

## Harwan, Seat of Ancient Kashmir, Will be on Global Map Soon: MoS Meenakshi Lekhi

Nazir Ganaie

**Srinagar, June 25:** Union Minister of State (MoS) for External Affairs and Culture, Meenakshi Lekhi, said on Sunday Kashmir's history is as old as mankind—asserting that the valley's "silent majority is not silent anymore."

Lekhi, in an exclusive chat with Kashmir Observer, said that the government of India (GoI) was making all efforts to revive the socio-cultural landscape of the Kashmir region by bringing all the stakeholders on board. She said that the government was constantly promoting

the arts and culture of Jammu and Kashmir.

"In everything, there is something, some message that PM Modi does. There is always a message in his acts. He is very concerned about Kashmir and promoting the arts and culture of Kashmir at the global forums," Lekhi said.

The Union Minister revealed that the Centre was mulling revamping and bringing back the lost legacy of the 'Harwan Monastery'. She said that the Harwan monastery is a reminder of the pivotal role played by Kashmir in the spread of knowledge globally.

- Kashmir has been the host of global summits since ancient times
- Kashmir a seat of learning, Sharda Kshaitra
- Kashmir's silent majority no more silent



"Harwan, the seat of ancient Kashmir, will be on the global map soon. We all relate to the G-20 today, but let me tell you Kashmir has been the hot and

happening place for the spread of knowledge and bringing back the legacy of the knowledge world to the place which has been blessed by Maa Sharda," she said.

"It is hard to imagine the importance of the site from its ruins. But this ancient monastery played a pivotal role in Kashmir's history. It is here

that the 4th Buddhist council of the Mahayana (Sarvastivada) school of Buddhism was held sometime in the 1st or 2nd century CE, on the orders of the Kushana emperor Kanishka."

She said that sadly, the significance of the site seems to have been lost somehow in modern times. "It is not known exactly when the Harwan monastery was built; though excavations reveal archaeological remains dating from 1st to 6th century CE. During this period, numerous Buddhist monasteries dotted Kashmir, with the ones at Harwan and Ushkur (Baramulla district) **More on P6**

## Egypt Confers Highest Honour on PM Modi



Press Trust of India

**Cairo:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on Sunday conferred with the 'Order of the Nile', Egypt's highest honour, by President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi here.

Instituted in 1915, the 'Order of the Nile' is conferred upon heads of states, crown princes, and vice presidents who offer Egypt or humanity invaluable services.

This is the 13th highest state honour conferred upon Prime Minister Modi.

The 'Order of the Nile' is a pure gold collar consisting of three-square gold units comprising Pharaonic symbols.

The first unit resembles the idea of protecting the state against the evils, the second one resembles prosperity and happiness brought by the Nile and the third one refers to wealth and endurance. The three units are connected to one another by a circular gold flower decorated with turquoise and ruby.

Hanging from the collar is a hexagonal pendant decorated with flowers of the Pharaonic style, and turquoise and ruby gems.

In the middle **More on P6**

## LG Urges Civil Society For Active Participation In Amarnath Yatra

Interacts With Prominent Members Of PRIs, Civil Society, Business & Religious Leaders



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 25:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Sunday interacted with the prominent members of PRIs, civil society groups, trade, business and spiritual leaders and discussed the preparations and arrangements for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra.

LG urged the prominent citizens for active

participation of all sections of society in the 62-day long festivity, starting from 1st July. "We all have one purpose, one idea, our conscience is one, we are devoted to one message of peace, brotherhood, progress and prosperity of J&K," the Lt Governor said.

"Society has always welcomed the devotees of Baba Amarnath Ji with open arms and has ensured their needs

are taken care of. This is a beautiful example of peaceful and harmonious co-existence," he added.

"These are our ancient values, our Sanskar and I have seen its expression in the collective efforts of the society in the last three years to take J&K UT to new heights of success. We are ready to welcome pilgrims and hope they will go back to their **More on P6**

## 'Collective Responsibility To Deal With Drug Menace'

**Jammu and Kashmir** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday said it is the collective responsibility of the society to rehabilitate youngsters who have fallen prey to the drug addiction conspiracy hatched by a neighbouring country. The LG was addressing cyclists who took part in the 'Pedal for Peace' event held here.

"A lot of youngsters have become victims of drug addiction due to the conspiracy of our neighbouring country. It is the collective responsibility of the society to take them out of the muddle and help them achieve their dreams," Sinha said.

"It is my appeal to you, the **More on P6**

## Largest Hajj Pilgrimage in History Begins

The number of pilgrims this year is expected to break records at more than 2.5 million.

Agencies

**Makkah:** The pilgrimage of Hajj has begun as crowds of Muslims donning white robes circle the Kaaba, the cubed structure at the epicentre of Islam's holiest site, their prayers ringing through the air.

The annual pilgrimage began on Sunday in Makkah, Saudi Arabia with the tawaf, the circling of the Kaaba, in an event that is expected to break attendance records.

"This year, we will witness the largest Hajj pilgrimage in history," said an official at the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah.

More than 2.5 million Muslims are expected to take part, as coronavirus pandemic restrictions in place

since 2020 have been fully relaxed.

That year, just 10,000 people were permitted to participate; 59,000 in 2021; and last year there was a cap of one million people.

Saudi authorities have described this year's event as the "biggest" Hajj pilgrimage in years, as more than two million people from over 160 countries were said to have attended the annual religious gathering.

The event comes as the requirement for women to be accompanied by male guardians was dropped by Saudi authorities in 2021.

This year, the maximum age limit has also been scrapped, meaning thousands of elderly people will be among those braving Saudi Arabia's scorching **More on P6**

**6 THE MEETING ALSO DISCUSSED ARRANGEMENTS** for the upcoming Eid-ul-Azha festival and celebration of Prakash Parv of Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. The LG informed the prominent citizens that a district-wise review was conducted recently to monitor preparations and ensure all the arrangements for the Eid festival.

## 1500 Spl Invitees To Attend Security Conclave In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

**Jammu:** Around 1,500 special invitees, including defence experts and retired army officers, are attending a security conclave which will be addressed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh here on Monday, Jammu and Kashmir BJP chief Ravinder Raina said.

Besides addressing the conclave at Gen Zorawar Singh auditorium on the campus of University of Jammu, Singh will also visit the BJP headquarters at Trikuta Nagar to chair a meeting of senior party leaders to review the prevailing political situation, Raina said.

"Around 1,500 special invitees are attending the security conclave on internal and external security, a non-political event being organized as part of the BJP's ongoing programme to highlight the nine-year achievements of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government," Raina told PTI.

He said the defence minister



will brief the gathering of prominent persons about the measures taken by the Modi-led government for strengthening its defence mechanism after coming to power in 2014.

Defence experts, retired decorated army officers, academicians, doctors and think tanks, besides youths, will be attending the conclave which will start at 10.30 am, Raina said.

He said that Singh will discuss the security and other important issues with the participants and also share the strong position of India in **More on P6**

## Pak Deploying Chinese Supplied Cannon On LoC

Press Trust Of India

**China** has been helping the Pakistan Army build its defence infrastructure, besides providing Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, setting up communication towers and laying underground cables along the Line of Control, officials said.

This, according to officials, is part of efforts to further shore up China's position as an all-weather friend of Pakistan while ensuring the safety of growing Chinese enclaves in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK) set up on the pretext of securing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) road and hydel projects built in the "occupied territory".

The officials said that the recently developed SH-15, a 155 mm truck-mounted howitzer gun, has also been spotted at some places along the Line of Control (LoC) after it was displayed on Pakistan Day last year.

Known as a 'shoot and scoot' artillery weapon, Pakistan had signed a contract with Chinese firm North Industries Group Corporation Limited (Norinco) for the supply of 236 SH-15s and, according to London-based Janes Defence magazine, the first batch was delivered in January 2022.

Though no senior PLA officials were observed at forward posts, unlike earlier in 2014, some intercepts suggested that Chinese troops and engineers were setting up infrastructure along the LoC, including underground bunkers, the officials said.

The Army has officially maintained silence on the issue but has been constantly updating the intelligence agencies, sources said.

The Chinese military's presence, according to experts, is due to Beijing's 46-billion-dollar CPEC under which Gwadar Port in Karachi will be linked to China's Xinjiang province by the Karakoram highway, an area under the illegal occupation of China. **More on P6**

## Govt Announces Summer Vacation Upto Primary Level From June 26

**SRINAGAR:** The authorities here on Sunday preponed summer vacation for pre primary and primary classes of all government and government recognised private educational institutions of Kashmir and ordered that the schools shall now shut for summer break from June 26.

The decision by Directorate of School Education Kashmir comes a day after the government announced 10 days summer vacation for all government and private educational

institutions in Kashmir upto class 12th from July 01 to July 10 of 2023.

"In continuation to this Office Order no. 159-DSEK of 2023, dated 24.06.2023, and considering the consistent rise in temperature, the summer vacations for pre-primary and primary classes of all government and recognized private schools shall commence from 26th June, 2023," the DSEK order read.

Kashmir has been reeling under intense heatwave for the past **More on P6**

**SHRI MANOJ SINHA**  
HON'BLE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
JAMMU & KASHMIR

26  
JUNE  
2023

**International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking**

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- Raise awareness about Hepatitis C epidemic & HIV among people who use drugs and expand and strengthen Hepatitis C prevention programmes.
- Promote evidence-based, voluntary services for all people who use drugs.
- Educate about drug use disorders, available treatments and the importance of early intervention and support.
- Offering alternatives to punishment; prioritizing prevention; and leading with compassion.
- Combat stigma and discrimination by promoting language and attitudes that are respectful and non-judgmental.
- Empower young people and communities to prevent drug use and addiction.

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**Drafting and implementing drug de-addiction policy on ground.**

**Setting up of 14 addiction treatment facilities in UT of J&K.**

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# AI Could Democratise Nutritional Advice, But Safety And Accuracy Must Come First

## The Conversation

When you search online to see how people are using artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, you will quickly find that food requests are popular. More specifically, users are seeking help with menu planning to meet their personal dietary goals.

But how effective is this technology in providing dietary advice? In a consumer poll, over three out of five consumers agreed they would like to eat a healthier diet. Some 73% felt it was important to buy food that has a low environmental impact.

A standard diet is a leading cause of chronic disease and death around the world. Additionally, a third of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions are linked to food. Against this background, it's clear that help is required to achieve the transformational shift from goals to behaviour.

However, for the 19.9% of Europeans who live with a self-reported food allergy, every eating decision has to align with protecting themselves from an adverse reaction. This comes at a cost: the average spend on weekly food purchases for those with food hyper-sensitivities is 12-27% higher than for those with no allergies. An extra 40.37 days is required for those with allergies to research and plan their diet.

So, while AI could help many households have healthier diets, the consequences of an error for those with food allergies can be life threatening. With concern also raised for consuming purported healthy ingredients such as coconut oil, it is extremely important that nutrition experts help inform these technological solutions.

### How can AI help?

Academics in Canada used specific types of AI, known as natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning, to process text on food labels. This is done to accurately categorise food products by their specific nutritional criteria.

Such criteria include the Table of



Reference Amounts for food categorisation used by Health Canada – the country's government department for health policy – along with the nutrient profiling system of Food Standards Australia New Zealand, the authority that develops food standards for both Oceanian countries. This work showed that technology could be used to reduce the time needed to manually categorise large numbers of food products.

Commercial offerings using technology in this way already exist. One example is the company Food Maestro. The company I am involved with, Spoon Guru, has been working with global retailers for eight years, helping them facilitate the food search and find features within online grocery shopping platforms using AI systems that are co-developed with registered nutritionists.

The field of generative AI uses large language models (LLM) and machine learning to not only identify words within text but also to understand their order and context to produce human-like responses to text-based prompts.

AI chatbots such as Chat GPT use this technology to synthesise information, summarise text and answer questions. It can be used to provide tailored menu plans, generate recipe ideas and compile

shopping lists.

### Chatbot test

Early expert reviews using Chat GPT for menu planning and dietary advice have produced mixed results. A study to assess the chatbot's ability to produce dietary plans for those with allergies found that out of 56 diets, it generated an unsafe plan on one occasion, including almond milk within a nut-free dietary plan.

There were other errors too. For example, there were mistakes in the way food quantities and energy values were described and there was repetition of the same foods within menu plans.

In a review of ChatGPT's potential for personalised obesity treatment, the authors raised concerns about patient privacy and security. They also noted a lack of accountability should harmful advice be provided. These models currently do not have to abide by professional standards or codes of ethics.

Dietitians tested ChatGPT's ability to define an ideal diet for those with type 2 diabetes or those undergoing haemodialysis – a treatment for kidney failure. They too found errors. The chatbot responded with foods that would not be optimal for these conditions, without

any warnings. Menu plans were again repetitive and the authors raised concerns that such solutions could encourage users not to consult qualified health professionals.

The lack of references to the sources of information used to generate the answers meant they couldn't check if they were of high scientific quality. A cardiologist tested the advice that ChatGPT generated in relation to his specialist area, which was the link between dietary fat and cardiovascular disease. He felt the answers misinterpreted the research studies, repeatedly producing errors and inconsistencies in a tone described as sensible, confident and convincing.

### Ethical implications

Despite clear signs that caution is warranted, some early reviews also noted that AI had strengths and the potential for providing personalised nutrition advice. ChatGPT's responses often aligned with published food-based dietary guidelines. For example, the chatbot included fruit and vegetables in every meal, and incorporated advisory statements, such as "it is important to read labels carefully" and "consult a health professional".

The ethical implications, safety and quality of the technology will need to be more fully understood before it is likely to be used within these professions. However, customers and patients may choose to make regular use of it regardless.

Technology like ChatGPT could be seen as a useful tool for dietitians and registered nutritionists to quickly find information about foods, helping inform their work.

Academics investigating the relationship between food and health could also use AI to save time or develop innovative approaches to their research. This could help increase the impact of their research, increasing its accessibility in a way that benefits society.

Policy makers, regulators and those working in the food industry are very interested in the health and sustainability of food. They are also interested in how advice in this area is communicated to the public.

اور دفتر نائب تحصیلدار سرکل گوگیر باغ تحصیل ساؤتھ سرتیگر  
 مضمون: ججٹی آمدہ از نمبر 17/SGR/PEN/JKSRTC  
 تاریخ: 18-05-2023 اجرائی ڈیپنڈنٹ ایگن ہیر سرٹیفکٹ ایڈمیشن  
 ایشیا ریسرچ اور ایجوکیشن  
 معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان صدر میں ججٹی آمدہ روز ٹرانس پورٹ کارپوریشن سرٹیفکٹ ایڈمیشن کے مطابق  
 مسات جائز کوٹھ سے اپنے مرحوم خاوند کا پتہ حاصل کرتی تھی اور اب مسما سے جانے  
 مور 20-06-2016 کوٹھ ہوئی اور اب متوفی کی ججٹی پتہ حاصل کرنا چاہتی ہے۔ اس ضمن میں  
 پیواری حلقہ سے بھی ریسپورٹ طلب کی گئی جس کے مطابق واقعی متوفی فوت ہو چکی ہے۔ اور کنبہ بذیل  
 افراد پر مشتمل ہے۔  
 نصرت سلطان دختر متوفیہ 38 سال گھریلو کام  
 ریاض احمد پسر متوفیہ 36 سال سیلز مین 5000 آمدنی  
 ذابہ سلطان دختر متوفیہ 32 سال زیر تعلیم  
 اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی افراد کنبہ نہیں بتلا گیا ہے۔ ذابہ سلطان متوفیہ پر ہی انحصار کرتی تھی۔ زیر بحث  
 سرٹیفکٹ اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو حقیقت اجراء کر نہیں کوئی اعتراض ہو تو ساتھوں کے اندر اندر  
 دفتر پڑا کو مطلع کریں۔ بعد از معیا کوئی اعتراض قابل قبول نہ ہوگا۔  
 نائب تحصیلدار گوگیر باغ  
 laa

## SAD DEMISE

With profound grief, we inform the demise of **Ghulam Nabi Khan R/o Shah Jeelan Colony Budshah Nagar Natipora** who left for heavenly abode on Saturday 24th of June, 2023 after brief illness. May Almighty Allah grant Jannat-UI-Firdous to the departed soul.

Congregational **Fateha Khawani** shall be held on **Tuesday 27th of June 2023 at 9:30 AM** at our ancestral graveyard **Kani Devar**, near **Islamia College, Hawal**. Afterwards **dua e majlis** will continue throughout the day at our residence, **Shah Jeelan Colony Budshah Nagar Natipora, Srinagar, In Sha Allah.**

**Bereaved: Bashir A Khan, Shafat Gul Khan, Khalid Gul Khan, Shahnwaz Ahmad Shah, Mir Javed Ahmad**  
 Contact: 9149897979

# Google Meet Getting New Companion Mode Check-In Feature

IANS

Tech giant Google has announced that it is rolling out a new companion mode check-in feature in the video communication service 'Meet'.

"One of the challenges of joining a virtual meeting from a conference room, is that the people in the room are identified by the name of the conference room rather than as individuals," the tech giant said in a Workspace Updates blogpost on Thursday.

However, with the new feature, if someone joins a meeting from a conference room, they can use companion mode on their personal device to check in to that specific room.

Rather than being represented in a meeting just by the conference room users are in, room check-in helps to make sure that everyone in the meeting can see their name and be aware of their



presence. Room check-in will be available by default, but admins can turn this feature off for specific Meet hardware devices or specific users.

Meanwhile, earlier this month, the tech giant was rolling out a new viewer mode in the

video communication service, which allows users to select "Everyone is a viewer" when creating their Calendar invite.

When using Google Meet for large meetings, designating attendees as "viewers" helps reduce potential meeting distractions, like audio disruptions.

## SAD DEMISE






اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّا اِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

With profound grife and sorrow we inform the sad demise of Noora begum wife of late Abdul Rahman panjabi residence Hawal kanidevar near marriage hall who left heavnly abode on saturday 24June 2023 congregational. Fateh khawni will be held on Monday 26 June 2023 at 10. :30am at their ancestral graveyard hawal kanidevar Note ladies are requested not to bring fruit etc with them


**BEREAVED FAMILY**  
 9906833880

inf

## WHY TO USE CRITICAL CARE AMBULANCE

- Early Intervention**
  - Critical care ambulances are equipped with advanced medical equipment and trained medical professionals who can provide early intervention to patients during transit. This early intervention can help to stabilize patients and prevent their condition from deteriorating, thereby reducing the risk of mortality and morbidity.
- Timely Transportation**
  - Critical care ambulances can transport patients to hospitals more quickly and safely than private transport, reducing the time between the onset of the medical emergency and the start of treatment. This can be critical in cases of heart attacks, strokes, or traumatic injuries, where every minute counts.
- Reduced Complications**
  - Patients who receive critical care ambulance services are less likely to experience complications during transit or upon arrival at the hospital. This can result in shorter hospital stays, reduced healthcare costs, and improved patient outcomes.
- Better Coordination**
  - Critical care ambulance services often work closely with local hospitals and emergency medical services (EMS) to ensure that patients receive the appropriate care and treatment. This coordination can help to reduce the risk of medical errors and ensure that patients receive the best possible care.
- Improved Accessibility:**
  - Critical care ambulance services can help to improve the accessibility of healthcare services in remote or underserved areas. This can help to reduce health disparities and improve the overall health of the population.



**9484100200/ 01942310018**

## Preserving Kashmiri Culture & Artistry

### Punjab, TN Gov's Attend Vitasta Cultural Festival Closing Ceremony In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The third and final edition of the esteemed 'Vitasta Cultural Festival' concluded successfully, on Sunday, in the Valley, celebrating culture and various art forms unique to the region of Jammu and Kashmir, and bringing together diverse cultural expressions from various regions of the country.

The grand event concluded on Sunday evening, with a series of cultural programs, including singing, dancing, and various forms of folk art, which took place at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC), located on the banks of Dal Lake in Srinagar.

The Governors of Punjab and Tamil Nadu, Banwarilal Purohit and R. N. Ravi were present as chief guests at the closing ceremony.

On Sunday, the concluding event showcased a remarkable variety of captivating cultural programs, featuring one standout performance by Saurabh Jadu & Group. Their enchanting singing mesmerized the audience and left a profound impression.

Adding to these mesmerizing programs, the audience was enthralled by a special presentation of Tigulbandi,

which beautifully merged Kashmiri instruments like santoor, rabab, and guitar in a harmonious fusion. Moreover, the program was graced by the captivating qawwali performance of Ustad Shafi Sopori, who is renowned for his exceptional musical prowess. Additionally, the Bollywood orchestra delivered a captivating rendition of songs filmed in the scenic locales of Kashmir, further enhancing the overall experience.

On this occasion, Banwarilal Purohit, Governor of Punjab and Chairman of the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala, expressed immense pride in being a part of the ongoing celebration of this festival. Highlighting the significance of this glorious occasion, where diverse cultures from across the country converge in the heavenly land of Kashmir, he said that the festival 'Vitasta' serves as a unifying thread, weaving diverse cultural blooms into a splendid garland.

Purohit extended his heartfelt congratulations to the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, for organizing this grand and folk culture-centric event. Additionally, he lauded the dedicated efforts of Furkan Khan, the diligent director of the North Zone Cultural Centre, for orchestrating this marvel-

ous occasion.

Purohit said, "As the Chairman of the North Zone Cultural Centre, I take immense pride in the trust placed upon us to host this remarkable event. I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Director of the Centre, Furkan Khan, and his dedicated team for the resounding success of this event."

"I am grateful to the Government of India, particularly the Union Ministry of Culture and its officials, for providing us with this valuable opportunity. Additionally, as the Chairman of the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala, I wholeheartedly express my gratitude to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir and the local administration for their unwavering cooperation in organizing this grand cultural extravaganza," he said.

During the event, Governor of Tamil Nadu, RN Ravi of, expressed his thoughts on the significance of Vitasta as a remarkable initiative towards the vision of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' (One India, Great India). He conveyed his immense delight at having attended the inaugural edition of this event when it was held in Tamil Nadu, and he expressed his joy at being present once

again for its conclusion in the enchanting city of Srinagar.

He emphasized the profound spiritual significance of Kashmir, stating that it holds a prominent place as a centre of spirituality. He cited the transformative power of the region, exemplified by historical figures such as Milander, who, even as an invader, underwent a spiritual transformation and became known as Milind.

Governor RN Ravi expressed his belief in the emergence of a new India, where the rich cultural heritage of the nation plays a pivotal role. He enthusiastically announced his commitment to invite artists from Jammu and Kashmir to participate in future cultural festivals held in Tamil Nadu, fostering cultural exchange and collaboration between the two regions.

The event commenced with a warm welcome extended to the esteemed guests, accompanied by the melodious strains of the Wunwan song, a traditional Kashmiri composition. Chief Guest, Mr. BL Purehit, Governor of Punjab, and Guest of Honor, RN Ravi, Governor of Tamil Nadu, were honored with mementos by Uma Nanduri, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Culture.

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**HIGHWAY STATUS**

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



**HIJRI CALENDAR**

07 Zil-Hajj  
1444

PRAYERS	
FAJR	3:36
ZUHR	12:33
ASR	5:33
Magrib	7:50
ISHA	9:31

## Bukhari Greet People On Annual Urs of Shah-e-Hamadan (RA)

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Sunday extended greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Urs of Hazrat Ameer-e-Kabeer, Mir Syed Ali Hamadani (RA), and appealed to them to pray for sustained peace and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir.

In his message, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari said, "On the auspicious occasion of the 658th Urs of Shah-e-Hamadan, I extend my heartiest greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The teachings of Shah-e-Hamadan will forever resonate in our hearts, as his remarkable influence in spreading the Message of Allah in Kashmir, shaping the Valley's culture, and introducing renowned handicraft skills among the people, remains unparalleled."

Mr. Bukhari appealed

to people to pray for the sustained peace and prosperity of Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of the annual Urs of Shah-e-Hamadan (RA).

The Apni Party president urged the administration to ensure all the facilities at Khanqah-i-Moula, Ziyarat of Hazrat Amir-e-Kabir Shah-e-Hamadan (RA) in Srinagar, and other religious places where devotees of Shah-e-Hamdan would come to offer special prayers.

He said, "The revered shrine at Khanqah-i-Moula in Srinagar holds a significant place of faith for the Muslims of Kashmir, serving as an epicenter for their spiritual devotion. It is imperative for the administration to ensure the provision of essential services, particularly transportation facilities, enabling people to conveniently reach the shrine and participate in congregational prayers."(KNS).

## Unidentified Male Body Found In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: An unidentified male body was found in the Shalteng bund area on the outskirts of Srinagar district on Sunday, officials said.

A male body, officials said was fished out from the river Jhelum at Shalteng Bund and that the concerned locals promptly informed the police about it.

Upon receiving the information, a police team reached the spot and took the body to the hospital for medico-legal formalities, they said.

The dead body was recovered from the river Jhelum, but the identification of the deceased is yet to be ascertained. A case has been registered in this direction and further investigation has been initiated, they added.



Two elderly men enjoys evening near a lit-up chinar at trendy Polo-View Market at Residency Road in Srinagar amid intense heat. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

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## This Day In History

- 363 - Roman Emperor Julian is killed during retreat from the Sassanid Empire. General Jovian is proclaimed Emperor by troops on the battlefield.
- 684 - St Benedict II begins his reign as Catholic Pope
- 1409 - Council of Pisa selects Petros Philargi as 3rd Pope: Alexander V
- 1483 - Duke of Gloucester succeeds as King Richard III of England after Parliament declared Edward V illegitimate
- 1498 - Toothbrush invented in China using boar bristles
- 1630 - Swedish troops under Gustaf II Adolf lands at Peenemunde
- 1714- Spain & Netherlands sign peace/trade agreement
- 1794- Battle of Fleurus: major victory by forces of the First French Republic under General Jean-Baptiste Jourdan over the Coalition Army (Great Britain, Hanover, Dutch Republic, and Habsburgs) first use of reconnaissance balloon
- 1843- Hong Kong proclaimed a British Crown Colony.
- 1879- Ismael Pasha resigns as khedive of Egypt
- 1894- Karl Benz of Germany receives US patent for gasoline-driven auto
- 1900- Japan mobilizes 20,000 troops to help put down the Boxer uprising - but also advance long-term interest in gaining land and power in mainland Asia
- 1900- The Russian Tsar orders that Russian must be the official language of Finland, despite growing unrest within Finland and increasing international concern over Russia's behavior there
- 1902- Aga Khan III is appointed Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire
- 1911- Nieuport sets an aircraft speed record of 83 mph (133 kph)
- 1914-The Indian Relief Act, passes after a protracted period of Passive Resistance led by Gandhi; it abolishes a £3 tax imposed on Indians who had not renewed their indentures and recognizes "the validity of Indian customary marriages"
- 1917- 1st US Expeditionary Force arrive in France during WWI
- 1924- After 8 years of occupation, US troops leave Dominican Republic

## From KO Archives

### 'Malnutrition In J&K Lowest In Country'

Observer News Service

**S**RINAGAR- Union Minister of State for Women and child Development Mrs. Renuka Choudhary Monday lauded the state government for achieving distinction in the country in bringing down malnutrition level among children in the state.

"In the entire country we are struggling to lower the level of malnutrition which is telling upon the health and lives of children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers, however, it is heartening that in Jammu and Kashmir the level of malnutrition is on a considerable decline", she added.

Addressing media persons here this afternoon Mrs. Choudhary said that Union Women and Child Development Ministry has approved additional 1500 anganwari centres for Jammu and Kashmir. She said over 13500 anganwari centres have already been approved for the state under first two phases.

She announced two projects of aromatic herbs production and mushroom cultivation for the state, saying it would benefit over 8000 women and give host to the efforts of government for empowerment of women. Five hostels for working women have also been approved by the Union Ministry for Jammu and

Kashmir, she said and added that two out of these have already been completed while other three are under execution.


(Kashmir Observer, 26 June, 2007)

### ASF ENTERPRISES

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# A Sea Of Difference

Media coverage of Titanic-touring sub and migrant boat tragedy reveals deep bias

ANAN TELLO

“  
There is a potential tragedy unfolding with a submarine that is getting minute-to-minute coverage all around the world, and it is understandable because, obviously, we all want and pray that those folks are rescued

LONDON: For much of the past week, international news media audiences had to put up with round-the-clock coverage of an incident whose place in the annals of history is far from assured. For as long as the fate of five people inside Titan, a submersible that was headed to the site of the Titanic shipwreck, remained unknown, major media outlets spared no bulletin slot or expense in getting talking heads to hold forth on the topic.

It did not need an elder statesman of America to point out the scandalous contrast between the intense media coverage of the Titan's doomed journey and the almost cursory attention paid to the deaths of possibly hundreds of people off the coast of Greece just days earlier. Still, when Barack Obama did just that at a public forum in Athens on Thursday, his comments not only struck a responsive chord with the audience but also gave voice to the pent-up frustrations of news consumers worldwide.

“There is a potential tragedy unfolding with a submarine that is getting minute-to-minute coverage all around the world, and it is understandable because, obviously, we all want and pray that those folks are rescued,” the former US president said in the Greek capital, where he was attending a conference on child and adolescent mental health initiatives.

“But the fact that that has gotten so much more attention than 700 people who sank — that is an untenable situation.”

The disaster he was referring to — described as “one of the worst in recent memory” — unfolded far away from the media's gaze in the Central Mediterranean on Tuesday. A fishing vessel carrying an estimated 750 people from Palestine, Syria, Egypt and Pakistan capsized in international



waters off Pylos in southern Greece. According to the UN Human Rights Office, 78 people are confirmed dead while at least 500 more are missing.

The media conversation concerning the tragedy, however, was quickly drowned out by the noise of technical experts and ocean explorers dissecting live on air the search-and-rescue efforts of multiple Western countries to locate the Titan, which was carrying wealthy marine enthusiasts on a tour of the Titanic wreckage off the coast of Newfoundland in Canada before it vanished on Sunday.

“Sadly, the only reason people are talking about the relative lack of attention to the staggering number of migrants and refugees who die all the time on dangerous journeys

is that timing,” Judith Sunderland, associate Europe and Central Asia director at Human Rights Watch, told Arab News. “It happened right after the horrifying shipwreck off the coast of Greece, one of the worst in recent memory.”

Her viewpoint is seconded by Nour Halabi, a University of Aberdeen fellow, who believes that had the Titan not gone missing during the same week that tragedy struck the migrant vessel, Western media outlets' “blasé” attitude might not have been so glaringly evident and “we would not have been having this discussion.”

The “juxtaposition of the two events” has brought to the public's attention “this contrast of ‘worthy’

and ‘unworthy’ victims.” Halabi, the author of “Radical Hospitality,” which examines media coverage of immigration, told Arab News.

While international media outlets went big on close-ups, names and life stories of the five “explorers,” as described by the submersible's operator OceanGate, the world got to see at best blurry images of a mass of migrants in distress as their ship capsized, the latest in a long line of tragedies that have turned the Mediterranean Sea into a veritable graveyard of people fleeing poverty and violence in their home countries

— Arab News

In ‘Dessicated Land - An American in Kashmir’, journalist David Lepeska gathers his best work for Kashmir Observer during 2006-7 to explore the reality of daily life in Kashmir then.

David Lepeska

A two-meter by two-meter slab of pearly white stucco stands alone near the center of a vacant, trash-strewn lot behind a red brick wall across Maulana Azad Road from Regal Chowk. The faux Spanish tile roofing is cracked and falling off, and on one side a golden inscription in black marble reads: “Sri Pratap Singh Library, Foundation Stone, Laid February 27, 2004.”

Zahida Bano, Chief Librarian of the current SPS Library, explained what happened.

“Nothing,” she deadpanned, chatting outside her office last week. “There was some controversy between the builders and the government, apparently costs were higher than they expected, and construction stopped before it started.”

Nearly three years later the stout monument looms over the vast emptiness like an anti-scarecrow, fending off progress and fostering a return to nature. Instead of thrumming with the quest for knowledge the spot festers, silent testament, if any more were needed, to the Valley's intellectual calcification.

“I've been championing, fighting, writing letters and pleading with all and sundry, but nothing is getting done over there,” said Agha Ashraf Ali, former J&K Director of Education and Principal of the College of Education. He had prodded local bureaucrats, politicians, and businessmen not only to restart work on the modern SPS venue but also to add an extension to the children's

## Kashmiris Close The Book

When libraries began dying in Kashmir, educated started reading less

library in the name of his son, the poet Agha Shahid Ali, all to no avail. “Full of large promises and small excuses, they are not interested in books at all,” he said.

In the age of bottomless broadband Internet and 2000-channel satellite television, reading may be on the wane across the globe. But in Kashmir the problem is especially acute, and the stakes particularly high. From Mughals to Dogras to Indians, Kashmiris have for centuries been under one or another oppressive yoke; an unwillingness to read could fate them to remain there.

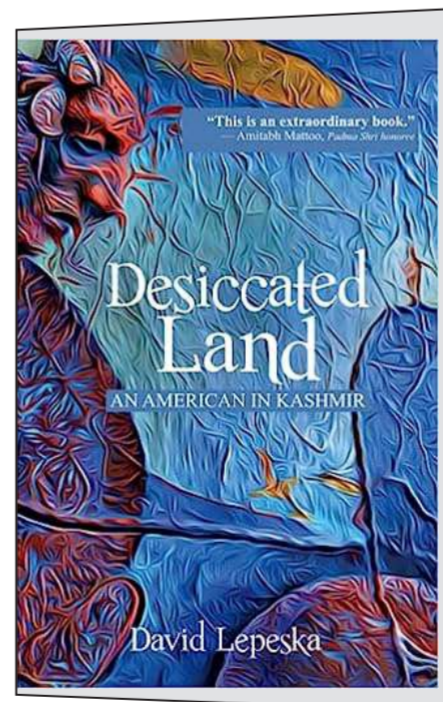
“Without a library there's no university, there's no thought, there's no progress,” Agha added. “Libraries and universities, these things are on the frontier of thought, where you can move forward and ask inconvenient questions; this is an absolutely dead society, afraid of asking questions.”

Indeed, the saddest truth may not be that the library has not yet been built, but that locals don't seem to care. The Deputy Director of Libraries admitted the situation had grown dire.

“Many people are less interested in reading,” acknowledged Kuldeep Singh, who was transferred into his new post from the Social Welfare Department last month. He cited electronic media and an increasing lack of time, particularly among wealthier, more sophisticated Kashmiris. “The educated people are reading less, not more, even though it should be the other way around.”

Comparing the latest borrowing estimates with historical data revealed a steep decline. The Directorate of Libraries said SPS Library has averaged 1000 visitors and 350-400 borrowers per month this year. Bano, who works at the site every day, estimated that members borrowed around 70-80 books monthly, or one-fifth the directorate's estimate.

According to Dr. Sangita Gupta and Dr. Gurdev Singh, professors of library science at the University of Jammu and authors of the new report “Public Library System in J&K State”, SPS Library loaned out 10,185 books from April



1945 to April 1946. Stretched over a year, the directorate's 2006 estimate would come to much less than half that and Bano's on-site numbers would be just under one-tenth. Yet the population of Srinagar has doubled in the last 60 years, which means book borrowing has dropped as much as 95 percent in that span.

Prodded by such data, Kashmir Observer undertook an informal survey of passersby on Residency Road and found that about one out of every ten local adults had read an entire book in the last six months. Unemployed engineering graduate Javed Dhar, 27, was representative of those polled.

“I'm online all the time and just not very interested in reading,” he said, stopping on the way to meet a friend for lunch. “I'm really busy, too

busy...and in terms of books these days. I have no idea which ones would be good.”

Detailing a litany of problems in the J&K library system, Gupta and Singh argue that locals should not shoulder all of the blame.

“The collection developed in the public libraries so far is... not relevant to the tastes of the public,” they wrote. “[Book] selection is done at a higher level, and the requirement of users of the particular library is not taken into consideration. The librarian is not consulted...this leads to less use of library reading material.”

“The condition of these libraries is unsatisfactory and very poor,” the authors continued, explaining that professional service is absent, the infrastructure nominal, the locations odd and unpopular, and that all the libraries “are lacking the requisite reading facilities; the reading space is insufficient and the requisite furniture is inadequate.”

Finally, Gupta and Singh pointed out that, like current Deputy Director Singh, most library officials are appointed from within the state administrative cadre. “In the history of public libraries, no subject expert has been appointed as Director of the Public Libraries and Research in the state,” said their report.

These findings are borne out at SPS Library, which lies tucked away behind the State Museum across from the Jhelum. Although the front reading room is bright, airy, and attractive, in two back rooms thousands of volumes fester in dusty cases surrounded by neglected, brilliantly colored papier-mache walls.

Chief Librarian Bano acknowledged the 1896 building was in need of cleaning and repair, but more than the structure has suffered. A few of the glass-fronted bookcases had been left unlocked, and a recent visitor found that many of the texts inside were fragile and of little use. Upon opening, several pages fell out of a faded, red-bound 1927 hardcover of Dostoyevsky's Poor Folk. A bright green 1950's Penguin Edition of Dickens' Our Mutual Friend was sticky and unwilling.

“I used to check out Carlisle, Rousseau, the lives of Napoleon and all that from SPS, books for my father,” Agha recalled. “Now fifty, sixty years after independence, when money has been coming into Kashmir in cataracts, the library has gone to the dogs. You can't find any books at all, anything that has been released in the last few years is not available here.”

— This excerpt from David Lepeska's ‘Dessicated Land - An American in Kashmir’, has been published with permission from Vishwakarma Publications.

## Surrounded By Mob In Manipur, Army Frees Militants To Save Locals' Lives



**Imphal, Kolkata:** After a stand-off between a mob led by women and security forces that had cordoned off Itham village in Imphal East where a dozen members of militant group KYKL were hiding, the Army took "a mature decision" to not risk civilian lives and left with seized weapons and ammunition, officials said on Sunday.

The Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL), a Meitei militant group, was involved in a number of attacks, including the ambush of a 6 Dogra unit in 2015, they said.

Acting on specific intelligence, operation was launched in Village Itham (06 km East of Andro) in Imphal East by Security Forces today morning. Specific search after laying cordon was... pic.twitter.com/7ZH9jp8n0l

The stand-off in Itham went on throughout Saturday, and ended after a "mature decision by the operational commander keeping in view the sensitivity of use of kinetic force against large irate mob led by women and likely casualties due to such action", they added.

Among those holed up in the village was self-styled Lt Col Moirangthem Tamba alias Utam, a wanted terrorist who may

have been the mastermind of the Dogra ambush tragedy, officials said.

The 1,500-strong mob led by women surrounded the Army column and prevented forces from going ahead with the operation, they said.

"Repeated appeals to the aggressive mob to let the security forces carry on with operation as per law did not yield any positive result," officials said.

The Army's decision to leave was taken, keeping in mind the need to "avoid any collateral damage during the ongoing unrest in Manipur".

More than 100 people have lost their lives in the ethnic violence between Meitei and Kuki communities in the northeastern state so far.

Clashes first broke out on May 3 after a Tribal Solidarity March was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal Valley. Tribals -- Nagas and Kukis -- constitute another 40 per cent of the population and reside in the hill districts.

## Russia Coup Attempt Fails, Mercenary Chief Halts Tank Advance On Moscow

Agencies

**Moscow:** The Wagner paramilitary group halted its march on Moscow on Saturday, after Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko brokered a deal between Russian President Vladimir Putin and the rebels, averting an armed confrontation that threatened to plunge the country into civil war.

Yevgeny Prigozhin, the leader of Russian mercenary group Wagner, told his forces to immediately halt their advance on Moscow and return to their camps as fears of a possible violent power struggle gripped the country.

"We are turning our columns around and going back to the field camps according to our plan," Prigozhin said in a short, fiery audio message posted to Telegram on June 24.

In his statement, Prigozhin boasted that his troops -- which he claimed numbered 25,000 -- had come within 200 kilometers of Moscow without spilling any blood, a possible hint to the Kremlin of his support within elements of the nation's security structures. Earlier, Moscow deployed soldiers in preparation for their arrival and told residents to avoid going out.

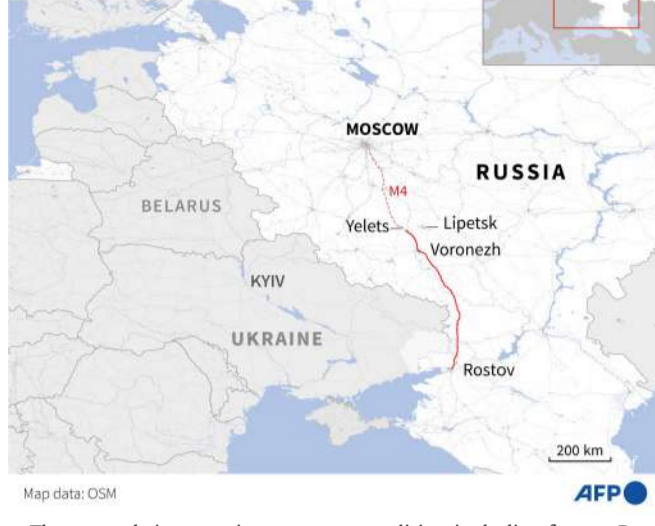
The Kremlin later confirmed that it had struck a deal with Prigozhin to end the insurrection, saying the mercenary leader will move to Belarus and have all charges dropped against him while his Wagner group will now come under the direct control of the Russian military.

Belarusian strongman Alyaksandr Lukashenko helped mediate the deal, the Kremlin said.

The insurrection heralded the most serious challenge to President Vladimir Putin's more than two-decade hold on power, and though it appears to be over for now, it has left the authoritarian Russian leader weakened and vulnerable, experts say.

In a sign of the gravity of the situation earlier in the day, Putin addressed the nation, saying in televised remarks that he would do "everything to protect the country. He also called the leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkey to inform them of the situation.

### Rebel Wagner rebels advance towards Moscow



The armed insurrection, unprecedented in post-Soviet Russia, put other nations on alert, with U.S. President Joe Biden contacting his counterparts in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

Putin must now contend with the ramifications of the mutiny as Ukraine pushes ahead with its large-scale counteroffensive, a crucial endeavor that could shape the course of the conflict, including further opening the spigot of lethal Western military aid.

Prigozhin's forces swept into Rostov-on-Don in Russia's south in the early morning hours of June 24 where they easily seized key infrastructure before racing in convoy through the country, transporting tanks and armoured trucks and smashing through barricades before moving north toward Moscow with little resistance, shocking the country and the world.

"In 24 hours we got to within 200 km of Moscow. In this time we did not spill a single drop of our fighters' blood," Prigozhin, dressed in full combat uniform at an undisclosed location, said in a video.

Putin called his actions a "mutiny" and said he would take "decisive action" to stabilize the situation. The Russian military reportedly fired on the Wagner forces at one point as they made their way along the highway toward Moscow.

Top Russian officials and per-

sonalities, including former President Dmitry Medvedev, Russian Orthodox Church head Patriarch Kirill, and Russian State Duma head Vyacheslav Volodin echoed Putin's call for Russian citizens to rally and for Wagner troops to halt the insurrection.

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, a close Putin ally who has headed the republic in Russia's North Caucasus region since 2007, said he was going to deploy Chechen troops to "preserve Russia's unity and protect its statehood."

### 'Personal Ambition'

The Russian leader said that Prigozhin had "betrayed" his country out of "personal ambition."

In a televised address from the Kremlin, Putin said the Wagner rebellion put Russia's very existence under threat.

"We are fighting for the lives and security of our people, for our sovereignty and independence, for the right to remain Russia, a state with a thousand-year history," Putin said, vowing punishment for those who "prepared an armed insurrection".

Prigozhin responded promptly to Putin's allegations of betrayal, saying in an audio message that the Russian president was "deeply mistaken" and that he and his forces "are patriots of the motherland."

## Israeli settlers' rampage against Palestinian villages continues for fifth day

Agencies

Israeli settler gangs on Sunday morning burned crops in the Palestinian town of Turmusaya, north of Ramallah, only days after the village was subjected to a rampage that left at least 30 houses and 70 vehicles on fire.

More than 400 settlers stormed the village on Wednesday under the protection of the Israeli army, killing one Palestinian, Omar Jabara Abu Al-Qattin, 25.

Israeli settler attacks on Palestinian villages are increasingly a regular occurrence for West Bank residents. On Saturday, dozens of settlers swept through several West Bank villages attacking Palestinian homes in scenes that have been described as an organised "pogrom".

Several dozen settlers rampaged through the village of Umm Safa, in the occupied West Bank, terrorising Palestinian residents.

Video footage of the attack has surfaced online showing roving gangs of settlers firing bullets towards Palestinian houses.

The latest attack marks the fifth consecutive day of vigilante attacks against Palestinian villages in the West Bank.

Palestinian media outlet Arab48 said that at least 10 houses were destroyed in Umm Safa and seven vehicles.

The settlers carried out the attacks with the protection of the Israeli army, according to Palestine TV journalist Mohammed Radhi.

An off-duty Israeli soldier was one of four suspects detained following the attack on Umm Safa.

Following the latest attack, the Israeli military chief Herzi Halevi, the head of the Israeli intelligence at Shin Bet, Ronen Bar, and Israeli Police Commissioner Kobi Shabtai issued a joint statement strongly condemning the recent string of settler attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank, branding them as "nationalist terrorism in the full sense of the term".

The Israeli military has admitted to having "failed" to stop other settler riots in recent days.

Israeli settlers also attacked the electricity grid, causing a blackout in several Palestinian villages including Umm Safa, Deir Sudan, Ajjoul and Attarah.

Spiralling violence Separately on Saturday, a Palestinian teenager was left bleeding to death after being shot by Israeli forces at a military checkpoint at Qalandia, a village between Jerusalem and Ramallah.

Ishaq Hamdi Ajlouni, 17, was shot and killed by Israeli forces after he opened fire, lightly wounding a security guard.

Violence has engulfed the West Bank this past week following Israel's raids on the Jenin refugee camp on Monday that left seven Palestinians dead.

The raids were followed by an attack on Tuesday by two Palestinian gunmen that left four Israeli settlers dead. Israel continued to ratchet up tensions when on Wednesday it carried out its first drone strike in the West Bank in almost 20 years, leaving three Palestinians dead.

Last year, faced with an increase of armed resistance in the West Bank, Israel publicly initiated the Break the Wave campaign, enabling near-daily military raids across the West Bank and an escalation in Israel's shoot-to-kill policy, resulting in mass arrests and the deadliest year for Palestinians in the occupied territories since the Second Intifada two decades ago.

Since the start of this year, Israeli forces and settlers have killed at least 171 Palestinians, including 26 children. A total of 135 fatalities have been recorded in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and a further 36 in the Gaza Strip. In the same period, Palestinians have killed at least 24 Israelis.

## Internet Ban In Manipur Extended Till June 30



Agencies

**Imphal:** The Manipur government on Sunday extended the ban on internet services in the state for five more days to prevent any disturbances of peace and public order.

According to an official release, the ban on internet services in the Northeast state, which has been racked by ethnic clashes and violence, has been extended till 3 pm on June 30 to "prevent any disturbances of peace and public order in the jurisdiction of the State of Manipur".

The government release informed further that the ban on mobile internet services in the state was extended due to the "persisting unrest".

Director General of Police, Manipur vide letter No.IC/11(163)/2008-PHQ(Pt) dated 24-06-2023 reported that there are still reports of incidents of violence, attacks and arson of houses and premises including exchange of firing," the release stated.

"There is apprehension that some anti-social elements might use social media extensively for the transmission of images, hate speech and hate video messages inciting the passions of the pub-

lic which might have serious repercussions for the law and order situation in the State of Manipur," it added.

This is the third straight extension of the ban on internet services in the state.

Earlier, on May 3, the Manipur government suspended mobile internet services in the state, amid the spiralling ethnic violence, and the ban has remained in force ever since.

The government extended the ban on June 11, till June 15, and then again, for five more days, from June 20 to June 25.

Manipur has been in the throes of ethnic violence for a month, in the wake of a directive of the high court asking the state government to consider including the Meitei community in the list of Scheduled Tribes (STs).

The Centre had to deploy paramilitary forces as violence escalated in the Northeast state.

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Violence gripped Manipur on May 3 after clashes erupted during a rally organised by the All Tribals Students Union (ATSU) to protest against the demand for the inclusion of Meiteis in the list of Scheduled Tribes (STs).

## India, Egypt Sign Deal To Elevate Relations To "Strategic Partnership"

**Cairo:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday held a meeting with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi during which they signed an agreement to elevate the bilateral relationship to a "Strategic Partnership".

Both the leaders discussed ways to further deepen the partnership between the two nations, including in trade, investment, defence, security, renewable energy, cultural and people-to-people ties.

The two sides signed an agreement to elevate the bilateral partnership to a "strategic partnership." In addition, three Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) in the fields of agriculture, archaeology and antiquities and competition law were also signed between India and Egypt.

Ministry of External Affairs official spokesperson Arindam Bagchi tweeted, "PM @narendramodi held a productive meeting with President @AlSisiOfficial in Cairo on 25 June 2023. The leaders discussed ways to further deepen the partnership between the two countries, including in trade & investment, defence & security, renewable energy, cultural and people to people ties."



An agreement to elevate the bilateral relationship to a "Strategic Partnership" was signed by the leaders. Three MoUs in the fields of Agriculture, Archaeology & Antiquities and Competition Law were also signed.

Earlier, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi conferred PM Modi with the highest state honour of Egypt, the 'Order of Nile'. Arindam Bagchi tweeted, "A mark of abiding friendship between & ! PM @narendramodi was conferred with the highest civilian honour of Egypt, the 'Order of the Nile', by President @AlSisiOfficial

in Cairo on 25 June 2023."

PM Modi also visited the Al-Hakim Mosque in Cairo. Taking to Twitter, PM Modi said, "Honored to visit the historic Al-Hakim Mosque in Cairo. It's a profound testament to Egypt's rich heritage and culture."

After visiting the Al-Hakim Mosque, PM Modi, who arrived in Cairo on Saturday, went to Heliopolis War Cemetery and paid tribute to the Indian soldiers who made supreme sacrifices during the First World War. PM Modi is on a state visit to Egypt from June 24-25.

Mufti said. He said he had earlier met PM Modi at one of the Sufi conferences in Delhi.

"Between the two meetings, I have noticed that there is a great development in India. It reflects that he is continuously working in India. It also reflects the wise policies being adopted by Prime Minister Modi bringing co-existence between various factions in India," he said.

### NEWS MAKERS

## PM Modi Meets Egypt's Grand Mufti, Discusses Religious Harmony, Extremism

Agencies

**Cairo:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday met the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Shawky Ibrahim Abdel-Karim Allam, and discussed issues related to promoting social harmony and countering extremism and radicalisation. On a two-day state visit to Egypt, the Prime Minister apprised the Grand Mufti

that India would set up a Centre of Excellence in IT at the Dar-al-Ifta - an Egyptian advisory body for Islamic legal research - under the Ministry of Social Justice of Egypt.

"They discussed the strong cultural & people to people relations between India and Egypt. Discussions also focused on issues related to social and religious harmony in society and countering

extremism and radicalisation," External Affairs Ministry spokesman Arindam Bagchi said. He said the Grand Mufti appreciated the Prime Minister's leadership in fostering inclusivity and pluralism.

"I was honoured to meet Prime Minister Modi. It was a very nice and interesting meeting. In fact, he reflects a wise leadership for a big country like India," the Grand

## PM Modi Visits Egypt's Historic 11th-Century Al-Hakim Mosque In Cairo

**Cairo:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday visited Egypt's historic 11th-century Al-Hakim Mosque in Cairo, restored with the help of India's Dawoodi Bohra community. On the second day of his state visit to Egypt, Prime Minister Modi was shown around the mosque whose latest restoration was completed about three months ago.

The mosque mainly performs Friday prayers and all five obligatory prayers. The Prime Minister

was seen appreciating the intricately carved inscriptions on the walls and doorways of the mosque which was built in 1012.

Over a thousand years old, al-Hakim is the fourth oldest mosque in Cairo and the second Fatimid mosque to be built in the city. The mosque covers an area of 13,560 square metres, with the iconic central courtyard occupying 5,000 square metres. The Bohra community, which is settled in India,

originated from the Fatimids. They renovated the mosque from 1970 onwards and have been maintaining it since then, he told PTI.

"The Prime Minister has a very close attachment to the Bohra community who have also been in Gujarat for many years and it will be an occasion for him to again visit a very important religious site for the Bohra community," India's Ambassador to Egypt Ajit Gupte earlier said.





### Woman swallows 59 capsules containing cocaine worth Rs 11 crore; caught at Delhi airport



Agenceis

New Delhi: A woman from Guinea-Bissau has been arrested for smuggling in cocaine worth Rs 11 crore at the international airport here, a statement issued on Sunday by the customs said.

The passenger was intercepted after her arrival from Ethiopia's Addis Ababa on June

18, it said.

During investigation, it was found that she had swallowed 59 capsules containing the narcotic. The passenger was taken to a local hospital where she was made to regurgitate the capsules, leading to recovery of 724 grams of cocaine.

The woman has been arrested and cocaine has been seized, the agency said.

### 56-Year-Old Millionaire Fails China's Toughest Exam For 27th Time

Agenceis

China: After failing to achieve a high enough score on China's dreaded college entry exam for the 27th time, 56-year-old Liang Shi is beginning to wonder if he will ever make it to his dream university.

Mr Shi, a self-made millionaire, has taken the gruelling "gaokao" exam dozens of times over the past four decades, hoping to earn a place at top-tier Sichuan University and fulfil his ambition of becoming "an intellectual".

By most measures, Liang has had a successful life -- he worked his way up from a menial job on a factory floor to establishing his own construction materials business, making millions of yuan in the process, but his university dreams have so far eluded him.

In his quest for a prestigious higher education, he has put in 12-hour study days, abstained from drinking and playing mah-jong, and endured the media mocking him as the "gaokao holdout", as well as online suspicion that it is all a publicity stunt.

But despite months of living like "an ascetic monk", this year Liang was 34 points short of the provincial baseline for getting into any university.

"Before I got the result, I had a



feeling that I wouldn't be able to get a high enough score to enter an elite university," he told AFP.

"But I didn't expect to not make it into the ordinary ones."

Shortly before 10 pm Friday -- along with hundreds of thousands of high-school students across southwestern Sichuan province -- the grey-haired businessman carefully typed in his exam identification information and nervously waited to find out how he'd done.

Several local media reporters live streaming the scene were also avidly checking for updates -- and from their disappointed expressions, Liang knew before he even saw the screen himself that the result was not ideal.

"It's all done for again this year," he said to himself. "It's very regrettable."

In the past, Liang's repeated misses failed to deter him.

Every time he fell short, he vowed to try again the next year.

Now, for the first time in decades, he is wondering if his hard work will ever lead to anything.

"If I truly can't see much hope for improvement, there is no point doing it again. I really did work very hard every day," he said tiredly.

"It's hard to say whether I will keep on preparing for the gaokao next year," he admitted.

But a life without gaokao preparation is almost unthinkable to him.

### US Airport Worker Gets Sucked Into Plane Engine, Dies

Agenceis

Washington: US regulators said Sunday they are investigating an incident in which a Texas airport worker was killed after being sucked into a passenger plane engine.

A Delta flight had arrived in San Antonio, Texas from Los Angeles on Friday night and was taxiing to the gate with one engine on "when a worker was ingested into that engine," the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) told AFP in a statement.

"The NTSB is continuing to gather information about the event," it said.

The worker was employed by Unifi Aviation, a company the airline giant contracts with for ground crew operations, according to local media. Delta told San Antonio broadcaster KENS 5 that the

company was "deeply saddened" by Friday night's events and that it is "cooperating with authorities as they begin their investigation."

Unifi Aviation told the broadcaster the incident was "a tragic accident."

"From our initial investigation, this incident was unrelated to Unifi's operational processes, safety procedures and policies," the company said.

On Wednesday, regional carrier Piedmont Airlines was fined \$15,625 by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), another regulatory body, for the death of a ground crew worker last year in a similar incident.

"Proper training and enforcement of safety procedures could have prevented this tragedy," an OSHA official said.

Piedmont is a subsidiary of carrier American Airlines.



Quick eats for busy people

# Chicken Crispy Burger

JK BANK LAWNS, NEAR GHAT 6, BOULEVARD-SRINAGAR