

158 Drug Peddlers Booked Under PITs-PSA, Over 150 Narco Smugglers Arrested

DC Srinagar Chairs NCORD Meeting

Observer News Service

Srinagar: As many as 158 drug peddlers have been booked under PITs-PSA/PSA and over 150 Narco smugglers were arrested during the current year in Srinagar District...

The meeting was held under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad on Tuesday.

SP also informed that huge quantity Contraband substance were also seized/recovered including 108.52 gms of Brown sugar, 8.693 Kgs of Heroin, 8.7 Kgs of Charas, 9.5 Kgs of Fuki, 1356 PSY syrup bottles, 41210 PSY capsules/tablets, besides illicit cultivation of 5066 Kgs Ganja...

Similarly, the DC was informed that the Excise Department has destroyed wild bang spread over 348 kanals of land in Srinagar District, besides illicit poppy cultivation over 12.3 kanals of land during

the current year. In addition, several awareness programs regarding Narcotic Crops/Drug Abuse were also conducted.

Likewise, the DC was also briefed about the action taken and deterrence measures taken by the Anti-Narcotic Task Force (ANTF) to curb drug peddling in Srinagar District.

During the meeting, it was informed that Sale operation of 08 Chemist shops operating in different parts of the City has been suspended for violating Drugs & Cosmetics Act.

The DC also reviewed the implementation of the measures taken and progress achieved to eliminate drug abuse and its peddling from the Srinagar District particularly during the last two months.

The meeting, among others was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Syed Shabir Ahmad, Superintendent of Police, Arif Amin Shah, Chief Education Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, Chief Agricultural Officer DDMO Srinagar, besides Nodal Officer Colleges, representative from Private Schools Association, Incharge Drug De-addiction Centre SMHS Hospital, Incharge ATF, SKIMS Bemina and from ANTF, Excise Department, other concerned.

LCMA Demolishes Various Illegal Structures In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In order to curb the menace of illegal constructions, the Lake Conservation & Management Authority through its Enforcement Wing today conducted a Routine demolition drive in the area of Brein, Ishber Kral Mohalla, Harwan, Tailbel, WFR and Dal.

During the drive several illegal constructions were demolished/removed which includes 01 tin Shed, 03 Hut, 01 tin walling, 01 3rd storey, 01

2nd storey, 01 shop and 01 Single storey. Besides, legal action has also been initiated against the violators.

The Special Demolition Drives will continue within LCMA Jurisdiction especially in Green Belt (200 mts) and the violators will be dealt under law. Therefore, people within LCMA Jurisdiction are time and again warned not to resort to any kind of illegal construction/encroachments within LCMA Jurisdiction especially Green Belt (200 mts).



Lt Governor Inaugurates JKAACL's Kashmir Folk Festival In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha inaugurated the Kashmir Folk Festival, organized by J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages at Tagore Hall, today.

In his address, the Lt Governor commended the efforts of the JKAACL, artists, literary people from J&K and various organizations for promotion of local folk art and culture.

Diverse culture, different art forms are our greatest strengths. The peace has provided the conducive environment for the revival of cultural activities. In the last few years, dedicated efforts have been made through literary & folk festivals, theatre, cultural

exchange programs and cultural events to provide a platform to our artists and young talent, the Lt Governor said.

"We have taken decisive steps for rejuvenation of our rich cultural heritage and it is heartening to see that youth in large numbers are coming forward to promote cultural activities," the Lt Governor said.

Our cultural and spiritual heritage is attracting people from across the world. The earnest efforts made to facilitate the tourists visiting the UT have also opened up large livelihood generation avenues for the youth, local people and all the associated stakeholders, he said.

At the inaugural event, the Lt Governor called upon the artists,

poets and literary personalities of the UT to work collectively and complement the government's endeavors to preserve the cultural and folk traditions of Jammu Kashmir.

Bharat Singh Manhas, Secretary JKAACL shared the efforts of the academy for promotion and preservation of local art, culture and languages. He also informed about the upcoming events to be organized as a part of the Gandhi Jayanti celebrations.

Cultural performances displaying the folk art of Jammu Kashmir were performed by artists.

Senior officers of UT and Police Administration, eminent artists and personalities from diverse fields were present.

Mission Youth Conducts Psychosocial Program At SP College

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In its concerted efforts to address the critical issues of mental health and drug abuse among the youth of J&K, Mission Youth in its month-long awareness program today conducted a one-day psychosocial program at Sri Pratap College, M.A Road, Srinagar.

The event brought together a gathering of a large number of students who are committed to raising awareness and combating these pressing societal challenges by becoming the stakeholders of

this Government initiative.

The event was graced by the presence of the Principal, Sri Pratap College as the chief guest. He emphasized the paramount importance of mental well-being in the lives of students. His thought provoking remarks felt the need for a holistic approach to education, which includes addressing the mental health concerns faced by young individuals.

The event's proceedings commenced with a compelling introductory speech delivered by a Psychosocial Consultant from Mission

Youth. This address offered a concise but insightful overview of Mission Youth's extensive initiatives and their dedication to empower the youth of Jammu and Kashmir.

A pivotal moment of the program featured an expert from IM-HANS (Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences) who threw light on the importance of mental health awareness and the battle against drug abuse. The session was both informative and inspiring, as it highlighted the critical role that awareness plays in safeguarding the mental health of our youth.

KTA Seeks Release Of Pending Payments From J&K Agro Industries

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Kashmir Traders Alliance (KTA) has made a fervent appeal to the authorities, seeking the immediate release of pending payments by the Jammu and Kashmir Agro Industries.

President KTA, Aijaz Ahmad Shahdhar in a statement spoke about the plight of the suppliers, and contractors, stating, "Our members have been facing immense financial stress because of the prolonged delay in receiving payments from J&K Agro Industries and also pending liabilities in treasuries across Kashmir. This has not only affected their business operations but also put their livelihoods at risk. We implore the authorities to intervene and ensure the immediate release of these payments, which are rightfully owed to our members."

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name in my passport bearing no k6917115 is record as Safiya Begum whereas in my matriculation certification it is recorded as Safiya Bano. now i am applying for renew of my passport and went to correct my name in my passport if any body has any objection in this time regards he /she may contact head post office Barmulla within seven days,after which no objection will be entertained.

Safiya Bano

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-Auction Notice table with 5 auction entries including details of parcels, dates, and descriptions.

Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited Possession Notice under Section 13 (4) of the SARFAESI ACT, 2002 read with Rule 8 (1) of the Security (Enforcement) Interest Rules, 2002. Includes description of the immovable property and contact information.

HELP text box with contact numbers for Traffic Police, PCR, Fire and Emergency Services, CAPD, SMC Health Officer, and Ambulance.

AIRPORTS, RAILWAYS, and HIGHWAY STATUS sections with relevant contact numbers and status information for Srinagar.

PRAYERS CALENDAR for Hijri 03 Rabi-ul-Awwal 1445, listing prayer times for Fajr, Zuhr, Asr, Magrib, and Isha.

This Day In History

- List of historical events starting from 622 Islamic Prophet Muhammed (SAW)/Abu Bakr (RA) arrives in Jathrib (Medina) to 2015 - Pope Francis meets Fidel Castro in Havana, on the 1st day of his tour of Cuba.

KASHMIR OBSERVER™

Wednesday | 20-09-2023

Unprecedented Heatwave

Kashmir is in the grip of an unprecedented heatwave this September, with dire consequences for its agriculture sector, particularly apple and paddy crops. On September 12, Srinagar recorded its second-highest maximum temperature ever recorded in September since 1891, reaching a scorching 34.2°C, just shy of the all-time high of 35.0°C set in 1934. Qazigund and Kokernag also experienced record-breaking temperatures, exacerbating an already challenging situation.

The soaring temperatures have led to premature ripening of crops, disrupting their development cycle and adversely affecting both their quality and quantity. The average September rainfall in Kashmir is 75mm, but the region has received only a mere 20mm of precipitation, leaving a significant 55mm deficiency.

Apple growers are particularly concerned, as the excessive heat has hindered color and size development in their crops, impacting the market value of their produce. The apple-growing region of Pulwama has been hit very hard.

While the heatwave persists, there is little immediate relief in sight. The Meteorological Department attributes the dry and hot weather to the El Niño phenomenon, causing temperatures to rise globally. The department does not anticipate significant rainfall until September 20, which could further exacerbate the crisis.

However, there is a silver lining for paddy farmers, as the weather conditions have been favorable for the crop's growth. Some parts of the region may start harvesting the crop in the next 10 days. Another positive dimension is that tourism in Kashmir remains relatively unaffected, with August and September seeing higher inflows compared to the previous year.

That said, it hardly detracts from the concern about the creeping climate change. Though global in scale, it affects every region of the world. And as the continuing erratic weather in Kashmir in recent years reveals, the region is increasingly feeling the impact. According to reports and some surveys, many natural streams in various parts of the Valley have run dry in recent years. And the reason for this is the steady depletion of the glaciers. This has not only reduced the discharge in the rivers and streams but also made many water bodies extinct, affecting the irrigation in the Valley. However, such disturbing changes aren't specific to Kashmir only. This is becoming a worldwide phenomenon. There is thus an urgent need for the world to come together and take remedial measures to pre-empt the catastrophe. But it may take decades before the world is able to sufficiently reign in the factors which are contributing to the disruption in the climate. As continuing heatwaves show, the world needs to quickly get its act together before it is too late.

OTHER OPINION

Raising the game

Asia Cup 2023, India Asia Cup win, Team India Asia Cup campaign, Rohit Sharma, R Ashwin back in squad series against Australia, World Cup squad, Indian express news. The seamers were fantastic, not just Mohammad Siraj but Jasprit Bumrah also showed he has retained the old bite despite a long injury layoff.

At the end of the victorious campaign at Asia Cup whose importance to this Indian team can't be understated, came a revealing soundbite from captain Rohit Sharma. He talked about the potential of R Ashwin playing in the series against Australia — someone who wasn't picked in the World Cup squad.

It shows that Rohit isn't getting carried away by success in the tear-drop-shaped island; he realises the imbalance in the squad and its possible pitfalls.

The Asia Cup must have provided breathing space to the management to do a rethink. It was an all-boxes-checked tournament. They had entered it with questions: Can the re-jigged middle-order hold up? Can the top order handle pressure? Can the lower order justify the exclusion of Ashwin and Yuzvendra Chahal? In the event, the top held its nerve against Pakistan in the second game, the middle more than held up in the first match against Pakistan, the lower order, led by Axar Patel, almost pulled off a lost cause against Bangladesh.

The seamers were fantastic, not just Mohammad Siraj but Jasprit Bumrah also showed he has retained the old bite despite a long injury layoff.

So if all is well, does this team really need Ashwin? Rohit's comment shows the team hasn't wandered into the realm of over-confidence. One look around the cricketing world would disabuse any team of notions of complacency.

Packed with genuine allrounders, Australia are marching on; armed with ambition and Bazball, England are rollicking; with Heinrich Klaasen and David Miller, South Africa are finding their way back to elite cricket; and despite the horrors in the final, Sri Lanka have shown how to cope with the absence of five frontline players to injury.

And no one will take Pakistan lightly despite their hiccups in this tournament. How India do now will depend on how thoroughly they plan for each game of the World Cup

The Indian Express

Third Party Monitoring for JJM in J&K

Stop destruction of Forest Land , Third Party Monitoring under JJM must look into environmental concerns. Govt must create awareness about this agency

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

Few months back I had written a piece "Sadak ya Paani: Lack of Admin Cooperation is Creating Civic Chaos". I had explained in detail how the black-topped roads were being damaged to lay water pipes under the Jal Jeevan Mission in J&K. It is understood that while laying these pipelines, the roads have to be dug but there is no official timeframe or deadline to restore these roads again. I know many roads which were blacktopped last year were dug by cranes to lay large drinking water pipes by the contractors hired by Department of PHE Jal Shakti J&K Govt and till date these road surfaces have not been restored. There is no official deadline given regarding restoration of these roads nor are these works properly monitored by the requisite agencies called independent agencies also known as Third Party Inspection and Monitoring Agencies (TPIMA). Even if the third party monitoring is done that is not focussed on the environmental aspect especially the forest landscape.

Third Party Monitoring in J&K

Last year in February Jal Shakti Department, Jammu appointed Delhi-based infrastructure consultancy company, Rudrabhishek Enterprises Ltd (REPL) for inspection and quality monitoring of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) program in 10 districts of Jammu Division. The agreement was signed between Er. Manesh K. Bhat (Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department, Jammu) and Dr. Harish Sharma Executive Director -REPL. As per the media reports the Executive Director -REPL said that their agency will assist the Jal Shakti Department in effective supervision, quality monitoring and transparency in implementation of JJM in Jammu division.

"We will review, inspect and monitor the construction works, quality tests to verify the adherence of quality control, safety measures, and streamline the quality control and payment process. We will also monitor the functioning of infrastructure during trail run," said the Executive Director.

When it comes to monitoring of JJM projects in J&K, the PHE Jal Shakti has assigned this work to Water and Power Consultancy Services Limited- WAPCOS which is an Indian consultancy service provider under the ownership of the Government of India and administrative control of the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Even as the Govt appointed these third parties to monitor Jal Jeevan Mission -JJM works in Jammu & Kashmir, their presence is not felt on the ground nor are people aware about them.

If people have concerns about the JJM projects they approach Govt agencies only or PHE Jal Shakti officials, the reason is they are not aware about Third Party Inspection and Monitoring Agencies (TPIMA).

Pertinently, the third party agency WAPCOS which is a government-owned consultancy services firm with about 60-70 employees in Kashmir was not paid the consultancy fees for many months by the Jal Shakti Department. This had caused serious concern and halted the work as well in many areas. This issue was reported by local media last year in September.

One fails to understand how can a third party inspection and monitoring agency -TPIMA work independently or transparently if it relies on the same Govt agency for payment of consultancy fees. The TPIMA cannot work as a watchdog in such circumstances.

Why third party Monitoring?

Considering the quantum of works and constraints, the Government of India has given permission for empanelling the third party inspection agencies for various centrally sponsored schemes. Under JJM this is done to support the village panchayat or local Village Water and Sanitation Committee-VWSC to ensure quality control in implementation of JJM. In order to empanel the agencies as third party inspection agencies, the State Project Management Unit, State Water and Sanitation Mission -SWSM, JJM called for the Expression of Interest (Eoi) to show interest in providing the services.

Empanelling of agencies is done based on the experience, human resource and financial capacity of the firm/agency/institution. Once the SWSM releases the empanelled list, the District Water and Sanitation Mission DWSM will select the third party agencies based on the empanelled list. How this has been done in Jammu & Kashmir isn't known? Was the District Water and Sanitation Mission -DWSM involved in the selection of third party inspection agencies at the district level people want to know?

The validity of the agencies empanelled through this process in South Indian states



At a time when massive work is being executed under the national flagship programme Jal Jeevan Mission -JJM, we see our roads being damaged in many areas to lay the drinking water pipelines and these roads not repaired within stipulated time

like Tamil Nadu is 3 years and it can be extended depending on the requirement of services. I think this would be the same in other states and UTs as well.

The Third Party Monitoring and Inspection Agency -TPMIA is supposed to inspect the quality of the work executed by the agency, quality of the materials used in construction and quality of machinery installed in each scheme.

Scope of work for TPMIA

The Third Party Monitoring and Inspection Agency-TPMIA shall inspect the works combined with the village panchayat or Village Water and Sanitation Committee - VWSC and Rural Development Department. They have a mandate to carry out inspection of all engineering works relating to civil, mechanical and electrical components executed under in-village infrastructure covering the following aspects:

Sample checking, test report of the materials used for construction, quality control measures adopted at the time of construction in the field, safety measures adopted at the time of construction in the field, payment for labour by the executing agency/contractor/ vendor, quantity and quality of works executed as per the bill for payment claimed. The third party can carry out inspection of all engineering works relating to civil, mechanical and electrical components.

Srinagar top ranking district

Srinagar District has been ranked as the top performing District under the national level survey called Jal Jeevan Survekshan (JJS-2023) among 114 Har Ghar Jal Certified districts across the country in the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) during October, 01, 2022 to June 30, 2023. Srinagar District has attained the top rank in implementation of JJM by obtaining highest score of 83.0 under set parameters and indicators of JJS-2023. This is indeed a great achievement for J&K but at the same time other districts have to make sure that the infrastructural damages caused due to laying of pipes on metalled roads should be restored within a given time frame. In addition to it the works undertaken in forest and environmentally fragile areas like wetlands, wildlife reserves must be taken up in presence of third party officials and subject matter experts.

No coordination between Govt & TPIMA

More than Rs 5000 crores (Rs 50 Billion)

have been allocated by Government of India to J&K under Jal Jeevan Mission this financial year. Large number of projects are being executed by PHE-Jal Shakti Department across the nook and corner of J&K, but during execution of the works large scale vandalization of roads and forest land is taking place. There is no coordination between different Govt agencies and third party inspection and monitoring agencies -TPIMA. Forest landscape is being destroyed openly and there is no one to guide the contractor. Even the third party agency officials, engineers of PHE Jal Shakti or Forest officials are not seen at the site in the remote forest areas where pipelines are laid in clear violation of Indian Forest Act and other environmental laws. The Forest Department is mute spectator and all the work is done by a JCB Crane operator? This is totally unacceptable. Recently in Yusmarg and Doodh Pathri forests of Budgam I found JCBs and cranes have plundered forest land to lay the drinking water pipelines. I didn't see the third party monitoring agency, officers of the forest department or local tourism development agency around these sites? The entire forest land has been kept at the disposal of the JCB crane operator and he does what he wants? This is how the system of governance is working?

Conclusion

At a time when massive work is being executed under the national flagship programme Jal Jeevan Mission -JJM, we see our roads being damaged in many areas to lay the drinking water pipelines and these roads not repaired within stipulated time. Let the Govt frame a time period for such repairs as roads damaged last year are still not blacktopped. This winter, people will have to suffer on account of this. Forest land is being plundered by JCBs and third party monitoring agencies never take notice of it? How can they do justice when they themselves rely on the Govt for payment of Consultancy Fees?

Moreover, there is also no awareness about the third party inspection and monitoring agency -TPIMA. How many people complain before them?

Let the Govt create awareness about TPIMA and make sure third parties are not controlled by the Govt. Let them work independently and sincerely.

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

Billions Left Behind on Path to Universal Health Coverage

Mohammad Hanief

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank have jointly published the 2023 Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Global Monitoring Report, revealing an alarming stagnation in the progress towards providing people everywhere with quality, affordable, and accessible healthcare.

Released ahead of the High-Level Meeting on UHC at the 78th United Nations General Assembly, a media report exposes a stark reality based on the latest available evidence – more than half of the world's population is still not covered by essential health services. Furthermore, 2 billion people face severe financial hardship when paying out-of-pocket for the services and products they needed.

"The COVID-19 pandemic was a reminder that healthy societies and economies depend on healthy people," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General and added that the fact that so many people cannot benefit from affordable, quality, essential health services not only puts their own health at risk, it also puts the stability of communities, societies and economies at risk and urgently need stronger political will, more aggressive investments in health, and a decisive shift to transform health systems based on primary health care.

The 2023 report found that, over the past two decades, less than a third of countries have improved health service coverage and reduced catastrophic out-of-pocket health spending. Moreover, most countries for which data are available on both UHC dimensions (96 out of 138) are off-track in either service coverage, financial protection, or both.

"We know that achieving Universal Health Coverage is a critical step in helping people escape and stay out of poverty, yet there continues to be increased financial hardship, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable people," Mamta Murthi, Vice President for Human Development, World Bank has said and further says that, "This report paints a dire picture, but also offers evidence on ways to prioritize health



in government budgets and strengthen health systems for greater equity in both the delivery of essential quality health services and financial protection".

While health service coverage improved since the beginning of the century, progress has slowed since 2015, when the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted. Notably, there was no improvement from 2019 to 2021. While services for infectious diseases saw significant gains since 2000, there has been little to no improvement in service coverage for non-communicable diseases and reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health services in recent years. In 2021, about 4.5 billion people, more than half of the global population, were not fully covered by essential health services. And this estimate does not yet reflect the potential long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Catastrophic out-of-pocket health spending, defined as exceeding 10% of

a household budget, continues to rise. More than one billion people, about 14% of the global population, experienced such large out-of-pocket payments relative to their budgets. But even small expenditures in absolute terms can be devastating for low-income families; approximately 1.3 billion individuals were pushed or further pushed into poverty by such payments, including 300 million people who were already living in extreme poverty.

Out-of-pocket health payments can also cause individuals to forego essential care and force families to choose between paying for a visit to the doctor, buying food and water, or sending their children to school. Such trade-offs can spell the difference between the early treatment of a preventable disease and, at a later stage suffering severe illness or even death. Addressing this problem requires progressive health financing policies that exempt those with limited ability to pay

WITH THE REGION PRONE TO NATURAL DISASTERS, DISEASE OUTBREAKS and health risks of climate change, one of WHO's key priorities is to strengthen emergency risk management for sustainable development. Promoting universal health coverage – health for all - and building robust health systems are key priorities

for health services.

Achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by 2030 is crucial for fulfilling the promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and realizing the fundamental human right to health.

To reach the goal of UHC, substantial public sector investment and accelerated action by governments and development partners are essential. Key actions include a radical reorientation of health systems towards a primary health care approach, advancing equity in healthcare access and financial protection, and investing in robust health information systems.

These shifts are essential to counter the impact of COVID-19 on health systems and the health workforce globally, as well as the new challenges posed by macroeconomic, climate, demographic, and political trends that threaten hard-won health gains worldwide.

The 2023 UHC Global Monitoring Report

serves as a wake-up call to the global community, highlighting the urgent need to prioritize and invest in UHC to ensure that everyone gains access to quality, affordable, and accessible healthcare without suffering financial hardship.

Dedicated to the well-being of all people and guided by science, the World Health Organization leads and champions global efforts to give everyone, everywhere an equal chance at a safe and healthy life. We are the UN agency for health that connects nations, partners and people on the front lines in 150+ locations – leading the world's response to health emergencies, preventing disease, addressing the root causes of health issues and expanding access to medicines and health care with a mission to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable.

The World Bank provides financing, global knowledge, and long-term commitment to help low- and middle-income countries end poverty, achieve sustainable growth, and invest in opportunity for all. We comprise the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the world's largest development bank, and the International Development Association (IDA), one of the largest sources of funding for the world's poorest countries.

One of the six WHO Regions, WHO South-East Asia is home to over a quarter of the world's population. Committed to building a better, healthier future for the nearly two billion people in the Region, WHO is working with the 11 Member States to address persisting and emerging epidemiological and demographic challenges.

With the Region prone to natural disasters, disease outbreaks and health risks of climate change, one of WHO's key priorities is to strengthen emergency risk management for sustainable development. Promoting universal health coverage – health for all - and building robust health systems are key priorities.

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G20 and West Asia

India's invitation to the UAE and Oman was a reflection of how much the Gulf matters to India, for both economic and strategic reasons

Sunaina Kumar

On its fifth anniversary, the G20 made a commitment to "listen carefully" to the rest of the world, considering the far-reaching impacts of its decisions as a forum that represents nearly 85 per cent of the global GDP and 75 per cent of global trade, whose membership is ultimately limited to 20. Inviting guest countries every year is a crucial way for the G20 to engage with the world.

India's guest list included Bangladesh, the UAE, Oman, Egypt, Mauritius, Nigeria, Singapore, the Netherlands and Spain. The list reflects a mix of considerations which encompass friendly ties and strategic importance to India at a time when the country is vigorously working on strengthening its international partnerships. The invited countries are also very much in line with India's commitment to make the G20 more inclusive and to amplify the voices of small or under-represented countries from the Global South.

That India invited two of its key partners from the Gulf Cooperation Council, the UAE and Oman to participate in the G20 is a reflection of how much the Gulf matters to India, for both economic and strategic reasons, and has been prioritised in India's G20 presidency. Oman, which is India's oldest strategic partner in the Gulf, was invited to the G20 for the first time. The UAE, an increasingly indispensable crucial strategic



partner for India, had been a guest country in previous G20 presidencies, it was invited by Indonesia in 2022 and by Saudi Arabia in 2020.

A key pillar of India's G20 agenda has been the demand for multilateral institutions to become more inclusive. The crisis in the multilateral system, precipitated by the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic, the climate emergency and the Ukraine-Russia conflict, has underlined the need for a more inclusive and accountable international system. India's

demand for multilateral reform has been vociferously backed by the UAE. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the UAE, wrote in an editorial at the start of India's presidency: "This strategy is a natural extension of the UAE's foreign policy, which always seeks to support partners around the world and ensure that diverse perspectives are heard on the critical issues of our time."

The interlinked crises of our times and the shakeup in the global order

have led to countries pursuing strategic autonomy and multiple choices for partners. The recent expansion of BRICS, to include four West Asian nations, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Iran and Egypt, is a reflection of a resurgent West Asia and its growing international clout.

The upheaval in geopolitics has thrown up challenges as well as opportunities. One such opportunity has been the partnership between India and UAE, which has exponentially grown in this time. The UAE is

India's third-largest trading partner after the United States and China, while India is the UAE's second-largest trading partner after China. To cement their ties, the two countries signed the first-ever bilateral free trade agreement last year. The relationship between India and the UAE spans defence, security, environment, education, health, commerce, investment, and is undergirded by strong cultural and people-to-people ties.

The two countries have demonstrated a commitment to promoting each other's global rise and work together in global fora. They are both a part of the quadrilateral forum the I2U2, which started last year with India, Israel, the UAE, and the United States as members, and the new UAE-France-India Trilateral Cooperation Initiative.

It is on the climate agenda that the two countries will be working in tandem this year. India, which has pressed on the importance of historical responsibility in climate action and championed the cause of developing economies during its G20 presidency, will hand over this agenda to the UAE, the host country for COP28. The two countries have released statements to affirm the importance of cooperating on the climate agenda through G20 and COP28. This year could well turn out to be a pivotal moment for the emergence of Asian global leadership on climate change.

The article was originally published by Khaleej Times

Songbird Species Help Scientists Discern Link Between Vocal Learning, Problem-Solving

Scientists have discerned a strong correlation between vocal learning and problem-solving in songbird species. Some species of songbirds, with versatile abilities in whistling, calling, and singing developed all through their lives, rank among the most advanced avian vocal learners. According to a long-standing hypothesis, only the most intelligent animals are

capable of complex vocal learning, said Jean-Nicolas Audet, a research associate in the laboratory of Erich Jarvis at The Rockefeller University, US. "If that is true, then complex vocal learners should also be better at cognitive tasks, but no one had ever demonstrated that before," said Audet. Audet and colleagues spent three years catching hundreds of wild birds from 21 songbird species in mist nets at The Rockefeller University Field Research Center. Upon ranking the vocal learning capabilities of their subjects, three frontrunners

emerged: starlings, blue jays, and gray catbirds (relatives of mockingbirds). These were also the only three capable of mimicking other species, which Audet calls the "the epitome of vocal learning". The team then ran a battery of cognitive tests on 214 birds from 23 species, including two lab-raised bird species, tests that measured their problem-solving abilities, self-control and making associations and connections. Starlings, bluejays, and catbirds were not only the most advanced vocal learners, but also the most adept at solving puzzles,

and vice-versa - the better a bird was at working its way around obstacles to nab a treat, the more complex its vocal learning ability, the researchers found using statistical analyses. This suggested a strong correlation between vocal training and problem solving, they said in their study published in the journal Science. There was no association between the other cognitive tests and vocal learning complexity. Advanced vocal learners and problem solvers were also found to have brains larg-

er than their body sizes. Overall, the findings suggest that vocal learning, problem solving, and brain size may have evolved in tandem, perhaps as a way of increasing biological fitness, the researchers said. "Our findings help support a previously unproven notion: that the evolution of a complex behaviour like spoken language, which depends on vocal learning, is associated with co-evolution of other complex behaviours," said Jarvis, co-corresponding author on the study.

Government Of Jammu And Kashmir Office Of The Senior Superintendent Of Police- District Pulwama. Includes court orders, notices, and legal proceedings involving Arjumand Gulzar Dar S/o Gulzar Ahmad Dar R/o Kharbatpora Ratnipora Tehsil & District Pulwama. Contains sections for Special Designated Court Under NIA Act, Pulwama and Court of Special Judge (Designated Court Under NIA Act Pulwama).

ICC Charges Eight For Corrupt Activities In Emirates T10 League

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has charged eight people including players, officials and a couple of Indian team owners, Parag Sanghvi and Krishan Kumar Chaudhary on different counts of corruption during the 2021 edition of Emirates T10 League.

The two Indians were co-owners of the team Pune Devils and one of their players in that edition, former Bangladesh Test batter Nasir Hossain has also been charged for breach of league's anti-corruption code.

The third Indian, who is indulged in corrupt activities, is a little-known batting coach named Sunny Dhillon.

The charges relate to the 2021 Abu Dhabi T10 Cricket League and attempts to corrupt matches in that tournament - these attempts were disrupted. The ICC was appointed by the ECB as the Designated Anti-Corruption Official (DACO) for the purposes of the ECB's Code for this tour-



nament and as such are issuing these charges on the ECB's behalf," ICC said in a statement.

Sanghvi has been charged under Articles 2.2.1 and 2.4.6 of the Anti-Corruption code.

He has been accused of "being party to an attempt to fix, contrive or influence improperly matches or aspects of matches in the Abu Dhabi T10 2021." He has also failed to "disclose

to the DACO full details of any approaches or invitations received to engage in Corrupt Conduct under the Code."

Nasir, who played 19 Tests and 65 ODIs for Bangladesh was guilty of "Failing to disclose to the DACO receipt of a gift worth over USD 750."

The others who have been suspended, include batting coach Azhar Zaidi, UAE's domestic

players Rizwan Javed and Saliya Saman and team manager Shadab Ahmed. Six of the charged, including three Indians have been provisionally suspended and all have 14 days from Tuesday to respond to the charges. Later in the evening, the organisers issued a press note expressing their disappointment and promising more vigilant attitude from the upcoming editions.

Miandad, Misbah Back Babar Azam After Asia Cup Debacle

Press Trust of India

KARACHI: Pakistan legends Javed Miandad and Misbah ul Haq on Tuesday defended Babar Azam, saying the captain should not be squarely blamed for the below-par performance in the just-concluded Asia Cup as cricket is a team game. Talking to the media here at a match of the 40's Global Cricket Event, Miandad and Misbah both advised the country's cricket authorities to not press the panic button.

"Why blame Babar Azam only when the rest of the team didn't perform as well in the Asia Cup matches against India and Sri Lanka," Miandad said.

Both the stalwarts, who have played World Cups in India, also advised the players to not let the thought of playing the mega-event in India affect them psychologically.

"Look our team is not as bad as it played in the Asia Cup. It has plenty of potential to do well in the World Cup. Only thing is how quickly our players cope and adjust to playing in Indian conditions before big



crowds and in a country where they will encounter some hostility," Miandad said.

The veteran batsman, who had three tenures as Pakistan coach, said the players need to learn from their performance in the Asia Cup and plan ahead for the World Cup.

"The sooner this suspense about the final squad is ended the better it is for us in the mega-event," Miandad said.

He said while other teams have announced their squads and looked settled, there was unnecessary panic in Pakistan cricket after just two defeats in the Asia Cup.

Misbah also said that Pakistan would only do well if everyone in the squad contributes collectively.

"Don't just expect Babar to perform every time. This is not possible. This team has been successful as a collective unit and they must remember that even in India," he said. He said Babar had now been the captain for three years and he would only get better in taking tactical and leadership decisions with time. "Now is not the time to talk about his captaincy. He is someone who can be relied upon in the World Cup as a captain and batsman."

Anantnag To Host YSS Provincial Cricket Tourney



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Department Of Youth Services & Sports Anantnag will host the Provincial

Level Cricket Tournament for Boys of all age groups at different venues across the district. Ten district teams of the Kashmir division are participating in the tourney. The teams will report at Anantnag from September 20.

The department on Tuesday held a meeting presided over by the District Youth Services & Sports Officer Mr.Raja Yaqoob Ali along with Activity Incharge of the District Muhammad Abbas Dar and other senior officials.

Different committees, like Technical Committee, Boarding and lodging, Press and Publicity, Reception and other committees, have been constituted to oversee the arrangements to put in place proper arrangements.

On Tuesday, members of the committee were briefed about the proceedings of the tournament and different convenors were briefed about their assignments.

DYSS Doru Holds Inter School Zonal Level Athlete Meet For U-14 & U-17 Girls

An Inter School Zonal Level Athletic Meet in disciplines of Running, Throwing and Jumping for Under-14 and Under-17 girls was organised by ZPEO Doru at HS Shankarpura on Tuesday.

A total 238 girl students participated in the competitions.

J&K Tourism Unveils 3rd J&K Open Golf Tournament In Delhi

Grand launch event features cricket legend Kapil Dev

Observer News Service

NEW DELHI: The Department of J&K Tourism, headed by Secretary Tourism, Dr. Abid Rasheed Shah, announced the 3rd Edition of the J&K Open Golf Tournament, in partnership with the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI), the official governing body of professional golf in India.

The grand launch event at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, was graced by the presence of cricketing legend and Vice President of PGTI, Kapil Dev.

Unveiling the upcoming PGTI tournament, Kapil Dev expressed his delight at J&K Tourism's collaboration with PGTI, highlighting how this partnership will provide additional playing opportunities for Indian professional golfers.

He emphasized the tournament's role in promoting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir and passionately encouraged the media to visit and witness the remarkable transformations taking place in the region. Kapil Dev underscored the need to bolster golf tourism in this stunning region, shedding light on the in-



credible opportunities it offers to golf enthusiasts and travellers alike.

Participating in the press conference, Mr. Amarjeet Singh, Special Secretary to the Government Tourism Department, shed light on the burgeoning Golf Tourism sector, emphasizing its significance in the broader tourism landscape.

Manav Gupta, Secretary of Jammu Tawi Golf Course, assured that the course is fully prepared to host this prestigious event for the second consecutive year, from October 4th to 7th, with a Pro Am event on October 8th.

Uttam Singh Mundy, CEO of PGTI, enthusiastically stated, "The third edition of the J&K Open, presented by J&K Tourism,

is one of the most eagerly anticipated tournaments of the 2023 PGTI Season."

The J&K Open promises to be an unforgettable gathering of top Indian golf professionals and international talents. The event will feature celebrated players such as Udayan Mane, Rashid Khan, defending champion Yuvraj Singh Sandhu, and former champion Honey Baisoya, alongside more than 120 national and international participants.

The convergence of world-class golfing facilities, stunning natural beauty, and the endorsement of cricketing icon Kapil Dev has set the stage for an exciting future in golf tourism for Jammu and Kashmir.

Baramulla Wins Provincial Level U-17 Girls Handball C'ship

Observer News Service

BARAMULLA: The week-long Inter-District Provincial-Level Handball Championship continued at Indoor Stadium here.

Tuesday marked the conclusion of the Under 17 Girls' competition, featuring an intense final match between District Baramulla and District Bandipora.

In a stunning display of skill and determination, District Baramulla emerged victorious once again, following their earlier triumph in the Under 14 category.

The final ceremony was graced by



guests, including Jatinder Singh, District Youth Services & Sports Officer of Baramulla, alongside the Manager of Sports Council Baramulla and the Zonal Physical Education Officers of the department.

The Under-19 Girls' competition will begin today at the same venue.

YSS Ganderbal Holds District Level Kabaddi Competition



Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The Department of Youth Services and Sports Ganderbal on Tuesday organised a spectacular Inter Zonal District Level Kabaddi competition for boys at GCOPE Gadoora here.

The event saw the participation of 124 students from all four zones of

the district.

The competition unfolded with fervor and intensity shining a spotlight on the remarkable athletic prowess of these young participants.

The efforts of the meritorious teams were recognized by the senior officials of the department by felicitating them with the well-deserved trophies after the culmination of the activity.



Wounded Manchester United Are A Threat To Bayern, Warns Kane

Agencies

Harry Kane's first Champions League game for Bayern Munich will be against familiar opposition on Wednesday when Manchester United visit the Allianz Arena and the England striker has warned against reading too much into their poor form. While Kane has scored four goals already in the Bundesliga and Bayern are level on points with the leaders, United have lost three of their opening five games, including last weekend's 3-1 home reverse against Brighton and Hove Albion.

United manager Erik ten Hag is already under scrutiny and things could get a lot more uncomfortable for the Dutchman if they suffer defeat against the six-time European champions in one of the standout fixtures of the opening week. Kane, who played in five Champions League campaigns with Tottenham Hotspur before sign-



ing for Bayern in the close season, said underestimating United would be dangerous.

"They've been going through a tough spell recently but sometimes that can make a team dangerous because they want to respond," the 30-year-old Kane, who was reportedly a target for Manchester United, told reporters on Tuesday. "We're at home and want to control the game but we need to be careful of their threat. I don't think about form because every game can be different. There can be big response from teams going through a

difficult spell."

Kane's England team mates Marcus Rashford and Harry Maguire will both be in the squad, although Maguire has made only one substitute appearance for United this season. Kane believes the defender has been treated badly.

"I think H has come under some unnecessary scrutiny," the striker said. "He has probably been scapegoated a bit. "He is a really good friend of mine, a great guy and a really hard working professional. He has been one of England's best defenders over recent times and in England's history."

Manchester City Favourites To Win Champions League: Ancelotti

Agencies

Real Madrid never consider themselves favourites to win the Champions League despite their rich history in the competition, manager Carlo Ancelotti said on Tuesday as he singled out holders Manchester City as the bookmakers' pick.

Madrid, who won a record-extending 14th European Cup in 2022 but lost to City in the semi-finals last season, open their Group C campaign at home to Union Berlin on Wednesday.

They will also face Serie A champions Napoli and Portuguese side Braga in the group stage.

"City are favourites because they have a squad that saw them win it last season and they haven't changed much. However in the Champions League, like always, there are surprises at the end," Ancelotti told reporters ahead of facing Union at the Bernabeu.

"Real Madrid are a team that are going to fight until the end. We never think of ourselves as favourites, just as I think City don't. They won it last year, they can win the Champions League."



Real may be taking on Champions League debutants Union, but Ancelotti stressed they would not take the Germans lightly.

"They're a new team in the Champions League but the fact they're here means they've done very well. They're well organised defensively, they're solid and they play with intensity...," he said. "The Champions League is a

special competition for us. We're going to treat tomorrow's game as something special. We want to get off to a good start in the group stage and we're playing at home."

The Italian added that Dani Carvajal would be rested for Wednesday's game, but said the right back would likely be available for their LaLiga clash at Atletico Madrid on Sunday.

Old Parliament Building Renamed 'Samvidhan Sadan'



Agenceis

The old Parliament building will now be known as 'Samvidhan Sadan', Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said on Tuesday as the functioning of Parliament shifted to its new building here.

The Speaker also announced that henceforth, terms such as 'House', 'Lobby', and 'Galleries' used in the proceedings of the Lok Sabha will refer to the new building, which is now the Parliament House of India.

"The building where we gathered in the morning will now be known as Samvidhan Sadan," he said.

Earlier, at a function held

in the Central Hall of the old Parliament building, Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggested that the building should be renamed "Samvidhan Sadan".

"We are shifting to the new Parliament building. It is an auspicious day, it is Ganesh Chaturthi," he said.

"My suggestion is that as we are going to the new building, the glory of this building should never decline. It should not be called just the old Parliament... It can be named Samvidhan Sadan," Modi said.

Members of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on Tuesday gathered at the historic Central Hall of the old Parliament building for the function.

India Now Has 42 UNESCO World Heritage Sites After 2 More Added To List

Agenceis

New Delhi: The number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India has grown to 42 with the 'Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysala' finding a place in the coveted list on Monday, the ASI said.

Santiniketan, the famed place in West Bengal where poet Rabindranath Tagore built Visva-Bharati over a century ago, earned the UNESCO tag on Sunday.

The beautiful 13th century temples of the Hoysala dynasty in Karnataka, have been inscribed on the World Heritage list of UNESCO, taking the total number of such sites in India to 42, the Archaeological Survey of India said after UNESCO announced its inclusion.

"This is an occasion for immense joy and celebration for the entire India," it said in a statement.

With this successful nomination, India has 42 world heritage properties overall, which includes 34 in the cultural category, seven in the natural category and one mixed property, the ASO said.

Presently, India has the sixth largest number of (UNESCO) sites in the world.



The countries that have 42 or more world heritage sites are Italy, Spain, Germany, China and France, the statement said.

"It is further added that India has added 12 new world heritage sites since 2014, and this is testimony to the prime minister's steadfast commitment to promoting Indian culture, heritage and the Indian way of life," it added.

The Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas has been nominated as a serial property comprising three temples in Karnataka, namely the Channakeshava temple in

Belur, the Hoysaleswara temple in Halebidu and the Keshava temple in Somanathapura, reflecting the creative brilliance of the 13th-century architects, the ASI said.

"These temples are a culmination of various temple building traditions prevalent in the northern, central and southern India such as the Nagara, Bhumiya and Dravida styles," it added.

"Hence the inscription of these temples in the World Heritage List is a combined homage to the great temple-building tradition of India. The temples are richly

experiential, with their exquisite architecture, sculptures and intricate carvings, reflecting the genius of the sculptors in translating religious beliefs, stories and abstract ideas into the medium of stone," the ASI said.

The practice of having sculptural panels narrating stories from the Hindu epics and Puranas along the walls of the temple deepening the religious experience of the circumambulation path, was first introduced by the Hoysalas, it said.

"The coming together of the creative genius, architectural eclecticism and symbolism into this outstanding sacred architecture makes these Hoysalas temples, a true work of art and their inscription is truly an honour for India and the entire world heritage community," the ASI said.

The ASI on Sunday termed the inscription of Santiniketan on the UNESCO World Heritage List a "momentous achievement".

In a post on X, the ASI said, "A momentous achievement for India as Santiniketan, West Bengal, has been officially inscribed on @UNESCO's World Heritage List, becoming 41st World Heritage Property of India."

Elon Musk Says X Could Charge All Users 'Small Monthly Payment'



Agenceis

The tech tycoon has made multiple changes since taking over the site for \$44 billion in October last year when it was known as Twitter.

He has fired thousands of employees, introduced a paid premium option, cut content moderation, and reinstated formerly banned accounts, including that of former US president Donald Trump.

He said in July the platform had lost roughly half its advertising revenue. Bots — accounts run by computer programmes rather than humans — are common on X, where they can be used to artificially amplify political messages or racial hatred.

During a talk with Musk on Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu raised the question of online anti-Semitism, and how X could "prevent the use of bots — armies of bots — to replicate and amplify it".

Musk replied that the company was "moving to having a small monthly payment for use of the X system."

"It's the only way I can think of to combat vast armies of bots," he said.

"Because a bot costs a fraction of a penny — call it a tenth of a penny — but if somebody even has to pay a few dollars, some minor amount, the effective cost of bots is very high."

"And then you also have to get a new payment method every time you have a new bot."

The conversation, which was broadcast on X, came as the Tesla tycoon is mired in a row with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), a US-based Jewish organisation.

Musk has accused the ADL of making unfounded accusations of anti-Semitism that have scared away advertisers and hurt his company's revenue and has threatened to sue for billions of dollars.

Ronaldo Gets Warm Welcome On Arrival In Tehran

AL-NASSR Captain Cristiano Ronaldo Received A Warm Reception In Iran On Monday, In The First Visit Of A Saudi Team To Iran Since 2016 Ahead Of The Beginning Of The Group Stage Of The Asian Champions League

Agenceis

Al-Nassr face Iranian side Persepolis in Group E on Tuesday, while Qatari side Al-Duhail play Istiklol Dushanbe of Tajikistan.

The streets were crowded with fans who raised welcome banners and pictures of Ronaldo upon the arrival of the

Saudi Arabian team in Iran after the restoration of relations between the two countries.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) announced that matches between Saudi and Iranian teams would be held on a home-and-away basis after the agreement of the two local federations.



Supporters invaded the team's hotel, despite attempts by security personnel to prevent them.

The fans chanted Ronaldo's name, with children and women carrying pictures of the Portugal captain.

Al-Nassr posted several photos of Ronaldo receiving a luxurious hand-made

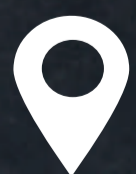
Iranian carpet from Persepolis supporters.

"Mr Cristiano Ronaldo, welcome to Iran. A token of appreciation, an original hand-woven piece of art made by Iranian artists to commemorate your presence in Iran, on behalf of Persepolis's fans," the fans wrote.

Bun Maska



Famous Irani Chai of Bombay now in Srinagar



JK Bank Lawns,
Opp Ghat 6 Boulevard,
Srinagar