



Authorities Closed Badamwari Park For Morning, Evening Walks

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The authorities here have barred the locals from visiting Badamwari Park during morning and evening hours, alleging that the local residents, who enter the park for activities like walking and jogging, are causing damage to the turf.

has been observed that the local residents who are visiting the park during morning hours for walking, jogging etc are damaging the turf of the park as they are not using the paths which are meant for these activities and thereby, also damages the plant material."

"Therefore, you (Mr. Gulla Malik, the I/C Head Gardener of Badamwari is hereby being directed to ensure complete suspension of these activities at the Badamwari Park so that the glory of the park may not be affected in future," it reads.

Nonetheless, locals while speaking to KNO expressed anguish over the authorities' decision and described it as a nonsensical move, while urging the authorities to refrain from such actions.



Man taking out water from his shikara in the interiors of world famous Dal Lake amid scorching heat on Friday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Cop On Mumbai Visit Dies 'Mysteriously', Family Suspects Foul Play

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: Dead body of a policeman who died under mysterious circumstances in Mumbai a few days ago, arrived at his native place in Srinagar on Friday, family sources said.

Auqib Hussain Mir son of Khurshid Ahmad Mir aged around 32 of Hasnabad Rainawari, according to his family had gone to Mumbai for drone pilot course a few days ago.

However, the sudden death of their son, who had been married

only for a year, shook the whole family, they added.

"The entire family and relatives of the deceased cop were shocked the moment they came across the sudden death of their son. Auqib was married only for a year and had gone to Mumbai for a drone-pilot course a few days ago," one of the close relatives of the deceased cop told Kashmir Observer.

He said there were deep wounds on his entire body while his back was broken as if he had

either been pushed or had fallen from the top.

The family of the deceased cop who was posted at Police Control Room (PCR) Srinagar urged the government to conduct a thorough probe into the mysterious death of their son.

"We want an in-depth investigation into Auqib's enigmatic death to be carried out by the authorities. His back was broken, and there were visible injury marks all over his body, it appeared that he was either pushed or fell from the top, they added.

Female Biker Embarks On Dream Trip To Kashmir

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A female biker from Karnataka has embarked on a journey to Jammu and Kashmir, riding solo and reaching her destination in just 15 days.

Sharing her travel experience, Chitra Rao told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that she reached Srinagar on Thursday.

"People are very nice here. Before coming to Kashmir, I was worried but I find people are very

helpful and I would like to thank Kashmiri people," she added.

She said that it is her first solo road trip and she is enjoying it.

"For me, traveling alone was important because if I would have come in a group, people would think it's a biker gang roaming around. But when they see a solo female traveler, it is noticeable."

"I took all the precautions and reached Kashmir safely within 15 days," she added.

KU Strengthens Amenities For Students

Observer News Service

Srinagar: To strengthen the amenities being provided to the students of the main and satellite campuses, the University of Kashmir acquired a fleet of new buses for the convenience and safety of the students from far-flung areas.

Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir, Prof Nilofer Khan inaugurated the fleet of eight (8) new buses here at the main campus in a ceremonial way.

Notice: I ulfat Rashid D/o Ab Rashid Mir R/o Bakura Alustang Ganderbal have lost my RC of Alto Car Model 800 Bearing Reg. No: JK16B-6623. Now I want to apply its duplicate.

Office of the Executive Engineer, Electric Division-1st, Srinagar. For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Electric Division-1st, Srinagar invites online e-bids from registered A-Class Electrical Contractors/firms for as under:
Table with 3 columns: S.No, Particulars, Estimated Cost (In Lacs)

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-AUCTION NOTICE. The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Firozpur for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Auction from eligible and registered bidders for the following works over Firozpur Division:

Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited Impaired Assets Portfolio Management Department (IAPMD) Zonal Office Central Srinagar. Possession Notice. Notice under Section 13 (4) of the SARFAESI ACT, 2002 read with Rule 8 (1) of the Security (Enforcement) Interest Rules, 2002

Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited Business Unit: Zablipora (Anantnag) T: 01932-234280 E : zablip@jkbmail.com. Possession Notice. Whereas Mr. Mohammad Shafi Bhat, as the Authorized Officer of the Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
PDD: 0194-2450213
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
CAPD: 18001807011
SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311
RAILWAYS SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259 ANANTNAG: 01932-228243 BARAMULLA: 0194-102029 BIJHERA: 01932-228243 PAMPORRE: 01933-294132 PATTAN: 01954-293507 QAZIGUND: 01951-296153
HIGHWAY STATUS Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open) Mughal Road - (Open) Srinagar-Leh- (Open)

PRAYERS FAJR 4:50 ZUHR 12:36 ASR 4:53 Magrib 6:42 ISHA 8:02
HIJRI CALENDAR 29 Safar 1445

This Day In History
1970 - King Hussein of Jordan forms military government
1971 - West German chancellor Willy Brandt meets with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev
1974 - US President Gerald Ford announces conditional amnesty for US Vietnam War deserters
1974 - US General Haig becomes NATO supreme commander in Europe
1975 - The first prototype of the MiG-31 interceptor makes its maiden flight.
1975 - Egyptian president Sadat re-elected
1977 - Seattle beats Royals, 4-1, to end KC's winning streak at 16 games
1978 25,000 die in 7.7 earthquake in Tabar, Iran
1979 - Coup in Afghanistan under Hafizullah Amin
1982 - Massacre of 1000+ Palestinian refugees at Chatila & Sabra begins
1987 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalatinsk USSR
1987 - Pope John Paul II's ends his Los Angeles tour with an interfaith meeting at Dodger Stadium with leaders of Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism
1988 - Javed Miandad completes 211, his 5th Test Cricket double, v Australia

India, US To Showcase New Ties
WASHINGTON: The White House will showcase a "new" era in India-US ties by welcoming Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee this week, but tough issues like arms control and war-torn Kashmir will lurk beneath the bonhomie.
Vajpayee, who arrives in Washington on Wednesday after attending the UN Millennium Summit, will meet President Bill Clinton and deliver a landmark address to a joint session of Congress. His invitation, which was issued during Clinton's stay in India earlier this year, further cements a drive by both sides to end decades of frosty ties between Washington and New Delhi. "The president's visit brought us into a qualitatively new relationship with the Indians," a State Department official told AFP.
Vajpayee's visit will stress blossoming links between the two countries in computer technology, trade and science, said India's national security advisor Brajesh Mishra during a visit to Washington in July.
Indian-US ties have warmed considerably on Clinton's watch, largely due to a reshuffling of US diplomatic priorities after the Cold War, a period when Washington scorned New Delhi for its links to the Soviet Union. The attempt by both sides to consign old suspicions to the past was interrupted in 1998 when India's nuclear arms tests triggered a tit-for-tat response by its arch-rival Pakistan.
Fearing that periodic conflicts over the divided Kashmir could boil over into full scale nuclear war, the United States has since been trying to ease tensions on the subcontinent. But it has been confined to treating the symptoms of the conflict, rather than their cause due to debate Kashmir seemingly unbridgeable differences between India and Pakistan.
Pakistan is crying out for international mediation in a dispute which has triggered two out of three wars between the neighbours. But India, has refused and accused Islamabad of fomenting an insurgency that has claimed more than 30,000 lives in the Indian zone of the divided state since.
"Vajpayee is likely to insist in the US that "India will not engage Pakistan (in talks) unless it puts an end, to its cross-border terrorism," Indian analyst Raja Mohan told AFP in New Delhi.
Stressing that the United States did not see itself as a mediator, the State Department official said the dispute could only be solved by the two rivals.
"What we are doing is trying to push both the Indians and Pakistanis to talks," he said.
"You have to do what you can with the tools you have—a direct intervention would probably do more harm than good."
Vajpayee arrives as a campaign gathers pace in the US Congress for the lifting of the sanctions, but there is no sign the administration is ready to relax the pressure.
His tour of the US was delayed several days due to concerns over his health and members of the Indian diaspora in the high technology corridor in California were disappointed he would be unable to visit them.
A powerful business delegation is however travelling with Vajpayee, hoping to scoop billions of dollars of US investment for India's flagship hi-tech industry.
As well as meeting Clinton, Vajpayee is scheduled to meet Vice President Al Gore, who is now himself running for the White House, and members of both parties in Congress. (Kashmir Observer, September 19, 2000)

Yemen War: Saudi Arabia Invites Houthi Officials For Talks To End Conflict



Agencies

Saudi Arabia invited a delegation from the Houthi movement to resume talks about ending the war in Yemen, Saudi state media said on Thursday. The visit aimed to "reach a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire in Yemen and a sustainable political solution acceptable to all Yemeni parties," the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said. The talks will build on previous efforts by Saudi Arabia and Oman to end the conflict. In April, a Saudi delegation led by the country's ambassador to Yemen, Mohammed Al-Jaber, visited Sanaa and met with Houthi political chief Mahdi al-Mashat. It was the first public meeting between Saudi and Houthi officials since a war between the two broke out in 2015. Mashat confirmed that a Houthi delegation would travel to Saudi Arabia with Omani mediators, according to the group's Saba news agency. "Peace was and still is our

first option and everyone must work to achieve it," Mashat said. The conflict in Yemen began when the Houthis seized Sanaa in 2014. A Saudi-led military intervention began in 2015, intending to restore the internationally recognised government. The fighting has dragged on since, without a decisive military victory for either side, resulting in hundreds of thousands of deaths and a major humanitarian crisis. After the UN brokered a ceasefire in April 2022, hostilities and casualties were drastically reduced. The truce expired in October, but fighting has largely remained on hold. According to analysts, it appears that Saudi Arabia has realised that its prolonged military campaign will not bring about the defeat of the rebel forces in Yemen. This understanding comes as Saudi Arabia and Iran, which backs the Houthis, re-established diplomatic ties, leading to a wave of rapprochement across the region.

Living With Another Woman Doesn't Disentitle Man From Divorce If...: Court

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Living with another woman during pendency of divorce proceedings after long separation cannot disentitle a husband from divorce on account of proven cruelty by wife, the Delhi High Court has said. While upholding the divorce granted by a family court to one such couple, a bench headed by Justice Suresh Kumar Kait observed that they had been living separately since 2005 with no possibility of re-union, and the prolonged differences and criminal complaints by wife made the husband's life bereft of peace and conjugal relationship. The court observed the disputes emanating from disrespect to husband and his family members and frequent quarrels resulted in mental agony for which there was no solution and the conduct of

wife "indisputably" amounted to cruelty. "Such prolonged differences and criminal complaints made the life of respondent-husband bereft of peace and conjugal relationship which is the bedrock of any matrimonial relationship," the bench, also comprising Justice Neena Bansal Krishna, said in an order dated September 13. "After such long years of separation with no possibility of re-union, the respondent husband may have found his peace and comfort by living with another woman, but, that is a subsequent event during the pendency of the Divorce Petition and cannot disentitle the husband from divorce from the wife on the proven grounds of cruelty," the court stated. The court observed the wife was not been able to prove any other act of cruelty by the husband to disentitle him from obtaining divorce.

Earth's Warmest August Saw 65 Countries Set Record High Temperatures: Report

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Thirteen per cent of the Earth's surface, spanning 65 countries, experienced record high temperatures in August, while the rest of the world braved significantly higher temperatures compared to the 1951-1980 average, according to a new analysis conducted by an independent US-based non-profit organisation. Berkeley Earth, which focuses on environmental data science and analysis, said last month was the warmest August since records began to be kept in 1850, with "particularly warm conditions" prevailing in parts of India, Japan, North Atlantic, Eastern Equatorial Pacific, Northern South America, Central America, parts of Africa and the Middle East. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a US government agency, said on Thursday that 2023 witnessed Earth's hottest August in its 174-year climate record. The sizzling month also marked the northern hemisphere's warmest meteorological summer and the southern hemisphere's warmest meteorological winter on record, the NOAA's National Centres for Environmental Information said. Berkeley Earth said August 2023 exceeded the previous record set in August 2016 by 0.31 degrees Celsius, "a surprisingly large margin, well



degrees Celsius, the analysis showed. An El Niño condition -- periods of unusual warming of waters in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean -- was officially declared by the NOAA in early June. Berkeley Earth said the global mean temperature in August was 1.68 (± 0.09) degrees Celsius above the 1850-1900 average, which is frequently used as a benchmark for the preindustrial period. "This is the 12th time in the Berkeley Earth analysis that any individual month has reached at least 1.5 degrees Celsius over the preindustrial benchmark. However, July and August 2023 are the only times, thus far, that a 1.5-degree Celsius anomaly has occurred during the northern hemisphere summer," it said. One of the Paris Agreement goals has been to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above the preindustrial (1850-1900) average. "That goal is defined in reference to the average climate over many years, so a few individual months above 1.5 degrees Celsius do not automatically mean that the target has been exceeded. "However, isolated anomalies above 1.5 degrees Celsius are a sign that the Earth is getting close to that limit. It is likely that global warming will cause the long-term average to exceed 1.5 degrees C during the 2030s unless significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions

Defence Purchase Proposals Worth Rs 45,000 Cr Get Centre's Nod

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Defence Ministry on Friday cleared procurement of various weapons systems and platforms including Dhruvastra short range air-to-surface missile and 12 Su-30 MKI fighter jets at a cost of around ₹45,000 crore. A total of nine procurement proposals were approved by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) headed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, officials said. "All these procurements will be made from Indian vendors under Buy (Indian-Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured (IDDM)/Buy (Indian) category which will give substantial boost to the Indian defence industry towards achieving the goal of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'," the



defence ministry said. To enhance protection, mobility, attack capability and increase survivability of mechanised forces, the DAC accorded the approval for procurement of Light Armoured Multipurpose Vehicles (LAMV) and Integrated Surveillance and Targeting System (ISAT-S), the ministry said in a statement. The DAC cleared also cleared the procurement of High Mobility Vehicle (HMV) Gun Towing Vehicles for swift

mobilisation and deployment of artillery guns and radars. The DAC further approved procurement of next generation survey vessels for the Indian Navy, the ministry said. It said a proposal of the Indian Air Force to ensure avionics upgrade of Dornier aircraft to improve the accuracy and reliability for operations was also given Acceptance of Necessity (AoN). The AoN is the initial approval. "The procurement of Dhruvastra Short Range Air-to-Surface Missile as a potent Indigenous Precision Guided Weapon for indigenously built ALH Mk-IV Helicopters has been cleared by the DAC," the ministry said. "The AoN for procurement of 12 Su-30 MKI Aircraft with associated equipment from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) was also accorded," it said.

Mobile Internet Suspended In Haryana's Nuh After Congress MLA's Arrest



Press Trust of India

CHANDIGARH: Hours after Congress MLA Mamman Khan was arrested in connection with the July 31 Nuh violence, the Haryana government on Friday ordered the suspension of mobile internet and bulk SMS services in the district for two days to prevent "the spread of misinformation and rumours". A government order in this regard does not mention anything about Mr Khan's arrest though. "This order is issued to prevent any disturbance of peace and public order in the jurisdiction of district Nuh in the state of Haryana and shall be in force with effect from September 15 (10:00hrs) to September 16 (23:59hrs)," says the order issued by Home Department Additional Chief Secretary T V S N Prasad. Mr Prasad said the decision was taken after the Nuh deputy commissioner wrote to him on Thursday expressing apprehension there could be tension, agitation, damage of public and private property, and disturbance of peace and tranquillity in the district. The additional chief secretary agreed there is a clear potential

of disruption of public utilities, damage to assets and amenities and disturbance of law and order in Nuh on account of misuse of Internet services. He said inflammatory material and false rumours are being or could be circulated to the public through social media and messaging services through Internet, SMS and dogle services. "In order to stop the spread of misinformation and rumours through various social media platforms, such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, etc. on mobile phones and SMS, for facilitation and mobilisation of mobs of agitators and demonstrators who can cause serious loss of life and damage to public and private properties by indulging in arson or vandalism and other types of violent activities, the mobile internet has been suspended," he said. "...I do hereby order the suspension of the mobile internet services (2G/3G/4G/5G/CDMA/GPRS), bulk SMS (excluding banking and mobile recharge) and all dogle services etc. provided on mobile networks except the voice calls in the jurisdiction of district Nuh of Haryana State," Mr Prasad's order reads.

Witness To Dalit Man's Murder Killed 4 Years Later In Gujarat, 3 Arrested

Press Trust of India

BOTAD: A 46-year-old man who was a witness in the murder case of a Dalit man four years ago has died after allegedly being attacked by the accused's relatives last week, police said here on Friday. Three of the alleged assailants have already been arrested. Rajesh Makwana, resident of Bagad in Ranpur taluka in Botad district of Gujarat, was attacked near his village by seven armed men on September 6. He died at a hospital in neighbouring Bhavnagar city on Thursday night, said Botad district superintendent of police Kishor Balolia. As per preliminary probe, the assailants, who belonged to an Other Backward Class (OBC) community, held a grudge against Makwana for being

a witness in the case of the murder of Manjibhai Solanki, a Dalit worker who lived in neighbouring Jalila village. Political rivalry between Solanki and his wife Geeta Solanki, the then village sarpanch, and the accused men led to his murder in 2019, the official said. The men allegedly involved in the attack on Makwana are related to the eight persons arrested in the Solanki murder case, he added. "Makwana was allegedly attacked by one Dhru Khachar, his three sons and three unidentified men on September 6. He succumbed to injuries on Thursday night. While Khachar's three sons have been already arrested, Khachar himself and the other three are yet to be nabbed," said Botad district superintendent of police Kishor Balolia.

BEFORE THE HON'BLE DC OFFICE AT BUDGAM .
THROUGH : ADV ISHFAQ AHMAD AND ASSOCIATES.
In the case of :
1 Gh Mohammad Thoker
S/O Gh Rasool Thoker
R/O Khawaja gund tehsil khag district budgam.
Caveator
VS
Public at large
Non Caveator
In the matter of : caveat
May it please your honour :
The Caveator humbly submits as -
That the Caveator is seeking caveat wrt land situated at Khawaja gund tehsil khag district budgam measuring 32 kanals 19 marlas 8 number of fruit under khawat no 25 khata no 10 & 11 and in case the non Caveator choose to file any suit / application / appeal etc. Notice to be given before issuance of any order. Hence the publication for the caveat.

BEFORE THE HON'BLE COURT OF MUNSIFF COURT AT BEERWH.
THROUGH : ADV ISHFAQ AHMAD AND ASSOCIATES.
In the case of ;
1 Gh Mohammad Thoker
S/O Gh Rasool Thoker
R/O Khawaja gund khag budgam.
Caveator
VS
Public at large
Non Caveator
In the matter of : Caveat
May it please your honour :
The Caveator humbly submits as -
That the Caveator is seeking caveat wrt land situated at Khawaja gund tehsil khag district budgam measuring 32 kanals 19 marlas 8 number of fruit under khawat no 25 khata no 10 & 11 and in case the non Caveator choose to file any suit / application / appeal / etc. Notice to the Caveator be given before issuance of any order. Hence the publication for the Caveat..

BEFORE THE HON'BLE COURT OF MUNSIFF COURT AT BEERWH.
THROUGH : ADV ISHFAQ AHMAD AND ASSOCIATES.
In the case of ;
1 Gh Mohammad Thoker
S/O Gh Rasool Thoker
R/O Khawaja gund khag budgam.
Caveator
VS
Public at large
Non Caveator
In the matter of : Caveat
May it please your honour :
The Caveator humbly submits as -
That the Caveator is seeking caveat wrt land situated at Khawaja gund tehsil khag district budgam measuring 32 kanals 19 marlas 8 number of fruit under khawat no 25 khata no 10 & 11 and in case the non Caveator choose to file any suit / application / appeal / etc. Notice to the Caveator be given before issuance of any order. Hence the publication for the Caveat..

BEFORE THE HON'BLE SUBDIVISION MAGISTRATE (SDM) OFFICE AT BEERWAH.
THROUGH : ADV ISHFAQ AHMAD AND ASSOCIATES.
In the case of :
1 Gh Mohammad Thoker
S/O Gh Rasool Thoker
R/O Khawaja gund tehsil khag district budgam.
Caveator
VS
public at large..
Non Caveator
In the matter of : caveat.
May it please your honour :
The Caveator humbly submits as -
That the Caveator is seeking caveat wrt land situated at Khawaja gund tehsil khag district budgam measuring 32 kanals 19 marlas 8 number of fruit under khawat no 25 khata no 10 & 11 and in case the non Caveator choose to file any suit / application / appeal etc. Notice to be given before issuance of any order. Hence the publication for the caveat..

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER SUB TRANSMISSION DIVISION GANDERBAL
Email: -xen-stdgbl@nic.in, exengineer12@gmail.com
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
e-NIT No.: - STD/GBL/22 of 2023-24 Dated: 14-09-2023
For and on behalf of the Managing Director, KPDCJ Jammu and Kashmir UT, e-Tenders (In Two Cover System) are hereby invited from OEM's, Authorized Dealers & Service providers, Registered (A- Class) Electric Contractors registered with J&K Government, Central Public Works Department, Railways and other state/central governments for "Laying of 2 Kms. of 150 mm² ACS/ XLPE, DOG covered conductor on already erected 11 Meter ST poles, along 33KV Gurez line in respect of STD Ganderbal".

Important Dates and Events	
e-NIT No	STD/GBL/22 of 2023-24 Dated: 14-09-2023
The Standard Bidding Document can be downloaded over http://jktenders.gov.in as per schedule given below:	
A	Date & Time of downloading of Standard Bidding Document
B	Clarifications start date
C	Clarifications end date
D	e-Bid submission (start) date & time (Submission of e-bidder fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS)
E	e-Bid submission (end) date & Time
F	Online Commercial and Technical e-Bid opening date & Time
G	Online financial e-Bid opening date & time (Only of the technically qualified bidders)
H	Venue of opening of technical & financial e-Bids
I	Cost of e-Bid document
J	Earnest Money Deposit
K	Advertised amount
L	Validity offer
M	Completion period

The tender document can be downloaded from website jktenders.gov.in "Corrigendum, if any, would appear only on the jktenders.gov.in website. Sale of physical tender document is not applicable. No price shall be submitted offline in any form. Bidder can modify his bid before last date of submission of online bid. After the last date of submission of online bid, no claim of bidder shall be entertained.
No: STD/GBL/Ts/909-914
Date: 14-09-2023
DIPK-NB-3180-23
DT: 15/09/2023
Executive Engineer,
STD Ganderbal

School Squabbles

Does Teacher In-fighting Get The Better Of Academics At Schools?

Farooq Shah

“
The repercussions of this division are profound, sowing the seeds of hierarchy and prejudice among staff members. Gazetted staff often consider themselves superior, while their non-gazetted counterparts grapple with feelings of inferiority. Adding to the complexity, gender-based segregation results in separate staff rooms for male and female educators, further fragmenting the school community

Schools play a pivotal role in shaping not only the academic expertise of their students but also their values, attitudes, and social consciousness. A key aspect of this influence is their ability to cultivate unity, inclusiveness, and an appreciation for life's diverse tapestry.

The primary focus, in an ideal educational environment, should be on the pursuit of knowledge and the nurturing of intellectual curiosity among students. Teachers play a crucial and multidimensional role in establishing and sustaining such an atmosphere. They play a key role in creating a learning atmosphere that encourages growth, inclusiveness, and positive student interactions. This involves not just imparting knowledge but also appreciating belonging, respect, and a safe space for growth.

Teachers, thus, serve as the backbone of this educational ecosystem, where their dedication and efforts contribute significantly to the overall well-being and success of their students.

However, there is a concerning trend prevalent in almost all the government-run schools that is negatively impacting their overall academic environment. This is evident in the troubling divisions that have emerged among the school staff, rooted in differences of gender and job positions, sometimes seniority posing a significant threat to the fundamental principles of the education system.

Government-run schools, the bedrock of our educational system, are suffering the consequences of this insidious influence. Rather than cultivating an environment of unity and shared educational goals, the system is rife with discord and disunity.

Within a typical higher secondary school, a clear separation can be observed between the senior secondary and higher secondary sections, each overseen by non-gazetted staff and gazetted lecturers, respectively. This division is so deep that it even extends to the physical layout of the school, with up to four separate rooms being used by staff members, each of which has its own tea club.

The repercussions of this division are profound, sowing the seeds of hierarchy and prejudice among staff members. Gazetted staff often consider themselves superior, while their non-gazetted counterparts grapple with feelings of inferiority. Adding to the complexity, gender-based segregation results in separate staff rooms for male and female educators, further fragmenting the school community.

This disunity among staff members has dire consequences for the academic character of the schools. Students, who should be learning the values of cooperation and inclusiveness, instead witness the stark realities of discord within their educational environment. The first lessons in division and prejudice are imparted right within the school walls, where staff members often find themselves at odds.

On occasion, these divisions become evident through behaviours such as mudslinging, backbiting, and character assassination. In more heated moments, they may even escalate to verbal confrontations, stopping just short of physical altercations.

School administrators, whether principals or headmasters, face an arduous task in bridging these divides. Almost all of them have risen through the ranks within this divisive system itself, making it exceptionally challenging to instil a sense of unity and a



Kashmir Observer

shared commitment to academic excellence.

The way ahead necessitates immediate intervention from the authorities at the helm to tackle the issue promptly. Converting staff rooms and opening them up for students could serve as the initial action to deter teachers from congregating in these undesirable gatherings.

Simultaneously, teachers should be encouraged to utilize alternative spaces like libraries and reading rooms during their free time. This change in approach would not only resolve overcrowding but would also foster a culture of engagement in more constructive and academically enriching activities.

Transforming school libraries into hubs of intellectual engagement can be a powerful tool in fostering inclusivity. Encourage teachers, irrespective of their designation or gender, to spend time in libraries, perusing books, journals, and magazines together. This shared intellectual pursuit not only promotes unity but also provides opportunities for informal discussions and bonding. The library becomes a neutral ground where staff members can interact as equals, promoting a sense of belonging.

An essential step in dismantling hierarchical barriers involves arranging frequent workshops and training sessions dedicated to enhancing professional growth and interpersonal abilities. These programs can assist staff in understanding the value of teamwork and proficient communication. By elevating their expertise and understanding, educators are better prepared to partake in meaningful discussions and collaboration, regardless of their position or gender.

Furthermore, to foster a sense of unity among school staff, it is essential to encourage team-building activities that bring them together in a non-academic setting. These activities help break down the barriers that may have developed over time and allow staff members to interact on a more personal level. Team-building not only builds trust but also promotes inclu-

sivity by transcending traditional hierarchies.

Implementing mentoring programs within the school can further solidify the bonds between educators. Experienced educators can guide and support their colleagues, regardless of their designation or gender. These programs provide opportunities for knowledge sharing and create a culture of mutual support and collaboration.

Encouraging collaboration between gazetted and non-gazetted staff members on academic projects and extracurricular activities is another powerful way to break down artificial barriers. When educators from different designations work together, it promotes a more cohesive staff body. It showcases the value each member brings to the table, regardless of their job title, and emphasizes that everyone's contribution is equally important.

We must understand that it is crucial to recognize that education should transcend such divisions and biases. Instead, it should stand as a beacon of enlightenment and progress, where all individuals, regardless of their gender or job title, can collaborate harmoniously in the pursuit of knowledge and the empowerment of future generations.

To counteract this concerning trend, educators, administrators, and stakeholders must work together to cultivate a culture of unity, respect, and inclusivity within our academic institutions. Only by upholding the core values of education can we ensure that the seeds of wisdom and inspiration continue to flourish in the fertile soil of our schools.

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

The author can be reached at mjshsh@gmail.com

Geo-Political Implications of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor

Dr Lakshmi Priya

Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) by the USA, European Union, France, Germany, Italy, India, Saudi Arabia and the UAE during the 18th G20 summit will have various implications for the regional and global geo-politics. The corridor has the potential to stir existing political dynamics while emphasizing on the rising significance of the Middle East for Asia, Europe and the USA. It underlines the fact that the USA is willing to engage in the Arab world, Europe is assigning considerable attention to the region and India is ready to be the dependable partner. Also, IMEC is perceived as a counter to the China's Belt and Road initiative (BRI) in the region, sheds light on the western isolation of Iran and indicates towards the warming of ties between Saudi Arabia and Israel.

With the potential to stimulate economic development through enhanced connectivity and economic integration between Asia and Europe, IMEC consists of two corridors-the eastern corridor will connect India to the Arabian Gulf and the northern corridor will connect Arabian Gulf to Europe. The corridor includes a railway line that will provide a reliable and cost-effective cross-border ship-to-rail transit for goods and services between India, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, and Europe while supplementing the existing maritime and road transport routes. The railway link will also have an electricity cable, a high-speed data cable and a hydrogen pipeline for digital con-

nectivity and green energy export respectively.

Belying speculations of withdrawal from the region, the corridor confirms Washington's strong footing and unwavering presence in the Middle East. President Joe Biden said that the USA focuses on the regional infrastructure projects that deliver results across multiple countries and in multiple sectors and IMEC is a big deal and a game changing investment. He thanked the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. UAE attended the G20 meeting as an invitee country whereas Saudi Arabia and Turkey participated as member countries. It is to be noted that the US and EU also announced the "Trans-African Corridor" connecting the Angolan port of Lobito with landlocked areas in the mineral-rich countries of Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia.

At the same time, the corridor is seen as a counter to China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), when China has ramped up its active engagement in the region. Beijing's mediation role in the Saudi-Iran deal has fostered its role as an important external actor in the region. Absence of the President of China and Russia in the G20 summit adds to the speculations that the corridor may undermine their position in the region. The corridor is also being seen opposed to the North South Transport Corridor in which Iran and Russia have made considerable investments. However, the Gulf countries claim that the corridor will lead to economic growth and development while enhancing connectivity along with emphasizing on the multipolar world.

“
With the potential to stimulate economic development through enhanced connectivity and economic integration between Asia and Europe, IMEC consists of two corridors-the eastern corridor will connect India to the Arabian Gulf and the northern corridor will connect Arabian Gulf to Europe

Signing of IMEC also signals Europe's increasing interests in the Middle East for energy security. The Ukraine crisis led to disruptions in the energy flow to Europe; as per the International Energy Agency report the European Union might face a potential shortfall of almost 30 billion cubic meters of natural gas in 2023. The signs of European countries coying up to the Gulf countries have been visible in recent times. In May 2023, Italy had Italy announced last week a full and immediate end to its arms embargo on the United Arab Emirates, and a month later the French multinational energy and petroleum company TotalEnergy and the Saudi state-owned petroleum and natural gas

company ARAMCO signed a \$11 billion contract. Following that, Germany softened its position on arms exports to Saudi Arabia.

For India, the corridor opens new opportunities and possibilities to engage with the region. While being a credible and dependable partner for the regional countries, it is committed to the development of the region crucial for energy security and hosting more than 9 million Indian citizens. The corridor will not only connect the region like never before, but will also lead to digital connectivity and sustainable development. However, there are concerns like the vulnerability and political instability of the region. Currently the region is going through a state of reverie with deals and agreements giving a semblance of stability but the longevity of this phase is questionable. Secondly, the logistical issues like the poorly developed railways in Greece due to mountainous topography and the hot deserts of the Arab land will pose a challenge for the corridor. Thirdly, funding will be an important concern as not much has been put on paper regarding this; Saudi Arabia is expected to invest around \$20 billion. Fourthly, since there are multiple stakeholders, chances of it picking pace are slim. Lastly, Israel is an important country for the success of IMEC and even though Riyadh-Tel Aviv are coming closer gradually, the likelihood for Saudi Arabia to sign Abraham accords is thin.

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 Financial Express



This Conservationist Quietly Comes to Kashmir to Check on Bird Habitats

KO Web Desk

Dr Asad Rahmani is an ornithologist and conservationist who was also the former Director of Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). He is currently the scientific adviser to The Corbett Foundation, and governing council member of Wetlands International, South Asia. He was a member of several committees of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) for about two decades and was a Global Council member of BirdLife International, UK. Having authored about two dozen books and over 150 peer-reviewed research papers in scientific journals, Dr. Rahmani has also guided scores of scholars of biological sciences. He is deeply interested in grassland and wetland birds and often highlights the plight of bird species and bird habitats. The only mission this scientist comes to Kashmir with is to enquire about the health of bird habitats given their significance for migratory and resident bird species.

In an interview with Kashmir Observer's Parvaiz Bhat, Dr. Rahmani spoke about his frequent visits to Kashmir's wetlands and his impressions about Kashmir and challenges facing conservation of bird habitats in Kashmir.

Q. Tell us about your connection with Kashmir. Since when you started coming to Kashmir and what was your first impression about the place and its people? Has that impression changed over the years?

Q. When you compare the environment and wildlife conservation in Kashmir with other parts of India, do you find any major difference?

Wildlife and wild areas are under threat all over the country. So, Kashmir is no exception. J&K is perhaps the only state that has a separate Department of Wildlife Conservation. Kashmir has fabulous wetlands in the Valley but they are generally neglected. Like other states, in J&K also, attention is given only to a few protected areas, for example Dachigam, while other sanctuaries are neglected. There are many good sanctuaries in the state but lack sufficient staff, facilities, approach roads, and protection. Most of the visitors do not even know the names of these Protected Areas.

Q. Every time you come to Kashmir, it is only for ecological reasons -- mainly for visiting wetlands. Which other aspects of Kashmir's ecology attract you the most?

You are right. I visit places to study their conditions and then contact decision makers. I love birds but I am not a birdwatcher in its true sense. I am basically a conservationist, interested in protection and nature education. I encourage people to become conservationists, not just birdwatchers. People should speak to authorities on behalf of birds (and wildlife in general). If we do not speak, then who will speak? If not now, then when?



I do not get a response from authorities but I am told they take notice of my letters and articles, which is fine with me. I do not need facile acknowledgement, but strong actions on the ground.

Recently, I was instrumental in bringing out a special issue of *Buceros*, a publication of the ENVIS Centre of the Bombay Natural History Society, on the Wetlands of Jammu and Kashmir. I sent copies of this publication to nearly 50 people in the state. Now it is for the authorities to take action. Poaching is a big problem in the Valley that needs to be tackled immediately. The Department of Wildlife has very fine officers and staff -- they need government full support, resources and human-power. The authorities should immediately cancel all gun licences, instead give pistols for so-called "personal safety". Why does a person need a gun? Extra-vigilance should be increased during winter when most of the poaching takes place. More staff should be recruited, and volunteers should be appointed who could become 'eyes and ears' of the Wildlife Department to stop poaching.

The birds, particularly wildfowls (ducks and geese) are shy, clearly indicating they are afraid of human beings. I have never seen such shy ducks anywhere in India. In good protected areas, one can approach ducks 50-60 m but in Kashmir, they fly away from 200 to 300 m. It is only because of extensive poaching. Even I have heard gun shots in late evening in Shalabugh and Haigam.

The Wildlife staff should be taken to Keoladeo National Park in Bharatpur, or Lakh Bahosi Sanctuary in UP, or Nalsarovar in Gujarat to see how birds behave when they are protected.

Q. You have written several journal articles and books about the birds of India. Could you please tell us how birds and their habitats are crucial for local ecology, economy and culture?

I am not sufficiently qualified to talk about birds with particular reference to Kashmiri culture. I have not written many research papers on the birds of Kashmir though I have guided some students to work on birds. I have written two books, co-authored by many Kashmiri students:

Threatened Birds of Jammu and Kashmir
Important Bird Areas of Jammu and Kashmir
Both these books were published by BNHS, RSPB and BirdLife International, and distributed by Oxford University Press. If I write about the importance of birds in our life, it will be like a text-book. In a nutshell: Birds are an integral part of our culture and literature. Birds play an important role in eating insects, help in pollination, and seed dispersal. Birds are a heritage of our country. Bird watching is a multi-billion industry and occupation as birds attract thousands of tourists, helping the local economy. Bird habitats help in water regime (wetlands), climate mitigation (forests, wetlands, and grasslands) and pollution control.

Q. In recent years, a lot of young people in Kashmir have started taking interest in bird

I AM BASICALLY A CONSERVATIONIST, INTERESTED IN PROTECTION AND NATURE EDUCATION. I encourage people to become conservationists, not just birdwatchers. People should speak to authorities on behalf of birds (and wildlife in general). If we do not speak, then who will speak? If not now, then when?

watching and environmental conservation. How do you see that?

Bird-watching is all fine but all birdwatchers should become conservationists, spokespersons for wildlife. Merely taking pictures and sharing in social media is not going to save birds and their habitats. Do something on the ground. Become a pressure group, work with the Department (not for the Department), report to them if you see any wrongdoing. Do not remain silent when you see drainage of Hokarsar (as it happened two years ago). Do not remain silent when you see poaching. The Department of Wildlife needs your support to stop poaching. Help in environmental awareness.

Taking pictures of birds and sharing in social media is not enough -- it does not save them.

Q. In one of your articles, you had profiled Musa Khan of Jaisalmer in Rajasthan who you call "birding star of Desert National Park." Khan has probably not received formal education and yet he knows names of over 200 birds and their ecological behavior. Have you come across any such bird enthusiasts in Kashmir?

Yes, Musa Khan of Jaisalmer has come up well, and now he has a flourishing bird tourism business. He is the most sought-after bird guide of Jaisalmer.

In Kashmir, Dachigam to be precise, Nazir Malik was a fine forest staff and birdman, but after his retirement there is no good replacement, as far as I know. But now we have many youngsters like Mudassir Manzoor, Sheikh Haris, and Reyhan Sofi who are good birdwatchers. They need national and international exposure to develop bird tourism as a profession.

In the last 20 years, I have conducted many training-workshop to develop bird guides in Kashmir, even distributed hundreds of bird books in Urdu, but unfortunately, there was no follow-up by the authorities. I am willing to conduct bird tourism training even now but people and authorities should follow it up.

The Kashmir Valley has a great potential for bird tourism, but first we have to get out of Dachigam-Hangul syndrome and look beyond. There is a whole world of birds waiting to be appreciated.



WILDLIFE AND WILD AREAS ARE UNDER THREAT ALL OVER THE COUNTRY. SO, KASHMIR IS NO EXCEPTION. J&K is perhaps the only state that has a separate Department of Wildlife Conservation. Kashmir has fabulous wetlands in the Valley but they are generally neglected. Like other states, in J&K also, attention is given only to a few protected areas, for example Dachigam, while other sanctuaries are neglected.

I had heard about the beauty of Kashmir since my childhood but came to Kashmir in the late 1990s for a short time, and later in 2005 with my two students for a longer period when we went around the Valley and also some protected areas. From Srinagar, we drove to Ladakh.

Kashmiris are very friendly and hospitable people, despite the problems that they are facing since late 1980s. The education system in Kashmir is much better than many states, therefore, Kashmiris are educated and articulate.

I want local people, experts, concerned citizens, and scientists to come together to work for conservation. The Kashmir Valley needs a strong civil society movement for conservation, like in many other Indian states.

Q. You have taken personal interest in highlighting the problems facing Kashmir's wetlands. This includes writing to the Jammu & Kashmir administration about those problems and their solutions. What kind of response do you get from the government?



India 2nd In ODI Rankings, Pakistan Drop To 3rd



Press Trust of India

DUBAI: Having stormed into the Asia Cup final, India have climbed to second place, ahead of Pakistan who have lost the No. 1 ODI rankings following their elimination from the tournament.

The Babar Azam-led side, who lost to Sri Lanka in a last-ball thriller for their second successive defeat in the 'Super

Four', slipped two places to No. 3 with 115 points in ICC's mid-week update.

Two points ahead of India (116), Australia are now the No. 1 ODI side as the race for the top spot has intensified ahead of next month's World Cup.

Both the teams are also set to clash in a three-match ODI series in India beginning on September 22 ahead of their World Cup opener in Chennai on October 8.

Australia have climbed to No. 1 on the back of their back-to-back defeats in South Africa but their loss in the third ODI at Potchefstroom by 111 runs may have given an opening to India.

The fourth and penultimate ODI of the South Africa-Australia rubber is slated on Friday, while the series finale is on Sunday. India will play the Asia Cup final against co-hosts Sri Lanka on Sunday.

No India-Pakistan Match Till They 'End Terrorism': Sports Minister

Agencies

NEW DELHI: Union Sports Ministers Anurag Thakur said that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) had earlier decided a bilateral series of cricket between India and Pakistan wouldn't take place until Pakistan puts end to "terrorism" following the Anantnag encounter.

Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur while speaking to reporters said, "BCCI had decided much earlier that we would not play bilateral matches with Pakistan until they put an end to terrorism, cross-border attacks and infiltration. I think the sentiments of the country

and of the public are also the same."

The statement comes after three top Indian security personnel were recently killed in a gunfight in Anantnag's encounter with Pakistan-based terrorists in Jammu & Kashmir which has enraged the entire country.

An Army Colonel commanding a Quick Response Team (QRT) of the Rashtriya Rifles, lost his life in the ongoing gunfight in the Anantnag district. An Army Major and a Deputy Superintendent with the Jammu and Kashmir Police also fell to enemy fire in the Kokernag area.

The slain senior Army officers and the DSP were

identified as Colonel Manpreet Singh, Major Ashish Dhonak, and Humayun Bhat.

India and Pakistan haven't played a bilateral series since 2012/13, after that series the bilateral cricket ties between India and Pakistan have been suspended due to the heightened diplomatic tensions between the two neighbours.

Earlier this month, BCCI president Roger Binny and vice-president Rajeev Shukla travelled to Pakistan following an invitation to members of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) and other cricket boards by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to attend Asia Cup matches taking place in Lahore. (ANI)

Two Matches Played in Srinagar Premier League



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Two out of the three 2023 Srinagar Premier League matches were played on Friday at Synthetic Turf TRC here.

The first game, scheduled to be played between Novelty FC and LoneStar Kashmir FC, did not take place as LoneStar Kashmir "failed to report" to the venue. The match resulted in a walkover in favour of Novelty FC.

LoneStar Kashmir released a statement few days back announcing their intention to withdraw from the Premier Division league. The club laid out several disagreements with J&K Football Association as their reason to pull out from the competition.

The second scheduled game of the day was played between Star Kashmir FC and Kashmir Maharaja FC. Star Kashmir took the lead through Ayaan in the 28th minute.

Abdula made it 2-0 in the 52nd minute, before Sharik made it 3-0. Adil pegged one back for the Maharaja, but Dawar (66') and Ayaan (90+) sealed the tie 5-1 in favour of Star Kashmir FC.

In the final contest of the day, ARCO FC took on Iqbal Sports FC. The late evening kick off saw a major upset as Iqbal Sports ran out 2-1 winners in the matchup.

It seemed business as usual for ARCO when Sujith made it 1-0 in the 17th minute. However, Iqbal Sports hung on and equalised with a spectacular long-range effort by Ghulam Mohd in the 69th minute. Club captain and Solina product, Aiman, then scored the winning goal in the 75th minute to give Iqbal Sports a much-needed win.

Srinagar Premier League matches scheduled for Saturday and Sunday have been postponed, the league officials announced.



ODI WC: Demand For Kashmir Willow Cricket Bats Up By 10 Times

Agencies

SRINAGAR: With the 2023 ODI World Cup around the corner, Kashmiri cricket bat manufacturers are gearing up for an anticipated surge in demand.

The World Cup will start from October 5, and this season, many international players are going to use Kashmir willow cricket bats.

The local bat manufacturers said the demand for the Kashmir willow bats has increased by 10 times in the last few weeks.

"We are anticipating a further surge in demand. Almost one lakh cricket bats are being exported to various states per week to meet the demand. It's cricket fever everywhere during the World Cup and we are boosting our production to cater to cricket lovers," said Fawzul Kabir, spokesperson of the Kashmir Cricket Bat Manufacturers Association.

Kabir's company-made cricket bats are going to be used by at least 17 international cricketers in the World Cup matches.

He said currently, the demand for Kashmiri willow cricket bats is emerg-

ing from the entire India.

"We expect the demand to go even higher as the ODI World Cup begins. From Odisha to Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and other states, cricket lovers are preferring Kashmiri cricket bats this season," he said.

Spokesperson, South Sports Goods Manufacturers Association, Firdous Ahmad Khan said the demand for both seasoned and tennis cricket bats has surged during the recent past.

Khan said every unit holder is now increasing the production of cricket bats in view of the World Cup 2023.

The surge in demand for Kashmiri cricket bats is not limited to domestic markets. Export orders from countries such as England, Australia and New Zealand have also seen a notable uptick as the World Cup approaches.

Currently, Kashmir has 400 factories manufacturing cricket bats, with which 1.5 lakh people are directly and indirectly associated.

The Jammu and Kashmir government is also working hard to get a geographic indication (GI) for Kashmir willow bats. (KNO)

J&K Admin Clears Decks For Creation Of Sports Cadre

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Administrative Council (AC) met on Friday under the chairmanship of LG Manoj Sinha and gave its nod for creation of "Jammu and Kashmir Sports cadre" under the administrative control of Youth Service and Sports Department, along with the creation of 235 posts to be utilized for appointment of out-

standing sports persons, which

include 10 Gazetted posts. "The new rules have been formulated with the view to motivate the young people for sports activities and also to encourage the outstanding sports persons. Recognition of sports persons from J&K at the national and international level across different sports categories is a testament of the efforts of the government to rejuvenate sports activities in



standing sports persons, which

include 10 Gazetted posts. Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to LG, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary J&K, and Dr. Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to LG, attended the meeting.

With this decision, the process for appointment of outstanding sports persons will begin, which has been entangled in various legal and procedural issues for the past

few years.

"The government endeavors to make these appointments a yearly affair so as to provide an enabling environment for promotion of sports in J&K. Besides, the appointment of outstanding sports persons as mentors would give a major fillip to the training and development process of youth and increase their participation in local, national, and worldwide competitions," a press release said.

Former Sri Lanka Skipper Arjuna Ranatunga Calls ICC 'Toothless'

Press Trust of India

COLOMBO: The International Cricket Council has become a "toothless tiger" whose suited officials are happy making numbers at various meetings and are ready to allow one country take all major decisions, former Sri Lanka captain Arjuna Ranatunga said on Friday.

"ICC is a toothless tiger. They act very unprofessionally. I think they are the ones who should protect cricket. Ultimately cricket should be controlled by ICC and not by a country. In Asia Cup, you had rules and you changed rules for one game. So where is ACC? Where is ICC?" said Ranatunga in a sarcastic tone.

"So I will not be surprised if for World Cup, they have a separate rule for Indo-Pak game. This is bad. India is powerful no doubt but then

ICC officials are quite comfortable, happy putting coat and tie and hanky and going to meetings," he added.

The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) move to add a reserve day for the Indo-Pak match in Colombo had raised several eyebrows, despite inclement weather being listed out as the reason.

Ranatunga said changing rules of a tournament to suit one or two teams would put the game in jeopardy, and slammed ICC and ACC for inaction.

"I am not very comfortable when you have a tournament, where you change rules for one team. You are looking at a disaster in the future," the World Cup winning skipper fumed.

"I feel very sad for ICC and ACC because they just want to hold the positions. Former cricketers too don't open, simply because they need the



bucks," he said.

Ranatunga, using caustic sarcasm, said he would not be surprised if India's World Cup match against Pakistan at Ahmedabad gets a reserve day.

"I won't be surprised if they change the rule before the In-

dia-Pakistan game (in World Cup). ICC will keep their mouth shut and say 'OK, do it'. ICC just talks rubbish, nothing happens," he said.

There were predictions for rain in Colombo during the Asia Cup, and Ranatunga

criticised the ACC for not exploring venues outside the city such as Hambantota to conduct the Super 4 and final matches.

"Why did they play in Colombo when you have places like Hambantota? That ground was built to play cricket during the rainy season. And you come to Colombo to play in the Asia Cup. What is ACC doing?" said Ranatunga.

Ranatunga said world cricket should not be governed by one board or individual, and cited the Asia Cup scheduling issue as a case in point.

"Why do the other countries allow that (poor scheduling) to happen? Because the BCCI is powerful, or one particular person is powerful. No, it can't happen like that. They should have given an extra day for all the games if that was the case," said Ranatunga, without taking names.



END OF AN ERA

Mumbai Says Goodbye to Iconic Double-decker Buses

Agenceis

Mumbai: After 86 years of leading several routes in Mumbai, the iconic non-air-conditioned double-decker BEST buses will officially 'retire' from the service of the commuters Friday night, officials said.

The last of the five such buses plying on certain routes in south Mumbai will go into oblivion, followed by a handful of open-deck double-decker tourist buses which will be retired on October 5.

However, the BEST has introduced 16 air-conditioned, electric double-decker buses -- first unveiled by Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari in 2022 -- with closed doors on a few routes and 18 more will be joining the fleet in phases over the next few months.

Of the 18, around 10 will be deployed south Mumbai and the rest will serve in the suburbs, with plans to acquire and add more such buses in the fleet.

Currently, a little over 3,000 BEST single-decker buses criss-cross Mumbai, parts of Navi Mumbai, Thane, Raigad for

the benefit of over three-million daily commuters and are considered "the reliable, all-weather life-line of Mumbai".

The first of the non-AC double-deckers was introduced on Mumbai roads way back in 1937, eleven years after the BEST bus services were launched in the city in July 1926.

Visible from a long distance, these buses -- some with a vestibule where the driver's cabin was separate from the rest of the vehicle -- were popular for the large and spacious commuter 'boarding deck'.

A tiny curving staircase led to the upper deck, the most popular especially for a long ride, and a small hop on a raised level to travel on the lower deck with two side seats and rest facing the front, preferred by those making a short trip.

On certain crowded routes, there would be nearly a dozen commuters jostling for space on the 'boarding deck', waiting to get off at their stop, before another flood of commuters would board it, but in case of a sudden brake, there would be a pile-up of people right there!



'Emits Too Much Radiation'; EU Orders Apple To Halt Sales Of iPhone 12



Agenceis

Apple has agreed to install updates for the iPhone 12 in France after French regulators ordered the company to stop selling the model because it emits electromagnetic radiation levels that exceed European Union standards.

The company, which just unveiled its newest generation of iPhones, insists the 12 model is safe and the phones have been certified in countries around the world since its introduction in 2020. It says the problem raised by the French government agency that manages wireless communications frequencies is related to a specific testing protocol.

The French agency said the iPhone 12 recently failed one

of two types of tests for electromagnetic waves capable of being absorbed by the body. On Tuesday, France's government ordered a halt to sales of the iPhone 12 and told Apple to issue a software update to address the problem or face a recall.

Apple said in a statement Friday that it will issue a software update for users in France to accommodate the protocol used by French regulators. It did not elaborate.

The French ban could have been extended to all 27 EU countries after three months if Apple had refused to issue updates and if no other government objected, European Commission spokesperson Sonya Gospodnova said Thursday.

France's digital affairs

minister said the iPhone 12's radiation levels are still much lower than what scientific studies consider potentially harmful to users, and the radiation agency acknowledged that its tests don't reflect typical phone use.

Cellphones have been labelled as possible carcinogens by the World Health Organization's cancer research arm, putting them in the same category as coffee, diesel fumes and the pesticide DDT. The radiation produced by mobile phones cannot directly damage DNA and is different from stronger types of radiation like X-rays or ultraviolet light.

Experts have recommended that people concerned about their cellphone radiation exposure use earphones or switch to texting.

What NASA Says About Aliens After New Findings

Agenceis

The US space agency NASA on Thursday released a 33-page report calling for new techniques to study UAPs, or unidentified anomalous phenomena.

That's the term NASA uses for unidentified or unexplained objects or phenomena seen in the skies or space, some of which would more commonly be referred to as potential UFO (unidentified flying object) sightings.

An independent 16-member study team commissioned by NASA last year to conduct research into reports of human encounters with unidentified phenomena in the skies said advanced satellites, artificial intelligence and machine learning were essential to better understanding UAP.

"NASA has a variety of existing and planned Earth- and space-observing assets, together with an extensive archive of historic and current data sets, which should be directly leveraged to understand UAP," wrote the report's authors.

The panel, which featured physicists, astronauts and astrobiologists, also noted that negative perceptions surrounding the topic of UAP posed an impediment to data collection. NASA officials hope their involvement will allow more serious consideration of such phenomena.

NASA Administrator Bill Nelson, a former Democratic senator from Florida, said the space agency was seeking to move the conversation around UAP, "from sensationalism to science."

Nelson also made a point of noting that the panel had

found no evidence of extraterrestrial origins in any of the UAP they investigated.

Nelson said NASA would be "transparent" in identifying unexplained occurrences in the skies and in space.

Thursday's report used several popular examples often cited as evidence of possible alien life to underscore public misinterpretations based on faulty sensor recordings, claiming that scientific conclusions were impossible until observation methods could be improved.

"Observations of objects in our skies that cannot be identified as balloons, aircraft or natural known phenomena have been spotted worldwide, yet there are limited high-quality observations," according to the report.

Furthermore, it stated, "Despite numerous accounts and visuals, the absence of consistent, detailed, and curated observations means we do not presently have the body of data needed to make definitive, scientific conclusions about UAP."

The topic of possible alien encounters and conspiracy theories surrounding massive government cover-ups have been popular in the US for decades and have become more so over the past few years.

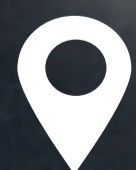
The issue has been further fueled by Pentagon releases of video taken by pilots and purporting to show objects resembling aircraft appearing to fly in ways and at speeds that would surpass known human technologies.

The panel did not access top secret government files for its report but instead relied on unclassified data.

Bun Maska



Famous
Irani Chai of
Bombay
now in Srinagar



JK Bank Lawns,
Opp Ghat 6 Boulevard,
Srinagar