$9.78 million) fine plus a five-year jail term for Rosell and an 8.4 million euros fine for Barcelona.

DIS is also requesting jail terms for Rosell and Bartomeu, and a to-

tal fine of 149 million euros fine for the defendants.

DIS acquired 40% of Neymar's rights when he was aged 17 in exchange for two million euros. It argues that the player's sale to Barcelona was well below its real market value.

Barca said at the time of Neymar's move that the transfer figure was 57.1 million euros, of which 40 million was paid to Neymar's family.

DIS received a 40 percent share of the remaining 17.1 million that was paid to Santos.

Kerala Fisherman Wins ₹70 Lakh Lottery Hours After Getting Bank Notice



Agenceis

Kollam, Kerala: Barely hours after he received an attachment notice from a bank in respect of his house for default on loan repayment, a fish seller from Kerala was able to heave a sigh of relief as he won the ₹ 70 lakh Akshaya lottery of the state government.

Pookunju, on October 12, began his day as usual and while on the way to collect the fish which he sells during the day, he bought an Akshaya lottery ticket which had a first prize of ₹ 70 lakh.

When he returned home in the afternoon, he got to know that the bank had sent a notice of attachment in respect of his house as he had been unable to pay back a loan amount of around ₹ 9 lakh, he told a television channel.

"We were in despair after we received the notice from the bank. We did not know what to do. Whether to sell our property. We have two children, a boy and girl, who are studying," his wife told the channel.

"Besides the bank loan, my

father had raked up a debt of around ₹ 5 lakh buying lottery tickets," Pookunju said.

But fate smiled upon the family at the right moment as within hours of receiving the notice, when the winning number of the lottery was announced, he was the winner of the ₹ 70 lakh first prize.

"He did not believe me when I told him we had won. He initially said it was not at all possible. Then he kept checking and re-checking the ticket number and the result. He just could not believe we had won," she told the channel.

She also said that just a day before that he missed winning a ₹ 5,000 prize by two numbers and she had told him to buy another ticket on the next day and that he will win.

"He had not believed me then," she said with a beaming smile.

Their son, who is studying, told the channel that he never believed in buying lottery tickets and bought it sometimes to help out those selling the same.

For iPhones Without Chargers, Apple Fined \$20 Million In This Country



Agenceis

Brasilia: A Brazilian judge fined Apple \$20 million Thursday for selling iPhones without chargers, calling it an "abusive practice" that forces customers to buy an additional product.

The decision, which can be appealed, came after Brazil's justice ministry slapped a separate fine of nearly \$2.5 million on Apple in September over the same issue and barred the US tech giant from selling its iPhone 12 and 13 models without chargers.

The new fine — 100 million reais — was awarded by a Sao Paulo civil court judge as damages in a lawsuit filed by the Brazilian Consumers' Association.

Apple stopped including outlet chargers with new iPhones in October 2020, saying it wanted to help reduce electronics waste. But the move effectively "requires consumers to purchase a second product in order for the first to work," Judge Caramuru Afonso Francisco wrote in his ruling.

He ordered the California

company to supply chargers to all consumers in Brazil who bought iPhone models 12 or 13 in the past two years, and begin including them with all new purchases.

Apple is also facing charger-related headaches across the pond.

Last week, the European Parliament passed a law requiring all smartphones, tablets and cameras to use USB-C ports as the single charger standard from late 2024, which will force Apple to change its phone designs.

India Test Fires Ballistic Missile From Nuke Submarine INS Arihant

Agenceis

New Delhi: India's strategic strike submarine INS Arihant carried out successful launch of a ballistic missile on Friday, the defence ministry said.

The missile was tested to a predetermined range and it impacted the target area in the Bay of Bengal with high accuracy, validating all operational and technological parameters, it said.

"The successful user training

launch of the SLBM (submarine launched ballistic missile) by INS Arihant is significant to prove crew competency and validate the SSBN programme, a key element of India's nuclear deterrence capability," the ministry said.

"A robust, survivable and assured retaliatory capability is in keeping with India's policy to have 'credible minimum deterrence' that underpins its 'No First Use' commitment," it said in a statement.

Should Muslim Women Wear Bikini If Not Hijab, Asks Asaduddin Owaisi

Agenceis

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMM) chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi sought to know if Muslim women should wear bikini if not hijab. His comments came after the Supreme Court delivered a split verdict on the ban on hijabs in Karnataka's educational institutions.

Addressing a gathering on Thursday evening, the MP claimed that nobody is forcing Muslim women to wear hijab. He sought to know if Sikh people can wear a turban. Christians can wear a cross and Hindus vibudha, why can't Muslim girls wear hijab in schools.

"If not hijab, should Muslim girls wear a bikini? If you want, you can wear it," he said.

Asaduddin Owaisi claimed that a ban on hijab will send a wrong message to girls from Sikh, Christian, and Hindu communities that Muslims are lesser citizens. "Why are you bent upon finishing off our religion, culture and beard," he asked. He claimed that wearing hijab comes under freedom of religion, and said if such freedom exists, students will learn from each others' culture.

The MP said it is the constitutional right of people to wear what they want. "If you come to Hyderabad, you will see the most notorious drivers are our sisters. I ask my driver to be careful. If they ride pillion with them on motorcycles, they will understand if anyone can force them to do anything," the MP said.

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