

Wet Spell In Kashmir From Today

Gulmarg Coldest Place In Valley At Minus 6.4 Deg Celsius



Press trust Of India

Srinagar: Night temperatures across Kashmir settled above normal, officials said on Sunday, while some places in the Valley braced for a fresh wet spell.

Half of the weather stations in Kashmir recorded sub-zero night temperatures, they said.

The departure from normal varied from 0.3 to 4.9 degrees, they said.

Srinagar recorded a minimum temperature of 1.8 degrees Celsius -- 2.2 notches above normal.

Qazigund, the gateway town

to the Valley, registered a low of minus 0.4 degrees Celsius -- a notch above normal.

The mercury settled at a low of zero degrees Celsius -- two notches above normal -- in Kokernag town in south Kashmir. North Kashmir's Kupwara recorded a minimum temperature of 2.9 degrees Celsius, which was 4.9 degrees above normal.

Pahalgam recorded a minimum temperature of minus 5.4 degrees Celsius, while Gulmarg registered a low of minus 6.4 degrees Celsius.

The meteorological office has forecast mainly dry weather across **More on P6**

Sonamarg Hotels Likely To Face Bulldozers

Admin Issues List Of 28 Hotels Raised On State, Kahcharai Land

Agencies

Srinagar: As the ongoing anti-encroachment drive is being further accelerated in the Union Territory, the Jammu and Kashmir administration on Sunday issued a list of hotels illegally raised in the picturesque hill station of Sonmarg in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

According to an official, 28 hotels have been found illegally constructed in the tourist resorts of Sonamarg and Gagangeer on state and Kahcharai land along the Srinagar-Ladakh highway. Among these hotels, a few fall in the 3 and 4 star category and are located not too far from the banks of Sindh nallah.

The official, according to a local news agency KNO



said that action will be taken against all these "land grabbers" as per law of the land. He added that the higher authorities have already issued directions in this regard.

As per the official, the hotels raised on government land include, Hotel Shahi

Jahan, Hotel Snow King, Hotel Trambo, Hotel Country Inn, Hotel Khohinoor, Hotel Sheen, Hotel Vista, Hotel Namroze, Hotel Thajiwas Glacier, Sindh Resorts, Hotel Snowland, Hotel Palace, Hotel Tranquil Retreat, Hotel Mountain View, Hotel Imperial, **More on P6**

Admin Reassure Jammu Shopkeepers

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has assured that residences or small shops on which livelihoods of families depend will not be harmed during the ongoing anti-encroachment drive in Jammu district. Jammu Deputy Commissioner Avny Lavasa's statement comes a day after people resorted to stone-pelting during an anti-encroachment drive in Upper-Narwal Sunjuwan area of Jammu city. A policeman was injured in the incident. "I want to assure the people that no residence or small commercial **More on P6**

Pervez Musharraf No More



Press Trust Of India

Dubai: Pakistan's wily former military ruler General Pervez Musharraf, the architect of the Kargil War in 1999, died on Sunday in Dubai after battling an incurable disease.

Musharraf, 79, who lived in self-imposed exile in the UAE to avoid criminal charges against him in Pakistan, died after a prolonged illness at the American Hospital in Dubai.

He was suffering from amyloidosis, a rare disease caused by a build-up of an abnormal protein called amyloid in organs and tissues throughout the body, according to his family.

In a statement issued immediately after Musharraf's death, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistan military, said that Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad and all the services chiefs express their heartfelt condolences.

"May Allah bless the departed soul and give strength to the bereaved family," it said.

Musharraf's family has filed an application in the Pakistani consulate in Dubai to shift the former military leader's body to Pakistan.

A special jet will fly to Dubai from Nur Khan **More on P6**

After Doda, Houses Develop Cracks In Ramban

5 Families Evacuated To School Building

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Five families were shifted to a school building after their houses developed cracks following an expansion work on a highway in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district.

A resident told reporters that the cracks were developed after cutting activity was carried out by a construction company on the highway as a result of which the hill began to slide down in the Basti area.



It also slid down due to rain, he said. The station house officer (SHO) and tehsildar evacuated the families and shifted them to a school.

The residents **More on P6**

RAJOURI ATTACK

Villagers Threaten Hunger Strike If Attackers Not Killed In 15 Days

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Residents of Dhangri in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district on Sunday expressed concern over the "failure" of security agencies in tracing the terrorists behind the twin attacks in the village and demanded justice for the victims.

The villagers threatened to go on a hunger strike if the

security agencies are unable to eliminate the terrorists within the next 15 days.

Seven people were killed and 14 injured as terrorists attacked Dhangri on January 1.

While five people, including two brothers, were killed in the firing by terrorists, two children died when an improvised explosive device (IED) left behind by **More on P6**



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Wastewater Surveillance Can Be Used To Warn Against Covid-19 Outbreak

Press Trust Of India

Genomic surveillance of wastewater can be an early warning system to predict Covid-19 outbreak and to identify new virus variants, according to a study.

The study conducted by researchers from Tata Institute for Genetics and Society (TIGS), National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) and Biome Environmental Trust has shown that genomic surveillance of wastewater can effectively be used to understand Covid-19 trends and for early detection of new viral emergents.

The study was conducted in Bengaluru, a release from TIGS said. Wastewater samples were collected once every week from 28 sewer sites across the city, between January 2022 and June 2022. Positive samples for SARS-CoV-2 were analysed using RT-qPCR, a demonstrated economical surveillance tool used globally to trace the spread of Covid-19, it said.

The findings of this study divulge real time genomic surveillance of wastewater as a key tool to understand the emerging patterns of virus populations and of new virus variants in densely populated areas.

The scientists compared the viral load of SARS-CoV-2 virus in



both wastewater samples and clinical samples obtained from individuals affected by Covid-19 infections and found them to be positively correlated with each other.

This confirms genomic surveillance of wastewater to be a complementary tool to gain insights on SARS-CoV-2 virus populations in a community, according to the release.

Genomic sequencing is the backbone of wastewater surveillance and needs to be done in real time to understand the variants that cause the emerging viral load patterns in wastewater, said Dr Farah Ishtiaq, scientist heading the wastewater surveillance at TIGS.

According to the research, wastewater was also found to have higher number of virus variants in it than found in clinical samples.

The emergence of new variants in wastewater is indicative of a significant number of individuals in the community to have been already infected by new viral strains. Many new variants were observed at different intervals of time along the duration of the study. However, these variant types and their time of detection were consistent across all sampling sites in the city. Wastewater surveillance should be used as a complementary surveillance approach to identify disease hotspots said Dr Uma Ramakrishnan, Professor, NCBS.

The outcomes of the sensitivity analysis suggest that the total number of individuals infected with SARSCoV-2 virus in Bengaluru was four times higher than the number obtained via clinical tests, the release added. This information was shared with the city's municipality (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike and Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board) officials, to help them take informed decisions when strategising plans to curtail the spread of Covid-19.

Based on the findings of this study, clinical testing for Covid-19 was increased in some locations in Bengaluru. The scientists believe the insights gained from this study will significantly improve public health surveillance, both for the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and also other infections which may adversely affect in the future.

Current surveillance and infrastructure are being scaled beyond SARS-CoV-2, to other pathogens (e.g. dengue, malaria). This will also help understand major pathways and drivers of antimicrobial resistance in the environment said Rakesh Mishra, Director, TIGS.

AI Could Help Answer The Question 'Are We Alone In The Universe?': Study

Press Trust Of India

Researchers have applied deep learning techniques to previously studied dataset of nearby stars and uncovered eight previously unidentified signals of interest.

The team of researchers was led by an undergraduate student at the University of Toronto, Peter Ma, along with those from the SETI Institute, Breakthrough Listen and scientific research institutions around the world, the study said.

The research is published in the journal Nature Astronomy.

When pondering the probability of discovering technologically advanced extraterrestrial life, the question that often arises is, "if they're out there, why haven't we found them yet?" And often, the response is that we have only searched a tiny portion of the galaxy. Further, algorithms developed decades ago for the earliest digital computers can be outdated and inefficient when applied to modern petabyte-scale datasets, the study said.

"In total, we had searched through 150 TB of data of 820 nearby stars, on a dataset that had previously been searched through in 2017 by classical techniques but labelled as devoid of interesting signals," said Peter Ma, lead author.

"We're scaling this search effort to 1 million stars today with the MeerKAT telescope and beyond. We believe that work like this will help accelerate the rate we're able to make discoveries in



our grand effort to answer the question 'are we alone in the universe?'" said Ma.

The search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI) looks for evidence of extraterrestrial intelligence originating beyond Earth by trying to detect technosignatures, or evidence of technology, that alien civilizations could have developed.

The most common technique is to search for radio signals. Radio is a great way to send information over the incredible distances between the stars; it quickly passes through the dust and gas that permeate space, and it does so at the speed of light, about 20,000 times faster than our best rock-

ets, the study said.

Many SETI efforts use antennas to eavesdrop on any radio signals aliens might be transmitting, the study said.

According to the study, it re-examined data taken with the Green Bank Telescope in West Virginia as part of a Breakthrough Listen campaign that initially indicated no targets of interest. The goal was to apply new deep learning techniques to a classical search algorithm to yield faster, more accurate results.

After running the new algorithm and manually re-examining the data to confirm the results, the study found that newly detected signals had sev-

eral key characteristics: 1) The signals were narrow band, meaning they had narrow spectral width, on the order of just a few Hz. Signals caused by natural phenomena tend to be broadband. 2) The signals had non-zero drift rates, which means the signals had a slope. Such slopes could indicate a signal's origin had some relative acceleration with our receivers, hence not local to the radio observatory. 3) The signals appeared in ON-source observations and not in OFF-source observations. If a signal originates from a specific celestial source, it appears when we point our telescope toward the target and disappears when we look away. Human radio interference usually occurs in ON and OFF observations due to the source being close by.

"These results dramatically illustrate the power of applying modern machine learning and computer vision methods to data challenges in astronomy, resulting in both new detections and higher performance.

"Application of these techniques at scale will be transformational for radio technosignature science," Cherry Ng, another of Ma's research advisors and an astronomer at both the SETI Institute and the French National Center for Scientific Research said.

While re-examinations of these new targets of interest have yet to result in re-detections of these signals, this new approach to analyzing data can enable researchers to more effectively understand the data they collect and act quickly to re-examine targets.

Entangled Atoms Over Distance Pave Way For Future Quantum Networks

Press Trust Of India

Scientists have entangled two ions over a distance of 230 metres, according to a new study. Trapped ions have previously only been entangled in one and the same laboratory.

The experiment at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, has showed that trapped ions are a promising platform for future quantum networks that span cities and eventually continents, the study said. The latest results have been published in the journal Physical Review Letters.

According to the study, trapped ions are one of the leading systems to build quantum computers and other quantum technologies.

To link multiple such quantum systems, interfaces are needed through which the quantum information can be transmitted, the study said.

In recent years, researchers led by Tracy Northup and Ben Lanyon at the University of Innsbruck's Department of Experimental Physics have



developed a method for doing this by trapping atoms in optical cavities such that quantum information can be efficiently transferred to light particles, the study said.

The light particles can then be sent through optical fibres to connect atoms at different locations, the study said.

Now, their teams, together with theorists led by Nicolas Sangouard of

the Université Paris-Saclay, France, have for the first time entangled two trapped ions more than a few metres apart, the study said.

According to the study, the two quantum systems were set up in in two laboratories, one in the building that houses the Department of Experimental Physics and one in the building that houses the Institute of Quantum Optics

and Quantum Information of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria.

"Until now, trapped ions were only entangled with each other over a few metres in the same laboratory.

"Those results were also achieved using shared control systems and photons, or light particles, with wavelengths that aren't suitable for travelling over much longer distances," explained Lanyon.

After years of research and development, the Innsbruck physicists have now managed to entangle two ions across campus, the study said.

"To do this, we sent individual photons entangled with the ions over a 500-metre fibre optic cable and superimposed them on each other, swapping the entanglement to the two remote ions," said Northup, describing the experiment.

"Our results show that trapped ions are a promising platform for realizing future distributed networks of quantum computers, quantum sensors and atomic clocks," said Northup.

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Chanakya IAS Academy Felicitates Its JKAS Qualifiers

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chanakya IAS Academy - Srinagar Centre organised a felicitation ceremony for the qualifiers of its recently-announced JKAS candidates.

The event was held to felicitate Mr. Tafheem Firdous, Ms. Rakhshan Peerzada, Ms. Bazila Javid and Mr. Syed Nazeef Hassanian. They shared their experiences about the choice of civil services as a career option and preparation strategy with the aspiring candidates currently enrolled at the Chanakya IAS

earned success.

Chanakya IAS Academy - Srinagar organises these mentorship and guidance programmes for the aspiring youth of the valley.

"Every student who comes to Chanakya IAS Academy bears a hidden potential which we try to recognise and polish them to shine brighter in their endeavours," the academy said.

"Our academics team meticulously helps students enhance their learning, logical reasoning and analytical abilities so that every individual can be fine-tuned



Academy - Srinagar.

On the occasion, the qualified candidates were presented a 'memento of appreciation' for their hard

to become an able administrator," the academy said while wishing the successful candidates every success in all their future endeavours.

Hundreds Of Workers Join DAP

Agencies

Srinagar: A leader from Peoples Democratic Party along with hundreds of his workers joined the party on Sunday. Ghulam Nabi Bhat Zonal President Eidgah joined the DAP in presence of Chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad at Srinagar and said that he was impressed with the vision and leadership qualities of party chief Ghulam Nabi Azad.

He said DAP is the only party that envisages vision

and direction to lead Jammu and Kashmir in the right direction and overcome the prevailing political chaos on ground. He said that DAP was the only party with a pro people agenda.

The party chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad welcomed Palapori and said his joining will give a boost to DAP at ground level since he enjoys a good reputation among the masses. On this occasion, other leaders garlanded Palapori and welcomed him into the party fold.

Vishing Scam On The Rise, J&K Bank Urges Customers to Take Precautions

Yasir Shakoor

Srinagar- J&K Bank, one of the leading banks in Jammu & Kashmir, has informed its customers about a vishing scam that has been affecting the bank's clients. The bank took to its social media handles to warn the public about the dangers of vishing fraud and how to protect themselves from falling victim to it.

In its message, J&K Bank advised customers to stay vigilant of any calls or messages that ask for personal details. The bank emphasized that it never asks for sensitive information over the phone, such as PIN numbers or OTPs. The bank urged customers to hang up immediately if they receive any suspicious calls or messages and report them to the bank's customer support team.

According to the RBI report, financial frauds fell 46% year-on-year to 19,485 crore between April and September 2022, compared to 36,316 crore during the same period last year. This decrease in financial frauds is a positive development for the Indian banking system and a testament to the efforts made by banks to safeguard their customers' information and assets.

What is Vishing?

Vishing is a type of scam where fraudsters use phone calls or voicemails to trick people into revealing sensitive information, such as their bank account details, passwords, and PIN numbers. The scammers

often pose as bank representatives or technical support staff, making it difficult for people to distinguish between genuine calls and fraudulent ones.

Vishing scams are becoming increasingly common, and it is important for customers to be aware of the signs. To protect yourself from vishing scams, below are some tips you should take in consideration.

• Be wary of unsolicited calls or messages asking for personal information.

• Do not reveal your passwords, PIN numbers, or OTPs to anyone, even if they claim to be from your bank.

• Report any suspicious calls or messages to your bank immediately.

• Install anti-virus software and keep it up-to-date to prevent hacking attempts.

• Always obtain J&K Bank's Mpay or other banking applications from the official Play Store or App Store and make sure to regularly update them to ensure their security.

J&K Bank is committed to ensuring the safety and security of its customers' information. By spreading awareness about vishing scams, the bank aims to help its customers protect themselves from falling victim to these types of attacks.

In conclusion, vishing is a serious threat, and it is essential for customers to stay vigilant and follow the best practices to protect their personal and financial information. By being proactive and cautious, customers can help themselves stay protected from vishing scams.



A man rows his shikara in Dal Lake on a cold winter day. KO Photo Abid Bhat.

KU Contingent Bags 8 Awards In North-Zone Youth Festival

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A contingent of students from the University of Kashmir has won eight awards at the 36th Inter-University North Zone Youth Festival hosted by the University of Jammu.

The five-day festival 'Antarnaad', which was inaugurated by Honourable Chancellor, Shri Manoj Sinha, was organised by Association of Indian Universities (AIU), New Delhi, and 49 students from the University of Kashmir participated in various activities held during the event.

The KU team bagged eight prizes in Elocution, Western Vocal Solo, Clay Modelling, Installation, Collage, Cultural Procession, Fine Arts and Folk Orchestra. The team, led by KU Cultural Officer Shahid Ali Khan, has qualified for Nationals in Clay Modelling and Installation competitions.

Suhail Ahmad Khan, Irtiga Bazaz, Badru Nissa and Toiba Shafat Koul will now represent the University of Kashmir in the AIU 36th National-level

Youth Festival being hosted by Jain University Bengaluru from 24-28 February, 2023.

KU Vice-Chancellor Prof Nilofer Khan congratulated

and international competitions," she said, assuring that the University will provide the best possible facilities and infrastructure for its students



the team for the successful tour and wished them best for the National-level competitions.

"Participation in such festivals allows our students to showcase their talent and gain more confidence to further participate in national

to excel in extracurricular activities at the national and international level.

KU Registrar Dr Nisar A Mir also congratulated the winners and wished them best for the upcoming AIU festival.

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1444

PRAYERS

FAJR	5:59
ZUHR	12:45
ASR	4:25
Magrib	6:09
ISHA	7:29

This Day In History

- 337 - St Julius I begins his reign as Catholic Pope
- 1508- Maximilian I proclaimed Holy Roman Emperor, 1st Emperor in centuries not to be crowned by the Pope
- 1577- King Henri de Bourbon of Navarra becomes leader of the Huguenots
- 1626- Huguenot rebels & French sign Peace of La Rochelle
- 1685- Duke of York becomes King James II of England and VII of Scotland upon the death of his brother Charles II
- 1716 Britain & Netherlands renew alliance
- 1760 -Niccolò Piccinni's opera buffa "La buona figliuola" (The Good-Natured Girl) first performed at the Teatro delle Dame, Rome, Italy, with an all-male cast
- 1778 Britain declares war on France
- 1778 -France recognizes USA, signs Treaty of Alliance in Paris, 1st US treaty
- 1788- Massachusetts becomes 6th state to ratify constitution
- 1819- Stamford Raffles founds Singapore as a British trading port
- 1820- First 86 African American immigrants sponsored by the American Colonization Society start a settlement in present-day Liberia
- 1832- 1st appearance of cholera in Edinburgh, Scotland
- 1832- US ship destroys Sumatran village in retaliation for piracy
- 1840- The Treaty of Waitangi is signed between 40 M ori Chiefs (later signed by 500) and representatives of the British crown in Waitangi, New Zealand. The treaty was designed to share sovereignty between the two groups.
- 1843- The first minstrel show in the United States The Virginia Minstrels opens (Bowery Amphitheatre in New York City).
- 1855 - British government of Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston forms
- 1861- 1st meeting of Provisional Congress of Confederate States of America (US Civil War)
- 1861 - 1st meeting of Provisional Congress of Confederate States of America (US Civil War)
- 1861 - British Vice-Admiral Robert Fitzroy issues first storm warnings for ships
- 1862 - American Civil War: Naval engagement on Tennessee River, USS Conestago vs CSS Appleton Belle
- 1904 - Japan notifies Russia that in view of Russia's delaying tactics and provocative military action, Japan is ending negotiations and recalling its members from Moscow
- 1911 - Great fire destroys downtown Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey)
- 1918 - Great Britain grants women (30 & over) the vote
- 1920 - Saarland administrated by League of Nations
- 1933 - German President Paul von Hindenburg and Franz von Papen end the Prussian parliament
- 1939 - Spanish government flees to France
- 1941 - British troops conquer Bengazi, Libya
- 1967 - Cultural Revolution in Albania
- 1979 - Supreme court affirms death sentence against Pakistan Premier Bhutto
- 1988 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalinsk USSR
- 2014 - The Taliban and Pakistani government begin peace negotiations.
- 2017 - Qatar Airways achieves the longest-ever commercial flight in service when its B777 aircraft lands in Auckland after a 16 hour and 23 minutes flight from Doha
- 2018 - UN calls for ceasefire in rebel-held Eastern Ghouta area by Syrian government troops after 40 people reportedly killed

Kashmir's Discarded Educators

"After taking 15-years of service from me, the government has now categorized me as 'surplus candidate' and discarded me as deadwood of the department."

Bisma Bhat

“
In 2019,
when the valley
was witnessing
an unprecedented
situation, my
college authorities
made an unjustified
transfer and
brought another
faculty at my place
and told me that
you're no more
needed here. Since
then I'm running
from pillar to post
to get justice

Every morning, Arshid Ahmad, a 40-year-old contractual college lecturer readies himself not for his routine classroom teaching session but to work in one of the relative's land as a farm labourer.

Soon after the Jammu and Kashmir lost its special status on August 5, 2019, Arshid was disowned by the higher education department. Sans job and salary, he was forced to do land tilling to feed his family.

Hailing from south Kashmir's Kulgam district, Arshid—a post-graduate in Political Science and National Eligibility Test (NET) qualifier—was appointed as a contractual lecturer in 2004 and since then he has been serving the higher education department with a hope that his services would be regularized one day.

"For the first 10 years of my career, I was solely running the department of Political Science," Arshid said. "I was going out of my way to serve the department."

However, after August last year, the department told him that they do not need his services anymore.

"After taking 15-years of services from me, the government has now categorized me as 'surplus candidate' and discarded me as deadwood of the department," Arshid rued, adding that he was left with no option other than to work as a tiller to support his family.

"School fee of my children is pending since March because I've not received my pending salary. What will I feed my family, if I won't work as a tiller now," he lamented.

Not eligible for any other job

Arshid is among the 500 senior-most college contractual lecturers who've served the department for nearly two decades and are not eligible for any other job, as they've crossed the upper age limit.

After giving their youth to the department, the government has issued an order categorizing them into "surplus candidates". The order has come as a big blow for these teachers awaiting regularization since years now.

Since 1995, Dr. Fayaz Wani, a senior-most college contractual lecturer, has already served the Arabic Department for 25 years.

Hailing from Magam area of district Budgam, 52-year-old Wani is currently posted at Government Degree College Kansahab. Like others in his contractual teaching camp, he's also without work and salary since August last year.

"In 2019, when the valley was witnessing an unprecedented situation, my college authorities made an unjustified transfer and brought another faculty at my place and told me that you're no more needed here. Since then I'm running from pillar to post to get justice



tified transfer and brought another faculty at my place and told me that you're no more needed here. Since then I'm running from pillar to post to get justice," stressed Wani, who has a doctorate degree in Arabic.

What's worrying Wani is that he's not eligible for any other job in a government department as he has crossed the age limit.

"My forms in Public Service Commission (PSC) have been rejected many times due to the fact that I'm over-aged," Wani rued.

"Where will I go at this stage of my life? At my home, my daughters are waiting for their wedding but I've nothing to give them. I'm empty-handed. I'm the most unfortunate father who can't afford to marry off his daughters."

For living, the doctor has become a tiller, but people feel hesitant to hire a 'scholar labourer'.

"They feel ashamed of seeing a Ph.D. working as a labourer in their fields," Wani continued. "Last time, while working in one of the fields in my village, I got to know it was owned by one of my students. Both of us were embarrassed to face each other that day. He did not allow me to work further in his field."

Violation of UGC Guidelines

The regulations which are formulated by the University Grants Commission (UGC) direct that it should be ensured that a minimum of one teacher is available for every 10 students (1:10) at the different postgraduate departments pursuing their degrees in fields like Science as well as Media and Mass Communication studies.

Also, one teacher for every 15 students (1:15) should be available in fields like Commerce and Management, Social Sciences, and Humanities. In addition to this, for the undergraduate courses, one teacher should be available for every 25 students.

However, the prevalent ratio

for the Social Science stream is 1:30, whereas for that of Science is 1:25.

"The government has shown us as 'surplus', implying they've enough faculty, when the reality is that colleges across J&K lack teaching staff," Arshid, the fired contractual lecturer, continued.

"I've approached my college principal many times but she said they don't need me. But the fact is, there's only one permanent faculty in Political Science department who's teaching 250 students."

Knock At High Court

Each year, the Higher Education Department engages lecturers on academic arrangement basis. However, senior-most lecturers face discrimination as they've to compete with the new candidates who have degrees from abroad with high merit.

"We've been toppers of our time, too, and some of us are even gold medalists," said another fired lecturer, Lateef Baba.

"Just because the new candidates happen to have more marks than us and degrees from abroad, we experienced lots are being sidelined by the department." After getting rejection letters from the PSC and knowing government is not providing any job security to them, the contractual college lecturers said they had no other option than to seek justice from the court.

In 2015, Dr. Fayaz Wani approached the court to challenge the JK government's special provision act 2010.

In 2010, JK government enacted a policy for ad-hoc, contractual, and consolidated employees who've been working in various departments for more than seven years and said that they'll be regularized against the clear vacancy and post in the government departments.

However, the contractual lecturers working in the education department have been excluded from this policy.

"As per the act we were promised to be regularized but the government

excluded us, which I challenged in the court and the government agreed that they have excluded us," Wani informed.

"Court ordered the government to provide us salary and do not disturb our position in the department till final decision comes. But post-abrogation of J&K's special status, the government simply junked the court order and disengaged us."

Lateef Baba, who's working in Government Degree College Pampore, has already sent legal notices to his college principal for restoring his services.

"But the college authority is brazenly telling me that they won't follow the court orders and allow me to work there," said Baba.

Dr. Seema Naz, Principal Degree College, Pampore, told Kashmir Observer that Baba's workload is not justified in the college, so she cannot take his services anymore.

Campaign hassles

Fired college lecturers are also accusing the officials of the higher education department of harassing them because of their justice campaign.

"Officials in Secretariat have left no stone unturned to torture and harass us mentally," said Dr. Muhammad Yousuf Nengroo, Vice President JK College Contractual Teachers Association (JKCCTA).

"We're highly qualified youth and after JK became UT we've been left jobless. Government's tall claims of employment are just a hoax. Nothing has been done on the ground. Highly qualified youth are pushed towards the wall."

Reconsideration Letter

As Director Colleges, Preezada Mohammad Yousuf Shah and Secretary Higher Education, Talat Parvez Rohella were not available for their comment on the story, a top government official told Kashmir Observer on the condition of anonymity that the college principals had sent a required list of around 1300 contractual lecturers, but the government only confirmed appointment of 800 candidates.

"500 candidates have been categorized as surplus when the colleges have dearth of these lecturers," the official said. "I don't know why the administration has not considered these candidates."

College principals, he said, have now again written to the higher education department for reconsidering the excluded candidates, as they don't have faculty available.

"We're hopeful that they will look into the matter soon," the official said.

The author is an independent journalist from Kashmir

Campus Life Outside Kashmir

Romaan Arora

It's another cold morning of the winter season, and a group of young Kashmiris is busy discussing their holiday plans with each other in the IT hub of India.

One of them, Junaid Nazeer, is a third-year student of Bachelor of Engineering (BE) from Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU).

Junaid plans to go to his homeland, once the official announcement regarding the vacations is made. Speaking about his journey, he says that his family wanted him to pursue B.Tech from Chandigarh, but he never agreed, keeping his family's low income in mind.

Yet, in the second step of the Prime Minister Special Scholarship Scheme, he finally got the opportunity to complete higher studies.

Coming to Bengaluru, the first thing Junaid noticed was the highly developed city space, and huge skyscrapers. Speaking about the people of the city, he claims that the residents there don't interfere in each other's affairs. As a result of which, there is no reason to fight.

"Even after the Pulwama attack of 2019, there was a complete sense of peace and calmness in Bengaluru," he says. However, he remembers one incident in Haryana, where a shopkeeper denied him entry for being a Kashmiri.

At this point, Abdul Wahid Peer, Junaid's senior and a resident of North Kashmir's Handwara, jumps into the conversation.

Abdul, who came to V.T.U because of his cousin studying there, claims that in his entire 4 years of study, he hasn't witnessed any sort of discrimination against any Kashmiri, in his varsity.

"See, no one wants to leave his homeland in the first place, but I had to come here for meaningful higher education and a promising career, which is not there in Kashmir. In the initial stages of moving here to Bengaluru, I was concerned. But to my surprise, the atmosphere was quite peace-

ful; people don't care who you are and what you do."

However, Abdul strongly reiterates the point made by his junior and further claims that North Indians don't like Kashmiris.

"I have seen and felt it personally. There is a big difference between the treatment we receive in North and South Indian states. I haven't faced any discrimination here in Bengaluru, but unfortunately, it's there in northern states."

Though Abdul and his junior Junaid agree and disagree on some points, still both of them jointly say that revealing their Kashmiri identity outside of Kashmir, does bring them a huge sort of discomfort and insecurity in the first place.

To understand the experience of other Kashmiri students, and to check the claim of Abdul and Junaid, we talk to Sukaina Ashraf, a third-year nursing student at Aman Bhalla Nursing Institute, Pathankot (Punjab).

Sukaina, who hails from Nowgam in Srinagar, says that though her family was worried about her security, yet all of them were convinced of her plans to study nursing in Punjab.

The first thing she noticed after coming to Pathankot was the unnecessary stares of people. But she was already prepared for such an experience, so it didn't cause her any serious problem.

However, Sukaina clearly remembers the

news of the Pulwama attack in her college, and how it unfolded a huge set of disturbance and insecurity for her.

"I was at the hospital duty when the news of Pulwama attack reached us. I clearly remember how the staff members and the patients shouted at us and said: 'Get these Kashmiri terrorists out of here and shoot them indeed!' Most of my female friends started crying at that moment. We all felt isolated and helpless. It was a horrific incident."

Everything changed after the Pulwama attack for her.

"Everyone changed their behavior with us in a negative manner," she recalls. "They treated and looked at us in such a way as if we the students were responsible for the attack. We weren't allowed to go outside of the campus for one month. We felt as if we have been caged."

Today, she doesn't feel safe revealing her identity to anyone outside of Kashmir, especially after the kind of things she went through, post the Pulwama attack.

Sharing the same story of anguish, Mohammad Zeeshan, a final year arts student from Delhi University, remains watchful about his conduct outside the valley.

Zeeshan hails from Srinagar and has spent most of his academic life in Delhi.

"Day by day it is becoming harder and hard-

er for a Kashmiri to get accepted here in Delhi," Zeeshan says. "People here are filled with a huge amount of anger for Kashmiris, as they hold us responsible for the killings of their soldiers."

His family remains quite worried about him, and repeatedly asks him to not reveal his identity to others.

"I remember my first semester in DU when I went to attend a seminar at St. Stephen's College. There was a blind student who was asking for people to assist him to reach the cafeteria, and no one was paying any attention to him. Hence, I went to him and offered him help, to which he agreed and asked for my name. The moment I told him my name, his facial expressions changed from a smile to a state of shock and discomfort. Then he immediately took a step back and asked me to go after claiming that he can reach the cafeteria on his own. I was hurt to my core, yet I moved on."

Another thing happened when he was in the second semester. This time, the Pulwama attack.

"People were angry, and rallies were held where inflammatory slogans were being raised all across Delhi," he recalls. "Every rally was marked with hate speeches against Kashmiris, and there were incidents of violence against Kashmiri students and workers."

In his own college group, a hyper-toxic nationalist started calling every Kashmiri a traitor and militant and asked for a heavy assault policy against Kashmiris, Zeeshan says.

"No one came forward to counter him," recalls. "These back to back moments made me feel how vulnerable I will become, the moment I reveal my identity. Hence, to this day, I prefer to remain silent on many things and issues."

The author is a former correspondent of Kashmir Observer.

Kashmiri Techie's 'Mission Robotics'

A Kashmiri engineer is simplifying Robotics in the valley by providing a platform to students aspiring to make a career in the adventurous field.

Arbeena Shah

As a campus routine, engineering students of Kashmir would rely on remote relief till recent past to complete their project work. But such desperate degree-completion bids—promoting a culture of foreign reliance—would often prove a bumpy ride for aspiring techies.

When Tahir Showkat Bazaz became mindful of this despairing dependence, he decided to make Robotics a feasible project for Kashmiri students.

A merit-holder who clinched gold upon completing his engineering degree in 2015, this 28-year-old Kashmiri techie brought smiles to distressed students with his proactive self-starting endeavour.

"Engineering students of Kashmir would prefer to go outside for their project work due to lack of expertise and proper guidance in the valley," Tahir says, as we meet in his office chamber filled with projects and tech vibes.

"Those who couldn't afford to go outside ended up facing a tough time. But now, Kashmiri students have guidance available back home."

That guidance has already created a sweeping campus change, as since 2015, Tahir has successfully made more than 500 innovative and exciting projects with his students. He has also conducted several Robotics workshops in various schools.

Some of his prominent projects include Wireless Robotic Hand, Smart 'Tashnear', Tricopter, Medicine Box, Smart Pen, 3D Printer-based abrasive Jet, Bot, Miners Helmet, and AI based Home Automation System.

"Despite being a topper in my academic career," Tahir, who has won awards in Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, says, "I



“I still remember how that student gifted me a pack of walnuts as a token of gratitude,” Tahir says, with a beaming face. “With that single reassuring case, I embarked on a fulfilling journey.”

always knew that I had to assist my tribe struggling to submit their crucial engineering projects.”

He finally became a helping hand for the campus-deprived students—

about whom he says, “Kashmiri students possess an unmatched IQ level and have the capability to make a lasting mark in different technical fields”—after he qualified national

level exam: GATE (Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering).

He started with an engineering student from Pulwama and never looked back.

“I still remember how that student gifted me a pack of walnuts as a token of gratitude,” Tahir says, with a beaming face. “With that single reassuring case, I embarked on a fulfilling journey.”

However, his conviction came with its own cost.

He had to reject placement offers from various well-known technological companies—Wipro, TCS, Sagacious IP, Magneti Marelli, Larsen & Tourbo Infotech—to guide the students.

He became a game-changer after he approached a Delhi-based institute for a trainer to set up a Robotics franchise in Srinagar.

But before becoming a reliable mentor ending outside dependence for Kashmiri engineering students, this middle class family boy from Srinagar's Karan Nagar area had greatly toiled to come of age.

He cracked AIEEE (All India Engineering Entrance Examination), now known as JEE (Joint Entrance Examination) and got selected in National Institute of Technology (NIT), Srinagar. He completed his B.Tech degree in Electronics & Communication with a shimmering gold.

Between his M.Tech and mentorship, he chose latter by staying in Kashmir only.

Howbeit, not to upset his father, in September 2015, he joined the Sagacious IP- the Global IP Research and Consulting Firm, Gurugram, as a patent analyst.

Besides working there, he acquired some additional knowledge from various institutes and workshops in Delhi during weekends which were required for opening the first of its kind technical institute in Srinagar.

Tahir used his earnings in renovating and setting up the rooms and

required infrastructure in his hometown.

The next step was to apprise the students about Robotics by conducting workshops.

The young techie knew that he had to follow a bottom-to-top model until he achieves some visibility in the market.

“I approached schools, but almost all of them rejected to conduct robotics workshop,” he says.

“At last, I got an approval call from the Presentation Convent Higher Secondary School just one day before the onset of their vacations.”

Students eventually showed interest in the subject and began enrolling themselves in Tahir's Robosapiens during winters.

To help distressed students back home, he even gave up his PhD at IIT Kanpur and IIT Delhi under the Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF) Scheme. His dedication, however, didn't disappoint him.

Tahir got a major breakthrough when three of his students grabbed the third rank in the All India Robotics Competition held in February 2016 that consisted of students from 28 states.

“It was an incredible and a proud moment for me,” the techie says. “Indeed, it was my first and big achievement as a guide. Since that day my franchise started growing both in terms of students as well as the projects.”

He next wants to open a talent-based technological institute in the valley where students would learn things on the basis of their skills irrespective of their qualification.

“I did drop many opportunities in my career already, but I'm content with my work,” Tahir says. “I believe, sacrifices ultimately lead to satisfaction in life.”

IS TRAUMA FADING MEMORY IN KASHMIR?

Amid distress and disturbance, the cases of forgetfulness are rising in Kashmir.

Zeenish Imroz

In one frozen November day in Kashmir, a classic consultation scene—where doctor usually tries to break the sullen silence of patients—unfolded inside Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences (IMHANS).

On the doctor's chair sat Kashmir's prominent psychiatrist, Dr Arshid Hussain. And on the patient's side, an unsound policeman flanked by an attendant wore a deadpanned face.

“What's your name?” Dr Hussain asked.

The patient merely responded with blank eyes.

“WHAT'S THE TIME?”

Only silence came as a resounding reply from Wali Ahmad, a cop from Mattan in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

The doctor handed over prescription to Imtiyaz, Wali's brother-in-law, and soon the dazed cop followed his attendant's directions like a robot.

“Janaab, where were you?” Imtiyaz asked Wali, in order to demonstrate his mental state. The cop repeated his attendant's words: “Janaab, where were you?”

Wali has been suffering from dementia for last three years now. Medics define dementia as a neurocognitive disorder leading to progressive memory impairment, difficulty in recognition, way finding difficulties and eventually to complete dependence on caregivers.

Symptoms like forgetting were first noticed after the 50-year-old cop was traumatized by the death of his colleague.

In 2017, the cop was on a routine sentry duty in Charar-e-Sharif town when a sudden militant attack rattled him. Wali escaped unhurt in Nund Reshi's shrine premises, but was left traumatized by seeing his colleague bleeding to death.

“He wasn't the same person after that,” Imtiyaz said. “He started acted strange. His uncertain behavior was a complete undoing of his lively personality.”

One such behavior was demonstrated during a friendly visit to Wali's senior. “That's when I first noticed his abnormal behavior,” Wali's brother-in-law said.

At the officer's house, Wali who



would invariably abstain from local bakery products had eaten it insatiably. After tea, the cop devoured a big apple akin to a starving man.

While Imtiyaz was wondering about Wali's sudden 'wild' behavior, the cop soon walked away—without bidding a goodbye to his officer and waiting for Imtiyaz—and drove home in haste.

“Is everything alright at his home?” Imtiyaz recalled the officer's concern over Wali's rash behavior.

“I believe he's a little distressed these days,” Imtiyaz had to told the officer.

Knowing that Wali was economically and emotionally secure at home, Imtiyaz realized that it was killing of his colleague which altered Wali's mind and method in life.

Soon after the violent episode at Charar-e-Sharif, Wali, a father of four girls and a 3-year-old boy, had started fearing for his life.

In his quarter, Imtiyaz would later learn, the cop would imagine his fallen colleague's fate and fret. His distressed mental state would escalate to a level where it reared an obsessive head.

“He would call his senior repeatedly for transfer — sometimes even more than 200 times a day,” Imtiyaz said.

By the time his transfer order came, Wali's neuro-degenerative disorder had already deteriorated.

Wali would behave oddly — forgetting names of people, remaining heedless of important daily activities and trying to run away at night through the main-gate.

From aggression to calmness, his trauma had taken a severe form of dementia.

TRIAL OF TRAUMA

As someone well-versed with the cop-like traumatic cases in Kashmir, Dr. Insha Rouf, a psychiatrist in the valley, said that dementia is fast becoming an end result of the rampant and pervasive trauma in Kashmir.

“The old memories remain intact initially,” Dr Insha said. “It's the recent memories that get affected. Patients cannot form memories.”

At least 20 dementia patients visit IMHANS and Drug De-addiction center of SMHS hospital

daily, she said, while many others prefer to opt for private clinics or neurologists.

“The dementia patients we see are the tip of the iceberg,” Dr. Rouf, who detailed dementia's link with trauma in her 2014-16 study, told Kashmir Observer.

“Much of this has to do with our mindset which considers forgetfulness as a part of normal aging. Mostly patients from the affluent class of the society come forward for the treatment.”

But by the time most of these patients show up for treatment, she said, dementia already takes a mental toll on them.

“Most patients are usually in a severe to profound stage of dementia where they're usually brought with complaints of diminished self-care, agitation and aggression,” the medico said. “Mostly, they carry a lot of caregiver burden.”

Unfortunately, she said, there's no cure for dementia. The available treatments can only mask the symptoms of the disease and help the person to live as normal of a life as possible.

WALI'S LONELY TRIBE

In Srinagar Psychiatrist Hospital, a 50-year-old calmly lying on her bed was asked about her health. In her dazed state, she asked her young attendant, “Mea kath chudoad” (What is my illness?)

The lines engraved in her face defined the agonizing pain inflicted upon her. Her heart was pounding, the blood pressure monitor showed the reading 156/100.

Syeda was shivering, and was restless. A resident of Anantnag, Syeda has been suffering from dementia for the past 8 months.

A divorcee, she would mostly seek emotional refuge in her sister. Her departure, however, affected her mind.

She recognizes her family members and is closely bonded to her grandchildren, but she tends to forget names after every 10 minutes and obsessively gets her blood pressure checked.

“Once an active lady who used to keep everyone in the family on toes now needs support for movement,” said her attendant.

Battling Alzheimer's disease,

which is one of the most common types of dementia, Syeda's memory issues started with her inability to comprehend or produce speech.

“Dementia robs you of everything that makes you who you are,” Sama Beg, a certified trainer on Alzheimer's and related disorders, argues in her article.

“It steals your memories, your intelligence, your independence, your ability to think, to make decisions, to communicate, and to do the simplest of tasks. As humans, we pride ourselves on our intelligence — that God created us as the most gifted of living beings. The tragic irony is that the same intelligence we take pride in can be taken away with little warning in the form of this debilitating condition.”

COP CASE

After facing trauma, cop Wali is able to see but unable to make sense. He only follows his attendant like a robot and micks his words.

“Due to memory impairment and difficulty in recognition, dementia patients might feel that they are not at home and may wander away without informing anybody,” Dr. Tajamul Hussain notes in his write-up.

This assertion perhaps explains why the cop leaves home in the midnight before being dragged in by his alert attendants.

“People with dementia might sometimes become aggressive towards caregivers,” Dr. Tajamul, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at GMC Baramulla, further reveals.

“It might seem unprovoked to the caregivers but usually has some underlying cause like fear, pain, confusion etc. As people with dementia might have difficulty in communicating it often leads to caregivers doing things contrary to what the patient wants.”

As someone who has managed dementia care facilities in the US and India, Dr Sama said, she has found one form of therapy to be the most effective.

“And that's love, patience and kindness,” she said.

“We must remember that a person living with dementia is still a human being with emotions. They deserve to be treated with dignity and respect because they are trying to do their best despite having been tragically robbed of their identity.”

J&K Tourism Pavilion at OTM Mumbai attracts overwhelming response

Varied tourism products, post Covid experiences, new initiatives captivate attention of travel reps, professionals



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The three day long Outbound Travel Mart (OTM)-Mumbai, 2023 concluded last evening with J&K Tourism Pavilion attracts an overwhelming response from the visitors.

The J&K Tourism Department had participated in this year's OTM in a big way as part of its extensive tourism promotional campaign being held across major cities of the country. 112 Co-exhibitors and participants from Jammu & Kashmir attended the travel extravaganza drawing thousands of tourists, holidaymakers, travel trade buyers and tour organizing professionals to the J&K pavilion.

The Jammu and Kashmir Pavilion set up by the Tourism Department offered the most-engaging experiences for the travel consumers and trade visitors as well as the co participants from various States and UTs besides international delegates.

Hundreds of travel trade fraternity members from Mumbai, Pune, Nasik, Nagpur, Amravati, Gujarat, Bihar, Kerala, Karnataka, Uttarakhand and even from some foreign countries visited the J&K Pavilion and interacted with the members of the official delegation and co-exhibitors from the UT.

The varied tourism products introduced by the Department during the last two years, post Covid experiences and the new initiatives captivated the attention of the travel representatives and professionals alike.

The interactions consisted of detailed presentations, various short films on known and off-beat destinations of Jammu and Kashmir and discussions on sustainable inbound & outbound travel for the year.

The officers representing the Tourism Department comprised Special Secretary, Tourism, S. Amarjit Singh, Chief Executive

Officer, Tourism Development Authority Pahalgam Syed Sajad Qadri, Joint Director Tourism, Jammu, Mrs. Sunaina Sharma and other officers.

S. Amarjit Singh while interacting with the visiting delegates and the media informed them that to further diversify the experiences of and attractions for tourists J&K Government is developing 75 new offbeat destinations while strictly maintaining the scenic beauty and ecology of these areas. He said new ecologically balanced accommodation units are coming up at these destinations in the form of homestays for which the Government has already notified a policy and the Department is working to execute it.

OTM Mumbai is the country's biggest and largest international travel and tourism interface. This year's OTM, which was held at the recently launched Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai saw the participation of over 1,250 exhibitors from 50 countries and 30 Indian states and UTs, showcasing their destinations and tourism products.

Meanwhile, on the third and final day J&K Tourism organised a big road show in which representatives of Travel Trade Fraternity of Maharashtra and other visiting delegates participated.

On the occasion, a detailed Powerpoint presentation, various short films on known and off-beat destinations of Jammu and Kashmir and its adventure potential were showcased. Also the roadshow highlighted the known and lesser-known destinations besides the art and craft, pilgrimage, adventure, border, film tourism and the upcoming events and festivals of the UT.

An open question answer session to address the queries of the participants was also held during the roadshow.

It's Time IB Had Comprehensive Written History Says Former RAW Official Dulat

Press Trust of India

Thiruvananthapuram: Former chief of Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and special director of the Indian Intelligence Bureau (IB) Amarjit Singh Dulat has said it is time the IB had a comprehensive history written with the help of a studious historian.

Dulat, a spy master and is popular for his Kashmir links, said the major intelligence agencies in the world have a well-written history about their organisations and India requires such a written history.

"The history of IB, which has more than 100 years of legacy, should at least be laid down to educate the common man," Dulat said during a conversation on 'Spymaster As a Chronicler' with author and journalist N P Ullek at the Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters (MBIFL) here on Saturday. Commenting that diplomacy is vital, Dulat said, "We have to talk more to enemies than our friends as it will help improve ties and change situations all of a sudden".

"Pakistan is in deep turmoil, and has started showing signs of bonhomie with India. I think, in six or eight months, both countries will improve ties between them," he said.

Asserting that the revocation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir has not yielded



any benefit for the region, he said the social milieu in Jammu and Kashmir should be evaluated through the minds of the people.

He asserted that Kashmiris are inevitable part of India and they have nowhere to go.

While recalling his official days, Dulat said he watched Parliament being attacked through the windows of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and sometimes, it may not be possible to avert and predict everything.

The former RAW chief, who also authored 'Kashmir: The Vajpayee Years,' said unlike media reports, he has had a healthy relationship with his former colleague Ajit Doval, who was also invited for Dulat's book release.

Dulat headed RAW till 2000 before being appointed as special advisor on Kashmir in the PMO during the Atal Bihari

Vajpayee government.

Meanwhile, Goa Governor P S Sreedharan Pillai, while inaugurating the valedictory session of MBIFL in the State capital, said today that Kerala's youngsters were showing increased interest in reading books, brightening the prospects of giving literature new dimensions.

"Literary events in the State are invariably turning out to be great success, inviting an encouraging footfall. The trend holds a bright future for Malayalam literature as well," Pillai said.

All the same, languages are getting abused in social media, Pillai said citing instances of Malayalam words and usage that have earned negative connotations in recent times.

MBIFL, with 525 speakers, hosted no less than 250 sessions across a dozen venues on the Palace Grounds.

Training Programme for Legal Aid Defence Counsels concludes



Observer news Service

JAMMU: Two day training programme for Legal Aid Defence Counsels (LADCs), which was inaugurated yesterday by Justice Tashi Rabstan, Acting Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, concluded here today at J&K Judicial Academy, Jammu.

On the second day of the programme, four technical sessions were held. The first session was conducted on the topic "Advocacy Skill - Drafting", wherein, Mandeep Reen, Advocate and Panel Lawyer, HCLSC was the resource person. She shared her experiences and deliberated upon bail applications, miscellaneous applications, appeals, which was followed by open house discussion.

The second session was held on the topic "Advocacy Skill (Session/Magistrate Trial)", wherein, Ashok Parihar, Advocate High Court of J&K and Ladakh, was the resource person. During his deliberation, he focused on witness examination

and addressing arguments.

In the third session, legal assistance at pre-arrest, arrest and remand stage and citizen services through digital platform were discussed in detail wherein M S Parihar, District and Session Judge (Retired) was the Resource Person.

PDKotwal, District and Sessions Judge (Retired) and President, District Consumer Commission, Jammu, was resource person for the 4th session which focused on advocacy and professional ethics. Both these sessions were followed by a healthy discussion among the participants.

Pertinently, this training programme is part of Legal Aid Defense Counsel Scheme launched by NALSA in 350 districts of the country under phase-I including 10 districts of UT of J&K. The objective of this scheme is to provide qualitative and competent legal services in criminal matters to eligible persons and to manage and implement legal aid system in professional manner in criminal matters.

Kishtwar Admin Organises Career Guidance Session For NEET, JEE-IIT, Other Competitive Exam Aspirants

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

KISHTWAR: District Administration Kishtwar today organised a Career Guidance Session here in Reading Hub (24*7) Library of Government Model Higher Secondary School Girls.

The session was the part of the mentorship programme launched by Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Devansh Yadav for the Aspirants of NEET JEE-IIT, CSE and other competitive exam.

During the Guidance Session, Deputy Commissioner, Tehsildar Kishtwar Muneeb Umar; Accounts Officer DC Office, Imran Ahmed Kichloo besides Dr. Jamsheed Ahmed Assistant Professor from GDC Chatroo talked with the students about strategy and pattern of preparation to crack a competitive exam.

About 50 students besides competitive exam aspirants participated in the session. Among others, the workshop was attended by school faculty and staff members of the CEO Office.



The welcome address was presented by Accounts Officer Imran Ahmed Kichloo. He threw light on the aim and significance of conducting such sessions.

He also acquainted the aspirants about the techniques to

develop the Communication skills, personality development besides the strategy to be adopted to crack NET and SLET exam.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner enumerated in detail the need of

career counseling and guidance programmes at school and college level. He added that in this competitive world, career counseling helps the students to understand the career options and realize their strengths and weaknesses with regard to their course or profession.

He informed the aspirants that the district administration Kishtwar has planned to provide online-offline coaching to the aspirants of NEET and JEE-IIT by well known teachers of branded coaching institutes of India for which registration process is going on. He encouraged the students and competitive exam aspirants to enroll themselves to avail the coaching facility for NEET & JEE-IIT at their home town at nominal cost of Rs 990 per month.

He said the coaching classes will be started from March/April 2023 at Auditorium Projector of GDC Kishtwar from 4pm to 7 pm.

"District administration Kishtwar has taken several other steps including the establishment of 24*7 Library to benefit the students", he added.

Tehsildar Kishtwar and Assistant Professor Dr Jamsheed Ahmed, Assistant Professor GDC Chatroo Dr Jamsheed Ahmed also shared their experiences about the competitive exam.

Dr Jamsheed gave helpful tips regarding academics, higher education, research and creative writing etc to the students.

At the end, an interactive question-answer session was held to enable the students to raise queries and clear their doubts. The queries were responded to by the Deputy Commissioner and others present in the session to best of the satisfaction of the students.

Overall, the participating students took the session overwhelmingly and thanked district administration Kishtwar for organising such guidance programmes.

It is pertinent to mention here that on the demand of aspirants and students of Kishtwar, the district administration Kishtwar is going to organise such sessions on every Sunday that too at different places to benefit maximum number of students of the district.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Wet Spell

Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, but said there is a possibility of light rain and snow at scattered places on Monday.

Another wet spell is likely from February 9 to 11 as there is a possibility of light to moderate snowfall and rain at many places in the union territory.

Sonamarg Hotels

Hotel Burzaman, Hotel Dream Land, Hotel Snowland, Snow Hail, Hotel Sonamarg Inn, Hotel Salman, Hotel Relax Inn, Hotel Zum Zum, Hotel Snow Hearts, Hotel Neel Gagan, Hotel Al Bahar, Hotel Himalayan Resorts and Hotel Sunshine.

Admin Reassure

shops on which livelihood of families is dependent will be distributed during the anti-encroachment drive in Jammu", Lavasa said.

She further said the action was taken by the district administration after a prominent showroom built illegally was issued a notice but failed to submit any justification in the stipulated time frame.

She said it is a pro-people drive and only against those who have encroached upon State land for vested interest by misusing their power.

"The action is taken for the benefit of people. The land retrieved will be used for public interest activities," she said.

The deputy commissioner said the law and order situation is under control and appealed to people to cooperate with the administration for their own benefit.

Pervez Musharraf

airbase in Rawalpindi to bring Musharraf's mortal remains back to Pakistan.

The burial site remains to be decided but sources said it is likely to take place in either Islamabad or Karachi. Pakistan's top leadership and concerned authorities were in contact with the family for the funeral preparations, The Express Tribune newspaper reported.

His illness came to light in 2018 when his party - the All Pakistan Muslim League (APML) - announced that the former military ruler was suffering from amyloidosis.

In June last, he was hospitalised in Dubai for three weeks. "Going through a difficult stage where recovery is not possible and organs are malfunctioning. Pray for ease in his daily living," his family said at the time in a statement after the news of his demise had started circulating on social media.

Musharraf was the main architect of the Kargil War that took place months after then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif signed a historic peace accord with his Indian counterpart Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Lahore.

After his misadventure in Kargil, Musharraf deposed the then Prime Minister Sharif in a bloodless coup in 1999 and ruled Pakistan from 1999 to 2008 in various positions - first as the chief executive of Pakistan and later as the President.

Born in a middle-class family of Urdu-speaking Mohajir parents in Delhi in 1943, Musharraf migrated to Pakistan with his family after the Partition in 1947.

Pakistan's last military dictator died on Sunday as a forgotten man in politics after spending his final years in self-exile in the UAE to avoid criminal charges against him in his country.

During his stint as the head of the

Pakistan government, Musharraf allied with America in the war against terror after the 9/11 attacks on the US and cracked down on Islamist groups and banned dozens of radical outfits, a move that angered radicals. He even escaped assassination attempts in later years.

Nawaz Sharif's younger brother and current Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif extended condolences and sympathy to Musharraf's family.

"Praying for the forgiveness of the deceased and patience of the family," he said in a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office.

Nawaz Sharif, who was sentenced to life by a court during Musharraf's regime and was later exiled to Saudi Arabia following the intervention of the Gulf Kingdom, tweeted in Arabic a verse from Holy Quran with hashtag "#Pervez Musharraf".

The verse - loosely translated as "To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return" - is usually recited by Muslims when they hear the news of a death.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and former information minister Fawad Chaudhry described Musharraf as a "great person" and said his ideology was to always keep Pakistan first.

The four-star general was ruling Pakistan as a "chief executive" when the 9/11 attacks on the US took place and he swiftly aligned with Washington during its military intervention in neighbouring Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.

After the December 2007 assassination of Opposition leader Benazir Bhutto, his allies suffered crushing losses in the 2008 elections, leaving him isolated.

In more than seven years in office, he

oversaw a stint of economic growth while dodging at least three assassination attempts. Musharraf won a five-year term as president in a 2002 referendum, but reneged on promises to quit as army chief until late 2007.

Musharraf's plan to return to power in 2013 was dashed when he was disqualified from running in an election won by Sharif, whom he had deposed in 1999.

In March 2014, Musharraf was indicted for suspending the Constitution on November 3, 2007.

In December 2019, a special court handed Musharraf a death sentence in the high treason case against him. However, a court later nullified the ruling.

The former military ruler left the country in March 2016 for Dubai to seek medical treatment.

Musharraf joined the Pakistan Army in 1964 and was a graduate of the Army Staff and Command College, Quetta.

Musharraf visited India for the failed Agra summit in 2001 and made two more visits in 2005 as President to watch an India-Pakistan One-day Cricket match and in 2009 to attend a media event after shedding power.

Musharraf, the second of three brothers, spent his early years in Turkey, from 1949 to 1956, as his father Syed Musharraf-ud-din was posted in Ankara.

He joined the Pakistan Military Academy in 1961 and was commissioned into the Artillery Regiment in 1964.

He fought in the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965 as a young officer, and also participated in the Indo-Pak War of 1971 as a Company Commander in the Commando Battalion.

Musharraf rose to the rank of General and was appointed as the Chief of Army Staff on October 7, 1998, by then prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

He was given additional charge of the Chairman Joint Chiefs Staff Committee on April 9, 1999. Six months later, he toppled the Sharif government and became the head of the state designated as Chief Executive.

Musharraf was living in Dubai since March 2016, when Pakistan's Supreme Court lifted a travel ban on him to seek medical treatment there.

He married Sehba Musharraf in 1968 and has a son and a daughter.

Villagers Threaten

the attackers went off the next day.

Hundreds of residents of Dhangri held a meeting at the attack site and paid floral tributes to the victims on Sunday, a villager said.

They expressed concern over the "failure" of security agencies in finding clues about the terrorists involved in the twin attacks, he said.

Victims' family members demanded that efforts to identify the attackers be intensified.

The villagers threatened to launch a hunger strike if the security agencies are unable to neutralise the terrorists in the next 15 days.

After Doda

have sought action against the construction company, blaming them for making the area housing 20 to 25 houses insecure.

Omar, Mufti Recall Musharraf's Stand On Resolving K-Issue



Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Former chief ministers of Jammu and Kashmir Omar Abdullah said he would always remember Musharraf as the only Pakistani leader willing to meet and engage with mainstream Kashmiri leaders from India.

"Parvez Musharraf died, largely unlamented even in his own country. For all his faults & his troubling legacy, I will always remember him as the only Pakistani leader willing to meet & engage with mainstream Kashmiri leaders from India, much to the horror of Hurriyat leaders," Abdullah wrote on Twitter.

Musharraf's solution for the Kashmir issue put the interests of the people of J-K at the forefront while being realistic that the framework must ensure that neither India nor Pakistan "lost face", he added.

"It didn't happen & we are where we are today. May Allah grant him place in Jannat," Abdullah further said.

Musharraf seized power in 1999 in a coup and served as Pakistani president from 2001-2008.

Former Pakistan foreign minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri had claimed in his book 'Neither A Hawk Nor A Dove' that India and Pakistan were close to finding a solution to the vexed Kashmir issue during the 2001 Agra Summit between the then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Musharraf.

"Deepest condolences. Perhaps the only Pakistani General who genuinely tried to address the Kashmir issue. He wanted a solution according to wishes of people of J-K and acceptable to India and Pak. Though GOI has reversed all CBMs initiated by him and Vajpayee ji, the ceasefire remains," Mufti, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president, said in a tweet.

BJP Holds Working Committee Meets In 12 J&K Districts

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The BJP's Jammu and Kashmir unit on Sunday conducted working committee meetings of 12 districts across the Union Territory as part of efforts to strengthen the organisation.

A day-long working committee meetings of 12 organizational districts including Samba, Kashmir Displaced, Doda, Rajouri, Jammu South, Srinagar, Budgam, Ganderbal, Bandipora, Anantnag, Kulgam and Pulwama, a Bharatiya Janata Party spokesperson said.

In Doda district, J&K BJP General Secretary (organization) Ashok Koul chiefly addressed

the working committee meeting of district, while Lok Sabha MP Jugal Kishore Sharma, BJP Vice-President and former minister SS Salathia chaired meeting in Samba district.

Former deputy chief minister Kavinder Gupta addressed the meeting of South Jammu district, and BJP General Secretary and former MLC Vibodh Gupta chaired meeting in Rajouri district, spokesperson said.

In Kashmir Displaced district, Jammu Municipal Corporation Mayor Rajinder Sharma addressed the working committee meeting, while the meeting in Srinagar was chaired by Anwar Khan, prabhari, and Ashok Bhat, BJP's district president.

Security Personnel's Sacrifices Kept Country's Integrity Intact: Azad

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Democratic Azad Party (DAP) chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad on Sunday said the sacrifices made by personnel of the army and other paramilitary forces have kept the country's integrity intact.

He said the entire population of the country is having peaceful sleep at night only due to the untiring and uncompromising security provided by these men who sometimes have paid with their lives.

"We are today proud of our

country since it has not only grown as economic power but also won almost all wars fought against enemies since 1947. This makes us feel great and proud as citizens of India," he said in Samba where he took part in a "Vishnu Mahayagya".

"The sacrifices made by our army personnel and other paramilitary forces have kept the integrity of our country intact. They have been selfless when it comes to fighting terrorism and guarding borders from our enemies," Azad said.



Kendriya Vidyalaya DPS Kishtwar Celebrates Grandparents Day

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Kendriya Vidyalaya DPS Kishtwar on Saturday invited the grandparents of the students to the school and briefed them about the day-to-day learning of their grandchildren.

The grandparents of the primary class students were honoured at the school and a memento of appreciation was presented to each one of them by the chief guest. Harbansh Lal Parihar.

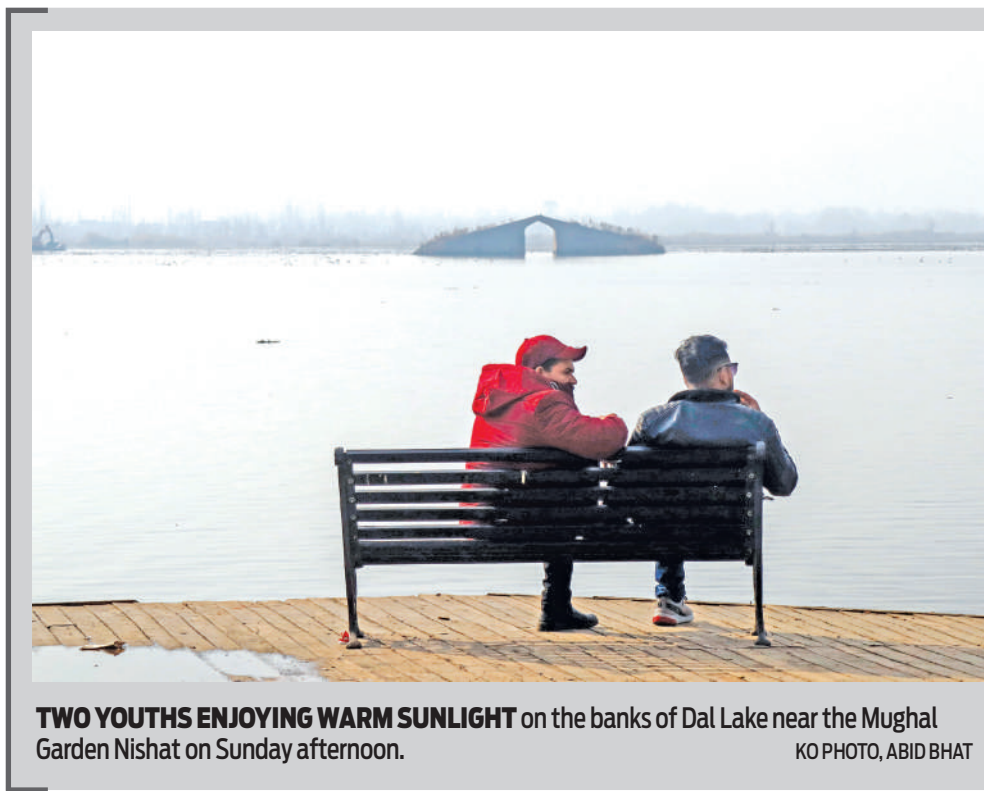
The Incharge principal of the KV DPS Kishtwar, Manoj Kumar Verma, while addressing the grandparents welcomed them and expressed his gratitude for

their presence and blessings.

He further underlined the importance of the day and the invaluable relation the grandchildren share with their grandparents.

The energetic learners took the opportunity to show their love and gratitude towards them by performing, dances, role play and poetry recitation. These activities also highlighted the bond between the grandparents and the children. Their enthralling performance left everybody spellbound and thoroughly mesmerized.

The function concluded with the blessings of the grandparents and refreshment.



TWO YOUTHS ENJOYING WARM SUNLIGHT on the banks of Dal Lake near the Mughal Garden Nishat on Sunday afternoon.

KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

ADGP Calls For Professional Approach In Counter Insurgency Ops

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Additional Director General of Police Kashmir Vijay Kumar on Sunday asked officers to adopt professional approach while dealing with counter insurgency operations.

The ADGP made the remarks while chairing a review meeting regarding security scenario, anti-militancy operations, law and order, anti-drug drive and other issues related to day-to-day policing at the conference hall of DPL Awantipora, a police spokesperson said in a statement.

The meeting was attended by DIG SKR Rayees Mohammed Bhat-IPS, DIG CKR Sujit Kumar-IPS, DIG CRPF D.P Upadhyay, SSP Awantipora Mohd Yousif JKPS, SSP Anantnag Ashish Kumar Mishra-IPS and other senior officers of Police & CRPF.

"During the meeting, ADGP appreciated the efforts of Police for maintaining law & order in the Police district," the spokesperson said, adding, "During the meeting, he took stock of the overall security situation and counter insurgency operations. He emphasised upon the officers to adopt a professional approach while dealing with counter insurgency operations."

He also urged officers to strengthen the general security grid and ensure great synergy and coordination among the agencies working on



ground, the spokesperson said. "He also emphasized upon the officers to keep strict vigil over the (militant) associates and take all necessary measures under law against them."

ADGP also directed the officers to complete investigation of pending cases on priority. "He also laid stress on strengthening the police-public relations, service-oriented policing which will help in gaining the confidence and trust of the general public," the spokesperson added.

ADGP also directed the officers to complete investigation of pending cases on priority. "He also laid stress on strengthening the police-public relations, service-oriented policing which will help in gaining the confidence and trust of the general public," the spokesperson added.

Anti-Encroachment Drive

AAP Leaders Detained In Jammu During 'Dharna'

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: AAP leader Harsh Dev Singh, including two other partymen, were detained on Sunday during a protest outside Raj Bhawan here held against an anti-encroachment drive.

Before they were detained, the three sat on a dharna holding a tricolour flag in front of Raj Bhawan in protest against the drive.

"Though the Lieutenant Governor assured the poor they will not be evicted, the district and tehsil administration were dispossessing only the poor and un-influential while leaving the rich and powerful untouched," the former minister said.

The Aam Aadmi Party leader said that several ex MLAs had carved out colonies by encroaching the state and other lands and sold them at exorbitant rates, while the poor continue to be harassed, intimidated, and persecuted despite the



tall slogans of the LG. He called upon the ex-ministers, MLAs, and bureaucrats to come clean on the issue before initiating eviction proceedings against the poor, villagers, nomads, and other homeless people.

He said that selective action against the poor was not only reprehensible but amounted to a "sin of the highest order." Singh also accused the LG administration of facilitating the encroachment of palatial mansions and those of state lands,

forest lands, lands under the Jammu Development Authority, and municipal lands by ex-ministers, MLAs, and some saffron party leaders.

He alleged that several BJP leaders were reported to have regularised state lands under the Roshni scheme with full impunity.

Singh urged the civil society also to come forward to expose and oppose the authoritarian and dictatorial policies of the present corrupt regime.

'Snowbound' Road Forces Family To Carry Postpartum Mother On Cot In Uri

Agencies

URI: A postpartum woman had to be carried on a cot by her family to reach back home from a health facility as the authorities concerned allegedly are yet to clear several stretches of the accumulated snow in Uri in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

The woman hailing from Silapathar Nambra, as per locals, had recently given birth to a twin at a hospital in Uri. "Once the doctors discharged her, the family arranged a vehicle to take her back home however little did they knew the roads' were yet to be cleared of accumulated snow", they told adding the attendants were left with no option than to carry the mother and the two little souls on a cot amid severe chill for almost two kilometers."

Ruing the lackadaisical approach of the PMGSY department vis-à-vis the clearance of roads in the area, the locals

alleged that there are several stretches which continue to remain non-motorable. "The people, especially patients, are suffering badly even as it almost has been a week since any significant snowfall was witnessed in the area", they said.

The inhabitants have urged Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir and DC Baramulla to intervene in the matter and instruct PMGSY Department to clear the snow from the roads to mitigate the suffering of people.

When contacted, AEE PMGSY Uri Kursheed Ahmad told that the clearance was carried out for 1.6 kms on the said road recently. "Due to sliding/slips the balance length of approximately 1 km was halted so as to avoid any exigency with regards to the labourers and machinery", he said.

"Some locals wanted protection work being done at the sliding spots before moving the machinery forward for clearance", he further said. (GNS)

150 Kg Of Poppy Recovered In Jammu, Ramban

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Police recovered 150 kilograms of poppy and arrested a drug peddler in the Jammu and Ramban districts of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, officials said.

A police team intercepted a vehicle on a highway at Sukeetar naka point when it was going to Jammu from Srinagar, they said.

During the search of the vehicle, police recovered 95 kgs of poppy and arrested one drug

peddler Pargat Singh of Amritsar district of Punjab, they said.

A case in this matter was registered at Jhajar Kotli police station.

Another vehicle was intercepted by police on a highway at Banihal and 55 kilograms of poppy was recovered during its search, they said.

The driver escaped from the spot. A case stands registered at police station Banihal and an investigation is on. The search of the accused is on to apprehend him, they added.

28 Lakh Passbooks Distributed In J&K Under 'Aapki Zameen Aapki Nigrani'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Under the revolutionary citizen centric 'Aapki Zameen Aapki Nigrani' initiative, about twenty eight lakh passbooks have been distributed among the beneficiaries of Jammu and Kashmir which is aimed to demystify land records for eliminating possibility of manipulation.

Pertinently, Aapki Zameen Aapki Nigrani initiative is one of the flagship programmes launched by the J&K government to bring ease, transparency and convenience for citizens about land records.

Under this initiative, public users can search and view copies of scanned data online on CIS Portal- <http://landrecords.jk.gov.in/>. The initiative facilitates easy online access to the Land Records System thereby reducing manipulation of revenue records besides improving the efficiency of Revenue offices substantially. This endeavor is part of Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP) and Jammu and Kashmir has achieved an important milestone in providing the most transparent and accountable services to the common people under this initiative.

As per the official records, lakh of citizens have viewed their land records till date and the feedback of citizens has resulted

in purification, updation of land records on constant basis.

Earlier, there was no mechanism to view or monitor the status of land records by the citizens who were dependent on the officials to check their land records manually.

An official said that through Aapki Zameen, Aapki Nigrani, land records have been made readily available to citizens, and the online revenue service delivery is preventing human intervention and mischief.

Similarly, the new land-use laws have ensured that people get a reasonable and fair price for their land and the interest of farmers is protected.

The programme aims to modernize management of land records, enhance transparency in the land records maintenance system, thus reducing scope of land/property disputes and facilitate conclusive titles to immovable properties in the country. The major components of the programme included computerization and digitization of land records, survey/resurvey and updation of all survey and settlement records, integration of property registration with land records and cadastral maps for enhancing authenticity and security of data, bringing utmost transparency in the system, Capacity building, and development of Land Records Information System.

Education India Launches "Club Indigo" At Amritsar Principals' Conclave Club To Adopt A Total Of 28 Schools Across India For Training, Resource Building

Farooq Shah

AMRITSAR: Education India, a Karnataka-based education company that describes itself as "Education Partners of India," unveiled its "Club Indigo" initiative at a glittering event at the hotel Radisson Blue on Sunday wherein it will adopt 28 schools throughout India and work with them to develop their overall resources while also providing training for their teaching staff. The event was powered by Indigo Global School and co-powered by Grow School.

Speaking at an event called "Vidvat Sabha" 2023 in which several school principals of reputable private schools participated, Dr. Manjeet Jain, CEO of Education India, said that the organization has many teachers,



psychologists, mentors, Tedx speakers, and teacher-trainers available to create a nationwide campaign that will cause a paradigm shift in the field of education.

Anil Swaroop, a former secretary of the Government of India responsible for school education and coal, and the event's chief guest, emphasised the importance of providing students with a quality education

in order to boost the nation's competitiveness and bring Indian talent on par with that of the rest of the world.

In a panel discussion, Arindam Roy Chaudhury, Principal G D Goenka Public School Jammu, Dr Gurmeet Kaur Gill, Principal, Dasmesh Nursery School, Mukerian Punjab, Pawan Sood, Principal Hargobind Public School, Ludhiana and Dr Sandeep Sood, Saffron Public School, Phagwara,

discussed a variety of topics regarding how school principals should turn into successful entrepreneurs to be called as "heroes" in their discipline.

First woman IPS officer in India and former Lieutenant Governor, Puducherry, Dr. Kiran Bedi, who was the guest-of-honour at the event, stated the lack of a heart-to-heart connection between a teacher and a pupil led in the non-alignment with the father-mother-teacher trinity leading in a corrupt society devoid of any ethical and moral standards.

"Today, we cannot rely solely on a top-notch infrastructure since concrete and mortar alone cannot create morally upright individuals," Dr Bedi said. "Teachers need to be aware of what fresh ideas they can present to pupils who, as a result of the ex-

tensive and high-quality content available online, are more knowledgeable than them."

Corruption, she said, is the "single most factor" that "ruined fast our value-based system" and teachers must work hard in inculcating values among the students so that they can be builders of the nation in the longer run.

Dr. Bedi appreciated the efforts of Education India in bringing a qualitative change in the educational landscape of the country.

Education India takes schools on lease and works to grow them in order to improve performance. It also conducts audits to compare school performance to the highest standards, collaborates with school owners to advance their overall development, and oversees all aspects of operations for schools all over India.



How Indo-Pak Cricket Thrived In Musharraf's Rule

Press Trust of India

KARACHI: Pakistan's former military ruler Pervez Musharraf, the architect of the Kargil War in 1999, loved his cricket.

Musharraf, who passed away in a Dubai hospital on Sunday, used cricket as a strong diplomatic tool to improve relations between the two countries when he led Pakistan first as Chief Executive and then President.

An avid follower of the game, Musharraf wasted no time in bringing his blue eyed boy, Lt-General Tauqir Zia, as Chairman of the cricket board soon after his military coup in October 1999.

But in 2003 the moment he learnt that Tauqir's son Junaid had played for Pakistan, Musharraf asked the PCB Chairman to resign as he saw the entire episode as a conflict of interest.

Musharraf then brought in former career diplomat and ex foreign secretary, Shaharyar Khan, who had served as ambassador in New Delhi, to head the cricket board.

And few months later, Shaharyar fulfilled Musharraf's ambition of having the Indian team tour Pakistan.

Before Musharraf's coup, Pakistan had been to India in early 1999 when Atal Bihari Vajpayee was Indian Prime Minister but after that they were no bilateral exchanges between the two countries until 2004.

The Indian team led by Sourav Ganguly came in March-April 2004 and it turned out to be a famous diplomatic success for the military ruler as the top names from India including government ministers and celebrities

were invited to Pakistan to watch the matches with red carpet treatment laid out for them.

The tour was a success with Musharraf wasting no opportunity to have photo shoots with the Indian team and his famous remarks about MS Dhoni's hair style became a hit in both countries.

His meeting with the Indian team players were all exercises aimed at softening relations between the two countries and to portray himself as a moderate and liberal leader.

And the plan worked to a great extent as never in a tenure of a Pakistani premier or President did so many Indo-Pak bilateral series take place than in Musharraf's tenure.

After the 2004 series, India came again to Pakistan in early 2006 while the Pakistan team also toured India for full Test series first in 2005 and then in 2007 returning to Pakistan in 2008 for the Asia Cup.

Before Musharraf's time, bilateral tours between the two countries had been far and few with huge gaps in between. Pakistan went to India in 1979-80 after a gap of nearly 18 years and India came to Pakistan in 1978/79 for the first time since 1954/55.

Ironically these tours in the late 70s also took place during the tenure of another military dictator, General Zia ul Haq, who also used cricket diplomacy to reduce tensions.

Musharraf himself wasted no opportunity to show up at cricket matches even in India when Pakistan was playing. In 2005, he turned up at the Feroze Shah Kotla ground to a warm welcome.

PCB Again Threatens To Pull Out Of WC In India



Press Trust of India

KARACHI: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman, Najam Sethi has reportedly told BCCI secretary Jay Shah that his country wants to host the Asia Cup and if the tournament is moved out, Pakistan will not send its team for the men's ODI World Cup in India.

Sethi's comments are on similar lines as his predecessor Ramiz Raja, who had reiterated that Pakistan could boycott the 50-over World Cup in India this year if the Asia Cup issue between the two cricket boards wasn't resolved.

Pakistan was originally allotted the Asia Cup in September this year, but Shah, who is the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) president, had said in October last year that the Indian team will not tour Pakistan for the continental tournament due to diplomatic tensions.

The ACC is expected to shift the Asia Cup from Pakistan and decide on the alternate venue in March.

However, a well-informed source in the PCB told PTI that during the ACC executive board

meeting held in Bahrain on Saturday, Sethi made Pakistan's stance on the Asia Cup very clear to Shah that his country "will not forgo the hosting rights of either the Asia Cup or the Champions Trophy in 2025".

"Sethi has made his stance very clear (to Shah) and he went to Bahrain after meeting Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif last Tuesday. Apparently, he has discussed the matter with the PM before going to Bahrain," the source said.

"Sethi was clear that the Asia Cup is a multi-team event and the Pakistan government is willing to give security assurances to the Indian team. So, there is no reason for the BCCI to not send its team to Pakistan in September this year," the source added.

"Sethi also made it clear that if the BCCI cannot get clearance from its government for the Asia Cup, Pakistan will also not travel to India for the (ODI) World Cup." The source added that Sethi told the meeting in Bahrain that if India didn't come to Pakistan, then both countries could play their matches in the

two multi-team event at off-shore venues.

The source rubbished reports that other ACC member countries, including Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, had said they would have to get government clearances to play the Asia Cup in Pakistan.

"No such discussion took place. All the discussions centred around India-Pakistan cricket ties and the Asia Cup and World Cup." The source said that after Sethi's tough stance, it was decided the ACC will meet again in March and the matter will be taken forward.

"Sethi told the ACC members that before the next meeting, the BCCI should speak to its government and make its stance clear on whether it will send its team for the Asia Cup, so that Pakistan can also discuss with the ICC about playing its World Cup matches in India," the source said.

The source added that Sethi asked the ACC members that when Pakistan was chosen as the host for the Asia Cup and the 2025 Champions Trophy, why didn't the BCCI representatives raise their objection then.

IND vs AUS

Injured Josh Hazlewood Set To Miss 1st Test

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Recovering from an achilles injury, Australia pacer Josh Hazlewood is set to miss the opening Test against India in Nagpur and also remains a doubtful starter for the second game in Delhi.

The 32-year-old had sustained the injury on his left leg after bowling in the rain-affected Sydney Test against South Africa last month.

"Not sure about the first Test. It's still a few days away but it's sneaking up pretty quickly," Hazlewood was quoted as saying by 'Cricbuzz' before Australia's final session at the KSCA Stadium in the outskirts of Bangalore on Sunday.

"Second one is obviously straight after as well. So, we'll play it by ear over the next week and next few days and hopefully Tuesday goes well," added the pacer, who is likely to have his first bowl in Nagpur on Tuesday.

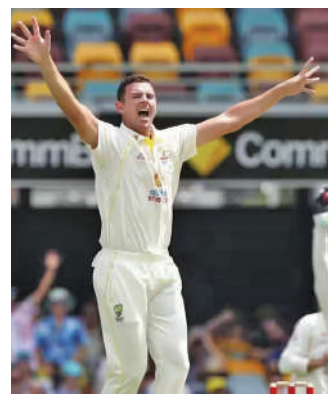
The opening Test begins on February 9 and if he misses out, Scott Boland might get his first overseas Test. Australia is already without Mitchell Starc for the first Test as the pacer is nursing a finger injury.

"Just a bit of workload management at the moment. Just managing the Achilles. I was bowling a fair bit leading into the tour at home and sort of just pushing up against it," Hazlewood said.

"Probably wasn't recovering as well as I would have liked between each session so thought we'd give it a few days here straight of the bat and try and get over the hump and have a bowl from Tuesday on (in Nagpur) and hope it goes well."

Hazlewood has had frequent breakdowns in the last two years, having managed to play just four Tests and that too not able to complete a series.

"It's been frustrating play-



ing one Test at a time," said the right-arm pacer, who had played the first Test against West Indies but missed the next three with a side strain.

Hazlewood had made a comeback in the Sydney Test only to injure his Achilles.

"It always feels the hardest Test to play, the first one and they sort of get easier as they go and you get to the other side, the end of the series, it gets hard again. Hopefully I can string a couple together on this tour," he said.

Despite all the injury breaks, Hazlewood's priority remains Test cricket with Australia set to play the World Championships Final and the Ashes apart from the Border Gavaskar trophy in India.

"It's still the same mindset. It's still about taking every game as it comes. It's obviously a huge tour and a long tour as well. It's four Tests. It's not a two-Test series where you might push things to get up for it.

"Four Tests is a long time and the Ashes is there as well and there's cricket all the time. It's just about getting it right, you don't want it lingering around for months on end.

"The Achilles is a hard one, being a tendon it's couple of steps forward, one step back occasionally, which is how it goes for everyone when they've got this type of injury. Feels like it's heading in the right direction," he said.

India Women Focussed On Pakistan Clash: Skipper Kaur

Press Trust of India

CAPETOWN: The Women's Premier League auction is just around the corner but India are firmly focussed on their T20 World Cup opener against Pakistan as they aim to emulate the U19 girls' title-winning feat, insisted skipper Harmanpreet Kaur.

The WPL action is slated to be held on February 13 in Mumbai, a day after India's T20 World Cup opener against Pakistan.

"Before that [the auction], we have a very important game and we are just going to focus on that," Harmanpreet said at the T20 World Cup captains' press conference.

"The World Cup is more important than anything else. Our focus is on the ICC trophy. These things will keep coming, and as a player, you know what's important for you and how you need to keep your focus.

"We are all mature enough and know what is important for us," she added.



Led by Shafali Verma, the Indian team won the inaugural U19 T20 World Cup last month and the senior side wants to add another ICC title in India's trophy cabinet.

"After watching the U19 World Cup, we are motivated to do what they have done. They have motivated us to do well, they have done it and we have not done it yet," Harmanpreet said.

The flamboyant Indian skipper hoped that the WPL will play a similar role in contributing to the growth of Indian women's cricket like the Women's Big Bash and The Hundred have done in Australia and England.

Real Madrid Loses 1-0 Ahead Of Club World Cup

Agencies

MADRID: Marco Asensio missed a penalty kick and depleted Real Madrid lost 1-0 at Mallorca in the Spanish league on Sunday in its last match before traveling to Morocco to play at the Club World Cup.

The draw gives Barcelona the chance to increase its lead at the top when it hosts struggling Sevilla later Sunday. The Catalan club will enter the match at Camp Nou with a five-point lead over second-place Madrid. "We already expected a very tough match," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "We had our chances but couldn't take advantage of them."


Ancelotti couldn't count on several injured starters, including striker Karim Benzema, defender Eder Militao and goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois, who was dropped from the squad at the last minute after getting injured during the warmup. Ancelotti also rested midfielders Toni Kroos and Luka Modric, who came on in the second half.



Asensio missed a chance to equalize when his 60th-minute penalty kick was saved by Mallorca goalkeeper Pedrag Rajkovic after Madrid forward Vinicius Junior had been fouled. Madrid's last chance was a header by Antonio Rudiger that went narrowly wide deep into stoppage time.



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