

## In Cold Desert, Identity Politics Remains Hot Pursuit

Auqib Javed

With Kashmir-centric politics unable to come out of cold-storage due to impasse in electoral ice-break, the leaders of Ladakh are currently stealing the limelight with their identity politics campaign.

The leaders from the Buddhist-majority Leh as well as the Muslim-majority Kargil have come together to up the ante against the government for failing to acknowledge their demands.

"The government should

listen to our demands and discuss them," said Padma Stanzin of Ladakh Students' Environmental Action Forum (LEAF). "If they ignore us, we'll be forced to launch an agitation."

The cold desert's political campaign is growing days after the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) constituted a High-Powered Committee (HPC)—headed by Minister of State, Nityanand Rai—to "ensure protection of land and employment" for the people of Ladakh.

The 17-member committee including Ladakh Lieutenant Governor R.K. Mathur will



"discuss measures to protect the region's unique culture and language taking into

consideration its geographical location and its strategic importance".

### WE'VE BEEN DEMANDING THE IMPLEMENTATION

of the sixth schedule for Ladakh from day one, but the committee hasn't included this in the agenda. So there's no point in engaging with it. We'll be holding a protest to press our demands now."

However, four days after the MHA order, the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) and Leh Apex Body (LAB) in a joint meeting on January 7 decided to stay away from the HPC.

These groups were formed following the resentment against the central government for "failing to safeguard Ladakh's constitutional position, job and land" after the creation of separate union territory in August 2019.

"Since our demands haven't been included in the list, we've decided not to engage with the HPC," Tsering Dorje Lakruk, LAB's vice chairman, told Kashmir Observer.

"We've been demanding the implementation of the sixth schedule for Ladakh from day one, but the [More on PIO](#)

## Computer Glitch Grounds Flights Across US

Press Trust Of India

**New York:** Hundreds of flights were grounded across the United States on Wednesday after a computer outage at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

The FAA said it suffered an outage of its system that alerts pilots and crew to advisories and information for flights.

"The FAA is working to restore its Notice to Air Missions System. We are performing final validation checks and reloading the system now," it said in a tweet.

It said operations across the National Airspace System are affected.

"We will provide frequent updates as we make progress," it added.

The outage comes as a result of the failure of the Notice to Air Missions system, which alerts pilots and other personnel about airborne issues and other delays at airports across the country.

"The FAA is still working to fully restore the Notice to Air Missions system following an outage. While some functions are beginning to come back on line, National Airspace System operations remain limited," the FAA said in another tweet.

While the FAA has not enforced a grounding of aircraft due to the outage, most airlines have chosen to ground their own plane due to the system's failure. The failure has so far resulted in some 400 cancelled flights across the US, Fox News reported. [FULL REPORT INSIDE](#)

## Govt Designates 6 Courts For Trial Of UAPA Offences

Observer News Service

**Srinagar:** Jammu and Kashmir Government has designated six courts of trial for offences under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA)-1967 in the Kashmir Valley.

In a notification, the government has notified six courts for trial of offences under the UAPA in 10 districts of Kashmir.

The notification has been issued under the powers vested with the Union Territory administration under the National Investigation Act-2008.

Earlier there were [More on PIO](#)

## SNOW AGAIN ELUDES PLAINS OF KASHMIR

Except Srinagar-Jammu Highway, All Major Highways, Roads Closed For Vehicular Movement; Weatherman Predicts Snow, Rains Till Jan 13

Observer News Service

**Srinagar:** Several higher reaches of Kashmir including the ski-resort of Gulmarg experienced fresh snowfall on Wednesday while the plains including Srinagar received light rainfall, bringing down the temperature further across Kashmir. The weatherman, however, again predicted snow and rains in Kashmir till Friday.

Reports reaching here said that snowfall has occurred at high altitude areas including Gurez, Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Machil, Kamah besides other upper reaches of Kashmir Valley.

The plains of Kashmir including Srinagar received light rain-fall despite prediction of snowfall by the Met office. The light showers brought down the maximum temperature further in the Valley.

Earlier Director



KO Photo | Abid Bhat

Meteorological Department (MeT), Sonum Lotus said that there will be a gradual increase in intensity and distribution of snow or rain as the day progresses with main activity towards evening and night.

"Some places, mainly

higher reaches may receive heavy snowfall," he said, adding that on Thursday, there is a possibility of widespread light to moderate snow and rain in plains of Jammu.

He further added that light snowfall or rains would occur

at a few places on Friday.

Moreover, Lotus as per the forecast said that the weather would remain mainly dry from January 14-17. Pertinently, a fresh Western Disturbance has affected Jammu and Kashmir from today, which would result in light to moderate snowfall in higher reaches and light snowfall in plains as well.

Meanwhile, the fresh snowfall has led to the closure of Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri Road, Mughal Road, Kamah-Kupwara and Bandipora-Gurez roads.

Officials said that the roads have been closed as precautionary measures after the fresh snowfall led to the slippery conditions of the roads.

However, Srinagar-Jammu highway remained open for vehicular movement.

Moreover, Police established Emergency [More on PIO](#)

## Dense Fog Hits Air, Rail Operations In Jammu

The dense fog cover coupled with the unbearable cold conditions throws normal life out of gear, while frequent power cuts add to the misery of people in Jammu. According to reports, air and rail operation remained hit on the fourth consecutive day due to dense blanket of fog gripped Jammu on Wednesday while movement on roads also registered snail pace and long traffic jams due to fog and many under construction roads. Vehicles moved at snail's pace on the road with headlights on to avoid any untoward like incident due to fog. As per the weathermen, the foggy weather conditions will prevail for a few more days while the chilling weather conditions continue

## BJP Asks J&K Unit To Gear Up For Assembly Polls

Press Trust Of India

**Jammu:** BJP national general secretary B L Santhosh asked the party's Jammu and Kashmir unit on Wednesday to gear up for assembly polls.

At a meeting with senior party leaders of the Union territory, he laid emphasis on strengthening party units at booth and assembly constituency levels.

He asked party in-charges to focus on winning the election in their respective areas.

The meeting came days after senior party leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah held deliberations with party functionaries from Jammu and Kashmir in Delhi.

The assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir are likely to be held this year, though there has been no official announcement yet.

In his address to party leaders, Santhosh said, "A leader is born when he selflessly works for the win of others and the organisation. So you all must devote yourselves to organisational duties."

He asked the Jammu and Kashmir unit of the party to switch to election mode.

The meeting was also attended by Union minister Jitendra Singh, BJP national general secretary and J&K in-charge Tarun Chugh and J&K BJP president Ravinder Raina.

In his address, Singh said, "This is the first major election campaign after historic changes in J&K and hence we need to contest these elections all together."

He said the BJP is the only party which has truly cared for the rights of the residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

Referring to the [More on PIO](#)

### BHARAT JODO YATRA

## Congress Invites 21 Parties To Join Concluding Event In Srinagar



Press Trust Of India

**New Delhi:** Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has invited leaders of 21 like-minded parties to join the concluding function of the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Srinagar on January 30, saying their presence would strengthen

the march's message of truth, compassion and non-violence.

In a letter to the heads of the parties, he said from the beginning of the yatra, the Congress has sought the participation of every like-minded party and on the invitation of Rahul Gandhi, MPs of several political parties [More on PIO](#)

### Lal Singh's DSSP, Shiv Sena To Join Rahul's Yatra

Extending support to Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra, the Dogra Swabhiman Sangathan Party and the Jammu and Kashmir unit of Shiv Sena Wednesday announced they will join the march when it enters Jammu and Kashmir next week. A DSSP spokesperson said that at a meeting, the party unanimously decided to accord a warm welcome to the Bharat Jodo Yatra on reaching [More on PIO](#)

## Continue Providing Financial Services To People: LG To J&K Bank



Observer News Service

Jammu: The Union Territory Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Wednesday impressed upon J&K Bank to continue providing quality financial services to the people and to ensure benefits under the various schemes, pensions etc are extended to the beneficiaries living in remote villages faster and more efficiently. Sinha made these remarks

during an interaction with Baldev Prakash, MD & CEO of the J&K Bank at the Raj Bhawan here on Wednesday, an official spokesperson said.

Prakash, he said, apprised the LG about the financial services being extended to the people of J&K, and briefed on the to-date progress achieved under different schemes of Government being run for employment generation and [More on PIO](#)

### Man Carrying Rs 57L In Geyser Held: Police

A person was apprehended by police for carrying over fifty-seven lac cash concealed in a geyser in Handwara area in North Kashmir's Kupwara district. Officials in knowhow of the recovery told a local news agency GNS that one person named Syed Irfan Abdullah, son of Mohd Abdullah, resident of Laribal, Handwara was apprehended carrying cash concealed in a geyser, during a naka checking at Braripora Handwara. The recovered cash, the officials said, was counted in presence of the [More on PIO](#)

### Police Rubbishes Grenade Attack News

Police on Wednesday rebutted any news regarding a grenade attack in Zoonimar area of Central Kashmir's Srinagar district. In a statement issued here, the police said that there is a fake news circulated by some irresponsible people about a grenade attack in Zoonimar area. The police spokesman further stated that it is a completely fake news and media persons are requested to verify authenticity of news before spreading such unverifiable news, reads the statement. [More on PIO](#)

### Woman Pilgrim From Shopian Dies In Mecca

A 70-year-old woman from South Kashmir's Shopian district passed away in the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday. Haleema Begum, resident of Kaprin Shopian, as per her family was alongside her sister at Mecca to perform Umrah - "minor pilgrimage" undertaken by Muslims to enter Mecca. The funeral prayers of the deceased woman, the family told a local news agency GNS, were led by Imam-e-Kabbah, following which her mortal [More on PIO](#)

### ACB Arrests Patwari For Accepting Bribe

Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Wednesday said that a Patwari from Halqa Rasli Gandhera, Basantgarh, Udhampur was trapped and subsequently arrested for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 30,000 for issuance of Fard. As per a statement issued here, ACB received a complaint alleging therein that he wanted to sell his piece of land and the concerned Patwari, Halqa Rasli Gandheran, Udhampur namely Darbinder Singh is demanding bribe of Rs 50,000 for issuance of Fard. [More on PIO](#)

### 6 'Micreants' Held For Bursting Firecrackers

Police on Wednesday arrested six 'micreants' for bursting firecrackers and creating panic among people in Zoonimar area of this capital city. In a tweet, Srinagar police wrote, "5 Miscreants detained, latter 1more for bursting fire crackers on Syedpora-zoonimar stretch in the evening so as to create panic among the public. All these have history of indulging in stone pelting in the past. Further, examination is going on."



### Man Held With Heroin-Like Substance In Sopore

Sopore Police on Wednesday arrested a drug peddler along with heroin-like substance during a Naka at Wagub crossing in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. An official said that a drug peddler was arrested along with 15 grams of Heroin-like substance during a checkpoint at Wagub crossing by the party of PP Putkha under the jurisdiction of Police Station Amargrah/Tarzoo. The arrested drug peddler as per the officials disclosed his identity as Ashiq Elaahi Parray, son of [More on PIO](#)



از انبیاء وانکولہ پورہ  
اجلاس ایکریکیو جسٹس دینے والوں  
مضمون: درخواست منجانب زبیر احمد پرے ولد غلام حسن پرے سالنہ موضوع  
انکولہ پورہ تحصیل نئیر برماواجرانی Unemployment سرٹیفکیٹ بخت خود  
اشہیارہ برماواگامی برہا صوام  
عالمہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر کے نسبت سالن کے کا قدرت زیر بحث دفتر ہذا میں  
برکاروانی ہے۔ بیان ر پورٹ پٹواری حلقہ و نمبردار سالن مذکورہ ہذا میں  
پاش پیر ہے اور کبھی ترک سکونت اختیار نہیں کی ہے۔ سالن پیش سے  
طالب علم ہیں سالن مذکورہ کی کبھی سرکاری یا غیر سرکاری محکمہ میں کام نہیں کرتا  
ہے۔ اور تاحال بے روزگار ہے  
تعلیم اس کے سالن کی درخواست پر دیکھ کروانی کی جائے۔ اول برہا صوام کو  
برعز اشہیارہ مطلع کیا جائے کہ اگر اس بارے میں کسی شخص یا شخص کو کوئی عذر  
اعتراف ہو تو ایک ہفتہ کے اندر دفتری اوقات میں اساتما یا کالنا اپنے عذر یا  
اعتراف پیش کریں۔ بعد گرنے عیاو کوئی بھی عذر قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا تھر برہا صوام  
نامہ تحصیلدار





# Rising Accidents In City: 48 People Killed In 2022

Agencies

Srinagar: Authorities on Wednesday said that they have identified some black spots in Srinagar where frequent accidents are taking place and that the efforts will be made to ensure the graph of accidents within the summer capital is reduced this year.

Talking to the media persons, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic, City, Muzaffar Ahmad Shah, said that around 48 people have lost their lives in the accidents in Srinagar last year and through a study, which will culminate shortly, it has come to the fore that most of the accidents have occurred on Bypass road.

“We have identified a few black spots like from Shalteng-Parimpira and Pantha Chowk stretch where most of the lives out of 48 in 2022 have been lost. As soon as the study culminates, we will provide the report to Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar in which recommendations will be made with regard to the black spots,” he said.

He further said that work like enforcement and other things will be done to reduce the number of accidents, but indeed the accidents cannot be reduced until the people drive safely and cooperate in terms of following the rules and regulations.

“A good number of accidents in Srinagar happen on two-wheelers, which is probably due to overconfidence of driving skills and other related things. Safe driving is imperative to reduce the number of accidents,” he said, adding that there are some issues like absence of service lanes along Bypass, but these issues will be resolved soon.

He said that there are a couple of reasons behind the road accidents including wrong road designs, over speeding and other things, but the work will be done in this regard and “we will try our best to reduce the number of accidents this year.”

He also said that action against the people who are found driving after drinking will also be initiated.

## Divisional Level Orientation & Training Programme Kicks Off At SKUAST

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A Divisional Level orientation and training programme (11 January to 3rd February 2023) organized by directorate of research SKUAST-Kashmir under the aegis of Agriculture Production department Go J&K was kick started at Vice-Chancellors conference hall SKUAST-Kashmir. The programme was chaired by Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor SKUAST-Kashmir Dr. Nazir A. Ganie , and attended by Director Agriculture Kashmir Mr. Choudhary Mohammad Iqbal, Director Research Prof. Sarfaraz a Wani, Director Extension Prof Dil Mohammad Makhdoomi, Director Strategic Planning and Marketing Prof Haroon Rashid Nayak, Director Door-darahn Mr. Haseebul Rehman, Associate Director of Research , Chief Agriculture Officer District Agriculture Officer, Programme coordinators of KVKs and Scientists of SKUAST-Kashmir.

The Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor in his inaugural address informed the house about the

first of its kind plan for any state with an actionable road map for holistic development of agriculture. The plan has well defined short and long term goals and expected outputs and outcomes leading us to bridge a wide gap between the production and imports. Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor mentioned that he is falling short of words to thank Hon'ble Lt Governor Shri Manoj Sinha and Additional Chief Secretary Agriculture Production Department. Shri Atal Duloo for their tireless efforts and support for making the dream come true. He stressed upon exploring the potential of the endowments, diversity with human intellect bestowed to our UT for its future generations to come. While encouraging the extension functionaries he informed that we have to transform out UT into a knowledge economy and ultimately leading to the growth of bio-economy. He further informed us that we have to sacrifice our comforts for the future generations to come by converting our Vision Mission and Goal into action.

## Road Safety Week Under "Swachhata Pakhwada-2023" Inaugurated

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In connection with Road Safety Week being observed from January 11 to January 17 under "Swachhata Pakhwada-2023", the Deputy Commissioner(DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad flagged off Cab rally on Traffic Awareness campaign from TRC Corridor with a view to promote responsible driving to reduce road accidents in Srinagar District.

SSP Traffic City, Muzaffar Ahmad Shah and Regional Transport Officer(RTO), Kashmir, Sajid Yehaya Nagash, besides SP East were present on the occasion.

After flagging off the Cab Rally, the Deputy Commissioner presided over the awareness programme on observance of “Road Safety Week” organized by RTO, Kashmir at Sumo Stand, Tourist Reception Center(TRC) to create awareness among general public and Transporters to improve the road safety measures and give an opportunity to all stakeholders to contribute in the burning issue of in the society.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that ob-

serving Road Safety Week provides an opportunity to all stakeholders including Administration, Transporters, Commuters, Pedestrians and public in general to contribute in reducing road accidents by strictly adhering to traffic safety measures to save precious human lives.

The DC said road accidents is a critical issue that has devastated many families and it is imperative for every citizen to follow Traffic rules in letter and spirit for their own safety and for the safety of others.

The DC urged youngsters not to indulge in rash driving and always keep in mind that they have a family waiting for them to come home.

The DC stressed on spreading awareness on road safety and following traffic rules. He said Road safety awareness campaigns/precautionary measures should not be restricted to this week but must continue to be followed throughout the year.

The DC also underlined the importance and use of seat belts that help to save lives during untoward accidents. He emphasized on ensuring fitness of vehicles as per guidelines for safe driving.



## Shower Turns Srinagar's Busiest Road Into Slippery Street

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: After a few hours of rain in Srinagar, roads in and around Lal Chowk which are going through renovation turned muddy and slippery. Commuters, especially two wheelers, had a tough time riding through the slippery road in the heart of the city on Wednesday.

A video which went viral on social media shows female commuters falling from a scooter. As a passerby tries to help the falling duo, he too falls on the road.

People thronging the commercial hub of Lal Chowk have voiced their displeasure over the dilapidated condition of the roads.

“I was standing on the footpath of the Residency road, At least twenty motorists fell on the road due to the slippery road. If Authorities want to carry out developmental works,

they ought to take proper precautions.” Said Kifayat Hus-sain Mir, a bystander.

“If people falling on the roads are hit by a vehicle from behind, it can cost them their life.” Kifayat added.

The commuters urged the LG Administration to take note of the situation and take measures in order to avert a tragedy.

Pertinently, roads in and around Lal Chowk have been dug for various development projects by the Srinagar Smart City (SSC). However, in absence of macadamization the roads are muddy and slippery.

Speaking to a local media outlet, a biker who fell off the bike said he was riding at a very slow speed.

“Despite the fact I was riding very slowly, my bike skidded because mud was all over the road. Even before me, many people have fallen here. Look at the condition of my clothes, is this what the Smart City is meant to be” he questioned.

Netizens also reacted sharply to the incident and urged authorities to get to the rescue of people.

“Srinagar is being destroyed in the name of Smart City” commented Nazir Ahmad on the viral video. However, some people had suggestions for the Administration.

“Salt should be sprinkled all over the Residency in order to make it feasible for commuters but the government does not care” wrote Zubair Ahmad on the social networking site Facebook.

Kashmir Observer tried to get in touch with the authorities in order to raise the burning issue. However, SMC Commissioner & CEO Smart City (SSC) Athar Aamir did not respond to repeated phone calls.

As the Meteorological Department has predicted Snow in plains and upper reaches of Kashmir, the condition of the dilapidated roads in the city is set to get worse.

“I was standing on the footpath of the Residency road, At least twenty motorists fell on the road due to the slippery road. If Authorities want to carry out developmental works, they ought to take proper precautions

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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

19 Jumad al-Sani

1444

PRAYERS

FAJR 6:08

ZUHR 12:39

ASR 4:04

Magrib 5:45

ISHA 7:10

## This Day In History

- 475 - Basiliscus becomes Byzantine Emperor, with a coronation ceremony in the Hebdomon palace in Constantinople.
- 1528 - Gustav I of Sweden “father of the nation” crowned King of Sweden. Rules 37 years.
- 1552 - Dutch west coast hit by heavy storm, 100s killed.
- 1806 - French evacuate Vienna.
- 1816 - France decrees Bonaparte family excluded from the country forever.
- 1836 - Battle of Wetumka, Fla.
- 1915 - US House of Representatives rejects proposal to give women right to vote.
- 1916 - Britain proclaims Gilbert & Ellice Islands as a colony in Pacific.
- 1940 - World War II: Soviets bombs cities in Finland.
- 1942 - National War Labor Board created
- 1944 - Churchill & de Gaulle begin a 2-day wartime conference in Marrakesh.
- 1945 - German forces in Belgium retreat in Battle of Bulge.
- 1945 - The Soviets begin a large offensive against the Nazis in Eastern Europe.
- 1948 - Mahatma Gandhi begins his final fast.
- 1950 - USSR re-introduces death penalty for treason, espionage & sabotage.
- 1959 - Rediscovery of the Caves of Nerja in Spain
- 1961 - UN genocide pact goes into effect.
- 1962 - Operation Chopper begins, America's first combat mission in the Vietnam War.
- 1970 - Biafran War ends, Biafra surrenders to Nigeria.
- 1970 - Boeing 747 makes its maiden voyage.
- 1971 - Negotiations over price of petroleum begin in Tehran between 6 OPEC Persian Gulf states and 22 oil companies.
- 1974 - Libya & Tunisia announces they are merging as “Islamic Arab Republic”.
- 1976 - UN Security Council votes 11-1 to seat Palestine Liberation Organisation.
- 1977 - Anti-French demonstrations takes place in Israel after Paris released Abu Daoud, responsible 1972 -Munich massacre of Israeli athletes.
- 1986- 24th space shuttle (61-C) mission-Columbia 7-launched.
- 1990 -Romania bans Communist party (1st Warsaw Pact member to do so).
- 1991 - US Congress gives George H. W. Bush authority to wage war against Iraq.
- 1992-Algeria's general elections canceled after strong gains by Islamic Salvation Front in the 1st round.
- 1992- A new constitution, providing for freedom to form political parties, is approved by a referendum in Mali.
- 1995 - Major earthquake kills 5,092 in Kobe Japan.
- 1996 - Russian troops arrived in Bosnia (joint operation with US).
- 1997 - Space Shuttle STS 81 (Atlantis 18), launches into space
- 1998 - Nineteen European nations agree to forbid human cloning.

From KO Archives

Mobile Phones In JK soon

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Centre has agreed in principal to extend the mobile telephone service to Jammu and Kashmir. Announcing this at the inauguration of the state's first Software Technology Park (STP) here today, the Union Minister for Information Technology, Pramod Mahajan, dismissed the Idea that security of the state would be adversely affected if the mobile services were allowed here. He said he was not convinced with the argument and had discussed this with the Prime Minister & Ministers of Home & Defence who have all agreed to his suggestion of extending the facility in J&K. He asserted that mobile telephone had nothing to do with the security of the country adding, nobody In the government Of India is saying 'no' to it. He said contrary to the belief of risk to the security, the mobile facilities would help in tracking down the militants.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 12 January, 2001)



## RSS Chief Says "Hindustan Should Remain Hindustan" Kapil Sibal Replies



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Wednesday took a swipe at Rashtriya Swayam-sevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat's "Hindustan should remain Hindustan" remark, saying he agreed with that but "Insaan (human beings) should remain Insaan". Mr Bhagwat has said Muslims have nothing to fear in India, but they must abandon their "boisterous rhetoric of supremacy".

In an interview to Organiser and Panchjanya, Mr Bhagwat said, "The simple truth is this, Hindustan should remain Hindustan. There is no harm to the Muslims living today in Bharat...Islam has nothing to fear. But at the same time, Muslims must abandon their boi-



terous rhetoric of supremacy."

"We are of an exalted race; we once ruled over this land, and shall rule it again; only our path is right, rest everyone is wrong; we are different, therefore we will continue to be so; we cannot live together; they (Muslims) must abandon this narrative. In fact, all those who live here whether a Hindu or a communist must give up this logic," the RSS chief said.

Reacting to the remarks, Mr Sibal said on Twitter, "Bhagwat: 'Hindusthan should should remain Hindusthan', Agree. But: Insaan should remain Insaan."

Mr Bhagwat also said the new-found aggression among Hindus the world over was due to an awakening in the society that has been at war for over 1,000 years.

## Pakistan's Passport Among World's Weakest. Most Powerful Are...



Agencies

Japan starts 2023 with the world's most powerful passport, allowing visa-free entry to 193 global destinations, according to the latest Henley Passport Index, which the country tops for the fifth consecutive year.

That doesn't mean the passport is widely used, even as travel rebounds from Covid. Only 24 million valid Japanese passports were in circulation at the end of 2021, according to the latest available figures from the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. That's down more than 3 million from the year before and means that less than 20% of the population held the travel document.

Singapore and South Korea retained their places in joint second on the ranking, followed by Germany and Spain, and then a slew of other European nations.

The US was among the top 22, with visa-free access to 186 places, matching the likes of Switzerland, New Zealand and Norway. China's allows access to 80, the same as Bolivia's.

Russia's is better, providing hassle-free entry to 118 destinations, while Afghanistan's remained the weakest, with access to just 27.

The ranking, published by London-based immigration consultancy Henley & Partners, uses data from the International Air Transport Association to rank 199 passports' access to 227 travel destinations. The methodology differs from other passport indexes like one published by financial advisory Arton Capital, which put the United Arab Emirates in pole position.

Separately, a Morning Consult poll conducted in July showed that 35% of adult respondents in Japan indicated they didn't plan to ever travel for leisure again, a far higher percentage than the other 13 nations surveyed. South Korea was the next, with 15% saying the same.

Nearly 2 million people traveled overseas from Japan in the first 10 months of last year, according to the Japan National Tourism Organization, a long way off the 20 million that did so in all of 2019, before the pandemic.

## U.S. Air Travel Rumbles Back To Life After FAA Computer Outage

Agencies

**WASHINGTON/CHICAGO:** U.S. flights were slowly resuming departures and a ground stop was lifted after the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) scrambled to fix a system outage overnight that had forced a halt to all U.S. departing flights.

More than 6,000 flights were delayed and nearly 1,000 canceled according to the FlightAware website as officials said it will take hours to recover from the halt. The numbers were still rising.

The cause of the problem with a pilot-alerting system, which delayed thousands of flights in the United States, was unclear, but U.S. officials said they had so far found no evidence of a cyberattack.

The outage occurred at a typically slow time after the holiday travel season, but demand remains strong as travel continues to recover to near pre-pandemic levels.

"Normal air traffic operations are resuming gradually across the U.S. following an overnight outage to the Notice to Air Missions system that provides safety info to flight crews. The ground stop has been lifted. We continue to look into the cause of the initial problem," the FAA Tweeted.

The number of flights impacted rose even after the ground stop was canceled. One issue airlines are facing is trying to get planes in and out of crowded gates, which is causing further delays.

At an airport in Greenville, South Carolina, Justin Kennedy abandoned a work trip to nearby Charlotte. He said confusion reigned as airline employees weren't aware what the FAA was saying, and many passengers were initially unaware of the delays.



"I sat in a Chick-fil-A dining area that had a good view of the TSA exit," the 30-year-old information technology employee said. "I saw at least four people sprinting to gates because they thought they were going to miss their flight, only to come back to the food court, out of breath."

### RIPPLE EFFECTS

Captain Chris Torres, vice president of the Allied Pilots Association, said the outage could impact traffic through Friday.

"This thing was lifted at 9 a.m. Eastern. That doesn't mean the problem stops at 9 a.m. This is going to cause ripple effects," said Torres, whose members fly for American Airlines. "The end result of this is going to be very similar to big weather events."

The FAA had earlier ordered airlines to pause all domestic departures after its pilot alerting system crashed and the agency had to perform a hard reset around 2 a.m., officials said. Flights already in the air were allowed to continue to their destinations.

U.S. President Joe Biden ordered the Transportation Department to investigate and said the cause of the failure was unknown. Asked if a

cyber attack was behind the outage, Biden told reporters, "We don't know."

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg pledged a "process to determine root causes and recommend next steps."

Shares of U.S. carriers initially fell in Wednesday's pre-market trading, but most rallied after the market opened to positive territory as flights resumed.

After dropping more the 19% last year - its third consecutive year of decline - the S&P 500 airlines index (.SPLRCR) has gotten off to a strong start this year, up 15.5%, as travelers return to the skies.

Southwest Airlines (LUV.N) shares were flat, while Delta Air Lines Inc (DAL.N), United Airlines (UALO) and American Airlines (AAL.O) shares rose. JetBlue (JBLU.O) and Spirit (SAVE.N) each rose about 2%.

A trade group representing the U.S. travel industry, including airlines, called the FAA system failure "catastrophic."

"America's transportation network desperately needs significant upgrades," Geoff Freeman, president of the U.S. Travel Association, said in a statement. "We call on federal policymakers to modernize our vital air travel infrastructure."

## Air India Keeping An Eye As All Flights Across US Grounded Due To A Glitch

Agencies

**A**ir India on Wednesday said that it is in touch with the relevant authority after flights across the US were grounded due to a technical glitch in the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) computer system.

"We are aware of the snag in the US and we are in touch with the relevant authority," an AI official told ANI.

"Air India around six-seven flights operates in a day to the US in a week," it added.

Air India, India's largest wide-body airline, is the only airline that can operate the maximum number of flights to the US.

Over 400 flights across the United States have been stranded due to a major outage in the computer system of the US regulator Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on Wednesday.

According to media reports, the flights that were severely

impacted were within, into, and out of the United States.

Operations are normal at all the airports in India and as of now there is no impact on flights from India to the US amid a glitch in US Federal Aviation Administration's system, said a senior DGCA official.

However, as of now, India-US flights do not have any impact due to a glitch in the computer system of the US regulatory body, FAA.

FAA has tweeted, "The FAA is working to restore its Notice to Air Missions System. We are performing final validation checks and reloading the system now. Operations across the National Airspace System are affected. We will provide frequent updates as we make progress."

The Federal Aviation Administration stated that it is 'experiencing an outage that is impeding the update of Notice to Air Missions (NOTAMs)' and that 'all flights are unable

to be released at this time' due to the enormous glitch that caused flight delays.

Notably, the US Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) system that alerts pilots and other flight personnel about hazards or any changes to airport facility services and relevant procedures.

Moreover, the Air Traffic Control System Command Center (ATCSCC), a part of the Federal Aviation Administration air traffic control system, located in Warrenton, Virginia also issued an advisory that the United States NOTAM system failed and since then no new amendments have been processed.

"The United States NOTAM system failed at 2028Z. Since then no new NOTAMs or amendments have been processed. Technicians are currently working to restore the system and there is no estimate for restoration or service at this time," the ATCSCC advisory read.

## Iran's Navy Fleet Will Sail To Panama Canal: Iranian Navy Commander

Agencies

**A**ccording to a report by Tasnim News Agency, during a conference on maritime civilization in Tehran, Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani announced on 11 January that plans are in progress to dispatch the Iranian naval forces to the Panama Canal.

"The Iranian Navy units are getting closer to the coasts of the Americas," he stated.

The navy commander elaborated that Iranian naval forces had already been deployed to all of the strategic straits across the world - with the exception of just two.

"The Iranian Navy forces will sail into one of those two remaining straits this year while plans are being made for the presence of the Iranian naval forces in the Panama Canal."

Irani went on to add that the Iranian Navy has established three ocean commands supervising missions to the Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, and the Atlantic Ocean.

"The equipment that will join the Navy in the future is in line with the missions of these three commands," he explained.

He highlighted the naval



forces' previous achievement of sailing across the Pacific Ocean and revealed that at the time, Australia and France both posed threats to Iran by breaking the regulations involving sailing past their coasts - regulations that they themselves had issued. In the face of these threats, however, Iran stood its ground and responded to them in accordance with the law.

The Australian Department of Defense announced on 2 January that two Iranian warships had been detected passing through the South Pacific.

In August of 2022, the Iranian navy commander made clear that the "Iranian Navy Forces are present in any ocean if needed" and that they are "ready to counter any foreign danger powerfully."

That said, Iran is not seeking to engage in conflict and would only retaliate in the event that its security is endangered.

## Congress's Contribution In India's Freedom Big, But...: Amit Shah



Agencies

**NEW DELHI:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday, while acknowledging that the Congress-led freedom movement had a big contribution to India's freedom, said that it is, however, not right to propagate the narrative that there was no role of others in the country's freedom struggle.

Mr Shah's remarks came at the book launch event of 'Revolutionaries, The other story of how India won its freedom' by Sanjeev Sanyal in the national capital.

The Home Minister said that the word 'other story' in the title of the book is the summary of the book which presents the other perspective of the contributions of various others in the freedom struggle.

"Revolutionaries, The other story of how India won its freedom. The word 'other story' is the summary of this book. Because one story has been

established in public under one narrative. One perspective has been imposed on the public through history writing, and education. The perspective that has been imposed, I do not say that the non-violent struggle has no role in the freedom struggle, or is not a part of history. It is a part of history and has a huge contribution," Mr Shah said.

Stating that there were contributions of various people and organisations, the Home Minister said that freedom is the "collective" result of everyone.

"The movement led by Congress has a big contribution to the country's freedom. But no other has contributed, this narrative is not right. Because if we analyze the country's freedom, numerous people, organisations, ideologies, and paths had made efforts to reach one destination. India's freedom is the collaborative result of all of this," he said.

## NEWS MAKERS

## RRR's Hit Track 'Naatu Naatu' Wins Golden Globe Award For Best Original Song

Press Trust of India

**LOS ANGELES:** SS Rajamouli's 'RRR's' hit track 'Naatu Naatu' has won the award for the best original song-motion picture.

The film's Telugu track 'Naatu Naatu', composed by veteran music director MM Keeravani and sung by Kala Bhairava and Rahul Sipligunj, won the award for best original song.

Keeravani accepted the trophy and thanked Rajamouli for his "vision".

The veteran music composer also thanked the team behind the track -- choreographer Prem Rakshith, lyricist Chandrabose and singers Sipligunj and Bhairava.

The movie though lost out for the 'best picture-non English' to 'Argentina, 1985'.

'Argentina, 1985', directed by Santiago Mitre, is based on real



events and follows the events surrounding the 1985 Trial of the juntas, which prosecuted the ringleaders of Argentina's last civil-military dictatorship.

The other nominees in 'best picture-non English' category were Korean romantic mystery film 'Decision to Leave', German anti-war drama 'All Quiet on the Western Front', and French-Dutch coming-of-age drama 'Close'.

'RRR' follows a pre-Independence fictional story woven around two real-life Indian revolutionaries - Alluri Sitarama Raju and Komaram Bheem - in the 1920s. The film stars Ram Charan, Jr NTR, Alia Bhatt and Ajay Devgn in key roles.

Released theatrically last March, 'RRR' reportedly made over Rs 1,200 crore at the global box office.

## Michelle Yeoh, Steven Spielberg Win In Revamped Golden Globes

Agencies

**M**alaysian star Michelle Yeoh has taken home a top acting award at the Golden Globes after the ceremony's return following a scandal over diversity and ethics.

Yeoh, renowned for doing her own stunts, was honoured as best actress in a musical or comedy on Tuesday night for her lead role in the dimension-hopping action film Everything Everywhere All at Once.

"Hollywood was a dream come true until I came here," the 60-year-old actress added, noting that she was called a "minority" and asked if she could speak English early on in her career.

Forty years later, "it's been an amazing journey and incredible fight to be here today, but I think it's been worth it," she said.

Also honoured was Steven Spielberg, nominated 14 times



by the Globes for best director and winning for the third time with his autobiographical coming-of-age movie The Fabelmans, and Irish actor Colin Farrell, who won best actor in a musical or comedy for his part in the dark comedy of shattered friendship The Banshees of Inisherin.

Austin Butler, the 31-year-old star of director Baz Luhrmann's rock-and-roll biopic Elvis, won best actor in a drama.

"You were an icon and a rebel and I love you so much," said Butler to the late, legendary singer in an emotional speech in which he also praised Presley's family for their support.

"You could at least play 'Suspicious Minds' or something," he joked to the gala's pianist, as music interrupted his moment on stage.

Australian Cate Blanchett was named best actress in a drama for her role as an orchestral conductor in Tár.

The two biggest box office successes of 2022 - Avatar: The Way of Water and Top Gun: Maverick - were shut out.

Celebrities and broadcaster NBC abandoned the 2022 Globes because of ethical lapses at the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA), the group that hands out the awards.

A larger, more diverse membership and other changes persuaded many of the biggest movie and TV stars to support

this year's ceremony - the 80th Golden Globe Awards - the traditional curtain raiser for the Hollywood awards season.

The show unfolded largely as it had in years past, except for a biting monologue from comedian and host Jerrod Carmichael who opened the show joking, "I'm here because I'm Black."

"I won't say they were a racist organisation," he continued before sitting on the stage. "But they didn't have a single Black member until George Floyd died. So do with that information what you will."

Other award winners included Black Panther actress Angela Bassett, who won a supporting actress award for playing Queen Ramonda in Black Panther: Wakanda Forever.

"We showed the world what Black unity, leadership and love looks like beyond, behind and in front of the camera," Bassett said as she held her trophy.



## No Surge In Covid Cases In J&K: Officials

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Despite the surge in Covid-19 cases worldwide, the situation in J&K so far is well under control as no surge has been reported here, officials said Wednesday.

Officials told a local news agency KNO that the surge in Covid-19 cases was reported in different countries but situation J&K is better as no surge has been reported.

They said that people in J&K have hybrid immunity because of a combination of wide-spread natural infection and vaccination.

They said that people with hybrid immunity developed by both vaccination and previous infections have significant protection against future Covid infections.

Almost everyone has contracted the virus more than once during three Covid-19 waves besides that above 12

years of age whole population is vaccinated, so there are very little chances that any variant can trigger fresh wave as of now here, he said

They said that there is no need to panic and cases have started to decline in countries which witnessed recently but people must take precautions and government keep vigil on new variants by conducting genome sequencing of positive cases.

They said that as of now there are 22 active cases of Covid-19 but no one among them has been admitted in hospital and all are under observation at home.

They said that J&K is ready to tackle any situation in future as well but people must take precautions.

Notably, mock drills in the hospitals were conducted to ensure operational readiness for management of Covid with specific focus on oxygen plants, ventilators, logistics and human resources—(KNO)

## Govt Forms 14-Member UTLSC Headed By CS

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir government on Wednesday constituted a 14-member Union Territory Level Sanctioning Committee (UTLSC) for approval of Flexi Fund component under PMDP (MIDH).

As per an order issued by Secretary to the Government, Dr Piyush Singla, Chief Secretary has been appointed as Chairman of the UTLSC.

The order issued under number 37-JK(GAD) of 2023, dated 11-01-2023, reads that sanction is hereby accorded to the constitution of Union Territory Level Sanctioning Committee (UTLSC) for approval of Flexi Fund component under PMDP (MIDH) on the lines of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY).

Other than Chief Secretary as Chairman, Administrative Secretary, Agriculture Production Department has been appointed as Vice Chairman of the committee while Administrative Secretary, Finance Department Member, Administrative Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, representative of Department of Agriculture, Co-operation & Farmers Welfare, Government of India (Officer not below the rank of Joint Secretary), Administrative Secretary, Department of Forest, Ecology & Environment, Administrative Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Administrative Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring Department, Director, Agriculture, Jammu/Kashmir, Director, Horticulture, Jammu/Kashmir, Director, Animal Husbandry,

Jammu/Kashmir, Director, Fisheries, J&K and representative of SKUAST, have been appointed as members of UTLSC.

Secretary in the Agriculture Production Department has been appointed as member Secretary of UTLSC, the order further reads.

UTLSC may co-opt two more members from Agricultural Research Organizations, reputed NGOs working in the field of Agriculture, Deputy Commissioners of important districts and leading farmers. The quorum for the UTLSC meeting shall not be complete without the presence of a representative from the Government of India, the order reads.

It added that UTLSC shall be responsible for sanctioning the projects, under Flexi fund Component under PMDP (MIDH).

It shall monitor the progress of the sanctioned projects/schemes. It shall review implementation of the schemes' objectives and ensure that the programmes are implemented in accordance with the guidelines laid down.

It shall ensure that no duplication of efforts or resources takes place. It shall ensure commissioning/undertaking field studies to monitor the implementation of the projects. It shall initiate evaluation studies from time to time, as may be required. It shall ensure that there are no inter-district disparities with respect to the financial patterns/subsidy assistance in the projects, the order further said.

The UTLSC shall meet as often as required but shall meet at least once in a quarter—(KNO)

## Director RDD Reviews Functioning Of Department At Shopian



### Observer News Service

**SHOPIAN:** The Director, Rural Development Department (RDD) Kashmir, Khalid Majid on Wednesday presided over a meeting of departmental Officers at Meeting Hall of Mini-Secretariat, here to take a comprehensive review of all activities and works.

At the outset, Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD), Hilal Ahmad apprised the chair about the current status of different works undertaken by RDD Shopian. He presented a detailed report about the implementation of various Centrally Sponsored schemes including 14th FC, MGNREGA, SBM and other related schemes through a powerpoint presentation.

The meeting also discussed the physical and financial status of projects targeted for completion in the current fiscal.

It was given out in the meeting that under 14th FC, out of 1763 works, 1528 works have been

completed and 367 works taken up during Back to Village are almost nearing its completion.

On the occasion, the Director emphasised on the concerned officers to take immediate measures to accelerate the pace of the ongoing works for their time-bound completion and directed for regular monitoring of works.

Directions were also passed for clearance of Material and labour payments within days to the extent of releases made till date.

Director exhorted upon the concerned officers to achieve the set targets under different schemes within a stipulated time frame with a focus on the creation of durable assets.

The Director, after taking stock of works in the district directed all the officers to keep a close liaison and coordination with PRIs so that implementation of developmental activities is ensured in a hassle free manner and people can realize the actual and intended benefits of work.



**A MAN WAITING FOR A BUS ON A RAINY DAY** Wednesday near Srinagar's busy Residency Road..

KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

### Outsourcing Tourism Dept Assets

## Govt Adds Two More Members To The Constituted Panel

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir government on Wednesday modified the previous order related to the constitution of a committee for deciding the mechanism of outsourcing of the identified assets of the Tourism Department.

Two more members have been included in the committee while the Secretary to the Government, Health & Medical Education Department has been excluded as the member of the panel.

As per the order, Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Forest, Environment & Ecology Department and Commissioner/Secretary to

the Government, Revenue Department shall be co-opted member(s) of the Committee.

Earlier, the government in December last year constituted a committee headed by Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary) Finance Department, to select the properties from the identified list to be outsourced besides identifying the model for each property or group of assets for outsourcing.

In the fresh order, under number 36-JK(GAD) of 2023, dated 11-01-2023, the government said that in partial modification of Government Order No. 1297- JK(GAD) of 2021 dated 09-12-2021 read with Government Order No.

327-JK(GAD) of 2022 dated 07-11-2022, it is hereby ordered that Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Forest, Environment & Ecology Department and Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Revenue Department shall be co-opted member(s) of the aforesaid Committee.

“Concerned Deputy Commissioner(s) & Vice Chairman(s)/Chief Executive Officer(s) of the Development Authorities (if any) shall be special invitees to the Committee,” the order reads.

It further added that Secretary to the Government, Health & Medical Education Department shall not be a member of the Committee—(KNO)

## National Conclave On NEP Concludes In Jammu

### Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The maiden National Conclave on NEP which was inaugurated on the 9th concluded on Wednesday evening, here in the Convention Centre Jammu.

Delegates including teachers, officials of Education Department, private players and other stakeholders of education sector from across the country joined in to brainstorm towards making the NEP-2020, that is the first education policy of the twenty-first century announced after 34 years of the last National Policy on Education of 1986, a grand success.

Director School Education Jammu, Dr. Ravi Shankar Sharma presented a comprehensive power point presentation on the achievements and work under progress in the education sector in J&K.



He said that the NEP-2020 is directed towards initiating major reforms in schools and higher education levels focusing on the principle that education is fundamental for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society and promoting national development.

One of the main objectives of the National Education Policy is to transform India into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society. It envisions an India-centric education system that con-

tributes directly to transforming India into a Knowledge superpower, he said.

The Director School Education Jammu concluded the first National Conclave on National Education Policy (NEP) -2020 which was organized by Agri Industries Vikas Chamber, New Delhi under the aegis of Department of School Education, JKUT. The Resource Person from various parts of the country expressed their views on “Challenges & Implementation of National Education Policy 2020”.

## Govt Invokes CSR 30 To 'Censure' College Principal Over Misconduct

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir higher education department has invoked Civil Service Rule 30 to 'censure' college principals over misconduct.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Higher Education Department (HED) has reprimanded the college Principal and issued a strict warning against the Principal of Government Degree College (GDC) Pattan Prof Tariq Ashai under Rule 30 (i) "censure" of the civil service (classification, Control, and Appeal) Rules 1956."

As already reported by KNO, the JK HED had attached the in-charge Principal Government Degree College (GDC) Pattan over serious allegations leveled against him for his misbehavior at Cluster University Srinagar (CUS).

The attachment order was issued by HED after a written complaint was submitted by the dean of Academic Affairs of Cluster University Srinagar (CUS).

Following this, the HED ordered an inquiry, and Prof. Tariq Ashai

was attached to the Administrative Department, Civil Secretariat, Jammu, till the outcome of the inquiry.

Additional Secretary HED, Su-shil Kumar Khajuria was appointed as the inquiry officer.

As per the order, the inquiry officer has submitted the inquiry report with the recommendation that Prof. Tariq Ashai has not maintained the sanctity of the chair.

"As such a strict warning under Rule 30 of the Civil Service (Classification, Control, and Appeal) Rules 1956 i.e may be issued with the advice to restrain from such acts even in adverse situations and shall remain careful in future," the order reads.

"However, the victim, Prof Khurshid Ahmad controller CUS may also be admonished to refrain from such acts which may lead to provocation," the order reads.

As already reported, Prof. Ashai was attached for physically assaulting the Controller examination CUS over some official issue in presence of the Vice Chancellor CUS, Deans, and other administrative staff members of the University.

### Ring Road Project

## DDC Budgam Inspects Pace, Progress Of Work

### Observer News Service

**BUDGAM:** The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Budgam, S F Hamid Wednesday visited ring road project wherein he took on spot review of pace and progress of the project in the district.

During the visit, the DDC instructed all concerned to augment the manpower and expedite the work process to ensure timely completion of all works and projects.

The DDC directed the concerned executing agency to speed up the pace of work so that the project is completed at the earliest. He

asked the concerned to expedite the work on projects to ensure the movement of vehicular traffic around the area.

He said that the project is of immense public importance and is being strictly monitored by higher authorities for the earliest completion. He said as soon as the projects are completed, the same will prove helpful towards overcoming traffic jams besides ensuring smooth plying of traffic on the highway.

The DDC further directed the concerned to ensure all facilities like Telecom and Transmission towers besides completion of basic connecting bridges.

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ELECTRIC DIVISION GANDERBAL

Short Term NIT No. \_\_06\_\_ of 2022-23, Dated: \_\_06 /01/2023

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble Lt. Governor of J&K State, Sealed tender affixed with Rs. 05/- Revenue stamps are invited from the reputed and resourceful Contractors/Dealers enlisted/registered with J&K Power Development for the following job:

### Details of work:

| S. No | Particulars of work  | Estimated cost of work (Lacs) | Earnest money (Rs.)  | Completion Period | Position of funds |
|-------|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1.    | Illumination of Mini Secretariat Ganderbal, District Police Lines Ganderbal , S P Office Ganderbal, SDM Office Kangan and Duderhama Bridge with Fancy Decoration and LED lights on the occasion of Republic Day for the year 2021. | 0.90                          | 2% of estimated cost | 02 days           | Demand            |

Tender document consisting of specifications of work, schedule of quantities and set of terms and conditions of contract can be had from the office of the undersigned in person on application against non-refundable cash payment of Rs. 200/- as cost of tender document after presentation of valid registration Certificate issued by JKPDD.

The Tender documents shall be received in the office of the undersigned through Registered/ Speed Post, or in person upto 2pm of 16-01-23. The envelope containing the tender papers should be super scribed with tender no, name of work, name of firm with complete address along with mobile no and email ID nature of work. The authority will not be responsible for any postal delay for non-receipt of bid documents in time.

The bids shall be opened in the presence of the bidders who may like to be present at the time of opening of tenders.

The authority reserves the right to reject the bid/s without assigning any reason thereof. The tender document is liable for cancellation if following self-attested copies are not enclosed.

1. Earnest money in the shape of CDR @2% of Advertised cost.
2. Valid electrical registration license.
3. VAT/Tax Clearance certificate
4. Pan Card.
5. Experience certificate for execution of similar/alike nature of work.

### Key Dates about issuance/ submission of the tender document:

1. Sale of Tender documents starts 09-01-2023
2. Sale of Tender documents closes 16-01-2023
3. Submission of the filled tender documents ends (2 P.M) 17-01-2023
4. Opening of tender documents at 3 P.M 17-01-2023

No: EDG/V/ 154-64/TS  
Dated: 06-01-2023

DIPK-NB-5965-22  
DT: 11-01-2023

-Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
ED-V Ganderbal



KASHMIR OBSERVER  
Thursday| 12-01-2023

Growing  
Drug Abuse

In Kashmir, the growing use of drugs by the youth is one of the most tragic of the humanitarian fallouts of the lingering political conflict and the attendant violence. The daily play of death and despair has created a sense of dead-end for a generation born into conflict. Most of the addicts, the data reveals, come from the downtown Srinagar and the major towns of Baramulla, Sore, Anantnag, Kupwara which have been the hubs of the conflict and have witnessed most of the violence. The addiction has caught on among women too.

According to a recent study, Kashmir has around 70,000 substance users, and 52,000 people are using IV Heroin, among whom 34 percent drug abusers are unmarried. What is more, while a recent study of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi said that Punjab has 1.2 percent of opiate users, Kashmir study has revealed the percentage at 2.87 percent.

Steep rise in addiction has alarmed police who have launched a concerted drive against substance abuse in the Valley over the last year. In 2022, nearly 1,700 alleged drug peddlers were arrested in Kashmir. Police have registered 1,021 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. But it hasn't made much of an impact on the ground so far. People are using psychotropic substances, barbazol and sleeping pills.

However, it is not difficult to see what is leading the youth towards drugs. One major reason is the political conflict of the past over thirty years which is taking its toll on the youth. According to unemployment figures, jobless rate in Kashmir is 24 percent. There are also a huge number of uneducated and unskilled youth who look forward to no future. The reigning political uncertainty and the humanitarian fallout of the past three decades have only reinforced the sense of hopelessness, leading youth to ease their frustration through drugs.

Having said that, the dismal state of affairs is no less aided by the easy availability of prescription drugs in the state. As a society, we are always inclined to trace these wrongs to the prevailing political conflict in the region and hence absolve ourselves of the responsibility to collectively play a role in redeeming the situation. We need to step up and face the humungous problem head on. Government, on the other hand, needs to actively engage young people in income-generating activities, including sports, to ensure that those who benefit from rehabilitation do not relapse and are embraced by their families and society once they change their ways.

OTHER OPINION

Empty Nest

More than 18 million people born in India live abroad, making the country the world's biggest source of emigration by far. Yet, as India rightly celebrates its massive diaspora through the annual Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, which concluded in Indore yesterday, it is also important to take stock of the reasons why millions of its citizens are choosing to build a future in other nations. Unlike Mexico, which has the world's second-largest emigrant population that is largely concentrated in the United States of America, people of Indian origin are spread across the world. The Gulf nations are home to more than eight million non-resident Indians. The US, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia have large and growing populations of people who have given up their Indian passports or are looking to do so. Meanwhile, East Africa, the Caribbean, Malaysia and Fiji have large populations of Indian origin, descended from indentured labourers taken from India by former colonial powers. This rich mix makes the Indian diaspora a reflection of the old and the new, white collar and blue collar, past and present all at once. But what does the future hold? The Indian diaspora is increasingly successful in different countries. Indians are the wealthiest ethnic group in the US. The prime ministers of the UK, Portugal, Ireland and Mauritius and the presidents of Guyana, Suriname and Indonesia — spanning four continents — all have Indian roots. Others, such as the US, have Indian-origin vice-presidents.

The greatly influential Indian diaspora has often served as an important bridge that gives New Delhi economic and geopolitical advantages. For instance, it played a vital lobbying role in sealing the 2008 nuclear deal between the US and India. The popularity of the prime minister, Narendra Modi, among large sections of Indian expatriates gives his government leverage with foreign counterparts. But there are also reasons for serious worry. More than 100,000 Indians give up their citizenship each year — the figure crossed 183,000 in the first 10 months of 2022. The global consulting firm, Henley and Partners, estimated that 8,000 Indian dollar millionaires left the country for good last year. Wealthy Indians are also taking their money for investments abroad at record rates. That speaks to their relative lack of confidence in the Indian economy, while denying the country valuable taxes. It is important to ask the diaspora to do more for India. But it is even more important to ask why they felt the need to leave in the first place.

Telegraph India

M. K. BHADRAKUMAR

India faces an acute problem of self-identification, since it notionally advocates the transformation of global mechanisms imposed by developed countries but also happens to be a votary of the so-called “rules-based order”, which is a metaphor for the political ideology of the US as the dominant state and “lone superpower” in the 1990s

India's Got The  
BRICS Blues

The Brazilian news agency reported that Lula da Silva's inauguration as the new president on January 1 for a historic third term amidst a carnival-like backdrop was attended by over five dozen foreign delegations, composed of heads of government, vice presidents, foreign ministers, special envoys and representatives of international organisations. It was the largest event with high-level international figures in Brazil since the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

The BRICS leaders flocked to Brasilia — the vice-presidents of China and Russia and the foreign minister of South Africa. The solitary exception was India. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar prioritised a tour of the beautiful Mediterranean island of Cyprus and Austria.

India's “underrepresentation” probably was due to the close equations between PM Modi and Jair Bolsonaro, who served as the 38th president of Brazil from 2019 until 2022, whom Lula defeated. For some strange reason, Modi government invested heavily in Bolsonaro by inviting him as the chief guest at India's Republic Day in January 2020.

It was a controversial decision, given Bolsonaro's obnoxious record on misogyny and homophobia, and his perversion for targeting the indigenous people. In a scandalous incident, he once told an opposition politician Maria do Rosario during a debate in the parliament, “I wouldn't rape you because you're not worthy of it.”

Later, he explained that he wouldn't rape her because she was “ugly”. Bolsonaro's misogyny surged when he once remarked “I have five children. Four are men, and then in a moment of weakness the fifth came out a girl.” Again, his homophobic views got the better of him when he threatened that “if I see two men kissing each other on the street, I'll beat them up.”

Indeed, it remains a mystery what attracted the Indian ruling elite to Bolsonaro, an ex-military officer. Maybe, his “strong man” image and fascist ideology?

Be that as it may, ignoring Lula's historic return to power in Brazil is incomprehensible. It is not only that he's, arguably, the most charismatic statesman from a developing country, but he is certain to steer the BRICS to a higher destiny during his 4-year term.

Lula's return comes at a juncture when the BRICS is going from introvert to extrovert and its greater global ambition raises hopes across the wide expanses of the Global South of material changes in the global economic system. The ongoing polarisation between the West and the Rest over Ukraine issue accentuates the trend.

The hallmark of China's BRICS chairmanship in 2022 has been the launch of the extended BRICS+ meeting at the level of foreign ministers. China also has plans to open up the possibility of developing countries joining the core BRICS grouping. In fact, Algeria, Argentina and Iran have already applied to join BRICS, while Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt have announced their interest in becoming the group's members.

Looking ahead, the vitality of the BRICS trajectory will largely depend on the success of the BRICS+ enterprise. While an inert, introvert BRICS has neither global capacity nor global mission, a stronger, more inclusive and open BRICS has the potential to become the basis for a new system of global governance. This is the crux of the matter.

To be sure, the BRICS association needs to overcome its mounting internal contradictions. On the one hand, a fundamental transfor-

mation of the globalisation process has begun (and this process is only gaining momentum) and there are calls for the basic principles and mechanisms which bring the BRICS countries together to undergo reform. On the other hand, this is also an inflection point as multipolarity gains traction and all global multilateral organisations are faced with the loss of their status as universal platforms for overseeing the global rules of the game.

India faces an acute problem of self-identification, since it notionally advocates the transformation of global mechanisms imposed by developed countries but also happens to be a votary of the so-called “rules-based order”, which is a metaphor for the political ideology of the US as the dominant state and “lone superpower” in the 1990s.

Indeed, the difficulties of the BRICS were also caused by internal reasons. BRICS became internally highly heterogeneous and the main reason for this is India's unwillingness to work with China as leaders of economic growth. To be sure, the aggravation of contradictions between China and India has led to a slowdown in active work in the BRICS.

Enter Brazil. The victory of Bolsonaro in 2018 would also have been a moment of risk for the BRICS, as the new elites in power in Brasilia made no secret of their desire to place their main stake on rapprochement with the US. Surely, India saw in Bolsonaro a “natural ally” within the BRICS, which largely explains the high honour Modi bestowed on him on 2020 Republic Day.

Bolsonaro, like Modi, felt no commitment to the idea of uniting the Global South under the banner of reshaping the world order. Both preferred pragmatic, technocratic areas as the BRICS agenda that are objectively beneficial to them (eg., technological cooperation, the fight against organised crime, digitalisation, the Development Bank

and so on) although this resulted in an atrophy of the raison d'être of BRICS agenda.

But, as luck would have it, Joe Biden's victory in the November 2020 US election led to a cooling of the enthusiasm on the part of Bolsonaro and the Brazilian elites regarding the prospects for rapprochement with the US. The apple of discord was Bolsonaro's policy toward the Amazon River.

Bolsonaro worried about the inclusion of environmental issues



in the NATO agenda and he discarded his previously restrained approach to the BRICS, recognising its importance as a tool to counter isolation in the event of worsening relations with the US and the EU.

Suffice it to say that Lula's return is happening at a defining moment. In his first remarks after assuming power on Sunday, Lula vowed a drastic change of course to rescue his nation plagued by hunger, poverty and racism.

Lula made clear his main focus would be on ending hunger and narrowing rampant inequality. He also said he aims to improve the rights of women, and attack racism and Brazil's legacy of slavery. Lula declared that social conscience will be “the hallmark of our government.”

Unsurprisingly, India feels uneasy that the centre of gravity in BRICS is poised to shift further to the left of centre. Equally, India will find it difficult to maintain its role as a regional leader with the entry of Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia into the portals of BRICS. Being an acolyte of the US-led “rules-based order,” India faces the spectre of isolation.

Beijing, whose approaches to diplomacy and international politics are known for their strategic vision for the long term, is biding its time. Lula told Chinese vice-president Wang Qishan who participated in the ceremony in Brasilia as Xi Jinping's special representative, that he looked forward to visiting Beijing “to further deepen bilateral practical cooperation in various fields, enhance friendship between peoples, and lift Brazil-China relations to a new level.”

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 India Punchline



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Unfortunate News

Not a day goes by without the news of some violence against women. It is very unfortunate that women are still being treated so inhumanely even in the 21st century. Decades and centuries of women's miseries and struggles do not seem to end.

Our society has still not developed the understanding that women are just as human as men and they are entitled to the same amenities, but instead our society is still struggling to treat women as humans and not animals.

The oppressive culture of pushing our sisters and daughters into unhappy and abusive marriages needs to end. Families should support their daughters and not tell them to ‘adjust’ with their in-laws until she's beaten to death or burnt alive. Unfortunately the law does not seem to be strict enough for these abusers and murderers. All of these abusers involved in the case

must be dealt with strictly, in fact such stern action should be taken that nobody ever dares to raise their hand on a woman again. The extent of extremism is that even after we have already seen so many women die owing to domestic abuse, the society still hasn't learnt a lesson and neither have the authorities. Until and unless the police take a stern initiative, uncultured beasts like this will continue to harass and abuse women.

Our society has terribly failed to save their women in almost every sphere, and it is now the time to make amends in this matter. Women are not objects or possessions that can be beaten up or killed according to their husband's or in-law's choice, she is a human and as equal as a man is. Society cannot prosper unless men don't learn to respect women and treat them with regard.

Shameen Shafi



Seth Borenstein

With climate change, plastic pollution and a potential sixth mass extinction, humanity has made some incredible messes in the world.

But when people, political factions and nations have pulled together, they have also cleaned up some of those human-caused environmental problems, including healing the ozone hole, clearing perpetually smoggy air and saving many species from the brink of extinction.

"We can be good at cleaning up our messes, it's whether or not we choose to be and what we prioritize," said Michigan State University environmental sustainability researcher Sheril Kirshenbaum.

For Earth Day, The Associated Press asked more than 25 environmental scientists and policy experts, including two former U.S. Environmental Protection Agency chiefs and the current director of the United Nations Environment Programme, to share their top stories about environmental problems that the world fixed.

"There are some amazing success stories," said Stanford University environmental scientist Rob Jackson. "It's easy for us to get tunnel vision with everything going wrong, and there is a lot that needs to change quickly. But it's wonderful to remind ourselves that other people in the past have succeeded and that society has succeeded too, both nationally here in the U.S. and also internationally."

Here are the four successes mentioned most often and a key aspect that so many ecological wins have in common.

#### HEALING THE OZONE HOLE

Fixing ozone depletion was by far the top choice of scientists, officials and environmental policy experts.

"It was a moment where countries that usually compete with each other grasped the collective threat and decided to implement a solution," former EPA chief Carol Browner said in an email.

Scientists in the 1970s had discovered that a certain class of chemicals, often used in aerosol sprays and refrigeration, was eating away the protective ozone layer in Earth's atmosphere that shields the planet from harmful ultraviolet radiation linked to skin cancer.

The ozone layer was thinning everywhere, creating a hole over Antarctica, which not only threatened increased skin cancer cases, but cataracts and widespread changes to ecosystems around the globe, said University of North Carolina atmospheric scientist Jason West.

"It's the first time we created a planet-killing problem and then we turned around and solved it," Stanford's Jackson said.

In 1987, the countries of the world signed the Montreal Protocol, a first of its kind treaty that banned the ozone-munching chemicals. At this

# Healing Earth Positive Stories of Humans Cleaning up the Mess

point every nation in the world has adopted the treaty, 99% of the ozone-depleting chemicals have been phased out, "saving 2 million people every year from skin cancer," United Nations Environment Programme Director Inger Andersen said in an email.

The ozone hole over Antarctica worsened for a couple decades, but over the last several years it has slowly started to heal in fits and spurts. The United Nations Environment Programme projects that the ozone "will heal completely by the 2030s."

While activists point to the Montreal Protocol as a hope and example for the fight against climate change, it's not quite the same. In the case of the banned ozone-sapping chemicals the corporations that manufactured them also made their replacements. But with climate change "it's more of an existential threat to the oil and gas companies," Jackson said.

#### CLEANER AIR AND WATER

In the United States and much of the industrialized world, the air is much cleaner and clearer than it was 50 or 60 years ago when major cities like Los Angeles were choked with smog and even more dangerous microscopic particles in the air. And lakes and rivers were dumping grounds, especially around Ohio, Michigan and Canada.

"We would go to Lake Erie when I was young... and play on the beach and there would be dead fish everywhere. We would have dead fish fights," Stanford's Jackson said.

In the United States the Clean Air Act of 1970 and its follow up in 1990 with EPA regulations "effectively cleaned our air," UNC's West said. A similar law passed in the 1972 for water.

"This has led to fewer health conditions such as cancer and asthma, for example, and saved millions of lives and trillions of dollars in health care costs," Syracuse University environmental sciences professor Sam Tuttle said. "That means healthier people, more productive fisheries and a healthier and more attractive environment for



all of us to enjoy."

Tight restrictions on tiny particles alone decreased annual U.S. air pollution deaths "from about 95,000 in 1990 to 48,000 in 2019," West said.

In Los Angeles in 1955, smog levels peaked at 680 parts per billion. In the last couple years they hit 185 parts per billion but are usually much smaller.

It's not just air outside. Former EPA chief William K. Reilly and University of Maryland environmental health scientist Sacoby Wilson said restricting indoor smoking had huge public health effects.

On the water, Brown University environmental scientist J. Timmons Roberts also grew up on Lake Erie and stopped going to the water because of the dead fish: "Regulations and co-operation between the U.S. and Canada really made the difference and now there's genuine eco-tourism there and thousands of walleye and other fishers come out every summer."

#### SOLAR AND WIND POWER

The steep fall in price of solar and wind power, which do not produce heat-trapping gases, has surprised experts and given them hope that the world can wean itself from coal, oil and natural gas that are causing global warming.

From 2010 to 2020, the price of residential solar power dropped 64% and the price of large-scale utility solar power generation dropped 82%, according to the National Renewable Energy Lab.

Solar "is becoming a dominant energy technology and it's becoming cheaper," Jackson said. "It is cheaper than almost all other forms of electricity generation."

Few people thought solar and wind prices would drop so quickly just ten years ago, Jackson, Kirshenbaum and others said.

Experts credit renewable power subsidies to pull the world out of the 2008 Great Recession, especially in Germany and the United States.

#### ENDANGERED SPECIES

The bald eagle, American alligator, peregrine falcon, Canada geese and humpback whales are each environmental success stories.

All were once on the brink of extinction, put on the endangered species list for protection. Now they are all of the protected list and in some cases they are so abundant that people consider them a nuisance or they cause problems for other species.

"Conservation efforts are clawing some endangered species back from the brink," Duke University ecologist Stuart Pimm said. "We are learning to do this thing called conservation."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has taken 96 species off the endangered species list, 65 of them because they have recovered.

Experts credit regulations and laws across the world with restricting the killing and trading of endangered species and preventing destruction of crucial habitat for those critters and plants.

Another key change was the ban on the pesticide DDT, which reverberated through the food chain, causing thinning eggs for eagles, peregrine falcons and other birds of prey, Cornell University environmental biology professor Robert Howarth said.

#### COOPERATION

In the United States, many of these key successes were spurred by laws and actions taken by Republican administrations of Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush.

"All these major milestones, including the creation of the EPA, were bipartisan, but unfortunately today we can't seem to get that stuff done," said Christie Todd Whitman, who was an EPA chief during a Republican presidency. "Sadly, Republicans don't seem to care about these issues anymore—everything is so hyper partisan now that (the) GOP seem to be Neanderthals on the environment."

Often when a Republican is president, the rest of the country moves left and becomes more friendly to environmental action, whereas they move right and become more environmentally complacent during Democratic administrations, said Kirshenbaum, a former congressional staffer and director of Science Debate. What's important is cooperation and buy-in to big issues from all sides, experts said.

The treaty to heal the ozone hole is the example for what working together can accomplish, Syracuse's Tuttle said: "This agreement proved that the international community could come together to create an enforceable framework to tackle an environmental problem of global significance."

The article was originally published by PHYS ORG

# The Future of Working

From steam power and electricity to computers and the internet, technological advancements have always disrupted labor markets, pushing out some jobs while creating others. Artificial intelligence remains something of a misnomer – the smartest computer systems still don't actually know anything – but the technology has reached an inflection point where it's poised to affect new classes of jobs: artists and knowledge workers.

Specifically, the emergence of large language models – AI systems that are trained on vast amounts of text – means computers can now produce human-sounding written language and convert descriptive phrases into realistic images. The Conversation asked five artificial intelligence researchers to discuss how large language models are likely to affect artists and knowledge workers. And, as our experts noted, the technology is far from perfect, which raises a host of issues – from misinformation to plagiarism – that affect human workers.

To jump ahead to each response, here's a list of each:

#### Creativity for all – but loss of skills?

Lynne Parker, Associate Vice Chancellor, University of Tennessee

Large language models are making creativity and knowledge work accessible to all. Everyone with an internet connection can now use tools like ChatGPT or DALL-E 2 to express themselves and make sense of huge stores of information by, for example, producing text summaries.

Especially notable is the depth of humanlike expertise large language models display. In just minutes, novices can create illustrations for their business presentations, generate marketing pitches, get ideas to overcome writer's block, or generate new computer code to perform specified functions, all at a level of quality typically attributed to human experts.

These new AI tools can't read minds, of course. A new, yet simpler, kind of human creativity is needed in the form of text prompts to get the results the human user is seeking. Through iterative prompting – an example of human-AI collaboration – the AI system generates successive rounds of outputs until the human writing the prompts is satisfied with the results. For example, the (human) winner of the recent Colorado State Fair competition in the digital artist category, who used an AI-powered tool, demonstrated creativity, but not of the sort that requires brushes and an eye for color and texture.

While there are significant benefits to opening the world of creativity and knowledge work to everyone, these new AI tools also have downsides. First, they could accelerate the loss of important human skills that will remain important in the coming years, especially writing skills. Educational institutes need to craft and enforce policies on allowable uses of large language models to ensure fair play and desirable learning outcomes.

Second, these AI tools raise questions around intellectual property protections. While human creators are regularly inspired by existing artifacts in the world, including architecture and the writings, music and paintings of others, there are unanswered questions on the proper and fair use by large language models of copyrighted or open-source training examples. Ongoing lawsuits are now debating this issue, which may have implications for the future design and use of large language models.

As society navigates the implications of these new AI tools, the public seems ready to embrace them. The chatbot ChatGPT went viral quickly, as did image generator Dall-E mini and others. This suggests a huge untapped potential for creativity, and the importance of making creative and knowledge work accessible to all.

#### Potential inaccuracies, biases and plagiarism

Daniel Acuña, Associate Professor of Computer Science, University of Colorado Boulder

I am a regular user of GitHub Copilot, a tool for helping people write computer code, and I've spent countless hours playing with ChatGPT and similar tools for AI-generated text. In my experience, these tools are good at exploring ideas that I haven't thought about before.

I've been impressed by the models' capacity to translate my instructions into coherent text or code. They are useful for discovering new ways to improve the flow of my ideas, or creating solutions with software packages that I didn't know existed. Once I see what these tools generate, I can evaluate their quality and edit heavily. Overall, I think they raise the bar on what is considered creative.

But I have several reservations.

One set of problems is their inaccuracies – small and big. With Copilot and ChatGPT, I am constantly looking for whether ideas are too shallow – for example, text without much substance or inefficient code, or output that is just plain wrong, such as wrong analogies or conclusions, or code that doesn't run. If users are not critical of what these tools produce, the tools are potentially harmful.

Recently, Meta shut down its Galactica large language model for scientific text because it made up "facts" but sounded very confident. The concern was that it could pollute the internet with confident-sounding falsehoods.

Another problem is biases. Language models can learn from the data's biases and replicate them. These biases are hard to see in text generation but very clear in image generation models. Researchers at OpenAI, creators of ChatGPT, have been relatively careful about what the model will respond to, but users routinely find ways around these guardrails.

Another problem is plagiarism. Recent research has shown that image generation tools of

ten plagiarize the work of others. Does the same happen with ChatGPT? I believe that we don't know. The tool might be paraphrasing its training data – an advanced form of plagiarism. Work in my lab shows that text plagiarism detection tools are far behind when it comes to detecting paraphrasing.

These tools are in their infancy, given their potential. For now, I believe there are solutions to their current limitations. For example, tools could fact-check generated text against knowledge bases, use updated methods to detect and remove biases from large language models, and run results through more sophisticated plagiarism detection tools.

#### With humans surpassed, niche and 'hand-made' jobs will remain

Kentaro Toyama, Professor of Community Information, University of Michigan

We human beings love to believe in our specialness, but science and technology have repeatedly proved this conviction wrong. People once thought that humans were the only animals to use tools, to form teams or to propagate culture, but science has shown that other animals do each of these things.

Meanwhile, technology has quashed, one by one, claims that cognitive tasks require a human brain. The first adding machine was invented in 1623. This past year, a computer-generated work won an art contest. I believe that the singularity – the moment when computers meet and exceed human intelligence – is on the horizon.

How will human intelligence and creativity be valued when machines become smarter and more creative than the brightest people? There will likely be a continuum. In some domains, people still value humans doing things, even if a computer can do it better. It's been a quarter of a century since IBM's Deep Blue beat world champion Garry Kasparov, but human chess – with all its drama – hasn't gone away.

In other domains, human skill will seem costly and extraneous. Take illustration, for example. For the most part, readers don't care whether the graphic accompanying a magazine article was drawn by a person or a computer – they just want it to be relevant, new and perhaps entertaining. If a computer can draw well, do readers care whether the credit line says Mary Chen or System X? Illustrators would, but readers might not even notice.

And, of course, this question isn't black or white. Many fields will be a hybrid, where some Homo sapiens find a lucky niche, but most of the work is done by computers. Think manufacturing – much of it today is accomplished by robots, but some people oversee the machines, and there remains a market for handmade products.

If history is any guide, it's almost certain that advances in AI will cause more jobs to vanish, that creative-class people with human-only skills

will become richer but fewer in number, and that those who own creative technology will become the new mega-rich. If there's a silver lining, it might be that when even more people are without a decent livelihood, people might muster the political will to contain runaway inequality.

#### Old jobs will go, new jobs will emerge

Mark Finlayson, Associate Professor of Computer Science, Florida International University

Large language models are sophisticated sequence completion machines: Give one a sequence of words ("I would like to eat an ...") and it will return likely completions ("... apple."). Large language models like ChatGPT that have been trained on record-breaking numbers of words (trillions) have surprised many, including many AI researchers, with how realistic, extensive, flexible and context-sensitive their completions are.

Like any powerful new technology that automates a skill – in this case, the generation of coherent, albeit somewhat generic, text – it will affect those who offer that skill in the marketplace. To conceive of what might happen, it is useful to recall the impact of the introduction of word processing programs in the early 1980s. Certain jobs like typist almost completely disappeared. But, on the upside, anyone with a personal computer was able to generate well-typeset documents with ease, broadly increasing productivity.

Further, new jobs and skills appeared that were previously unimaginable, like the oft-included resume item MS Office. And the market for high-end document production remained, becoming much more capable, sophisticated and specialized.

I think this same pattern will almost certainly hold for large language models: There will no longer be a need for you to ask other people to draft coherent, generic text. On the other hand, large language models will enable new ways of working, and also lead to new and as yet unimaginable jobs.

To see this, consider just three aspects where large language models fall short. First, it can take quite a bit of (human) cleverness to craft a prompt that gets the desired output. Minor changes in the prompt can result in a major change in the output.

Second, large language models can generate inappropriate or nonsensical output without warning.

Third, as far as AI researchers can tell, large language models have no abstract, general understanding of what is true or false, if something is right or wrong, and what is just common sense. Notably, they cannot do relatively simple math. This means that their output can unexpectedly be misleading, biased, logically faulty or just plain false.

These failings are opportunities for creative and knowledge workers. For much content creation, even for general audiences, people will still need the judgment of human creative and knowledge workers to

prompt, guide, collate, curate, edit and especially augment machines' output. Many types of specialized and highly technical language will remain out of reach of machines for the foreseeable future. And there will be new types of work – for example, those who will make a business out of fine-tuning in-house large language models to generate certain specialized types of text to serve particular markets.

In sum, although large language models certainly portend disruption for creative and knowledge workers, there are still many valuable opportunities in the offing for those willing to adapt to and integrate these powerful new tools.

#### Leaps in technology lead to new skills

Casey Greene, Professor of Biomedical Informatics, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

Technology changes the nature of work, and knowledge work is no different. The past two decades have seen biology and medicine undergoing transformation by rapidly advancing molecular characterization, such as fast, inexpensive DNA sequencing, and the digitization of medicine in the form of apps, telemedicine and data analysis.

Some steps in technology feel larger than others. Yahoo deployed human curators to index emerging content during the dawn of the World Wide Web. The advent of algorithms that used information embedded in the linking patterns of the web to prioritize results radically altered the landscape of search, transforming how people gather information today.

The release of OpenAI's ChatGPT indicates another leap. ChatGPT wraps a state-of-the-art large language model tuned for chat into a highly usable interface. It puts a decade of rapid progress in artificial intelligence at people's fingertips. This tool can write passable cover letters and instruct users on addressing common problems in user-selected language styles.

Just as the skills for finding information on the internet changed with the advent of Google, the skills necessary to draw the best output from language models will center on creating prompts and prompt templates that produce desired outputs.

For the cover letter example, multiple prompts are possible. "Write a cover letter for a job" would produce a more generic output than "Write a cover letter for a position as a data entry specialist." The user could craft even more specific prompts by pasting portions of the job description, resume and specific instructions – for example, "highlight attention to detail."

As with many technological advances, how people interact with the world will change in the era of widely accessible AI models. The question is whether society will use this moment to advance equity or exacerbate disparities.

By arrangements with The Conversation







## Direct Tax Collection Grows 24.58% To Rs 14.71 Lakh Crore Till Jan 10

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The country's gross direct tax collection rose 24.58 per cent to Rs 14.71 lakh crore till January 10 this fiscal, buoyed by an upsurge in personal income tax mop-up, the government data showed on Wednesday.



After adjusting refunds, net direct tax collection stood at Rs 12.31 lakh crore, 19.55 per cent higher than the net collections for the corresponding period of last year.

The net collection is 86.68 per cent of the total budget estimates of direct taxes for the current fiscal. The Budget had estimated direct tax collection at Rs 14.20 lakh crore this fiscal.

On gross basis, collections from corporate income tax (CIT) grew 19.72 per cent, while that for personal income tax (PIT) increased 30.46 per cent.

"The provisional figures of direct tax collections up to 10th January, 2023 continue to register steady growth. Direct tax collections up to 10th January, 2023 show that gross collections are at Rs 14.71 lakh crore which is 24.58 per cent higher than the gross collections for the corresponding period of last year," the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement.

After adjusting refunds, the net growth in CIT collections is 18.33 per cent and that in PIT (including securities transaction tax) is 20.97 per cent.

Refunds amounting to Rs 2.40 lakh crore have been issued between April 1, 2022, to January 10, 2023, which are 58.74 per cent higher than refunds issued during the same period last year.

## Court Rescinds Ban, Allows Johnson & Johnson To Make, Sell Baby Powder

Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** The Bombay High Court on Wednesday permitted Johnson & Johnson to manufacture, sell and distribute its baby powder and quashed three orders of the Maharashtra government revoking the company's license and asking it to stop the product manufacture and sale, terming them as "stringent, unreasonable and unfair".

A division bench of Justices Gautam Patel and S G Dige also came down heavily on the state Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for its delay in carrying out tests on a sample of the company's baby powder seized in December 2018.

The bench noted that while maintaining standards of quality and safety are of utmost importance for cosmetic products, at the same time it does not seem reasonable to shut down the whole manufacturing process when there is a slight deviation in one of the products.

Such an approach would result in considerable amount of "commercial chaos and wastefulness", it said.

The orders of suspension and revoking of license were passed based on the report of a lab which found the powder contained higher pH level than prescribed.

The HC in its order on Wednesday noted the fresh tests conducted showed all batches of the baby powder product were compliant with

the norms prescribed.

The court passed its order on a petition filed by the company challenging three orders of the state government -- one dated September 15, 2022 cancelling the license, the second dated September 20, 2022 ordering it to immediately stop the manufacturing and sale of the baby powder product, and the third passed on October 15, 2022 by the state minister concerned upholding the earlier two orders.

The HC in its order said, "The executive cannot use a hammer to kill an ant. Is it always inevitable that when there is a single case of deviation or non-compliance (to prescribed norms) by a product the only option left with the regulatory authority is to cancel or revoke the license of the manufacturing company?"

"This seems to us as an extreme approach. There seems to be an unfairness and unreasonableness in the executive action. There is also nothing to show that the FDA has adopted such a stringent approach for any other product of the petitioner company or any other company," it added.

Noting that the government orders cannot sustain, the HC quashed them and permitted the company to manufacture, distribute and sell its baby powder products.

The court also came down heavily on the FDA for the delay in carrying out tests on a sample of the company's baby powder seized in December 2018.

## CS For Branding Of Products Produced By KVIB Clusters

Board proclaims providing employment to more than 1.6 lakh youth under PMEGP



Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta Wednesday urged the Khadi & Village Industries Board (KVIB) to identify certain products, give them a brand name and promote these in the market.

He expressed these ideas in the 106th Board Meeting held today under his chairmanship.

The meeting was attended by the board members including Vice Chairperson, KVIB; Principal Secretary, Industries and Commerce; Commissioner Secretary, RDD; DG, I&C, Jammu; Director, I&C, Kashmir; CEO/Secretary, KVIB and many other concerned officers and officials.

Dr Mehta impressed upon the Board to certify their products so that their saleable value increases in the market. He observed that people prefer quality products and the quality has to be certified by the third party for its acceptability. He enjoined upon the officers to use

standard certification methods for enhancing the appeal of products among the customers.

The Chief Secretary enquired about the average time of loan disbursement to the applicants. He stressed on shortening the waiting period for applicants besides further accelerating the process to increase their number.

Dr Mehta asked the Board to take innovative measures in value addition and creation of market linkages. He advised the Board to look into handholding of youth in establishment of Leather processing in J&K, the raw material for which is available locally. He told them to take better consultancy advice in this regard so that employment generation for youth takes place.

He also told them to hold the Board meetings regularly and look for avenues to generate revenue for the Board to meet its expenses. He made out that the recruitment rules should be reviewed wherever necessary as per updated requirements.

He asked for bringing in fresh talent to KVIB by engaging the management and other technical professionals in it.

The meeting was informed that in the previous 6 years from 2018-19 the Board has been successful in establishing 20772 units under PM Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) generating employment for about 166172 persons. It was elucidated that the board has achieved its target by more than 5 folds thereby achieving first rank in the country in implementation of this programme.

It was also given out that under JK Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP) the Board has established more than 3000 units from 2018-2022 thereby generating employment for nearly 18000 persons.

It was revealed that the board invites applications online so that the process is more transparent, smooth and hassle-free for the benefit of all the applicants.

## 'Budget 2023-24 To Incorporate Ideals Of Viksit J&K, Women Empowerment, RCB, Skill Development'

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** In the aftermath of the 2nd Chief Secretaries Conference chaired by Prime Minister recently the Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta took a detailed review of way forward for achieving different objectives set out during the conference.

The meeting was attended by all the Administrative Secretaries, DG Budget, Directors of Finance of different departments and other concerned officers.

Dr Mehta stressed on including all the themes mentioned by the Prime Minister in the upcoming budget. He maintained that all of these form the guiding principles for us to be earnestly followed and achieved in a time bound manner. He directed for making necessary inclusions in the budget 2023-24 for implementing these ideals set for the UT.

It was set out that the agenda of this year's conference was based upon the broad counters of Viksit Bharat that were decided after extensive deliberations between nodal Ministries, NITI Aayog, States/UTs and domain experts. The discussion during the Conference were held on six identified themes viz Thrust on

MSMEs, Infrastructure and Investments, Minimising Compliances, Women's Empowerment, Health & Nutrition and Skill Development.

The Chief Secretary encouraged the officers to continue strengthening MSME sector as being significant for attaining the goal of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and to popularise local products. Further the ideals of 'Ease of Living' and 'Ease of Doing Business' also needs to be focussed upon.

He called upon them to focus on ending mindless compliances and those laws or rules which are outdated. He remarked that in a time of unparalleled reforms, there is no scope for over regulation and undue restrictions. So time has come to reduce the compliance burden (RCB) on common citizens as much as possible, he added.

Besides the meeting held focused deliberations on incorporation of themes like Vocal for Local and use of new emerging technologies. It was decided that districts being the fulcrum of development should be given more autonomy in utilization of funds through PRI's to enable their unrestrained growth and progress. It also discussed the idea of circu-

lar economy and UTs being model of development for all other states.

Dr Mehta impressed upon all the Administrative Secretaries to create a single helpline as envisaged in the conference. He asked them to integrate the helplines related to women and children like 181 and 1098 with 112 Emergency Response Support System.

It was further made out to create women hubs in each district and women exclusive shopping centres, women tourist guides and taxi drivers for their greater role in such men-dominated activities. Promotion of women SHGs for carrying out their entrepreneurial activities was also promulgated as a priority area for the budget. Hostel for working women and pink bus service to be used as transport was also discussed in this meeting.

With regard to Health sector the Chief Secretary declared that whole adult population should be screened for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) besides children and girls for malnutrition and anaemia respectively. It was targeted to have 100% institutional births and maintenance of fertility rate at national average of 2.1 here in the UT as well.

## Electric Vehicles Steel The Limelight Of First Day Of Auto Expo 2023

Press Trust of India

**GREATER NOIDA:** Electric vehicles hogged the limelight on the first day of India's flagship motor show Auto Expo 2023 with the likes of Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Kia, Tata Motors and MG Motor showcasing their futuristic products, while also committing to invest in sustainable mobility.

The show, returning after three years having been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, opened with the global premiere of Suzuki Motor Corporation's con-

cept electric SUV 'eVX' which is slated to hit the market by 2025.

The company's Indian arm Maruti Suzuki India is among the major manufacturers participating at the expo, in which some major manufacturers such as Mahindra & Mahindra, Skoda, Volkswagen and Nissan along with luxury car makers like Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Audi are not participating.

The Concept eVX is a mid-size electric SUV concept designed and developed by Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC), Japan. It will be powered by a 60 kWh battery pack offering up to 550 km of



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battery electric vehicle platform E-GMP.

"Ioniq 5 represents our shift towards future mobility with tenets that encapsulate intelligent technology, innovation and sustainability," Hyundai Motor India MD and CEO Unsoo Kim said.

Hyundai already sells one EV model, Kona Electric, in the country.

Another carmaker Kia India, which unveiled an all-electric SUV concept Kia Concept EV9, said it plans to invest Rs 2,000 crore over the next four years to scale up its presence in the electric vehicle segment.

## Non-Residents From 10 Countries Will Soon Be Able To Use UPI For Fund Transfer

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The NPCI has permitted non-residents from 10 countries, including the US, Canada and UAE, to digitally transfer funds using the UPI platform from NRE/NRO accounts.

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in a circular said it has been receiving requests for allowing non-residents to use international mobile numbers for transacting in Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

Accordingly, the NPCI in a circular dated January 10 has asked the UPI participants to put in place a mechanism by April 30 under which non-residents having NRE/NRO accounts will be allowed to transfer funds using their international mobile numbers.

To start with, this facility will be available to non-residents in 10 countries -- Singapore, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Oman, Qatar, USA, Saudi Arabia, UAE and the United Kingdom.

While NRIs and PIOs can open Non-Resident (External) Rupee (NRE) bank accounts, Non-Resident Ordinary (NRO) accounts can be opened by any person residing outside India for bonafide transactions in the rupee.



The NPCI, which operates the UPI platform, said, "To begin with, we shall be enabling transaction from mobile numbers having the country code of (10 nations)... and shall extend for other country codes in near future..."

Payments Council of India Chairman Vishwas Patel said the major convenience factor would be in the form of 'payment/money transfer convenience' for NRIs when they visit India.

Sarvatra Technologies Founder MD Mandar Agashe said all these years, NRIs couldn't access the UPI network since SIM binding, which is an important security feature of UPI, was available only to Indian SIM card phones.

"NRIs will just need to link their NRE and NRO accounts linked to their international SIM to UPI and use it like any other Indian UPI user for merchant payment as well as peer-to-peer payments," Agashe said.

## SHORT TAKES

### Google Fails To Get Interim Relief In App Store Case

**NEW DELHI:** In a setback for Google, an appellate tribunal on Wednesday refused an interim stay on the competition regulator imposing a Rs 936-crore penalty on the US tech giant for abusing its dominant position in the market.

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal directed Google to deposit 10 per cent of the fine that was slapped by the Competition Commission of India in a case related to its Play Store policies.

A week back, Google failed to get relief from the NCLAT on a separate Rs 1,337.76 crore fine imposed by CCI on alleged abuse of the dominant position that the US tech giant has in the Android smartphone operating system in the country. It was asked to deposit 10 per cent of the fine within four weeks.

Google challenged that order before the Supreme Court, which agreed to hear it on Monday.

While in the first case, CCI had in October last year asked Google to allow smartphone users on the Android platform to uninstall apps and let them select a search engine of their choice, the regulator had stated that the company to take corrective steps on policies that forced developers to use Google Play's billing system to list their apps on its Play Store. **PIT**

### Sebi Imposes Securities Market Ban On 8 Entities

**NEW DELHI:** Sebi on Wednesday barred eight entities, including BRH Wealth Kreators and BRH Commodities, from the securities markets for up to seven years and imposed penalties totalling Rs 11.5 crore on them in a case related to misuse and diversion of clients' funds.

Individually, the regulator has slapped a fine of Rs 5 crore each on BRH Wealth Kreators and BRH Commodities and Rs 1 crore on Anubhav Bhattar, who was the director of the two companies and also held significant beneficial interest in these firms. These three entities have been prohibited from the securities markets for seven years.

Also, a fine of Rs 10 lakh each has been levied on five entities -- Prosperous Vyapaar, Polo-Setco Tie Up, Parton Commercial, AB Investments and Bluesnow Supplies. They have also been restrained from the securities market for five years.

In its order, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said BRH Wealth Kreators and BRH Commodities have violated regulatory norms by misappropriating clients' funds or securities and diverting funds to five related entities. The related entities have also played a major role in aiding and abetting BRH Wealth Kreators and BRH Commodities in misappropriating the securities and funds of their clients, it added. **PIT**

### GeM Onboarding For Walnut (ODOP) By JKTPO Concludes

**KUPWARA:** Jammu & Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO) in collaboration with Invest India and District administration Kupwara successfully concluded the onboarding drive of ODOP products on Government e-Market place (GeM) for walnut exporters, FPO, entrepreneurs, traders of district Kupwara at DC office complex, Kupwara Wednesday.

On the directions of Prashant Goyal, Principal Secretary, Industries and Commerce, JKTPO is engaging with all the districts of UT to promote local ODOP products and create awareness regarding advantages of selling their products on the Government's e-Marketplace and other e-commerce platforms.

Walnut is the ODOP of district Kupwara under District as Export Hub Scheme (ODOP initiative. Jammu and Kashmir accounts for more than 98% of walnut production in India. Locally known as "Doen", Walnuts of Kupwara are naturally organic as no sprays and fertilizers are used in their cultivation.

The onboarding will open Government market for ODOP products especially for gifting/souvenir purpose during major government events, conferences, summits especially in view of various G20 meetings to be held across the country in 2023. **ONS**

### J&K Bank Shifts Its Khaag Branch To New Premises

**SRINAGAR:** Upgrading its infra-structure for customer convenience, J&K Bank threw open its new premises of Khaag Branch on Tuesday for public in Budgam.

The Bank's Zonal Head Budgam Sajad Hussain inaugurated the new premises in presence of Cluster Head Azad Ahmad Bhat amid a gathering of valuable customers, senior citizens, residents and other bank officials. Pertinently, the new premises also houses a hub, with an ATM and Cash Deposit Machine (CDM), so that people not only withdraw but can deposit cash as well.

Speaking on the occasion, Zonal Head said, "In line with the policy to upgrade our banking infra-structure so as to ensure customer comfort, I feel pleased to dedicate this centrally-heated and spacious new building equipped with state-of-the-art banking facilities for public. The branch space has been organised carefully to take care of the different types of visitors especially women and elderly."

"Besides providing the best customer services in the branch, an ATM and a CDM have also been installed within the premises to extend easy and accessible banking services to the people of catchment area even beyond the office hours", he added. **ONS**

### 170 Youth Appear In Interview For Self-Employment Schemes

**BANDIPORA:** In an endeavour to empower youth, 170 unemployed youth today appeared in an interview process meant for selection of youth on the basis of merit under Mission Youth.

The interview was organised with the aim to select different eligible beneficiaries to avail benefits under Mission Youth to establish their units in manufacturing sector, service sector and other employment avenues. Project Manager, District Industries Centre (DIC) Bandipora, Mehraj Wani said that under the scheme the eligible beneficiaries take loan from 2 lac to 20 lac with the facility of availing interest subsidy.

He said District Administration is working in mission mode to prioritise self-employment and self-empowerment of youth.

He said all the line departments dealing with individual schemes including DIC, KVIB, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and other departments have jointly carried out skill mapping of youth during Back To Village programme and 15 candidates from every panchayat have been Counselling for different entrepreneurship programmes. The Project Manager urged youth to come forward and take benefits from youth oriented Government schemes to speed up their socio-economic development under Mission Youth. **ONS**



Mr. Zaffar A. War, Mr. Latif A. Mir, Mr. M. Shamim, Mr. Showkat A. Lone  
Mr. Bashir A. War, Mr. Gh. Hassan, Mr. SaqarWar



# India Eyeing Another Big Win With Rohit, Virat In Full Flow

Press Trust of India

**KOLKATA:** Buoyed by the form of its top three batters, a clinical India will look to take an unassailable 2-0 lead when they face Sri Lanka in the second ODI here on Thursday.

Having ended his century drought for nearly three years in a T20I against Afghanistan in the Asia Cup in September, Virat Kohli has not looked back since then especially in the white ball format and brought up his 73rd International century in their 67-run win in Guwahati on Tuesday.

He looked in supreme control in the first ODI in Guwahati on Tuesday and made Sri Lanka pay the price for two dropped chances to slam a back-to-back ODI hundreds that formed the backbone of India's massive 373 for seven. It was like the

Kohli of the old as he looked uncluttered and no Sri Lankan bowler troubled him.

Returning from an injury, Indian skipper Rohit Sharma too allayed any concerns whatsoever of being short on match-fitness as he took on the Lankan attack in a 67-ball 83 to set the foundation for a mammoth total. He seemed to be in his zone before coming to his favourite venue Eden Gardens.

The last time the two teams met in an ODI here, Rohit struck that world record 264 eight years back. Now here in his favourite venue as the Indian skipper, Rohit would be definitely keen to get to a big score. That an ODI century is also eluding him since a long time -- his last ODI hundred came against Australia in January 2020 would also be an added motivation. Add young



opener Shubman Gill's splen- did ODI run to Indian top three and Indian top-order looks

sorted and would once again look to dominate the pedestrian Lankan attack.

Having got unflinching support from his skipper, Gill was back as opener in the ODI format at the expense of left-handed keeper-batter Ishan Kishan, a selection that copped a lot of criticism in Guwahati. But Gill silenced all that debate with yet another aesthetic knock of 70 off just 60 balls as he continued his fine form from last year during which he has averaged 70-plus from 12 innings.

With Shreyas Iyer also coming back from a dream ODI run last year and occupying the no 4 spot with his flair for tackling spin and rotating strike in the middle overs, the only spot that may open up in the batting order is that of KL Rahul.

Rahul, who also doubles up

as a wicketkeeper, has been in wretched form of late but may get a longer run especially in the series to prolong Kishan's wait.

Mohammed Siraj continued to raise his stakes and looked terrific with the new ball in an opening spell of 5-1-15-2, laced with 25 dot balls on a flat deck at Barsapara Stadium.

On Eden's fast deck, Siraj will relish the challenge bowling with old warhorse Mohammed Shami as it remains to be seen whether the team think tank opts for an extra seamer.

Umaran Malik played the role of the enforcer in the middle overs till Dasun Shanaka took on him en route to a fine century. The young pace gun is a work in progress and would look to improve with every match.

Match starts: 1.30pm IST.



## Real Kashmir Play Sudeva Delhi In I-League Today

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Real Kashmir FC is all set to take on Sudeva Delhi at Chhatrasal Stadium, New Delhi in I-League today, Thursday, January 12.

After a string of poor performances, the Snow Leopards will hope to bounce back against the experienced Delhi side. RKFC has lost 3 and drawn 1 of their last four matches. The team had started well early in the campaign, but the form fizzled out.

Real Kashmir head coach Mehrajuddin Wadoo was with Sudeva Delhi in the previous season, but is adamant that the team is focused on their "own brand of football".

"I think we started well but went on to lose three games in a row before the draw against Aizawl. The only thing I can say is that this is football. It can happen and we have to be ready for everything. We are prepared for the game against Suveda, and we will pay close attention to detail so that we do not repeat past mistakes." Wadoo said.

"I know Sudeva. I was the coach here last season but for me, it's how we play, not the opponent. We respect Sudeva, they are a good team, but our focus is on how we perform on the day," he added.

The match kicks off at 2:00 PM.

## Kashmir Arrows Win National-Level Tournament



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Valley based football club Kashmir Arrows on Tuesday won the Amar Shaheed Thakur Ranmat Singh Memorial All India Football Tournament 2023 held at Kothi, Satna, Madhya Pradesh.

After fine performances in the tournament, Umair was declared the Golden Boot winner,

while Mohammad Shadab was adjudged as the Golden Gloves winner.

DFA Srinagar congratulated Kashmir Arrows for their exemplary performance which led them to win their first ever All India Level.

Jammu & Kashmir Football Association also wished the team best of luck in future as well.

## J&K vs Punjab: Only 11 Overs Played On Day 2

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** J&K senior men's cricket team reached 176/6 in 44 overs on Wednesday as bad weather allowed only 11 overs of play at the end of Day 2.

J&K built on their overnight score of 146/6 after 33 overs on Day 1, when bad weather halted play.

For J&K, wicketkeeper Fazil Rashid 46 (70) and pacer Aquib Nabi 16 (61) were on the crease at stumps. The duo added 30 runs on Day 2, while building an overnight partnership of 50 runs. Aquib came on to bat



when the team was crumbling at 126/6 and, along with Fazil, ensured the team didn't lose any more wickets.

Earlier on Day 1, quick fire innings by Vivrant Sharma 41 (45) and Abdul Samad 46 (29) saved J&K from a humiliating batting display.

## Australia Name Spin-Heavy Squad For Test Tour Of India



Press Trust of India

**MELBOURNE:** Uncapped off-spinner Todd Murphy, with all of seven match first-class experience, received his maiden Test call-up as Australia on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, announced a spin-heavy squad for their upcoming four-Test series in India starting February 9.

Looking for their first Test series win in India since 2004, Australia will play Test matches in Nagpur (February 9-13), New Delhi (February 17-21), Dharamsala (March 1-5) and Ahmedabad (March 9-13).

The 22-year-old from Victoria will join fellow spinners Ashton Agar, Mitchell Swepson and Nathan Lyon in the 18-member squad which also includes Peter Handscomb and Matthew Renshaw as batting back-ups.

Owing to a finger injury, Mitchell Starc will miss the first Test in Nagpur on February 9 and is likely to join his pace colleagues -- captain Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, Scott Boland and Lance Morris later for rest of the series.

All-rounder Cameron Green will also be part of the contingent as he races against time to

recover from a finger fracture.

Murphy will be Nathan Lyon's understudy, having taken 29 wickets in his seven first-class games so far. He has also played 14 List A and 8 T20 games

**Australia squad:**

Pat Cummins (C), Ashton Agar, Scott Boland, Alex Carey, Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Peter Handscomb, Travis Head, Usman Khawaja, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Lance Morris, Todd Murphy, Matthew Renshaw, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Mitchell Swepson, David Warner.

## There Is An Attempt To Weaken Skipper Babar Azam's Position: Misbah

Press Trust of India

**KARACHI:** Former captain and coach Misbah-ul-Haq believes some people in the Pakistan Cricket Board are trying to weaken the position of current skipper Babar Azam and said this will have an adverse impact on the team's dressing room.

"Cricket is my blood and I watch cricket matches and read about cricket all the time. And from what I see Babar Azam's position in the team is being weakened," Misbah told reporters in Lahore on Tuesday.

"Look at some of the questions being asked to him what do they indicate he is being weakened as a captain and I am afraid that will have adverse effects on the team's dressing room."

Misbah, who held the all powerful positions of head coach



and chief selector in 2019-2020, said if the cricket board had issues with Babar's captaincy then they should sit down with him and the selectors and discuss it across the table.

"If you put pressure on someone like this it eventually will disturb the team and that is not good for Pakistan cricket."

"Test teams are built after a

lot of hard work and time and frequent changes don't help. We had a good test side but the changes disturbed everything," he said.

"Pakistan no doubt has a very good white ball squad so at least in those formats they are no problems at all. I personally would support Babar to the end," he added.

## Arthur Rejects Offer To Return As Pakistan Coach

Press Trust of India

**KARACHI:** Mickey Arthur has spurned an offer from the PCB to return as the head coach of the national team, forcing the board to continue its search to find a replacement for incumbent Saqlain Mushtaq.

The Pakistan Cricket Board on Tuesday said it was in discussions with Arthur for a new stint as head coach but the South African won't be able to take up the role right away



as he has a long-term contract with Derbyshire.

"Owing to his long-term contract with Derbyshire, we have also discussed a proposal

to act as a consultant to the PCB on a time-sharing basis with Derbyshire," PCB said in a statement.

"Unfortunately, however, this option is proving difficult to materialise for various reasons on both sides.

"Under the circumstances, the PCB will continue its search for the right person to fit the slot of the national team head coach and some top names are already under consideration."

## French Football Prez Steps Back Pending Investigation

Agencies

**PARIS:** Noël Le Graët agreed to step back from his duties as president of the French soccer federation on Wednesday following an emergency executive committee meeting into his behavior.

The 81-year-old Le Graët has faced claims of sexual harassment and the soccer federation is the target of an investigation ordered by French Sports Minister Amélie Oudéa-Castéra.



The federation said in a statement Wednesday that Le Graët agreed to step away from his role until the audit's findings have been fully reviewed by the executive committee.

On Tuesday, sports agent Sonia Souid accused Le Graët of improper conduct over several years, saying he only was interested in her sexually. Souid said in an interview with L'Equipe sports daily that Le Graët repeatedly tried to approach her from 2013-17.

Le Graët has had a tumultuous week after saying he "couldn't care less" about France football great Zinedine Zidane's future as a coach. He subsequently apologized for his

comments after facing a barrage of criticism.

Le Graët is currently a candidate for another four-year term on the FIFA Council, the soccer body's decision-making committee. He is being challenged for the seat by Portuguese soccer federation president Fernando Gomes. The election is set for April 5, when UEFA member nations meet in Lisbon.

Last March, Le Graët was re-elected on a four-year term

despite opposition from anti-racism activists who describe him as out of touch.

Le Graët had downplayed racism in soccer, telling broadcaster BFM: "This phenomenon of racism in sport, and in soccer in particular, does not exist at all or barely does."

Le Graët was against the idea of players wearing rainbow-colored armbands to campaign against discrimination during the World Cup in Qatar.

Leadership roles in French sports have come under scrutiny in recent months. French Rugby Federation president Bernard Laporte is fighting a suspended two-year sentence on corruption charges. (AP)

## Felix Joins Chelsea On Loan, But Extends Atletico Contract

Agencies

**LONDON:** Portugal forward João Félix joined Chelsea on loan from Atletico Madrid on Wednesday in a deal that will keep him at the Premier League club until the end of the season.

Felix has also extended his contract with Atletico for one more year until June 2027.

"Chelsea is one of the great teams in the world and I hope to help the team reach their objectives, so I am very, very hap-

py to be here and very excited

to play at Stamford Bridge," the player said.

Felix became the third most expensive player of all time when Atletico triggered the 126 million euro (around \$140 million) buyout clause in his contract in 2019 to sign him from Benfica.

The 23-year-old Felix is no longer a guaranteed starter under coach Diego Simeone, but Atletico still moved to extend

his existing deal.

"From Atletico de Madrid we wish João Félix every success in this new professional stage," the Spanish club said in a statement.

Felix will hope to rediscover his best form at Chelsea, which has been struggling for attacking inspiration in a poor run of recent results that has left manager Graham Potter under pressure.

Felix never fully fulfilled the expectations that came along with his high-profile transfer in



2019 to replace Antoine Griezmann, who had left Atlético to join Barcelona. Then 19, Félix was considered by many in Portugal as the successor to Cristiano Ronaldo and Atlético fans expected him to become one of the team's biggest stars.

His departure comes amid reports that he became increasingly at odds with Simeone, who has repeatedly denied having any problems with the player. (AP)





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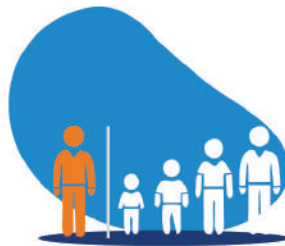
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