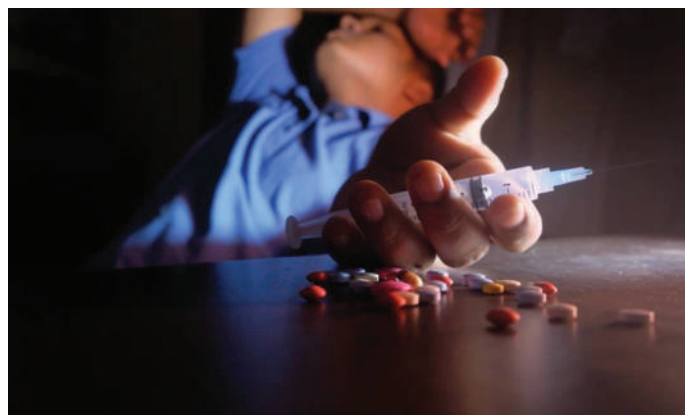


## War On Drugs

## Admin Orders Colour Coding Of Kashmir Villages



Observer News Service

**Srinagar:** In a bid to tame the monster of drug abuse, the Union Territory administration on Wednesday ordered the Deputy Commissioners (DCs) of the Valley to classify villages according to the number of individuals involved in substance use, and label those hamlets as green, yellow and red depending upon severity.

The directions in this regard were passed by the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com)

Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bhiduri while chairing an NCORD meeting here on Wednesday, an official spokesperson said.

Bhiduri, he said, called for collectively employing efforts & resources to eradicate the substance abuse to secure the young generation from sliding into the menace of drugs.

The meeting was attended among other by DCs, Director Social Welfare Department, Director School Education, Director Health **More on P10**

**HE IMPRESSED UPON THE OFFICERS TO SPREAD AWARENESS AT GRASS** roots level about the negative impact of drugs in the society. He instructed them to classify villages according to the number of individuals involved in substance use, and label those hamlets as green, yellow and red depending upon severity."

## Authorities Rule Out Flood Situation In Kashmir This Year

Majid Nabi

**Srinagar:** The authorities have dismissed fears of floods hitting Kashmir Valley this year, despite spells of heavy rainfall raising water level considerably in all major water bodies, including Jhelum and its tributaries for over a fortnight.

Apprehensive of recurrence of catastrophic September 2014 floods that rendered thousands of people homeless, people from worst affected areas of Srinagar including Bemina, Mehjoornagar, Rajbagh, Jawaharnagar, Hyderpora and Natipora urged the administration to inform masses about likelihood of floods well in advance.



File Photo

"Incessant rains have made us apprehensive of the recurrence of 2014 like floods, while substantial rise in water level in water bodies has added to our concerns. We are mulling to move to safer places in case there is no improvement in weather for the next

few days," Bilal Ahmad, a Mehjoor Nagar resident told Kashmir Observer.

"We have suffered a lot and are not in a position to go through the worst phase yet again," Tariq Ahmad, a Hyderpora resident said

However, Chief Engineer, Irrigation and **More on P10**

## Cloudburst Triggers Flash Floods In Kulgam

**F**lash flood triggered by a cloudburst on Wednesday created panic in several villages of Devsar in South Kashmir's Kulgam district. An official said that a cloudburst occurred in the upper reaches of Lammar-Hallan area in Devsar on Wednesday afternoon. "Soon after the cloudburst, there was a sudden down flow of water, creating panic in the area," he said. Naib Tehsildar Lammar, Hyder Hussain told a local news agency **More on P10**

## Airfares Likely To Rise As Go First Cancellations Reduce Capacity: TAAI

New Delhi, May 3: No-frills carrier Go First filing for insolvency proceedings and cancelling flights is bad for the airline industry as the move will reduce capacity and could push airfares in certain routes, travel agents' grouping TAAI said on Wednesday.

Bogged down by an acute financial crunch due to grounding of more than half of its fleet amid P&W engine supply woes, Go First has cancelled flights for three days starting May 3.

Besides, the Wadia group-owned airline has filed for voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy



Code (IBC).

"It is bad for the (airlines) industry... It is such a fragile industry... we lost crores of rupees in Kingfisher Airlines, in Jet Airways and we have another one going into insolvency (proceedings)," Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) President Jyoti Mayal told PTL.

The developments at Go

First, which has been flying for more than 17 years, also come at a time when the domestic air traffic is on an upward trajectory.

Mayal said that right now there is demand for air travel as it is holiday time and "we do expect fares going up in sectors it (Go First) was flying. In the coming weeks, fares are likely to go up." Regarding booked tickets, she said it is the company that has to provide refunds and if it goes into insolvency, the rules are different. "Those are the challenges we are going to be facing".

TAAI has around 2,800 members. In the summer schedule that is **More on P10**

## In A First, Women Cops Deployed For Night Duty In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

**Jammu:** In a move aimed at ensuring women's safety as well as keeping tabs on women drug peddlers, female constables have been deployed at various vital checkpoints in Jammu city during night hours, officials said.

This is for the first time that women constables have been deployed during night hours, they said.

"We are deployed at various checkpoints in the city to ensure safety and protection of women at night," a female head constable said.

Anita, a constable, said that women cops have been deployed to do proper verification

of women during night time.

"Our duty involves keeping tabs on movement of women residents, since male (constables) can't question them too much, so that there should be no (illegal) activities," she told PTL.

According to senior police officials, the deployment of women constables has been done not only to ensure the safety of women citizens but also to check instances of drug peddling by women.

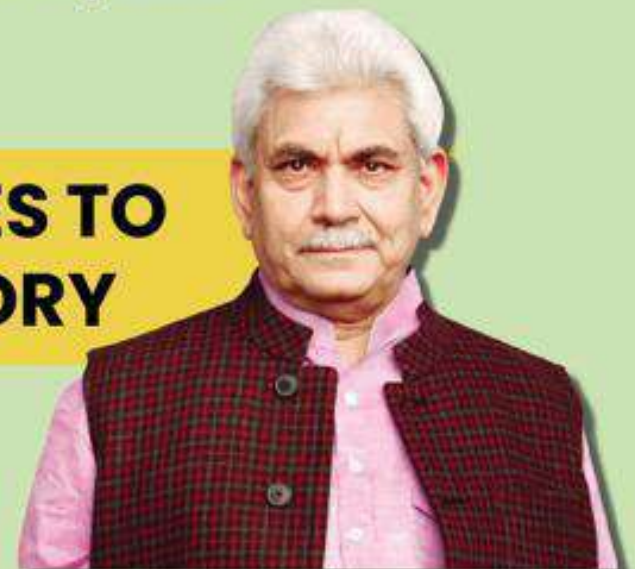
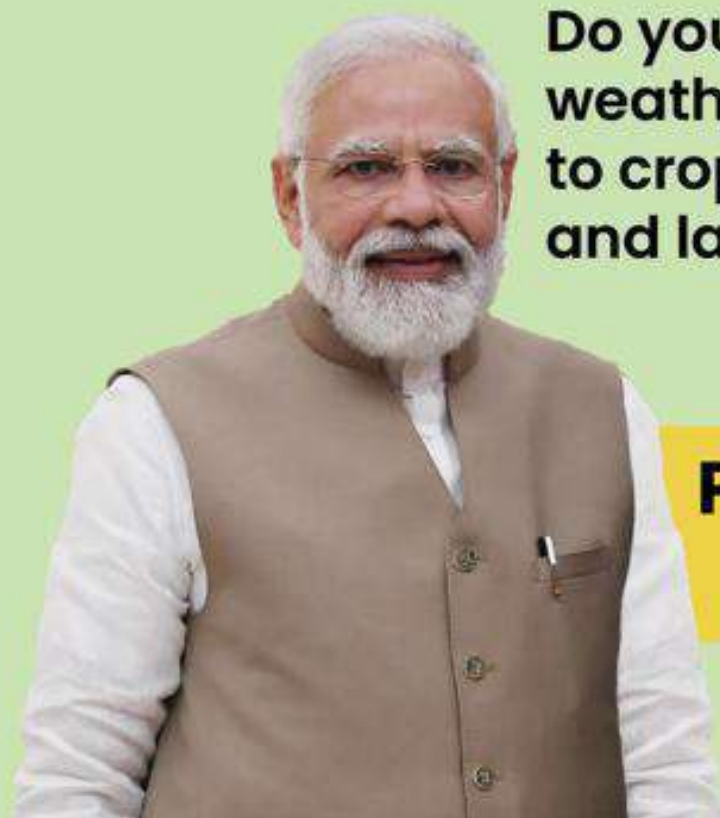
As per sources, over 50 to 60 female constables along with male cops have been put on duty under new the set-up in the city.

Most of the women cops have been deployed at the entry and exit points of **More on P10**



Do you need **REGULAR INFORMATION** on weather conditions, pest-prevention, diseases related to crops & livestock, spraying schedule of fruit crops and latest agricultural and allied sector inputs?

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The Agriculture Production Department, UT of J&K has launched **DAKSH KISAN** (Learning Management System) and **KISAN SAATHI** (IT Dashboard). Please **SCAN THE QR CODE** to register and get advisory directly on your phone



IT DASHBOARD



DAKSH KISAN





# AI Systems' Signals Found To Mirror How Brain Interprets Speech

**Press Trust of India**

Providing possible insights into how artificial intelligence (AI) systems operate, a new research showed that they can process signals in a way strikingly similar to how the brain interprets speech. Researchers from the University of California, Berkeley, US, measured the brain waves as participants listened to a single syllable - "bah". They then compared that brain activity to the signals produced by an AI system trained to learn English. A side-by-side comparison graph of the two signals was found to show a striking similarity. The researchers said that this was raw data and that the data had not been tweaked. "Understanding how different architectures are

similar or different from humans is important," said Gasper Begus, assistant professor of linguistics at UC Berkeley and lead author on the study published recently in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

That is because, he said, understanding how those signals compare to the brain activity of human beings is an important benchmark in the race to build increasingly powerful systems. For example, Begus said, having that understanding could help put guardrails on increasingly powerful AI models. It could also improve our understanding of how errors and bias are baked into the learning processes.

To do so, Begus turned to his training in linguistics.

He said that the sound of spoken words enters



our ears and gets converted into electrical signals, which then travel through the brainstem and to the outer parts of our brain. Using electrodes, researchers traced that path

in response to 3,000 repetitions of a single sound and found that the brain waves for speech closely followed the actual sounds of language. The researchers transmitted the same recording of the "bah" sound through an unsupervised neural network - an AI system - that could interpret sound. They then measured the coinciding waves and documented them as they occurred.

Begus said he and his colleagues are collaborating with other researchers using brain imaging techniques to measure how these signals might compare. They're also studying how other languages, like Mandarin, are decoded in the brain differently and what that might indicate about knowledge.

Many models are trained on visual cues, like colours or written text – both of which have thousands of variations at the granular level. Language, however, opens the door for a more solid understanding, Begus said. The English language, for example, has just a few dozen sounds. "If you want to understand these models, you have to start with simple things. And speech is way easier to understand," Begus said. In cognitive science, the researchers said, one of the primary goals is to build mathematical models that resemble humans as closely as possible. The newly documented similarities in brain waves and AI waves are a benchmark on how close researchers are to meeting that goal, they said.



Javeedigbal123@gmail.com /vbcfvscs@skuastkashmir.ac.in Tele-fax: 0194-226237

**Tender Notice No. (01) of 2023, Dated: 01.05.2023**  
**(For construction of Polyhouse)**

Sealed tenders/quotations are invited from the interested parties for construction of "Hi-Tech Greenhouse/Polyhouse" at Main-campus, SKUAST-K, Shalimar-190025. The necessary Tender documents along with terms and conditions for the construction of "Hi-Tech Greenhouse/Polyhouse" are available and can be downloaded from university Website [www.skuastkashmir.co.in](http://www.skuastkashmir.co.in). The tenders should reach to the office of undersigned by or before 10.05.2023 (2:00 pm) .The tenders will be opened on the same day (10.05.2023) in presence of the tenderers who wish to remain present. (M) 9469075059  
No: AU/FoH/DST-SERB-CRG/23/1066-68  
Dated:03-05-2023

Sd /-  
(Dr. Javeed I. A. Bhat)  
P.I. Project/Prof. & Head

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly mentioned in my Polytechnic Diploma in Mechanical Engineering, Marks Sheet with degree as Shafat Ahmad Bhat while my correct name is Shafath Ahmad Bhat which needs to be corrected. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the J&K State Bote of Technical Education Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Shafath Ahmad Bhat**  
**S/o Nazir Ahmad Bhat**  
**R/o Kaloosa Bandipora**

**From The Principal District  
Judge, Srinagar**

Present : Mr. Jawad Ahmad

1. Fayaz Ahmd Mir  
3. Mushtaq Ahmad Mir  
All sons of Ali Mohammad Mir, All residents of Baghi Roop Singh Rainwari Khanyar Sgr  
In the matter of  
Application for issuance of Succession certificate in favour of the petitioner(s)

## Notice To Public At Large

Where the petitioner(s) Filed Above Titled Petition Before This Court For Issuance Of Succession Certificate In Favour Of Petitioner(s) in respect of Rs 28,24,303 as debts and securities in name of Deceased Namely: Late, Ali Mohammad Nabi S/o Ghulam Nabi Mir R/o Baghi Road Singh, Khanaya Srinagar who died on 23, SEPT 2016. The petition is pending disposal before this court and the next date of hearing is fixed on 02-05-2023. Public Notice is hereby issued, informing all and sundry through the drom of this proclamation that at any anyone has any objection for issuance of succession certificate, he/she / they shall appear before this court either personally or through counsel or any authorized agent and file objections on or before 02-05-2023. Failing which the petition will be taken up and appropriate orders will be passed in the same. In case, the date fixed is declared as holiday the matter shall be taken on the next working day.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

That I Mukhtar Ahmad Bhat S/o Gh Nabi Bhat intends to sell Plot No 811 in housing colony, Ompora Budgam to Basit Mukhtar S/o Mukhtar Ahmad R/o Mughal Mohalla Chhattabal. I have applied for NOC for conveyance deed for transfer of lease hold rights of above said plots. Objection, if any, may be conveyed to the Managing Director, J&K Housing Board Green Belt Park, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu within a period of 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. However, no objection will be entertained after the expiry of the above said period

**Mukhtar Ahmad Bhat**  
**S/o Gh Nabi Bhat**  
**R/o Mughal Mohalla Chhattabal**

NEAR J&K BANK ZALDAGAR

Telefax No. 0194-2952696  
e-mail Id: xenmidsrinagar@gmail.com

Sub:- Extension in bidding time for this office Short Term e-NIT No. 01 OF 2023-24, Dated: 15-04-2023 for below mentioned works:-

## EXTENSION NOTICE 2

Due to poor response to above mentioned sub-part of this office above referred e-NIT for the subject work, the critical dates are again extended as under: -

Bid submission/ Document download / sale end Date	09/05/2023 at 1400 hrs
Date and time of Bid opening	10/05/2023 at 1230 hrs

Rest of the terms and conditions shall remain un-altered as laid down in the original e-NIT.

No. MIDS/Ts/ 374-79  
DIPK-1053/23  
Dated:- 03-05-2023

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
Mechanical Irrigation Division  
Spring

**Subject:- Grant of Registration of the proposed Travel unit under the name & style "M/s TELEPORT TRAVELS " Situated at Nandpora Dal Lake..**

## Public Notice

Whereas, I Danish Mushtaq Sopori S/o Mushtaq Ahmed Sopori R/O Shalimar Talbal Kashmir intends to apply in the department of Tourism for Registration of my proposed Travel Unit **TELEPORT TRAVELS " Situated at Nandpora Dal Lake Srinagar** Kashmir under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas, I will submit State Subject/Domicile Certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan Card, Experience Certificate (Minimum 05 Years), Character Certificate (Police Department), Bank Statement (Minimum Balance 100000), Site Plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested by Sub-Register , Printing Material ( Letter Head/Visiting Card), Photograph of the Unit (Indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size Photographs to the Department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency.

Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12, before my case is processed for registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/Financial Institutions/Bank/Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Registration (e-mail Id: ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/newspapers of the Valley. No objections beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained.

از جانب تهره پوره شورده اچلاک ارشاد احمد ملک  
مضمون: درخواست رونق بخشی  
پوره تحصیل کار باز بموله برادر اعطای Income Dependence Certificate  
مختصر  
آمدنی سند برآمدنی عبدالاحد ملک ولد عبدالصمد ملک ساکنه موضع کھنڈر پوره (موقوفی)  
(05-03-2023)

شہنشاہ براد گاہی پور خراسان و عام۔

معاملہ عنوان ایسٹون ٹیکہ مل تحقیق FBI- Division Tangmarg موروثہ 23-03-2023 پتھن زیر 0559/FBI/D/PHE موروثہ 23-03-2023 وائلس پتھن ایڈیٹو Sub Divisional Magistrat موروثہ 23-03-2023 کلرگ زیر نمبری

مختصر آمدنی پسمند دکان آمدنی عدلا حد ملک ولید عبدالعبد الصمد ملک سائو متع محمد پورہ موروثہ 03-05-2023 کوئی اس نہایت قلم اڈیں ورث جائز سند زیر نمبر

کڑورس اجراء ہوئے ہے بروئے فکشی سند اڈا مشددا JK-REV-LHC/2023/0409 موروثہ 04-06-2023 بجین داروان جائز تحصیل

کڑورس پورہ فکشنوگ کسی عدلا حد عبدالعبد الصمد ملک زیر نمبری Officer

کڑورس موت کی جو ہے فوت ہوا ہے موتی عدلا حد ملک کوئی اڈا ٹیکہ مل تحقیق 05-03-2023 موروثہ 05-03-2023 D-2023-05265-00020

فکشنوگ شخصیت ALM کا تھرا فتوحاتی کی آمدنی پورے داروان جائز بدیل افراد مختصر تھے۔

مسکاتہ راجہ بیکم زبوتونی 62 سال گھر بیکلام

کبیر احمد ملک پور متونی 37 سال مزدوری 3000 آمدنی

مقدودہ بانو دختر متونی 35 سال گھر بیکلام

عاقب متباق پوتا 19 سال Driver 6000

غائب متباق پوتا 13 سال زرتعلیم

غائب متباق پوتا 10 سال زرتعلیم

فرقان متباق پوتا

اس کے علاوہ کوئی افراد کسمہ نہیں بتلایا گیا ہے۔ لہذا مزید بحث سرٹیفکٹ اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عذرا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض مع وجوہات پیش کرے۔ مبادا گزرنے بعد کوئی عذرا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار

از نیابت سری وار پوره

درخواست منجانب عبد المجید وانی ولد عبد الرحمان وانی ساکنہ شوچاپورہ بمراد  
عطا نیگی لیگل ہیر سرٹفکیٹ مرحوم والد عبد الرحمان وانی

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ ذیل عنوان الصدر کی نسبت میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے مطابق رپورٹ پٹواری سائل عبدالجید وانی ولد مرحوم عبدالرحمان وانی ساکنہ موضع شچنپا پورہ کاسکوٹ داربے سائل مذکورہ کا کنبہ 04 افراد پر مشتمل ہے سائل کا والد مرحوم عبدالرحمان وانی ولد عبدالغنی وانی مورخہ 01-08-1990 کو فوت ہوئے اوسمی کے وارثان حسب ذیل ہیں۔

نام	عمر	پیشہ	رشتہ بہرہ متوفی
عبدالحمید دانی	56 سال	سرکاری ملازم	پسر مرحوم
تہانہ بیگم	57	گھریلو کام	دختر
افروزہ بیگم	44 سال	گھریلو کام	دختر
وجیدہ بیگم	54 سال	گھریلو کام	دختر

اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی افراد کسمپرسی نہیں ہے۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا شخص اس کو کوئی عذریا اعتراض ہو جولوہ سات دان کے اندر دفتر بڑا میں پیش کریں معباد گزرنے بعد کوئی بھی عذریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

فکو  
نائب تحصیلدار





## Poor Cellular Network Irks Jio Subscribers In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Reliance Jio subscribers have been facing call drop and connection issues across Kashmir Valley.

Subscribers have been giving vent to their anger by uploading posts regarding the poor performance of Jio Telecommunications on social media.

One of the posts from a well-known social activist has garnered thousands of hits with hundreds of subscribers complaining about call drop and connection issues for the last several months. Srinagar and Budgam, users said are the worst sufferers of the poor service,

while subscribers from Sopore, Bandipora, and Tral also face the same issues.

Some of the areas where Jio performance is below par include Shalteng, Nowhatta, Press Enclave, Mehjoor Nagar, Lal Bazar in Srinagar, Panzan, Chadoora, Kremshore, Khanshab, in Budgam, Mansbal, Bandipora, Sopore, and Baramulla.

The subscribers said they are satisfied with the Jio mobile internet service but are facing problems while making or receiving calls.

One of the subscribers said that this issue has been persisting for the last several months, but the service provider is yet to come up with a solution to it.

## Power Supply To Remain Affected At PSS Lasjan On May 4 & 8

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Power Controller Kashmir has informed that, the power supply to the Re-

ceiving Station Lasjan shall remain affected due to facilitating additional work at Lasjan PSS on May 04 and 08 from 11.00 am to 3 pm.

## DC Srinagar Inspects Major Ongoing Construction Works In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Deputy Commissioner (DC), Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Wednesday conducted an extensive tour of City areas to inspect progress of various ongoing major projects being carried out at Government Women's College M.A Road, Lal-Ded Maternity Hospital, Amar Singh College Gogji Bagh and beautification project along the Jhelum River embankments from Zero Bridge to LD Hospital under Srinagar Smart City initiative.

The DC also visited Central Veterinary Hospital Maisuma and took stock of its functioning. At Government Women's College M.A Road, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the under construction Administrative Block being constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 5.63 crore.

On the occasion, the DC expressed his displeasure over the slow pace of the work. He directed the concerned executing agency to speed up the pace of work by employing additional men and machinery. The DC sets a July, 2023 deadline for the completion of the project.

The DC also visited the

construction site of a new 200-bedded Extension Block/ Gynecology & Infertility Block of Lal Ded (LD) Maternity Hospital being constructed at a cost of Rs 132 crore.

While inspecting the progress of works of the project, the DC was apprised about the physical status of the under construction project. He was informed that the five-floor building will have a complete Oncology Department, High End Labor Room, and 4 Operation Theatres and a big Diagnostic Laboratory and Neonatal Unit. In addition, there will be a ground plus 5-floors with parking space, patients waiting lounge, canteen, new-born section, and hospital equipment and also space for wards.

The DC was also informed that work on the project will pick up the pace as soon as base isolators are procured.

Similarly, at Amar Singh College, Gogjibagh, the DC inspected the progress of work being executed on construction of a new administrative Block being constructed at a cost of Rs 2.43 crore. He inspected the pace of work and directed the concerned executing agency to work in double shifts and complete the work on the Administrative Block by November 2023.



Security forces personal using explosive detection equipments at the Boulevard Road on Wednesday ahead of proposed G-20 summit in Srinagar. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

## Authorities Disallow Roadside Parking At M.K Chowk, Locals Aghast

Was Not Aware, Will Address Issues At Earliest: SSP Traffic

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The residents of Mirza Kamil Sahib Chowk, Hawal are up in arms against authorities for allegedly not allowing them to park their vehicles on the roadsides.

Residents say the authorities have placed barricades at M.K Chowk to divert traffic at the busy square, causing frequent traffic jams in the area.

Residents further alleged tyres of cars parked on the roadside area deflated, thus leaving motorists in a helpless situation.

"We had parked our car outside our house and we were shocked to see tyres ruptured. We don't have any other space to park our vehicles" said Syed Hussain, a local resident.



We had parked our car outside our house and we were shocked to see tyres ruptured. We don't have any other space to park our vehicles

"We don't have a problem obeying rules but the authorities should provide us with parking space so that we can park our vehicles" he said.

Locals also said since barricades have been placed on roads, people take to the wrong side, thus risking the lives of pedestrians and commuters in addition

to their own.

"The reason for placing barricades is aimed at making people follow rules and to minimize traffic jams, however, the diversions and barricades play spoilsport." Mohammad Burhan, a resident said, adding some people drive on the wrong side, which results in quarrels and fights between commuters.

The locals appealed to the authorities to get the barricades removed for the safety of commuters.

Speaking to Kashmir Observer, SSP Traffic Srinagar Muzaffar Ahmad Shah said he was not aware about the issue and assured action.

"Now that the issue has been brought to my notice, we will address the issue" He said.

## NJJM Technical Team Visits Water Testing Lab In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A technical team from Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, GOI, National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM) headed by Neeraj Sharma and accompanied by Mission Director Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) J&K Dr. G.N Itoo today visited the UT level Water Testing Laboratory (WTL) in Srinagar.

The team that is on a three day visit to Kashmir for inspection of ongoing works under

JJM and review the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in the UT of J&K on the occasion enquired about the various parameters being tested.

Mission Director JJM apprised the team about various initiatives being taken at village level to improve water testing through Field Test Kits and their demonstration on Back to village and Back Diwas organized at district level.

The team was apprised about the upgraded facilities and equipment being procured

to make the UT water testing lab NABL compliant.

During the visit, the NJJM team gave some suggestions for improving the overall system and making water testing more accurate so that the goal of JJM of providing Quality drinking water to the inhabitants is achieved.

The team also suggested utilizing the collage Labs for testing and continuous capacity building of Lab staff. It expressed satisfaction about the progress of JJM in the UT of J&K.

## VC KU Felicitates 5 PPS Bemina Teachers With Best Teacher Awards

Observer News Service

Srinagar: CT University of Punjab in collaboration with Kashmir University organized a one day workshop in the convocation complex of University of Kashmir on the theme "Unlocking Opportunities for the Youth", today.

On the occasion, five teachers of PPS Bemina Srinagar were facilitated with best teacher awards besides; the principal of the institution was awarded with a memento of honor for being among 15 influential principles of the valley.

On the occasion, Vice Chancellor of Kashmir University Prof. Nelofer Khan and Chancellor of CT University of Punjab Charanjit Singh Channi were chief guests.

In the workshop the main focus was NEP 2020 keeping in view the skill based opportunities for the youth. During the workshop the professors of both the universities along with chief guests throw light on the holistic development of the young generation. The joint director of CT University Dr. Maninder Pal Singh encouraged

the students for the skill based education.

In the event, Police Public School Bemina Srinagar participated with great enthusiasm. Five teachers including Sheikh Rouf, Mir Zahoor, Yasir Yousuf, Zeeza Mushtaq and Shabnum Malik were felicitated with best teacher awards. Moreover, the best performing students of the institution got certificates in the workshop. Principal of PPS Bemina was also awarded with a memento of honor for being among 15 influential principles of the valley.

## 4 Students From RISE Score More Than 99 Percent In JEE Mains

Observer News Service

Srinagar: RISE Institute achieves best results yet again, unlocking the hidden talents and abilities of its students with personalized guidance, expert mentoring, and comprehensive learning resources.


Four students from RISE have achieved a re-

markable feat by securing an outstanding score of 99+ percentile in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main 2023 namely, Nadeem Shabir 99.32, Muiz Zubair 99.19, Azhar ul Shams 99.18, Peerzada Shabir 99.05.

The JEE Main exam is considered one of the toughest engineering entrance exams in India and

is the gateway to the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs). This exceptional performance is a testament of hard work, dedication, and academic prowess of these students.

It is a proud moment not just for them but also for RISE and the community as a whole.



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**Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited**  
B/U B.P. Batmaloo  
(Saifco Complex)  
Srinagar-190009

## Possession Notice

**Notice under Section 13 (4) of the SARFAESI ACT, 2002 read with Rule 8 (1) of the Security (Enforcement) Interest Rules, 2002**

Whereas Mr. Aijaz Ahmad Sheikh, as the Authorized Officer of the Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers under section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notice dated 19.11.2022 thereby calling upon the Borrower namely **M/S City Shoe Centre Prop:- Peer Aijaz Ahmad S/O Haji Peer Ghulam Hassan R/O Upper Soura near petrol pump Srinagar** to repay an amount of **Rs. 40,58,796.86 (Rupees Forty Lacs Fifty Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Six & Paise Eighty Six Only)** being the balance outstanding as on 31.10.2022 in the accounts of the Borrower, within 60 days from the date of the said notice together with the future interest and other charges thereon.

The said borrower having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the said borrower in particular and the public in general that the undersigned being authorized officer of the J & K Bank Ltd. has taken symbolic possession of the mortgage property described herein below, in exercise of the powers conferred on me under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules, on this the **1 May day of month of the year 2023**.

The said borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned against dealing with the said property in any manner whatsoever and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the charge of the J&K Bank Limited for the amount in aggregating to **Rs. 40,58,796.86 (Rupees Forty Lacs Fifty Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Six & Paise Eighty Six Only)** together with future interest thereon from 01.11.2022 and other charges incurred or to be incurred.

**The borrowers attention is invited to the provisions of Sub-section (2) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of the time available, to redeem the secured assets.**

**Description of the Immovable Property**  
**(As per the schedule provided in mortgage deed/latest particulars including any accreditations)**


**Equitable Mortgage of Double Storied Residential House along with land measuring 10 Marlas falling under Khasra no. 677 min , Khata no. 201 & khawat no. 42,Mouza Buchpora standing in the name of Mrs. Shazia Ajaz W/O Peer Aijaz Ahmad R/O Upper Soura Srinagar situated at Upper Soura, Tehsil and district Srinagar.**

Ref. No. JKB/PATHER/ADV/2023-  
Dated: 01.05.2023  
Place: Srinagar

Authorized Officer

Registered office : Corporate Headquarters, M.A.Road, Srinagar 190001, Kashmir, India  
CIN: L65110JK1938SGC000048 ; T : +91 (0)194 2481 930-35 ; F : +91 (0)194 248 1928 ; E : info@jkbank.com ; W : www.jkbank.com


DIPK-NB-524/23      DATED: 03-05-2023


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

**AIRPORTS**  
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

**RAILWAYS**

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

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

 HIJRI CALENDAR 13 Shawwal 1444	PRAYERS
	FAJR 4:06
	ZUHR 12:28
	ASR 5:18
	Magrib 7:19
	ISHA 8:50

## This Day In History

- 1471-Wars of the Roses: Battle of Tewkesbury- final battle between Lancaster and York sees the Prince of Wales, Edward of Westminster killed and King Edward IV restored to his crown thus extinguishing the Lancastrian of Plantagenet line
- 1493- Spanish Pope Alexander VI divides America between Spain & Portugal
- 1540-Venice & Turkey sign Treaty of Constantinople
- 1776- Rhode Island declares independence from Britain
- 1799- Fourth Anglo-Mysore War: The Battle of Seringapatam: The siege of Seringapatam ends when the city is assaulted and the Tipu Sultan killed by the besieging British army, under the command of General George Harris.
- 1814- Bourbon reign restored in France
- 1818- Netherlands & Britain sign treaty against illegal slave handling
- 1869- The Naval Battle of Hakodate takes place in Japan.
- 1878- Phonograph shown for 1st time at Grand Opera House
- 1888-Italy & Spain sign military covenant
- 1912- Italian mariners occupy Turkish Island of Rhodes
- 1915- Italy drops Triple Alliance with Austria-Hungary & Germany
- 1916- At request of US, Germany curtails its submarine warfare
- 1924- German Republic election fascists & communists win
- 1925- League of Nations conference on arms control & poison gas usage
- 1931- Mustafa Kemal Pasja becomes Turkish president
- 1942- Battle of Coral Sea begins in the Pacific (1st sea battle fought solely in air) between Japanese, US and Australian navies and air forces

## From KO Archives

## Violent Upsurge Claims 11

Observer News Service

**S**SRINAGAR - In stepped up attacks on political activists in Jammu and Kashmir, the head of the Pattan municipal committee, a block president of the Pradesh Congress-Committee and three policemen were shot dead on Tuesday, even as the security forces claims to have killed 6 militants on Monday night in foiling an infiltration-attempt in Poonch. Fifteen people, including two STF personnel, were injured in a grenade blast in Pulwama district today.

Gunmen, who police said were militants, opened fire on, the chairman of the Pattan Municipal Committee, Muhammad Ramzan Mian, in the town market at around 11:30 a.m., critically injuring him, his two security guards, a civilian, and a policeman who was standing nearby.

The injured were rushed to hospital, where Mian and his two personal security guards, Zahoor Alunad and Riyaz Ahmad were declared brought dead. The police constable, Altaf Hussain, succumbed to his injuries later.

A civilian Basheer Ahmad Bhat with whom Mian had been in conversation at the time of the attack, was also injured in the firing. He has been shifted to the SKIMS in a critical condition.

Mian had been inspecting developmental works in the market and had stopped for a chat at the shop of Pattan beopar mundal president when the attack took place, the CNS said.

According to one report, the attackers made off with two service rifles of Mian's security guards after the firing.

Security guards deployed with political workers have been put on alert following the killings.

In another incident, a group of unidentified gunmen intruded into the house of one Abdul Ahad Ganai at Shangran near Doom in Anantnag district in the wee hours today and shot dead the block president of

Pradesh Congress CommitteeJabbar Ahmad Khanday. A contractor by profession, Khanday died instantly and his gunmen fled the scene.

Gunmen also shot at and critically injured the village head of Zainapora, Ali

Muhammad Wani outside his house in Shopian area of Pulwama district this morning.

Another civilian Bashir Ahmad Dar was also injured in the firing and both were hospitalized.

The security forces shot dead six suspected militants as they were trying to sneak into Jammu and Kashmir through the Line of Control (LoC) in what is being called the biggest infiltration attempt this year.

(Kashmir Observer, 04 May, 2005)



## Pak Govt, PTI Agree to Hold Same-day Elections

Press Trust of India

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan's coalition Government and former Prime Minister Imran Khan's party made "big progress" after they agreed to hold general elections in the entire country on the same day but still differed on the date of the polls.

The decision was taken in overnight parleys to end a deadlock over the timing of provincial and federal elections, an issue that has rocked the country's politics for months.

The talks were being held in the backdrop of the controversy with Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) seeking early polls -- particularly in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where assemblies were dissolved in January -- and the government maintaining that provincial and federal elections across the country be held on the same day in October.

The third and key round of talks between the coalition government and PTI began on Tuesday night to discuss proposals for holding elections on the same day in the country.

"There was no longer any confusion about whether there should be separate elections in one or two provinces [...] and the two sides have agreed that holding elections in the country on the same day was for the betterment," Ishaq Dar was quoted as saying by the Dawn newspaper.

He added that another posi-



tive outcome of the talks was that elections would be held under caretaker setups.

However, he added, a consensus was yet to be reached on the date of the elections.

"We have narrowed down on the date... but we have yet to reach an agreement," he said, adding that both sides would consult their leadership on the matter.

He termed the consensus on holding one-day elections in the country as "big progress".

The minister said both sides have shown flexibility and if they continue to work towards a resolution with sincerity, "the third stage (finalisation of the election date), which will be the final stage, will also be successful". Speaking alongside him, PPP's Yousuf Raza Gilani said it was also agreed that both sides would accept the election results.

The government side included Ishaq Dar, Khawaja Saad Rafique, Azam Nazeer Tarar and Sardar Ayaz Sadiq from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and they are joined by Yusef Raza Gilani and Syed Naveed Qamar from the Pakistan Peoples Party and other parties in the coalition government.

## Supreme Court Questions Centre Over Probe Agency Chief's Term Extension

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** "Can one person be so indispensable?" The Supreme Court asked the government today as it questioned it about the third extension of service given to ED Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra despite its express direction that no further extension shall be granted to him.

The top court said it had categorically held in its 2021 judgement that any extension of tenure granted to officers holding the post of Director of Enforcement after attaining the age of superannuation should be for a short period and clearly mentioned that no further extension will be given to Mishra.

"Is there is no other person in the organisation who can do his job? Can one person be so indispensable? "According to you, there is no one else in ED who is competent? What will happen post to the agency post-2023, when he does retire?" a bench of Justices BR Gavai, Vikram Nath and Sanjay Karol asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who represented the Centre.

The barrage of questions

from the bench came after the solicitor general said Mr Mishra's extension was necessitated because of administrative reasons and was vital for India's evaluation by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

"The next peer review of India's legislation on money laundering is to take place in 2023 and, with a view to ensuring that India's rating does not go down, continuity of the leadership in the Enforcement Directorate is crucial," Mr Mehta said, adding the person already interacting with the task force is best suited to deal with it and the skills for that is acquired after working in that position for several years.

The solicitor general said though no one is indispensable, in such cases continuity is required.

"We are not dealing with individuals, but with the performance of an entire country," he contended.

At the start of the arguments, the solicitor general questioned the locus standi of some of the PIL petitioners who have challenged the amended law that allowed extension to the ED boss.

## Go First Passengers Furious Over Last-Minute Flight Cancellations



Agencies

**AMRITSAR (PUNJAB):** As Go First Airlines grounded flights amid bankruptcy, passengers who booked their tickets with the airlines are left in the middle of nowhere.

Go First Airlines on Tuesday announced that its flight operations will remain cancelled from May 3 to May 5 adding that a full refund will be issued to the passengers.

Meanwhile, counters of Go First Airlines lie deserted at Amritsar airport as the cash-strapped airlines ground their flights. A passenger of Go First Airlines said that the airline is only talking about giving a refund.

"I have my flight to Mumbai, as I reached the airport there was nobody at the counter... we asked to adjust us to other flights but the airline is only talking about giving us a refund," said Gurvinder Singh

the passenger.

Another passenger who booked her ticket with Go First Airlines said that the flight was cancelled suddenly and should have been given another flight.

"Our flight was cancelled suddenly. They should have given us another flight. They are telling us they will refund us after 7 days," said another passenger.

The official media account of Go First Airlines took to Twitter and said, "Due to operational reasons, GoFirst flights for 3rd, 4th and 5th May 2023 have been cancelled. We sincerely apologise to our loyal customers. We assure you that we will be back with more information soon. A full refund will be issued through the original mode of payment shortly".

Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said that the Government of India

has been assisting Go First Airlines in every possible manner but it is incumbent upon the airline to make alternative travel arrangements for passengers so that they do not face inconvenience.

"Go First has been faced with critical supply chain issues with regard to their engines. The GOI has been assisting the airline in every possible manner. The issue has also been taken up with the stakeholders involved," Mr Scindia said.

"It is unfortunate that this operational bottleneck has dealt a blow to the airline's financial position. It has come to our knowledge that the airline has applied to the NCLT. It is prudent to wait for the judicial process to run its course," he added.

On Tuesday, Go First Airlines said that due to the non-supply of engines by the US-based jet engines manufacturer, operations will remain cancelled.

## Iranian President Arrives in Syria on Landmark Visit

Agencies

**P**residents of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Arab Republic of Syria have signed an agreement on "long-term strategic comprehensive cooperation" between the two countries.

The two presidents held a meeting earlier in the day in Damascus, highlighting the importance of Iran-Syria's long-term cooperation plan for advancing the interests of the two nations and other countries in the region.

The two presidents inked 14 documents in various areas,

"A major section of these documents seeks to facilitate trade between the two countries," he told IRI after the signing ceremony, noting that the agreements will improve the quality and volume of bilateral trade.

Tehran and Damascus are also set to discuss the establishment of a joint bank and joint insurance that will ease trade, said the official, adding that one Syrian and one Iranian bank will carry out financial transactions till the joint institution is set up.

According to one of the agreements, 50,000 Iranians will be able to make pilgrimage



including trade, oil and energy, engineering, housing, rail and aerial transportation, free trade zones, communications and technology, earthquake reliefs, and facilitation of pilgrimage to the holy sites for the people of the two Muslim nations.

Mehrdad Bazrpash, the Iranian road minister and head of the Iran-Syria Joint Economic Commission, described the signed documents as "nearly unprecedented both in terms of number and importance of [addressed] issues."

to the shrine of Hazrat Zainab, the granddaughter of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in Damascus on a yearly basis, using three to five direct flights every week, Bazrpash said. He added that the operation to dispatch pilgrims will start in the next two months.

Experts had earlier stressed the importance of economic aspects of Raisi's visit to Damascus, noting that increased economic cooperation would help confront the Western-imposed sanctions on both states.

## Beant Singh Assassination Case: Supreme Court Upholds Convict's Death Penalty

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court today declined to commute the death penalty of Balwant Singh Rajoana, who was convicted in the 1995 assassination case of then Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh, to life imprisonment.

The court said the competent authority may deal with Rajoana's mercy plea.

"What we have decided is that the stand of the Ministry of Home Affairs to defer the decision on the mercy petition of the petitioner is also our decision for the reasons given hereunder..."

"This actually amounts to declining grant the same (remission) for the present. Therefore, we have directed that the competent authority will again as and when they deem necessary will deal with the mercy petition and take a further decision. The writ petition (of Rajoana) is disposed of accordingly," a bench comprising Justices B R Gavai, Vikram Nath and Sanjay Karol said.

Balwant Singh Rajoana has been in jail for the past 26 years.

On March 2, the top court had reserved its verdict on the plea of Rajoana after hearing the submissions of senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the convict, and Additional Solicitor General KM Natraj.

Earlier, the counsel for Mukul Rohatgi had said that keeping him on death row while sitting over his mercy plea for such a long period violated his fundamental right.

His plea for mercy has been pending before the government for over a decade.

On October 11 last year, the top court had said that a three-judge bench would be set up to hear the plea of Rajoana.

Mr Rohatgi had said that his client was in jail for 26 years and has a substantive case based on the judgements of the top court that his rights under Article 21 of the Constitution (the right to protection of life and personal liberty) has been violated. On September 28 last year, the top court had expressed dissatisfaction over the Centre's failure to take a decision on Rajoana's plea for his death penalty to be commuted to life imprisonment.

## "Punish By Chanting Jai Bajrang Bali When Casting Vote": PM Targets Congress

Press Trust of India

**ANKOLA (KARNATAKA):** Accusing Congress of "abuse culture", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday urged the people of Karnataka to punish those indulging in abuse, while casting their vote in polling booths on May 10.

He said Congress and its leaders hate and abuse him because he has crashed their "corrupt system".

"In this election, Congress is seeking votes in the name of its leader who is retiring... the other way in which they are seeking votes is by abusing Modi," PM Modi said.

Addressing a public meeting in Uttara Kannada district, he said: "Will anyone in Karnataka accept this abuse culture? Will anyone like abusing someone? Does anyone like even a small man being abused? Will Karnataka forgive those abusing?" "What will you (people) do this time? Will you punish them? Will you punish the abusers?... When you press



the button in the polling booth, punish by saying 'Jai Bajrang Bali'...", he added.

Noting that BJP's only aim is to make Karnataka the number one state in the country, and the party has a roadmap for it and is ready to put in efforts, the Prime Minister said the Congress has lost credibility because of its decades of "misrule". "False allegation and false guarantees is Congress' only support," he said, adding that Congress, which ruled the country for decades, concentrated on its own development, instead of the country, and had prepared a system to ensure that its leaders' treasury was filled with "black earnings".

Accusing Congress of "fake name scam" with fake names in the government beneficiaries list during its rule, PM Modi said: "The fake names were more than Karnataka's population, and in their name money was spent, which used to go into the account of Congress' corrupt people's black treasury. Congress had ensured that about 10 crore fake names are in government documents from across the country, he alleged and said, "It was names of people who were not born and did not exist...where did the money sent to these names go? The money was going into the pockets of Congress' corrupt leaders top to bottom."

### NEWS MAKERS

## Family Of Maharashtra Man Killed In 2019 Accident To Get ₹ 1.19 Crore Aid

Press Trust of India

**THANE:** The Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) here has awarded a compensation of ₹1.19 crore to the Mumbai-based family of a 33-year-old man killed in a road accident in 2019.

MACT member M M Walimohammed, in the order passed on April 25, directed Gulnar Plastics Pvt Ltd at Silvassa, the owner of the offending vehicle, and its insurer Tata AIG General Insurance Company Ltd, to jointly and severally make the payment of ₹1,19,64,400 to the claimants within two months along with an interest of seven per cent per annum from the date of filing of the claim.

If they fail, they will have to pay the interest at eight per cent per annum till the realisation of the compensation amount, as per a copy of the order made available on Wednesday. The claimants in the petition were deceased Shailesh Mishra's wife, minor daughter and parents.

Their counsel S L Mane told the MACT that Mishra worked as a manager with a garments company and earned ₹60,000 salary per month.



The claimants submitted that on June 17, 2019, Mishra was travelling in a car from Kandivali to Andheri on the Western Express Highway in Mumbai.

Another car came in a high speed from the wrong side and dashed Mishra's car near Durgadi in Goregaon. Mishra received severe injuries and died on the spot. He was the only earning member of the family, the claimants said. The lawyers of the offending car owner and its insurer contested the claim on various grounds.

The MACT in its order said the FIR followed by spot pancanama (inspection), the accidental death report and statements referred prove the involvement of the offending vehicle and the

negligent driving of its driver.

The police papers are relied by the parties, it said.

"The opponent insurance company is directed to pay the compensation and is at liberty to recover the amount from the owner of the vehicle," it said.

The MACT directed that on realisation of the amount, a sum of ₹25 lakh be kept in a fixed deposit in the name of the deceased's child, ₹15 lakh FD in his wife's name and ₹10 lakh each be paid to the parents of the deceased. The balance amount be paid to Mishra's wife, it directed.

The compensation amount includes figures under various conventional heads, including loss of estate, loss of consortium as well as funeral expenses.

## Jagadish Shettar Still Keeps PM Modi Photo In Office After Messy BJP Exit

Press Trust of India

**HUBBALLI, KARNATAKA:** Former Karnataka Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar -- contesting on a Congress ticket hoping to reclaim his lost 'self-respect' -- still has photos of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah hanging on a wall in his home-office and says it is not good to remove them.

The photos adorn the wall although he is hurt the BJP chose not to pick him for the May 10 assembly elections.

Having represented Hubli-Dharwad Central since 1994 on a BJP ticket, Mr Shettar, however claimed the saffron party had no "address" earlier there and that he built it since then, making it a "Shettar vs Congress" battle ever since.

After severing his decades-old ties with the saffron party, Mr Shettar now in his last leg of political career puts a Congress flag on his car and sets out for campaigning along with the party workers.

Trying to put the past aside, Mr Shettar is meeting supporters and party workers at



his home-office sitting in his regular sofa with two photos of Modi and Shah still hung on the wall behind.

In an interview to PTI while being seated on the same chair, Mr Shettar asked, "what is so surprising about it," when queried why he has not removed the photos after exiting BJP.

He said: "Immediately after shifting from one party to another, removing photos of earlier leaders is not a good thing. I cannot do that." In the past, Mr Shettar and his wife have said several times they have respect for PM Modi and Mr

Shah.

Stating this would be his last assembly election, the six-time MLA said, "this election is a fight for my self-respect, not for political aspirations. As my self-respect was damaged, I joined the Congress for my own peace without putting conditions," he added.

"It (BJP ticket) did not happen due to General Secretary (Organisation) B L Santhosh who pushed for a ticket for his close associate and did all this drama," he claimed.

Mr Shettar further said the poll ticket was denied also

because there was apprehension he may claim number one position among Lingayats after former chief minister B S Yediyurappa.

Asked if he was facing difficulty in convincing voters as a Congress candidate now, he admitted facing some "embarrassment" in the beginning. Gradually, voters are realising when told he was denied a BJP ticket without any reason.

"Nobody knows why I was denied a ticket despite having popularity, age, no criminal background and no corruption/CDs. Whereas the BJP has given tickets to 75 year-old people, family members and those who have criminal background," he said.

Mr Shettar mentioned he was receiving a positive public response so far and added, "I have still maintained popularity because of pro-development works. There is no anti-incumbency. I am confident of winning with a thumping majority this time." He said there is a "miscommunication" that he won in the last six consecutive elections with support of BJP workers and Marathas.



## ‘Social Development’ Emerging As A Career Choice Among Students

- DSW University Of Kashmir Organises Seminar To Educate Youth On Social Development Sector In The Country.
- SBI Foundation Invites Youth For Fellowship Program In Rural Development.

### Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Department of Social Work, University of Kashmir organised a seminar to raise awareness on the social development sector in the country.

Ms. Uzdah Mohammad Jawaid, former alumni, SBI Youth for India delivered a talk on how the youth of Kashmir can facilitate societal development at the village level, by working with communities



and grassroots.

The seminar was attended by the Professors and students from the University.

Speaking at the Seminar, Ms. Jawaid highlighted the social work that the youth today can explore in thematic areas such as Health, Rural Livelihood, Food Security, Environmental Protection, Education, Water, Technology, Women's Empowerment, Self-Governance, Social Entrepreneurship, Traditional Craft and Alternate Energy. Some of these areas align with the India's G20 goals this year.

The social development sector in India faces several challenges in reaching out to rural communities while engaging youth in their development.

Some of the rural challenges include limited Infrastructure, language and cultural barriers, limited resources, lack of awareness, resistance to change and gender inequality, to name a few. To address these challenges, social development organizations need to adopt innovative approaches, build partnerships with local organizations and community leaders, and work towards building trust with the community.

The seminar by SBI Youth for India exemplified that the urban youth have the right skill-set and education to come up with unique solutions to challenging situations, and foster sustainable, inclusive and resilient growth at the grassroot level of the country. This will result in building capacity and empowering local communities to take ownership of development initiatives.

### ABOUT YOUTH FOR INDIA

Inspired by US 'PeaceCorps', initiated as SBI 'IndiCorps' and then renamed to SBI 'Youth for India', SBI Youth for India fellowship is SBI Foundation's uniquely designed 13-month fellowship program that came into inception in the year 2011.

## One Dead After Cab Overtakes In Poonch

**JAMMU:** One person was killed and four were injured when their cab skidded off the road and turned turtle in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, police said.

The cab was on its way to Mandi from Balnoi when the driver lost control of the vehicle, they said.

After receiving information about the incident, a rescue opera-

tion was launched immediately. The occupants of the cab were rushed to a nearby hospital, where Mohd Rustam from Balnoi, was declared brought dead, the police said.

The four injured, including an eight-year-old boy and two women, are undergoing treatment, they said.

## People Fume Over Delay In Construction Of Bridge In Udhampur

### Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Patience is running thin for the residents of over 50 villages in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district who have been waiting for the last two years for a new bridge over a rivulet and say the administration needs to be "shaken out of its slumber".

The 70-year-old Birwan bridge in the Army cantonment, one kilometre ahead of the Northern Army Command headquarters, was declared unsafe two years ago after it developed cracks, hitting Army movement and forcing over one-and-a-half lakh population to take an 18-km detour to reach the Jammu-Srinagar national highway.

Chairman of Udhampur District Development Council Lal Chand, however, appealed to the people to have patience, assuring them that the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), the executing agency, was waiting for the soil testing report to start the construction of the double-lane bridge.

He also said that Local MP and Union minister Jitendra Singh was monitoring the project.

The Army has immediately built a temporary steel bridge in place of the Birwan bridge, but the new construction could not be used for more than two months. Later, a Bailey bridge was built by the Army with restrictions on the movement of goods and commercial vehicles.

"We have staged protests demanding a new bridge, but nobody paid any heed. We are suffering economic losses because we have to pay additional transportation charges," the president of Beopar Mandal N C Bhatti told PTI.

He demanded a bridge which could be used by passenger vehicles. General Secretary of Senior Cit-

izens Forum Garhi Amreek Singh said the administration had plans to build a bridge for over 30 years.

"The delay in starting the work is because the administration is fast asleep they need to be shaken out of their slumber. The people are suffering as they have to spend an extra two hours to reach their destinations," Singh said.

He said the government should consider starting the Jammu-Udhampur and Katra-Udhampur service through the Bailey bridge immediately for the convenience of the people.

Sumit Mangotra, a local Congress leader, said the administration started dismantling the old bridge six months ago and that rekindled hope among the locals that a new bridge would be built within a year.

The work, however, stopped within two weeks and there was no headway since then, he said, adding the local shopkeepers were the worst hit by the collapse of the original bridge.

DDC chairman Lal Chand said, "The debris of the old bridge already stands cleared. The design of the double-lane bridge with footpaths on both sides is ready and we are expecting the work to start immediately after the soil testing report is received."

"Soil testing was imperative as the original bridge and the steel bridge collapsed due to the sinking of the earth. It is like a swamp which needs to be tackled before the construction work starts," he said.

Chand, who is a BJP leader, said the main problem was the water supply pipes passing through the area to the army cantonment. The issue has been resolved, he said.

"We have also been in touch with the authorities concerned. The bridge will be a reality soon," Chand asserted.

## CS Reiterates Zero Tolerance Against Irregularities In Recruitment

Says Govt Has Brought Greater Transparency, Accountability To Financial System Since 2019



### Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Reiterating that the Union Territory administration zero tolerance against irregularities in any recruitment process, the Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta on Wednesday said that the Jammu and Kashmir government has brought greater transparency and accountability in the financial system making it more robust and outcome oriented.

He made these remarks while addressing a day-long workshop on "Transformation and Reforms in Financial Management" organised by the Finance Department at SKICC here.

The workshop was attended by Director General(s) of Finance and Planning Departments, Director(s) Finance in Administrative Departments, FA&CAOs in Administrative Departments, FAs/CAOs/Accounts officers posted with HODs/DDCs, Treasury officers and other senior officers of the Department.

The focus of the workshop was to apprise the participants about the priorities of the government and implementation of its schemes through digital platforms for better outcomes at the field level.

Mehta, who was Chief Guest on the occasion highlighted major reforms taken up by J&K government to bring greater transparency and account-

ability in the financial system making it more robust and outcome oriented.

He said that since 2019 many reforms had been taken in the financial management system which has resulted in producing far better outcomes.

Chief Secretary said that the key reforms introduced by the government in its financial structure envisaging added transparency and accountability and has brought UT's fiscal system at par with any other system in the country. He maintained that implementation of transformative reforms such as Budget Estimation and Allocation Monitoring System (BEAMS), online submission of bills through J&K PaySys, mandatory administrative approvals, technical sanctions and e-tendering, digital payments, GFR, GeM and related measures have greatly helped the financial systems in J&K to be efficient, transparent and result oriented.

Mehta complimented the finance department for bringing in necessary changes for the overhaul of the system and said that the department has been at the forefront in eradication of corruption at all levels.

"Today we could safely conclude that the financial system in J&K is one of the most transparent systems anywhere and is among the key changes that have taken roots in the UT af-

ter 2019" he added.

Chief Secretary said that the government has completed 92000 works during 2022-23 which was unthinkable in the recent past as the number of completed works would be around 9000 before 2019.

He also said that the feedback taken from the panchayats is highly encouraging as no complaint is being received from them regarding the works. He said that works are taking place 3-4 times more on the same amount of money and without facing any obstacles as this year 43000 works have been completed in panchayats which was just about 3000 before this system was put in place. He said that the officers involved in this transformation should feel proud to be part of this journey.

Regarding the number of beneficiaries receiving old age pension, widow pension, the CS said that number of beneficiaries has increased from 4.5 lakh to 10 lakh without putting any further burden on the state exchequer. He also said that 11.5 lakh beneficiaries have been weeded out from the CAPD department without anyone complaining about the same. He said that the money is reaching where it is intended to reach and there is no siphoning of public money now due to DBT and digitisation of services.

## Satisfied With Smooth Vaishno Devi Yatra Post 2022 Stampede: HC

### Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has disposed of a petition seeking information about an inquiry report into a stampede at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine last year, saying it is satisfied with steps taken by the authorities concerned to regulate the smooth conduct of the yatra.

The division bench of Chief Justice N Kotiswar Singh and Judge Justice Wasim Sadiq Nagal, however, directed the government to take effective steps in furtherance of the decision and recommendations of the three-member committee for ensuring safety of the devotees.

In a first-ever stampede at the shrine in Reasi district on January 1 last year, 12 pilgrims lost their lives and 16 others were injured following which the government constituted a three-member committee with a direction to submit its report within a week.

### FUNDING CASE

## HC Seeks NIA Stand On Hurriyat Leader's Challenge To Charges

### Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi High Court on Wednesday sought the stand of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Kashmiri separatist leader Nayeem Khan's challenge to the framing of charges against him in an alleged militancy funding case. A bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Talwant Singh issued notice to the NIA on the petition and listed it for hearing on August 3.

A trial court had last year framed charges against Khan and others in the case related to alleged militant and secessionist activities that disturbed the Valley in 2017.

Hurriyat Conference leader Khan was arrested on July 24, 2017 and is currently in judicial custody.

The high court had issued a notice on Khan's bail plea in the matter earlier this year.

The trial court had ordered framing of charges against Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) founder Hafiz

Saeed, Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin, Kashmiri separatist leaders, including Yasin Malik, Shabbir Shah, Masarat Alam and others, under various sections of the anti-terror law UAPA and Indian Penal Code (IPC), including criminal conspiracy, waging war against the country, and unlawful activities and militancy, in a case pertaining to secessionist activities that disturbed peace in Jammu and Kashmir.

It had also charged Hafiz Saeed, Md Yusuf Shah, Aftab Ahmad Shah, Altaf Ahmad Shah, Nayeem Khan, Farooq Ahmad Dar, Md Akbar Khanday, Raja Mehrajuddin Kalwal, Bashir Ahmad Bhat, Zahoor Ahmad Shah Watali, Shabir Ahmad Shah, Masarat Alam, Abdul Rashid Sheikh and Naval Kishore Kapoor in the case.

Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chief Mohammad Yasin Malik had pleaded guilty to the charges, including those under the UAPA, and he was convicted and

sentenced to life imprisonment.

According to the NIA, various militant organisations such as the LeT, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), JKLF, Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), among others, with the support of the ISI of Pakistan, perpetrated violence in the Valley by attacking civilians and security forces.

It was alleged that in 1993, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) was formed to provide a political front to secessionist activities.

The NIA charge sheet submitted before the trial court said the central government received credible information that Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, Amir of Jammatt-ud-Dawah and the secessionist and separatist leaders, including members of the Hurriyat Conference, have been acting with the connivance of militants of proscribed militant organisations like HM and LeT for raising, receiving and collecting funds, domestically and abroad, through various illegal channels including the hawala route.

## G-20 Event In J&K Matter Of Immense Joy: BJP Leader

### Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** Holding a G-20 event in Jammu and Kashmir is a matter of immense joy and the delegates of participating countries will get to see with their own eyes that the people of the Union Territory are peace-loving, the BJP said on Tuesday.

The party said such an international event was happening in J-K for the first time since the country's independence in 1947.

"It is a matter of immense joy for J-K that the representatives of G-20 countries will visit here for a two-day event. This is happening for the first time since the country's independence that such an international level event is taking place in J-K. I thank the central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for organising this huge meeting," J-K BJP president Ravindra Raina told reporters here.

He said in the last 70 years, a lot of propaganda was done regarding Jammu and Kashmir at the national and international level and people were misled by the enemies of peace.

But the world has now become aware that the people of J-K want to live in peace, happiness and prosperity, Raina added.

"The people here are peace-loving. The hearts of the people of J-K are filled with loyalty towards the country. The whole world has seen this. So, it is a matter of happiness that the delegates of the G-20 countries will visit here and see J-K with

their own eyes," he said.

Reacting to National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah's criticism of the government for not holding a G-20 meeting in the Jammu region, the BJP leader said he is a tall leader and should not give such statements.

"J-K is a single unit. He should not give such statements which try to separate Jammu from Kashmir. J-K is our Union Territory. I will say that PoK is our territory. He should not try to separate Kashmir and Jammu," the BJP leader said.

Lashing out at Pakistan, Raina said the neighbouring country has always indulged in bloodshed in the valley.

"Pakistan sent bullets to J-K. Pakistan is behind the bloodbath in J-K. Pakistan has given wounds to the people of J-K in the last 35 years. Today, when the people of J-K want to live in peace, the enemies of the country and the enemies of peace find it hard to digest.

"So, they indulge in violence every now and then. Pakistan does not want peace and calm in Kashmir. Pakistan is the biggest enemy of the people of J-K. Pakistan has killed many innocent people, and it is responsible for terror incidents in J-K," he said.

The BJP's J-K unit president said Pakistan has had to bear the consequences of indulging in terror activities, but still has not learnt its lesson. "It should have learnt a lesson that gun is a dangerous thing."

## Chairman APSCC, Ex-MLA Call On LG



**SRINAGAR:** Jagmohan Singh Raina, Chairman, All Parties Sikh Coordination Committee called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan here on Wednesday.

Raina discussed with the Lt Governor various important matters pertaining to the Gurdwara Board elections, promotion of handicrafts and youth-related issues.

Ishaq Jabbar, former Legislator

apprised the Lt Governor about various development & public issues of Ganderbal District.

Later, Sheikh Muzaffar, President, Jammu & Kashmir Nationalist People's Front (JKNPF), also called on the Lt Governor and put forth the concerning issues of Faisal area of Kulgam.

The Lt Governor assured the visiting individuals of appropriate redressal of the issues and demands projected by them.

### G20 Meet In Srinagar

## ADG Press Information Bureau Calls For Making Event A Great Success

The Coordination & Cooperation Between Media Units Must Be Strengthened For Effective Communication And Best Publicity Of Gol Policies And Programs: Rajinder Chaudhry

### Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Additional Director General (Region) PIB J&K and Ladakh, Rajinder Chaudhry said on Wednesday that the coordination & cooperation between media units of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, J&K DIPR and Central Government Departments must be strengthened for effective communication and best publicity of Government of India initiatives, policies and programs.

Chaudhry said this while chairing a meeting of the Inter-Media Publicity Coordination Committee (IMPCC) organised by Press Information Bureau, Jammu.

In his address, Rajinder Chaudhry said, better media integration and synergy among the units is significant in achieving better media coverage. Chaudhry emphasized, the publicity should not be seen as an event based activity but has to be a sustained ongoing process and the story ideas like soft stories/success stories must be shared, to be converted into concrete stories in collaboration with media units.

A positive story planned and placed well in the media will help change the course of any ongoing Government of India project, policy or scheme for best implementation, he added.

Chaudhry emphasized, the need is to identify a soft story on an achievement which can be packaged well so that it can be amplified nationally and sometimes internationally depending on its content.

Highlighting proper story for further amplification as per relevance of the content is need of the hour, he further said.

Chaudhary appreciated the efforts of the media units based in J&K for giving best publicity to 100th episode of Mann Ki Baat, Y20 in Ladakh and commemoration of the foundation day of Maharashtra and Gujarat in J&K.

Joint Director, Press Information Bureau, Jammu & Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Ghulam Abbas gave an overview about Central Bureau of Communication and its overall functioning. The mandate of CBC is to highlight various centrally sponsored schemes and initiatives through Multimedia Exhibitions, he said.

Deputy Director, Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Ayushi Puri provided an overview about main activities of CBC & PIB in J&K. She emphasized, the cooperation is inevitable between the departments in giving meaningful information so as to develop good developmental stories.

Media & Communication Officer, PIB Jammu, Sheikh Mudasir Amin stressed the need to ensure factually correct information and press matter to be shared with PIB to take the same to the masses in the interest of the larger benefit of the common masses. He also asked the participating departments to utilize social media platforms for quick, fast and accurate delivery of the information and achievements in a professional manner.



KASHMIR OBSERVER<sup>TM</sup>

Thursday | 04-05-2023

Our Drug Problem

Jammu and Kashmir is experiencing a growing crisis of substance abuse, with an estimated 10 lakh residents or 8 percent of the population addicted to drugs, according to India's Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The most commonly abused drugs in Jammu and Kashmir are heroin, cannabis, opioids and sedatives. The heroin epidemic is particularly worrying, as it is a costly drug that poses a financial burden on addicts, and sharing needles or syringes is leading to the spread of infections such as HIV and hepatitis C.

The problem of drug abuse in Kashmir is complex and multifaceted, with a range of factors contributing to its prevalence. One of the key drivers of drug use in the region is poverty and unemployment, which leave many young people feeling hopeless and marginalized. In addition, the ongoing conflict in the region has created a climate of fear and instability, which has further exacerbated the problem.

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

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

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

OTHER OPINION

Greener shores

In India, those with some education or skills dream of going abroad for a life that promises higher incomes, greater career opportunities, and better possibilities of realising ambition. The latest World Development Report published by the World Bank estimates that Indian workers who go abroad enjoy a 120% increase in income as against only a 40% rise if they migrated to another location within Indian territory. The report also reveals that low-skilled Indians migrating to the United States of America are likely to get a 500% hike in income. This would be 300% if they migrated to the United Arab Emirates. The gains are, expectedly, much higher if the migrants belong to the high-skilled category of workers such as computer engineers or doctors. Economic migrants like information technology professionals stand to gain the most. Unsurprisingly, India falls among the most active international migration corridors, such as the India-US, India-Gulf Cooperation Council nations and Bangladesh-India. Indians move out, earn more, and remit greater money back to the country.

However, migration is not all about economic gains. Being a migrant in a foreign land can be stressful, even dangerous. As global migration swells, the animosity towards migrants is also increasing. Local populations consider migrants to be a competitive economic threat and, culturally, a disruptive constituency. Being the most populous country in the world, India has a surfeit of human resources that it cannot retain through attractive livelihood opportunities and career paths. Hence, more skilled people leave India than is necessary. Shortages in other countries determine opportunities for migration on the lower end of the spectrum of skill and education. Hence a plumber or an electrician can earn two to three times more by migrating out of India. The country has always had a portion of the labour force that is uneducated, unemployed, and without any marketable skill set. This trend is a cause for concern. While the nation can take legitimate pride in Indian-origin chief executive officers manning the ships of global enterprise, the average quality of the workforce in India makes worker productivity low. The fact that India is producing and supplying top talent across the world — the migrants who leave early — is good news. On the other hand, many corporate bosses believe that most of the graduates churned out of Indian colleges are not even employable. The best will migrate out of the country. The labour force in India will be increasingly straddled with unemployable debris. That is something the nation needs to reflect upon.

Telegraph India

Can the Global Economy  
Avoid a Lost Decade?



KAUSHIK BASU

India is a case in point. Since 2012, private-sector investment as a share of Indian GDP has steadily declined. The World Bank and other experts attribute this trend to political polarization and a growing lack of trust. While public investment has increased dramatically over the past decade, this can be a dangerous trend

The Spring Meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund usually provide a platform for various organizations, policymakers, and commentators to reflect on the state of the global economy, offer assessments of the previous year's developments, and forecast what lies ahead. This year's meetings, which took place in Washington in April, were accompanied by grim predictions that underscored the growing likelihood of a prolonged global recession.

While many analysts previously assumed that the confluence of crises that the world has faced over the past three years — the COVID-19 pandemic, supply-chain disruptions, the war in Ukraine, and the resulting inflation crisis and financial turmoil — would have a significant but ultimately transitory effect on the global economy, new data suggest that the current economic upheaval will last longer than initially expected.

The IMF's World Economic Outlook and Global Financial Stability Report suggest a difficult road ahead, warning that "the fog around the world economic outlook has thickened." The rapid succession of large interest-rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve and other major central banks has caused public and private sector debts to increase to their highest levels in decades, enhancing the risk of financial instability. The world's advanced economies, which grew by 2.7% in 2022, are projected to grow by just 1.3% this year. While the IMF expects Asia's emerging and developing economies to expand by 5.3% in 2023 (compared to 4.4% last year), India's growth forecast has been revised down to 5.9% (compared

to a 6.8% growth rate in 2022).

A new book by the World Bank is even more pessimistic, warning that the global economy could be on the brink of a "lost decade." Based on a comprehensive database of estimates of potential growth covering 173 countries, the authors project that annual global growth will fall to a three-decade low of 2.2% and remain weak for the rest of the decade. While the wealthy may have the means to weather the storm, the same cannot be said for the world's poor and lower-middle classes, who will be hit hardest by the coming downturn.

To comprehend the full ramifications of the current moment, we must look beyond the immediate consequences of COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine and confront underlying issues that have been festering for decades, including climate change and the social and political disruptions caused by rapid technological innovation. Navigating our way out of today's "polycrisis" and restoring global growth, though possible, will be extremely challenging for two key reasons.

First, as the World Bank report highlights, many countries are experiencing an alarming trend of declining investment. While fiscal and monetary policies certainly play a role, I believe that the root cause of weak investment is the increasing politicization of economic policy, which has fueled a widespread loss of trust in governments and undermined confidence in their ability to solve the problems that matter.

India is a case in point. Since 2012, private-sector investment as a share of Indian GDP has steadily declined. The World Bank and other experts attribute this trend to political polarization and a growing lack of

trust. While public investment has increased dramatically over the past decade, this can be a dangerous trend: When the government has disproportionate control over investment, it often leads to a surge in cronyism. Russia, where an oligarchy rapidly emerged by currying favors with political leaders in exchange for lucrative contracts and sweetheart privatization deals, offers a stark example.

The second challenge is that introducing any corrective policy would require a concerted, multi-country effort. The interconnectedness of global supply chains means that any disruption has widespread and powerful knock-on effects, and the growing use of economic sabotage as a war tactic underscores the urgency of multilateral cooperation on a treaty promoting the protection of economic assets.

Achieving a prosperous, peaceful world also requires stepping up efforts to meet climate goals and stem the increase in economic inequality within and between countries. Owing to advances in digital technology and the globalization of supply chains, such challenges are beyond the reach of individual countries acting alone. To address these global issues, governments must coordinate their monetary, fiscal, and security policies. To be sure, this will not be easy. But the alternative — a future of sluggish growth, political instability, and environmental catastrophe — is simply too dire to contemplate.

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



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Employ New Technology

A gas leak in the crowded Giaspura neighbourhood of the industrial city of Ludhiana has tragically claimed 11 lives, including those of children, and sent several people to the hospi-

tal. The state investigation team not yet determined what the gas was or how it formed, but all indications point to it escaping from a sewer. The modernization of India's economy, as well as the expansion of manufactur-

ing, must be accompanied by more effective regulation. New mechanisms for monitoring and surveillance that utilise cheap and readily available data connections and other technological advances need to be piloted

and evaluated. The government cannot long postpone a reckoning when it comes to regulating toxic pollution.

Vijay Kumar HK



# From Siri to Surveillance The Rise of AI and Its Privacy Implications

MUBASHIR AZMAT

Currently, one of the most dynamic and contentious issues in the field of law is the ongoing debate surrounding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and its profound effects on privacy.

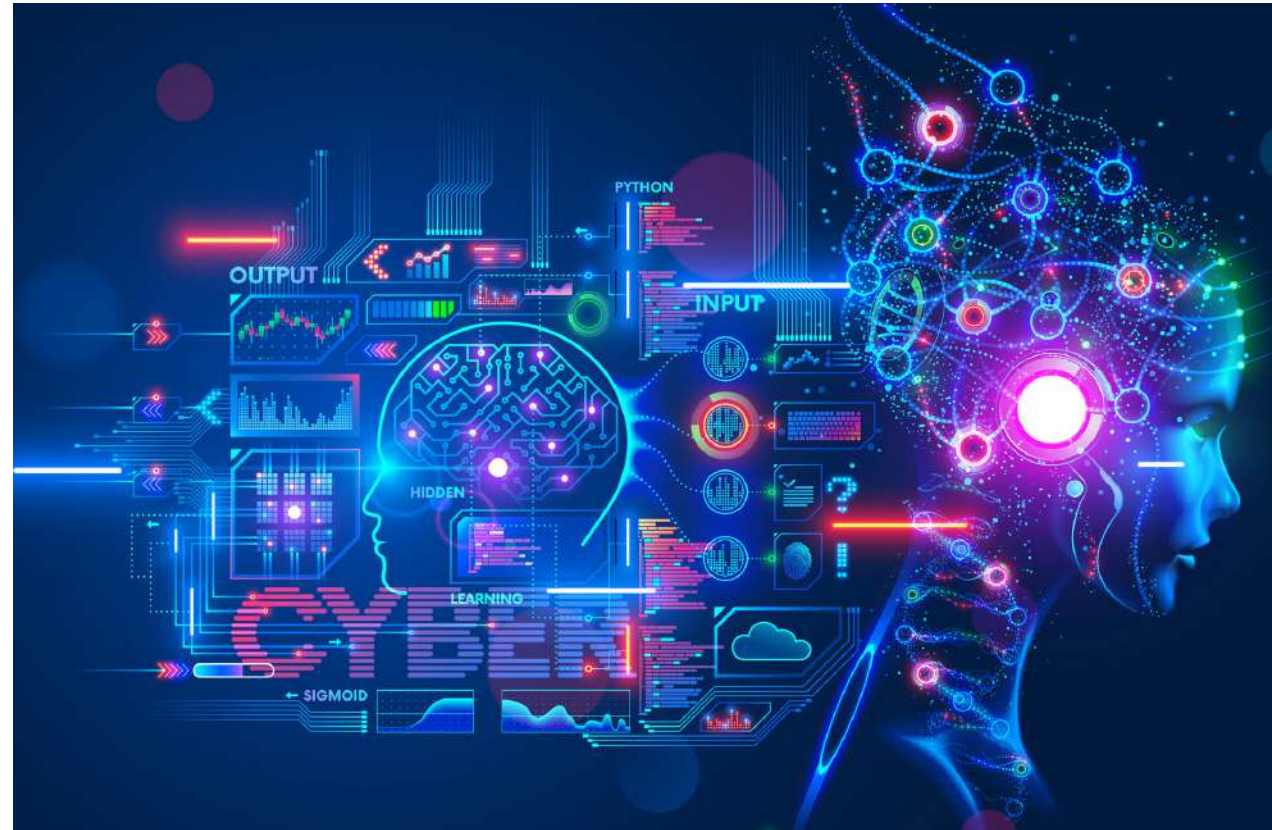
AI is a sophisticated technology that allows computer systems to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, including speech recognition, decision-making, and problem-solving. The rapid development and integration of AI into various facets of our daily lives, ranging from personal assistants like Siri, Alexa and recently Chatgpt to self-driving cars, have led to numerous concerns regarding privacy and the potential impact of AI on the security of our personal information. As AI continues to evolve and proliferate, many experts have raised red flags over the privacy implications of this cutting-edge technology. The use of AI in areas such as facial recognition and data analytics has generated particular concern among privacy advocates, who worry about the potential misuse and abuse of sensitive personal data. Moreover, the increasing reliance on AI in critical areas such as healthcare and finance has sparked further debates about the need for greater regulatory oversight and transparency in the deployment of AI systems. Despite these challenges, many proponents of AI argue that this technology offers significant benefits in terms of efficiency, productivity, and innovation. AI can assist in automating routine tasks, freeing up valuable time and resources for more complex and creative endeavors.

**“FINALLY, COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN POLICYMAKERS, ACADEMIA, AND INDUSTRY could help establish international standards for AI and data privacy. Such standards would help create a level playing field for organizations across different jurisdictions and ensure that data privacy is protected worldwide.”**

**In what ways does AI technology offend privacy?**

The integration of AI technology has enabled the collection, analysis, and storage of copious amounts of personal data, encompassing location data, search history, and even biometric data. Through the implementation of machine learning methods, AI can utilize this data to draw inferences about our behaviors and preferences. For instance, a social media platform might leverage AI to scrutinize user-generated content, such as posts, likes, and shares, with the intent of creating customized advertisements. While this may benefit businesses, it has raised considerable concerns about the extent of personal data that is being amassed and how it is being employed.

In particular, the vast quantities of personal data being accumulated by AI have sparked debates over issues such as privacy, transparency, and accountability. This data often includes sensitive information, such as financial records, medical histories, and social connections, which may be vulnerable to misuse. Furthermore, AI methods may be opaque, making it dif-



icult for users to comprehend how their data is being utilized or to contest decisions made based on this information. As such, it is critical to develop effective measures to safeguard personal data, ensure transparency and accountability, and promote responsible usage of AI.

privacy is often insufficient, creating vulnerabilities for individuals susceptible to data breaches and privacy infringements. The growing autonomy of artificial intelligence (AI) systems poses a formidable

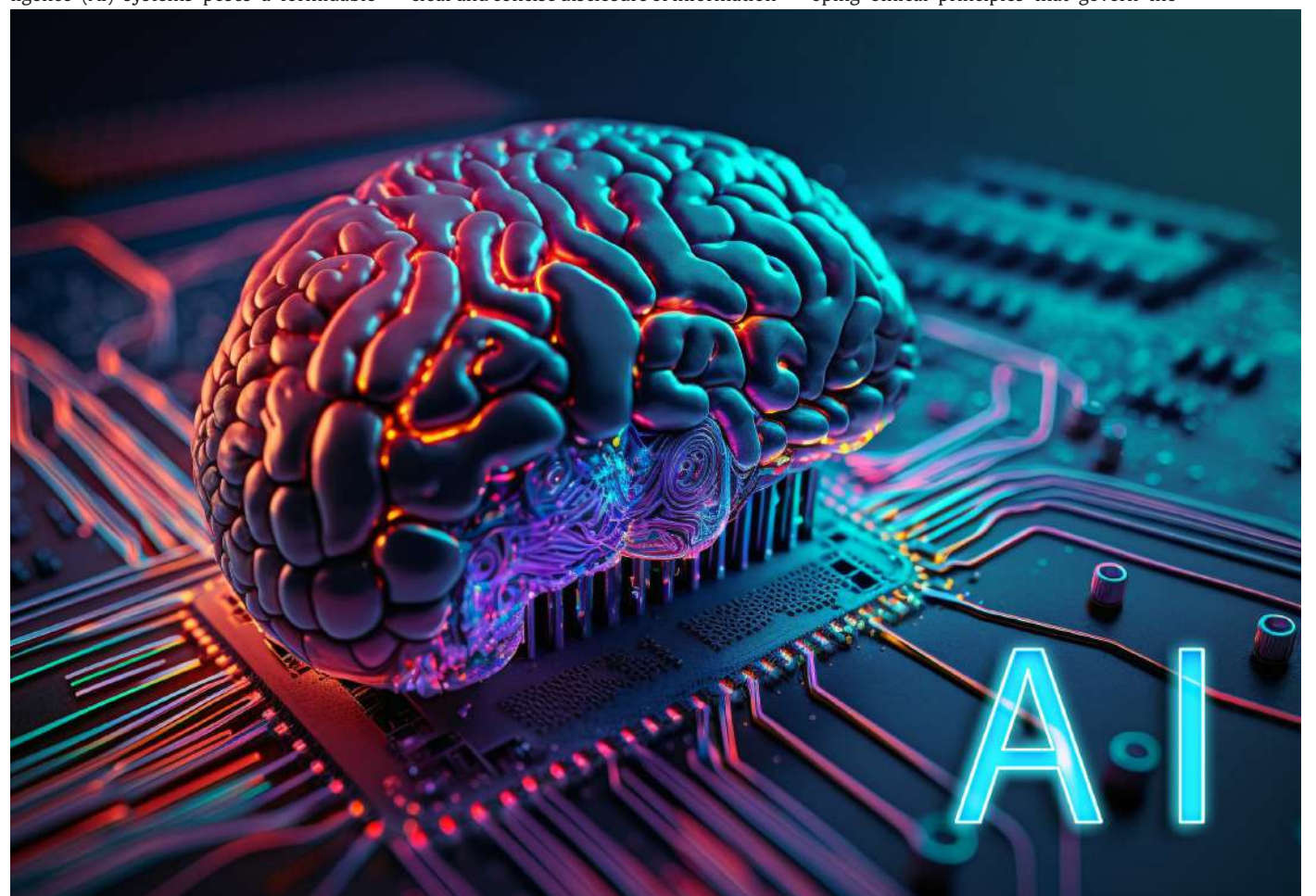
To combat the privacy concerns that arise with the use of AI, several potential solutions exist. Increasing transparency can be a viable solution, as it involves the clear and concise disclosure of information

and protection to individuals.

Another potential solution is to promote the development of ethical AI practices. This would involve integrating ethical considerations into the design and development of AI systems, such as addressing issues of bias and discrimination. Additionally, organizations could establish independent ethical review boards to monitor AI systems and ensure that they are in compliance with ethical standards.

Finally, collaborations between policymakers, academia, and industry could help establish international standards for AI and data privacy. Such standards would help create a level playing field for organizations across different jurisdictions and ensure that data privacy is protected worldwide. As AI continues to evolve and become more integrated into our daily lives, it is critical that we develop comprehensive solutions that protect individuals' privacy and promote ethical practices.

To conclude, there is no doubt that Artificial Intelligence (IA) has made things easy and handy. It is an important source to get maximum information in a minimal time period which is very helpful. But at the same time it has an adverse impact on the privacy of an individual. To mitigate these privacy risks, it is vital to adopt a multi-faceted approach that incorporates robust privacy protections, ethical guidelines, and rigorous regulatory oversight. This entails establishing clear and transparent policies on the collection, storage, and use of personal data, as well as developing ethical principles that govern the



**“IN PARTICULAR, THE VAST QUANTITIES OF PERSONAL DATA BEING ACCUMULATED BY AI HAVE SPARKED DEBATES over issues such as privacy, transparency, and accountability. This data often includes sensitive information, such as financial records, medical histories, and social connections, which may be vulnerable to misuse**

to individuals regarding data collection and its intended use. This can be accomplished by implementing user-friendly interfaces and privacy policies that offer greater transparency and control over personal data. Additionally, organizations can take a proactive approach by adopting stronger data protection regulations and consent requirements to ensure that individuals have greater control over their personal information. This could include measures such as enhanced data encryption, data retention policies, and data deletion protocols that offer greater control

design and deployment of AI. Additionally, it is essential to enhance accountability mechanisms and provide individuals with greater control over their personal data. By addressing these issues proactively, we can ensure that the benefits of AI are harnessed in a way that is responsible, ethical, and respectful of individual privacy.

*Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The author studies law at Aligarh Muslim University*

**Recommendations to address the privacy concern of AI**





# New Finding May Improve Type-2 Diabetes Treatment In India: Lancet Study

Press Trust Of India

Scientists have found genetic similarities and differences between various forms of type 2 diabetes in India and Europe, an advance that they say can be used to improve the treatment of the disease in the country.

Researchers in Sweden have previously shown that diabetes can be divided into five subgroups, and that there are genetic differences between the four subgroups relating to type 2 diabetes.

The new study, published in The Lancet Regional Health South-east Asia journal, confirms that the classification system is applicable on a group in western India.

"The study highlights genetic similarities and differences between different forms of type 2 di-

abetes in India and Europe," said Rashmi Prasad, associate professor in genomics, diabetes, and endocrinology at Lund University in Sweden.

"We see this as an exciting new step towards a better understanding of the development of type 2 diabetes in India," Prasad said in a statement.

The results are based on clinical data from 2,217 patients and genome-wide associations studies (GWAS) and a genetic risk score analysis (GRS) on 821 people with type 2 diabetes from a study in western India.

"The characteristics of all the subgroups reflected those seen in European people with diabetes. We could also confirm our previous findings that have shown that a certain form of type 2 diabetes that is characterised by relatively low



BMI is the most common form of the disease in India," said Prasad. The subgroup is called severe insulin-deficient diabetes (SIDD) and

this is a form of type 2 diabetes that is also characterised by early onset, low insulin secretion, and poor metabolic control, the researchers said.

Of all the participants with type 2 diabetes in the Indian study, 47 per cent were classified as belonging to the SIDD group.

Previous studies on populations in Sweden have shown that mild age-related diabetes (MARD), which is characterized by late onset, is the most common form of diabetes among Swedish people.

"Early life undernutrition in Indians may be a major contribution to early onset of type 2 diabetes, and this may be why we see this difference in the distribution of patients between Sweden and India," Prasad said.

"The knowledge may be used to prevent the disease in India, which has the second highest number of diabetes worldwide after China. Our findings suggests that efforts to prevent malnutrition in Indians may also prevent type 2 diabetes,"

she added.

The second largest group in India was mild obesity-related diabetes (MOD), a group which is characterized by obesity, early onset, and a relatively mild disease progression, according to the study.

Dengue Virus Evolved 'Dramatically' In India In Last Few Decades: Study

Press Trust Of India

The dengue virus evolved "dramatically" over the last few decades in India, according to a study led by scientists at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), which stresses the need for developing a vaccine against the strains

## Dengue Virus Evolved 'Dramatically' In India In Last Few Decades: Study

Press Trust Of India

The dengue virus evolved "dramatically" over the last few decades in India, according to a study led by scientists at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), which stresses the need for developing a vaccine against the strains found in the country.

Dengue cases have steadily increased in the last 50 years, predominantly in the South-East Asian counties. However, there are no approved vaccines against the mosquito-borne viral disease in India, although some vaccines have been developed in other countries.

"We were trying to understand how different the Indian variants are, and we found that they are very different from the original strains used to develop the vaccines," said Rahul Roy, Associate Professor at the Department of Chemical Engineering at IISc Bengaluru.

The study, published in the journal PLOS Pathogens, examined all available (408) genetic sequences of Indian dengue strains from infected patients collected between the years 1956 and 2018 by others as well as the team themselves.

There are four broad categories serotypes of the dengue virus (Dengue 1, 2, 3 and 4).

Using computational analysis, the team examined how much each of these serotypes deviated from their ancestral sequence, from each other, and from other global sequences.

"We found that the sequences

are changing in a very complex fashion," said Roy, corresponding author of the study.

Until 2012, the dominant strains in India were Dengue 1 and 3, the researchers said.

However, in recent years, Dengue 2 has become more dominant across the country, while Dengue 4 once considered the least infectious is now making a niche for itself in South India, they found.

The team investigated what factors decide which strain is the dominant one at any given time.

One possible factor could be Antibody Dependent Enhancement (ADE), said Suraj Jagtap, a PhD student at IISc and first author of the study.

ADE occurs when the antibodies generated during an immune response recognise and bind to a pathogen, but they are unable to prevent infection. Instead, these antibodies act as a "Trojan horse," allowing the pathogen to get into cells and exacerbate the immune response.

Jagtap explained that sometimes, people might be infected first with one serotype and then develop a secondary infection with a different serotype, leading to more severe symptoms.

Scientists believe that if the second serotype is similar to the first, the antibodies in the host's blood generated after the first infection bind to the new serotype and to immune cells called macrophages. This proximity allows the newcomer to infect macrophages, making the infection more severe, they said.

"We knew that ADE enhances severity, (but) we wanted to know if that can also change the evolution of dengue virus," Jagtap noted.

The researchers noted that at any given time, several strains of each serotype exist in the viral population.

The antibodies generated in the human body after a primary infection provide complete protection from all serotypes for about 2-3 years. Over time, the antibody levels begin to drop, and cross-serotype protection is lost, they said.

The researchers propose that if the body is infected around this time by a similar not identical viral strain, then ADE kicks in, giving a huge advantage to this new strain, causing it to become the dominant strain in the population.

Such an advantage lasts for a few more years, after which the antibody levels become too low to make a difference, they said.

"Nobody has shown such interdependence between the dengue virus and the immunity of the human population before," Roy said.

This is probably why the recent Dengue 4 strains, which supplanted the Dengue 1 and 3 strains, were more similar to the latter than their own ancestral Dengue 4 strains, the researchers said.

The reported dengue cases in 2018 have increased more than 25-fold (three year average) since 2002 in India, according to the researchers.

All four geographical regions, namely North, East, South and West-Central India, show periodic spikes in dengue cases as well as deaths over 2-4 years, they added.

## Stuck Stem Cells Are Connected To Ageing Of Hair, Says Research

ANI

Based on a recent study, specific stem cells can travel between growth compartments in hair follicles with a special aptitude, but as people age, they become trapped and lose the capacity to mature and preserve hair colour.

The latest research, led by scientists from NYU Grossman School of Medicine, concentrated on cells called melanocyte stem cells, or McSCs, which are found in both the skin of mice and humans. The signal to mature cells that produce the protein pigments responsible for colour is received by pools of nonfunctional, continuously proliferating McSCs found within hair follicles.

The latest learning, which was published online in the journal Nature Online on April 19, revealed that McSCs are remarkably plastic. This indicates that such cells constantly travel back and forth between compartments of the growing hair follicle during normal hair growth along the

maturity axis. McSCs are exposed to various quantities of protein signals that influence maturation within of these compartments.

The research team discovered that McSCs, depending on their location, undergo a transformation between their most basic stem cell state and the following stage of their maturation, the transit-amplifying state.

The researchers found that as hair ages, sheds, and then repeatedly grows back, increasing numbers of McSCs get stuck in the stem cell compartment called the hair follicle bulge. There, they remain, do not mature into the transit-amplifying state, and do not travel back to their original location in the germ compartment, where WNT proteins would have prodded them to regenerate into pigment cells.

"Our study adds to our basic understanding of how melanocyte stem cells work to colour hair," said study lead investigator Qi Sun, PhD, a postdoctoral fellow at NYU Langone Health.

"The newfound mechanisms raise the possibility that the same

fixed-positioning of melanocyte stem cells may exist in humans. If so, it presents a potential pathway for reversing or preventing the greying of human hair by helping jammed cells to move again between developing hair follicle compartments."

Researchers say McSC plasticity is not present in other self-regenerating stem cells, such as those making up the hair follicle itself, which are known to move in only one direction along an established timeline as they mature. For example, transit-amplifying hair follicle cells never revert to their original stem cell state. This helps explain in part why hair can keep growing even while its pigmentation fails, says Sun.

Earlier work by the same research team at NYU showed that WNT signalling was needed to stimulate the McSCs to mature and produce pigment. That study had also shown that McSCs were many trillions of times less exposed to WNT signalling in the hair follicle bulge than in the hair germ compartment, which is situated directly below the bulge.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Jammu & Kashmir Services Selection Board

CPO Chowk, Panjtirthi, Jammu/Zamzam Complex Rambagh, Srinagar

(www.jkssb.nic.in)

Subject: Notice for submission of "Option" for the posts of "Anaesthesia Assistant" and "Junior Theatre Assistant", Advertised vide Notification No. 02 of 2021 dated 26.03.2021

NOTICE

Whereas, the Health and Medical Education department, vide indent No. HD/Drug/24/2020 dated 25-09-2020 followed by No. HD/Drug/24/2020 dated 07.01.2021, and No. ME/NG/83/2020 dated 08.03.2021 and No. HD/Coord/64/2020 dated 25.09.2020 and No. HD/Coord/63/2020 dated 25.09.2020 and No. HD/ISM/62/2020 dated 25.09.2020 and No. HD/Coord/64/2020 dated 05-03-2021 and No. ME/NG/83/2020 dated 28.09.2020, among other posts, forwarded the requisition for making direct recruitment to the below mentioned posts, under various items as per the following break up:

	Advt No	Item No.	Name of the post	Cadre of the post	OM	SC	ST	OSC	ALC/IB	RBA	PSP	EWS	Total posts
S. No.													
1.	02 of 2021	171	Junior Theatre Assistant	Div. Jammu	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
2.	02 of 2021	215	Junior Theatre Assistant	Div. Kashmir	20	4	4	2	2	5	2	4	43
3.	02 of 2021	221	Anaesthesia Assistant / Anaesthesia Technician	Div. Kashmir	18	3	4	1	1	4	2	3	36

Whereas, the aforementioned posts are categorised into the following two domains for the purpose of making final selections:  
Domain 1: Item No. 171 and 215  
Domain 2: Item No. 221

Whereas, as per the Indent, the qualification prescribed for the posts was [is] as follows:

S. No	Item No.	Name of the post	Cadre of the post	Prescribed Qualification (As per Indent)
1	171	Junior Theatre Assistant	Div. Jammu	10+2 with science or above qualification with minimum two years Diploma/Degree in Operation Theatre technology Course from any recognized Institution/ State Medical Faculty/ J&K Paramedical Council.
2	215	Junior Theatre Assistant	Div. Kashmir	10+2 with science or above qualification with minimum two years Diploma/Degree in Operation Theatre technology Course from any recognized Institution/ State Medical Faculty/ J&K Paramedical Council.
3	221	Anaesthesia Assistant / Anaesthesia Technician	Div. Kashmir	10+2 with science or above qualification with minimum two years Diploma in Anesthesia Assistant Course or having Degree in Anesthesia Technology Course from any recognized Institution/ State Medical Faculty/ J&K Paramedical Council.

Whereas, the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) advertised the aforesaid posts among other posts of Health and Medical Education Department vide Advertisement Notification No. 02 of 2021 dated 26.03.2021; and

Whereas, as per the Notification, the selection to these posts was to be made on the basis of Written Examination only and, accordingly, the JKSSB conducted the Computer Based Test (CBT) for these posts in multiple sessions/slots w.e.f. 17.08.2021 to 25.08.2021; and

Whereas, on the basis of merit obtained by the candidates in the written test, the Document Verification was conducted vide Document verification Notice No. SSB/CoE/Health/2021/7598-7606 dated 09.11.2021, from 20.11.2021 to 04.12.2021, after JKSSB notified domain-wise list of candidates falling in the consideration zone vide No. SSB/CoE/H&ME/2021/7477-84 dated 02.11.2021, both at Jammu and Srinagar by the DV Committees constituted vide Order No. 380-SSB of 2021 dated 17.11.2021 followed by Order No. 386-SSB of 2021 dated 18.11.2021 and Order No. 389-SSB of 2021 dated 18.11.2021. and separate DV committees for the left-out candidates were also constituted vide Order No. 348-SSB of 2021 dated 30.11.2021; and

Whereas, the candidates figuring in the consideration zone for the above mentioned posts were allowed to indicate the order of preference for various posts/items through a link provided on the official website of the Board www.jkssb.nic.in from 17.11.2021 upto 25.11.2021, vide Notice No. SSB/CoE/Health/2021/7695-7704 dated 17.11.2021, the date for which was extended upto 30.11.2021 vide Notice No. SSB/COE/Health/2021/7958-67 dated 25.11.2021; and

Whereas, the selection committee for preparing the selections to the aforementioned posts was constituted vide order no 344-SSB of 2021 dated 29.11.2021, that was superseded by a fresh selection committee constituted vide order no 277-SSB of 2022 dated 8.10.2022; and

Whereas, during the course of selection it was found that some students were in possession of Degree with combined nomenclature viz. B.Sc. Anaesthesia, Critical Care and Operation Theatre Technology, making them eligible for all the three Item Nos. mentioned above (171,215,221), clubbed in Domain 1 and Domain 2, respectively; and

Whereas, the final clarification regarding the above stated issue, received from the Health and Medical Education Department vide letter No. ME-NG/116/2022-02 dated 24.04.2023 states that:

"...as per the latest clarification of President J&K Paramedical/Nursing Council Srinagar, the candidates who possess degrees with combined nomenclature and have applied for both posts viz: "Anesthesia Assistant" and "Junior Theatre Assistant" should be asked to submit one option only. The candidates shall accordingly be considered for the opted post"; and

Whereas, for the selection to the aforementioned posts in light of the above-mentioned clarification from the indenting department, it becomes imperative to seek Option from the candidates who are in possession of the Degree with combined nomenclature, to indicate whether they want to be considered for the post of "Anesthesia Assistant" or for the post of "Junior Theatre Assistant".

Therefore, in view of the aforesaid position, the candidates in possession of the Degree with combined nomenclature, are hereby called upon to submit one option only, either for the post of "Anesthesia Assistant" or for the post of "Junior Theatre Assistant" only, either through e-mail - healthhelpdeskjkssb2023@gmail.com or in person at JKSSB office Jammu/Srinagar, within 7 days of issuance of this notice, in the following format:

Name/Parentage	
Application ID	
Roll No	
Option	
(Option I - Anaesthesia Assistant)	
(Option II - Jr. Theatre Assistant)	

Note: Candidate(s) who fail to indicate one option for the said two posts, will be deemed to have agreed to any allocation of the Cadre(s), in respect for such candidate(s), as shall be done by the Board.  
By Order

(Sachin Jamwal), JKAS  
Secretary  
J&K Services Selection Board

No. JKSSB/Sel/Secy/2023/553-60  
DIPK-1092/23      Dated: 03-05-2023



## Go First Doing Everything Possible In Current Situation: CEO Tells Staff

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI:** Go First chief Kaushik Khona has told employees that the airline has been crippled by recurring Pratt & Whitney engine troubles and assured that the carrier is doing everything possible to navigate the situation with utmost care and concern for all staff.

The no-frills carrier has filed an application for voluntary insolvency proceedings and has also cancelled all its flights for three days starting Wednesday.

In a message to employees late on Tuesday, Khona said that a terrible crisis has been created by Pratt & Whitney's failure to supply engines.

For more than 12 months, the airline's management has tried their level best to convince P&W to provide spare engines, repair engines. However, P&W has been stonewalling the discussions, the CEO said, adding that it moved Emergency Arbitration in Singapore.

According to the airline, the arbitrator ordered P&W to supply at least 10 serviceable spare leased engines by April 27 and a further 10 spare leased engines per month until December 2023.

"With that, the airline would have had all its A320 neo aircraft operational by August/ September 2023... unfortunately, Pratt & Whitney has chosen to defy the order from the Emergency Arbitrator," Khona said in the



message.

The airline approached the arbitrator, who reinforced the order and since P&W "chose to defy for the second time", it filed enforcement proceedings at a US court seeking implementation of the order, he added.

More than half of the airline's fleet is grounded due to engine issues.

With a depleted fleet size, Khona said the airline is not able to generate revenue for the payment of lessors, and as a result, they are taking coercive steps against the company by invoking letters of credit, grounding notices and demanding return of aircraft.

"... The company has been crippled by the recurring Pratt & Whitney engine troubles. Pratt & Whitney's defiance in not supplying spare engines as instructed by the Emergency Arbitrator has ground your company to a halt," he told the staff.

Against this backdrop, Khona said there was no other option other than seeking voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings to preserve the company's operations by taking effective steps.

## Pol Science Graduate 'Chaspeeda' Of Baramulla Becomes Role Model In Agri Farming

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Thirty four year old, Chaspeeda Bano of Palhan village of Baramulla district, an ambitious agripreneur, has made fortunes with agriculture farming emerging as a role model for womenfolk of the area.

Bano is extending complete support to other women to become financially independent.

A graduate in Political Science, Bano entered into the farming sector seven years ago and with her hardwork and latest practices and regular advice from the Agriculture Department and succeeded in changing her fortunes.

She started growing different vegetables on her eight kanal fertile land and has been not only earning livelihood through it but now she also helps other farmers in her area to turn their agri farming into profitable enterprises.

Chaspeeda has been cultivating organic vegetables like radish, cucumber, tomatoes, potatoes, onions, peas, beans, chillies. She appreciates the officials of Agriculture Department for regularly visiting her farm and encouraging her to adopt new practices in the field.

"A new Hi-Tech green house is being established which will further help me to grow vegetables round the year. It will

definitely add to my income substantially," she says.

Chaspeeda Bano is becoming a role model for many farmers and youth in the district who regularly visit her farm to take her expert advice and regarding increasing the quality and quantity of the produce.

Chaspeeda Bano bats for promotion of organic farming which she says is a low cost production. "Quality produce has the opportunity to get good premium price and organic production is economically viable. In fact my organic farming and its produce has provided a viable income to me which encourages me to do more hard work. Farming has provided me with financial security," she said.

Agriculture Department has praised her unique agriculture techniques. Bano also grows onion seedlings on four kanal of land which she sells in October and has been promoting the same to the people and farmers over the years.

"We sell our onion seedlings to Kupwara, Bandipora and other areas of Kashmir. We also sell the seedlings to the local markets," she said.

She produces at least 150 quintals of tomatoes every year which has helped her to improve her financial condition and become an example for other farmers in the village.

## India's Services Sector Growth Climbs To Near 13-Year High In April: PMI

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** India's services sector growth accelerated in April, as strong demand conditions resulted in the fastest increase in new business and output in close to 13 years, a monthly survey said on Wednesday. The pick-up in demand occurred in spite of escalating price pressures.

The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Services PMI Business Activity Index rose from 57.8 in March to 62.0 in April, signalling the fastest expansion in output since mid 2010, amid a pick-up in new business growth and favourable market conditions.

For the 21st straight month, the headline figure was above the neutral 50 threshold. In Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

"India's service sector posted a remarkable performance in April, with demand strength backing the strongest increases in new business and output in just under 13 years. Finance & Insurance was the brightest spot, topping the sectoral growth rankings for both measures," said Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at S&P Global Market Intelligence.

Monitored companies signalled an improvement in international demand for Indian services in April. New export business expanded for the third



month in succession and at the fastest pace over this period.

On the prices front, input costs rose at the quickest pace in three months during April.

According to survey members, food, fuel, medicine, transportation and wages were the main sources of inflation. Consumer services recorded the fastest upturn in average expenses.

The combination of rising input costs and demand resilience urged services companies to lift their selling prices in April. The rate of charge inflation was marked and the strongest in 2023 so far.

On the jobs front, despite the substantial uptick in new orders, staff levels in the service sector increased only marginally at the start of the first fiscal quarter. Whereas some companies lifted headcounts due to rising output needs, the vast majority left them unchanged amid sufficient workers for current requirements.

"One area of weakness highlighted in the latest results was the labour market. Despite the

substantial pick-up in sales growth and improved business sentiment towards the outlook, the increase in employment seen in April was negligible and failed to gain meaningful traction," Lima said.

Going ahead, marketing efforts, plans to price competitively and an increased focus on customer relations boosted business confidence in April.

"Close to 22 per cent of companies forecast growth of business activity over the course of the coming 12 months, compared with 2 per cent that anticipate a reduction," the survey said.

Meanwhile, the S&P Global India Composite PMI Output Index -- which measures combined services and manufacturing output -- rose from 58.4 in March to 61.6 in April, its highest mark since July 2010.

Despite the substantial upturn in sales, job creation across the private sector remained mild. Rates of expansion were broadly similar at manufacturing firms and their services counterparts.

## WTO Needs To Look At Farm Subsidy Issue With Open Mind: Sitharaman

Press Trust Of India

**INCHEON:** The World Trade Organisation (WTO) should look at the issue of farm subsidies with an open mind as it impacts the food security needs of emerging economies in the backdrop of Covid pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Wednesday.

Speaking at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Governor's seminar on 'Policies to support Asia's rebound', Sitharaman said sooner a solution is found out by the WTO, the better it would be for the world.

"Since WTO was founded, there has been a grievance with respect to the export of agricultural products and generally in trade, the voice of the Global South and emerging markets has not been heard at par with that of the developed countries," she said.

The 'Global South' largely refers to countries in Asia, Africa and South America.



Subsidies for agriculture and poor farmers in developing countries were not counted at all and were frozen, she said, adding that in context of Covid and Russia-Ukraine war, food and fertilizer security have become important.

"We will all have to talk again (about food and fertilizer security) at the WTO with an open mind," the minister said.

"There is better food security in the developed world compared to developing countries. Trade agreements have come about in a lopsided way, for which solutions have to be found," Sitharaman said.

Under global trade norms, a WTO member country's food subsidy bill should not breach the limit of 10 per cent of the value of production based on the reference price of 1986-88.

As part of permanent solution, India has asked for measures like amendments in the formula to calculate the food subsidy cap and inclusion of programmes implemented after 2013 under the ambit of 'Peace Clause'.

As an interim measure, the WTO members at the Bali ministerial meeting in December 2013 had agreed to put in place a mechanism popularly called 'Peace Clause' and committed to negotiating an agreement for a permanent solution.

Under Peace Clause, WTO members agreed to refrain from challenging any breach in prescribed ceiling by a developing nation at the dispute settlement forum of the WTO.

This clause will stay till a permanent solution is found to the food stockpiling issue.

## In Request To Recall All Bank Notes Except Rs 100, High Court Seeks Centre's Reply

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked the Centre and the Delhi government to present their stand on a plea seeking recall of all currency notes above ₹100, restricting cash transactions above ₹10,000 and linking assets worth more than ₹50,000 with Aadhaar to check corruption.

The plea also wanted cash transactions to be restricted on purchase of air ticket, rail ticket, electricity bill, LPG bill, CNG bill, municipality bill and other such bills of ₹10,000 and above, claiming it was a practical solution to curb corruption, generation of black money, money laundering, benami transactions and amassing disproportionate assets.

It also sought restricting cash transactions in goods and services purchased through online shopping platforms like Amazon and Flipkart.

A bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela asked the counsel for the Central and Delhi governments to obtain instructions and listed the matter for further hearing in August.

However, no formal notice was issued on the petition.

Petitioner and advocate Ashwi-



ni Kumar Upadhyay also sought direction to the Centre and states to take appropriate steps to restrict cash transactions in all industrial and domestic goods, products and services to the maximum retail price of ₹10,000.

"Even after 75 years of the independence and 73 years after becoming a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic, none of the districts are free from bribery, black money, benami transactions, disproportionate assets, tax evasion, money laundering,...," the petition said.

It said, similarly, no district is free from the clutches of mafias like land mafia, drug-liquor mafia, mining mafia, transfer-posting mafia, betting mafia, tender mafia, hawala mafia, illegal immigration mafia, conversion mafia, superstition-black magic mafia and white-collar political mafia.

The plea said India cannot move forward without clean and transparent governance for which a corruption-free society is the basic requirement.

## Ajay Banga Becomes First Indian-American To Head World Bank

Press Trust Of India

**WASHINGTON:** Ajay Banga was on Wednesday appointed as the next President of the World Bank, becoming the first-ever Indian-American to head the global financial institution which said it looks forward to working with him at a time when it's tackling the toughest development challenges facing developing countries.

"The Executive Directors of the World Bank today selected Ajay Banga as President of the World Bank for a five-year term beginning June 2, 2023," the bank said in a press statement.

In February, President Joe Biden announced that the US would be nominating Banga, 63, to lead the World Bank because he is "well equipped" to lead the global institution at "this critical moment in history."

The Board looks forward to working with Mr. Banga on the World Bank Group Evolution process, as discussed at the April 2023 Spring Meetings, and on all the World Bank Group's ambitions and efforts aimed at tackling the toughest development challenges facing developing countries," the bank statement added.

Banga, who was awarded the Padma Shri in 2016, most recently served as Vice Chairman at General Atlantic. Previously, he was President and CEO of Mastercard, a global organisation with nearly 24,000 employees.

He is the first-ever Indian-



American and Sikh-American to head either of the two top international financial institutions: the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The World Bank Executive Directors followed the selection process agreed by shareholders in 2011. The process included an open, merit-based, and transparent nomination where any national of the Bank's membership could be proposed by any Executive Director or Governor through an Executive Director, the statement said.

This was then followed by thorough due diligence and a comprehensive interview of Banga by the Executive Directors, it added.

The President of the World Bank Group is also the Chair of the Board of the Executive Directors of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The President is also ex officio chair of the Board of Directors of the International Development Association, International Finance Corporation, the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, and of the Administrative Council of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes.

## Kupwara Gets J&K Bank Cash Recycler Machine

CRM will be having cash deposit, drawl and fake currency detection facility

Observer News Service

**KUPWARA:** In a bid to provide the latest technological banking facilities to its customers, J&K Bank Wednesday operationalized a Cash Recycler Machine (CRM) at Sub District Hospital Kupwara.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Dr. Doifode Sagar Datatray inaugurated the first of its kind CRM at Sub District Hospital Kupwara.

He congratulated J&K Bank for its contribution in rendering world-class banking facilities to the people. He informed that the bank will open more such CRMs at Handwara and Kralpora.

The DC asked the people to take advantage of this facility at their convenience.

The first of its kind CRM at Sub District Hospital Kupwara is laced with latest technological banking facilities. It will help people of the area in depositing cash beyond banking hours and even on holidays as CRM will re-



main open 24x7.

CRM will be having fake currency detection, instant messaging and note denomination wise receipt facility.

On the occasion, the Zonal Head reaffirmed the bank's commitment to providing world-class banking facilities and services to the people of Kupwara district, regardless of their location or status.

The installation of CRM will address issues related to cash withdrawals and deposits by the people while also reducing foot-fall at Business Units.

CRM located at SDH Kupwara is mapped with J&K Bank Branch Old Chowk.

Zonal Head Baramulla Imtiyaz Ahmad Bhat, Cluster Head Kupwara Shadab Mehboob, LDM Kupwara Mehboob Ellahi Khan, CMO Kupwara, Mohamad Ramzan, President Traders Federation Kupwara, Showkat Masoodi President Bar Association Kupwara, Adv. Shafiq Ahmad Shah, Branch Managers of various Branches of the district and a large gathering of customers of the J&K bank were present on the occasion.

## Markets Pause 8-Day Rally; All Eyes On US Fed Interest Rate Decision

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI:** Benchmark indices ended lower on Wednesday, halting their eight days of rally, ahead of the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision and mixed global market trends.

Robust equity buying by foreign institutional investors failed to stop the downward movement as fall in index heavyweights Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys and Larsen & Toubro weakened the overall sentiment.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 161.41 points or 0.26 per cent to settle at 61,193.30. During the day, it tumbled 330.27 points or 0.53 per cent to 61,024.44. The broader NSE Nifty fell 57.80 points or 0.32 per cent to end at 18,089.85.

"Renewed concerns over the US regional banking turmoil, uncertainty regarding the Fed's policy outcome, and the need to increase the US treasury debt borrowing limit triggered a bearish attack on Wall Street. Despite this, the robust growth of India's services and manufacturing sectors in April and the strong inflow of foreign funds helped minimise the losses in the domestic market," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

India's services sector growth accelerated in April, as strong demand conditions resulted in the fastest increase in new business and output in close to 13 years, a monthly survey said on Wednesday.

## Auditor Named In Hindenburg Report Resigns From Adani Company

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** A small Ahmedabad-based chartered accountancy firm, whose appointment was questioned by a US short seller in its scathing report against the conglomerate run by billionaire Gautam Adani, has resigned due to "pre-occupation", Adani Total Gas Ltd said.

Hindenburg Research in its January 24 report that levelled allegations of fraud, stock manipulation and money laundering against the Adani group, had also raised the issue of the size and capability of the firms auditing the conglomerate.

Adani group has repeatedly denied all allegations.

Hindenburg stated that the independent auditor for the group's flagship firm, Adani Enterprises, and its city gas retailer Adani Total Gas Ltd is a "tiny firm" called Shah Dhandharia.

"Shah Dhandharia seems to have no current website. Historical archives of its website show that it had only 4 partners and 11 employees. Records show it pays Rs 32,000 (USD 435 in 2021) in monthly office rent. The only other listed entity we found that it audits has a market capitalization of about Rs 640

million (USD 7.8 million)," it had stated.

In a stock exchange filing, Adani Total Gas Ltd said, "We wish to inform that M/s. Shah Dhandharia & Co. LLP, Chartered Accountants, have resigned as the statutory auditors of the company i.e., Adani Total Gas Limited (ATGL) with effect from May 2, 2023."

It attached the May 2, 2023 resignation letter from the auditor.

In the letter, the auditor said it was given a second term of 5 years on July 26, 2022, and has completed the audit of the company for the financial year ended March 31, 2023.

"We have carefully evaluated and due to increased professional pre-occupation in other assignment, we regrettably propose our resignation," it said.

"Our resignation does not result from an inability to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence," it added.

It went on to state, "There are no other circumstances connected with our resignation which we consider should be brought to the notice of the Board."

"In view of the above and as discussed and agreed with the management, we express our inability to continue as the statutory auditors for the company. Please accept our resignation with immediate effect," it said.



# Iran's Revolutionary Guard seizes tanker in Strait of Hormuz

Dubai, May 3 (AP) Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard seized a Panamanian-flagged oil tanker in the strategic Strait of Hormuz on Wednesday, the second-such capture by Tehran in under a week amid heightened tensions over its nuclear programme.

The taking of the oil tanker Niovi renewed concerns about Iran threatening maritime traffic in the strait, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of all crude passes.

It also comes amid the disappearance of a crude oil tanker in southeast Asia believed to be carrying Iranian crude oil amid reports it may have been seized by the US.

The US Navy published surveillance footage shot by an aerial drone of about dozen Guard vessels swarming the tanker around 6:20 a.m. The drone had been on a routine patrol in the area and saw the seizure, though the Navy did not receive a distress call from the Niovi itself, 5th Fleet spokesman Cmdr. Timothy Hawkins said.

Those Guard ships "forced the oil tanker to reverse course and head toward Iranian territorial waters off the coast of Bandar Abbas, Iran," the Navy said.

"Iran's actions are contrary to international law and disruptive to regional security and stability," the 5th Fleet said in a statement. "Iran's continued



harassment of vessels and interference with navigational rights in regional waters are unwarranted, irresponsible and a present threat to maritime security and the global economy."

Iran's semiofficial Tasnim news agency, believed to be close to the Guard, reported the paramilitary force had seized a tanker it described as a "viola-tor," without elaborating.

Shipping registries show the Niovi as managed by Smart Tankers of Piraeus, Greece. A woman who answered the phone at the firm declined to immediately comment on the seizure.

The Niovi had been coming from dry-dock repairs in Dubai, bound for Fujairah on the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates without carrying any cargo, according to the data firm Refinitiv.

Last week, Iran seized an

oil tanker carrying crude for Chevron Corp. of San Ramon, California, amid wider tensions between Tehran and the US over its nuclear programme. The Advantage Sweet had 23 Indians and one Russian on board.

Iran has accused the Advantage Sweet of colliding with another vessel, while offering no evidence to support its claim. Iran has offered a variety of unsupported claims in the past when seizing foreign-flagged ships amid tensions with the West.

The taking of the two tankers in under a week comes amid the disappearance of the Marshall Island-flagged Suez Rajan, which had been in the South China Sea off Singapore for over a year after a report alleged it to smuggling sanctioned Iranian crude oil. Tracking data for the Suez Rajan last showed it off

East Africa, moving in a direction that could take it to the Americas.

The Financial Times, as well as the maritime intelligence firm Ambrey, both have reported the Suez Rajan was seized on order of American authorities. The ship's manager has not responded to queries from The Associated Press about the status of the ship. US officials also have not commented.

However, the Greek Ministry of Maritime Affairs acknowledged Wednesday recently sending a warning to Greek ships in the Mideast to be on alert when going through the Persian Gulf. The ministry did not say what prompted the warning.

The seizure by Iran of the two ships in the last week was the latest in a string of ship seizures and explosions to roil the region.

The incidents began after then-President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the United States from Iran's nuclear deal with world powers, which saw Tehran drastically limit its enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions.

They've continued under President Joe Biden and as diplomatic efforts at finding a way back to the accord remain stalemated.

Also, the US Navy has blamed Iran for a series of limpet mine attacks on vessels that damaged tankers in 2019, as well as for a

fatal drone attack on an Israeli-linked oil tanker that killed two European crew members in 2021.

Tehran denies carrying out the attacks, but a wider shadow war between Iran and the West has played out in the region's volatile waters. Iranian tanker seizures have been a part of it since 2019.

The last major seizure before recent days came when Iran took two Greek tankers in May 2022 and held them until November.

Since the collapse of the nuclear deal, Iran now enriches uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels.

The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency has warned Tehran has enough of a uranium stockpile to build "several" nuclear weapons if it chooses. Iran long has insisted its programme is for peaceful purposes, though the IAEA and Western intelligence agencies believe Tehran had a secret military nuclear programme through 2003.

Iran also has restricted the ability of IAEA inspectors to monitor its programme. However, the IAEA on Wednesday acknowledged that "work is ongoing" to re-install monitoring equipment at Iranian nuclear sites following a March visit by its director-general to Tehran. The agency did not elaborate and Tehran did not acknowledge the work. (AP)

## KIIT, DU Inks MoU With George Washington University



### Observer News Service

**Bhubaneswar:** The KIIT-DU has signed an MoU with George Washington University (GWU) in the United States for students and faculty exchange programmes.

The MoU was signed recently between Prof. Sasmita Samanta, VC, KIIT DU and Christopher Bracey, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs, GWU.

As per the MoU, both institutes will join efforts to educate highly qualified individuals to prepare them in the field of Business Analytics, Information Systems and Project Management. The programmes will be offered both at KIIT and at the GWU campus in the United States through credit transfers. The programmes are STEM Certified.

All students who satisfactorily complete all the

requirements of the programme will receive either the degree of Master's of Science in Business Analytics (MSBA), Master's of Science in Project Management (MSPM) and Master's of Science in Information Systems Technology (MSIST) degrees from GWU. The programmes are divided into credits which will be taught both at KIIT and GWU.

GWU shall provide the courses and faculty for the programme. To obtain the degree, the student must complete all the GWU-required courses with a cumulative GPA of 3.0. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 at any time during the programme may be placed on probation or dismissed, consistent with published GWU policies.

For this initiative Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS thanked Mark S. Wrighton, President, GWU, and Shivraj Kanungo, Vice Dean, Graduate Programs Business School, GWU.

## In three decades, one domestic airline on average went belly up every year

### Agenceis

New Delhi: One scheduled airline on an average has gone out of business every year since private airlines took to the skies nearly three decades ago, with Wadia group-owned Go First being the latest carrier battling financial turbulence for survival.

The first private airline to go belly up was East West Travels & Trade Link Ltd, which shuttered operations after almost two years in November 1996. The same year, ModiLuft Ltd also went out of business.

Since 1994, the year when private airlines took off in the country, at least 27 scheduled carriers have either been shuttered or have been acquired or merged with other carriers, according to official data.

While the country's domestic aviation sector is on an upswing with strong traffic recovery post-pandemic, Go First is grappling with severe financial crunch due to non-availability of Pratt & Whitney engines that has resulted in grounding of more than half of its fleet.

Three scheduled airlines -- Zexus Air Services Pvt Ltd, which operated as Zoom Air; Deccan Chartered Pvt Ltd and Air Odisha Aviation Pvt Ltd -- shut shop in 2020 while Heritage Aviation Pvt Ltd stopped flying in 2022.

Once a storied full service carrier, Jet Airways shuttered operations in April 2019, bogged down by financial woes and is yet to restart operations even though a winning bidder has been found through the insolvency resolution process.

Jet Lite (formerly known as Sahara Airlines) stopped operations in 2019.

Another prominent player that was forced to stop flying was Kingfisher Airlines Ltd in 2012. Prior to that, Kingfisher Airlines, in 2008, had acquired Deccan Aviation Pvt Ltd (Air Deccan). The latter was the pioneer of low-cost air travel in the country.

In 2017, at least five carriers went bust -- Air Carnival Pvt Ltd, Air Pegasus Pvt Ltd, Religare Aviation Ltd, Air Costa and Quikjet Cargo Airlines Pvt Ltd.

Deccan Cargo & Express Logistics Pvt Ltd (2014), Aryan Cargo Express (2011), Paramount Airways (2010), MDLR Airlines Pvt Ltd (2009), Jagson Airlines Ltd (2008) and Indus Airways Pvt Ltd (2007) are among the other carriers that closed down.

While two airlines went belly up in

1996, NEPC Micon Ltd and Skyline NEPC Ltd (formerly known as Damania Airways Ltd) shuttered operations in 1997. Lufthansa Cargo India Pvt Ltd stopped flying in 2000, as per the official data.

Go First, which has been flying for more than 17 years, has filed for voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings and cancelled all its flights for three days starting Wednesday.

The airline is the second major scheduled carrier after Jet Airways that is likely to undergo resolution process under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

After being pushed into insolvency proceedings by its lenders, Jet Airways found its new owner Jalan Kalrock Consortium (JKC), but the ownership transfer is hanging fire amid persisting differences between the lenders

and the winning bidder.

India is one of the fastest growing civil aviation markets in the world and the number of passengers are rising. State-owned Air India and Air India Express were acquired by Tata Group in January last year.

Currently, all carriers, except state-owned Alliance Air, are private ones.

About Go First, Sanjiv Kapoor, who quit as CEO-Designate of Jet Airways recently, on Wednesday said it is sad to see another airline suspend operations.

"This is in addition to the lengthy delays in getting Jet off the ground again. This is not good for consumers, to be heading towards concentration of such a large market to just 2 or 3 players. Need at least 4 strong airlines," he said in a series of tweets.

According to him, there needs to be at least two strong Full Service Carriers (FSCs) and two or three strong Low Cost Carriers (LCCs) in a market of this size and complexity.

"By 'strong' airlines I mean well capitalised, well-managed airlines that run safe, reliable, and efficient operations with well-maintained aircraft, well-trained staff, and consistent service, creating customer preference and thereby creating value for all stakeholders," he said.

It was curtains down for the monopoly of corporations in scheduled air transport services space in March 1994 when the government repealed the Air Corporation Act, 1953. The move marked the liberalisation of domestic air transport services, allowing the entry of private operators.

### CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Admin Orders

Services, Excise Commissioner, Dy. Drug Controller Kashmir, J&K Waqf Board and other officers of the administration.

Speaking on the occasion, the spokesperson said, Div Com directed DCs to divert abandoned government buildings or unutilized buildings to the nearby departments so that these structures shall not become hubs of drug addicts. Bidhuri, he said, also asked for regular surveillance of such places.

"He impressed upon the officers to spread awareness at grass roots level about the negative impact of drugs in the society. He instructed them to classify villages according to the number of individuals involved in substance use, and label those hamlets as green, yellow and red depending upon severity," the spokesperson said.

While acknowledging the pivotal role of religious leaders and PRIs, Bidhuri, he said, asked DCs to sensitize religious leaders, Imams and public representatives to create awareness among people to curb substance abuse.

The spokesperson said that the Div Com exhorted officers to adopt a proactive approach to stop the spread of drugs among youth.

In order to break the nexus of drug trafficking,

Bidhuri vouched for detention of drug traffickers under different NDPS laws while asking for activation of counseling centres for others to rehabilitate them.

Besides, Div Com also instructed Divisional & District officers to publicize helpline numbers of SUKON & E-MANS so the victims of drug abuse will receive proper counseling.

Earlier, the spokesperson said, In-charge Divisional Control Room, Tahir Magrey gave a detailed presentation on Burden of Mental Health disorders and Substance Abuse, status of substance users in Kashmir division, measures taken to destroy poppy crop and bhug plants by enforcement agencies, counseling and rehabilitation process, functioning of drug de-addiction centers, surveillance on unorganised and organized drug trafficking activities etc.

### Authorities Rule

Flood Control (I & FC) department, Naresh Kumar dismissed the flood fears creeping into the minds of 2014 survivors. He said there was no likelihood of flood like situation in Kashmir this year anytime.

"Nothing of the sort will happen, what if rains occurred for a few days. Rainfall is important

for crops. If there is no rainfall, all the water that the crops need has to be supplied by irrigation," Kumar said, adding people need to stay calm, flood like situation will not occur this year anytime.

He however was quick to add that the administration is prepared to meet any eventuality.

"Department is to take care of the things. Besides, there are allied department including Revenue department that also works in this direction, hence people are once again requested not to panic and I would like to reiterate that minor rains does not trigger floods. 2014 is gone, its 2022 and we are prepared to meet any eventuality," he added.

Talking to Kashmir Observer, Director Meteorological Department Sonam Lotus forecast intermittent widespread rainfall on 6th and 7th and light rainfall towards late afternoon or evening on May 8. He however said the widespread rains may trigger flash floods in upper reaches.

Director Met said that significant improvement is expected from May 8 while weather is likely to remain dry from May 9 to 11 with increase in night temperature.

### Cloudburst Triggers

KNO that no loss of life or injury has been reported in the incident. He termed the situation well under control.

### Preparation For

ballast is replaced by a rigid construction of concrete or asphalt.

Sunker was informed that the country's "first cable-stayed bridge" Anji bridge has been completed and preparatory works for laying the ballastless track are in progress, officials said.

Sunker, who inspected the entire section from Bakkal to Dugga by motor trolley, was also informed that the BLT has been laid in the section (world's highest railway bridge) and the work of installation of electro-mechanical devices is in progress, they said.

The BLT has to be laid on nearly 30 kilometers of track in different stretches on 111-km stretch from Katra to Banihal.

He inspected and reviewed the ongoing important works of the Anji bridge, for which all 96 cables were fully installed on April 26 in a record time period of 11 months, they said.

### Airfares Likely

on from March 26 to October 28, Go First is to operate 1,538 flights per week.

### In A First, Women

Jammu city. In the next phase, they will also be deployed in the rural areas of Jammu, the officials said.

Women residents have welcomed the initiative by the Jammu and Kashmir Police.

In Jammu, several women travel in night as part of their duties.

"This is a great and commendable initiative by the police. It will help those women who go to work at night. It will also help those who are the victims of domestic violence," Tarika Mahajan, a local resident, told PTI.

She said that at times, those women who go to the party and come back late at night have to face unwanted situation on the roads.

"Some women hesitate to tell their problem to male police personnel, but with the deployment of the female cops now, it will help them to raise their voice against any crime," Mahajan said. Shikha Rathore, another resident, said that being a girl there have been a lot of security related issues. "But the deployment of women constables during night hours gives a sense of security." The police officers maintained that it will give women cops feeling that they are no less than their male counterparts.

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

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# Messi The Latest Pawn In Proxy Rivalry In Middle East

## Agencies

**PARIS:** Lionel Messi was supposed to be training alongside his Paris Saint-Germain teammates on Monday, with his club embroiled in an increasingly fraught French league title race.

Instead, the football great was in Saudi Arabia, holding a falcon on his arm, watching a palm-weaving demonstration and looking around the Arabian Horse Museum as part of his commercial contract with the kingdom to promote tourism in the Middle Eastern country.

It will prove to be an expensive trip for the recent World Cup winner.

Messi has been suspended by PSG — reportedly for two weeks, when he won't get paid or be allowed to train or play with the team. That could yet spark the end of a turbulent and somewhat underwhelming two-season spell at a club where soap opera-style drama, on and off the field, is rarely far away given the presence of other superstars like Kylian Mbappé and Neymar in the squad.

It also exposes the tensions

now that Qatar and Saudi Arabia — gulf neighbors and fierce recent rivals in regional politics — have become major influencers in the world of football.

Messi is right in the middle of it all, through his own making and because everyone — inside and outside the game — wants a piece of one of the all-time greats.

The Argentina forward never intended to be playing for PSG, a club owned by Qatar Sports Investments, but found himself moving there in 2021 after previous team Barcelona, the football love of his life, plunged into financial problems that still persist.

Immediately, it thrust Messi into the hands of the Qataris, given QSI is a subsidiary of the emirate's sovereign wealth fund, and invited accusations against him of sportswashing.

Messi placed himself in an even more delicate position last year when, just a few months before the World Cup in Qatar, he signed up to be essentially an ambassador for Saudi Arabia.

Hence this week's trip to the kingdom, which he de-



cided to make without PSG's permission and covering a period when the squad had been asked to train in response to the team's 3-1 loss at home against Lorient on Sunday.

According to French daily L'Equipe, PSG coach Christophe Galtier had pledged to give his players Monday and Tuesday off if they beat Lorient. Instead, the team trained on Monday and had Tuesday off.

In the wake of Messi's re-

sulting suspension, the Saudi Tourism Authority released a long news release detailing the movements of the man it called a "football icon" and his family on a day he was supposed to still be in France. Other aspects of the trip included "feeding the indigenous Arabian gazelles," while the Messis apparently also were "charmed by the authenticity and architecture of At-Turaif and the beauty of the Arabian

horses." "Messi's visit to Saudi was packed with exciting activities, with something for everyone in the family," the tourism board boasted.

It would make interesting reading for PSG president Nasser Al-Khelaifi, chairman of QSI and beIN Media Group, which has been the victim of broadcasting piracy in Saudi Arabia in recent years.

Indeed, Saudi Arabia and Qatar are engaged in a proxy bat-

tle to be the epicenter of Asian football. The presidency of the Asian Football Confederation is vacant in 2027 and both have potential candidates line up.

Since elections in February, the presidents of the Saudi and Qatari football federations — Yasser Almoineh and Sheikh Hamad Al Thani, respectively — are members of the FIFA Council, the executive body that makes the decisions in world football.

The neighbors and rivals were competing to host the 2027 Asian Cup, until a solution emerged that rewarded both. Qatar stepped up when China handed back hosting rights to the 2023 edition, citing the COVID-19 pandemic, and that tournament will start in Doha in January. The AFC then awarded Saudi Arabia the 2027 edition — a likely audition for ambitions to stage a future World Cup, possibly in 2034.

It does not stop at football. Doha will host the multi-sport Asian Games in 2030 and Qatar is widely expected to launch another campaign to host an Olympics in the city, this time in 2036.

The 2034 Asian Games are in Riyadh, and Saudi Arabia won a bid to host the 2029 Asian Winter Games in a futuristic mountains resort, Trojena, that is not yet built.

All of this, of course, is way above Messi's head but his decision-making over the past two years has placed him front and center in this regional contest.

His ties with PSG may be coming to end, however. His contract expires at the end of this season and there's uncertainty about his next destination, with reports linking him to Inter Miami in MLS, a return to Barcelona and, naturally, a money-spinning move to a Saudi team, potentially Al-Hilal.

Playing for Al-Hilal would place him in direct confrontation with long-time rival Cristiano Ronaldo, who has been at Saudi team Al-Nassr since the start of the year.

Shifting the Messi-Ronaldo rivalry to Saudi Arabia would sum up modern-day football, with the riches of the Middle East proving as enticing to two of the game's GOATs as they are to FIFA and other sports bodies. (AP)



## Rain Plays Spoilsport As LSG, CSK Forced To Split Points

### Press Trust of India

**LUCKNOW:** Lucknow Super Giants and Chennai Super Kings were forced to split points as their Indian Premier League match was called off due to rain here on Wednesday.

With incessant rain lashing the Ekana Stadium, even the minimum five overs of the CSK innings weren't possible after the home team had made 125 for seven in 19.2 overs when rain interrupted play.

LSG middle-order batter Ayush Badoni's unbeaten 59 (33

balls; 2x4s, 4x6s) was the only bright spot in the home team's otherwise lacklustre play as Chennai Super Kings' Moeen Ali (2/13) and Maheesh Theekshana (2/37) impressed by making early inroads.

The game began after a 15-minute delay due to wet outfield and rain returned in the final over of the first innings to halt the proceedings.

Brief scores: LSG 125/7 in 19.2 overs (Nicholas Pooran 20, Ayush Badoni 59 not out; Moeen Ali 2/13, Maheesh Theekshana 2/37) vs CSK.

## KL Rahul Out Of IPL

### Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Lucknow Super Giants skipper KL Rahul in all likelihood will take no further part in the Indian Premier League (IPL) after sustaining a serious thigh injury during team's last game against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

The PTI can also confirm that veteran pacer Jaydev Unadkat's shoulder condition is serious and he too is ruled out of the IPL. It is understood that it will be a race against time for BCCI Sports Science & Medical Team to get the senior batter-keeper Rahul ready for World Test Championship final in London from June 7 to 11.

Rahul injured his right thigh while sprinting towards boundary to a Faf du Plessis cover drive off Marcus Stoinis bowling.

"KL is currently with the team



in Lucknow but he is leaving the camp on Thursday after watching the game against CSK on Wednesday. His scans will be done in Mumbai at the BCCI designated medical facility. His case as well as Jaydev's case will be handled by BCCI," a senior BCCI source privy to development told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

The source also confirmed that no scans has been done till now.

"Once the scans ascertain the degree of injury, the BCCI medical team will decide the course of action," said the source.

## DYSSO Srinagar Holds Inter School Zonal level Tournaments



### Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** In accordance with the calendar of activities issued by Directorate of Youth Services and Sports, Inter School Zonal Level competitions are being organised by the different zones of Srinagar.

Accordingly Zonal Physical Education Officers have con-

ducted various sports activities to involve more and more students towards sports activities and keep them away from drugs.

The activities are conducted under the theme of "Unity" Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav in Chess, Carom, Rope Skipping, Tennikoit, Badminton and Road Race for Boys and Girls students only under the age group of 14 years.

## IPL 2023: SRH Top-Order Under Pressure Ahead Of KKR Game



### Press Trust of India

**HYDERABAD:** Sunrisers Hyderabad will expect more consistency from their top-order when they host Kolkata Knight Riders in an Indian Premier League match here on Thursday.

Both teams are languishing at the bottom of the table and another loss will put a serious dent in their play-off qualification chances.

Getting Abhishek Sharma back to open worked in the previous game for Sunrisers and now they will be hoping their other opener, Mayank Agarwal, to find some fluency.

The batting as a whole has not clicked for Sunrisers and therefore it is not a surprise they find themselves in a desperate situation in the second half of the tournament.

While Agarwal is striking at an underwhelming 110 at the top, number three Rahul

Tripathi is not faring any better either. Skipper Aiden Markram too needs to lead from the front and Harry Brook, despite scoring a hundred, has failed in majority of the games. He is back in the middle order and the management will be hoping that he finds some rhythm.

All-rounder Washington Sundar being ruled out of the IPL due to injury is a big blow to Sunrisers.

Pacer Umran Malik has the worst economy rate among the bowlers and has only taken five wickets in seven games, contributing to the team's woes.

KKR too would be expecting more fluency from their batters as they look to get their campaign back on track after six defeats in nine games.

They have been found wanting in all three departments of the game, something that was mentioned by skipper Nitish Rana af-

ter the loss to Gujarat Giants.

"In crucial games and against top oppositions, you need to do all the basics well in all the three departments of the game," he had said.

Rana has not shown the consistency that is expected of him while N Jagadeesan has struggled at the top. Both Jason Roy and Rahmanullah Gurbaz have shown good form at the top but the management can only play one of them.

The pace bowlers leaking runs has also been hurting KKR. All-rounder Andre Russell and Shardul Thakur have conceded more than 10 runs per over. Harshit Rana did well in his first game and is likely to start again.

The spin trio of Varun Chakravarthy, Sunil Narine and Suyash Sharma has been effective but need support from the fast bowlers. Match starts: 7.30pm IST.

## Wrestlers Move SC Seeking Permission To File Affidavit In Sealed Cover

### Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The seven women wrestlers, who have levelled allegations of sexual harassment against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, on Wednesday moved the Supreme Court seeking permission to file an affidavit in sealed cover.

On April 28, Delhi Police had filed two FIRs against Singh on the allegations of the wrestlers, hours after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Delhi Police, had told the apex court that a case will be registered on Friday.

On Wednesday, the counsel representing the women wrestlers mentioned the matter before a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice P S Narasimha and said he was seeking permission to file the affidavit in sealed cover before the court, which is slated to hear the matter on Thursday.

He said they don't have any problem in supplying the copy of the affidavit to the solicitor general but it should not go in public domain.

The bench permitted the counsel to bring the sealed cover affidavit on Thursday



with advance copy to Mehta.

Mehta told the bench that investigation is going on in the case and the petitioners' can share these materials with the investigation officer.

When Mehta asked if he can share the material with the investigation officer, the bench said, "alright".

The country's top wrestlers have been on a sit-in at Jantar Mantar in Delhi demanding action against Singh.

On April 26, Delhi Police had told the top court that some kind of preliminary probe was needed before it can proceed with the registration of an FIR over the sexual harassment allegations.

The bench permitted the counsel to bring the sealed cover affidavit on Thursday

the seven women wrestlers, saying the matter is "serious" and requires consideration.

Several national award winning wrestlers have been protesting at Jantar Mantar demanding the government make public the findings of an oversight panel that investigated the sexual harassment allegations against Singh, also a BJP MP.

The wrestlers had asserted they won't leave the protest site until Singh is arrested. They had resumed their sit-in protest on Sunday and demanded that the findings of the oversight panel that investigated the allegations be made public. The committee was set up by the Sports Ministry in January after the wrestlers held a three-day sit-in.



## Cristiano Ronaldo Is World's Highest Paid Athlete: Forbes

### Agencies

**C**ristiano Ronaldo became the world's highest-paid athlete after his move to Saudi Arabian side Al Nassr nearly doubled his annual playing salary while Paris St Germain duo Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappe round off the top three, according to Forbes.

Ronaldo, who joined the Saudi football club on a deal until 2025 after leaving Manchester United last year, earned \$136 million with Forbes saying his annual playing salary went up to an estimated \$75 million.

Ronaldo's contract has been estimated by media to be worth more than 200 million euros (\$219.98 million).

PSG forward Messi, 35, was next on the list after bringing home a combined \$130 million while club teammate and France captain Mbappe — the youngest on the list at 24 — earned \$120 million to sit third. PSG are owned by Qatar Sports Investments.

Los Angeles Lakers player and NBA great LeBron James (\$119.5 million) and Mexican boxer Canelo Alvarez (\$110 million) rounded out the top five.

Forbes said its on-field earnings figures include all prize money, salaries and bonuses earned in the last 12 months while off-field earnings are an estimate of sponsorship deals, appearance fees, licensing income and cash.

## Arsenal Fan Arrested For Shining Laser At Chelsea Player

### Agencies

**LONDON:** A football fan has been arrested for shining a laser into the face of Chelsea winger Mykhailo Mudryk during a game against Arsenal in the Premier League, Arsenal said Wednesday.

The incident appeared to happen when Mudryk was taking a free kick after coming on as a second-half substitute in Chelsea's 3-1 loss at Emirates Stadium on Tuesday.

"This behavior is dangerous and totally unacceptable," Arsenal said in a statement, "and we will fully support the police with their enquiries. We will obviously take the strongest possible



action." The Football Association is set to look into the matter.

Mudryk was jeered by Arsenal fans after coming on, having been close to joining the club in January before signing for Chelsea instead. (AP)

## Fl: Perez Can Make Statement Of Intent At Miami Grand Prix

### Agencies

**S**ergio Perez wants to be considered a Formula One title contender and Sunday's Miami Grand Prix offers the Mexican a chance to lead the championship for the first time and rattle the cage of Red Bull team mate Max Verstappen. A third win in five races would lift 33-year-old Perez above reigning double world champion Verstappen and be quite a statement of intent.

Verstappen, who has enjoyed an unbroken run at the top of the standings since he won in Spain on May 22 last year, has yet to finish lower than second in 2023 and arrives in Florida with a six-point advantage. The 25-year-old Dutch driver was only five points clear of Perez after four races last year but won in Miami with fastest lap



and went on to finish the season 149 points ahead and with 15 victories to his team mate's two.

Perez has never won more than two races in a season but is coming off the back of a double success in Azerbaijan -- in the Saturday sprint and Sunday's main event -- hoping to build momentum. "I really believe that we are in the fight," he said after the race in Baku.





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