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Minister of State, Parliamentary Affairs &
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50% Of Time Indian Users Pick Up Their Phones Out Of Habit: Report

IANAS
 One out of two (50 per cent) times Indian users pick up their phones without knowing why they fired up their smartphone, a new report revealed on Monday.
 According to the global management consulting firm Boston Consulting Group (BCG), a typical smartphone user picks up the phone 70-80 times a day.
 "In our research, we have seen about 50 per cent of the time consumers do not have clarity on why they pick up the phone — they do it out of habit," said Kanika Sanghi, lead, Centre for Customer Insights India.
 The findings in the report are based on actual clicks/swaps data of over 1,000 users and in-depth consumer interviews conducted across India.
 Moreover, the report found that 45 to 50 per cent of the time consumers are very clear on the task to be accomplished, and 5 to 10 per

cent of the time consumers have partial clarity.
 "Smartphones are evolving — the recent spate of discussions in media and at industry events on themes like 'AI on device' or 'app-less experience through Gen AI' is a testament to that evolution," said Nimisha Jain, senior partner and managing director at BCG.
 The report also mentioned that Indian smartphone users love to stream video content (short-form/long-form) as 50 to 55 per cent of their time is spent on streaming apps, while socialising (texts/calls), shopping, searching (for information on travel, jobs, hobbies etc.) and gaming.



“In our research, we have seen about 50 per cent of the time consumers do not have clarity on why they pick up the phone — they do it out of habit

Google Confirms Feature That Will Hold Call Till Human Representative Is Available

IANAS
 Google has confirmed that it is testing a new feature that will help you make a call, wait on hold and then give you a call back once a human representative is available.
 After reports surfaced about the new tool, the tech giant confirmed to TechCrunch that it is testing the "Talk to a Live Rep" feature.
 The feature aims to help people not to wait for countless minutes, while listening to recorded music, trying to get connected to a customer service representative.
 The new AI feature is currently available in English for people in the US who are part of the Google Search Labs. The feature works on Google app for Android and iOS users and Chrome on desktop.
 The "Talk to a Live Rep" is like Google Pixel's "Hold for Me" feature. However, the company said the new feature on both Android and iOS "will navigate the phone tree for you and then call you back when a customer service agent is available". On the other hand, "Hold for Me" is only available on Pixel phones.
 According to reports, supported businesses for the new feature include airlines, telecommunications, retail, services and insurance.

Novel AI Model May Lead To Personalised Tuberculosis Treatments: Study

Press Trust Of India
 Scientists have developed a new Artificial Intelligence (AI) model to predict treatment outcomes of tuberculosis (TB) patients, an advance that may lead to personalised treatments for the bacterial disease.
 The study, published in the journal iScience, analysed multimodal data including diverse biomedical data from clinical tests, genomics,

and outperformed existing models that focus on a narrow set of clinical data," said Sriram Chandrasekaran, corresponding author and associate professor at the University of Michigan, US.
 "We identified drug regimens that were effective against certain types of drug-resistant TB across countries, which is very important due to the spread of drug-resistant TB," added study first author Awanti

history," Sambarey said.
 "We also noted if the patients had other comorbidities, such as HIV, and then we worked with several imaging features such as their X-ray, CT scans, data from the pathogens, drug-resistance data, as well as genomic features and what mutations the pathogen had," she said.
 The researchers noted that it is very difficult clinically to look at the data all together. That is where the role of AI comes in handy.
 The team also studied the impact of the type of drug resistance present.
 "You can look at a specific snapshot of the data, such as genomic features and find what mutations the infecting pathogen had, and ask what some of the long-term treatment implications are," Sambarey added.



medical imaging and drug prescriptions from TB patients.
 By analysing data from patients with varying levels of drug resistance, the researchers discovered biomedical features predictive of treatment failure.
 They also uncovered drug regimens effective against specific sets of drug-resistant TB patients.
 "Our multimodal AI model accurately predicted treatment prog-

ress, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Michigan.
 Using AI, the team examined more than 5,000 patients.
 "This is real-world data we're talking about, so patients from different countries have different admission protocols. We worked with more than 200 biomedical features in our analysis; we examined demographic information such as age and gender as well as prior treatment

Researchers Develop Novel Antibiotic That Overcomes Bacterial Resistance

ANI
 Researchers from the Harvard University and University of Illinois in Chicago have created an antibiotic that may provide a fresh tool in the fight against drug-resistant bacteria and the illnesses they cause.
 According to Science, the antibiotic cresomycin efficiently reduces pathogenic microorganisms that have developed resistance to a variety of frequently administered antimicrobial medications.
 The promising new antibiotic is the result of a long-term collaboration between Yury Polikanov's laboratory at UIC, an associate pro-



fessor of biological sciences, and colleagues at Harvard. Harvard researchers use the vital insights into cellular functions and structure that the UIC scientists provide to assist design and synthesis of novel medications.
 In developing the new antibiotic, the group focused on how many antibiotics interact with a common cellular target - the ribosome - and how drug-resistant bacteria modify their ribosomes to defend themselves.
 More than half of all antibiotics inhibit the growth of pathogenic bacteria by interfering with their protein biosynthesis - a complex process catalysed by the ribosome, which is akin to "a 3D printer that makes all the proteins in a cell," Polikanov said. Antibiotics bind to bacterial ribosomes and disrupt this protein-manufacturing process, causing bacterial invaders to die.
 But many bacterial species evolved simple defences against this attack. In one defence, they interfere with antibiotic activity by adding a single methyl group of one carbon and three hydrogen atoms to their ribosomes.
 Scientists speculated that this defence was simply bacteria physically blocking the site where drugs bind to the ribosome, "like putting a push pin on a chair," Polikanov said. But the researchers found a more complicated story, as they described in a paper published last month in Nature Chemical Biology.
 By using a method called X-ray crystallography to visualize drug-resistant ribosomes with nearly atomic precision, they discovered two defensive tactics. The methyl group, they found, physically blocks the binding site, but it also changes the shape of the ribosome's inner "guts", further disrupting antibiotic activity.
 Polikanov's laboratory then used X-ray crystallography to investigate how certain drugs, including one published in Nature by the UIC/Harvard collaboration in 2021, circumvent this common form of bacterial resistance.
 "By determining the actual structure of antibiotics interacting with two types of drug-resistant ribosomes, we saw what could not have been predicted by the available structural data or by computer modelling," Polikanov said.
 "It is always better to see it once than hear about it 1,000 times, and our structures were important for designing this promising new antibiotic and understanding how it manages to escape the most common types of resistance." Cresomycin, the new antibiotic, is synthetic. It is preorganised to avoid the methyl-group interference and attach strongly to ribosomes, disrupting their function. This process involves locking the drug into a shape that is pre-optimized to bind to the ribosome, which helps it get around bacterial defences.
 "It simply binds to the ribosomes and acts as if it doesn't care whether there was this methylation or not," Polikanov said. "It overcomes several of the most common types of drug resistance easily." In animal experiments conducted at Harvard, the drug protected against infections with multidrug-resistant strains of common disease drivers including Staphylococcus aureus, Escherichia coli and Pseudomonas aeruginosa. Based on these promising results, the next step is to assess the effectiveness and safety of cresomycin in humans.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate in favour of my daughter namely Adebashir, as per school records the DOB of my daughter is 26-06-2013. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Naib Tehsildar Kakapora within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Bashir Ahmad Sheikh
 F/o Adebashir
 R/o Sathergund Tehsil Kakapora

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PM To Inaugurate Banihal Rail Link Tomorrow

Historic, Will Transform Our lives: Residents

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Thousands of families in remote pockets of Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district are eagerly waiting for the inauguration of train services on the Banihal-Sangaldan section by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday, and say it will fulfil their decades-old dream and completely transform their lives.

The 48.1-km section, a part of the ambitious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link project, will provide an all-weather dependable transport facility to the people of the region.

According to Northern Railway officials, the prime minister will virtually dedicate to the nation the Banihal-Khari-Sumber-Sangaldan railway line and flag off the first electric train from Baramulla to Sangaldan during his visit to Jammu on February 20.

Modi is also scheduled to inaugurate and lay the foundation of 209 projects worth Rs 3,161 crore from the Maulana Azad Stadium and address a public rally.

The start of the rail service

is "a historic occasion for us and is going to transform our lives completely," Choudhary Mohammad Ashraf, former sarpanch of Sumber, told PTI.

"We will have a dependable transport facility at a minimum cost. It will not only provide us a major relief but will also open new vistas, especially for our younger generations," he said.

He said the enthusiasm among men, women and children can be gauged by their turnout in huge numbers on both sides of the railway track and the hill tops to witness the first train chugging along the track during the inspection by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) on Friday.

Qamar Din of the same village said the joy of having a train service after seven decades of the country's independence is very difficult to describe.

"Our village is located 40 km from Ramban district headquarters and considered as backward in every sphere, be it health, education or road network. We have to spend a lot of money to | More on P6



Preparations underway at Budgam Railway Station as Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the electric train during his J&K visit on February 20th. KO Photo Abid Bhat

"Aiding Terror Groups" Pak Increasing Telecom Towers In PoK: Officials

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The number of telecom towers along the Line of Control in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK) has been increased in recent times with an aim to aid terrorists and their associates in infiltration activities, officials said here.

Terror groups have been using highly encrypted YSMS services, a technology that merges smart-phones and radio sets for covert communication purposes, the officials said after a study of the pattern of infiltration bids and recent terror attacks, particularly in the south of the Pir Panjal range in the Jammu region.

With this technology, a handler of a terror outfit in PoK is connected with the infiltrating group and its reception party in the Jammu region on a telecom network used across the LoC. This is done to avoid detection by the | More on P6

After Over 7 Decades, PM Established Social Justice In J&K: LG

Dedicates 'Awaam ki Awaaz' To Unsung Heroes, Women Power

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi established social justice in the Union Territory after over seven decades of India's independence.

He said the vision of his administration is to ensure that growth must reach all sections of society and measures for equitable access to opportunities are further strengthened.

Speaking at his monthly 'Awaam Ki Awaaz'



radio programme, the Lt Governor highlighted efforts of the government to provide social justice to build an 'Atmanirbhar' Jammu and Kashmir. | More on P6

Art 370 Led To Over 40,000 Deaths In Kashmir: HM

Agencies

Srinagar: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said that because of Article 370, over 40,000 people got killed in Kashmir and terrorism and separatism increased in the Valley, but on August 05, 2019 PM Modi-led government struck down the Article once for all.

Amit Shah made the remarks while addressing BJP National Convention in New Delhi today. Thousands of BJP delegates and leaders are taking part in the 2-day national convention of the party, which is being held months ahead of the Lok Sabha elections.

Addressing the convention, Amit Shah, said that when the constitution came into being it was decided that Article 370 is temporary, which means it needs to be struck down at an appropriate time, but due to appeasement politics that



appropriate time never came in 70 years under the Congress rule. "Due to Article 370 terrorism and separatism increased in Kashmir, Pakistan got a chance to enter Kashmir and over 40,000 people got killed, but appeasement politics didn't allow it to scrap Article 370," he said.

Shah said that the people of the country gave majority to the PM Modi-led government for the second time and on August 05, 2019, PM Modi struck down | More on P6

PM's Visit: Security Stepped Up In Kashmir

Security forces have been put on an alert in Kashmir ahead of the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Jammu on Tuesday. Police and paramilitary forces are conducting random checking of vehicles at dozens of places in the city and elsewhere, officials said here on Sunday. Special checking points have been set up at various places entry and | More on P6

WE WILL HAVE A DEPENDABLE TRANSPORT facility at a minimum cost. It will not only provide us a major relief but will also open new vistas, especially for our younger generations."

Snow Cloaks Highlands Of Kashmir

Plains Receive Rains As Temp Plummet



Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Higher reaches of Kashmir received fresh snowfall even as plains of the valley received rains that brought down the temperatures by several degrees, officials said here on Sunday.

Snowfall has been reported in all hilly and mountainous areas of Kashmir since Sunday morning, they said. The plains of the valley, including Srinagar city, received light to moderate rains, they said.

The snowfall has closed several roads connecting the main valley to remote areas like Machil in Kupwara district, Gurez in Bandipora district and Sonamarg in Ganderbal district, officials said.

Avalanche Warning Issued For Anantnag, Kulgam

FROM FEBRUARY 19-20, THERE IS POSSIBILITY OF LIGHT to moderate rain and snow at most places (plains and lower reaches) with possibility of heavy snowfall over middle and higher reaches."

Mughal road connecting Shopian district of Kashmir to Rajouri-Poonch area of Jammu division has also closed due to snow.

The weather office has forecast moderate to heavy precipitation in the form of snow or rains across Kashmir Valley over the next three days.

Earlier, they issued a yellow warning for isolated heavy rain and snow over higher reaches and disruption of traffic on higher passes from February 18-20.

There are four types of colour codes signifying the level of caution: green which means no action, yellow—situation to be watched, orange—government agencies need to be prepared for severe weather | More on P6

Jammu and Kashmir State Disaster Management Authority (JK DMA) issued a low-danger level avalanche warning on Sunday for Anantnag and Kulgam districts of Jammu and Kashmir | More on P6

Imbibe Values Of Social Harmony, Non-Violence: LG To Students

Press Trust Of India

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha addressed the Convocation Ceremony of Khadiha Mahavidyalaya, Ghazipur today. The Lt Governor congratulated the graduating students and their parents on the momentous occasion and extended his best wishes to them for all the success in the future. He also paid homage to the great educationist and freedom fighter Shri Brijmangal Rai. The Lt Governor | More on P6

He said the vision of his administration is to ensure that growth must reach all sections of society and measures for equitable access to opportunities are further strengthened.

Speaking at his monthly 'Awaam Ki Awaaz'

radio programme, the Lt Governor highlighted efforts of the government to provide social justice to build an 'Atmanirbhar' Jammu and Kashmir. | More on P6

"The construction of a grand and divine temple of Lord Shri Ram at his birthplace in the ancient holy city of Ayodhya is a historic and glorious achievement for the country.

"This convention of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) heartily congratulates the leadership | FULL STORY ON PAGE 4

'Ram Rajya' For Next 1000 Yrs: BJP Passes Ram Temple Resolution

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The BJP's national convention on Sunday passed a resolution on the Ram temple in Ayodhya, asserting that this heralds the establishment of "Ram Rajya" in India for the next 1,000 years.

The resolution noted that the temple where a grand consecration ceremony took place last month, has become a temple of "national consciousness" and will play a decisive role in fulfilling the resolutions adopted in building a "Viksit Bharat".

"The construction of a grand and divine temple of Lord Shri Ram at his birthplace in the ancient holy city of Ayodhya is a historic and glorious achievement for the country.



This heralds the establishment of 'Ram Rajya' in India for the next 1,000 years with the beginning of a new 'Kalachakra,' the resolution said.

"This convention of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) heartily congratulates the leadership | FULL STORY ON PAGE 4

Seeking 3rd Term for India's benefit, Not Political Gains: PM Says Foreign Countries Also Know 'Aayega To Modi Hi'

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday asked the BJP cadre to work with renewed vigour and confidence for the next 100 days to reach out to new voters and win their confidence to ensure the party's return to power in the Lok Sabha elections with a stronger mandate.

Addressing the BJP national convention here, Modi said the nation will now have to dream big and make big resolutions to make India a developed country by 2047.

"The next five years are going to be crucial. We have to take a big leap towards 'Viksit Bharat'. The first imperative is to ensure the return of the BJP to power | More on P6

Obstructing Ambulances May Attract 10k Fine Or Jail Upto 6 Months

Agencies

Srinagar: The Traffic Police department Kashmir Sunday warned that obstructing ambulances could lead to a Rs 10,000 fine or up to 6 months in jail.

"In case of any medical emergency movement, hospital administration and other health care centers operating in Kashmir Valley are advised to communicate with Traffic Police Control Room for hassle free movement of patients within municipal limits of Srinagar," the Traffic department said in its circular.



It said that the drivers of the medical emergency vehicles carrying patients and the attendants shall keep close liaison with Traffic Control Unit on the above mentioned helpline numbers during the transit of patients to the hospital for a hassle free passage. "All the commuters on road are advised to pave way for Ambulances, | More on P6

PM 's J&K Visit KCCI Urges Focus On Unemployment, Business Growth

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) on Sunday said the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Jammu and Kashmir next week is a significant occasion eagerly anticipated by the people in general and the business community in particular.

In a statement KCCI while thanking the Prime Minister for accepting many of its suggestions in the past said, "We hope that PM Modi will consider suggestions critical for the all-round development of Jammu and Kashmir, especially

in light of the alarming rate at which the unemployment rate has been growing. Despite numerous schemes announced by the Lieutenant Governor in recent years, the unemployment rate remains higher than the national average, posing serious challenges that need to be addressed."

The statement further reads, "KCCI emphasizes the implementation of the Prime Minister's favoured EASE OF DOING BUSINESS Scheme, as non-adherence to the system has led to a reverse trend, hindering business growth and exacerbating unemployment. The KCCI | More on P6

Chain Of Thoughts

The Epic, Annal And The Highway

Kashmir is not the only land on this planet with which myths, mythologies and folklore are associated. In fact what has survived, after many historical onslaughts on this Sharda peeth; what is presently accessible to readers in our libraries and Museums here (- not forgetting other sources) may not answer all serious questions, of inquisitive minds, related to various streams of Kashmir's antiquity. True, this land of ours can boast of giving birth to Kashmir Shaivism as well as harbouring one school of Buddhism for a considerable period; long before the advent of Islam and Sikhism, but our study material related to former two, is comparatively, no match to what is available elsewhere in other parts of this earth, that pertains to the rich Greek, Roman, Celtic, Hittite and of course the (- umbrella term) Hindu Mythology?

Long before historiography and other subjects emerged in their present distinct individual form, everywhere on this globe, mythology played the role of mother-figure that carried many foetuses; akin to the ancient statues of the Fertility goddesses.

The National epic of Kashmir, in Sanskrit, NILAMATA PURANA, also known by the name of Kasmira Mahatmya, written around the sixth to eighth century, is said to contain information about religion, folklore, culture, geography, and 'history' (- in a limited sense). Whether the incorporation of the material about Kashmir Shaivism is a latter day interpolation, (-as alleged by some critics) only serious scholars can tell, so leaving the question unanswered, I proceed to pen down that Kalhana, is said to have used this epic, Nilamata Purana, as one of the sources of his history.

George Buhler (1837-1898) -annotator of PanchaTantra, (-who was professor of Oriental languages at Elphinstone College of Bombay & later Member of Royal Asiatic Society and also thereafter Professor at the University of Vienna) regarded Nilamata Purana as the 'mine of information regarding legends, culture and political life'. Hiuen Tsang too is believed to have borrowed the legend of Satisar lake from this Nilamata Purana.

In recent times some books are said to have been written after 1960's and the PhD thesis of one Dr.Ved Kumari, approved by Banaras Hindu University in 1960, has been published in two volumes in 1973 as Cultural & Literary Study And Critical Study of Nilamata Purana AND above all in 1999 The Kyoto Institute for Research (Japan) is said to have published 'A Study Of The Nilamata-aspects of Hinduism in Ancient Kashmir'.

Readers might also be knowing that Raja-tarang-ini, (- the twelfth century text; that commands a distinct position and respect in the arena of written treatises of this corner of the globe), is said to have borrowed from the supra-mentioned epic of Kashmir.

RAJATARANGINI, (Waves/Saga of kings), written by Kalhana (pandit, the scholar connected to the power corridors of his time), is the Sanskrit chronicle of kings of Kashmir (-mainly; though dwelling also on those of other places of North-west India), presented in metrical-form, with elegant literary allusions. This legendary account, spread over four parts, has been translated into English (-by Sir Marc Aurel Stein in 1900, & subsequently by Ranjit Sitaram Pandit in 1935 etc); in Hindi, in Urdu, in Telugu, in French and also, dur-



S. SARWAR.MALIK

PENMAN'S NICHE

“
This Land Of Ours can boast of giving birth to Kashmir Shaivism as well as harbouring one school of Buddhism for a considerable period; long before the advent of Islam and Sikhism, but our study material related to former two, is comparatively, no match to what is available elsewhere in other parts of this earth, that pertains to the rich Greek, Roman, Celtic, Hittite and of course the (- umbrella term) Hindu Mythology?



ing king Zain ul Aabideen's reign (- 15th century), into Persian.

Though people have placed great historical value on this book, critics, especially those after 1975, have not only pointed out some chronological errors (e.g " King Mihir kula's reign is recorded seven decades earlier than his son, Toramana -the Hun king". (- In a lighter vein I want to tell my readers that 'a crude taunt, in the street language of Kashmir, that uses this name' comes to my mind here. Surprised? Remember in everyday Kashmiri language, zuhak; the thin but cruel incurator of yore, too lives.). Moving ahead, let me continue. Only the fourth part of Rajatarangini is said to be more accurate and this is understandable because this last period was obviously closer to Kalhan's lifetime. This 4th part, that mentions the Karkota dynasty, though said to contain exaggerated account of the conquests of king Lalitaditya Muktapida, but that much can be condoned, if readers agree with me that " for writing histories of their periods, kings have, every where, largely, used the services of 'hired pen's'.

Rajatarangini, on one hand is said to dwell on the period when Mahabharata war was fought between Kauravas & Pandavas (- a dialogue, as to why the Kashmir king didn't participate in this great war is mentioned in this Rajatarangini) and on the other hand it is said to refer to this Kashmir valley as being originally a lake, Sati-sara. Readers must have heard the tale that in answer to sage Kashyapa's prayers; upon the motivation of 'god Shiva/ Shankara, this piece of land received a boon from goddess Parvati / Sati, in the form of a river(-that was possibly named after her as sati). Lord Vishnu, it is said, had allotted Satisar to Nagas (- whose king was Nila) but Lord Brahma had given boon to the demon, Jalodbhava. King Kashyapa was approached by his own son, Nila, to intercede with gods, to punish the evil-doer Jalodbhava. (- why? wait, dear reader, I will tell you in the next para). At the end Lord Vishnu and Lord Ananta solved the problem. Kashyapa tried to settle both 'Nagas and the descendants of Manu', on this dried-

land but Nagas are said to have refused this proposal of cohabitation. But, later, Nagas had to, ultimately, live with Pisacas as well as Manavas.

Most readers can easily recall that part of the legendary story where it is said that the Sati-Sar lake(- lake is Sar in Kashmiri), that covered a large part of Kashmir Valley, at one time bore a demon, Jalodbhava, (- "reared by the Nagas") who caused a lot of devastation all around. Ultimately it was god Vishnu who cut off the demon's head after the water of this mega-lake was drained by lord Ananta from Baramulla / Varahmulla gorge; leaving behind large number of karewas/ mounds; remnants whereof can be seen even today, in Baramulla as well as Budgam districts of Kashmir. Geologists can tell you more. Anyway it is possible that the question as to 'why the Compiler of Mahabharata, Rishi Vyas, didn't mention this Satisar-Jalodbhava-story in his treatise', might arise in the mind of many readers but most probably it is so because it was of local interest only; "specifically generated by the rivalry of Sage-King Kashyapa and the Nagas".

The King of Kashmir didn't participate in the Mahabharata because earlier King Gonandan of Kashmir had been slain by Lord Krishna's brother, Balrama and also Lord Krishna had killed Gonanda's son, named Damodara but considering the high sanctity of Kashmir, Krishna crowned his widow, Yasovati, because the slain king's son was a minor hence exempted from participating in this great war. Here I pause.

Thoughts about these books of yore wafted on my mind's screen, some days back, when seated on his sofa; waiting for the newspaper Editor.... [- S.H.A; whom I had gone to meet after 17 years; Let me confess, here, today: I just love a handful of Journos, few Mass Com pass outs & some of the Media-studies Deptt....AND... and of course some WRITERS too [... eyeing silently the 'Silk Route' on the map, exhibited on the wall of his room; there I sat, recalling the fact that human history is replete with transactions of myriad types, as these highways of past have brought

both 'blooming zephyrs as well as uprooting tempests'. Big names among travellers of yore, like Marco Polo, Hiuen Tsang, Fahien and the rest, (-including those to whom I was introduced during my prime years when Buddhist Studies captivated me for 26 months), walking on the Silk Route from different stations (- Italy, Greece, Istanbul, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, North western part of (-our geographical) Kashmir, and China) engaged my thoughts as my eyes travelled on the map on the wall; pondering how this highway of yore, known in the annals of human history for the 'movement of People, Ideas and of course Goods', though popularly known items were Silk, spices, olive, ivory and gold. Readers must underline the information that in spreading Buddhism from India to China, Afghanistan, Korea, Japan and S.E Asia this SILK ROUTE played a vital role.

The regions of Kashmir and Ladakh had links with the CENTRAL ASIAN REGION as the two were on the crossroad between China, Tibet and India when through places like Yarkand, Lhasa, Skerdu, Kulu, Kishtwar, Srinagar etc caravans of yore travelled with merchandise; gathered in bazaars and sarais (Marts & Inns) and imbibed a plethora of ideas in 'conversational discourses and recreational pastimes like storytelling, theatrical performances; not to miss the mention of faiths & beliefs and practices that men carried from their home ground to new pitches'.

True, after 15th Century AD trade with the East diminished after the discovery of the Maritime route to India by Vasco Di Gama (1498) but Mongol plundering too disrupted this grand road, that had contributed a lot to the Indian subcontinent, Arabian peninsula, Persia as well as Europe (-Eurasian Continent). My thoughts had jumped to the 'so-called New Silk Route and China's recent BARF summit of 2017 when the arrival of the host broke my reverie and transported me to the present. Rest some other time, dear readers, adieu.

Over the past four years, the education sector in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has undergone a profound transformation, driven by a series of pioneering initiatives aimed at revolutionizing the landscape of learning. This period has witnessed a concerted effort to enhance accessibility, quality, and relevance in education, guided by the principles outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP). Through strategic planning and collaborative action, stakeholders have embarked on a journey towards comprehensive educational reform, with a focus on fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and skill development among the youth.

At the forefront of this transformative journey is the implementation of the NEP, which has provided a strategic roadmap for revitalizing the education system in J&K. By aligning policies and practices with the principles of inclusivity and modernization, stakeholders have laid the groundwork for a more dynamic and inclusive educational ecosystem.

A hallmark of this transformation has been the introduction of innovative programs such as "College on Wheels" and the promotion of entrepreneurship through startup culture. These initiatives have not only expanded access to education but have also

Transformative Education Initiatives In J&K

Nargis Bano

created new avenues for learning and skill acquisition. By bringing education directly to the doorstep of students and fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, J&K is nurturing a generation of dynamic and forward-thinking individuals poised to drive socio-economic growth and development.

Moreover, initiatives like "Design Your Degree" have empowered students to tailor their educational journey according to their interests and career aspirations. By providing flexibility and autonomy in course selection, this initiative has ignited a sense of ownership and agency among students, empowering them to chart their own paths to success.

The emphasis on research and skill development has also been central to the transformation

of the education sector in J&K. With 30 colleges actively engaged in research endeavors and 56 colleges offering skill development courses, the region is equipping its youth with the tools and knowledge needed to thrive in the modern workforce. By fostering a culture of inquiry and innovation, J&K is laying the foundation for sustained growth and development in key sectors of the economy.

Furthermore, efforts to expand educational opportunities have been evident in the establishment of pre-primary education in over 15,000 schools, catering to the holistic development of young learners. Additionally, the enrollment of over 1.21 lakh students in vocational courses underscores the commitment to fostering practical skills and scientific temper among the youth.

By providing opportunities for hands-on learning and skill acquisition, J&K is preparing its youth to meet the challenges of the future with confidence and resilience.

In line with the commitment to universal education, initiatives such as identifying and mainstreaming 46,000 out-of-school children demonstrate a steadfast commitment to ensuring inclusive and equitable access to education for all. Additionally, the Pradhan Mantri Schools for Sing India (PM SHRI) Yojana, with the approval for the upgradation of 233 schools in its first phase, reflects a commitment to infrastructure development and improving learning outcomes across the region.

As we reflect on the strides made in the education sector over the past four years, it is evident that Jammu and Kashmir is on a trajectory towards excellence and innovation in education. These transformative initiatives not only equip the youth with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed but also lay the groundwork for a brighter and more prosperous future for the region. Through continued collaboration and unwavering dedication, J&K is poised to emerge as a beacon of educational excellence, setting new standards for the nation and beyond.

'Ram Rajya In India For Next 1,000 Years': BJP Resolution On Ayodhya Temple

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The BJP's national convention on Sunday passed a resolution on the Ram temple in Ayodhya, asserting that this heralds the establishment of "Ram Rajya" in India for the next 1,000 years.

The resolution noted that the temple where a grand consecration ceremony took place last month, has become a temple of "national consciousness" and will play a decisive role in fulfilling the resolutions adopted in building a "Viksit Bharat".

"The construction of a grand and divine temple of Lord Shri Ram at his birthplace in the ancient holy city of Ayodhya is a historic and glorious achievement for the country. This heralds the establishment of 'Ram Rajya' in India for the next 1,000 years with the beginning of a new 'Kalachakra', the resolution said.

"This convention of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) heartily congratulates the leadership of the prime minister (Narendra Modi) for successfully conducting the consecration of Lord Ram," it added.

The resolution noted that the Ram temple is a symbol of India's vision, philosophy and path. "Shri Ram temple has truly become a temple of national consciousness," it said and added that every Indian was happy to see the divine consecration of Lord Shri Ram.

On January 22, a new idol of Lord Ram was consecrated at the temple in a consecration ceremony led by Prime Minister Modi. Lakhs of people watched the "pran pratishtha (consecration)" ceremony on television in their homes and neighbourhood temples, becoming part

of the historic event.

The resolution said that Lord Ram, Sita and the Ramayana are present in every aspect of Indian civilisation and culture.

"Even in the original copy of the Constitution of India, on the section of fundamental rights, the picture of Lord Shri Ram, Mother Sita and Lakshman ji after returning to Ayodhya after the victory is a proof of the fact that Lord Shri Ram is the source of inspiration for the fundamental rights," it said.

The resolution said that "the idea of 'Ram Rajya' was also in the heart of Babu Mahatma Gandhi".

"He used to say that the idea of 'Ram Rajya' is the idea of true democracy. Following the ideals of Lord Shri Ram, the prime minister has implemented the spirit of 'Ram Rajya' in the true sense by establishing good governance in the country," it added.

The values that Lord Ram instilled in his words and thoughts are the inspiration for 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', and the basis of 'Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas', the resolution said.

"Under the leadership of the prime minister, India's unity and solidarity have received the power of public participation. He has raised the morale of the nation with his policies and leadership. Indian cultural, spiritual and historical pride has been restored in the last 10 years," it said.

"This convention congratulates Prime Minister Modi for making the shared power of heritage and development the identity of new India through his determined efforts and thanks the prime minister for making the whole of India experience the magic of Ram," it added.



'US Threatens To Block New UN Vote Seeking Gaza Ceasefire'

Agencies

United Nations: The UN Security Council could hold a vote next week, sought by Algeria, on a resolution seeking an "immediate" ceasefire in Gaza, diplomatic sources told AFP Saturday, although Washington again appeared set to block it.

Algeria launched discussions on a new draft after the International Court of Justice ruled in late January that Israel must do all it can to prevent genocidal acts in its war in Gaza, which it says is targeting Hamas operatives.

The latest version of the text, seen by AFP Saturday, "demands an immediate humanitarian ceasefire that must be respected by all parties."

It also "rejects forced displacement of the Palestinian civilian population," and it "demands the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages."

The Gaza war began with Hamas's October 7 attack which resulted in the deaths of about 1,160 people in Israel, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of Israeli official figures.

Israel responded by launching a relentless assault on Gaza that has killed at least 28,858 people, mostly women and children, accord-



The resolution put forward in the Security Council, in contrast, would not achieve these outcomes, and indeed, may run counter to them

ing to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry.

Algeria has requested a UN Security Council vote on Tuesday, but Washington signalled it is likely to veto the measure.

US President Joe Biden is working with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the leaders of Egypt and Qatar on a hostage deal that would bring about six weeks of a "prolonged pause in fighting," US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield said in a statement on Algeria's proposed draft.

"The resolution put forward in the Security Council, in contrast, would not achieve these outcomes, and indeed, may run counter to them," Thomas-Greenfield said.

"The United States does not support action on this draft resolution," she added. "Should it come up for a vote as drafted, it will not be adopted."

Like previous texts opposed by Israel and the United States, the new text does not condemn the unprecedented attack by Hamas.

Earlier this month, Thomas-Greenfield said that Algeria's latest initiative risked derailing the negotiations.

"We believe that it is high time now for the Security Council to decide on a humanitarian ceasefire resolution," Palestinian UN envoy Riyad Mansour said recently, adding there is "massive support" for the text's elements among council members.

In October and December, despite international pressure over Gaza's growing humanitarian crisis, Washington vetoed texts calling for a ceasefire.

The Security Council has adopted just two resolutions on Gaza since October 7, including one calling for large-scale delivery of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian territory.

Gaza's 2nd-Largest Hospital "Completely Out Of Service" After Israeli Raid

Agencies

Cairo: The Gaza Strip's second-largest hospital has been put "completely out of service", a spokesperson for the Gaza health ministry said on Sunday.

"There are only four medical staffers currently caring for patients" inside the Nass-

er Hospital in the southern city of Khan Younis, Ashraf al-Qidra told Reuters.

"The Nasser medical complex is the backbone of health-care in the southern Gaza Strip. Its ceasing to function is a death sentence for hundreds of thousands of Palestinian displaced people in Khan Younis and Rafah," he said.

Qidra said a lack of fuel and fighting around the facility had put it out of action.

Nasser was Gaza's largest functioning hospital until Sunday and had been under siege this week in Israel's war with the Palestinian group Hamas. Israeli forces raided the hospital on Thursday.

Farmers' March: Internet Services Suspended In Parts Of Punjab Till Feb 24

Press Trust Of India

Chandigarh: The suspension of internet services has been extended in certain areas of some Punjab districts, including Patiala, Sangrur and Fatehgarh Sahib, till February 24 on the orders of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

Earlier, the internet services were suspended from February 12 till 16 in view of the farmers' 'Delhi Chalo' march.

According to the ministry's February 16 order, internet services will remain suspended in areas falling under Shambhu, Julkan, Passian, Patran, Shatrana, Samana, Ghanaur, Devigarh and Balbhara police stations in Patiala; Lalru police station in Mohali; Sangat police station in Bathinda; Killianwali police station in Muktsar; Sardul-

dian Telegraph Act, 1885 read with Sub-rule 1 of Rule 2 of the Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules 2017, and in the interest of maintaining public safety and averting public emergency, it is necessary and expedient to order, the temporary suspension of internet services from 00:00 Hrs on February 17, 2024 to 23:59 Hrs on February 24, 2024 in the following areas," the order read.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann had raised the issue regarding the suspension of internet services at select areas during the February 15 meeting between three Union ministers and farmer leaders in Chandigarh.

The Haryana government has suspended mobile internet services and bulk SMS in



garh and Boha police stations in Mansa; and Khanauri, Moonak, Lehra, Sunam and Chajli police stations in Sangrur; and areas under Fatehgarh Sahib police station.

The Centre used its special powers under the Telegraph Act of 1885 to suspend internet services in these areas of Punjab.

"In exercise of the power conferred by section 7 of In-

Ambala, Kurukshetra, Kailash, Jind, Hisar, Fatehabad and Sirsa districts.

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha are spearheading the 'Delhi Chalo' agitation to put pressure on the Centre over their demands, including a law on minimum support price for crops and loan waivers.

Afghanistan Province Tells Officials Not To Photograph "Living Things"

Agencies

Kabul: Authorities in the southern Afghan province of Kandahar, the birthplace of the Taliban, ordered its officials on Sunday not to take pictures or videos of "living things".

In a letter addressed to civil and military officials, the provincial Department of Interior directed them "to refrain from taking pictures of living things in your formal and informal gatherings, because it causes more harm than good".

It said text or audio content on officials' activities was allowed.

Images of humans and animals are generally avoided in Islamic art, extending for

some Muslims to an aversion to any images of living things.

A spokesperson for Kandahar's governor told AFP the letter was authentic and that its instructions only applied to provincial officials.

"It is not related to the general public and independent media," Mahmood Azam said.

Television and pictures of living things were banned under the previous Taliban rule from 1996 to 2001.

Several media outlets have refrained from using images of people and animals since the Taliban returned to power more than two years ago.

However, official central government departments frequently distribute and share pictures of senior officials meeting foreign dignitaries.

Rahul's 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' reaches Prayagraj



Press Trust Of India

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' reached Prayagraj on Sunday evening.

Rahul Gandhi, UP Congress president Ajay Rai and other party leaders were seen moving in an open jeep during the yatra.

Senior party leader Pramod Tiwari said Gandhi reached Swaraj Bhavan straight from the airport, where he met the party workers and started his yatra.

He said that the yatra will pass through Netram Chauraha and reach Laxmi Talkies, where Gandhi will address a public meeting, and after this, the yatra will move forward.

Jain seer Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj embraces death through 'sallekhna'

Renowned Jain seer Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj breathed his last on Sunday at Chandragiri Teerth in Dongargarh in Chhattisgarh's Rajnandgaon district after undertaking 'sallekhna'.

Sallekhna is a Jain religious practice involving voluntary fasting unto death for spiritual purification, a statement from the teerth said.

Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj attained Samadhi through 'Sallekhna' at Chandragiri teerth at 2:35 am, the statement said.

"Maharaj was staying on the teerth in Dongargarh for the last six months and was unwell from the last few days. For the last three days, he was observing sallekhna, a religious



practice of voluntarily fasting to death, and had quit intake of food and liquids. According to Jainism, it is a vow taken for spiritual purification," the statement said.

A procession will be taken out at 1 pm on Sunday for people to pay tribute to the departed seer and the final rites will be held in Chandragiri teerth,

it added.

Ahead of the Chhattisgarh Assembly elections last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had visited Dongargarh, a popular pilgrimage spot, and met Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj on November 5 and took his blessings.

In his condolence message, Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said, "Received the news of the world revered and national seer Acharya Shri Vidyasagar Mahamuniraj ji's samadhi at Chandragiri Teerth in Dongargarh.

Acharya Shri Vidyasagar Ji Maharaj, who enriched the country and the world including Chhattisgarh with his dynamic knowledge, will be remembered for ages for his exemplary works for the country and society, sacrifice and penance."

UP Woman Arrested For Asking Man To Prepare Time Bombs Using Bottles: Cops

Lucknow: The Special Task Force (STF) of Uttar Pradesh Police has arrested a woman who had allegedly asked a man to prepare time bombs using bottles.

The arrest was made days after the STF arrested a man named Javed for allegedly making time bombs using glass bottles packed with iron pellets. Javed was on his way to hand over the bombs to the woman, STF officials said.

According to a press statement, a team of the Meerut STF unit arrested Imrana, a resident of the Muzaffarnagar district on Saturday evening following intelligence inputs.

"Imrana had known Ja-



ved for long and had asked him to make the bombs. Javed was arrested when he was on his way to hand over four bombs to Imrana," read the statement.

Imrana told STF officials that her house was allegedly damaged in the 2013 communal riots. She had asked for the bombs in case any vio-

lence or riot broke out again, as per the statement.

Imrana also allegedly confessed she had kept such bombs at her house in the past, which were later handed over to other people.

The STF has lodged a case under the relevant sections of the IPC.

After arresting Javed, a resident of Muzaffarnagar, on Friday, the STF recovered four time bombs.

During interrogation, the arrested accused told the police that these four bottle bombs were improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The bottles were packed with gun powder-999, iron pellets, cotton, POP etc. Javed had made

these bottle bombs at the behest of Imrana, wife of Azad, a native of Shamli currently residing in Muzaffarnagar.

He used to buy glucose bottles from doctors and iron pellets from cycle shops, besides arranging watches.

Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) and ADG STF Amitabh Yash said the STF team arrested Javed around 11.45 am on Friday and recovered four-time bottle bombs (IEDs) from his possession.

The police official said the Uttar Pradesh STF had been receiving information for a long time about missing or reward-declared criminals being active.

NEWS MAKERS

Cesar Reyes, G L Dholakia Conferred KISS Lifetime Achievement Award



KO Web Desk

Bhubaneswar: Former Vice President of Guatemala Cesar Guillermo Castillo Reyes and the Founder-Chairman of Sri Ramakrishna Export Private Limited Mr. Govindbhai Laljibhai Dholakia were on Friday bestowed with the KISS Lifetime Achievement Award, marking the 20th-anniversary celebration of KIIT DU.

Former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda could not attend the celebrations due to his health but wished the students all success in life in a message.

The awards were given away by the Founder of KIIT

and KISS Dr Achyuta Samanta in the presence of KISS Pro-Chancellor Prof Amareswar Galla and KISS Vice Chancellor Prof Deepak Kumar Behera.

They were given this award for their extraordinary contribution to the field of social service, leadership, and philanthropy.

In his acceptance speech, Dholakia expressed his awe at witnessing such a large gathering of students and faculty for the first time in his life. He praised the students for being blessed enough to study at KISS and commended Dr. Samanta's efforts in making such an institution possible.

Dholakia likened his

interaction with Dr Samanta to meeting with a second Mahatma in his life, emphasizing the importance of having individuals like Dr. Samanta in society to create impactful institutions like KISS, which can provide education to a large number of students.

Dr. Reyes in his speech stressed the need for personalities like Dr. Samanta in their country, suggesting that with such individuals, it would be possible to create educational institutions such as KISS, significantly contributing to the education of numerous students. He advised the students to dream big and aim for excellence in their pursuits.

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu Presents Best Chancellor Award to Vivek Singh of Arni University

Shimla: One of the most prestigious private universities of Himachal Pradesh Arni University added another feather to its crown by bagging the Best Chancellor award from the private sector. Arni University's visionary Chancellor Mr. Vivek Singh bagged the Best Chancellor Award among private universities in the state. At a grand ceremony here in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu presented the Award to Vivek Singh. This accolade highlights Mr. Vivek Singh's exemplary leadership and dedication to advancing higher education in the state.

Vivek Singh expressed gratitude for the honor, emphasizing the university's commitment to academic excellence and societal impact. He said, "I am very encouraged by this honour as it acknowledges our contributions to higher education in Himachal Pradesh. At Arni University, we have always believed in contributing to social causes."

Under the visionary leadership of Vivek Singh, Arni University has consistently demonstrated its commitment to fostering inclusivity and supporting the educational aspirations of various communities. In a ground breaking initiative,



the university has introduced special provisions for students from defense families, starting with the Jammu and Kashmir Scholarship Scheme. This initiative aims to facilitate access to quality education for deserving candidates recommended by the Indian Army's Northern Command Headquarters.

Mr. Vivek Singh reiterated the university's vision of

"Skill Comprehensive Higher Education," emphasizing its role in equipping students with the skills needed to excel in their chosen fields and contribute meaningfully to society. This forward-thinking approach has made Arni University a preferred destination for students from across Northern India, leading to a significant increase in student

enrollment over the years. As Arni University continues to evolve and innovate, it remains committed to empowering students and serving as a catalyst for positive change in the region. The recognition of Chancellor Vivek Singh with the Best Chancellor Award underscores the university's dedication to excellence and leadership in higher education.

CONTD. FROM PAGE 3

PM To Inaugurate

take a patient to hospital while our students lack basic facilities," he said, citing the very low pass percentage of students of the government high school in the class 10 board exam.

With the start of the train service and a station in the village, he said, they can travel easily to outside their village, including Banihal and Srinagar, for educational and healthcare purposes and return on the same day.

Ramban Deputy Commissioner Baseer-ul-Haq Chaudhary said, "This railway line brings immense joy to not only the people of Ramban but to the entire Chenab Valley, fulfilling a decades-old dream."

District Development Council (DDC) chairperson and National Conference leader Shamsad Shan termed the proposed inauguration of the railway line a "historic moment" and said the start of the service will transform the lives of the people, especially the down-trodden sections of society.

She said the round-the-year mobility will facilitate easy access to markets, promote business and help employment generation.

DDC member Khari Fayaz Naik, who is associated with the Democratic Progressive Azad Party led by former chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, said it is a welcome development for the remote area.

He also highlighted the demand of the people for a flyover at the Khari railway station and improvement of the road, which is not in a good condition.

Dozens of villages in Banihal, Ramban, Khari, Gool, Mahore, Sangaldan, Pogal Paristan (Ukhral) and Ramsoo tehsils will be directly benefited by the start of the train service.

"The train will also boost the government's efforts to bring virgin valleys like Mohu Mangant and Pogal Paristan into the tourism map. The launch of the train service is expected to improve the footfall of visitors in the breathtaking spots," Tanvir Bin Ahad, a tourist guide, said.

He said the country's longest transportation tunnel, T-50, having a length of 12.77 km also falls between Khari and Sumber railway stations, which will attract visitors as well.

Railway officials said the Banihal-Khari-Sumber-Sangaldan section features a total of 16 bridges -- 11 major and four minor bridges and one road over bridge.

More than 90 per cent of this section runs through tunnels, with a total of 11 tunnels covering 43.37 km, including the country's longest transportation tunnel, T-50, they said.

They said the work on the remaining Katra-Sangaldan section of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project is going at a high pace, and it is hoped that Kashmir will be connected with the rest of the country by train within the next few months.

Out of the total 272 km USBRL project, 161 km was commissioned in phases.

The first phase 118-km Qazigund-Baramulla section commissioned in October 2009, followed by 18-km Banihal-Qazigund in June 2013 and 25-km Udhampur-Katra in July 2014.

The work on the project, which is the most challenging railway infrastructure project being undertaken post-independence, was started in 1997 and has missed several deadlines amid huge cost escalations.

The officials said the railways will further stimulate infrastructure development in the area, improving living standards and quality of life of the local population.

PM's Visit:

exit points in Srinagar as a precautionary measure, the officials said.

Although the prime minister will be visiting Jammu region, security agencies in the valley have been put on an alert to ensure that terrorists do not carry out any subversive activities during the high profile visit to the Union territory, they said.

This will be Modi's second visit to Jammu and Kashmir during his second term in office.

The prime minister is expected to inaugurate various development projects during his visit to Jammu which include AIIMS hospital

Jammu, world's highest railway bridge over Chenab river and Devika river project in Udhampur.

Modi is likely to remotely flag off the first train in Sangaldan-Baramulla rail link and also

address a public rally in Jammu later in the day.

Pak Increasing

army or the BSF, which guard the borders with Pakistan.

The project for boosting telecom signals has been completely handed over to the Special Communication Organization (SCO) led by Pakistani army officer Maj Gen Umar Ahmad Shah, believed to be formerly working with Pakistan's spy agency ISI.

The strategic placement of telecom towers near the LoC and the international border, generally used for aiding terrorists and their associates in infiltration activities, stands in violation of Article 45 of the constitution of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a body under the United Nations.

Article 45 of the ITU's constitution requires all 193-member countries to take the steps required to prevent the transmission or circulation of identification signals, "and to collaborate in locating and identifying stations under their jurisdiction transmitting such signals".

The officials said, the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) under the ITU has reiterated that all stations are "forbidden to carry out unnecessary transmissions, or the transmission of superfluous signals, or the transmission of false or misleading signals, or the transmission of signals without identification".

The matter is being discussed at the ministerial level for taking it up at the international forum concerned, they said.

The new telecom towers are operating on the Code-Division Multiple Access (CDMA) technology and the encryption has been done by a Chinese firm mainly for catering to YSMS operations, the officials said.

This rouge telecom infrastructure supports infiltrating terrorists and their contacts in the Jammu and the Kashmir regions.

The deployment of CDMA technology along the LoC has been done with the aim to complicate monitoring efforts as the technology allows multiple signals on a single transmission channel, posing challenges in controlling illegal communications.

Past instances of use of such technology in 2019 and 2020 were thwarted by security agencies by breaking the encryption. The officials said the present attempt of terror groups aided by state actors of Pakistan would meet a similar fate.

Despite the towering presence of the SCO in PoK, including in Gilgit and Baltistan, telecom towers offer minimal advantages in the Kashmir Valley due to its elevated terrain. But, their signals extend into the Jammu plains, with traces even reaching sensitive places like the Kot Balwal jail area.

Conventional measures such as jammers and managed access systems have fallen short in deterring mobile-phone usage, prompting the development of advanced detection capabilities aimed at locating and neutralising active phones within defined areas.

The officials said new technology is likely to be tested nationwide, particularly in prisons, by security agencies to combat security threats effectively.

The smuggling of cell phones in prisons presents a significant public safety hazard, empowering criminals to orchestrate terror activities from within the confines of a prison, the officials said.

This comes after several security agencies indicated that telecom signals from PoK have been penetrating into Indian territories, affecting regions from Baramulla and Kupwara in Kashmir to Jammu, Kathua, Rajouri, and Poonch Districts in the Jammu division.

Of particular concern is the communication between terrorists on Indian soil and their handlers in Pakistan, facilitated by various technologies like LoRa, YSMS, Baidu and Thuraya Satellite Communication.

The utilisation of LoRa technology, known

for its long-range capabilities, is being used by terror groups and their handlers so that the communication remains undetected between terrorists and underground workers (OGW).

After Over 7

He also shared the stories of beneficiaries and inspiring unsung heroes that have become embodiments of transformation in 'Naya Jammu Kashmir'.

"After more than seven decades of India's independence, the prime minister established social justice in J-K, which ensured everyone has access to equal opportunities and resources and well-being and prosperity of marginalised sections of society," the Lt Governor said.

He said the vision of 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas' has removed developmental imbalances and put J-K on the path of accelerated and inclusive development.

"No future-oriented society can progress without people-centred governance. Our vision is to ensure that growth must reach all sections of society and measures for equitable access to opportunities are further strengthened," he said.

He said the "historic" decision of the inclusion of Paharis, Padari Tribes, Koli and Gadda Brahmin in Scheduled Tribes list, while safeguarding the interest of Gujjar, Bakarwals and other listed tribes is a testimony to the government's commitment towards the empowerment of all.

Dedicating the 35th edition of 'Awaam ki Awaz programme' to unsung heroes and 'Nari Shakti' (women power) of Jammu Kashmir, the Lt Governor also paid homage to Thakur Raghunath Singh, a nationalist thinker-writer and recalled his significant contribution to the promotion of Dogri language and culture.

He also congratulated and commended Padma Shri recipients Dogri folk singer Romalo Ram and master craftsman Ghulam Nabi Dar of Srinagar for preserving and promoting the rich art and heritage of Jammu and Kashmir.

Imbibe Values

exhorted the students to imbibe the values of selfless service, compassion, social harmony, sacrifice, truth, non-violence and work for the betterment of the society. Your strong character, courage and self-confidence will lead you to overcome the challenges in life, he added.

Youth is growth and development. They will be the flag bearers of our knowledge and cultural heritage. Under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, the progressive educational reforms have paved the way for the bright future of the younger generation, he said.

He asked the youth to take full advantage of the enormous opportunities available in diverse fields and contribute in realising the vision of Viksit Bharat.

A publication on Human Values and Human Rights was also released on the occasion.

Prof. Vandana Singh, Vice Chancellor, Veer Bahadur Singh Purvanchal University, Jaunpur; Prof. Prem Narayan Singh, Director IUCTE Varanasi; Dr. Shashikant Rai, Administrator and Dr. Kunwarbhanu Pratap Singh, Principal Khardiha Mahavidyalaya; Heads of various institutions, teachers and students were present.

Art 370 Led

Article 370 once for all and today Kashmir is touching new heights of development. (KNS)

Seeking 3rd Term

in strong numbers," the prime minister said. The two-day convention of the BJP was attended by nearly 10,000 members of the party from across the country.

In his 65-minute speech at the Bharat Mandapam, Modi slammed the opposition, particularly the Congress, saying it lacked the courage to take on the BJP ideologically or on the basis of principles.

"The Congress is demoralised... therefore, abusing Modi and levelling false allegations against me have become the single-point agenda of its leaders," he added.

The prime minister said that even opposition leaders are now raising slogans in favour of more than 400 Lok Sabha seats for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

"But, for NDA to cross 400, the BJP will have to cross the milestone of 370," Modi said.

He said every country across the world is now keen to forge a deeper relationship with India.

"Elections are yet to take place, but I already have invitations from different countries for July, August and September. This means that several countries across the world are also completely confident about the return of the BJP government," he said.

Modi said that every country across the world knows "aayega toh..." as the gathering shouted "...Modi hi. Aayega toh Modi hi."

The prime minister said he lives by the ideals of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and takes inspiration from him.

"We rid the country of mega scams and terror attacks, and made efforts to improve the living standards of the poor and the middle class," he said.

Modi said he is seeking a third term not to enjoy power but to work for the nation. "If I had thought of my home, it would not have been possible to build homes for crores of people," he said.

He said 10 years of unblemished governance and pulling 25 crore people out of poverty were no ordinary feats.

"A senior leader once told me I had done enough as PM and CM, I should rest. But I am working for 'rashtrantiti', not 'rajneeti'," he said.

The prime minister said he lives by the ideals of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and takes inspiration from him.

"I am not someone who lives for his own happiness. I am advocating for a third term for the BJP not for political gains but for the benefit of India. My efforts are dedicated to the people of India. The dreams of Indians are my commitments," Modi said.

He said he is the first prime minister to raise the issue of toilets and speak about dignity for women from the Red Fort.

The BJP is bringing together the power of the youth, women and farmers in building a "Viksit Bharat", Modi said.

"We asked those who were not acknowledged by anyone, and not just that, we have also worshipped them," he said.

In the times to come, there will be plenty of opportunities for "our mothers, sisters and daughters", the prime minister said.

He said Mission Shakti will create a complete ecosystem for the protection and empowerment of women in the country and added that 15,000 women self-help groups will get drones.

"Now, 'Drone Didi' will bring scientific temperament and modernity to farming. Now, three crore women in the country will be made 'Lakhpatti Didis'," the prime minister said.

He also said that the BJP ended the five-century wait of people and constructed the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

"The religious flag has been hoisted in Pavagadh, Gujarat, after 500 years. After seven decades, we opened the Kartarpur Sahib Highway. After waiting for seven decades, the country has got freedom from Article 370," the prime minister said.

He said the spirit of "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat (One India-Glorious India)" is visible in governance.

"The Northeast was completely ignored by earlier governments. But we do not work for votes and seats. For us, every corner of the country should be prosperous and developed, this is our belief," Modi said.

He said his Council of Ministers had a record representation of leaders from the Northeast.

"For the first time, a woman has become a member of the Rajya Sabha from Nagaland. We are proud that for the first time we have given a place to a person from Tripura in the Council of Ministers," he said. "For the first time in our government, Arunachal Pradesh has got a cabinet minister," Modi said.

"Our government is for everyone. 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' is reflected in our work

ethics," the prime minister said Obstructing Ambulances

especially carrying patients to referral hospitals, failure to provide passage to the medical emergency vehicles (Ambulances) is violation under section 194E Motor Vehicle Act and carries fine of Rs. 10, 000/- and imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months," it said. (KNS).

KCCI Urges

also invites the Prime Minister's attention to the challenges faced by the industrial sector in Jammu & Kashmir, emphasizing the need for expedited resolution of infrastructure deficiencies, multiple industrial policies, and lack of support to local industries."

The KCCI underscored the urgent need to expand and upgrade the Srinagar Airport terminal to accommodate the growing number of travelers. "Additionally, the KCCI draws attention to the power crisis experienced in Jammu & Kashmir, suggesting subsidies for the installation of solar power systems to commercial customers to mitigate power shortages and augment power generation," it reads.

"The KCCI stresses the creation of robust tourism infrastructure and fast-tracking the 2035 Srinagar Metropolitan Region Master Plan, with top priority given to environmental sustainability in view of climate change and global warming that have resulted in irregular weather cycles in Jammu & Kashmir and looks to the Prime Minister for special focus on IT, innovation, startups, women's development, horticulture, handicrafts, and other sectors of the economy," it said.

Snow Cloaks

and red -action needed by the agencies. From February 19-20, he said, there is possibility of light to moderate rain and snow at most places (plains and lower reaches) with possibility of heavy snowfall over middle and higher reaches of Kupwara, Baramulla, Bandipora, Ganderbal, Badgam, Shopian and Kulgam districts during late afternoon of February 19 to February 20 late night.

From February 21, he said, there is possibility of light to moderate snow at many places till afternoon and late afternoon and gradual improvement thereafter.

Regarding Jammu division, he said, there is a possibility of light rain and snow at many places on Sunday.

From 19th-20th Feb, there is a possibility of intermittent light to moderate rain with thunder/lightning in plains of Jammu Division with light to moderate snowfall over higher reaches and heavy snowfall over isolated higher reaches of Ramban, Poonch, Doda and Kishtwar."

On February 21, he said, light to moderate snow/rain/thunder/lightning is expected over many places till late afternoon and evening and gradual improvement thereafter.

The MeT office also issued an advisory, saying that the system may lead to temporary closure of roads of higher reaches and important passes like Sinthan pass, Mughal Road, Sadhna, Razdan pass, Zojila etc.

"Travellers are advised to plan accordingly," the MeT official said, adding, "farmers are advised to withhold irrigation and fertilizer application and drain out excess water from Orchards and fields during the above period."

Avalanche Warning

for the next 24 hours. The warning said that the avalanche is likely above 2500 metres over the Anantnag and Kulgam districts.

JK DMA also issued a warning of an avalanche with a medium danger level over Doda, Kishtwar, Poonch, Ramban Bandipore, Baramulla, Kupwara and Ganderbal districts in the next 24 hours.

Taking to the micro-blogging site, X, JK DMA posted, "Avalanche with LOW Danger Level is likely to occur above 2500 metres over Anantnag & Kulgam districts in the next 24 hours. Avalanche with Medium Danger Level is likely to occur above 2200 metres over Doda, Kishtwar, Poonch, Ramban, Bandipora, Kupwara and Ganderbal districts in next 24 hours."

DC Advocates For Multifaceted Strategy To Combat Drug Abuse In Pulwama

KO NEWS SERVICE

PULWAMA: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr Basharat Qayoom chaired a review meeting of Narco Coordination Centre (NCC) with concerned officers and highlighted the urgent need for a multifaceted strategy to combat drug abuse in the region.

He called for a multi-stakeholder collaborative approach to tackle the impact of drug abuse on individuals, families, and communities in Pulwama.

The DC emphasized the importance of addressing drug abuse through a comprehensive approach that encompasses prevention, treatment, and law enforcement. "We cannot afford to address this issue with a one-size-fits-all approach. It requires a multifaceted strategy that tackles the root causes of drug abuse while also providing support and treatment for those affected," the Dr Basharat stated.

With initiatives aimed at educating young people about the dangers of drug abuse and promoting healthy lifestyle choices, the DC stressed the importance of engaging with schools, community organizations, and religious institutions to raise awareness and provide support to at-risk individuals.

Education department was directed to prepare an annual Nasha-Mukt calendar of activities to be implemented across all educational institutions.

Enforcement measures, including FIRs, property attachments, and reducing areas under illicit crops, were reviewed as part of a comprehensive strategy. The chair was briefed on the lodging of 153 FIRs, 26PIT NDPS Cases registered and the attachment of 7 properties in line with prior directives against the offenders.

He gave directions and suggestions to build the capacity

of the enforcement wings to have a better understanding of the provisions of COTPA 2003 to implement the NTCP.

The chair was informed that special drives were conducted in eight villages of district Pulwama under Nasha Mukh Abhiyan, 19 medical shops were disallowed for non-compliance of set SOPs besides 5 licenses were suspended.

The meeting also reviewed the status of CCTV camera installation and computerized billing in retail medical shops.

Chair directed the concerned officers for saturation in CCTV installations in both wholesale and retail drug outlets.

Agriculture and allied sectors informed that 825 kanals of land have been restricted/cleared.

The DC emphasized the need for accessible and effective treatment options for those struggling with drug abuse. Collaborating with healthcare providers and community organizations will be crucial in delivering these essential services to those in need.

He underscored the significance of robust law enforcement measures to combat the supply and trafficking of drugs in Pulwama. "We must work closely with law enforcement agencies to tackle the illegal drug trade and hold those responsible accountable for their actions," the DC emphasized. This includes enhancing surveillance and enforcement efforts to disrupt the distribution networks of illicit substances.

Dr Basharat called for a collaborative approach that involves local government agencies, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and community organizations. "Addressing drug abuse requires a united front. By working together, we can leverage our collective expertise and resources to make a meaningful impact in our community," he stated.

Ensure Heightened Vigilance To Mitigate Risk Of Terrorist Threats: IGP

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Zone, V K Birdi, convened a high-level meeting today at PCR Kashmir.

The meeting, attended by senior officers from various security agencies including police, Army, BSF, CRPF, SSB, CISF, as well as state and Central intelligence agencies, aimed to comprehensively review and enhance security arrangements in preparation for the visit of VVIPs to the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir, along with other upcoming events.

The meeting saw the participation of IG CRPF (SOS) Srinagar, IG BSF Ftr, DD IB Kmr, DIsG of CKR, SSB, BSF, Armed, IRP, CRPF, ITBP, SSSP Srinagar, PCR Kashmir, CID CIK, Traffic, Security & PC & Telecom, DC SB Sgr, and CSO (1) 15 corps. Those who joined virtually were DIsG NKR, SKR Baram-

ulla, CRPF Bla & South, and all SSSP/SP's of Districts and PDs.

During the meeting, participating officers provided a comprehensive briefing on the security plans formulated in anticipation of the upcoming events. Recognizing the need to maintain a delicate balance between security requirements and the smooth conduct of events, IGP Kashmir directed officers to ensure heightened vigilance, especially during night-hours, in order to mitigate the risk of terrorist threats.

Emphasis was placed on the imperative to enhance intelligence gathering and anti-terror operations. IGP Kashmir urged officers to strengthen security at vulnerable points, particularly during significant events, to minimize the risk of untoward incidents. Special attention was given to enhancing security along the National Highway, tunnels,

minority pickets, and other critical areas.

Furthermore, specific directives were issued to intensify security measures, including surprise naka operations, in both uptown and downtown areas of Srinagar. This includes 24x7 patrolling and increased presence at entry and exit points within the district. The IGP also emphasized the importance of briefing personnel to adhere to standard operating procedures (SOPs), given the increased security concerns during events.

Additionally, IGP Kashmir Zone stressed the critical need for thorough monitoring of vulnerable areas and prompt action against suspicious activities. Special instructions were given to border district heads to maintain strict vigilance along the Line of Control (LoC) and hinterland in order to prevent potential terrorist activities. (KS)

Party To Decide Candidates For Lok Sabha Seats Soon: Mehbooba Mufti

Agencies

SRINAGAR: PDP President and former Chief minister Mehbooba Mufti Presided over an important meeting of Central Kashmir parliamentary seat to discuss the preparations for the election.

Mehbooba Mufti said that parliamentary board will decide the candidates for parliament seats soon in an important meeting headed by Chairman Parliamentary Board



Mohammad Sartaj Madni. Party Senior vice President Abdul Rehman Veeri, General secretary Dr Mehboob Beg and Adv Gh Nabi Lone Hanjura, Additional general secretary Asia Naqash, Senior leaders and former ministers Nayeem Akhtar Andrabi, Zahoor Ahmad Mir, Ex MLAs, District Presidents, Constituency incharges, Zonal president s and other leaders spoke in meeting and share their views. (KNS).

DC Visits Mechanical Field Sub-Division Kulgam



Agencies

KULGAM: To oversee preparedness for snow clearance and availability of machinery, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today visited Mechanical Field Sub-Division Kulgam.

During the visit, the DC took a detailed stock of availability of snow clearance machines, snow clearance plan and functioning of control rooms.

AEE Mechanical Engineering Department briefed the DC about the availability of machinery and added that there are 24 machines available with the department including 2 snow cutters.

He also informed that they have established Snow clearance control rooms at Chawal-

gam, Kulgam and Bathipora, and the department is clearing 554 Kilometer road length with 377 Kilometers priority 1st and 177 priority 2nd roads.

With regard to positioning of machines it was shared that 5 machines are kept at D.H Pora control room for Snow clearance in Noorabad area.

One machine is pre-positioned for Kund area and 14 machines are in ready mode for rest of Kulgam stationed at Chawalgam.

The DC instructed officers to keep all men and machinery ready to ensure timely Snow clearance from all roads to avoid any inconvenience to people.

Accompanying the DC were ADC Vihar Ahmad Lone and other officers.

Budgam Resident Dies In Road Accident In Chandigarh

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A man from Budgam lost his life in a road accident in Chandigarh on Sunday officials said.

Reliable sources told News Agency that a man identified as Mohammad Aslam from Pakherpora Budgam met with an accident at Mohali and died on the spot at around 3 am on

Sunday.

They said that Aslam was dealing in selling and purchasing vehicles and was in Gujrat to bring some vehicles.

Aslam as per locals is survived by two daughters and a son besides wife and parents.

They said that his dead body is being brought to his native area from Chandigarh. (KS)

Div Com Reviews Operational Readiness Of New 'State of Art' B&J Hospital Block

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: With a minimum civil work remaining for the completion of new State of Art Bone & Joint Block, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today paid a visit to the B&J Hospital Srinagar to assess the operational readiness of the project which would boost the health sector and patient care in Valley.

More than 70% of the work on the project has been completed on 160 bedded block while the remaining portion is expected to complete within a month.

During the visit, Div Com was accompanied by CEO, Smart City Srinagar, Dr Owais Ahmad; Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi ud din Bhat; SSP Traffic; Chief Engineer, PWD R&B and officers of

agency of the project.

The building includes 6 bedded ICUs, 12 bedded Pre Op & Post Op rooms, 3 Modular OTs.

The new block has features of Earthquake Protection using wall dampers, Pneumatic tube transfer system and Hospital Management & Information System.

While chairing a meeting, Div Com directed the executing agency to strictly adhere to the timeline for the completion of pending work. He also directed the construction of a bridge between the main block of the old building and new block for transferring patients between blocks very comfortably.

He also directed the development of the emergency unit which constitutes the pivotal segment of the hospital.

He also enjoined on concerns to explore the possibility of shift-



I & FC and KPDC.

Besides, Principal GMC, Srinagar; Medical Superintendent, B&J Hospital and senior doctors of the hospital were also present on the occasion.

On the occasion, Div Com was briefed that the 160 bedded block is being contracted with World Bank Funding while NPCC is the executing

ing the power grid station from the premises of the hospital.

Besides, Div Com directed CEO Smart City for the development of one way Bund Road in a loop form so patients can approach the hospital conveniently. He also directed for development of parking space at the available parking space in the proximity.



HOLDING UMBRELLA, an elderly man made his way home on Sunday amid fresh snowfall in Tangmarg area of Baramulla district in north Kashmir.

KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

Woman Found Dead At In-Laws House, Family Alleges Murder

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Family members of a woman, who was found dead in mysterious circumstances at her in-laws house in Zonimar area of Srinagar, Sunday, alleged that she has been murdered, while her in-laws claimed she died of suicide.

Family members of the deceased woman, identified as Mehvish, alleged that she had been murdered by her in-laws.

One of the family members said that they tried to call her many times, but she was not available. "Her in-laws, however are claiming that she died by suicide, but they have murdered

her. We demand a thorough probe into the matter," he said.

Meanwhile, a police official said that a formal case under relevant sections of law has been registered, in this regard and investigation is underway.

He said that the cause of the woman's death was also being ascertained

Com SMC Chairs High Level Meeting On Sanitation & Solid Waste Management

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Commissioner SMC, Dr. Owais Ahmed presided over a meeting regarding Sanitation and Solid Waste Management in Srinagar City, aimed at reviewing and strategizing the enhancement of sanitation and solid waste management services across the city.

The meeting was attended by the Senior Officers and Officials of SMC, to assess current practices, address challenges, and outline a roadmap for further improvisation of sanitation standards and waste management.

During the meeting, the Commissioner emphasized the pivotal role of the sanitation and solid waste management wings

in upholding cleanliness and public health within the city, underscoring the need for collaborative efforts to achieve higher standards of sanitation and waste management.

Discussions revolved around identifying areas for improvement, optimizing resource allocation, and fostering innovation in sanitation practices to better serve the community.

Notably, the meeting also provided a forum for sanitation and solid waste management wing Officials to share their experiences, insights, and suggestions for refining operational processes and addressing operational bottlenecks. This open dialogue facilitated a holistic approach to the ground realities



and enabled the formulation of pragmatic solutions to elevate sanitation services and waste



management. Following the meeting, the Commissioner outlined a series

of action plans and initiatives that will be implemented to revitalize the sanitation and solid waste management wings capabilities and effectiveness. These initiatives encompass the introduction of modern technologies, targeted capacity-building programs, and the establishment of a responsive feedback mechanism to ensure continual improvement and accountability within the sanitation wing.

The Commissioner expressed confidence that the concerted efforts and commitments made during the meeting will pave the way for a noticeable improvement in sanitation standards, ultimately contributing to a cleaner and healthier environment for all residents of the city.

Admin Mulls Integration Of Public Transport In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a bid to streamline and enhance efficiency in public transportation, the administration in Kashmir is mulling to integrate the public transport system under a unified mechanized traffic management system in Srinagar, said an official said.

A senior official said discussions are underway on the directions of the divisional

administration Kashmir to amalgamate public transport operations, encompassing Smart City's E-buses, JKRTC, and private mini buses, within a centralized route plan and timing system.

The official outlined the initial strategy, indicating plans to consolidate approximately 100-200 high-end private minibuses with E-Buses from Smart City and buses from RTC.

India Crush England By 434 Runs In 3rd Test, Take 2-1 Series Lead

Agencies

RAJKOT: India set England a huge target and then skittled the tourists out for 122 to romp to a 434-run victory in the third test and go 2-1 up in the five-match series on Sunday.

India had been in the box seat since grabbing a handy first-innings lead of 126 and they never took their foot off the pedal at the Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium. Opener Yashvir Jaiswal smashed an unbeaten 214, Shubman Gill made 91 and debutant Sarfaraz Khan struck his second fifty of the match before India declared their second innings on 430-4.

Jaiswal equalled Wasim Akram's record of hitting 12 sixes in a test innings and it followed his 209 in the second test in Visakhapatnam. Chasing an improbable 557 for victory, England slumped to 50-7 with Ravindra Jadeja (5-41) wrecking their middle order.

Once Kuldeep Yadav dismissed England captain Ben Stokes lbw for 15, the match was effectively



over. Mark Wood made a quickfire 33 before being the last England batter dismissed as India registered their biggest test win in terms of runs.

After play resumed on the penultimate day, Gill consolidated India's position with his assured accumulation of runs.

Gill was run out after a misunderstanding with Kuldeep Yadav but there

was no respite for England as Jaiswal, who had retired hurt on 104 on Saturday, walked in, Jaiswal and Sarfaraz tore into the England attack and it suddenly started raining boundaries as they plundered 172 runs off 158 deliveries.

Jaiswal took a single off Root to bring up his double hundred, while Sarfaraz smashed three sixes in his unbeaten 68. Left

with a mountain to climb, England lost their openers cheaply and could never arrest the slide.

Ben Duckett (four), who smashed 153 in the first innings, was run out after a horrible mix-up with Zak Crawley (11), who was trapped lbw by Jasprit Bumrah. Jadeja mowed down the England middle order dismissing Ollie Pope, Jonny Bairstow

and Root.

Once Kuldeep removed England captain Ben Stokes lbw for 15, the match was effectively over. Jadeja's seven-wicket match haul, along with his hundred in the first innings, earned him the player of the match award at his home ground.

The fourth test, scheduled in Ranchi, begins on Friday.

Dhoni Picked Skipper Of IPL's All-Time Team; Warner, Kohli Openers



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Iconic Indian cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni was on Sunday selected as the leader of IPL's all-time greatest team which was picked to celebrate the success of world's most-popular T20 league which was launched in 2008.

The selection panel consisted of former cricketers Wasim Akram, Matthew Hayden, Tom Moody and Dale Steyn. About 70 journalists were also part of the selection process.

Australia's fiery David Warner and India's batting mainstay Virat Kohli were chosen as open-

ers while 'Universe Boss' Chris Gayle was given the number three spot in batting order.

The middle-order consisted of Suresh Raina, AB de Villiers, Suryakumar Yadav and Dhoni, while Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja and Kieron Pollard were the three all-rounders in the 15-member squad.

Rashid Khan, wily Sunil Narine and Yuzvendra Chahal formed the spin attack while Lasith Malinga and Jasprit Bumrah were the unanimous choice for the fast bowlers' slots.

The marquee tournament will complete 16 years of the first-ever IPL

on February 20, 2024.

In the realm of IPL cricket, few names shine as brightly as that of Dhoni. Widely regarded as one of the most successful captains in cricket history, his leadership prowess has garnered praise from peers and pundits alike.

All-time great IPL squad:

MS Dhoni (C), Virat Kohli, Chris Gayle, David Warner, Suresh Raina, AB de Villiers, Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, Kieron Pollard, Rashid Khan, Sunil Narine, Yuzvendra Chahal, Lasith Malinga and Jasprit Bumrah.

Sarmad Hafeez Reviews Preparations For Khelo India Winter Games

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Department of Youth Services and Sports Secretary Sarmad Hafiz chaired a review meeting in Gulmarg on Sunday to review preparations for the 4th Khelo India Winter Games, slated to begin from February 21 to 25.

Sarmad Hafeez expressed satisfaction over the progress made and directed the officials to ensure that the roads leading to Gulmarg are cleared of the snow and maintained properly for smooth traffic movement.



He instructed the officers to ensure adequate accommodation, transport and other facilities for the athletes and delegates expected to participate in the event. He extolled that Gulmarg has potential to become a world class winter sports destination and no stone should be left unturned to make the event a grand success.

The Secretary emphasised that Khelo India Winter Games is an opportunity for J&K to showcase the beauty of the venue which has one of the finest

slopes and the best quality snow otherwise also known to skiers who travel from other parts of the world.

The meeting was also attended by J&K Sports Council Secretary Nuzhat Gull, Chief Executive Officer Gulmarg Development Authority, Waseem Raja and other officials from various departments.

Earlier in the day, Nuzhat Gull chaired a meeting during which it was briefed that 4th edition of winter games will exclusively focus on the snow related winter sports events.

JKSC Secretary said that the preparations for the games are complete and the venue is ready to welcome the athletes and other participants.

Among others present in the meeting included country's famed winter sports and Olympic athlete Shiva Keshavan, Sachin, Under Secretary SAI; Nusrat Gazala, Divisional Sports Officer Kashmir, nodal officer of the event and other officials from the Sports Authority of India and J&K Sports Council.



Real Kashmir secured a 2-0 I-League win over Churchill Brothers on Sunday at Tilak Maidan in Goa. An acrobatic goal by Gnohere Krizo in the 66th minute and a late goal from Bayi Kamo Stephane, in ninth minute of added time, gave coach Ishfaq Ahmad's Snow Leopards all three points. In Frame: Real Kashmir's Jeremy Laldinpuia, 23, (in yellow jersey) delivering a cross in the first half.

Image via I-League

Sonamarg Hosts First-Ever National Snowshoe C'ship

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The picturesque Sonamarg is making history by hosting its first-ever national-level event in winter sports, the 8th National Snowshoe Championship 2024.

This event marks a significant milestone for the mountain resort, as previous editions of the championship were traditionally held at the renowned Ski-resort Gulmarg.

The 8th edition of the championship is being organized by the J&K SnowShoe Federation in

collaboration with the Sonamarg Development Authority and key stakeholders viz. the Hoteliers Association of Sonamarg.

The event was inaugurated on Sunday by Shyambir, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, in the presence of Farooq Ahmad Baba, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Sonamarg Development Authority and General Secretary Snow Shoe Association J&K, Dr. Altaf-ur-Rehman.

Over 200 athletes representing 13 states across India are participating in various events through-

out the three-day championship. This gathering of athletes from different regions further emphasizes the national significance of the championship and underscores its role in promoting winter sports in Sonamarg.

The DC expressed his delight at the hosting of the championship in Sonamarg, highlighting its potential to catalyze development and enhance the health resort's prospects for a brighter future. CEO Sonamarg Development Authority extended his gratitude towards the Hoteliers Association



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of Sonamarg for making this event possible by providing boarding and lodging facilities for both visiting athletes and other tourists.

As the competition progresses against the backdrop of Sonmarg's snow-covered terrain, spectators are treated to a spectacle of skill and athleticism. With its stunning scenery and the thrill of competition, the National Snowshoe Championship in Sonamarg truly embodies the essence of winter sports, making it a dream come true for enthusiasts and participants alike.

Inter Milan Surge Back On To Champions League Stage, Barcelona & Napoli Look To Take Last Chance

Agencies

GENEVA: After Kylian Mbappé, Real Madrid and Manchester City seized center stage last week, the Champions League spotlight can now turn to shine on others.

The four remaining first-leg games in the round of 16 this week feature the beaten finalist last season, the champions of Italy and Spain, plus the team with the best record in any of the top European leagues this season.

Inter Milan hosts Atletico Madrid on Tuesday as the clear leader in Serie A and looking a more solid contender now than on its run to the 2023 final against Man City.

Napoli hosts Barcelona on Wednesday in a pairing of teams unlikely to retain their domestic league titles and seem to have just one chance left to win a trophy this season.

PSV Eindhoven is a hot favourite to win the Dutch league having dropped the fewest points (four, drawing two of 22 games) and amassed the biggest goal difference (60) in any of the major European leagues.

PSV hosts Borussia Dortmund on Tuesday in a clash of clubs that each

lifted the European Cup trophy once.

Arsenal goes to Porto on Wednesday after back-to-back away wins by a combined score of 11-0 in the Premier League.

Arsenal is the only English team in European action this week though its title rivals at home, Liverpool and Man City, each has a Premier League game in midweek.

INTER'S PROGRESS

Inter Milan was an unexpected finalist last season avoiding any English or Spanish opponent in the knockout rounds until the final. An unlucky 1-0 loss to Manchester City in Istanbul showed doubters the three-time European champion was worth its place.

Inter goes to Madrid after six straight wins in Serie A helped it build a nine-point lead ahead of Sunday's games.

Inter and Atletico will put up their traditionally solid defenses against productive attacks this season: Inter's Lautaro Martínez and Marcus Thuram have combined for 35 goals in all competitions while the Álvaro Morata-Antoine Griezmann duo has 37 for Atletico.



LAST CHANCE

There is much at stake for Barcelona and Napoli in their two meetings over the next three weeks, starting at the Italian club's stadium named for Diego Maradona.

Each trails by a distance in defense of their domestic league title, both are

out of the domestic cup and whichever is eliminated in the Champions League cannot qualify for the lucrative 32-team Club World Cup that FIFA relaunches next year in the United States.

Barcelona coach Xavi will leave at the end of the season and his succes-

sor likely will inherit a Champions League entry.

Napoli is currently ninth in Serie A and the only route back to the Champions League for coach Walter Mazzarri, who replaced the fired Rudi Garcia during the group stage, could be to win this one.

RETURN GAMES

Second-leg games are played three weeks after the first leg.

On March 5, Bayern Munich will host Lazio trailing 1-0, and Paris Saint-Germain takes a 2-0 lead to Real Sociedad.

Mbappé scored the first goal Wednesday in Paris one day before it was confirmed he told the club he will leave as a free agent when his contract expires in June.

On March 6, Real Madrid — Mbappé's expected next employer — hosts Leipzig with a 1-0 lead and defending champion Manchester City has a 3-1 lead against visiting Copenhagen. The other second-leg games are played March 12-13. The draw for the quarterfinals and semifinals is made March 15 at UEFA headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland.

EUROPA LEAGUE DRAW

The European action continues beyond Wednesday. Second-leg games in knockout playoffs for the Europa League and Europa Conference League are on Thursday, one day before the round of 16 draws for both competitions.

Friday is when Liverpool and Bayer Leverkusen re-enter the picture — two clubs who more and more seem to have a shared sense of destiny this season.

Both will enter the Europa League draw as seeded teams having won their groups, leading their domestic title races and with as much attention on their coaches as their players.

Jürgen Klopp has said he will leave Liverpool after a remarkable nine-year run and the best option to replace him could be Leverkusen coach Xabi Alonso, who would be returning to the club where he won a Champions League title in 2005 and which he says he still supports.

Liverpool and Leverkusen cannot be paired in the round of 16 but a final between them on May 22 in Dublin could beat the Champions League final 10 days later for narrative drama. (AP)