

## As Kashmir's Wetlands Shrink Fast Experts Suggest People Oriented Conservation

Parvaiz Bhat

Experts have recommended a number of measures for effective conservation of wetlands across Jammu and Kashmir which include involvement of society, strict control on encroachment and poaching, capacity building of the staff, increased and timely funding, maintenance of water regimes and besides other measures.

In a special issue of Buceros -- a newsletter published by Environmental Information, Awareness, Capacity Building

and Livelihood Programme (EIACP) which is a resource partner on Avian Ecology at Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and is sponsored by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change -- issues facing the wetlands of Jammu and Kashmir have been broadly described by several subject experts who have given a number of recommendations for their effective management and conservation.

One of the key recommendations of the experts is about involving the society,



especially nature-loving young people, for conservation of wetlands across Jammu & Kashmir. "Over the past few

**WHEN WE ANALYSED THEIR INFORMATION WITH THE HELP OF GOOGLE TOOLS, it made a lot of sense to us and we straightway acted upon what the knowledgeable elderly people told us."**

years, several birding clubs have come up in J&K, with hundreds of birdwatchers who are actively involved in birding. Besides bird watching,

their active involvement in wetland conservation should be explored," the experts have recommended.

Involving local community members in conservation exercises have already shown good results at one of Kashmir's prime wetlands, Hokersar. Sajjid Faruk, wetland ranger at Hokersar, said that he and his other colleagues found the community knowledge quite useful for maintaining the water level and enhancing the water spread in the wetland for making it easy **» More On P10**

## KP Guards Killing SIA Raids Multiple Locations in South Kashmir

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The State Investigation Unit (SIA) on Wednesday carried out series of targeted raids at multiple locations in South Kashmir's Pulwama, Shopian and Anantnag districts in connection with the killing of Sanjay Sharma, a 40-year-old ATM guard in Pulwama district in February this year.

Official sources said that raids are being conducted in the Litter area of Pulwama, Shirmal area of Shopian district and Anantnag district as well. He said that raids are underway in connection with the investigation in the case of the killing of ATM guard Sanjay Sharma of Pulwama who was killed in February this year.

Earlier this year, **» More On P10**

## 400 People Sitting Across LoC Identified: DGP

- Have Wiped Out Entire Militant Leadership
- Situation Normal Despite Kokernag Gunfight



Agencies

Kathua: Jammu and Kashmir's Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbagh Singh Wednesday said that 400 locals have been identified who are presently in Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) working to fuel terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir through their supporters.

"We have identified some 400 locals from J&K who are present in Pakistan and PoK. These people are involved in running terrorism here through various means. These people work for various terrorist outfits. We have decided to zero in on their handlers and supporters here," the DGP told reporters during his visit to the Bhalesha area of Doda.

He said that very soon these people will feel isolated and won't be able to carry out their "nefarious designs."

Replying to a query, he said that terrorism was at its low in J&K as major terror outfits like Jaish-e-Muhammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Hizbul Mujahideen are facing leadership crisis after we "wiped out" their all leaders. He said there was a huge difference between Doda of the 1990s and Doda of 2023. "Today, people are living a peaceful life," he said.

Earlier, during his visit to Kathua district of Jammu, DGP stated that after the administration handed over police recruitment to a separate agency, there are 4000 vacancies of constables in the department **» More On P10**

## J&K Unemployment Rate Declines to 5.2 Percent

Auqib Javeed

Srinagar: - The unemployment rate in Jammu and Kashmir has declined from 6.7 percent in 2019-21 to 5.2 percent in 2021-2022, according to a report by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

The report, a copy of which lies with Kashmir Observer revealed that the unemployment rate in the UT was 5.1 in the year 2018-2019 and rose to 6.7 percent in 2019-2020. The percentage came down to 5.9 in the year 2020-21 and 5.2 percent in 2021-2022.

As per the report, the unemployment rate is the usual status for persons of age 15 years.

The data on Employment and Unemployment is collected through Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) conducted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) since 2017-18. The survey period is July to June of the next year.



**THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN J&K WAS 5.1 in the year 2018-2019 and rose to 6.7 percent in 2019-2020. The percentage came down to 5.9 in the year 2020-21 and went further down to 5.2 percent in 2021-2022.**

As per the latest available Annual PLFS reports, the estimated Unemployment Rate (UR) on usual status for persons of age 15 years and above was 5.8%, 4.8%, 4.2% and 4.1% during 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 respectively, which shows that the unemployment rate in the

country has declining trend. As per the reports, the estimated Labour Force Participation Rate (LPPR) on usual status for persons of age 15 years and above was 50.2%, 53.5%, 54.9% and 55.2% during 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22, respectively, which shows an increasing

trend in the labor force.

The Government said that they have taken various steps to improve the Labour Force Participation Rate in the country including women's participation in the labour force and quality of their employment.

While rejecting the monthly reports of private agencies involved in the surveys, Director Employment Jammu and Kashmir, Nisar Ahmad Wani told Kashmir Observer that this is the actual unemployment rate in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said various steps are being taken to bring it down further.

"The reports of the private agencies aren't based on facts and are faulty in their approach," Wani told Kashmir Observer.

Notably, the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) would monthly come up with the unemployment percentage in the country and would show J&K in a "worrying situation".

In March, the **» More On P10**

## MULTI CRORE AYUSHMAN BHARAT SCAM Court Gives ACB 3 Days To File Status Report

Agencies

Jammu: A local court here extended the time for the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), Jammu to submit the latest status about the alleged scam in the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Jan Arogya Scheme in Jammu and Kashmir.

A complaint had been submitted before the Director, CBI seeking registration of FIR into Rs.500-700 Crores scam in the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Jan Arogya Scheme by Advocate Sheikh Shakeel Ahmed last year. The case was later transferred by the CBI to the

Director, Anti-Corruption Bureau, J&K.

The court had directed the ACB to submit the status report by or before September 26 this month and on Wednesday Additional Sessions Judge (Anti-Corruption) Jammu O.P. Bhagat extended the time up to September 30, 2023.

Additional Public Prosecutor appearing for ACB submitted that he has not received the status report from the ACB Headquarters and he be allowed more time to comply the orders of the Court. On the other hand Advocate, S.S. Ahmed **» More On P10**

## PM Modi Has Empowered Farmers Like Never Before: LG

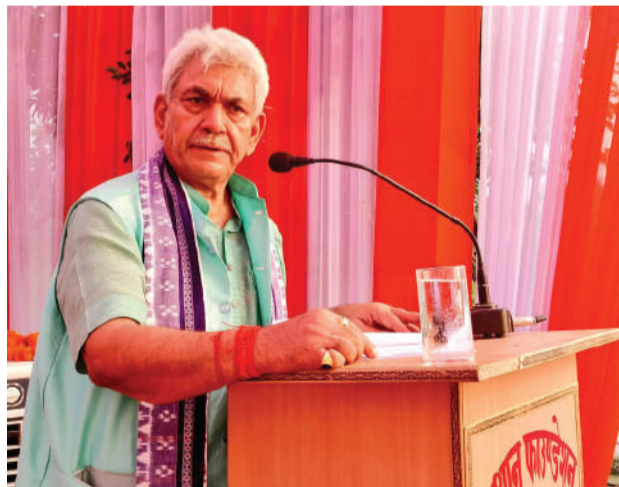
Addresses seminar on social reformer Swami Sahajanand at Ghazipur

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Wednesday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given the agriculture and allied activities new impetus and with it agriculture budget has gone up by 5.7 fold as compared to 2013-14.

Addressing a seminar on great social reformer Swami Sahajanand organized by Swami Sahajanand Postgraduate College in collaboration with ICSSR at Ghazipur, UP, Lt Governor highlighted the significant contribution of Swami Sahajanand to farmer's movement and his role in empowering small and marginal farming community, transformation and rejuvenation of agriculture sector to fulfill the development ambitions of a large section of society.

"Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji is implementing the vision of Swami Sahajanand and has given the agriculture and allied activities new impetus. Agriculture budget has gone up by 5.7 fold as compared to 2013-14, credit flow to farmers stepped up



and Rs.1 Lakh Crore allocated to Agriculture Infrastructure Fund," the Lt Governor said, according to an official spokesman.

He said the progressive reforms under the guidance of Prime Minister have empowered the farmers and brought prosperity in their lives.

"The comprehensive approach from seed to market and the efforts to strengthen the rural economy have led to the empowerment of farmers at every step. Highest-ever

food grain production, significant rise in income and entrepreneurship is scripting a new chapter in history of agriculture sector," the Lt Governor said.

Rs.20 Lakh Cr has been allocated for agriculture credit to farmers and it shows that the government's top priority is to unlock the growth potential of the agriculture and allied sector, he added.

At the seminar, the Lt Governor also shared the agricultural reforms and farmer-centric policies **» More On P10**

## Dr Farooq Convenes Oppn Meeting in Jammu

Invitation sent to all opposition leaders to discuss prevailing situation in J&K: Tarigami

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Former chief minister and National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah has convened a meeting of all opposition leaders in Jammu on October 3 to discuss prevailing political situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

Former legislator and CPI (M) leader Muhammad Yousuf Tarigami told Kashmir News Observer that a meeting of



leaders of opposition parties in J&K has been convened on 3rd of October and it will be chaired by Dr Farooq Abdullah.

The meeting **» More On P10**

## 8 Bihar Labourers Injured in Anantnag Blast

No Terrorist Angle Observed, Investigation Started: Police

Observer News Service

Anantnag: At least eight labourers were injured after an explosion in a vibration machine took place in Larkipora area of Anantnag district.

Reports said that the blast occurred Wednesday morning

near a local market, causing panic among the residents.

All the injured persons, hailing from Bihar, were rushed to a nearby hospital for medical treatment. The injured have been identified as Chato Kumar, son of Soria Kumar (18), Param Jeet, son of Jitender (22), Bhawan Kumar, son of Mohan Kumar (21), Fiqan, son of Nanda Lal (17), Jiten, son of Nanda Reshi (21), **» More On P10**

### SHORT TAKES

#### LG Sends Greetings on Eid-e-Milad

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has extended his greetings and good wishes to the people on the eve of Milad-un-Nabi. In a message the Lt Governor said: "On the auspicious occasion of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh), I convey my greetings to all. The holy Prophet showed us the path of an egalitarian society based on **» More On P10**

#### Soldier Injured In Rajouri Mine Blast

An army soldier was left severely injured in a landmine blast along Line of Control in Rajouri district, officials said on Wednesday. News agency GNS reported that one Naik Dheeraj Kumar Magrati, was injured after he accidentally stepped on a landmine, while on patrolling duty in the forward area of LoC in the Nowshera sector. The injured army man was airlifted to North-ern **» More On P10**

#### Kashmir Youth Dies In Saudi

A Srinagar resident has been killed in a road accident in Saudi Arabia and the family here has appealed to the Lieutenant Governor-led administration in Jammu and Kashmir to help them bring back the body for last rites. Youth identified as Adil Shaban from Rainawari Srinagar died in a road accident in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday. The deceased had arrived in Saudi Arabia only 15 days back on a work visa.

#### ARTO Suspends 21 Licenses

Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Bandipora on Wednesday suspended 21 driving licenses for the period of 3 months for various violations under Motor Vehicle Act. The ARTO made public the list, mentioning Driving Licences, through a notice. The notice reads that the Driving Licences' holders have been found involved in different offences/violations under Motor Vehicle Act **» More On P10**

#### Dawar Declared Best Tourist Village

In a major feat for the Jammu and Kashmir's Tourism department, Dawar village of Gurez in northern district of Bandipora Wednesday bagged the best tourism village award from the Union Ministry of Tourism. The award was received by the J&K's Tourism Secretary Syed Abid Rashid on behalf of J&K government. "Dawar village bagged the award in the golden category from **» More On P10**

#### Horse & Dog Show at APS Srinagar

Army Public School (APS), BB Cantt, Srinagar under the aegis of the Chinari Corps organised horse and dog show for the students and parents today. Parents of the students of APS and citizens were invited to witness the mega show organised by the Indian Army. The event was attended by 600 APS students, their parents and equestrian enthusiasts. 25 APS children, 22 Army personnel, six Canines **» More On P10**



SRTC Retirees Seek Release Of 6th Pay Commission, COLA Arrears

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The retired employees of State Road Transport Corporation (SRTC) on Wednesday staged a protest at Press Enclave, demanding immediate release of 6th Pay Commission, Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) arrears and other retirement benefits.

The aggrieved retirees said besides COLA, their 6th Pay Commission arrears are yet to be released and COLA while they have been deprived of retirement benefits since their superannuation in 2020.

They also alleged that their issues have not been resolved by the current J&K Administration despite having visited the

Civil Secretariat for the last 3.5 years.

"We are now fed up with this government. Over and over again, we have apprised them (government) about our issues, but we are not getting any conclusive answer... we are now descended in a state of begging," said Mohammad Amin Sheikh, a retired SRTC employee.

The protesting employees further said they have worked for decades in the department and seemed to have been left with empty hands.

While ruing the apathy of officials towards them, they hoped that the concerned authorities would listen and redress their matter this time.



Visitors taking photographs at Lal Chowk Square as night life returned to Kashmir after three decades. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

SKICC Celebrates World Tourism Day

Srinagar: Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) today celebrated World Tourism Day in which all the officials of SKICC participated.

On the occasion, Director SKICC, Bakshi Humayun Javed recited the oath for making SKICC the sought after green clean Conference centre of the country, which reflects the theme of World Tourism Day 2023 'Tourism and Green Investments'.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Director said that while cele-

brating World Tourism Day, we are reminded of the immense potential that tourism holds in fostering economic growth, cultural exchange, and social inclusivity.

With its state-of-the-art facilities and commitment to excellence, SKICC has become a premier destination for conferences, conventions, and cultural events. He highlighted that SKICC continues to play a pivotal role in promoting tourism, economic development, and cultural exchange across Jammu and Kashmir.

120-Bed Block At B&J Hospital Barzulla To Be Ready By Year-End

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Construction of the Valley's major orthopedic tertiary care hospital in Srinagar, which was destroyed in a devastating blaze last year, is expected to be completed by the end of this year, alleviating the suffering the patients endured over the last one year.

According to a top health official, the construction of a top health official, the construction of a brand-new, 120-bed hospital block would provide the valley's main orthopedic hospital a major infrastructure boost.

The block, he said, is being built as part of the JTFRP, a project to strengthen critical infrastruc-

ture funded by the World Bank.

The work on the project began in 2019 and was approved in 2015. The hospital had suffered major damage in the 2014 floods, with one of its buildings declared unsafe. The infrastructure was damaged further due to a fire incident last year.

"The state-of-the-art building has a G+5 structure with modern earthquake-resilient technology. The hospital building has modular operation theatres, laminar flow system, TSSU (Theatre Sterile Supply Unit), ICU, Pre & Post Operation care wards, CSSD (Central Sterile

Supply Department), specialized laundry, pneumatic tube system and waste collection system," the official said.

He further said that the main features of the hospital building include IGBC (India Green Building Council) rating and biomedical waste management.

"The bio-medical system designed will cater to the biomedical generation of 140 kg per day which will be disposed of on scientific lines since it also has the provision for the construction of STP/ETP (Sewerage Treatment Plant & Effluent Treatment Plant) as part of the sub-project," he added.

TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
PCR: 0194-2452092, 2455883
PDD: 0194-2450213
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488, 2452222, 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
PAMPORE: 01933-294132
PATTAN: 01954-293507
QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

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

PRAYERS FAJR 5:00
ZUHR 12:22
ASR 4:39
Magrib 6:25
ISHA 7:45

This Day In History

- 1906 - US troops reoccupy Cuba, stay until 1909
1914 - German forces move into Antwerp Belgium (WW I)
1915 - Battle of Kut-el-Amara: British defeat Turks in Mesopotamia
1923 - Abyssinia (Ethiopia) leaves League of Nations
1924 - French government names Gen Serrail governor-general of Syria
1926 - Russia & Latvia treaty of neutrality signed
1928 - Prussia forbids speech from Adolf Hitler
1928 - US acknowledge Chinese government of Chiang Kai-shek
1939 - Estonia accepts Soviet military bases
1939 - German-Soviet Frontier Treaty is signed by Joachim von Ribbentrop and Vyacheslav Molotov; redraws German and Soviet spheres of influence in central Europe and transfers most of Lithuania to the USSR
1944 - Battle of Arnhem, Germans defeat British airborne in Netherlands
1950 - Indonesia becomes 60th member of UN
1959 - Explorer VI reveals an intense radiation belt around Earth
1961 - Syria withdraws from United Arab Republic
1972 - Japan & Communist China agree to re-establish diplomatic relations.
1982 1st reports appear of death from cyanide-laced Tylenol capsules
1982 - NASA launches Intelsat V satellite, no. 505
1983 - STS-9 vehicle moves to launch pad
1985 - NASA launches Intelsat VA F-12
1991 - UN weapons inspectors ends 5-day standoff with Iraq

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice. Sr. DEN-II/FZR acting for and on behalf of the President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date: 17.10.2023 up to 15:00 Hrs.

NORTHERN RAILWAY NOTICE INVITING TENDER. Dy.CEE/SGSU/FZR acting for and on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tenders for the works as under. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date: 20.10.2023 at 15:00 Hrs only.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Executive Engineer PW (R&B) Division Zainpora. NOTICE INVITING TENDER CIVIL WORKS SINGLE COVER SYSTEM (up to Rs. 2.50 Crores) NIT No: 06/ZNP/RnB/e-Tendering/2023-24

From KO Archives

Political Strands in Jobs Racket Revealed

'NC Block President Has Earned Rs 40 Lakh Duping Jobless Youth'

Observer News Service

Srinagar-Several political strands appear to be attached to the recently unearthed fake jobs scandal in Shopyan, with a block president of a political party arrested along with a gazetted officer and four others so far.

Scores of fake appointment orders for government jobs are reported to have been seized from the arrested persons. Investigations have revealed that the arrested political functionary has extracted Rs 40 lakh from jobless youth so far by luring them with promises of government jobs, and the network was spread all over the valley. The sensational racket came to light when a Chattragaram resident, Abdul Ghafar Bhat, filed a complaint with the Zainpora police that one Ali Muhammad Ganai of his village had demanded a bribe of Rs 1 lakh from his son for securing him a job in the Social Forestry Department, and gobbled up Rs 70,000 as advance.

The complaint said that to dupe people, Ganai used fake appointment orders prepared by his son, Altaf Ahmad. The Zainpora-police station registered a case under sections 419, 420 and 467 of the RPC, and handed the case over to the superintendent of police for Shopyan, Joginder Singh.

In the meantime, the police arrested Altaf Ahmad, and seized a Social Forestry uniform, an identity card and a fake appointment order from his possession.

The superintendent of police said that a suspicious list of 200 employees under the name of the Social Forestry Department was published in a newspaper, and on investigations it was found to have been issued by a shopkeeper in Budshah Chowk, Srinagar, Manzoor Ahmad.

As the case was pursued, Manzoor told the police that the list had been given to him by an acquaintance who often came to his shop and passed himself off as a DFO. The superintendent of police laid a trap and arrested the phony DFO when he next visited the shop. He was later identified as Gulam Nabi Bhat of Kawoosa, Budgam, who was an employee of the forest department.

"Twenty fake appointment orders and a number of identity cards were seized on the instance of Bhat, and during interrogation he had revealed the names of several of his accomplices, following which a gazetted officer of the civil secretariat, Abdul Majeed Zargar of Neehama, Beeri, and Muhammad Yaqoob Sheikh of Makhdoom Sahib Srinagar and Chulam Nabi Bhat of HMT were arrested. A further 40 fake appointment orders, state subject certificates and educational certificates were recovered after their questioning. The SP said that Zargar used to work in the secretariat's General Administrative Department, and had been suspended in a case of fictitious appointments, but had later been reinstated.

(Kashmir Observer, September 28, 2000)





KASHMIR OBSERVER<sup>TM</sup>

Thursday | 28-09-2023

## Jaishankar's UN address

**E**xternal Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, delivered a strong message in his address to the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday, stressing that political expediency should not define global responses to terrorism and extremism. Coming in the wake of the ongoing diplomatic dispute between India and Canada over the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, Jaishankar stressed the need for consistent respect for territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs of a country, emphasizing that these principles should not be selectively applied. Projecting the image of a confident India, Jaishankar asserted that India's vision of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future' centers on addressing the concerns of many, rather than catering to the interests of a select few.

Significantly, the foreign minister made it clear that the days of a handful of nations setting the global agenda were over, while noting that India's pursuit of great power status would not be driven by self-aggrandizement but by a desire to take on greater responsibility and make more contributions to global welfare. The speech at once challenged traditional power structures, called for principled diplomacy, and underlined India's commitment to global welfare. And this needed to be said at a time when Canada together with the US and the other major western powers are unfairly blaming India for killing a Khalistani extremist in Canada. While New Delhi has declined any role in the killing, the union government has rightly taken on the west for its double standards.

Truth is that India is now a major power in its own right and it can't be browbeaten to submit to the west's idea of right and wrong as articulated by the foreign minister in his speech. Today India is in a position to demand parity in the terms of its engagement with the major powers. After all, India's geopolitical relevance makes it as important to the west as the west is to it. So, there is a mutuality of interests and also values which make the relationship advantageous to both, perhaps more so to the west. As a result, the west's outreach towards India has a structural incentive to carry on despite occasional challenges. Thus beyond a point, the controversy over the killing of Nijjar won't be more than a passing irritant.

But while the west needs India, it has to also be mindful of India's geopolitical interests and address them. Ever since independence, India has maintained and protected its strategic autonomy. And the major powers which court India have to make room for this for the relationship to endure. And the foreign minister's UN speech makes the country's position amply clear.

### OTHER OPINION

## Identity pangs: On Aadhaar and concerns

**A**s the world's largest digital ID programme with biometric and demographic details of over a billion residents, Aadhaar stands out for its scale. But at a broader level, the agency has red-flagged security and privacy risks from "centralised" digital ID systems such as Aadhaar, where a single entity controls identifying credentials. Moody's, which has mooted decentralised ID systems that give users more control over their data, has also lent weight to worries about the efficacy of Aadhaar's biometric-based authentication systems to verify identities. "The system often results in service denials, and the reliability of biometric technologies, especially for manual labourers in hot, humid climates, is questionable," it said. While this observation is of relevance amid the government's push to switch all payments under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) to an Aadhaar-based payment system, it echoes the concerns raised ever since its launch under the United Progressive Alliance regime.

The vigorous pursuit of Aadhaar, after some initial hesitation, under the present government has manifested in the 12-digit number becoming mandatory for almost all welfare benefits to weaker sections as well as activities such as opening bank or provident fund accounts, securing telephone connections and remitting taxes. Its use, backed by the expansion of access to no-frills bank accounts and mobile phone connections, has indeed enabled the direct transfer of benefits to millions in welfare schemes and weeding out ghosts and middlemen. Yet, there have also been instances of people being excluded from basic services for lack of an Aadhaar or labourers and senior citizens struggling to confirm their fingerprints and retina scans to prove they exist. An audit of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India released last year, had flagged lapses that jeopardise privacy and compromise data security, along with flaws in enrolment processes leading to duplication and faulty biometrics. India has pushed for digital public infrastructure like the one built around the edifice of Aadhaar, as a means for service delivery in G-20 nations and beyond. Having appointed a part-time chief to the UIDAI last month after four years, the government must seek an honest review of, and course correction in the Aadhaar programme, before expanding its linkages further, be it for electoral rolls, private entities or MGNREGA payments.

The Hindu

## International Access to Information Day

# Why Doesn't Right to Information Find a Place in J&K's e-Services?

What prevents J&K Govt from setting up a digital platform to access information under the RTI Act 2005?



Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

**V**ery recently, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Government of India released a report on National e-services Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) wherein Jammu & Kashmir ranked One vis a vis e-services delivery. As per the report, J&K Government is said to have been providing 1028 e-services and has thus surpassed Madhya Pradesh which provides 1010 e-services and Kerala which has 911 online services for its citizens. This is indeed a great achievement for the people of Jammu & Kashmir but as a long time Right to Information (RTI) campaigner, I feel dejected and dispirited when I don't see RTI in the list of 1028 online/ e-services.

According to a press statement by the Government, issued in response to the aforementioned report, the Digital J&K programme was launched in mission mode last year. The number of online services has increased exponentially from 35 services in 2019 to 1028 services as on date.

"The remarkable digital journey of J&K and the resultant transformation from a laggard status in e-governance to a leading position in such a short span of time is unprecedented. This has brought about a paradigm shift resulting in increased transparency, accountability and efficiency at all levels. There has been a palpable reduction in corruption and increase in citizen satisfaction", reads the Govt statement

Union Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances -DARPG, Mr V Srinivas, congratulated the Govt of J&K for this great achievement. He stated that the NeSDA framework, developed by DARPG has played a pivotal role in catalyzing the improvement in the uptake, volume, and quality of e-services.

### Offline to Online

Last year, in December, the J&K Chief Secretary Dr A K Mehta had impressed upon all the Govt offices to make all the offline services online. As per the Govt statement issued on December 16th 2022, the Chief Secretary while reviewing the performance of the Information Technology (IT) Department in a meeting, directed the officers to prepare a list of all the services provided by the Govt departments. The Chief Secretary directed the officers to separate the services still offered through offline mode and prepare a roadmap for offering the same through an online platform with end-to-end digitisation by January 15th 2023. The Chief Secretary during the meeting asked the officers of the IT department to issue advisories to different Govt departments for conducting security audits of their official websites as well without any delay.

By January 15th 2023, all the offline services had to be made online but even as September is coming to an end, the citizens in J&K continue to seek information under Right to Information Act 2005 (RTI Act) through an offline mode which is completely obsolete.

As on date, citizens intending to seek information under RTI



**Today's day and the theme of this day should be a wakeup call for Jammu & Kashmir Govt. If the Govt of J&K is providing 1028 online services to its citizens what prevents them from not including online RTI service in this list and make it 1029?**

in J&K write down an RTI application, take its printout, then purchase the Indian Postal Order (IPO) of Rs 10 which isn't available in all the local post offices. The application is then sent via speed post / registered post or dropped personally in a Govt office. On the contrary, this is not the case with central Govt offices. One can file an RTI application on a cell phone and pay application fees online. If J & K is directly ruled by the centre for the last 4 years, why are not the same facilities given to people of J&K ?

### Ladakh starts Online RTI portal

As J&K Govt fails to give its citizens the right to access information through an electronic mode, the Union Territory of Ladakh has taken a lead instead. The Ladakh UT administration last month (August 18th) launched and started a web portal namely RTI online to facilitate the citizens in filing RTI applications and first appeals through an online platform [www.rtionline.ladakh.gov.in](http://www.rtionline.ladakh.gov.in). As per the official order issued by UT of Ladakh, the web portal will be managed and supervised by General Administration Department (GAD)

"An RTI cell with officers Sonam Chhosdon, Deputy Secretary and Mohammad Shafi, Junior Assistant, GAD, has also been constituted accordingly," said the order. The order further says that RTI cell and the portal shall be serviced by the Accounts wing of the GAD. All the Public Information Officers (PIOs) and First Appellate Authorities (FAAs) have been directed by Ladakh GAD to ensure disposal of RTI applications filed through online mode on the designated portal in a time bound manner as per the timeline prescribed under Acts and Rules.

The accounts wing of the Ladakh GAD has also been directed

through the same order to supervise and maintain the online fee receipts and ensure its timely transfer to relevant heads. The UT Govt of Ladakh has set up a technical support team controlled by GAD for maintenance, hosting, and other IT support for smooth operation and running of the new RTI portal by using the manpower that has already been hired through an outsourcing agency. The NIC Ladakh is providing all required support to GAD in technical matters vis a vis online RTI. Pertinently the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) on February 26 this year had instructed his Principal Secretary Sanjeev Khirwar to fix a timeline to launch the RTI Online Portal at the earliest. The LG during a few meetings at Raj Niwas Leh early this year had inquired about the reasons for the delay in launching the RTI online portal in Ladakh. It is heartening to know that finally online RTI is a reality in Ladakh and the Govt of J&K must also follow the footsteps of UT of Ladakh by launching an RTI portal soon.

### Our Advocacy

This author along with other volunteers associated with Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement have been doing a lot of advocacy for online RTI facilities in J&K. For the last many years I have been writing about it and one of our committed activists namely Syed Adil from Ganderbal used the RTI application as a tool to ensure RTI goes digital in J&K. Adil sought information about all this from the Govt of India around January end this year. He filed an application before the Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeITy). The Ministry forwarded the application under section 6 (3) to Department of Personnel and

Trainings (DoPT) Govt of India which works under the Prime Ministers Office (PMO). The DoPT further forwarded Adil's application to J&K Govt (General Administration Department-GAD) and the Govt had no option but to say in writing that online RTI will be a reality in J&K very soon. It is now around 4 months and we still struggle to seek information through an offline mode.

### Conclusion

Today is September 28th and this day is celebrated as The International Day for Universal Access to Information Day or RTI Day. This day was proclaimed on 15 October 2019 at the 74th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). This year's global celebrations are being held at Oxford, United Kingdom on September 28th 2023 and the entire programme will revolve around the theme titled as "The Importance of the online space for access to Information". The theme will also encompass discussions and deliberations on the challenges and opportunities posed by the internet and the significance of accessing information through an online mode and implications of internet shutdowns and online censorship. I think today's day and the theme of this day should be a wakeup call for Jammu & Kashmir Govt. If the Govt of J&K is providing 1028 online services to its citizens what prevents them from not including online RTI service in this list and make it 1029?

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

*Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat is an Acumen Fellow. He is Founder and Chairman of Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement*

# 21st Century Western Scholarship on the Prophetic Seerah—Some Positive Glimpses

Dr Tauseef Ahmad Parray

The Western scholarship on Islam in general, and on the primary sources of Islam in particular—the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH): the Last Divine Message and the Last Messenger—have continued from centuries, and, indeed, has seen an impressive growth from the last few decades, especially in the 21st century. A plethora of literature has been produced on the life of the Last Prophet (PBUH), which is generally denoted by the Arabic term Seerah/Sirah—one of the most prominent genres in the Islamic literary tradition. A large number of biographies of the Prophet (PBUH) exist in all Islamic languages as well as in the European languages (especially English) in prose, poetry, and more recently even through films/ documentaries. In the West, interest has increased about the popular as well as scholarly Seerah works; however, most of this scholarship, throughout history, has remained 'biased', 'bigoted', 'negative', and 'offensive'.

Nevertheless, in the recent Western scholarship on this theme, one observes a positive perception in these biographies. These "recent works on Sirah in English", as Professor Abdur Raheem Kidwai puts it in his Images of the Prophet Muhammad in English Literature (2018), "reflect a sea-change in the representation of Prophet Muhammad" (PBUH), indicating "the welcome trend of acknowledging the Prophet's greatness and glory." He labels this recent positive representation of the Prophet as "Towards Fairness and Truth" in contrast to the negative portrayal of medieval times, which he terms as "The Distorting Mirror". He has summarized the whole discourse in these words: "Notwithstanding the highly regrettable and detestable portrayal of the Prophet down the centuries, ... which makes a sad, depressing reading, it is gratifying that since early twentieth century there has been some fairness in the West's treatment of the Prophet...acknowledging the gross injustice and hostility in the West's representation. Equally welcome is the appearance of several biographies of the Prophet by Western scholars, which do justice, to a large extent, to the Prophet's genius and his life-ennobling message."

It is in this backdrop that views of some of the Western non-Muslims scholars/ writers are presented (on the eve of 12th Rabi-ul-Awal) in this write-up to show the developments as well as perception of the Prophet (PBUH) in the 'West' (from 2000 onwards).



Professor Carl W. Ernst (Professor at North Carolina Chappell Hill, USA), in his Following Muhammad: Rethinking Islam in the Contemporary World (2003) writes: "While the Qur'an as divine revelation may be the most important resource of the Islamic tradition, we would not have it in its present form without the Prophet Muhammad [PBUH]... He [PBUH] has served as an ongoing model for ethics, law, family life, politics, and spirituality in ways that were not anticipated 1,400 years ago. There are few people in history who have had a greater impact on humanity, and it is through the historical elaboration of tradition that we must seek to understand that impact".

Professor Gerhard Bowering (Yale University, USA) in an article entitled "Muhammad (570-632)", in his Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought (2013) is of this opinion when he presents the Prophet (PBUH) as a 'political leader': "That one man could achieve so much in such a short time is astounding. ... [He (PBUH)] made a global impact over more than a millennium and whose cause continues to exert a worldwide attraction today.

His message has stood the test of time for more than a thousand years, and his community has grown steadily over the centuries".

Professor Tamara Sonn (Professor in the History of Islam at Georgetown University, USA) in her 'Islam: A Brief History' (2010), admits that Prophet's [PBUH] role "extends beyond the task of delivering revelation", for his life is "a model for humanity of how to live every moment, and make every choice, in accordance with God's will. The way he lived his life is described by the Quran as the best example of Islam" (Q. 33: 21); and together with the Quran, his example (Sunnah) "comprise the guidance [and direction] Muslims need in their collective responsibility to establish justice".

Professor John L. Esposito (professor of Religion & International Affairs and of Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, USA) in his 'What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam' (2002 & 2011) writes: "In contrast to the often spiritualized Christian view of Jesus [Prophet 'Isa (AS)], Muslims look upon Muhammad [(PBUH)] as both a prophet and a very human figure,

one who had great political as well as spiritual insights. Thus Muslims look to Muhammad's [(PBUH)] example for guidance in all aspects of life: how to treat friends as well as enemies, what to eat and drink, how to mourn and celebrate. ... [Prophet] Muhammad's [(PBUH)] life translated the guidance revealed in the Quran into action; he lived the revelation, giving concrete form to the laws that God revealed for the various conditions of ordinary human life. For Islam, no aspect of life is outside the realm of religion". In his The Future of Islam (2010), Esposito writes as: "Muhammad [PBUH] is one of the great figures of world history. Few have had more of a global religious and political impact; yet no prophet has been more vilified throughout history. ... In his lifetime, throughout Muslim history, and today, the Prophet Muhammad [PBUH] is seen as the 'living Quran', the embodiment of God's will in his behavior and words". Esposito repeats almost similar views in the 5th (updated) edition of his Islam—The Straight Path (2016), wherein he devotes a full chapter to the "Muhammad and the Quran—The Messenger and Message".

Highlighting his role as a reformer, Esposito writes: "Muhammad [PBUH] was not the founder of Islam; he did not start a new religion. Like his prophetic predecessors, he came as a religious reformer. ...The Prophet brought a revolution in Arabian life, a reformation that sought to purify and redefine its way of life.

William E. Shepard (Retired Associate Professor of Religious Studies, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand), in his Introducing Islam (2014) devotes a full chapter to the Prophet's biography, entitled "The Prophet Muhammad [PBUH]: 'the best of all creatures'". He begins his chapter with these words: "If the Qur'an is the Book of God, Muhammad [PBUH] is the person through whom that book came to humanity and his words and deeds are the first and most important commentary on it. In his lifetime, he was prophet, arbitrator, political leader and moral exemplar". Furthermore, he presents the views (both positive and negative) of some modern Muslim and non-Muslim scholars, regarding the various facets of the Prophet's (PBUH) blessed life. As a reformer, Shepard sums up as: "Muhammad [PBUH] is also presented as a reformer who considerably raised the social and ethical level of the Arabs of his time... He called for equality and mutual responsibility among his followers, and for the abolition of class privilege and extremes of wealth. He is described as calling for social justice and sometimes even for socialism".

These few examples clearly reveal that the Western scholarship has seen a 'sea-change' in the representation of the Prophet's biography in recent years and is, thus, indicative of a 'welcome trend of acknowledging the Prophet's greatness and glory'. It is apt to conclude with this passage from the Preface of Professor Kidwai's Images of the Prophet in English Literature: "In today's globalized world with numerous opportunities for interaction and much faster and varied channels of communication we can and should ensure a better representation of the Prophet and of ourselves. Our real, meaningful tribute to the Prophet consists in facilitating a better understanding of Islam and the Prophet by dint of our character and conduct patterned after the Prophet's role model which is characterized by sympathy, sincerity and love for all fellow human beings."

The author is Assistant Professor, Islamic Studies, GDC Sogam (Lolab), Kupwara. Feedback at tauseef.parray21@gmail.com

## 6 Books to Read on the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

SELINA BAKKAR

We've taken to social media to once again ask for recommendation on books and resources specifically about the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. For those of us who want to get to know the Prophets life and perhaps it's the first time you are making the intention to look at his footsteps we'd actually recommend children's books, they allow you to digest the chronological order of events and simple details so when you dive into heavier literature you are able to navigate it with a bit more ease.



The Simple Seerah

The Simple Seerah was authored by Ustadh Asim Khan and is produced by

Toyris Miah who shares on the site "The idea for The Simple Seerah came about when Toyris discovered his 11-year-old nephew Zakaria had a passion for reading history books. He tried to find some Islamic history books for Zakaria but struggled to find anything which catered to his age group, this sparked a desire to produce a book on the Seerah that appealed to a younger demographic."

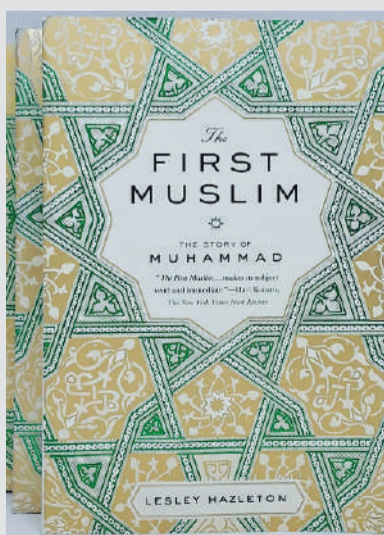
When The Moon Split: A biography of Prophet Muhammad



The book was published many years

ago but recently was revised and has a new front cover, it also has full color pictures and Lessons & Morals at end of each section. It's another good one for Children, families looking at the seerah together or for someone that wants to grasp the timeline and character of the Prophet Muhammad.

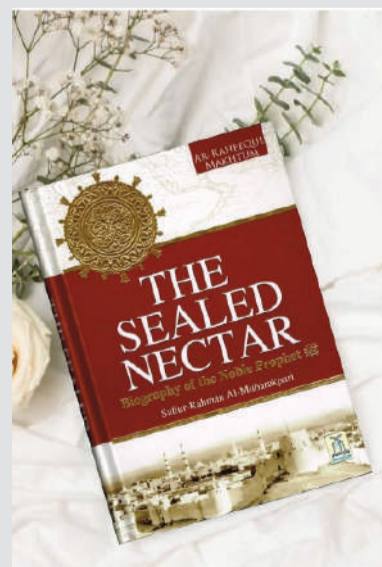
The First Muslim: The story of the prophet Muhammad



The book was researched and written by Lesley Hazleton who is a

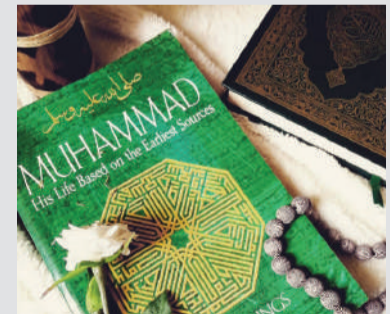
British-American author whose work focuses on the intersection and interactions between politics and religion.

The Sealed Nectar

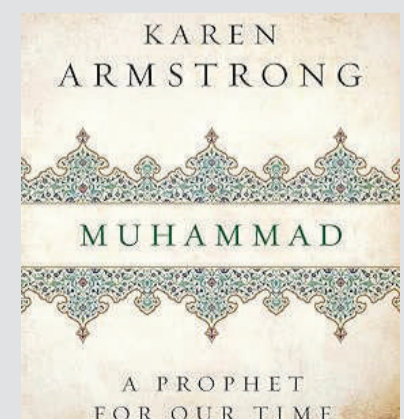


One of the older books in the list, the book is still highly recommended. This book was awarded first prize by the Muslim World League in worldwide competition on the biography of the Prophet held at Makkah Al-Mukarramah in 1399H/1979.

Muhammad by Martin Ling



Karen Armstrong: Muhammad



Muhammad the Prophet by Maulana Muhammad Ali

# Covid Antiviral Drug Molnupiravir Linked To Virus Mutations: Study

Press Trust Of India

**A**widely used COVID-19 antiviral drug, molnupiravir, has been linked with a pattern of mutations in the SARS-CoV-2 virus, according to a study published in the journal Nature.

A team, including researchers from the Francis Crick Institute and the University of Cambridge in the UK, noted that molnupiravir works by inducing mutations in the virus's genetic information, or genome, during replication.

Many of these mutations will damage or kill the virus, reducing viral load in the body. It was one of the first antivirals available on the market during the COVID-19 pandemic and was widely adopted by many countries.

The scientists used global sequencing databases to map mutations in the SARS-CoV-2 virus over time. They analysed a family tree of 15 million SARS-CoV-2 sequences so that at each point in each virus's evolutionary history they could see which mutations had occurred.

Although viruses mutate all the time, the researchers identified mutational events in the global sequencing database which looked very different to typical patterns of COVID-19 mutations, and that they were strongly asso-



ciated with individuals who had taken molnupiravir.

The researchers found that these mutations increased in 2022, coinciding with the introduction of molnupiravir. They were also more likely to be seen in older age groups, consistent with the use of the antivirals to treat people who are more at risk, and in countries

which are known to have high molnupiravir use.

The team analysed treatment data in England and found that at least 30 per cent of the events involved use of molnupiravir.

The causes of mutational events can be traced by looking at their mutational signature: a preference for mutations to occur at particular

sequences in the genome.

The researchers found a close match between the signature seen in these mutational events and the signature in clinical trials of molnupiravir.

They also saw small clusters of mutations which suggest onward transmission from one person to another, although no established

**Many of these mutations will damage or kill the virus, reducing viral load in the body. It was one of the first antivirals available on the market during the COVID-19 pandemic and was widely adopted by many countries.**

variants of concern are currently linked to this signature.

Understanding the impact of molnupiravir treatment on the risks of new variants, and any impact they might have on public health is difficult, the researchers said.

It is also important to consider that chronic COVID-19 infections, which molnupiravir is used for, can themselves result in new mutations, they said.

"COVID-19 is still having a ma-

jeor effect on human health, and some people have difficulty clearing the virus, so it's important we develop drugs which aim to cut short the length of infection," said study lead author Theo Sanderson, a postdoctoral researcher at the Francis Crick Institute.

"But our evidence shows that a specific antiviral drug, molnupiravir, also results in new mutations, increasing the genetic diversity in the surviving viral population," Sanderson said.

The findings are useful for ongoing assessment of the risks and benefits of molnupiravir treatment, the researchers said.

The possibility of persistent antiviral-induced mutations needs to be taken into account for the development of new drugs which work in a similar way, they said.

"Molnupiravir is one of a number of drugs being used to fight COVID-19. It belongs to a class of drugs that can cause the virus to mutate so much that it is fatally weakened," said Christopher Ruis from the University of Cambridge.

"But what we've found is that in some patients, this process doesn't kill all the viruses, and some mutated viruses can spread. This is important to take into account when assessing the overall benefits and risks of molnupiravir and similar drugs," Ruis added.

## Government of Jammu and Kashmir Office Of The Senior Superintendent Of Police-District Pulwama

Pulwama 192301 Telephone: 01933-24123(7 Fax;01933-241932/ Email ID: dpopulwama@jkpolice.gov.in

No. CRB/82-P/2023/8831-32

Date: 09/2023

### IN THE SPECIAL DESIGNATED COURT UNDER NIA ACT, PULWAMA

In the case of

UT of J&K through P/S Kakapora. V/S

Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Abdul Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama. (Case FIR No. 29/2022 U/S 302, 307 IPC, 16, 18, 20, 38, 39 UAP Act and 7/25, 7/27 I. A. Act. of P/S Kakapora

JKPCO/00/6082023  
DOI : 21-09-2023  
DOD : 21-09-2023

Coram: O.P.Thankur J.O. Code: JK-00097

ORDER  
21.09.2023

The instant application has been moved by LD. Additional Public Prosecutor of this court in terms of section 82 of Cr.Pc. aimed at publication of proclamation requiring\* the accused namely Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama accused in said criminal case to appear before this court for facing trial. It is averred in the application that owing to involvement of said accused in the criminal case covered by Case FIR No. 29/2022 U/S 302, 307 IPC, 16, 18, 20, 38, 39 UAP Act and 7/25, 7/27 I. A.) Act. of P/S Kakapora and in various other terrorist activities, he has been declared as terrorist and upgraded to A++ category vide PHQ order No.OP/S/CAT/2022/139-42 dated 26-02-2022, belonging to the banned terror outfit of LeT. It is also submitted in the application that said accused is avoiding his arrest and owing to the absconding of said accused general warrant of arrest issued by this court on 18.09.2023 also could not be executed.

Perused the application and the documents connected thereof I have also perused the Charge Sheet of aforesaid criminal case and also heard the LD. Additional Public Prosecutor at length in the matter. Having regard to gravity of offences in which above named accused is involved and peculiar facts and circumstances attending the matter, the prayer of LD. Additional Public Prosecutor for publication of proclamation under rules with regard to above named accused appears to be genuine, accordingly, the application at hand is allowed. Let proclamation be issued against the accused namely Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Abdul Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama involved in FIR No. 29/2022 U/S 302, 307 IPC, 16, 18, 20, 38, 39 UAP Act and 7/25, 7/27 I. A. Act. of P/S Kakapora in terms of section 82 Cr. P.C to appear before this court, by or before 24-11-2023

The investigating agency is directed to adhere to the following while publishing the proclamation in question.

e) The proclamation shall be publicly read in some conspicuous place which is ordinarily place of residence of the said accused.

f) The proclamation be affixed/pasted at some conspicuous part of the house of accused and at some conspicuous place of the village Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama

g) Copy of the proclamation shall also be affixed/pasted at some conspicuous part in District court complex Pulwama.

h) Copy of the proclamation shall also be got published at least in two leading newspapers of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir in which at least one shall be valley based.

The application is accordingly disposed of and shall form part of Charge Sheet (Challan).

Announced  
21.09.2023

Special designated court  
Under NIA/Act, Pulwama

### IN THE SPECIAL DESIGNATED COURT UNDER NIA ACT, PULWAMA

In the case of

UT of J&K through P/S Kakapora. V/S

Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Abdul Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama. (Case FIR No. 60/2022 U/S 18, 20, 23, 38, 39, UAP Act and 7/25 I. Arm Act, of

P/S Kakapora

Coram: O.P.Thankur  
J.O. Code: JK-00097

ORDER  
22.09.2023

The instant application has been moved by LD. Additional Public Prosecutor of this court in terms of section 82 of Cr.Pc. aimed at publication of proclamation requiring the accused namely Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama accused in said criminal case to appear before this court for facing trial. It is averred in the application that owing to involvement of said accused in the criminal case covered by Case FIR No. 60/2022 U/S 18, 20, 23, 38, 39, UAP Act and 7/25 I. Arm Act, of P/S Kakapora and in various other terrorist activities, he has been declared as terrorist and upgraded to A++ category vide PHQ order No.OP/S/CAT/2022/139-42 dated 26-02-2022, belonging to the banned terror outfit of LeT. It is also submitted in the application that said accused is avoiding his arrest and owing to the absconding of said accused general warrant of arrest issued by this court on 18.09.2023 also could not be executed.

Perused the application and the documents connected thereof. I have also perused the Charge Sheet of aforesaid criminal case and also heard the LD. Additional Public Prosecutor at length in the matter.

Having regard to gravity of offences in which above named accused is involved and peculiar facts and circumstances attending the matter, the prayer of LD. Additional and , Publihi Prosecutor for publication of proclamation under rules with regard to above named accused appears to be genuine, accordingly, the application at hand is allowed. Let proclamation be issued against the accused namely Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Abdul Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama mvolved in Case FIR No:60/2022 U/S 18, 20, 23, 38, 39, UAP Act and 7/25 I. Arm Act, of P/S Kakapora in terms of section 82 Cr. PC to appear before this court, by or before-24/11/2023

The investigating agency is directed to adhere to the following while publishing the proclamation in question.

a) The proclamation shall be publicly read in some conspicuous place which is ordinarily place of residence of the said accused.

b) The proclamation be affixed/pasted at some conspicuous part of the house of accused and at some conspicuous place of the village Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama

c) Copy of the proclamation shall also be affixed/pasted at some conspicuous part in District court complex Pulwama

d) Copy of the proclamation shall also be got published at least in two leading newspapers of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir in which at least one shall be valley based

The application is accordingly disposed of and shall form part of Charge Sheet (Challan).

Announced  
22.09.2023

Special Designated Court,  
Under NIA Act, Pulwama

### In the Court of Special Judge (Designated Court Under NIA Act) Pulwama.

In the case of:-

UT of J&K through P/S Kakapora. V/S

Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/oAbAziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama. (Case FIR No. 29/2022 U/S 302, 307 IPC, 16, 18, 20, 38, 39 UAP Act and 7/25, 7/27 I. A. Act of P/S Kakapora.

In the matter of: - Proclamation in terms of section 82 of Cr. PC Svt 1989.

WHEREAS: It appears to the satisfaction of the court that one Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama is an accused in a Criminal case which is covered by Case FIR No. 29/2022 U/S 302, 307 IPC, 16, 18, 20, 38, 39 UAP Act and 7/25, 7/27 I. A. Act of P/S Kakapora

WHEREAS: The said accused namely Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama has neither appeared before the investigating officer of the said case during the course of investigation nor before this court post submission of Charge Sheet in the above referred case till date even despite issuance

of coercive process

WHEREAS, this court has all the reasons to believe that Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar. R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama, accused in the above captioned case against whom non-bailable warrant has earlier been issued by this court vide dated 14.09.2023 is absconded and is concealing himself so that such warrant can not be executed

WHEREAS; in the analysis of this court it would be proper for taking trial of the aforesaid

case to its logical conclusion to publish a written proclamation requiring said Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama accused in above captioned case to appear before this court.

Now through the medium of this proclamation accused namely Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama is hereby directed to appear before this court situated in New District Court Complex Degree College Road Pulwama in connection with criminal Case which is covered by Case FIR No. 29/2022 U/S 302, 307 IPC, 16, 18, 20, 38, 39 UAP Act and 7/25, 7/27 I. A. Act of P/S Kakapora of P/S Kakapora by or before 24.11.2023. Herein fail not. ' Issued this 12th day of September 2023 under my hand and seal of the court.

Special Designated Court,  
Under NIA Act, Pulwama

### In the Court of Special Judge (Designated Court Under NIA Act) Pulwama.

In the case of:-

UT of J&K through P/S Kakapora. V/S

Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama. (Case FIR No. 60/2022 U/S 18, 20, 23, 38, 39 UAP Act and 7/25 I. A. Act of P/S Kakapora.

JKPLO100/607  
DOI 22-09-2023 DOD 22-09-2023

In the matter of: - Proclamation in terms of section 82 of Cr. PC. Svt 1989. WHEREAS: It appears to the satisfaction of the court that one Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama is an accused in a Criminal case which is covered by Case FIR No. 60/2022 U/S 18, 20, 23, 38, 39 UAP Act and 7/25 I. A. Act of P/S Kakapora.

WHEREAS: The said accused namely Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama has neither appeared before the investigating officer of the said case during the course of investigation nor before this court post submission of Charge Sheet in the 'a'bov' referred case till date even despite issuance of coercive process

WHEREAS, this court has all the reasons to believe that Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama, accused in the above captioned case against ( whom non-bailable, /warrant has earlier been issued by this court vide order dated [14.09.2023 is absconded and is concealing himself so that such warrant cannot be executed

Whereas in the analysis of this court it would be proper for taking trial of the aforesaid case to its logical conclusion to publish a written proclamation requiring said Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama accused in above captioned case to appear before this court.

Now through the medium of this proclamation accused namely Reyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Ab Aziz Dar R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora District Pulwama is hereby directed to appear before this court situated in New District Court Complex Degree College Road Pulwama in connection with criminal Case which is covered by Case FIR No. 60/2022 U/S 18, 20, 23, 38, 39 UAP Act and 7/25 I. A. Act of P/S Kakapora of P/S Kakapora by or before 24.11.2023. Herein fail not.

Issued this day of September 2023 under my hand and seal of the court.

Special Designated Court,  
Under NIA Act, Pulwama

DIPK-9570/23  
dated: 27-09-2023





## Government Polytechnic College Bandipora Marks World Tourism Day 2023 with "Tourism and Green Investments" Theme

Government Polytechnic College Bandipora celebrated World Tourism Day 2023 today with great enthusiasm and a commitment to sustainable tourism under the theme "Tourism and Green Investments." This event was organized to raise awareness about the importance of eco-friendly practices and responsible tourism in preserving the natural beauty of the region.

World Tourism Day is celebrated globally on September 27th to foster awareness about the social, cultural, and economic significance of tourism. This year, Government Polytechnic College Bandipora hosted a series of events to highlight the importance of sustainable tourism as a catalyst for green investments.

The event commenced with an inaugural address by the college principal, Mr. Javid Iqbal Bhat, who emphasized the need for sustainable tourism practices to protect the pristine environment of Bandipora District and promote eco-friendly tourism.

The event showcased the rich cultural heritage of the region through traditional music and dance performances by the students of Travel Tourism & Hospitality Management branch as well as by students of Mechanical & Civil Engineering



branches, highlighting the importance of cultural preservation in tourism.

Mr. Javid Iqbal Bhat, Principal of Government Polytechnic College Bandipora, expressed

his gratitude to all participants and attendees, stating, "Tourism plays a crucial role in the development of our region, and it is our responsibility to ensure that this development is sustainable

and environmentally friendly. The theme of 'Tourism and Green Investments' reminds us of the need to protect our natural resources for future generations."

While speaking on the occasion, Mrs. Rukhsana Bashir, HoD, Travel Tourism & Hospitality Management Branch, expressed that the celebration of World Tourism Day at Government Polytechnic College Bandipora served as a platform for

dialogue and collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, and tourists, to promote responsible tourism practices and investments in green infrastructure.

The event concluded with a pledge taking ceremony for responsible and sustainable tourism and a vote of thanks from Principal Government Polytechnic College Bandipora

## Toyota Kirloskar Motor Showcases Special-purpose Hilux at the Indo-Pacific Armies Chief's Conference



Srinagar: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) showcased a Toyota Hilux which has been uniquely modified through its authorised external vendor, during the Indo-Pacific Armies Chief's Conference (IPACC) in New Delhi.

Hosted by the Army Design Bureau, Indian Army, in collaboration with the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers, the Defence Equipment and Technology Display coincides with the Indo-Pacific Armies Chief's Conference, Indo-Pacific Armies Management Seminar, and Senior Enlisted Leadership Forum.

Toyota's participation in this high-profile forum, reflects its commitment to providing innovative solutions, with its technological strengths, in the critical areas of defence and capable of serving other special customer requirements.

Recently Toyota displayed two modified (with the support of an authorised external vendor) Hilux vehicles - Field Diagnosis Vehicle (FDV) and Rapid Intervention Vehicle (RIV) at the North Tech Symposium organised by Northern Command of

Indian Army. With Toyota's legendary QDR (Quality, Durability and Reliability), this 4x4 all-terrain mountain off-road vehicle is engineered to excel in the harshest of environments, making it an ideal choice for varied customers with specific necessity as well as Indian army purposes.

V. Wiselene Sigamani, General Manager - Strategic Business Unit (North) of Toyota Kirloskar Motor, said, "Marking yet another remarkable demonstration, Toyota is proud to display a uniquely designed Hilux, modified through an authorised external vendor, during the Indo-Pacific Armies Chief's Conference (IPACC). This platform allows us to showcase our technological prowess in offering cutting-edge solutions to meet varied customers' special vehicle needs. We are immensely honoured with this great opportunity to present our customised Hilux especially that can serve the Indian army purposes, which is a testament to our resolute commitment in providing unique solutions with versatility." (KNT)

### CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

#### As Kashmir's Wetlands

for the birds to land and forage in the wetland.

"The inputs of the local people were very useful. They shared their experiences about the network of canals in the wetland and told us how each of those canals differently influences the water-level in the wetland," Faruk said. "When we analysed their information with the help of Google tools, it made a lot of sense to us and we straightway acted upon what the knowledgeable elderly people told us," he added.

Hokersar is a famous waterfowl reserve and a wetland of international importance. According to Ramsar Sites Information Service, it is the pathway of 68 waterfowl species like large egret, great crested grebe, little cormorant, common shelduck, tufted duck and the endangered white-eyed pochard, visiting it from Siberia, China, Central Asia, and Northern Europe.

Recommending strict control on encroachments, the experts have observed in the Buceros report that the wetlands are threatened by continuous encroachment.

"Most wetlands are threatened with encroachment, which is largely at the behest of politically influential elements and land mafia. For example, Hokersar, which is surrounded by 10 villages, and located on an important (Srinagar-Baramulla) road and close to the Srinagar City, has over the years been subjected to slow encroachment. Fortunately, the Wildlife Department has taken concrete steps to demarcate the wetland boundaries and made several evictions. To control further encroachment, all wetlands should be demarcated properly," the report says.

A NASA report has also revealed recently that Wular Lake, an ecologically crucial lake for Kashmir, has witnessed large reduction in size due to land conversions and deforestation in recent decades. This not only poses a threat of repeated flooding in Kashmir, but will negatively influence livelihood generation and availability of water for the communities, the NASA report said.

"Some of the bright green area on the eastern side of Wular Lake used to be open water. Nutrient-rich sediment and aquatic vegetation have filled in parts of the lake and contributed to its shrinking in recent decades," the NASA report further said and added: "In a 2022 study, researchers in India—using data from the Indian Space Research Organization's (ISRO) LISS-IV instrument—found that Wular Lake's open water area had shrunk in size by about one-quarter between 2008 and 2019."

In a detailed study of the lake, Wetlands International, a Netherlands-based not-for-profit that works to sustain and restore wetlands globally, had also revealed earlier that there was a 45 percent reduction in the lake area mainly because parts of the lake were converted for agriculture and willow tree plantations.

Wular Lake is crucial for saving Kashmir from floods. In recent years, Kashmir valley has witnessed

repeated flood like situations following the devastating 2014 flooding. The lake is also important for livelihoods of people. "When I was young, this lake looked like a sea," said Abdul Subhan Dar, an elderly villager living near Wular Lake.

"But, today, many of its areas have become very shallow while some have become playing-fields for children and grazing grounds for cattle," Dar said and added that there is also considerable reduction in quantity of fish and fodder in the lake as compared to a few decades back. As per an estimate of Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA), Wular Lake has lost one-fifth of its water-holding capacity in three decades which is equivalent to an annual lake sedimentation rate of 2,470 acre feet.

The experts have also expressed concern about rampant poaching in the Buceros report and have recommended: "Poaching may be under control inside the protected wetlands, but continues to be rampant outside the protected wetland boundaries in adjacent paddy fields, and unprotected marshes and wetlands, which are foraging sites of waterfowl. Poaching can be controlled by a) ensuring conviction of and exemplary punishment to the poachers, b) banning the issuance of licenses for large fire-arms (rifles, and 'sport' and punt guns) in the name of 'self-defence' (instead, licences should be given for pistols in such cases), c) controlling the sale of certain cartridges used for poaching, d) training and capacity building of the wildlife staff to lodge complaints that can stand the scrutiny of the court, e) sensitizing the local communities and judiciary about the ecological values of wetlands and water-birds, f) recognising services rendered by the frontline staff by the institution and rewards for the staff members who show exemplary performance in controlling poaching, g) involving local youths in tourism and related activities, and h) involving religious leaders and organizations to raise awareness on conservation."

According to the experts' report in Buceros, while present management of J&K's water bodies "is in good, technically sound hands, quite often the lack of resources and occasionally administrative apathy lead to several loopholes."

The report further says: "Financial support required by these agencies, particularly, the Forest and Wildlife Departments, to meet the increasing demands of conservation and development of the water bodies under their administrative control, has not been up to the mark." The experts have made several other recommendations for efficient protection of the J&K's wetlands which include, as follows:

About the capacity building of the staff, the experts have advised: "Wildlife guards and watchmen play a vital role in implementing conservation measures in the field. Unfortunately, their role is often overlooked and thus, attention should be given to their capacity building and training. While most personnel are dedicated to their

work, providing regular motivation is crucial. Further, a system should be developed to expose the field staff to conservation efforts being implemented in other states, by arranging visits to wetlands, such as Keoladeo and Sultanpur national parks. Such visits can demonstrate the positive impacts of effective poaching control, and make the staff appreciate the benefits of conservation efforts. Capacity building of wildlife guards and watchmen will eventually enhance their contribution to wildlife conservation in their respective areas."

According to the experts, the funding should be increased for conservation work and should be released in a timely manner: "Wetland management and development is not possible without liberal financial support. The amounts allocated in J&K for wetland conservation are too meagre to cater to the actual conservation requirements. Therefore, there is an urgent need to enhance the fundings from multiple resources. Management interventions required in a wetland are often season-specific and time-barred. For example, desilting and de-weeding operations cannot be launched in peak summers when the water level in the wetlands is extremely high, or in winters, when migratory birds are visiting. This leaves a small window for conducting such operations, and if sufficient funds are not provided on-time, implementation of suitable conservation efforts are delayed."

Natural water regimes should be studied scientifically, the experts have recommended: "The natural water regime of all the wetlands should be scientifically studied and then proper measures should be undertaken for its restoration/maintenance. As was observed in the case of Hokersar, a mistake by the Flood and Irrigation Department (in what was otherwise a well-planned intervention to prevent floods) partially dried up wetlands, which had to be subsequently restored by timely efforts of the Wildlife Department. Thus, experts from all fields, including hydrology, landscape ecology, wetland ecology, and development planning, should be involved, along with ornithologists and biologists to develop short-term and long-term conservation plans. Particularly, a strict monitoring protocol should be developed for every wetland. Further, external agencies, such as Wetlands International South Asia (WISA) or BNHS, should be roped in to independently assess the health of the wetlands in J&K."

The experts have further recommended: "Effective environmental awareness campaigns should be initiated in schools, colleges, and villages around each wetland. Notably, several villagers living adjoining the wetlands have never visited the wetlands as all they know is that the wetlands are protected areas with entry restricted for villagers. Consequently, they are completely disconnected with the wetland, birds, or ground staff. Nonetheless, the association can be strengthened by environmental awareness programmes implemented by local NGOs. However,

local and national NGOs need governmental support. Although a slow process, changing the attitude of people is required."

According to the experts, the wetlands need to be studied and monitored on long-term to find out the scientific solutions for their degradation: "J&K boasts several reputed universities and institutions. To study each wetland more comprehensively, both short-term and long-term research studies should be initiated in collaboration with the universities, local organizations, and national NGOs. The following are some of the potential research topics that can be considered: a) Long-term monitoring of waterfowl populations, b) migratory movements through ringing, banding, and telemetry, c) local movement of migratory duck/ geese during winter, d) habitat selection by resident and migratory waterfowl, e) breeding ecology of Mallard Anas platyrhynchos and other waterfowl, and f) behavioural changes at different protection levels/ regime. SKUAST-Kashmir has already conducted extensive research on most of these topics, thus, laying a strong foundation that can be further reinforced."

#### SIA Raids Multiple

Sharma, a Kashmiri Pandit, was shot at point-blank range by militants while on his way to a local market.

Raids are underway and further details will be shared after the culmination of the raids, he added.

Notably, the case of Sharma's killing was first investigated by Pulwama Police, however, it was later transferred to the SIA.

According to a previous PTI report, the key focus earlier was on the residences of three active persons, namely Danish Hamid Thoker, also known by the alias Khalid, Ubaid Padder from Chakoor Shopian, and Abrar Farooq Wani of Hef Shirmal. These individuals, as the report states, have been identified by SIA for their connections to the ongoing investigation.

#### 2 Cops Killed

The injured have been identified as Joginder Singh, a teacher and Constable Sewa Singh.

A case has been registered and further investigation started, official added.

#### J&K Unemployment

CMIE put the unemployment rate of Jammu and Kashmir at 23.1 per cent. In January, the unemployment rate in J&K was put at 21.8 percent, which is the highest in states and UTs across.

Wani said that the government took serious notes of the "factually incorrect" percentage and informed the central government. "The agency didn't have any work force in the valley and would take only six districts for the survey, which was wrong," Wani added.

Notably, the CMIE is not coming up with the unemployment percentage for the J&K from the last four months.

Wani said that efforts are on to bring the unemployment rate to zero

in the next two to three years.

"Currently there are 14 government departments that are working on self-help employment schemes in the J&K," said Wani adding that "Government gives subsidy and enticed the youngsters to take benefit of government schemes."

Wani further said that the department conducted 84 job fairs, which attracted hundreds of companies from the private sector offering thousands of jobs for the youth.

"The efforts are on but the youth need to come forward and stand on their own feet," Wani added.

He informed that there are around 2.5 lakh unemployed youth registered with the government in the UT of different age groups.

Earlier, Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said that over 30,000 government posts have been filled in the last three years while recruitment for another 20,000 posts in the administration will be advertised in 3-4 months. He said all the vacant posts in various Government departments will be filled in the next six months through a "major recruitment drive."

#### 400 People

while deficiency is being felt everywhere.

"Earlier, police would conduct its recruitment drives itself. Since the recruitment process was handed over to some separate agency, there are 400 vacancies of police constables in the department. The deficiency in ranks is being felt everywhere in J&K," DGP Singh said.

He said that Kathua and its remote villages are maintaining communal harmony. "There are hardworking people who spend days in fields and shops to earn their livelihood. Peaceful atmosphere is prevailing in this district," the DGP said, adding that "there is a great demand for the police recruitment drives as youth here are facing unemployment."

He said that police had been always giving priority to border areas whenever recruitment drives were held in the past.

Asked about situation post the Kokernag encounter where two army officers and a police officer were killed, the DGP said "situation continues to remain peaceful as it was earlier."

He said that neighbouring country always hatches conspiracies to destabilise the peace but police and forces are alert to foil all such bids.

-With Inputs from KNO

#### Court Gives

resisted the prayer and submitted that ACB is taking the matter casually and an attempt is being made to hush up Rs.500-700 Crores Scam, news agency KNT reported on Wednesday.

He further submitted that a time-bound direction be issued to the ACB so that the status of the scam is known to everyone.

The court agreed and asked ACB to present the status report on Saturday.

#### PM Modi Has

introduced in the UT of J&K over

the past few years.

He also called for adopting sustainable development measures to effectively tackle the threat of Climate change.

Prof. (Dr.) V K Rai, Principal Swami Sahajanand PG College; Dr. Neerja Madhav, renowned author; Prof. Udayan Misra, Principal LBS PG College Mughalsara; Prof. Chandrakanta Rai and prominent personalities from all walks of life were present.

#### Dr Farooq Convenes

will discuss the present situation in J&K, he said, adding that he has sent invitation to all leaders of opposition parties after discussing the about the meeting with Dr Farooq Abdullah. He said that the meeting will be held at 2:30 pm at Dr Farooq Abdullah's Jammu residence.

#### 8 Bihar Labourers

Titu Kumar, son of Mahir Reshi (23), Matlesh Kumar, son of Ganesh Kumar (19) and Shan Kumar, son of Nanda Reshi (17)—all residents of Bihar.

Meanwhile, police in a post on X, said that there is no terrorist angle observed in the incident while investigation has been started. "An explosion occurred in the cement mix settling vibration machine, adjacent portable generator and tin can of oil being carried with labourers in a load carrier at Larkipora Anantnag, 8 labourers injured with burn injuries being treated at hospital. All stable. No terrorist angle observed. Investigation started," Kashmir Zone Police wrote on X.

#### LG Sends Greetings

compassion, peace, love, harmony and brotherhood. The timeless teachings of holy Prophet continue to guide humanity on the path of kindness, equality and universal brotherhood. May the joyous occasion of Milad-un-Nabi bring peace, prosperity and happiness to all and inspire us to follow the path of righteous living and work for the welfare of all."

#### Soldier Injured

Command hospital Udhampur for immediate treatment, they further said.

#### ARTO Suspends

and the Rules made there under. Dawar Declared across all villages in the country," officials said.

Sources in the tourism department said that the move will help the border tourism further as the government has already explored 75 off beat destinations to increase the number of foreign and domestic tourists to J&K.

Pertinently, this year so far, 1.6 Cr tourists including over 30000 foreign guests have visited the UT while the government is eyeing 2.25 Crore tourists this year.

#### Horse & Dog

and four Horses presented a number of breathtaking stunts in the incredible display of skills and horsemanship along with unconditional human-canine bonhomie.

## Pakistan Cricket Team Arrives In India After Seven Years

Press Trust of India

**HYDERABAD:** The Pakistan cricket team arrived here on Wednesday, its first visit to India in seven years, to compete in the ODI World Cup beginning on October 5.

The Babar Azam-led side will spend a lot of time in Hyderabad, having arrived here Dubai where it had a long nine hour layover. The squad had left Lahore in the wee hours of Wednesday and reached Hyderabad in the night.

Pakistan play their opening warm-up game against New Zealand on September 29 before taking on Australia on October 3. They open their tournament campaign against Netherlands here before battling with Sri Lanka on October 10.

The Pakistan players had got their Indian visas less than 48 hours before their scheduled travel. Both India and Pakistan only face each other Asia Cup and ICC events due to the tense relations between the two countries.

Only Mohammad Nawaz and Salman Ali Agha have visited India for cricket. Babar



could not play the T20 World Cup in India in 2016 due to an injury.

"The BCCI has assured the ICC that all teams will be provided the best security and will be well looked after so I don't expect anything different for our team. I don't think our team will face any issues in India," head of PCB management committee Zaka Ashraf told reporters before team's

departure.

Ahead of the team's departure, Babar had spoken about his excitement over playing in India especially Ahmedabad where the arch-rivals lock horns in front of a one lakh plus crowd.

"Although we have not played in India before, we are not taking too much pressure. We have done our research and we have heard the condi-

tions are similar to how they play out in other Asian countries," said Babar in the pre-departure media conference.

"I am excited to play in Ahmedabad as it will be jam-packed. I will try my best to perform up to my potential. I am not worried about my individual accolades, I want to make sure whatever I do helps the result for the team," he said.

## Australia Beat India By 66 Runs In Consolation Win In Third ODI



Press Trust of India

**RAJKOT:** Australia avoided an unprecedented series white-wash after registering a 66-run victory over India in the third ODI here on Wednesday.

Chasing a massive 353 to win, India were restricted by Australia to 286 in 49.4 overs. India however won the three-match series 2-1.

The Aussies motored to 352 for 7 after Mitchell Marsh (96), Steve Smith (74), Marnus Labuschagne (72) and David Warner (56) made impact knocks.

Jasprit Bumrah took three for 81 and emerged the most successful among Indian bowlers.

India made a fist of chase through captain Rohit Sharma (81) and Virat Kohli (56), but soon fizzled against the off-spin

of Glenn Maxwell.

Brief scores:

Australia: 352 for 7 (Mitchell Marsh 96, Steve Smith 74, Marnus Labuschagne 72, David Warner 56; Jasprit Bumrah 3-81) beat

India: 286 all out in 49.4 overs (Rohit Sharma 81, Virat Kohli 56, Shreyas Iyer 48; Glenn Maxwell 4-40).

## 5 Matches Played In U-17 Provincial Tourney In Anantnag



Observer News Service

**ANANTNAG:** Five matches were played in the Department of Youth Services & Sports-organised Under-17 Provincial Level Cricket Tournament across several turf wicket venues in Anantnag.

Hosts Anantnag played Srinagar in the first game. The toss was won by Anantnag and after electing to field first, Sehran bowled a brilliant spell of 4 overs with 4 wickets and by conceding 13 runs only. He was declared as man of the match. Muzain Farooq was top scorer from Srinagar with 27 runs in 26 balls. Anantnag won by 6 wickets.

In the second game, Kupwara took on Pulwama. Kupwara won the toss and after

electing to bat first, set a target of 87 runs, with Himayat scoring 20 runs in 12 balls. From Pulwama, Mehran Hilal bowled a great spell of 3 overs for 4 wickets, while Faizan Mukhtar claimed 3 wickets in 3 overs. Chasing the target, Faizan Mukhtar scored 48 runs for Pulwama and was declared man of the match. Pulwama won this match by 5 wickets.

It was Ganderbal vs. Anantnag in the third game of the day. The toss was won by Ganderbal, who scored 135 runs in allotted overs, with Sheikh Areeb scoring 46 runs in 28 balls. Huzaim clinched 5 wickets in 3 overs. Anantnag won the match by 8 wickets with exceptional batting of 58 runs in 43 deliveries. Pulwama played Budgam

in the fourth game. Budgam won the toss and chose to field first. Pulwama scored 158 runs in allotted overs with Faizan Mukhtar scoring 58 runs in 22 deliveries. Chasing the target, Budgam were bundled at 138 runs, with Azhar Farooq scoring 37 runs in 24 balls. For Pulwama, Zaid Farooq took 3 wickets, as they won the match by 20 runs.

Anantnag took on Shopian in Game 5. Shopian batted first after winning the toss and was bundled at 62 runs, with Muneeb Hilal top scoring with 32 runs. Sahib and Huzaim from Anantnag claimed 3 wickets each. Chasing the target, Tanzeel and Tawfeeq scored 25 and 27 runs as Anantnag won the match by 9 wickets.

## World Dragon Boat C'ship Winners Meet Secy YSS

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Zahoor Ahmad and Zain Ul Aabidin, gold medalists of the 16th International Dragon Boat Federation's World Dragon Boat Racing Championship, and their coach, Farooq Ahmad Bhat, on Wednesday called on Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, Sarmad Hafeez, at Civil Secretariat here.



They had detailed discussion with the Secretary regarding various issues need to be taken care of to further boost this potential sports in Jammu and Kashmir. They also shared their experiences of the championship.

The Indian team won four

medals, comprising one gold, one silver and two bronze medals, in the championship held at Rayong Pattaya, Thailand.

Farooq Ahmad Bhat will also represent India at the 19th Asian Games 2023 at Hangzhou, China in Dragon Boat event as International Technical Official alongside Tom Joseph.

Secretary YSS complimented Farooq Ahmad Bhat and wished

him good luck for the Asian Games.

The Indian team had also won two bronze medals at the 14th ADBF Asian Dragon Boat Championship 2022 under the coaching of Farooq Ahmad Bhat and Regi KS of Kerala.

## Inter Zonal Football & Cricket Tournaments End In Srinagar



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Inter Zonal District Level tournaments in football and cricket organised by DYSSO Srinagar concluded on Wednesday at Gindun Ground Rajbagh and Bemina Degree College Ground, respectively.

In football, Zone Amarakadal beat Zone Batamaloo 1-0 in the last moments of the match at Gindun Ground. Meanwhile in cricket, Zone Hawal beat Zone Gulab Bagh

by 3 runs in the final played at Bemina College Ground.

Both tournaments were conducted for Under-19 boys.

In other YSS news, Zone Eidgah organised a Yoga Display programme for girls of all age groups at BHSS Nawakadal. A total of 60 girls of the zone participated.

Zone Batamaloo organised competition in 100 mtrs sprint at GHS Clubbed Hyderabad. In which 30 students of the zone participated.

## Junior Soft Tennis Open Trials On October 3

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The J&K Amateur Soft Tennis Association announced on Wednesday that it will be conducting open selection trials for J&K teams (Boys and Girls) for their participation in the upcoming 18th Junior National Soft Tennis Championship. The trials will be held at Gindun Stadium, Rajbagh, on October 3.

The national tournament is scheduled to be held at Tennis Complex, IGMC Stadium, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh from October 15 to 19.

As per revised date for open trials, JKASTA has urged upon all its affiliated district units to ensure their participation in the selection trials. The players must be born in or after 2005. Earlier, these trials had been scheduled for 22-09-2023.

## Contract Issue: PCB Convinces Top Players To Sign Three-Year Deal

Agencies

**LAHORE:** The central contracts stand-off between Pakistan Cricket Board and top national players ended on Wednesday after the parent body announced a significant enhancement in match as well as retainer fees apart from a committed percentage earned from ICC media rights revenue. This is the first time that the PCB has agreed to give a portion of the ICC revenues to players and according to a reliable source in the board under the three-year deal the players will get from 3 to 5 percent of the ICC revenues.

The PCB is expected to get an annual sum of around USD 33-34 million from its share of revenues earned from media rights of ICC events.

The three-year deal will run from July 1 2023 to June 30, 2026 with as many as 25 cricketers able to get a pie from the ICC revenue share. The board said the players' match fees will also see a major hike: 50% increment in Test, 25% in ODI and 12.5% in T20.

The PCB has also given a significant increase in monthly retainers to contracted players across all its four categories with the top A category players including captain, Babar Azam, Muhammad Rizwan and Shaheen Shah Afridi earning a 20% increase their



monthly salary. This would be roughly around 4.5 million rupees with just a 10% tax deduction.

Players in the remaining three categories have also got substantial increases in their retainers with a 144% increase for B category, 135% for C and 127% enhancement for D category players.

Centrally contracted players who are playing domestic cricket will be paid half of international players' match fee. In addition, players will be allowed to play two foreign leagues in each season. The PCB, unlike last season, also merged the red-ball and white-ball national contracts on the recommendations of the central contract committee as a way to evaluate players in terms of winning

matches and aimed at promoting fairness, transparent selection process.

PCB chairman Zaka Ashraf said that the PCB had agreed to new contracts with players after lengthy negotiations. "We believe that our players are the true assets of Pakistan cricket, and it is our utmost priority to ensure their well-being and provide them with the best possible services."

Pakistan captain, Babar Azam termed it a historic deal. "I am extremely happy and satisfied that we have reached an agreement with the PCB. It has been a lengthy and, at times, challenging negotiation process, but I believe we have reached a fair and beneficial agreement for both parties."

## Tamim Iqbal Hits Out At BCB After Saying He Opted Out Of World Cup

Press Trust of India

**MIRPUR:** Tamim Iqbal opted out of next month's ICC Cricket World Cup after a dispute with a member of the Bangladesh Cricket Board, the opening batsman said on Wednesday while describing the situation as "a dirty game."

"Someone called me from the top level of the board who is very involved with our cricket. He said that if you go to the World Cup you have to play the matches by managing your (back) injury. So, you better do one thing, don't play the first match against Afghanistan (on October 7)," Tamim said on a video posted on his official Facebook account.

"I replied that the Afghanistan match is still 12/13 days away. In 12/13 days, I will be in better condition. Why shouldn't I play? Then, he said that if you play you have to bat down the order."

"After hearing this, I am shocked, as I have never in my 17-year career batted down the order. I feel like I'm being forced to do many things. I said, 'Look, if you have such thoughts then don't send me. I don't want to be in this mess. I don't want to be part of this dirty game. You make me face something new every



day. I don't want to stay here."

Tamim hit 44 in the second ODI against New Zealand on September 23, his first innings back in international cricket since reversing his decision to retire in July. It was also followed by an injury layoff which forced him to miss this month's Asia Cup.

The 34-year-old batsman said he felt ready to take the plane to India for his fifth World Cup.

Tamim said: "I was very happy after that game, 44 is not a big score, but I was very happy at the way I batted. I felt confident."

Local media reported that Tamim told the selectors that he would

play just five matches in the World Cup considering his long-term back injury, and the team management responded by saying they did not want to include a player in the squad who was only half fit.

Tamim, however, denied the reports. He said: "The medical department believed that if I was rested and played the second warm-up match (against England) on October 2, I would get enough time (to prepare) ahead of the first World Cup match."

"I am sure chief selector Minhajul Abedin also denied the report that I told him that I would play five matches in the World Cup."

## Young India Will Turn Into Rapidly Ageing Society In Coming Decades: UN

Agenceis

"By the end of the century, the elderly will constitute over 36 per cent of the total population of the country. Sharp growth in the elderly population is observed from 2010 onwards along with a decline in the age group of below 15 years, indicating rapidity of ageing in India," the report said. The report noted that the elderly population in India is expanding at an unprecedented rate and may be expected to surpass the children's population by mid-century.

"Four years before 2050, the population size of the elderly in India will be higher than the population size of children aged 0-14 years. By that time, the population share of 15-59 years will also see a dip. Undoubtedly, the relatively young India today will turn into a rapidly ageing society in the coming decades," it said.

A distinguishing feature of ageing in India is the significant interstate variation in absolute levels and growth (and hence, share) of the elderly population, given the varying stages and pace of demographic transition across states.

Consequently, there are considerable variations in the age structure of the population, including the ageing experience.



Most of the states in the southern region and select northern states such as Himachal Pradesh and Punjab reported a higher share of the elderly population than the national average in 2021, a gap that is expected to widen by 2036, the report said.

While states reporting higher fertility rates and lagging in demographic transition, such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, expect to see an increase in the share of the elderly population between 2021 and 2036, the level will remain lower than the Indian average, the report said.

The report pointed out that India has witnessed moderate to high pace of decadal growth in elderly population since 1961 and evidently, the pace was slower before 2001 but is expected to increase sharply in coming decades.

"The decadal growth of the elderly population in India

declined slightly from 32 per cent between 1961 and 1971 to 31 per cent in 1981-1991. Growth picked up pace during 1991-2001 (35 per cent) and is projected to shoot to 41 per cent between 2021 and 2031," the report said.

The report said that there are 39 older persons per 100 children in India, according to 2021 population estimates. The states with a higher share of the elderly population (such as those in southern India) also show a higher score for an ageing index, indicative of a decline in fertility leading to a rising number of older persons as compared to children.

"Compared to southern and western India, central and north-eastern regions have the younger group of states as indicated by the ageing index," it said.

The ageing index measures the number of elderly (60+ years) per 100 children population (below 15 years)

and the index score increases as the population ages.

The UNFPA said the population projections indicate that in 2021, there were 16 older persons per 100 working-age persons in India, with significant variations across regions.

"In line with the findings regarding the ageing index, in the southern region, the old-age dependency ratio was higher than the national average at around 20 as is true of western India at 17. Overall, Union Territories (13) and the north-eastern region (13) reflected lower old age dependency ratios," it said.

The old-age dependency ratio of a population represents the number of persons aged 60+ years per 100 persons in the 15-59 years (or working-age) group. The higher the ratio, the greater the old age-related dependency, reflecting higher levels of demand for care from immediate family.

Andrea M. Wojnar, UNFPA India Representative and Country Director Bhutan, said the report is a valuable resource for scholars, policymakers, programme managers, and all stakeholders involved in elder care.

"Older persons have contributed significantly to society, and they deserve nothing less than our best efforts to ensure their well-being," Wojnar said.

## Google To Roll Out Earthquake Alert Service On Smartphones In India

Agenceis

New Delhi: Internet major Google will roll out an earthquake alert service in India that works using sensors in Android smartphones to detect and estimate the intensity of earthquakes, the company said on Wednesday.

Google has introduced "Android Earthquake Alerts System" in India in consultation with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the National Seismology Centre (NSC).

"Today, in consultation with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the National Seismology Centre (NSC), we're introducing the Android Earthquake Alerts System in India. Through this

launch, we strive to provide Android users automatic early warning alerts when there is an earthquake in their area," Google said in a blog.

The alert service will be available in Android 5 and later versions of the operating system.

"The Android Earthquake Alerts System is rolling out to all Android 5+ users in India during the coming week," the blog said.

The system takes the help of tiny accelerometers present in Android smartphones that can act as mini seismometers.

that an earthquake may be happening, as well as characteristics of the event - like its epicenter and magnitude. Then, our server can send alerts to nearby phones," the blog said.

Google said that internet signals travel at the speed of light, much faster than the propagation of earthquake shaking through the ground, so the alerts often reach phones several seconds before severe shaking does.

"In India, we have been working closely with the NDMA to provide users with helpful safety information about natural disasters such as floods and cyclones on Google Search and Maps. We're proud to further our association with the NDMA, along with the NSC, to bring the Android Earthquake Alerts system to India," the blog said.

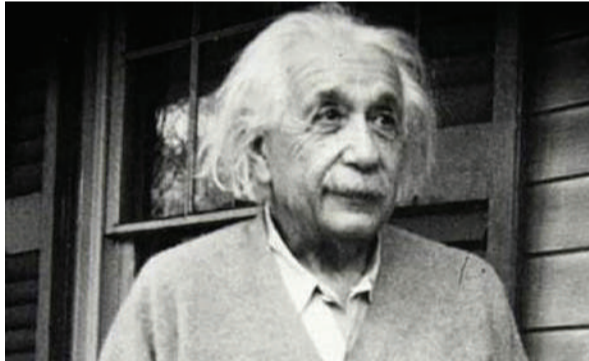
## Albert Einstein's Signed Manuscript Fetches ₹10.7 Crore At Shanghai Auction

Agenceis

New Delhi: A rare autographed manuscript by renowned physicist Albert Einstein explaining the development of his famous contributions to science -- theories of special relativity (1905) and general relativity (1915) -- fetched 10.7 crore at the recently held Christie's '20th/21st Century Art Evening Sale'.

The auction was held at the Waldorf Astoria Shanghai on September 23.

The manuscript, first published in a special supplement to the New York Times on February 3, 1929, is written in German. Albert



Einstein had been commissioned to explain the development of his two most famous contributions to science: the theories of special relativity (1905) and general relativity (1915).

The rare Einstein

manuscript, which marked the Classic Art category's debut in mainland China, was met with great enthusiasm, proving that the collecting appetite here is strong and ever evolving.

"We look forward to

reconnecting with collectors at our upcoming previews for the Autumn Auctions in Hong Kong, and at the China International Import Expo this November," said Rebecca Yang, chairman of Christie's China, in a statement.

The 14-page manuscript holds tremendous significance as it recounts the history behind the discovery of relativity, explains its working, and looks to the possibility of completing the cycle of relativity in a 'unified field theory'.

It includes two equations and a diagram illustrating the structure of the space-time continuum, along with two pages of scientific formulae.

## After Alert From Interpol About 'Suicide' Search Online, Mumbai Police Save Man From Ending Life

Agenceis

The Mumbai police traced a 28-year-old man here and saved him from ending his life following an alert from the Interpol that he was searching about the 'best way to commit suicide' on Google, an official said on Wednesday.

The man, who hails from Rajasthan, was rescued on Tuesday from suburban Malvani after the police traced his location on the basis of his mobile number shared by the Interpol, he said.

The International Criminal Police Organization, commonly known as Interpol, is an international organisation



that facilitates worldwide police cooperation and crime control.

"The rescue operation was conducted by the Unit-11 of the Mumbai police's crime branch based on the information given by the Interpol on Tuesday afternoon," the police official said.

"The victim, a resident of Malvani in Malad west is a native of Rajasthan. During

the probe, the police found that he was under pressure as he was not able to secure the release of his mother from jail in Mumbai since her arrest in a criminal case two years ago," he said.

The man earlier stayed in Mira Road locality (in neighbouring Thane district) with his relatives before shifting to Malvani, a western suburb, he said.

"He has been jobless since the last six months. Since he was not able to secure the release of his mother from a jail, he was under depression. As the thoughts of ending life came to his mind, he started an online search to find ways to commit suicide," the official said.

He searched 'Suicide best way' on Google several times, which caught the attention of Interpol officials, who sent an email about it to the Mumbai police along with his mobile phone number, he said.

On the basis of that information, the crime branch found that the user of the mobile phone was in Malvani, he added.

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