

## Navigating Potential Hazards As Trekking Gets Popular Among Kashmir Youth

Parvaiz Bhat

Until a few years back, trekking to Kashmir's alpine areas was hardly something which fascinated the locals of Kashmir. The number of adventure enthusiasts who would undertake arduous journeys to the mountains was very small. Not anymore.

In recent years, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant increase in the number of treks to Kashmir's idyllic mountain areas.

As more and more adventure

enthusiasts venture out in the highland pastures and glacial lakes, possible pitfalls and potential plastic pollution in forests is raising concern among environmentalists.

The sharp increase in expeditions to alpine areas being now undertaken by youth has pleasantly surprised the long-time trekkers. They see it as a positive trend and are hopeful that it will ultimately be helpful in conserving the forest resources with more and more youth getting familiarized with the health and recreational benefits



**THERE IS A GROWING REALIZATION ALL OVER THE WORLD THAT THE RELATIONSHIP OF HUMANKIND with nature is breaking. That is why the emphasis is on restoration of ecosystems and the decade from 2021 to 2031 has been declared as the decade for ecosystem restoration."**

of mountain biodiversity. But as trekking requires more physical strength, mental endurance, and navigation skills as it often involves more difficult terrain and longer trips with heavier loads experts are

of the view that new trekkers, even if they trek once a year, need to be mindful about the possible dangers involved. "The fact that more and more youth are now turning to nature for health and other benefits is a

welcome development. And it is particularly important in a place like Kashmir where people have gone through rough patches for over three decades," said Muhammad Aslam, a mountaineer from north Kashmir who has been on various trekking expeditions in the past 12 years.

But, he cautioned that people need to be physically fit and aware of the challenges involved in trekking. "Besides being physically fit, a trekker aspiring to be a regular trekker, needs to know that trekking involves other **More on P11**

## Inclement Weather Persists Yatra Suspended for 2nd Day, 1000's Stranded

Press Trust Of India

**Jammu/Srinagar:** The Amarnath Yatra was suspended for the second consecutive day on Saturday following incessant rains and landslides, leaving thousands of pilgrims stranded in Jammu and at various places en route to the cave shrine. Union minister Jitendra Singh assured the pilgrims that senior officials are monitoring the situation and requested them not to panic and to follow instructions issued by authorities from time to time.

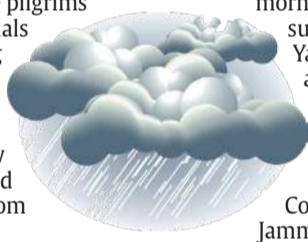
Heavy rains have lashed large parts of Jammu and Kashmir since Thursday night while several high-altitude areas, including Mahagunas Top and adjoining areas near the Amarnath cave shrine, experienced

snowfall. Some places witnessed record rainfall over a 24-hour period for July.

"The Yatra remains suspended from both Pahalgam and Baltal routes for the second day due to the inclement weather," an official said.

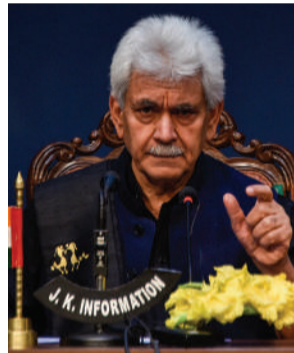
"No fresh batch of yatrins was allowed (to leave) from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp this morning in view of the suspension of the Yatra in the Valley and the inclement weather," a police official told PTI.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar said nearly 15,000 pilgrims were stranded in the Jammu region and directed deputy commissioners of five districts to increase accommodation capacity and activate Emergency **More on P11**



## LG Announces Additional 10 Kg Ration for 57 Lakh Households

- Says 14.32 lakh ration card holders to be covered under PM's FSS for priority households
- No alternative to smart meters; Power debt mounted to Rs 31000 Cr in last 4 years;
- Work on for alternate stretch at Panthal on NH; Yatra suspended due to bad weather; SSB exam dates to be out within 15 days



alternative to the smart meters as power debt bills for J&K mounted to Rs 31000 Crore in the past four years.

Addressing a press conference at Raj Bhavan here, the LG said that priority households in J&K are already getting 5 kg ration free per member per family. "From now onwards, 10 kg additional ration will be provided to each family **More on P11**

Observer News Service

**Srinagar:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Saturday announced 10 kg additional ration at subsidized rates for priority households of UT under Prime Minister's Food Supplementation Scheme for Priority households. He also said that there was no

**Azad, Bukhari Hail Govt Decision**

Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) Chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad Saturday hailed the announcement of the government to enhance the monthly ration quota for consumers. "Big thanks to the Home Minister Amit Shah, LG Manoj Sinha for heeding our protests and announcing 10 kg additional ration for 57 lakh households in J&K. Our united efforts **More on P11**

## 'Abolished Costly Durbar Move Practice'

At a separate function LG Manoj Sinha said that soon after he took over the reins of J&K on August 7, 2020, he decided to abolish the practice of annual Durbar Move that was causing a huge loss to the exchequer and that all major government services were now almost in online mode. "When the government offices shifted back to Srinagar in May 2021, the decade's long practice of Durbar move ended forever. There used **More on P11**

## 3 Minor Girls Fall In Kupwara River; 2 Rescued, 1 Missing

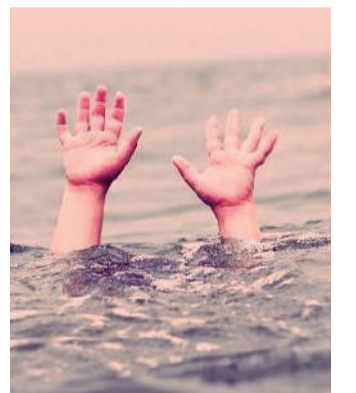
Agencies

**Srinagar:** Two minor girls were rescued and while another was untraceable after the three fell in a fast flowing Nallah Pohru in Jaggerpora village in north Kashmir's Kupwara district on Saturday afternoon, reports reaching here said.

Quoting officials, news agency GNS reported that three minor girls fell in Nallah Pohru which was in spate due to heavy rains Saturday afternoon sending shockwaves across the area. A report said the girls were walking on the wooden bridge built over the stream when slippers of one of them fell in the stream. All the three tried to retrieve it and in the process they were taken away by the currents. "Soon after the news spread, the locals and police rushed to the spot. Police and locals rescued two girls however the third one remained untraceable.

"The two girls rescued were hailing from Mughalpora Nagri while the missing girl is believed to be from Muqam-i-Shahwali Drugmulla", reports further said.

As the rescue operation was intensified to trace the missing girl, there were no signs of her



by the evening, reports said. Late in the evening Tehsildar Handwara Shahbaz Ahmad said that the operation was called off as light receded. "Given the night and darkness, the rescue operation has been called off. A large number of people, including children were there and for their safety, this measure has been taken," he said, according to news agency KNO.

The river, he said, was overflowing due to the continuous rains.

"Rescue operation was called off and shall resume early in the morning. Many other measures like traps at different places nearby have also been installed. Hopefully, the girl will be rescued early," he said.

## More Rain Likely in Next Few Days: Met dept

The meteorological department said intermittent light to moderate rain is likely to continue at most places in Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, with the possibility of heavy to very heavy showers at isolated places of the Jammu division. From July 10 to 14, the weather is likely **More on P11**

## Security Forces Remain Alert

The Army is conducting area domination patrols daily along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway with drones, surveillance equipment and sniffer dogs to ensure a secure passage for Amarnath pilgrims, officials said on Saturday. The drills on the highway are an integral part of the multi-security grid **More on P11**

## Rains Bring Down Temperature

Moderate to heavy rains lashed Jammu and Kashmir, bringing down the temperature, even as the weatherman on Saturday forecast more till July 9. A meteorological department official said that in last 24 hours till 0830 hours today, Srinagar received rainfall of 20 mm, Qazigund 94 mm, Pahalgam 73.3mm, **More on P11**

**THE YATRA IS REVIEWED TWICE EVERY DAY. WE TAKE HOURLY REPORTS. I hope the weather improves from tomorrow so that the Yatra restarts."**

## Jhelum Crosses 'Flood Alert Mark' at Sangam, Pampore

- No need to panic, monitoring situation: Govt
- Record 24-hr rainfall in Pahalgam, Banihal; Qazigund

Agencies

**Srinagar:** The water level has crossed the "flood alert mark" in the River Jhelum, sparking fears of floods among residents of low lying areas of the city especially those living around the river.

The water level increased due to the incessant rainfall in the Kashmir parts for the second consecutive day on Saturday while as the government reiterated on Saturday that there was no need to panic as the situation was being monitored closely.

There was record 24-hour-rainfall at multiple places in J&K in the month of July, which include Pahalgam and Banihal while Gulmarg, Qazigund and Kokernag recorded the second highest 24 hour precipitation.



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In Pahalgam, 73.3 mm rainfall was recorded in 24 hours, which is the highest-ever 24 hour precipitation in the month of July so far. The previous highest was 60.4 mm, which was recorded

on July 16, 1983, according to an Independent Weather Forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng. Banihal also received record-breaking 24 hour precipitation with 103.0 mm, where the previous highest

was 83.0 mm on July 25, 1995. However, Qazigund has recorded second highest 24 hour rainfall today at 94.0 mm while Kokernag and Gulmarg also recorded second highest **More on P11**

## Geared Up To Tackle Any Situation: CE I&FC

Amid rise in water level in Jhelum river and other tributaries following heavy rainfall, the government on Saturday said that it is monitoring the situation and there was no need to panic.

"Our teams have already geared up to tackle any adverse situation. The water level in Jhelum and other water bodies is increasing, but the weather as per the IMD is going to improve in the afternoon," Chief Engineer, Irrigation and Flood Control department, Naresh Kumar said, as per news agency KNO. He said that he is personally monitoring the situation and there was no need to panic.

Earlier, the department also issued a circular directing all flood zonal committees to remain alert. "In view of forecast of heavy rains predicted by the Meteorological Department from 08-07-2023 to 09-07-2023 all the **More on P11**

### SHORT TAKES

#### 2 soldiers feared drowned in Poonch

Two Army soldiers were feared drowned in a swollen stream in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district on Saturday, officials said. The soldiers were crossing the Dogra nallah at Poshana in Surankote area when they were swept away by flash floods triggered by heavy rains, the officials said. A joint rescue operation by the Army, police and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) is on but there was no trace of the soldiers who **More on P11**

#### Traffic Partially Restored On Highway

Traffic on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was restored partially this morning after remaining suspended for several hours, officials said today. Traffic control unit Ramban said that the highway is open for single way via old alignment of NH-44. Quoting deputy Commissioner, Ramban Mussarat Zia said that NHAI has made the old alignment of NH-44 motorable and vehicles have been allowed moving on one-to-one basis. **More on P11**

#### Scooty Rider Killed In Sumbal Mishap

A person lost his life and another was hospitalized with critical injuries in an unascertained nature of accident in Sumbal area of Bandipora, officials said. Two persons riding on a scooty were found in an injured condition near Baharabad village this evening. "The duo was immediately evacuated from the site to CHC Sumbal where one among them succumbed to his injuries", the official said adding the injured was referred to JVC Hospital Srinagar **More on P11**

#### 1st Hajj Flight to Arrive on July 18

With the first batch of pilgrims scheduled to return from Saudi Arabia on July 18th, after performing Hajj, the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today convened a high level meeting to review the arrangements being made for providing required facilities to Hajjis. Director Airport, SSP Traffic, ADC Sgr, CEO Hajj Committee, Jt. Commissioner SMC, SE Customs, representatives of CISF and CRPF, **More on P11**

#### Camping at Gulmarg Needs Permission Now

CEO Gulmarg Development Authority, Ghulam Jeelani Zargar Saturday said it has been observed some local visitors and tourists are installing temporary tents on green meadows and hill stocks without proper permission, which is unlawful. "The act has resulted in the destruction of greens and accumulation of excess waste, which causes inconvenience to the tourists," he said. **More on P11**

#### Lineman Electrocuted in Rajouri

A need based worker of Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDC) died on Saturday after receiving an electric shock while repairing a transformer at Manyal Gali area of Thanamandi sub division in Rajouri district. The death of the need-based worker sparked protests in the area with family members alleging the negligence of the department. The deceased has been identified as Jahangir Khan (35), son of Abdul Aziz of Azmatnabad village of Thanamandi tehsil in Rajouri district. **More on P11**



'Catch the Rain, Save the Water'  
**DC Srinagar Sets Dept Wise Timeline**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR JULY 08: To review and discuss the key action points for implementation of "Catch the Rain, Save the Water"-2023 initiative under Jal Shakti Abhiyan, a meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad here today at Meeting Hall of the DC office Complex.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Programme Officer, ICDS, Assistant Commissioner Development, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, Deputy Education Officer, Executive Engineers from Irrigation & Flood Control, SMC, PHE, REW, besides,

ity for Drinking Water" for year 2023 with the view to improve the effectiveness of consumption of water, reducing the loss of water, recharge of ground water by rain water harvesting methods and afforestation.

The DC also took a detailed review of the plans reflecting the provisions for Direct Recharge Structures (under JJM) and other indirect interventions like creation of Artificial Storages, Spring rejuvenation etc. which are being carried out under different schemes like MGNREGS, CAPEX, IWMP etc. and these works form main component of Jal Shakti Abhiyan.

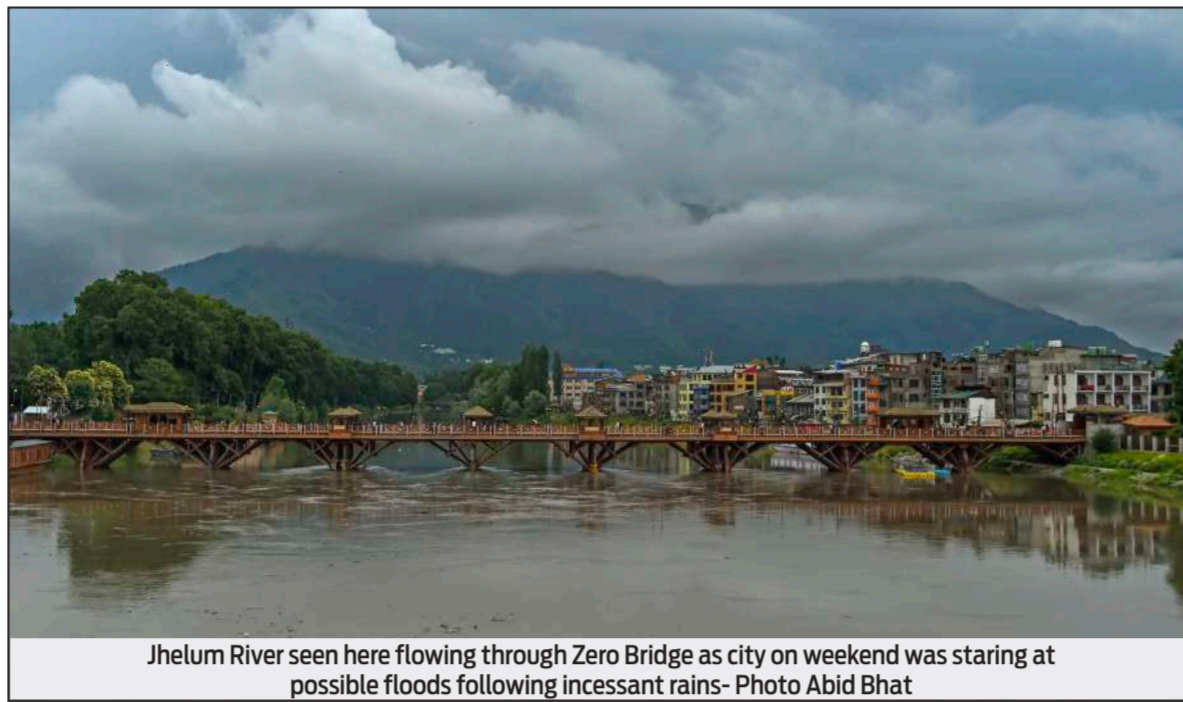
On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner set a timeline of July 11, 2023 for



representatives from Department of Ecology Environment and Remote Sensing, KVIB, and other concerned.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner held discussions regarding the implementation of "Catch the Rain, Save the Water" initiative by the line Departments under Jal Shakti Abhiyan with the central theme "Source Sustainabil-

all line Departments to frame Scientific based Conservation Plan for Source Sustainability of Drinking Water covering both rural and urban areas in the District. He stressed on making extra efforts for efficient management of water conservation and rain water harvesting, besides fully tapping ground water sources and springs across the District.



Jhelum River seen here flowing through Zero Bridge as city on weekend was staring at possible floods following incessant rains- Photo Abid Bhat

**All Set For Smooth Arrival of Hajis at Srinagar Airport**

- 1st flight with Hajj pilgrims to arrive on 18th July
- Div Com convenes meeting of officers, reviews all arrangements

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR, JULY 08: With the first batch of pilgrims scheduled to return from Saudi Arabia on July 18th, after performing Hajj, the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today convened a high level meeting to review the arrangements being made for providing required facilities to Hajjis.

Director Airport, SSP Traffic, ADC Sgr, CEO Hajj Committee, Jt. Commissioner SMC, SE Customs, representatives of CISF and CRPF, Hajj Officer, besides representatives of Jal Shakti, KPDC, Fire and Emergency, Security, Homeguards, SRTC etc. Meanwhile, Deputy Commission-

ers of all districts of Kashmir, Jammu and Kargil attended the meeting through video conferencing.

At the outset, the DC directed the concerned officers to prepare facilitation of rousing welcome to the J&K bound Hajis (Hajj Pilgrims) upon their return from Saudi Arabia after the culmination of annual pilgrimage, 2023.

The meeting was informed that 12000 Pilgrims from Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh performed Hajj this year. Return Hajj flights from Saudi Arabia to Srinagar will operate from July 18th to August 02, 2023.

A total of 38 flights shall fly Hajj pilgrims from Saudi Arabia to here, with two flights to operate on the first three days and afterwards three flights will

operate till the return of all pilgrims.

The meeting discussed threadbare various issues relating to arrival of Hajj Flights, reception, arrival timings, airlifting of luggage and Aabe-Zam Zam, deployment of Home Guards volunteers, parking facilities, vehicle passes to attendants and transport arrangements for pilgrims.

The Div Com directed CEO Hajj Committee to ensure color coded passes for attendants of pilgrims entering the airport. He also directed the concerned Officers for setting up medical facilities, deployment of fire tenders with crew, regulation of traffic at airport, besides uninterrupted drinking water and power supply at Hajj House and proper sanitation in and around Hajj House etc.

**Mayor of Srinagar addresses 'U20 Mayoral Summit' at Ahmedabad**

Says, Srinagar city has the distinction of being designated as part of UNESCO Creative Cities Network in Crafts & Folk Arts

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Mayor of Srinagar, Junaid Azim Mattu today said that Srinagar city has the distinction of being designated as a part of UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) in the field of Crafts and Folk Arts, the only second city in India in this category after Jaipur.

The Mayor of Srinagar said this while addressing U20 Mayoral Summit at Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

During his address, Mattu said, local culture plays an important role in not only how a city functions but how a city grows and redefines itself from time to time. Srinagar being the oldest and heritage city in the country has championed in surviving of traditional economy and local culture which is a great achievement in itself, he added.

Sharing his insights at the U20 Mayoral Summit's Thematic Session on "Championing Local Culture and Economy", Mattu said, championing of local culture and economy of a city is not only important from the perspective of identity as people of the city but is also important in the perspective of sustainable job creation and economic development of the city.

Mayor of Srinagar emphasized, there is a drastic need and the time has come to liberalise our laws to meet the growing urban challenges.

It is worth mention-

ing here that Junaid Azim Mattu has the privilege of participating in the U20 Urban Mayoral Summit held in Ahmedabad. Known for his visionary leadership and unwavering dedication to his city, Mattu actively engaged in the summit to contribute his valuable insights and expertise on pressing urban challenges.

Throughout the summit, Mattu actively participated in discussions and exchanges of ideas with



fellows mayors from around the world. He shared his extensive knowledge and experiences in urban development, governance, and sustainable practices, among other crucial topics that impact cities globally.

Mattu's presence at the U20 Urban Mayoral Summit not only showcased his exceptional leadership but also highlighted his city's commitment to addressing urban issues on an international platform. By actively participating in such esteemed gatherings, he ensured that the voice of his city was heard and its interests were well-represented among the global community of mayors.

**PMAY (GRAMEEN) : TRUTH & FACTS**

**Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)** was launched with the aim to provide housing at an affordable price to the weaker sections of the society, lower income group people, urban poor, and rural poor. PMAY (Grameen) started on 1.4.2016 by Ministry of rural Development, Govt under "Housing for all by 2022". Per unit assistance of 1.30 lakhs is provided per house by Govt of India under the scheme.

- **2016:** 2,57,349 Houseless cases were identified in J&K in SECC data 2011 & after due verification process - only 136152 cases were sanctioned .
- **2019:** Based on Pan India PMAY (Grameen) survey during January, 2018 to March, 2019, to identify those beneficiaries which claimed to have been left out under the 2011 SECC **2.65 Lakhs** houseless cases were recorded in J&K and target of **63426** houses was given. These houses have been sanctioned in 2022 .
- **2023:** Based on good performance **199550** more PMAY (Grameen) houses have been sanctioned as a special dispensation-Out of which **2711** cases were identified who don't own land
- Government has taken a policy decision to allot 5 marlas of land to these **2711** cases so that they can build their own houses.

**J&K Government is committed to serving poor and landless people who were deprived of basic amenities such as a roof over their head through reform measures**

ISSUED BY  
**Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj**  
**Government of Jammu & Kashmir**

## Two Men Involved In Shah Cheragh Terrorist Attack That Killed 15 Executed

Agencies

Iranian judicial authorities have executed two men who had been sentenced to death for involvement in a deadly terrorist attack last October on the revered Shah Cheragh shrine in the southern province of Fars.

Mizan news agency, affiliated with the Iranian Judiciary, reported on Saturday that the two, identified as Mohammad Ramez Rashidi and Naeim Hashem Qetali, were hanged at dawn in the provincial capital city of Shiraz, following two court sessions attended by their lawyers and the fact that Iran's Supreme Court had upheld their death penalty in mid-March.

According to the report, the men had said during their trial that they had been in contact with the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group in neighboring Afghanistan, and helped organize the attack on the holy shrine in Shiraz.

rest of 26 Takfiri terrorists for involvement in the attack. The statement said the men were nationals of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan, and none of them was Iranian.

During a court session in Shiraz on March 15, Qetali, an Afghan national, confessed to making preparations for supporting the prime attacker in Tehran and pleaded guilty to directly helping the attacker and financially supporting members of the group.

The court accused him of aiding and abetting "corruption on earth" through financial participation and support for Daesh elements in Iran.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, in a message on October 27, pledged that the perpetrators of the "outrageous" crime will definitely face punishment.

"The grief of these dears and desecration of the shrine of Ahl al Bayt will, however, not be compensated unless through



Mizan also said that other convicts, identified as Mohammad Rahmani, Mostafa Jaan-Amani and Hamidullah Kabuli, were respectively sentenced to 25, 15 and 5 years in prison.

On October 26, 2022, an armed terrorist barged into the Shah Cheragh shrine in Shiraz, killing 15 pilgrims, including women and children, and injuring dozens more before he was arrested by security forces.

The terrorist was later pronounced dead at a hospital, succumbing to injuries sustained during the attack that sent shockwaves across the country.

A few suspects were immediately nabbed, and, some two weeks later, the Intelligence Ministry announced the ar-

tracking these disastrous acts back to where they originate from and through adopting decisive and wise measures against it," the Leader said.

**IRGC repels terrorist attack in southeast Iran**

Also on Saturday morning, Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps foiled a terrorist attack on a police station in the southeast of the country, killing all four assailants.

In a statement, the IRGC said the terrorists raided the police station in the city of Zahedan in Sistan and Baluchestan province, but they faced stiff resistance from law enforcement forces stationed there and were all shot dead. Two law enforcement forces were martyred in the firefight.

## US to send cluster bombs to Ukraine, drawing criticism

AFP



The United States announced Friday it will provide cluster munitions to Ukraine for the first time as Kyiv's forces face tough fighting in their counteroffensive against invading Russian troops.

The move drew sharp criticism from rights groups due to the danger unexploded bomblets pose, but Washington said it has received assurances from Kyiv that it would minimize risk to civilians, including by not using the munitions in populated areas.

President Joe Biden told CNN that the decision to provide the munitions was "very difficult," but that Ukrainian forces were "running out of ammunition."

"They either have the weapons to stop the Russians now -- keep them from stopping the Ukrainian offensive through these areas -- or they don't. And I think they needed them," he said.

A new military aid package announced Friday includes "dual-purpose improved conventional munitions," the

Pentagon said in a statement, referring to cluster bombs.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky rapidly expressed gratitude for the "much-needed" aid, tweeting that "the expansion of Ukraine's defense capabilities will provide new tools for the de-occupation of our land and bringing peace closer."

US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan explained the decision by saying there is "a massive risk of civilian harm if Russian troops and tanks roll over Ukrainian positions and take more Ukrainian territory and subjugate more Ukrainian civilians because Ukraine does not have enough artillery."

Kyiv "has provided written assurances that it is going to use these in a very careful way," he said, noting that Ukraine's government "has every incentive to minimize risk to civilians, because it's their citizens."

Ukraine pledged that it would not use the rounds in civilian-populated areas, and would record where they use them to assist demining efforts after the war, added US Undersecretary of Defense Colin Kahl.

"Keep them in the fight"

The United States would also not provide cluster munitions with a "dud rate" of more than 2.35 percent, Kahl said, contrasting this with 30-40 percent rate of such weapons used by Russia in Ukraine.

Referring to the Ukrainian counteroffensive, he said "it's been hard sledding, because the Russians had... six months to dig in. And so those defensive belts that the Russians have put in place in the east and in the south are hard -- they'd be hard for any military to punch through."

"We want to make sure that the Ukrainians have sufficient artillery to keep them in the fight in the context of the current counteroffensive, and because things are going a little slower than some had hoped, there are very high expenditures of artillery." But rights groups have come out strongly against the United States providing the munitions.

Human Rights Watch said that "transferring these weapons would inevitably cause long-term suffering for civilians and undermine the international opprobrium of their use opposes."

## Yemen: Saudi Arabia preparing to exit costly war?

Agencies

The fractured political landscape in Yemen, long under the influence of regional powers, could soon become even more complicated.

According to the Yemen Press Agency, the first Saudi-backed administrative council opened in the region of Hadramawt in June, and the second such council is planned for later this month in the port city of Aden.

Once in place, these Saudi-backed bodies are set to foster the idea of a united Yemen -- in stark contrast to the United Arab Emirates-backed Southern Transitional Council and its quest for secession from the rest of the country.

"The timing is key, as Saudi Arabia's peace negotiations with the Iran-aligned Houthi militia seem to be failing and Saudi Arabia wants to get a foot into the country's south, although it could have done this years ago," Matthew Hedges, a London-based independent Yemen researcher and regional expert, told DW. "It could be an indication of Saudi Arabia's admittance that Yemen might split into two."

Yemen has been at war since 2014, when Houthi rebels seized

to the question of secession.

Over the past decade, Yemen has been divided into three parts: a Houthi-controlled region in the north, the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council in the south and the government-controlled rest of the country, backed by the Saudi coalition.

Saudi Arabia's real interest: Exiting the war

Observers, however, actually doubt these new councils are going to affect the political affiliations in the south.

"It is unlikely that the new council in Aden will develop into a wider community of support or to a wider political movement that can genuinely confront the Southern Transitional Council," said Hedges. In fact, he rather sees these new administrative bodies as "setting the cat among the pigeons."

This view is echoed by Mohamed al-Iriani, a research analyst at the Yemen Policy Center, an independent think tank in Sanaa. "Saudi Arabia has made repeated attempts to form a political coalition in Aden, particularly with those political factions that share aspirations for a united Yemen," he told DW. "These efforts have proven unsuccessful."

However, the researcher



the then-capital, Sanaa, and ousted the internationally recognized government. In 2015, the situation escalated when a Saudi-led coalition of nine countries, including the United Arab Emirates, intervened in an effort to restore the government, which has meanwhile become the Presidential Leadership Council. The United Arab Emirates are firm Saudi allies in all respects -- except when it comes

sees another benefit that could be provided by the Saudi-backed councils. If Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates overcome their differences in the south, these new councils "could potentially facilitate consensus-building in local dialogues among southern factions," said al-Iriani. This, he added, "could aid the Saudi-led coalition's exit from the war."

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ELECTRIC DIVISION HANDWARA**  
**KASHMIR POWER DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LIMITED (KPDCL)**  
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e-NIT No: 29 of 2023-24 Dated: 03-07-2023

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

For and on behalf of the Managing Director, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL), the Tender Floating Authority, as specified in clause 1 of BDS, invites e-bids from reputed Contractors having Valid Class-A Electrical Contractor License or equivalent license issued by Chief Electrical Inspectorate of J&K PDD/ Relevant issuing authority/ registered Firms/Bidders enlisted with CPWD/MES/Railways/GEM as per terms, conditions, technical specifications and schedules forming part of this document. The detail of work is as under:

S No.	Description of work:	Adv. Cost (Rs in Lacs)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Cost of Tender Document	AA No. & Date	Work completion Period
1	Installation of LT Network at Ward No 02 and 01 at Dahama B Panchayat Halqa Dahama B Block Ramhall	2.91	Rs 5830.00/=	Rs 208.00	43-DDCK of 2023 Dated: 15-06-2023	90 days

**TIME SCHEDULE**

A	Date & Time of Publishing of Standard Bidding Document	The Standard Bidding Document can be downloaded over <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a>
B	e-Bid submission (start) date & time	04-07-2023 02:00 PM
C	Clarification start date & time	04-07-2023 02:00 PM
D	Clarification end date & time	06-07-2023 04:00 PM
E	e-Bid submission (end) date & time	27-07-2023 04:00 PM
F	Online Commercial and Technical e-Bid opening date & time	28-07-2023 12:30 PM
G	Online financial e-Bid opening date & time (Only of the technically qualified bidders).	Will be communicated to the Technically Qualified Bidders through email.
H	Venue of opening of technical & financial e-Bids	Office of Executive Engineer Electric Division Handwara (KPDCL).

The interested bidders are requested to submit their offer along with terms, conditions, technical specifications and annexures forming part of this tender document.

- The Bidders are advised to study the Bidding Document carefully. Submission of e-Bid against this SBD shall be deemed to have been done after careful study, careful examination of the procedures, terms and conditions of the Standard Bidding Document with full understanding of its implications.
- The tender document is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table.
- The bidders need to upload the proof/cost of e-Bid document and Earnest Money Deposit as stated in the above table through Treasury Challan and CDR/ FDR respectively pledged to Executive Engineer Electric Division Handwara. The scanned copy of the Treasury Challan and CDR/ FDR must be enclosed along with the e-Bids but the original instrument should be submitted by the L1 bidder in the office of Executive Engineer Electric Division Handwara. In addition, Performance security shall be Submitted by successful Bidder L1 only pledged to the office of the Executive Engineer Electric Division Handwara. The 2% EMD of successful bidders shall be released after receipt performance security.
- In the event of date specified for e-Bids opening being declared a holiday then the due date for opening of e-Bids shall be the following working day at the appointed time and place.
- The Executive Engineer Electric Division Handwara reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-Bids/ the e-Bid process without assigning any reason thereof. The decision of Executive Engineer Electric Division Handwara will be final and binding.
- The bidders should upload Contact detail document (e.g., Address, Mobile No, e-mail ID etc.) and other document as per the SBD.
- The contractor has to get the key material, to be provided by him inspected by the PMA and or representative of the sub division and price quoted by the bidder will be inclusive of inspection expenses. No extra claim / charges will be paid. Test certificates are to be enclosed with the work done bill.
- Payments will be processed as per the availability of funds against the work done bills.
- The work has to be executed as per the approved GTP and Drawing available at <https://kpdcl.jkpcdd.net/> under "Standards and Specification".
- The contractor has to produce pre-execution, during execution & post-execution photographs (with GPS Coordinates i.e longitude & Latitude) along with SLD of the site.
- As per the Govt. Circular No: 03-JK(PDD) of 2022, dated: 23-08-2022, all new electrical installations are to be cleared by the inspection Agency of JK PDD and contractor has to process and follow-up for same.
- The contractor has to produce the test certificates of all the material for all kind of works.
- The contractor must follow all SOPs during execution of work. Any deviation in this regard the fine can be imposed and he shall be solely responsible for any un-towards or any accident at site. Besides he shall be responsible for taking all safety majors. In addition to it, he should have group insurance of his workers working at site.
- The contractor has to get the work executed under the supervision of qualified Engineer/supervisor as per the SBD conditions.
- The Bidder needs to upload all the following documents to avoid cancellation in technical Evaluation Process:
  - Cost of e-Bid Document, amount specified in the table (Only Treasury Challan shall be accepted).
  - PAN Card along with latest ITR.
  - Valid Registration Card with validity up to date.
  - GST Registration.
  - SBD.
  - Earnest Money Deposit.
  - Affidavit as per SBD.
  - Annual Financial turnover certificate

(Note: - The Bidders shall mention the e-NIT No. and name of the Firm on Treasury Challan and EMD in order to avoid using the same multiple times for different works.)

No.: EDH/1037-39 Dated: 03-07-2023

DIPK-NB-1758-23 DT: 08/07/2023

s/d  
Executive Engineer  
Electric Division Handwara

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**  
**SUB TRANSMISSION DIVISION-IIND, RAJBAGH, SRINAGAR**

**SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE**  
eNIT No STD-II /25of 2023-24 Dated 07/07/2023

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory, (In Two Cover System) is hereby invited from A-class electrical contractors/ registered firms enlisted with CPWD/MES/Railways/DGS&D and Inspection Agency/Transformer Repairing Agencies to fix "Supply Installation Testing and commissioning of 33/0.433KV 100kVA Auxillary Transformer at Receiving Station IchgamBudgam"

SNO	Description of Work	Earnest Money (In Lacs)	Estimated Cost(In Lacs)	Last date of submission of e-bid
01	Supply Installation Testing and commissioning of 33/0.433KV 100kVA Auxillary Transformer at Receiving Station IchgamBudgam	Rs 8700.00	Rs 4.34Lacs	21-07-2023; 2:30pm

- Bidders are advised to study the Bidding Document carefully. Submission of e-Bid against this SBD shall be deemed to have been done after careful study and examination of the procedures, terms and conditions of the Standard Bidding Document with full understanding of its implications by the bidder.
- The tender document is available on website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders may view or download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid on line up to date as per the details mentioned in the table below:

A	Date & Time of downloading of Standard Bidding Document	The standard Bidding Document can be downloaded over <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a> from 10-07-2023; 10:00am
B	Sale of Bid Document (Start)	10-07-2023; 10:00am
C	Sale of Bid Document (End)	21-07-2023; 2:30pm
D	e-Bid submission (start) date and time (submission of e-tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	10-07-2023; 10:00am
E	e-Bid submission (End) date and time (submission of e-tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	21-07-2023; 2:30pm
F	Online commercial and technical e-bid opening date and time	22-07-2023; 2:30pm
G	Online financial e-bid opening date & time (only of the technically qualified bidders)	Will be communicated to the technically qualified bidders
H	Venue of opening of technical & financial e-bids	The office of Executive Engineer, STD-II, Rajbagh, Srinagar
I	Cost of e-bid document	Rs 300.00 (Rupees Three Hundred Only)
J	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit	Rs 8700.00 (Rupees Eight Thousand seven hundred Only)

- The bidders need to submit the proof/Cost of e-Bid document as stated above through e-Challan/Treasury Receipt pledged to Executive Engineer, STD-II, Rajbagh, Srinagar to be credited to M.H-0801-Power payable at Srinagar. The scanned copy of the e-Challan/Treasury Receipt must be enclosed along with the e-Bids. No demand Draft shall be accepted.
- All the e-Bids must be accompanied by the scanned copy of EMD in the form of CDR / FDR only, pledged to the Executive Engineer, STD-II, Rajbagh, Srinagar. No interest would be payable on Earnest Money deposited with the Department.
- Hard Copy of e-bid (complete) shall have to be submitted to the office of the Executive Engineer, STD-II, Rajbagh, Srinagar only from the bidder who is declared L1 after opening of financial bids.
- The date and time of opening of financial bids shall be notified on web site <http://jktenders.gov.in>. This is conveyed to the qualified bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The financial bids shall be opened accordingly online on the same web site at the office of the Executive Engineer, STD-II, Rajbagh, Srinagar.
- The e-Bids will be electronically opened in the presence of bidder's representatives, who choose to attend at the identified venue on indicated date and time mentioned in the above table or any subsequent day to the convenience of the Tender Opening Committee. An authority letter of bidder representative will be required to be produced.
- The Department reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-Bids/ the e-Bid process without assigning any reason thereof. The decision of department will be final and binding.
- In the event of date specified for e-Bids opening being a holiday/ closed day for department's office then the due date for opening of e-Bids shall be the following working day at the same time and place.
- All the required documents excluding Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded by the e-Bidder electronically in the PDF format, whereas Price Schedule/BOQ should be up loaded electronically in the same BOQ sheet provided with the SBD.
- To participate in e-bidding process, bidders have to get "Digital Signature Certificate(DSC)" class III(b) as per InformationTechnologyAct-2000, to participate in online bidding.
- Hard Copy of requisite documents shall be required to be submitted only by the Lowest Tenderer along with original CDR and e-Challan/Treasury Receipt instantly after opening of e-NIT pledged to Executive Engineer, STD-II, Rajbagh, Srinagar.
- The Name of the Work/Job along with e-NIT reference should be superscripted in bold letters on the envelope and the Name/Firm should be clearly written on the cover.

The name of the bidder and e-NIT no. shall be clearly written on the cover. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. Any other information regarding e-tendering process can be had from the office of the Executive Engineer, STD-II, Rajbagh, Srinagar.

No: STD-II/1342-44/Ts  
Dated: 07-07-2023  
DIPK-NB-1752-23  
DT: 08/07/2023

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
Sub Transmission Division-II,  
Rajbagh, Srinagar.

## Mega Job Fair-2023 Opens at GDC Boys Baramulla

Around 900 enthusiastic Youth participated in the Fair

Observer News Service

**BARAMULLA:** In order to facilitate educated youth of the district with employment opportunities in different sectors, a day-long mega job fair was today inaugurated by Director Employment Jammu and Kashmir, Nissar Ahmad Wani at Government Degree College (GDC) Boys, here.

Principal GDC for Boys, Assistant Director Employment, Career Counseling Officer and EO of DE&CC Baramulla were present at the event.

The day-long mega job fair

Later, around 42 candidates were given offer letters on the spot.

During the event, the job Seekers with varied skills were shortlisted by the companies for different jobs, while participating candidates were also urged to get registered on the NCS employment portal for getting information about the job opportunities.

Addressing the gathering, the Director highlighted the importance of the event and underlined that the event would serve as an excellent platform for introducing skilled unem-



programme was organised by District Employment and Counseling Centre (DE&CC) Baramulla in active collaboration with GDC Boys Baramulla.

As many as 20 employers from different sectors including Hospitality, Banking, Finance, Insurance, Transport, IT, Education, construction etc participated in the event. The event also witnessed an overwhelming response from job seekers as around 900 plus youth across the district participated in the programme.

207 candidates were shortlisted till date for 500 vacancies offered by 20 Employers/Job Providers across the district.

employed youth of Baramulla with recruiters.

He also urged the youth to get registered with online portal jakemp.nic.in and informed them that the portal has also been integrated with NCS portal which has 1.92 lakh employers onboard. He also informed that more than 50 thousand unemployed youth from J&K have already registered at the platform.

Elaborating further, the Director asserted that the platform aimed to bridge the gap between job seekers and employers, providing an opportunity for aspiring individuals to secure meaningful employment.

## 95% of 111-Km-long Katra-Banihal Rail Line Complete: Officials

Press Trust of India

**BANIHAL/JAMMU:** Top Northern Railway officials here Saturday said 95 per cent of the work on the 111-km-long Katra-Banihal rail line has been completed.

They said Northern Railways General Manager Shobhan Chaudhuri inspected the ongoing work on the Katra-Banihal section of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Line (USBRL) project on Friday.

Chaudhuri carried out an intensive inspection of the project and other ongoing works in Jammu and Kashmir. He was accompanied by the USBRL's Chief Administrative Officer S P Mahi, Director R K Hegde and

other senior officials.

Mahi explained to the team that of the 272-kilometre stretch of the project, 161 kilometres of railway tracks have already been commissioned.

"On the remaining 111-kilometre-long Katra-Banihal section, work is completed up to 95 per cent in spite of all geological, topographical, and meteorological challenges," he said.

Chaudhuri commenced his inspection from Katra onwards by motor trolley up to tunnel T1 and thereafter, conducted an exhaustive inspection and review of tunnel T1 at the site with officers and the agency.

He further conducted an inspection of the world's highest Chenab railway bridge.

## Annual Kailash Yatra scheduled from Sept 11

DDC Doda discusses arrangements with line departments, religious organizations

Observer News Service

**BHADERWAH:** District Development Commissioner (DDC) Doda, Vishesh Mahajan today convened a meeting here in Dak Bungalow Bhaderwah to discuss the arrangements for forthcoming Yatras in the district, particularly the annual Kailash Yatra.

BDC chairman, Omi Chand; DDC counselor, Yudhvir Singh; Senior Superintendent of Police, Abdul Qayoom; ADC Bhaderwah, Chowdhary Dil Mir; Chief Medical Officer, ACD, CAHO, ASP Bhaderwah, Tehsildar Bhaderwah, BDO Bhaderwah, XEN R&B Bhaderwah, DFO Bhaderwah, XEN BDA, OC 33-CRPF, EO MC Bhaderwah, Representatives of various other departments and president Sanatan Dharam Sabha Bhaderwah, Kailash Sewa Sangh and other trustees were present in the meeting.

President Sanathan Dharam Sabha, Bhaderwah, informed the meeting about the schedule of forthcoming Kailash Yatra in the district and sought cooperation from District administration for smooth conduct of the historical Pilgrimage.

The Kailash Yatra, as informed by the president SDS, is scheduled to be held on 11th September to 12th September 2023.

The Sanatan Dharam Sabha called upon administration to make foolproof security arrangements for the pilgrims and ensure maintenance of

roads, availability of drinking water, presence of medical staffs along the route of Yatra, accommodation of pilgrims, arrangements of buses, arrangements of firewood at yatra venues, arrangements of power through Generators besides other facilities viz toilets at different locations enroute and at venues.

Responding to the issues raised by the Sabha, the DDC issued on the spot directions with respect to different Yatras which are going to be held to different religious places.

Regarding Security, SSP Doda was asked to deploy a sufficient number of police personnel along the Yatra routes to ensure the safety of pilgrims. He further directed the ASP Bhaderwah to ensure hassle free movement of vehicles carrying pilgrims.

The DFO Bhaderwah was asked to clear the inconveniences along the traditional route and make availability of firewood at kailash kund and at Hayan where Yatra will have a night halt.

The DDC stressed on making adequate provision of drinking water on the yatra route to meet the requirement of the huge rush of pilgrims expected this year. He further insisted upon the R&B department to clear the landslides on Bhaderwah Chamba road for smooth and hassle free movement of vehicles during the days of Yatra.

## Banaras Hindu University Holds Urology Alumni Meet at Srinagar

LG Sinha pays tributes to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya



Says country expects valuable contribution of alumni in critical areas of socio-economic development

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha addressed the Banaras Hindu University-BHU Urology Alumni Meet, organized by the Department of Urology, SKIMS at Srinagar, today.

In his address on the occasion, the Lt Governor lauded the significant contribution of BHU alumni to the knowledge economy and pioneering new areas of research for all round development of the country.

The Lt Governor paid tributes to Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and remembered his lifelong campaigns that have brought social and economic transformation in Indian society.

"Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya had scripted India's industrial revolution. Now, the country expects valuable contribution of alumni in critical areas of socio-economic development and in a rapidly changing global environment, we have to focus on developing indigenous capabilities," the Lt Governor said.

"Alumni have onerous responsibility of mentoring youth, building strong network to harness their existing potential to realize the dreams and ambitions of new India," the Lt Governor observed.

All the Alumni need to take a pledge to contribute to reforms, speeding up of infrastructure development and building of strong educational institutions to prepare today's young generation for tomorrow's challenges, he said.

At the Alumni Meet, the Lt Governor highlighted several milestones achieved in the

health and medical education sector of J&K.

Under the guidance of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, we are making sincere efforts to augment the health infrastructure and ensuring accessible, affordable and quality healthcare services to all, he added.

He also urged the BHU alumni for their active participation to strengthen the healthcare ecosystem of J&K UT.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor released souvenir of BHU Alumni meet, and publications on Medicos and NEET MCH Exam.

Dr Darakhshan Andrabi, Chairperson J&K Waqf Board; Bhupinder Kumar, Secretary Health and Medical Education; Prof. Parvaiz Ahmad Koul, Director SKIMS; Head of Departments from BHU and GMC, former HoDs, alumni of BHU and their family members were present on the occasion.

## CJ Inaugurates Legal Aid Clinics at Tangdhar, Teetwal

Interacts with bar, students, civil administration

Observer News Service

**KUPWARA:** On the second day of his visit to Kupwara district, Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Justice N Kotiswar Singh on Saturday inaugurated Legal Aid Clinics at Tangdhar and Teetwal and interacted with bar members, students and civil administration here.

Principal Secretary to Chief Justice M K Sharma, District and Sessions Judge Kupwara (Chairperson, DLSA Kupwara) Shazia Tabasum; Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan; Principal Government Degree College Kupwara, Prof. Haroon Rashid, SSP Kupwara, Yougal Manhas; Civil Judge/Munsiff, Tangdhar Court, Faizan I Nazari; DDC Member Karnah, Adv. Najma Hamid, President Bar association, Qazi Mehboob Illahi, Members of Bar association Karnah and local PRIs and officers of Tehsil administration were present at the inauguration functions

of legal aid clinics held at Government Degree College Tangdhar and Teetwal.

After inaugurating the Legal Aid Clinic, the Chief Justice delivered Presidential address in which he invoked the Preamble of the Constitution which calls for securing justice for all citizens to highlight the importance of providing free legal aid to vast sections of people who are still unaware of their legal rights and privileges.

"Judiciary has to play important role apart from adjudication, that is legal awareness", Justice Kotiswar said.

The Chief Justice further said that Judiciary has to ensure that people's rights are not being trampled upon and dignity of the individuals is respected. He underscored the importance of legal aid clinics in enhancing the people's access to justice.

"Legal aid clinics are one of the important ways to fulfill our Constitutional pledge of

ensuring access to justice for one and all," he said.

The Chief Justice further remarked that PLVs are foot soldiers and can play important role in making legal aid clinics more vibrant and effective by going to grassroots for legal awareness among the people to increase their access to justice.

"Legal aid clinics are one of the important ways to fulfill our Constitutional pledge of ensuring access to justice for one and all," Justice Kotiswar said. He added that our responsibility is to help those who are in need of help.

While congratulating District administration Kupwara, Chief Justice said that it is happy to note that development has taken place in Tangdhar and Teetwal areas. Rich history and contribution of Karnah residents are immense, though there are some difficulties, but by co-operation and coordination we can overcome these difficulties, he said.

## Political Process, Statehood Key to Normalcy in J&K: Karan Singh

Press Trust of India

**JAMMU:** The political process has to be restored in Jammu and Kashmir, veteran Congress leader Karan Singh said as he batted for early assembly elections in the Union Territory as well as reinstating its statehood.

He also acknowledged that the law and order situation is "better" in Jammu and Kashmir, saying there has been a cessation of shutdown calls and "Hurriyat fatwas". But it cannot be claimed that there is "100 per cent complete control", Singh told PTI in an interview.



in Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

To a question on peace and normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir, he said calls for shutdowns and "Hurriyat fatwas" have ceased, resulting in a better environment.

"The calls (for shutdown) and fatwas of Hurriyat are now shut. Law and order is better. But we cannot say that everything is 100 per cent under control. At any time something could happen. But it (situation) has improved," Singh said.

The Congress leader also noted that development projects are being implemented in the region and mentioned those for the Dal Lake and under the Smart Cities programme.

On the current political developments, Singh said in a democracy, both the government and the opposition should be strong. He viewed the emergence of a robust opposition as a positive development.

"In a democracy, the government should be strong and the opposition should also be strong. It is a good thing that the opposition is emerging as strong," the Congress leader said.

On whether the June 23 opposition meet in Patna indicated a growing strength of the opposition, Singh suggested that it is too soon to draw conclusions. "Let us see. Too soon to say. Let us see what will happen in the days to come," he said.

## NEET Qualifiers, 10th/12th Class Toppers of Kashmir Dvn Felicitated



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Principal Secretary, Education department, Alok Kumar today felicitated the NEET qualifiers as well as 10th and 12th class toppers of Kashmir Division in a function organised by Directorate of School Education Kashmir at Government Girls Higher Secondary Kothibagh here.

Special Secretary SED, Naseer Ahmed Wani; Project Director Samagra, Deep Raj Kanethia; Director School Education Kashmir, Tassaduq Hussain Mir, CEOs, Principals of Higher Secondary Schools, Teachers, Parents and large number of students were present on the occasion.

Speaking during the felicitation ceremony, the Principal

Secretary highlighted that these achievers should remain connected to their alma mater and keep passing on this legacy to other students. He advised the achievers to give back to the society what they have achieved and give due credits to the teachers and the parents for this success.

Alok Kumar, on the occasion, also advised the students to take full benefits of Prime Minister's Scholarship scheme.

While speaking on the occasion, Director School Education Kashmir emphasized that the students should follow these success stories and work hard as there is no short cut to success. He added that the achievers should mentor others for achieving the same feat.

## Implementing UCC Not Easy Like Revoking Article 370: Azad

**SRINAGAR:** Former Union minister Ghulam Nabi Azad on Saturday cautioned the Centre over implementing a uniform civil code, saying it will affect all religions.

Talking to reporters here, he also said that implementing UCC will not be "easy as it was to revoke Article 370".

"There is no question (of implementing it). It is not easy as it was to revoke Article 370. All religions are involved in it. Not only Muslims, but Christians and Sikhs also, tribals, Jains, Parsis, annoying all these people at once, will not be good for any government," the chairman of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) said.

"So, I suggest this government to not even think about taking this step," he said.

UCC refers to a common set of laws that are applicable to all citizens of India that is not based on religion and dealing with marriage, divorce, inheritance and adoption among other matters.

The DPAP chairman welcomed the announcement of the land-for-landless policy by the Jammu and Kashmir administration, but demanded that land be given only to the poor residents of the Union Territory and not outsiders.

"Land should be given, but there is a condition. We welcome the announcement, but it should (be given) only to the poor residents of Jammu and Kashmir. That is important," he said.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER DEPARTMENT OF FLORICULTURE KASHMIR SRINAGAR

e-NIT No: 16 of 2023-24 Dated: 08.07.2023.

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory, J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Registered Manufacturers /Suppliers/Authorized Dealer/ Distributors/Firms with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In lacs)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs.)	Class of Participants	Major A/c Head
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
01.	Supplying of Electronic Devices for the Office of Ex. Engineer, Floriculture Department Kashmir.	03.29	8580/-	200/-	Manufacturers/Authorized Dealers/Distributors.	Capex Budget 2023-24

Position of AAA/TS : Accorded

Position of funds : Available

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:-

1.	Period of downloading of bidding Document	08/07/2023 from 04:00 PM to 18/07/2023 up to 04:00 PM
2.	Bid submission Start Date.	04/07/2023 from 04:30 PM
3.	Bid submission End date	18/07/2023 up to 04:00 PM
4.	Date and time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	19/07/2023 at 02:00 PM

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of e-Challan/copy of receipt from Treasury favouring of Executive Engineer, Floriculture Department Kashmir (Tender inviting authority) indicating name of work by crediting the requisite charges to the MH: 0406-02-112-Public Gardens (Floriculture Department Kashmir) in favour of Executive Engineer (Tender inviting authority)
- Intending bidders must upload earnest money (EMD @ 2% of the Advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e Executive Engineer Floriculture Department Kashmir.
- The 1st Lowest (Successful bidder) has to produce an amount equal to 5% of cost of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer Floriculture Department Kashmir (Tender receiving authority) within three (03) days before fixation of Contract and shall be released after successful completion of work. However, the earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the total cost, which will be released after successful completion of the work/DLP.
- No exemption is allowed and so all bidders must upload proof of EMD and Tender processing Fee.

No: EE/FDK/810-15  
Dated: 08.07.2023  
DIPK-4738-23  
DT: 08/07/2023

Sd/-  
(Er. Syed Hilal Ahmad)  
Executive Engineer  
Department of Floriculture,  
KASHMIR

# Symbolic Gestures and Littered Aftermaths

SOHAIL KHAN

“There’s urgency to move beyond symbolism and embrace everyday actions that protect our environment. It is only through our collective effort that we can create a sustainable future where our parks, water bodies, roads, and streets remain clean and vibrant

In recent times, we have witnessed both moments of hope and despair in our efforts to protect the environment. On occasions such as Eid ul Azha and World Environment Day, we have seen contrasting attitudes of people towards their surroundings. While the surge in visitors to public parks during Eid was a positive sign for the local economy, the subsequent littering was rather irresponsible.

Similarly, the grand gestures and symbolic actions taken on recently observed World Environment Day raise the question of whether they truly lead to lasting change. It is crucial for us to reflect on these experiences and observations, and emphasize the need to move beyond symbolism and embrace the spirit of environmental responsibility every single day.

## THE PARADOX OF CELEBRATIONS

Eid ul Azha, a festive occasion celebrated with joy and enthusiasm, brought families and friends together in parks and gardens. A celebration of communal harmony and togetherness, transformed parks and gardens into vibrant hubs of festivity.

The surge in visitors highlighted the significant role of these public spaces in our local economy.

However, the aftermath presented a disheartening sight: bottles, chip packs, and polythene scattered across the parks. This glaring lack of civic sense reminded us that the respect and care for our environment should be integral to our celebrations. It is essential to create awareness among people about the impact of their actions and encourage responsible behavior during such gatherings.

## THE SYMBOLISM OF WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

The World Environment Day, an occasion observed globally, aims to promote environmental awareness and encourage positive action. Schools, colleges, government officials, and various organizations come together to organize seminars and cleanliness drives. This year too saw many colleges and schools going all out in celebrating this day.

While these events may generate enthusiasm and temporarily highlight the importance of environmental protection, we must question



their long-term impact. Are they merely symbolic gestures, or can they bring about lasting change?

## TRANSCENDING SYMBOLISM, A CALL TO ACTION

As concerned individuals and communities, we need to transcend symbolism and embrace the spirit of environmental responsibility every single day. It is not supposed to be a one-off incident but needs to be ingrained in our habits. Environmental consciousness must be a part of our ethical outlook towards the world and we must religiously uphold it.

One can take minor steps in the direction and create changes at community levels. For instance, the experiences of witnessing both the festive littering and the grandeur of World Environment Day motivated our team 'Social Concern Group', a team of green volunteers to take action. In Manasbal, we organized a cleanliness drive within the park to sensitize people about the need for behavior change. By directly engaging with the visitors, we conveyed the message of responsible waste disposal and the importance of preserving our natural spaces.

It is essential to involve communities and individuals in the ongoing effort to protect the environment. Education plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes and behaviors. Collaborating with schools and col-

leges, we can integrate environmental awareness into curricula and organize interactive sessions that encourage students to take action. Empowering local communities through workshops and skill development programs can also promote sustainable practices and help generate a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the environment. Symbolic gestures alone cannot solve the environmental challenges we face. Governments and institutions need to reinforce the significance of everyday environmental stewardship. This can be achieved through policy reforms, investment in waste management infrastructure, and strict enforcement of environmental regulations. By aligning economic incentives with sustainable practices, we can create a society where environmental responsibility becomes the norm rather than the exception.

## ISLAM AND THE ENVIRONMENT

As we seek to move beyond symbolism and embrace a culture of environmental consciousness, it is essential to look to the teachings of Islam and the Quran. Islam emphasizes the preservation and conservation of the environment as a sacred duty bestowed upon humanity. The Quran teaches us that Allah has created the Earth as a place of balance and harmony, and it is our responsibility to be its guardians and protectors. Numer-

ous verses in the Quran call for the preservation of nature, emphasizing the importance of water bodies, trees, and the overall balance of the ecosystem. By understanding the significance of incorporating Islamic teachings in our efforts to protect the environment & integrating the teachings of Islam into our cleanliness drives and awareness campaigns, we can highlight the religious duty of preserving our surroundings. This approach can help us connect with a wider audience and reinforce the message of responsible waste disposal and the protection of water bodies.

There’s urgency to move beyond symbolism and embrace everyday actions that protect our environment. It is only through our collective effort that we can create a sustainable future where our parks, water bodies, roads, and streets remain clean and vibrant. Let us make every day World Environment Day and ensure that our actions, as individuals and as a community, speak louder than words.

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

The author is the president of Social Concern Group and is associated with J&K RTI movement

Only a couple of months ago, I wrote a column suggesting that the issue of a Uniform Civil Code would be highlighted by the BJP in the run up to the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

This is after all, the last big ideological big ticket agenda of the sangh parivar- the other two were the hollowing of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir and the construction of a Ram Mandir.

Lo and behold, on the 28th of June, the Prime Minister pushed for a Uniform Civil Code, or UCC, in a speech to BJP workers in Madhya Pradesh, where he exhorted that the country “could not run with the dual system of separate laws for separate communities”.

A Uniform Civil Code will essentially ensure a single law for all on marriage, divorce and inheritance irrespective of religion. But implementation on the ground is far more complicated. The personal laws of all religions are not uniform. Hindus have several laws governing them, as do Muslims and Christians.

There are hundreds of tribes in the northeast which have their own customs. Those opposed to it say a Uniform Civil Code will undermine the social and religious customs of different religions and hurt India’s unity in diversity.

Many gender rights activists however support the idea of a uniform law that would end discrimination against women regarding divorce and alimony. Wrong side of a polarised debate

## The Big Battle Over India's Uniform Civil Code

From marriage to inheritance: Unraveling complexities of implementing the UCC in India

Nidhi Razdan

The pitch from the Prime Minister himself has sent political circles into a tizzy. For one, it has rankled in the opposition camp and could see differences over the issue come out into the open.

Worried that this could see it on the wrong side of a polarised debate, the Congress has officially taken a cautious line saying it would wait to see the details of a draft bill first.

Though Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said that a UCC was neither “necessary nor desirable at this stage”. The Uddhav Thackeray’s faction of the Shiv Sena, which is an ally of the Congress, has however supported a uniform civil code.

The Aam Aadmi Party or the AAP meanwhile has welcomed a Uniform Civil Code in principle but suggested a proper debate and discussion with stake-

“A Uniform Civil Code will essentially ensure a single law for all on marriage, divorce and inheritance irrespective of religion. But implementation on the ground is far more complicated. The personal laws of all religions are not uniform. Hindus have several laws governing them, as do Muslims and Christians.

holders first. However its Chief Minister in Punjab, Bhagwant Mann, took a different line this week comparing India to a bouquet of flowers asking “should there be only one colour in a bouquet?” while talking about every religion with its own culture and customs.

## Exceptions to the rule

For the BJP too, it won’t be politically easy. Its allies in the northeast in particular are against a uniform civil code since these states have a majority tribal population that is covered by its own laws and customs.

The Chief Minister of Meghalaya and NPP leader Conrad Sangma has taken a strong stand saying that the UCC is against the idea of India.

Another BJP ally, the National

Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP), in Nagaland has opposed the law and so has Mizoram’s ruling Mizo National Front (MNF). In Nagaland, more than 86% of the population belongs to Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities which have protections under the law for their own customs.

There were heated arguments on the issue at a parliamentary panel meeting chaired by BJP MP Sushil Modi last week.

Mr Modi suggested there could be exemptions for tribals in the new Uniform Civil Code law, prompting the opposition to mock the Prime Minister’s call for “a dual system of separate laws”.

What is the point of a uniform civil code if there are exceptions?

For the BJP, this is a win win either way. The very fact that there is now a huge political debate around a uniform civil code could polarise voters ahead of the next general election and work to their advantage. Even if they don’t actually manage to bring in a uniform law before that.

For the opposition, this will test their unity efforts once again and their ability to keep the focus on bijli, sadak, paani.

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 Gulf News

# The Sikh Neighbours at Our Hajj Farewell

Haneen Farid

Last month, Jammu & Kashmir witnessed 12,000 pilgrims leave for Saudi Arabia to perform Hajj. Among these thousands of people were two of my family members who were preparing to leave from the city of Baramulla. As is the custom in our hometown, several friends, relatives, and neighbours paid us a visit during the days leading up to the pilgrimage. Whilst this tradition of loved ones visiting us as a show of emotional support was a common courtesy, what was not as common a sight- at least for me- was the active participation of Sikh individuals in this tradition.

For instance, on the eve before the date of travel, we hosted a get-together in our locality when our Sikh neighbour, wearing a Khalsa band over his turban, walked into the house and joined in on the gathering. Not long after, our local imam also entered the living room and his face lit up with happiness upon spotting our neighbour. Not only this, it was undoubtedly him, amongst all the Muslims, who got the biggest hug from imam sa'ab. It was precisely this show of love that drew my attention to the harmony which exists in certain Kashmiri communities and is surprisingly left out of mainstream discussions on the valley.

So in our locality again, there lives a single Sikh family, one of the other members of which is Geet\*. I had the opportunity to speak to her about her experience living in an all-Muslim locality; in a nutshell she says, 'pyaar bohoh hai. Agar humein Kashmir na ho, hum kahin nahi reh sakte. Main toh reh nahi sakti, mujhe toh Kashmir itna



achha lagta hai' (there is lots of love here. We cannot stay anywhere else but in Kashmir. I, for one, can definitely not stay elsewhere, that is how much I like Kashmir).

And there are several examples of how we appreciate each other's identities, where even the smallest of gestures strengthen the bond between us.

On Eid, for example, our elders visit Geet and her family to give their children Eidi. Then on their festivals, they distribute sweets in the neighbourhood. We live as one big family, not

once stopping to differentiate between our religious and cultural differences, which truly dissolve in the face of brotherhood that we share. And this sentiment of goodwill is unwavering- so much so that even during the peak of militancy, there was not a single moment when Geet or her family felt unsafe.

It was at this time that hundreds of people would march and raise political slogans, still no one ever made them feel unsafe. As a matter of fact, not very far from the Mohalla is the Baramulla

old town, known for protests in the past.

Geet shares that her in-laws lived in the old town during this tumultuous time, and no one ever tried to harm them: 'Aaraam se rehte the, kabhi kuchh kaha nahi sardaaron ko' (they lived peacefully, no one ever said anything to the Sikhs).

A similar experience is shared by Roop\*, a Sikh who grew up in Batpora, Baramulla. Overall, she describes Kashmiri society as mostly inclusive. In fact, the people of Baramulla felt so secure around each other that a lot of

houses did not have any walls or barricades separating them from each other. When questioned about any negative episodes in context of her religious identity, she struggles to think of many but recalls that in 2008, certain protestors verbally assaulted Roop and her father in their locality by calling them 'kaafirs', saying that they should leave Kashmir. In spite of this dreadful occurrence, Roop states that she does not look at these people as representatives of the general Kashmiri society. Besides, she confidently says that her feelings towards the valley and its people are mostly pleasant, and that is what must be focused on in sensitive times- the goodness. Because it is only this goodness that can overshadow any evil that plagues our beautiful valley.

So while we seek to address some instances of the persecution of religious minorities in Kashmir, it is important for us to simultaneously study portions of the valley which remain a safe haven for people such as Roop and Geet. This would enable not only an understanding of the conditions of tolerance in this region but also ensure that a single narrative does not unjustly come to define the valley. Looking at Kashmir from this objective lens in addition to conceptualising the dynamics that allow for peaceful coexistence would pave the way for long-term harmony.

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

The author is a student at King's College London and is an intern at Kashmir Observer

## Unimagining Muslim Women The Spurious Art of Representation

MARIYA BINT REHAN

There is very little Muslim women, in particular, have gained from the spurious art of being 'represented' in the media. In film and TV it has given us the unironically crafted character arc of being abstractly, and totally inexplicably 'dehijabed' as a means of self-discovery and joy. There are scant few Muslim women on screen that aren't liberated by a mediocre white boy with a just-broken voice and boy-band hair whose super power appears to be depinning head cloth and inhibitions. Representations in literature remain honourably loyal to the age-old 'behind the veil' trope with its strong allusions to an 'Arabian Nights', heavily kohled, air thick with smoke, musk and mysterious flutes kind of vibe. Bless. And of course, in advertising we can't seem to divorce our long-standing friend, and humanising accessory that is the skateboard. Because Muslim women on wheels are more deserving of empathy and praise than when we come detached from our sporting prop.

The sometimes obsessive act of 'reimagining' the Muslim woman by those that aren't her is fraudulent in nature. In early orientalist art, with work going as far back as the early 19th century, the painterly gaze of artists from Europe and North America who depicted the Middle East and North African world as lands of 'beauty and intrigue', hit a frustrating wall when it came to Muslim women. Seeing Muslim women as an extension of the land they sought in conquest, they often depicted the women they were restricted from viewing in their work. Often their curiosity and lustful eyes would lead to fantasy depictions of the harems that so ignited their interest and which were so out of their visual reach.

These earliest portrayals of Muslim women were rooted in nothing other than the Western imagination of a hidden and unfathomable world; they are mirrors to those surveying men, and not windows into the lives and beings of their subjects. In fact, they have nothing to do with Muslim women, and totally ignore their reality. In this way, they speak more of those that are trying to imagine than those they attempt to conceptualise. Since this early practice of 'imagining' the Muslim woman, we have had a barrage of equally criminal 'reimagining' of Muslim women built upon and in response to this falsehood, and ultimately, someone else's ego and vanity.

The Muslim woman as a prop for others' sense of cultural and intellectual superiority is the common thread that unites this circus of caricatures that are dotted through western vi-

sual culture and history. All in the name of representing the unrepresentable.

Amongst the most frustrating of these genres, and the one which exemplifies this ballooning trend as charlatan in nature, is the 'high-art' world of photography which claims to use a post-modern, self-referential irony to subvert this dehumanising trend. The supposedly dissenting image of the darkly veiled, often niqabed, Muslim woman juxtaposed with some wildly annoying, superficial reference to 'modernity' as a statement about Muslim women not fitting a 'stereotype' is so tired and recycled, that it has become an acceptable, and lazy, shorthand for a seditious art supporting us.

It embodies the most obvious and insulting 'Muslim woman as submissive, voiceless object' trope to make some supposedly tongue-in-cheek commentary about the art world. This art 'knowingly' claims to be the mirror and not the window, though the results and impact remain frustratingly the same - an entrenching of visual and symbolic tropes which objectify Muslim women and which provide a smug, self-congratulatory satisfaction to the audience who 'get it'.

If visual media plays architect to our cultural values, this constant barrage of imagery which paints the Muslim woman as subdued and subordinated does nothing to challenge the harmful assumptions regarding us, nor the material realities that underpin and reinforce it. It is effectively adding to a dumping ground of negative imagery associated with Muslim women and does nothing to move us forward culturally. In claiming to be disruptive, it reduces our worth to a symbolic opposite of a specific idea of 'modernity'. The Muslim woman is further objectified in the name of her de-objectification and the world of high art sets the visual tone and cultural precedent for representation in all art and media downstream from it. It further cements an infantilising narrative while claiming, in its purportedly visionary and groundbreaking position, to do the opposite.

Worryingly, we as Muslim women have come to accept it as part of our narrative. Tellingly, these images are overwhelmingly photographed and directed by men, and those that do not identify as Muslim. Their proximity to Muslim women - either as Muslim men, or hailing from a Muslim background, means they can to all intents and purposes, position themselves as allies, and their visually regressive work a clever act of solidarity. Often it is seen as a kind of benevolence, as though a mere reference to our continued dehumanisation is enough.

Its special trick is to bring the 'subtext' of how Muslim women are regressively portrayed, to the very surface. It claims by directly visu-

ally referencing our subjugation - in simply foregrounding and 'ironically' engaging in this reductive symbolism of false representation of Muslim women - it is doing all the muscle work of exposing and deconstructing these stereotypes. Due to its modern, 'edgy', often urban or faux-parochial-twee aesthetic it is accepted as a 'minority' perspective - in as far as minority perspectives are understood - and is therefore automatically given the rubber stamp of 'authenticity' and speaking on our behalf.

It commands respect both due to this supposedly subversive look and nature, and in how unabashed and obvious it is - the inverted logic that the idea of putting a niqabi woman on a bike/holding a boombox/covered in a corporate logo is so obviously insulting, it has to be supportive? It's so shockingly rude, and saying the quiet bits out loud that it must be trying to make a point. Right?

This is part of a broader trend in the art world, made up overwhelmingly of those from privileged backgrounds, in which the symbols of the 'oppressed' or 'disadvantaged' are used in crude and shocking ways to make vague and nebulous points. By employing a shallow symbolism, this trend seems to further that oppression, while claiming impunity for being 'socially conscious' or 'aware'. It is also a symptom of a more niche trend that exists amongst artists of a Muslim background. Many of whom gain popularity and currency from their secular identity and viewpoints in their homeland, while simultaneously depending on their Muslim identity to gain 'diversity' points and get their foot in the door in the West. This raises some pertinent and much needed questions about what pass as 'acceptable' identities, expressions and subjects in the global art world and why.

What do we feel comfortable viewing in sanitised frames, in our clinical galleries, and what does this say about our need for affirmation, and our generosity in extending understanding and solidarity?

These postmodern era representations of Muslim women are problematic for a number of reasons beyond just the sheer gall of using Muslim women as objects of juxtaposition. Just like advertising, broadcast and literature, this constant 'rediscovering' of the Muslim woman as human - having agency, complexity, whim and will, beauty and humour - done safely from behind the lens assumes a default audience position of seeing her as less so. It already sets the tone by which it wants to arrogantly act as a resistance to; the conceptual frame it puts Muslim women in is one of a submissive, static and one dimensional stereotype. In constantly 'rediscovering' Muslim women, it pushes us further away from the signified 'human'. It does not-

ing to advance a conversation which seems to be stuck on the surprise element of the Muslim woman as agent. This constant revisiting of the Muslim as anything other than an insentient, pliable being reinforces the assumption that she is so. It assumes very little of Muslim women to begin with, and works lazily from this vantage point alone.

It continues a centuries-old conversation with the viewer - this time, rather than crafting and pandering to the ignorance of the audience, it gives it a knowing wink and nudge. This trend is not some altruistic gesture working to humanise Muslim women and launder their public image - and that's even before we address the binary code it endorses. Rather, this artwork is self-indulgent, attributing humanity to the consumer of this media. It tells the audience they are generous for understanding, being in on the joke.

Once again, in continuing a tradition dating back to the birth of orientalism, it gives the audience, the surveyor, those that are doing the 'perceiving' the upper hand - it attributes superiority to them because they may be able to conceive this as a false representation of Muslim women. It is congratulating an audience on the bare minimum of being able to potentially envision Muslim women outside of a narrow and constricted stereotype - not actually attributing anything of substance to Muslim women outside of it. It is the art world equivalent of your, otherwise respectful, elderly History teacher telling you not to worry, he knows Muslim women can be 'modern' or reassure you that he knows not all of you wear that silly thing on your head - it assumes very little of the hijab itself, reducing it to a barrier for male consumption, and using it as a symbolic 'other' to modernity. Once again Muslim women are not part of, nor do we want to have anything to do with, the rambling and incoherent conversations between one man - in this case the paternal and aging art world - and himself. What is painfully telling is that most Muslim women do not in earnest engage with this suffocatingly limited paradigm. We do not base our understanding of ourselves or our faith on such ridiculously poor assumptions.

The idea of 'representing' Muslim women is erroneous because there is no homogeneity to represent.

The hijab itself as separate to us as women and as an expression of our beautiful faith remains something that will be alien to an external agent - be that men or non-Muslims - and which will resist the net of social, cultural and anthropological definitions or expressions. One of the many and Divinely set functions of hijab is to act as an equalizer - there is beauty in its

democratising nature that is hard to discern in a world of mass consumerism and the hyper individualism that it breeds and feeds off. The hijab is not anchored in a value system which privileges a superficial beauty or the charms of fashion, and its notion of exclusivity or being 'seen'. Like Islam, the hijab demands more of us, intellectually and morally. And that is no bad thing.

For an edict that we are blessed to have been sent directly from Allah, it becomes impossible to discuss, analyse or dissect on any other terms than from Islam itself. The tools, language and experience of 'representing' hijab - be it visually or through other forms of media and literature - do not exist because it is Divinely ordained and therefore unfathomable to those that don't share that faith or experience. The problem isn't with the hijab, the issue lies with the very flawed nature of representation in a world that doesn't understand the beauty and sincerity of faith. The issue is the act of representation itself. Perhaps we would be better off dissecting, analysing and foregrounding this obsessive act of representing, of being able to fit neatly into a conceptual box, and what this says about our own self-flattery and ego, our own attempt to colonise knowledge and understanding in a world created by His Majesty.

In a world of Only Fans, ubiquitous cosmetic enhancement and a titanous beauty industry, the act of covering, and modesty as an endeavour, remains radical in the most unparallel of ways. When we are encouraged to share, reveal our inner and outer world, the quiet act of keeping something to yourself will always defy understanding. Islam in itself is iconoclastic, it came and rebuked traditions and continues to defy and rebuke traditions today. As half the world continues to argue that the hijab is a tool of patriarchy furthered only by men, while the other half argue condescendingly that it is modern as though this is a qualifying feature, the truth remains that the hijab, and most women who have the privilege of wearing it, is centring Allah and not men, society, nor the concept of modernity. As women are encouraged to dress, redress, shape and reshape themselves in line with a standard that revolves around the male vantage, and changing fashions, the hijab and niqab will always remain a thing of curiosity and astonishment. This idea is simple not one that the art, corporate, literary or media world has the range to cover.

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 Amaliah









## J&K Wushu Team For Junior National Finalised

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The three-day selection trial for finalizing the Junior J&K Wushu team for the 22nd National Wushu Championship concluded on Saturday at Sher-i-Kashmir Indoor Sports Complex here.

The team shall participate in the national championship being held in Patna from 6th to 11th August, next month. More than 300 players drawn from sixteen districts participated in the trials.

The selection committee headed by national coach and Dronacharya awardee Kuldeep Handoo also included Maqsood Rather, Kamal Kishore, and Ajaz Hassan. The final team was short-listed based on the performances during the sparring. Mohammad Iqbal, Manager Sheri Kashmir Indoor Sports Complex Srinagar was the observer on the occasion.

The J&K team is hopeful of put-

ting on an exceptional show in the championship. Pertinently in the last outing, the J&K Wushu team emerged as 2nd runner-up, and Ayera Chisti, one of the team members was selected to represent the national team in the 7th Junior World Wushu championship in Indonesia. Ayera had done justice to her selection by bagging a bronze medal in the championship.

As per the handout of the Wushu Association of India, the medalist of the championship will be shortlisted for the NCOE centers for the preparation of the Indian Junior Wushu team for the forthcoming Youth Olympic, World, Asian, and Youth Asian Games.

Secretary Youth Services and Sports department, Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary Sports Council, Nuzhat Gull, President and General Secretary Wushu Association of J&K all wished the team their best.

## Lord's Museum Documents Empire Of Cricket With New Exhibition



Press Trust of India

**LONDON:** The bat used by K S Ranjitsinhji, well-known as Ranji, to score his unbeaten 154 in his Test debut over a century ago in July 1896 and the ball from the infamous Bodyline England versus Australia series of 1932-33 are among the iconic items on display at a new exhibition at Lord's Cricket Ground Museum.

'No Foreign Field: MCC and the Empire of Cricket' is a documentation of the vast expansive spread of cricket, its association with the British Empire and the winds of change for the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) over the decades. Divided across segments of First Contact, Building Connections, Tours and the Imperial Bond, Conflict and Transition, the new exhibition which opened recently is now part of any tour of the Lord's ground until early next year.

"The story of this exhibition is essentially the global spread of cricket around the world and that tracked the spread of the British empire," said Neil Robinson, Head of Heritage and Collections at MCC.

"The same way that the empire was governed from London, cricket was governed from Lord's by MCC. We look at how that sometimes caused conflict and how the power structures that were developing overseas began to draw that power balance away from Lord's towards a new home in Asia (Dubai) where it stands today," he explained.

The new curation at the museum uses objects and artefacts from the MCC's archives as a self-reflective exercise that throws up some fascinating insights, complete with a multimedia feel.

"The aim is to showcase a new way of thinking about the relationship between the MCC, cricket and empire," said Dr Prashant Kidambi, a historian at Leicester University and author of 'Cricket Country: An Indian Odyssey in the Age of Empire', who collaborated on the project.

"It tries to tell the story of how the MCC was implicated in cricket as an imperial game, how it played a role in the global spread of cricket and also how the club's actions and activities generated imperial bonds but also produced conflicts," he said.

## Ashes: England Seek Wickets After Rain Delay



Agencies

**LEEDS:** England's quest for Australia wickets in the third Ashes Test at Headingley resumed Saturday after rain had kept the players off the field for most of the third day.

Following an umpires' inspection, the game eventually restarted at 1545 GMT only for a fresh shower to halt play again after just one over from Chris Woakes yielded two runs.

But minutes later the match got going again, with the Test on a knife edge.

Australia were 118-4 in their second innings, a lead of 144 runs, as they looked to go 3-0 up in the five-match series and secure a first Ashes campaign triumph in England since 2001.

The gloomy overhead skies in Leeds were set to make life

difficult for Australia's batsmen.

Mitchell Marsh, who has already marked his first Test in nearly four years with a brilliant run-a-ball 118 in Australia's first innings, was 18 not out and Travis Head 19 not out.

Their fifth-wicket partnership of 155 was the cornerstone of Australia's first-innings 263.

England had slumped to 142-7 at lunch on Friday before captain Ben Stokes's dashing 80 took his side to 237 all out.

That left England just 26 runs behind on first innings, despite Australia skipper Pat Cummins's impressive haul of 6-91.

Stokes also hit a blistering 155 in the second Test at Lord's last week as England suffered a 43-run defeat.

Friday's innings revived

memories of Stokes's Ashes heroics at Headingley four years ago, when his astounding unbeaten century guided England to a remarkable one-wicket win over Australia.

England's 362-9 in that chase is the second-highest fourth-innings total to win a Test at Headingley.

The lengthy break in the action could help England's injury concerns, with seamer Ollie Robinson yet to bowl since suffering back spasms on the first day and all-rounder Stokes batting a longstanding left knee problem, as well as several other niggles.

England are bidding to become only the second team in Test history to come from 2-0 down to win a series after Australia, inspired by batting great Don Bradman, overturned that deficit to take the 1936/37 Ashes 3-2. (AFP)



## Netherlands Play Sri Lanka in 2023 WC Qualifier Final

Agencies

**HARARE:** Sri Lanka can count on some of the leading batters and bowlers at the Cricket World Cup Qualifier, while the Netherlands will turn to their proven match-winners when the India-bound teams meet in the tournament final.

The undefeated Sri Lanka have surged into the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 in India with a barnstorming run through the Qualifier tournament as their spin twins and opening pair drive their domination.

The 1996 World Cup champions have been able to turn to spin wizards Wanindu Hasaranga and Maheesh Theekshana to tear through their opponents as the top two wicket-takers at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Qualifier.

The closest tournament pacesetters have been pushed when the Netherlands were 127/4 while chasing a modest target of 214, but then lost 6/65 to fall 21 runs short. While Sri Lanka boast

several of the standout batters and bowlers at the Cricket World Cup Qualifier, the Netherlands have had a more even spread of contributors that will be hoping for a first-ever ODI victory over their final opponents.

Scott Edwards, Vikramjit Singh, Max O'Dowd, Wesley Barresi and Teja Nidamanuru each have multiple scores beyond 50 at the tournament, but it is the Netherlands' X-factor performers that have stood taller whenever the stakes rise.

Netherlands can also call on van Beek when the game is on the line, especially after the all-rounder set a new benchmark with 30 runs in a Super Over to secure what ultimately proved to be crucial Super Six points from West Indies.

With Sri Lanka and the Netherlands already sure of their spots at the Cricket World Cup, the CWC23 Qualifier final looms as a test of the steady against the sensational as both teams start to cast an eye toward the showpiece event in India later this year. (ANI)

## Mbappe Calls PSG 'Divisive' As Contract Standoff Drags On

Agencies

**PARIS:** Kylian Mbappe has described his club Paris St Germain as a "divisive team", amid a contract standoff between the player and the French Ligue 1 champions. Relations between PSG and Mbappe soured last month after the French forward said he would not renew his contract which expires at the end of next season, meaning he can leave for free in June 2024.

If he runs down his contract PSG would be unable to recoup any of the 180 million euros (\$197 million) they spent to sign him. PSG President Nasser Al-Khelaifi has said they will not let him go for free. Mbappe, Ligue 1's top scorer in the last five seasons, has been linked with a move to Real Madrid.

"I think that playing for PSG doesn't help much because it's a divisive team, a divisive club," he said in an interview with France Football magazine. He



did not elaborate. PSG representatives did not immediately reply when contacted by Reuters for comment on Saturday.

PSG have won nine of the last 11 Ligue 1 titles but Mbappe's frustration lies with their performances in the Champions League -- a trophy the Parisian club have never won despite all their investment in the squad. PSG went out in the last 16 this year when they were beaten by Bayern Munich, failing to score in both legs. Mbappe was injured for the first leg and said they were "helpless" in the second.

## De Gea Leaves Manchester United After Contract Expires

Agencies

**MANCHESTER:** David De Gea has left Manchester United following the end of his contract, with the Spanish goalkeeper penning a farewell message to the Premier League club's fans on Saturday.

"It's been an unforgettable

and successful period since I came here. I didn't think from leaving Madrid as a young boy we would achieve what we did together," he wrote on Instagram.

"Now, it's the right time to undertake a new challenge, to push myself again in new surroundings."

## Homeless World Cup Brings Its Message Of Hope To California

Agencies

**CALIFORNIA:** Hundreds of soccer players from around the world will step on to the pitch on Saturday to compete in the Homeless World Cup, an international competition held this year in California for people living without permanent shelter or in rehab centers. The 40-team tournament, which runs from July 8-15 at California State University, Sacramento, is the brainchild of Homeless World Cup Foundation.

The foundation says it has more than 100,000 players in partner leagues across the globe. About 500 of those players will participate in Sacramento. "Soccer is a unifying force, it's incredibly powerful and in my view, more generally, it really has a lot of power to tackle some of the most serious problems in the world," said Mel Young, co-founder of the Homeless World Cup Foundation, which says it offers homeless athletes a community for support and seeks to erase the stigma of homelessness.

Homelessness affects nearly



150 million people worldwide, according to a 2021 report by the World Economic Forum. To be eligible for the event, now in its 20th year, players need to have been homeless or in rehabilitation centers within the last two years.

The foundation said the players come from a range of situations: refugees, asylum seekers or people forced into shelters or on to the street because of a lack of affordable housing. Fahrudin Muminovic represented Bosnia and Herzegovina at the 2019 Homeless World Cup in Wales. His father and 150 other people from his village were killed in the Srebrenica massacre in 1995, and he had since spent most of his life in refugee camps.

Sienna Jackson will play for Team USA. She grew up playing soccer, but family conflict forced her to rely on the goodwill of friends, she said, according to a press release from Sacramento State. When necessary, she slept in parks before Sacramento's Wind Youth Center led her back

to soccer and helped her put her life back together. All participants have been paired with partner organizations in their home countries that provide mental and physical health support, Young said. When ready, players receive help finding work or a home.

"It's all about helping them move on and change their lives," Young said. This is the first time the Homeless World Cup will take place in the U.S. Previous tournaments were in South Africa, France, and Denmark.

There are two different fields of play, the World Cup, which consists of both men's and co-ed teams, and the Women's World Cup, featuring women-only matches. Games are played with four players per side, on a field closer in size to a tennis court than a regular soccer pitch. This leads to faster-paced and higher scoring games, with each lasting for 15 minutes each.

The final match will be held July 15, five days before 32 teams take the field for the 9th annual FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.



## Indo-Pak Couple, Who Fell In Love On PUBG, Get Bail After Arrest In Noida



Agenceis

**Noida:** The Pakistani woman and her Indian partner, both of whom were arrested by the police in connection with her illegal stay in India, were on Friday granted bail by a court in Uttar Pradesh's Greater Noida, officials said.

Seema Ghulam Haider, around 30, and Sachin Meena, around 25, were arrested on July 4. While Seema was charged with illegally entering India, Sachin was booked for sheltering the illegal immigrant.

On July 4, both Sachin and Seema had confessed their love for each other in front of the media and police, urging the government to allow them to get married and stay together in India.

The duo had got in touch in 2019 while playing online game PUBG and eventually got closer to the extent that she decided to come to India to stay with him in Greater Noida. The officials said

the bail was granted to the two by Justice Nazim Akbar of the Jewar Civil Court junior division.

"Both Seema and Sachin have been granted bail by the court. However, they are yet to be released from the jail. They would be released after paper work and verification are completed," said Sudhir Kumar, in-charge of local Rabupura police station, where the case was lodged.

"Seema's four children are also with her in the jail. They would stay with the mother once she walks out of the jail," Kumar told PTI.

Earlier, the court had ordered that the woman's four children, all aged below 7, would stay with the mother in the jail. The children had accompanied Seema when she illegally came to India in May this year. Sachin's father Netrapal Singh (50) was also arrested in connection with the case and charged with sheltering an illegal immigrant.

## US Makes New Alzheimer's Drug More Widely Accessible

Agenceis

The US drug regulator gave full approval to a new Alzheimer's medicine on Thursday, a move that makes it more widely available to the public through government-run health insurance for the elderly.

Leqembi, developed jointly by Japan's Eisai and Biogen of the United States, was shown in a clinical trial to modestly reduce cognitive decline among patients in the early stages of the disease.

But the study also raised concerns about side effects including brain bleeds and swelling.

Leqembi was initially granted "accelerated approval" by the Food and Drug Administration in January, which meant it was not broadly covered by the government-run Medicare program for people aged 65 and older.

Thursday's decision, which follows further study of the drug, means Medicare will now defray a large portion of treatment, initially listed by the makers at \$26,500 per year.

"This confirmatory study verified that it is a safe and effective treatment for patients with Alzheimer's disease," senior FDA



official Teresa Buracchio said in a statement.

Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, administrator of the agency that runs Medicare, added: "This is welcome news for the millions of people in this country and their families who are affected by this debilitating disease."

But people covered by Medicare will still need to meet 20 percent of the cost, or thousands of dollars, themselves.

Approximately 6.5 million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's, which is characterized by memory loss and declining mental acuity.

Leqembi, also known as lecanemab, is an antibody treatment that is injected into the brain every two weeks and works by reducing amyloid

beta, a protein that builds into plaques and causes brain cells to die, as well as brain shrinkage.

The FDA's decision was welcomed by patient groups.

"This treatment, while not a cure, can give people in the early stages of Alzheimer's more time to maintain their independence and do the things they love," said Joanne Pike, Alzheimer's Association president and CEO.

"This gives people more months of recognizing their spouse, children and grandchildren."

Leqembi was the second Alzheimer's drug developed by Eisai and Biogen to receive approval. The first, Aduhelm, was approved in 2021 but the decision was highly controversial as the data about its efficacy was inconsistent.

## 4 Arrested In Mumbai For Stealing 90-Foot Long, 6,000-Kg Iron Bridge

Agenceis

**Mumbai:** Sharad Pawar has alluded to his nephew Ajit Pawar while speaking about whom not to trust at a public event in Maharashtra's Nashik. Ajit Pawar's decision to ally with the ruling BJP and become Maharashtra's Deputy Chief Minister has led to internal turmoil in the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP).

The escalation has parallels with how Shiv Sena's Eknath Shinde revolted with a large group of MLAs and allied with the BJP to become the Chief Minister.

"I erred in trusting some people. I won't repeat the mistake," Sharad Pawar said at Nashik today, alluding to his nephew.

He also scoffed at Ajit Pawar's suggestion that he should retire from politics.

"Do you know at what age Morarji Desai became Prime Minister? I don't want to become the

PM or a minister, but only want to serve the people," Sharad Pawar said, referring to his nephew's comment that he should retire now that he is 83 years old.

Sharad Pawar, referring to "Nather tired nor retired" comment by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, told the news channel Mumbai Tak, "Who are they to tell me to retire? I can still work."

On the succession battle in the family after Ajit Pawar's comments that he was sidelined as he wasn't somebody's son, Sharad Pawar said, "I don't want to say much on this topic. I don't like discussing family issues outside the family."

Sharad Pawar said Ajit Pawar was made minister and also deputy chief minister, but no ministerial position was given to daughter Supriya Sule even though it was possible.



Quick eats for busy people

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Chicken Crispy  
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