

Disability Support Will Be History—Meet Kashmiri Innovator With A Cause

Saima Shakeel

At 21, Ajaz Hussain has already become a “tech-messiah” for the disabled people, given how his innovations are ending the traditional caregiving support to them. His EEG (Electroencephalogram) enabled wheelchair, for instance, is helping disabled persons in their daily needs without any assistance.

“Existing wheelchairs require the help of another person to move or the user’s finger to operate via a joystick or buttons,” Ajaz, a resident of Hazratbal, Srinagar, says.

“But my wheelchair is for completely crippled persons who can’t even lift their hands to control the wheelchair. This is for those who can only use their minds.”

The young techie’s innovation will function by capturing beta waves or EEG signals from the brain, which will then be used to drive the wheelchair.

According to him, such technology can change the shape of impaired people’s lives.

“Brain Computer Interface or BCI can have a dramatic impact on the life of a disabled or old person or persons with locked-in syndrome since it allows



control over numerous gadgets without any requirement of movement of the body parts,” he explains. “Such folks can control by paying attention or blinking.”

But if there’s a wheelchair like this, Ajaz, a BCA student at Amar

BUT MY WHEELCHAIR IS FOR COMPLETELY CRIPPLED PERSONS who can’t even lift their hands to control the wheelchair. This is for those who can only use their minds.”

Singh College, says, it will cost around Rs. 40 lakh “but I’m trying to make it affordable for all”.

Destination Mapping, he adds, is a key element of the EEG-controlled wheelchair. As the user goes around and autonomously achieves desired spots, the wheelchair creates a

virtual map by collecting commands from a smart interface.

Ajaz has already conducted extensive study and consulted more than 50 papers on wheelchairs from reputable magazines such as IEEE, Science Direct, and others.

“An innovator can make an

innovation if he has enough knowledge of past things,” he says. “Even if a system requires a minor update, you should acquire all of the information before upgrading it.”

Ajaz believes that the high expense of modern medical facilities has prevented many needy and impoverished individuals from benefiting from them. “Many updated medical facilities are in place, but the average person cannot afford them,” he says. “We must innovate in such a way that their costs are reasonable to all.”

When developing the improvements, he **More on P6**

Teen Held For Sensitive Social Media Post

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: A teenager was arrested on Monday for allegedly hurting the religious sentiments of a community in Jammu and Kashmir’s Ramban district, police said.

The 17-year-old allegedly uploaded on his social media account a post that triggered protests by the Muslim community on Monday, a police official said.

The protesters blocked the main road near Maitra Chowk for an hour, dispersing only after Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Mohita Sharma and Additional Deputy Commissioner Harbans Lal Sharma assured quick action.

“A case has been registered under relevant sections of the law against the accused who was also arrested,” SSP Sharma said.

She also appealed for communal harmony and brotherhood in the larger interest of peace in the region and warned of stern action against anyone found posting communally sensitive material on social media to create a divide in society.

The accused has been booked under relevant sections, including 295A (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion **More on P6**

No Militant Given J&K Govt Job: Omar

Says He Won't Support Policy Of 'Punishing Their Kin'

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: No militant was given government jobs by the previous Jammu and Kashmir dispensation, National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah said Monday, asserting that his party would not support any policy to punish relatives of militants as it is against natural justice.

Interacting with reporters after addressing a public rally -- his first in the city after the abrogation of Article 370 -- Omar Abdullah also raised the issue of “misuse of police against the civilian population”.

“No terrorist was given a (government) job but we did not punish people because they were relatives of terrorists. Is it fair for me to punish **More on P6**

J&K On Threshold Of Economic Revolution: LG

‘Those Hell-Bent Upon Breaking Morale Of Society Will Be Dealt With Iron Hands’

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha Monday said that Jammu and Kashmir will experience an economic revolution in near future, and the elements hell-bent upon breaking the morale of the society will be “dealt with iron hands”.

Sinha said that responsibility for the security of the success Jammu and Kashmir has achieved in terms of economy and business, lies with the police force.

He said the government has to work tirelessly in maintaining an atmosphere of stability, security and economic development in the newly carved out Union Territory.

“We need to deal with iron hands with the elements, who try to break the morale of the society as J&K is all set to experience an economic revolution in the near future. We have to work tirelessly in maintaining an atmosphere of stability, security and economic development of J&K,” Sinha said at the closing ceremony of 71st B.N Mullik Memorial All India Police Football Championship at Bakshi stadium.

The LG said that there must be a close eye on happenings around and ensure the police and other security forces are capable to fight the coming challenges.

Referring to the groundbreaking ceremony for the first foreign direct investment in Jammu and



KO Photo | Abid Bhat

Kashmir, a shopping mall and a multipurpose tower on the outskirts of Srinagar, Sinha said it was after a long time that the economic pendulum has shifted towards the Union Territory.

In a separate program, the LG said the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 provides a roadmap to establish India as a knowledge economy, and it should be implemented in letter and spirit.

Sinha was chairing the 82nd Council Meeting of the University of Kashmir, at the Raj Bhawan here.

“NEP 2020 provides a roadmap to establish India as a knowledge economy. It should be implemented in letter and spirit and it is essential that through this transformation, our higher education institutions contribute to create a prosperous society,” said the LG, who is the Chancellor of

the University of Kashmir.

He impressed on time-bound completion of various academic and research programmes and award of degrees to the students.

Sinha called for enhanced research activities by the university on local problems and issues. “Enhanced research activities will provide solutions to local problems and it will create comprehensive knowledge wealth that will be the key factor in all-round development”.

Noting that many industries are coming up in Jammu and Kashmir, he said there is a need to put special focus on skill development and capacity building.

“The university should build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and start-ups and the government will provide all the required assistance,” the Lt Governor said.

The University Council approved the proposal related to introduction of several new courses at the main and satellite campuses of the University to cater to the growing needs of the students.

These new courses include PG in Artificial Intelligence; Bachelor’s course in Economics, BBA-LLB and Medical Lab Technology programmes at South Campus, Anantnag; Integrated BSc-MSc Botany at North Campus, Baramulla and Integrated UG-PG programme in Arabic at Kupwara Campus.

The Council resolved to run all courses strictly in accordance with the guidelines and rules of the relevant statutory/regulatory bodies such as the UGC, AICTE and MCI.

The University Council also held detailed deliberations on several academic, administrative and research-related matters aimed to bring further qualitative improvement in the higher education sector of Jammu Kashmir.

Vice-Chancellor, University of Kashmir, Nilofer Khan, informed the Council that the University of Kashmir is holding the Y20 event in May 2023 as part of the country’s G20 Presidency, while all departments are presently holding programmes to spread the country’s G20 message among the masses.

Speaking at a function after attending the **More on P6**

Fake PMO Official

Court Reserves Order On Bail Plea



Agencies

Srinagar, March 20: A court here on Monday reserved orders on the bail plea of man from Gujarat, Kiran Patel, who conned the security establishment in Jammu and Kashmir into believing him to be a PMO official and got the requisite perks prior to his arrest earlier this month.

The prosecution opposed the bail plea, saying that the investigation in the case is still at infancy. On the other hand, the counsel representing the accused sought, arguing that the liberty of a person was sacrosanct and that there are no “serious” offences against him.

After hearing the submissions of the counsels, the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) Srinagar

Raja Mohammad Tasleem reserved the order to be pronounced on Thursday (March 23).

Kiran Patel, the imposter hailing from Gujarat posed as an additional director (strategy and campaigns) in the Prime Minister’s Office and enjoyed many perks, including a bulletproof car and security cover besides other hospitality. Kiran Patel was on his third visit to the Kashmir Valley when he was nabbed by security officials from a five-star hotel in Nishat area of Srinagar on March 2.

Police has ruled out any intelligence failure in the entire episode but blamed field officers for “lapse” with further avowal of action against those involved.

“There has been a proper FIR in this case. **More on P6**

JKP Will Help Punjab Police In Amritpal Case: DGP

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Pro-Khalistan preacher Amritpal Singh’s ‘Waris Punjab De’ outfit procured some weapons from Jammu and Kashmir, and all help will be extended to the Punjab Police in the case, the Union Territory’s police chief Dilbag Singh said on Monday.

The Jammu and Kashmir director general of police was speaking to reporters after the closing ceremony of the 71st B.N Mullik Memorial All India Police Football Championship at the Bakshi stadium here.

“Wherever Punjab Police needs us, the Jammu and Kashmir Police will extend all help to them. Some cases have come to the fore where some weapons were issued from here to the people there. We have



taken cognisance of such cases. A couple of cases have been registered and we will help the Punjab Police wherever they need,” Singh said.

The Punjab Police on Saturday launched a major crackdown against Amritpal Singh and members of his outfit ‘Waris Punjab De’.

The elusive preacher, however, gave police **More on P6**



Srinagar’s majestic Badamwari garden is abuzz with visitors as the almond trees are in full bloom, announcing the arrival of spring in Kashmir. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Academic Session Not To Begin From Apr-20: DSEK

Refute Media Reports, Says New Classes To Start After Exams End

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Director School Education Kashmir (DSEK) on Monday strongly refuted the news item published in some local dailies claiming that the New Academic Session in schools shall commence from April 20.

In an official handout issued here, Dr. Tassaduq Hussain, DSEK said that the news item is baseless and all the stakeholders including heads of the institutions have already been placed under strict instructions to complete the process of examination for classes 1st to 7th and 9th up to 20th March 2023 and start new classes immediately after culmination of the examinations

Board Exam Results To Be Out By May End

The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE) Chairman Parikshat Singh Manhas Monday said that the evaluation process of ongoing board exams was already initiated and the results will be declared in the ‘last week of May’.

“We have already **More on P6**

vide Letter No: DSEK/NEP/227-231/23 Dated: 23-02-2023. The statement read that the instructions have **More on P6**

S H O R T T A K E S

Properties Of Two OGWs Attached

Properties of two militant associates were attached in Bandipora district of North Kashmir on Monday, police said.

Continuing its crackdown on those harbouring militants and providing logistic support to them, police in Bandipora attached the two properties in presence of the executive magistrate, a police spokesman said. He said the properties **More on P6**

SIU Searches Militant’s House

The Special Investigation Unit (SIU) of Jammu and Kashmir Police Monday conducted searches at the house of a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant in Pulwama district in connection with a terror-related case, officials said.

They said searches were conducted at the house of Abdul Aziz Dar, father of active LeT militant Riyaz Ahmad Dar in Kakpora area of the south Kashmir district. **More on P6**

LG Greets People On Navroz

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday extended his warm greetings to the people, especially the members of the Parsi community, on the occasion of Navroz, the Parsi New Year.

In his message, the Lt Governor said that the auspicious occasion of Navroz symbolizes new beginnings and celebration of seasons.

“May the festival bring happiness, health and prosperity **More on P6**

Another DDC Member Joins Azad’s DPAP

District Development Council member Sagam, Anantnag on Monday joined Ghulam Nabi Azad-led Democratic Progressive Azad Party in South Kashmir’s Anantnag district. Reports said that Advocate Muhammad Saleem Parrey, who secured 2172 votes in DDC polls in 2020 and defeated his nearest rival Anees-ul-Islam of Apni Party by around 700 votes, joined the party today **More on P6**

Retired Justice A Q Parrey No More

Retired Justice Ab Qadir Parrey died after a brief illness at his home in south Kashmir’s Anantnag district on Monday.

One of the family members said that Parrey was not keeping well for quite some time and today breathed his last at his home. He said his funeral was held at Sherbagh area of Anantnag town. Meanwhile, several political and socio religious **More on P6**

4 Drug Peddlers Arrested In Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir Police on Monday claimed to have arrested four drug peddlers and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

“In Budgam, acting on an information that one Abdul Hamid Mir son of Abdul Ahad Mir resident of Badran has concealed narcotic substance at his house. Accordingly, a police team from Police Station Magam **More on P6**

Secy Tourism Inaugurates Spring Festival At Badamwari

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Secretary Tourism, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah today inaugurated the Spring Festival, marking onset of Spring' at iconic Badamwari Park here.

Speaking on the occasion, the Secretary expressed his delight at the start of the festival, stating that the Spring Festival is an opportunity for people to come together and celebrate the arrival of this beautiful season. He added that this season is a time to enjoy the outdoors, experience local traditions, and connect with our communities.

The Secretary further highlighted that such kinds of festivals are aimed at promoting tourism and showcasing the diversity and beauty of many unexplored destinations. He added that the department will organise such

kinds of events across the length and breadth of the UT to tap the potential of virgin tourist destinations here.

Dr. Abid on the occasion also highlighted the government's commitment to developing the tourism sector, with initiatives aimed at improving infrastructure, enhancing tourism services, and promoting sustainable tourism practices.

Speaking on the occasion, Director Tourism Kashmir, Faz Lul Haseeb said that the department has lined up a series of activities at different tourist destinations across Kashmir division to give people and visitors maximum avenues for recreation. He added that the department is providing all possible assistance to the tourists and visitors who want to visit Kashmir and experience its enthralling scenery and beauty.



J&K LG, Manoj Sinha posing for a picture with a woman entrepreneur during SAARS Exhibition in Dal Lake on Monday. KO Pic Abid Bhat

Parliamentary Panel Recommends Fresh Mapping Of Dal Lake

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A parliamentary panel has recommended to the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory administration to conduct fresh mapping of world famous Dal Lake.

In its report, the department-related parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Home Affairs has recommended to the UT administration to conduct fresh mapping of Dal Lake.

"The Committee recommends that the UT administration may conduct fresh mapping of Dal Lake to get an understanding about the percentage of the lake's water which is relatively clean or severely degraded. This will help the UT administration to make a conservation plan for Dal Lake as well as in removing encroachments," reads the

report which was tabled in the Parliament during the ongoing budget session.

The panel has recommended that the cleaning of the water-body should be completed within a time frame. "Additional allocations, if required, may be sought from the Ministry of Finance at the Revised Estimates(RE) stage for this purpose," the report states.

Briefing the panel about the steps taken for the restoration of Dal-Nagin lake, the UT Administration on Feb 16, 2023 informed them that the work for the preservation of both the water bodies spread over an area of 25.01 sq. km. and in the catchment area of 337.17 sq. km has been undertaken in a mission mode.

"Numerous other steps including de-weeding and lake cleaning on a large scale have been taken up for the conserva-

tion of the lake to restore it to its pristine glory," the J&K administration told the panel.

In 2022-23, the Ministry of Home Affairs allocated Rs 273 crore for the rehabilitation of the Dal-Nagin Lake.

The committee, in its report, said that it notes that while 273 crores was sanctioned in BE 2022-23, the UT administration has not provided details regarding its utilization.

The panel observed that there is a large number of encroachments in the Dal lake area.

"Weeds, silt and untreated sewage are increasingly choking the beautiful lake, which draws tens of thousands of tourists each year. The waste discharge from houseboats also adds to the pollution in the lake. The committee observes that the visible outcome of the projects are yet to be seen," the report further states.

Srinagar Smart City Advisory Forum Meeting Held

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Srinagar Smart City Advisory Forum (SSCAF) meeting was held today in the Conference Hall, ICCS Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by Member of Parliament (LS), Mayor Srinagar, Advisor to J&K Government on Smart Cities, Commissioner SMC, Additional Commissioner, Kashmir, Chief Engineer PW(R&B) Department, Chief Engineer KPDC, Director Floriculture, VC SDA, RTO Kashmir, Contoller Examination University of Kashmir, Urban Experts, etc. officers of

different departments, traders' fraternity, technical experts, social experts, scientists, etc.

In addition to the ongoing projects presentation by CEO of Srinagar Smart City, Athar Aamir Khan, a presentation was also given by Professor Prasanna Desai, Architect, and Urban Designer from Pune.

Professor Prasanna Desai shared his valuable insights and suggestions regarding urban design and planning aspects of the ongoing projects.

A detailed discussion was held regarding the ongoing projects, and valuable suggestions, views, and unending support

were expressed by all the participants which were duly noted by the Srinagar Smart City team.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to all participants and an acknowledgment for the active support and hard work from all the departments, various organizations, traders' fraternity, and especially the Srinagar Smart City Limited team.

The Srinagar Smart City team appreciated the valuable inputs received from all the participants and ensured incorporating the suggestions and feedback received to enhance the ongoing projects.

Admin Launches Market Checking in Srinagar Parts Ahead of Navroz

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Ahead of Navroz Festival, the special teams of District Administration Srinagar Monday launched an intensified Market checking drive in various parts of the City in order to curb profiteering, hoarding of essentials in the market, besides to maintain quality and standard of the food items.

The drive was conducted on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad by the checking squads headed by SDM West Mr Primroze Bashir along with a team from the Food safety department.

The Teams conducted intensive market checking in different parts of Srinagar City including Shalteng, Parimpora, Qamerwari, Bemina, Zadibal, Hawal, Soura, Lalbazar areas of the District and booked several erring shopkeepers found failing to maintain the quality of food items, not displaying rate lists of essential commodities, selling expiry products, besides indulging in practices of illegal profiteering and sale of underweight products.

During the market checking, a fine of about Rs 28000 was also imposed on the erring shopkeepers and rotten vegetables and other items were destroyed on the spot.

Mayor Fumes Over Water Curtailment Plan on Navroz

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: Mayor Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) Junaid Azim Mattu has taken a serious note of a notice issued by the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Water Works Division, Srinagar regarding shortage of water supply on the occasion Navroz-Alam.

Pertinently, the Executive Engineer had issued a notice saying due to the cleanliness of the 18,00,000 Gallon Service Reservoir Aalasteng water treatment plant was to be carried out, the water supply in many city areas would get affected. The notice further mentioned that the water supply would get affected from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on 20th March, Monday.

However, Mayor Srinagar Municipal Corporation Junaid Mattu tweeted that the notice had been withdrawn with immediate effect.

"This notice stands withdrawn effective immediately. No part of the city will be deprived of water supply on the eve of the celebration of Nowroz. Have asked for the repairs to be deferred till after Nowroz" Junaid tweeted on his official twitter account.

DC Srinagar Reviews Power, Water Supply Arrangements For Ramadan

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad on Monday chaired a meeting here at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex in order to take review of the preparations/arrangements being made by all line Departments for ensuring all basic amenities and supplies ahead of the holy month of Ramadan.

The Deputy Commissioner also finalized the arrangements for observance of upcoming festivals of Navroz and Navratri being celebrated on March 21 and March 22 respectively.

At the outset, the DC sought a detailed action plan from concerned Departments regarding the arrangements being put in place during Holy month of Ramadan related to electricity, water supply, cleanliness, transport, parking and medical facilities etc.

The DC directed the Department of PDD to ensure uninterrupted power supply during the month, particularly during Sehri and Iftari times. He asked the PHE Department to make proactive arrangements for adequate supply of drinking water in all areas of the District.

Similarly, the department of FCS&CA was asked to ensure adequate supply of essentials including Ration, LPG supply and availability of all essentials at Government approved rates.

He also stressed on deploying special teams under the supervision of SDM, East and SDM West from tomorrow to carry out market checking in order to curb profiteering, hoarding of essentials in the market, in addition to maintaining quality and standard of the food items.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Office Of The Divisional Forest Officer Special Forest Division Tangmarg

SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTICE
e-NIT NO: 24of 2022-23 DATED: 13-03-2023

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble President of India, e-tenders (Two cover system) are invited from registered, reputed and resourceful Contractors/Firms registered with Jammu & Kashmir Govt./Central Govt. Organizations for the following works:-

S.No.	Name of Work	Adv. cost (Rs. in Lakh)	Bid Security (EMD) INR (Rs.)	Class of Contractor	Cost of Tender Document (Rs)	Time of Completion
01	Construction of Gazbo (View-Point) at Zig Mode Tangmarg Gulmarg Road Gulmarg Range Forest Division Tangmarg (6-20 Event).	15.48	30960	'B, C & D' Class Civil contractor	800	30 Days

The position of codal formalities in respect of above work(s) is as under:

Position of Funds	Budgeted
Position of AA/TS	Accorded vide No.138 /CCF(K) of 2023 dated 23-02-2023 Accorded vide No.27 /CF(Sgr) of 2023 dated, 23-02-2023
Position of AA/TS	Accorded vide No.139 /CCF(K) of 2023 dated, 23-02-2023 Accorded vide No.20 /CF(Sgr) of 2023 dated, 20-02-2023
Position of AA/TS	Accorded vide No.133 /CCF(K) of 2023 dated, 20-02-2023

The e-NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, scope of work, Bills of Quantities(B.O.Q.),Terms & Conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the website:-www.jktenders.gov.in.

Publishing Date:	13-03-2023
Download Start Date:	13-03-2023 from 4:00 PM
Bid submission Start Date:	13-03-2023 from 4:00 PM
Bid submission End Date:	23-03-2023 upto 4:00 PM
Date of Opening of Technical Bid through online:	24-03-2023 at 11:30AM in the office of the office of Conservator of Forests Srinagar Circle Srinagar.
Date of Opening of Financial Bid through online:	To be opened (Online) after technical evaluation is completed.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website: https://jktenders.gov.in.
- Bids uploaded must accompany Govt. Treasury Receipt (cost of tender document) in the shape of Treasury Challan for the amount shown against the work above to be deposited in Govt. Treasury under Account Head 0406- Forest and Bid Security in the shape of EMD(CDR) for requisite amount and pledged to Divisional Forest Officer.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of bids.
- The bidders have to submit their Technical & Financial bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No Technical or financial bid will be accepted in physical/hard form. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents i.e Bid security in shape of EMD in form of CDR), Valid Registration Card issued by PWD/CPWD/Forest Dept. duly renewed for the current year 2022-23.PAN, Valid GST Registration, Govt. Treasury receipt (Cost of Tender Document), Affidavit cum undertaking.
- As per rule 171 of GFR-2017, Performance Security shall have to be deposited by successful bidder to the order of 3% of the value of contract and if there are compelling circumstances, performance security in excess of three percent may also be demanded.
- The Department will not be responsible for any delay in online submission of the bid due to any reason (technical or otherwise).
- The Department shall not be held responsible for selection criteria/policy matter being adopted by the Directorate of Information regarding publishing the NIT, in any of the newspaper under circulation.
- The Tender Accepting Authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
- All other terms and conditions shall remain same as per PWD form 25 (double leaf) and as per the Detailed Tender document.


Sd/-
Divisional Forest Officer, Special Forest Division,
Tangmarg.


NO: DFO/TNG/Accts/2022-23/329-34
DIPK-18571/22 Dated:-20/03/2023

 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
BIJBERA: 01932-228243
PAMPORE: 01933-294132
PATTAN: 01954-293507
QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

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


**HIJRI
CALENDAR**

28 Shaban
1444

PRAYERS	
FAJR	5:11
ZUHR	12:40
ASR	4:58
Magrib	6:45
ISHA	8:06

This Day In History

- 1942 - Convoy OP9 departs Great Britain to Murmansk
- 1943 - Assassination attempt on Adolf Hitler fails
- 1945 - During WW II Allied bombers begin 4-day raid over Germany
- 1958 - USSR performs atmospheric nuclear test
- 1962 - Yogi the bear becomes the 1st creature to be ejected at supersonic speeds by the US military testing ejection seats
- 1965 - US Ranger 9 launched; takes 5,814 pictures before lunar impact
- 1975 - Ethiopia abolishes its monarchy after 3,000 years
- 1979 - Egyptian Parliament unanimously approve peace treaty with Israel
- 1990 - Namibia becomes independent of South Africa, Sam Nujoma becomes president
- 1991 - 27 lost at sea when 2 US Navy anti-submarine planes collide
- 1991 - UN Security Council panel decided to lift the food embargo on Iraq
- 1992 - Pakistan scores 6-264 to overhaul NZ in exciting World Cup semi
- 1994 - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) enters into force after being ratified by the required number of nations
- 1999 - Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones become the first to circumnavigate the Earth in a hot air balloon.
- 2002 - In Pakistan, Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh along with three other suspects are charged with murder for their part in the kidnapping and killing of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl.
- 2006 - Immigrant workers constructing the Burj Dubayy in Dubai, The United Arab Emirates and a new terminal of Dubai International Airport join together and riot, causing \$1M in damage.
- 2012 - Five former Guatemalan paramilitaries are sentenced to 7,710 years in jail for their role in the Plan de Sanchez massacre in 1982
- 2012 - Greek Parliament votes in favour of an international bailout deal
- 2013 - 42 people are killed and 84 are injured by a bombing in a mosque in Damascus, Syria
- 2013 - At least 45 people drown and 60 are missing after a Nigerian boat sinks off the shore of Gabon
- 2013 - 24 people are killed and 100 are injured by a tornado and hail storm in southern China
- 2013 - The European Space Agency reveals new data that indicates that the universe is 13.82 billion years old
- 2014 - Russia formally annexes Crimea amid international condemnation

From KO Archives

Student Killed, 10 Hurt In Baramulla School Blast

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A student was killed and ten others were injured when a powerful blast rocked a school, which also housed troops of Rashtriya Rifles in Baramulla district of North Kashmir on Friday, official sources said.

The blast followed by several firing shots took place at Government High School, Nadihal, 55 Km's from here, killing a 10th class student Mohsin Dawar Lone and injuring ten other boys, the sources said adding condition of two students was critical.

The incident took place at 1:05 PM when the students were leaving the school, the sources said adding today being Friday the school observes half day to facilitate the students to offer prayers.

The cause of the explosion was not known, the sources said adding that it was either grenade or IED explosion. Rashtriya Rifles troops who were camping in the school, fired several shots in air after the explosion rocked the area, the sources said.

A police party from Bandipora police station immediately rushed to the scene and the whole area was cordoned off, they said. Immediately after the incident panic-stricken villagers rushed the school to inquire about the welfare of their wards.

Several thousand people gathered outside the school and were protesting against the presence of the troops inside the educational institute, the sources said. Reinforcements had been rushed to the area to maintain law and order, the sources said.
(Kashmir Observer, 21 March, 2005)

KASHMIR OBSERVERTM

Tuesday | 21-03-2023

Manage Tourism Around Dal

Opening of Tulip garden for public is drawing thousands of tourists and locals to witness 1.5 million flowers in bloom at Zabarwan foothills. Formerly known as Siraj Bagh, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden was opened in 2008 by then chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir Ghulam Nabi Azad to boost tourism in the Valley. Manoj Sinha, the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, announced at the opening ceremony that about 68 types of tulips will bloom this year. He said that last year, the garden had witnessed 3.60 lakh visitors, which is the highest since it was opened. We are likely to surpass this number this year.

That said, the throngs of people visiting tulip garden have clogged the Boulevard, the principal approach road to it. The peak traffic hours remain a horror. A chaotic spectacle plays out on the road every day. It takes hours to travel a distance of a few kilometres to work. And there is no hope that things can improve until the tulip garden is closed by April end. Until then, the traffic congestion is set to continue.

This has been a source of severe inconvenience to people living in the neighbourhoods surrounding Boulevard. Some localities are being choked by more vehicles than they have ever seen before, with traffic snarls fueled by an unrestricted tourist rush to tulip garden. People can't reach their workplaces, students to their schools and patients to the hospitals. They are endlessly stranded on the roads. Traffic often spills over into the interiors of the colonies. What is more, there is no end in sight to this ordeal, forcing the residents to take long detours which, in turn, has disrupted their lives. Many of them have expressed their helplessness by posting videos on social media platforms. These include patients caught in the unending jam stretching miles.

This is why the administration needs to pay urgent attention to this sad state of affairs. The grievances of the ordinary residents of the Dal areas shouldn't become subservient to those who come from outside, even though we need to do everything to encourage tourism in Srinagar, as also elsewhere in the valley. But there's a need for a balancing act between promoting tourism and ensuring that the lives of the local residents aren't impacted. One remedy for this is to better regulate the traffic. The administration can resort to many innovative means to achieve this: for example by not allowing people to drive in their personal vehicles to the tulip and the other gardens along Boulevard. The administration should make an alternative transport arrangement to ferry people along the boulevard. There are several other solutions that can be evolved and the traffic department is quite capable of dealing with the situation. That is, provided the administration takes an empathetic view of the woes of the people in the neighbourhood.

OTHER OPINION

Why India's exports and imports have been contracting

Especially worrying is the deepening of the pace of contraction in both exports and imports. Merchandise exports fell by 8.8 per cent in February, after declining by 6.6 per cent in January and 3.1 per cent in December, while imports declined by 8.2 per cent in February, after falling by 3.6 per cent in January. On the flip side, a consequence of this deepening contraction is that the country's merchandise trade deficit narrowed further to \$17.4 billion in February.

The disaggregated data shows that core-exports, which exclude exports of oil, gold and gems and jewellery, have continued to contract. In fact, 16 of the 30 main export segments actually fell in February, with even labour intensive segments such as leather and textiles witnessing deep contraction. As per a report by Nomura, as of January, the sharpest declines have been observed in the country's exports to the US, China, Japan and the rest of Asia. While higher export growth in the first half of the financial year has pushed overall growth for the year so far (April-February) to 7.55 per cent, non-oil non-gems and jewellery exports are almost at the same level as last year. This is a worrying sign. On the imports side too, a similar scenario exists. Core imports, which exclude oil, gold and gems and jewellery, have continued to contract. The data points towards a softening of imports of consumer and investment goods, indicative of weakening domestic demand.

The outlook for exports remains subdued. According to a report by Crisil, India's merchandise export growth is likely to moderate to 2-4 per cent in the coming fiscal year as two of the country's biggest destinations for exports — the US and EU — are expected to slow down sharply. As per the International Monetary Fund's latest World Economic Outlook, the US economic growth is expected to slow down from 2 per cent in 2022 to 1.4 per cent in 2023, while the Euro region is expected to moderate from 3.5 per cent to 0.7 per cent over the same period. This assessment implies that exports are unlikely to provide a fillip to growth. The overall economic momentum will be further weighed down as the full impact of the RBI's tighter monetary policy will be felt across the country.

Indian Express

Chinese Conundrum in Middle East for US and India

Anuraag Khaund

Amidst the recent geopolitical churns in the current era, a new development brought tidings of seismic changes in West Asia. This was the agreement concluded between Saudi Arabia and Iran brokered by China in order to explore the possibility of rapprochement between the two long time regional as well as religious rivals and bring about much needed peace and stability in the war-torn Middle East which was bearing the brunt of proxy conflict between Riyadh and Tehran. The Joint Trilateral Statement released on 10 March 2023 stated that both the countries have agreed to re-start and re-open diplomatic missions of each other in their respective territories while adhering to the UN Charter principles of respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-intervention in each other's internal matters. In addition, it also mentioned that both the countries would also explore reviving the Security Cooperation Agreement of 2001 as well as the General Agreement for Cooperation in the Fields of Economy, Trade, Investment, Technology, Science, Culture, Sports, and Youth, which was signed in 1998. While the above events may have ushered in a way of hope in the region as seen in the other West Asian countries' responses to the same, yet the underlying logic of US-China rivalry beneath this China brokered attempt cannot be unseen. This constitutes the interest of the article which explores the implications of a strengthened Chinese foothold in West Asia for the US and India.

With apparent declining US interest in the West Asian region, as seen in the Biden Administration's National Security Strategy 2022 prioritising focus on Russia with regard to Europe and China in the Indo-Pacific, many countries including traditional allies such as Saudi Arabia have started looking for other options or partners in terms of economic and security partnerships. This search or diversification of partnerships has also been underlined by the perceptions of apparent US weakness and decline in the wake of Washington's withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021. In such a scenario, China has grabbed the opportunity to strike a foothold in the region which is crucial for Beijing's energy imports. This includes the visit of President Xi Jinping to Saudi Arabia and the signing of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement in December 2022 as well as developing a similar partnership with Iran for 25 years in March 2021. In the case of Iran, the agreement also involves Beijing investing 400 billion USD in Tehran's economy in areas such as oil and gas, petrochemicals, transportation, and infrastructure development. It is no wonder then that the development of such ties as well as the stakes in the Middle East have induced Beijing to help usher in the above rapprochement between the two bitter regional rivals.

The Iran-Saudi-China agreement, while helping secure Beijing's economic and energy interests in the region, has also allowed Beijing to subtly challenge Washington in the region as well as in the international order. This can be gleaned from the statement by China's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's remarks about the above agreement helping 'regional countries to get rid of external interference (US) and take the future into their own hands'. In addition, the Spokesperson also remarked that while 'pursuing no selfish interests in the region', Beijing respects the 'stature of Middle East countries as the masters of this region' and harbours 'no intention to and will not seek to fill so-called vacuum or put-up exclusive blocs'. This can be interpreted as Beijing's snub at the longstanding US policy of intervention and democracy-promotion in the region which has resulted in nothing but wars and disasters such as the instability in Iraq since 2003, the crisis in Syria etc. Along with it, by bringing Saudi Arabia and Iran to the negotiating table, Beijing has also criticised and showed the folly of the traditional US policy of forming 'exclusive blocs' or allies and military bases in order to encircle Tehran long dubbed as part of the 'Axis of Evil' along with Saddam Hussein ruled



Coming to India, while the rapprochement between Iran and Saudi Arabia would play an important role in softening the Sunni-Shia divide within the Indian Muslim population, yet the strategic foothold gained by China in the region would not be good news for New Delhi

Iraq and North Korea. At the same time, the lines 'China always believes that the future of the Middle East should always be in the hands of the countries in the region.. always supports the people in the Middle East in independently exploring their development paths and supports Middle East countries in resolving differences through dialogue and consultation to jointly promote lasting peace and stability in the region' takes a sharp dig at Washington's interventionist policy in the region in terms of democracy promotion and advocacy of human rights while trying to isolate countries such as Iran and even its ally Saudi Arabia over the alleged murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in 2019 while promoting the image of a Beijing as a non-interventionist power (as opposed to US) respecting the right of other countries to follow their own development paths which may be at variance with the global 'Western' norms. China's 'non-interventionist' credentials are also outlined by the last part of the statement which mentions Beijing's respect for and advocacy of attempts by regional countries to solve their differences on their own accord without exercising any undue influence or interference in the process (unlike the US) while 'continuing to contribute its insights and proposals to realizing peace and tranquillity in the Middle East and play its role as a responsible major country'. Note the use of the word 'responsible major country' instead of a 'great power country' (like the US) in the previous line. This further underlines the image projection of Beijing as a country markedly different from the US, who would behave 'responsibly' by being a 'a promoter of security and stability, partner for development and prosperity and supporter of the Middle East's development through solidarity' unlike the 'irresponsible' behaviour of the US in the region till date.

The Chinese challenge and subtle attack on the US were not lost to certain sections in Washington. This was seen in the statement of Mark Dubowitz, the chief executive of Washington based research institute Foundation for Defense of Democracies who said that the agreement was 'a lose, lose, lose for American interests' in the region which signalled that 'the Saudis don't trust Washington to have their back' while giving Iran 'an opportunity to peel away American allies to end its isolation' and 'China becoming the major domo of Middle Eastern power politics'. Despite National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby's pushback that the US has not abandoned the Middle East, the fact that Riyadh did not ask US to engage in the consultations leading to the March 10 agreement only highlights Saudi Arabia's (and possibly other US allies) diminishing trust upon Washington's capabilities and give further impetus to a sense of Chinese preponderance and diminishing US presence in the

region, and global stage at large, in the views of American scholar on Middle East Jon B Alterman. This perception brought about by the China brokered agreement could also affect the US attempts at normalizing ties between Israel and other Arab states, especially Saudi Arabia around the bogey of a 'rogue, nuclear Iran' as well as put dent in Washington led regional groupings like the I2U2 (India, Israel, US, and UAE) announced in 2022.

Coming to India, while the rapprochement between Iran and Saudi Arabia would play an important role in softening the Sunni-Shia divide within the Indian Muslim population, yet the strategic foothold gained by China in the region would not be good news for New Delhi. A declining US presence in West Asia would not be helpful to India's interests in the region at a time when New Delhi's engagement with the region has been marked through groupings such as the I2U2 which would lose its strength in the absence of Washington's leadership. This, and the fact that two members of the I2U2 Israel and UAE already enjoy high levels of partnership with Beijing with the latter's prestige having risen in the eyes of Abu Dhabi post the agreement would further affect the internal cohesion of the nascent grouping. However, the most important effects of this development will be on India's strategic projects such as the Chabahar port in Iran and the envisioned Indo-Arab-Mediterranean Corridor of the I2U2 linking India, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, and Greece. An increased Chinese presence and prestige in the Middle East, especially Iran would further add to the side-lining of the Chabahar port as well as delay in the execution of the Indo Arab Mediterranean Corridor (with most of the members such as UAE, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Greece having varying levels of strategic and other partnerships with China). Given the scale of its investment in West Asia and now with its new found prestige and partnerships, Beijing would have considerable leeway in drawing these countries away from the initiative while drawing them closer to become a part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) thereby cementing Chinese foothold in the resource rich region.

While the current Iran-Saudi rapprochement has been hailed by Chinese State Councilor and Director of the Office of the Central Foreign Affairs Commission of CPC, Wang Yi as 'a victory for the dialogue, a victory for peace...' It remains to be seen whether it transforms into China's victory at the behest of the US and India.

Anuraag Khaund is a student of International Politics (IP) from Central University of Gujarat (CUG).

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



OBSERVER
MAIL

All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, space and accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

MAIL YOUR LETTERS

P.O. Box # 337, GPO, Srinagar-190 001
email: editpage.ko@gmail.com

Paying Peanuts to Private School Teachers

TEACHERS in privately owned and managed schools are being exploited on a regular basis. The teachers employed in such schools are paid a fraction of their authorised salaries and are made to work endlessly for hours. Such malpractice is seen to affect the performance of the teachers in the classroom as well. The school

trust pays these teachers much less than the amount they were promised, leading to resignations and constant changes in the faculty. This has affected students' performance and led to an atmosphere of uncertainty in the schools which is detrimental to the cause of education.

As a nation that prides itself on respecting its teachers, it must be

understood that we cannot build a future for our students if we do not give due credit to our teachers. The government should ensure that such schools pay salaries as per the government's fixed pay scales. Payments should be made through banks and the government agencies should monitor the salary perks etc. The authorities must take up this

matter in order to investigate the issue further and mobilise the cause towards calling for a complete overhaul in the education system where needed. Teachers are the builders of the nation, it is a shame that the system fails to provide them the adequate reward they deserve.

Malika Hussain

NAUROZ: A Festival Of Life

Kashmir belongs more to Central Asia than to South Asia, owing to its glorious ties with the region in terms of geography, culture, traditions, religion and much more. However the bitter fact is that the rich Central Asian or to be precise Persian influence in Kashmir is on decline. It is where the significance of Nauroz, an annual celebration across Central Asia, has increased manifold in Kashmir.

Nouruz is the festival of spring celebrated across Central Asia. Nouruz starts at the exact moment of the vernal equinox, commencing the start of the spring. In Kashmir however, the festival has sadly attained sectarian connotation and this has decreased its significance for the general public.

Below we reproduce excerpts from an article written by renowned Iranian scholar, Dr Ali Shariati, underlining the significance of this great festival. -Editor

Nauroz is celebrated every year, and talked about each year again. Much has been said about it, and you have heard a lot in this regard. So is there no point in talking about it once again?

Of course there is! Do we not renew Nauroz each year. So let us also hear about it repeatedly as well. It is boring and even nonsense to repeat a scientific or a literary text. Wisdom rejects repetition, but sensations welcome it. Nature too, likes repetition, and the societies need it.

Nature is basically made up of repetition. A society is strengthened through repetition, sensations gain their life from it and Nauroz is a beautiful, repetitious story in which the nature, sensations and the society are all engaged, yet it never gets old or boring.

Nauroz, which has for long centuries been the master and most gracious of all the national ceremonies around the world, maintains its young, strong, lively existence, because it is not an imposed, an artificial or a political ceremony.

It is the ceremony of the universe, the happiness day of earth and the birthday of the sun and the skies. The glorious day when every natural phenomenon evolves, blooms and resolute filled with the sweet anxiety of many "startings".

The national ceremonies of the other cultures often encourage men and women to leave their workshops, farms, deserts, alleys and streets, gardens and pastures, and then gather up in rooms under the ceilings, behind closed doors.

They gather in such surroundings as bars, dancings, cellars, saloons and houses.. in places that are heated with gas, lit with light bulbs, filled with smoke, made pretty with artificial colors, decorated with paper or plastic flowers and ornaments, scented with perfumes or burning herbs... Nauroz, on the contrary, grabs the people's hands kindly and pulls them joyfully along with it out of their small surroundings in rooms, behind closed doors, under ceilings, from among tall buildings and cement pavements in and around towns into the glorious vast pastures, green areas and the broad, kind embrace of nature, where everyone feels free and jubilant.

The kind spring sun warms them and brightens their day, the glory of witnessing renewing of creation and themselves excites them, the wind and the spring rain beautifully designs new scenes which are already background with bloomed buds of various colors and scented with:

"Smell of rain,
smell of spearmint,
smell of soil.
And smell of boughs that are wet of gentle spring rain and shining clean"...

Nauroz is a great chance for recollection of lots of great memories. Memories of relationship between man and nature, which is renewed each year. This forgetful child of nature who has got himself so much engaged in artificial affairs and pre-scheduled engagements, that he/she has even totally forgotten his own lovely mother.

He/She Is Now Called Back To The Kind Embrace Of His Loving Mother With The Magical Spell Of Nauroz. There, They Will Together Joyfully Celebrate This Happy Reunion.

The careless child will find out about his/her own origin in the kind embrace of his/her mother, and the mother's face will bloom in finding back her lost child, shed tears of happiness for this happy occasion, cry joyfully in spring thunders, get young and pretty another time, and briefly speaking, like the Prophet Yaqub(AS), who regained his lost sight after smelling the scent of Yusuf's (AS) shirt, will be bestowed a sharp sight to see her dear child once again.

The More Complex Or Heavier Our Artificial, Technical Civilization Will Become, The More Urgent The Need To Reunion With And Return To The Nature's Embrace.

Thus, unlike traditions, that get old and incompetent, and sometimes even useless as time goes by,



What a beautiful story it is. Even prettier than reality itself! Doesn't every human being honestly feel that the first day of spring is the first day of creation repeated again?

Nauroz gets younger, prettier and stronger with the passage of time, and that is because Nauroz is a third way for reconciling between the two sides of the long cultural aware that has been going on since the era of Lao-Tso and Confucius until the recent days of Roseau and Walter.

Nauroz is not merely a good chance for relaxing and being happy, but a bare need of the society and the vitally needed spiritual food for a nation.

What else is capable of brightening up cold hearts, in a dark world, based upon ever-ongoing changes, revolutions, separation and loss, disintegration and dissolving, where the only thing that is stable and never subject to change is ever-renewing itself and instability?

What else can make a nation invulnerable in the cruel path of the carriage of time, which destroys anything in its path, breaks and crashes any pillar and demolishes any base?

No nation is formed within a night, one generation's era, or even two. A nation can be described as the continuous string of many generations that time, this pitiless, thoughtless sword of nature, separates their physical connections along the

course of their history.

Unfortunately, we cannot have a two-way correspondence with our ancestors those who have formed the soil of our nation.

The horrendous, deep valley of history is dug. The long, hollow centuries have formed a great impassable gap between us and them. It is only our traditions that speaking away from the sharp eyes of the cruel time executioner, can kindly take our hands and convey us spiritually to the other side of this terrifying valley, thus reconciling between us and our glorious past, our ancestors.

It is in the holy face of these traditions that we can feel their presence by our side today, and Nauroz celebrations are among the steadiest, most gracious of these traditions.

It has never been an excuse to be "careless, cheap and forgetful", but a pretext to announce the lively determination of our nation to be and to continue to be and maintain strong ties with a glorious past, which the time factor and the invaders of different races have always tried in vain, to wipe off the scene of existence.

Nauroz has always been so dear. To Zoroastrian clergies, to sagacious old men in ancient history, to Mus-

lims and to Persian speaking people all over the world.

Everyone has considered Nauroz a beloved one, and talked about it sympathetically. Even the philosophers and scientists who have considered Nauroz "The first day of creation, when God, in ancient Persians mythology created the universe".

What a beautiful story it is. Even prettier than reality itself! Doesn't every human being honestly feel that the first day of spring is the first day of creation repeated again?

If God Set A Beginning For Life On Earth, That Day Must Have Doubtlessly Been The Nauroz Day. Surely, Spring Has Always Been The First Season Of The Year. God Must Not Have Ever Made Summer, Winter Or Fall The First Season Of The Year, Nay!

The first grass on earth must have surely started sprouting on the first day of spring, the rivers must have started running then, and the buds blooming which means Nauroz must have always been on the first day of spring, simultaneous with the renewing of creation.

"Soul" must have surely been created in this season. Love's first bow must have stricken a heart on its first day, and the sun risen for the first

time on the very same day, marking the start of the clock of the universe.

Islam, Which Wiped Off All The Discrimination And Colors Of Racism And Tribalism, And Changed The Form Of Many Traditions, On The Contrary Polished The Beautiful Facade Of Nauroz. It Approved Of This Glorious Tradition. Let Its Sapling Continue To Grow And Get Stronger...

The two great events of appointing Ali (AS) as the Prophet's spiritual inheritor (Shah-e-Vilayat) and choosing him as the Calif of the Muslims and Emir of all the believers (Amirul Mu'menin) have both been on Nauroz day and surely what a great coincidence!

This glorious celebration, which had begun its life with the ancient soul and love of a nation, was now doubly fortified with the holy spirit of a great religion, Islam, as well.

The main prophesy of Nauroz yet, is to polish the stains of sadness and hopelessness off the betrayed hearts... and blow the soul of jubilation in the corpse of this land and its people.

And yet that is not all. Nauroz is responsible for strengthening the ties between the present generation and all our wise ancestors in the past on the one hand, and strengthen the ties of these all with mother nature on the other hand.

And we, in these happy moments, light the.. fire of Nauroz once again, and deep in our conscience, tread the black death-stricken deserts of hollow centuries, and get ready to celebrate Nauroz along with all the men and women.

Thus, we proudly proclaim our lively existence as a happy wise nation, standing tall amid the heavy winds of horrendous incidents which are capable of uprooting any strong tree, but not our nation's.

We announce that we are alive and we will continue our proud existence on this land till the end of the time, even in this dark century when our enemies, and particularly the usurper West, are fiercely determined to make us foreign with our own culture, so that we will be their obedient slaves, with no personality of our own to rely on.

So let us renew our alliance with all our ancestors and with all the different races of our nation, as well as with our mythology in this historical intersection of time, beliefs and traditions.

Let us borrow the precious inheritance of love from them and promise to be faithful inheritors of it. Let us promise as a nation, never to die.

Diabetes, Hypertension and Glaucoma Risk



WHILE GLAUCOMA CAN DEVELOP AT ANY AGE, PATIENTS WITH DIABETES, hypertension are more susceptible to this eye condition as these patients are more prone to risk of eye infection causing glaucoma. It mainly affects people above the age of 40 years

Dr. Shazia Shafi

Senior Glaucoma Specialist at Sharp Sight Eye Hospitals, Srinagar says, Glaucoma (Kala Motia) is a severe eye condition that damages our eye's optic nerve. Being progressive in nature it may get worse over time. This condition is often associated with buildup of pressure called intraocular pressure within our eye. This pressure damages the optic nerve which sends visual information from the eye to the brain.

While glaucoma can develop at

any age, patients with diabetes, hypertension are more susceptible to this eye condition as these patients are more prone to risk of eye infection causing glaucoma. It mainly affects people above the age of 40 years. A positive family history of glaucoma is also a very important risk factor. People with high minus numbers (myopia), history of eye trauma, or use of corticosteroid medicines for a long time are also more likely to develop a risk of glaucoma.

Glaucoma is known as the 'silent thief of vision' as people may

not show any signs or symptoms at first. Its symptoms appear gradually. Once you lose vision, it can't be reversed back. Therefore it's very important to get your eyes checked regularly. If diagnosed, then follow the treatment religiously. If left untreated, glaucoma can cause permanent blindness or vision loss. It is one of the leading causes of blindness worldwide.

DO NOT OVERLOOK THE SYMPTOMS:

- ▶ Blurred vision
- ▶ Persistent headache
- ▶ Sensation of dazzle of lights

while driving

- ▶ Seeing rings or halos around the light
- ▶ Finding difficulty in low light
- ▶ Redness in eye

Diagnosis:
To detect this disease, testing of eye pressure, optical coherence tomography (OCT) test, CT scan of the eye vein, visual field testing, examining the field of vision of the eye, and gonioscopy are conducted.

ADVICE:

Early detection is the key to saving vision. People above 40 years, a family history of glaucoma, eye injury,

near-sightedness or myopia, certain conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, migraines and patients on steroids are highly recommended to get regular eye checked in a year. You should get intraocular pressure checked every year regularly as it helps in early detection of glaucoma. Exercise regularly and eat a balanced diet to manage diabetes and hypertension. Avoid smoking and alcohol consumption as these are major risk factors for diabetes and hypertension. Avoid using eye drops without a doctor's advice as overuse of steroids present in these medicines can

cause damage to the eyes.

Treatment: Treatment is followed depending upon the state of glaucoma. Anti glaucoma medication is the first line of treatment given.

Depending upon the staging of disease your doctor can advise Trabeculectomy surgery or valve surgery also.

Detected at an early stage glaucoma can be prevented. Only treatment is Prevention & early detection. Let's spread awareness about this silent thief of vision.

'THE WORLD IS BRIGHT, SAVE THE SIGHT'



Mid-March Snowfall Worries Chenab Valley Fruit Growers

Press Trust Of India

Bhaderwah: Fresh snowfall on Monday in the upper reaches of Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district has left farmers a worried lot due to fear of damage to fruit crops as the trees are currently in bloom.

According to officials, snowfall ranging between two inches to one foot was recorded in different high-altitude areas, including Kota Top, Jatani, Kansar, Thanahala, Baach Dhar, Shankhoja, Chenera, Kaljugasar and Sivili.

Amid the continuous snowfall, the district administration has issued an advisory asking people not to venture near avalanche-prone areas and has also suspended vehicular traffic on Bhaderwah-Basohli-Pathankot and Bhaderwah-Chamba interstate roads.

Farmers, especially fruit growers, claimed that some areas received snowfall on March 20 after a long gap, catching them unprepared as they have already started working in their orchards after prolonged winters.



"We have already started ploughing our maize fields and were expecting to have a good crop of apricot, almond, peach and walnut as these trees were in the bloom," Saif Din Dhakkar, a farmer of village Kota Top, told PTI.

He said the unseasonal snowfall and the sudden dip in temperature have done a lot of damage to the fruit-bearing trees.

Additional Superintendent of Police, Bhaderwah, Kameshwar

Puri said most of the higher reaches in Bhaderwah and Bhallesa are witnessing fresh snowfall since morning.

"We have issued an advisory to the people residing in hilly slopes to avoid venturing outside especially near avalanche-prone areas till weather conditions improve," he said.

He said the traffic on the interstate highways was suspended as a precautionary measure after

the snowfall rendered a 30-km stretch from Thanala to Khundi Maral on Bhaderwah-Chamba road and 25-KM stretch from Thantera to Chatter Galla pass on Bhaderwah-Basohli road slippery.

"It is still snowing and no vehicles will be allowed to move beyond Thanalla on Bhaderwah-Chamba road and Thantera on Bhaderwah-Basohli-Pathankot road," Puri said.

Students who had started going to school after extended winter vacations with some of them appearing in class 10 and 12 annual examinations next month are finding it difficult to cope with the winter-like conditions.

"We have just started attending our classes after a long break. We fall in a hard zone and our exams are commencing from the first week of April but after the snowfall, we are not able to reach our school at this crucial juncture," said Mohd Arif (16), a class 10 student of village Kharangal-Bhallesa.

Rainfall Bring Down Mercury In Valley

Srinagar:Rains lashed most of plains in Jammu and Kashmir including Srinagar while Gulmarg received sleet in the last 24 hours, the weather department said on Monday. Quoting a meteorological department official, news agency GNS reported that in last 24 hours till 0830 hours today, Gulmarg received 15.8mm of sleet while Srinagar had 2.0mm of rain, Qazigund 7.4mm, Pahalgam 14.5mm, Kupwara 4.5mm, Kokernag 14.4mm, Jammu 0.0mm, Banihal 27mm, Batote 21mm and Bhaderwah 8mm.

Regarding the forecast, he said, generally cloudy weather with possibility of rain was expected in the next 24 hours.

On March 21, he said, "a brief spell of thunderstorm with rain was likely at isolated (50-60% chance) towards evening."

From March 22-23, he said, dry weather was expected while weather was likely to be generally cloudy with intermittent light rain with thunder

at scattered places on March 24-25. Thereafter, he said, the weather was expected to be dry with "no forecast of any major rain/snow till March 28 in J&K."

Regarding temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of 7.2°C against 5.5°C on the previous night and it was 2.5°C above normal for

the capital. Qazigund, he said, recorded a low of 6.0°C against 3.5°C on the previous night while Pahalgam recorded a low of 2.6°C against 1.2°C on the previous night.

Kokernag recorded a low of 4.6°C against 4.0°C on the previous night and it was 1.1°C above normal for the place, the

officials said. Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 0.6°C against minus 0.4°C on the previous night and it was 1.7°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 3.2°C against 4.5°C on the previous night and it was 0.1°C above normal for the north Kashmir area.

Jammu recorded a low of 14.7°C against 14.2°C on the previous night. It was 0.2°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 6.9°C (above normal by 0.2°C), Katra 14.1°C (1.5°C above normal) and Bhaderwah 7.0°C (3.1°C above normal).

Ladakh's Leh and Kargil, he said, recorded a low of minus 1.5°C and minus 4.2°C respectively.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Disability Support

had to confer with doctors numerous times because any more changes to the gadget could have an effect on the patient. "I consulted doctors at every stage of development," he says, "and specialists have responded positively to my inventions."

To promote robotics and technical knowledge among the younger generation, Ajaz and his friend Naveed have founded the F1 Tech Club. Members of the club come from different universities and colleges of Kashmir, as well as from other countries and prestigious Indian institutes.

"One must pay attention to the medical and health sector," Ajaz states. "Medical breakthroughs are few in comparison to other professions, and we need to make good health available to all people, regardless of their socioeconomic condition."

Inspired by Iranian physicist Mostafa Chamran Save'ei, Ajaz has already become a bio-mechatronic expert incubated in the NIT (National Institute of Technology), Srinagar, where he's giving lectures to seniors on the subject.

Under the supervision of Dr. Sandeep Rathee—Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, NIT, Srinagar—Ajaz and three other mechanical engineering students—Avinash, Malik Arslan and Arbina—created the Soft Robotic Glove. MSME (Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises) is funding the invention.

"Soft Robotic Glove is a BCI-enabled neuro-rehabilitation device that uses haptic feedback," Ajaz says. "It takes the place of a physiotherapist. This technology will allow the human brain to communicate with the glove by sending impulses to it via the emotive headset. The glove contains internationally authorised medicines."

The headset has sensors that are worn by the patient and record brain activity. It will detect brain activity and translate it into commands that will operate the glove, allowing individuals to perform activities more effectively. "It has been demonstrated that such robot-assisted active training is more effective than passive methods and can improve treatment outcomes."

Since childhood, Ajaz was fascinated with gadgets and would often experiment with them. "My parents would yell at me if I opened the television, refrigerator, or any other item, but I would fix them," he says. "I've learned a lot along the road, and I've always wanted to create devices that would have a positive impact on society and aid people in the health sector."

Innovations take time and a lot of approval and acceptance, he says. "If you want something unusual to happen, you must be patient."

Future is all about Artificial Intelligence and Brain Computer Interface, says Ajaz believing that handicapped people will no longer be a burden on others. "Such patients can conduct their daily activities using their brain and are not a liability to anyone."

Teen Held For

or religious beliefs) and 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place or birth), of the Indian Penal Code, the police said.

J&K On Threshold

Saras Aajeevika Mela at the iconic Dal Lake here, Sinha said the government aims for women-led development, and has taken several initiatives to help women entrepreneurs to scale up their business and providing opportunities to link with the global market.

The Lt Governor said the Saras Aajeevika Mela is providing an excellent platform for rural Self-help Groups and artisans to demonstrate their products, develop ties with buyers and learn about design, packaging and social media advertising.

"Self-help Groups are playing a vital role in the empowerment of women. We have taken several initiatives to help women entrepreneurs to scale up their business and provide opportunities to link with the global market," he said.

Around 6.27 lakh women associated with more than 78,000 SHGs in J&K have transformed the rural economy, creating jobs and some have also shown the potential to become bigger enterprises, he added.

The Lt Governor called upon the women entrepreneurs and members of SHGs to lead the socio-economic change taking place in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Lt Governor highlighted the flagship programmes and schemes of the government making a greater impact on the lives of women in the Union Territory.

"Our aim is women-led development. It is being ensured that the women entrepreneurs in urban, rural and remote areas get all the financial assistance and necessary handholding in packaging, branding, licensing, skilling and marketing," he said.

Earlier, the Lt Governor inspected various stalls displaying unique products, traditional cuisines from J&K and across the country and also interacted with the artisans, women entrepreneurs and members of Self-Help Groups.

Court Reserves

See, when Srinagar police got information on March 2, a team headed by a senior IPS officer arrested him red handed. Fake visiting cards were recovered," ADGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar (IPS) has said. "Rigorous interrogation was done. He remained under police custody for 14 days. He is presently in judicial remand. He is in jail completely," he had said, adding, "We are professionally carrying out investigation. We are taking help from Gujarat police and nobody will be spared."

Asked about "clear cut" guidelines by MHA that no security should be given to anyone on verbal instructions, he had said. "The SOP is there from the beginning. Instructions come from time to time. Police should not provide security to anyone on verbal instructions. We

don't. The mistake which has happened is being looked into and action will be taken against the officer who has given instructions."

Asked if it was an intelligence failure, the ADGP had responded in negative, saying "we cannot call it intelligence failure. There has been negligence at the field officer level and action will be taken."

No Militant

you for the crime committed by your father or a son? Tomorrow, if God forbid a close relative of (Lt Governor) Manoj Sinha Sahab commits a crime, should he be sent to jail?" the former chief minister said.

He was responding to a question on Sinha's recent allegations that previous governments in Jammu and Kashmir provided jobs to militants and their families and facilitated one lakh backdoor appointments.

"Natural justice is not that relatives are punished for the crimes of someone else. Nobody is advocating that hardcore militants should be given government jobs but it is also wrong to punish somebody just because they have the misfortune of being related to a terrorist," he said.

"This is not the way to win the hearts and minds of the people. This is not something we will ever support."

On Sinha's statement that 47 employees were dismissed for anti-national activities, Omar Abdullah said, "I am not going into a war of words... If for lakhs of appointments, all you can find is a list of 47 then that is next to nothing."

Accusing the Jammu and Kashmir administration of playing with the future of job aspirants by engaging a tainted company to conduct recruitment examinations, he said, "We want an inquiry how APTECH, which is blacklisted across the country, was given a contract and where the scams had taken place."

"We heard the contract was cancelled but the youth are still not happy. You (L-G) need to reassure the youth," the former chief minister said, alleging that the Jammu and Kashmir administration is not making any attempt to resolve the issues of the people.

About reports that the administration is going to conduct CID verification of all contractors, Omar said he had no such knowledge.

However, he alleged that this administration likes to misuse the police.

"Blacklisted companies are brought here but honest and efficient contractors are subjected to harassment. Attempts should be made to give contracts to those who are honest and who can work without giving or taking a commission. The extra-ordinary use of police against civilians is bad," Omar Abdullah said.

JKP Will Help

the slip and escaped their dragnet when his cavalcade was intercepted in Jalandhar district. The J-K police chief said militancy numbers in the UT were low and youngsters were taking to sports.

"Today, there is an atmosphere of peace in schools and colleges, and everywhere, students are focussed on their studies and are also participating in sports activities."

"They are also doing well in different competitive exams. We want to strengthen the atmosphere of peace so that the youth continue their studies without any hurdles and build their lives and take care of their parents and the society," Singh said.

Academic Session

been made with an aim so that not a single day of the students is wasted.

It also mentioned that the Department of school Education is committed to provide quality Education in schools and to kick start the Academic session at the earliest all the preparations are already in place.

Board Exam Results

started the evaluation process and we will try to finish the process at earliest," Manhas said.

"We have all of the employees involved in the evaluation process even though we have taken teachers on board. If everything goes as of the timeline fixed by the board, I think by the last week of May we should be able to finish it off," the chairman said.

Manhas further said, "Soon after the culmination of examinations, the academics for next grade will begin immediately. "We are working very hard so that no time will be wasted on students. Let's see the feasibility because the school education department is also involved."

He added, "This year, we have big challenges like implementation of a uniform academic calendar, New Education Policy and a lot more."

Manhas, who also heads the Jammu and Kashmir State Council of Education Research and Training (JKSCERT) on asking about the main focus of the council said, "SCERT will focus on getting up to the national and international level in terms of curriculum, teaching and training."

"We will try to adopt best practices to provide the quality of education to our students," he said—(KNO)

Properties Of

include houses of Abdul Majeed Reshi, father of accused Aijaz Ahmad Reshi alias 'Doctor' at Gundpora Rampura, and Mohammad Jamal Malik, father of accused Maqsood Ahmad Malik resident of Chitneybandey.

The properties were attached under section 25 of the UAP Act, the spokesman said.

Process for attachment of the property belonging to the above accused falling within the ambit proceeds of militancy was initiated by the order of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, he said.

According to the notice, the owners of these houses have been restrained from transferring, leasing out, disposing off, change its nature or deal with the said property in any manner

without the permission of designated authority, the spokesman said.

Any violation will attract penal provision of law, he added.

SIU Searches

The searches were in connection with a terror-related case, they said.

LG Greets

to all," the Lt Governor said.

Another DDC Member

in presence of its president Ghulam Nabi Azad.

This is the third party Parrey has joined in his political career. In 2020, he contested DDC polls on NC ticket and won from Sagam. In 2022, he joined the Peoples Conference.

This is the second joining of a DDC member in the Azad-led party in the past 24 hours. On Sunday, DDC chairman Anantnag Muhammad Yusuf Gorsi joined Azad-led party—(KNO)

Retired Justice A Q

organizations condoned the death of Parrey—(KNO)

4 Drug Peddlers

raided the specific house and conducted the search," a police spokesman said in a statement.

During the search, the police party was able to recover 1KG & 800 Grams of Charas like substance in powdered form from the house. The accused person was arrested on the spot and shifted to police station where he remains in custody, police said.

"In Baramulla, a police party under the supervision of DySP Hqrs Baramulla assisted by SHO PS Sheeri at a checkpoint established at Fatehfarh Crossing Sheeri arrested two (02) drug peddlers identified as Arbaaz Ahmad Khan son of Riyaz Ahmad Khan resident of Chheradari & Fasil Mehraj Mir son of Mehraj Ud Din Mir resident of Zandfaran. During their personal checking 100 grams of charas like substance was recovered. They have been arrested and shifted to a police station where they remain in custody," police said.

In Shopian, Police Station Zainapora has reliably learnt that one person namely Sameer Ahmad Ganie son of Mohamad Youf Ganie resident of Dhoobi Mohalla Zainapora has concealed contraband like substance in his residential house at Zainapora. Accordingly, a Police party from PS Zainapora alongwith concerned Executive Magistrate raided the said house and recovered 18.5Kgs of Charas like substance. The accused involved in the commission of crimes has been arrested on the spot. He has been shifted to the police station where he remains in custody, police added.

Accordingly, police said that the cases under relevant sections of law stands registered at respective police stations and investigation has been initiated.

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

Mid-March Snowfall Worries Chenab Valley Fruit Growers

Press Trust Of India

BHADERWAH: Fresh snowfall on Monday in the upper reaches of Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district has left farmers a worried lot due to fear of damage to fruit crops as the trees are currently in bloom.

According to officials, snowfall ranging between two inches to one foot was recorded in different high-altitude areas, including Kota Top, Jatani, Kansar, Thanhala, Baach Dhar, Shankhoja, Chenera, Kaljugasar and Sivili.

Amid the continuous snowfall, the district administration has issued an advisory asking people not to venture near avalanche-prone areas and has also suspended vehicular traffic on Bhaderwah-Basohli-Pathankot and Bhaderwah-Chamba interstate roads.

Farmers, especially fruit growers, claimed that some areas received snowfall on March 20 after a long gap, catching them unprepared as they have already started working in their orchards after prolonged winters.

"We have already started ploughing our maize fields and were expecting to have a good crop of apricot, almond, peach and walnut as these trees were in the bloom," Saif Din Dhakkar, a farmer of village Kota Top, told PTL.

He said the unseasonal snowfall and the sudden dip in temperature have done a lot of damage to the fruit-bearing trees.

Additional Superintendent

of Police, Bhaderwah, Kameshwar Puri said most of the higher reaches in Bhaderwah and Bhallesa are witnessing fresh snowfall since morning.

"We have issued an advisory to the people residing in hilly slopes to avoid venturing outside especially near avalanche-prone areas till weather conditions improve," he said.

He said the traffic on the interstate highways was suspended as a precautionary measure after the snowfall rendered a 30-km stretch from Thanala to Khundi Maral on Bhaderwah-Chamba road and 25-KM stretch from Thantera to Chattar Galla pass on Bhaderwah-Basohli road slippery.

"It is still snowing and no vehicles will be allowed to move beyond Thanalla on Bhaderwah-Chamba road and Thantera on Bhaderwah-Basohli-Pathankot road," Puri said.

Students who had started going to school after extended winter vacations with some of them appearing in class 10 and 12 annual examinations next month are finding it difficult to cope with the winter-like conditions.

"We have just started attending our classes after a long break. We fall in a hard zone and our exams are commencing from the first week of April but after the snowfall, we are not able to reach our school at this crucial juncture," said Mohd Arif (16), a class 10 student of village Kharangal-Bhallesa.

Rainfall Bring Down Mercury In Valley

SRINAGAR: Rains lashed most of plains in Jammu and Kashmir including Srinagar while Gulmarg received sleet in the last 24 hours, the weather department said on Monday.

Quoting a meteorological department official, news agency GNS reported that in last 24 hours till 0830 hours today, Gulmarg received 15.8mm of sleet while Srinagar had 2.0mm of rain, Qazigund 7.4mm, Pahalgam 14.5mm, Kupwara 4.5mm, Kokernag 14.4mm, Jammu 0.0mm, Banihal 27mm, Batote 21mm and Bhaderwah 8mm.

Regarding the forecast, he said, generally cloudy weather with possibility of rain was expected in the next 24 hours. On March 21, he said, "a brief spell of thunderstorm with rain was likely at isolated (50-60% chance) towards evening."

From March 22-23, he said, dry weather was expected while weather was likely to be generally cloudy with intermittent light rain with thunder at scattered places on March 24-25. Thereafter, he said, the weather was expected to be dry with "no forecast of any major rain/snow till March 28 in J&K."

Regarding temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of 7.2°C against 5.5°C on the previous night

and it was 2.5°C above normal for the summer capital.

Qazigund, he said, recorded a low of 6.0°C against 3.5°C on the previous night while Pahalgam recorded a low of 2.6°C against 1.2°C on the previous night.

Kokernag recorded a low of 4.6°C against 4.0°C on the previous night and it was 1.1°C above normal for the place, the officials said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 0.6°C against minus 0.4°C on the previous night and it was 1.7°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 3.2°C against 4.5°C on the previous night and it was 0.1°C above normal for the north Kashmir area.

Jammu recorded a low of 14.7°C against 14.2°C on the previous night. It was 0.2°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 6.9°C (above normal by 0.2°C), Katra 14.1°C (1.5°C above normal) and Bhaderwah 7.0°C (3.1°C above normal).

Ladakh's Leh and Kargil, he said, recorded a low of minus 1.5°C and minus 4.2°C respectively.

Mudslides, Shooting Stones Block Banihal Highway

JAMMU: Traffic on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway was suspended Monday after heavy overnight rains triggered mudslides and shooting of stones at some places in Ramban district, officials said. No fresh traffic was allowed on the highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, this morning, the officials said.

They said the road was blocked by mudslides near Shalgari and Sher Bibi around 5 am, while rains also led to shooting of stones from the hillcock overlooking the highway at Mehar, Cafeteria Morh and Chamalwas.

Road clearance agencies are on the job to make the highway traffic-worthy, the officials said.

Traffic police have asked the people to confirm the status of the highway before leaving for their journey.



A YOUNG SANTOOR ARTIST ENTERTAINS the audience at the government sponsored Saras Aajeevika Mela organised along the banks of Dal Lake in this capital city on Monday.

KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

EDUCATION ON WHEELS

Bringing Sanskrit Learning To Doorsteps In Jammu Villages

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: To popularise the Sanskrit language in Jammu and Kashmir, an education on wheels' programme has been launched where teachers will visit households in villages to educate people about the ancient language.

The initiative, 'Mobile Sanskrit Gurukul', by Jammu-based NGO Vedic Sansthan Trust was started in December last year and has covered over a dozen hamlets in Jammu.

The Trust says it wanted to share the treasure of knowledge with people and provide non-formal education in Sanskrit, one of the oldest living languages in the world.

"We are reaching out to urban and rural population to teach them Sanskrit... Our aim is to impart education of Sanskrit to all by qualified teachers by reaching out to every home in rural and urban areas," Trust president Mahant Rohit Shastri says.

As the mobile gurukul moves from village to village to hold classes mostly for youths and children Sanskrit, the response has been encouraging, Shastri says.

"We request other villages also to call us and benefit from this initiative. We are happy



to see people of all castes and creeds participating in this function," he says. The NGO has visited over a dozen hamlets in Jammu and mostly school-going children in villages have come forward to learn Sanskrit.

The target is to educate most of the students in Sanskrit in a phased manner, Shastri says. They have two vans and 10 teachers who spend 4-5 days in each village panchayat and also rope in schools in their effort.

Shastri says they had earlier conducted classes to teach Sanskrit to the business community of Jammu.

"People have been enthusiastic about this concept... They are coming forward voluntarily to get an education. We are distributing free Sanskrit books among the people", he says.

A student of class 11 said he was drawn to study the language when he learnt about

the 'mobile gurukul'.

"I was going home after school and I saw this 'Mobile Sanskrit Gurukul'. I thought that I should also learn the Sanskrit language and I got the book from there. I am a student in the 11th class and I feel we should also learn Sanskrit like English," the student said.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, at the launch of the mobile Sanskrit gurukul, had observed that Sanskrit is not confined to religious texts and offers a complete knowledge structure of ancient India that covers great works of scientists and experts in medicine, botany and mathematics.

Appreciating the Trust for preserving, developing and propagating the Sanskrit language and the message of the ancient sages, Sinha called for working together with a flexible and non-formal approach to popularise Sanskrit.

Migratory Birds Start Leaving Kashmir As Springs Begins

'Around 13 Lakh Birds Visit Kashmir Since October Last Year'

Agencies

SRINAGAR: With the onset of spring, migratory birds have started leaving Kashmir valley and this winter more than 13 lakh migratory birds have visited the valley.

Officials said that keeping their centuries-old relationship with Kashmir, these birds visit Kashmir every year and enjoy the temperate climate here.

"During the month of October, these birds start migration from Siberia, China, Philippines, Eastern Europe

and Japan to the valley and stay here for about five to six months", they said, adding that



around 13 lakh migratory birds visited Kashmir from October last year.

"The Government of Jammu

and Kashmir has taken up restoration of wetlands on priority. Various departments of the Government are working for restoration of wetlands under their respective jurisdictions", officials said.

Ifshan Dewan, Kashmir's wildlife warden (wetlands), said the birds start migration to Kashmir from the end of October and leave the valley in mid-March.

"Some birds are still present in wetlands and departure of birds remain usual as of previous years", she said—(KNO)

Do Not Encourage Party-Hopping: Azad

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: DPAP leader Gulam Nabi Azad on Monday said he does not encourage party hopping by politicians but would welcome those who do not see a future of their parties in Jammu and Kashmir.

"I would prefer you stay and work for people within your own parties but if you feel there is no future for that party, I welcome you to strengthen my party," Azad said at a function in Anantnag.

He welcomed several local leaders in the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) that

he floated after parting ways with the Congress last year.

Azad also said he could not see assembly elections being held in Jammu and Kashmir in the near future. In such a scenario, the administration is passing laws which ought to be passed by an elected government, he claimed.



"Even the laws they are repealing were passed by elected governments. This has led to an increase in our problems," Azad said.

He alleged that Jammu and Kashmir was battling unemployment, drug menace and militancy.



PIB Srinagar Organizes Media Workshop 'Vartalap' At Budgam

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: To build a direct interface between the government and the journalists working at district and sub-district levels across Kashmir division, Press Information Bureau (PIB), Srinagar, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India today organised Media Workshop "Vartalap" at district Budgam.

The workshop, organised at the Conference Hall of Deputy Commissioner's (DC) Office, was presided over by Additional District Development Commissioner Budgam Dr Akramullah Tak.

In his address, Dr Tak appreciated the efforts of PIB Srinagar for organizing the media workshop and said that it is the best platform for a dialogue between media and government as it is the need of the hour. He also presented the development scenario of district Budgam and informed the gathering about the progress made under various Central Government schemes and initiatives in the district.

He expressed hope that more such programmes are organized in future as they prove to be very productive for all stakeholders. He said that media is the watchdog of society and positive criticism from the press will help improve working of government. He impressed upon journalists to keep upliftment of masses in mind and adhere to all professional standards.

Assistant Commissioner Development Budgam, Nuzhat Qureshi congratulated PIB for organizing the workshop and gave an overview of the working of the Rural Development Department. She said that the Panchayati Raj System is the true corner stone of development and a three tier system has been put in place in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. She informed the gathering that elected representatives of local bodies have been sent to various institutions across country and that these exposure visits help them to perform their duties better.

Qureshi said that the administration is working in full swing to realize the implementation of sustainable development goals at the local level. She said that development now happens from

bottom to top and that institutions like Panchayati Raj play a pivotal role in this.

Commenting further on the efforts of the government, Ms Qureshi owing to the success of programmes like Back To Village, the administration has been able to come up to the expectations of the people and fulfill the demands raised by them. She said that Amrit Sarovars have been established in district Budgam as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and the tasks of water conservation and rejuvenation of water bodies is being taken on in full swing.

Chief Education Officer Budgam, Mushtaq Ahmad Qadri presented an overview of the working and achievements in the education sector in the district. He said that Budgam district has one teacher for every 14 students and one school for every 66 students which is better than the national average. He also highlighted key aspects of National Education Policy 2020 and threw light on the measures being taken for its successful and effective implementation.

District Nodal Officer (PMJAY) Dr Lahoot Hasan presented an overview of the health scenario of district Budgam. She said that a total of 216 health institutions are operational in Budgam district and all are working to full capacity. She said that under the PMJAY-Sehat scheme, free health cover to all residents of the district is being provided and all family members can avail benefits of upto Rs 5 lakh under the scheme. She added that around 5.5 lakh Golden Cards have been generated in Budgam district and that Budgam is the first district in India that is entirely TB free.

District Information Officer Budgam, Erim Aziz while addressing the participants said that media acts as the fourth pillar of democracy and it is the responsibility of media to bring issues of people to the notice of the government so that action can be ensured and grievances addressed. She said that such workshops have huge potential to bridge the gap between people and administrators and the media fraternity should ensure that they take maximum benefit from such programmes.

J&K Bank Inks Pact With Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Bank today entered into a corporate agency agreement with Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company - one of the country's leading insurance providers. The agreement has paved way for the Bank to sell the life insurance products of Bajaj Allianz from 1st April, 2023.

General Manager & Vertical Head (Cross Selling) Narjaj Gupta signed the agreement on behalf of J&K Bank, while as, Chief Distribution Officer (Institutional Business) Dheeraj Sehgal put in his signatures on behalf of Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company in presence of Bank's Executive Director Sudhir Gupta. Bank's General

Manager & Vertical Head (Business Support Division) Syed Rais Maqbool, Bajaj Allianz Business Heads Varghese Chacko and Zeeshan Andleeb besides other senior officials of the Bank and Bajaj Allianz Life also attended the signing ceremony at corporate headquarters.

Commenting upon the Bank's efforts to expand the choice-canvas for its growing and varied customer-base across the country, MD & CEO Baldev Prakash said, "Signing of the corporate agency agreement with insurance giant LIC of India and Bajaj Allianz Life in quick succession - with 1st April, 2023 as date for commencing operations - clearly exhibits our customer-centric policy approach, thrust on swift implementation



and commitment to widen the range of products, services for our clients."

Executive Director Sudhir

Gupta hailed the Bank's business relations with Bajaj Allianz. On the occasion, he said, "Through this agreement we

have further strengthened our relationship with Bajaj Allianz. With both organisations being reputed brands in their field of

operations, I am sure this partnership will help us achieve our business goals successfully."

Lauding the Bank's systemic importance in J&K and Ladakh besides strategic presence in rest of the country, CDO Dheeraj Sehgal said after signing the document, "We are thankful to J&K Bank for this opportunity and are eager to put our best foot forward in serving the people here by providing them an array of life insurance products to cover and secure their life goals."

"We believe collaboration with J&K Bank will surely bring solutions to life insurance needs of huge population J&K Bank serves with great pride and professionalism", Dheeraj Added.

"Bank's reach especially in J&K, Ladakh and range of Ba-

jaj Allianz products makes the tie-up beneficial not only for the customers but a win-win for both the institutions", commented General Manager Narjaj Gupta.

"J&K Bank and Bajaj have strong brand value and rich legacy of serving people", said General Manager Syed Rais Maqbool adding that the agreement will facilitate the Bank's customers besides enabling both the companies to leverage the strengths of each other.

Expressing confidence on the occasion, Bajaj Allianz Life (Business Head) Zeeshan Andleeb said that the partnership with J&K Bank especially in J&K and Ladakh will mean benefit and success for everyone across the value-chain.

Assam Rifles Win 71st All India Police Football Championship



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Assam Rifles defeated Mizoram Police 1-0 to win the 71st B.N. Mullik Memorial All India Police Football Championship on Monday at Bakshi Stadium.

LG Manoj Sinha felicitated the winning and runner-up teams at the closing ceremony of the mega event. The championship was organised by J&K Police in collaboration with Jammu & Kashmir Football Association (JKFA).

Congratulating all the participants and winners, the Lt Govern-

nor said it is an honour for J&K to host the championship.

The teams from various states and CAPFs have strengthened the spirit of unity in diversity and Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, said the LG.

Dilbag Singh, DGP, officers of Civil and Police Administration, players, coaches, and managers of the State Police and Central Security Forces teams were present on occasion.

On Sunday, Assam Rifles' women's team lifted the women's title by beating SSB 3-1 at Synthetic Turf TRC.

Will Start Of T20 League In US With IPL Investment Change Cricketing Ecosystem?

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The world cricket's ecosystem is slowly seeing a paradigm shift towards franchise cricket and the entry of Indian Premier League franchises in the United States through the inaugural edition of Major League Cricket (MLC) could be a significant step in that direction.

With Kolkata Knight Riders (Los Angeles), Chennai Super Kings (Texas), Mumbai Indians (New York) and Delhi Capitals (Seattle Orcas) taking ownership or making significant investments in four of the six franchises (the other two being Washington Freedom and San Francisco Unicorns), the cricketing landscape is going to change forever.

Even the two franchises which don't have IPL investments are also owned by persons of Indian origin. San Francisco Unicorns' top investors are Venture Capitalists Venky



Hariharan and Anand Rajaraman, who have got Australian state side Victoria on board. Washington Freedom is owned by Indian American Sanjay Govil along with New South Wales state cricket body from Australia. Not to forget Seattle has Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella as one of the investors.

But the IPL franchises are now expanding their bouquet of teams across leagues in the West Indies, UAE, South Africa and now US is another

untapped market that wasn't being explored for a long time despite the Asian diaspora craving for some regular cricket show at least once a year.

On Monday, early morning India time (Sunday night in Houston), the likes of former Australia captain Aaron Finch (San Francisco), Quinton de Kock (Seattle Orcas), a former South African skipper and even now a batting mainstay, premier pacer Anrich Nortje (Washington), Sri Lanka's top T20 freelancer Wanindu Hasaranga (Washington), dashing all-rounders Mitchell Marsh (Seattle) and Marcus Stoinis (SF Unicorns) are the first lot of quality internationals picked up by 'Draft System', which is a Major League thing.

In major US sports like basketball, baseball, there are no auctions held and only the draft picks, and hence that has been followed by the Major League Cricket as well.

Senior National Table Tennis C'ship Begins At Jammu



Observer News Service

JAMMU: The 84th Senior National and Inter State Table Tennis Championship was declared open by Advisor to LG, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, on Monday at University of Jammu.

More than 900 players are participating in this mega event which includes 34 teams of men and 32 women teams. The championship was last held in J&K 25 years ago.

Addressing a large gathering of table tennis players including a galaxy of top stars from across the country at this grand event, Advisor Bhatnagar highlighted that Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing a remarkable transformation in sports ecosystem since the past three years. This,

he said, reflects story of growth and development here with sea of opportunities.

Advisor appreciated the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) for allotting this big event to the UT of Jammu and Kashmir. He also appreciated J&K Table Tennis Association for their tireless efforts in organizing such a mega event.

Secretary Youth Services and Sports, Sarmad Hafeez highlighted broad contours of the tournament and appreciated TTFI for reposing faith in J&K Table Tennis Association in organizing such a big event.

Chairperson of Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT), Vita Dani, in her speech, assured the UTT will continue to promote the table tennis game in the country.

REDISCOVER MIRRORLESS PERFORMANCE

Z 5 A MIRRORLESS MASTERPIECE

24.3 MP 4.5 FPS Continuous Shooting ISO 100-51200 4K UHD

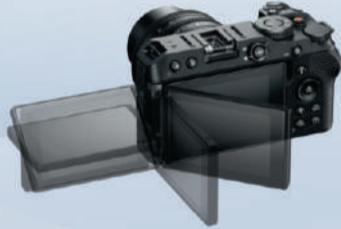


Body only MRP: ₹ 1 11 995.00*
Body with NIKKOR Z 24-50mm f/4-6.3 Lens MRP: ₹ 1 34 995.00*
Body with NIKKOR Z 24-70mm f/4 S Lens MRP: ₹ 1 56 995.00*
Body with NIKKOR Z 24-200mm f/4-6.3 VR Lens MRP: ₹ 1 69 995.00*
Body with NIKKOR Z 24-120mm f/4 S Lens MRP: ₹ 2 09 990.00* now at an Offer Price: ₹ 1 91 995.00*

Consumer offer worth ₹ 4 990.00 and Mount Adaptor FTZ II at 50% discount

Z 30 BE INSPIRED. INSPIRE OTHERS.

20.9 MP 3.0" Vari-Angle LCD Monitor ISO 100-51200 4K/30p uncropped



Body Only MRP: ₹ 59 895.00*
Body with NIKKOR Z DX 16-50mm f/3.5-6.3 VR Lens MRP: ₹ 73 495.00*
Body with NIKKOR Z DX 16-50mm f/3.5-6.3 VR & NIKKOR Z DX 50-250mm f/4.5-6.3 VR Lens MRP: ₹ 94 495.00*
Body with NIKKOR Z DX 18-140mm f/3.5-6.3 VR Lens MRP: ₹ 97 795.00*

Consumer offer worth ₹ 11 999.00 and Get SmallRig Tripod & Remote Control 'ML-L7' worth ₹ 5 645.00 at just ₹ 3 387.00

Z 50

20.9 MP EXPED 6 Image Processor ISO 100-51200 4K UHD Uncropped



Z 50 Body only MRP: ₹ 72 995.00* now at an Offer Price: ₹ 70 995.00*
Z 50 Body with NIKKOR Z DX 16-50mm f/3.5-6.3 VR Lens MRP: ₹ 85 995.00* now at an Offer Price: ₹ 82 995.00*
Z 50 Body with NIKKOR Z DX 16-50mm f/3.5-6.3 VR & NIKKOR Z DX 50-250mm f/4.5-6.3 VR Lens MRP: ₹ 1 05 995.00* now at an Offer Price: ₹ 1 02 995.00*
Z 50 Body with NIKKOR Z DX 18-140mm f/3.5-6.3 VR Lens MRP: ₹ 1 28 490.00* now at an Offer Price: ₹ 1 06 495.00*

Consumer offer worth ₹ 8 550.00 and Mount Adaptor FTZ II at 50% discount



Abbas Ads: 7006444730

Mimic Colour Lab - Residency Road, Srinagar. Contact: 9419044249

Meals on the Go...

NOW ON BOULEVARD INTRODUCING FISH & CHIPS

Bun Maska

Chai

Who Says Healthy Food Can't Taste Good?

BRING YOUR KIDS ALONG

JK BANK LAWNS, NEAR GHAT 6, BOULEVARD-SRINAGAR