

# Govt Hands Over Guns To VDGs In Rajouri

DC Visits Bal Jarallan To Inspect Allotment Of Guns, Cartridges; Announces Village-Wise Training Programmes



Press Trust Of India

**Jammu:** Authorities on Saturday distributed weapons among Village Defence Guards (VDGs), comprising local volunteers, in a village in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, an official said.

Rajouri Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal visited Bal Jarallan to inspect the allotment of guns and cartridges to the VDGs to bolster the security of the area. The weapons and ammunition are being provided to the VDGs by police authorities, the official said.

Bal Jarallan had witnessed a

terror attack on February 19, 1999, resulting in the killing of seven people attending a marriage ceremony and injuries to an equal number. The village is four km away from Dhangri village, the scene of recent attack by terrorists which left six civilians dead and many others injured.

Interacting with the VDGs, Kundal assured that appropriate measures would be taken to maintain peace and tranquility in the district.

The deputy commissioner also enquired about their familiarity with the **More on P6**

## 18 Detained As Search Operation Continues

At least 18 suspects have been detained for questioning in connection with a recent terror attack at Dhangri village in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district that left six civilians dead, officials said on Saturday. A massive search operation to track down the assailants **More on P6**

## LG Meets Injured Civilians At GMC Jammu

The Union Territory Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Saturday visited Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu to inquire about the health of civilians, who were injured in Rajouri attack. Dr. Shashi Sudan, Principal, GMC Jammu and other senior doctors briefed the Lt Governor on the health condition of Sanvi Sharma, Prince Sharma, **More on P6**



Gulmarg presents a fairytale view these days. KO Photo | Abid Bhat

## Ladakh Parties Not To Meet MHA Panel, Demand Statehood

Put Four Conditions, Including Statehood; Safeguards Under 6th Schedule To Meet Any Empowered Committee

Observer News Service

**Srinagar:** Days after Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) set up a high-powered committee to discuss measures to ensure protection of land and jobs for the people of Ladakh, two major representative bodies of the region on Saturday laid four conditions for meeting any panel empowered to discuss issues, including statehood for the UT and constitutional safeguard under the sixth schedule of the constitution.

The Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), two major conglomerates of political, social and religious organisations on



Saturday held an emergency meeting at Jammu and unanimously decided not to accept the formation of the high-powered committee and not to attend any meeting conducted

under the aegis of the committee, saying it has not been mandated to discuss issues raised by the two bodies, reads a joint statement issued to Kashmir Observer. **More on P6**

## SIA Attaches More Jama'at Assets In South Kashmir

Agencies

**Srinagar:** State Investigation Agency (SIA) on Saturday attached more properties belonging to banned Jama'at-e-Islami (Jel) at different locations in South Kashmir.

Quoting an official, news agency KNO reported that SIA attached the properties in Sirhama, Viddy Srigufwara, Arwani in Anantnag district and in main town Kulgam.

He said the properties include a double-storied house, along with 7 Marla of land, 56 kanal agriculture land, 02 Kanal 7 Marla land, 3 Kanal 4 Marla land and 1.5 Kanal land.

The official said the properties were seized in connection with an investigation of a case by the SIA.

## Mercury Up Ahead Of Snowfall Prediction

Press Trust Of India

**Srinagar:** The minimum temperature across Kashmir rose by several degrees, comforting people from the intense cold ahead of a possible wet weather spell that may last a few days beginning Saturday, the weather department said.

Srinagar recorded a low of minus 1.4 degrees Celsius on Friday night up by over four degrees from minus 5.5 degrees the night before, officials said.

Qazigund, the gateway to the Valley, registered a minimum of minus 1.6 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara, a frontier district, recorded a minimum of minus 1.8 degrees.

Kokernag in south Kashmir recorded a low of minus 1.4 degrees, the officials said.

The tourist resort town of Pahalgam in Anantnag district, which also serves as a base camp for the annual Amarnath Yatra, registered a low of minus 2.8 degrees Celsius -- up from minus 8.6 degrees.

The minimum temperature in Gulmarg, the famous ski resort town in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, recorded a temperature of minus 2.6 degrees Celsius up from the previous night's minus 5 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

The Met office said the weather was likely to remain cloudy on Saturday with a possibility of light snow in scattered places towards the night with a 75 per cent chance of light-to-moderate snowfall at many places on Sunday.

The weather will remain generally cloudy on January 10 and 11, but there are chances of widespread moderate snowfall and rain in the plains of Jammu, and heavy snowfall in the higher reaches, it said.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chilla-i-Kalan', the 40-day harshest weather period when the chances of snowfall are maximum and most frequent.

'Chilla-i-Kalan' begins on December 21 and ends on January 30. **More on P6**

## G20 Summit: Chair Of W20 India Calls On LG

Observer News Service

**Jammu:** Dr Sandhya Purecha, Chair W20 India (Women-20), an official G20 engagement group focused on gender equity, met Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, at the Raj Bhavan here on Saturday, an official spokesperson said.

Dr Purecha, he said, shared with the LG the vision and goals of W20 and efforts to mainstream gender considerations into G20 discussions and translate into the G20 Leaders' Declaration as policies and commitments that foster gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

"The Lt Governor assured cooperation and support of the UT administration to the W20 in its endeavours towards women-led development and an equal and equitable society," the spokesperson said.



Dr Purecha's meeting with LG comes at a time when the Union Territory administration is making preparations over a possible G20 summit meeting in Jammu and Kashmir this year.

Last month, LG Sinha chaired a high-level meeting and called for extensive preparations

ahead of the G20 meet. He said that the meetings under India's presidency is also an opportunity to share Jammu Kashmir's achievements and to showcase its rich cultural heritage.

In June last year, the LG-led dispensation had established a five-member **More on P6**

## Most KP Employees Have Returned To Work In Valley: Pole

Press Trust Of India

**Srinagar:** A majority of Kashmiri Pandit employees, who had struck work following the killing of Rahul Bhat by terrorists last year, have returned to work, a senior official of the Jammu and Kashmir administration said here.

"I reject this notion that all Kashmiri Pandit employees are protesting in Jammu. A majority of these employees have already joined their offices (and) we are releasing their salaries. They have understood the importance of reporting to work," Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Pandurang Kundbarao Pole told PTL.

Bhat, a Kashmiri Pandit employee, was shot dead by the ultras inside his office at Chadoora in Budgam district in May last year. The killing had sparked off protests by the Kashmiri Pandit employees



who refused to return to work.

A group of protesting employees left the Valley and demonstrated in Jammu, demanding that they be relocated out of Kashmir till the security situation improved here.

Though the administration agreed to look into most of the demands of the Kashmiri Pandits (KPs), it refused to relocate them out of Kashmir. It further hardened its stand against the protesting **More on P6**

## Azad Puts Up Brave Face Amid Exodus Of Leaders

'Don't Worry About Leaders Till Voters Are With Me'

Press Trust Of India

**Srinagar:** Democratic Azad Party (DAP) chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad on Saturday said he does not worry about leaders leaving his party till voters are with him.

His remarks come after several of his colleagues left the DAP and switched back to the Congress.

Azad said he has come to Jammu and Kashmir after seeing miseries of the people here and he does not "rely" on leaders.

"I do not worry whether 10 or 12 leaders go to Delhi. Till the time the voters are with me, I do not worry for the



leaders. You (voters) make the leaders. I used to give tickets, you made them win"

"Now, those who used to give tickets and those who made them win have come together. Let us see how many will win," Azad said at a party function here.

On Friday 17 DAP leaders, including former J-K deputy chief minister **More on P6**

## Board Announces Tentative Dates For Class 10-12 Exams

Agencies

**Srinagar:** The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE) Saturday announced tentative date sheets for annual regular examination of classes 10th to 12th commencing from March-4 for soft zones and April-08 for hard zones.

This is for the first time, students of Jammu and Kashmir will appear in the annual regular board examination in March and April session respectively.

The official records state that annual regular exams of class 12th in soft zones tentatively will commence from March-04 while in hard zones the exams will commence from April-08.

Similarly, the BOSE has said that it is likely to hold annual regular exams of 11th standard from March-06 in soft zones and April-10 in hard zones respectively.

Likewise, the exams of 10th standard are likely to commence from March-09 while the exams of hard zones will begin from April-11

The Board of School Education (BOSE) has identified 444 such schools in the both divisions of Jammu and Kashmir for which annual regular examinations will be held in the month of April instead of March.

Besides, the Board has also declared the whole Leh district of Union Territory of Ladakh as a hard zone and has accordingly **More on P6**

### S H O R T T A K E S

#### MHA Declares Dr Asif Maqbool As Terrorist

The Union Home Ministry on Saturday declared Dr. Asif Maqbool, who is based in Saudi Arabia, as terrorist under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention Act)-1967. In a notification, the MHA said that Dr. Asif Maqbool, who is resident of Bandey Payeen, Wagoora, Baramulla, presently based at Daman, Ash Sharqiyah, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, is associated with Hizb-Ul- Mujahideen. "The said Dr. Asif Maqbool Dar is involved in instigating or provoking the youth of Kashmir Valley for terrorist activities by using social media platforms," reads the notification. According to the MHA, Dr. Asif Maqbool Dar is one of **More on P6**

#### Army Opens Speculative Fire Along LoC

Indian Army troops on Saturday evening opened fire after noticing suspicious movement near the Line of Control (LoC) in the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The troops picked up the suspicious movement in the Balakote sector and opened "speculative fire", they said, adding the firing lasted for a few minutes and there was no report of any casualty. A search of the area will be carried out with the first light of the day on Sunday, the officials said. A tight vigil is being maintained in the area to ensure that there is no infiltration attempt from across the border, they added.(PTI)

#### 3 Punt Guns Seized Near Wular Lake

Authorities on Saturday seized three punt guns from Saderkoot and Garoora villages in north Kashmir's Bandipora district. An official said that 3 punt guns which are being used by hunters to kill wetland birds were seized near the banks of Wular Lake. He said based on a tip off regarding the use of punt guns in Wular Lake for killing certain bird species, anti-poaching team raided several locations during which 3 punt guns were seized, however poachers fled from the spot. The official said a case under relevant sections of law has been registered and further investigation was going on—(KNO)

#### Delhi Records Coldest Night At 2.2°C

Delhi on Saturday recorded a minimum temperature of 2.2 degrees Celsius, five notches below the average and the season's lowest so far, according to the India Meteorological Department. Very dense fog reduced visibility at Palam to around 50 metres, affecting road and rail traffic. The visibility at the Palam observatory near the Indira Gandhi International Airport was 25 metres at 5:30 am. A Railways spokesperson said 36 trains were delayed by one to seven hours due to the foggy weather. According to the weather office, 'very dense' fog is when visibility is between 0 and 50 metres, 51 and 200 metres is 'dense', 201 and **More on P6**





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2

# Scholarships This Week

Kashmir Observer in association with Buddy4Study.com presents scholarships available for the meritorious students of Jammu and Kashmir.

## Scholarship Name 1: Philips Scholarship Program 2022-23

Description: Philips invites applications from students who are pursuing MBBS, BDS, Nursing, B.Pharm, BAMS, BHMS or any healthcare-related courses. The scholarship aims to support meritorious students from economically weaker families to pursue their education in the healthcare field.

Eligibility: Students pursuing courses such as MBBS, BDS, Nursing, B.Pharm, BAMS, BHMS or any healthcare-related courses (any year) are eligible. Applicants must have scored at least 70% marks in the Class 12 examination. The annual family income of the applicant must not be more than INR 6,00,000 from all sources.

- Prizes & Rewards: INR 50,000
- Last Date to Apply: 31-01-2023
- Application mode: Online applications only

tions only  
Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/PSP14](http://www.b4s.in/observer/PSP14)

## Scholarship Name 2: Reliance Foundation Undergraduate Scholarships 2022-23

Description: The Reliance Foundation Undergraduate Scholarships aim to support meritorious students from all corners of the country with an undergraduate college education, empowering them to continue their studies, become successful professionals and realize their dreams, unlocking their potential to lift themselves and their communities up and contributing towards India's future socio-economic development.

Eligibility: Students must be enrolled in 1st-year full-time undergraduate (UG) degree in any stream at a recognised Indian institute. Must have passed class 12 with a minimum of 60% marks



The annual household income should be less than INR 15,00,000 (preference will be given to those students whose family income is less than INR 2,50,000)

Open for resident Indian citizens only.

- Prizes & Rewards: Up to INR 2,00,000 over the duration of the degree
- Last Date to Apply: 14-02-2023
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/RFS6](http://www.b4s.in/observer/RFS6)

## Scholarship Name 3: Reliance Foundation Postgraduate Scholarships 2022-23

Description: The Reliance Foundation Postgraduate Scholarships aim to enable and propel India's future leaders who can think big, think green, think digital for the benefit of society.

Eligibility: Students who are enrolled in the first-year of postgraduation programmes in following streams can only apply for this scholarship:

Computer Science

Artificial Intelligence  
Mathematics and Computing  
Electrical and/or Electronics Engineering  
Chemical Engineering  
Mechanical Engineering  
Renewable and New Energy  
Material Science & Engineering  
Life Science

Must have secured 500 to 1,000 in the GATE examination

OR  
Must have scored 7.5 or above in their undergraduate CGPA (or % normalized to CGPA) [If students have not attempted GATE]  
Open for resident Indian citizen.

- Prizes & Rewards: Up to INR 6,00,000 over the duration of the degree
- Last Date to Apply: 14-02-2023
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/RFS7](http://www.b4s.in/observer/RFS7)

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

## Directorate of School Education Kashmir

Subject: Appointment of candidates on Compassionate grounds under SRO-43 of 1994.

### NOTIFICATION

It is notified for the information of all concerned that the compassionate appointment ease in terms of SRO-43 of 1994 of following candidates are under process in this Directorate. Any person having any sort of objection in this behalf shall submit the same in the Office of Chief Education Officer concerned or this Directorate within ten days from the date of publication of this notification. After the expiry of stipulated period, no claim what-so-ever will be entertained.

S. No	District	Applicant Name	Deceased Name
1	Anantnag	Faisal Nabi Dar S/o Ghulam Nabi Dar & Hassina Bano R/o Shala Tokuna Tehsil Awantipora, Anantnag	Hassina Bano deceased Teacher, MS Asthan Mohalla Seer Zone Mattan, Anantnag.
2	Kupwara	Peer Fayiz Ashraf S/o Peer Mohammad Ashraf R/O Ta-kiya Khurhama Lolab Lalpora Kupwara	Peer Mohammad Ashraf Deceased Master, BHSS Maidanpora, Kupwara.

Directorate  
of School Education  
Kashmir.

No: Estt-III/B-Trs/Misc-18/2021/ Paper-SRO/5825  
DIPK-16148/22  
DATED: 07-01-2023

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

## Office Of The Executive Engineer Mechanical Hospital And Central Heating Division Srinagar

(Tele-fax No: 019-2496089, e-mail id: [xenmhchdk@yahoo.in](mailto:xenmhchdk@yahoo.in))

Gist of e-NIT NO: MHCHD/TS/2022-23/190/e-tendering

Dated:-06.01.2023

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited from Authorized dealers of Suggested makes of Split ACs or Registered/ Reputed and experienced firms for the below mentioned work:-

Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees)	Time of completion (in days)	AAA	TS.NO	EMD Amount (Rs)
1 Supply, Installation, Testing Commissioning of Inverter type Hot and Cold (reversible ACs) at District Court Complex Moominabad, Srinagar. Providing and fixing of PVC Curtain Strips at various Doors and Main entrance of District Court Complex Moominabad, Srinagar.	2.478	200	10	7946-47/PDJS/Adm/2022, Dt: 28-12-2022 By Principal District & Session Judge, Srinagar.	6 MHCHD/TS/142 Dated 01/23	5,000/-
	0.738	100	05	7043/PSJS/Adm, Dated: 16-11-2022 By Principal District & Session Judge, Srinagar	31 of 01/2023 (AEE SD-3rd)	1500/-

- The Tender document Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) from 06.01.2023 (18.00 hrs).
- The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site from 07.01.2023 (10:00hrs) to 12.01.2023 (14:00 hrs) in two (02) cover.
- The bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on 12.01.2023 (16.00 hrs) or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar.

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
MHCHD, Srinagar

No: MHCHD/ TS/9321-25  
DIPK-16107/22

Dated: 07-01-2023

## Office Of The Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama.

### CANCELLATION NOTICE

It is notified for the information of all concerned that due to :

- A) No Respoen for the work Viz "Constt. Of covered Drain / lane from H/O Gh Mohd Bhat to H/O Gh Hassan Magray at Dangerpora B i/c Constt. Of lane from H/O GhMohi-Ud-Din Mir to H/O Gh Nabi Mir at Hyder Colony Payer Road Gund Hyder Dangerpora-B and constt of lane / drain from Alamdar MASjid to H/O Ab. Rasheed Dar at DANGERPORA -B MC PULWAMA." advertised vide this office NIT NO: E-NIT No: Fresh/356/14096-14106 /EEP/RNB/of 2022-23 Dated: 17-12-2022 figuring at Sr No 1 only
- B) Single tender response for the work Viz "Construction of lane from House of Mohammad Akbar Ganie to Shop of Nissar Ahmad Sofi Chatapora-A Municipal Council Pulwama" advertised vide this office NIT NO:360/EEP/RNB/of 2022-23/14218-28 Dated: 19-12-2022.

As such the said works / tenders are hereby cancelled and put to fresh tenders.

No: T-1/EEP/15403-08  
DIPK-16102/22

Dated: 07-01-2023

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
R&B Division Pulwama.



## Raja Ismail No More

We inform with profound grief the sad and sudden demise of Raja Ismail W/o Mohammad Ismail Tuman R/O Syed Colony Habak Srinagar in Delhi on Saturday. She was a noble soul. Her Nimaz-e- Jinaza shall be offered at Habak on Sunday morning. All are requested to pray for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Bereaved  
Gulzar Ahmad Tuman  
M Yusuf Tuman (Sons)  
Through Sameer Ahmad

SS

از نبیات سرگل نند پورہ تحصیل ناتھہ سرینگر

مضمون: درخواست منجانب سہ ماہیہ زوجہ مرحوم غلام محی الدین ماتو ساکنہ لشکری محلہ سرینگر بغرض ازرائی ڈیپنڈنٹ سرٹیفکیٹ ایجنسی نوٹیفکیشن 05-07-2022

اشہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص و عام۔

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں مسائل نے ایک درخواست پیش کی ہے جو زیر کارروائی ہے اس سلسلے میں پٹواری حلقے سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے سالک کا شوہر مورخہ 05-07-2022 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے۔ متواتر کی کتبہ بذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

مسماہ مریم زوجہ متوفی 40 سال گھریلو کام

الطاف حسین ماٹو پر متوفی 23 سال زیر تعلیم

گلزارہ فاطمہ دختر متوفی 22 سال زیر تعلیم

اشرت جان دختر متوفی 20 سال زیر تعلیم

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نائب تحصیلدار سرگل نند پورہ ناتھہ سرینگر inf

## اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی

یہ خیر انجمنی دکھ اور افسوس کے ساتھ دے جاتی ہے کہ اہلسید مجید جلالی ساکنہ غازی دوری علمگیری بازار سرینگر سنہ 07 جنوری 2023 کو اس دارالفانی سے رحلت کر گئی۔ اس سلسلے میں مرحوم کی اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی بروز سوموار 09 جنوری 2023 کو ان کے آبائی مقبرہ گلستان بابا حزاروا قلعہ علمگیری بازار صبح 7:30 پر انجام دی جائیگی۔ بعد ازاں تعزیتی مجلس ان کے گھر واقعہ غازی دوری نزدیک گورنمنٹ پارک علمگیری بازار میں دن برجاری رہے گی۔

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## Jammu & Kashmir Housing Board

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Jammu office  
A/D Block, Green Belt Park,  
Gandhinagar, Jammu.

Srinagar Office  
Habitat Centre Bernina Bye Pass  
Srinagar

### Online Demand Survey for Plots/Flats in Districts/Sub-Divisions of JKUT.

Jammu & Kashmir Housing Board intends to take up projects for Development of New Housing Colonies and Construction of flatted accommodation for General Public in Districts/Sub-Divisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory who don't possess any Residential House, Plot/Flat allotted by any State Government Agency.

- In this regard, an Online Demand Survey [without any commitment] is being conducted for allotment of Plots/Flats in the envisaged Composite Housing Projects complete with all the required infrastructure and amenities.
- The Jammu and Kashmir Housing Board shall launch the project only after receiving adequate demand/response from the interested stake holders and availability of land in these locations. The cost of individual Plots/flats will be intimated later on after announcement of the Scheme through the Advertisement and publishing of the "Scheme Brochure" on finalization of the Scheme.
- The online application form for the demand survey can be filled on official website <https://www.jkhu.in/surveyform.aspx> and <https://jkhousingboard.jk.gov.in> along with fee of Rs100/- (non-refundable/adjustable).
- Jammu and Kashmir, Housing Board reserves the right to abandon the Scheme/Demand Survey for the said projects without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

Last date for submitting online application form: 15.02.2023.  
Contact Nos: Jammu 0191-2431230. Srinagar: 0194-2950927.

DIPK-NB-5950/22  
dated: 07-01-2023

-Sd-  
Secretary  
J&K Housing Board,





## Anganwadi Workers Stage Protest Against HR Policy

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: The Anganwadi & ICDS workers on Saturday staged a protest at the Press Enclave against the recently approved HR policy by the administration for female Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Helpers working in the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) of J&K.

The protesting Anganwadi workers said according to the HR policy the retiring age of the workers has been set 60, besides there are some clauses of the order which are not in the interest of workers.

“We are being told those Anganwadi workers who have attained the age of sixty years should sit at home, the move is unjustified and uncalled for,” said an Anganwadi worker.

The protesting Anganwadi workers said whereas the retirement age for Anganwadi workers in New Delhi and Ladakh is 65 years, it is 60 years in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

They further said that after years of service, workers are being transferred from one ward to another.

“Our retirement age should be enhanced to 65 years to bring us at par with other Union Territories and status quo should be maintained with reference to our postings” they said.

The ICDS workers further said some decades back when they joined their duties, the number of malnourished children was much higher and the credit of improving the health scenario in Jammu and Kashmir goes to them.

However, they said, by approving the HR policy the admiration has not only failed in acknowledging their contribution but also put a question mark on their credibility.

Pertinently, the government in November this year approved the proposal of a comprehensive Human Resource Policy to govern the engagement, leaves, promotion and other important aspects of this very vital work force of the Social Welfare department.

## Papier Mâché Artist Trains Son To Keep Age-Old Craft Alive

Agencies

Srinagar: A highly talented Papier Mache artist from Srinagar has been working for the last four decades to keep the exquisite artwork alive.

Papier Mache artists are abandoning the craft in the face of low wages with the younger generation little interested in carrying forward the trade. But Hakeem Manzoor Ahmed of Ganai Doori Alamgari Bazar Srinagar is now training his son to keep the paper mache art alive.

Manzoor said that he was just 14-15 year old when he started learning this art from his elder brother who later abandoned it.

But Manzoor created a niche for himself by his unique papier mache products with different colour combinations.

“When this craft was in

decline, we got an offer to work at Jamia Masjid Charar e Sharief. People were surprised by our work and they started enquiring about us which opened doors for opportunity,” he said.

“Since then I have worked on multiple projects including Ziyarat Dastgeer Sahab, Shah Hamdan Shrine Tral, Masjid at Police Lines Batamalo, Khaqah-e-Moula, Naqshband Sahib shrine and currently we are about to start work at the shrine of Aishmuqam in Anantnag,” he said.

“Decorative items of papier mache items are more common. But the papier mache artwork that I do on walls is truly unique. This work is found in ancient masjids and religious shrines. Such colourful and wonderful work is also found in houseboats and houses of some affluent,” he added—(KNO)

## LCMA Convenes BPA Meeting, Decides 39 Cases On Merit

Observer News Service

Srinagar: : The J&K Lake Conservation & Management Authority (LCMA) on Saturday convened the 126th meeting of the Building Permission Authority (BPA) under the chairmanship of Dr. Bashir

Vice Chairman Dr J&K LCMA who is also the Chairman of BOCA has requested the people residing in the local jurisdiction of LCMA to apply for proper building permission through its BPA and obtain building permission before starting any sort of construction. Action against



Ahmad Bhat, Vice Chairman, LCMA at Miskeen Bagh Office Complex, Srinagar.

The agenda for the meeting presented by the member secretary was discussed threadbare and 39 cases were decided by the BPA on merits.

Among others, Chief Town Planner of Kashmir, Joint Commissioner (P) SMC, Secretary J&K LCMA, Executive Engineer Electric Inspection Division, Enforcement Officer J&K LCMA, representatives of Executive Engineer UEED Division 1st, and PHE, representatives of Collector J&K LCMA, Tehsildar Khanyar and Tehsildar Nazool attended the meeting.

In the meanwhile, the

illegal constructions shall be taken as per the law.

Meanwhile, the Enforcement Wing of LCMA today undertook a demolition drive in the areas of Baghwanpora Lal Bazar, Friends Colony Shalimar and Botanical Garden.

During the drive, two Single storeys, two Compound Wallings and one Wooden Shed was demolished/ removed. Moreover, illegally dumped earth filling in the area of the Botanical Garden was also removed on the spot. Further legal action against the violators was also initiated.

The Police Station Lal Bazar and Police Contingent from PCR were accompanying the Special Demolition drive.



## 82 Mutton Shops Sealed In City For Overcharging

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In view of complaints pouring in from various corners regarding overcharging by mutton sellers, the Enforcement Squad of Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) department sealed 82 mutton shops and imposed a fine of Rs 30,000 on 18 erring traders during

the preceding week.

The erring traders were sealed during the special drive launched in various areas of Srinagar City from 30 December, 2022 to 07 January, 2023.

Pertinently, during the month of January-2023 in the entire valley, an amount of Rs 80,700 has been collected as fine from 269 erring traders for violating E.C.Act. Besides, 59 establishments

also stand sealed.

Moreover, the Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) department erring has warned the erring lot to remain careful in future.

“The drive will continue in the same passion in future as well and whosoever is found violating the norms will be brought to justice. In case of any complaint, people may contact the

## General Body Meeting Of Zila Sainik Welfare Board Held

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, who is also the President Sainik Welfare Board today chaired Annual General Body Meeting of Zila Sainik Welfare Board here at Meeting Hall of the Zila Sainik Bhawan.

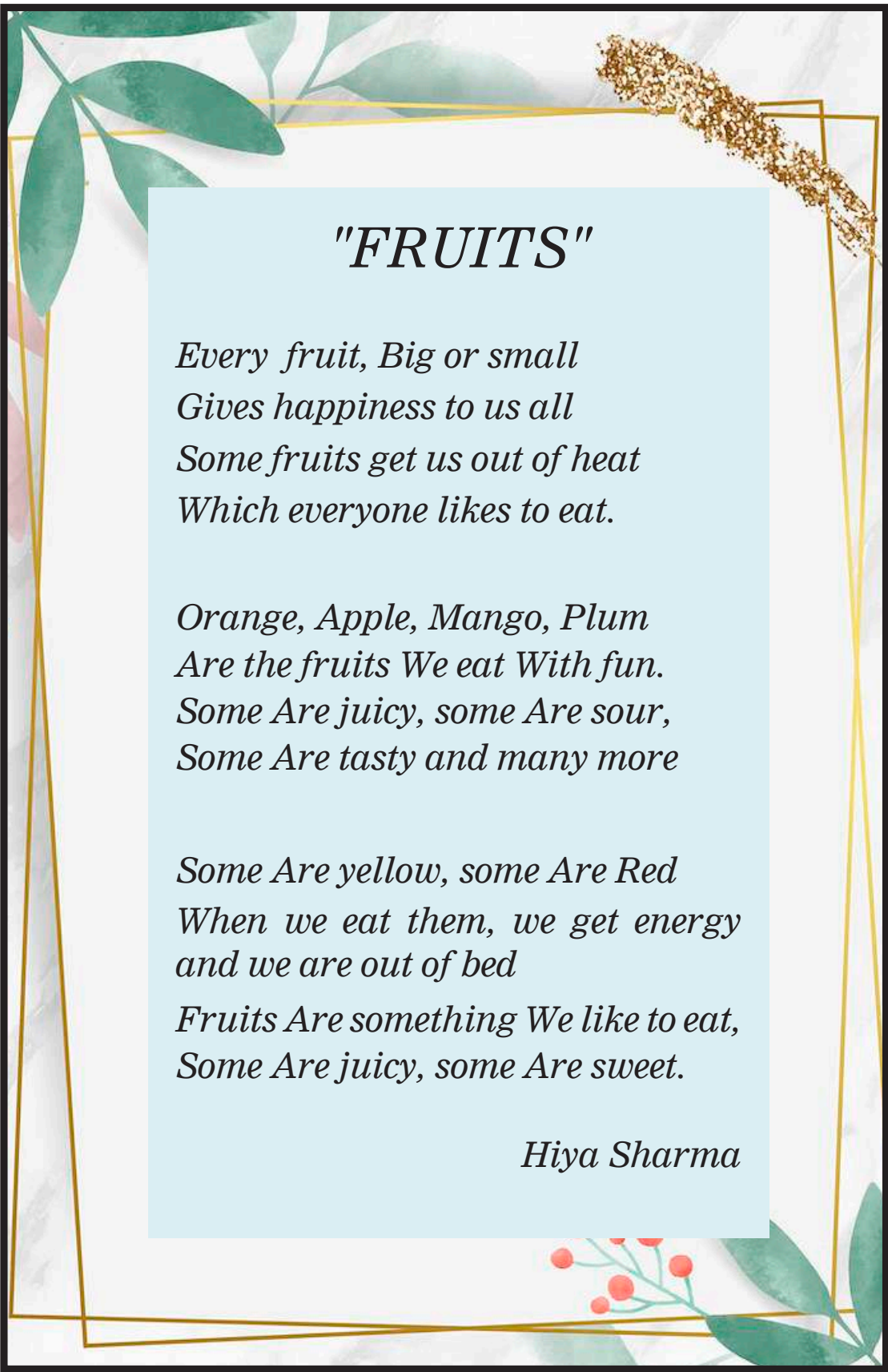
The meeting was attended by General Manager DIC, As-

sistant Commissioner Revenue, Assistant Labour Commissioner, Executive Engineer R&B, besides, senior Police Officers, Colonel veterans and Defence veterans.

At the outset, DC/President Sainik Welfare Board took a detailed review of the functioning of the Zila Sainik Bhawan, role and area of responsibility of the Sainik Board.

The DC held a detailed discussion regarding the issues related to the Ex-Servicemen (ESM), war widows (Veer Naris) and their dependents.

On the occasion, the DC said the District Administration will provide all required support to Zila Sainik Bhawan in order to further strengthen its functioning and infrastructure development.



- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200



### AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



### RAILWAYS

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



### HIGHWAY STATUS



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



**HIJRI**  
**CALENDAR**

15 Jumad al-Sani  
1444

### PRAYERS

FAJR	6:08
ZUHR	12:35
ASR	3:59
Magrib	5:42
ISHA	7:06

## This Day In History

- 871 - Battle of Ashdown: Ethelred of Wessex and his brother Alfred (the Great) beat invading Danish army
- 1297 - Monaco gains its independence.
- 1558 - French troops under Duc de Guise occupy Calais
- 1610 - Simon Marius, a German astronomer, independently discovers the first three moons of Jupiter one day after Galileo
- 1656 - Oldest surviving commercial newspaper begins (Haarlem, Netherlands)
- Music Premiere
- 1708 - Spanish armada headed by the San Jose and loaded with gold sunk after British squadron attacks off coast of Colombia (rediscovered 2015)
- 1745 - Britain, Austria, Netherlands & Saxony sign anti-Prussian Quadruple Alliance
- 1760 - Comet C/1760 A1 (Great comet) approaches within 0.0682 AUs of Earth.
- 1790 - 1st US President George Washington delivers 1st state of the union address
- 1800 - Austrians defeat French in Second Battle of Novi
- 1806 - Battle of Blaauwberg: British forces attack French vassal, the Batavian Republic near
- 1815 - Battle of New Orleans (War of 1812); the war had ended on 24th December 1814 but none of the combatants knew
- 1816 - Sophie Germain is the first woman to win a prize from the Paris Academy of Sciences for her paper on elasticity
- 1916 - WWI: ANZAC forces withdraw from the Gallipoli Peninsula after Ottoman forces successfully defend access to Constantinople
- 1917 - Austria-Hungarian troops conquer Forlani Italy
- 1926 - Abdulaziz Ibn Saud becomes King of Nejd and Hejaz; forerunner of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- 1940 - Britain's 1st WW II rationing (bacon, butter & sugar)
- 1952 - Jordan adopts constitution
- 1958 - Cuban revolutionary forces capture Havana
- 1959 - Charles de Gaulle inaugurated as president of France's 5th Republic
- 1973 - Secret peace talks between US & North Vietnam resumed near Paris

## From KO Archives

Probe Ordered

## 30 Injured In Prison Riots

Observer News Service

S RINAGAR- At least 30 people, including a deputy superintendent of jail, were injured in a clash between detainees and CRPF jawans in the high security Kotbawal jail near here today. A high-level en-qquiry has been ordered into the incident.

Trouble arose when jail of-ficials and CRPF personnel were inspecting one of the bar-racks housing foreign militants around 1100 hours. According to NAFA, CRPF and police had gone to the jail with sniffer dogs on receipt of some information'. A Pakistani militant identi-fied as Khawaja is reported to have entered into an argument with the police who subjected him to a summary thrashing. This at-tracted die attention of other detainees in the adjacent bar-racks. Around 50 of them, mostly foreigners came out and started shouting 'provocative' slogans.

Sensing trouble, the police and CRPF personnel resorted lathicharge which was re-sponded by the detainees with stone pelting. In the ensuing clash 36 detainees besides the deputy superintendent of po-lice, Harish Kotwal, were in-jured. Several visitors who had come meet their jailed relatives and some shopkeepers also started shouting slogans. They were chased away with some of them sustaining injuries in the process.

Later, a large number of visitors and shopkeepers sat on a dharna on the Akhnoor road and caused disruption in vehicular traffic. It was only after the CRPF commandant arrived at the spot that the situation was brought under control. He pacified the agitated inmates and the protesters and later reported the matter to the higher ups.

Taking a serious note of the incident, the director general of prisons, S S Ali, ordered a high level enquiry into it and asked the jail superintendent to submit a report immediately.

(Kashmir Observer, 08 January, 2001)



# Takeaways: High Performing Education Systems

Shahid Qureshi

“Any system that snatches the discretion from teachers and students, stops working. It is vital to put this autonomy back to the people on the spot. Contrary to these models, in most systems elsewhere, federal or provincial governments decide and dictate both curricular and operational aspects of academic business

Education is not a mechanical system or a manufacturing process where we could design an algorithm, automate a set of standardised operations involved and expect the quantity and quality of products on predictable lines. The fact is that education is a man-made system, an organic process which is more or less based on the principles of agriculture. The analogy intends to elucidate that there are conditions under which learners thrive and conditions under which they don't. Therefore, the culture in which students and teachers work is of foremost significance among many factors which determine the quality of education and its outcome.

Culture is an organic term. While the concept of quality is constantly evolving, some universal benchmarks of 'quality education' include ability to think critically, creatively and the application of knowledge and skills to meet real life challenges. It is imperative that the foundations of an education system be laid on the principles that create and support conditions under which children learn in an effortless and seamless fashion.

Many countries around the world have established their global reputation as the 'best education systems' of the world and have come to be frequently accepted as reference models in global policy discourses as educational stars for other countries to emulate.

For instance, since 2011 education reforms, Canada has emerged as an educational leader in international assessment rankings. A enviable story of the Canadian system has been its capacity to integrate large immigrant students into the system with the same performance outcomes as native Canadians. Similarly, the success of Singapore's 'Teach less, learn more' campaign together with the 'Thinking schools and learning nations' as well as the model of recruitment and retention of professionally competent teachers has raised Singapore to being one of the top performing education systems in the world.



Finland's education system too, which is widely acknowledged as one of the best systems in the world, climbed up the global ranking ladder in tandem with evidence-based reforms based on what has the greatest impact on teaching and learning. Finland regularly comes out at the top in science, maths and reading in PISA rankings. Finland's strong focus on personalised learning, school autonomy and a de-cluttered curriculum, has given students, teachers and flexibility to progress academically and professionally.

Quite noticeably, what all these high performing systems in the world be it Singapore, Canada, Finland or Shanghai do is not available in many other countries including India.

If we look closely, there are many shared features of these successful educational systems. The first is that these systems individualise teaching and learning. Personalised education is premised on the recognition of uniqueness of each child and the refutation of a one-size- fits-all approach. As children have unique biographies, the system has to engage with their individuality. These systems have a very broad approach to education with a very broad and diverse curriculum which offers much flexibility of choice to individual learners.

The third important feature of these systems is that they attribute a very high status to the teaching profession. This makes teaching a highly attractive career choice for talented people. No education system in the world can be better than its teachers. We can't improve education if we don't get talented people to teach, give them constant support, encouragement, appreciation and professional development.

Top-performing countries take

two different approaches to ensuring well-trained teachers. In Finland and Canada, the training is 'front-loaded' and teaching is an attractive profession. In Singapore, Japan and Shanghai, teachers are expected to improve throughout their career, and are assessed against teacher standards or descriptions.

Yet another feature of these systems is that they devolve responsibility to school levels. Educational institutions operate with a great deal of autonomy. A system based on trust that relies on professional expertise of teachers as against control through the top-down directives from federal or provincial governments. The system recognises that education doesn't occur in the meeting halls of the policymakers. It is transacted in classrooms. Its actual players are the teachers and the students.

Any system that snatches the discretion from teachers and students, stops working. It is vital to put this autonomy back to the people on the spot. Contrary to these models, in most systems elsewhere, federal or provincial governments decide and dictate both curricular and operational aspects of academic business.

Such systems also put less emphasis on standardised assessments. These encourage learners to come up with their own solutions to problems based on personalised curriculum. The high performing systems offer inspiration and guidelines to us. Policy makers back home can make inferences from practices of the successful systems and test their applicability within our context.

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

*The author is an educator by profession*

Twentieth-century political democracy was supposed to last forever. Though there were many variations of the British and the American models, the common thread that bound different democracies across the world was that governments were elected through the exercise of universal franchise. Almost all these democracies had economies driven by private capital and free markets. The threat to democracy was from the outside — the biggest one being socialism of some sort. This threat was considered more dangerous than dictators who assumed power after a military coup. This was because these dictators kept the economic structures intact and often allowed greater free play of international capital. A prime example of this was Chile in the 1970s. The socialist president, Salvador Allende, was overthrown and an authoritarian military dictator was installed with support from the Establishment in the United States of America. The economy did well in terms of corporate profits and national income while many people critical of the government were sent to jail, or went missing, never to be seen again.

In the twenty-first century, however, democracy has emerged as its own enemy. Governments elected through open elections have morphed into regimes that are described as illiberal democracies. The erosion comes from within the system. Institutions and processes that were the key players in a democracy began to get compromised and open to manipulations and ideological distortions by elected governments. There are many examples: the US, Turkey, Hungary, India, Brazil to name a few. These trends have triggered a variety of responses: is this the end of democracy? Is it a new system of government emerging? Is it just a temporary aberration?

To understand why democratic institutions and values have become vulnerable to attack from elected governments, it is important to know what makes democracies work in the first place. Democracy requires the voice of the people to be heard. Not just some particular voices but the voices of all citizens. Economic and social benefits are created and distributed amongst the population on the basis of the responses of the government to these voices. These benefits have to be perceived to be fairly distributed. Good governance has to be based on reason and responsibility.

This conception of good governance requires, in turn, a set of institutions that are nurtured and allowed to flourish — an efficient and responsive bureaucracy, an independent judiciary, a free media, and an open and critical academe. Without these, a good set of legislators may fail to govern, and an unresponsive set of legislators cannot be held accountable. This, in short, was the basic theory of democracy. The model of representative parliamentary democracy became popular and more



## Death From Within

Anup Sinha

commonly observed in the twentieth century.

The economic and social benefits that a good democratic government is supposed to deliver imply that over time citizens experience economic development and enjoy higher levels of material consumption as well as greater political freedoms and civil liberties. However, there is one serious difficulty here, germane to democracy. The essence of political freedoms and civil liberties rests on treating all citizens as equals; there is no difference between a rich business tycoon and an unemployed worker living on the streets. The difference between the business tycoon and the unemployed worker is fundamentally economic. On the economic front, outcomes are necessarily unequal. The system of private enterprise and markets makes someone rich and someone poor: luck and ability combine in determining fortunes.

As economic development and growth took place in the twentieth century, there appeared a tension between the inclusive responsiveness of the government to the needs and the demands of citizens and the demands of big business to grow unencumbered by government regulations. The result of this tension was a foregone conclusion: the political players who formed the government needed

big business to bankroll their election campaigns. Government interventions in markets and in the process of economic development became unfashionable. This was the crux of neoliberalism where open markets and free international trade were deemed essential to keep the world economy afloat.

As a result of this, during the last three decades, the ability of governments to remain responsive to people's demands and requirements became limited. Democracy's proverbial 'man on the street' changed too. The leaps made by technology made populations impatient and more self-centred. The smartphone generation cares little for others; it has a strong belief in technology when it comes to solving all problems; being technologically savvy gives its members a great deal of confidence to control their own destinies. Hence, their articulated need for government is much less than what was thirty years ago.

The explosion of material goods that has become part of everyday life brought about new problems. Academics have been warning us about irreparable environmental damage that would restrict the way we live and work and also jeopardise life on the planet. This set of problems requires new interventions and cooperation between govern-

ments and corporations never known before.

From the typical government's point of view, governing has become more and more complicated. New environmental challenges and acute problems associated with growing income and wealth inequalities require policies and interventions that would hurt some and benefit others. Profit-making would have to be redefined if the economy is to become sustainable. Complex technological connectivity has made the world more dangerous, with cyber crimes, pandemics, and terrorism adding to the problems of governance.

Twentieth-century democracy has made governability more difficult, bringing political openness and economic freedom under heavy stress. With an increasing number of people growing relatively poor, and another large segment of the population refusing to take its eyes off their cell phones, the easier option for governments was to keep political freedoms under check. This was one way of ensuring that governments had big business on their side while, politically, they could soften, stifle and silence voices of dissent.

To be able to do this effectively and systematically, governments have been changing the political narrative as much as possible. A sharp change in the narrative often serves to distract citizens from their immediate concerns. New narratives usually concentrate on the past, since the future is uncertain and complex. The past is glorified as an ideal society, and the historical evidence to that effect is concocted, or simply created through a set of lies. Another part of the changed narrative focuses on a common and easily identifiable enemy — usually a religious or racial minority or a migrant community — that is part of that society. These groups are supposed to represent a clear and immediate threat to the majority. This threat is used as a weapon to control the independence of judges, bureaucrats, journalists and academicians.

Openness itself becomes a threat to the political order. One does not have to be a revolutionary or a power-hungry military leader, anyone criticising the government is suspect and dealt with in a proper manner. The new narrative becomes the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Twenty-first-century democracy is not awaiting the revolutionary socialist bang on its door; rather, it is succumbing to a whimper of impotence from within.

*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*

*Anup Sinha is former Professor of Economics, IIM Calcutta*



# Virtues of Being ‘Correct’

Firdous Ahmad Mala

Authenticity, brevity and correctness are my A, B and C of academic excellence. These are among the several possible academic virtues one can aspire for. Absence of any of these is akin to being unworthy of being labeled academically sound and intellectually upright. Only the good and academically correct deserve acclaim and applause. One is supposed to be well-versed with the art and science of dotting all the “i”s and crossing all the “t”s in pursuit of academic excellence.

Take the example of the act of writing. It often happens that if we fail to express clearly what we intend to express, there will be many a slip between the cup and the lip. One does not and should not expect oneself to be popular with the listeners if one is bereft of the gift of gab or if one writes, but is not versed with the ingredients that bring about good and praiseworthy write ups.

As per Ruskin Bond, India is in danger of producing more writers than readers. This could be due to several possible reasons. These include the advent of self-publishing avenues and the access to a plethora of digital tools that simplify the art of writing. As a matter of fact, writing is becoming more of a mechanical process than the art of being able to express through the tongue that which lies in the heart. The sad part of the tale is the fact that despite the availability of accessible-writing-tools and a quantum of examples to learn from, many of us are still butter-fingered when it comes to writing. This is a very sad state of affairs.

Regarding speaking, one who speaks and knows not what or how to speak makes others loathe and detest the practice of lending one’s ears to others.

Irresponsible speeches can be disastrous to say the least. In the words of Napoleon Hill, “Think twice before you speak, because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of another.” Speaking ad nauseam is very likely to do more harm than any good.

In the words of Dorothy Sarnoff, “Make sure you have finished speaking before your audience has finished listening.”

Regarding the exercise of power, one must be wise enough to know that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Misuse of power and making the irrational overpower the rational is never long-lasting. Correctness, rationality and being sensible apply equally to all, irrespective of being in power or being subjugated. As per Patricia Cornwell, abuse of power is the root of all evil. Correctness vis-à-vis power means being just, kind, understanding and rational.

Apart from the endeavors of writing, speaking and exercising one’s power, it is almost evident that for all other endeavors, correctness is a prerequisite.

The importance of being correct is difficult to overemphasize. In the words of Stephen Jay Gould, “A man does not attain the status of Galileo merely because he is persecuted; he must also be right.”

*The author is an Assistant professor, Govt. Degree College Sopore and can be reached at firdousmala@gmail.com*



**AS A MATTER OF FACT, WRITING IS BECOMING MORE OF A MECHANICAL PROCESS THAN THE ART OF BEING ABLE TO EXPRESS THROUGH THE TONGUE THAT WHICH LIES IN THE HEART.** The sad part of the tale is the fact that despite the availability of accessible-writing-tools and a quantum of examples to learn from, many of us are still butter-fingered when it comes to writing

## ‘A TOUGH LITTLE SPARROW’: How a ring helped me grieve my mother

Jane Ratcliffe

At the tail-end of a social media distraction scroll, I stared at my computer, transfixed. There on my Instagram feed was the perfect signet ring: atop a gold band rested the engraved emblem of a sparrow perched on a branch looking blissfully over its shoulder. Its quiet contentment stirred in me a sense of hope I hadn’t felt in quite a while. I wanted that ring. I needed that ring.

And then I realised it already belonged to me.

The jeweller had posted a picture of it on their page nearly a year and a half after I’d designed it and brought it home. Over the next few days, like a teenager, I found myself returning to the post to see how many hearts it had racked up. I felt embarrassingly proud that my little sparrow was faring well.

But amidst the oohs and ahs were people asking to purchase it – and the jeweller instructing them to contact the shop for a quote. I was astounded. This was my ring. With my design. To honour my mother. Could the jeweller legally offer her to the world? If so, was I prepared to share my mom?

I’d long wanted a pinky signet ring. They’re so English. My parents grew up in London during World War II; I have dual citizenship and fancy myself more a Brit than an American, especially as of late.

My mother died of thyroid cancer in her late eighties, but her body had been giving out on her in so many ways for so long. Her last decade had been hard, though she rarely let on.

After her death, my dad, niece, and I went to London to sprinkle her ashes on her mother’s grave. While there, I wanted to find a pinky ring as a remembrance to her.

A month before we were set to leave, I scouted out stores online we could dash into. I wasn’t expecting much. But up popped one link and my breath caught short. Each ring was handmade and engraved by master craftsmen who’d honed their ancient trade the old school way by apprenticeship. The jewellery was elegant, timeless, substantive; I could conjure the weight of one on my hand and knew this was my ring.

My mom and I had had a tender but complicated relationship. When



I was five or six, my mother – red lipstick, Chanel No 5, diamond studs – let me know that the reason she’d given birth to me was so that she would never be alone.

“We’ll always be best friends,” she’d said firmly, kneeling beside me.

In part, I was delighted: I was her treasure. In part, even at such a young age, I felt tremendous pressure. How could I shine brightly enough to fill up this wondrous being’s whole life?

“What if I let you down?” I queried, my eyes, as mom liked to say, as big as saucers.

“Oh, love,” she said, “you could never let me down.”

As I grew older, her refrain transfigured slightly into, “Isn’t our relationship wonderful? So many mothers and daughters don’t have this.”

What it was we had wasn’t clear, yet questioning it risked defiling my whole purpose. It wasn’t until I was much older that I realised how angry this agreement made me – as if I needed to earn my mother’s attention by bestowing attention upon her.

For much of my life, I kept this simmering fury from my conscious mind, but I realise now it informed nearly all our interactions. Whether conjured or genuinely present, I found the expectations draining. I felt my mom wanted too much from me, wanted to be part of my life in a way that was too intimate for my comfort level, wanted to tell me things about her life, including her

relationship with my dad, that as her daughter I didn’t want to hear.

In an effort not to buckle from the pressure I did my best to generate a forcefield of emotional-distancing armour that allowed me to be the good daughter we both wanted while keeping some semblance of myself intact.

My visit that summer to the jewellers I’d found online took me to Leather Lane in Hatton Garden, London’s jewellery district. Narrow and winding, more like an alley with trappings of an outdoor market, it reminded me of the Lower East Side in the early eighties. My mind wandered back to when my parents would visit me there. People living in cardboard boxes lined the streets then. My mom would stop and talk to each of them. She would hold their hands, ask questions about their lives, listen deeply to their answers, then give everyone a hug goodbye. It took forever to get down the street.

The jewellers’ storefront at the time was small, barely big enough to swing a cat, as my cockney grandmother would say. In the backroom, I slipped various sizes and shapes of rings from the velvet trays onto my finger. They were even weightier than I imagined. There were few things my mom loved more than jewellery and I felt her there thrilling over my shoulder.

Next, I met with the engraver who sketched out a sparrow from a photo I’d brought along, his workbench gloriously strewn with various worn

clamps, scrapers and chisels. When coming up with the design, I’d closed my eyes to connect with my mom and the first thing I saw was a sparrow.

I wasn’t surprised I’d conjured a bird, my mother loved them. As far back as I can remember she cared

kept in their back garden, who regularly wandered into the house. My mother had loved her. The youngest of nine children, her brothers were off at war, her brothers-in-law had been taken prisoner and most of her sisters were involved in the war effort. There was the Blitz, the rations, a father who drank too much and a mother who wore her teeth to nubs trying to keep her family safe. I imagine her a lonely child, finding comfort from the merry strut of Sally Ann. No wonder she desired the guarantee of a best friend.

It took several weeks to complete my ring and once I slipped it on, I never wanted to take it off. I realised that more than a remembrance, my grief had taken the shape of this tiny bird. There’s nothing regal or elegant about the chubby little brown feathered ave that’s now permanently perched atop my finger.

It’s not the sort of bird that usually graces an expensive trinket – but its friendly, communal manner is true to my mom’s spirit, the spirit that tended to the unhoused people in New York back in the day.

“A month before we were set to leave, I scouted out stores online we could dash into. I wasn’t expecting much. But up popped one link and my breath caught short. Each ring was handmade and engraved by master craftsmen who’d honed their ancient trade the old school way by apprenticeship. The jewellery was elegant, timeless, substantive; I could conjure the weight of one on my hand and knew this was my ring

for them, the birdfeeders in our yard blossoming from one to three to seven or eight, plus a heated birdbath. Their songs and antics delighted her.

Every day, one of the feeders needed filling and, no matter the weather, she scurried outside, scooped in seeds from a huge tub in the garage, then reverentially hung them back in place. When I lived in Manhattan, she’d call to tell me what “her” birds were up to, and when I was home for a visit, she would cajole me into feeding them alongside her.

She’d long shared stories of Sally Ann, one of the chickens her family

The spirit that tended to so many others through her volunteer work and simply how she lived her life. Everywhere she went she “adopted” people: church, Kroger’s, her manicurist, neighbours, my friends, even the garage attendant on a holiday in London who was so taken with her he bought her a Union Jack bell as a parting gift.

As she grew older her eyesight and hearing worsened, so she would stand close, her hand resting on their arm, asking all her questions and leaning close enough that her eyelashes nearly fluttered their cheek as

she listened to their answers. People lit up in her presence.

In many ways, I did, too. Generous beyond measure, she was always keen to treat me to that special something I couldn’t swing for myself – be it a cosy sweater or pocket money for a trip. Every Easter in Manhattan friends flocked to my apartment as I opened the massive box of chocolate turtles, jellybeans, and homemade pumpkin bread my mother sent. I could call her any time of day or night and often she was expecting me; she seemed to intuit key moments of my life.

When she was alive, so much of her goodness had been buried beneath the exhausting bargain to complete her life. Now I could appreciate the beauty of her love without feeling like she needed my energy to survive. She was just lonely, too. This gentle sparrow became a reminder I was a beloved daughter not just someone’s promised companion.

And now the jewellers wanted to allow others to have a piece of the mother I was just growing to properly appreciate, a piece of my grief. My initial impulse was to shoot them an email, instructing them they couldn’t sell my design. But I waited a few days and kept counting hearts. I also kept filling my birdfeeder following the routine my mom had imprinted. The feeder was the first gift my parents gave me when I left Manhattan to be closer to them – both in their eighties and my mom well into her health struggles – and bought my first home in Michigan. Dressed in my Boggs and J Crew parka, my version of my mom’s Uggs and Burberry duffel, I felt her spirit move inside me – both of us most content when the birds are fed and their birdbath full.

In the end, I simply made a comment on the jewellers’ post thanking them for their beautiful work. I claimed the ring as mine but didn’t try to prevent others from owning it too. Now I imagine my tough little sparrow perched on fingers across the world and it delights me. Of course, the wearer wouldn’t know any of this – not consciously, at least – but my mom would be there nonetheless, adopting each of them as a welcome member of her flock.

*The article was originally published by Al Jazeera*



# Court Refuses Police Custody Of Man Arrested For Urinating On Co-Passenger On AI Flight, Says 'Go By Law'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi:** A Delhi court on Saturday sent Shankar Mishra, accused of urinating on a woman co-passenger on an Air India flight, to judicial remand for 14 days while rejecting a plea by police for his custody.

"Just because there's public pressure, don't do this. Go by the law," Metropolitan Magistrate Anamika said after the police sought Mishra's remand for three days for custodial interrogation on the grounds that he was required to be identified by three cabin crew members, two captains and other co-passengers, who were also to be examined.

The court passed the order to send Mishra to judicial remand, noting that his custody was not needed for recording the statements of other witnesses and they can be quizzed in his absence.

Meanwhile, it posted for January 11 the consideration of the bail application of the accused.

"Considering all the reasons stated above... PC is not required for recording the statement of witnesses. They can be interrogated in his absence. Statements can be recorded, and there is no



requirement of his PC," the court said.

It noted that on the basis of the evidence, the accused prima facie did not cooperate in the investigation.

"Perusal of records shows that the accused was deliberately avoiding joining of investigation. In order to make further investigation, recording of statements of crew members, recording

statements, his custody is not required," the magistrate said.

During the arguments, the court asked the police why it required his custody.

"He is not required for others' questioning, TIP (Test Identification Parade). Everything is known. Why his custody is required? Nobody else is to be arrested. There is no ground for PC," the court said.

On the court's query whether the police were expecting any co-accused in the case, the agency submitted that the cabin crew did not handle the situation and that they were also "complicit in the alleged offence".

Custodial interrogation is required for his identification by three cabin crews, two captains, and other co-passengers, who are also to be examined, police

told the court.

Advocate Manu Sharma, appearing for the accused, opposed the police plea, saying, "A lot of noise has been made. Even if the incident is taken as true, all the offences my client is accused of areailable."

The police, meanwhile, refused to hand over a copy of the FIR to an advocate appearing for the complainant, saying the "case has been so viral, we do not want to give a copy of the complaint to anyone but the complainant".

After the judge passed the order, the counsel for the accused sought bail, contending that since he was not required for interrogation, there was no need to keep him in custody.

The metropolitan magistrate said the bail application will be considered on January 11.

Bengaluru police had assisted Delhi police in arresting Shankar Mishra from Sanjay Nagar area in the city. Mishra allegedly urinated on the woman, a senior citizen, in an inebriated condition in the business class of the Air India flight from New York to Delhi on November 26 last year. The Delhi Police registered an FIR against him on January 4 on a complaint given by the woman to Air India.

## Bharat Jodo Yatra Passes Through Karnal, Rahul Gandhi Also Watches Kabaddi Match

Press Trust of India

**Karnal:** The Congress' Bharat Jodo Yatra passed through Haryana's Karnal district Saturday with scores of people, including Olympic medalist boxer Vijender Singh and senior party leaders Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Randeep Singh Surjewala, joining the Rahul Gandhi-led march.

The Yatra entered the district in the morning from neighbouring Panipat. It halted in Indri here for the night before moving to the Kurukshetra district Sunday morning.

The Kanyakumari to Kashmir march covered over 130 km in its first leg in Haryana from December 21 to 23, passing through Nuh, Gurugram and Faridabad districts. It re-entered Haryana on Thursday evening from Uttar Pradesh.

In the evening, Gandhi watched a Kabaddi match here with senior leaders including Bhupinder Singh Hooda, K C Venugopal, Kumari Selja, and Deepender Singh Hooda accompanying him. The former Congress president later attended a 'havan' organised by the Ror community here.

Earlier in the day, Gandhi also interacted with a group of prominent sportspersons.

Hooda claimed that the Yatra was getting overwhelming support from the public, including farmers, labourers

and traders.

When asked about reports of infighting in the Haryana unit of the party, Hooda told reporters, "There is no infighting, the Congress is one."

To a question if the senior leaders who left the party between 2014 and 2019 would be eager to return to the fold after seeing the response the Bharat Jodo Yatra received, he replied, "The Congress is a sea, people keep coming and going."

At this point, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh intervened and said that 17 leaders rejoined the party in Jammu and Kashmir. "They had gone on a two-month leave. One of them has been a deputy chief minister and one was the state unit chief. All returned. You will see this in other states too."

Asked about the possibility of Ghulam Nabi Azad will returning to the Congress, Ramesh said, "If he wants 'Dil ki Azadi and Mann ki Azadi (freedom of heart and mind) then he will definitely return.'"

Notably, 17 leaders of the newly formed Democratic Azad Party (DAP) in Jammu and Kashmir, including former deputy chief minister Tara Chand and ex-Pradesh Congress Committee chief Peerzada Mohammad Sayeed, on Friday returned to the Congress.

## Over 100 Ex-Civil Servants Seek Action Against BJP MP Pragma Thakur for 'inflammatory remarks'

Press Trust of India

**New Delhi:** Over 100 former bureaucrats on Saturday sought action against Pragma Thakur, the BJP Lok Sabha member from Bhopal, over her alleged inflammatory speech in Karnataka, claiming it "fomented hate against non-Hindu communities".

In an open letter, they said Thakur has forfeited the ethical right to be a Member of Parliament with her incendiary speech and repeated propagation of hate.

"A particular responsibility devolves on the Houses of

Parliament which make laws for the country. Surely its members cannot be permitted to violate the principles of the Constitution?"

"We therefore urge the honourable Speaker of the Lok Sabha to take immediate action to refer the matter to the Committee of Ethics of the Lok Sabha for such action as may be deemed appropriate," it said.

Thakur had on December 25 in Shivamogga said Hindus have the right to respond to those who attack them and their dignity as she spoke about the killing of Hindu activists. Speaking at the

Hindu Jagarana Vedike's southern region annual convention, she had also told the gathering to give a befitting reply to anyone who "infiltrates our house."

Though Thakur appears to have cleverly chosen her words to avoid criminal charges being made against her, the disguise is only a thin one, the former bureaucrats' letter said. "She is obviously fomenting hate against non-Hindu communities, and advocating violence against them."

Former Lieutenant Governor of Delhi Najeeb Jung, ex-foreign secretary Shivshankar Menon, former Indian Police Service

(IPS) officers A S Dulat, Julio Ribeiro, and Amitabh Mathur, and ex-Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers T K A Nair and K Sujatha Rao are among 103 signatories to the letter written by the collective 'Constitutional Conduct Group'.

They said that by her "incendiary words", Thakur has not only committed several offences under the Indian Penal Code, but has also violated the oath taken by her as Member of Parliament to uphold the Constitution of India, which is premised upon the rights to life and liberty, secularism, equality, and fraternity.

## SC Concludes Its First 'Hackathon'

Press Trust of India

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Saturday concluded its first 'hackathon' event to identify innovative ideas and explore practical propositions for refining and bringing in efficiency in the existing process -- from filing to listing -- of judicial matters.

The event was part of the process to enhance the organisational practices and usher in reforms in the Registry and saw the participation of members of the Supreme Court Bar Association, Members of the Supreme Court Advocates-on-record Association, officers of the Registry and other stakeholders.

"Suggestions/innovative ideas were invited online from

the stakeholders/duty holders.

"Suggestions received during Hackathon touched upon refining the current operational framework relating to filing and listing and leveraging technology at various levels of processing judicial files in the Supreme Court of India," a release said.

The Screening-cum-Selection Committee evaluated the suggestions given by the applicants on various parameters, and 18 candidates were selected by the Committee to give presentation demonstrating their vision as to how their proposition may be effectively implemented and how it would improve the processes from filing to listing.

Reflecting on the suggestions received, Justice Kaul said that

inputs have provided substantive insights with regard to reforms in the processes and use of technology for better output.

"His Lordship highlighted the peculiar features of filing and listing in the Supreme Court of India, and emphasized the importance of having an effective system in place."

"The participants during their presentations gave innovative ideas and discussed various aspects relating to E-filing, use of Artificial Intelligence, simplifying categorization of cases, use of Q.R. Codes for better processing of files, scrutiny processes and effective mentioning through the use of technology etc," the release said.

### CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

## Govt Hands

weapons and said village-wise training programmes would be organized for the VDGs after the weapons are distributed.

He also urged them to work for the safety and security of the people in the area.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has started reissuing weapons to the VDGs, earlier known as Village Defence Committees, following the Dangri incident.

## 18 Detained As Search

is going on and "some vital leads" have been found, they said and expressed hope that the case would be cracked soon.

The six civilians were killed and several injured when the terrorists attacked the village on January 1. While four were killed when the terrorists fired on the houses belonging to the members of a particular community, two cousins sisters lost their lives in an IED explosion the next day. The improvised explosive device (IED) was planted by the terrorists at the house of one of the victims.

"The investigation of the terror attack is going in the right direction. So far, a dozen-and-a-half suspects, including some women, have been detained for questioning," an official said.

Additional Director General of Police, Jammu zone, Mukesh Singh is monitoring the investigation, which is being conducted by senior officers under the supervision of the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Rajouri-Poonch range, Haseeb Mughal.

"Some vital leads have been found that suggest the presence of terrorists in some villages near Rajouri town," the official said.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Rajouri, Mohammad Aslam confirmed the detention of at least 18 suspects.

"We have received some vital leads and are working on those to crack the case. An operation is on to neutralise the terrorists involved in the attack," the officer said, refusing to divulge any further details.

## LG Meets Injured

Rohit Sharma, Pawan Kumar and medical procedures being followed, an official spokesperson said.

The LG, he said, also met the family members and assured all possible assistance. He directed the Hospital Administration for ensuring the best possible medical care and assistance for their speedy recovery.

## Ladakh Parties

However, the statement said that the meeting resolved that both the bodies will agree to participate in any meeting headed by a committee which is empowered to discuss the four issues

in question, including statehood for UT Ladakh, Constitutional Safeguard under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India, formation of Public Service Commission and Reservation of Jobs for youth of Ladakh, besides creation of two separate parliamentary constituencies for Leh and Kargil.

"The meeting further strongly objected to the composition of members of the High-Powered Committee representing Leh APEX Body and KDA as the government has arbitrarily excluded and included members without consultation with the APEX Body and the KDA," the handout reads.

The two bodies, as per the statement, also resolved in the meeting that the agitation for the resolution of the four issues shall continue till our genuine demands are fulfilled.

"In this connection, the APEX and KDA propose to have a protest rally at Jammu on the 15th of January followed by Dharna Protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on 3rd week of February 2023. It may also be clarified that both the bodies have decided to intensify the agitation during 2023," it said.

The statement further said that the meeting further resolved that the government should include all the names as proposed by Leh Apex and KDA body in the year 2021 as per Home Ministry's instruction.

From Apex body, Thiksey Rinpoche, Thupstan Chhewang Ex Member of Parliament of Ladakh, Tsering Dorje Lakruk, Acharya Stanzin Wangtak President LGA Leh, Nawang Rigzin Jora, Ex Minister J&K, Ashraf Ali Barcha, President Anjuman Imamia and Dr. Abdul Qayum, President Anjuman Moin-ul-Islam have been named.

Similarly, from KDA Qamar Ali Akhone Ex. Minister, Asgar Ali Karbalai Ex MLA, Sajad Hussain Kargili Representative Jamiat Ulema Isna Asharia, Sheikh Bashir Shakir, Vice Chairman IKMT Kargil, Agha Syed Ahmad Rizvi Anjuman Sahab Zaman, Agha Syed Mohammad Shah Anjuman Noorbakshia, Haji Ghulam Nabi Var Anjuman e Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat and Skarma Dadul, Ladakh Buddhist Association Kargil have been named.

## Mercury Up

The cold wave continues even after that with a 20-day-long 'Chilla-i-Khurd' (small cold) and a 10-day-long 'Chilla-i-Bachha' (baby cold) following it.

## G20 Summit:

high level committee for overall coordination in connection with hosting of G-20 meetings in J&K in 2023.

J&K's housing and urban development department principal secretary was appointed chairman of the committee which was formed

in response to a June 4 communication from the Ministry of External Affairs.

Four other members included Commissioner Secretary (Transport), Administrative Secretary (Tourism), Administrative Secretary (Hospitality and Protocol) and Administrative Secretary (Culture).

This will be the first major international summit to be held in Jammu and Kashmir after the erstwhile state's special status guaranteed under Article 370 of the Constitution was withdrawn and it was divided into two union territories in August 2019.

G20 brings together 19 of the world's leading economies and the European Union, with its members accounting for more than 80 per cent of global GDP, 75 percent of global trade and 60 percent of the global population, according to the MEA.

The G20 member nations are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

## Most KP Employees

employees and stopped salaries of those who did not return to work.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir police stated that work was going on to expeditiously complete transit accommodations for the Kashmiri Pandit employees posted in the Valley.

"The government has reserved 6,000 jobs for the Kashmiri Pandits under the Prime Minister employment package. The selection process is almost complete and 6,000 flats are being raised at 17 places in Kashmir for them," a police officer said.

"We have tried to establish these accommodations near main roads and not in the interiors. However, this also depends on the availability of government land," he said.

Pole said while police personnel will be deployed for the security of these accommodations, preference has been given to set up these flats near CRPF camps so that the occupants feel a sense of security and protection.

He said the compounds for Kashmiri Pandit employees will have other facilities like mini hospitals, anganwari centres and fair price retail shops.

While 600 flats for the employees are already operational, another 500 will be completed by March-end. The total number of flats is expected to go up to 2,000 by June this year.

"Till now, 600 flats are completed at Vessu (Kulgam) and Sheikhpora (Budgam) area. Prefabricated huts have been provided at Natnusa and Veerwan in Baramulla. By March

2023, nearly 500 flats will be completed and in June 2023, we are expecting the completion of 2,000 flats," the divisional commissioner added.

Even as the administration asserts that the employees from the community have nothing to fear in the Valley, political parties maintain that a sense of security among the minority community members was as important as physical security.

"It is not about one-room or two-room apartments. The government thinks that providing accommodation will resolve the entire issue about Kashmiri Pandits, but that is not the case. The government has to build a sense of security and confidence among the Kashmiri Pandits," PDP spokesman Mohit Bhan said.

He said the Kashmiri Pandit employees came back to the Valley in 2010 to restore the community's essence and culture.

"Unfortunately, since 2019, we have seen incidents of target killings of minorities. When regional parties were governing Jammu and Kashmir, not a single Kashmiri Pandit was harmed during agitations like in 2010 and 2016. Now, they are losing trust in the security establishment," he added.

National Conference spokesman Imran Nabi Dar echoed similar views.

"Primarily, the government has to give the employees a sense of security which it has failed. Otherwise, why are they protesting in Jammu for the past so many days? They are not ready to come back as they do not feel secure enough," he said.

BJP spokesman Altaf Thakur had a different take to offer on the issue.

"The biggest security for the Kashmiri Pandits are the majority Muslims living in the Valley..." he said.

Thakur said security forces are capable enough to fight against terrorists and provide adequate security to the Kashmiri Pandits.

"... The KPs should come back. They should not surrender before the hollow threats of terrorists as the motive of these Pakistan-sponsored ultras is that the Kashmiri Pandits should not come back (to the Valley)," he added.

## Azad Puts Up

Tara Chand and former JKPC chief Peerzada Mohammad Sayeed, rejoined the Congress in Delhi.

He said the leaders who have left his party "will face worse in their own constituencies, god willing".

Azad said he has not come to J-K relying on leaders, but has come for the people.

"I have come here after seeing your miseries, your troubles. I have come back after seeing the

poverty, unemployment.

"Our people are living in an atmosphere of fear. When will someone be arrested, no one knows, when will people's land, building or house be snatched, there is no guarantee. No leader or political party raises voice against it. So, I left everything to come here," he said.

The former J-K chief minister said there is no corner of the country or Jammu and Kashmir which he has not visited and where he has not helped the people.

He said he has the courage as well as the "acquaintance and influence" to use that for the betterment of the people of J-K.

"People tell me that I have done 10 times the developmental work than I remember at a particular place. And when I left everything to come here, you also gave me 10 times the love and affection. I do not have any wealth, but I have programmes. I have the courage, I have the acquaintance, the influence, which I can use for the betterment of this state, for the employment of its youth," Azad said.

## MHA Declares

the leading radical voices on social media and is involved in nefariously influencing Kashmiri youth to take up arms against the Indian government and security forces.

The MHA further said that Dr. Asif Maqbool Dar is accused in a case investigated by the National Investigating Agency relating to a conspiracy hatched by the cadres of the terrorist organization to undertake violent terrorist acts in Jammu and Kashmir and major cities in India including New Delhi on the direction of handlers based across the border.

Dr. Asif Maqbool is the 52nd person to be declared as a terrorist under the UAPA--(KNO)

## Delhi Records

500 metres 'moderate', and 501 and 1,000 metres 'shallow'.

The Safdarjung observatory, Delhi's primary weather station, logged a minimum temperature of 2.2 degrees Celsius.

Lodhi Road, Ayanagar and Ridge weather stations recorded minimum temperatures of 2 degrees Celsius, 3.4 degrees and 1.5 degrees, respectively.

The humidity at 8:30 am was recorded at 100 per cent, the IMD said.

The weather department has predicted mainly clear skies, moderate to dense fog and cold day conditions during the day. The maximum temperature is likely to settle around 16 degrees Celsius. (PTI)

## Board Announces

directed to conduct the exams in the Month of April--(KNO)



## WINTER WOES

## Surge In Respiratory Infections Linked To Spike In Heart Attacks, Strokes: DAK

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Saturday said surge in respiratory infections during winter puts people at higher risk of heart attacks and strokes.

"If you catch respiratory infection, you are at increased risk of having a heart attack or stroke," said DAK President and Influenza expert Dr Nisar-ul-Hassan in a statement.

Dr Hassan said as winter sets in, cases of respiratory infections increase. The surge in respiratory infections has been linked to spike in heart attacks and strokes during winter months.

He said a study conducted at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has found strong evidence that recent respiratory infections increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

The researchers found that the risk of both heart attack and stroke doubled in the week following respiratory infection.

The risk is particularly high

among elderly and those with underlying heart conditions.

The DAK President said respiratory infection causes acute and severe inflammation that builds up fat deposits in the inner walls of blood vessels. These fat deposits dislodge and get stuck in heart or brain, where they block the blood flow.

"Infection activates blood cells and clotting system leading to increased risk of blood clots," he said.

Dr Nisar said the number of heart attacks and stroke patients in Kashmir doubles in winter and respiratory infection is a major factor.

"The risk is similar to the risk seen for other known risk factors, such as high blood pressure, diabetes or smoking," he said.

"Preventing respiratory infections by vaccinating people against influenza and pneumococcus will help reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes during wintertime," he added.

## BJP Will Destroy Country's Constitution: Mehbooba

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** The BJP will destroy the country's Constitution and replace the tricolour with a saffron flag, former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti said on Saturday.

Speaking at a function to mark the seventh death anniversary of her father and former Union home minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, the PDP chief also said no country can win a war against its own people.

"He (Sayeed) had this belief that even if a country was powerful, it cannot win a war against its own people. Had this not been true then America would not have withdrawn from Vietnam, or Bangladesh would not have separated from Pakistan," she said at the event in Bijbehara area of south Kashmir's Anantnag.

Mufti attacked the BJP, saying it will replace the country's national flag with a saffron flag.

"We want to tell the people of our country that the BJP, which eroded our constitution in 2019, will destroy the constitution of this country in the time to come. They (BJP) snatched our flag, and in the times to come, they will snatch the Tiranga for which the people of the country gave their blood. They will replace the Tricolour with a saffron flag," the PDP president said.

She said the BJP has not only eroded J-K's constitution, but has also "bulldozed" the constitution of India. "By abrogating (Article) 370, they eroded the country's constitution as well," she added.

There was a time when a court ruled against then prime minister Indira Gandhi, Mufti said, adding, "Today, our chief justice says the courts are afraid of granting bail. You have to see the difference. Then a court ruled against a PM, now they are afraid of granting bail to innocents."

Similarly, she said, when riots took place, the media used to question the government, but today, the media is "afraid".

"If today's media would have talked, then Stan Swamy would not have died in the jail. The media would have seen how J-K has

become a military garrison. There are troops everywhere," she said.

The PDP president said the party does not have any differences with the Army and they have done their job, but asked if the situation had improved, then why not send the troops back to barracks.

"If the BJP says that the situation in J-K has improved, then send the troops back to barracks. Then AFSPA should be withdrawn. However, you are doing quite the opposite. You are bringing more troops, you are arming the people here. How will this work?"

"Which India are you trying to make? This is not the India which Sayeed used to talk about. His face used to light up when he used to talk about India," she said.

He said many people ask if Sayeed would have been alive, what would he have done?

"Had he been there, then his heart would have broken. This is not his India. This is Godse's India. We have not joined with this India, but with (MK) Gandhi's, (Jawahar Lal) Nehru's and Abul Kalam Azad's India," she said.

Accusing the BJP of "destroying" institutions, Mufti said people are being "oppressed", youth are being arrested and employees sacked.

"But, I want to tell people, do not lose hope. Sayeed would not have lost hope. I want to tell my workers don't lose hope," she added.

Meanwhile, Mufti's daughter Iltija Mufti said there was a huge difference between the India where she was brought up and the today's India.

"Mother Mary's statues were vandalised at many places when Christmas was celebrated. This is not Gandhi's India, but Godse's," she said while replying to a reporter's question about her mother's remarks that the country today is not the same to which J-K acceded to.



**SHIKARA OWNERS WARM THEIR HANDS** on the banks of Dal Lake on a cold Saturday morning.

KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

## Govt Procures Machines Worth Rs 78 Cr For Snow Clearance

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The J&K administration has procured modern snow clearance machines worth Rs 40 crores out of the total budget of Rs 78 crores this year, while as the authorities on Saturday claimed that men and machinery have been put in alert mode in the wake of snowfall prediction.

Some of the machines with hydraulic power systems will be pressed for the first time during the road clearance.

Chief Engineer Mechanical Engineering Department (MED), Rasheed Ahmad Dar said that a total budget of Rs 78 crores were allotted to procure the machines and vehicles for snow clearance in Jammu and Kashmir. "The machines and vehicles worth Rs 40 crores have reached us so far while the machines worth Rs 38 crores will arrive soon," he said.

He said that at present there are three snow cutter machines available, which is meant for heavy snowfall and has been procured at the cost of Rs 18 crore. Besides, two trucks, 30-40 snow 4x4 trucks that are



specially meant for Kashmir are presently available.

Dar further informed that a total of 252 machines are available with the department for snow clearance. "The number of machines available with us was 150 only till 2020, but the number has been increased to 252," he said.

About the weather forecast by Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), Chief Engineer MED said that the man and machinery has already been geared up and a total of 15 control rooms including 10 district control rooms have been established.

He also said that there is

possibility of snowfall across Kashmir including Srinagar and special control rooms have been established at some areas including Gurez, Gulmarg and other places.

The Chief Engineer further added that the road clearance over a total of 9000 kilometers falling under MED's jurisdiction will be ensured very swiftly.

However, he appealed to people not to park their vehicles on the roadsides to ensure that the road clearance work is not hampered. "The people should cooperate in this regard. The people should not park their vehicles on the roadsides," he said—(KNO)

## Govt Bans PAFF, Declares LeT Man As 'Individual Terrorist'

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Centre has banned the People's Anti-Fascist Front (PAFF), a proxy outfit of the militant group Jaish-e-Mohammed, for its involvement in militancy activities in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere.

The Union Home Ministry on Friday also designated Arbaz Ahmad Mir, a Lashkar-e-Taiba member, as an "individual terrorist" under the stringent anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

In a notification, the ministry said the PAFF has been regularly issuing threats to security forces, political leaders and civilians working in Jammu and Kashmir from other states.

"The PAFF, along with other organisations, is involved in pro-actively conspiring both physically and on social media

to undertake violent terrorist acts in Jammu and Kashmir and major cities in India," it said.

"Along with other organisations, the PAFF is indulging in radicalisation of impressionable youth for recruitment and training in handling guns, ammunition and explosives. The group has also been involved in terrorism. It has committed and participated in various acts of terrorism in India," the ministry said.

Therefore, exercising the powers conferred by clause (a) of sub-section (1) of section 35 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, the central government declared the PAFF a banned organisation, it said.

In a separate notification, the Union Home Ministry said it has designated Arbaz Ahmad Mir, who hails from Jammu and Kashmir but is presently based in Pakistan and working

for the banned militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba, as an "individual terrorist".

It said Mir has been involved in target killings and has emerged as the main conspirator in the killing of a woman teacher, Rain Bala, in Kulgam of Jammu and Kashmir a few months ago.

"Mir has been involved in coordinating terrorism in the Kashmir Valley and supporting terrorists by transporting illegal arms or ammunition or explosives from across the border," the ministry said.

"The central government believes that Mir has been involved in terrorism and therefore exercising the powers conferred by clause (a) of sub-section 1) of section 35 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 designated him as an individual terrorist," the notification said.

## LG Releases Dogri Poetry Collection "UdanKhatola"

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha released a collection of Dogri poetry "UdanKhatola" penned by Dr Chanchal Bhasin at the Raj Bhavan here on Saturday, an official spokesperson said.

Congratulating Dr Bhasin for her book, the LG said that Dogri language represents the great Indian culture and traditions. He further appreciated Dr Chanchal Bhasin's contribution in the field of Dogri Literature.

The Lt Governor noted that different genres of literature not only express the imagination and creativity of an author but also represent the core val-

ues and beliefs of society.

He further stressed the need for spreading the rich heritage of Dogri art and literature among the younger generation in the modern context so that they can take our traditional values to greater heights.

Dr Bhasin's poetry collection comprises of 55 poems in Dogri.

Sahitya Akademi Award-ees including Padma Shri Dr Jitendra Udhampuri; Sh Shailender Singh, JKPS SSP; Prof. Dr Veena Gupta; Prof. Lalit Mangotra; Sh Mohan Singh and Smt Sunita Badwal, besides Sh Rohit Bassan, Scholar were present on the occasion.



## Meets Ex-Minister, Delegation Of Ex-Services League

**JAMMU:** Sunil Sharma, former minister on Saturday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha here at Raj Bhawan.

The former Minister apprised the Lt Governor about the welfare issues of Rehbar-e-Khel and Rehbar-e-Janglat appointees, VDC SPOs, National Youth Corps and other issues of public importance.

Later, a delegation of J&K Ex-Services League led by its President Lt Gen RK Sharma (Retd.), submitted a memorandum of demands to the Lt Governor pertaining to the welfare of ex-Servicemen.

The Lt Governor assured the members of the delegation that all their concerning issues and suggestions would be taken into consideration.

## Banihal Highway Open, Mughal Road; Leh Highway Closed

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Mughal road, connecting twin districts of Poonch and Rajouri with Shopian, as well as Srinagar-Leh highway has been closed for this winter while Jammu-Srinagar thoroughfare, the only surface link connecting Kashmir Valley with outside world remained through for both ways traffic.

The Srinagar-Leh highway has been closed for vehicular movement vide Divisional Commissioner Ladakh UT's order no. 75 dated 06-01-2023 in view of snow accumulation.

The authorities decided to close Zoji La, connecting Leh with Srinagar for winter from Saturday after keeping it open

till January 6 for the first time. Usually the pass, located at a height of 11,643 feet, is closed for traffic by the end of December or beginning of January every year.

Meanwhile, Mughal road has been closed for vehicular movement vide District Magistrate Shopian's order from January 5 in view of snow accumulation.

"Subject to fair weather and road clearance, LMVs Passenger/Private Cars shall be allowed from both sides on Jammu-Srinagar highway viz Jammu towards Srinagar and vice-versa," traffic department officials said in a statement to GNS. "TCU Jammu/Srinagar shall liaise with TCU Ramban before releasing the traffic." (GNS)

## Sensitisation Programme on Mental Health Organised At GDC Baramulla

## Physiological &amp; Emotional Wellbeing Need To Be Prioritised: Health Experts

Observer News Service

**BARAMULLA:** In view of current spike in suicidal ideation and societal thought, District Administration Baramulla in collaboration with Govt Degree College (GDC) Baramulla authorities on Saturday organised a daylong Sensitisation cum awareness program in the college campus, here.

The programme marked an overwhelming participation of youth from across the district.

The event was organised under the banner of Nayi Soch which aims to evoke positive perception about the understanding of life vis a vis contemporary problems of the time.

On the occasion, Medical expert from Psychiatrist department GMC Srinagar, Dr Arshad gave detailed information on various topics related to the prevention of mental illness in youth with special focus on adolescents.

In his address, Dr Arshad complimented the participants and underlined the need for prioritizing the mental health viz a viz physical well-being. He added that need of the hour is to enthuse the spirit of positivity among our youth by virtue of different means and measures like organizing coun-

seling sessions, amusement activities among others.

Expressing concern over the spike in suicide rates, the Medical expert emphasized upon different stakeholders of the society to play their part so as to curb this growing trend. He also urged the parents to understand the desires and aspirations and try to redress them positively without any negative fallout.

Meanwhile, various health professionals and experts highlighted the objectives of the programme and the need for integrating mental health in the mainstream by virtue of different capacity building programs. It was given out that the journo and users of social media handles should not cover the attempt of suicidal ideation and must abide by the WHO guidelines and Press Council of India. Incident reporters should help out the victims in times of distress.

Furthermore, the Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Zahoor Ahmad Raina also spoke on the occasion and said that district administration is committed for well-being of the society and said that more such programmes on mental peace will be organised to create awareness among the masses.

## Cong, RSS Delegations Meet Families Of Victims In Rajouri

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Members of local Congress and RSS visited Dhangri village in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district where six people were killed and several others injured in militant attacks earlier in the month.

The Congress delegation led by its spokesperson Deepika Pushkar Nath criticised Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and the Centre over their claims of restoration of normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir.

The RSS delegation too demanded a probe into the disarming of village defence committee (VDC) members without any government order.

"The co-ordination between the Indian Army and the police needs to be stepped up with enhanced vigilance to prevent loss of innocent lives. This (Dhangri incident) is an example of gov-

ernance and administrative failure in full measure," Nath, an advocate, said on Saturday.

She appealed to the central government to hold a fresh security audit of the region.

Offering her condolences to the victims' families, the Congress leader said, "It was heart-breaking and painful to watch the families who lost their loved ones in an instance of mindless violence as a result of a monumental security breach."

Nath said the tragedy could have been avoided if the authorities were vigilant enough.

"This tragedy could have been avoided had the administration been a little vigilant and alert as this attack took place days after the Sidhra encounter," she said.

Four heavily-armed terrorists, travelling in a truck to Kashmir after infiltrating from Pakistan, were killed in a "chance encounter" on Decem-



ber 28 last year.

The gunfight had taken place early morning amid dense fog near Tawi Bridge in the Sidhra bypass area along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway.

"It is clear that the LG administration and BJP in an attempt to pat their own backs by selling the lies of normalcy and peace have made people of Jammu and Kashmir vulnerable

to such attacks and Rajouri was one such example.

"It has become a habit of the LG administration to issue ex-gratia amount and announce jobs for the victims of terror attacks but they pay very less attention towards prevention of such dastardly attacks and protection of the citizens," she said.

"I on behalf of my party ap-





## J&K End Santosh Trophy Campaign With A 4-2 Win

Aakif Javaid scores a hat-trick against Andhra Pradesh

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The J&K football team on Saturday secured a comfortable 4-2 victory over Andhra Pradesh to end their Santosh Trophy campaign on a happy note.

Anantnag lad Aakif Javaid Reshi scored 3 goals to lead his team to victory at EMS Corporation Stadium in Kozhikode, Kerala.

J&K head coach Satpal Singh Kala made several changes to the starting line up, one of which included the change up front. The team played well in the first half, with Ateeb Ahmed Dar opening the score in the 14th minute of the match.

After seeing his side struggle

to convert the chances, Coach Kala introduced Aakif in the 51st minute. The move paid dividend barely 10 minutes later as Aakif scored three in the 61st, 69th and 71st minutes of the match to take J&K to a 4-0 lead and putting the tie to bed.

Andhra Pradesh fought back in the dying moments to pull back two goals. But the effort was not enough.

With this match, J&K ended the 73rd National Football Championship Santosh Trophy in 3rd position of their Group II table, accumulating 7 points from a possible 15. The team played 5 matches, winning 2, losing 2 and drawing 1 in the process.

## Sarmad Hafeez Reviews Preparations For 3rd National Winter Games

- ▶ Games to commence from Feb 10 at Gulmarg, around 2000 athletes participating
- ▶ Snow Shoe Race, Ice Skating, Ice Hockey, Nordic Ski, Ski Mountaineering major attractions of event



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Secretary Tourism, Sarmad Hafeez on Saturday chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat here to review the preparedness of department for the forthcoming third edition of 'Khelo India National Winter Games'.

The third edition of the games will start from February 10, 2023 and culminate on February 14, 2023 in Jammu and Kashmir's winter destination of Gulmarg.

Addressing the officers during the meeting, Sarmad Hafeez highlighted that the games will not only promote sports activities in Jammu and Kashmir but will also go a long way in attracting the tourists, both domestic and foreign, towards different tourist destinations of UT.

While reviewing the arrangements for the marquee event, the Secretary emphasized upon the government departments and private agencies associated to put in place all arrangements well in advance for the successful conduct of event.

While reviewing other aspects related to event, Sarmad Hafeez exhorted upon the officers that all necessary arrangements like accommodation, lodging and other facilities should be put in place well in advance.

He directed the PDD and PHE departments to provide uninterrupted power and water supply during the event and also asked the Mechanical Division to keep men and machinery ready so as to avert any kind of exigency that may arise due to snowfall.

The Secretary also asked the Municipal authorities to maintain hygiene in the surroundings, besides directing the health and SDRF to keep a special team of their men available during the whole event.

During the meeting, accommodation for participants, traffic management, identification of additional parking slots, snow clearance, security, transport facilities, media coverage, maintenance of slopes, electricity, water, health care facilities and other related issues were also discussed in detail.

It was given out in the meeting that this year around 2000 athletes from different parts of the country will converge on the snow-bound slopes of Gulmarg during the event.

The prominent sports activities, which will be the hall-mark attractions of the winter games, include Snow Shoe Race, Ice Skating, Ice Hockey, Skiing, Nordic Ski, Snowboarding, Ski Mountaineering and Ice Stock besides other activities.

## Ex-Arsenal Boss Wenger To Help Develop Indian Football

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Former Arsenal manager and world governing body FIFA's current chief of global football development, Arsene Wenger will play a role in Indian football's grassroots programmes and talent development.

During the FIFA World Cup in Doha, All India Football Federation (AIFF) president Kalyan Chaubey had held deliberations with Wenger and other senior officials of the FIFA and Asian Football Confederation (AFC) regarding youth development projects in India.

"We have had extensive discussions with FIFA development team. Arsene Wenger is head of FIFA Task Force and they will help us in grassroots programme. Coaches from Wenger's team would come," Chaubey said after unveiling AIFF's Vision

2047 roadmap.

"About football budget cut, we have got lot of help from government and ministry and we have never been turned down when we requested for something. In future too, we will expect whatever we deserve in terms of help, government will give us," he added.

The roadmap hopes that in the country's centenary year of independence, India will also emerge as a new powerhouse of Asian football.

Developed in conjunction with all stakeholders of Indian football, the roadmap has also sought and incorporated inputs from the AFC and FIFA. The salient ambitions of the roadmap are to see India among the top four footballing nations in Asia, host one of the top leagues in the continent, and create a vibrant footballing ecosystem.

## India Crush Sri Lanka By 91 Runs In Final T20I



Press Trust of India

**RAJKOT:** Suryakumar Yadav shone with a belligerent hundred as India defeated Sri Lanka by 91 runs in the final T20I to claim the three-match series 2-1 here on Saturday.

Suryakumar hit an unbeaten 112 off 51 balls as India posted an imposing 228 for five after opting to bat first.

India lost Ishan Kishan (1) early but the likes of Shubman Gill (46), Rahul Tripathi (35) and Suryakumar propped up the hosts with a barrage of big hits at the Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium.

In reply, Sri Lanka were bowled out for 137 in 16.4 overs.

Earlier, Tripathi's runs came off just 16 balls and included five fours and two sixes. But

the evening truly belonged to Suryakumar, who smashed seven fours and nine sixes.

**BRIEF SCORES:**

India: 228/5 in 20 overs (Suryakumar Yadav 112 not out, Shubman Gill 46, Rahul Tripathi 35).

Sri Lanka: 137 all out in 16.4 overs (Kusal Mendis 23, Dasun Shanaka 23; Arshdeep Singh 3/20).

## Pant Undergoes Knee Surgery; Likely To Be Out For A Year

Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** Rishabh Pant, who miraculously survived a horrific car accident last week, has successfully undergone a knee surgery at a Mumbai hospital, BCCI sources said on Saturday.

"Rishabh Pant has successfully undergone a knee ligament surgery on Friday. He will be under observation. Further course of action and rehabilitation will be advised by Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala and followed by the BCCI sports science and medicine team," a BCCI source told PTI.



It is learnt that Pant has undergone a Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) reconstruction surgery and is likely to be out of action for a year.

The surgery took place at the

Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani hospital in Andheri West under the supervision of Dr Pardiwala, the head of the Centre for Sports Medicine and director of Arthroscopy & Shoulder Service.

Pant was taken to Mumbai by air ambulance from Dehradun since he was not in a position to fly by a commercial airline.

The 25-year-old, who was driving from Delhi to Roorkee to surprise his family members in the early hours of December 30, suffered multiple injuries after his speeding car hit the divider and caught fire.

## BCCI Retain Chetan Sharma As Chairman Of Selectors

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Chetan Sharma was on Saturday reappointed as the chairman of the senior selection committee, exactly two months after his entire panel was disbanded by the BCCI for the Indian team's semifinal exit in the T20 World Cup.

Chetan's new team, though, would have entirely new faces with junior chairman of selectors S Sharath of South Zone being promoted. The others in the panel are former seamer Subroto Banerjee from East Zone, Salil Ankola from West Zone and Test opener Shiv Sunder Das from the Central zone.

Das qualified from central for

being a former Vidarbha player after he finished playing for Odisha.

His colleague, Harvinder Singh, also reapplied but wasn't considered after interview as he was believed to be not up to the mark.

"The board received around 600 applications following its advertisement

for the five posts issued on its official website on 18th November 2022," BCCI secretary Jay Shah said in a release.

"Upon due deliberation and careful consideration, the CAC shortlisted 11 individuals for personal interviews. Based on the interviews, the committee has recommended the following candidates for the senior men's national selection committee," he added.



## Australia's Hopes Raised Of Series Sweep Over SA



Agencies

**SYDNEY:** Australia had a glimpse of what appeared an unlikely victory and a series clean sweep as it took six of the 20 South African wickets it needs after captain Pat Cummins declared the host's first innings at 475-4 on the fourth day of the rain-affected third Test.

Cummins took three wickets in a fearsome display of pace bowling under grey skies at the Sydney Cricket Ground, while Josh Hazlewood picked up two and Nathan Lyon claimed another,

amongst a clutch of several near misses, as the Proteas finished Saturday at 149-6, trailing Australia by 327 runs.

To win, Australia needs to capture the four remaining South African first-innings wickets and then enforce the follow-on in a bid to bowl the Proteas out a second time — all within three sessions on Sunday's final day.

"Yeah, I think so," said Hazlewood on Australia's prospects of engineering an unlikely final-day victory. "From what we saw today we bowled 50-odd overs and took six wickets."



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