







KASHMIR OBSERVER™  
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## Militancy Challenges Remain

The statistics presented by Union Minister Nityanand Rai in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday shows a conspicuous downward trend in terror-related incidents in Jammu and Kashmir over the past four years. The figures for militancy-related incidents plunged from 228 in 2018 to a record-low of 41 in 2023. Equally noticeable is the decrease in encounters, which dropped from 189 in 2018 to 44 in 2023. The improvement in the situation reflects in the decline in casualties of civilians and security personnel. From 55 civilian casualties and 91 security personnel fatalities in 2018, the numbers have come down to 13 civilians and 20 security personnel respectively in 2023.

The minister Rai also highlighted the government's commitment to the holistic growth of J&K, saying projects worth Rs 58,477 crore across various sectors like infrastructure, education, healthcare, tourism, and agriculture have been turned around the region's economy. Moreover, according to the data, J&K has attracted Rs 5,319.35 crore between 2019-20 and October 2023, which would make a redeeming difference to economy and generate employment.

That said, it is also true that the challenge of militancy remains very much there. Since 2021, the militancy has witnessed a conspicuous rise in Jammu region, where it had been non-existent for almost two decades prior to this. This has led to the killing of dozens of soldiers by the militants. And the fact that the militants who carried out these killings are mostly at large and their number remains unknown makes the future uncertain. It is likely that more violence is in store until the security forces track the militants down. So far, the extensive search in the jungles hasn't yielded desired results.

But there is no denying the fact that overall militancy has been reigned in. And this is due largely to the reduction in the fresh recruitment of local youth. According to an estimate by Jammu and Kashmir Police, there are now only 40 locals among 111 active militants. This marks a significant decrease from the 137 active militants recorded the previous year. This is the first time since 2015 that the ratio between foreign and local militants has altered in favour of the former, reflecting a drastic dip in the local recruitment, which earlier replenished the depletion in the militant ranks due to the killings. However, as the influx of the foreign militants shows, the effort seems to be to compensate for the setback to the local militancy. The coming weeks and months will be crucial as to how things will evolve on this score. Here's hoping that the downward trend in the violence stays and lasts.

OTHER OPINION

## Creating certainty

The Goods and Services Tax (GST), which turns six and a half years old this month, has yielded almost 3.4 lakh crore through October and November.

While revenues in October marked the second highest monthly collections, November's kitty is the third highest. Both these months also recorded accelerated revenue growth after a sequence of slowing upticks that culminated with September recording a 27-month trough of 10.2%. October's GST inflows were up 13.4% and November's by 15.1%, with revenues from domestic transactions up 20%, the highest in 14 months. Festive fervour surely bolstered last month's nearly 1.68 lakh crore of GST revenues, which were based on transactions in October, and that trend may persist this month as well on the back of anticipated last-minute Deepavali spending. Prior to this two-month spike, GST revenues had crossed 1.65 lakh crore on only three occasions, which were typically driven by year-end compliances. Now, the average monthly collection so far in 2023-24 stands at 1.66 lakh crore, and economists believe central GST receipts may surpass Budget estimates even if one factors in a relative slowdown in the final quarter of this year.

With revenues buoyant, in no small part due to tighter compliance and a crackdown on tax evaders, the government must consider resetting its ambitions and work towards making the GST a truly good and simple tax, as it was promised to be. At a recent industry interaction, responding to concerns about the manner in which a spate of GST demand notices and investigations have unfolded in recent months, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the GST is still at a stage of moving from "uncertainty to certainty" on some grounds and those aspects are being sorted out now. That certainty needs to be pursued at a broader level to provide genuine comfort to investors about India's tax regime being stable and predictable. For one, pending taxpayer appeals against central GST levies have risen by a quarter this year to hit nearly 15,000 cases by October and it is necessary that appellate tribunals cleared by the GST Council become operational at the earliest to unwind this pendency and set clear precedents for future tax treatment disputes. It is equally critical to lay down a road map to bring in excluded items such as petroleum and electricity into the GST framework as well as the rejig of its complicated multiple rate structure. With the general election ahead, some dithering on such reforms may be understandable, but the GST Council must not lose focus of the unfinished agenda and keep deliberating on its to-do list, so that these steps can be fast-tracked after the Lok Sabha election.

The Hindu

# Ailing SKIMS Needs a Helping Hand

## Providing better healthcare is a constitutional obligation of a welfare state



Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

India is a Welfare State wherein the Government is supposed to play a key role in the protection and promotion of economic and social well-being of the citizens. A welfare state is based on the principles of equality of opportunity and equitable distribution of wealth. It also stresses on the state's responsibility for disadvantaged groups who are unable to make both ends meet. There is a social security for such people and the welfare of its citizens is the prime responsibility of the state. Technically speaking, a welfare state is an institution of social service rather than an establishment created out of power.

A welfare state is supposed to provide following things to its citizens:

- Ensuring individual liberty and social security and creating a balance between individual freedom and social control
- Ensuring the basic amenities of like food, clothing and shelter (Roti, Kapda aur Makan)
- Ensuring education, employment and health services / medical aid.

A welfare state is a form of government in which the state and its institutions are supposed to protect and promotes the economic and social well-being of its citizens, based upon the principles of equal opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth and state is committed to providing basic economic security for its citizens by protecting them from market risks associated with old age, unemployment and bad health.

The Article 47 of the Indian constitution is one of the Directive Principles which directs the State to improve public health as a primary duty.

Therefore, the Government cannot deprive its citizens the right to have better medical facilities at any cost.

### SKIMS in bad health

The Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences -SKIMS is the largest medical institute in J&K which was set up in Srinagar's Soura areas in late 1970s. After assuming power in 1975 for the second term, post signing of the Indira Sheikh accord, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the then Chief Minister of J&K was fully focussed on setting up SKIMS. The construction work began in 1976 and within 5 years the institute was partially commissioned on 5 December 1982 which happens to be the birthday day of Sheikh Sahib.

Infact, Mr Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah had died a few months back on September 8th 1982. On 19 August 1983, Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences was granted University-like status through a legislative process. Every year the institute celebrates 5 December as its foundation day which coincides with the birthday of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.

It has now been more than 40 years since SKIMS Srinagar was established but due to official apathy, the health of this institution has deteriorated. Recently, this author had made a detailed video report through our weekly programme Inkishaf wherein I had exposed how this prime health institution was suffering because of lack of specialist doctors and other paramedical staff.

The information sought by a noted RTI activist, Dr M M Shuja, from SKIMS under RTI Act 2005 has confirmed that:

1	Out of 290 sanctioned posts of Professor, Additional Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor, only 175 have been filled and 115 posts are still vacant.
2	Out of 8 posts of Resident Medical Officers, only 2 have been filled.
3	Out of 33 sanctioned posts of Technical Officers, 30 posts are vacant and have not been filled through promotions.
4	Out of 16 sanctioned posts of Tutors, only 2 have been filled and 14 posts are still vacant. These are also not filled through promotion.
5	To manage various labs, there is a sanctioned strength of 77 posts of Selection Grade Technologists but only 21 have been filled and 56 are still vacant. These positions are to be filled through promotion but this too hasn't been done.
6	Out of 258 posts of Technicians, only 83 have been filled and 175 posts are still vacant. These posts too aren't being filled through direct recruitment.

There are dozens of posts which are lying vacant and if one were to continue writing about all of them, this article would be endless.

### Need to ensure quality health care for all

Politically, the Government in centre, some political parties in J&K, or a section of society as well, may have differences with late Sheikh

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Yet, the dearth of doctors and other paramedical staff is affecting the lives of patients at SKIMS. The government must not take steps which go against the constitution. There are rights to which we are entitled, simply by virtue of our humanity

Mohammad Abdullah. However, the institution that he has set up for people of J&K should be protected at all costs.

SKIMS is ailing and needs a helping hand and proper care by the Government.

There are speculations that SKIMS might be clubbed with the AIIMS Kashmir in the coming years. In my opinion, this shouldn't be done. Let this institution thrive and progress on its own.

On one hand, the Government of India or the J&K Administration under LG Manoj Sinha are doing a great job as far as the health sector is concerned. They have introduced schemes like PMJAY or opened subsidised chemist shops (Jan Aushadi centers). The PM-JAY provides cashless cover of up to Rs 5 lakhs to each eligible family per annum for listed secondary and tertiary care conditions.

Yet, the dearth of doctors and other paramedical staff is affecting the lives of patients at SKIMS. The government must not take steps which go against the constitution. There are rights to which we are entitled, simply by virtue of our humanity.

For instance, Rajasthan became the first state in India to have a law wherein citizens could have the right to health. In March this year, the government of Rajasthan passed the Right to Health Act, which gives every resident of the state the right to avail free services at all public health facilities. This includes free healthcare services, including consultation, drugs, diagnostics, emergency transport, procedure and emergency care. The new law in Rajasthan makes it mandatory for hospitals to provide treatment in emergency cases without waiting for medico-legal formalities and give medicines and transport facilities without charging money. Our government can follow suit.

Human Rights exist independent of our culture, religion or economic status. Only by the free exercise of these rights can we enjoy a dignified life. Among other fundamental rights to which we are entitled, health care is the most intersectional and crucial. The very frailty of our human lives demands that we protect this right as a public good and this is what a Welfare State is all about.

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



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## Encouraging Literary Festivals

It is a lot encouraging to see that literary festivals are increasingly held elsewhere in the world, which help build communities of readers. These festivals also provide a platform to new authors by drawing instinctive attention from readers and the media, besides enabling popular authors to market their titles. Turned into a major industry,

these festivals create new readership, boost book sales, and upgrade publishers' brands. Perhaps, another major attraction of literary festivals is that it mirrors the nation's inherent culture and its mores.

As for India, the country celebrates book lovers, authors and writers every year through literary festivals organized across the country's

length and breadth. It is a matter of pride for Indians to attend and be a part of these lit-fests, which indicates the growing tribe of intellectuals in the country. The Jaipur Literary Festival, which is described as the 'cultural catalyst' and the 'greatest literary show on earth', draws people around the globe, augmenting Rajasthan's tourism economy. Literary fes-

tivals enable us to unite the past with our contemporary lives, the real with the imagined and the spoken with the written. These festivals have become a great centre for all literature aficionados and aspiring writers with a growing passion for books and expanding love of writing.

Ranganathan Sivakumar

Mindful Fridays

# Balancing Act: Dual Working Parents, Family Ties, and Children's Mental Well-being

Wasim Kakroo

Parents play a pivotal role in shaping the holistic development of their children. Beyond the basic responsibilities of providing love, care, and sustenance, parents serve as the primary educators, instilling essential life values. Teaching children the importance of "me time" fosters physical and mental well-being, while imparting religious, hobby-related, and personal development knowledge contributes to a balanced life. Family values, respect for kinship, and an understanding of friendships cultivate strong interpersonal relationships. Emphasizing the value of education equips children for a broader understanding of life and financial independence. Parents also bear the responsibility of raising socially conscious individuals, fostering awareness of youth activism and instilling a sense of duty towards society. Only when children internalize these teachings can they become responsible life partners and, eventually, competent parents themselves, ensuring the perpetuation of these crucial values through generations.

## TRADITIONAL ROLES OF PARENTS IN THE HOUSEHOLD INCLUDING PARENTING

Traditionally, gender roles defined distinct roles for parents in the household. Fathers were often seen as breadwinners, responsible for financial support and decision-making. Mothers, on the other hand, were primarily tasked with caregiving, managing the home, and nurturing children. These roles were deeply ingrained, shaping family dynamics. However, societal shifts and evolving values challenge these norms. Modern families increasingly blur traditional lines.

## THE INCREASING TREND OF DUAL WORKING PARENTS

Global surge in dual working parents, a situation where both parents have some full-time job, mirrors societal changes towards gender equality and economic necessity. With increasing female workforce participation and evolving gender roles, families are embracing shared responsibilities for financial stability. Dual-income households offer enhanced economic security, yet challenges arise in managing work-life balance, childcare, and potential stress. Employers and policymakers are acknowledging the necessity for supportive measures, such as flexible work arrangements and accessible childcare. Despite this global trend, third-world nations like India, particularly in regions like Kashmir, grapple with limited infrastructure and traditional norms, impeding effective implementation. Achieving equilibrium between professional demands and familial responsibilities proves elusive, emphasizing the need for nuanced solutions for comprehensive growth.

## THE IMPACT OF DUAL WORKING PARENTS ON CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

The impact of dual working parents on children's mental health is multifaceted and can encompass a range of challenges with far-reaching consequences. The scarcity of parental availability during formative years in-

Employers and policymakers are acknowledging the necessity for supportive measures, such as flexible work arrangements and accessible childcare. Despite this global trend, third-world nations like India, particularly in regions like Kashmir, grapple with limited infrastructure and traditional norms, impeding effective implementation

creases the risk of various mental health issues. Children may experience heightened anxiety and depression due to a lack of emotional support and nurturing interaction. The potential for emotional neglect and abuse leading to trauma is also heightened when parents are stretched thin between work commitments.

Moreover, the prevalence of screen addiction, linked to increased instances of Autism Spectrum Disorder, becomes a concern. Unsupervised internet usage may expose children to inappropriate content at an early age, impacting their psychological well-being. The limited time for familial interactions may contribute to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as junk food addiction.

Additionally, the absence of emotional warmth may lead to confusion in social relationships, potentially influencing later romantic relationships. The struggle to balance work and parenting responsibilities creates an environment of stress and tension at home, further impacting the mental health of children. Recognizing these challenges and actively seeking a balance between professional and family life is crucial to mitigating the potential negative consequences of dual working parents on children's mental health. Parents must strive to create a nurturing environment that prioritizes the emotional needs of their children during these crucial formative years.

## IMPORTANCE OF ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES TO OVERALL FAMILY'S MENTAL HEALTH IN FAMILIES WITH DUAL WORKING PARENTS

Balancing the demands of dual careers within a family structure poses unique challenges to mental health. The juggling act of work responsibilities, childcare, and household duties can lead



to heightened stress levels, impacting the overall well-being of both parents. Effective communication, shared responsibilities, and setting realistic expectations become crucial in navigating this dynamic. Neglecting mental health can result in burnout, strained spousal relationships, and a negative impact on children. Prioritizing self-care, seeking support, and fostering a supportive environment at home

is imperative for fostering a supportive environment that enables mothers to make choices aligned with societal expectations and personal fulfillment, all while safeguarding their mental well-being.

While financial independence and the fulfillment of professional aspirations contribute to raising a mother's self-esteem, it is crucial to recognize that these should not be the sole sources of

assuming caregiving roles. Despite persistent workplace biases and societal stereotypes, the benefits of shared parenting are significant. Fathers actively engaged in caregiving not only ease the burden on mothers but also cultivate stronger parent-child bonds, contributing to a more balanced workload distribution and healthier work-life balance. Breaking down gender-based caregiving norms positively in-

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are essential. Addressing these challenges proactively not only ensures the mental health of individual family members but also contributes to a harmonious and resilient family unit.

## COMPLEX LANDSCAPE OF MATERNAL CHOICES AND MENTAL HEALTH

The complex landscape of maternal choices in the context of dual working parents goes beyond the impact on children's well-being, extending to the significant influence on maternal mental health. Maternal instincts, deeply rooted in evolutionary biology or God's hands, are pivotal in shaping a child's emotional development. Mothers, often recognized for their nurturing nature, find these innate qualities strained by the demands of a dual-working lifestyle.

In the delicate balance between staying at home and pursuing a career, mothers face a multitude of challenges. The decision to be a stay-at-home mom or a working mom involves weighing various factors, including financial, personal, and professional considerations. This internal conflict is intensified by societal expectations that may reinforce traditional roles, placing added pressure on mothers to conform to certain norms.

The emotional bonds formed during a child's formative years are crucial, and mothers often grapple with the dilemma of providing financial support for their family while being physically present for their children. Striking the right balance becomes an intricate art, with the consequences of these choices significantly impacting a mother's mental health. Acknowledging and addressing these chal-

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## MUTUAL DECISION-MAKING: FATHERS AS CAREGIVERS

In response to modern challenges, families are increasingly adopting mutual decision-making in caregiving responsibilities, challenging traditional gender roles and encouraging fathers to become active caregivers. This paradigm shift involves evaluating factors such as work flexibility, employer support, and societal perceptions for fathers

own parents and siblings can prevent pressure on the wife to assume external employment, sometimes just as a way to avoid conflict and toxicity at home, promoting a harmonious family dynamic.

## SOLUTIONS FOR DUAL WORKING PARENT FAMILIES

In navigating the challenges faced by dual working parent families, innovative solutions

are imperative to safeguard children's well-being. Prioritizing quality over quantity in parenting time emerges as a crucial approach, encouraging parents to maximize the impact of their time with children through active engagement, attentive listening, and genuine connection. Strong emotional connections take precedence, requiring parents to be not only physically present but also emotionally attuned to their child's needs. Effective communication and emotional support play pivotal roles in developing secure attachments that act as buffers against the stresses arising from dual careers.

In addition to fostering quality interactions, addressing the intrusion of mobile phones in family time becomes essential. Implementing measures to reduce or eliminate mobile phone usage during family moments enhances genuine connections. Further enriching family time involves incorporating activities such as reading, healthy TV watching, and age-appropriate games. By consciously investing in these moments and diversifying activities, dual working parents can mitigate potential negative effects on their children's mental health, contributing to a nurturing and resilient family environment.

## FLEXIBILITY IN WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Flexibility in work arrangements is essential for addressing challenges faced by dual working parents, allowing a balance between professional responsibilities and family life. Family-friendly work policies, encompassing flexible hours, remote options, and parental leave, create an environment valuing employees' and families' well-being. Beyond policy implementation, fostering a supportive work culture demands a shift away from toxic norms prioritizing relentless success. Societal pressures for constant achievement can lead to a robotic work ethic, jeopardizing parents' mental health and affecting their children. In corporate settings with demanding workdays, there's a need to combat challenges, emphasizing empathy and recognizing the interconnectedness of productivity and well-being. A flexible, family-friendly workplace is vital for nurturing both professional and personal aspects of dual working parents' lives.

## STRENGTHENING DUAL WORKING FAMILIES THROUGH PARENTAL WORKSHOPS AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

In addressing the unique challenges faced by dual working families in regions like India especially in Kashmir, parental workshops emerge as crucial tools for supporting the mental well-being of parents and children. These workshops provide valuable resources and strategies tailored to the specific challenges prevalent in the region, offering insights into effective time management, communication skills, and stress reduction techniques. The communal aspect of these workshops creates a supportive environment, allowing parents to share experiences and learn from each other.

Furthermore, couple, marital, and family therapy sessions offer a personalized approach to navigating the complexities of dual careers. Professional therapists assist couples in prioritizing the emotional well-being of their children, providing a safe space for open communication, conflict resolution, and the development of healthy coping mechanisms. These therapeutic interventions contribute to fostering resilience and harmony within dual working parent families, promoting a more supportive and nurturing environment.

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IN THE DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN STAYING AT HOME AND PURSUING A CAREER, MOTHERS FACE A MULTITUDE OF CHALLENGES. The decision to be a stay-at-home mom or a working mom involves weighing various factors, including financial, personal, and professional considerations. This internal conflict is intensified by societal expectations that may reinforce traditional roles, placing added pressure on mothers to conform to certain norms







## Dnarrowns Arrows Beat Jammu XI In Gold Cup Exhibition

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Dnarrowns Arrows, the girls team of Srinagar Premier League champions Dnarrowns Heroes FC, defeated Jammu XI 2-0 in an exhibition match on Thursday at GGM Science College Ground in Jammu. The exhibition game commemorated the first day of 17th Christmas Gold Cup football

tournament.

"This marked the girl's first outside exposure trip, and they shone as winners. Huge thanks to organizers of Gold Cup and J&K Sports Council, especially Nuzhat Jehangir, Secretary JKSC, for their unwavering support and providing a platform for these talented girls," the Heroes said in a statement.

## Pencak Silat Trials On Dec 10



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Pencak Silat Association of J&K on Thursday announced open selection trials for J&K team to compete in the 1st Beach Games Festival (Pencak Silat) 2023-24. The trials are for both boys and girls from the age of 16 to 20 years, and will be held on December 10 at Gindun Sports Centre, Rajbagh here. The Beach Games are scheduled to be held at Dnarrowns, DNHD&D,

from January 5-10, 2024.

The association has asked players to carry valid ID proof and age proof and other documents.

Selected athletes will face the screening team of J&K Sports Council on 11th December 2023.

"For further details, Please contact Mr. Nassir Ahmad Dnarrowns, President on 9797194893, 9622422766 or jksilat@gmail.com," the Pencak Silat Association said.

## Real Kashmir Draw 0-0 With Deccan In I-League



Press Trust of India

**SRINAGAR:** Sreenidi Deccan FC preserved their second place in the table after a goalless draw with Real Kashmir FC in their I-League match here at the TRC Stadium on Thursday.

Deccan now have 17 points from nine matches, while the Kashmir side slid to fourth with 14 points from eight matches.

A good result was mandatory for Deccan after their 1-2 defeat in their last match against table-toppers Mohammedan Sporting.

Accordingly, Deccan made four changes to the starting

line-up and one of those -- midfielder Ibrahim Sissoko -- had the first chance of the match in the fifth minute.

But his volley off a lofted ball from Lalbiakliana did not trouble the Kashmir goalkeeper.

The next to try his luck from distance was winger Rilwan Hassan who cut in from the left and unleashed his effort but the outcome was similar.

At the other end, Kashmir almost broke the deadlock with a thunderous shot from outside the box but Deccan goalkeeper Albino Gomes dived to his left to tip it over the bar.

The second half was an

even tighter as chances were few and far between.

Substitute David Castaneda of Deccan had two of those as his first effort was smothered from close range by the goalkeeper while later a header was off target in the closing stages of the match.

Kashmir almost let the match slip in stoppage time as Jagdeep Singh's cross from the right thudded on to the crossbar.

Deccan will now face Delhi FC on December 11.

As for Real Kashmir, they will take on Gokulam Kerala at home on Monday, December 11. The game kicks off at 2:00 PM.

## Shami Among Nominees For ICC POTM For November



Agencies

**DUBAI:** India pacer Mohammed Shami, who ended the recently concluded ICC World Cup as the leading wicket-taker of the tournament, has been nominated for the ICC Men's Player of the Month Award for November 2023 along with Australia's batting sensation Travis Head and all-rounder Glenn Maxwell.

Shami continued his golden run in the World Cup into November. He bagged 15 wickets at an average of 12.06 with an economy rate of 5.68. Overall, he finished as the leading wicket-taker of the 2023 Cricket World Cup, with 24 wickets to his name from merely seven innings. Among his highlight efforts this month was a stunning 5/18 against Sri Lanka at Wankhede.

Australia's batting sensation Head returned to the squad after a long injury layoff at the end of October with a spectacular century against New Zealand and continued his good vein of form throughout November. In November, he scored 220

runs in five ODIs at a remarkable average of 44, including a half-century and a century. Notable were his efforts in the Cricket World Cup semi-final and final, where he was named Player of the Match and played a key role in Australia's sixth title.

Meanwhile, Australia's star all-rounder Maxwell gathered 204 runs at an average of 20.4 with a strike rate of 152.23 in his three ODI outings last month, along with two wickets. In two T20Is in the series against India, he amassed an impressive 116 runs at a stunning strike rate of 207.14.

The all-rounder returned in style against Afghanistan. His double hundred was the first by an Australian in Men's ODIs and the second-fastest ever. It was also the first time a chaser scored a double century. This was also the highest score from someone ranked sixth or lower.

He later appeared in the T20I series against India, and his century in the third T20I in Guwahati helped Australia win. His 104\* came off just 48 balls, with eight fours and eight sixes. It aided in the pursuit of India's 223. (ANI)

**MAZBOOTI SE BANI HAR**  
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**DIL KE EHSAAAS**



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