

War Against Terrorism In J&K Not Fully Over: DGP



Director General of Police (DGP) RR Swain, IGP Kashmir, V K Birdi, and other officials on Monday visited Chhatti Padshahi, Gurudwara in Rainawari and paid obeisance to the Guru Nanak Dev on the eve of Gurupurab. KO Photo

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: The war against militancy in Jammu and Kashmir is not fully over yet and security forces may be suffering losses, but will not back down from the fight, the Union Territory's Director General of Police R R Swain said here on Monday.

Swain was talking to reporters after paying obeisance at Srinagar's Chatipadshahi Gurudwara on the occasion of Gurpurab. The holy place is located at Rainawari in downtown Srinagar, an area once dominated by various terror groups.

"As I have said before, this war is not over yet completely. The war will only end when one side acknowledges that there is no benefit in it and it will not take them anywhere other than bloodshed," Swain said and

expressed hope that the misguided youngsters of the valley will shun the path of violence and join the national mainstream.

Referring to the recent killings of five Army personnel, including two officers, in the Rajouri area of the Jammu region, the police chief said "as far as the fight on our side is concerned, it is right that there has been loss and we have to move forward bearing this loss".

Having said that, he added that "we cannot go back from this war. But what we can do is ensure minimum loss to the public. And as a fighting force, we will try to minimise the loss (to the security forces)".

The DGP, however, reiterated that they will not back away from any challenge. Last week, five Army personnel, including two captains, were killed in an | [More on P6](#)

AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, THIS WAR IS NOT OVER YET COMPLETELY. The war will only end when one side acknowledges that there is no benefit in it and it will not take them anywhere other than bloodshed."

Srinagar's International Airport Sans Foreign Flights

Auqib Javed

Srinagar: After the inauguration of much hyped Srinagar-Sharjah direct flight two years ago, the Srinagar's Sheikh ul-Alam International Airport has barely seen any international flight taking off, barring the planes carrying pilgrims to Saudi Arabia for annual Hajj pilgrimage once a year.

The first international flight from Srinagar to Dubai was started on February 14, 2009 by Air India Express. However, once-a-week service was discontinued due to 'low demand' by the authorities.

Twelve years later in October 2021, the international flight operations were again resumed by the government with fanfare. Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Srinagar-Sharjah Go First flight from the airport, aiming at restoring direct air connectivity



between Kashmir valley and the UAE.

However, like Air India Express, Go First also suspended the operations. And since the airliner ceased its operations last year and filed for bankruptcy before the National Company Law Tribunal, no airline has reportedly come forward to restore the international service.

Javed Anjum, Director Srinagar International Airport

said the international operations ceased before Go First airlines suspended its operations.

"The authorities decided to halt the operations since the footfall of international passengers was very less," Anjum told Kashmir Observer.

However, private airlines have a different version on the claim of less footfall.

"International airports can't be just names and titles but more importantly

infrastructure and facilities. To operate international flights, two runways are required, proper immigration facilities and public announcement systems too are needed. Where are all these facilities at Srinagar airport," a senior official of a private airliner told Kashmir Observer.

He also questioned the absence of Instrument Landing System (ILS), besides a false ceiling inside the airport complex.

"Pigeon poop can be seen inside the terminals and waiting hall. A light snowfall, or fog grounds flights for days. What makes Srinagar international airport international?" he questioned.

However, Anjum said that Srinagar international airport has all facilities, including the ongoing installation of instrument landing system (ILS) necessary for operation of international flights. He said that AAI will be | [More on P6](#)

Kashmir Gets Slight Respite From Cold Wave

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: There was a significant improvement in the minimum temperature at most places in Kashmir, providing some relief to the residents from the intense cold conditions, even as a thick layer of fog engulfed the valley, officials said on Monday.

The ski resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir was the only weather station in the valley where the minimum settled below the freezing point at minus 1.2 degree Celsius.

The officials said Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded a minimum of 3.5 degrees Celsius up from zero degree Celsius the previous night.

They said the minimum in Qazigund, the gateway town to the valley in south Kashmir, settled at 2.6 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag town registered a low of 2.8 degrees Celsius.

The officials said the tourist destination | [More on P6](#)

500 MWs Of More Electricity Will Bring Normalcy: PDD

Govt To Sign Power Purchase Agreement In A Day Or Two: Principal Secy

Agencies

Srinagar: An additional 500 MW of electricity, which the government has decided to purchase, will bring the valley out of the present power crisis, officials said.

Principal Secretary, Power Development Department, H Rajesh Prasad said that they will be able to maintain the curtailment schedule within the valley. "These additional 500 MW will bring normalcy and relief to the people. We will be able to maintain the power cut schedule. People will get electricity as the load shedding will be maintained," he said.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Sunday approved the purchase of an additional 500 MW of firm power



from the Ministry of Power (MOP) to meet the base load power requirement of J&K.

To bridge this gap between demand and availability of power during winter months, the AC approved the signing of a fresh

Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) by J&K Power Corporation Limited (JKPCL) with NTPC regarding Singrauli-III run by NTPC.

Prasad informed that the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) will be signed | [More on P6](#)

WORLD CUP CLASH

7 SKUAST Students Arrested For Celebrating India's Loss

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Seven students of an agricultural university have been arrested here under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) for allegedly raising objectionable slogans and celebrating the Indian cricket team's loss in the World Cup final, officials said on Monday.

All the seven arrested students are studying at the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST) Kashmir, in Shuhama, Ganderbal.

The students were arrested after police launched an investigation into a complaint by a non-local student who alleged his college mates had harassed

him and raised objectionable slogans after India lost the final match and the cup to Australia.

The police in Ganderbal district filed a case under Section 13 (unlawful activity punishable with imprisonment) of the UAPA, and Sections

505 (inciting to commit any offence against any other class or community) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC.

Meanwhile, the J&K Students Association urged Union Home Minister Amit Shah and J&K Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha to drop UAPA charges.

"It is an unacceptably harsh punishment that could ruin their future. The UAPA charges will have | [More on P6](#)



Rohingya Man Among 5 Arrested: Police

Agencies

Srinagar: Police on Monday claimed to have busted a human trafficking racket by arresting five people, including Rohingya national Manzoor Alam, from North Kashmir's Bandipora district.

A senior Police officer said that the accused were involved in trafficking Rohingya women through Bangladesh, arranging marriages with locals within the Union Territory (UT) in exchange for monetary gains. He said that the arrests were made after meticulous investigative efforts uncovered the illicit operation.

The officer further added the modus operandi involved exploiting vulnerable Rohingya women, transporting them through Bangladesh, and orchestrating marriages with locals in the UT. He further said that the transactional nature of these marriages suggests a distressing nexus between human trafficking and illegal financial gains. Meanwhile, the police have taken cognizance of the matter and have started investigation | [More on P6](#)

Gurez Valley Gets Grid Connected Electricity For 1st Time



Observer News Service

Bandipora: In a groundbreaking and historical achievement, the Gurez Valley was Sunday successfully connected to the electricity grid, marking the first time the region has access to a reliable source of electricity.

The historic development was also announced by the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, who expressed his joy and stated that this marks a momentous occasion in the history of the region.

"Historic day for Gurez! Grid connectivity reached the pristine valley for the first time after the country's independence. 33/11kV Receiving Station energized today benefiting 1500 consumers of

various Panchayats, and efforts are on to connect all the villages in phased manner" Sinha posted on X, previously known as Twitter.

The project involves around 180 kilometer of 150 mmsq conductor, 1950 ST Poles, 4 km of underground cabling over vast stretches passing over Razdhan Pass situated at a height of 12672 ft above sea level having most hostile weather conditions and tough terrain and topography.

Extending congratulations to the resilient people of Gurez Valley, Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Owais Ahmad acknowledged the patience and perseverance of people throughout the process and expressed optimism about | [More on P6](#)



A tourist couple takes a selfie in front of a life-size cutout of PM Narendra Modi established on a jetty along the banks of Dal Lake in Srinagar. KO Photo

S H O R T T A K E S

6 Bangladeshis Detained In Jammu

Six Bangladeshi women and girls, who had illegally crossed into India, were detained by police from two separate localities here, officials said on Monday. Preliminary investigation suggests that five of them had reached Jammu with the help of a tout and were heading for Kashmir when they were picked up from Bathindi, they said. Another woman, also a Bangladeshi national who got married in Ramban district of Jammu, was held | [More on P6](#)

2 Die in Doda Road Mishap

Two persons were killed and another injured when a load carrier fell into a 250-foot-deep gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district on Monday, police said. The accident occurred at the Tantana area of Gundana tehsil around 5 am, they said. Senior Superintendent of Police of Doda Abdul Qayoom said the load carrier was on its way to Gundana from Thathri when the driver of the vehicle, carrying two passengers and five cattle, lost control. The deceased have | [More on P6](#)

2 Suspects Arrested With Arms

The Army on Monday claimed to have apprehended two suspected individuals along with arms and ammunition in Gushi area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district. In a post on X, Chinar Corps, said that the suspected individuals were apprehended during a naka checking by police and army. "In a Joint Operation launched by #IndianArmy & @JmuKmrPolice on specific intelligence, a Mobile Vehicle Interception Post (MVIP) was established | [More on P6](#)

Raja Is CEO Gulmarg Authority

The government on Monday appointed Wasim Raja, JKAS, Additional Secretary to the Government, Youth Services and Sports Department, as Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Development Authority, Gulmarg. According to a government order, Raja Yaqoob Farooq, IRS-IT:2014, Director, Tourism, Kashmir has been relieved of the additional charge of the post. Meanwhile, Yasha Mudgal, IAS (AGMUT:2007), Commissioner/Secretary to the | [More on P6](#)

Lightning Kills 27 In Gujarat

At least 27 people have been killed in multiple lightning strikes in Gujarat as widespread unseasonal rainfall battered the state, damaging homes and standing crops, officials said on Monday. The lightning-related deaths occurred in a span of 24 hours beginning on early Sunday morning, they said. The rainfall subsided on Monday which saw only intermittent showers at some places in the state. As per the State Emergency Operation | [More on P6](#)

Prez To Confer Prestigious Honour To AFMC

President Droupadi Murmu will confer the prestigious 'President's Colour' to the Pune-based Armed Forces Medical College on December 1 in recognition of its 75 years of "exemplary service" to the nation, the defence ministry said on Monday. The AFMC is a premier medical services institution and one of the leading medical colleges of the country. The president is the supreme commander of the armed forces and the | [More on P6](#)



Bacteria Store Memories And Pass Them On For Generations: Study

Press Trust Of India

Bacteria can create memories about when to form strategies that can cause dangerous infections in people, such as resistance to antibiotics, a study has found.

Researchers at the University of Texas at Austin (UT) in the US said these strategies also help bacteria to form swarms when millions of these microorganisms come together on a single surface.

The finding, published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, has potential applications for preventing and combatting bacterial infections and addressing antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

The discovery relates to a common chemical element bacterial cells can use to form and pass along these memories to their progeny over later generations, the researchers said.

They found that E. coli bacteria use iron levels as a way to store information about different behaviours that can then be activated in response to certain stimuli.

"Bacteria don't have brains, but they can gather information from their environment,



and if they have encountered that environment frequently, they can store that information and quickly access it later for their benefit," said Souvik Bhattacharyya, the lead author and a provost early career fellow at UT.

The researchers noted that it all comes

back to iron, one of the most abundant elements on Earth. Singular and free-floating bacteria have varying levels of iron.

They observed that bacterial cells with lower levels of iron were better swimmers.

In contrast, bacteria that formed bio-

films, dense, sticky mats of bacteria on solid surfaces, had high levels of iron in their cells. Bacteria with antibiotic tolerance also had balanced levels of iron.

These iron memories persist for at least four generations and disappear by the seventh generation, according to the researchers.

"Before there was oxygen in the Earth's atmosphere, early cellular life was utilising iron for a lot of cellular processes. Iron is not only critical in the origin of life on Earth, but also in the evolution of life," Bhattacharyya said.

"It makes sense that cells would utilise it in this way," he added.

Researchers theorise that when iron levels are low, bacterial memories are triggered to form a fast-moving migratory swarm to seek out iron in the environment.

When iron levels are high, memories indicate this environment is a good place to stick around and form a biofilm.

"Iron levels are definitely a target for therapeutics because iron is an important factor in virulence. Ultimately, the more we know about bacterial behaviour, the easier it is to combat them," Bhattacharyya added.

From the office of Advocate Fahim Mehraj

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 Resident Of Narbal District Budgam
 2. Bashir Ah Rather S.o Ali Mohammad Rather R.o Narbal

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n j

Sd/advocate

The Jammu And Kashmir State Board Of School Education

SUB-OFFICE BANDIPORA

The candidates whose photograph is published in this notice is claiming to have lost the original marks certificate of 10th session Regular-2021-22 Issued by the board of School Education under Below mentioned particulars

Name : Shazia Hanief
 S/o: Mohd Hanief Lone
 Roll No: 114001240
 Year & Session 2021-22 Regular



Now the candidate has applied for Duplicate Marks Card. Anybody (if) having any objection may file the same before undersigned with (07) Seven days from the date of publication of this notice. Besides, the original marks card is treated as cancelled.

bb

Sd/ Assistant Secretary
 Board Of School Education
 Sub Office Bandipora

Scientists Find Brain Region That Blind Use To Recognise Faces

Press Trust Of India

Scientists have found the brain region which is used when the blind recognise basic faces, known as the fusiform face area.

While it is known that blind people can compensate for their loss of vision by using other senses to a certain extent, a study at Georgetown University, US, tested the extent to which this compensation exists.

"Our study tested the extent to which this plasticity, or compensation, between seeing and hearing exists by encoding basic visual patterns into auditory patterns with the aid of a technical device we refer to as a sensory substitution device," said Josef Rauschecker, professor in the Department of Neuroscience at the university.

Using the specialised device that trans-

lated images into sounds, the blind can recognise a basic 'cartoon' face, such as a happy face emoji, the researchers said in their study published in the journal PLoS ONE. They used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to determine the brain area where this compensatory plasticity was taking place.

Rauschecker said that the results implied that the brain's fusiform face area development did not depend on experience with actual visual faces, rather on exposure to the geometry of facial configurations, which can be conveyed by other sensory modalities.

"Our study demonstrates that the fusiform face area encodes the 'concept' of a face regardless of input channel, or the visual experience, which is an important discovery," said one of the lead authors Paula Plaza, now



at Universidad Andres Bello, Chile.

For the study, the researchers recruited six blind and 10 sighted people (controls), all of whom underwent practice sessions to learn to recognise faces via sounds.

The people were initially trained to recognise simple geometrical shapes, such as

horizontal and vertical lines. The researchers then increased the complexity of the stimuli, such that the lines formed shapes like houses or faces, which then became even more complex - tall versus wide houses and happy faces versus sad faces.

The team found through fMRI scans that in the blind, the sounds activated the left fusiform face area to recognise faces whereas in the people having sight, the facial recognition occurred mostly in the right fusiform face area.

"We believe the left/right difference between people who are and aren't blind may have to do with how the left and right sides of the fusiform area processes faces - either as connected patterns or as separate parts, which may be an important clue in helping us refine our sensory substitution device," said Rauschecker.

اجتماعی فائز خوانی



پیرا ایمپائی ڈھکے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ کھڑکی قادری ساکن نیوکلونی ٹیگن نزدیکی مدینہ منورہ (NIT) سرینگر 26 نومبر 2023 کو اس دار فانی سے رحلت کر گئیں۔ مرحوم شریف انٹرنیشنل سٹار بزنس اعلیٰ اور صوم و صلہ کے پابند تھے۔ اللہ تعالیٰ مرحوم کو جنت الفردوس نصیب کریں۔ اس سلسلے میں مرحوم کی اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی 30 نومبر 2023ء بروز جمعرات ان کے آبائی مقبرہ واقعہ آغا جہا شریف حضرت بل سرینگر میں صبح 10:30 بجے انجام دی جائے گی۔

سوگواران

لیاقت احمد قادری، اختر احمد قادری (فرزند)

inf

نوٹ: مستورات سے گزارش کی جاتی ہے کہ وہ اپنے ساتھ میوہ و شہریات ساتھ نہ لائیں۔

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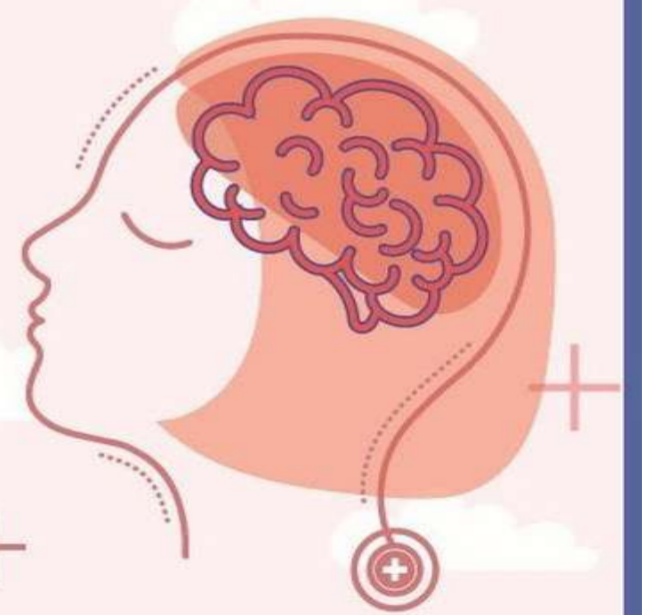
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Oncologists Book On 'Origins Of Religion' Released Amid Controversy

'The Book Is critical Of Religionists And Not religions', says the author

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: The book penned by a cancer surgeon on the origins of religion was released here at a function that brought together scholars, literary enthusiasts and a host of medical practitioners.

"From Boom to Baghdad: A brief study of the origin and evolution of religion" was officially unveiled at Tagore Hall on Sunday. Dr Qazi Ashraf, author of the book and a cancer surgeon by profession, presented his work to an august gathering.

The 400 page book divided into four sections is further divided into chapters and subchapters. Each section, according to reviewers and critics, unveils a unique facet of the narrative, creating a symphony of storytelling.

Dr Qazi Ashraf, was praised by some reviewers, some remained quiet, while some voiced their skepticism over the contents of the book. However, critics and reviewers alike lauded him for use of lucid English language, praising the clarity and accessibility of his prose.

However, a contrasting perspective also emerged, with former Vice Chancellor of Islamic University of Science & Technology Prof. Siddiq Wahid hinting that the author may be treading on precarious ground by delving into a subject "outside his cultural or experiential realm".

Similar concern was voiced by senior academician and former head department of Islamic Studies University of Kashmir, Prof. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi who emphasized on the importance of authors sticking to their familiar territory or subject of study.

Prof. Rafiabadi said that the author has tried to trace the origin of religion, adding he has quoted orientalists and scholars of religions, who according to him, are not religious scholars.

"The book is controversial and



controversy is not good in a place where we cannot tolerate differences of opinion. The author has talked about the birth of religion and the evolution of the universe." Rafiabadi said.

"The author says the book is for lay public, I being a student of comparative religions with a teaching experience of more than three decades at times, find it difficult to understand, so it is not for ordinary people to understand" Rafiabadi added.

"The author has quoted many authors and talked about religion and sciences but without references. Had references been there, it would have been a great contribution. The book has talked about conflicts, violence and hope, but there is more violence than hope" he noted.

Rafiabadi further said that the problem with the author is that he has not contextualized the text and just quoted them, without agreeing or disagreeing with them. Whatever they have said, he has believed

in that. That is not the way to do it. A scholar has to either accept something or reject something and put forth his own opinion. He has not done that" Rafiabadi opined.

Former Director SKIMS & gastroenterologist Prof. Showkat Zargar and prominent educationist Vijay Dhar, declined to comment on the book, asserting that they will reserve their opinions until they have had the chance to read the contents in their entirety. However, Dr Zargar reserved his comment to praise the author saying that "it is not everybody's cup of tea to be an author."

The book drew heavy criticism from former HOD English, University of Kashmir, Prof. Mohammad Aslam, in particular, alleging that the book takes a critical stance on Islam and various other faiths.

"What is important is that if you are quoting someone, references have to be there and interestingly out of some 283 books, there are only 23 references to Muslims and rest European authors." Aslam said.

However, Aslam noted that the book has ample food for those who believe in human language. One of the distinctive properties of human language is its displacement in technical terms. We are the only species in the world who are capable of talking of the past infinitive.

"If the book has to be placed somewhere, it has to be placed with the European writers, who have actually written against Islam, Muslims and the Prophet Muhammad (P.b.u.h)." Aslam noted.

However, Shafi Ahmad, author of 'Half Widow' said that the author Dr. Qazi Ashraf has literally burned midnight oil and provides us with a condensed form. He has taken the help of 283 books and references to compile this book.

"I did not find mention of the book titled 'Humans are not from Earth, a scientific evidence of evolution by Ellis Silver. Ellis examines the evidence that is all around us, and discovers that we revolve around a world distinctly different we live in today. Earth as a prison

planet as many people actually believe that the earth is our prison and that we were brought here as punishment. Does it confirm to the popular belief of eating forbidden fruit in the heavens"

Author Mushtaq Bhat said that the book showcases an intricate relationship between theological concepts of religion, scientific and historical perspective of its evolution particularly in the context of origin.

"The book has marked an emphasis on rational thought and reason to witness a diverse knowledge with some learning towards tradition (naqal) and others prioritizing reason (aqaal). The book is a study of historical, social evolution of religion in the rope of faith which is yet to be discovered." Mushtaq said.

"The central argument posted in the book is that conventional faith believers lack a balance of metaphysics and faith." Mushtaq noted.

The author Dr Qazi Ashraf said that he wrote this book not to praise or oppose anybody, not to talk for or against religion, or science for that matter.

"There are two worldly aspects, one is God centered world perspective and the other is the standard model of science. These two perspectives have been at loggerheads with each other for the last two hundred years. What I have put in the book is the accepted narrative"

"The God centric narrative is that God created the world and universe. Full stop and no questions are to be asked and I have not gone by this version. I have gone by the standard model of the universe and life."

I have put the research of the Western authors, Muslim authors, non-Muslim authors and anybody else and put it in the chronological order and put before the readers a book to compel them to start thinking, reading and going into the discourse.

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This Day In History

- 587 - Treaty of Andelot: King Guntram of Burgundy names cousin Childebert II as heir
- 1443 - Albanian George Kastriotis Skanderbeg and his forces liberate Kruja in Middle Albania from the Ottomans and raise the Albanian flag.
- 1520 - Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan begins crossing the Pacific Ocean
- 1660 - The Royal Society is formed at Gresham College, London, after a lecture by Christopher Wren, Gresham Professor of Astronomy
- 1785 - The Treaty of Hopewell is signed between the Confederation Congress of the United States of America and the Cherokee people
- 1814 - The Times of London first printed by automatic, steam powered presses built by German inventors Friedrich Koenig and Andreas Friedrich Bauer - makes newspapers available to a mass audience
- 1821 - Panama declares independence from Spain
- 1843 - Ka Lahui: Hawaiian Independence Day - The Kingdom of Hawaii is officially recognized by the United Kingdom and France as an independent nation.
- 1862 - Battle at Cane Hill, Arkansas (475 casualties)
- 1862 - Battle of Hooly Spring, MS
- 1864 - 3rd day of Battles at Waynesboro/Jones's Plantation, Georgia
- 1875 - British explorer Verney Cameron reaches East Africa
- 1879 - Battle at Lydenburg South Africa: Gen Wolseley beats Sekhukhene Pedi-Zulu
- 1899 - Battle of Mud River (Boer general Cronjé beats British gen Methuen)
- 1911 - Zapata proclaims Plan of Ayala Mexico
- 1912 - Ismail Qemali declares Albania independent from Turkey in Vlorë
- 1914 - World War I: Following a war-induced closure in July, the New York Stock Exchange re-opens for bond trading.
- 1939 - Soviet government revokes Russian-Finnish non-aggression treaty
- 1958 - Chad becomes an autonomous republic within French community
- 1958 - Congo & Mauritania become autonomous members of French Community
- 1960 - Mauritania gains independence from France (National Day)
- 1962 - Telegraph between Netherlands & Indonesia restored
- 1967 - 1st radio pulsars detected by British postgraduate Jocelyn Burnell and her supervisor Antony Hewish at Cambridge University
- 1973 - Arab League summit in Algiers recognizes Palestine
- 1975 - Democratic Republic of East-Timor proclaimed
- 1983 - 9th Space Shuttle Mission-Columbia 6-is launched
- 1986 - OPEC reaches oil production accord
- 1987 - South African Airways Boeing 747 crashes into Indian Ocean, 159 die
- 1990 - Conservative Party chooses John Major to succeed Margaret Thatcher as leader and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
- 2012 - 54 people are killed and 120 are injured by two car bombs in Damascus, Syria
- 2016 - Plane carrying Brazilian Chapecoense football team crashes near Medellin, Colombia killing 71 players and journalists.
- 2017 - India's Supreme Court rejects appeal to block global release of controversial film "Padmavati"
- 2017 - Uhuru Kenyatta sworn in for a second term as president of Kenya
- 2019 - European parliament declares a climate emergency
- 2019 - Iraqi security forces open fire on protesters killing at least 25 in Nasiriya a day after the Iranian embassy in Najaf is burnt down
- 2019 - Zimbabwe on the brink of man-made starvation according to the UN
- 2020 At least 110 people killed in attack on Koshobe village in north-east Nigeria by Boko Haram jihadist group

Interaction Meeting Cum Training Workshop Held At SKIMS

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A two day interaction meeting cum training workshop was held at SKIMS under ICMR-PCOS Cohort study Phase-II on 26-27 Nov 2023. The 1st phase study which has been completed was based on prevalence of PCOS among the Women of India.


The study was conducted among ten different centers across country with Chief coordinator from SKIMS soura (Dr Ashraf Ganai Prof, Endocrinology). Dr Ashraf Ganai who presented the successful outcome of 1st phase of this study across India revealed that 19% of Indian women's suffer from this metabolic disease. He also alarms the audience about its close association with lifestyle diseases.

While discussing the long term five years study (Phase-I) across India he revealed its close association with Diabetes, Hyperlipidemia, Hypertension, Obesity and other correlated metabolic conditions associated with lifestyle of people in our country. The phase second which was discussed by expert representatives from different centers across country which includes centers from AIIMS New Delhi, GMC Trivandrum, PGIMER Chandigarh, AIIMS Raipur, PGIMER Kolkata, MHRT Mumbai, OMC Hyderabad and NEIGRIMS Shilong and SKIMS Soura etc. Apart from these centers, collaborators within J&K from allied institutions including CUK (Prof Afzal Zargar, Registrar) and SKUAST-K (Dr Showkeen Muzamil) were also present in the meeting. The phase second discussed the longitudinal study for next five years which will be based on the follow up of patients and their offspring's born to them for successful outcome. The study after completion will be used to frame a future policy based on scientific strategies and thorough study of data generated from patients who will be compiled from Phase I and Phase II. All the twenty centers proposed to work cordially with each other and with allied collaborator institutions of the country for better outcome and preventive measures for this disease.

EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

INDEED, TO ALLAH WE BELONG AND TO ALLAH WE SHALL RETURN



Late Abrar Hussain Khawaja

TOKEN OF GRATITUDE FROM KHAWAJA FAMILY ESPECIALLY FROM KHAWAJA GHULAM MUHAMMAD (FATHER), KHAWAJA RIYAZ AHMED (BROTHER) KHAWAJA ANAYAT HUSSAIN (BROTHER), AND MIRZA ULFAT ALI (BROTHER IN LAW) RESPECTED RELIGIOUS LEADERS, SCHOLARS, POLITICIANS, BUSINESSMEN, PROFESSIONALS, EULOGY RECITERS, RELATIVES, VOLUNTEERS, NEIGHBOURS, MOHALLA COMMITTEE, FRIENDS AND ALL THOSE WHO OFFERED THEIR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF OUR BELOVED LATE ABRAR HUSSAIN KHAWAJA. YOUR SUPPORT DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME IS DEEPLY APPRECIATED, AND WE ALL ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE KINDNESS AND SOLACE YOU ALL HAVE PROVIDED TO OUR FAMILY IN THIS TIME OF GRIEF AND SORROW. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR COMFORTING WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY. PLEASE REMEMBER HIM IN YOUR PRAYERS.

**GRIEVED KHAWAJA FAMILY
KAMANGER PORA, SRINAGER
ANAYAT HUSSAIN KHAWAJA
9868164614**

From The Office Of Advocate Adil Lateef Khan

In the case of:
Mohd Maqbool Dar S/O Abdul Ghani Dar & Mohammad Ashraf Dar S/O Late Ghulam Ahmad Dar R/O Chatterhama Hazratbal Srinagar

VS
PUBLIC AT LARGE

In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A

The caveators have reason to believe that Non-Caveators may file any Application, Petition, Appeal, Suit or any other type of proceeding before the Hon'ble Court and on the ground of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked story and may seek in obtaining some relief/order at their back /in exparte against the caveators and in such eventuality the caveators will be put in irreparable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order.

laa

Sd/advocate

KASHMIR OBSERVER™

Tuesday | 28-11-2023

Persisting Militancy Challenge

A high level security review meeting was held in Jammu on Saturday in the wake of the encounter in Rajouri in which tragically five security personnel, including two captains, lost their lives. The meeting that was chaired by Director General of Police R R Swain and the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of 16 Corps Lieutenant General Sandeep Jain discussed sharing of intelligence and synergy to tackle the resurgence of militancy in the region. Following day Inspector General of Police Kashmir, V K Birdi, chaired a meeting at the Srinagar District Police Office, stressing the urgent need to fortify security measures within the city. Intelligence-sharing mechanisms took center stage as a key weapon in staying ahead of the militant threats and criminal activities. Of equal importance was the call to reinforce security surveillance across vital establishments and locations in the city. The IGP also stressed on the importance of seamless coordination among different branches of law enforcement to effectively address the security challenges. He urged the police officers to keep close watch on anti-national and anti-social elements, besides taking stringent action against troublemakers and rumour mongers.

The security review follows the renewed challenge of militancy in the union territory, more so in Jammu. Though overall militancy remains at a low ebb, the situation in the recent past has taken a troubling turn with successive encounters claiming lives of several security personnel. However, this is not to discount the progress made in recent years. Security-wise also, the situation has transformed to a large extent since the withdrawal of Article 370 in August 2019. This has happened incrementally over the period with violence declining sharply, reaching its lowest last year. Earlier, an MHA review highlighted the progress made in J&K in 2022 on economic and security fronts. The union territory, the report said, witnessed "a 54 percent reduction in terrorist incidents, a 22 percent drop in recruitment of militants and 84 percent decline in the deaths of security forces." In real terms, the militancy related violence has decreased from 417 incidents in 2018 to 229 in 2021 while the number of slain security personnel had reduced from 91 in 2018 to 42 in 2021.

The security forces have killed over 500 militants in the last four years, but the militancy continues to pose a formidable challenge. The militants have struck recurrently to announce their presence. The predominant targets of their attacks have been civilians including those belonging to minorities. As the DGP Swain himself pointed out on Monday that the war against militancy is not over in Jammu and Kashmir saying war ends only when one side accepts defeat. So, while one can't but acknowledge that Kashmir has come a long way, the situation is far from returning to complete normalcy. And to get there, the government would need to go beyond the security centric approach.

OTHER OPINION

False alarm

Nearly four years after the novel SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus emerged in Wuhan, the capital of the Hubei Province in China, resulting in the deadliest pandemic that the world has faced in 100 years, the news of an outbreak of influenza-like illness in Beijing, Liaoning, and other places in China since mid-October has raised concerns about the emergence of yet another new virus. In what appears to be a replay of the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic when China showed little interest in alerting the WHO quickly, China's National Health Commission failed to report to the WHO the large number of undiagnosed pneumonia cases among children. The other striking similarities to the 2019 outbreak are the reportage of the clusters in local media and ProMED, a publicly available surveillance system for infectious diseases outbreaks, more than a month after the respiratory illnesses spiked, and the WHO becoming aware of the issue only through media reports. Finally, like in 2019, the WHO was forced to request China for detailed epidemiologic and clinical information, as well as laboratory results of pneumonia cases in children. One reason for China's reluctance to keep the global health body informed could be that the surge in respiratory illness was driven by known pathogens, including influenza and common bacterial and viral infections. On November 23, the details shared with the WHO by China indicated that the spike in cases and hospitalisations among children were due to Mycoplasma pneumoniae pneumonia since May, and RSV, adenovirus and influenza virus since October. While the multiple pathogens that caused illnesses in children this year are not novel nor the clinical presentations unusual, the surge in cases has occurred "earlier in the season than historically experienced". This could be because it is China's first full winter season after COVID-19 restrictions were removed in December last year.

China has claimed that the increased detection and reporting of respiratory illness in children was primarily due to enhanced outpatient and inpatient surveillance for respiratory illnesses covering a large variety of viruses and bacteria, including Mycoplasma pneumoniae. But this does not explain its failure to voluntarily keep the WHO informed about the unusually high number of cases last month. While China had reported a Mycoplasma pneumoniae pneumonia surge in October, the reasons for the current outbreaks were less clear till the WHO requested for information. China is duty-bound to keep the WHO informed in time without being asked.

The Hindu

In Their Own Words: Unveiling the Pashtun Narrative

Zia Darakshan

Our destination was the Land of Cockaigne, Wantrag, as my team and I embarked on a derivative journey to the heart of South Kashmir's Anantnag district—a cosmic enigma veiled above Mattan, where ancient mystique entwines with modern intrigue.

Nestled atop the peaks, Wantrag, a hidden gem about a 15 km drive from the bustling main town of Islamabad (Anantnag), emerges as a breath of fresh air from the daily grind. It promises, a journey of steep gradients winding up, mirroring the curves of a snake. Despite Wantrag sitting atop a mountain, the journey surprises with its smoothness, facilitated by pristine roads. I must express that the road to it proves excellent, and it didn't take us very long to get there.

The small village of Wantrag, adorned with well-furnished houses in a hilltop setting, defies the traditional image of a village. Concrete roads, a well-established drainage system, and the presence of electricity and dish TVs in many of its well-furnished houses paint a picture of modernity. Inhabited mostly by a small Pashtun community that migrated from Afghanistan and Pakistan, Wantrag stands as a proof to their malleability and adaptability.

Wantrag surpasses many neighbourhoods in Srinagar City, flaunting proper drainage and an excellent road infrastructure.

If you happen to pass through Mattan, the Martand Temple, situated on one side of the road is a landmark on your way to Wantrag.

Upon reaching Wantrag, Tauseef, a young man embodying the distinctive appearance commonly associated with Pashtun youth, warmly welcomed us. Tauseef, a history enthusiast with a master's degree from IGNOU, is presently working alongside his father, in the orchid business. For many Pashtun tribes in this locale, horticulture serves as their primary occupation.

Gull Mohd Khan, Tauseef's father and a retired storekeeper from the Food and Civil supplies department of Jammu and Kashmir, courteously led us to the well-lit drawing room. The room, beautifully furnished with modern accessories, was impeccably clean and well-maintained, embellished in a manner akin to any Kashmiri family's house. Tauseef, exemplifying courteous and good-manners, accompanied us throughout our visit.

We received a warm welcome from Tauseef's mother, who assisted us by providing warm blankets. Their immeasurable hospitality allowed us to savour delicious gravy chicken with tandoor rotis. The chicken was cooked in a distinctive Kashmiri style, and I must say, I have never savoured tandoor bread like that ever in my lifetime. Surprisingly, we observed that people in Wantrag maintain tandoors at home, where their women prepare rotis during Ramadan to serve in the local mosques.

While we were savouring our meal, Bashir Ahmed Khan, a retired school teacher and a Pashto activist, entered the room accompanied by Ghulam Mohd Khan, a retired supervisor from the R&B department.

They warmly extended greetings to us, and the conversation delved into the history and integration of the Pashtun tribe in the region.

"I have always found the story of this tribe to be very tragic," Bashir Ahmed Khan began, recalling how this tribe assimilated with the local culture, envisioning Kashmir as their home for future generations.

This tribe traces its origins to Afghanistan and Pakistan, migrating long before the country attained its independence. There was a time when our forefathers would visit Kashmir to assess the land before deciding to settle here permanently. As far as their living conditions were concerned, they landed in a much better place, which was serene and peaceful compared to their previous location. For the majority of the Pashtun tribe, also known as the Pashtoo, it was precisely for this reason they chose to settle along the valley's belts in significant numbers, primarily concentrating in Gultibagh (Ganderbal). Kashmiri Pashtuns predominantly reside in the districts of Ganderbal, Anantnag, Baramulla, and

Kishtiwar, comprising a population of 40,000 humans.

"There has never been any attention on the ailing portion of this community," said Khan, continuing, he remarked, "these were the circumstances" and the overall comparisons that made them believe they could build a better life here. Somehow, the people of Wantrag exerted their best efforts and managed to acquire the Shamlati land. This practice of purchasing land persisted until Sheikh Abdullah's arrest in 1953, after which Bakshi Ghulam Mohd became the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir in the same year.

As a response to the dire conditions faced by this tribe, Bakshi

Khan category. A Pashtun is characterized by qualities such as god-fearing nature, honesty, and unshakable loyalty to the government. Their consistent demonstration of good conduct has fostered a reciprocal loyalty from the government. Importantly, the Pashtun community has steadfastly refrained from engaging in antisocial activities, resulting in the enduring safety and tranquillity of their regions.

Despite facing numerous challenges in their journey, the Pashtun community found a relatively easier path here compared to the hardships they encountered before. While economic constraints were a reality, their way of life has never veered

decision-makers to heed their pleas and shift the program back to its roots in Kashmir.

Despite securing permission from the Director-General, bureaucratic obstacles emerged. The then-director, Bajjad, and others, including Gujjar, expressed reservations, placing the program in the remarks section. Their concern centered around potential demands from other communities if the Pashtun tribe were granted this program. Nevertheless, the Pashtun community persisted in their efforts to retain and showcase their cultural representation.

The issue at hand is the lack of distinction between the Pahadi and Gujjar communities even by the central authorities. Our community, rooted in the Pathan community clan, is being erroneously amalgamated with the Pahadi subcaste Gujjars.

Despite being predominantly part of the Pahari community, regardless of linguistic differences such as Pahari, Henko, Karnai, etc., a significant portion of our community is being mistakenly categorized as Gujjars for Scheduled Tribe (ST) purposes. This is a misrepresentation, as our community predominantly identifies with the Pathan community. Some individuals have adopted sir names like Khan Pathan, while others have appended Gujjar-khan, leading to an amalgamation with the Gujjar community.

The consequence of this misclassification is evident in cases like Dadu Marhama, where community members with the ST classification are reaping benefits. This has sparked discontent among the Gujjars, who contested this practice. However, those with ST certificates were able to substantiate their claims through historical records, such as patwari records, which identified Shakula Gujjar as their ancestor. This legal victory has enabled individuals who are genuinely Pathans to access benefits in terms of employment and education.

This situation has created an identity crisis within the community. The confusion persists regarding who is a Gujjar, who is a Pahadi, and who is a Pathan. The disparities in access to ST benefits further underscore the complexity of this identity crisis, with some members of the same community enjoying advantages while others, residing in the same neighborhood, are denied such benefits due to the absence of ST classification. Resolving this identity crisis is essential for equitable opportunities and recognition for all members of our diverse community.

In the 1986 census for Jammu and Kashmir, the reported Gujjar population is 30 lakh, encompassing various communities, including Pathans and Paharis. Despite the assimilation of Pathans within the Pahari community, a significant portion of the Pahari population still identifies as Pathan, irrespective of the language they speak. This recognition highlights the undeniable presence of Pathans within the Pahari community.

Currently, a significant development is underway, suggesting a potential resolution to this issue by December 2022. The government is expected to issue an order by the year's end, which could lead to the inclusion of our tribe in the Scheduled Tribes (ST) category. This recognition as ethnic Pahadi tribals holds considerable significance, establishing our community as a vital component. The impending resolution offers hope for a positive outcome.

Moreover, Jammu and Kashmir now host tens of thousands of Pashtuns. While the exact number might not reach into the lakhs, the presence of Pashtuns in the thousands is evident from the gatherings of jirgas. Gultibagh, with a population of approximately 10-12 thousand people, and Wantrag, with around 5-6 thousand people, serve as notable centers reflecting the diverse ethnic composition within the region. This evolving demographic landscape emphasizes the need for accurate recognition and representation, which the anticipated government order may address.

This is an abridged version of the article. Read the full article online at kashmirobserver.net. Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer.



Despite the introduction of the bill related to the Pahari community in the summer parliament session 2023, the resolution is still pending. The tribe, linked to the Pahari ethnic group, pins its hopes on the winter session of parliament scheduled for December 2023. The expectation is that the bill will be passed during this session, potentially resolving the longstanding concerns and demands of the tribe

granted them permanent residence status in 1953. During Jawahar Lal Nehru's era, shortly after the meeting with Bakshi, the government swiftly passed an ordinance, awarding the tribe Permanent Resident Certificates (PRC).

The community, consisting of the Shah, Syed, and Pathan clans, obtained a permanent residence certificate, officially categorising them as farmers or agriculturalists. Remarkably, until 1976, the community had a recognized Member of the Legislative Council (MLC), originating from the Gultibagh area, where the tribe had its highest concentrations, accompanied by elevated educational standards, proudly boasting away.

In 1957, the government's Social Welfare Department initiated incentives for various tribes, including the Pashtuns. Unfortunately, owing to educational limitation, this tribe couldn't fully exploit on these advantages. This tribe continued to engage in various occupations such as cattle herding, laboring, and farming, among others, to complement their way of life. Similarly, in 1970, the Pashtun tribe was categorized as a social caste, entitling them to a 12% reservation. However, due to lower education levels, many were unable to comprehend or take advantage of this provision.

Bashir then shared a light-hearted anecdote, recounting an incident from Gultibagh. He humorously recalled that some locals received scholarship money from their teachers in Nunar, Ganderbal. However, in that era when education was minimal, the recipients found themselves perplexed, unable to comprehend the significance or purpose behind the unexpected financial support. It was a time when the concept of education was unfamiliar, and people grappled with a lack of understanding about its importance.

Notably, an ethnic survey in 1986 erroneously included Pashtuns as part of the Gujjar Bakerwala community, fostering a misconception among Kashmiris. The Pashtuns were inaccurately perceived as Gujjars, and the term "Khan" erroneously became synonymous with the Gujjar community.

Numerous Pashtuns reside in Gultibagh, Cheera, Baramulla, and other locales, and it's crucial to dispel the misconception that they are synonymous with the Gujjar Bakerwalas. Each individual in this community is rightly classified under the

towards antisocial tendencies. Consequently, these resilient individuals lead contented lives, holding a deep-seated belief in loyalty to the source of their sustenance, understanding that loyalty begets the provision of essential necessities.

In Kellar, Pulwama, a handful of Pashtun families coexist with the predominant Gujjar population. Unfortunately, the situation for the Pashtuns in this area is disheartening; they face adversity, residing in modest dwellings known as Kothas. Meanwhile, in Machil, where 300 Pashtun families reside, the challenges are even more pronounced. Only one individual has achieved a matriculation qualification in the past five or six years, accentuating the educational hardships faced by the community.

While the Pashtun condition is comparatively better than some tribes in Gultibagh and Wantrag, the overall circumstances remain challenging. The community has tirelessly strived to establish themselves in this region. Yet, beyond their specific enclaves, the general conditions for the tribe are far from ideal.

In the aftermath of the country's independence in 1947, the Pashtun tribe gained representation on Radio Kashmir. The inauguration of Radio Kashmir in 1948 marked a significant milestone as this tribe was accorded its own dedicated segment. These special programs, orchestrated by individuals from the Gultibagh tribe, featured a diverse range, including news highlights, recitations of the Quran Sharif, and culturally enriching content. This broadcast not only elevated the tribe's prestige but also showcased its rich cultural heritage.

However, owing to a lack of interest and logistical challenges such as inadequate transportation, live programs faced a decline in participation. Subsequently, the program was relocated to Delhi and rebranded as 'Pashtun Sagar'. Realizing the importance of preserving their culture and language, the Pashtun community took proactive measures, reaching out to Delhi and successfully reinstating the program in Kashmir.

The significance of this cultural program was acknowledged in Delhi, where officials recognized the potential embedded in the unique language and culture of the Pashtun community. Despite the community's economic challenges, the language was deemed culturally rich, prompting

VISION VERSIFIED

S.Sarwar.Malik

(Vision Versified - I)

Without commenting on the travel of her *Vakhs* from oral tradition to popularly acceptable documented compilations available today, Lal Ded (born in 1320 or 1335 AD), is the saint – poetess widely regarded as the greatest icon of *Kashmiriyet*; saviour of the Kashmiri language – who warded off the potential threat of Sanskrit; and the true mystic transcending compartmentalization; remembered by Baba Nasr as “*manind humsheera Mansoor Halaj*”. Although semantics and legends have got mixed up and scores of *vakhs* attributed to Lal Ded have to be winnowed, credit goes to Sir George Greirson - who got 109 *Vakhs* gathered from Mukandram Shastri in 1914AD. Thanks to Richard Temple for his work on mystic lines and to dozens of local scholars for their contribution towards our great legacy and literature.

Unflinching faith in ideology and poetic mastery complement one another in the poetry of the revered mother in such a visionary manner that the **charter** of interfaith harmony and cosmic vision seems relevant even today.

*Shiv chhoye thalle thalle roozaan
Mou zaan Heund tai Musalmaan
Trook hai chhookh te paan parzenav
Soyye chhay Sahibas zaeni zaan.*

Shiva- the divine energy, resides everywhere
Discriminate not between a Hindu and a Muslim
Realize the true self, if you are wise
That alone is true acquaintance with the Lord.

*Rau matte thalle thalle taepetann
Taepetann votim daish*

*Varrun matte looke garri ae-tsy-tam
Shiv chhoye kruoth te ts-ain wopdaish*
Doesn't the sun shine alike, on all abodes?
Does it only bless the highlands?

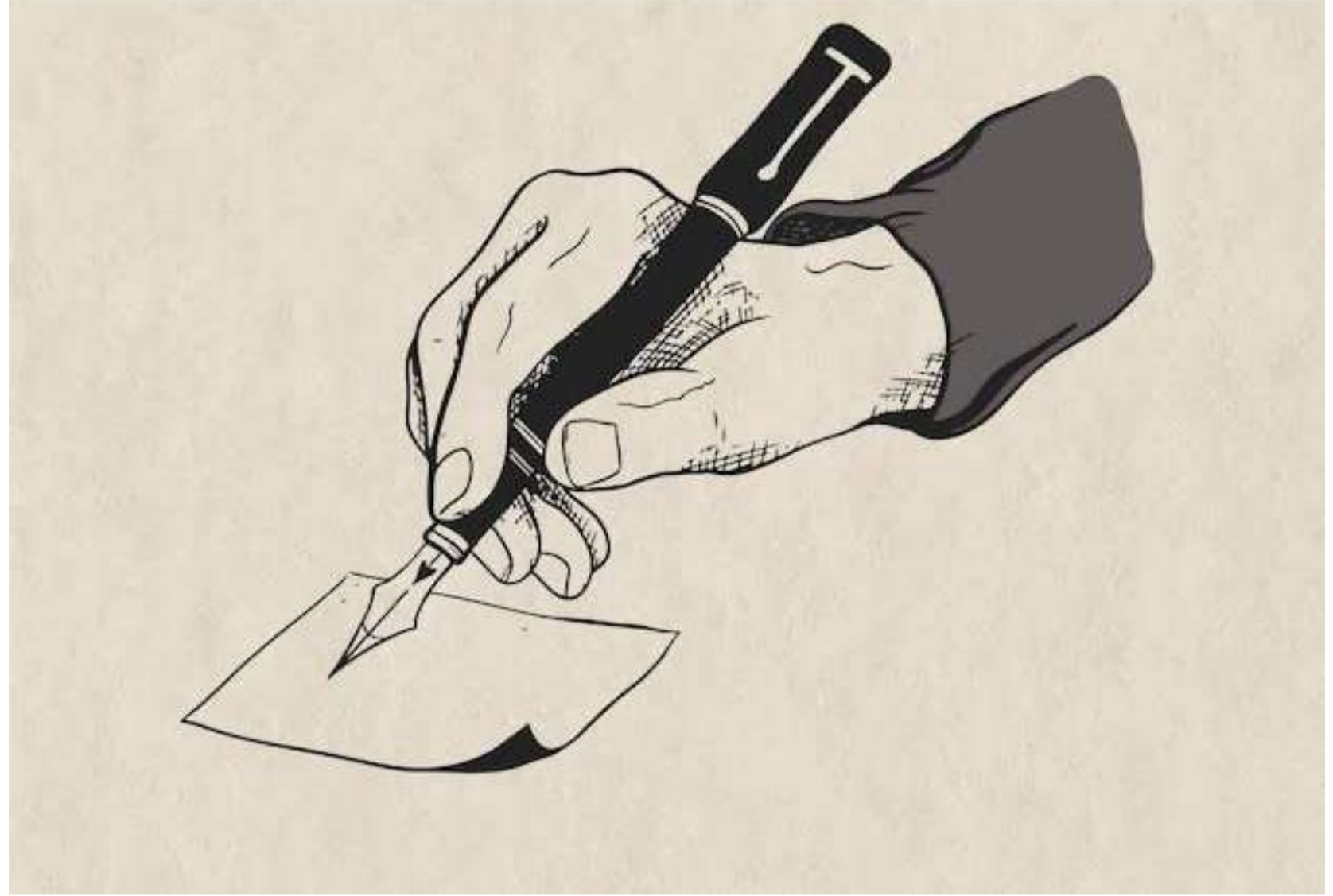
Doesn't the rain- god visit all roofs; high and low?
Grasp the truth, Shiva isn't easy to realize.

(Vision Versified- II)

Popularly known as the Staff Bearer of Kashmir(- i mysticism / *Ryoshoet*), Nünd Ryosh (1377- 1438 AD) – the patron saint , is not only held in high esteem for being the spiritual heir of Lull Ded – whom he reverently called Mother of our Avatars, but also as the real saviour of Kashmiri language. His poetry – *Wa-ts-oen* and *Shroik*, survives in hearts as well as in popular idiom of common people. Through his ethical poetry Nünd Ryosh (Sheikh Noor-u- Deen Wali) preached non- violence and religious tolerance; rendering Islamic tenants and teachings in understandable Kashmiri (-of his contemporary time), instead of Persian or Sanskrit language and spoke openly against *Mulla-ism* / *Pandit-ism* and hypocrite *Rishis*. For finding a place in the celestial constellation around the Sun his exhortation to become King- Swans; not ignorant crews, by seeking company of wise, reminds me of Shiekh Saidi Sheerazi's *ba gul nishistumm* and Maulana Rumi's *sohbatte Saleh* and the symbolic dance form of latter's order.

Winnowing the attributed ones from the original verses is a difficult task and writing a credible biography of Shiekh Noor-u-Deen Wali is not easy because writers/ researchers often find themselves in a piquant situation where considerations of sentimental attachment to myths and legends has to be respected; as going beyond accepted writings of Baba Nassr, Baba Naseeb, Baba Mishkati and numerous others- including G.M.D Sofi, PNK Bamzai, Ab.Ahad Aazad, leads to a tortuous path.

Without going into the controversial Arabic *Khati- Irshaad* – letter of authority to enroll in *Kubravi* mystic order, and the Elegy of his own female disciple Shammie Bibi, let us dwell on the report telling us that Mir Mohammad Hamdani (15 th century) and Shiekh Hamza Makhdoom(16 th century) paid homage to Nünd Ryosh; and so did sultan Zainul-abbideen Budshah and sultan Ali Shah Chak. In 19 th century governor Atta Mohammad Khan struck coins in the



Winnowing the attributed ones from the original verses is a difficult task and writing a credible biography of Shiekh Noor-u-Deen Wali is not easy because writers/ researchers often find themselves in a piquant situation where considerations of sentimental attachment to myths and legends has to be respected; as going beyond accepted writings of Baba Nassr, Baba Naseeb, Baba Mishkati and numerous others- including G.M.D Sofi, PNK Bamzai, Ab.Ahad Aazad, leads to a tortuous path

name of this local saint and in 20 th century Bhakshhi Gulam Mohammad and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah did much practically- beyond voicing tribute. His shrine at Ts-rari Sharief is a much thronged place and was rebuilt recently.

Nünd Ryosh, known for his piety, humility and humble life style, believed that by closing the six gates of senses, union with “*Meem-less Ahmad*” can be

achieved. He also states that First Rishi was Ahmed Rishi – identified by all writers as prophet Mohammad (saw).

Internal evidence provided by some of his verses- for example, “*Kasheeri Pheuroes ande ande*” reveal that people did not pay much heed to his teachings immediately, especially in the areas influenced by Persian missionaries.

Though Sheikh Noorudin addressed his verses to both- “*Asl Hendyeh Mosalmana*,” communities and preached “**LOVE—that makes inner nightingale sing hymns**”, he employed Quran, Sunnah and Hadees in explaining the concept of unity of Godhead –“*Towheed/Koneir*” and what is expected of a Muslim—“*Soi Dapzehay Mosalman*.”

Know that imbibing the essence of first Surah (“*Al-hamdu*”) - called epitomized/ brief version of holy Quran; understanding truly the concept expounded in Surah Ikhlās 112 (“*Qulhoo Allaho*”), -- together comprising of eleven Aayats only; reciting with utmost devotion *Aiehayyaato* i.e. *Tashahod* [followed by integral part- *Darood*—*Allahum Sallialla Mohammad (s.a.w.) wa alla Aale Mohammad (s.a.w.)*] prescribed for daily ‘*Nimaz*’; is equivalent to complete Quran (“*Palkhai Tae Chhoie Qoranus Yotei*), says Nünd Ryosh in one *Quatrain*.

Readers may recall Maulana Abul Kalam’s commentary of invocative Surah no. 1 in The Tarjumaan-al-Quran- “If a person were to read nothing but this from Quran and grasp its meaning, he could understand all the essentials of the faith.”

**“Aeksi mael te majje hindein
Timmun deaye thhovaeth keyia
Mosalmanun kyo Henddein
ker banddan toshe khoddaye”
Born of the self- same parents
Muslims and Hindus -
-Why are they estranged?
When will they earn the sight
-of God’s Pleasing countenance?”**

The author can be reached at sarwarsms@gmail.com

Save Your Life: Read Poetry

Arthur Dobrin

It’s not news that English departments are having a hard time at universities. Declining enrollments aren’t confined to English but are widespread throughout the humanities. In 2019, 116,536 B.A. degrees in psychology were awarded, compared to 39,335 degrees conferred the same year for English language and literature/letters. This is a dramatic reversal from 50 years ago. In 1970, psychology accounted for 5,466 undergraduate degrees, while 63,914 students completed English language and literature/letters B.A.s.

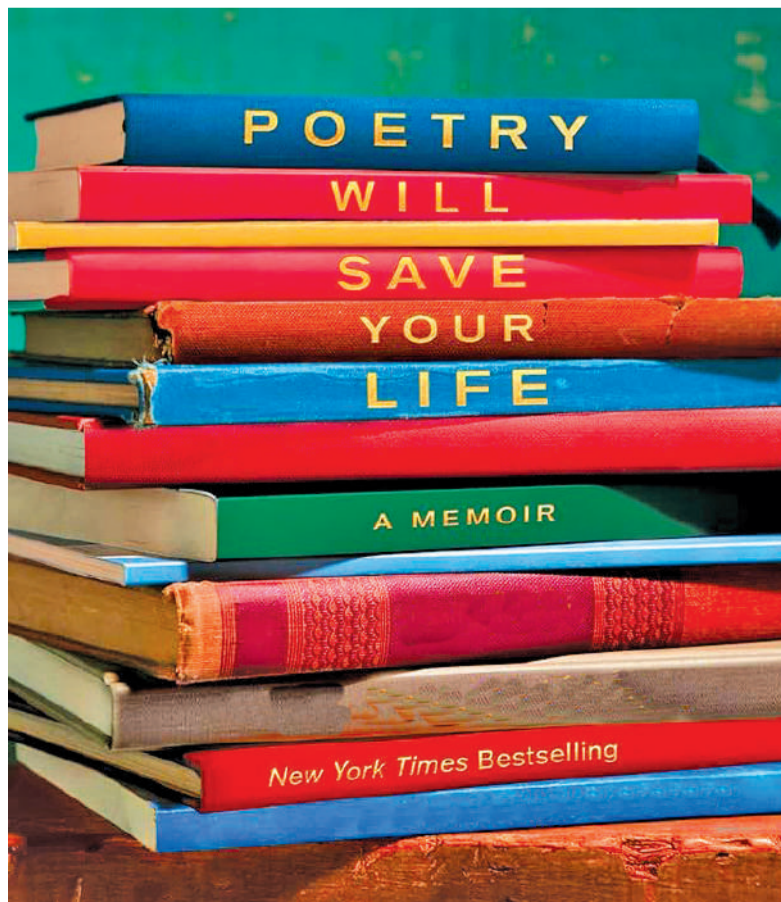
Faced with an uncertain economic future, it is understandable that students have placed their bets that a degree in psychology is more valuable than one in literature. Ironically, it is from psychology that we know the importance of literature. We know that people tell stories, so much so that it is fair to say that we are narrative-producing and narrative-seeking creatures. We learn from stories, and we tell stories, some of which we inherit from families and society, others that we construct from our own experiences, putting together fragments—the bits of information that constantly flood our senses and minds—to create a meaningful worldview.

The importance of the humanities—literature and history, in particular—is that it helps overcome the limitations of our own stories by providing us with stories that may not be our own.

UCLA historian Lynn Hunt contends that novels, in particular, helped expand the boundaries of concern. She writes:

“Empathy only develops through social interaction; therefore, the forms of that interaction configure empathy in important ways. In the 18th century, readers of novels learned to extend their purview of empathy. In reading, they empathized across traditional social boundaries...As a consequence, they came to see others—people they did not know personally—as like them, as having the same kinds of inner emotions. Without this learning process, ‘equality’ could have no deep meaning, and in particular no political consequence.”

A contemporary example of the power of literature comes from Gaza City today, where poetry is used as a way for Palestinians to see the world through Jewish eyes. Prof. Refaat Alareer, who is a fierce opponent of some Israeli policies, said the “most moving movement of my teaching career was when I asked my students which of the characters they



identify with more: Othello, with his Arab origins, or Shylock, the Jew. Most students felt they are closer to Shylock and more sympathetic to him than to Othello.” Alareer also teaches poetry. In one class, he read a poem about Jerusalem. Only after students reacted to the poem favorably did he reveal that the writer was Israeli. One student said, “Maybe this changed something in my mind about [the Israeli’s] experience. It’s like we share things. We relate.”

An ethical world is one in which concern for others runs deep and wide. Literature is a means towards that end, not through moralistic tales but through stories that touch the heart. This is why some are concerned about the growing list of banned books. Novelist Viet Thanh Nguyen’s concern is this: “Those who ban books seem to want to circumscribe empathy, reserving it for a limited circle closer to the kind of people they perceive themselves to be. Against this narrowing of empathy, I believe in the possibility and necessity of expanding empathy.”

The connection between literature and empathy may not be cause and effect but a correlation; that is, those who read a lot are more empathetic to begin with. Sara Dillon of the University of Cambridge writes, “The existence of a correlation itself,

however, suggests an interesting further function of stories. For example, there is some empirical support for the idea that engagement with stories can potentially encourage empathy with marginalized ‘others.’”

The social sciences mainly deal with generalizations and statistics. Literature tends to focus on individuals. An article published in 1916 captures this distinction nicely:

“There is double the pathos for us in the death of one little New York waif from hunger than there is in a million deaths from famine in China. It is not that distance glosses over the terrible picture of the Chinese horror or that a feeling of national kinship with the waif impresses us the more sincerely with his plight. It is merely that the mind is unable to grasp a suffering in the gross. Suffering is so intimately personal a thing that it must be explained through the personal equation, if at all.”

The great 20th-century American poet William Carlos Williams put it this way:

**It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.**

The article was originally published by Psychology Today

Airtel connects Kargil's Zaskar Valley with superfast Airtel 5G Plus

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Bharti Airtel has connected the Zaskar valley in Kargil district with its ultrafast Airtel 5G Plus. This makes Airtel the only operator to offer 5G services in the Zaskar Valley.

Located at an altitude of 7756 m from the sea level, this expansion is part of Airtel's efforts to connect the remotest locations of the country including high-altitude valleys through its ultrafast Airtel 5G Plus services. The company has been ramping its 5G roll-out in the country and has already connected 20000 villages and 5000 towns by Oct 2023. Airtel 5G Plus is available across all districts in the Union Territory of Ladakh. All 25 villages in the Zaskar Valley can now enjoy the power of 5G as enjoyed by millions of Indians.

Zaskar located in the Ladakh region faces extreme weather conditions in winter making it almost inhabitable for 6 months of the year. The place however becomes a popular tourist destination owing to the famous 'Chadar Trek', a trek along the frozen Zaskar river attracting tourists from India and abroad. Network connectivity becomes a critical necessity for safety, during emergencies. Airtel's 5G service is now operational across Rangdum, Phey Thang Zaskar, Sani Monastery, Kisherak Rd Padum, Techa Khasar, Karsha amongst others. The launch will not only enhance the quality of life for locals but also readies the tourist destination ahead of its peak travel season. All the 25 villages of this region will benefit from the launch of superfast 5G service.

EC must have power to derecognise political parties for violations of conditions, SC told

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: The Election Commission (EC) must have the power to derecognise a political party in case of a violation of the mandatory conditions for registration and for breach of laws, the Supreme Court has been told by a petitioner.

Fresh written submissions, seeking more punitive powers to the poll panel, have been filed by petitioner and advocate Ashwini Upadhyay ahead of a crucial hearing on his plea on Tuesday.

A three-judge bench, headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, is hearing pleas, including the one filed by Upadhyay, alleging that the pre-election promise of freebies by political parties is a corrupt practice and amounts to a "bribe" under the Representation of the People Act. The pleas have also said the EC should be empowered to effectively deal with this practice.

The written submissions, filed through senior advocate Vijay Hansaria and advocate Ashwini Kumar Dubey, said, "The Election Commission of India shall be entitled to deregister a political party on failure to satisfy the aforesaid mandatory conditions and/or such other conditions that the Election Commission may prescribe after complying with the principles of natural justice."

"The Election Commission may be directed to frame guidelines for continuance of the registration of the political parties," the



submissions said and listed out the mandatory conditions, violations of which should follow punitive action from the poll panel.

"The political party (registered unrecognised political parties) has set up candidates in a minimum of 5 per cent of the seats the succeeding two general elections of the State Legislative Assembly and/or two seats in the Lok Sabha held after the registration of the political party, and has obtained a minimum of 5 per cent of the votes polled in the seats contested by it," one of the proposed conditions read.

"The political party has filed its annual audit accounts as required under the Transparency Guidelines dated 29.08.2014 issued by the Election Commission of India within the prescribed time," it said.

The political parties shall submit a certificate every year, certifying its existence at the notified addresses and the total number

of its registered members as on December 31 prior to the year of the filing of the certificate, it said.

Presently, there are eight recognised national political parties and 56 state-level recognised parties.

The total number of registered unrecognised political parties in the country is 2,796.

Earlier, Hansaria had told the court that the pre-election promise of freebies by political parties is a corrupt practice and amounts to a "bribe" under the Representation of the People Act.

Such a corrupt practice is a ground for declaring an election to be void, he had said.

Hansaria had told the bench that the 2013 judgment delivered by a two-judge bench of the apex court in the matter of S Subramaniam Balaji vs The Government of Tamil Nadu and others required reconsideration.

In the 2013 judgment, the apex

court had noted that after examining and considering the parameters laid down in section 123 of the Representation of the People Act, it had arrived at a conclusion that promises in an election manifesto cannot be read into section 123 for declaring it to be a corrupt practice.

Hansaria had submitted that the judgment in the case of S Subramaniam Balaji did not lay down the correct law.

"Under section 123 of the RP Act, 1951, 'bribery' is deemed to be corrupt practice for the purpose of the Act. The expression 'bribery' has been defined to mean any gift, offer or promise by a candidate or his agent or by any other person with the consent of a candidate or his election agent of any gratification with the object of inducing an elector as a reward to his candidature."

"Thus, the promises made by the political party are nothing but a bribe within the meaning of section 123(1)(A) of the RP Act, 1951, which is a corrupt practice, and if other conditions mentioned in the said section are fulfilled, is a ground for declaring the election to be void under section 100(1)(b) of the Act," Hansaria had said.

The hearing in the matter will continue on Tuesday.

The apex court had earlier directed the pleas against the practice of political parties promising freebies ahead of elections to be listed before a three-judge bench, saying it appears that the issues raised before it require an "extensive" hearing.

BJP will liberate Telangana from clutches of BRS, says PM Modi

Press Trust of India

Hyderabad: Asserting that the BJP will free Telangana from the clutches of BRS, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said it is his party's resolve to send the corrupt leaders of the Chandrasekhar Rao-led party to jail.

Modi, who addressed election rallies at Mahabubabad and Karimnagar, said, "the saffron party considers as its responsibility to bring Telangana out of the clutches of BRS... whatever the scams KCR (K Chandrasekhar Rao) was involved in here" would be probed by the BJP government (if elected).

He warned that those who betrayed Telangana's poor and youth will not be spared by the BJP government. "Our resolve is to send the corrupt of BRS to jail."

Noting that he had the opportunity to interact with many people during three days of campaign in the state, the PM said Telangana people have already resolved to oust the government of KCR. Lashing out at the Congress and BRS, the veteran BJP leader held both the parties equally responsible for 'destroying' Telangana.

"The people of Telangana cannot allow another disease after getting rid of one. I have seen this in Telangana everywhere," he said.

Telangana's trust is in BJP and the people of state have decided that the next CM of Telangana will be from BJP, Modi said.

Invoking former PM P V Narasimha Rao, he said the soil of Karimnagar has given a PM to the country in the form of Rao and alleged that the "shahi parivar (royal family) of Congress did not like it and insulted him at every step".

"Not just that, even after the demise of Rao saab, the 'shahi parivar' of Congress did not let go of any opportunity to insult Narasimha Rao ji."

Rat-hole mining experts called in for drilling through tunnel debris, vertical boring makes headway

Agencies

Uttarkashi/New Delhi: Rescuers had bored 36 metres into the hill above the Silkyara tunnel by Monday evening in their effort to reach 41 workers trapped inside for 15 days as rat-hole mining experts also reached the disaster site to help tackle the challenge simultaneously from another front.

Twelve rat-hole mining experts will be involved in manual drilling and excavation horizontally through the last 10- or 12-metre stretch of debris of the collapsed portion of the under-construction tunnel on Uttarakhand's Char Dham route.

This drilling was earlier being carried out by a huge auger machine that got stuck in the rubble on Friday, forcing officials to focus on an alternative option -- drilling down from above the tunnel. About 40 per cent of the 86-metre vertical drilling required is now done.

For the horizontal through-the-rubble option, officials decided that the final stretch would be handled through a manual approach in which individual workers will go into the escape passage with drills, as well as gas-cutters to tackle obstacles like iron girders.

By Monday evening, the last bit of the stuck auger had been cut out piece by piece and a

steel pipe inserted further into the partially complete escape passage.

With individuals already working inside the tunnel with tools like gas-cutters, officials said, "in a way" the manual operation has begun Sunday.

In Delhi, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) member Lt Gen (ret'd) Syed Ata Hasnain said vertical drilling, which began Sunday, has already reached a depth of 36 metres.

Rescuers hope to pull out workers through this one-metre-wide shaft when it breaks through the top of the tunnel below, hopefully by Thursday.

Another eight-inch wide shaft being drilled from a nearby

point has reached about 75 metres down.

This probe, which is also expected to act as a supply line for the trapped workers, has indicated that there were no serious geological obstacles for the main shaft up to this point, the NDMA member and officials at Silkyara said.

The vertical drilling, however, encountered some water underground and "dewatering" was carried out, officials said. But it didn't seriously affect the operation.

Two teams of seven and five men who are experts in the technique of rat-hole mining are now at the site, called in by two private companies involved in

the rescue operation.

Rat-hole mining is a controversial and hazardous procedure in which miners in small groups go down narrow burrows to excavate small quantities of coal.

Uttarakhand government's nodal officer Neeraj Khairwal made it clear that the men brought in to the site are not rat-hole miners but people who are experts in the technique.

They are likely to be divided in teams of two or three. Each team will go into the steel chute laid into the escape passage for brief periods.

Rajput Rai, a rat-hole drilling expert, said one man will do the drilling, another collect the

rubble with his hands and the third place it on a trolley to be pulled out.

Principal Secretary to Prime Minister P K Mishra, Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla and Uttarakhand Chief Secretary S S Sandhu came to Silkyara Monday to take stock of the operation.

Mishra spoke to the trapped workers, assuring them that multiple agencies were at work to evacuate them and they should remain patient. Gabbar Singh Negi talked to the official through the communication link on behalf of other workers inside the tunnel.

They are in a two-kilometre built-up stretch of the tunnel

and are being supplied food, medicines and other essentials through a six-inch pipeline. "They are in very good health," Hasnain said.

He said it was difficult to give a timeline for the manual operation at this stage.

The NDMA member said a yellow alert has been issued by meteorological department indicating light rains in the next 24 to 48 hours. "But there is no possibility that work will be hindered because of this," he added.

He said Mishra has directed officials to ensure all medical facilities for the trapped workers as "difficulties could increase with the passage of time".

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

War Against

operation in Rajouri. Two militants, including an Afghanistan-trained commander, were also gunned down in the operation. Initially, it was mentioned that the slain ultras belonged to proscribed terror outfit Lashker-e-Taiba but later, they turned out to be from Jaish-e-Mohammed.

Swain was also asked about reports of increased attempts of infiltration from across the border from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). "With snowfall, the infiltration will decrease at some places and increase at some places. It is a matter of strategy and cannot be discussed in public," the police chief said.

Srinagar's International

welcome, if any airline desires to operate international flights.

"We are here to facilitate them. It's up to the airlines whether they want to operate or not," he said, while noting that no airliner has come forward so far.

"The ILS is a technological upgrade and aims to bolster aircraft landing capabilities, particularly in scenarios with low visibility due to fog or challenging weather conditions. The visibility threshold is expected to increase to 800 metres," he added.

Notably, four flights a week between Srinagar and Sharjah were announced in 2021 with the Jammu and Kashmir administration claiming that the resumption of direct flight to Sharjah will boost trade and tourism in the region.

Recently, the administration also claimed that they are trying their best to woo back foreign tourists to the Kashmir Valley.

Last month, Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said the number of foreign tourist arrivals in J&K has gone up by 350 per cent from the previous year.

"Srinagar hosted the G20 meeting (the third tourism working group meeting of the G20 member countries) and post that, the number of foreign tourist arrivals in J&K has gone up by 350 per cent from the last year," the LG had said, during the inauguration of Vistadome rail coach at Nowgam railway station in city outskirts.

"The tourist and traders fraternity were upbeat when direct Srinagar to Sharjah flight was announced a few years ago. We were expecting more foreign tourists but then the operation was suddenly halted without any reasons," said Rauf Trambo, president of Travel Agents Association of Kashmir (TAAK).

He further said footfall of the tourists will gradually increase when the government will create "buzz" about the flight operation.

The tourism players argue that if the government promises to bring more foreign tourists, they should create adequate travel facilities for them.

"Why are no international flights taking off from Srinagar Airport despite it being declared an international Airport. Thousands of foreigners visited Kashmir this year. The number could be more if direct flights operate," said Jan Mohammad, a guest house owner from Srinagar.

Kashmir Gets

of Pahalgam in south Kashmir Anantnag district recorded a low of 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The minimum in Kupwara town in north Kashmir settled at a low of minus 1.8 degrees Celsius.

A thick layer of fog engulfed the valley on Monday morning. However, there was not much of an impact on the air traffic at the Srinagar airport due to the fog.

The Met Office has said shallow to moderate fog is likely to continue till Tuesday at many places in Kashmir.

The weather is generally cloudy at most places of Jammu and Kashmir and it will likely remain such with light rain or snow at isolated places till Tuesday.

From Wednesday, there are chances of light to moderate rain or snow at fairly widespread places with the possibility of thunderstorms or lightning at a few places over two days.

500 MWs Of More

in a day or two following which the valley will get the additional power supply.

"We have been waiting for approval. In a day or two, the PPA will be signed by J&K Power Corporation Limited (JKPCL) with NTPC. Formalities have been completed regarding it and now we are ready for the agreement," he said.

The Principal Secretary PDD said the supply of electricity to the valley has already increased to nearly 1600 MWs. "Currently, we are getting between 1500-1600MWs of electricity. We are hopeful the power situation will enhance with the procurement of additional 500 MWs," he said.

Prasad said they will also now launch a sustained campaign across the valley for the judicious use of electricity.

"We will now raise awareness among the people for judicious use of electricity. We will use various mediums to highlight the need for judicious use of electricity," he said.

Pertinently, the valley for the last two months has been facing an acute power crisis.

From domestic to commercial consumers, the power crisis has affected everyone in Kashmir.

While domestic consumers said they didn't get electricity as per the curtailment schedule, industrialists said their losses have mounted to nearly 75 per cent—(KNO)

7 SKUAST Students

serious consequences on the academic and future career of the students and should be immediately withdrawn. It may have serious repercussions both in the long term and short term," Nasir Khuehami, national convener of the Association, said.

He said the association also condemned the act and behaviour of the Kashmiri students "in the harshest of words". "The issue should be resolved amicably, rather than taking it to the court and police station," he added.

Gurez Valley Gets

the positive impact that electricity will have on various facets of daily life, including education, healthcare, and economic activities.

Residents of Gurez expressed their overwhelming joy and gratitude to the LG, District Administration, and PDD for successful completion of this project. They further expressed that the dedicated power supply shall bring out manifold progress in tourism related and other economic activities.

Owais informed that the district team, including STD division, has worked hard to complete the work as per strict timeline. He said that the 60 KM 33 KV transmission line had a successful trial on Sunday. He said that 1500 consumers will be benefitted in first phase.

He further informed that the rest of the villages will be connected in a phased manner.

The DC said that for decades, the residents of Gurez Valley have faced challenges due to the absence of a consistent power supply. He said that the frontier sector relied on diesel generator sets for the electricity.

Owais said that Gurez now enjoys grid connectivity, first time after independence with the successful charging of the 33KV line.

The DC applauded the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders, including PDD, STD Ganderbal/Bandipora, involved in making this project a reality.

He emphasized that the electrification of Gurez Valley is not just about providing power but about empowering the local communities, fostering economic growth, and enhancing the overall quality of life.

As the lights illuminate Gurez Valley for the first time, it symbolizes not just the arrival of electricity but the dawn of a new era for the residents, full of possibilities and opportunities.

6 Bangladeshis

from Gandhi Nagar. She was supposed to accompany the other women and girls to Kashmir, officials said.

Those detained are aged between 14 and 70 years, they said.

2 Die in Doda

been identified as Mir Ali of Konthal and Zafarullah of Dandi Bhala. The driver Aqib Gulzar has been admitted to hospital with serious injuries, the police officer said, adding a case has been registered in the matter and further investigation was underway.

2 Suspects

today at Gushi Bridge at Kupwara where two suspected individuals were apprehended. 04xHand Grenades, 01xPistol with ammunition along with other incriminating material were recovered. Investigation in progress," the post reads.

Raja Is CEO

Government, Cooperatives Department, has been asked to hold the charge of the post of Mission Director, Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADP), in addition to her own duties, till further orders.

Lightning Kills

Centre (SEOC), so far 27 people have lost their lives after being struck by lightning in different parts of Gujarat.

Most of the deaths were reported in the districts of Dahod, Tapi, Dangs, Amreli, Surendranagar, Botad, Mehsana, Kheda, Panchmahal, Sabarkantha, Ahmedabad, Bharuch and Devbhumi Dwarka, it said.

Lightning strikes also killed animals, while untimely rains accompanied by thunderstorms and hailstorms damaged houses and standing crops, the officials said.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah paid condolences to the families of the victims and said the state administration was engaged in relief work.

Shah, in a post on X on Sunday night, said, "I am deeply saddened by the news of the death of many people due to bad weather and lightning in various cities of Gujarat. I express my deepest condolences for the irreparable loss to those who lost their loved ones in this tragedy. The local administration is engaged in relief work."

Gujarat Cabinet Minister Rushikesh Patel on Monday said Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, who is currently on a trip to Japan to promote the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2024, has expressed concern over the untimely rainfall and loss of lives and damage caused by it. Rushikesh Patel, who is also the state

government's spokesperson, said nearly 60 per cent of the state has received showers ranging from 1 mm to 144 mm in the last two days, causing loss to kharif crops.

The government will carry out a survey to assess damage caused by unseasonal downpour, hail and lightning in parts of the state so that adequate compensation is given to affected farmers, he said.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD), in its latest bulletin, said the state was likely to experience dry weather from Tuesday onwards, with minimum temperatures expected to fall by 4 to 5 degrees Celsius before rising during the next 4 to 5 days.

In 12 hours till 6 pm on Monday, a total 27 talukas of Gujarat received 1 to 45 mm rainfall, mainly in south Gujarat districts of Tapi, Valsad, Navsari, Dangs and Surat.

It was a drastic reduction from 236 talukas receiving precipitation up to 144 mm in 24 hours till Sunday morning, the SEOC data showed.

Apart from causing damage to standing crops, the sudden showers also affected the ceramic industry in Morbi district in the Saurashtra region as factories were forced to remain shut, officials said.

The untimely rains were caused due to a cyclonic circulation lying over the north-east Arabian sea and adjoining Saurashtra and Kutch regions, the IMD said in a bulletin earlier.

Prez To Confer

President's Colour, also known as the 'Rashtrapati ka Nishaan', is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon a military unit.

One of the highlights of the event will be the ceremonial parade that will be led by women officers leading contingents of the Armed Forces Medical Services personnel serving in the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, according to the ministry.

"The President of India and the Supreme Commander of Armed Forces, Droupadi Murmu, will confer the President's Colour to Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC), Pune, on Friday in its platinum jubilee year," it said in a statement.

The ministry said the award is a "testament to the glorious 75 years of AFMC's exemplary service to the nation."

The ceremony will also witness the release of a special cover and stamp and a commemorative coin by President Murmu.

"The president will also e-inaugurate the 'Prajna', the armed forces centre for computational medicine which will place AFMC in league with leading global institutes undertaking cutting-edge healthcare research using artificial intelligence," the ministry said.

TB Testing Ramped Up To Three Fold For Early Detection Of Cases In Kashmir

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A coordinated effort to combat tuberculosis (TB) in Kashmir division has led to a substantial increase in testing initiatives, and is aimed at early detection and reduced transmission rates.

Health officials said that TB testing programmes have expanded to identify cases during the initial stages. According to the officials, testing has seen a threefold increase compared to the previous year, with a focus on detecting cases early in the course of the disease.

In 2020, 63,307 presumptive examinations were conducted, followed by 95,290 in 2021, 97,647 in 2022, and 220,558 examinations till October this year.

The intensified testing efforts are aimed at facilitating timely treatment, reducing transmission rates and breaking the chain of TB transmission within communities, they said, adding that the rapid and accurate diagnostic tools play a crucial role in confirming TB cases swiftly, allowing healthcare professionals to initiate appropriate interventions

promptly.

The officials said the proactive approach to TB testing not only improves individual health outcomes but also contributes to the broader goal of eliminating the disease.

Investments in TB testing infrastructure, along with innovative diagnostic technologies, underscore a commitment to addressing this persistent health challenge though on the decline in Kashmir, they said.

Authorities in Kashmir have also adopted Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems to detect potential tuberculosis cases, enhancing surveillance efforts with the aim of making the division TB-free.

Dr Adfar Qadri, the State Tuberculosis Officer, said that tuberculosis is on the decline in Kashmir.

"We will achieve TB elimination by 2025 as we are doing intensified and active case finding and case screening," Dr Adfar said, adding, "Several measures have been taken over the years to develop infrastructure and employ manpower for the early detection and effective treatment of the disease."—(KNO)

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra Held In Shopian's Keller Block



Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) was organised on Monday here in 6 Panchayats of the Keller block of the district.

The Yatra is a significant step towards the direction of achievement of universal coverage of eligible people for scheme benefits, generation of schemes awareness by reaching out to the unreached.

Under Meri Zubaani, Meri Kahani, beneficiaries shared with appreciation and gratitude towards the hassle free and momentous service delivery.

BDO Keller, Shakil Ahmad and department incharges, briefed the participants on various beneficiary oriented schemes of their respective panchayats and highlighted government programmes and schemes especially PMJAY, JJM, Insurance and Social Se-

curity Schemes and other employment and welfare based schemes.

Comprehensive health screening was conducted, including online registration of eligible beneficiaries for Ayushman Bharat, screening for TB, Sickle Cell Anaemia.

On spot services including Drone demonstrations, adhaar authentication, health screening, distribution of handouts and assistance, was done on the occasion.

Stalls of departments focused to respond to issues of people and helped them to avail them to register for different schemes of the government.

The people of these Panchayats participated in Viksit Bharat Yatra programmes in large number. The locals of these panchayats warmly welcomed Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra programmes with folk songs & cultural performances.



THOUSANDS OF DEVOTEES from Sikh community on Monday visited Gurudwaras and offered special prayers on the occasion of Gurupurab. KO PHOTO

Govt Okays Land For NDRF's Battalion Hqs, JNV; Court

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Union Territory administration on Monday approved transfer of land for various public purposes, including setting up a battalion headquarters of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) in Jammu and Kashmir.

The decision to approve transfer of land was taken in the Administrative Council (AC), which met under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, here on Monday, an official spokesperson said.

LG's Principal Secretary Dr. Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Advisor Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, and Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, attended the meeting.

These include land transfer for establishment of Industrial estates Redbug, Kupwara; Munsif Court, Qazigund Anantnag; establishment of police post at Mochwa, Budgam; setting up of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) at Zainpora, Shopian; establishment of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) Battalion Headquarters in district Samba and establishment of Indian Council of Medical Research, National Institute of Virology (ICMR - NIV), North Zone Unit at Jammu.

The Administrative Council approved transfer of land measuring 85 Kanals in favour of Industries & Commerce (I&C) Department, J&K for establishment of Industrial Estate at Redbug Kupwara. The Industrial estate shall be developed



at a project cost of Rs.668.25 lacs and is expected to generate direct employment opportunities for both skilled and unskilled labour, while also providing indirect employment avenues for local vendors and youths.

In another proposal, approval was granted for the transfer of land measuring 20 Kanal at Wanpoh Qazigund, Anantnag for establishment of Munsif Court Complex. The new Munsif Court Complex shall ensure better facilities to Judicial Officers, Litigants, Advocate as well as general public.

Approval was also granted for the transfer of land measuring 90 Kanals & 10 marlas, situated at Zainapora, Shopian in favour of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), National Institute of Virology, Department of Health & Family Welfare, GoI, Pune for establishment of ICMR - NIV, North Zone Unit.

The establishment of a National Institute of Virology (NIV) unit in Jammu shall play a pivotal role in addressing virus disease outbreaks by employing epidemiological and diagnostic tools. Besides, it shall also provide referral diagnostic services to individuals, community, medical colleges & research institutions.

In order to bolster disaster preparedness, AC approved the transfer of State land measuring 568 Kanals in District Samba in favour of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF),

MHA GoI, for establishment of Battalion Headquarters. Given Jammu and Kashmir's susceptibility to various disaster risks, the presence of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) becomes crucial, aligning with both public and national interests. Currently, the 13th Battalion of NDRF designated for J&K and Ladakh operates from Ladhawal in Punjab, with temporary arrangements in place.

Besides, approval was also given for transfer of land measuring 41 Kanals & 04 marlas, situated in Jagti, Nagrota, Jammu in favour of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), National Institute of Virology, Department of Health & Family Welfare, GoI, Pune for establishment of ICMR - NIV, North Zone Unit.

The establishment of a National Institute of Virology (NIV) unit in Jammu shall play a pivotal role in addressing virus disease outbreaks by employing epidemiological and diagnostic tools. Besides, it shall also provide referral diagnostic services to individuals, community, medical colleges & research institutions.

Security Scenario In Jammu's Border Areas Reviewed

Observer News Service

JAMMU: District Magistrate Sachin Kumar Vaishya on Monday reviewed security scenario in Border areas of Jammu District here at a meeting of the District Level Standing Committee on Security.

The meeting took in-depth review and discussed various critical issues of the areas along the Indo-Pakistan Border.

SSP Jammu Dr Vinod Kumar and the officers from the Indian Army and paramilitary forces who were also part of

to the unique challenges they face due to their demography. He said that the government is committed to provide all the basic amenities and infrastructure to the border residents and improve their quality of life.

The DM instructed the district officers to conduct regular pre-scheduled visits to the border areas for continuous review of saturation and delivery of government schemes and to take feedback on the grievances and demands of the local public. The officers were told to maintain



the meeting presented detailed report on the security situation and deployments put in to thwart any attempt of mischief by the enemy.

The DM inquired in detail the security situation and the measures taken to prevent attempts of infiltration or ceasefire violation by the enemy forces. He appreciated the role of the security forces in safeguarding the border and ensuring peace and tranquillity in the region.

The DM highlighted the significance of development in border areas including better connectivity and basic facilities for the border people owing

close coordination with the security agencies as well.

Sachin Kumar stressed that the government will leave no stone unturned to address issues and aspirations of border citizens. He also urged the public to cooperate with the administration and the security forces in maintaining law and order and harmony in the border areas.

In view of multiple challenges faced by people there, the district administration is paying special attention to border areas.

Sub Divisional Magistrates, Executive Engineers besides other officers were also present in the meeting.

Thousands Of Devotees Turn Up As Jhiri Mela Starts In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Thousands of devotees flocked to Jhiri village on the outskirts of Jammu where an annual 10-day fair commenced on Monday.

Jammu Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar inaugurated the mela.

Eight to 10 lakh devotees, mainly from Jammu region, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Haryana, visit the fair every year to commemorate the sacrifice of Baba Jitto, a farmer who gave up his life in protest against the oppressive demands of a zamindar about 500 years ago.

His daughter Bua Kouri, according to the legend, took her life by jumping on her father's funeral pyre.

During the Jhiri Mela, devotees pay obeisance at a temple dedicated to Baba Jitto and his daughter on the Jammu-Akhnour national highway.

Devotees take customary dips in the Baba-da-Talab, a natural pond four km from the

temple, before offering prayers.

Temple head priest Bhubesh Mehta said this is one of the biggest fairs in north India with around one lakh people visiting the place every day.

Officials said all necessary arrangements have been made for the smooth conduct of the fair.

"This is a major fair for farmers after crop harvesting. The fair was already brought on the tourism map in view of its religious significance," Kumar told reporters after reviewing arrangements and paying obeisance at the temple.

He said the government has put up special awareness stalls to inform the visitors, especially farmers, about the new schemes and technologies introduced for their benefit.

"Since it is a very popular fair, the government departments have put the handicraft and handloom products on display, while special focus is also being given to boost cultural and sports activities," the divisional commissioner said.

Govt Official On Mission To Revive Bhand Pather

Agencies

SOPORE: With a journey to preserve cultural roots and foster community spirit, a government official has embarked on a mission to breathe life into the forgotten folk tradition of Bhand Pather that has languished in obscurity for too long.

Fayaz Ahmed Lone, a Tehsil Social Welfare Officer posted in Sopore, has taken it upon himself to revive this cultural gem.

Once the heartbeat of rural communities in the region, blending vibrant music, dance and storytelling to narrate tales of local legends and historical events, Bhand Pather over time faced neglect, fading into the backdrop of modernity.

Being a social welfare officer, Lone is making a remarkable impact by organising tours across the valley and performances for senior citizens, aiming to provide them with moments of happiness and share their experiences in an old tradition form.

Traditional musicians, seasoned actors and storytellers come together to pass on their knowledge to the younger generation, ensuring the continuity of this fading art form, of which a recent event was witnessed in central Kashmir's Ganderbal, which attracted a huge audience especially school students who were on a picnic.

Fayaz said that reviving Bhand Pather is not just about preserving the past but all about empowering our communities and fostering a sense of identity. "Bhand Pather is not merely an art form but a reservoir of our shared history

and values," he remarked.

"I'm on it, to create a sense of community, deliver a message on various social issues happening in and around, which would create an impact and awareness among the masses through this traditional art form," he added.

Through departmental schemes and funding, this initiative also serves as a reminder to value and care for our elders and to respect them for their wisdom and contributions to society, Lone said.

Last year, Deputy Commissioner Baramulla Dr Syed Sehrish Asghar during an event in Sopore said there is a need for the revival of this old traditional folk theatre and the administration will continue to focus on providing them a space, besides ordering their registration in G-portals so that other agencies will also call them.

Her statement came following a theatre play in a satirical style which highlighted the efforts of Nasha Mukht Bahar Abhiyaan programme at the auditorium of degree college Sopore, which got applause from the audience.

Abdul Ahad Bhat, a famous folk artist from the Bomai village of Sopore, lamented, "Changing times and evolving entertainment preferences have cast a shadow over Bhand Pather, once a vibrant and communal art form. It must be preserved."

"We feel a responsibility to pass on our heritage to the coming generations. Bhand Pather is more than just a performance; it's a living testimony to our shared history, our struggles and our triumphs," Bhat expressed.

J&K, North-Eastern Region Have Potential To Drive India's Future Growth Story: Jitendra Singh

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Union minister Jitendra Singh on Monday said that Jammu and Kashmir and the unexplored north-eastern region have huge amount of natural resources capable of driving India's growth story in the 'Amrit Kaal'.

Addressing the inaugural session of 7th batch of the capacity building programme for senior officers of the Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) via video conferencing, Singh asked them to be catalysts of Modi's governance reforms and help in their effective implementation in the union territory.

The training event is being hosted at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie from November 27 to December 8, an official statement said.

"The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the unexplored north-eastern region (NER) have huge natural resources that would drive India's future growth story during the Amrit Kaal towards attaining a 'Viksit Bharat @ 2047'," an official statement quoted Singh as saying.

The value addition to India's growth is going to come from these unexplored regions during the next 25 years, the Minister of State for Personnel added.

Singh, who represents Udham-

pur constituency of Jammu and Kashmir in the Lok Sabha, said the discovery of lithium in Reasi district may well turn out to be "India's next big story", giving a multifold boost to the country's economy, according to the statement.

"Analysis suggests that the value of lithium deposits of Reasi might be higher than [the one found] in China," he said, stating that lithium is a key component in rechargeable batteries and there is huge demand for it as the world turns to renewable energy.

Singh said, the success of 'aroma mission' and 'purple revolution' in the Bhaderwah and Gulmarg regions of Jammu and Kashmir has resulted in over 3,000 startups engaged in lavender cultivation alone. "Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh have sent delegations to J-K to study the lavender cultivation model and have evinced interest in emulating the aroma mission," the statement issued by the Personnel Ministry quoted the minister as saying.

Stating that an increasing number of items from J-K have been geo-tagged, Singh called upon the JKAS officers to promote the sale of GI-tagged products from the UT to boost the local economy.

He said that ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi took office in 2014, he has made it a commitment to bring the neglected

and remote regions of India including J-K, Ladakh, the islands and the northeast region into the national mainstream.

PM Modi has introduced several governance reforms for the socio-economic upliftment of society, he added.

"Public policy in our country is currently aimed at enhanced transparency and accountability in governance with focus on fiscal federalism, transforming rural India, and improving the quality of public service delivery," the minister said.

The 7th capacity building programme is being attended by 26 JKAS officers working in the ranks of secretaries, special secretaries, additional secretaries, CEOs, directors, joint directors, development officers among others, the statement said.

The training workshop is tailored to equip civil servants of Jammu and Kashmir in delivering robust and seamless services to the people, it said.

"The cutting-edge knowledge and new skill set acquired during this programme will help these civil servants in efficient public service delivery to improve the lives of people. The aim of this programme is to reorient officers to work with single-mindedness to improve the quality of life and create opportunities for the people," the statement said.

CRACKDOWN ON VIOLATORS

20 Vehicles Challenged, 2 Blacklisted In Shopian

Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: Following the directions of District Magistrate, Fazlul Haseeb, the Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Shopian Shakil Bhat on Monday launched a crackdown on traffic violators and implemented a vehicle blacklisting initiative to curb repeated offenses.

To curb the menace of overloading and wrong parking, a checking drive was today carried out by Motor Vehicle Department Shopian. The team headed by Assistant Regional Transport Officer, Shakil Bhat Challenged 20 vehicles for Traffic violations under Motor Vehicle Act besides 02 vehicles were blacklisted.

MVD Shopian launched a drive in various public places including hospital road in order to free the roads from wrongly parked vehicles. Several vehicles were challenged and fine was imposed on the spot.

ARTO Shopian said they conducted a series of operations and checkpoints on Mughal Road and Hospital Road. He said the aim was to identify and penalize individuals violating traffic rules, thereby creating awareness and promoting responsible driving habits.

In addition to the penalties imposed on the violators, the ARTO Shopian has implemented a vehicle blacklisting system to deter repeat offenses. Under this initiative, vehicles involved in severe traffic violations or multiple offenses will be blacklisted, leading to restrictions on their use on public roads.

The ARTO Shopian has warned the vehicle operators to strictly adhere to the provisions of the Act failing which they shall be booked under the relevant provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act.

Real Kashmir Play Inter Kashi At TRC Today



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Real Kashmir FC is all set to take on Inter Kashi FC in an I-League matchup on Tuesday at Synthetic Turf TRC here.

The Snow Leopards are coming off a 4-0 win over NEROCA FC, after losing two back-to-back away games. Real Kashmir, currently fifth in the I-League table, has won three

and lost two thus far, taking nine points from five games.

RKFC coach Ishfaq Ahmad has won two out of two at TRC, and with the home crowd behind the team, he will be confident of a win.

On the other hand, Inter Kashi has two wins, two losses and one draw in the 2023-24 I-League. They have taken seven points from their five games, and will be no push overs.

Trekking Camp For Girl Students Concludes



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: Department of Youth Services and Sports District Anantnag-organised District Level Trekking Camp for Girls concluded on Monday and saw the female trekkers climb several famous hills in Pahalgam.

The trekking started from Baisaren to hill top, famous Golf course hills, Zoo park hills, where the trekkers participated in several adventurous activities under the guidance

of field staff of YSS District Anantnag. Trekkers from different schools of District Anantnag participated in the event.

"While having the interactive cum feedback session on Final Camp Fire, the girl trekkers displayed unexpected cultural show and shared their views with positive responses. They also showed a lot of satisfaction over the arrangements and also desired their wish to be part of this in future also," the department said in a press release.

3rd T20I: India Aim To Seal Series Vs Aus

Press Trust of India

GUWAHATI: The stylish Tilak Varma wouldn't mind some quality batting time before his possible exit from the playing eleven as the Indian team aims to take an unassailable lead in the third T20 International against Australia here on Tuesday.

Shreyas Iyer, who was given a week's rest after the World Cup final, will join the squad for the last two games in Raipur and Bengaluru, taking vice-captaincy duties from Rituraj Gaikwad.

That effectively means that Iyer will walk into the playing XI and there is a strong possibility that he will replace Tilak. The replacement has more to do with combination rather than form.

After near-flawless batting performance in back-to-back games, the new-look Indian team would like to keep its foot firmly on the pedal on a Barsapara Stadium track that



has traditionally been a batting belt. And there is no reason to think that the 22-yard strip is any different this time also.

The 40,000 spectators, expected to fill up the stands, would expect a run-feast from the talented Indian batting unit, which would want to add to the 36 boundaries and 24 maximums it has collectively hit across the two games.

For Australia, some of their

senior players like Steve Smith, Glenn Maxwell, Marcus Stoinis and Adam Zampa have been in India for nine weeks and fatigue is showing. They need considerable rest before their next assignments.

All the four will play in Big Bash League next month. For Smith, the Pakistan Test series would be his next international assignment.

Match starts at 7pm IST.

Gill To Lead Gujarat Titans, After Pandya Returns To Mumbai Indians

Agencies

AHMEDABAD: Gujarat Titans said on Monday opener Shubman Gill would captain the side in next year's Indian Premier League after they allowed Hardik Pandya to return to Mumbai Indians, his first IPL team.

Pandya, who helped Mumbai to four IPL titles between 2015-2021, led Gujarat to the IPL title in their debut season in 2022 and was also captain of the squad that finished runners-up to Chennai Super Kings. Mumbai also sent



Australia all-rounder Cameron Green, who they bought for 175 million Indian rupees (\$2.10 million) last year, to Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Pandya's move to Mumbai puts an additional 150 million rupees in Gujarat's coffers, which could come in handy at the player auction in Dubai on Dec. 19.



SCFA Lifts Youth Football Championship

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: J&K Sports Council Football Academy lifted the Kashmir Youth Football Championship 2023 on Monday at Bakshi Stadium here. Two finals in boys and girls categories were played on Monday.

In the girls championship, Kashmir Arrows defeated KIC Budgam one goal to nil through penalty kick in the starting minutes of the match and

maintained the lead till the end. In the boys final, JKSC Football Academy defeated FC Ganderbal by a solitary goal scored by Numaan in the 28th min of the match through fantastic header assisted by captain Farhan's wide free kick.

The winning team received a trophy with a cash prize of ₹75 thousand and awards of the match. JKSC Football Academy team is being trained by the renowned coaches Ishfaq Ahmad and Javed Sofi.

Anusha Wins Pencak Silat Gold In National Championship

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Sheikh Anusha, a student of 6th Standard of Presentation Convent Higher Secondary School Rajbagh has won Gold in the Pre-Teen category at National Pencak Silat Championship 2023-24, held at Patliputra Sports Stadium in Patna, Bihar. The championship was held from 23 November to 26 November 2023.

Anusha, resident of Rajwar Hamdwara area in Kupwara, won the Gold medal in her maiden attempt in her weight category (34 to 36Kgs) and defeated experienced rivals with considerable point margins. The athlete previously won Bronze medal at Inter-State



level this year held at Indoor Sports Stadium in Srinagar. Anusha is next preparing to play internationals.

MAZBOOTI SE BANI HAR
— DEEWAR SE JHALAKTE HAI —
DIL KE EHSAAAS

