



# Empowering Tribals, Transforming J&K

## Historic Step for Inclusive Development

### Communities getting benefits of ST reservation

- Balti
- Bot, Boto
- Brokpa, Drokpa, Dard, Shin
- Changpa
- Mon
- Gujjar
- Gaddi
- Beda
- Garra
- Purigpa
- Bakarwal
- Sippi

### Additional Communities who will get benefits of ST reservation

- Pahari Ethnic Group
- Paddari Tribe
- Koli
- Gadda Brahmin
- Based on **SEBC Commission Recommendations**
- **Additional & proportionate reservation will be provided separately for above communities**



**Existing Communities including Gujjar Bakarwal will continue to get the 10% reservation and there will be no reduction in it**

**Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas**

**Government of Jammu & Kashmir**





Every Year Spent In School Or University May Improve Life Expectancy: Lancet Study

Press Trust Of India

Every year spent in school or university may improve life expectancy, while not attending an educational institute could be as bad as smoking or heavy drinking, according to a study published in The Lancet Public Health journal.

The research identified data from 59 countries and included over 10,000 data points collected from more than 600 published articles.

The team, including researchers at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), found that education saves lives regardless of age, sex, location, and social and demographic backgrounds.

They found that the risk of death drops by 2 per cent with every additional year of education. That means those who completed six years of primary school had a lower risk of death by an average of 13 per cent.

After graduating from secondary school, the risk of dying was cut by nearly 25 per cent, and 18 years of education lowered the risk by 34 per cent, according to the study.

Researchers also compared the effects of education to other risk factors such as eating a healthy diet, smoking, and drinking too much alcohol, and they found the health outcome to be similar.

For example, the benefit of 18 years of education can be compared to that of eating the ideal amount of vegetables, as opposed to not eating



More education leads to better employment and higher income, better access to health care, and helps us take care of our own health. Highly educated people also tend to develop a larger set of social and psychological resources that contribute to their health and the length of their lives

vegetables at all, they said.

Not going to school at all is as bad as drinking five or more alcoholic drinks per day or smoking ten cigarettes a day for 10 years, the researchers said.

"Education is important in its own right, not just for its benefits on health, but now be-

ing able to quantify the magnitude of this benefit is a significant development," said study co-author Terje Andreas Eikemo from NTNU.

While the benefits of education are greatest for young people, those older than 50 and even 70 years still benefit from the pro-

protective effects of education, the researchers said.

They found no significant difference in the effects of education between countries that have reached different stages of development. This means that more years of education is just as effective in rich countries as in

poor countries.

"We need to increase social investments to enable access to better and more education around the globe to stop the persistent inequalities that are costing lives," said Mirza Balaj, co-lead author and postdoctoral fellow at NTNU.

"More education leads to better employment and higher income, better access to health care, and helps us take care of our own health. Highly educated people also tend to develop a larger set of social and psychological resources that contribute to their health and the length of their lives," Balaj said.

Most of the studies reviewed for the study were from high-income settings, highlighting the need for more research in low- and middle-income countries, particularly from sub-Saharan and north Africa where data are scarce.

"Closing the education gap means closing the mortality gap, and we need to interrupt the cycle of poverty and preventable deaths with the help of international commitment," said Claire Henson, co-lead author and researcher at Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington's School of Medicine, US.

"In order to reduce inequalities in mortality, it's important to invest in areas that promote people's opportunities to get an education. This can have a positive effect on population health in all countries," Henson added.

NOTICE

I Khalid Mehraj Shah S/o Mehraj Ud Din Shah R/o Haji Bagh Buchpora Srinagar want to change ownership of Electricity Connection (Domestic) having Consumer ID 0204040014077 installation Number 39355 from Firdous Ahmad Baba S/o Lt. Ghulam Mustafa Baba R/o Haji Bagh Buchpora Srinagar to Khalid Mehraj Shah S/o Mehraj Ud Din Shah R/o Haji Bagh Buchpora, Srinagar. In this regard, if any person should have any objection he/she may file the same to the PWD Srinagar, within a week at the most. After that no objection will be entertained.

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I Khalid Mehraj Shah S/o Mehraj Ud Din Shah R/o Haji Bagh Buchpora Srinagar want to change ownership of water supply connection (Domestic) having Connection Number 33838 Consumer ID 0202030113025 from Firdous Ahmad Baba S/o Lt. Ghulam Mustafa Baba R/o Haji Bagh Buchpora Srinagar to Khalid Mehraj Shah S/o Mehraj Ud Din Shah R/o Haji Bagh Buchpora, Srinagar. In this regard, if any person should have any objection he/she may file the same to the PHE Srinagar, within a week at the most. After that no objection will be entertained.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of DOB Certificate for my daughter namely Fatima-Tuz-Zahra who was born on 13-07-2022. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. Ghulam Mohammad Rather F/O Fatima-Tuz-Zahara R/O Kunchipora Tangmarg nj

The Jammu And Kashmir Board Of School Education New Campus Bemina Srinagar

I have passed/appeared in Secondary School Examination (Class- 12th) under Roll No. 312001298 Session: Bi-annual 2023 Pvt through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. Due to the error committed by the concerned School/parent/Board against my Caste as Khan instead of Gojer Quenshi. Now, I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education, New Campus Bemina, Srinagar, if any person has any objection in this regard, may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of Publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained. Name: Shahbaz Ahmad Gojer Quenshi F/N: Ghulam Nabi Gojer Quenshi M/N: Fulshana Begum DOB: 20-12-2005 Residence: Sumlar Shokbaba bb

Writing By Hand Found To Enrich Brain Connections More Than Typing On Keyboard

Press Trust Of India

Students learn more and remember better when taking handwritten notes than using a keyboard as brain connectivity patterns were found to be far more elaborate while writing than typing on a keyboard, a new research has found.

Researchers said the findings suggested that the precisely controlled hand movements when writing with a pen helped obtain visual and movement information that contributed extensively to the brain's connectivity patterns, known to be crucial for memory formation and learning.

"There is some evidence that students learn more and remember better when taking handwritten lecture notes, while using a computer with a keyboard may be more practical when writing a long text or essay," said Audrey van der Meer, a brain researcher at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and co-author of the study published in the journal Fron-

tiers in Psychology.

For the study, the researchers recorded the electrical activity of the brains of 36 university students, who were repeatedly prompted to either write or type a word that appeared on a screen. When writing, they used a digital pen to write in cursive directly on a touchscreen. When typing they used a single finger to press keys on a keyboard.

The researchers found that the connectivity between different brain regions increased when participants wrote by hand, but not when they typed. On the contrary, the researchers found that repeating the simple movement of hitting a key with the same finger was less stimulating for the brain.

"This also explains why children who have learned to write and read on a tablet, can have difficulty differentiating between letters that are mirror images of each other, such as 'b' and 'd'. They literally haven't felt with their bodies what it feels like to produce

those letters," said van der Meer.

Even though the study participants used digital pens for handwriting, the researchers said the results are expected to be the same when using a real pen on paper.

"We have shown that the differences in brain activity are related to the careful forming of the letters when writing by hand while making more use of the senses," explained van der Meer.

The findings demonstrated the need to give students an opportunity to use pens, rather than having them type during class, they said.

Guidelines to ensure that students receive at least a minimum of handwriting instruction could be an adequate step, they said.

However, the team also cautioned that it was important to keep up with continuously developing technological advances, which they said included an awareness of which way of writing - handwriting or typing - was advantageous under what kind of circumstances.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of DOB Certificate for my Son namely Anzar Ishfaq who was born on 14-10-2017. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. Ishfaq Ahmad Beigh F/O Anzar Ishfaq R/o Takia Batpora bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE

Mistakenly my wards parentage recorded as Khalid bin Mohammad instead of Khalid bin Mohd in his Birth certificate issued vide no 291 by Registrar Deaths and Births, Municipal Committee Budgam which needs to be corrected. If any person having any objection may file the same in the above mentioned office within weeks time. No objection shall be entertained after given stipulated period. Khalid bin Mohd Father of Saifullah Khalid R/O: Haripora Harran Budgam su

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of DOB Certificate for my daughter namely Sumaya Ishfaq who was born on 12-10-2015. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. Ishfaq Ahmad Beigh F/O Sumaya Ishfaq R/o Takia Batpora bmg

حاجی غلام احمد زرگر انتقال کر گئے

یہ خبر انتہائی دکھ اور افسوس کے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ حاجی غلام احمد زرگر ساکنہ B6 فروری لین چھانڈ پورہ نزدیکی اتر نیل ٹاور سرینگر 8 فروری 2024 کو انتقال کر گئے۔ اللہ تعالیٰ مرحوم کو جو ارحمت میں جگہ دے اور لواحقین کو یہ صدمہ برداشت کرنے کی توفیق عطا کرے۔ مرحوم کی انتہائی فاتحہ خوانی 11 فروری 2024 بروز اتوار صبح گیارہ بجے ان کے آبائی مقبرہ واقع ابراہیم مسجد جو ڈسٹ ہاؤسنگ کالونی چھانڈ پورہ میں انجام دی جائے گی۔ سوگواران: شفیع احمد زرگر فون نمبر 9818999651 ss

اظہار تشکر

ہم ان تمام حضرات کے شکر گزار ہیں جو میری اہلیہ کے وفات سے چھ ماہ تک میرے شانہ پر شانہ ساتھ رہے اور اس مصیبت کی گلیز میں مجھے دلاسا دیا۔ اللہ تعالیٰ ان سب کو جہنم میں لے جائے اور میری ماں اور صاحبزادے کو جہنم سے محفوظ رکھے۔ ان سب کو اللہ تعالیٰ سے دعا کرتا ہوں کہ وہ جہنم سے محفوظ رہیں اور اللہ تعالیٰ سے دعا کرتا ہوں کہ وہ جہنم سے محفوظ رہیں اور اللہ تعالیٰ سے دعا کرتا ہوں کہ وہ جہنم سے محفوظ رہیں اور اللہ تعالیٰ سے دعا کرتا ہوں کہ وہ جہنم سے محفوظ رہیں۔ نذیر احمد گنائی ساکنہ مومن آباد منٹری بل inf

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Table with 4 columns: Agency Name, Location, Agency Name, Location. Lists various news agencies and their locations across Srinagar.

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## Candlelight Marches Held Across Kashmir Against Dual Civilian Killings

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: To condemn the killing of two Punjab residents in Srinagar on Wednesday by terrorists and to express solidarity with their families, candlelight marches were held at several places across Kashmir.

Members of civil society, traders federation, and citizens of Baramulla today gathered together and held a candlelight march condemning the killing of two innocent civilians in Srinagar yesterday.

The march witnessed huge participation of people, with participants holding candles as the march passed from main chowk to Nanak Bhawan, expressing their sympathies with the families of the innocent civilians of the target killings.

With resolute determination, the participants called upon the authorities to swiftly and diligently identify the perpetrators responsible for this despicable act and ensure that they are held accountable under the full extent of the law.

Similarly, in Pulwama,



local residents, members of Civil Society Pulwama and traders took out a candle march in Kupwara, people started the march from Kupwara Bus stand which culminated at Fountain

Chowk Rigipora after passing through Kupwara By-Pass.

Similarly, candlelight vigils and solidarity marches were held across the district including Sopore, Uri, Anantnag,

Ganderbal and Budgam, echoing the sentiments of unity and empathy towards the victims of the tragic killings.

The protesters fervently denounced the | More on P6

### Second Victim Succumbs, Security Tightened In City



Agencies

Srinagar: A worker from Punjab who was injured in Wednesday's terror attack in Srinagar's Habba Kadal area died at the SKIMS hospital here this morning, taking the toll to two in the first targeted killing of the year by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir.

The city is on alert following the attack with security measures being intensified and authorities asking people to be cautious and vigilant.

Rohit Masih succumbed to injuries at the SKIMS Hospital here this morning. He was shifted to the tertiary care institution late Wednesday night after his condition worsened at the SMHS Hospital, officials said.

On Wednesday, Amritpal Singh, also a worker from Punjab, was shot dead from point blank range at Shalla Kadal in uptown Habba Kadal.

Meanwhile, the body of Amritpal Singh reached his native village today, where the cremation took place.

The body of Rohit is expected to reach Amritsar by tomorrow where the last rites will be held.

The attack was condemned by Lieutenant Governor | More on P6

### 'Selection, Not Election' Polarized Pakistan Goes to Polls

KO Web Desk

Islamabad: Counting was underway Thursday after millions of Pakistanis voted in an election marred by rigging allegations and a shutdown of mobile phone services, while the country's most popular politician Imran Khan languished in jail.

Pollsters predicted a low turnout from the country's 128 million eligible voters following a lacklustre campaign overshadowed by the jailing of former Prime Minister Khan, and the hobbling of his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party by the military-led establishment.

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) is expected to win the most seats following Thursday's vote, with analysts saying its 74-year-old founder Nawaz Sharif has the blessing of the generals.

Adding to concerns about the integrity of the vote, authorities announced just before polls opened that they had suspended mobile telephone services across the country "to maintain law and order" after two blasts on Wednesday that killed 28 people.

Nighat Dad, a lawyer who runs the not-for-profit Digital Rights Foundation, said the outage "is an attack on the democratic rights of Pakistanis".

"Shutting down mobile phone services is not a solution to national security concerns. If you shut down access to information you create more chaos".

Voters in Pakistan were reliant on a text | More on P6

### Punjab Grants 2 Lakh, J&K Govt. 1.5 Lakh To Kins Of Victims

The Punjab government on Thursday gave an ex-gratia grant of ₹ 2 lakh each to the families of two workers from Amritsar who were killed in Wednesday's terror attack in Srinagar. As per police officials, Jammu and Kashmir administration also gave families of both victims ₹50,000 cash each, apart from a cheque for ₹1 lakh each. The body of one of the victims, Amritpal Singh, reached his native village Chamiari, near Ajnala town, amid a pall of gloom. His cremation of the second victim, Rohit Masih, 25, also from Chamiari village, who succumbed in Srinagar Thursday will be held on Friday. A villager Gurjant Singh said, "Masih was the family's lone breadwinner. He accompanied Amritpal as a helper in carpentry work. He leaves behind his | More on P6

### Parliament Okays Interim Budget 2024-25

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Parliament on Thursday completed the exercise of passing the interim Budget for 2024-25, with Rajya Sabha returning the Finance Bill 2024 and the relevant appropriation bills.

The Upper House also returned the appropriation bills related to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The bills were returned to Lok Sabha after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's reply on the discussion.

On Wednesday, Lok Sabha passed these bills.

Rajya Sabha returned the Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill, 2024; The Appropriation Bill, 2024; The Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation (No.2) Bill, 2024; The Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation Bill, 2024; and The Finance Bill, 2024. With Rajya Sabha returning all these money bills to Lok Sabha, the Budget process has been completed.

## Mitigating Climate Change Impact Can Boost Farm Revenue on Existing Land: LG

Says Last Year, Kashmir's Apples Constituted 75% Of Country's Total Production

Observer News Service

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha addressed the inaugural session of the 6th J&K Agricultural Science Congress on "Diversification of Agriculture for Self-Reliant Mountain Agro-Ecology" at SKUAST Jammu on Thursday.

The LG welcomed the eminent scientists and researchers from across the country in the three-day conference.

He said the exchange of ideas and discussions among the experts on critical aspects of alternative agriculture systems, digital agriculture, start-up culture, advanced veterinary science, innovation, and data sciences will help in addressing the challenges and exploring opportunities in sustainable agriculture.

The LG directed the Agricultural Universities to



prepare a strategy for diversification, value addition, supply chain management and profitable market linkage for small and marginal farmers.

"J&K has diverse agro-climatic zones which provide ample scope of adopting farm level diversifications. With

this scientific solution, we can mitigate the impact of climate change and will be able to generate higher farm revenue from the same piece of land," Sinha said.

The LG made certain valuable suggestions to improve productivity and make the

agriculture and allied sector more lucrative for farmers and stakeholders.

He advised for chalking out an effective scientific strategy for organic and integrated farming. "Our farmers should be provided necessary hand-holding and guidance on Monoculture farming so that they could avail the benefits of this Farming of Future," he said.

The LG emphasized on increasing awareness and dissemination of information on the benefits of crop rotation, digitization and precision farming tools among the farmers.

He also advised for Rural Action Plan for innovation, technological advances, and digital agriculture to make rural communities accessible to the key flagship areas of the agriculture and allied sectors.

Addressing the gathering, the LG | More on P6

## J&K Has 2nd Highest Potential Of Solar Energy

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir ranks at the second place for having higher potential to produce solar energy in India, documents reveal.

As per the documents, Jammu and Kashmir has a potential to produce 111050 MW of solar energy.

Throughout India Rajasthan ranks at the first place for having a potential to produce 142310 MWs of solar energy.

Jammu and Kashmir is followed by Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, which as per the document has a potential to produce 64320, 61660, and 38440 MWs of solar energy.

Currently, Jammu and Kashmir has 27.25MW of installed capacity of solar power.

Pertinently, the Ministry of Renewable Energy has embarked

on a mission to install 175 GW of renewable energy capacity, which includes 100 GW from solar, 60 GW from wind, 10 GW from bio-power, and 5 GW from small hydro-power.

This year, the Centre has also focused on establishing infrastructure for utilizing renewable energy sources in Jammu and Kashmir.

In the budget released earlier this year, the Centre proposed installing 4,000 additional agricultural solar pumps and commissioning about 80 megawatts of solar capacity, which would cover 20,000 families in the union territory.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir government is also planning to harness 500 Megawatts of solar energy by 2030 under a clean energy mission.

As per the vision document of the Jammu and Kashmir government, the government has to | More on P6

## Me'raj-e-Aalam Observed With Fervor Across J&K



Majid Nabi

Srinagar: Braving cold weather, thousands of devotees from across the valley thronged Asar-e-Sharief Dargah Hazratbal to offer congregational Zuhr (afternoon) prayers at the revered shrine on the eve of Shab-e-Meraj on Thursday.

While mosques across Kashmir were reverberated with praises to Allah and his messenger (Pbuh) during the night long prayers, major congregations were witnessed at Dargah Hazratbal,

Asar-e-sharief Shahr-e-Kalashpora and Jenab Sahab Saura in Srinagar.

Congregational prayers were also offered at Lal Bazar, Khanqah-e-Maula, Ziarat Hazrat Dastageer Sahab (RA) Khanyar and Sarai Payeen, Syed Yaqoob Sahab (RA) Sonwar, Khawaja Naqshband Sahab (RA) and Ziarat Makhdoom Sahib (RA).

Similar gatherings were reported from south Kashmir, where thousands of people prayed at mosques and shrines, primarily at Jamia Masjid Reshi Sahab, Kaba Marg, | More on P6

## PM Took A Dig At Congress, But Praised Manmohan Singh

KO Web Desk

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi bid farewell to the retiring members of the Rajya Sabha on Thursday. In his speech, he lauded former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's contribution towards the country. He later took a dig at the Congress which released a 'black paper' against the Narendra Modi-led government on Thursday. Here are 10 points that PM Modi said in the Rajya Sabha- PM Modi reacted to the Congress 'black paper' against the NDA government, calling it a "kala teeka" that will ward off the evil eye on the achievements of his government.

"Whenever a good thing happens, we apply the 'kala teeka' (to ward off the evil eye), and I thank (Congress chief Mallikarjun) Kharge ji for doing this honour today," the prime minister said in the Rajya Sabha.



PM Modi said, "When the country is touching new heights in the last ten years, we take it as 'kala teeka' to help ward off the evil eye". He said Kharge being an elder has put this 'kala teeka' for the good work being done by our government in the country's progress.

Recalling some difficult times, PM Modi took another swipe at the Congress and the Opposition, saying "we saw

fashion parades" in the Rajya Sabha at times. He was referring to opposition leaders wearing black attire in protest over several issues in Parliament.

At the beginning of his speech, PM Modi praised Manmohan Singh for his "huge contribution" as a political leader. He said, "I want to remember Dr Manmohan Singh today, his contribution has been immense. Ideological | More on P6

### No Scope For Divisions In India: PM

India's mantra of unity in diversity is so comprehensive that there is no scope for divisions in it. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday and asserted that development and heritage will continue to march together as the country moves forward. Addressing a programme marking the 150th birth anniversary of Srila Prabhupada at the Bharat Mandapam, | More on P6

### MBBS Admissions In Pakistan

## ED Nabs Kupwara Man For 'Terror Financing'

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: The Enforcement Directorate has arrested a man from Kupwara district in a money laundering case related to MBBS admissions in Pakistan.

"ED has arrested Mohammad Abdullah Shah, a resident of Kupwara, J&K, on 06/02/2024 under the provisions of PMLA, 2002 in connection with

money laundering case where-in accused persons involved in terror financing were hand in glove with Pakistani handler Manzoor Ahmad Shah, who arranged admissions in MBBS & other courses in the colleges of Pakistan for students from J&K," the ED posted on X.

The probe agency said Shah was produced before the Court of the | More on P6

## J&K Has 85,203 MSMEs Run by Women: Govt

Agencies

Srinagar: Under the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises and Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), J&K has 85,203 MSMEs running by women since the inception of the scheme till 05-02-2024, said the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises on Thursday.

As per the data from the

Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises showed that J&K has 85,203 women-owned MSMEs as of 05 February 2024, with 80,523 under UDYAM and 4,680 under UAP.

"As informed by RBI, vide circular FIDD. MSME & NFS. BC.No 06/00.02.31/2015-16 dated August 27, 2015 on 'Streamlining flow of credit to Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs)' for facilitating timely and adequate | More on P6



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Friday | 09-02-2024

## Dogs, Dogs Everywhere

The Valley continues to witness an alarming increase in dog bite cases. The surge in incidents has been attributed to the unchecked growth of the stray dog population and unscientific garbage disposal practices. In Srinagar alone, over one lakh stray dogs roam the streets, contributing to over 5,000 reported cases of dog bites in the last 10 months, with the numbers being particularly large in the summer capital.

The issue is not just about the physical harm caused by dog bites; it extends to the psychological and economic toll on the victims. A qualitative study conducted by the Department of Community Medicine at GMC Srinagar revealed the profound impact on dog bite victims, describing feelings of psychological and emotional instability, economic losses, and social detachment. The implications are clear – this is not just a public health crisis but a multi-faceted problem affecting the well-being of the community.

One of the root causes of this crisis is unscientific garbage disposal practices and the unchecked growth of the canine population. Open dumping sites in Kashmir, combined with the absence of waste segregation and scientific disposal, have become breeding grounds for stray dogs. The lone garbage dumping site in Srinagar at Achan is overloaded, emitting pungent smells that make the lives of residents in Downtown Srinagar miserable. The proposed waste-to-energy plant, which could alleviate the burden, has yet to materialize despite six years passing since its announcement.

The situation is dire, and urgent measures are needed. The government must expedite the establishment of waste management facilities, ensuring proper segregation and disposal. There is a pressing need for the swift sterilization of stray dogs, particularly in areas with a high incidence of dog bites. Authorities in Srinagar are struggling to cope with the sterilization efforts due to a lack of infrastructure and manpower. It is imperative to address these logistical challenges promptly to control the burgeoning canine population.

The scenario in Kashmir mirrors a larger national issue, prompting the Supreme Court to take note and schedule hearings on the stray dog menace in February. The pending petition by the Animal Welfare Board of India challenges a 2006 judgment empowering local self-government institutions to cull stray dogs. The court must consider various perspectives, including the rights of animals and the concerns raised by local authorities regarding the increasing incidents of dog attacks, especially against children.

Addressing the menace of stray dogs in Kashmir requires a comprehensive and coordinated effort from the government, local authorities, and the community. Immediate steps must be taken to implement scientific waste management practices, expedite sterilization programs, and strike a balance between public safety and animal rights. The Supreme Court's involvement signals the need for a nationwide approach to this issue, emphasizing the urgency of finding sustainable solutions that protect both human and animal welfare.

### OTHER OPINION

## Prophet Muhammad (SAW) Journey (Al Isra Wal Miraj): A Spiritual Voyage of Divine Proximity

*The voice of the evening star resonates from the heavens,  
To whom the dawn prostrates, for it is tonight,  
The path is but a single step for the courage of the Ascendant,  
For it is this very night, the Ascension.*

انتر شام کی آتی ہے فلک سے آواز  
سجدہ کرتی ہے تحریک کو، وہ ہے آج کی رات  
راہ یک گام ہیں بہت کے لیے عرش برین  
کہ رہی ہے یہی مسلمان سے معراج کی رات

(ALLAMA IQBAL)

In the vast and intricate array of human history, there exist pivotal moments that transcend the limitations of time and space, leaving an indelible mark on the collective consciousness of humanity. Among these luminous episodes stands the miraculous journey of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) called Al Isra Wal Miraj, an ethereal odyssey imbued with profound spiritual significance and divine revelation.

As expounded upon in the Quran and Sunnah, the Night Journey (Al Isra) and Ascension (Miraj) were bestowed upon the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as a testament to his exalted status and divine favor. It was an unparalleled journey, transcending the boundaries of the material world and granting him unparalleled access to the celestial realms, ultimately leading to an intimate communion with the Divine.

تَحَنُّنَ الْوَالِدِ إِذَا رَأَىٰ ابْنَهُ يَتَّقِي اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ لَمَّا رَأَىٰ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا بِذُنُوبِهِ رَبِّهِ

“Exalted is He who took His beloved Prophet by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing.”

This verse begins with the phrase *تَحَنُّنَ الْوَالِدِ* which is a declaration of the greatness and perfection of Allah. It emphasizes His transcendence and exalted status. The verse then describes the miraculous journey of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), known as the Isra and Miraj. The journey took place at night, during which the Prophet Muhammad was taken from the Sacred Mosque (Al-Masjid al-Haram) in Mecca to the Furthest Mosque (Al-Masjid al-Aqsa) in Jerusalem. This journey was facilitated by Allah as a special honor bestowed upon His beloved servant. The phrase *“رَأَىٰ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا”* refers to Al-Aqsa Mosque, which holds significance as one of the holiest sites in Islam. It was here that the Prophet Muhammad led a congregation of prophets in prayer, further affirming his status as the final messenger of Allah. The verse mentions that the surroundings of Al-Aqsa Mosque have been blessed by Allah. This blessing serves as a divine manifestation of His mercy and favor. It also indicates the importance of Jerusalem in Islamic tradition as a sacred and blessed city.

# High Tide Of Youth Unemployment

Joblessness among the youth cannot be addressed through fiat



N Chandra Mohan,

“  
**Joblessness among the youth cannot be addressed through fiat or mandating the filling of government jobs ahead of important assembly and national elections. There is a need for generating employment-intensive growth, besides labour reform and incentivizing India Inc to invest more to generate employment. More flexible labour markets through reform will help in a big way**

Although India is the world's fastest-growing large economy, it faces a serious challenge of dealing with joblessness, especially among the youth. Nothing illustrated this better than a cartoon in the Times of India pointing to good news on the jobs front as after UP and Haryana, five more states sought to join Israel's recruitment drive.

This pertains to 10,000 temporary jobs on offer in Israel's construction industry—facilitated by the Indian government—that has seen thousands of young men from the Hindi-speaking heartland scrambling for this lucrative opportunity with salaries of ₹1.4 lakh a month despite working in a war zone. “It is better to die working than perishing due to hunger,” stated an applicant who is a post-graduate.

It is possible to interpret this drive as Indian nationals exploring opportunities in the global workplace due to shortages of semi-skilled and skilled labour. But this desperation to get out reflects a push factor stemming from the limited jobs in the government and private sector in the country. This can also take place illegally.

As many as 96,917 Indians were apprehended seeking to enter the US between October 2022 and September 2023, per United States Customs and Border Protection data. A better description of this reality is jobless growth. An adequate number of jobs for the youth are not being generated, despite economic growth projected to accelerate to 7.3% in FY 24. In other words, growth is not employment-intensive enough.

Unemployment is the biggest concern for educated youth who prefer to wait for better opportunities, unlike the poor who take up whatever is available. But this cannot be an indefinite wait and can erupt into violence, as has happened with the Agnipath scheme for recruitment into the army couple of years ago. That year also witnessed rioting in

Bihar due to anger over the non-transparent and problematic hiring process in the railways—more than 10 million aspirants signed up for 35,000 openings. Six years ago, the state government of Uttar Pradesh received as many 2.3 million applications for 368 job openings as peons, including from doctoral and post-graduate candidates. These bleak prospects have also been observed in other states.

In urban India, the latest unemployment rate for those between 15-29 years of age is almost three times higher at 17.3% than the overall rate of 6.6%, according to NSSO's quarterly Periodic Labour Force Survey for July-September 2023. This is a current weekly status estimate that captures those who sought or were available for work during the reference period of a week preceding the survey. A growing reserve army of unemployed youth portends serious strains on the country's social fabric. As the electorate that swept the Narendra Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party into power in 2014 and 2019 was predominantly young, from villages and small towns, the regime must expeditiously address the challenge of youth unemployment.

However, joblessness rarely figures in public discourse as some employment is being generated, even if such jobs are largely in the self-employment sector or pertain to casual wage labour in the urban informal sector. Much has been made of a steady rise in female labour participation—the share of those above 15 years of age who had a job or sought one—in the latest official review of the Indian economy. In urban India, this is true for 2022-23 and July-September 2023, when it nudged up to 24% after remaining stable at 22% since 2019-20. There was a similar uptick in female employment rates that resulted in a lower unemployment rate of 8.6%. But these jobs have been largely of the self-employment kind, including as helpers in household

enterprises.

Back to the 15-29 age group, the quarterly PLFS data on males in urban areas hints at a discouraged worker effect of sorts, as some of them are opting out of searching for employment opportunities due to the paucity of suitable jobs. Estimating the real number of discouraged workers, however, is far from easy, as official surveys do not ask probing questions like whether workers are willing to seek work again if it were made available. Labour force participation rates have drifted down in July-September 2023 compared to July-September 2018. While there has been an increase in employment rates, there has been a sharper fall in the joblessness rate, suggesting that fewer young men are seeking work or are available for work to count as unemployed.

Joblessness among the youth cannot be addressed through fiat or mandating the filling of government jobs ahead of important assembly and national elections. There is a need for generating employment-intensive growth, besides labour reform and incentivizing India Inc to invest more to generate employment. More flexible labour markets through reform will help in a big way. There is evidence that states which reformed labour laws saw an increase in average plant sizes and higher employment in the organised manufacturing sector. This is the sustainable way forward to enable millions of people to shift from agriculture to manufacturing and services jobs in urban India and ensure they do not desperately seek temporary opportunities abroad, even in war zones, or enter countries like the US illegally.

*Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The article was originally published by Financial Express*



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## Deploy AI to Reduce Plastic Pollution

One of the most urgent environmental issues of our time is plastic trash, which calls for ground-breaking innovations to solve. The plastics sector in developed countries is undergoing a transformation thanks to artificial intelligence (AI) and digitization, which are providing solid solutions that may efficiently re-

duce plastic waste and optimize its use through higher recycling. Waste collection in urban areas by state and central regime, particularly in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, and Hyderabad, can be significantly improved by utilizing intelligent algorithms and integrating advanced technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT) and

geolocation, which bring us closer to a more sustainable future. It is necessary to adopt more AI-enabled smart bins across the nation in order to sort materials at their source, maximize recycling potential, and improve plastic waste management. More industries ought to employ algorithms that develop cutting-edge goods and package designs, use less

plastic and other resources while maintaining performance standards. Potential effects of AI and digitization on the management of plastic trash could hasten the transition to a circular economy.

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Dr. Vijaykumar H K



Mindful Fridays

ADULTING

# Navigating Life's Challenges with Parental Guidance

Wasim Kakroo

As young adults transition into independence, they face the multifaceted journey of "adulting," navigating responsibilities ranging from financial management to career pursuits. Amidst these challenges, parental guidance plays a pivotal role in providing support and direction. Parents serve as mentors, offering wisdom and encouragement as their children navigate the complexities of adulthood. Through their guidance, young adults gain essential life skills and confidence to tackle the obstacles they encounter. The role of parents in this transformative period cannot be overstated, as they provide a foundation of support and guidance that empowers their children to thrive in the adult world.

**UNDERSTANDING ADULTING**

Adulting encapsulates the acquisition of critical life skills vital for success in adulthood. From mastering personal finances to cultivating healthy habits, forging meaningful connections, and pursuing professional ambitions, it's a multifaceted journey. While some aspects may feel intuitive, many encounter unfamiliar terrain and unforeseen hurdles. Negotiating these challenges requires resilience, adaptability, and a willingness to learn. Whether it's creating a budget, prioritizing self-care, nurturing relationships, or charting career paths, each facet contributes to holistic adult development. Embracing the uncertainties of adulting fosters growth and self-discovery, empowering individuals to navigate life's complexities with confidence and competence. As young adults venture forth, armed with newfound skills and experiences, they embark on a journey of self-reliance and fulfillment, shaping their paths towards a prosperous and fulfilling adulthood.

**THE ROLE OF PARENTS**

Parents are the cornerstone of a young adult's journey into adulthood, serving as their primary influencers and mentors. With a wealth of experiences and wisdom, parents offer invaluable guidance, support, and encouragement as their children navigate the complexities of adulthood. By sharing their own life lessons and insights, parents help prepare their children for the responsibilities and challenges they will inevitably face. Whether it's offering practical advice on managing finances, navigating relationships, or pursuing career aspirations, parents play a pivotal role in shaping their children's values, beliefs, and aspirations. Through their unwavering support and unconditional love, parents empower their children to embrace the journey of adulthood with confidence, resilience, and a sense of purpose.

**FINANCIAL LITERACY**

Financial literacy is paramount in the journey of adulting. Parents play



a crucial role in instilling money management skills in their children early on. Teaching the significance of budgeting, saving, and investing equips young adults with the tools needed to navigate economic independence. Through setting positive examples and offering practical advice, parents empower their children to make informed financial decisions. These skills lay the foundation for responsible financial behavior, enabling young adults to handle financial challenges with confidence and resilience. By fostering a culture of financial awareness and responsibility within the family, parents contribute to their children's long-term financial well-being and success in adulthood.

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Navigating relationships and man-

aging emotions are critical components of adulting. Parents are instrumental in fostering their children's emotional intelligence, imparting skills like empathy, effective communication, and conflict resolution. Through modeling healthy interactions and providing guidance, parents lay the groundwork for their children to develop meaningful connections in both personal and professional spheres. By nurturing a supportive family dynamic, parents equip their children with the tools necessary to navigate the complexities of relationships, handle conflicts constructively, and foster deep and fulfilling connections throughout their lives. These foundational lessons not only contribute to personal well-being but also serve as a solid foundation for success in various aspects of adulthood, from maintain-

While adulting presents its fair share of challenges, it also offers numerous opportunities for personal growth and development. By embracing these challenges alongside their children, parents can foster resilience, adaptability, and perseverance

ing healthy friendships and romantic partnerships to thriving in the workplace.

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's career aspirations by providing guidance, encouragement, and mentorship. They can facilitate educational opportunities, introduce networking connections, and offer professional advice to help their children navigate the complex world of career development. By empowering their children to explore various career paths, develop essential skills, and pursue their professional goals, parents lay the foundation for success in adulthood. Through their unwavering support and guidance, parents not only help shape their children's career trajectories but also instill in

them the confidence and resilience needed to overcome challenges and thrive in their chosen fields. Ultimately, by fostering a nurturing environment conducive to career growth and development, parents play a pivotal role in preparing their children for the demands and opportunities of the professional world.

**INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY**

As young adults step into adulthood, parents must balance support with fostering independence. Encouraging autonomy enables confidence-building and experiential learning. While parents provide guidance, granting children the freedom to make decisions fosters self-reliance and ownership. This approach empowers them to navigate life's challenges independently and develop into resilient individuals prepared for the complexities of adulthood.

**CHALLENGES AND GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES**

While adulting presents its fair share of challenges, it also offers numerous opportunities for personal growth and development. By embracing these challenges alongside their children, parents can foster resilience, adaptability, and perseverance. Encouraging an open dialogue and providing a safe space for their children to express their concerns and seek guidance can help alleviate the pressures associated with adulting.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF ROLE MODELING**

Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's approach to adulthood by serving as positive role models. Demonstrating integrity, resilience, and a strong work ethic instills invaluable lessons in their children, influencing their values and beliefs. When parents lead by example, they reinforce the significance of personal responsibility, accountability, and lifelong learning. By embodying these qualities, parents provide a solid foundation for their children to navigate the complexities of adulting with confidence and integrity. Through their actions and behaviors, parents not only guide their children but also inspire them to strive for excellence and embrace the challenges of adulthood with resilience and determination. As children observe their parents' commitment to ethical behavior and continuous self-improvement, they are motivated to emulate these qualities in their own lives, fostering a legacy of integrity and success that transcends generations. In essence, parental role modeling is a powerful tool that equips young adults with the essential skills and values needed to thrive in the adult world.

The author is a licensed clinical psychologist (alumni of Govt. Medical College Srinagar) and works as a Child, Adolescent and Family therapist at Centre for Mental Health Services (GMHS) at Rambagh, Srinagar. He can be reached at 8825067196

# Why Old School Writing is Better

Abigail Fagan

Thousands of people now speak to their smart devices to make their grocery lists. Students are more likely to type out notes in class than write them down. And we often type or dictate calendar reminders into our smartphones instead of writing them on a wall calendar. In short, people across the globe and in a wide variety of settings primarily use digital devices to record the things they want to remember.

It turns out, that may not be a good thing. A substantial body of evidence demonstrates that handwriting stimulates different and more complex brain connections that are essential in encoding new information and forming memories.

The most recent study supporting this idea was published last month in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology*. Researchers in Norway asked university students to write individual words either using a digital pen on a touchscreen or using a single finger to type all while measuring electrical activity in their brains using a high-density electroencephalogram (EEG). They found that brain con-



nnectivity patterns were far more elaborate and widespread for participants who wrote by hand compared to those who typed. This suggests that the precisely controlled hand movements that

occur when writing lead to spatial and temporal patterns in the brain that promote learning.

This study adds to a large body of previous research that finds handwriting activates the brain

in ways that other forms of recording information do not.

A 2022 systematic review conducted by a doctoral student at the University of Louisville combined data from 33 studies to

evaluate whether taking notes by hand versus typing affected how students performed on tests. The review found that students who took handwritten notes scored significantly higher on quizzes

about that material compared to students who typed notes.

But you don't have to be a student to benefit from handwriting. A 2021 study by Japanese researchers found that participants who recorded calendar event information on paper calendars demonstrated more brain activity than subjects who recorded the same information onto a smartphone when they tried to remember details about the information later. In addition, the participants who wrote in their calendars recalled the information 25% faster than those who typed it into a smartphone.

In addition, earlier research demonstrates that handwriting is essential in children's brain development. This study asked five-year-old, preliteracy children to write, type, and trace letters while undergoing functional MRI scanning. The students who wrote by hand were the only ones who demonstrated brain activity in a circuit of the brain used in learning to read.

The take-home message: If you need to remember something, write it down! There is clear evidence that the act of writing helps us to learn and remember.



# Northern Railway Celebrates 68th Railway Week

100 Employees Felicitated For Outstanding Services At New Delhi | Delhi Division Declared The Best Overall Performance In all fields

New Delhi: To commemorate the running of the first train in the country between Bori-bunder and Thane, Indian Railways celebrate the Railway Week every year during April. This year

Northern Railway is celebrating its 68th Railway Week. Shri Shobhan Chaudhuri, General Manager, Northern Railway presided over the Awards Distribution Ceremony held today i.e. on 8th February 2024 at National Rail Museum, Chankayapuri, New Delhi. Shri Ajay Kumar Singhal, Additional General Manager and all the Principal Heads of the various departments, other senior railway officials and railway employees of Northern Railway, Members of Unions Associations & Federations, President, Northern Railway Women Welfare Organization. (NRWVO) Smt. Sanneti

Chaudhuri and other Members of NRWVO were present on the occasion.

The ceremony started with facilitation of 100 railway employees (Officers & Staff) for their meritorious services by Shri Shobhan Chaudhuri, General Manager, Northern Railway. 54 running shields were presented by the General Manager, based on performance-oriented parameters. Ambala Division has been awarded with the General Manager's Excellence Shield. Delhi Division was declared the Best overall performance in all fields, hence was awarded the shield for its overall performance. Ferozpur Division has been awarded for its Most Economical Functioning. Best improved division shield has been awarded to Moradabad Division.

Speaking on the occasion, the



General Manager lauded officers and staff for various achievements of the zone in core functional areas. He stated that this year has been an encouraging one for us. Northern Railways has achieved unprecedented growth in our infrastructure and services. It was an honor for

Northern Railway when Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the first phase of renovated Ayodhya Dham Railway station from Ayodhya.

Shri Chaudhuri was pleased to mention that all railway men are aware of the responsibility.

Northern Railway has earned Rs. 7869 crores from 35-million-ton Cargo Loading. Earned Rs.349 crore from parcel & goods loading and achieved first position among all Zonal Railways. Ran 266 special trains during Deepawali and Chhath Puja festival besides

augmenting 510 regular trains. Launched "One Station, One Product" scheme at 126 stations over NR and 1582 beneficiaries earned 04.39 crore rupees. 95 % route of NR has been electrified. 19 pairs of coaching trains have been converted from diesel to electric traction and registered Rs. 23 crore recurring annual saving in high-speed diesel. On Delhi-Mumbai and New Delhi-Kolkata route, work is in progress to increase the trains speed up to 160 KMPH. 03 Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals have been completed on NR. 68 Km. long Rohtak - Meham new line has opened for the public after CRS clearance. All the seven stations between Banihal and SMVD Katra have been completed and remaining work is in full swing on this section under the USBRL Project.

Northern Railway is proud of

its outstanding and dedicated sportsmen and sportswomen who have won the highest laurels for us nationally as well as internationally. Northern Railways' sports persons give their best to bring glory for the country.

RPF personnel of Northern Railway have consistently shown high dedication to duty and protected railway property and helped the public in times of need.

He congratulates all the recipients and their families on getting Awards today. The contribution of railway men and railway women's families to enable their spouses in discharging their duty irrespective of the demand's domestic issues like festivals, personal important occasions - which most railway men forgo to discharge their duties so selflessly.

## CONTD. FROM PAGE 3

### Candlelight Marches

heinous attack, unequivocally expressing their unwavering solidarity with the grieving families affected by their tragic loss. They shouted slogans condemning the killing of innocent civilians.

The candlelight March served as a poignant reminder of the community's collective resolve to stand against violence and to uphold the principles of peace, justice, and unity.

The protesters said that people want to live in peace & harmony. They said that such unfortunate incidents should not take place as every human life is precious.

In Srinagar, BJP members arranged a candle march at Ganta Ghar Lalchowk and called for an immediate end to innocent killings.

### Second Victim

Manoj Sinha who said the perpetrators would be brought to justice.

Meanwhile, political leaders across party lines expressed shock at the loss of lives and vehemently denounced the attack.

### Punjab Grants

parents, wife and a daughter." Punjab cabinet minister and Ainala MLA Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal visited both families and delivered the grant cheques. "The state government stands with the grieving families and will extend every kind of aid," he said.

### Polarized Pakistan

messaging service to confirm the polling station where they were registered.

Forty-year-old Abdul Jabbar said the internet disruption prevented him and his wife from finding their polling station.

"Other Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters helped us to trace it in the end," he told AFP.

"Fear for my vote"

Voting officially ended at 5:00 pm local time (1200 GMT), but officials said anyone inside a polling station premises at the time would be allowed to cast their ballot.

First results are expected before midnight, but voting patterns are unlikely to emerge until Friday morning.

"My only fear is whether my vote will be counted for the same party I cast it for. At the same time, for the poor it does not matter who is ruling -- we need a government that can control inflation," said Syed Tassawar, a 39-year-old construction worker

First-time voter Haleema Shafiq, a 22-year-old psychology student, said she believed in the importance of voting.

"I believe in democracy. I want a government that can make Pakistan safer for girls," she told AFP in Islamabad. In the central city of Multan, Ayesha

Bibi said the next government must provide more schools for rural women.

"We came here by foot and then on a tractor trailer. It was a very difficult and hard journey," said the housewife. "Security measures"

More than 650,000 army, paramilitary and police personnel were deployed to provide security.

At least seven officers were killed in two separate attacks targeting election security details, and officials reported a string of minor blasts in southwestern Balochistan province that wounded two people.

On Wednesday, at least 28 people were killed and more than 30 wounded by two bomb blasts outside the offices of candidates in the province, attacks claimed hours later by the Islamic State group.

Justifying the mobile phone shutdown, an interior ministry spokesman said "security measures are essential to maintain law and order situation and to deal with potential threats".

"Tables turned"

Thursday's election has a similar air to the 2018 poll, but with the tables turned.

Then, it was Sharif who was disqualified from running because of a string of convictions for graft, while Imran Khan swept to power with the backing of the military, as well as genuine support.

As he cast his vote at a school in Lahore Thursday, Sharif denied making any deal with the military to rule.

"Actually I have never had any problems with the military," he said.

The history of Pakistan elections is chequered with allegations of rigging but also favouritism, said Bilal Gilani, executive director of polling group Gallup Pakistan.

"It's a managed democracy that the military runs," he said.

Unlike the last poll, however, the opposition party has had its name removed from ballots, forcing Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-selected candidates to run as independents.

Imran Khan, a former international cricketer who led Pakistan to victory in the World Cup in 1992, was allowed a postal ballot from Adiala Jail, a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf official said.

The former PM was last week sentenced to lengthy jail terms for treason, graft, and an illegal marriage.

Analysts say the character assassination shows how worried the military is that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-selected candidates could still prove a decisive factor in Thursday's vote.

Now begins the post-poll rigging," Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf information secretary Raouf Hasan told AFP.

However, he said the party still has a "good chance to spring a surprise" if Pakistanis were able to cast their vote fairly.

If Sharif does not win a ruling majority, he will most likely still take

power via a coalition with one or more junior partners -- including the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), another family-run dynasty now led by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

Whoever wins takes over an economy in tatters, with inflation galloping at nearly 30 percent and a balance of payments deficit that has frozen imports, severely hampering industrial growth

### Mitigating Climate

shared various progressive steps taken by the government including Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), high density plantation, GI tags for niche products, agri-entrepreneurship, new Farmers Producers Organisations and developing educational institutions as a technical hub to support farmers.

J&K is the biggest producer of apples in the country. Last year, our annual production was 75 % of the country's total production. In the last 3 years, 2.44 lakh metric tonnes of CA storage additional capacity have been added and we are aiming to add similar capacity in the next 6 months, the LG further added.

Dr. B. N. Tripathi, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Jammu and Conference Chair emphasised upon the importance of diversification of agriculture and its potential in attaining food and livelihood security.

At SKUAST Jammu, the LG inaugurated the International Hostel of the University.

He also released the Souvenir cum Abstracts of the 6th J&K Agricultural Science Congress being organized by SKUAST-J in collaboration with J&K Science, Technology and Innovation Council, Department of Science & Technology, J&K.

On the occasion, J&K Science, Technology & Innovation Council, Department of Science & Technology handed over a cheque of the financial assistance of Rs 1.45 crore to SKUAST Jammu on account of research of R&D projects under the Sponsored Research & Extension Programme scheme.

Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice-Chancellor SKUAST Kashmir; Saurabh Bhagat, Commissioner/Secretary, Science & Technology Department; senior Officers of UT Administration and SKUAST, Agriculture Scientists, scholars and students were present.

### J&K Has 2nd

complete the target of generating 1500 MW of solar energy in the union territory by 2047.

An official of the Jammu and Kashmir Energy Development Agency said they have been promoting the use of solar energy driven appliances. "We are offering financial assistance for solar water heaters, cookers, and other everyday goods. A significant effort to

encourage people to utilize appliances powered by renewable energy would be launched in the upcoming months," he said.

### Me'raj-e-Aalam Observed

Dooru and Seer Hamdan.

Similar assemblies were also reported from north Kashmir, where thousands of people prayed at different mosques and shrines.

A large number of devotees including men, women and children flocked Darqah Hazratbal shrine to offer prayers and have a glimpse of the Holy relic which is believed to be the hair strand of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh).

Every prayer was followed by the unveiling of the holy relic, with worshippers amid moist eyes raising their hands in supplication to seek forgiveness from Allah.

The significance of the sacred night was highlighted by the religious lecturers in their sermons, emphasizing the teachings and life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the occasion.

The J&K Road Transport Corporation had placed around hundred buses into operation to accommodate the devotees from remote locations, while the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board had made elaborate arrangements for the pilgrims on the occasion.

Foolproof security measures were put in place by the administration, with police and paramilitary forces deployed on roads to ensure no untoward incident takes place.

Shab-e-Miraj, according to Islamic lunar calendar, is observed on the 27th day of the month of Rajab, commemorating the Prophet's ascent to heaven.

Me'raj, also known as Isra, is a night of immense spiritual significance, and is marked by prayers, the recitation of the holy Quran, and contemplation on the Prophet Muhammad's (Pbuh) miraculous voyage to heaven.

### PM Took A Dig

differences are very short-lived, but they have guided this House and the country for such a long time. They will definitely be discussed in future... the way he has guided this House & Country, Dr Manmohan Singh will always be remembered for it..."

Adding to the praise for Manmohan Singh, PM Modi said, "I remember in the other House, during the voting, it was known that the treasury bench would win but Dr Manmohan Singh came on his wheelchair and cast his vote. This is an example of a member being alert of his duties..." It doesn't matter who he was given strength, but I believe he provided strength to democracy.

Our friends who are moving forward towards new responsibilities. Moving from limited expansion to unlimited expansion. Coming out of Rajya Sabha and going to public meetings. I think his

experience in Rajya Sabha will prove to be a great asset for the country," PM Modi said.

### No Scope For

Pragati Maidan, Modi said in today's India, Vande Bharat trains will run along with the transformation of Ayodhya and Mathura-Vrindavan.

He lauded the younger generation for the change in their outlook and emphasised that they take along both knowledge and research together. "Our new generation now wears its culture proudly on its forehead," Modi said.

When youngsters lead the country, they can land a rover on the moon and also nourish traditions by naming the landing spot "Shivshakti," he said.

They understand the importance of both spirituality and start-ups, the prime minister said, noting that pilgrimage centres like Kashi and Ayodhya are witnessing a large number of young visitors.

Modi paid rich tributes to Srila Prabhupada and noted that the 150th birth anniversary of the spiritual guru is being celebrated at a time when just a few days ago, the centuries-old dream of a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya was fulfilled.

Talking about the Ram temple and the consecration ceremony there on January 22, he said such a big "mahayagya" was completed only with the blessings of saints.

"We are celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Srila Prabhupada at a time when just a few days ago, the centuries-old dream of a grand Ram temple was fulfilled. The enthusiasm that is seen on your face is also reflective of the happiness for the Ram Lalla 'virajman', the prime minister said.

"India's mantra of unity in diversity is so simple and comprehensive that there is no scope for divisions in it," he added.

Modi also said Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the 15th-century saint, was the epitome of love for Lord Krishna. "He made spirituality and spiritual practice accessible to the common people," he said.

The prime minister also released a commemorative stamp and a coin in honour of Srila Prabhupada.

Prabhupada was the founder of the Gaudiya Mission that played a pivotal role in preserving and spreading the fundamental tenets of the Vaishnava faith. Gaudiya Mission has played a significant role in propagating the teachings of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and the rich spiritual heritage of Vaishnavism across the world, making it the centre of the Hare Krishna movement.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Modi said, showed the way of reaching god through joy. He recalled his personal experience when at one stage of his

life, he felt that despite fully living the "bhakti", there was a void, a distance, adding that it was the joy of "bhajan kirtan" that enabled his full immersion in the moment.

"I have personally felt the power of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's tradition. I was clapping today as a devotee and not as a prime minister when the kirtan was on," he said.

The biggest manifestation of distance from one's own roots is forgetting one's capabilities and strengths, Modi said, ruing that this happened with the glorious tradition of "bhakti" too.

He said "bhakti", rationality and modernity are considered contradictory to each other by many, adding that devotion is not despair, but hope and confidence. It involves securing victory over oneself and working for the humanity.

Due to this spirit, India never attacked other countries to expand its borders, the prime minister said.

"Today, in the Amrit Kaal of independence, the country is taking forward the resolve of the saints by taking the pledge of freedom from the mentality of slavery," he added.

Saints propagating the "bhakti" tradition have played an invaluable role not only in the freedom movement but also in guiding the country through every challenging phase, Modi said. Throughout India's tumultuous history, eminent saints and spiritual leaders have emerged to provide direction to the country in various capacities, he added.

Describing Srila Prabhupada's life as an example of "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat", Modi noted that he was born in Puri, took initiation in the tradition of Ramanujacharya, who was from south India, and carried on the tradition of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who had his monastery in Bengal.

"Bengal is a source of constant energy from spirituality and intellectuality," the prime minister said, adding that it has given the country saints like Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore and Raja Rammohan Roy.

### ED Nabs Kupwara

Special Judge ACB (CBI-Cases) Srinagar, Kashmir, which has granted the custody of the accused to it till February 13.

### J&K Has 85,203

credit flow during their 'Life Cycle', banks have been advised to clearly delineate the procedure for disposal of loan proposals, with appropriate timelines, and to institute a suitable monitoring mechanism for reviewing applications pending beyond the specified period, without any compromise on due diligence requirements," said the Ministry of MSMEs.

## Aes Kaeshir

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KASHMIR OBSERVER





## CRACKS DOWN ON DRUG PEDDLERS

### Police Seizes Properties Worth Millions

#### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir police has tightened its noose on the drug peddlers by booking the big sharks under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) act as it has seized movable and immovable properties of those involved in drug trade besides freezing a large amount of cash. The police move has evoked a great response from all sections of the society with people hailing the move widely.

Figures available with the news agency, suggest that 15 vehicles and gold coins worth Rs 10.66 lakh were recovered and seized in 2023. "Of this, four vehicles were seized from the Jammu region with cash worth Rs 28.10 lakh was also freed," the figures reveal.

Similarly, while continuing its war against narcotics, seven houses and 21.5 malras of land was seized in Kashmir where Rs 238 lakh were also freed. "Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) also seized one house and four malras of land in Kashmir last year," the figures reveal.

In total, 15 vehicles and gold coins worth Rs 10.66 lakh were seized under NDPS in 2023 besides eight houses and 21.9 malras land also attached under NDPS. "In total, cash worth Rs 296 lakh were recovered and freed," the figures reveal.

A senior police official said that

along with the NDPS, police are acting tough against big fish involved in supplying and distributing drugs among youth in J&K. "Special police teams have been constituted to crack the gangs and nexus among suppliers and dealers. Focus is to ensure stern punishment those involved in spreading this poison among youth of J&K," he said, wishing not to be named.

From seizing the properties including movable or immovable and freezing the cash earned out of the sale of narcotics, NDPS act is coming handy in dealing with the narcotics dealers, suppliers and distributors. "We want to set an example by ensuring the stern punishment to those involved in this drug trade so that it is rooted out from the society forever," he officer said.

After last year's success, police teams continue their efforts of reaching out to the big fish to crack the whip on the narcotics terrorism in J&K. Meanwhile, locals have hailed the police action against drug abuse in J&K stating those involved in the supply chain should be booked under NDPS and sternly punished. "As far as this action is concerned, we are with the police every time. Our support is for the police as drug menace is eating our young population. Youth are falling prey to drugs at a great speed. Booking big fish under NDPS is a great move," a group of people from Srinagar's downtown told KNO.

### J&K Filmmaker's "Sanson Ki Mala" Earns Global Acclaim

#### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** A filmmaker from Jammu and Kashmir has come up with a remarkable cinematic masterpiece "Sanson Ki Mala" (Beads of Breath), which has garnered applause worldwide.

Shoaib Shawl's 'Beads of Breath' is a poetic odyssey with a strong theme about true nature of love. The film revolves around an eccentric man, who yearns to find the true nature of love while villagers' varied perspectives about his identity heat things up.

"Beads of Breath" transcends borders, both geographical and cultural. The Himalayas, in their raw, resplendent glory, morph from mere backdrop to living characters, mirroring the emotional ebb and flow of the protagonists. At the heart lies an enigmatic man, consumed by a yearning for love's true essence. His presence ignites a web of speculation and intrigue amongst the villagers, their varied perspectives painting him as a puzzle to be deciphered," he told news agency.

For Shawl, who is fuelled by his artistic passion and deep Pahari roots, "Beads of Breath" is more than just a story.

He said it's an amplification of his region's voices.

Through this film, he champions local talent, showcasing their skills on an international platform while weaving the rich folklore, culture, and stories of the Pahari people into the very fabric of the film.

Alongside the captivating performance of Usman Shawl as the enigmatic protagonist, a talented ensemble cast, including veteran Kashmiri actor Yousuf Shahnaz, Javid Khan and local talents, lends their distinct voices to the narrative.

Shawl said this film has already resonated with audiences worldwide.

"Fresh from captivating viewers at the Chicago South Asian Film Festival, 'Beads of Breath' garnered both Best Student Film and Best Actor (Usman Shawl) awards at the Ayodhya Film Festival, alongside accolades at the Indogma Film Festival. Now, it prepares to enthrall audiences once again at the Kolkata Short Film Festival," he said.

He said the film's title, inspired by the Sufi hymn "Sanson ki Mala Pe" sung by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, pays homage to the legendary singer.

### J&K Witnessed Driest, Warmest January In 43 Years

#### KO NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** Several parts of Jammu and Kashmir, including Srinagar city, witnessed the warmest January in 43 years, the Meteorological Centre Srinagar's data said.

In terms of snowfall or rains, Srinagar city witnessed the second driest January in the past four decades, recording a mere 3.0 mm of precipitation in the month this year, it said.

The lowest precipitation in the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir was recorded in January 2018 when only 1.2 mm of rainfall or snow took place.

According to data, the mean Tmax (maximum temperature) recorded in January over Srinagar station was 11.9 degrees Celsius while for Gulmarg in north Kashmir and Banihal in Ramban district, it was 5.7 degrees Celsius and 16.9 degrees Celsius respectively.

Jammu city recorded the lowest mean maximum tempera-



ture for the first month of the year in over four decades, it said.

This is the highest mean maximum temperature for the month of January for these stations in the past 43 years, the MeT centre said in a post on X. "2024 January was one of the driest and warmest January in the last 43 years for most of the stations of J-K except the stations of plains of Jammu (Jammu, Samba and Kathua)," it added.

It said Jammu station, on the

other hand, observed a mean maximum temperature of 13.4 degrees Celsius in January, which is the lowest since 1983.

The mean minimum temperature for January observed over Srinagar, Jammu, Gulmarg and Banihal were minus 3.2 degrees Celsius, 5.5 degrees Celsius, minus 3.9 degrees Celsius and 0.1 degrees Celsius respectively. "The 2024 mean Tmin is one of the highest for Gulmarg in the last 43 years," the MET centre said.

### CS Led Committee Approves AAP For Key Agri Schemes

#### KO NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today chaired the UT level committee meetings called for giving approval to the Annual Action Plans (AAP) of some of the key Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) for development of Agriculture and Horticulture sectors here in the UT.

While taking note of the components included in each scheme, the Chief Secretary maintained that these schemes are meant to enhance the overall productivity and quality of crops thereby substantially increasing the returns for the farmers. He remarked that the timely interventions on part of the department could aid in meeting the objectives in a time-bound manner.

He called for regular monitoring and evaluation of these schemes at a higher level so that the bottlenecks, if any, are removed instantly. He also advised for inter-department coordination for smooth implementation of these schemes here in the UT.

Dulloo also stressed upon making the scheme benefits readily available to the prospective beneficiaries by simplifying the procedures. He also called for making necessary amendments as per the guidelines, wherever required, for orienting these with the interests of farmers here.

The Principal Secretary, APD, Shailendra Kumar informed the meeting about the monitoring mechanism put in place



by the department for achieving the targets on time. He also made out that the department has ironed out certain complications for the applicants based on their feedback.

He also threw light on the overall picture of the implementation of these schemes here besides the measures the department is contemplating to enhance the outcomes for each such scheme under implementation in the UT.

The respective Mission Directors presented the performance made in each scheme during the ensuing financial year. They also unveiled the AAP for the financial year 2024-25.

It was given out that under for CSS Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) funds to the tune of Rs 13.21 Cr were released by central government for different projects like RKVY- Normal, Agriculture Machinization, Soil Health Fertility, Rainfed Area Development (RAD), Paramparagat

Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and Agroforestry.

The outcomes of the scheme includes distribution of one crore vegetable seedlings among farmers, installation of borewells, and bower systems. Similarly 230 clusters had been established for promotion of organic farming under PMKVY and distribution of 41 water lifting devices, 82 vermicompost units, 252 apiculture hives has also been done under RAD.

The meeting also held deliberations about the AAP under RKVY 2024-25. It was apprised that the AAP amounting to Rs 63.03 Cr has been laid for the next financial year.

This includes Rs 6.51 Cr for RKVY- Normal, Rs 22.45 Cr for Agriculture Machinization, Rs 2.38 Cr for Soil Health Fertility, Rs 2.10 Cr for Rainfed Area Development (RAD), Rs 6.71 Cr for PKVY and Rs 18.75 Cr for Per Drop More Crop besides allocations for other sub-projects of this scheme.

### GMC Srinagar Receive Around 7,000 Cancer Patients Since 2017

'1,640 Cases Registered In 2023 Alone'

#### Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The number of cancer patients is on the rise in Jammu and Kashmir as around 7,000 patients have been registered alone at the Department of Radiation Oncology, SMHS Hospital GMC Srinagar since 2017.

Official statistics revealed that 1640 cases of cancer were reported at the Radiation Oncology Department in 2023, which is the highest in the last several years.

491 new cancer patients were registered at the radiation oncology department, SMHS in 2017; 1,032 in 2018, 801 in 2019, 650 in 2020, 1,010 in 2021, 1,169 in 2022 and 1,640 in 2023.

Officials said that around 5 to 6 new cancer patients are being registered at the department every day.

Prof Manzoor Ahmad, Head of the Department of Radiation Oncology at GMC Srinagar said there is a sharp increase in new cancer cases in J&K, with the department registering a record number of 1640 cases in 2023, out of which 911 were males and 729 were females.

"The most common tumor in males was lung cancer and in females breast cancer. This scenario looks very grim as far as lung being the most common

tumor in males is concerned because this cancer has a direct bearing and relation with tobacco use," he said.

"This indicates the magnitude of tobacco products in our society and how much awareness we have to make among the general public regarding the use of tobacco," he said.

As far as breast cancer in females is concerned, one of the major reasons is the lack of physical activity and obesity. "So both the common cancers, whether it is lung in males or breast in females, could be easily avoided if we make the change in lifestyle," Prof Ahmad said.

He called for public awareness through signs and symptoms of cancer, preventive measures and timely medical evaluations.

He said that the OPD of the department remains functional for six days (Monday-Saturday) from 10 am to 4 pm where the consultant along with senior resident and PG student remains available.

"After checking the relevant reports in the OPD, patients are registered and data is digitized," he said, adding that there are two separate units where patients are being admitted and four consultants along with senior residents remain available in each of the wards.

### NASHA MUKT BHARAT ABHIYAAN ATF Centre Inaugurated At IMHAANS, Psychiatric Hospital Badamwari

#### Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** As a part of the ongoing efforts of the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to address drug demand through the National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR), an Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) Centre under Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan was inaugurated at Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS) Govt Psychiatric Diseases Hospital, Badamwari here on Thursday.

The Addiction Treatment Facility was inaugurated by Union Minister Social Justice and Empowerment Minister, Dr. Virendra Kumar through virtual mode.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat and Principal Government Medical College (GMC), Srinagar Dr. Masood Tanvir Bhat were present at the inaugural ceremony.

While, Administrator, GMC, Srinagar Mohammad Ashraf Hakak, Nodal Officer ATF IMHAANS, Dr. Arshid, Incharge Drug De-addiction Centre SMHS Hospital, Dr. Yasir, DDMO, Srinagar, Imtiyaz Amin Naik and other concerned were also present on



the occasion.

After dedicating ATF to the public, the Union Minister Social Justice and Empowerment Minister, Dr. Virendra Kumar in his address through virtual mode said that these ATF centre's will prove beneficial in eradicating the menace of drug abuse from the society and help make the dream of drug free nation a reality. He said public participation will play a crucial role towards this cause.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar said that the objective of ATF is to bridge the gap between drug abuse victims and the treatment facility dedicated for them.

While interacting with the Staff of ATF, the DC emphasized upon the Doctors and other Paramedical staff to take

the job as a noble task and treat the affected people with patience and dedication.

The DC further said elimination of drug menace from society is top priority of the Government and to combat this rising societal problem, multi-pronged rehabilitation, counseling and guidance policy is being implemented on ground to monitor drug abuse and take remedial measures to curb the menace.

The DC also sought cooperation from the families particularly from parents to overcome the menace among the youth which also leads to other social evils and crimes. He said parents have an important role to keep the youngsters away from the use of drugs and also the family support for the affected people could lead them towards normal life.



### The Risks of Unregulated Investment Schemes

#### Irshad Mushtaq

**D**o you know why people fall into the traps of risky investment schemes? One of the primary reasons is the absence of a legal framework in India that permits exorbitant returns over a short period of time. While banks offer interest rates ranging from 7% to 8%, the difference is minimal and they are regulated by the Reserve Bank of India. On the other hand, the stock market and insurance are regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority, respectively. These regulatory bodies ensure that all financial transactions are conducted within legal boundaries, providing a sense of security to investors.

However, in the absence of regulation, individuals often fall prey to fraudulent investment schemes promising high returns. Without the oversight of these regulatory bodies, there is no guarantee of the legitimacy of such ventures. It is crucial for investors to ensure that their money is being managed within the purview of these regulatory guidelines. Without this assurance, they are at risk of losing their hard-earned money.

Ultimately, it is up to individuals to educate themselves about the legitimacy of investment opportunities before diving in. They must be wary of offers that seem too good to be true and always seek out investments that are regulated by the appropriate authorities. Failure to do so can lead to financial ruin and place the blame solely on the investor for not performing due diligence. It is imperative to understand the importance of investing within the bounds of regulatory oversight to safeguard one's financial future.

— Author is NISM qualified, Mutual Fund advisor and distributor having experience of 18 years in financial market

### DC Kupwara Conducts Extensive Tour Of Main Town

#### KO NEWS SERVICE

**KUPWARA:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan on Thursday conducted an extensive tour of Kupwara town.

The tour encompassed areas including the Bus stand Kupwara, Jamia road Kupwara, parking slot at main chowk Kupwara, Hospital road and Bye-Pass road and other markets of town, where the Deputy Commissioner assessed the status of basic amenities, cleanliness and interacted with people.

During her visit, the DC also engaged with local residents to gather feedback, understand concerns and reinforce collaborative efforts towards beautification of the town and to provide hassle free services to the people.

DC took first hand appraisal of Solid waste management,

market checkings, and anti encroachment drive from roads and pavements of Kupwara town.

DC reviewed the status of traffic management in the town and checked the parking slots besides assessing bottlenecks impeding smooth flow of traffic in the town.

DC directed the CEO, Municipal Council Kupwara to get important roads and pavements like Bye-Pass road and Hospital road free from vendors and illegal encroachments.

DC directed EO to impose fines on those shopkeepers who don't use dustbins and spread litter and plastic wastes in the market.

DC directed that no vehicle shall be parked on Jamia road Kupwara, Hospital road and bypass, instead commuters will use parking slot near old Chowk Kupwara and Rigipora bus stand.

### 25 More E-Buses To Reach Srinagar By March

#### Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** With the increasing demand, the authorities have started the process to procure additional 25 electric buses for Srinagar while the officials stated that some among them have already reached Jammu.

Pertinently, the administration had announced the procurement of 200 e-buses, 100 each for Srinagar and Jammu cities. However, only 75 have

been introduced so far while a process to introduce more 25 e-buses has been started.

Chief Engineer SSCL stated. He added that some among the total 25 have reached Jammu. "Some of the buses have already reached Jammu and are under registration process. Once done with paper work they will be added to the fleet," he said, adding all the 25 e-buses are expected to reach Srinagar by March.

The officials said currently, the e-buses in operation offer a seating capacity of 23, with 17 seats allocated for men and



6 reserved for ladies and disabled passengers.

Er. Kirmani said that their eco-friendly mobility aims to bolster public transportation infrastructure in Srinagar for a better commuting experience.

He highlighted the importance of incorporating public feedback into their mobility initiatives, emphasizing the city's dedication to enhancing urban transportation accessibility.

"By expanding the e-bus fleet, Srinagar aims to not only reduce its carbon footprint but also provide convenient and reliable transportation options for commuters," Er. Kirmani said.





## Kohli To Miss More Action

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** India's star batter Virat Kohli is likely to miss the third and fourth Tests against England due to personal reasons, which also kept him out of the first two matches of the series, a BCCI source said on Wednesday.

Chances of Kohli playing the final Test of the series in Dharamsala (from March 7 to 11) are also remote but the board isn't looking that far ahead as that particular match is still a month away.

The third Test will be held in Rajkot from February 15 to 19, while the fourth game is in Ranchi from February 23 to 27.

Last week, it was reported that there is no clarity on Kohli's participation in the series and he will only be picked if he is in a position to play.

Recently Kohli's close friend and former South African skipper AB de Villiers had revealed on his YouTube show that the Indian batting ace is missing action due to the impending arrival of his second child.

"The BCCI has time and again made it clear that when it comes to family matters, it stands firmly behind the cricketer and it will be Virat's call when he is ready to make a comeback. As of now, it looks unlikely that he will play in the series," a BCCI source said.

## Real Kashmir Open Up I-League Title Race, Play RUFC Today

Agencies

**NEW DELHI:** Nothing is ever certain in the I-League. After the first half of the season, if anyone thought Mohammedan Sporting were going to be running away with the title, they were proved wrong last Sunday, with Real Kashmir dealing the Black and White Brigade their first loss of the campaign.

A shocking loss in many senses. A team that hadn't conceded more than once in an entire match so far, let in three unanswered goals in 45 minutes. That too, against a team like Real Kashmir, who had lost their previous two away games to bottom-half teams Delhi FC and Namdhari FC.

The Snow Leopards scintillatingly found form in the toughest away trip of the season to throw open the title race. Sreenidi Deccan also scored a last-gasp winner against Churchill Brothers in Vasco da Gama, cutting Mohammedan's lead at the top to four points.

Round 13 of the I-League might have been depleted with three fixtures being postponed, but these two big results proved more than enough to make up



for any missed drama. Things are about to heat up even more with non-stop action for the next 11 straight days.

Round 14 kicks off with Real Kashmir travelling to Sri Bhaini Sahib to face Rajasthan United FC on Friday. It will be important for the Snow Leopards to not get carried away with the big win and build consistency on the road.

Rajasthan United have shifted

base once again this season, playing out of the Namdhari Stadium now, which means it will be Real Kashmir's third visit to Punjab. They will hope to make it third time lucky after losing on both occasions previously without scoring a single goal.

Later on Friday at 7 pm, Inter Kashi will host Gokulam Kerala FC in their newfound home, the Kalyani Stadium. (ANI)

## 9 Year Old From Tral Wins Silver In Martial Arts C'ship



Agencies

**TRAL:** A 9-year-old boy from Tral has won silver in a Martial Arts championship held in Kanyakumari.

Moeen-u-din Sofi, resident of Tral town, is a third class student at private school and has already showcased his talent at national and international level.

Moeen-u-din said that he was interested in martial arts since childhood and started learning different forms of martial arts a few years before.

He said that he has

been working hard while his parents, despite having financial constraints, have been supporting me.

"I got enrolled in a local academy to learn martial arts and due to my hard work, I have so many medals at different stages so far," he said.

"Recently I participated in a martial arts championship in Kanyakumari where I managed to secure a silver medal," he said, adding that, winning any medal at any stage gives us more courage to work harder and prove our mettle wherever we get an opportunity.

"So far I have got the opportunity to showcase my talent at local, national and once at international level so far but my aim is to represent India at international level and win medals," Mooin added.

He requested the government to financially support him so that he can achieve his goals.

The primary class student said that parents must encourage their children and engage them in different games so as to keep them physically and mentally fit besides keeping them away from social evils. (KNO)

## U19 WC: Australia Edge Out Pakistan, Face India In Final

Press Trust of India

**BENONI:** Tom Straker's six-wicket haul and Harry Dixon's fifty inspired Australia to a tense one-wicket victory over brave Pakistan in the semifinal here on Thursday, setting up their ICC Under-19 World Cup final against defending champions India.

Straker (6/24).

Despite having their own struggles against spirited Pakistan bowlers, the Aussies managed to reach 181 for 9 in 49.1 overs to seal the final berth with Dixon (50, 75b, 5x4) and Oliver Peake (49, 75b, 3x4) leading their chase.

While India will be playing their ninth title match,

was held in New Zealand.

However, Australia's win was anything but smooth as a bunch of determined Pakistan bowlers made them stretch for every single run.

Pakistan's impressive 15-year-old pacer Ali Raza bowled through the cramps during his last spell, as Australia slumped



The summit clash will be played at the same venue on Sunday.

Pakistan made a below par 179, built around two half-centuries by Arafat Minhas (52) and Azan Awais (52) as they struggled against pacer

the Aussies are appearing in their sixth final.

India have won a record five titles while Australia have bagged three titles, and the last time the Yellow Brigade lifted the trophy was in 2010 with a win over Pakistan. That edition

to 164 for nine.

They needed a further 16 runs to win from that point with a wicket in hand but Raf MacMillan (19 not out) and Callum Vidler (3 not out) dragged their team past the line in the final over.

## Etihad To Sponsor Chennai Super Kings



Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** Gulf carrier Etihad Airways on Thursday entered into an agreement with the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) to become its official sponsor.

The partnership will cover CSK's events and platforms, while its players' jerseys will display the Etihad logo, the carrier said.

The collaboration with the five-time champion of the Indian Premier League (IPL), comes close on the heels of Etihad roping in Bollywood actor Katrina Kaif as its brand ambassador, it said. Etihad started flying into India 20 years ago and has been investing here from day one, be it in deploying the best planes here or customising local palette to customers across the 10 cities where we are operating, Etihad Airways Chief Revenue Officer Arik

De said.

The partnership with CSK was announced at Kalaivanar Arangam in Chennai in the presence of team officials and CSK players, who joined the Etihad cabin crew on stage wearing their new jerseys and displaying the airline's logo.

Etihad chose CSK for the sponsorship as the team has won the IPL championship five times since the tournament commenced in 2008, and the airline has won five World Best Airline awards.

Etihad operates 165 flights per week to 10 cities in India, connecting its passengers from here to 70 global destinations. Recently, the airline launched two routes to Kozhikode and Thiruvananthapuram. Besides, it increased the frequency of its Mumbai and Delhi flights to four from two.

## Girona Still Believe Ahead Of Top-Of-The-Table Clash With Real Madrid

Agencies

**MADRID:** When Real Madrid lorded it over Girona with a 3-0 win at the snug Estadi Montilivi in September it looked as though the Catalan upstarts had been firmly put in their place and that their audacious LaLiga title hopes had been fantasy all along.

Scroll forward more than four months from that defeat, however, and the club many thought would most likely be in a relegation battle are still toe-to-toe with Carlo Ancelotti's star-studded Real side, who they trail by two points.

Girona have gone 15 league games unbeaten since that setback, winning 11, and on Saturday can dislodge Real from top spot if they pull off a famous win at the Bernabeu Stadium. Girona manager Michel has been at pains to play down his side's chances of shattering the status quo in Spanish football by winning the title only seven



years since the humble club first played in LaLiga.

After all, the last club other than Real Madrid, Barcelona or Atletico Madrid to finish top was Valencia 20 years ago and they were hardly regarded as underdogs. But for neutrals, and those desperate for a new narrative, Girona's challenge to the elite has been a breath of fresh air.

Girona may be part of the same City Football Group stable as English and European champions Manchester City but they operate in another uni-

verse in terms of financial firepower. Michel has constructed a youthful squad with an attacking style that is easy on the eye.

**GOALS GALORE**  
Ukraine striker Artem Dovbyk, badly missed in last week's 0-0 home draw with Real Sociedad but likely to play, has a league-leading 14 goals this term, the same as Real's Jude Bellingham, while Girona's total of 52 is unmatched in LaLiga.

Brazilian winger Savio has also been earning rave reviews and will be off to

Manchester City at the end of the season, but Girona's main strength is their unity and team spirit -- fitting for a club from a fiercely patriotic Catalan city. They have earned 22 points from losing positions this season and whatever happens on Saturday, Michel's intrepid side will not be throwing in the towel.

A sense of injustice could also fuel their desire this weekend after some controversial decisions against Sociedad. They had a Yangel Herrera goal ruled out for offside by VAR even though the offence took place 37 seconds earlier.

Midfielder Herrera was also booked, meaning he misses Saturday's clash along with experienced defender Daley Blind, while Michel will be absent from the touchline after being sent off for expressing his frustration. Near the end of the draw, Girona's fans chanted 'Asi, asi, asi gana Madrid' which translates as 'That's how Madrid win'.

## Man City Eye Top Spot In Three-Horse Title Race As Everton Trip Looms

Agencies

**MANCHESTER:** Manchester City can top the Premier League for a few hours at least if they beat Everton at home on Saturday and Pep Guardiola's side are firm favourites to end the season there.

But a record fourth successive English league title is perhaps not the foregone conclusion some are predicting. Phil Foden's hat-trick inspired City to a 3-1 victory at Brentford on Monday -- City's fifth league win in a row -- to put them two points behind Liverpool with a game in hand.

It all feels ominously familiar with City looking capable again of the long winning streak that ultimately grinds down those seeking to end their domination of the top flight. "It does feel at the moment as though Manchester City winning the title is a formality," former Arsenal striker Alan Smith said.



"But Pep Guardiola and City certainly won't be taking anything for granted.

"Anything can happen and injuries could always knock them off balance but maybe that is wishful thinking!"

According to entertainment data experts Gracenote, however, City are still only 57% likely to win the title.

The reason being is that this time there appears to be a genuine three-horse title race after Arsenal's superb victory over leaders Liverpool last weekend. Only on nine occasions since the formation of the Premier League in 1992 have two points separated

the top three at least 23 matches into a season.

And the way all three clubs are playing -- assuming Liverpool's below-par display in London was just a blip -- it could stay tight at the top right into the climax of the season. Liverpool will hope that relegation-haunted Everton can throw a spanner in City's works on Saturday, although that seems extremely unlikely seeing as City are unbeaten in 13 league matches against the Merseyside club.

Juergen Klopp's Liverpool will be anxious to shake off any hangover

from the defeat at Arsenal and a home date with second-from-bottom Burnley looks tailor-made for them.

"It's important that we get back on track straight away. We have to try to do that," Andy Robertson, who is fully aware of the small margins for error in a title chase with City, told Liverpool's website on Thursday.

"We've got to show everyone it was a one-off and hopefully we kick on for the rest of the season." Arsenal celebrated loudly after their defeat of Liverpool, earning some scorn from pundits.

But there is no doubt that after a loss of form at the start of the year, the Gunners looked back in the groove and capable of staying with City and Liverpool. The pressure will ramp up on a weekly basis though and playing last of the three this weekend -- away at London rivals West Ham United -- will be a test of their nerve.