

Rahul Unfurled Tricolor In Lal Chowk Because Of Modi: HM Shah

Says Murli Manohar Joshi, Modi Unfurled National Flag In 1992 Under Intense Army Cover, Using A Helicopter

Aqib Javed

Srinagar: The Union Home Minister, Amit Shah on Friday took potshots at his political opponent Rahul Gandhi and said that his recent unfurling of the national flag at Srinagar's Lal Chowk during Bharat Jodo Yatra was possible just because of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi.

"I am satisfied with all the things I have done so far as a Home Minister. The people in the three regions of Kashmir, North East and Maoist areas are leading a normal life. The people too realise it," Shah said in an interactive session at the India Today Conclave on Friday.

When asked about Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka's



recent visit to Kashmir, the Home Minister said that he doesn't expect the Gandhi siblings to thank

him for creating such an atmosphere of peace in the Valley. "As the same time, I want

to tell you that in the same Lal Chowk, Murli Manohar Joshi jee and Modi jee went to unfurl the national flag. They went there under intense army cover using a helicopter because it was impossible," he said.

Rahul, he said, went to Lal Chowk and unfurled the tricolor without much security.

"Perhaps, Rahul Gandhi didn't know that unfurling the national flag was impossible during their times while it can be easily done now. It happened because of Modi jee," he added.

Pertinently, the then BJP president Murli Manohar Joshi, accompanied by Narendra Modi unfurled Tricolour at Lal Chowk's clock tower on the occasion of Republic Day in 1992. **More on PIO**

Snowfall Likely On J&K Higher Reaches

Agencies

Srinagar: Weather department on Friday predicted rain and thunderstorms at scattered places in plains and snowfall over upper reaches of Jammu and Kashmir in the next 24 hours.

"Intermittent rain and thunderstorm accompanied by gusty winds at scattered places is expected whereas snowfall is likely over higher reaches from March 18-20," a meteorological department official said.

The official further said that there is no forecast of any heavy rain and snow during the time.

He said farmers are again urged to postpone spraying of orchards during the period.

Regarding temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of 6.6°C against 5.5°C on the previous night and it was 1.9°C above normal for the summer capital.

Qazigund, he said, recorded a low of 4.5°C against 4.2°C on the previous night while Pahalgam recorded a low of 1.6°C.

Kokernag recorded a low of 4.6°C against 6.3°C on the previous night and it was 1.1°C above normal for the place, the officials said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of 0.5°C against 1.5°C on the previous night and it was 2.8°C above normal for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, he said.

In Kupwara town, he said, the mercury settled at 4.3°C against 3.2°C on **More on PIO**

Gujarati Conman Is A Known History-Sheet

Faces 3 Criminal Cases In His Home State, JKP Seize 10 Fake Visiting Cards; Two Mobiles From Him



Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Kiran Bhai Patel, who posed as a PMO official and got the requisite perks, including a bulletproof car and scores of security guards, had three cases registered against him in his home state Gujarat, police said on Friday.

He was arrested here on March 3 but his deception that tricked security forces of the high security zone that is Jammu and Kashmir has come to light only now. Patel was in police custody until Friday and has now been sent to jail for 14 days, officials said.

The story of the alleged conman from Gujarat

unravelling earlier this month when he visited Kashmir for the third time, each time passing himself off as Additional Director (Strategy and Campaigns) Prime Minister's Office, New Delhi.

Three cases under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, including cheating, forgery and breach of trust, dating back to 2017 are registered against him in police stations in Ahmedabad and Baroda, police said.

Purported videos of Patel surveying the snow slopes of Gulmarg with a posse of armed security personnel around him and of a convoy of vehicles **More on PIO**

Reserved Category Employees In J&K Suspend Strike

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Reserved Category employees who fled Kashmir following last year's targeted killings of their colleagues announced on Friday the suspension of their 290-day strike seeking relocation away from the Valley.

Reserved Category Employees' Association leader Kuldeep Kumar said the decision to suspend the strike was taken after a 10-member coordination committee held several rounds of talks with the Lt

Governor-led administration over the past two weeks.

The decision to suspend the agitation comes a fortnight after Kashmiri Pandits employed in the Valley under the Prime Minister's package also announced the suspension of their 310-day agitation. A majority of them have already resumed their duties in Kashmir.

Hundreds of Reserved Category employees who hail from Jammu and migrant Kashmiri Pandit employees in the Valley fled **More on PIO**

BJP Leader Says J&K Elections By September End

Says 3-Phase Assembly Polls In J&K To End On Sept 30, Two Dy CMs To Be Sworn-In; First Cabinet Meet On October 5

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: A Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader from north Kashmir has surprised everyone by declaring that the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir will conclude in September this year, and that the next Chief Minister will be from Kashmir.

BJP leader, Mohammad Maqbool War in a viral undated video clip has also claimed

that there will be two Deputy Chief Ministers in the Union Territory, one each from Doda and Rajouri districts of Jammu region.

The BJP leader's statement comes two days after opposition leaders led by veteran politician and National Conference president, Dr Farooq Abdullah met the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India and demanded **More on PIO**



Narendra Modi
Prime Minister



Department of Industries & Commerce
Government of Jammu & Kashmir

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B2G Meetings

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Foreign Direct Investment

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Foreign Investment Opportunities

Employment Opportunities





Capacity Building Program On “Women Safety & Security” Held In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: To address the gaps in action for women and children with the objective to create gender equitable and child centered environment, a daylong capacity building program on “Women safety & security” for the functionaries of Mission Shakti/ Mission Vatsalya, Mission Poshan and Special Cell for Women and children was today held here in the Auditorium of SKIMS, JVC, Bemina.

The program was held on the directions of the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad under Azadi ka Amrit Mohatsav PRAN 4 UNITY (unity in diversity).

During the program, the functionaries of Mission Shakti/ Mission Vatsalya, Mission Poshan and Special Cell for Women and Children were sensitized about the program and were given training by the Resource persons.

District Social Welfare Officer, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad who is also Nodal Officer of Mission Shakti presided over the function and highlighted the objectives of the program in his introductory speech.

On the occasion, Resource persons including Secretary SDA, Dr Mantasha Binti Rashid, Deputy Advocate General J&K High Court, Advocate Mubashir

Malik, Assistant Professor IUST, Dr Shazana Andrabi and Centre Administrator One Stop Centre Bandipora, Ms Ishrat Ayoub delivered their lectures on the topic.

Speaking about the day-long program, the Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar highlighted the importance of Mission Poshan 2.0, Mission Shakti and Mission Vatsalya an Umbrella Schemes of Ministry of Women & Child Development

The DC said the scheme is aimed at empowerment and protection of women and children and ensuring their wholesome development in a safe and secure environment. He said the scheme is crucial for sustainable and equitable development of the society and for achieving transformational economic and social changes.

The DC further said the Government is giving focused attention to ensure well-nourished and cheerful children and confident, self-reliant women by providing them with an environment which is accessible, affordable, reliable and free from all forms of discrimination and violence. He further said the prime objective of the scheme is to address gaps in measures taken for women and children to create gender equitable and child centered policies and programs.

VC KU Inaugurates 2-Day Intl Seminar On ‘Postmodern Literature’

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A two-day international seminar on ‘Post-modern Literature’ started at the University of Kashmir on Friday.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Nilofer Khan chaired the inaugural session of the seminar, organized by the Department of Urdu, as chief guest, said a statement.

In her presidential address, Prof Nilofer hoped that research papers read out during the seminar will not only enrich young research scholars and students but also acquaint them with contemporary critical perspectives as well.

Saying that the Department of Urdu has its own standing and stature in the literary world, Prof Nilofer said such international conferences having participation of academics and scholars from different parts of the country and abroad, would further enhance its visibility

2-Day International Conference Begins At GCW, M.A Road

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A two-day International Conference on ‘Advances in Computer Sciences and Technology’ began at Government College for Women, M.A. Road, on Friday, with academicians and subject experts deliberating on the recent trends in the field.

Vice-Chancellor, Cluster University Srinagar, Prof. (Dr.) Qayyum Husain was the Chief Guest for the inaugural ceremony.

In his presidential address, Vice Chancellor, Prof. Qayyum said computers and the allied technologies have revolutionized every sphere of our life. “The discipline of computer science itself has undergone a lot of changes over the years, which makes this conference all the more important. Artificial Intelligence (AI), for instance, has emerged as a very exciting and important field, opening up a plethora of possibilities for the future.”

“Keeping the developments in the field of Computer Sciences and other disciplines, Cluster University Srinagar proposed to introduce several new courses

es in the varsity’s second Academic Council meeting including Masters/Honors programmes in Artificial Intelligence and Data Science; Honors programme in Graphic Designing & Visualization; Diploma programmes in Digital Marketing, Block Chain Management, Cloud Computing and Cyber Security,” Prof. Qayyum said.

“These courses not only meet the industry requirements and technological advances made in the respective fields, but are also in line with the implementation of National Education Policy (NEP-2020)

At the same time we have to be aware of apprehensions and ethical dilemmas related to AI,” he added.

The Lead Talk of the conference was delivered by Mr. Marc Canter, CEO Instigate.ai and Co-Founder MacroMedia, USA. He shared an interesting case study on decentralized computing with professionals from different backgrounds coming together to offer international services with the concept of viral marketing. He cited the examples of ‘SauceNet’ and ‘Instigate.ai’.



Tulips in full bloom at Asia's largest Tulip Garden in Srinagar. KO Pic Abid Bhat

Irksome Traffic Jams Back To Haunt Commuters On Boulevard

Traffic Regulation A Big Challenge Amid Ongoing SSC Projects: SSP Traffic

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: At a time work under Srinagar Smart City Project is ongoing in several areas, commuters are likely to encounter ‘difficulties’ as a result of probable traffic jamming on Boulevard Road in view of the opening of Asia’s largest Tulip Garden for visitors from March 19.

Authorities have dug up roads from Lal Chowk to Mughal Garden Shalimar to develop the city on modern lines under SSC, ahead of the G20 tourism track meeting scheduled to be hosted in Srinagar in May this year.

However people, who often travel to Lal Chowk from Harwan via Boulevard Road are likely to face difficulties, as the authorities have issued advisory directing commuters intending to visit Tulip Garden to take Lal Chowk-Dalgate-Boulevard/Gupkar Road to reach Tulip Garden and Nishat-Foreshore-Habak-Dargah-Khanyar route on return.

“We have not seen such shoddy and subpar arrangements ever before, while roads have been dug almost everywhere in Srinagar, hours long traffic jamming on roads have made our lives miserable. Now given the opening of Tulip Garden, the one way traffic on a single lane stretch on Boulevard will further add to our woes,” Tariq Ahmad, a Nishat resident said.

He said people find it difficult to reach their destinations as a result of heavy traffic jams on roads given the projects being

executed under SSC.

“Literally, it takes me around two hours to reach Shalimar from Sonwar in the morning due to the traffic congestion on busy Boulevard Road as the authorities have dug one side of it while another side has been allowed for traffic. We request the administration to revisit its traffic plan for the larger interest of the public,” Shaista told Kashmir Observer.

When contacted, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic city, Syed Muzaffar Shah said people will face inconvenience as work under SSC is on at the moment. He however said the department will try to ensure hassle free movement of traffic on Boulevard Road.

He said the projects being executed under SSC have narrowed the space of carriage roads at major corridors in Srinagar which is going to throw a big challenge for the department to ensure smooth traffic movement.

“It’s meant to happen as work under Srinagar Smart City is on while Tulip Garden will also be thrown open for visitors from March 19. We will see the situation on Boulevard for the first three days and then decide what needs to be done,” SSP Traffic told Kashmir Observer.

When asked whether any separate arrangements have been put in place for outside visitors to park their vehicles away from Tulip Garden, he said there is no such arrangement in place; however some parking slots have been identified for visitors


at Boulevard Road.

Traffic Police department in this regard has issued a advisory directing people intending to visit Tulip Garden to adopt Lal Chowk-Dalgate-Boulevard/Gupkar Road to reach Tulip Garden and on their return Nishat-Foreshore-Habak-Dargah-Khanyar route to reach their respective destinations.

“Asia’s largest Tulip Garden is being thrown open to the public on 19th March-2023 and it is expected that a large number of tourists and local populace will throng to Tulip Garden and other gardens in its vicinity. Due to the expected rush of people; there are chances of congestion and for the convenience of people and to avoid slow movement, One-Way traffic shall be regulated initially w.e.f 19-03-2023 till 26-03-2023,” the advisory issued by SSP Traffic reads.

Likewise, motorist’s intending to travel from Harwan-Shalimar-Nishat and other adjacent areas towards Lal-Chowk have been asked to travel via Foreshore-Hazratbal route instead of Nishat-Boulevard road axis to reach their respective destinations.

“Motorists intending to travel from Gulab Bagh-Zakoorra-Naseembagh-Habbak and adjacent areas shall adopt Habak - Dargah- Khanyar route to reach Lal Chowk instead of Foreshore Road. Visitors are advised to park their vehicles at designated parking places only and avoid parking their vehicles on roadside. Wrongly, parked vehicles will be towed,” it adds.


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

AIRPORTS


SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311




RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS



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

<div><div>HIJRI CALENDAR</div></div>	PRAYERS
25 Shaban 1444	<div>FAJR5:18</div> <div>ZUHR12:40</div> <div>ASR4:56</div> <div>Magrib6:42</div> <div>ISHA8:02</div>

This Day In History

- 1922 - British magistrates in India sentence Mahatma Gandhi to 6 years imprisonment for disobedience
- 1937 - The human-powered aircraft, Pedaliente, flies 1 kilometre (0.62 miles) outside Milan.
- 1940 - Benito Mussolini joins Hitler in Germany's war against France & Britain
- 1943 - Red Army evacuates Belgorod
- 1944 - Nazi Germany occupies Hungary
- 1944 - 2,500 women trample guards & floorwalkers to purchase 1,500 alarm clocks announced for sale in a Chicago Illinois dept store
- 1945 - 1,250 US bombers attacks Berlin
- 1948 - France & Great Britain & Benelux sign Treaty of Brussels
- 1948 - Soviet consultants have left Yugoslavia in first sign of Tito-Stalin split.
- 1949 - NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Org) ratified
- 1952 - 1st plastic lens for cataract patients fitted (Philadelphia)
- 1955 - I Hatojama recognized as premier of Japan
- 1959 - US President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs Hawaii statehood bill
- 1962 - Algerian War ends after 7½ yrs (250,000 die), Ben Bella flees
- 1963 - France performs underground nuclear test at Ecker, Algeria
- 1965 - USSR launches Voshkod 2; Alexei Leonov makes 1st spacewalk (20 mins)
- 1967 - Oil tanker Torrey Canyon hits a rock off Cornwall & spills oil
- 1968 - Congress repeals requirement for a gold reserve
- 1970 - Two-week US postal strike begins; it is against the government and is the largest wildcat strike in US history
- 1971 - 200 die in landslide into Lake Yanahuani, Chungar Peru
- 1972 - China performs nuclear test at Lop Nor, PRC
- 1972 - Ulster Vanguard hold a rally of 60,000 people in Belfast; William Craig tells the crowd: "if and when the politicians fail us, it may be our job to liquidate the enemy"
- 1974 - Most Arab oil producing nations end embargo against US
- 1975 - Kurds end fight against Iraqi army

From KO Archives

Hajj Pilgrim Held Up For Not Bribing CID

Observer News Service

S RINAGAR-Refusal to 'bribe' a police department sleuth has cost an intending Hajj pilgrim the final green signal to proceed to the holy land. Even after travel documents, including pilgrim pass, had been issued to the pilgrim, authorities have dashed his hopes of performing the Hajj and asked him to stay put at his Kupwara home.

According to a NAFA report, Habibullah Kashi s/o Budullah r/o Anwarabaad, Salkot (Kupwara district) had been selected for this year's Hajj vide serial No 4478. He was scheduled to fly to Jeddah tomorrow. His flight has to take off from here at 10.30 a.m. He has already received his pilgrim pass and other travel documents.

Surprisingly, the authorities have stopped his departure for the holy pilgrimage at the last minute. He has been asked not to leave his home. The divisional commissioner who is also the convener of the state Han committee is understood to have informed him that he would not be allowed to be proceed before CID clearance. His frantic efforts to reach the inspector general of police, CID failed as the letter's office avoided him.

Family sources told NAFA an official from the CID had approached Habibullah in connection with verification and allegedly demanded Rs 500. He expressed his inability to bribe the official as he was proceeding for a holy pilgrimage. The official might have forwarded an adverse report, they suspected.

Interestingly, report said, Habibullah Kashi visited Pakistan-controlled Kashmir in October 1999 on a valid passport bearing number A-6579375. The passport had been issued only; after proper verification of his antecedents. "If the CID didn't have any objection for his visit to Pakistan or Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, why did they withhold clearance on my pilgrimage for Hajj which is mandatory for the eligible Muslim", he asked.

(Kashmir Observer, 18 March, 2001)

Supreme Court To Hear Muslim Woman's Request For Equal Property Share

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to hear a plea filed by a Muslim woman who claimed the provision of Shariat law to the extent of not giving equal share to a female compared to a male is "discriminatory" and violative of the rights guaranteed under the Constitution.

A bench of justices Krishna Murari and Sanjay Karol was hearing the appeal against the Kerala High Court's January 6 order filed by Bushara Ali, who claimed that it is her grievance that being a daughter, according to Shariat Law, she was only allotted half the shares as of her male counterparts.

The bench issued notice to petitioner's 11 siblings which include four sisters.

The plea, filed through advocate Bijo Mathew Joy, said Bushara is a decree holder in a partition suit whereby according to preliminary decree dated January 19, 1995, she was allotted 7/152 shares of the scheduled property having 1.44 acres each.

Joy said that a status quo has also been ordered by the apex court.

The plea filed by Bushara said, "Petitioner is aggrieved by the final decree passed by the trial court wherein the petitioner was only allotted 4.82 cents of property marked as plot D of advocate commissioner's plan." Bushara said her father died intestate leaving



behind his wife, seven sons and five daughters.

She said in her plea, "It is the grievance of the petitioner that in spite of guarantee of the Constitution, Muslim women are subjected to discrimination. Even though the preliminary decree dated January 19, 1995 was not challenged and had become final, petitioner begs to submit that the partition of the property as per Shariat Law is discriminatory and same needs to be set aside. The Section 2 of the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937, to the extent of not giving equal share to a female compared to a male is violative of Article 15 of the Constitution and therefore void as per Article 13 of Constitution." The petition said that a similar issue is pending consideration before the court. Referring to the 2017 verdict in triple talaq case, she said the 1937 Act is a pre-constitutional legislation which would fall directly within Article 13(1) of Constitution.

Proposal To Allow Chemists To Write Prescription Rejected: Health Ministry



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The National Medical Commission has not agreed to Pharmacy Council of India's proposal to allow pharmacists to write prescription, saying writing a prescription is dependent on examining patients and making a diagnosis, the government said today.

Minister of State for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar said this in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha.

Ms Pawar also said the recruitment of pharmacists in government hospitals, their salaries and the eligible qualification for becoming pharmacists in hospitals in any state is governed by the rules of the respective state.

However, she added, the

Pharmacy Council of India has issued Pharmacy Practice Regulations, 2015, and amendments thereafter, as per which there is a provision for Pharm D graduates to work in the hospitals in various positions.

Besides, D Pharm and B Pharm graduates are eligible to work as community pharmacists in collaboration with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient care, which optimizes the use of medication and promotes health, wellness and disease prevention.

Ms Pawar said a Regional Drugs Testing Laboratory is functional in Guwahati in Assam. The laboratory has tested 3,285 samples in 2022 as compared to 1,133 samples in 2018, she added.

Pak Ex PM Imran Khan Gets Protection From Arrest In 9 Cases

Press Trust of India

LAHORE: In a relief to embattled Imran Khan, a top Pakistani court here granted protective bail to the former prime minister on Friday in eight terrorism cases and a civil case after he appeared before the court, hours after another top court suspended non-bailable arrest warrants against him till March 18 in a corruption case.

Khan, the 70-year-old chief of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, travelled to the Lahore High Court (LHC) in a bulletproof vehicle to seek protective bail in nine cases.

A two-member bench of the LHC, comprising Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh and Justice Farooq Haider conducted the hearing on bail pleas filed against the cases that are lodged under terrorism sections, according to Geo TV.

For the five cases in Islamabad, the court granted bail to the PTI chief till March 24 and for the three cases in Lahore, Khan received bail till March 27, the report said.

Meanwhile, Justice Saleem also heard the bail pleas that Khan filed against the civil case registered against him, it said.

Earlier, the Islamabad High Court suspended non-bailable arrest warrants issued against Khan till March 18, providing him with a chance to appear before the district court hearing the Toshakhana case.

Ahead of the LHC decision, a tense calm prevailed in La-



hore's upscale Zaman Park near Khan's residence, which was the scene of pitched battles for two days between his defiant supporters and Punjab Police.

The clashes ultimately subsided after the courts intervened on Wednesday.

Khan has been in the crosshairs for buying gifts, including an expensive Graff wristwatch he had received as the premier at a discounted price from the state depository called Toshakhana, and selling them for profit.

Established in 1974, the Toshakhana is a department under the administrative control of the Cabinet Division and stores precious gifts given to rulers, parliamentarians, bureaucrats, and officials by heads of other governments and states and foreign dignitaries.

Khan was disqualified by the Election Commission of Pakistan in October last year for not sharing details of the sales.

The election body later filed a complaint with the district court to punish him, under criminal laws, for selling the gifts he had received as prime minister of the country.

Khan has vehemently denied those charges.

According to Khan, he was facing over 80 different cases in various courts across Pakistan.

Khan, the cricketer-turned-politician, was ousted from power in April last year after losing a no-confidence vote, which he alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China, and Afghanistan.

Since his ouster, Khan has been asking for early elections to remove what he termed an "imported government" led by prime minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Sharif has maintained that elections will be held later this year once the parliament completes its five-year tenure.

Russia and China Join Iranian Naval Drills in Gulf of Oman

Agencies

Russia and China have launched joint naval drills with Iran in the Gulf of Oman this week, demonstrating their willingness to collaborate on operations at sea. It is the third naval exercise between the three nations since 2019 and the second Russian-Chinese naval exercise in two months.

The drill, called "Security Belt 2023", runs Wednesday through Saturday in waters off the port of Chabahar. Thursday and Friday will involve events at sea, including a search and rescue exercise and a gunnery exercise.

The Iranian Navy frigates Sakhand and Jamaran are involved in the maneuvers, as well as the 1964-built corvette Bayandor. Russia has dispatched the frigate Admiral Gorchkov, and China has sent the destroyer Nanning. Both are modern multirole surface combatants, and Gor-



shkov carries Russia's new hypersonic antiship missile, the Zircon.

Chinese state-owned outlet Global Times emphasized that the exercise "is not aimed at any third party."

All three nations have tense relationships with the United States, and all are broadly aligned with Russia regarding the ongoing invasion of Ukraine. Iran has

supplied Russian forces with military drones, which have been used repeatedly to attack the Ukrainian power grid. China's involvement has been limited to diplomatic support and provision of nonlethal aid, according to the U.S. government, but the White House has accused Beijing of considering plans to supply arms directly to Moscow.

3 Buddhist Monks Among 22 Shot Dead At Myanmar Monastery

Agencies

At least 22 people, including three Buddhist monks, were shot dead at close range in central Myanmar last week, according to a doctor's post-mortem report, in what opponents of military rule say was a massacre of civilians conducted by the army.

A spokesman for Myanmar's junta, which staged a coup two years ago to depose the elected government, said its troops had been involved in clashes with rebel fighters in the Pinlaung region of southern Shan state but had not harmed any civilians.

ther comment.

Reuters could not independently verify any of the claims. A spokesman for the KNDF said its soldiers entered Nan Neint on Sunday and found dead bodies scattered at a Buddhist monastery.

Video and photographs provided by the KNDF and another group, the Karenni Revolution Union (KRU), showed bullet wounds to the torso and heads of the dead bodies and bullet holes in the walls of the monastery. Reuters could not independently verify the authenticity of the material.

A post-mortem report by Dr. Ye



Junta spokesman Zaw Min Tun said in a statement the Karenni Nationalities Defense Force (KNDF) and another rebel group entered the village of Nan Neint after government forces arrived to provide security with a local people's militia.

"When the terrorist groups violently opened fire... some villagers were killed and injured," he said.

He did not respond to multiple calls from Reuters for fur-

Zaw, who is part of the National Unity Government, an exiled civil administration formed since the coup, said automatic weapons were likely used at close range to kill 22 people, including three saffron-robed monks.

"Since there were no military uniforms, equipment and ammunition found on the rest of the bodies, it is evident that they were civilians," said the report, a copy of which was reviewed by Reuters.

India Shouldn't Be Concerned Over China-Brokered Iran-Saudi Deal: Envoy

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The China-brokered deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia to revive diplomatic ties should not be a matter of concern for India as the pact would provide regional stability and would be beneficial for New Delhi's interests as well, Iranian ambassador Iraj Elahi said on Friday.

Under the deal, Iran and Saudi Arabia last week announced the full-fledged restoration of their diplomatic relations, seven years after severing the ties following a bitter row.

"I think it (the agreement) should not be a concern for India. It would be of benefit to India since it would help and intensify interests in that region," the envoy told a group of journalists.

"So it would be of benefit to India despite what has been done to the mediation of China," he said.

The surprise announcement on the deal had taken the diplomatic circles in New Delhi by surprise.

Elahi said peace and stability in the Gulf region will benefit the Indian diaspora as well, besides resulting in greater economic engagement that would include



India's trade ties with various countries in the region.

India on Thursday welcomed the pact, saying it has always advocated dialogue and diplomacy to resolve differences.

"We have seen the reports in this regard. India has good relations with various countries in West Asia. We have deep abiding interests in that region," Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.

"India has always advocated dialogue and diplomacy as a way to resolve differences," Bagchi said, without mentioning China's role.

Asked whether Tehran is looking for investments in Iran by Riyadh under the deal, Elahi said it is expecting expansion of trade ties with both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

NEWS MAKERS

Kohinoor To Be Cast As "Symbol Of Conquest" In New Tower of London Display

Press Trust of India

LONDON: The controversial colonial-era Kohinoor diamond claimed by India is to be cast as a "symbol of conquest" as part of a new display of Britain's Crown Jewels at the Tower of London set to open to the public in May.

Historic Royal Palaces (HRP), the charity that manages Britain's palaces, said this week that the new Jewel House exhibition will explore the history of the Kohinoor - also known as Koh-i-Noor - through a combination of objects and visual projections.

The infamous diamond, which is set within the Crown of the mother of the late Queen Elizabeth II, remains within the Tower after Camilla - in a diplomatic move - chose not to use this traditional crown for her coronation with King Charles II on May 6.

"The history of the Koh-



i-Noor, which is set within the Crown of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, will be explored," HRP said, with reference to the new planned display.

"A combination of objects and visual projections will explain the stone's story as a symbol of conquest, with many previous owners, including Mughal Emperors, Shahs of Iran, Emirs of Afghanistan, and Sikh Maharajas," it said.

Kohinoor, which means mountain of light in Persian, came into Queen Victoria's possession from the

treasury of Maharaja Ranjit Singh a few years before she was to be crowned empress of India and has played a starring role in British coronations of the past.

It will now take centre-stage at the new post-Coronation exhibition at the Tower of London.

"We look forward to expanding the stories we are telling about the Crown Jewels, and to showcasing this remarkable collection for millions of visitors from around the world to enjoy," said Andrew Jackson, Resident Governor of the Tower of London and Keeper of the Jewel House.

"We are delighted to unveil our brand-new Jewel House display from May 26, offering visitors a richer understanding of this magnificent collection. As the home of the Crown Jewels, we are delighted that the Tower of London will continue to play its part during this historic Coronation year," he said.

Scotland Woman Gets Baby Son's Body From Hospital After 48 Years: Report

Press Trust of India

LONDON: A mother from Scotland who has been fighting for more than four decades to find out what happened to her dead baby's remains has finally found closure as she received her son's remains 48 years after he died, a media report said on Friday.

Lydia Reid, 74, from Edinburgh, Scotland has campaigned for years to find out what happened to her son after his death in 1975 as there were no human remains found in his coffin, the BBC reported.

She got to know that her baby was not at his place of burial after a court granted an order for exhumation in September 2017.

Reid's baby, Gary, was a week old when he died of Rhesus disease, a condition where antibodies in a pregnant woman's blood destroy her baby's blood cells. Reid claimed that when she asked the hospital to see her son a few days after he died, she was shown a different child.

She also said a postmortem examination of her son's body was

conducted against her wishes.

Reid's fear that her son's organs were removed for research was realised when she discovered that her son's organs had indeed been removed for tests.

The Crown Office has now allowed the organs and other body parts that were stored in Edinburgh Royal Infirmary to be handed over to Gary's mother.

Reid has been a leading figure in the Scottish campaign to expose how hospitals unlawfully retained dead children's body parts for research.

The National Health Service in Scotland was forced to admit the widespread practice after an investigation into organ retention at Alder Hey hospital in Liverpool.

It was found that about 6,000 organs and tissues were kept by Scottish hospitals between 1970 and 2000, many from children, according to the BBC report.

Reid, who is suffering from bowel cancer and is admitted to the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh, still does not know what happened to the rest of Gary's body.

After Chief Justice Of India Trolled, Opposition MPs Ask President To Act

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Several opposition MPs have petitioned President Droupadi Murmu for immediate action over social media trolling of Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud while he was deliberating on a case related to the governor's role in Maharashtra during the last government formation.

In a letter to the President, the Congress' Rajya Sabha member Vivek Tankha termed such online trolling a "brazen case of interference with the course of justice" and has called for immediate action against the culprits.

Tankha was supported by several opposition MPs, including Congress' Digvijaya Singh, Pramod Tiwari, Shaktisinh Gohil, Akhilesh Prasad Singh, Ameer Yajnik, Ranjeet Ranjan, Imran Pratapgarhi, Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Priyanka Chaturvedi, AAP's Raghav Chadha, SP's Ram Gopal Yadav and Jaya Bachchan.

A copy of the complaint has also been sent to the Minister of Law, Minister of IT and the Police Commissioner of Delhi. In a similar complaint to the Attorney General of India, Tankha has demanded strict action against those accused of trolling.

Urging the president for immediate action against the troll army defaming the administration of justice and the Chief Justice of India, the complaint said the Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court headed by CJI D Y Chandrachud is seized of and hearing an important Constitutional issue in the matter of government formation and the governor's role in Maharashtra.

"While the matter is subjudice, the troll army, presumably sympathetic to the interest of the ruling party in Maharashtra, has launched an offensive against the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India. The words and contents are filthy and deplorable, which has garnered views in lakhs on social media platforms.

LG Performs Special Prayers Ahead Of Vaishno Devi Yatra Through Old Heritage Route



Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday performed the Pratham Puja of the ancient route of the Vaishno Devi Yatra, which will formally commence on March 26 from the old heritage route of Kol Kandoli here.

The yatra along the heritage route passes through several famous temples before reaching the sanctum sanctorum of Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills in Reasi district.

A delegation of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji Pracheen Marg Shrine Sanstha, led by senior BJP leader Devender Singh Rana was present during the special prayers, a spokesperson of the religious body said.

Amid chanting of mantras, the Lt Governor presented a Mata Ki Chhuni to the priest for being offered in the temple on the commencement of the yatra, he said.

The delegation briefed Sinha about the significance and historical perspective of the ancient route which passes through Jagdamba Mata Kheer Bhawani temple, Jagti, Durga Mata temple Pangali, Shiv temple Thandapani-Drabi, Shiv Shakti temple, Raja Mandalek temple and Raja Nowalgarh temple Marh, Kali Mata temple Gundla Talab, Ram Darbar, Shiv Temple Bamyal and Oli temple

Chhapanoo-Bamyal.

The spokesperson said the Sanstha has been organising the annual yatra to Mata Vaishno Devi and is working for reviving and promoting this "serene and spiritually traditional" route to add to the glory of the age-old yatra to the revered shrine.

To achieve this objective, the Jammu Chapter of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) had formulated a brochure that spells out broad contours of the revival project of the ancient route, he said.

As part of this initiative, he said the renovation of the Oli Temple at Bamyal in Nagrota had been undertaken two years ago under the aegis of INTACH.

"The objective of the revival of the ancient route, blessed with most revered temples and worship places, is to connect the posterity with their spiritual and cultural moorings," the spokesperson said.

He said the delegation also informed the Lt Governor that all the heritage components along the route were constructed and developed by the devotees, who used to visit the holy shrine on foot via this track.

The Lt Governor issued directions for the upgradation and maintenance of Jagati to Bamyal road for smooth use of the commuters and the pilgrims, he said.

Artists, Intellectuals From KP, Muslim Community Share Stage At Jammu Event

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: In an initiative to bring Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims closer, a cultural organisation held an event here which brought together artists, writers, poets and intellectuals from the two communities on one stage.

'Yom-e-sout-e-Kashmir' was organised by the Gaylor Foundation in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Language on Wednesday.

The foundation is named after veteran writer-poet Syed Ghulam Rasool Gaylor, who was shot dead by terrorists in 2005.

"We organised Yom-e-Sout-e-Kashmir here. The aim behind organising it is to bring Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims, who were distanced from each other (due to the eruption of militancy)," Gaylor Foundation chairman Showkat Gaylor Andrabi told PTI.

"We want to restore the com-

positeness," he said.

The focus of the foundation is to bring down walls of mistrust between the two communities, he said.

Writers, artists and poets including P N Trisal, A K Naaz, Darakhshan Andrabi, P N Shaad, Bal Krishen Sansasi, P S Betab and Wali Muhammad Aseer Kishtwari, and singers Qaiser Nizami, Deepali Wattal and Zahida Taranum participated in the event.

Writer and organiser P L Pandita said, "It is the day of brainstorming. We are committed to bringing the two communities together. We hope that more such programmes will be organised in the future. We appeal to both the communities to actively participate in this movement."

"One community has faced a lot of problems for several decades. Kashmiri Pandits migrated from the Valley. We want to end the era of fear and uncertainty," said actor and writer Ayash Arif.

Only LMVs Allowed On Zojila Road From Today: Div Com Kashmir

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Friday visited District Ganderbal where he convened a meeting of officers at VC room, DC Office Ganderbal for managing opening/closure of the Zojila Pass.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Shyamir, SSP Ganderbal, Nikhil Borkar, SSP Traffic Rural, ADC Ganderbal, CEO Sonamarg Development Authority, ACR, ARTO Ganderbal, officials from MeT/BRO, besides the meeting was also attended by Div Com Ladakh, DC Kargil, SSP Kargil, and officials from Vijayak through Video Conferencing.

At the outset, all the issues concerning the road opening were discussed threadbare including condition of road, Snow clearance, and it was decided that the road will only be open for the LGVs (Light Goods Vehicles) (One-Way), and no passenger/tourist vehicle shall be allowed.

The road opening date was decided to be 18th March, 2023 from Sonamarg to Kargil and cut off timing for vehicles to cross Sonamarg will be 6.00 am in the morning and in Meenamarg, Kargil the cut-off timing shall be 8.30 am. Besides, it was decided that traffic will be allowed only on



alternate days.

It was also decided in the meeting that on Fridays no traffic will be allowed, and road will be closed for maintenance purposes.

Div Com Kashmir directed the concerned to follow the already framed SOPs in likewise manner. He also directed the officials from MeT for the advance forecast of the weather, and asked the Traffic dept for issuing the same weather advisories on time. The BRO authorities were also directed to give road clearance on time so that traffic will cross the road before the avalanche prone timing.

Regarding the availability of machinery on Zojila road stretch, Mechanical engineering department was directed to provide one recovery van, and CEO SDA was directed to provide accommodation centre in case of any emergency enroute the Srinagar Sonamarg Gumri Road.

Regarding the deployment of SDRF Personnel, the SSP Gan-

derbal informed the Div Com Kashmir that the SDRF Platoon already stationed at Gund will be shifted to Sonamarg.

The Div Com also directed the concerned for operationalization of the weighing bridge at Sonmarg and ensuring that the weight of the vehicles bound to Ladakh has been done positively well before one day.

He also directed for establishing the Joint Control Room of Traffic/ Civil/ Police/ MED.

Div Com Kargil impressed upon the concerned that people should be made aware about the fact that the road will only be thrown open for the LGV (light goods vehicle) and no passenger/tourist vehicle shall be allowed. He also asked the concerned to issue a circular for carrying chains on vehicles mandatory.

Earlier, Div com Kashmir visited Transit Accommodation Wandhama and reviewed the readiness of the apartments being constructed for the Kashmiri Migrant employees.

KP Family Moves To Jammu After Sole Breadwinner's Killing

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Kashmiri Pandit family that braved peak militancy in Jammu and Kashmir in the 1990s to stay put in the Valley was forced to migrate to Jammu after militant killed its breadwinner Sanjay Sharma.

Three weeks after Sanjay Sharma, who worked as an ATM guard, fell to the bullets of terrorists, his widow along with three minor children and six other close relatives reached Jammu and applied for registration as migrants.

Sunita, the wife of Sanjay Sharma, sought the intervention of the lieutenant governor in providing them with a proper rehabilitation package, including accommodation, a job on compassionate grounds and free education for the orphaned children.

Sharma (40) was shot dead by militants from point-blank range in the Achan area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district on February 26.

"We were living under constant fear after the unfortunate incident which turned our life upside down. We are not safe there and will never return. If the government fails to rehabilitate us, I along with my children will commit suicide," Sunita, flanked by her children aged between two and nine years, told PTI.

Having taken shelter at the house of a relative in the Udaiwala

area on the outskirts of the city on Wednesday, she said they have met Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner Kuldeep Krishan Sidha and submitted an application seeking registration as migrants and three sets of government accommodation for the family.

"The family met me yesterday (Thursday) and submitted an application. We have assured them of appropriate action," Sidha told PTI.

He said the case will go to a government-constituted screening committee which will decide the fate of their application for registration as migrants, while the request for accommodation has been forwarded to the department concerned for early action.

"We are a total of 14 members and need three government quarters as we are presently living at our relative's homes. But how long will they help us?" she said.

Sunita said migration never came to their minds in the past three decades. "We never faced any problem or threat We were living a normal life till the fateful day when my sick husband was shot dead while we were on the way to a doctor for his medical checkup."

"We did not come out of the house for a fortnight due to fears. We will never return there and if the government fails to rehabilitate us, I along with my children will commit suicide," she said.

"Politicians, including the

BJP's Ravinder Raina and PDP's Mehbooba Mufti, visited us and made big promises. But we are suffering and are on the roads without a roof. The L-G did not visit us. We want him to come forward and extend support to us on humanitarian grounds," she said.

Besides Sunita and her children, her brother-in-law Deep Ji, his wife Anokha Sharma and sister-in-law Usha and their children have come to Jammu. Usha's husband Bhushan Lal, who is ill, is still in the Valley along with three other family members waiting for living arrangements in Jammu.

Deep Ji said security was given to them but "you cannot move around with security personnel all the time".

"The killing of my brother was a planned attack and his death shattered us. Even after the target killings started, we moved around without thinking that any of us would be attacked," he said, pleading for government accommodation and proper rehabilitation of Sunita and her children.

Usha described the situation in the Valley as "very bad" and requested speeding up the process of providing them accommodation in Jammu.

"He (Sharma) was like my son and his killing dealt a big blow to the family. We felt insecure there and have come to Jammu," she said.

Applications Invited For Hajj-2023 Trainers

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Haj Committee of India on Friday invited online from the desiring Muslim Govt. Employees (Permanent) of the Jammu & Kashmir for imparting Orientation/ Training to the Pilgrims of Hajj-2023.

The applicants (Male/Female) must be between the age-group of 25-60 years as on 27-03-2023. (i.e. those who will complete 25 years of age on 27-03-2023 and would complete 60 years of age on 27-03-2023)

They must have performed one Haj preferably during the years 2018 or 2019 or 2022. And have gotten vaccination of two (2) doses of approved vaccine for Covid-19.

Apart from this, the applicants must be fully conversant and fluent in English/ Urdu/ Hindi/ local language/dialects and computer literate besides being efficient enough to receive/transmit latest information/ messages through email/WhatsApp and other available sources of e-Media.

They must possess thorough knowledge of the logistics and rituals of Haj & Umrah.

The applicants must be mentally and physically fit, capable

of addressing/ giving lectures to relatively large gatherings and in a position to spare time for imparting training.

Any applicant having Criminal prosecution pending against him/her shall not apply.

The desiring applicants can apply Online through Haj Committee of India website <https://hajcommittee.gov.in>. The applicants are advised to upload the requisite documents at the time of filling up of Online Application Forms.

Opening date & time for filling Online Applications is 17-03-2023 at 11:00 hours whereas the last date date / time is 27-03-2023 at 23:59 hours.

Aspirants are requested to go through the Circular No. 5 dated: 17-03-2022 (available at <https://hajcommittee.gov.in>) issued by Haj Committee of India, Mumbai.

All desiring candidates fulfilling the stipulated eligibility criteria are required to submit hard copy of the online filled-in application form duly complete in all respects, along with copy of Aadhaar, proof of having performed Hajj and Covid Vaccination Certificate through the concerned Controlling Officer to the Executive Officer, J&K Haj Committee, Srinagar up to 30-03-2023.

SHORT TAKES

Militant Associate's Property Attached

SRINAGAR: Authorities on Friday attached property of a man for providing Shelter and logistic support to the militants in North Kashmir's Handwara.

In a statement the police said that today in an order of attachment of property under S. 25 of the UA(P) Act of an OGW was executed at Yaroo.

The order of attachment of property had been confirmed by the Office of Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir against Muhammad Abdullah Mir, son of Khazir Muhammad Mir, resident of Yaroo for his involvement in providing logistics and shelter to militants, in relation to which FIR no. 327/2018 U/S 307-RPC /7-27-Act,18,19,25 UA(P) Act had been registered at Police Station Handwara.

Excavator Operator Feared Dead

JAMMU: An excavator operator is feared drowned after his machine skidded off the road and fell into Chenab river in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district on Friday, a senior police officer said.

A joint rescue operation is on to trace out the driver Rahul Sharma (25) who was believed to have been swept away by the current, Senior Superintendent of Police, Doda Abdul Qayoom said.

Sharma, a resident of Dharmthal-Chennai in Udhampur, was operating the excavator near Shiva-Dul bridge when he lost control as a result of which the machine rolled down into the river, he said.

"Police along with SDRF and civil administration have launched a joint search operation. As of now only a part of the machine is visible and the operator could not be located so far," Qayoom said.

2 Missing Women From Samba Found

JAMMU: Two young women who went missing in Samba district here were found within 72 hours of their disappearance in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag and Punjab, police said on Friday.

Acting on the complaints lodged by their relatives, the police found the two women from different locations -- one from Anantnag district and the other from Punjab's Amritsar, a police spokesperson said. He said both the young women have been reunited with their families and further investigation is going on.

Senior Superintendent of Police (Samba) Benam Tosh said a total of 16 missing women and seven missing men have been recovered in two months from different parts of Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab.

"They have been reunited with their families following the proper procedure under the law. Police are sensitive and responsive concerning women-related reports and leaving no stone unturned to solve the matters," he said.

Sinthan Snow Festival Postponed

KISHTWAR: The district administration here on Friday announced postponement of first-of-its-kind "Sinthan Snow Festival" scheduled for March 19, due to rough weather conditions.

The announcement was made by Deputy Commissioner, Dr Devansh Yadav after receiving inputs from police and army, an official spokesperson said.

"The safety of tourists and organising staff is the prime concern for the authorities. As weather conditions are unlikely to improve in the coming week and with the advent of festival season, a revised date will be communicated shortly," he added.

Two Day Workshop On PM GatiShakti National Master Plan Begins In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A two day regional workshop on PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (NMP), being organized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) commenced Friday at SKICC in Srinagar.

The objective of the workshop is to improve logistics efficiency by enhancing connectivity to economic zones and industrial clusters, as well as to enhance public welfare through improved access to social infrastructure.

The workshop was chaired by Special Secretary, DPIIT Sumita Dawra and participants from eight states and Union Territories of the Northern Region are taking part in it.

PM GatiShakti is a transformative approach which was launched on October 13th, 2021 for building Next Generation Infrastructure which improves Ease of Living as well as Ease of Doing Business.

The inaugural day of the workshop featured discussions with infrastructure, economic, and social sector ministries and departments at the center and state levels. A demonstration of the adoption of

PM Gati Shakti with a holistic approach and a demonstration of best practices by states and UTs also featured in the workshop. Deliberations about the Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP) to showcase the different components of logistics and a presentation by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Incomes (CBIC) on possibilities to develop Inland Container Depots (ICDs) and Container Freight Stations (CFS) in Jammu and Kashmir to boost exports across the country were the main highlights of the first day of the programme.

Addressing media at the end of the day long proceedings, Dawra said that today we are at the crossroads of unprecedented growth in India, advancing with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to make India a developed Nation by 2047. She added that we are witnessing a strong growth of India across the social as well as the economic pillars of our nation that is surpassing its own record every year. To achieve our aim to become a USD 32.8 trillion economy by 2047, development of world class modern infrastructure is paramount, she further said.



Dawra said that through today's workshops, Northern States/UTs showcased the good work already done such as all-weather road connectivity in J&K, planning of ICD at Samba, planning for MMLPs, Cold Storage facilities, 64 Pharma units in Kathua, using PM GatiShakti National Master Plan.

She added that through this workshop, it is expected that all have got an opportunity to learn from each other's best practices and in the spirit of cooperative federalism we will improve outreach and facilitate project planning and monitoring on the NMP/SMP platform. There is great scope to augment the pace of adoption at State,

district and gram panchayat levels. Additionally, 14 social sectors Ministries/Depts. have already been onboarded onto the NMP platform and are in advanced stages of integration, she further said.

Dawra said that after the launch of PM GatiShakti National Master Plan, concerned Ministries and all States/UTs have been onboarded on mission-mode. Institutional frameworks have been set up, GIS-based individual portals and customised decision making tools have been developed, in-house capacities to adopt PM GatiShakti principles in project planning and implementation exist, and data based National Master Plan is being extensively

used for project planning and implementation, she added.

With a view to promote comprehensive, holistic, and integrated infrastructure development across the country, along with bridging critical infrastructure gaps, and addressing relative infrastructure deficit, across various economic zones/ industrial parks, etc., the PM GatiShakti Area Approach is being adopted to develop 100 locations/ economic nodes across the country.

The vision of Area Approach is to create adequate infrastructure for catalysing socio-economic development in a sustainable manner within a rational geographical location through a convergence

approach.

To complement the PM GatiShakti NMP, the National Logistics Policy (NLP) was launched on 17th Sept. by Hon'ble PM. The vision of NLP is to drive economic growth and business competitiveness of the country through an integrated, seamless, efficient, reliable, green, sustainable and cost-effective logistics network by leveraging best in class technology, processes and skilled manpower. This will reduce logistics cost and improve performance.

Understanding the importance of regularly updating accurate GIS based data in project planning, States and UTs along with BISAG-N are tenaciously uploading quality data on individual portals through API integration, to the extent possible. This is making project planning easy, cost-effective, and accurate. Along with this, institutional frameworks are fully operational across all States/UTs. These reforms have significantly de-risked infrastructure investments for private sector and streamlines operations and decision making for States/UTs.

The role of States/UTs is very critical in identifying the infrastructure

deficits and requirements for logistics facilities to enable comprehensive and holistic development of areas identified under this initiative.

DPIIT is undertaking several other initiatives such as the PM GatiShakti Area Approach. Hon'ble Prime Minister address at ET Global Investor Summit -- "When we think about 'Gati' (speed) and 'Shakti' (power), it also has the concept of area development and the development of the people there.

The second day of the workshop will feature sessions on national logistics policy, monitoring of state logistics policies, and drawing an understanding of state logistics policy for creating sustainable cities.

Senior government officials from different central ministries and departments related to infrastructure, the economic and social sectors, and multilateral agencies are participating in the workshop to share their experiences, best practices, and vision. Senior officers from states and UTs including Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, New Delhi, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, and Punjab will also participate in the workshop.

THE rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran, two Middle East powerhouses, brokered by China, is a momentous geopolitical event that has the ability to halt the increasing rivalry in a region riven by various crises.

The two countries announced the restoration of their ties a day after US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin's much-hyped trip to the region came to end. Austin travelled to Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and Israel to reassure Arab allies against a perceived Iranian threat as well as to strengthen US standing and support in light of China and Russia's increased interest in and outreach to the Gulf states.

The surprise Saudi-Iran detente, however, goes against the thrust of Austin's visit, which was largely premised on a bitter rivalry between the two countries. And that China midwifed it is likely to make the US uneasy about the communist giant's expanding influence in the region.

The fact that China mediated the deal is significant. It shows that China could play a significant role in fostering a Middle East more characterized by cooperation and trade than conflict and weapons sales, which have been the norm in the region under US leadership.

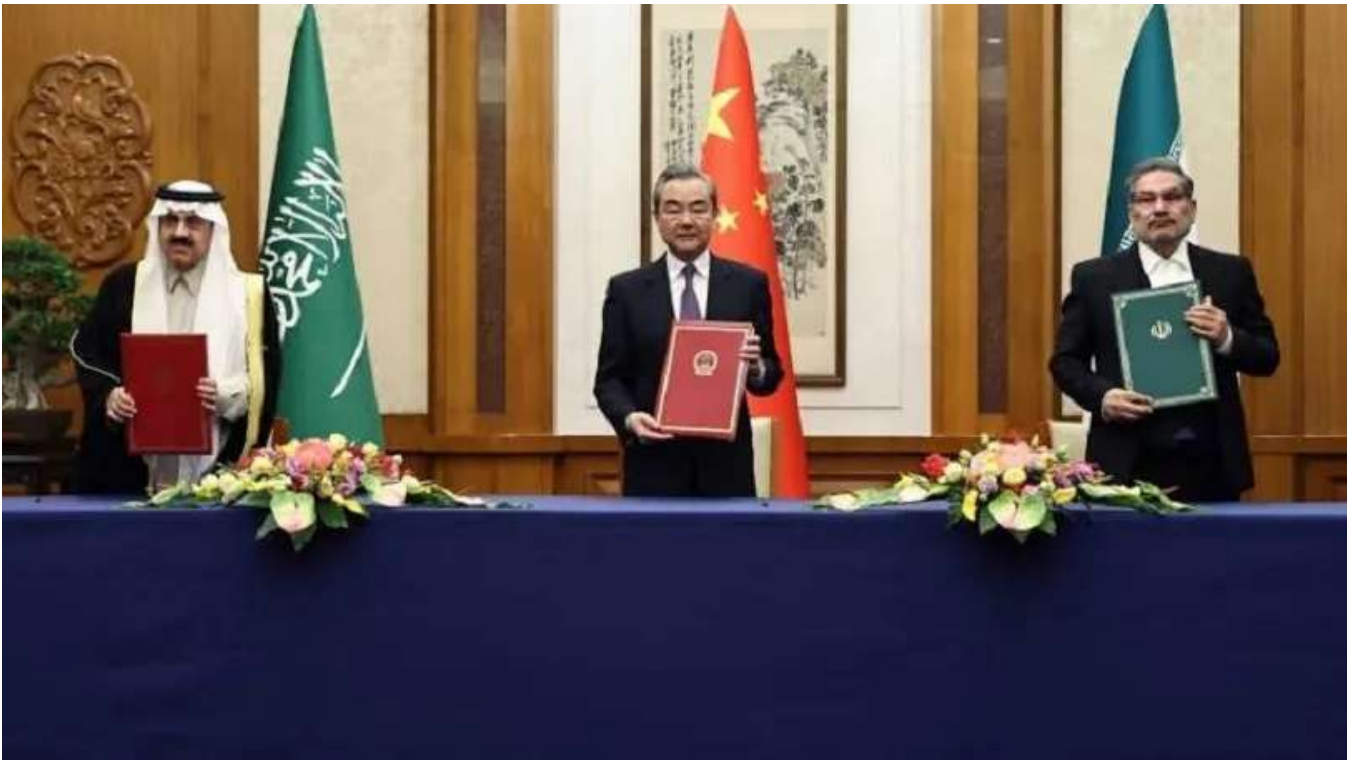
The agreement represents a strategic conundrum: China will be able to fill the security vulnerabilities in the region created by the absence of a US-based security architecture. China is reorienting to the East to fill the void left by Washington's shift to the Indo-Pacific in its bid to contain China.

The deal has nuanced the geopolitics of the region reshaped in recent years by the Abraham Accord between the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco. And now there has been a lingering talk of reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Israel. Iran and Israel are the opposite poles of Middle Eastern geopolitics and for Riyadh to be friends with both will call for an acrobatic readjustment of its approach to the ties with the countries in the region.

There are many takeaways from the Saudi-Iran normalization: one of them, of course, is China's growing clout in the region and the relative decline in the US influence. But one of the most instructive for us is that the longstanding bitter rivals decided to bury the hatchet at a time when they are fighting each other in several conflicts across the region, including the seven year old brutal war in Yemen that has claimed over 150,000 lives, besides many more due to famine and lack of healthcare facilities. Will rapprochement between the two countries pave the way to address their proxy wars across

An India-Pak Deal Midwifed by China?

Riyaz Wani



the gulf remains to be seen.

But for us in South Asia, the development is of profound significance, especially since the region has been permanently scarred by the implacable rivalry between India and Pakistan. And there is little hope that the two nations could ever come together to usher in genuine peace in the region and open up opportunities for cooperation, connectivity and economic progress. Could a Saudi-Iran type agreement be ever replicated in South Asia: a India-Pakistan deal mediated by China? Incidentally, unlike the Middle East, China is the neighbour of India and Pakistan, sharing border with both of them.

True, geopolitics of South Asia is very complex, and it has become more so with

An enduring India-Pakistan peace remains key to unlocking the true potential of South Asia. And it will also benefit China. And to a lesser extent, it will be helpful to the US too. This makes the pursuit of India-Pakistan normalization an inviting prospect for both superpowers

the rise of China as the global power, forcing the US pivot to Indo-Pacific. As the situation stands, China is becoming more assertive globally. China's rise as the global power and the expanding sphere of regional and global influence has made it a natural rival of India, an emerging economic powerhouse. Their interests and global outlooks have drastically diverged in recent years. China is busy building alternative alliances around the world, even in India's neighbourhood and New Delhi is drawn towards the established western order headed by the US. This is a world that is still in the process of forming itself and there is no telling yet what its final shape will be.

But this doesn't mean that the geopolitics of the Middle East is any less complex.

Mutual antagonisms run also deep there. Much like Hindu-Muslim antipathy that underpins India-Pakistan conflict, a Shia-Sunni schism undergirds Saudi-Iran rivalry. And, in a sense, both conflicts are structural and hence entrenched. But they can be managed and addressed, even though the best peace plans can also easily unravel and things go back to being worse than they were before.

This is not that there have not been efforts by the US to achieve conciliation between India and Pakistan but they have not been successful. Besides, for the predominant period of the past 75 years, the US was an ally of Pakistan and antagonistic to India, then an ally of the USSR. Now the US is a close ally of India and shares largely a relationship of convenience with Pakistan. But it is clear that the US role as a mediator in South Asia has diminished over the years and it's primary concern in the region is the containment of China. This is here that the India-Pakistan peace can work to the advantage of China. It can remove one of the major factors that has plagued the peace in the region and inhibited connectivity.

Could China try and replicate an India-Pakistan peace deal along lines of the Saudi-Iran agreement? Well, it has reportedly already tried but failed. During Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to India in October 2019, he was reported to have broached an India-Pakistan deal but India didn't agree to it. Incidentally, the visit took place in the wake of the withdrawal of J&K's special status in August 2019. Interestingly, before visiting India, Xi had hosted the then Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan. Ever since, things have gone further downhill, both with China and Pakistan. In April 2020, China staged incursions along five points on the Line of Actual Control and the two countries remain far from resolving the stand-off – albeit they have made some headway since.

That said, the world is a dynamic place. An enduring India-Pakistan peace remains key to unlocking the true potential of South Asia. And it will also benefit China. And to a lesser extent, it will be helpful to the US too. This makes the pursuit of India-Pakistan normalization an inviting prospect for both superpowers. More so, obviously for China. Much will depend on how China's rise reshapes the world order.

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

Dubious Ranks

Sudipta Bhattacharjee

Desperate, flush-with-funds institutions could well extend such appeasement yardsticks to academic assessors too. Where does that leave the NAAC's 'vision', 'mission' and 'value framework'? Will cleansers of corruption like Patwardhan be replaced instead of addressing the rot that has set into the system?

THE University Grants Commission established the National Assessment and Accreditation Council in 1994 to evaluate the performance of higher educational institutions. In less than three decades, it is embroiled in a quagmire of allegations. Last week, the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General flagged glaring "discrepancies" in the NAAC's assessment process. This follows the March 5 resignation of the NAAC chairman, Bhushan Patwardhan, days after he alleged in a letter to the UGC that universities were obtaining "questionable grades" by employing unfair means.

Patwardhan, who was appointed in February 2022, suggested that vested interests were manipulating norms governing the accreditation processes. "Based on my experience, various complaints from the stakeholders, and review committee reports, I had expressed my apprehensions earlier about the possibility of vested interests, malpractices, and nexus among the persons concerned, offering thereby a green corridor by presumably manipulating... processes leading to the awarding of questionable grades to some HEIs. Mainly due to this, I had also suggested the need for an independent inquiry by appropriate high-level national agencies," he wrote.

These malpractices include institutes using expired NAAC grades, plagiarising self-study reports and claims that grades could be purchased. Last year, the media highlighted instances where little-known private institutions had higher NAAC scores than the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, one of the country's top-ranked universities. The inquiry committee commissioned by Patwardhan found that the NAAC's accreditation process was mired in irregularities. Assessors were being allocated "arbitrarily", the panel claimed. The report said nearly 70% of the experts from the pool of around 4,000 assessors had not received any opportunity to make site visits, while some had visited multiple times. Among the other lapses were unau-

thorised individuals having full access to the NAAC's internal system.

The director of the NAAC, S.C. Sharma, has asserted that its entire process of assessment and accreditation is "transparent" and "cannot be compromised."



A senior professor at Jamia Millia Islamia, a Central university with an A++ NAAC grading, said they were thoroughly trained and ready when the NAAC team visited in 2021. "Though we were on tenterhooks, the university infrastructure was in perfect condition," he added.

A professor of English in a Bengal government college, Niranjan Goswami, said, "I am principally involved in the NAAC documentation process for my department. The committees entrusted with each criteria notify us from time to time. We produce and scan data and send them. Some of the data are kept in a digital repository. Some kind of accreditation process is essential for keeping quality intact. NAAC accreditation keeps us on our toes and creates a sense of competition and urgency. The link of corruption with any kind of grading is inalienable perhaps

with the South Asian psyche. What's more important than corruption is that accreditation should not be done with the hidden agenda of eliminating colleges from access to resources and making higher education unavailable to the poor by shutting down

colleges based on performance."

Another concern arises when institutes award honorary doctoral degrees to semi-lettered politicians. Desperate, flush-with-funds institutions could well extend such appeasement yardsticks to academic assessors too. Where does that leave the NAAC's 'vision', 'mission' and 'value framework'? Will cleansers of corruption like Patwardhan be replaced instead of addressing the rot that has set into the system? In such a compromised climate, who can blame us for regarding the grades of genuinely stellar institutions with suspicion?

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

The Beauty in Suffering: How Adversity Spurs Creativity

Aijaz Ahmad Mir

Creativity is often considered the outcome of joy, happiness, and sound physical and mental health. However, this is not always the case; creativity can be born out of suffering and misery. We have heard that suffering forces people to commit suicide, but it is also true that suffering has produced the best minds and personalities in the world throughout history since the dawn of human civilization. The great prophets, philosophers, theologians, and scientists suffered extreme suffering and pain. It was through this pain and agony that humankind received the best teachings and insights regarding morality, society, values, inventions, and discoveries. Sufferings help the sufferer to open up to new perspectives and ideas. It was through pain and suffering that some best pieces of art were produced. The idea of turning suffering into something constructive is applicable in all fields. Some of the thought-provoking philosophies emerged when a philosopher went through agony and pain. Suffering played a significant role in shaping the philosophy of the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, who believed that suffering helps us in gaining wisdom and knowledge. Plato believed that suffering was the result of a lack of knowledge and ignorance about the nature of reality. However, he believed suffering acts as a catalyst for gaining knowledge and true wisdom. Socrates, the well-known philosopher and the teacher of Plato, believed that suffering was a part of life and a means for personal growth and self-discovery. Socrates believed that suffering could help a person to question their fixed beliefs and assumptions and can help in better understanding themselves and the world around them. And sufferings assist us in becoming compassionate and empathetic towards other people.

Schopenhauer also believed that suffering is inherent in humans, and it is through suffering that one can understand the true nature of reality. Schopenhauer himself suffered from different physical and emotional ailments throughout his life. He, like Gautam Buddha, also believed that suffering was the product of our desires. Friedrich Nietzsche, a German post-modernist philosopher also influenced by the philosophy of Schopenhauer, had also gone through immense physical and mental suffering. He believed suffering is integral in human lives, and it is through it that one learns to become stronger and more resilient. He said that one could not escape suffering but could confront it. Suffering leads to self-awareness and provides the opportunity to build inner strength. It was during his mental suffering that Nietzsche was able to create some masterpieces, such as "Thus Spoke to Zarathustra" and "Beyond Good and Evil", among other writings. Similarly,



Variation on Edvard Munch's Scream/ Mateja Klaric/ Medium

SUFFERING HAS ACTED AS A CATALYST FOR INVENTIONS AND DISCOVERIES THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD. The pain and suffering experienced by people motivated scientists to produce painkiller medications. The suffering and pains caused by injuries and neurological diseases led to the establishment of medical imaging

other philosophers such as Rousseau, Immanuel Kant, and Martin Heidegger have suffered throughout their lives. But this suffering acts as a catalyst for their artistic expression and creativity.

Some of the western religious figures have found suffering a catalyst for change. Suffering has played a significant part in the life and theology of Saint Augustine. As a young man, he felt spiritual emptiness and experienced personal suffering, forcing him to turn to God and find solace in Christianity. Saint Augustine has two views regarding suffering; the first is that suffering is the punishment for our sins, and secondly, suffering can act as a medicine that helps us to learn humility and compassion. Thomas Aquinas, who was influenced by the teachings of Saint Augustine, believed that suffering is part of human existence and it serves several different goals. Suffering can lead us to a deeper appreciation of the valuable things in life, such as health, wealth, and relationships. Suffering can make us humble and can cultivate a feeling of gratitude in us. Thomas Aquinas also believed suffering could make us virtuous and bring us closer to God. In a nutshell, suffering assists us in increasing wisdom, faith, and virtue.

In the eastern tradition of philosophy, many philosophers suffered. Gau-

tam Buddha suffered immensely before achieving enlightenment. He was born into a wealthy family, but he abandoned his privileges and riches and started a journey to seek the truth about suffering. Buddha believed one could end suffering through the Four Noble Truths and by following the Eightfold Path. Jalaluddin Rumi, a great Persian Sufi mystic and poet, experienced great suffering after the death of his mentor Shams Tabrizi. This suffering and loss inspired him to write some great works which explore and revolve around the themes of love, grief, and the search for meaning in life. Confucius was a great Chinese philosopher who lived during a time of great political and social unrest. He saw the collapse of Zhou Dynasty and the emergence of various opposing states. This political turmoil and social unrest motivated Confucius to write about the importance of social harmony, good governance, and ethical leadership in China. Al-Farabi, a 9th-century Muslim philosopher, also went through immense suffering. He was regarded as the famous philosophical authority after Aristotle in the Muslim world. His own personal sufferings and his experiences with illness and poverty contributed to the development of his philosophy and ideas related to the relationship between reason and

revelation. Al-Ghazali was an 11th-century Muslim theologian, philosopher, and mystic. He is considered one of the important intellectual figures in Islam. He endured a unique kind of suffering and went through a "spiritual crisis," and he felt a deep sense of dissatisfaction with his intellectual pursuits and studies. He even quit his job as a professor at Madrasa Nizammiya and lived in seclusion for four years in order to examine Islamic injunctions from the Sufi perspective. Finally, he was able to overcome his sufferings by merging himself deep into Sufism. Thus, suffering has shaped the ideas and philosophy of Al-Ghazali throughout his life.

Suffering has been a great source of inspiration for various poets throughout history. It helps them to articulate and share their emotions and experiences. It gives them a meaning to write and express themselves in a beautiful way that resonates with the people. Romantic poets such as William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge often wrote about their suffering, loneliness, depression, and alienation. It was in this state of great suffering that William Wordsworth produced a masterpiece, namely "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," which explores the relationship between childhood, the natural world, mortality, and the human

condition. He states that the particular association of childhood with nature has lost forever, but the subconscious memories of those associations are still a source of wisdom and knowledge. Emily Dickinson, a prolific American poet, wrote over a thousand poems. Her poems often explored the themes of grief, loss, death, and mortality. It is said that she suffered from mood swings and undiagnosed depression. Similarly, poets like Sylvia Plath, Langston Hughes, and Maya Angelou wrote about their experiences of suffering.

There were many natural scientists who experienced pain and suffering in their lives. Some of them include the great physicist Stephen Hawking, Merie Curie, Rosalind Franklin, and Richard Feynman. Stephen Hawking went through immense suffering when he was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), which made his whole body paralyzed. Despite this suffering, he communicated his precious knowledge regarding the universe, the big bang, and black holes. Marie Curie was another famous scientist who endured suffering and discrimination throughout her career. Being a woman, she faced additional bias and prejudice. She lost her husband unexpectedly in a tragic accident. Despite all these odds, she didn't give up and became the first woman to win the Nobel prize in physics and chemistry. Her contributions helped the world to understand radioactivity.

Rosalind Franklin is a well-known British scientist who is known for her immense contribution in the discovery of DNA. She also contributed and told about the structure of viruses that laid the foundations of structural virology. She, as a woman and as a Jew, faced discrimination from her colleagues. Richard Feynman was a great American physicist who suffered from abdominal cancer. Despite his struggles with cancer, he contributed immensely in the field of quantum mechanics and electrodynamics. In 1965, Feynman shared the 1965 Nobel prize in physics with Julian Schwinger and Shin'ichir Tomonaga.

Suffering has acted as a catalyst for inventions and discoveries throughout the history of the world. The pain and suffering experienced by people motivated scientists to produce painkiller medications. The suffering and pains caused by injuries and neurological diseases led to the establishment of medical imaging. The agony and suffering caused by infectious diseases helped scientists develop the germ theory to understand the causes of diseases spread by bacteria and viruses. And the suffering caused by natural disasters drove scientists to explore space and mitigate the causes of these disasters.

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

The author is pursuing his Ph.D. in Political Science from Maulana Azad National Urdu University Hyderabad Telangana

Understanding the Natu Natu Victory at Oscars

Satyam Viswanathan

Winning a Best Original Song Oscar is not only a wonderful achievement for the makers of RRR but also the outcome of a great marketing success story. The film's producers successfully executed key elements of the modern marketing playbook - phonology, virality and a reinvention of familiar cultural codes. They also heeded age-old marketing wisdom: understanding their voting audience thoroughly, their aspirations, constraints and anxieties, and figuring out how best to resonate with them using every element of the marketing mix.

The voting audience: Votes for Oscars are conducted by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, a group of industry professionals with almost 9,500 voting members. The Academy now aspires to make the awards more inclusive compared to the all-White, American and English-centric affair the Oscars have been since its inception in 1929. Most categories are nominated by members of the same 'branch' - actors nominate actors, directors nominate directors, etc. However, all members can vote in the finals in almost all Oscar categories



where each voting member gets one vote per category (except for Best Picture, where voters have to rank their options).

Voter constraints and anxieties: It is almost impossible for voters to watch all nominated films. In a highly cluttered and competitive market,

there are two key voter behaviours that filmmakers seek to influence:

Getting voters to register the film's name and recognise it when it's time

to fill the ballot.

Ensure they watch the film, either by attending a screening or watching the copy sent to them.

To stand out in this volume and clutter, some key strategies:

Name recognition: This is critical, especially when dealing with a voting audience that struggles to recognise and pronounce the names of non-English films. The more voters hear of a movie, the easier it is for them to cast a vote in its favour, whether they have seen all the competing movies or not.

Even before the entire application process, the makers of RRR got critical product and brand elements spot on for a non-Indian audience. Here, phonology - the part of linguistics that deals with sounds - is critical when dealing with international audiences.

A movie name, RRR, that is a letter of the English alphabet repeated twice in succession, is brilliant in its simplicity. The song's name, Naatu Naatu, follows the safest structure for easy pronunciation across cultures - a consonant followed by vowel. In addition, the double 'a's make for a playful stretched sound - fun and memorable when spoken aloud.

Brand presence: Across categories, marketing budgets keep moving

towards digital media as consumers spend ever more time on smartphones watching videos made by content creators on social media. Visibility of a song in the form of video clips or as trending background music for user-generated content on Instagram or TikTok is a key marker of musical success today.

Micro-targeting online: Modern marketers have access to an array of sophisticated digital micro-targeting tools. For a small spend, it is easy to reach a narrow audience of voters through search and display ad campaigns on Google (including YouTube) and Meta (Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp).

Product and culture codes: Naatu Naatu was also incredibly well-suited to resonate with Western audiences - exotic (the Telugu language), but not too exotic (men in formal shirts, trousers and suspenders), with dance moves reminiscent of Gene Kelly and Fred Astaire. This combination of elements reflects the way consumer brands leverage nostalgia - by reinventing familiar, often deeply embedded cultural codes, in new, yet reassuring ways, to find resonance with audiences.

The article was originally published by Economic Times

YouTube TV Launches ‘Multiview’ Feature For Watching Multiple Streams At Once

ANS

YouTube TV has launched a new “Multiview” feature that will allow subscribers to watch up to four different programs at the same time.

The streaming giant said that early access to multiview will roll out to all YouTube TV members over the next few months.

Initially, only select users in the US will gain access to multiview on TV devices.

"During early access, some members will begin to see an option to watch up to four pre-selected, different streams at once in their 'Top Picks for You' section. After selecting multiview, viewers will be able to switch audio and captions between streams, and jump in and out of a fullscreen view of a game," YouTube said in a blogpost.

The company said that those who are part of early access will receive an email and see an alert about this feature in their YouTube TV experience.

As multi-viewing requires a high-powered device, it will be limited to users who have specific equipment, according to the company.

YouTube intends to monitor feedback from multiview users as more people gain access in the coming months and the NFL (National Football League) season approaches.

The goal is for all subscribers to have access to multiview by the start of the regular season.

YouTube has confirmed the access date for NFL Sunday Ticket, which will start from September 10.

'Lack Of Coordination Between Neural Assemblies Of Key Brain Regions Causes Memory Loss'

Press Trust Of India

Absence of coordination between multiple neural assemblies formed within and between the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex in the brain could lead to memory loss, according to a new study in mice.

The study has found that neural assemblies - multiple separate groups of neurons that join forces to process information - connected inside and across these key brain regions support learning, remembering and recalling memories.

Failure of these neural assemblies to sync together at the right time leads to the memories being lost, the study said.

The study led by researchers from the universities of Bristol (UK) and Heidelberg (Germany) is published in the journal *Currently Biology*.

Short-term memory relies on two key brain regions: the hippocampus and the prefrontal cortex. How do you keep track of what to do next? What happens in the brain when your mind goes blank?

The researchers set out to find answers to such questions by establishing how brain regions, namely the hippocampus and the prefrontal cortex, interacted with one another as memories are formed, maintained and recalled at the level of neural assemblies.

The study also wanted to understand why sometimes memory fails.

"Neural assemblies" were first proposed over 70 years ago, but have proved difficult to pinpoint.

Using brain recordings in rats, the research team has shown in the study that memory encoding, storage and recall is supported by dynamic interactions incorporating multiple neural assemblies formed within and between the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex.

When the coordination of these assemblies fails, the animals made mistakes, the study found.

"Our results make potential therapeutic interventions for memory restoration more challenging to target in space and time.

"On the other hand, our findings have identified critical processes that determine a success or failure in remembering. These present viable targets for therapeutic interventions on the level of neural assembly interactions," said Michal Kućwicz, lead author of the study.

"Our findings add to the evidence that the neural substrates of memory are more distributed in anatomical space and dynamic across time than previously thought based on the neuropsychological models," said Matt Jones, senior author of the paper and professor at Bristol.

The research team presumes the same neural mechanisms would work in human patients to restore memory functions impaired in a particular brain disorder.

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New Bone Cancer Drug Could Save Children's Lives

Press Trust Of India

Researchers at two UK varsities have developed a new drug that could save lives and reduce the amount of disability caused by surgery in children and young adults suffering from primary bone cancer.

Cancer that starts in the bones, rather than cancer that has spread to the bone, predominantly affects children and young adults. Current treatment is brutal, with outdated chemotherapy cocktails and limb amputation leading to life-long disabilities.

Even after these gruelling treatments, the five-year survival rate is still poor at just 42 per cent largely because of how rapidly bone cancer spreads to the lungs. These rates haven't changed in nearly half a century.

But a new study published in the *Journal of Bone Oncology* shows how a new drug called CADD522' blocks a gene associated with driving cancer's spread, in mice implanted with human bone cancer.

The new drug increases survival rates by 50 per cent without the need for surgery or chemotherapy. And unlike chemotherapy, it doesn't cause toxic side effects like hair loss, tiredness and sickness.

Primary bone cancer, although rare, occurs most often



in children and young adults between the ages of 10 and 20 usually during a growth spurt. It is a difficult cancer to treat as it can spread very rapidly to other parts of the body - especially the lungs, said co-author of the study, Professor Alison Gartland from the University of Sheffield.

Gartland said children have to undergo very toxic treatment which has very unpleasant and sometimes life-long side effects and sometimes life-changing amputation.

This, coupled with the low survival rate, is why this drug

is so incredibly important and could make a huge difference to patients and their families, said the researcher.

This breakthrough was only possible due to the extensive collaboration between teams at the Universities of Sheffield and East Anglia and I sincerely hope that with further research and backing this drug can be used in clinical trials in the near future, Gartland said.

The researchers collected bone and tumour samples from 19 patients at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital in Birmingham. However, this small number was

more than enough to detect some obvious changes in cancers.

The team used next-generation sequencing to identify types of genetic regulators called small RNAs that were different during the course of bone cancer progression. They also showed that a gene called RUNX2 is activated in primary bone cancer and that this gene is associated with driving cancer's spread.

They went on to develop CADD522, a small molecule which blocks the RUNX2 protein from having an effect and tested it in mice.

In high school, my best friend Ben Morley became ill with primary bone cancer. His illness inspired me to do something about it myself because during my studies I realised that this cancer has been all but left behind others in terms of research and treatment progress, said lead researcher Dr Darrell Green from UEA's Norwich Medical School.

I wanted to understand the underlying biology of cancer spread so that we can intervene at the clinical level and develop new treatments so that patients won't have to go through the things my friend Ben went through.

Ultimately, we want to save lives and reduce the amount of disability caused by surgery. And now we have developed a new drug that potentially promises to do just that, he said.

The new drug is now undergoing formal toxicology assessment before the team assemble all of the data and approaches the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for approval to start a human clinical trial.

The research was led by UEA in collaboration with the University of Sheffield, Newcastle University, the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, Birmingham, and the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital.

Govt of Jammu & Kashmir
Department of Tribal Affairs J&K UT
Office Of The Warden Gujar & Bakewal Boys Hostel Bandipora

Admission Notification 2023-24

All boy students of Gujar and Bakewal Community of District Bandipora who are reading in 6th class or have recently appeared 5th class examination during march 2023 and are interested to seek admission in Gujar & Bakewal Boys Hostel Bandipora are informed to fill up admission forms which can be obtained (free cost) from office of the warden Gujar & Bakewal Boys Hostel Bandipora . The selection of the candidates will be purely on the basis of performance in the written test as per the following details.

1. The admission forms will be issued w.e.f 08-03-2023
2. The last date for submission of admission forms is 06-04-2023.
3. Date of written test 10-04-2023.

Eligibility

1. The student must belong to Gujar & Bakewal community.
2. The student must be under BPL category and father/ Mother or guardian should not an employee of any govt. / Semi Govt. Department or institution.
3. The student must belong to Bandipora District Only.

Supporting Documents

1. ST Category Certificate.
2. Income certificate / BPL Ration Card of Father.
3. Aadhaar Card.
4. 02 Passport Size Photographs.

No: G&B/BH/Bpr/23/15-21,

DIPK-18471/22 dated:17-03-2023

Warden Gujar & Bakewal
Boys Hostel Bandipora

Government of Jammu and Kashmir
Jammu and Kashmir e-Governance Agency
Information Technology Department

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DIPK-18459/22
DATED:17-03-2023

Administrative Officer
J&K e-Governance Agency
Information Technology Department

Government of India
Department of Telecommunications
O/o the Controller of Communication Accounts, J&K Telecom Circle, HUDCO Bhawan, Rail Head Complex, Jammu (J&K)-180012
Website :- www.ccajk.gov.in Email:- ccaik@nic.in, Tel.No: 0191-2477298, Fax. No. 0191-2475858

No. 9-24/CCA/JK/2022-23/Pen Ada Attention DoT/BSNL Pensioners Dated: 16.03.2023

PENSION ADALAT NOTIFICATION

A Pension Adalat will be organized by O/o Controller of Communication Accounts, J&K Telecom Circle, Jammu-180012 on 28th March 2023 for prompt & quick redressal of pensioners' grievances of DoT/BSNL Jammu & Kashmir Circle within the framework of extant pension policy/guidelines as per the schedule given below.

Aggrieved pensioners of DOT/BSNL are requested to submit their grievances/complaints, if any, mentioning therein details of their grievances/complaints, PPO No., PPO Code, Contact No. on email ccaik@nic.in & cao.penjk@nic.in / Landline number 0191-2479283/ Toll Free No 18001807306..

Station	Last date of receipt of grievance/complaints	Venue	Date & Time of Pension Adalat
Kathua	25.03.2023 (05:30 PM)	Kathua HPO Complex, Kathua	28.03.2023 at 11:00 AM

Sd/- Accounts Officer (Pension)
O/o CCA, J&K Circle Jammu-180012

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J&K Govt Announces Rs 129 Cr Initiative To Reduce Fodder Deficit, Boost Livestock Sector



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir administration has announced a Rs 129.05 crore initiative to reduce fodder deficit and boost livestock sector under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in the union territory, a senior government official said on Friday.

Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo said over the years, livestock husbandry has emerged as a crucial growth engine for sustainable and equitable development, which is vital for uplifting the socio-economic status of farming communities in Jammu and Kashmir.

"An apex committee has devised a comprehensive plan under HADP, which amounts to Rs 129.05 crore, to mitigate the fodder shortfall in the UT by 80 per cent. The primary objective of this programme is to augment the agricultural and livestock sectors and equip farmers with vital resources such as financial assistance, improved seeds and technical guidance to amplify productivity, profitability, and overall economic progress of the area," he said.

Further, he said the government is "working closely with various stakeholders, including agricultural universities, research institutes, and industry experts to achieve this goal."

Dulloo said livestock rearing in Jammu and Kashmir incurs a significant cost, with 75 per cent of the input cost attributed to feed and fodder.

"The region is home to a diverse range of animals, including 31.45 lakh bovines, 45 lakh sheep and goats, 73 lakh backyard poultry birds and 2 lakh other animal species. Additionally, around five crore commercial broiler birds are being reared in the region," he said.

The annual requirement for green fodder is approximately 139 lakh metric tonnes, while the dry fodder requirement is around 58.53 lakh metric tonnes.

"In particular, there is a deficit of 40.93 per cent in fodder availability in the region, with a higher deficit of 48.63 per cent in the Kashmir division compared to 32.27 per cent in the Jammu division. Only four per cent of the total cultivable land is under fodder production at present," he said.

RBI Governor Cautions Banks About Excess Asset-Liability Build-Up

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Friday cautioned banks against any excessive mismatches in their asset-liabilities front, saying both are detrimental to financial stability, which is evident from the ongoing crisis in the US banking sector where two mid-sized banks went belly up last week.

The ongoing crisis in the US banking sector drives home the importance of ensuring prudent asset liability management, robust risk management and sustainable growth in liabilities and assets; undertaking periodic stress tests; and building up capital buffers for any unanticipated future stress, Das said. He was delivering the 17th KP Hormis (Federal Bank founder) commemorative lecture in Kochi this evening.

It can be noted that two mid-sized American banks (the startup sector-focused Silicon Valley Bank in California and a similar one in New York, the First Republic Bank) with over USD 200 billion in balance sheets each went belly up.

Das, without naming any of these US banks, said on the face of it, one of them had unmanageable deposits in excess of their assets side business. That bank invested the excess



deposit money into government securities the value of them went down when the interest went up exorbitantly in the US as the Federal Reserve set out to contain inflation -- at a four-decade high -- and this forced the bank to sell the government securities at a heavy loss, leading to crisis, which forced its depositors to withdraw money, leading to a run on the bank and the eventual bankruptcy.

The bank should have expected that interest rates will go up when inflation hit the roof, and the US Fed began to increase rates. This should have forced them to diversify their assets and also lower their deposits, he said.

The ongoing banking crisis in the US also speaks volumes that cryptocurrencies' assets or the like can be a real danger to banks, whether directly or indirectly, said Das, who has been calling for a complete ban on such private digital money.

J&K Budget Lays Special Focus On Employment Generation, Women Empowerment, Social Inclusion: Govt

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The whopping budget of Rs 1,18,500 crore for Jammu & Kashmir for the financial year 2023-24 has special focus on employment generation, women empowerment and social inclusion, a government spokesperson said on Friday.

"The total budget estimates for the fiscal is Rs. 1,18,500 crore, of which, developmental expenditure is of the order of Rs. 41,491 crore."

"The capital component of the budget has increased substantially. The expected revenue receipts are Rs 1,06,061 crore whereas Revenue expenditure is expected to be Rs 77,009 crore, thereby making available revenue surplus for capital expenditure to the tune of Rs 29,052 crore," reads the budget document.

According to a senior official in the J&K administration, the focus of the budget is good governance, strengthening grassroots democracy, promoting sustainable agriculture, facilitating investment and growth, employment generation, accelerated development and inclusive growth, women empowerment and social inclusion.

"Launch of HIMAYAT 2.0 with renewed focus on employment oriented trades for training and convergence of skill related infrastructure across the departments like Skill Development, Mission Youth, Industries & Commerce, School Education, Agriculture etc is also part of the budget.

As Jammu and Kashmir has returned to the path of peace



and progress, the youth are enthusiastic to excel in different fields like their counterparts in rest of India. A massive skill development programme which included introduction of latest streams and technologies at the college level, big industrial setups, start-ups and the exponential growth of small and medium entrepreneurs as well as self-help groups have been made in the budget today cater to all these aspects to take care of youth aspirations.

The emphasis of the budget is also on strengthening grassroots democracy with massive flow of funds for all three tiers of Panchayati Raj, with efforts on holistic improvement in infrastructure, roads and water and setting up agro-based small-scale industries to double the income of farmers and other villagers.

The strengthening of rural health care has received a major impetus in this budget to put in requisite equipments, facilities and laboratories in the hospitals.

Moreover, Power sector reforms and augmentation of the distribution network will continue in the budget and the projection of doubling the

electricity generation capacity in the coming years is there. Budgetary allocations are there to develop a road network with scores of bridges and tunnels to make the remotest areas accessible. Major HEPs will generate new employment opportunities for locals and change the outlook of rural Jammu and Kashmir.

For Agriculture and horticulture, the focus of this budget is on changing the scenario with the help of agricultural and horticultural experts. Scientific farming with multiple crops, reducing pre and post-harvest losses, financing major and minor farming equipment, and using solar pumps to reduce electricity expenses are the few targeted areas. The projected plan is to develop agro- and horticulture-based associated industries by providing easy finance and technical expertise to double the farmers' income and generate new employment avenues for the rural youth. Doubling milk production, well-coordinated milk collection through cooperatives, and poultry and sheep farming are a few other important sectors getting due attention in the budget.

Indian Carriers To Operate 22,907 Weekly Domestic Flights In Summer Schedule

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Indian carriers will operate a total of 22,907 weekly domestic flights during the summer schedule starting from March 26.

The number of flights to be operated is 4.4 per cent higher compared to 21,941 weekly flights operated in the winter schedule, according to aviation regulator DGCA.

The summer schedule is from March 26 till October 28.

As many as 11 airlines will be operating domestic services, with maximum weekly flights by IndiGo at 11,465.

In the 2022 summer schedule, the airline's number of flights is 10,085 flights.

Among the 11 airlines, Alliance Air, Air Asia, SpiceJet and Vistara will be operating fewer flights in the upcoming summer schedule compared to the 2022 winter schedule, which is from October 28, 2022 to March 25, 2023.

SpiceJet will be flying only 2,240 weekly flights in the summer schedule. This is nearly 30 per cent lower than 3,193 weekly flights in the winter

schedule.

In a release on Friday, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said 22,907 departures per week have been finalised to/from 110 airports for the summer schedule compared to 21,941 departures per



week from 106 airports in the winter schedule 2022.

"Out of these 110 airports, Jeyore, Cooch Behar, Hollongi, Jamshedpur, Pakyong and Mopa (Goa) are the new airports proposed by the scheduled airlines whereas operations from Ziro and Hindon airport are not proposed in the summer schedule 2023," the release said.

Tata Group-owned Air India will operate 2,178 weekly flights, which will be 9.45 per cent more than 1,990 flights in the winter schedule.

Its group airlines -- Vistara and AirAsia -- will be flying

fewer flights compared to the winter schedule. While Vistara will be operating 1,856 weekly flights which will be 4.38 per cent lower as against the winter schedule number of 1,941, Air Asia will be flying a marginally lesser number of flights

at 1,456. In the winter schedule, the number of weekly flights of Air Asia was at 1,462. No-frills carrier Go Air, now rebranded as Go First, will be operating 10.65 per cent more weekly flights at 1,538 in the summer schedule. Akasa Air will operate 751 weekly flights in the summer schedule.

In the summer schedule, Alliance Air will be flying 14 per cent less weekly flights at 887.

According to the release, Star Air and Fly Big will be operating a higher number of weekly flights in the summer schedule at 234 and 220, respectively.

Parent Of Silicon Valley Bank Seeks Bankruptcy Protection

Associated Press

NEW YORK: The parent of Silicon Valley Bank, seized last week by the US, is filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

SVB Financial Group, along with its CEO and its chief financial officer, were targeted this week in a class action lawsuit that claims the company didn't disclose the risks that future interest rate increases would have on its business.

SVB Financial Group is no lon-

g strategic alternatives for its prized businesses and assets, especially SVB Capital and SVB Securities," William Kosturos, Chief Restructuring Officer for SVB Financial Group, said in a statement on Friday.

Regulated broker-dealer SVB Securities and funds of venture capital and private credit fund platform SVB Capital and its general partner entities are not included in the Chapter 11 filing and continue to operate normally.

Funded debt for SVB Financial



ger affiliated with Silicon Valley Bank after its seizure by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. Its collapse was the second biggest bank failure in US history after the demise of Washington Mutual in 2008.

The bank's successor, Silicon Valley Bridge Bank, is being run under the jurisdiction of the FDIC and is not included in the Chapter 11 filing.

"The Chapter 11 process will allow SVB Financial Group to preserve value as it evaluates

Group is about USD 3.3 billion in aggregate principal amount of unsecured notes. There is no claim against SVB Capital or SVB Securities. SVB Financial Group also has USD 3.7 billion of preferred equity outstanding.

SVB Financial Group believes it has approximately USD 2.2 billion of liquidity. The Santa Clara, California-based company said it also has other valuable investment securities accounts and other assets that it's exploring strategic options for.

Secretary Tourism Holds Introductory Meeting With Tourism Stakeholders Of Kashmir

Lists stakeholder consultation, tourist feedback, idea exchange as way forward to scale up the tourism sector



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Secretary, Tourism & Culture, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah Friday chaired a marathon introductory meeting with representatives of various segments of the tourism sector of Kashmir valley at TRC, here today.

This was the first such interaction of Dr. Abid Rasheed after assuming charge of the Tourism Department recently.

During the interaction, representatives of all segments of tourism trade including Kashmir Houseboat Owners Association, Hoteliers Club, KHARA, KHAROF, NITTA, PILTOF, TAFI, DTOK, ADTOI, TAAI, shikara unions, representatives of tourism stakeholders from Pahalgam, Gulmarg and Sonamarg, travel bodies including TAAK, TASK and other such organization working in the tourism trade were present.

Interacting with the stakeholders, the Secretary Tourism underscored the need for upscaling the standards of the tourism industry of Kashmir, given its reach and scope. He said J&K is world famous

for its hospitality and the tourism products offered need to be global in standard and scale.

Appreciating the role of the local stakeholders in promoting Kashmir tourism worldwide and the synergy attained between the Department and the tourism players, the Secretary Tourism assured all support to them in addressing their genuine issues and grievances. He said he believes that constant and structured consultations on issues are the way to work out solutions and enhance the standards of the tourism sector. He also laid stress on taking tourist feedback and idea exchange between the stakeholders and the Department which he termed was critical to the further growth of the sector in an environment of global competition.

In their remarks, the representatives of tourism stakeholders hailed the taking over of Dr. Abid Rasheed as the Tourism Secretary hoping that many of their issues would get resolved through his prompt, innovative and on ground interventions as seen in his previous assignments in the Government.

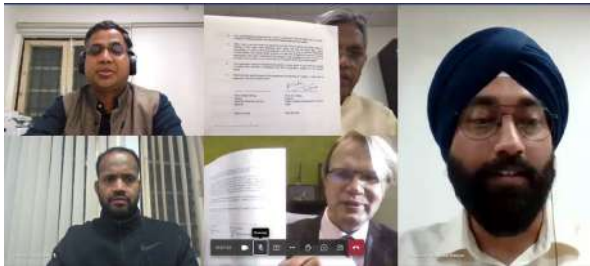
IIM Jammu Inks Pact With Estonian Business School, Estonia For Academic & Research Exchange

Observer News Service

JAMMU- Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the internationally renowned Estonian Business School for Academic and Research Exchange. The MoU was signed by Director IIM Jammu, Prof BS Sahay and Rector Estonian Business School, Prof Meelis Kitsing, in the presence of Dean Academics, Prof Jabir Ali; Chairperson of International Relations, Dr Sarbjit Singh and Co-Chairperson of International Relations at IIM Jammu, Dr Somu Gorai.

The MoU signing began with a welcome by Dr Sarbjit Singh followed by an overview of IIM Jammu by Prof Jabir Ali and an overview of Estonian Business School by Prof Meelis Kitsing.

During the MoU signing



ceremony, Prof BS Sahay, expressed his optimism about the collaboration with Estonian Business School. He said that it is a positive step towards absorbing best practices in research and teaching from top business schools worldwide.

Prof Meelis Kitsing, Rector of Estonian Business School also spoke at the event and gave an overview of his institution. He mentioned that collaboration between both institutes will help develop competence in key areas ranging from de-

velopment of educational and training programmes to long-range planning and institutional development.

Prof Jabir Ali, Dean of Academics at IIM Jammu also spoke on the occasion and gave an overview of IIM Jammu. He mentioned that both institutions have agreed to work in areas such as student exchange, faculty exchange, joint management development programmes, executive education programmes, organising joint research programmes and conferences.

Air India Makes Another Voluntary Retirement Offer For Staff

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Air India on Friday made a voluntary retirement offer for its non-flying staff, the second such offer by the Tata Group after taking control of the loss-making airline in January last year.

The latest offer will be available for permanent general cadre officers who have attained the age of 40 years or above and completed a minimum of five years of continuous service at the airline, according to a communication.

Also, clerical and unskilled categories of employees who completed a minimum of five years of continuous service will be eligible. The offer will be open till April 30.

Sources said that a total of around 2,100 employees will be eligible to avail the latest voluntary retirement offer.

Currently, the airline has a staff strength of about 11,000 people, including flying and non-flying staff. In June 2022, Air India launched the first phase of the voluntary retirement offer.

There has been a request from employees for extending the additional benefit of voluntary retirement to other permanent employees as well.

In response to this, Air India is announcing the second phase of the volun-



tary retirement offer, the airline's Chief Human Resources Suresh Dutt Tripathi said in the communication sent out to the staff on Friday.

"The employees who apply for voluntary retirement from 17th March 2023 to 30th April 2023 will also be provided with an ex-gratia amount as a one-time benefit.

"Eligible employees who apply up to 31st March 2023 will receive Rs 1 lakh over and above the ex-gratia amount," the communication said.

In the first phase of the voluntary retirement offer, both flying and non-flying staff were covered. At that time, around 4,200 employees were eligible and out of them, around 1,500 people opted for the offer, the sources said.

In September last year, Air India announced the transformation plan Vihaan. AI focuses on various goals to be achieved over a five-year period.

The plan is aimed at putting Air India on a path of sustained growth, profitability and market leadership.

Markets Extend Gains In See-Saw Trade; Metal, Banking Stocks Sparkle

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty overcame bouts of volatility to settle in the green for the second straight session on Friday, propped up by robust demand for the metal, banking and financial stocks amid a firm trend in global equities.

Besides, a strengthening rupee and lower crude prices in the international markets also influenced sentiments here, traders said.

In a volatile trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose 355.06 points or 0.62 per cent to settle at 57,989.90. During the day, it hit a high of 58,178.94 and a low of 57,503.90.

The broader NSE Nifty gained 114.45 points or 0.67 per cent to end at 17,100.05.

"The Nifty witnessed a volatile day of trade today. It witnessed sharp swings in both directions and ultimately closed in the green for the second consecutive day..We believe that the pullback rally has some more steam left and the Nifty is likely to carry on this positive momentum next week as well," said Jatin Gedia, Technical Research Analyst, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

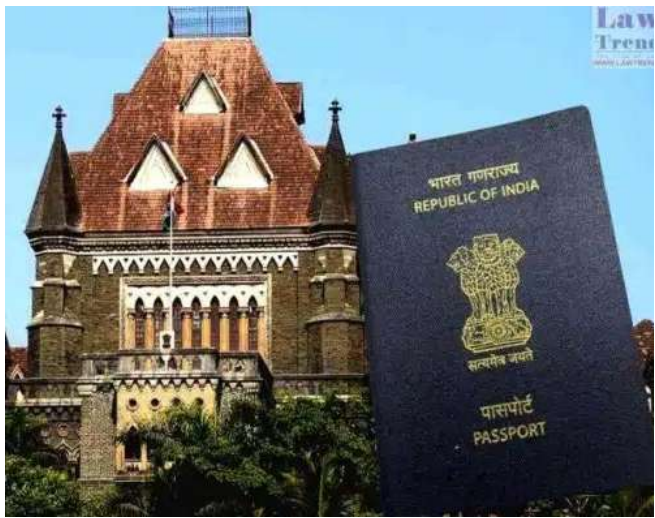
HCL Tech led the Sensex gainers' chart, spurring 3.58 per cent, followed by UltraTech Cement, Nestle India, Tata Steel, Kotak Bank, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel and HDFC twins.

In contrast, ITC, Maruti, NTPC, Asian Paints and Sun Pharma were among the main laggards, shedding up to 1.51 per cent.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.29 per cent and smallcap index advanced 0.69 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, realty jumped 3.16 per cent, metal 2.42 per cent, bankex (1.22 per cent), IT (1.10 per cent) financial services (1.01 per cent) and commodities (1.37 per cent).

Entry Ban On Man Who Used Indian Passport After Belgian Citizenship Upheld



Agenceis

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court has upheld the Centre's decision to ban entry to India for a man, who secured Belgian citizenship but used his Indian passport to travel to other nations, noting that the same was not arbitrary and does not violate his fundamental rights.

A division bench of Justices Gautam Patel and Neela Gokhale in its order of March 14 refused relief to the man, Vikram Shah, who had filed a petition against the Centre's decision.

The court refused to accept Mr Shah's contention that he had made an innocent mistake.

Mr Shah in his plea sought a direction to the Union government to issue him a visa to travel to India or an Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) card.

"If, having obtained Belgian citizenship, he (Shah) still travelled on his Indian passport anywhere, then that had to be a deliberate and conscious act and cannot possibly be a mistake or inadvertence. This is a clear violation of law," the court said.

"There is no question of violation of any fundamental rights simply because the petitioner is not an Indian citizen and fundamental rights are available only to Indian citizens," the bench said.

The Union Home ministry had told the court that Mr Shah had violated provisions of the Citizenship Act and the Passport Act by using his Indian passport to procure visas to travel to other countries on multiple occasions.

Mr Shah acquired Belgian nationality in May 2015 but did not surrender his Indian passport till September 2020.zzz

'Fake country' Kailasa cons 30 US cities with 'sister-city' scam

Agenceis

New York: Self-proclaimed godman and fugitive Nithyananda's "United States of Kailasa" has signed a "cultural partnership" with over 30 American cities, a media report has said, days after the city of Newark in the US state of New Jersey said it rescinded a "sister-city" agreement with the fictional country.

The sister-city agreement between Newark and the fake "United States of Kailasa" was inked on January 12 this year and the signing ceremony took place at City Hall in Newark.

Nithyananda, whose mind-bending spiritual homilies wrapped in a sheen of pseudo-science has provided much mirth on social media, claims to have set up a country called the "United States of Kailasa" in 2019.

According to its website, there are over 30 American cities that have signed a cultural partnership with the fake nation of Kailasa --- cities from Richmond, Virginia to Dayton, Ohio, to Buena Park, Florida literally all over the map.

A report in Fox News on Thursday said that "we are finding out the supreme fake pontiff" has a "long list of cities that he's duped."

It said that it reached out to some of the cities in the US for a reaction on signing an agreement with the fake nation.

"And so far most of the cities have confirmed these proclamations are in fact true," the report said.



Jacksonville, North Carolina told Fox News: "Our proclamations with Kailasa are not an endorsement. They are a response to a request and we do not verify the information that is requested."

Fox News blamed the cities for not "googling" for information about the fake nation.

"If someone wants a proclamation, someone gets a proclamation. They'll just say you're an exotic Hindu Island and they'll name a street after you," the Fox News anchor said.

The report added that it's not just mayors or city councils but "people running the federal government" who are falling for the fake nation too.

It added that according to the fake guru, two members of the Congress have given Kailasa "special congressional recognition." One of them is Congresswoman Norma Torres of California, who is on the House Appropriations Committee.

"So, the person who decides what we spend our tax dollars on just got duped by an

alleged rapist guru with a fake country," the Fox News anchor said.

Republican Troy Balderson from Ohio also presented "his divine holiness and pontiff of Hinduism congressional recognition." Earlier this month, Press Secretary in the Department of Communications, City of Newark, Susan Garofalo had told PTI in an email that as soon as "we learned about the circumstances surrounding Kailasa, the City of Newark immediately took action and rescinded the sister city agreement" on January 18.

"Based on deception, the ceremony was groundless and void...Although this was a regrettable incident, the City of Newark remains committed to partnering with people from diverse cultures in order to enrich each other with connectivity, support, and mutual respect," Garofalo said.

Newark Councilman at Large Luis Quintana sponsored the motion to rescind the agreement.

LAC STALEMATE

Situation Stable But Need To Be Watchful: Army Chief

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China is stable but there is a need to keep a very close watch on it, Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande said on Friday amid the nearly three-year-long border row in eastern Ladakh.

In an interactive session at the India Today Conclave, Gen Pande said the Indian Army has a robust deployment of troops all along the LAC besides having adequate reserves to deal with any contingencies.

Overall, I would say that the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is stable but we need to keep a very close watch on the situation as it develops," he said.

"As far as the deployment of forces by the adversary is concerned, there has been no significant reduction in the deployment. There is a great focus on modernization of forces, especially those deployed opposite the LAC," Gen Pande said.

He said both sides are engaged in talks to resolve the remaining issues in eastern Ladakh.

"Till the time a resolution happens, our deployment of forces, our alertness level will continue to remain of a very high level," General Pande said.

He said the infrastructure development on the "other side is coming about at a very hectic pace, be it the road infrastructure in terms of the highways which run along the LAC, be it the upgrading of airfields and heliports". Gen Pande said these are some

major developments which need to be taken note of specially in the context of the adversary's ability to mobilise troops.

"As far as what we are doing, I think we have a robust deployment all along the LAC and all three sectors. I must mention that we have adequate reserves to deal with any contingencies," he said.

"With the infusion of new technology and new weapon systems, our capability development is an ongoing endeavour. Equally we are focussing on infrastructure development, especially forward area roads, and heliports etc," he said.

He said the Indian Army's preparedness levels are high.

"From the winter months, now we are transitioning into the summer months and we have undertaken minor changes as you would do as summer posture," Gen Pande added.

Asked about the lessons learnt from the Russia-Ukraine war, he said land-centric warfare will remain a decisive domain, especially in India's case where it has contested land borders.

The notion of victory will remain land centric in our context, he said. On the Agnipath recruitment scheme, the Army Chief said it is a win-win policy not just for the military but for the society and country at large.

Calling Agnipath a transformational reform, Gen Pande acknowledged that getting the implementation right is key. Issues like training the recruits in a short frame of time is critical.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Rahul Unfurled

Shah further said that if we look at the nine years under PM Modi, we see investment coming into Kashmir and an improvement in the internal security situation.

"Bihar and Jharkhand are now free of Left-wing extremism, he added.

The Home minister also expressed confidence that in the coming years, security forces will be successful in ending Left-wing extremism prevailing in four districts of Chhattisgarh.

In the Northeast, Amit Shah said many youngsters have surrendered their weapons and have come to the mainstream.

"Development has reached the Northeast and the efforts to link the region via rail and air will be completed before 2024," he added.

On his party's vision for India, Amit Shah said the BJP's aim is to make India the world's number one country and the party will return to power in 2024 with a full majority.

Snowfall Likely

the previous night and it was 1.2°C above normal for the north Kashmir area.

Jammu recorded a low of 14.3°C against 15.0°C on the previous night. It was 0.6°C below normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal, he said, recorded a low of 6.2°C (above normal by 1.3°C), Batote 7.3°C (above normal by 0.6°C), Katra 12.5°C (0.1°C below normal) and Bhandarwah 4.6°C (0.7°C above normal).

Ladakh's Leh and Drass, he said, recorded a low of minus 3.2°C and minus 3.6°C respectively.

Meanwhile, the Agrometeorological Research Centre, which is based in SKUAST, Jammu and working on specific needs of agriculturists and farmers has issued an advisory.

The Agro division asked farmers to make elaborate arrangements for darning out excess water.

"Due to the possibility of rains in the next 5 days, farmers are advised to make arrangements to drain excess rain water from wheat, mustard, oilseeds, vegetable and flower fields," said Dr. Mahender Singh, Senior Scientist & Incharge, ARC, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Jammu.

"This time farmers are nurturing various crops including Wheat, Mustard, Rabi pulses, Gram at various stages besides cultivation in floriculture sector including Marigold, Gladiolus, Ornithogallum and vegetables are going on, The farmers asked to not to allow rain water to stagnate in fields," Dr. Mahender Singh said.

In addition, the farmer's planning to trade their crops in the Horticulture sector including Mango, Citrus, and Guava or growing button mushrooms advised to postpone irrigation as well as application of plant protection measures for next 5 days.

Mushroom growers should dispose of infected fruits in the pit after dipping the fruit bodies in 2% formalin solution of wetness observed.

"Maintain temperature 160C -180C during fruiting by spraying water on side walls and floor of the room. Maintain proper hygienic conditions in and around growing rooms.

Ventilation in the cropping room is recommended. Open cropping rooms at least 2-3 times to avoid accumulation of CO2," the weather scientist said.

Poultry farmers advised to provide adequate clean drinking water to poultry birds.

Give vaccination against IPD & Gumbro disease to 7 & 14 days of chick. Avoid huddling of chicks and maintain proper hygiene in poultry sheds. For the Fisheries sector, people advised to avoid manure feed for some days.

Dairy animals and Sheep & Goat farmers advised to provide hay of green forage like stala, lobia, maize, jowar and bajra etc. with kadbi and other green grasses to the milch animals in order to enhance milk production and also to prevent from bloat (aafara)

Gujarati Conman

accompanying him weaving through a Valley town have been circulated widely across social media platforms.

He had even visited the last post at Uri in north Kashmir, posing for pictures at a bridge treated as a Line of Control between India and Pakistan.

In a statement, police said the CID wing of Jammu and Kashmir Police gave information on March 2 about the arrival of an impersonator

who had checked into the Hotel Lalit Grand in Srinagar.

Detailing what had happened, the statement said Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rakesh Balwal sent a team to the hotel. He was identified as Kiran Bhai Patel, son of Juddesh Bhai Patel, a resident of Ahmedabad. He was questioned but his replies were found to be suspicious and he was taken to a police station in Nishat close by where he made a confession, police said.

Ten fake visiting cards and two mobiles were seized from him.

According to police, Patel held several meetings with Jammu and Kashmir bureaucrats, selling them dreams of boosting apple production, engaging youth in national building and holding seminars to give a fillip to the horticulture industry.

However, everyone asked Patel to come through official channels for the earmarking of funds for the so-called projects being offered by him, officials said.

He has cases filed under various IPC sections for cheating and forgery at the Nishat police station.

During an earlier visit, Patel travelled to Gulmarg, claiming the government had tasked him to look at improvement of hotel facilities in the area, officials said.

Meanwhile, an NDTV report quoting sources said that hours before Patel was arrested his three accomplices managed to escape.

Amit Hitesh Pandiya and Jay Sitapara from Gujarat, and Trilok Singh- from Rajasthan were also staying with Patel at a five-star hotel in Srinagar and impersonating an official team from the PMO, sources said.

Patel is also verified on Twitter and has over a thousand followers, including BJP Gujarat General Secretary Pradipsinh Vaghela.

In his Twitter bio he claims to have a PhD from Commonwealth University, Virginia, an MBA from IIM Trichy, as well as an M Tech in Computer Science and BE in Computer Engineering. Patel further described himself as a "thinker, strategist, analyst and campaign manager".

Sources told NDTV that action has been initiated against two police officials for the goof-up. The report also quoted an unnamed senior

officer as saying that it's a major concern that an IAS introduced a conman as a PMO official, and the security wing of the police and other officials obliged with official protocol and Z plus security cover for such a long time.

A team of Gujarat police has also joined investigations and questioned Patel, sources added.

Meanwhile, Patel's lawyer advocate Rehan Gowhar has alleged a political conspiracy, and said that two more people accompanying him were set free by the police.

"My client told me that he was accompanied by two more people from Gujarat. Police have also recorded his statement before the magistrate under section 164. Both were set free by the police," he told NDTV.

Reserved Category

to the Union Territory's winter capital last May following the killing of Rajini Bala and Rahul Bhat by terrorists.

While Bhat was shot dead in his office in central Kashmir's Budgam on May 12, schoolteacher Bala was gunned down in south Kashmir's Kulgam on May 31.

"Most of the 3,500 Reserved Category employees have already served in the Valley for over 15 years and we want the government to come out with a transfer policy, along with addressing our security concerns and appropriate accommodation," Kumar told PTI.

He said the organisation decided to suspend the agitation for the time being on the assurance of the administration that all their issues would be addressed in a time-bound manner.

"The talks with the administration are going on and we are hopeful of a positive outcome. The next course of action depends on the outcome of the dialogue," he said.

BJP Leader

early assembly elections in the Union Territory.

The delegation also met the national opposition leaders at the Constitutional Club in New Delhi and apprised them of the current J&K situation and sought their support in the restoration of statehood to the erstwhile state.

War has also claimed that the assembly

elections, which could not be conducted in J&K after the BJP-PPDP led coalition government ended in the year 2018, will be conducted in three phases and that the next cabinet meeting will be held on October 5 this year.

"The next CM will be from Kashmir while there will be two Deputy CMs in the UT, including one each from Doda and Rajouri districts. Game is all set, only six months are left for elections. Polls will be held in three phases, the first phase will be conducted in north Kashmir," War has said during a public rally in north Kashmir.

The BJP leader, who unsuccessfully contested Baramulla Parliamentary elections in 2019, also said the bulldozer drive against the land grabbers will be resumed as soon as assembly elections are over.

"This is a transitory pause; bulldozers will run afresh as soon as assembly elections conclude in Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

War also said that J&K will witness many ups and downs until assembly elections are conducted in the erstwhile state.

"Selection of ministers" and the Minister of State (MoS) has already been worked out. There will be one each Parliamentary seat in North Kashmir, Jammu and Srinagar. Elections will end on September 30 while counting of votes will be conducted on October 1 in Baramulla," War added.

BJP chief spokesman, Sunil Raj Sethi dismissed War's claims and said the views expressed by him do not reflect that of the party.

"Holding assembly elections is the prerogative of Election Commission of India (ECI). It's the elected representatives, who have to take call on the next Chief Minister elect," Sethi told Kashmir Observer.

"It's unfortunate on the part of one of the responsible leaders for making such statements. The party does not stand with his statement," he added.

However, BJP state spokesman, Altaf Thakur slammed War's remarks saying that he often makes 'meaningless' statements without applying his mind.

"War is not as important as other members in the party are. We don't take him seriously at all since he makes nonsense and makes meaningless statements," Thakur added.

Despite being geographically distant from Kashmir how Kashmiris in West maintain cultural, social, and emotional linkages with their homeland. Tune-in to latest KO podcast

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

KO PODCAST

1st ODI: Rahul, Shami Star In India's Five-Wicket Win

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: KL Rahul revelled under pressure with a composed 75 after Mohammed Shami's mesmerising spell of seam bowling as India overcame initial jitters with elan in their comfortable five-wicket win against Australia in the opening ODI here on Friday.

India now lead the three-match series 1-0.

After being put in to bat, Australia suffered a dramatic collapse, losing six wickets for 19 runs inside eight overs to get bowled out for 188 in 35.4 overs, courtesy 3/17 from Shami.

Mitchell Starc then blew away the Indian top-order with some incisive swing bowling as India were left tottering at 39 for 4 just after the end of the Powerplay.

Skipper Hardik Pandya (25) did stem the rot but India weren't out of the woods when he was dismissed with the scoreboard reading 83 for 5.

But Ravindra Jadeja (45 not out, 69 balls), after having bowled nine tight overs of left-arm spin, gave adequate support in his unbroken 108-run stand with Rahul.

India won the game in 39.5 overs. But Rahul does deserve the credit

for anchoring the innings in the face of a storm, and has taken to the role of a No.5 keeper-batter like fish takes to water.

He enjoys the low-scoring scrappy battles and Friday at Wankhede was one such occasion.

The twilight hour, however, did belong to Starc. The Australian quick moved the new ball dangerously in the air as well as off the surface. He pinned Virat Kohli (4) in front of the wickets off the penultimate ball of the fifth over and, with the final delivery of that over, trapped Suryakumar Yadav leg-before for a first-ball duck.

The right-arm pacer Sean Abbott too got the ball to jag back in, trapping Shubman Gill leg-before but the Indian batter reviewed successfully after being adjudged out.

Gill had luck riding in his favour as Australia missed two tough chances behind the wickets, but the Indian could not capitalise. Starc bowled fuller deliveries outside off to get the Indians to drive, hoping to find edges or shots hit in the air.

Deployed on a longer six-over burst, Starc finally succeeded after Gill hit the left-arm for two fours. The bowler had him caught at point for 20 off 31 balls with four fours in



all, leaving India in a precarious position at 39/4 in 10.2 overs.

This is when Rahul showed his experience as he didn't take undue risks but, at the same time, punished the loose balls as and when necessary. He hit Adam Zampa into the deep mid-wicket stands. The key was rotation of strike as Rahul and Jadeja ran 56 singles between them.

But credit should be given to Pandya for marshalling the resources well on his ODI captaincy debut, albeit as a stand-in one.

The idea to bring in Shami for an early second spell proved to be a masterstroke as Australia from 169/4 just collapsed like a house of cards.

He got Jos Inglis to drag one back onto his stumps and then in his next over, the delivery to Cameron Green

that sent the off-stump cart-wheeling was a real peach. It pitched on line of off-stump and Green had to commit but there was a shade late movement that beat the batter and knocked back the off-stump.

The veteran pacer helped India pull things back after an attacking 65-ball 81 from Mitchell Marsh set Australia on the course for a competitive total, as his second spell of 3-2-8-3 broke the back of Australia's resistance after a sparkling start.

Shami finished with brilliant figures of 6-2-17-3.

On the other hand, Siraj, who provided an early wicket in the second over, also enjoyed success in his second spell to return with 5-4-1-29-3, snaffling the last two wickets in the Australian innings. Marsh provided Australia with a rollicking start -- cracking 10 fours and five sixes in his first-ever innings as an opener in ODIs -- on his comeback to international cricket after a three-month layoff following an ankle surgery.

Marsh's charge in the first half of the game ensured Australia kept moving briskly towards a big total, but India kept making inroads at regular intervals and eventually bundled them out for a below-par score.

Coaches, Players Want Valley Girls To Take Up Football

Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR: Kashmiri parents should bring their daughters to watch football matches so that they can get inspired to take up the sport, said manager of the CRPF men's and women's teams Prem Thapa on Friday.

The men's football teams from the valley have done well over the past decade and Thapa feels there is huge potential for women as well in the sport.

"In Kashmir, there is good structure for football. Parents should encourage their girls and accompany them to the football grounds so that they can get connected with the sport," Thapa told PTI.



Football clubs from the valley, such as Real Kashmir and Kashmir FC, have done well at the national level and Thapa said there should be a professional club for women as well.

"There should be a professional club for girls here so that they can play and participate in other parts of the country. Like there is a football academy for boys, there should be facilities and support from the government for girls also," he added.

Manager and captain of the Manipur Police women's team, Oinam Bemben Devi, said while there was not much of a football culture in the valley, things can change if national-level events, like the All India Police Football Championships, are held here regularly.

"There is not much women's football culture in Kashmir but after this tournament (All India Police Football Championships),

Kashmiri women will also come forward. The culture can change here if more such tournaments are held," Devi said.

Devi said that local girls should come to watch women's matches in the ongoing championship.

"There are players who have played for the national team. They (local girls) can follow their footsteps to make their state and country proud," she said.

Nisha, an upcoming CRPF player, said parents should encourage girls to take up the sport just like they do for boys.

"I belong to Haryana. Earlier, girls there were not allowed to venture out but at present a lot of girls are taking up sports. I

think girls should be supported to come out from homes and play like boys," she added.

Deputy Superintendent of Police in Jammu and Kashmir Syed Sleet Shah said women should be given opportunities in all fields, including sport.

"They should be provided avenues in life so that they can come forward, put their best foot forward and be a member of the society. We see women in sports and it's always so inspiring. Once you are a part of a sports team, it builds confidence," Shah said.

Vice Chancellor of Kashmir University, Prof. Neelofar Khan, said the varsity encouraged the female students to actively participate in sport.

"It's wonderful to see the teams have come from other parts of the country and they are playing. It's a great encouragement for our students.... it's a great moment," she said.

Downtown Heroes Lose 3-0 In I-League 2

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Downtown Heroes FC lost their 2nd Division League (I-League 2) Group Stage match 3-0 against Delhi Football Club on Friday at Minerva Academy Ground in Punjab.

The Heroes lost the opening match against Jagat Singh Palahi Football Club 1-0 and now sit at



the bottom of the five-member Group A table with zero points from two matches.

Delhi Football Club took control of the match early on, scoring in the sixth minute. They doubled their lead in the 56th minute before adding another in the 78th minute.

The Heroes' next match is scheduled for Monday, March 27 against Himachali side Tech-tro Swades United FC.

Madrid Gets Chelsea, City To Meet Bayern In Champions League



Agencies

NYON: Real Madrid's path to another Champions League title will have to go through Chelsea in the quarterfinals for the second straight year.

Friday's draw takes Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti back to face his former club, which was eliminated by a goal from Karim Benzema in extra time a year ago.

This time, the first leg between the past two Champions League winners will be in Madrid instead of London -- on April 11 or 12.

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola also has a reunion with a former club. The English

champions were drawn to face Bayern Munich, which has won all eight of its game in the competition this season and will play the first leg away from home.

The winner between City and Bayern will go on to play Madrid or Chelsea in the semifinals.

The other half of the draw is dominated by Italian clubs with the possibility of a Milan derby in the semifinals.

AC Milan will first face Napoli, the runaway Serie A leader which is making its debut in the quarterfinals of the Champions League or the old European Cup. The first leg is at San Siro.

Inter Milan will play at Benfica in the first leg, returning to

the country where it eliminated Porto in the round of 16.

Inter is playing at this stage of the competition for the first time in 12 years, while Milan is ending an 11-year wait.

Six former champions who have combined for 34 titles in the 68-year history of the competition were in the draw. Only Napoli and Man City have yet to be European champions.

The first legs will be played on April 11 and 12. The return games are scheduled for April 18 and 19.

The semifinal matches will be played between May 9-17 and the final is set for June 10 at the Ataturk Olympic Stadium in Istanbul. (AP)

Man United Bidders Get A Closer Look Ahead Of Potential Sale

Agencies

MANCHESTER: Bidders are getting a closer look at Manchester United as the potential sale of one of the biggest soccer clubs in the world gathers pace.

Representatives of Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad Al Thani toured United's famed Old Trafford stadium and Carrington training base on Thursday as part of a series of meetings with contenders bidding to buy out current owners the Glazer family.

The latest step in the process comes after indicative offers for the Premier League club were made last month via U.S. merchant bank Raine Group, which is handling what could be the biggest-ever sale of a sports team.

Sheikh Jassim, the chairman of Qatar Islamic Bank and son of a former Qatari prime minister, is aiming to take 100 percent ownership of United. He did not travel to Manchester for meetings with club executives but sent advisers including Shahzad Shahbaz, who is the president of the Nine Two Foundation set up to complete the takeover.

Another bidder, INEOS owner Jim Ratcliffe, will tour United on Friday.

No other contenders have publicly declared their intention to buy United.

Ratcliffe has submitted a bid for majority ownership.

It is still not certain the Glazers will cede total control of the club the Americans have owned since 2005.

Much will depend on how high the bidding goes, with figures of up to \$6 billion estimated.

That is about twice as much as Premier League rival Chelsea sold for last year when it was bought by a consortium led by Todd Boehly and Clearlake Capital.

Raine also handled that sale.

The Glazers, who also own the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, announced in November that they were open to selling United as they explored "strategic alternatives."

Prospective new owners of United would likely need to in-

vest extensively in the stadium, which could include a rebuild at an estimated cost of around \$1 billion.

The tours held this week should give buyers a further indication of how high to pitch their next bids, which could be made within the next 10 days.

Sheikh Jassim has said he will look to "invest in the football teams, the training center, the stadium and wider infrastructure." His bid will also be debt free.

Ratcliffe said he would take "fan-centered approach" to ownership, adding that he is "focusing on winning the Champions League." The statements from both bidders will chime with United fans who have had to watch rivals Manchester City and Liverpool dominate English soccer in recent years.

Many supporters are also desperate to drive out the Glazers, who have been subject to numerous protests during their ownership.

Qatari-based ownership would offer the potential to rival the richest clubs in the world such as Abu Dhabi-backed City and Paris Saint-Germain, which also has Qatari owners.

Billionaire Ratcliffe, meanwhile, is one of the richest people in Britain and a childhood United fan. Sheikh Jassim is also a longtime United fan. (AP)



Germany Cancels WC Event After Russia Readmitted

Agencies

BERLIN: Germany's fencing federation has cancelled a women's foil World Cup event after the sport's global governing body (FIE) reversed a ban on athletes from Russia and its ally Belarus, it said on Thursday. Athletes from the two countries were banned from many international competitions after Russia invaded

Belarusians to resume competing in FIE events at last week's extraordinary congress. German federation (DFB) President Claudia Bokel, a team epee silver medalist at the 2004 Olympics, said the decision had triggered "heated discussions".

"Our solidarity goes to the people of Ukraine who are suffering from the war of aggression," Bokel said.



ed Ukraine last February in what Moscow calls a "special military operation".

More than 60% of nations voted to allow Russians and

The competition was scheduled for May 5-7 in Tauberscheidt. Fencing's qualifying process for next year's Paris Olympics is due to begin in April.

University Agrees To \$14m Settlement In Wrestler's Death

Agencies

WILLIAMSBURG: A Kentucky university has agreed to a settlement of more than USD 14 million over the death of a student wrestler hours after practice, the school announced.

The settlement over the death of junior Grant Brace, 20, of Louisville, Tennessee, includes an agreement for the University of the Cumberlands to participate in a heat-illness training program and to help raise awareness of heat-related injuries, the university said Wednesday in a statement.

Brace's death on August 31, 2020 from heat stroke after he begged for water and was refused "was tragic and entirely avoidable," news outlets reported, citing the lawsuit.

Brace was diagnosed with narcolepsy and ADHD and was prescribed Adderall which requires maintaining hydration, according to the lawsuit.

He died during the wrestling team's first training day of the season. After practice, the team had to sprint multiple times up and down a steep hill and Brace completed several before sitting down from exhaustion. The then-coach threatened to kick Brace off the wrestling team, so he ran up the hill again and was later heard saying "I'm done. I can't do this anymore," the lawsuit said.

He begged for water and his condition continued to deteriorate, but the coaches didn't provide water or contact the trainer



or emergency medical personnel, according to the lawsuit.

Brace left and tried to drink from an outdoor water fountain that was not working. He also tried to get into a building but could not, and he collapsed. About 45 minutes later, the coaches found him dead with his hands clenched in the grass and dirt, according to the suit.

The university said in a statement that it believed it could defend the claims asserted in the lawsuit, but the legal process would have been long and costly.

"The University made the decision to settle the case now in a manner it hopes will respect the Brace family's tremendous loss," the statement said.

It said the safety of students and athletes is a top priority and it "welcomes the opportunity to work with the Brace family's consultant to ensure it is providing the safest environment possible for student-athletes in all sports."

Jaded With Education, More Americans Are Skipping College

When he looked to the future, Grayson Hart always saw a college degree. He was a good student at a good high school. He wanted to be an actor, or maybe a teacher. Growing up, he believed college was the only route to a good job, stability and a happy life.

The pandemic changed his mind.

A year after high school, Hart is directing a youth theatre programme in Jackson, Tennessee. He got into every college he applied to but turned them all down. Cost was a big factor, but a year of remote learning also gave him the time and confidence to forge his own path.

There were a lot of us with the pandemic, we kind of had a do-it-yourself kind of attitude of like, Oh I can figure this out,' he said. Why do I want to put in all the money to get a piece of paper that really isn't going to help with what I'm doing right now?

Hart is among hundreds of thousands of young people who came of age during the pandemic but didn't go to college. Many have turned to hourly jobs or careers that don't require a degree, while others have been deterred by high tuition and the prospect of student debt.



What first looked like a pandemic blip has turned into a crisis. Nationwide, undergraduate college enrollment dropped 8 per cent from 2019 to 2022, with declines even after returning to in-person classes, according to data from the National Student Clearinghouse.

The slide in the college-going rate since 2018 is the steepest on record, according to the US Bureau of Labour Statistics.

Economists say the impact could be dire.

At worst, it could signal a new generation with little faith in the value of a col-

lege degree. At minimum, it appears those who passed on college during the pandemic are opting out for good. Predictions that they would enroll after a year or two haven't borne out.

Fewer college graduates could worsen labour shortages in fields from health care to information technology. For those who forgo college, it usually means lower lifetime earnings 75 per cent less compared with those who get bachelor's degrees, according to Georgetown University's Centre on Education and the Workforce. And when the economy

sours, those without degrees are more likely to lose jobs.

It's quite a dangerous proposition for the strength of our national economy, said Zack Mabel, a Georgetown researcher.

In dozens of interviews with The Associated Press, educators, researchers and students described a generation jaded by education institutions. Largely left on their own amid remote learning, many took part-time jobs. Some felt they weren't learning anything, and the idea of four more years of school, or even two, held little appeal.

Mediterranean Diets May Keep Prostate Cancer And Alzheimer's At Bay

Press Trust of India

Scientists have come forth with findings that report the importance of Mediterranean diets, or diets rich in vegetables and fruits with fish, in keeping serious diseases such as prostate cancer and Alzheimer's disease at bay.

Mediterranean diet is primarily a plant-based eating plan that includes a daily intake of whole grains, olive oil, fruits, vegetables, beans and other legumes, nuts, herbs, and spices.

Other foods like animal proteins are eaten in smaller quantities, with

the preferred animal protein being fish and seafood.

A study, published in the journal Neurology, has found that people who consume MIND and Mediterranean diets may have fewer signs of Alzheimer's disease - amyloid plaques and tau tangles in their brain - than people who do not consume such diets.

While they are both similar diets, the MIND diet prioritizes green leafy vegetables like spinach, kale and collard greens along with other vegetables.

While this study exhibits an association of a regular consumption of such diets with fewer Alzheimer's

disease plaques and tangles, it does not establish a causative relationship.

"These results are exciting - improvement in people's diets in just one area - such as eating more than six servings of green leafy vegetables per week, or not eating fried foods - was associated with fewer amyloid plaques in the brain similar to being about four years younger," said study author Puja Agarwal of Rush University in Chicago, US.

The study involved 581 people with an average age of 84 at the time of diet assessment who agreed to donate their brains at death to advance research on dementia.

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