

Kashmir's Higher Reaches Receive Snowfall

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Some areas in the higher reaches of Kashmir received fresh snowfall, while the plains were lashed by rains, officials said on Tuesday.

Around three inches of snowfall was recorded in Machil near the Line of Control (LoC).

The plain areas, including Srinagar city, were lashed by overnight rains, bringing down the temperature, the officials said.

The weather office said intermittent rain is likely to continue till Tuesday evening.

Intermittent light to moderate rain or snowfall over higher reaches is very likely at many places on Wednesday.

"During this wet spell of (18-19th) thunderstorms with strong gusty wind reaching (20-30KMPH) and hailstorm is also possible at some places of Jammu and Kashmir," a meteorological department official said.

From April 22-25, he said, the weather was likely to be mainly dry.

He said in last 24 hours till 0830 hours today, Srinagar received 6.9mm of rain, Qazigund 11.0mm, Pahalgam 22.4mm, Kupwara 15.7mm, Gulmarg 12.2mm, Jammu 6.2mm, Banihal 21.1mm, Katra 4.4mm and Baderwah 9.2mm.

Regarding temperature, the official said that Srinagar recorded a low of 11.0°C against 10.7°C on the previous night and it was 3.1°C below normal for the summer capital.



Qazigund, he said, recorded a low of 9.8°C against 8.8°C on the previous night while the tourist resort of Pahalgam in South Kashmir recorded a low of 5.6°C against 5.5°C on the previous night.

Kokernag recorded a low of 9.3°C against 8.7°C on the previous night and it was 2.8°C above normal for the place, the officials said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of 3.6°C against 3.5°C on the previous night and it was 1.3°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 8.6°C against 8.7°C on the previous night and it was 1.8°C above normal for the north Kashmir area.

Jammu recorded a low of 20.0°C against 25.9°C on the previous night. It was 0.1°C

above normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal, he said, recorded a low of 10.5°C (above normal by 2.1°C), Batote 12.6°C (above normal by 1.2°C), Katra 18.5°C (1.4°C above normal) and Baderwah 11.4°C (4.2°C below normal).

Ladakh's Leh recorded a low of 5.0°C and Kargil 5.4°C, he said.

5 J&K Districts On Avalanche Alert

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA) on Tuesday issued an avalanche alert over higher reaches in five districts of the Union Territory over the next 24 hours.

"Avalanche with Low Danger Level is likely to occur above 2800 to 3500 metres above sea level over Doda, Kishtwar, Poonch, Ramban & Ganderbal districts in next 24 hours," JKDMA said in an advisory posted on its [More on P6](#)

Shab-e-Qadr Observed With Reverence

Night Prayers Allowed At Jamia Masjid For First Time Since 2019

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Shab-e-Qadr, the night of power and blessings, was observed across Kashmir valley with religious fervour even as the congregational prayers were allowed at the historic Jamia Masjid here, three days after Jumma-tul-Vida prayers were barred.

This is for the first time since 2019 that the Shab-e-Qadr prayers were allowed at the 14th-century mosque.

As part of the festivities, Muslims thronged mosques and shrines across the valley Monday night for prayers and recitation of the Quran as the fasting month of Ramzan is about to end.

The biggest congregation was witnessed at the Hazratbal Shrine, on the banks of Dal Lake, which houses the [More on P6](#)

Solar Street Scam Hits KPDCCL

Two Engineers Attached For Swindling 6.12 Crore

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCCL) has attached two engineers and ordered a probe against them for allegedly swindling a whopping Rs 6.12 crores for non-existent works in North Kashmir's Kupwara district.

The action by Managing Director KPDCCL, Yasin M. Choudhary came in the backdrop of a report by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) that the Electric Division (ED) of Kupwara has withdrawn Rs 6 crore from the treasury for the installation of 3,600 solar street lights. However, during physical verification,

no streetlights were found installed.

Taking note of the ACB findings, KPDCCL attached an Assistant Engineer, and a Junior Engineer and ordered a probe against them. The investigation will be conducted by the Superintendent Engineer (SE) Sopore.

"Consequent upon receipt of advisory from the Director Anti-Corruption Bureau J&K Jammu, vide their letter no. ACB-E-7163969-4864-65; dated: 05.04.2023, Superintendent Engineer O&M Circle Sopore is hereby nominated as enquiry officer, who shall conduct an enquiry in the matter and furnish a detailed [More on P6](#)



Two J&K Officers Bag PM's Award

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Two senior bureaucrats from Jammu and Kashmir have been selected for the prestigious Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration-2022.

Dr. Shahid Choudhary and Dr. Syed Sehrish Asgar have been selected in the category of Innovation and Aspirational District. Both of them belong to J&K.

A 2009 batch officer, Choudhary is posted as Secretary of the Tribal Affairs Department, and Director of J&K Mission Youth, and Skill Development Missions.

Dr. Sehrish Asgar, who has served in various departments, including the Directorate of information and public relations (DIPR) is currently posted as Deputy Commissioner of Baramulla, in north Kashmir.

The news about the Choudhary and Dr Sehrish was broken by the [More on P6](#)

False Warning Prompts Srinagar-Bound Flight To Return

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: A Delhi-Srinagar SpiceJet flight returned to the IGI airport here on Tuesday due to a false warning in the cockpit, the airline said on Tuesday.

"On April 18, SpiceJet B737 aircraft operating flight SG-8373 (Delhi-Srinagar) returned back to Delhi as the AFT cargo fire light illuminated in the cockpit,"

the airline said in a statement.

The light later extinguished upon actions taken by the captain, SpiceJet said and added that before landing, all operational parameters were observed to be normal.

"The light later extinguished upon actions taken by the captain. Subsequently, upon opening of AFT cargo no sign of fire or smoke was found [More on P6](#)

Srinagar Library Survives In Digital Age

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Digital books and periodicals might have taken place of their physical versions in our personal reading rooms but for serious book lovers, a library remains still the place to visit and enjoy reading books.

Hundreds of people, including youngsters, throng the SPS Library in the heart of Srinagar

city's Lal Chowk every week to immerse in their favourite books.

"I used to read several books while I was doing post graduation. People can read online but we need an atmosphere which is free from hustle and bustle and that is available only in a library," Haseebullah, one of the regulars at the Srinagar library told PTI.

He said the library was also a cheap avenue [More on P6](#)



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19th April, 2023



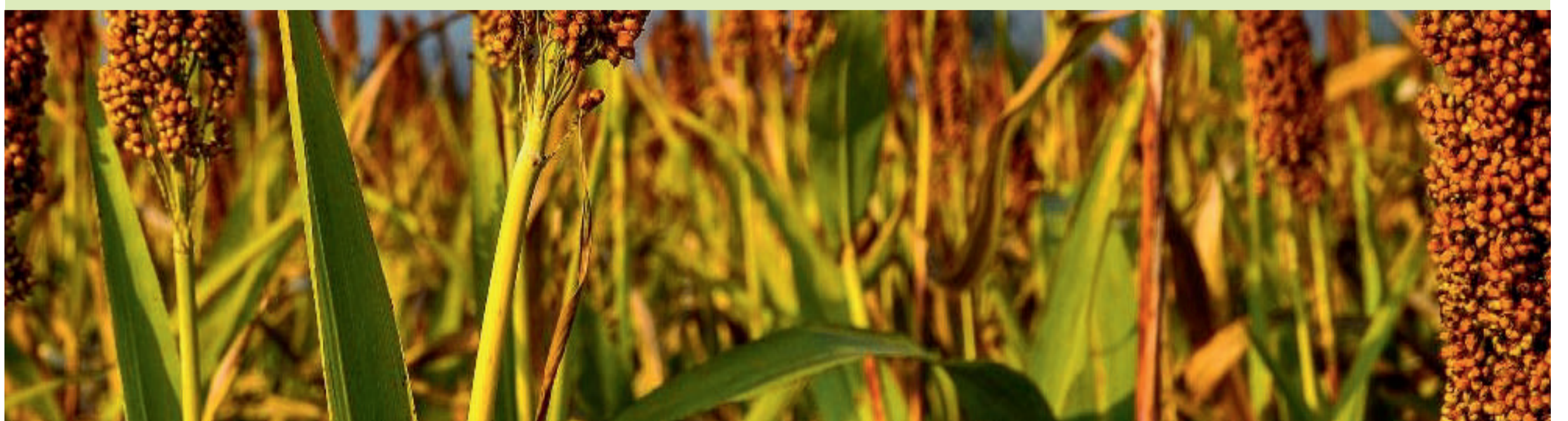
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Convention Center, Jammu



Science Debunks A Decades-Old Myth About Drinking Milk

ELANA SPIVACK
Inverse

Americans born in the '90s likely remember the Got Milk? campaign. The rhetorical question came in slim, white sans serif text, all lowercase, on a black background. Sometimes it completed a portrait of a smiling child or adult with a white mustache coating their upper lip like an Einstein-Groucho Marx hybrid.

Since then, milk has proliferated. At first there was just whole and skim milk, but now there are whole spectra of milk containing various amounts of fat, as well as plant- and nut-based milk in varying flavors.

All that advertising may have backfired, making some '90s and early-aughts kids into dairy-wary adults. Like calcium and Vitamin D, a healthy dose of skepticism can do a body good, so looking at whether milk is as imperative as TV led us to believe is worthwhile.

IS MILK ACTUALLY GOOD FOR YOU?

Evidence does show that cow's milk is replete with essential nutrients like calcium, zinc, magnesium, phosphorus, protein, fat, and more that help our bodies run.

Nutrition scientist Kimberly O'Brien at Cornell University says that while plant-based milks have some of these nutrients added to them, dairy milk is more of a total package. So it's accurate that milk contains things that are good for you, but that's not to say milk is for everyone. For a variety of reasons, someone might be lactose intolerant, which means their digestive tract can't break down lactose, which is only present in dairy.

"There's some validity to the backlash," says Michelle Averill, a nutritional sciences professor at the University of Washington. "Dairy consumption is not appropriate for all cultural groups." That's not to say that dairy is bad, but that dairy isn't as ubiquitous in some cultures as it is in, say, the French and American diet. East Asian diets, for example, don't include much dairy, but that doesn't



Evidence does show that cow's milk is replete with essential nutrients like calcium, zinc, magnesium, phosphorus, protein, fat, and more that help our bodies run.

mean they're lacking.

"Consuming dairy, like cow's milk, is not culturally included in all dietary patterns," Averill says. "So it's an assumed acculturation recommendation to say, 'Drink milk.'"

O'Brien also acknowledges that nothing is a one-size-fits-all, not even milk. "It's very hard to prescribe one diet for the entire planet," she tells Inverse.

Banner of a glass of milk, a jug of milk on blue background. The concept of farm dairy products, mi...

DO HUMANS NEED MILK?

Indisputably, humans need water, oxygen, and sleep, among other things, to live. While they require calcium, protein, fat, magnesium, zinc, and phosphorus — all of which cow's milk is chock full — humans don't necessarily need milk.

Calcium famously helps build strong bones. O'Brien says that by about age 20, most of a human's bone mass has accumulated. By age 30, that person's skeleton has reached peak bone density. This is one reason why milk is seen as a staple for kids, because the first 20 years of life are critical for for-

tifying the only skeleton you'll ever have. Moreover, like so many other things, genetics determines one's bone density. If someone's family has a history of osteoporosis (a bone disease due to decreased bone density and mass which can increase risk of injury), drinking milk regularly in childhood might beat dealing with the consequences.

But we don't only need calcium for our bones. Serum calcium, which is the element as it exists in our bloodstream, is crucial for healthy muscle contractions. When the nervous system jolts a muscle to flex, that muscle releases calcium from its cells' internal stores, allowing the muscle proteins to cause a contraction. In this situation, calcium also acts as what O'Brien calls a "potent signaling agent" for cells, its release in this moment instructing muscle cells to contract. Even the heart pulls calcium from surrounding blood to keep pumping. If the body gains or loses too much calcium, that imbalance can cause contraction defects, according to O'Brien.

When there isn't enough serum calcium — O'Brien says we have

10 milligrams of calcium per deciliter of blood — the body pulls it from our bones, which are calcium banks. Think of serum calcium as your checking account and calcium in your bones as your savings. If you keep dipping into your savings because your checking is too low for immediate expenses, you may face consequences down the line.

"Once you have demineralized your skeleton to a great extent, you can't bring it back to normal," O'Brien says. That can impact quality of life and even mortality should someone suffer a hip fracture.

All this is to say that calcium — of which Averill says milk is the most cost-effective source — is integral, but there are other founts.

Osteoporosis process infographic of bone tissue close-up with different density. Skeletal system dis...

WHAT ELSE HAS THE SAME NUTRIENTS AS MILK?

While milk is a single nutrient-dense food source, it's possible to get those nutrients from other food groups. The downside is that one must look farther afield for all those vitamins. Especially for kids, who need all the calcium they can get to fortify their skeletons, milk can be an easy single shot of good stuff. Averill suggests that non-dairy kids who are picky eaters can get much of the same nutrients from plant-based milks.

Averill also says that a varied diet consisting of many different grains, proteins, and vegetables ought to provide all the nutrients that one needs. Plant-based milk can make up for any areas where there's something left to be desired. In her class on micronutrients, Averill shows her students that bone density in vegan populations isn't uniformly impacted. This means that it's not dairy alone that can keep our calcium levels afloat. A few other good sources of calcium include almonds, leafy greens, and green soybeans.

"I'm not saying that one form is better than another," O'Brien says. "It's good that we have alternate fortified food sources that people can substitute to get get those nutrients."

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With a deep sense of sorrow this is to inform that Mrs. Suraya Nazir W/O Dr. Nazir Hussain and Mother of Dr. Irfan Ali left this world for heavenly abode on 08/04/2023 in Jammu. A Majlis e Tarheem will be held for her soul on Monday 24th April 2023 from 9 AM to 6 PM at the home of Dr. Irfan Ali Shaub e Zahra Lane adjacent to petrol pump. Near Mill Stop. Bagh e Ali Mardan Khan. Srinagar.
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Incessant Rains Plays Spoilsport With Shoppers, Shopkeepers Ahead Of Eid

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Inclement weather forecast until April 21 dampened the market buzz in the valley ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr on Tuesday.

Mohammad Maqbool, who runs a sweets and confectionery shop in Srinagar, said the shopkeepers could not display sweet items outside their shop due to the continuous rainfall since morning.

"We normally fix a tent outside our shop to display the stock of sweets and confectionery for sales, but the wet weather played a spoiler," he said, adding that they are hopeful of improvement in the weather and after which they will display their stock.

The street vendors from various parts of the valley who also fix their cots temporarily along roadsides to sell their merchandise like kitchen items, utensils, clothing, and bakery items also struggled to make any sales due to the rainfall.

In Lal Chowk, the street vendors were seen struggling to place their items on cots for sale, as the intermittent spells of rainfall did not let them settle.

Notably, soon after the Jummat-ul-Vida and

Shab-e-Qadar occasions, markets often witness an upsurge in sales with people thronging the shops to buy dresses for children, food items, bakery items, mutton, and other items.

Meanwhile, as per the J&K's weather department, the intermittent rain and thunderstorms are very likely to continue till April 21, and that 19th April will "very likely witness intermittent light to moderate rain/snowfall (over higher reaches) at many places".

The weather official said that during the wet spell of April 18 to 19, a thunderstorm with strong gusty wind reaching 20-30 kmph and hailstorm is also possible at some places in Jammu & Kashmir.

As per the MeT officials, last 24 hours till 0830 hours Tuesday, Srinagar received 6.9mm of rain, Qazigund 11.0mm, Pahalgam 22.4mm, Kupwara 15.7mm, Gulmarg 12.2mm, Jammu 6.2mm, Banihal 21.1mm, Katra 4.4mm, and Bhaderwah 9.2mm.

The temperature, as per the MeT for Srinagar, recorded a low of 11.0°C against 10.7°C on Monday night and it was 3.1°C below normal for the summer capital.

DC Srinagar Visits ShankarAcharya Temple

Finalizes ShankarAcharya Jayanti Arrangements

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad today visited ShankarAcharya Temple to review the arrangements being made for forthcoming ShankarAcharya Jayanti scheduled to be celebrated on April 25, 2023.

The Shankaracharya Jayanti is considered one of the significant celebrations in Sanatan Dharma which marks the day of birth of Adi Shankara ji, an 8th century Indian philosopher and theologian.

While taking review on the spot, the Deputy Commissioner directed concerned departments to ensure all basic arrangements are put in place for the devotees expected to perform Darshan in the Shankaracharya Temple on the top of Zabarwan hills during ShankarAcharya Jayanti.

The DC instructed

for ensuring hassle-free traffic movement for the devotees and making adequate facilities at the designated place for parking of the vehicles.

He also instructed for ensuring uninterrupted supply of electricity and drinking water at the venue so that devotees do not face any problem during their visit to pay obeisance at the Temple.

The DC also asked the Health Department to deploy a Medical team at the venue with the availability of all emergency medicines and first aid facilities to handle any medical emergency.

The DC directed the officers of all line departments to ensure all necessary arrangements required for smooth stay and enriching pilgrimage for all visitors on this occasion. He also stressed on maintaining proper sanitation at the Temple premises and at the entire

Dilapidated Lane On Babademab Road Awaits Repair

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The dilapidated by-lane along Babademab road in the old city has been giving a tough time to the inhabitants living around.

"The mud filled lane near Marriage Hall, is dotted with potholes that speaks volumes about the casual approach of the government to improve road connectivity," the residents alleged.

They said the condi-

tion persists since January 2020 after some drainage work was done in the area.

They said that driving two or four-wheelers on the existing road was fraught with dangers for both the motorist and pedestrians.

The residents appealed to Srinagar Municipal Corporation to come to their rescue by addressing their problem and providing them with better road connectivity in the area at the earliest.



Holding Umbrella, An Elderly Man Seeks Alms On A Street In Srinagar Amid Incessant Rainfall On Tuesday, KO Photo Abid Bhat

Kashmir Consumes Over 800 Truckloads Of Sheep This Ramazan

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Amid fluctuation in mutton prices, the demand of red meat has increased in the Valley, with over 800 truckloads of sheep consumed in the holy month of Ramdhan so far.

"Nearly 30-35 trucks loaded with sheep arrive in Kashmir on a regular basis in the past 27 days of Ramadan," Mehraj ud Din, General Secretary of Mutton Dealers Association said.

He said there is no shortage of mutton in Kashmir, adding that the shortage of mutton would be pos-

sible in case the highway is closed for vehicular movement amid the prevalent weather conditions.

The General Secretary of the association further informed that so far a total of 811 trucks loaded with Sheep arrived in Kashmir since the beginning of Ramadan. "30-35 trucks arrive in Kashmir on a daily basis. The number of trucks ahead of Eid will go up to 160 a day," he said.

Moreover, the consumers continue to complain that the mutton is being sold at Rs 650-700 per kg, adding that there has been no proper check on the ground as

it seems that the mutton dealers and butchers have been let loose to loot the public as per their will.

"One fails to understand the need of issuing a rate list when it is not being implemented on the ground. It seems that the authorities concerned are reluctant to act against the mutton dealers and have been maintaining silence over the issue," a consumer said.

He further said that a few months back, the concerned officials started a drive to act tough against the mutton dealers, but all in vain as the step has not yielded any results for the consumers.

Power Supply To Remain Affected In Parts Of Srinagar Today

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Power Controller Kashmir has informed that, the power supply to Receiving Stations

Brein, Nishat, Shalimar and Harwan shall remain affected due to repair works and remodeling in HT/LT lines on April 19 from 11 am to 5 pm.

Similarly, in order to facili-

tate augmentation works in 33/11 KV Pinjura receiving station, the power supply to receiving stations Aathama, Pinjura and Chowdhary Ghund shall remain affected on April 19 from 10 am to 3 pm.

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HIGHWAY STATUS

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



HIJRI CALENDAR

28 RAMAZAN
1444

PRAYERS	
FAJR	4 :28
ZUHR	12:32
ASR	5: 12
Magrib	7:08
ISHA	8: 34

This Day In History

- 607 - Comet 1P/607 HI (Halley) approaches within 0.0898 AUs of Earth
- 1012 - Martyrdom of Alphege in Greenwich, London.
- 1451 - Alam Shah of Delhi resigns throne
- 1524 - Pope Clemens VII fires Neth inquisitor-general French Van de Holly
- 1529 - 2nd Parliament of Spiers bans Lutheranism
- 1539 - Charles, protestant German monarch, signs Treaty of Frankfurt
- 1591 - Chartres surrenders to King Henry IV in France
- 1713 - Emperor Karel VI ends Pragmatic Sanctions
- 1770 - Amsterdam buys Van Aerssens family 1/3 part of Suriname
- 1770 - British explorer Captain James Cook first sights Australia
- 1775 - Minutemen Capt John Parker orders not to fire unless fired upon
- 1775 - American Revolution begins - Lexington Common, shot "heard round the world"
- 1775 - New England militiamen begin the siege of Boston, hemming in the British army garrison
- 1775 - Paul Revere, William Dawes and Samuel Prescott are captured by British troops riding from Lexington to Concord, Prescott escapes to warn Concord
- 1782 - John Adams secures Dutch Republic's recognition of the United States as an independent government and house he purchased in The Hague, Netherlands became first American embassy.
- 1810 - Venezuela achieves home rule: Vicente Emparan, Governor of the Captaincy General is removed by the people of Caracas and a Junta is installed.

From KO Archives

11 Policemen Injured In Militant Attack

Observer News Service

Srinagar: At least 11 police personnel were injured many of them seriously when militants attacked Safa kadal police station this evening.

The militants lobbed a powerful grenade and followed it by firing on the Safa Kadal police station around 6:30 p.m. seriously injuring eight policemen and three Central Reserve Police Force jawans, reports said. The militants escaped after the incident. The policemen posted there fired in retaliation but there were no reports of any casualty.

Harkat-e-Jihad-e-Islami has claimed responsibility. Suspected militants made an abortive attempt to blow up the ancestral house of minister for works Ali Mohammad Sagar in Nawab Bazar locality city today, official sources said today.

The heavily guarded house of the minister, who is ranked number three in the ruling National Conference in Zaldager area was attacked with grenades, they said. However, the explosives missed the target and fell short of the house without causing any damage.

The policemen guarding the house fired a few shots in the air to scare away the attackers, the sources said. The attack caused panic among the people. Shopkeepers immediately downed their shutters and movement of traffic came to a halt in the area, the sources said.

Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din, a surrendered militant turned Special Police Officer was shot dead by unidentified militants at Sopore town in Baramulla district last evening.

The body of an unidentified person was fished out from river Jhelum at Zaina Kadal in downtown Srinagar today.

The spokesman said police also picked up body of unidentified man from Kalaroos area of Kupwara district today.


Border Security Force (BSF) jawan was seriously wounded in a militant ambush at Muran-Karimabad in Pulwama district of south Kashmir last evening.

Two suspected militants were arrested by the security forces from the village during the course of a search operation today, he said. The spokesman said security forces busted a militant hideout at Manigah Kupwara district which led to the recovery of three claymore mines, three remote control devices, two RPG boosters, a missile head, five grenades, an equal number of detonators, besides eight kilograms of RDX.

In another successful operation, the spokesman said police apprehended a battalion commander of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen Ghulam Hassan Mir alias Rizwan during a raid on his hideout at Noor Bagh-Bhagwanpora in Srinagar last evening.

An AK-56 rifle and some ammunition were recovered from a house at Khankani Sokhta in downtown Srinagar on his disclosure, he said.

(Kashmir Observer, 19 April, 2000)



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PUBLIC NOTICE

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KASHMIR OBSERVERTM

Wednesday | 19-04-2023

Persisting Heatwave

Currently, large parts of India are experiencing high temperatures, with mercury hovering around 40 degrees Celsius in many areas. Heat wave conditions have persisted in the national capital, New Delhi, with some weather stations recording maximum temperatures at least five degrees Celsius above normal. Ditto for West Bengal, Bihar, Sikkim, Odisha and Jharkhand. The hot weather has led to several deaths due to sunstroke in Maharashtra.

Rising temperatures have serious consequences for the planet, including more frequent and intense heat waves, wildfires, droughts, and extreme weather events such as hurricanes and floods. These events have significant economic, social, and environmental costs and can lead to displacement, food and water scarcity, and loss of life.

The ongoing heatwave began in March itself. The month was the second warmest since weather record keeping began. However, winter was no different, more so the latter part of the season. The weather in Srinagar during the last two weeks of February was also like March with many people complaining that they couldn't sleep through the night due to unbearable warmth. In Kashmir, winter warmth leads to the early melting of snow at high altitudes. The onset of early warmth potentially disrupts our agriculture as it will elsewhere in the country and the world.

The erratic weather pattern has forced the world to take notice. According to the European Union's climate monitoring agency's report, the temperatures in March were higher than average in most parts of the world, including North Africa, southwestern Russia, Asia, North America, South America, Australia, and coastal Antarctica.

The report highlighted the urgent need for action to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There are dire projections for health, the global food system, and economic productivity if no pre-emptive action is taken. The European Union has already set ambitious targets to become carbon neutral by 2050, and other countries and organizations have also committed to reducing their emissions. However, more needs to be done to meet these targets and limit global warming to below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

It is clear that urgent action is needed to address the ongoing climate crisis and prevent further damage to the planet. This requires a collective effort from individuals, governments, and organizations around the world to take bold and decisive action to reduce emissions and transition to a more sustainable future. However, the prospects on this score don't look promising. We need more concrete global scale action over an extended period for the weather to change for the better.

Narcissism: The Ultimate Flaw of Our Individual Selves?



Wajahat Qazi

“Notwithstanding the many and multiple deep flaws of individualism, in its pure form it does require some character. By elimination, observation and experience plus comparative analysis I concluded we are a narcissistic people

Narcissism defined as 'excessive interest in and admiration of oneself, usually at the expense of others' has an interesting history and genesis. It emanates from Greek mythology wherein a handsome young man Narcissus is cursed to fall in love with his own reflection. But gradually Narcissus discovers that the object of his life (his own self) cannot love him back, he (Narcissus) withers away and dies. The story of Narcissus and what it emblemizes has a bearing on our (Kashmiris') individual selves: we are an extremely narcissistic people.

Our narcissism reflects itself in multiple ways: One, we have become pompous and garrulous. Both these attributes make us loath to countenance viewpoints other than our own. We are argumentative to the point of quibbling over trivia and our arguments never get settled. Two, we think we are the best in the world. The consequence of this fallacious thinking makes us wallow in and jump like frogs in the proverbial well. Three, it makes us contrarian: express a viewpoint, for example, with your friends, or acquaintances, right or wrong, it will be shot down for no other reason than taking a contrarian stance. Four, added up, these features make us mediocre and we then wear this mediocrity on our sleeves. While this list is not exhaustive, it means that we cannot (except for the daredevil eccentric amongst us) produce anything extraordinary and brilliant - in say literature, science, technology and so on. Yes, we have over centuries produced stalwarts in the fields of literature and poetry but these are exceptions; not the norm. And, to repeat, these emi-

nent men and women of excellence have been wildly eccentric. In this regard, and in more or less recent times, the great poet Ghaney Kashmiri comes to mind: the luminary would have his house locked from the outside when he was in the house but would leave it unlocked when he would be away. On being asked about this curious behaviour, the inimitable Ghaney Kashmiri would say that, 'he was the most valuable asset in his house and he would not want to be stolen'.

By way of a digression, when I returned for the first time from overseas, I thought, contrary to convention, that we were actually not a communitarian people but a supremely individualistic one. But I was disabused of this notion soon. Notwithstanding the many and multiple deep flaws of individualism, in its pure form it does require some character. By elimination, observation and experience plus comparative analysis I concluded we are a narcissistic people.

Where does this narcissism of our individual selves come from?

Difficult to answer but one speculation may be that we are a landlocked people with hardly any inter or cross civilizational contact. We have only ourselves to compare and benchmark against. Or, maybe along with this it's the weather that has led to a cocooned existence. Or maybe it's the general tenor of culture where lack of real confidence is supplanted by a fake admiration of the self. On the face of it, our narcissism should lead to a confident, self asserting culture and society. But it has actually had contra and counter intuitive effects: our narcissism at the individual level makes us

into a self loathing society at the communal and aggregate level. The irony is that while we Kashmiris have a greatly inflated view of ourselves, at odds with reality, we have a terrible view of ourselves at the collective level. This perhaps is the ultimate paradox of Kashmiris.

Can our narcissism be cured? Can we have a proportionate and sober view of ourselves?

Maybe. But for this to happen, we need to shake ourselves from this narcissistic stupor. One way to do this is to conceive of the world and the universe as a cosmological reality that is infinitesimally greater than ourselves and consider ourselves as specks in the world's luminosity - creatures created by God Almighty with a higher purpose. This may inject some sobriety and gravitas in ourselves and lead to a sense of self that is healthy - one that smells of roses. And this orientation might help us produce works of greatness, in the process according some measure of sanity to both our individual and thereby our collective selves. Contrarily, beating the same trodden path of narcissism would mean walling (and not even knowing about it) in a pit of mediocrity and collective self flagellation. As Ramadan 2023 comes to a close, it is these thoughts that must animate us!

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. Author has Masters with distinction in International Relations from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. He previously worked as Associate Editor at the Kashmir Observer.

OTHER OPINION

Optical Relief

The pace of price rise faced by Indian consumers eased below the central bank's upper tolerance threshold of 6% in March. The 5.66% retail inflation level recorded in March was last seen in December 2021. That was followed by a sustained spell of high inflation that escalated after the Russia-Ukraine conflict that began in February 2022, and peaked at an eight-year high of 7.8% in April. Including last November and December, March marks only the third occasion in 15 months when inflation was within the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) mandated tolerance range of 2% to 6%. The RBI, which had to send an explanation to the government on why the target was missed for three successive quarters — for the first time since the inflation targeting framework was introduced — hit a pause on interest rates this month after a streak of hikes. It now expects inflation to average 5.2% in 2023-24 (lower than the 5.3% it projected in February). As it stands, the average inflation between January and March has turned out to be 6.21%, far higher than the RBI's February projection of 5.9%. For the full year gone by, inflation averaged 6.66% vis-à-vis the 6.5% the RBI expected.

The central bank and the government may now be sanguine about headline inflation staying below 6%, but that is in no small measure due to the statistical effects of higher numbers from the previous year's base. In the April to June quarter, the RBI expects inflation to average 5.1%, up from 5% predicted two months ago — the same quarter had clocked a mean inflation of 7.28% in 2022. While the pace of price rise may slow down, prices are still rising at a fairly significant clip, on top of price hikes effected in the past year. There is no medium-term reversal likely in amounts people shell out for most goods and services, barring seasonally triggered changes in items such as vegetables. In fact, excluding vegetables whose prices have been falling year-on-year since November 2022, the inflation faced by consumers in March was still 6.6%. Imported inflation fell to its lowest level since November 2019 at 2.8%, which means domestic factors are still spurring prices around 6%. Fresh global shocks from oil prices and other unknowns may cause imported inflation to spike again. With cereal, spices and milk prices on the boil and worries about crop losses due to recent unseasonal precipitation (as well as fears of El Niño effects this year), food prices may continue to pinch households. There is no room to let the guard down on inflation, even if propping up growth is the priority. Squeezed consumption is hardly going to inspire investment.

The Hindu



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Climate Change is Real

Over the years climate change has become a defining crisis threatening the survival of human life. It has brought terrible implications in every part of the planet earth. According to the United Nations, the extraction of coal, oil, and gas releases billions of tonnes of CO2 into the atmosphere every year. Also, human activity is producing record-high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, with no indications of slowing down in the future. The impacts of climate change need special attention and efforts are needed in negotiating the global climate change crisis that can help in the preservation of the earth and its environment. Ever since man

set his foot on the path of research and discovery he left hardly anything untouched.

The way new branches of knowledge and information are growing can be described as no less than a miracle. The objects or tasks which were considered impossible and unattainable stand conquered. However this exploration has put the earth at stake and our environment well. "t as well. The deterioration is going on continuously and has snow not only put our own survival in danger but the fate of the earth itself is in jeopardy. The ever increasing dependency on the non renewable resources of irreparable rces of energy has done an irreparable damage to our envi-

ronment. The gases emanating from them have depleted the ozone layer and also increased the presence of the harmful gases.

The need of the hour is to make people aware about their role and contribution they can make towards the protection of earth. t is an important issue confronted by the people all over the world. Not only should our efforts be at national and global level, but more importantly at local level, because the problem is all pervasive. It isn't too late to come forward and do something. As already mentioned it is a global phenomenon which requires the efforts of each one of us and thereby foster a change in the whole world.

Perhaps there is an important role which can be played by the student community in sensitizing the society about this grave issue confronting planet earth. Climate change and environmental degradation are two pressing challenges that humanity is facing today.

Unless sincere efforts are not put in place to counter the climate crises; organizing seminars and framing global climate change agreements are less likely to help the cause. All the nations across the globe should take concrete steps to curb the serious impacts of climate change on human society.

Shahid Ul Islam

Finding a Balance Between Reason and Revelation

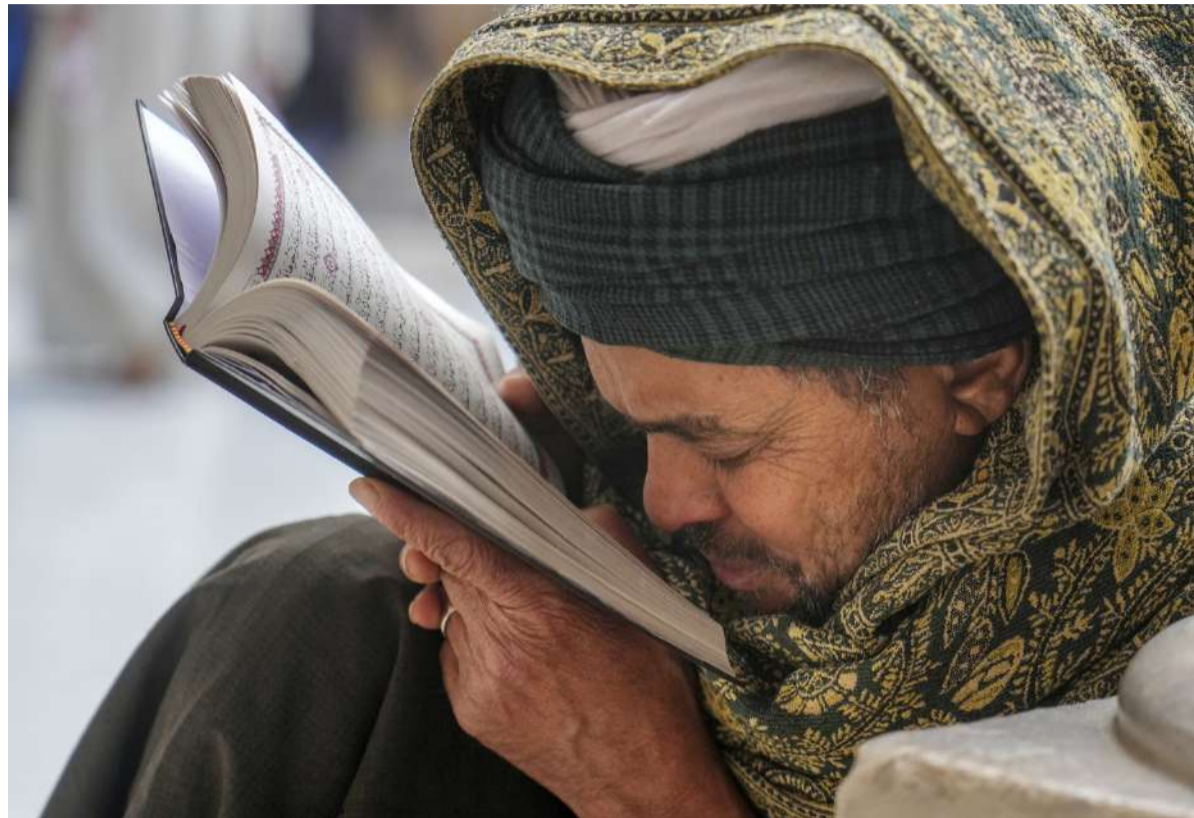
Tarek Bagnato

Muslim theologians differed for centuries in dealing with the concept of categorical verses (muḥkam) and ambiguous verses (mutashābih), giving rise to questions such as: What method should be applied when reason seems to contradict revelation? How should the ambiguous verses be understood and interpreted? The persistence of this dilemma led scholars such as Abū Ḥasan al-Ash'arī and Abū Maṣ'ūd al-Māturīdī to develop a science, 'ilm al-kalām, in order to defend the Sunnī orthodox inherited creed and to find a balance between reason ('aql) and revelation (naql). Ahlus-Sunna wal-Jamā'a (Sunnī orthodoxy and consensus) outlined a rule of interpretation: When the literal meaning of the ambiguous verses (mutashābih) contradicts sound reasoning, one must deny the literal meaning and resort to either tafwīd al-ma'na (consigning the meaning) or ta'wīl (clarifying the metaphorical meaning). There did exist, however, anomalous figures who defied this rule of interpretation, claiming that when the literal meaning contradicted sound reasoning, predominance should be given to the literal interpretation.

The concept of categorical verses (muḥkam) and ambiguous verses (mutashābih) is mentioned in the Qur'ān: It is He who has sent you down the Book: Some of its verses are unmistakably plain, which are the basis of the Book; while others are subtle of understanding between nuances. As for those in whose hearts is perverseness, they pursue only the subtle of it, seeking to sow doubts, and seeking to interpret it as they please, while no one knows its true interpretation but Allah and those firmly grounded in its knowledge: They say, 'We believe in it, each of these kinds of verses is from our Lord.' Yet none remember and heed but those of insight and mind. (3.7)

If ambiguous verses referring to God are to be taken literally, it denotes that God literally forgets, needs help, is vulnerable to being harmed, moves through clouds, has physical limbs, and other absurdities that are unbefitting of God as a perfect independent necessary being (see the verses: 9.67, 47.7, 33.57, 2.210, 48.10). So, not only do the literal implications of these verses contradict sound reason, but they also contradict verses that are categorical such as the verses in Sūra al-Ikhlās which denote that God is the necessary being, beyond place and time:

1. In the Name of Allah Most Merciful and Compassionate: Say: He is Allah: the Wholly One



WITHOUT REASON, ONE WILL LACK ACCESS TO THE REVELATION. SO, REASON "COMES TO GOVERN HOW THE TEXT IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD, THE CALIPH IN THE REALM OF SACRED TEXT." There are some people who attempt to deny the intellect as a source of knowledge because logical conclusions may appear contradictory given differences among logicians

2. Divine Reality Alone.
 2. Allah is the Sole Indomitable Recourse for all needs.
 3. He never gave birth, nor was given birth;
 4. And no one even compares with Him. (112.1-4)
- Without reason, one will lack access to the revelation. So, reason "comes to govern how the text is to be understood, the caliph in the realm of sacred text."
- There are some people who attempt to deny the intellect as a source of knowledge because logical conclusions may

appear contradictory given differences among logicians. This has been answered by many scholars such as Imām Nūr al-Dīn al-Ṣābūnī who writes in *Al-Bidāya fī Uṣūl al-Dīn*:

And how is it that you know that logical conclusions are contradictory? If you say by the intellect, then you have contradicted yourselves, as essentially you are saying, "By the use of the intellect, we know that nothing can be known by the intellect." If you say by a narration then how do you if it is true or false [since that distinction can be known only

by reason]? If you say by the senses, then you are simply being obstinate.

We then say: Logical conclusions are not contradictory; rather, logicians themselves simply disagree with one another, either due to some having inferior intellects or due to some not fulfilling all the requisite conditions for proper reasoning."

Since it has been established that it is impossible to forego reason, a rule of interpretation has been articulated by the scholars of Ahlus-Sunna wal-Jamā'a such as Imām Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Saḥī

al-Dīn al-Hindī and others as:

If reason-based and tradition-based proofs oppose one another, it is not possible to affirm both or deny both because it is impossible to affirm two opposites or deny both of them. Nor [is it possible] to affirm revealed tradition because reason is the foundation of revealed tradition (al-'aql asl al-naql). The probative value of revealed tradition is not established until the existence of the Maker and His attributes – knowledge, power, and His acting by free choice – and miraculous proof for the truthfulness of the messengers have been established. It is not possible to establish these matters by revealed tradition, on account of the impossibility of circular reasoning. If we denied reason-based proofs in order to authenticate tradition-based proofs, we would deny the root to authenticate the branch, but denying the branch necessitates denying the root. Authenticating revealed tradition by denying reason necessitates denying both of them, which is impossible. So, nothing remains but to affirm reason and divert what the tradition-based plain senses (zawāhir) indicate from their plain senses and delegate (tafwīd) knowledge of them to God – Exalted is He – and work to clarify their re-interpretations (ta'wīlāt). The first is better, and it is the doctrine of most (akthar) of the salaf. The second is the doctrine of most theologians (uṣūliyyūn). We do not believe that they did not permit the first. On the contrary, according to most of them, both [tafwīd and ta'wīl] are permitted. As for the ancients, perhaps they did not permit the second on account of the danger in it.

Rational proofs and scriptural proofs are either conclusive or inconclusive (see FIGURE A below). One must keep in mind that the "reason" ('aql) the scholars were referring to in the above context is rational proof that is conclusive (qaṭ'ī). In this context, conclusive rational proof and conclusive scriptural proof can never oppose each other. Ibn Rushd, the "arch-rationalist Averroes" states, "revelation is true; whatever is proven by reason is true; and there can be no contradiction between the two truths."6 Additionally, ambiguous verses are inconclusive (zannī) in their signification (dalāla) as mentioned in the verse (3.7) regarding categorical verses (muḥkam) and ambiguous verses (mutashābih) stated above. Alternatively, instead of perceiving the rule of interpretation as a matter of predominance between reason and revelation, one may perceive it as a matter of predominance between conclusive proof (qaṭ'ī) and inconclusive proof (zannī) regardless of whether they are rational or

scriptural.

Despite all of this, there remained some figures who vehemently opposed this rule of interpretation, advocating that given a contradiction between the inconclusive (zannī) scriptural proof and conclusive (qaṭ'ī) rational proof, predominance is given to the inconclusive (zannī) scriptural proof. Ibn Taymiyya, in his work, *Dar' ta'arūḍ al-'aql wa-l-naql*, states that "if reason and revelation contradict each other, then revelation must be given priority over reason."5 This led him and his followers to many contradictory notions of God, such as believing that God is a physical entity contained in time and place. Jon Hoover, a preeminent scholar of Ibn Taymiyya's works, concluded the following: "Nevertheless, he does not deny that God is corporeal or spatial. Ibn Taymiyya is decidedly empiricist. He claims that nothing incorporeal and non-spatial exists outside the mind. Something existing outside the mind must be accessible to the human senses, and God is no exception."

Ibn Taymiyya fiercely rebuked the Ash'arīs and Māturīdīs for denying the literal meaning of ambiguous verses and resorting either to tafwīd al-ma'na (consigning the meaning) or ta'wīl (clarifying the metaphorical meaning). In addition, he does not, in his works, deny God having a direction (jihā), modality (kayfiyya), physical boundary (had), etc., leading many to charge him with anthropomorphism. This begs the question: Since Ibn Taymiyya did not deny the literal meaning and was against the rule of interpretation, then what other alternative is there to these verses except anthropomorphism?

In conclusion, reading sacred texts like the Qur'ān in a literal way may lead to logical inconsistencies, driving the scholars of the past to develop the science of 'ilm al-kalām. From this emerged a rule of interpretation and a meticulous method of discerning between what is categorical and what is ambiguous. The Qur'ān is believed to be the word of God according to all Muslims, and so its grammatical, logical and rhetorical nature is a proof to this; if it was a mere simple book to be read literally, God would not have challenged mankind to "...then bring but one sura anything like it..." (2.23) because then it would have been a fairly easy task to accomplish.

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

What Opening of Apple Stores Means for India

"India is just that plus one in Apple's China plus one strategy. I hope it deepens. But, it simply means that Apple is a very politically correct corporate as far as India is concerned because if you see the the number of exports, whether it be Apple's large portion and Samsung's semi-large portion, mobile phones, handsets, these exports have contributed humongously to the balance of trade position that India has wanted to enjoy for a long time," says brand guru Harish Bijoor.

Brand Apple has entered India. What does it mean for the Indian market? What does it mean for the brand itself as well?

The moment an Apple store sets up anywhere, it means that we have arrived. So Apple is setting up a destination store. And it is going to be a destination store. I would typically call the Mumbai outlet the Taj Mahal of Apple being set up in India and the day after tomorrow's store to be the second Taj Mahal of Apple because it really means that these stores are going to become destination outlets, which are going to attract a whole host of people walking in.

Also, the dependency that Apple had on China as well. Does this come out to be a play for China plus one strategy? Will India actually become what China was for Apple in the going forward years? How do we see that coming then?

I definitely think this to be Apple's China plus one strategy. So India is just that plus one, at this point of time. I hope it deepens. But, it simply means to say that Apple is a very politically correct corporate as far as India is concerned because if you see the kind of Apple exports, the number of exports, whether it be Apple's large portion and Samsung's semi-large portion, mobile phone, handsets, these exports have contributed humongously for the balance of trade position that India wants to enjoy over a period of time.

So Apple, is a politically correct corporate for India, establishing two hubs, two Taj Mahals, two tourist destinations and expect these destinations to become real destinations because a visit to Mumbai or Delhi is



not going to be without a visit to an Apple store, at least for a segment of the population that sits at the top of the pyramid.

Well, another key question is that Apple has made sales of \$7 billion and of which \$5 billion was exported from India. Rest of it was the domestic market. What lies ahead really for them going forward? Will they ramp up their production? What's your sense?

If you sell more within the country, you might as well ramp up production for the overseas market because it is good for India in both ways. Do-

mestic consumption is great. It gets in the taxes. And as far as overseas consumption, export consumption is good. It is going to be good, it is going to be great but a warning bell at this point of time is that recession is hitting a large part of the Western world, whereas recession is least likely to hit India. So it is quite likely that domestic consumption is going to grow at a faster pace than export consumption because already in the electronics market, we see rumbles of consumption slowing down.

Do you think the affluent market, people buying more expensive

phones, is a trend and we are seeing something that is coming in there as well?

Absolutely. Electronics is the sexy new thing as far as the gifting market is concerned, as far as the upgrade market is concerned. You do not replace anything as fast as you replace electronics. So the hand phone is going to be one of those. The gifting market is big. If you look at electronics at the top of the pyramid, there is going to be a lot of traction because nobody wants to be carrying a phone which is two generations old.

A future point of time will come when you will not want to be seen

with a phone which is just one generation away. So the more Apple makes, the more you upgrade. The Intel philosophy of Pentium One, Pentium Two, and Pentium Three. A Pentium Three guy would never be caught with a Pentium One ever, ever. The same thing is going to happen. Apple is a lifestyle. It is not a brand, it is not a product, it is a lifestyle. And I think that is what Apple is pegging at.

India is more of a market which is focusing on value 5% of the market. But in terms of the premium segment, 60% share is with Apple. What does it mean when a store opens in India? Do you think we will be buying more Apple iPhones?

Oh, I think it is going to be an Apple a day in many, many ways in terms of consumption as far as our mobile phones are concerned. But the point is Apple is not really a product, not really a brand, it is a part of culture and to an extent, I would say that Apple is a subculture in itself. So to that extent, expect a lot of traction now that Apple is in India.

They are going to focus on ensuring an Indianisation of Apple, expect that. For instance, gold coloured phones are a big hit in India, particularly in Tamil Nadu, are going to be there in a big, big way. So expect Indianisation. The Mumbai store has got Mumbai icons, the Delhi store will hopefully have, you know, Paharganj icons.

If you really look at it, Apple becomes a part of India, it goes beneath the skin of the Indians, and then only there is going to be acceptability which is going to deepen down the pyramid of consumption.

Expect this subculture to seep into India. It is the usual Indianisation of the global brand that is being attempted because the market lies in India.

Right, I have been conversing with the crowd here and there are two sides to it. One is somebody who looks at it as a status symbol, and there are others who look at it as a great tool to create content. Is the consumer psyche changing? Is it about prestige? Is Apple brand valued as a prestige product or is it a product?

It is the most expensive product a common person would ever want to have. Let us put it that way. It is the new gold jewellery. It is the new Coorg Kada which one might have wanted to buy. Instead of that, I might just go and buy an Apple phone at the top end. Because a gold kada you might wear once in a while to a party. But an Apple iPhone is a day-to-day 24x7 status symbol.

Research in India says that we are the closest to the mobile hand phone that we use. It is a status symbol. It has flaunt value. So all of this is going to come into play and people are going to say I am closest to my Apple or any other hand phone. Because which is that one device you are the closest to on any single day? I have research evidence in India which says that nine and a half hours, an average Indian is with his, her or their phones. Now you cannot say that of a spouse even. If you really ask me, the closest electronic item to all our hearts is a hand phone. And Apple aspires to be that deeper and deeper.

– Economic Times

'No War, No Peace' Scenario

Balakot Showed Air Power Effectiveness: IAF Chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi: Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari on Tuesday highlighted the critical importance of India's air power considering the nature of its adversaries and said the Balakot operations of 2019 demonstrated its effectiveness even in a 'no war, no peace' scenario and under a "nuclear overhang".

The Chief of Air Staff said air power has become an option of choice due to "inherent flexibility" and "unmatched" precision strike capability.

"Operations like Balakot have also demonstrated that given the political will, aerospace power can be effectively used in a no war, no peace scenario, under a nuclear overhang without escalating into a full blown conflict," he said.

"This is very important given the nature of our adversaries. The response options available to the leadership have suddenly increased and increasingly, air power has become an option of choice due to inherent flexibility and unmatched precision strike capability," he said.

Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari was speaking at a seminar on 'Aerospace Power: Pivot to Future Battlespace Operations'.

India's war planes pounded a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist training camp in Balakot in Pakistan in February 2019 in response to the Pulwama terror attack in which 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed.

"India's security concerns necessitate that it puts in place adequate military power that has the ability to achieve deterrence, ensure information dominance, coerce when needed and provide multiple response options," Air Chief Marshal



Chaudhari said.

"Attributes of aerospace power enable the leadership to formulate an appropriate strategy with due cognizance given to the desired end state, conflict termination criteria and escalation matrix," he said.

The IAF chief said that considering the advantages that the aerospace power offers, it will become a crucial factor in future battlespace operations.

To be able to control the airspace across domains will prove vital in the future and in order to achieve that, he said.

Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari said there is a need to harness technology including the CMOS (complementary metal oxide semiconductors) sensors, Artificial Intelligence enabled decision support matrix and manned-unmanned teaming.

He said next generation fighter aircraft will prove to be a deciding factor when fighting "tomorrow's wars".

"One aspect that deserves a special mention is the humans

in the chain. Any amount of automation will not be effective unless we have well-trained, situationally-aware and technically sound professionals handling our systems," the IAF Chief said.

"To see first and see clearly, to reach first and reach farthest and to strike first and strike with precision will be the mantra for fighting modern wars," he added.

The Air Chief Marshal said battlespace transparency, enhanced rapid mobility and pinpoint precision capability will be the key to success and India's capability development plans must address these issues.

"If the world is increasingly becoming volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, it is high time that we develop counters," he said.

"We must evolve to counter the volatile with stability and calmness that comes from good strategy formulation and training in an environment of denial," he said.

SC to hear on Apr 24 plea seeking independent probe into killing of Atiq Ahmad, Ashraf



New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday agreed to hear on April 24 a plea seeking an independent probe into the killing of gangster-turned-politician Atiq Ahmad and his brother Ashraf in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj.

The duo were shot dead at point-blank range by three men posing as journalists in the middle of a media interaction on Saturday night while police personnel were escorting them to a medical college in Prayagraj for a checkup.

A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud took note of the submissions of advocate Vishal Tiwari who mentioned the matter seeking urgent hearing. The plea has also sought an inquiry into the 183 encounters that have taken place in Uttar Pradesh since 2017.

Just hours before the shooting, the last rites of Ahmad's son Asad, who along with one of his associates was gunned down in a police encounter in Jhansi on April 13, were held.

Uttar Pradesh Police had said on Friday that it has gunned down 183 alleged criminals in encounters in the six years of the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led government and this included Asad and his accomplice.

The plea sought the setting

up of an independent expert committee to probe the killing of Atiq and Ashraf.

"Issue guidelines/directions to safeguard the rule of law by constituting an independent expert committee under the chairmanship of a former Supreme Court justice to inquire into the 183 encounters which had occurred since 2017 as stated by Uttar Pradesh Special Director General of Police (Law and Order) and also to inquire into the police custody murder of Atiq and Ashraf," it said.

Referring to Atiq's killing, the plea said that "such actions by police are a severe threat to democracy and rule of law and lead to a police state".

"In a democratic society, the police cannot be allowed to become a mode of delivering final justice or to become a punishing authority. The power of punishment is only vested in the judiciary," the plea stated.

It said extrajudicial killings or fake police encounters have no place in the law.

When the police turn "daredevils then the entire rule of law collapses and generates fear in the mind of people against the police which is very dangerous for democracy and this also results in more crimes," the plea stated.

SC questions Gujarat govt over remission to convicts in Bilkis case

Says gravity of offence should have been considered

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday questioned the Gujarat government over the remission granted to the 11 convicts last year in the case of gangrape of Bilkis Bano and murder of her family members during the 2002 Godhra riots, saying the gravity of the offence should have been considered and asked whether there was any application of mind.

Asking for reasons for the premature release of the convicts, a bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna also questioned the paroles granted to them during their incarceration period. "It (remission) is a kind of grace which should be proportional to crime."

"Look at the records, one of them was granted parole for 1,000 days that is three years, the other 1,200 days and third is for 1,500 days. What policy have you (Gujarat government) been following? It is not a simple case of section 302 (murder) but a case of murders compounded by gangrape. Like you cannot compare apples with oranges, similarly massacre cannot be compared with single murder."

Hearing a plea challenging the release of the convicts, the court said although there was consultation with the Centre for grant of remission but the state is required to apply its mind, looking at the gravity of the offence.

The Centre and the Gujarat government also told the court they may file a plea seeking a review of its March 27 order asking them to be ready with original files on the grant of remission. Senior advocate AM

Singhvi, appearing for one of the PIL petitioners, said the records show that when the convicts were released on bail, they had given threats to witnesses and were involved in other crimes.

Advocate Shobha Gupta, appearing for Bano, said no new records have been filed in the petition and it is just the challenge to the remission granted to the convicts.

The bench told Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, appearing for the Centre and the Gujarat government, "Here a pregnant woman, who was gang-raped and several members of her family were killed. Crimes are generally committed against society and the community. Unequals cannot be treated equally."

"The real question is whether the government applied its mind and what material formed the basis of its decision to grant remission in the facts and circumstances of the case," the bench said, adding, "Today it is this lady (Bilkis) but tomorrow it can be anyone. It may be you or me. If you do not show your reasons for grant of remission, then we will draw our own conclusions."

The bench told Raju that non-production of original files will be construed as a contempt and asked him why the state government was shying away from producing the files.

Justice Joseph said the court is actually concerned with the exercise of power by the state in the present case and referred to a 2006 two-judge verdict of the apex court in the case of Epuru Sudhakar versus Government of Andhra Pradesh, in which the remission order was set aside as the ground was that the convict was "a good Congress worker".

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Kashmir's Higher

official Twitter handle.

The advisory also urged people living in these areas to take precautions and avoid venturing in the avalanche prone areas till further orders.

Shab-e-Qadr Observed

holy relic of Prophet Mohammad.

Along with the shrine, scores of devout Muslims gathered at Jamia Masjid in Nowhatta area of the city, Dast-e-Geer Sahib and Sayed Yaqoob Shah shrines.

The congregational prayers were allowed at the historic Jamia Masjid after the prayers on the Jumma-tul-Vida (the last Friday of Ramzan) were barred. The authorities had also disallowed Shab-e-Barat' prayers at the grand mosque last month.

Muslims across the world perform night-long prayers on the 26th night of Ramzan to celebrate the first revelation of the Holy Quran to Prophet Mohammad.

Preachers and religious scholars highlighted the teachings of Islam and various aspects of the life of the Prophet and urged Muslims to follow the same.

Meanwhile, Anjuman-e-Auqaf Jamia Masjid in a statement issued here on Tuesday said that people from across the valley came to the grand mosque in large numbers and sought forgiveness from the Almighty Allah on Shab-e-Qadr.

The Anjuman said that on the one hand, where people expressed happiness and joy over offering Isha and Taraweeh prayers after a long time on the occasion Shab Qadr while on the other hand, there was severe disappointment among them against the detention of Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Molvi Umar Farooq.

"The Anjuman expressed hope that the authorities would change their attitude and ensure the unconditional release of Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr so that he could fulfill his religious duties," the spokesperson said.

Solar Street

report with regard to facts of the case/ recommendations made by the Anti Corruption Bureau," reads an order issued by Managing Director KPDC.

Pending enquiry, the order reads, Mudasar Ismail I/C Assistant Engineer & Manzoor Hassan Chowdhary Junior Engineer are hereby attached to this office with immediate effect till further orders.

The ACB found that the ED Kupwara made an illegal payment of Rs 6.12 crore to four contractor firms without installing any solar lights. In response, the ACB has recommended that action be taken against the delinquent officials, including canceling the tender and recovering the payments.

"Payment of Rs 6.12 crore had been made illegally to four contractor firms without installing the allotted solar lights. No procurement of solar lights along with has been made. No solar lights have been installed on spot. No time was given to tenders that needs to satisfy the execution of work. The entire expenditure has been made illegally and criminal aspects will be seen separately which appears as a conspiracy to siphon off public funds by the attached officers and officials."

The AEEs and JEs of Sub Division Kupwara and Sub Division Trehgam both communicated to the Executive Engineer ED Kupwara that the allotted works were impossible to execute at the end of the financial year in just two or

three days. However, the Executive Engineer ED Kupwara prepared bills for the non-existent work through unauthorized channels.

Two J&K Officers

Union Territory Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on his official Twitter handle.

"Congratulations & best wishes to @MissionYouth_JK, @listenshahid, Dist. Baramulla, @DrSyedSehrish for prestigious Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration-2022 in category of Innovation (State) and Aspirational District Programme respectively. Keep it up!", Sinha Tweeted.

Meanwhile, in a handout issued here, an official spokesperson said that Dr Sehrish has been selected for this prestigious achievement in the category of Aspirational Districts programme as she has brought transformative changes in the identified parameters envisaged in the said programme.

As per reports, key aspects for Aspirational District Programme in Baramulla for which the Deputy Commissioner was awarded by the Prime Minister include establishment of Birth Waiting Wards in Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres, Upgradation of diagnostic services at all delivery points and Poshan Tracker Tabs for all Anganwadi workers.

"The Deputy Commissioner supported farmers through mechanism, plant protection, nursery strengthening, robust root stocks, quality planning material etc and organized marketing facility established at Sopore which is the second largest Fruit Mandi in Asia," the spokesperson said.

"Severe Acute Malnutrition has been reduced in the district to 0.01 percent from 3 percent and Moderate Acute Malnutrition

to 0.039 percent from 11.93 percent. A two-year paramedical diploma course has been introduced for 300 border area students to fill up the critical gap in the health sector," he added.

False Warning

and based on initial assessment, the warning was observed to be false," the statement added. The aircraft landed safely and passengers were deplaned normally, it added.

A source, however, said that a full emergency was declared for SpiceJet flight to Srinagar from Delhi, which had 140 passengers on board.

"Full emergency was declared at 10:40 am on Tuesday for SpiceJet's Delhi-Srinagar flight SG 8373. The flight landed back at IGI airport safely," the source said.

The aircraft has been parked, he added.

Srinagar Library

to study for those who do not have high-end phones and internet connection.

"This library is for them. Even in a digital era, we cannot find everything in Wikipedia. We need hard copies as well," he added.

For Inayat Rashid, reading from digital sources has its own disadvantages.

"Here we can concentrate on reading books. If we use a mobile for reading, it distracts our mind. Also, we are emotionally attached with books...those who have a habit of book reading don't rely on internet whether the facility is available or not," Rashid said.

Similarly, Jawad Ahmad prefers reading paper books as digital reading does not give him the same feeling.

"With the inception of new technology, we

started ignoring book reading. But we should focus on book reading as it gives us a positive edge. It gives us a different feeling when we have a book in hand which doesn't come in virtual technology like a tab," he said.

Mukhtar Ali talks about ill effects of digital reading on the eyes of the reader.

"Even for relaxation of eyes, books are good compared to reading on gadgets. It also helps kids improve their vocabulary," he said.

For Muhtaq Ahmad Mir, physical books are for posterity.

"With the passage of time, everything is online. But physical books have their own merits; we can keep them as records. No doubt everything is available on a smartphone, but books have their store value," Mir said.

Shazia Makhdoomi, the librarian at SPS Library, said a number of youngsters come to read books here.

"In Kashmir, people have the habit of reading books. You can see the children; they come from far-flung areas to study here. Sometimes the students can't find seats," she said.

Makhdoomi feels that book reading is comparatively better than reading on gadgets.

"Books give organised information, they don't need charger, internet facility, etc," she added.

The librarian said there was an increasing trend among students who read more for competitive examinations.

"We have three sections here -- boys, girls and children sections. There is a seating capacity of around 200 each in boys and girls sections, while there are 20 seats for children," she added.

With more than 3,500 registered patrons and the numbers increasing day by day, the SPS Library might need some expansion.

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

Rare Basohli Paintings Displayed On World Heritage Day At Jammu Museum

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: On World Heritage Day, the Jammu and Kashmir government showcased hundreds of rare and ancient Basohli paintings at a museum here in a bid to popularise this 17th-century miniature art.

Several people visited the Dogra Art Museum on Tuesday to see the paintings. A live demonstration on how to make Basohli paintings by artist Dheeraj Kapoor attracted hundreds of visitors, particularly children.

The Basohli paintings from Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district has obtained the Geographical Indication (GI) tag following an approval by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) on April 3.

The GI tag to a product, goods or specialty grants legal protection to the original producers and prevents their unauthorised use by third parties. It also boosts exports, promotes the goods at the international level and brings economic prosperity to producers and stakeholders.

Vikas Gupta, director, handicraft and handlooms department, said the GI tag will give a fillip to the Basohli painting industry, help artisans get better returns and also create a brand value for their products.

"There is a need to save the heritage art. The department will register those who want to practice it and we will set up a common facility centre at Basohli to provide them all facilities under one roof," Gupta told PTI. "The main theme of today's event is to highlight Basohli paintings," he said.

Gupta said children and adults were informed about Basohli paintings. During the exhibition, manuscripts, heritage photos, antiquities, instruments, rare books, and coins were also displayed at the museum at the Army Headquarters.

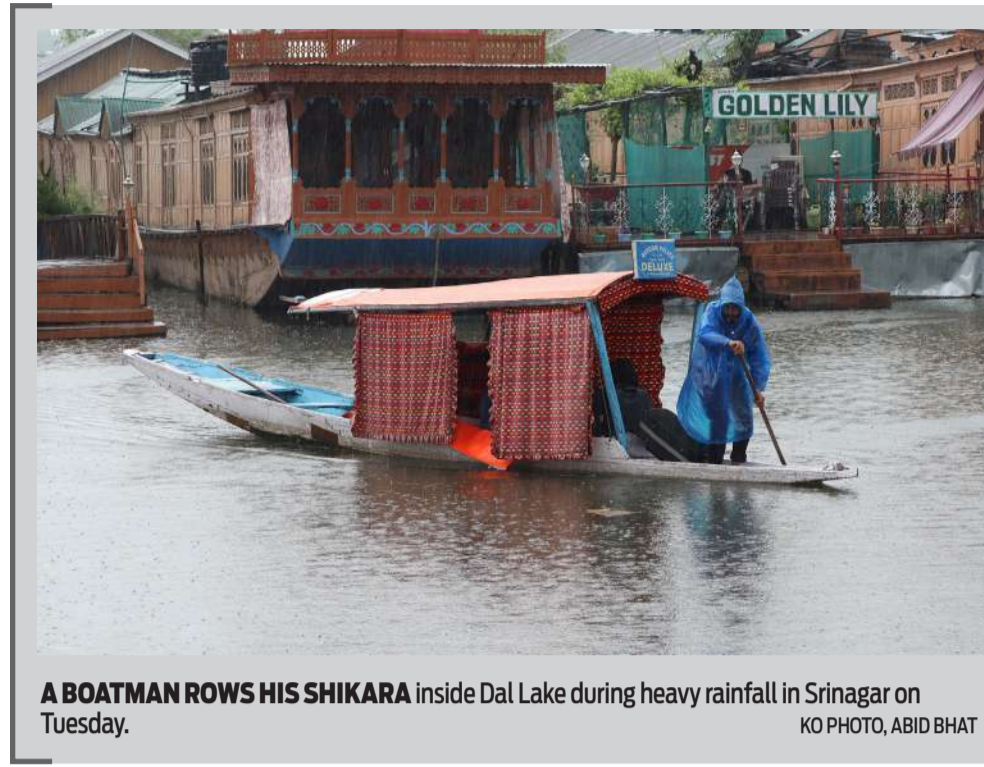
Pradeep Kumar, from the department of archives, archaeology and museum, said the main aim of the exhibition to make people aware about their culture and heritage.

"I have been making these paintings for 25 years," said artist Dheeraj Kapoor. Kapoor said at one point only a few artists were making Basohli paintings but students are now showing interest in these paintings.

"We are getting a huge response after the GI tag. Now children want to learn and be known as painters of Basohli art. It has revived the art in a big way," he said.

Basohli paintings flourished in the Indian hill states during the late 17th and the 18th centuries. The art takes its name from Basohli, a town in the Jammu region.

This town is believed to be the cradle of various Pahari paintings. It gave birth to a unique style of miniature paintings that witnessed a fusion of mythology and traditional folk art.



A BOATMAN ROWS HIS SHIKARA inside Dal Lake during heavy rainfall in Srinagar on Tuesday.

KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

Police Busts Inter-District Burglars Gang, 3 Brothers Among 11 Held

Stolen Property Including Gold, Cash Recovered, 3 Vehicles Seized

Majid Nahi

SRINAGAR: City police claimed to have busted an inter-district gang of thieves by arresting eleven persons including three members of a family, from different districts of the valley, and recovered stolen goods including gold and cash from their possession.

Police said four main accused of the case were arrested from Pulwama and Kulgam districts of south Kashmir while.

Four have been identified as Qayoom Ahmad Guroo of Gund Rabitar Ganderbal and Nazakat Ahmad Khan of Bathindi Jammu, who were arrested from Naina Batapora in Pulwama while two others, Tasleem Guroo and Arif Guroo both residents of Gund Rabitar were arrested from Amona area of Kulgam.

A formal case under FIR number 18 of 2023 under sections 457,380,411 IPC stands registered in Police Station Sadder in this regard.

Talking to Kashmir Observer Station House Officer (SHO) police station Sadder, Mudasir Nazar said the accused were arrested following a complaint regarding burglary at Rawatpora Bhagat area in uptown Srinagar on the night intervening March 2 and 3.

He said as soon as the complaint was received, investigation was taken up in the matter and eleven members of the gang including three members of a single family were arrested during raids from the different parts of the valley.

SHO Sadder said the gang was operated by three brothers from the same family, who closely coordinated these thefts in different districts across the valley.

"Stolen property including 168 grams of gold, Cash Rs 70000 and 02 Vehicles Belano bearing registration number JK05H 4535, Alto JK13 F 4524 and a Pulsar motorbike were recovered from their possession," SHO said adding, 72 grams gold (consisting

jewellery items) were stolen from Ravatpora Bhagat area in March this year.

Five more accused, who police said were receivers of stolen property, were arrested from Ganderbal and Baramulla districts in different raids.

Others were arrested in connection with the instant case have been identified as Shareef Ahmad Guroo son of Mohammad Shafi of Rabtar Gund Roshan Ganderbal, Sameer Hussain son of Ghulam Hussain Dar of Sultanpora pattan, Asif Hussain Dar son of Ghulam Hussain Dar of Sultanpora pattan, Shabaz Hussain Laway son of Mohammad Afzal Laway of Sultanpora pattan, Abdul Rashid Guroo son of Sanullah Guroo of Rabtar Gund Roshan Ganderbal, Mohd Hanef Guroo son of Sanullah Guroo of Rabtar Gund Roshan and Mohammad Maqbool Laway son of Ghulam Mohammad Laway of Sultanpora pattan.

SHO sadder said investigation into the case is ongoing at the moment.

Smart City Works In Srinagar Tacky: Mehbooba

Says Heritage Style Being Replaced By 'Hideous Tiles Seen In Public Toilets'

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti on Tuesday lashed out at the administration for causing "inconvenience" to the public and "destroying aesthetics" in Srinagar city as part of the developmental works under the smart city project.

"Excavating half of Srinagar for a Smart City" by reducing motorable roads to increase pedestrian paths isn't just causing harrowing inconvenience. It also comes at the cost of aesthetics," Mufti wrote on Twitter.

The former J-K chief minister said traditional and heritage style of architecture and planning is being replaced by "hideous tiles seen in public toilets".

"Sad to see beautiful divarstones demolished to make way for tacky & distasteful planning. Urban landscaping can be done without destroying our traditional aesthetics," she said.



Delegation Of KP Relief Holders Calls On LG

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Delegation of Kashmiri Migrant Relief Holders, Jagti Township called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhavan here on Tuesday.

The members of the delegation led by Sh Ravinder Koul expressed gratitude to the Lt Governor for

the unprecedented initiatives taken by the UT administration for the welfare of Kashmiri Pandit community. They also submitted a memorandum of demands to the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor assured the members of the delegation of redressal of the genuine issues put forth by them on merit.

Army Officer Hails TMR Team For Specialised Avalanche Rescue Cover To Troops During Winter

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Chief of staff of Army's Northern Command Lt Gen Anindya Sengupta on Tuesday interacted with a Tiranga mountain rescue (TMR) team after its successful stint to provide rescue cover to troops during natural calamities in high-altitude areas, officials said.

The team of 21 members was led by Col Satish Sharma and it met Lt Gen Sengupta in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district, they said.

The Tiranga mountain rescue team (TMR) was deployed in high-altitude areas to provide specialised avalanche and mountain rescue cover to troops during the winter season from November 2022 to April 2023, a Jammu-based defence PRO said.

Lt Gen Sengupta congratulated the team for its commendable work in protecting the troop and the civil population in remote areas from natural calamities.

Keep Close Watch On OGWs In Kishtwar, Doda: ADGP

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Mukesh Singh on Tuesday asked security agencies to keep a close watch on overground workers (OGWs) of terrorists in the Kishtwar-Doda belt in Jammu and Kashmir.

Singh chaired a meeting of police officers here to review

the crime situation in the Doda-Kishtwar range.

The ADGP Jammu Zone stressed on quality investigation in cases being probed by the police. He said special focus should be given to cases related to terrorism and those registered under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Singh also called for action against drug peddlers in the range.

Cong Demands White Paper From Govt On Pulwama Attack

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Tuesday demanded that the government should come out with a white paper on the Pulwama attack providing answers to questions such as what were the "intelligence failures" and why troops were denied aircraft.

Days after former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satyapal Malik's allegations over the 2019 Pulwama attack, the Congress held a press conference here by Col (retd) Rohit Chaudhry and Wing Commander (retd) Anuma Acharya, both associated with the party, and posed a series of questions to the government on the attack in which 40 CRPF jawns were killed.

There has been no reaction from the government since Malik's interview to a news portal was released, while the BJP has said that there were serious questions about his credibility and cited various statements made by him in recent years.

The BJP had cited Malik's past remarks, including the one that mocked former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi as a "political juvenile", and slammed him as the "disgraced" governor of Jammu and Kashmir.

Congress spokesperson Shaktisinh Gohil said the party did not make any political statement over an incident like Pulwama in 2019 but had to raise this issue as concerns have been expressed by former army chief Gen (retd) Shankar Roychowdhury in an interview.

Chaudhry and Acharya, the two armed forces veterans, said the defence fraternity and the entire nation share the concerns of Malik and Gen. Roychowdhury.



They posed questions to the prime minister on the basis of the assertions by the former army chief.

Why were 2,500 CRPF soldiers not allowed to travel by air despite their request, they asked.

They also asked as to why were intelligence inputs between January 2, 2019 and February 13, 2019 warning of a terrorist attack ignored.

"How did the militants procure around 300 kg of explosives? How could this huge quantity remain undetected despite heavy security presence in South Kashmir, especially the Pulwama-Anantnag-Avantipora belt," Chaudhry said.

"Four years after the attack, how far has the inquiry progressed? Why is there a delay in completing the inquiry and letting the nation know its findings?" they said.

At the Congress presser, the two army veterans said that in previous terror attacks, such as the Mumbai attacks in 2011 and the Pathankot attack in 2016, inquiries were held and findings made public. This was essential to establish the truth, fix responsibility, and strengthen

India's national security.

In Pulwama too, these serious questions must be addressed, they said.

"Therefore, we demand that the government of India publish a white paper on the Pulwama attacks, describing -- how the attacks took place, what were the "intelligence failures", why troops were denied aircraft, what security lapses occurred and the role of CRPF, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence, National Security Advisor and the Prime Minister's Office," the veterans said.

The Congress had on Saturday demanded that the Centre reveal the outcome of the probe into the Pulwama incident and asked why the paramilitary personnel were "denied" aircraft and made to commute by road despite the terror attack threat.

BJP's I-T department head Amit Malviya had on Saturday tweeted an old remark of Malik, who has become a strong critic of the government in recent years, praising Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the "best PM" for Jammu and Kashmir, to hit out at his "U-turn".



Chief Secy Calls For Third-Party Audit Of J&K Minerals

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta on Tuesday called for third-party audit of Jammu and Kashmir Minerals to boost its performance, generate employment in the Union Territory.

Mehta made these remarks while chairing 175th board meeting of Jammu & Kashmir Minerals Ltd.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasised over the need for a third-party audit to evaluate the performance of the corporation's mines. Mehta said that the audit would assess whether the mines are operating at their optimal condition and determine if there is potential to generate more employment within these mining facilities.

He also called for the development of a mining plan, with expert consultation, to increase the output of the Kalakote coal mines.

The Chief Secretary urged upon the Corporation that all

of their activities should aim at boosting the economy of Jammu & Kashmir. He commended the corporation's financial records over the past three years and suggested holding quarterly meetings for better coordination and implementation of decisions.

During the meeting, the Board unanimously agreed that in order to avail the funding under NMET (National Mineral Exploration Trust), J&K Minerals Limited shall surrender the Lease Hold Rights of Sapphire Mine so that Ministry of Mines can take up the work.

Furthermore, the Board approved e-Auction of rough sapphire to promote transparency.

The Board members in attendance included Secretary Planning Development & Monitoring, Dr Raghav Langer; Secretary Mining, Amit Sharma; Director, Geology & Mining, OP Bhagat; Managing Director, JKML, Vikram Gupta; DG Codes, SL Pandita besides officers from other concerned Departments.

J&K RTI Foundation Founder Expresses Concern Over Lack of RTI Data

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Irfan Banka, founder of J&K RTI Foundation, has expressed concern over the lack of data related to Right to Information (RTI) requests in Jammu and Kashmir.

In response to an RTI request filed by Banka, the Central Information Commission (CIC) stated that it did not have data on the number of RTI applications and first appeals filed in the region in the past four years.

The CIC suggested that Banka file an RTI request with the state government to obtain the desired information. Normally, the data is kept by the Information Commissions, but no such department or State Information Commission exists in Jammu and Kashmir as the J&K RTI Act was repealed in 2019 when the Central RTI Act 2005 was introduced in the UT.

Banka criticized the lack of transparency and accountability related to RTI Law, especially after Jammu and Kashmir was made a Union Territory and its own state information commission was dissolved. He believes that the RTI Act has weakened

in the region and that some public information officers (PIOs) view it as useless.

The RTI Act of 2005 empowers citizens to access information held by public authorities in order to promote transparency and accountability. The act applies to all states and union territories of India. However, Banka's experience raises questions about the effectiveness of the RTI Act in Jammu and Kashmir.

As a result of the lack of data, it is unclear how many RTI applications and appeals have been filed in Jammu and Kashmir since it was reorganized in 2019. This lack of information makes it difficult to hold public authorities accountable and undermines the very purpose of the RTI Act.

Banka's concerns highlight the need for greater transparency and accountability in the RTI system in Jammu and Kashmir. As citizens' right to information is an essential part of a functioning democracy, it is imperative that the government takes steps to ensure that the system is effective and transparent.

WORLD HERITAGE DAY

Govt Launches Scheme For Restoration Of Architectural Heritage In J&K

Agencies

SRINAGAR: In order to preserve the heritage of J&K, the government has launched "restoration of Architectural Heritage" scheme for the restoration of architectural heritage sites.

Mushtaq Ahmad Beigh Deputy Director Archives Archaeology and Museums Srinagar said that the scheme of restoration of architectural heritage of J&K has been launched and 16 architectural buildings including shrines, temples, churches and Gurudwaras are being restored in the first phase in Kashmir.

"Work at nine sites is going on and works at seven more spots have been tendered out and very soon work will be started there as well," he said.

He said the Secretary Culture is very keen to restore these sites to their original position and around 50-60 percent work at these sites have been already completed, he said.

The sites where work is going on includes Reshi Moll sahib Anantnag, Devbal Temple Anantnag, Zaina Shah sahib Anantnag, Ram Mandir Srinagar, Khanq-e-Sokhta, Ganpatyar Temple, temple at Bamb demb Srinagar, Hajibal Masjid Tangmar and Ziyarat of Mohammad Amin Qureshi Owaisi Kupwara.

"Two years before, we established an art museum here and we have displayed modern

paintings in it and 200 year old paintings were also displayed in it so that visitors can easily differentiate old and new art known as modern art," he said.

Beigh said that they have kept it available for local artists as well who can easily exhibit art for a week or two weeks. "We have kept recent findings in the SPS museum which includes the excavated findings besides that some were received from Police stations," he said. "My message will be to all that aware all about our rich heritage so that our students will know about past as J&K has rich heritage and if we will compare it with states, J&K has best collection of monuments."

He requested heads of all schools to take their students at heritage sites besides museums so that it can work as stress releaser for students.

He said that Public has to play a part in preserving the heritage. "Heritage tourism has great potential in J&K and if locals wherever monuments are existing, will preserve them as it will provide them employment opportunities once tourists will visit there," he said, adding that "I personally request tour operators to inform tourists about monuments, museums and other heritage sites so that they will know that tourism is J&K is confined to Gulmarg and Pahalgam only but there is much more," he said. —(KNO)



YSS Conclave 2023 From April 19

Director YSS takes stock of arrangements

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS) J&K is organising its maiden sports conclave on April 19 at SKICC here.

Director YSS Subash C Chhibber along with Joint Director Kashmir Waseem Raja and other senior officers of the Department took stock of the arrangements being made for the successful conduct of the first of its kind conclave.

"The sports conclave will be attended by J&K Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta and other senior dignitaries and aims at exploring means and methods by the ways of deliberations and discussions between the field staff of the Department to draw a road map for taking participa-

tion of youth in particular and people in general to the next level," the YSS said in a statement.

Providing details about this initiative, Director YSS said that while acting on the directions of Chief Secretary, this conclave is being organised in both the divisions of J&K.

The Department has invited members of field staff which includes District Youth Services and Sports Officers, Zonal Physical Education Officers, Physical Education Lecturers, Physical Education Master, Physical Education Teachers and other allied staff to share their ideas on the occasion.

"We are organising this conclave at Jammu also on May 2 and we shall be inviting field staff of the Jammu division on the same lines," the Director said.

Ishfaq Ahmed Leaves Kerala Blasters

Agencies

Indian Super League (ISL) team Kerala Blasters FC has parted ways with their first team assistant coach Ishfaq Ahmed. The club made the announcement in a tweet on Tuesday.

"Thank You Ishfaq Ahmed for all your efforts and the passion with which, you contributed towards the team. You will always be remembered fondly by the KBFC family. Wishing you the best, for all your future endeavours," Kerala Blasters FC wrote on Twitter.

The Srinagar-born midfielder started out as a player-assistant



manager in the ISL 2015 season where he made 25 appearances in the adorned yellow of Kerala Blasters FC. Following his retirement from football, he joined the Jamshedpur FC camp in their debut 2017-18 season.

After the completion of his stint at Jamshedpur FC, Ahmed returned to the Blasters in 2019 and resumed his work as an assistant coach under head coach Eelco Schattorie. Since then, the 40-year-old has been a mainstay at Kerala Blasters FC and has been an integral part of the coaching and backroom staff under two different coaches - Kibu Vicuna and Ivan Vukomanovic. (ANI)

IPL 2023: Can Inconsistent LSG Halt RR's Charge?



Press Trust of India

JAIPUR: Blowing hot and cold, Lucknow Super Giants will look to tick all the boxes and return to winning ways when they clash against table-toppers Rajasthan Royals in the IPL 2023 match in Jaipur on Wednesday.

With three wins and two losses so far, LSG is a team overflowing with talent but they have missed a trick or two at times to find themselves on the losing side twice.

In the last match against the Punjab Kings, Lucknow couldn't get enough runs in the middle overs, leaving them 10-15 runs short in the end.

While K L Rahul returning to form with a sizzling 56-ball 74 is a big positive, LSG will rue the scoring opportunities they squandered in the middle overs.

Lucknow have no dearth of power in their batting, with Kyle Mayers at the top and Nicholas Pooran and Marcus

Stoinis in the middle capable of pulverising any opposition.

Spin all-rounders Krishnappa Gowtham and Krunal Pandya too have done well in their respective roles.

Among the fast bowlers, LSG possess the fiery pace of Mark Wood and Avesh Khan. Yudhvir Singh Chakar too will look to carry on his good run after a sensational two-wicket haul on debut against Punjab.

However, for Lucknow, it will be an uphill task to disturb the appellation of the Royals, who have performed like a well-oiled machine with a hat-trick of wins to grab the top spot in the IPL standings.

Royals possess a formidable batting line-up with the likes of Yashasvi Jaiswal, Jos Buttler and Sanju Samson ensuring that the side has a good start and has enough runs in the Powerplay.

While Buttler, with 204 runs has been their highest run-scorer, Jaiswal has struck at 149.45 for his 136 runs so far

in the IPL.

And, when the duo failed the other day against Gujarat Titans, skipper Samson rose to the occasion, bailing out the team with a 32-ball 60 and the rampaging West Indian Shimron Hetmyer completed the job with a 26-ball 56.

Devdutt Padikkal too has come up with cameos but Riyan Parag hasn't been able to grab the opportunities.

Royals of three world class spinners in their playing XI in Yuzvendra Chahal, Adam Zampa and Ravichandran Ashwin making life difficult for the opposition.

It was the spinners who had won them the match against Chennai Super Kings, while pace spearhead Trent Boult did the job against Delhi Capital by taking two wickets in the first over to derail their chase.

Medium pacer Sandeep Sharma too has used all his experience, taking wickets regularly during his spells.

Rivalry Between Barcelona & Madrid Takes Turn For Worse

Agencies

MADRID: The days of a healthy rivalry between Barcelona and Real Madrid are over.

What used to be a cordial relationship between the Spanish powerhouses has turned ugly following the latest scandal involving Barcelona over payments to a former refereeing official.

Neither club is holding back, and there is no hiding the relationship has been strained.

"It's damaged," Barcelona president Joan Laporta said.

"We have had a harmonious institutional relationship with all clubs, including Madrid. The clasico is the greatest spectacle in the world and there is always an intense rivalry. But to me, the institutional relationship has been harmed because of them."

The clubs have been trading direct attacks ever since it became public that Barcelona had paid more than 7 million euros (\$7.6 million) over several years for ref-

Barcelona has denied it tried to influence referees with its payments, and Laporta said Monday in his first news conference to explain the club's actions that it was "an unprecedented exercise in cynicism" for Madrid to say it was harmed by referees during Barcelona's most successful era.

"Everyone knows that Real Madrid is a club that is historically favored by refereeing decisions, and continues to be now," Laporta said.

"It's a club that has been known for being the club of the regime, because of its proximity to those in power politically, economically and in sports."

Laporta claimed that for seven decades the top refereeing officials in the country were linked to Madrid.

"For 70 years, those in charge of making sure that there was justice on the field were either former members or players or officials from Madrid," he said in one of the harshest attacks yet by Barcelona.



ereeing reports produced by the company of a former vice president of the country's refereeing committee.

Barcelona was formally accused by prosecutors of alleged corruption in sports, fraudulent management and falsification of mercantile documentation, and Madrid was among the clubs that decided to take part in the legal proceedings. The team expressed its "utmost concern regarding the gravity of the facts" and said it was an "affected party" in the matter.

Madrid didn't stay quiet, and late Monday published a video on its television channel and social media accounts refuting Laporta's claims.

Using images from Laporta's news conference and past footage of events related to Barcelona's history, Madrid linked a video to former dictator Gen. Francisco Franco, including during the inauguration of Camp Nou Stadium. The video of more than four minutes ended with the question, "What was the team of the regime?"

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