

'PRASAD, PONY AND PALKIS'

How Kashmiri Muslims Put Hands & Hearts In Annual Amarnath Yatra

Press Trust Of India

Batal: The annual Amarnath Yatra to the holy cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas has been a shining example of Hindu-Muslim bonhomie as the local population has not only welcomed, but assisted the hundreds and thousands of Shiva devotees in their arduous journey of faith.

The support of the local Muslims has been instrumental for a smooth conduct of the



PIX: ABID BHAT

pilgrimage year after year, irrespective of the political atmosphere or security scenario in the rest of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Muslims put up tents for the yatrists to stay, provide palanquins and pony services for those devotees who cannot undertake the difficult trek to the 3,888-metre-high cave shrine housing a naturally formed ice-lingam -- the edifice of Lord Shiva. And they are also the first responders in case of any emergency.

The services have more to do with keeping the traditional communal harmony alive than the economic aspects.

"The necessary arrangements and other things that we need are taken care of by our Muslim brothers. From cleanliness to the 'prasad', pony, palakis -- all the help is rendered by local Muslims. This brotherhood is an example for the world. I have not witnessed a better example of brotherhood than this anywhere else and

I travel across India," Sadhu Nagaraj, here for the yatra, said. A local who works as a caretaker for the belongings of the pilgrims said they provide their services for free because of the age-old brotherhood.

"We come here for the yatrists. We keep their bags, cameras, mobile phones here and take care of those for free. This is our brotherhood. We are keeping Kashmiriyat alive," he said. Expressing satisfaction over the support of **More on P6**

4 Killed As Vehicle Falls Into Rajouri Gorge

Press Trust of India

Jammu: Four people died and eight sustained critical injuries when their vehicle skidded off a road and rolled down a deep gorge in Rajouri district in the early hours of Wednesday, officials said.

The accident took place in the Thanamandi subdivision when the car was on its way to Bhangai village from Poonch, where the victims had gone to attend a funeral, they said.

The officials said the driver of the vehicle lost control over it on the Thanamandi Bhangai road, hardly a few hundred metres from its destination.

"Twelve passengers in total were travelling in the vehicle at the time of the accident. All were rescued by locals and police and taken to the sub-district hospital in Thanamandi where four of them were declared brought dead," a police official said.

The deceased were identified as Shamim Akhtar (55), Rubina Kouser (35), Zarina Begum and Mohammad Younis (38), all residents of Bhangai.

Sub-Divisional Police Officer Thanamandi Imtiaz Ahmed said the injured have been referred to the GMC **More on P6**

SC's Hearing On Art-370 Likely In August

Agencies

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday indicated that it is likely to start hearing petitions challenging the abrogation of Article 370 and bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union territories in August.

The top court, however, did not mention the date of hearing, though as per the cause list, the cases were listed for July 11.

Justice BR Gavai was hearing the plea filed by activist Teesta Setalvad when senior advocate Kapil Sibal suggested that the hearing in her petition may be scheduled in August. Justice Gavai then said that in August, the apex court will hear pleas relating to Article 370.

"It will be too late because we will begin hearing the challenge against Article 370," Justice Gavai said.

To this, Sibal said the hearing in the Article 370 case was supposed to begin on July 11.

"That (July 11) is only for directions. Tentatively, we will be starting in August," Justice Gavai told Sibal.

As per the cause list, the matters are listed "for directions" on July 11. It means on July 11, the five-judge Constitution bench will pass direction on the completion of the procedural formalities, such as the filing of the documents and submissions, setting out the order of arguments and allocation of time. A bench of Chief **More on P6**

ADGP Calls For 'Precision' Based Anti-Militancy Ops

Reviews Security Situation In South Kashmir

Observer News Service

Srinagar: ADGP Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, on Tuesday visited twin districts of South Kashmir's Shopian and Pulwama to conduct security review meetings at the District Police Headquarters.

The meeting at Shopian was attended by DIG South Kashmir Range Rayees Ahmad Bhat, SSP Shopian, CO CRPF 14 Bn and other officers. During the meeting, SSP Shopian did a briefing on the modified joint area domination and zero militancy plan.

"ADGP Kashmir directed the SSP and other officers to focus on gathering **More on P6**

Mental Ailments, Drug Addiction In J&K Up Post-Covid: LG

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir's Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Wednesday said post Coronavirus pandemic in the Union Territory, the mental ailment and drug addiction related cases have shown a spurt.

He, however, extended all-out support to the Health and Medical Education (H&ME) department and Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS) for addressing both the issues effectively.

Addressing the Health Conclave at SKICC here on Wednesday, the LG said that in the past three to four years, health care has changed a lot right from primary to district level.

"Patient care has improved and massive health care related infrastructure has been set up across the UT," he said. "New technological tools have been introduced that saves time and helps the doctors ensure best possible treatment



PIX: ABID BHAT

to the patients."

The LG said that as per the study done by the IMHANS Srinagar, post Covid-19 pandemic, mental ailments that include common mental disorders, severe mental disorders and drug addiction among youth has shown a surge.

"The UT administration

extends its full support to the H&ME, IMHANS and doctors to pull out the youth from anxiety and the vicious cycle of drug abuse," he said.

He urged the H&ME department to launch massive awareness campaigns at Pachayat levels about ways and means of preventing **More on P6**

Launches India's First Tele-MANAS Chat-Bot

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday launched India's first Tele-MANAS chat-bot in the Union Territory, which will ensure round the clock services of health counsellors, clinical psychologists and consultants, officials said. The service was launched after Sinha inaugurated 'J-K Health Conclave' on mental health and non-communicable diseases at SKICC here, they said. On the occasion, the J-K Health and Medical Education Department inked memorandums of understanding (MoUs)

with Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Centre and NIMHANS, the officials said.

The Centre had in Budget 2022 announced the National Tele Mental Health Programme of India, Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele-MANAS). Tele-MANAS is a two-tier system. Tier 1 comprises State Tele MANAS cells, which includes trained counsellors and mental health specialists. Tier 2 comprises specialists at District Mental Health Programme (DMHP)/ Medical College resources for physical **More on P6**

Sex Racket Busted, Six Arrested

Srinagar: Police on Wednesday claimed to have busted a sex racket in north Kashmir's Baramulla district by arresting six accused, including two women.

Acting on information about the immoral activities being carried out in a rented house near Bus Stand Baramulla, a police team led by Station House Officer (SHO) carried out a raid and busted the prostitution racket, a police spokesperson said Wednesday.

The racket, he said, was run by a tenant Lateef Ahmad Chechi of Malangam Bandipora.

Besides Chechi, Altaf Ahmad Dar of Kralhar Baramulla, Khurshid Ahmad Chechi of Malangam **More on P6**

'Prolonged Suspension Amounts To Punishment' SC Upholds HC Order On Ex-Jail Superintendent

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The Supreme Court has upheld an order by High Court of J&K and Ladakh, dismissing in August last year an appeal filed by the government against an order by Central Administrative Tribunal which had set aside J&K Home Department's February 2018 order by virtue of which former Superintendent of central jail Srinagar, Hilal Ahmad Rather, was placed under suspension.

The case had genesis to the escape of Lashker-e-Taiba commander Naveed Jatt alias Abu Hanzalla from SMHS hospital here in February 2018. Hanzalla, according to police, was later killed in an encounter in Budgam district in June same year.

"We are not inclined to interfere with the impugned judgment and order passed by the High Court," a bench of Justice J.B. Pardiwala and Justice Manoj

Misra said while dismissing a special leave petition filed by the J&K government.

On August 24 last year, the high court had held that suspension of an employee is not a punishment but once it is prolonged then it amounts to the same due to "very strong stigmatic social connotations."

The court had made the observation while dismissing an appeal filed by the government against an order by Central Administrative Tribunal on April 27 last year. The CAT had passed the order on a plea by Hilal, contending therein that

as per the prescribed procedure, the order of suspension was required to be followed by a memorandum of charge or charge sheet against him and in case any inquiry was required to be conducted, the same had to be done "expeditiously".

He had also **More on P6**



A farmer dries mulberry cocoons inside his farm in Srinagar outskirts on a hot Wednesday afternoon. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

SHORT TAKES

Two JKAS Officers Shifted

The Union Territory government on Wednesday transferred two Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service Officers (JKAS) in the interest of the administration. According to a government order, Director General, Industries and Commerce, Jammu, Anoo Malhotra has been transferred and posted as Secretary in the Social Welfare Department. The order adds that Kishore Singh Chib, JKAS, Special Secretary to the Government, Planning, **More on P6**

Houses Of Six Militants Raided

The Special Investigation Unit of the Jammu and Kashmir Police on Wednesday raided houses of six militants at various places in Kishtwar district in connection with a terror funding case, officials said. "The SIU of Kishtwar Police again carried out raids at multiple locations in Kishtwar District in the house of militants who are operating from Pck and Paskistan," SSP Kishtwar Khalil Poswal said. The raids were conducted by six SIU teams in an Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act **More on P6**

Militant Aide Held In Baramulla

A militant associate of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) outfit was arrested in the Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said on Wednesday. On a specific information regarding the movement of militants in village Nowpora Jageer in the Kreeri area of the north Kashmir district, security forces launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) there, a police spokesperson said. During the search, a suspected person tried to flee after noticing **More on P6**

Man Dies Of Electrocution

A man died on Wednesday after receiving an electric shock at his home in Soibugh village of Central Kashmir's Budgam district Firdous Ahmad Malik was repairing a water motor inside his home in Gur Mohalla Soibugh on Wednesday when he received an electric shock, reports said. Malik sustained serious injuries due to the electrocution. He was removed by his family and neighbours to the SKIMS, Bemina for treatment. However, he succumbed to injuries during the treatment.

Cab Rolls Into Gorge, 1 Killed

A man was killed and another injured in a road mishap in Banihal of Ramban district this afternoon, officials said. Quoting officials, news agency GNS reported that a Sumo vehicle bearing registration number JK03D 4140 rolled down into a gorge in Khari area, resulting in on spot death of an occupant and injuries to another. The injured person was rescued and taken to a nearby health facility for treatment. A police official confirming it said that they have taken cognisance of the Incident.

Girl Slips To Death



A young girl drowned to death on Wednesday after slipping into a Nallah in Kangan area of Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. 12-year-old Naziya, daughter of Imran Ahmad Raina of Babanagri slipped into the Nallah near Waniarm Wangath on Wednesday following which a rescue operation was launched, an official said. He said that after hectic efforts, **More on P6**



If Companies Want To Stop Quiet Quitting They Need To Take Burnout Seriously



There are signs that some workplaces are serious about addressing the root causes of burnout. They are concerned with reducing workload. For instance, they can offer prolonged, or even unlimited, paid leave. They can provide more days off to allow employees to recharge.

The Conversation

In 2023, between a quarter and a third of Canadians are feeling burned out. Burnout has not declined compared to last year. A full 36 per cent of employees are more burned out now than last year.

If you aren't burned out, it may well be because you did some quiet quitting to keep work at bay. Most workplaces haven't changed their workload or how work is done, although there are a growing number of exceptions.

My research focuses on organizational governance. I study organizations and employees' experiences of their workplaces. Last summer, I wrote about how employee burnout remained high in Canada and discussed how it could be addressed. I cautioned that often, workplaces hold employees responsible for managing burnout.

However, addressing the root causes of burnout requires workplaces to examine the workload and expectations they place on employees. How can workplaces change their approach to burnout? Are they now more concerned with handling the root causes of burnout? Burnout and quiet quitting According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, burnout includes a variety of symptoms from being emotionally depleted to detachment and cynicism to a sense of low personal accomplishment and depersonalization — the feeling that work does not belong to oneself.

The fact that burnout hasn't decreased suggests that organizations have not addressed its root causes. Instead, employees have taken matters into their own hands and done some quiet quitting.

Quiet quitting refers to doing what our job requires and nothing more. Gone are the days of overwork and constant availability. According to a 2023 Gallup report, most employees around the world are quiet quitting. Because employees who quiet quit may set better boundaries around their work, quiet quitting enables them to prevent burnout.

The fact that many employees have resorted to quiet quitting suggests



My research focuses on organizational governance. I study organizations and employees' experiences of their workplaces. Last summer, I wrote about how employee burnout remained high in Canada and discussed how it could be addressed. I cautioned that often, workplaces hold employees responsible for managing burnout.

workplaces are not addressing or taking burnout seriously enough.

As a result, work remains the primary source of stress for Canadians. We have too much work, work in organizational cultures that are too toxic and don't feel supported enough.

Not surprisingly then, a recent survey found one third of Canadians have

left a job due to burnout. One in four businesses in Canada have had challenges with employee retention.

How workplaces can address burnout

Employers need to revisit the workload they place on their employees. They should consider how realistic it is for employees to complete their work within the required time frame.

They also need to address their culture and question how it can be toxic, notably concerning how work is done, and how toxicity can be addressed.

Finally, organizational leaders need to listen to their employees and set a tone that is supportive, shows empathy and is not merely rhetoric. Words have to be followed by actions to ensure the work environment fits the needs of employees.

Paying employees more isn't sufficient. Having a good work-life balance is often more important than higher salaries.

There are signs that some workplaces are serious about addressing the root causes of burnout. They are concerned with reducing workload. For instance, they can offer prolonged, or even unlimited, paid leave. They can provide more days off to allow employees to recharge.

A growing number of businesses are also embracing four-day work weeks as a way of boosting employee morale. Other workplaces give their employees the flexibility to work onsite and remotely.

Flexibility is essential for employees who also shoulder care work. Care work in many households is still done by women more than men. Women with young children take time away from their paid work for family responsibilities and miss more than twice as many days at work than men, leaving many mothers drained.

More than one third of working mothers in Canada say it is difficult for them to arrange child care. Mothers are about 20 per cent more likely than fathers to consider leaving their job because they struggle to find child care.

Employees need accommodating and flexible workplaces that understand their needs. Workplaces need to be mindful of that flexibility and should not view employees who seek it as less reliable than those who can work in offices for longer hours.

Resolve Water Crisis Syed Pora Rainawari Residents Urges Admin

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Residents of Khawaja Pora, Syed Pora at Rainawari area in the old city have been facing a severe water crisis for the last more than one month.

The aggrieved residents said there is a severe short-

age in our area has gone from bad to worse. We are being compelled to fetch water in buckets and containers from other areas," said Abdul Majeed, another local. What is our fault," he lamented.

It feels like we are living in a desert because the government is unable to provide

The water supply situation in our area has gone from bad to worse. We are being compelled to fetch water in buckets and containers from other areas

age of water despite having two water supply pipelines in their area.

"This has left us extremely frustrated. One of the pipelines in our area runs dry for the past two months, while the second pipeline provides intermittent supply with low pressure," Mohammad Rafiq, a resident said.

"The water supply situ-

ation in our area has gone from bad to worse. We are being compelled to fetch water in buckets and containers from other areas," said Abdul Majeed, another local. What is our fault," he lamented.

"We urge the government to address the issue at the earliest else we will be forced to take to the streets and stage protests," they said.

The residents had on Tuesday organized a protest near the JLN Hospital, Rainawari against the authorities for failing to address the issue.

Ease Restrictions For Visitors During Yatra: TASK Urges Admin

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Travel Agents Society of Kashmir (TASK) has urged the government to either declare Kashmir a 'no go zone' for tourists during the Yatra period or stop harassment and problems being faced by the tourists in view of the security arrangements for the ongoing Amarnath Yatra.

In a statement issued by Waseem Gosani - Secretary General TASK said that not everyone coming from outside Kashmir is a yatri. There are tourists who visit Kashmir to enjoy its scenic beauty and face immense problems, much to the disappointment of the travel agents.

Muhammad Akram Siah, president TASK said that tourists who visit Kashmir give vent to their frustration and blame local travel agents. "These tourists feel they are not in Kashmir but in a fortified forest. This is not a positive sign for ledger tourism."

"Not only have such restrictions put the general tourists in a lot of inconveniences but the travel agents

outside Jammu Kashmir have stopped promoting Kashmir till mid-August bringing down the tourist influx abruptly," Siah said.

"Tourists visiting Sonamarg have been directed to leave the destination before 2 pm. The same is the case with Pahalgam. How can it be satisfactory for a tourist visiting Sonamarg or Pahalgam or Gulmarg if he is not allowed to stay there as per his wish," he added.

TASK said that if Sonamarg and Pahalgam are the routes for the Amarnath Yatra then why are there restrictions in Gulmarg? Gulmarg has nothing to do with Yatra and still tourists and those associated with the tourism industry including cab drivers are not allowed to stay at the destination after 3 pm.

"We wholeheartedly welcome Yatris but at the same time, we don't want the tourism industry to suffer. We appeal to Home Minister Amit Shah and LG Manoj Sinha to review their decision and ensure hassle-free movement of tourists and locals in Kashmir during the yatra period.



Members of Sikh community Paid obeisance at Gurudwara Chatti Padshahi in Srinagar on the eve of Prakash Purab on Wednesday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Youth Held For Raping Minor In Srinagar

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: Police have arrested a 22-years old youth on the charges of allegedly raping a minor girl at Barzulla locality in uptown Srinagar on Wednesday.

A youth identified as Zaid Feroz son of Feroz Ahmad of Old Barzulla has been arrested by the police for allegedly raping a minor girl child, who is also said to be his close relative.

Arrest comes following a complaint filed by the parents of the victim, a 12-years old girl at police Station Saddar in this regard.

A formal case FIR No. 56 of 2023 under sections 5 and 6 of POSCO Act was registered at the concerned police station and investigations taken up.

Confirming the incident and subsequent arrest of the accused, Srinagar police in a tweet said that a 22-years old youth was arrested for raping a 12-years old girl in Old Barzulla.

"One Accused namely Zaid Feroz of Old Barzulla, Srinagar aged 22 years arrested for raping a 12 year old child (name withheld). The accused is a close relative of the victim girl child. FIR no 56/2023 under section 5, 6 of POSCO act registered in Sadar police station & investigation started," police said in a tweet.

The incident comes less than a month after a 42-years old school teacher at Rawalpura locality in uptown Srinagar was arrested under stringent sections of Prevention of Children from Sexual Offences (POSCO) Act for allegedly molesting and sexually assaulting two minor girl students in the school.

The accused Satar Beigh son of Nabar Beigh was working as Arabic teacher at Holy Faith



Two Juveniles Held In Stabbing Case

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: A boy suffered injuries after being stabbed by two juveniles near Zero-Inn at Rajbagh area of the city here this evening, police said.

A police official said the accused duo after stabbing the boy and injuring him, jumped into River Jhelum from Zero Bridge; however prompt action of a Border Security Forces (BSF) patrolling party led to their arrest. The victim, identified as Haseeb Bhat of Sonwar area of the city, was rushed to the hospital with arm injuries and is stable.

A formal case FIR No. 22 of 2023 under sections 341, 323,307 and 34 of IPC stands registered at Kothibagh police

School; Rawalpura area. A resident of Gurez area in north Kashmir's Bandipora district, the accused was putting up in a rented accommodation at Hyderpora locality in uptown Srinagar.

station in this regard.

Both the accused, officials said, have been arrested and weapon of offense recovered.

One of the accused, as per Srinagar police tweet is also from Sonwar area of the city and another from Rajbagh. Investigations into the instant case are on.

Confirming the incident, Srinagar police in a tweet said "One boy Haseeb Bhat of Sonwar was stabbed with a knife by two 17-years old juveniles (name withheld) one from Sonwar, other from Rajbagh. FIR No 22/2023 U/s 341, 323, 307, 34, of PC at Kothibagh PS. Accused arrested & weapon of offense recovered. Victim has arm injury & is stable,"

A case FIR No 31 under IPC sections 354D (stalking), 294 (obscene acts in a public place) and 506 (criminal intimidation) stands registered at police station Shalteng in this regard.

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- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
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HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR

17 Zil-Hajj
1444

PRAYERS	
FAJR	3:41
ZUHR	12:35
ASR	5:35
Magrib	7:49
ISHA	9:29

This Day In History

- 1044- The Battle of Ménéf takes place.
- 1189 - Richard the Lionheart is crowned King of England.
- 1253 - Mindaugas is crowned King of Lithuania.
- 1348 - Papal bull of Pope Clement VI issued during the Black Death stating Jews not to blame and urging their protection
- 1415 - Jan Hus is burned at the stake.
- 1483 - England's King Richard III crowned
- 1484 - Portuguese sea captain Diogo Cão finds the mouth of the Congo River.
- 1491 - Opening ceremony of Daitokuji's Shinju at subtemple
- 1495 - Battle of Fornovo, near Parma: French King Charles VIII beats Holy League
- 1560 - England and Scotland sign Treaty of Edinburgh
- 1573 - Pacificatie of Boulogne: new peace treaty with huguenots
- 1573 - Córdoba, Argentina, is founded by Jerónimo Luis de Cabrera.
- 1621- Dutch governor general John Pieterszoon Coen takes Banda islands, 15,000 die
- 1630- Swedish troops under Gustaf II Adolf land at Peenemunde
- 1673- French troops conquer Maastricht as part of the Franco- Dutch War
- 1770- Battle at Cesme: Russian fleet beats Turkish
- 1776- American Declaration of Independence announced on front page of "PA Evening Gazette"
- 1782- British-French sea battle at Negapatam (off India)

From KO Archives

Country-Wide Security Alert

NEW DELHI - An alert was sounded today in major capitals and sensitive towns across India following the terror attack on the makeshift temple in Ayodhya this morning. Security was particularly tightened around important temples and other place, if worship across the country in view of the targeting of the makeshift shrine where once the Babri Masjid structure stood and the possible repercussions it may have.

In Delhi, security was beefed up near the temples and the RSS headquarters in Jandewalan area in a crowded area in the central part.

Additional personnel of police and para-military forces have been mobilised in Delhi and patrolling has been intensified. In Mumbai, the scene of serial blasts and riots after the December 1992 demolition of the disputed structure in Ayodhya, security was beefed-up.

"We have taken special measures outside temples and other religious places in the city following the Ayodhya incident, Police Commissioner A N Roy, said.

Additional forces have been deployed at prominent temples and other places of worship. Security has also been beefed up at the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) installations across the country, Chief Security Officer of DAE N C Gop, said.

Security was also alerted across West Bengal with special emphasis on communally-sensitive areas. In Surat, where the RSS is holding a conclave, a security cordon was thrown around the venue of the meeting.

A high alert was also sounded in the Char Dham shrine circuit comprising Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamunotri and Gangotri in Uttarakhand and Krishna Janambhoomi. "Our police force has been put on high alert," Deputy Inspector General of Police R Singh Meena, said in Dehra Dun.

Police have been asked to be on patrol day and night in Badrinath temple area as it is one of the famous shrines in Uttarakhand, he said. Uttarakhand is attracting hundreds of pilgrims as the Chardham Yatra is going on.

(Kashmir Observer, 06 July, 2005)

Trendy Polo View Market Witnesses 30% Increase In Tourist Footfall

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Srinagar's famous Polo View Market witnessed a 20 to 30 percent increase in tourist footfall and has become a "wireless market" since it underwent major face-lift under Srinagar Smart City Ltd. recently.

Haji Mohammad Is-

mail, president of Polo View Market in Srinagar, said the market was renovated under the Srinagar Smart City project and gained international and domestic recognition.

"Before the renovation, the market already had a good footfall, but the renovation gave it a significant boost. The G-20 summit and visits

by foreign delegates have played a major role in promoting this market," he said.

He said there has been an increase in the number of foreign tourists visiting the market. "Even government guests visit here as it has been beautified to its highest potential," Ismail said.

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251-Elect-T-09/2023-24	Electrical Work in c/w Provision of electrical work for Video Surveillance System (VSS) and other allied work for 57 nos. Thana/Choki over FZR division.	48,45,539.65	96,900.00	06 Months	27.07.2023 after 15:00 Hrs	www.ireps.gov.in
251-Elect-T-12/2023-24	critical work in c/w Modernization of bridge work shop a Jalandhar Cantt under Dy.CE/WS/JRC	1,91,07,167.02	2,45,500.00	06 Months	27.07.2023 after 15:00 Hrs	www.ireps.gov.in

251-Elect/T. Notice No. 08-Elect/2023-24 Dated: 05.07.2023

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SCO summit

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit, hosted virtually by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saw the virtual participation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Putin, Pakistan's Shehbaz Sharif, and newly-inducted member Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi. The summit focused on crucial issues such as cross-border terrorism, regional stability, and enhancing cooperation among member nations.

In an oblique reference to Pakistan, Prime Minister Modi once again emphasized the importance of unequivocal condemnation of nations employing cross-border terrorism and urged the SCO not to shy away from criticizing such practices. India has repeatedly accused Pakistan of using terrorism as instruments of state policy.

A point of contention arose when India abstained from supporting China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in the SCO's New Delhi declaration. India's stance is rooted in concerns over the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which it believes violates its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

The New Delhi declaration signed by the member nations at the end of the meeting stated that the international community must come together to "counter the activities of terrorist, separatist and extremist groups, paying special attention to preventing the spread of religious intolerance, aggressive nationalism, ethnic and racial discrimination, xenophobia, ideas of fascism and chauvinism."

In his address, PM Modi indirectly referred to the ongoing Ukraine war, highlighting the challenges faced by the world, including conflicts, tensions, and pandemics. By acknowledging these global issues, Modi emphasized the need for collective efforts and cooperation among nations to address common challenges, such as food, fuel, and fertilizer crises.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif denounced terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, stressing the need for resolute action against both individual and state-sponsored terrorism.

Although the SCO summit was successfully organized, an undercurrent of bitterness between India's relations with China and Pakistan was obvious. Ever since China's incursions along the Line of Actual Control, India has drifted closer to the west and rightly so. And as for ties with Pakistan, the SCO summit offered little hope that the two countries are any closer to getting back to some working relationship. In fact, the two neighbours confronted each other in even more antagonistic terms.

The SCO summit was an opportunity for India and Pakistan to engage in dialogue and explore avenues for cooperation. However, the meeting has only served to highlight the deep-seated distrust. New Delhi has once again made it clear that as long as Pakistan continued to support terrorism, India will remain on guard and not resume dialogue. Similarly with China, India wants the status quo ante along the LAC to restore for normal neighbourly ties to resume.

OTHER OPINION

Playing The Price Card

With Reliance Jio launching an Internet-enabled feature phone (Jio Bharat) to tap the 250 million users of 2G services, the debate on whether such a subsidy-led model to produce handsets really works for telecom operators will start once again. Let's look at the numbers.

When Jio first launched its 4G, VoLTE feature phone (JioPhone) in 2017, there were around 500 million 2G users. Not all of them moved to Jio, but the fact is that the number is now down to 250 million. This means an ecosystem has been created to help operators migrate a substantial number of 2G users to 4G and enhance their average revenue per user (Arpu). It is true that the JioPhone and the entry-level smartphones priced at Rs 6,500, which it later launched in partnership with Google, were not hugely successful. That explains Jio's latest move to entice 2G users by playing the price card.

Another factor behind the launch of the phone at this point could be that operators are looking at revenue-enhancing measures. With the last headline tariff increase having happened in 2021 and chances of another one looking bleak before the 2024 general elections, telcos are left with no option but to make some tweaks to the existing structures. The sequential Arpu growth for both Jio and Bharti during the January-March quarter was flat.

This is despite Bharti Airtel recently raising entry-level tariffs for 2G users by around 57%. Jio is a fully 4G network, which has always marketed itself on price points, but has only 1% of its subscriber base as post-paid users. Thus, it has very little elbow room to raise tariffs at the lower end and needs a substantial increase in the subscriber base. Jio's rival, Bharti, however, has consistently resisted any temptation of getting into a subsidy-led handset business as it believes it is not possible to sustain a subsidy-driven subscriber addition model in the long run. The company, therefore, looks at working on strategies that can help it migrate subscribers to a higher tariff pack. This way, Arpu would also rise, and the company would not have to rely solely on headline tariff hikes. The economics is simple: when customers switch to 4G, Arpu doubles. Similarly, when a pre-paid customer moves to post-paid, Arpu further doubles, and when a post-paid customer buys all other services like DTH, wireline broadband, etc, the Arpu quadruples. So, there is a lot of Arpu enhancement that can come through upgrades

Financial Express

The US and India's Non-Aligned Alliance

Shashi Tharoor

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is riding high. His triumphant visit to Washington, which featured a state dinner at the White House and a rare second address to a joint session of Congress, appears to mark a new chapter in the relationship between the United States and India following a quarter-century of ups and downs.

Modi's visit was preceded by several major breakthroughs, including the recent US-India initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology, which seeks to foster bilateral collaboration on technologies such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, quantum computing, 5G, and cybersecurity. US semiconductor manufacturer Micron Technology recently announced that it plans to invest \$825 million in a new chip assembly and testing facility in India.

The US and India have also unveiled several defense agreements, including a deal for India to acquire 30 MQ-9B Predator armed drones from the US and a separate plan to produce F414 fighter jet engines for the Indian Air Force jointly with General Electric. These deals, which have not been previously extended to a country that is not formally an ally, highlight the intensifying bilateral defense partnership.

The transformation is striking. Throughout the Cold War, the world's oldest democracy and its largest remained essentially estranged. America's initial indifference toward India was evident in President Harry Truman's reaction when Chester Bowles asked to be the US ambassador. "I thought India was pretty jammed with poor people and cows wandering around the streets, witch doctors, and people sitting on hot coals and bathing in the Ganges," Truman said, "but I did not realize that anybody thought it was important."

America's preference for alliances with anti-communist regimes led the US to establish relationships with a series of increasingly Islamist dictatorships in Pakistan. Meanwhile, India's non-aligned democracy gravitated toward the secular Soviet Union. Non-alignment was not well-received in the US, where President Dwight Eisenhower's Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, famously declared that "neutrality between good and evil is itself evil."

The end of the Cold War, together with the reorientation of India's foreign policy and its integration into the global economy, led to improvement in US-India relations, but India's detonation of a nuclear device in 1998 triggered US-led economic sanctions. President Bill Clinton's visit to India in 2000, his final year in office, marked a major turning point, and George W. Bush's administration built on the momentum by signing a defense agreement with India in 2005 and a landmark accord on civil nuclear cooperation in 2008. The positive trend persisted under both Barack Obama and Donald Trump and now appears to have reached a zenith under President Joe Biden.

Today, the US seems much more willing to accommodate India's post-colonial obsession with strategic autonomy. Whereas the Hindu nationalist Modi stands in stark contrast to his secular predecessor, Manmohan Singh, there has been remarkable bipartisan support for deepening ties by five successive US presidents and three Indian prime ministers.

This shift has been partly driven by China's geopolitical assertiveness under President Xi Jinping, which represents a radical departure from his predecessors' adherence to the doctrine of China's "peaceful rise." The US clearly views China as its primary adversary and has been ac-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi laughs with US President Joe Biden as they stand on the Truman Balcony of the White House with first lady Jill Biden after an official State Arrival Ceremony held at the start of Modi's visit to the White House in Washington | Photo Credit: Reuters

tively pursuing regional alliances to counter its growing influence.

India has traditionally been reluctant to pick sides, but China's repeated encroachments on its territory across the disputed Himalayan border, and its killing of 20 Indian soldiers in June 2020, have rendered neutrality untenable. While India maintains its independent posture, the recent G7 summit in Hiroshima notably included the second-ever in-person Quad summit between Biden, Modi, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. During the gathering, the four leaders reaffirmed their commitment to a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

The message to China is clear. While India maintains that it is not a US ally but a partner, it has increasingly aligned itself with the democratic West in its escalating rivalry with communist China.

But it would be a mistake to view India-US relations solely through a Chinese lens. America and India have far more in common than is generally acknowledged: democracy, a common language, and dedication to fostering innova-

tion and entrepreneurship. As Henry Kissinger once observed, the two countries have "no conflict of interest in the traditional and fundamental sense."

The most important factor contributing to the deepening ties between the US and India is the growing number of Indian-Americans, which exceeds four million. Indian-Americans are disproportionately affluent, with the highest median income of any US ethnic group, including whites. They are also becoming an increasingly influential voting bloc, and their prominent roles in political fundraising, on Congressional staffs, and in government offices have given rise to a so-called Samosa Caucus. The US has had two governors and seven members of Congress of Indian heritage. US Vice President Kamala Harris's mother is Indian, and Former US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley - currently running for president - is the daughter of Punjabi Sikh parents.

While their political views vary, many Indian-Americans have been increasingly outspoken on issues related to India. The continuous influx of more than 150,000 Indian students to the US every year contributes to this dynamic. In addition to injecting nearly \$8 billion into the US education system and related services, these migrants ensure a constant infusion of fresh ideas and perspectives. In the long run, Indian-Americans may help shape US policy on India in the same way that Jewish Americans play a role in shaping US policy on Israel.

In the past, it was often said that Pakistan was a US ally but not a friend, while India was a friend but not an ally. With the US out of Afghanistan, Pakistan has become a less significant ally. But, while India still isn't one, owing to its insistence on strategic autonomy, even US skeptics who say the two countries' interests are more aligned than their values concede that those interests warrant closer cooperation. Modi's visit was one more indication of how close that cooperation has become."

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

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Cooking is a Life Skill

I am writing to express my views on the significance of cooking as a fundamental life skill that should be emphasized and taught to individuals from a young age. In an era dominated by convenience foods and fast-paced lifestyles, cooking has taken a backseat in many households, leading to numerous negative consequences for individuals and society as a whole.

Cooking is more than just the act of preparing a meal; it encompasses a wide range of essential skills and knowledge that promote physical health, foster creativity, encourage cultural understanding, and enhance personal independence. By actively engaging in the process of cooking, individuals develop a deeper understanding of nutrition, portion con-

trol, and ingredient selection, which are crucial for maintaining a healthy diet. Moreover, cooking allows us to connect with our cultural heritage by exploring traditional recipes and techniques, creating a sense of identity and preserving culinary traditions for future generations.

Furthermore, cooking promotes creativity and self-expression. It provides an outlet for individuals to experiment with flavors, textures, and presentation, encouraging them to think outside the box and develop their own unique culinary style. These creative endeavors can be incredibly fulfilling and empowering, boosting self-esteem and promoting mental well-being.

In today's fast-paced world, where convenience foods and takeout meals

dominate, there is a growing disconnect between individuals and their food. Relying on pre-packaged meals not only compromises our health but also distances us from the pleasure and satisfaction that comes from creating a meal from scratch. By reestablishing cooking as a life skill, we can rekindle this connection, enabling individuals to take control of their nutrition, make informed choices, and develop a healthier relationship with food.

I firmly believe that schools, community centers, and families should prioritize teaching cooking skills to children and young adults. Introducing cooking as a part of the curriculum or offering extracurricular cooking programs can instill a lifelong passion for culinary arts while equip-

ping individuals with the knowledge and skills they need to make healthier choices. Additionally, initiatives that promote community cooking classes or workshops can further enhance social cohesion and foster a sense of togetherness among individuals of different backgrounds.

In conclusion, cooking is a vital life skill that goes beyond nourishment. It promotes physical health, stimulates creativity, fosters cultural understanding, and empowers individuals to make informed choices about their nutrition. By prioritizing and investing in cooking education, we can ensure a healthier and more engaged society that embraces the joy and benefits of preparing meals from scratch.

Beenish Shah

Creating Safe Spaces

A Comprehensive Look at the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act

Madiya Mushtaq

The Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act of 2013 is a landmark legislation that seeks to address the pervasive issue of sexual harassment in various spheres of society. Recognizing the urgent need for legal protection and redressal mechanisms for victims, this act was enacted to ensure a safe and conducive environment, free from sexual harassment, for everyone, regardless of gender.

Sexual harassment is a grave violation of an individual's rights and dignity, often resulting in profound physical, emotional, and psychological consequences. It can occur in workplaces, educational institutions, public spaces, and even within the family. The Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act of 2013 acknowledges the detrimental impact of such behavior and endeavors to establish a robust framework to prevent and address instances of sexual harassment effectively.

This legislation defines sexual harassment comprehensively, encompassing a wide range of unwelcome acts or behavior, including physical advances, verbal or non-verbal conduct, or any form of sexually colored remarks or jokes. It recognizes that sexual harassment is not limited to physical contact but extends to creating a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment that interferes with an individual's safety, dignity, and well-being.

One of the crucial provisions of the act is the establishment of Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs) in organizations with ten or more employees. These committees play a pivotal role in handling complaints related to sexual harassment. They are responsible for receiving, investigating, and resolving such complaints in a fair and impartial manner. The ICCs serve as a crucial avenue for victims to seek justice and obtain appropriate redressal within their workplaces.

Furthermore, the act also em-



providing legal protection, establishing redressal mechanisms, and promoting awareness, this act seeks to empower victims, hold perpetrators accountable, and create a safer and more inclusive society. Its implementation is crucial in ensuring that individuals can live and work free from the fear and trauma of sexual harassment, fostering an environment that upholds the principles of equality, dignity, and respect for all.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROVISIONS

The Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act of 2013 encompasses several sections that outline the rights and responsibilities of victims and the procedures for dealing with instances of sexual

providing legal protection, establishing redressal mechanisms, and promoting awareness, this act seeks to empower victims, hold perpetrators accountable, and create a safer and more inclusive society. Its implementation is crucial in ensuring that individuals can live and work free from the fear and trauma of sexual harassment, fostering an environment that upholds the principles of equality, dignity, and respect for all.

COMPLAINT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

According to Section 9 of the POSH Act, complaints of sexual harassment at work may be made to the Internal Committee or Local Committee. The process is as follows:

Within three months of the occurrence date and, in the case of repeated incidences, within three months of the most recent incident, an aggrieved woman may report sexual harassment at work.

If the victimised lady is unable to file a complaint within the allotted three months, the Internal Complaints Committee or Local Complaints Committee may extend the deadline. The committee must be convinced that the woman was unable to submit a complaint within the allotted time frame due to the circumstances. According to Section 9 of the POSH Act, complaints of sexual harassment at work may be made to the Internal Committee or Local Committee. The process is as follows:

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PUNISHMENT AND COMPENSATION:

According to the POSH Act, an employer may discipline an employee in the following ways for sexual harassment:

The penalty outlined in the organization's service regulations;

There may be written apologies, warnings, reprimands, censures, withholding of promotions, pay increases, or increments, termination of the respondent's employment, counselling sessions, or community service if there are no service rules in the organisation; and

Paying the woman who was wronged compensation by reducing the respondent's salary (Section 13 of the POSH Act).

According to Section 15 of the POSH Act, harmed women may also get compensation. The following considerations must be made when calculating compen-

sation:

- Affected employee's mental trauma, pain, suffering, and emotional distress;
 - The loss of career opportunities caused by sexual harassment;
 - Physical and mental health treatment expenses incurred by the victim;
 - Whether the alleged perpetrator has a high income or a high status; and
 - Whether lump sum or installment payments are feasible.
- A failure by the respondent to pay the aforesaid sum will result in the IC forwarding the order of recovery to the District Officer concerned.

FALSE/ FRIVOLOUS COMPLAINTS:

Actions will be taken against complainants who "falsely or maliciously" invoke the provisions, according to Section 14 of the POSH Act. According to the POSH Act, disciplinary action can be taken against a complainant whose claims have been proven to be false, malicious, or made with knowledge that they are false in accordance with the service norms of the organisation. In cases where there are no service standards in place, the Act allows for disciplinary measures such as written apologies, warnings, reprimands, censure, withholding of promotions, withholding of raises and increments, terminating employment, going to counselling, and completing community service. The POSH Act makes it clear that a complaint does not necessarily have to be untrue or malicious just because there is not enough evidence to back it up. It is true that Section 14 appears to be a saving clause, but the language of the section is regarded as a deterrent in nature. It is possible to conclude from different perspectives that the provisions incorporated in Section 14 to punish false and malicious complaints or false evidence may deter frivolous complaints, but they may also deter genuine witnesses or complainants who may not collect sufficient evidence to prove their allegations.

WHAT STEPS SHOULD A VICTIM TAKEN WHEN BEING SEXUALLY ASSAULTED

- i. Recognize the harassment: Understand and identify the behavior as sexual harassment, whether it involves physical advances, unwelcome remarks, or creating a hostile environment.
- ii. Document incidents: Keep a record of the incidents, including dates, times, locations, and any witnesses present. Maintain any related evidence such as emails, messages, or photographs, if

applicable.

- iii. Inform the appropriate authority: File a written complaint with the ICC or the LCC within the prescribed time frame, providing a detailed account of the incidents and supporting evidence, if available.
- iv. Cooperate in the inquiry: Participate in the inquiry process, provide relevant information, and cooperate with the ICC during the investigation.
- v. Seek support: Seek emotional support from trusted friends, family, or support organizations. It is crucial to share the experience with someone who can provide guidance and empathy.
- vi. Follow up: Stay informed about the progress of the inquiry and any action taken against the perpetrator. If unsatisfied with the outcome, consider filing an appeal with the Appellate Authority.
- vii. Preserve confidentiality: Maintain the confidentiality of the proceedings and refrain from discussing the details of the case publicly, as it may hinder the investigation or legal processes.

It is important for victims to remember that they have the right to be treated with respect, dignity, and fairness throughout the entire process. Seeking legal advice or counseling services can also be beneficial in navigating through the procedures and coping with the emotional impact of the harassment.

CHALLENGES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSH ACT:

The implementation of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act in India faces several challenges. Some of the key challenges include:

- Lack of awareness: One of the significant hurdles is a lack of awareness about the provisions and requirements of the POSH Act among both employees and employers. Many individuals are unaware of their rights and the procedures for filing complaints, leading to underreporting and inadequate implementation.
- Inadequate training: Proper training and sensitization programs are essential for employees, employers, and members of Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs) to understand the nuances of sexual harassment, prevention strategies, and the process of handling complaints. Insufficient or inconsistent training can hinder effective implementation.
- Fear of retaliation: Victims of

sexual harassment may fear retaliation, such as negative repercussions or professional consequences, for reporting incidents. This fear can discourage victims from coming forward, leading to underreporting and perpetuating a culture of silence.

- Ineffective Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs): The formation and functioning of ICCs pose challenges. Some organizations may not have well-constituted or active ICCs, or lack trained members who can handle complaints effectively. This can undermine the confidence of victims in the complaint redressal mechanism.
- Inadequate support systems: Victims of sexual harassment require supportive systems and mechanisms to assist them throughout the complaint process. Access to counseling services, legal aid, and protection against victimization are essential for ensuring the well-being and safety of victims.
- Delayed or ineffective redressal: The timely resolution of complaints is crucial for the effectiveness of the POSH Act. Lengthy and delayed inquiry processes can discourage victims and undermine their faith in the system. It is important to ensure expeditious and fair investigations and appropriate disciplinary action against perpetrators.
- Compliance issues: Some organizations may struggle with compliance, either due to a lack of understanding or unwillingness to adhere to the requirements of the act. This can result in inadequate implementation and insufficient measures to prevent and address sexual harassment.
- Limited awareness in informal sectors: The POSH Act primarily focuses on formal workplaces, leaving out individuals working in the informal sector, such as domestic workers, agricultural laborers, and daily wage earners. Extending awareness and protection to these sectors remains a challenge.

Addressing these challenges requires collective efforts from all stakeholders, including employers, employees, ICC members, and the government. Continuous awareness campaigns, robust training programs, strengthening ICCs, promoting a culture of zero tolerance towards sexual harassment, and ensuring accessible support systems are crucial for effective implementation of the POSH Act and creating safer work environments.

SOME FAQs RELATED TO THE POSH ACT:

a. *Is it possible for both men and women to be victims of workplace sexual harassment?*

Both men and women can experience harassment. However, POSH Act safeguards and protections are only offered to women.

b. *Does language/ verbal conduct alone qualify as sexual harassment?*

Sexual harassment may include sexually explicit verbal abuse. Words can be offensive in the same way that touching and physical deeds can be. Sexually explicit jokes, remarks, and anecdotes can encourage sexual harassment at work and foster a hostile environment.

c. *Do the parties involved in a claim of sexual harassment have a chance to resolve the issue through mediation or conciliation?*

Yes, a settlement may be reached at the request of the aggrieved woman, but no monetary settlement can be reached.

The author is an Alumna, Hidayatullah National Law University and currently works as Advocate, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court

IN CASES WHERE THERE ARE NO SERVICE STANDARDS IN PLACE, THE ACT ALLOWS FOR DISCIPLINARY MEASURES SUCH AS WRITTEN APOLOGIES, WARNINGS, REPRIMANDS, CENSURE, WITHHOLDING OF PROMOTIONS, withholding of raises and increments, terminating employment, going to counselling, and completing community service. The POSH Act makes it clear that a complaint does not necessarily have to be untrue or malicious just because there is not enough evidence to back it up

phasizes the need for awareness and sensitization programs to educate employees and students about their rights, as well as the consequences and implications of sexual harassment. It encourages employers and educational institutions to foster a culture of zero-tolerance towards sexual harassment, thereby creating an atmosphere that promotes gender equality, respect, and dignity for all.

The Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act of 2013 represents a significant step forward in addressing the pervasive issue of sexual harassment in India. By

harassment. Here is an overview of the key sections of the act and what a victim should do in case of being sexually exploited.

DEFINITIONS

This section provides definitions for various terms related to sexual harassment, including unwelcome acts, physical contact, verbal or non-verbal conduct, and the creation of a hostile work environment.

CONSTITUTION OF INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (ICC)

According to this section, organizations with ten or more em-

Tuesday set an unofficial record for the hottest day on Earth. Wednesday may break it

Maine, Jul 5 (AP) The planet's temperature spiked on Tuesday to its hottest day in at least 44 years and likely much longer, and Wednesday could become the third straight day Earth unofficially marks a record-breaking high, the latest in a series of climate-change extremes that alarm but don't surprise scientists.

The globe's average temperature reached 62.9 degrees Fahrenheit (17.18 degrees Celsius) on Tuesday, according to the University of Maine's Climate Reanalyzer, a common tool based on satellite data and computer simulations and used by climate scientists for a glimpse of the world's condition.

On Monday, the average temperature was 62.6 degrees Fahrenheit (17.01 degrees Celsius), breaking a record that lasted only 24 hours.

While it is not an official National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration record, "this is showing us an indication of where we are right now," NOAA chief scientist Sarah Kapnick said. Even though the

dataset used for the unofficial record goes back only to 1979, she said that given other data, it's likely the hottest day in "several hundred years that we've experienced."

The previous hottest day was in August 2021, Kapnick said.

"A record like this is another piece of evidence for the now massively supported proposition that global warming is pushing us into a hotter future," said Stanford University climate scientist Chris Field, who was not part of the calculations.

With many places seeing temperatures near 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 degrees Celsius), the new average temperatures might not seem very hot. But Tuesday's global high was nearly 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit (a full degree Celsius) higher than the 1979-2000 average, which already tops the 20th- and 19th-century averages.

Higher temperatures translate into brutal conditions for people all over the world. When the heat spikes, humans suffer health effects especially



young and elderly people, who are vulnerable to heat even under normal conditions.

"People aren't used to that. Their bodies aren't used to that," said Erinanne Saffell, Arizona's state climatologist and an expert in extreme weather and climate events.

"That's important to understand who might be at risk, making sure people are hydrated, they're staying cool, and they're not exerting themselves outside, and taking care of those folks around you who might be at risk."

The highs come after months of

"truly unreal meteorology and climate stats for the year," such as off-the-chart record low sea ice in Antarctica and a rapidly strengthening El Nino, said University of Oklahoma meteorology professor Jason Furtado.

Scientists generally use much longer measurements months, years, decades to track the Earth's warming. But the new figures are an indication that climate change is reaching uncharted territory, even if the data aren't quite the type used by gold-standard climate measurement entities such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association.

The figures legitimately capture global-scale heating, and NOAA will take them into consideration for its official record calculations, said Deke Arndt, director of the National Centre for Environmental Information, a division of NOAA.

High-temperature records were surpassed this week in Quebec and Peru. Beijing reported nine straight

days last week when the temperature exceeded 35 degrees Celsius (95 degrees Fahrenheit).

Cities across the US from Medford, Oregon to Tampa, Florida have been hovering at all-time highs, said Zack Taylor, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

Wednesday may bring another unofficial record, with the Climate Reanalyzer again forecasting record or near-record heat. Antarctica's average forecast for Wednesday is a whopping 4.5 degrees Celsius (8.1 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the 1979-2000 average.

In the US, heat advisories are in effect this week for more than 30 million people in places including portions of western Oregon, inland far northern California, central New Mexico, Texas, Florida and the coastal Carolinas, according to the National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center. Excessive heat warnings are continuing across southern Arizona and California. (AP)

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

How Kashmiri Muslims

the Muslims, a pilgrim said the locals have left no stone unturned to make the yatra successful.

"The locals have provided a huge support. They have left no stone unturned. If we seek one item from them, they provide two," the yatri said.

For the locals, the yatra is also an opportunity to earn their livelihood.

"We come here when the yatra starts. We earn our livelihood for the month by carrying the bags of the yatri up to the holy cave and back. The yatri cannot carry the heavy bags, so we carry those for them," a man who carries the pilgrims' bags on his shoulders for a to-and-fro mountainous journey of about 25 kilometres said.

"We carry the pilgrims, especially the older ones, on palkis. We carry them on our shoulders. It also provides us an opportunity to earn our livelihood," another local service provider who carries the yatri on palanquins said.

For many locals, the yatra symbolises Hindu-Muslim unity.

"We Muslims help the Hindu community members. It symbolises our unity," one of them said.

Another appealed to Hindus across the country to come for the yatra, saying there is no danger or trouble in Kashmir.

"We are ready to welcome you and lend you every help," he added.

4 Killed As Vehicle

Associated Hospital in Rajouri.

He said a case under relevant sections of the law has been registered.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri, Vikas Kundal visited the District Hospital Kheora to enquire about the condition of injured passengers.

During his visit to the hospital, Kundal interacted with the injured passengers and enquired about their well-being. He also directed the hospital authorities to provide all necessary medical assistance to the injured passengers. The Deputy Commissioner expressed his condolences to the families of the deceased passengers and assured them of all possible support from the district administration.

He also urged the concerned authorities to investigate the cause of the accident and take necessary measures to prevent such mishaps in the future.

Sex Racket Busted,

Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Khan of Qazi Hamam Baramulla and two female sex workers (name withheld) were also detained, the spokesperson said.

Accordingly, he said, a case vide FIR No.136/2023 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Baramulla and further investigation has been initiated.

"Police once again requested the netizens to do tenant verification before giving their houses/rooms/shops on rent," he added.

Mental Ailments

anxiety and fighting drug addiction.

Launches India's

consultation and/or eSanjeevani for audio visual consultation, according to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare website.

In his address at the conclave, the Lt Governor commended the efforts of the health department to bring together medical experts on a common platform to deliberate on most challenging health issues and to generate awareness on mental health and life threatening non-communicable diseases.

"Our ultimate objective is patient-centred care and all the efforts are being made to ensure that primary health centres and district hospitals provide quality care focusing on the physical as well as emotional well-being of individual patients," Sinha said.

He said the new landmark initiatives launched are testimony to the commitment of the J-K administration in providing quality, affordable and accessible healthcare services to all.

The MoU inked between the J-K Health and Medical Education Department and the Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Centre will provide significant technical support to improve cancer care services in the UT and help us to establish preventive oncology service, day care centres and palliative care service at district hospitals, the Lt Governor said.

Another important MoU signed with NIMHANS Bengaluru will improve mental health services, training and capacity building of medical officers and nursing staff, he added.

Sinha said per capita spending on the health sector in J-K is among the highest in the country.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor also inaugurated 44 healthcare facilities worth Rs 56.18 crore to strengthen the medical infrastructure in J-K.

He also rolled out and launched several new initiatives to strengthen health system resilience including T3 - Test, Treat and Talk, anaemia camps, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease programme and scan and share service for OPD registration.

In order to improve community extension of health services, the National Health Mission, Jammu and Kashmir, is recruiting 380 additional ASHAs and 31 ASHA facilitators as approved by the central government, Sinha said.

There are also 334 numbers of tribal ASHAs sanctioned for various districts of J-K meant to cater the health care needs of the tribal population in an attempt to improve the health indicators of the migratory population, he said.

SC's Hearing

Justice of India DY Chandrachud and Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai, and Surya Kant will hear the case.

The petitions which are pending since 2019 have not been taken up for hearing since

March 2020.

Various petitions are pending before the top court challenging the validity of the law scrapping Article 370 of the Constitution and special status to Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcating the state into two Union Territories.

On August 5 2019, the Central government announced its decision to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir granted under Article 370 and split the region into two Union territories.

A five-judge Constitution bench in March 2020 had declined to refer to a larger 7-judge bench a batch of petitions challenging the Constitutional validity of the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 on August 5, saying there were no reasons to refer the matter to a larger bench.

A number of petitions have been filed in the top court including those of private individuals, lawyers, activists and politicians and political parties challenging the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which splits Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories -- Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

ADGP Calls For

human intelligence (Humint) and launch anti-(militancy) operations in collaboration with the security forces," a police spokesperson said, adding, "He also stressed the importance of taking preventive legal measures to prevent recruitment into (militant) ranks. Each police officer in the district was assigned to work on different (militant) modules under the close supervision of the district SSP."

After the meeting in Shopina, the spokesperson said, the ADGP Kashmir also visited Pulwama district concomitant with the visit of LG. He held a meeting with the DIG Police, COs of 182 & 183 Bns of CRPF, SSP Pulwama and other officers.

"ADGP Kashmir commended their efforts in eradicating the remnants of (militancy) and urged them to work together to conduct precision-based operations."

He emphasized the need to conduct precision based operations with special teams and introduce innovative and handpicked mechanisms to ensure the neutralization of militants, the spokesperson said in a statement.

"An adumbrated overview of the districts was taken, and specific guidelines were issued to officers to achieve targeted outcomes." SSP Pulwama was specifically directed to identify and take strict action against Over Ground Workers (OGWs) involved in the recent recruitment of two new individuals into militant ranks in the district, he said.

"During these meetings, ADGP Kashmir directed them to implement additional security measures in order to prevent (militant) incidents," he said, adding, "Besides, the process for identifying hybrid (militants) and taking appropriate actions were also discussed in the meeting". The ADGP also laid stress on strengthening the police-public relations, service-oriented policing which will help in gaining the confidence and trust of general public,

the spokesperson added.

SC Upholds HC

submitted before the CAT that no charge sheet was served upon him despite efflux of more than 4 years from the date he was placed under suspension.

From the perusal of the order passed by the Tribunal, the Division Bench of the High Court had said it is apparent that despite the time given to the counsel for the government, no response was ever filed.

"Keeping in view the urgency involved in the petition as (the employee, Hilal) was due to retire on 30 April 2022, the case was taken up by the Tribunal and, accordingly, after appreciating all the material facts on record and relying upon the judgment passed by the Supreme Court, it quashed the order of suspension with a further direction by holding him entitled for consequential dues as per rules," the High court's Division Bench had said.

In the appeal against the Tribunal's order before the High Court, the government had contended that charges against the employee are very serious and that the Tribunal did not provide ample time for response.

"On the one hand, the (government) have vehemently pleaded that there are very serious charges against (the employee) and on the other hand, the (government) failed to discharge obligations to proceed in accordance with law by issuing charge sheet and conducting inquiry after placing (employee) under suspension for more than 4 years," the high court had said, adding, "No plausible reasons have been explained for such delay for not framing the charge sheet, even after a lapse of more than 4 years."

No reason whatsoever has been spelled out by the authorities for such delay in filing the charge sheet nor any such ground has been taken in the petition, the high court had said.

"Since, as per the stand of the (government), there was grave charges against (the employee) then in that eventuality, the (government) could have acted with promptitude by issuing charge sheet by holding an inquiry within a stipulated time period, but the respondents by their own conduct have waived of their right either to charge sheet against the delinquent employee or conducting any inquiry."

The high court said that the law was settled by the Supreme Court in various authoritative pronouncements that although suspension is not a punishment but once it is prolonged (in this case for four years), then it amounts to punishment, as it has very strong stigmatic social connotations.

From the perusal of the order of suspension, the Division Bench of the High Court observed that it is apparently clear that the inquiry was required to be completed within 15 days, "which itself proves beyond any shadow doubt that the State was conscious of the seriousness and urgency involved in the matter, yet they slept over the matter for four long years to initiate inquiry by way of issuing charge sheet to the delinquent."

"By keeping the employee under suspension for four long years, the applicant (employee) has been put to lot of stress and temporary deprivation of his full wages over this period, and such inaction on part of the respondents indicate a total lack of seriousness in dealing with the matter as it was expected on the part of the respondents to have acted with promptitude by conducting the inquiry within the stipulated time period," the high court had said and dismissed the appeal filed by the government.

Two JKAS

Development and Monitoring Department, shall hold the post of Director, Industries and Commerce, Jammu, in addition to his own duties, till further orders.

Houses Of Six

(UAPA) case, he said.

Poswal said the teams, which included a magistrate, conducted the raids having obtained house search warrants from an NIA court in Jammu.

The raids were made at the houses of Manzoor Ahmed alias Tahir Ingalabi of Dwater Singhpora, Nazir Ahmed alias Shaheen of Beighpura Singhpora, Shabir Ahmed alias Junaid of Sewa Chatroo, Mohd Iqbal Rishi alias Muzamil Ansari of Dellar Chatroo, Mohd Amin Bhatt of Chinzam, and Mohd Iqbal alias Bilal of Kishtwar.

All of them are currently operating either from Pakistan-controlled Kashmir or Pakistan, the SSP said.

Evidence collected in search will be investigated for any involvement of these people in anti-national activities and perpetuation of militancy, Poswal said.

He said that the searches were aimed at eliminating the militancy ecosystem in the district with crackdown on over-ground workers and supporters of militancy.

Militant Aide

the security forces, but was apprehended, he said.

The spokesman identified the person as Mohammad Seediq Lone, a resident of Nowpora Jageer, Kreeri.

Incriminating materials, arms and ammunition including a pistol, a pistol magazine and three pistol rounds were recovered from his possession, he said.

During preliminary questioning, Lone revealed he was working as a militant associate of the proscribed terror outfit LeT and was in touch with active militants Adil Dantoo of Sopore and foreign terrorist Usman Bhai of Pakistan, he said.

Lone also said he has acquired arms and ammunition from these militants for carrying out "targeted killings and to terrorise" the public in the Baramulla district, the spokesperson said.

A case has been registered and an investigation has been initiated, he added.

Girl Slips

her body was fished out from the Nallah.

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

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

KO PODCAST

Mehbooba Alleges Conspiracy In Govt's 'Land To Homeless' Move

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday accused the Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor's Administration of importing slums and poverty into the erstwhile state under the pretext of providing housing to homeless people, calling it an attempt to change the demography of the union territory.

"The LG made an announcement about giving land to 1.99 lakh landless people in JK. Doubts and concerns have come to the fore as to who these landless people in Jammu and Kashmir are. According to the figures of the central government placed before Parliament, there are only 19,000 homeless families in Jammu and Kashmir," Mufti told reporters here.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday said the Jammu and Kashmir administration has started providing 150 square yard plots to landless families for the construction of their houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (PMAY).

"The rural development department has identified 1.83 lakh families who do not have their own houses. We are working on it. It is a step that will not only provide a house to them but transform their lives," he had said, claiming that plots to 2,711 landless families across the union territory have already been allotted.

Mufti said it seems to be an attempt to change the demography

of Jammu and Kashmir in order to increase the BJP vote bank.

"Who are these two lakh families? Even if there are only five persons per family, it accounts for a population of 10 lakh," she added.

The former chief minister further asked the government why did it not give five 'marla' land to Kashmiri Pandits who have been living in Jammu in one-room sets for the past 30 years.

"There are thousands of Kashmiri Pandits living in Jammu. Did you give them 5 marlas? Why not?" she asked. The PDP president alleged that Jammu and Kashmir and its resources, including land and jobs, were being treated as a "war booty".

"Jammu and Kashmir is a green belt, they are turning it into a slum. Instead of improving the place, they are importing slums and poverty. The good thing is that Jammu has started realising the dangers of this move. It will run over Jammu before reaching Kashmir," she said. Mufti said by bringing in 10 lakh people from other parts of the country into Jammu and Kashmir, the government was trying to provoke the people of the union territory.

"When they bringing 10 lakh people from outside, why do they want to provoke people of Jammu and Kashmir?" she asked.

The PDP president said the people of Jammu and Kashmir should follow in the footsteps of Ladakh by resisting these attempts.



Guruparab Celebrated By Sikhs In Kashmir Valley



J&K Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Wednesday joined members of Sikh community to celebrate Prakash Parv of Guru Hargobind Singh. KO photo, Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Sikh community of Kashmir Valley celebrated Guru Hargobind Singh Jayanti here on Wednesday to mark the birth anniversary of the sixth Sikh guru.

The Sikh devotees thronged the gurudwaras in Srinagar and elsewhere in the Valley to mark Guru Hargobind Singh's birth anniversary.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha visited two gurudwaras one in Srinagar and another in Pulwama to join the celebrations with the Sikh community.

"Greetings on Prakash Parv of Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. He was an embodiment of sacrifice, social justice, compassion & universal brother-

hood. Let's draw inspiration from his teachings & rededicate ourselves to ideals of social equality & brotherhood as epitomised by Guru Ji," Sinha said in a tweet.

Speaking to PTI, devotees at Chatti Padshahi Gurudwara in Rainawari highlighted the importance of the day. "Shakti ke bina bhakti nahin hai aur bhakti ke bina shakti nahin hai (without strength, one can't be devoted, and without devotion, one can't have strength)," Jagbeer Singh, a devotee, said.

He said Guru Hargobind Singh was skilled in several warfare techniques and had fought against cruelty of all kinds. The 6th Sikh guru came to Kashmir with emperor Jahangir, he added. There are 10 Sikh gurus in total.

The message of gurus is to connect with God and worship wholeheartedly, said Bhai Harbans Singh, head member of the gurudwara.

Guru Hargobind Singh prayed for the betterment and prosperity of all of mankind, Bhai Harbans Singh said, adding that he taught us to respect everyone without any bias.

"Guru Hargobind Singh came to Kashmir around 1616 and devoted himself to curing the people of Kashmir suffering from smallpox," he said.

J B Singh, another devotee, said a large number of people come to gurudwara with devotion to celebrate the Sikh guru's birth anniversary. "The message of this day is to promote brotherhood and harmony for the country," he said.

Govt Rubbishes Mehbooba's Claim

SRINAGAR: The Union Territory administration on Wednesday rubbished former Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti's claim that the recent decision of providing land to homeless families was aimed at bringing in demographic changes in Jammu and Kashmir.

In a statement issued hours after Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) President's press conference, the Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj rejected the allegations made by Mehbooba and termed her statements factually and without having any understanding of the PMAY scheme.

Giving details, an official spokesperson said that PMAY (Grameen) phase -1 started on 1.4.2016 by Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, under the overall commitment of Prime Minister for "Housing for all by 2022", in which 2,57,349 Houseless cases were identified in J&K in SECC data 2011 and after due verification by Gram sabhas, 136152 cases were sanctioned for J&K.

"Per unit assistance of 1.30 lakhs is provided per house by Govt of India under the scheme. Minimum size of the house prescribed is 1 marla," he said.

The Government, the spokesperson said, conducted Awaas+ survey during January, 2018 to March, 2019 to identify those beneficiaries which claimed to have been left out under the 2011 SECC.

He said that the data of beneficiaries captured through Awaas+ was utilized to fill the gaps between overall target and eligible beneficiaries made available from SECC Permanent Wait List (PWL).

"PMAY PHASE-II(AWAS Plus) Grameen started from 2019 onwards based on survey of 2018-19, (done pan India), in which 2.65 Lakhs

houseless cases were recorded in J&K and only target of 63426 houses was given to J&K. These houses have been sanctioned in 2022 only," the spokesperson said, adding that this phase of the scheme is getting over on 31.3.24.

Based on good performance of J&K in sanction and completion of houses, the spokesperson said on May 30 this year, 199550 more PMAY AWAS PLUS houses have been sanctioned as a special dispensation, in order to ensure housing for all for all 2.65 lakhs houseless persons, who were part of PWL2019.

He further said that survey is based on clear guidelines on the basis of all houseless, those living in zero, one or two room kachha houses, besides multi layered prioritization as defined in section 4 of the scheme guidelines.

He said the guidelines are available at <https://rural.nic.in/en/documents/guidelines>

"Those houseless persons who don't have land or clear title of land or have that category of land where construction is not permitted, couldn't be sanctioned house, even if they are part of this Permanent waiting list," the spokesperson said, adding that the district wise list of such cases are available with the department and may be accessed.

Based on the field level survey, out of 199550, 2711 cases were identified who don't have clear title of land and fall in the categories, including people residing on State land, people residing on Forest land; people residing in Rakhs and Farms land, where construction is not permitted, people sitting on Custodian land; and land allotted to displaced people by Government near Dachigam park for agricultural purpose, where construction is not permitted.

Panchs, Sarpanchs Protest, Seek 'Simultaneous' Polls In J&K

Demand Merger Of DDCs, Two Year Term Extension

Majid Nabi

SRINAGAR: All J&K Panchayat Conference, an umbrella body of all Panchs and Sarpanchs, Wednesday held a protest demanding elections for all the three tiers of the Panchayats are held simultaneously in the newly carved out Union Territory.

The protesting Panchs and Sarpanchs also appealed to the administration to extend their term by two years so that developmental works hit by the centre's August 5, 2019 move and COVID-19 pandemic are completed on time.

They also demanded that elections for all the three tiers of the Panchayats should be held simultaneously and merger of DDCs are ensured for smooth functioning of Panchayati Raj system in J&K.

Chanting slogans "Extend our term by two years, ensure three-tier elections in J&K", hundreds of Panchs and Sarpanchs as per their proposed program staged a protest at Press Enclave in Srinagar to press for the simultaneous elections under a three-tier system of government.

Protesters also appealed to the government to restore full ration quota supply to J&K and ensure people won't be hit with enhanced monthly electricity bills.

They also urged the government to create a Ladakh pattern job policy so that the job rights of people of J&K are secured like that of the people of Ladakh.

"We have assembled here with a charter of demands and want the center and the

LG administration to consider those demands on priority. At the outset, all Panchayati Raj elections should be held together as per three-tier system of the government or extend our term by two more years, if elections can't be held at the moment," Shafiq Ahmad Mir, Chairman All J&K Panchayat Conference told reporters.

Mir said the government is duty-bound to resolve the issues people of J&K have been confronting on the ground including that of the reduction in ration quota supply, enhanced electricity bills and other allied issues.

He also appealed to the government to release pending wages of MGNREGA workers, which he said have not been released over the years, causing poor workers to suffer immensely.

Intermittent Rain Forecast As Temp Rises At Some Places, Drops At Others In J&K

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Amid forecast for intermittent light to moderate rain and thunderstorms at many places, night temperature recorded a drop at some areas in Jammu and Kashmir and increased at others on Wednesday.

Quoting meteorological department official, news agency GNS reported that there was a possibility of intermittent light to moderate rain and thunderstorms at many places during the next 24 hours. Intermittent light to moderate rain was expected at many places of J&K from July 6-8, he said. "Some places in plains of Jammu re-

gion may receive moderate to heavy spells during morning hours," he added.

Regarding the minimum temperature today, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of 17.3°C against 17.8°C on the previous night and it was 0.2°C above normal for the summer capital.

Qazigund, he said, recorded a low of 17.0°C against 17.8°C on the previous night and it was 1.5°C above normal for the gateway town of the Kashmir Valley.

Pahalgam, he said, recorded a low of 11.6°C against 10.3°C on the previous night and it was above normal by 0.8°C for the famous tourist resort in south Kashmir's Anantnag district. Kupwara town, he said, the

mercury settled at 15.4°C against 16.0°C on the previous night and it was below normal by 0.1°C for the north Kashmir area.

Kokernag recorded a low of 16.3°C against 15.2°C on the previous night and it was 1.4°C above normal for the place, the officials said.

Jammu recorded a low of 22.8°C against 26.7°C on the previous night and it was 2.8°C below normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal recorded a low of 18.3°C (2.0°C above normal), Batote 18.3°C (0.8°C above normal), Katra 21.8°C (below normal by 0.2°C) and Bhaderwah 17.8°C (1.8°C above normal), the official added.

Civil-Military Conference Held In Akhnoor

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Indian Army organised a conference here on Wednesday for leveraging border peoples' responsibility toward security and nation-building and promote synergy and coordination between government officials, officials said.

The "civil-military liaison" conference was organised at the military station in the Rakhmuthi area in the Akhnoor border belt.

The conference was aimed at providing a common platform for discussing various methods to leverage government social schemes and administrative welfare projects in the Jammu region, they said.

Various inclusive schemes for farmers, women, youth and marginalised communities were dwelled upon and methodologies were deliberated to increase the impact and outreach of such schemes to re-

mote border populations at the grass-roots level, officials said.

The inclusive conference was attended by members of the armed forces, civil intelligence agencies and elected government representatives.

The message of shared responsibility of each individual and department was also promulgated and well acknowledged by all participants, they said.

The nation-building efforts of the Indian Army over the last two decades in aiding the upliftment of the human development index of the region through a number of 'Sadbhavana' projects were highlighted and appreciated by the civil administration, officials said.

The conference managed to enhance the level of cooperation and instil confidence in synergising the efforts of various agencies towards sustainable economic development and nation building, they added.

DAK Seeks Increase In Retirement Age For Doctors In J&K

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Wednesday has sought increase in the retirement age for doctors in Jammu and Kashmir (JK) to 65 years.

"Enhancement of superannuation age of doctors will help utilize the services of experienced doctors for the betterment of health care," said DAK President Dr Nisar ul Hassan.

Dr Hassan said many senior faculty members in medical colleges are retiring which would create a big void in teaching hospitals.

"Already there is a shortage of faculty in medical colleges; with more senior professors retiring it will hit the medical education in JK," he said adding "the number of postgraduate and postdoctoral seats will be affected."

The DAK President said raising the retirement age would help retain the best skilled healthcare professionals thereby providing better patient care.

"It would also help in improving the teaching standards and research in teaching hospitals," he said.

Dr Nisar said life expectancy has grown significantly over the years resulting in lot of doctors wanting to work beyond the current retirement age.

"Such doctors bring with them years of experience and expertise. Therefore, retirement age of doctors certainly needs to be increased," he said.

"Presently, the age of retirement for doctors in JK is 60 years and for faculty in teaching hospitals it is 62 years.

The retirement age for central government doctors is 65 years and it should be extended to JK doctors also," he added.

Over 6,000 Amarnath Pilgrims Leave Jammu For Kashmir



Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The sixth batch of more than 6,000 Amarnath pilgrims left the Jammu city in the early hours of Tuesday for the twin base camps in Kashmir, officials said.

The 62-day annual pilgrimage to the 3,888-metre-high cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas commenced from the twin tracks of Pahalgam in Anantnag district and Baltal in Ganderbal district on July 1.

The officials said the pilgrim foothall at the shrine is likely to cross the 50,000 mark later in the day as the yatra is progressing smoothly, with devotees from across the country thronging the base camps to have a glimpse of the naturally formed ice-shivlingam and of-

fer their prayers. A total of 6,107 pilgrims, including 1,203 women, 193 seers and 31 children, left the Bhagwati Nagar base camp here for the valley in a convoy of 244 vehicles amid tight security arrangements in the early hours of Wednesday, they said.

The officials said 3,929 pilgrims, headed for Pahalgam, left in a convoy of 140 vehicles for the valley, while another convoy of 104 vehicles carrying 2,178 pilgrims was the first to leave for the Baltal base camp at 3.15 am.

With this, a total of 30,269 pilgrims have left the Jammu base camp for the valley since June 30, the day the first batch of pilgrims was flagged off by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

The yatra is scheduled to conclude on August 31.

Eco-Parks Turn Into Major Tourist Attractions In Kupwara

Witness Surge In Tourist Footfall, Promote Livelihood For The Local People

Observer News Service

KUPWARA: Eco-tourism parks developed by the Forest department in Kamraj forest division of Kupwara district are witnessing a huge visitor's influx these days owing to the forest department's successful initiatives to develop Eco-tourism infrastructure and provide livelihood opportunities to several rural households.

Nagriwari Eco Park at Hatmulla, Kairwan Eco-Park at Dever and Satbaran Eco-Park at Lastiyal Kalaroose have be-

come sure stops, most preferred Eco-tourism and biodiversity-tourism attractions in Kupwara district.

People are seen spending their quality time with their family and friends in these Eco-Parks developed under Schemes like Green India Mission and CAMPA.

As summer tourism in Kupwara district has picked up, these prominent Eco-parks are witnessing a remarkable surge in tourism activities with thousands of local visitors, families, and students of different edu-



cational institutions and environment enthusiasts thronging these parks daily. Apart from becoming main tourism attractions these parks have become sources of generation of livelihood for several families living in the close vicinity of these parks.

With slight increase in temperatures in Kupwara and other parts of North Kashmir these days, the rush of visitors has grown manifold as visitors in large numbers are seen enjoying varied flora, fauna and cool temperature of these parks located

in the foothills of lush green and thick forests.

The officials of the department estimate that per month on an average around 50,000 local visitors pay a visit to these Eco-parks.

More than 110 rural families living in the peripheral areas of these Ecotourism parks are earning their livelihood with the help of these parks.

NAGRIWARI Eco-Park, spread over an area of 7-hectares this park is located in the foot-hills of lush green forests of Compartment 82/M. This forest park

is around 5 kilometers away from district headquarters Kupwara and has been beautifully landscaped with conifer trees, medicinal and ornamental plants and native shrubs.

This Park has a natural forest setting, open class room facility for students, and informative educational signage installed for engaging students and educating them about the importance of forests.

Nagriwari-Eco-Park is an ideal location for visitors to enjoy cool breeze, ideal ambiance, captivating views and serenity

of nature. Park offers a peaceful retreat for nature lovers and adventure enthusiasts with infrastructure for adventurous activities. Besides, it provides immense opportunities for Nature Walks, Bird Watching, Photography, etc.

Nagriwari -Eco Park has been established under Scheme "Green India Mission" with the project cost of Rs.7.178 lacs during the year 2021-22. This Eco-Park has got an average tourist foot-fall of 15,000 per month, besides providing livelihood directly to 65 families.

Team India For WI T20Is Announced

Agencies

NEW DELHI: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Wednesday announced India's T20I squad for their upcoming tour of the West Indies. An official statement by the BCCI, announcing the squad, read, "The Senior Men's Selection Committee on Wednesday picked India's squad for the upcoming five-match T20I series against West Indies to be played in the Caribbean Islands and in Florida, USA."

Hardik Pandya will take the mantle of captaincy in the absence of Rohit Sharma, while Suryakumar Yadav will be his deputy. Virat Kohli is another notable absentee from the T20I squad, with Sanju Samson likely to come in at Number 3 in the batting line-up.

Both teams will lock horns for a five-match T20I series, the first of which



will be played at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Trinidad, on August 3.

The second T20I will be played at the Guyana National Stadium, Guyana on August 6 while the third will be hosted at the same venue on August 8. The fourth and the fifth T20I fixtures will be played at the Broward County Stadium, Florida on

August 12 and 13.

India's T20I squad: Ishan Kishan (wk), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Tilak Varma, Surya Kumar Yadav (VC), Sanju Samson (wk), Hardik Pandya (C), Axar Patel, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Umran Malik, Avesh Khan, Mukesh Kumar. India's Test squad:

Rohit Sharma (Captain), Shubman Gill, Rituraj Gaiwad, Virat Kohli, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Ajinkya Rahane (vice-captain), KS Bharat (wicket-keeper), Ishan Kishan (wicket-keeper), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur, Axar Patel, Mohd. Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Jaydev Unadkat, Navdeep Saini. (ANI)

Babar Azam, David Miller To Headline LPL

Agencies

NEW DELHI: Star international cricketers such as Babar Azam, Shakib Al Hasan, David Miller are ready to roar in Lanka Premier League (LPL) 2023 as the league is scheduled to be played in

Sri Lanka from July 30 to August 21.

The upcoming season will witness the presence of popular international stars such as Babar Azam, Shakib Al Hasan, David Miller as well as popular Sri Lankan stars Thisara Perera and Wanidu Hasaranga. Angelo Mathews and skipper Dasun

Shanaka among others as the matches will be held across two venues—Colombo and Kandy, for the fourth season. Star Sports will telecast the league's matches live, exclusively in India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives and MENA region including UAE. (ANI)

England Name Playing XI For 3rd Ashes Test

Agencies

LONDON: England have made three changes for the third Ashes test against Australia which begins in Headingley on Thursday with Moeen Ali, Chris Woakes and Mark Wood named in the side as the hosts look to overturn a 2-0 deficit in the series.

Fast bowlers James Anderson and Josh Tongue have been rested while vice-captain Ollie Pope has been ruled out of the rest of the series after dislocating his shoulder, which requires surgery. With Pope not in the squad, Harry Brook will be promoted to number three.

Moeen came out of retirement for the first test but the spinner injured his finger, sitting out the second encounter at Lord's. Wood was not picked for the first two tests and England will welcome his fiery pace while Woakes's all-round ability will give the hosts depth in their batting lineup.

ENGLAND SQUAD: Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Harry Brook, Joe Root, Jonny Bairstow, Ben Stokes (captain), Moeen Ali, Chris Woakes, Mark Wood, Ollie Robinson, Stuart Broad.



Srinagar Premier League: 2 Matches On Schedule Today



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The 2023 Srinagar Premier League action continues today, Thursday, July 6, with two Round 4 matches set to be played at Synthetic Turf TRC.

The first match of the day will see two formidable teams go up against each other as Real Kashmir FC takes on Downtown Heroes FC at 8:00 AM.

The second match, a 4:30 PM kick off, is a clash of two talented teams with Jhelum FC up against Kashmir Maharaja FC.

The 2023 Srinagar Premier League returned to action on

Wednesday with JK Bank FC taking on their younguns at JK Bank Academy.

The youth team put up a gritty performance in the first half and went toe-to-toe against their senior side. The Bank Academy's persistence paid off as they managed to take a shock lead in the 44th minute.

At half time, the scores read 1-0. The JK Bank Academy youngsters continued to impress as they denied JK Bank's experienced players a clear shot on goal, before adding the second in 91st minute. Huzaif was the goalscorer, as JK Bank Academy defeated JK Bank 2-0.

THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR BANK EMPLOYEES UNION

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PRESS RELEASE

A delegate session of representatives from various districts bodies of JKBEU Kashmir was held in Srinagar Today on 5th of July 2023 wherein various important issues pertaining to j&k bank employees were discussed. The meeting ended with passing of resolutions unanimously which stressed on below mentioned points.

1.To strengthen JKBEU Kashmir at district levels by holding conferences and making the members aware about discriminatory ,un ethical and violations of law by the management of the bank. 2.Taking up the issues of the harassment done to the workman class of the bank by denying certain facilities to a section of employees without any justified reason to all the quaters including BOD and owners of The Bank. 3. Strengthening our cooperation with other trade unions including JK Bank officers Association Kashmir to pursue common interests through united forum of JK Bank officers and employees. Similar delegate Sessions were also held in Jammu, Delhi, and MAHARASHTRA.

**GENERAL SECRETARY
SAJAD AHMAD BHAT
JKBEU KASHMIR**

ABBAS ADS: 7006444730

Quick eats for busy people

Chicken Crispy Burger

JK BANK LAWNS, NEAR GHAT 6, BOULEVARD-SRINAGAR