

## Rain, Snowfall Likely From Today In J&K



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) office has predicted two back-to-back western disturbances in the region from Monday, likely to bring rain and snow across Jammu and Kashmir.

"On March 11-12 there is a possibility of light rain/snow at a few places. On March 13, there is a possibility of light to moderate rain/snow at widespread places," the MeF office said in its daily bulletin.

The MeF office added that from March 14, there was a possibility of light rain and snow at a few places. "From March 15-18, generally dry weather is expected," the bulletin said, and advised people not to venture in avalanche-prone areas. The

farmers were advised to resume farming.

An independent weather forecaster from Kashmir also said that two Western Disturbances in quick succession are going to affect Jammu and Kashmir over the next 5 days. "With the wet forecast, a significant dip is very likely in day temperatures," he said.

"Gusty winds and thundering/lightning is expected in plains of J&K during the period."

Barring Gulmarg, the night temperature was recorded below normal in all stations of the Kashmir Valley on Sunday.

Srinagar had a low of 2.2C against 2.1C recorded during the intervening nights of Saturday and Sunday. It was 1.1C below normal for the summer capital | More on P7

## Centre Aims To Make 3 Crore 'Lakhpati Didi': PM Says Priority Of 'Double-engine' Govt Is Welfare Of Women

Press Trust Of India

**Raipur:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said his government has resolved to make three crore women in the country "lakhpati didi" and asserted that women's welfare is their priority.

The PM was speaking after virtually inaugurating the 'Mahtari Vandan' scheme in Chhattisgarh to provide monetary assistance to women.

"It is fortunate that today I got an opportunity to dedicate the Mahtari Vandan scheme aimed at empowering 'nari shakti'. Under the scheme, we had promised to give Rs 1,000 per month to more than 70 lakh women and today, the BJP government has fulfilled it," Modi



said addressing the function via video conference.

The first installment of Rs 655 crore was deposited into the bank accounts of beneficiaries (married women)

under the scheme on Sunday, he said.

"I should have been among you today for this programme, but due to some other engagements I am in

Uttar Pradesh. I am speaking from Kashi, the land of Baba Vishwanath, who is also showering his blessings on you," he said.

The PM said he offered prayers to Lord Vishwanath on Saturday night and prayed for the well being of the country's people.

"When mother and sisters are empowered, then the entire family gets empowered. Therefore, the priority of the double-engine government (of BJP at the Centre and in the state) is the welfare of mothers and sisters," he said.

"Today, families are getting pucca houses and that too in the name of women," the prime minister said.

Through the Ujjwala scheme, women | More on P7

**6 THROUGH THE UJJWALA SCHEME, WOMEN HAVE BEEN getting cooking gas cylinders at cheaper rates. More than 50% of the Jan Dhan accounts are in the name of women. More than 65% of Mudra loans were taken by women."**

## Ramzan Likely To Begin From Tomorrow

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The crescent moon of the holy month of Ramzan 2024 was sighted in Saudi Arabia on Sunday. In a post on X, Inside the Haramain informed, "The crescent of Ramadan 1445/2024 has been sighted in Saudi Arabia. Subsequently, Ramadan 1445/2024 begins tomorrow, March 11, 2024. Taraweeh Prayers will begin in the Two Holy Mosques after Isha Prayers."

Haramain is the media office for the two holy mosques. Whether Muslims will observe 29 or 30 fasts is based on the sighting of the moon, which is crucial in deciding the beginning and the ending of the month.

Since, usually the crescent of Ramzan is first sighted in Saudi Arabia and then a day later in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other countries, the crescent moon is expected to be sighted in Kashmir tonight i.e. March 12.

The moon sighting before Ramzan, also known as Ramazan/Ramadan/Ramzaan, | More on P7

## First Govt Homoeopathy College In North Coming Up In J&K



Press Trust Of India

Jammu: North India's first centrally-funded government homoeopathy college will come up in the Jasrota area of Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said on Sunday.

The college will come up at a cost of about Rs 80 crore, he said.

The Union Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office said the institution will be spread over more than eight acres initially and the adjoining three acres may be added to the existing campus in due course.

"The proposed structure will include a hospital complex, a college, an administrative block and a hostel each for male and

female students," Singh said. "The open space will be utilised later for construction of an auditorium and a playground," the minister said as he visited the proposed site in the Jasrota village, where work on the boundary wall has already begun.

He was briefed about the institution by engineers and senior experts from the Department of Ayush.

Singh, who is seeking a third consecutive term in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls from Udhampur, said the agenda he took up after he was elected as MP in 2014 will continue uninterrupted till the date of the declaration of the Model Code of Conduct | More on P7

## Don't Panic About Ramzan Watermelons!

### J&K Food Safety Dept Ensures Fresh Produce

Auqib Javed

Srinagar: Ahead of Ramzan, the department of Food Safety, Jammu and Kashmir has appealed people not to panic amid reports of influx of artificially ripened fruits into the market.

An official from the department told Kashmir Observer that they have constituted different teams in all the districts to ensure the fruits and vegetables in the market are chemical free.

Notably, there were reports going on in social media that artificially ripened watermelons have flooded the Kashmir markets ahead of holy month Ramzan.

"This is no watermelon season, Say NO to artificially ripened watermelon this Ramadan. Save yourself from chemicals and later on chemotherapy," posted Dr Wajahat,



a clinical Oncologist on X/ twitter.

During the holy month, the consumption of fruits, especially watermelon, sees a significant surge in the valley. However, there has been a concern always regarding the

artificially ripened fruits into the market.

Shagufa Jalal, Deputy Commissioner, J&K Drug and Food Control Organisation said that they are routinely carrying-out the market checking in all the districts | More on P7

## Centre Launches Buddhist Development Plan

### Central Institute of Buddhist Studies In Leh Receives ₹85 Crore Boost

Observer News Service

**Leh:** In a significant move to strengthen the minority Buddhist population in the Himalayan belt - Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and UT of Ladakh, the Ministry of Minority Affairs on Sunday launched the Buddhist Development Plan.

Minister of Minority Affairs, Gol Smriti Zubin Irani virtually laid the foundation stone for 85 crore worth of projects of the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS), Leh, besides Training cum Examination Centre (200 seats) at

Polytechnic College, Kargil and Industrial Training Institute, Leh at an estimated cost of Rs 14 crores 50 lacs.

In addition to these developments, Minister of Minority Affairs Smriti Zubin Irani on the occasion announced the establishment of a new Buddhist Centre at Delhi University for the promotion and preservation of Buddhist literature, language and skills to be executed at an estimated cost of Rs. 30 Crores.

The virtual event was attended by Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC Leh Advocate Tashi Gyalson, Commissioner | More on P7



## KCCI Delegation Calls On LG

A delegation of Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry, led by its President Javid Ahmad Tenga called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan on Sunday.

The delegation apprised the Lt Governor of various important matters pertaining to the promotion of industries and tourism sector in Jammu Kashmir. Later, Gulzar Ahmad Bhat, Chairman, All J&K Folk Artists Association also called on the Lt Governor.

## 7 IEDs Seized In Poonch Raid

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Security forces on Sunday busted a terror hideout in a forest in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district and seized seven rusted improvised explosive devices and a wireless set, officials said.

They said the hideout located inside a cave was uncovered during a joint search operation by police and the Army at Dara Sangla in the Surankote area.

Blankets and some other materials were also found in the hideout, the officials said.

A case has been registered and further investigation is on, they said, adding that no arrests have been made so far.

The officials said preliminary investigation | More on P7

## KVIC Distributes Machinery and Toolkits To J&K Artisans

### Reach Of Products Gone From Local To Global: Chairman KVIC

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chairman Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, on Sunday, provided 411 machinery and toolkits under the Khadi Gramodyog Vikas Yojana to the rural artisans of Jammu and Kashmir division at SKICC, Srinagar district in the gracious presence of KVIC Member, (North Zone) Nagendra Raghuvanshi.

During the distribution program, in the presence of Manoj Kumar, Chairman - KVIC, 300 Bee Boxes were distributed to 30 Beekeepers of Jammu



through Video Conference under the Honey Mission Scheme, 100 Electric Wheels were given to 100 potters of Kashmir under the Kumbhar

Empowerment Scheme, 10 Hydra Pulper Paper Mache machines were given to 100 artisans, under the ABFPI scheme 10 artisans were given 01 set of

- » 300 Bee Boxes Distributed To Beekeepers
- » 100 Electric Wheels Given To Potters
- » 10 Hydra Pulper Paper Mache machines distributed
- » Training Certificates Provided To PMTC trainees

fruit and vegetable Machines and training certificates were distributed to 200 trainees undergoing training at PMTC Pampore. Manoj Kumar, Chairman, KVIC, addressing the beneficiaries | More on P7

## Easy For J&K To Elect A Govt Committed To Their Needs: Azad Says DPAP Not 'B Team' Of BJP

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: It will be easier for the people of Jammu and Kashmir to elect a government that will work for them as all regional and national parties have had a chance to govern the region, DPAP leader Ghulam Nabi Azad said on Sunday.

"Every party -- be it a national or a regional party -- has had a chance to govern Jammu and Kashmir. That makes it easier now for the people to elect a government that will work for them," Azad, a former chief minister of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state, told reporters.

On charges levelled against the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) that it is a "B Team" of the BJP, Azad said his detractors have associated with the saffron party in the past.

"Those who call us the BJP's 'B Team' were with them, they were 'A Teams' of the BJP. One leader had even begun his political career as a minister in a BJP government," Azad said.

"I was neither in the BJP as a minister or a chief minister, nor was I helped by the BJP," he added, referring to past alliances between the BJP and the National Conference and the People's Democratic Party.

The former | More on P7



# Gut Microbiome Meet Bifidobacterium Breve, Keeping Babies Healthy

## The Conversation

**B**ifidobacterium breve, or B breve for short, is a bacterial species that's found in the human intestine. It's especially relevant in early life, being one of the most abundant bacteria in the newborn gut. B breve is a species of the genus Bifidobacterium and is considered key in the development of a healthy gut. It has been studied extensively over the years to uncover how it benefits us from our first days of life.

Some of the benefits associated with this species include protection against pathogens, modulation of the immune system, and provision of nutrients through the breakdown of non-digestible carbohydrates from the diet.

We're still learning about the origin of B breve. But vertical transmission, where the origin is the mother and the transfer to the baby occurs either during or after birth, is understood to be the main source of microbes at an early age.

A study carried out by MicrobeMom (a project I was part of during my PhD) has shown that Bifidobacterium strains including B breve are indeed transferred from mother to infant.

We didn't investigate the precise mode of transfer, but one of the key factors influencing the outcome was vaginal birth, so it's likely these bacteria are passed on during childbirth.

Our research also showed that B breve was the most frequently isolated of the Bifidobacterium species. It was present in vaginal samples from the mother, stool samples from the infant and the mother, as well as breast milk. In fact, B breve represented 80 per cent of the total Bifidobacterium isolated from breast milk.

This highlights the pivotal role that the mother's gut microbiome has in fostering a baby's gut health.

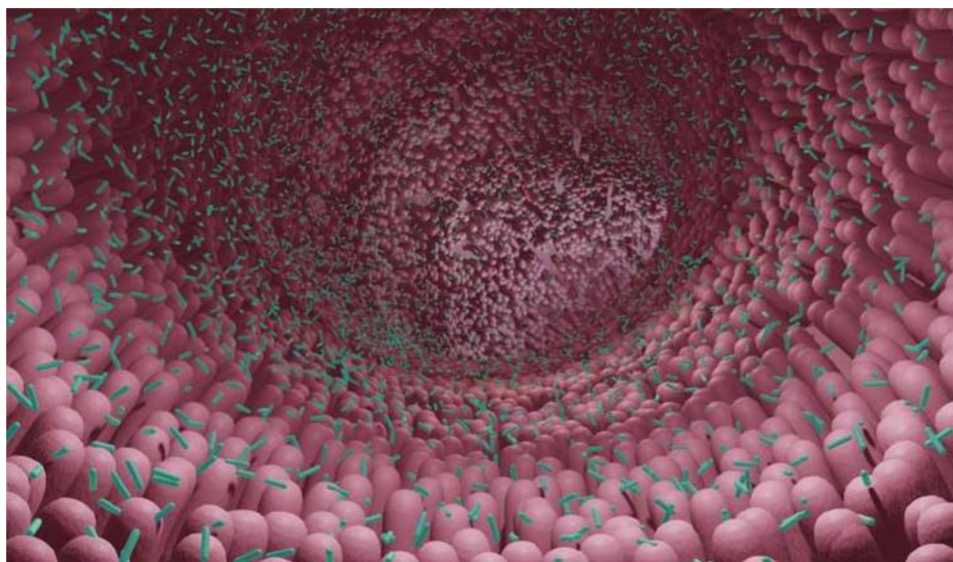
### Bifidobacterium and the infant gut

Bifidobacterium in general are known for being one of the first colonisers of the infant gut. This is because of their important role degrading carbohydrates from the diet that the infant gut cannot digest.

This has a positive effect not only on the development of the gut but also the baby's immune system. The mechanism for this is quite complex, but in general terms Bifidobacterium have been shown to interact with human immune cells and to modify immune responses.

The human microbiome changes constantly, and Bifidobacterium is a good example of this. The amount of Bifidobacterium in our gut changes during our lifespan, as does the composition of specific Bifidobacterium species, in response to our diet.

Bifidobacterium is the most abundant bacteria



“Our research also showed that B breve was the most frequently isolated of the Bifidobacterium species. It was present in vaginal samples from the mother, stool samples from the infant and the mother, as well as breast milk. In fact, B breve represented 80 per cent of the total Bifidobacterium isolated from breast milk.”

in the first months of life, when a baby is breast-fed, and when microbial diversity (the variety of bacteria, viruses and other microbes we carry) is still very low. The microbiota begins to change when solid food is introduced, and we have less Bifidobacterium as we get older when the microbial diversity in our gut increases.

Species such as Bifidobacterium adolescentis and Bifidobacterium longum are typically associated with adulthood, due to their ability to degrade plant-derived carbohydrates found in fruit and vegetables. But B breve and certain other species are generally associated with infancy.

### Breast milk

Human milk is a complex fluid capable of satisfying all the nutritional requirements of a newborn. It also provides extensive health benefits, such as reduced risk of various infections. Its composition changes over the period of lactation, adapting to the requirements of the infant. Breast milk is one of the main factors that influences the infant microbiota, as breastfeeding increases the number of Bifidobacterium in the infant gut.

One specific component of breast milk that affects

the composition of the microbiome is human milk oligosaccharides, which are the most abundant carbohydrates present in breast milk after lactose.

These carbohydrates cannot be digested by the human gut, which is where B breve plays an important role. It's among the microbes that can degrade human milk oligosaccharides, and in this way, they promote its persistence in the gut.

### Prebiotics and probiotics

Human milk oligosaccharides are considered prebiotics carbohydrates, indigestible by the human gut, that promote the growth of beneficial bacteria in the gut, such as B breve.

B breve is regarded as a probiotic a bacterial species whose intake has a benefit for the host. Nowadays, human milk oligosaccharides can be found in formula milk, aiming to facilitate the same changes in the microbiota through their prebiotic effects.

B breve is used as a supplement to treat and prevent gastrointestinal problems such as diarrhoea, often administered in combination with other probiotic bacteria such Lactobacillus or other Bifidobacterium species. It's also commercially available in combination with prebiotics.

## Scholarships This Week

Kashmir Observer in association with Buddy4Study.com presents scholarships available for the meritorious students of Jammu and Kashmir.

### Scholarship Name The Anant Fellowship 2024-25

Description: The Anant Fellowship 2024-25 is an opportunity offered by Anant National University (India's First DesignX University) for undergraduate degree holders in any discipline. This global, year-long postgraduate programme prepares and empowers individuals to become solutionaries who can design, build, and preserve equitable built environments.

Eligibility: Open for undergraduate degree holders in any discipline who demonstrate a commitment to improving the built environment. Applicants must possess a strong academic record and extracurricular achievements.

- Prizes & Rewards: Up to 100% of the tuition fee and other benefits
- Last Date to Apply: 31-07-2024
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/TAfM1](http://www.b4s.in/observer/TAfM1)



- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/BCSM1](http://www.b4s.in/observer/BCSM1)

### Scholarship Name British Council Scholarship for Women in STEM 2024

Description: British Council Scholarship for Women in STEM 2024 is an opportunity offered by the British Council in partnership with UK universities for females pursuing postgraduate degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields at selective universities in the UK.

Eligibility: Open for females from a specific country participating in the program. Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree in STEM subject and have secured admission to a pre-selected postgraduate program at a participating UK university.

Applicants must demonstrate a need for financial support/socio-economic need. Applicants must meet the English language proficiency requirements for postgraduate study in the UK.

- Prizes & Rewards: Full tuition fees, living stipend and other benefits
- Last Date to Apply: 30-04-2024
- Application mode: Online application

### Scholarship Name Teach for India Fellowship 2024

Description: Teach for India Fellowship 2024 is an opportunity offered by Teach For India (a non-profit organisation) to young graduates from universities and workplaces to serve as full-time teachers for children belonging to underserved communities. Under this fellowship, the selected fellows will explore the leadership knowledge, skills, and mindset required in the movement for educational equity.

Eligibility: Open for Indian citizens or Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) who have completed graduation by June/July 2024. Applicants must be applying for the first time for the 2024 Fellowship cohort (since July 2023).

- Prizes & Rewards: A monthly stipend of 23,040 and other benefits
- Last Date to Apply: 17-03-2024
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/TFIF2](http://www.b4s.in/observer/TFIF2)

# OBITUARY

With profound grief, we inform the demise of Mrs. Fatima bint Zavaar Ghulam Mohammad W/o late Mohammad Jaffar Bhat (pathwari) of Arabal, Shalimar Srinagar.

She breathed last at 7:50 pm on Saturday 09/03/2024.

A cherished mother, grand mother & sister, she spent her life spreading joy and kindness to everyone she met.

She was a beacon of warmth and is survived by her loving children, grand children, siblings, who will continue to honor her memory by living with the same grace and compassion she displayed every day of her life.

Congratinal FATEHA KHWANI SHALL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13th March 2024 at 7:15 am at graveyard AliAbad Arabal Shalimar followed by masjid-e-taziyat that shall continue throughout the day at the residence.

**Bereaved Family:**  
**MUSHTAQ AH. DAR**  
**FIRDOUS AH. BHAT**  
**JAMSHEED HUSSAIN**  
**ZAHOR AHMAD BHAT**  
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- Uttar Pradesh ranks first in the country in conviction rates for crimes against women
- More than 2 lakh women benefited from Pradhan Mantri SVANidhi Scheme
- More than 54.44 lakh mothers benefited under Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
- 1.75 crore families benefited under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana
- More than 17.82 lakh daughters benefited under Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana
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- Monthly pension of ₹1,000 to more than 31.28 lakh destitute women
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**Empowering Women Leads  
to Prosperous Nation**

**Double Engine Ki Sarkar**



# The Challenge of Atheism

## Historical and Scientific Survey

Amir Suhail Wani

“The closure of the window of transcendence and man's alienation and estrangement from God has been among the greatest tragedies of the twentieth century, greater than the tragedies of two world wars combined together”

Atheism is not a confession; it is a state of existence – the state of total ignorance of God and his decrees. Thus many people find it surprising when they are told that the phenomenon of atheism is on the rise, not only globally, but in our valley too. They ask for statistics and survey reports, without conceding that phenomena of qualitative nature are not best described by their quantitative equivalents. Thus the brewing state of atheism among youth is too evident a fact to be ignored and our preachers have for long ignored this fact or adopted a state of deliberate ignorance against this riding tide. A reaction to atheism has indeed emerged – unfortunately a reaction and not a measured and befitting response or reply. This reaction has manifested itself in the form of Puritanism, radical piety and rootless orthodoxy. Other people, who are deeply dyed in religion have gone to the extent of saying that the challenge doesn't even exist, but is just a hallucination of a few over anxious readers. This posture is not only hazardous to any attempt of genuine engagement with the problem, but it also prolongs and elongates the issue in the realm of ignorance. What is the challenge of atheism in nutshell and what intellectual and emotional posture best fits in response to this malady? That's what we shall explore here.

The revolutions of Newton and Galileo in science, of Darwin and Pasteur in biology, of Freud and Adler in psychology changed the landscape of human knowledge in an unforeseeable manner. All religions had born and evolved in the Pre-Newtonian universe and had evidently used language and knowledge as it was known and employed then. As the scientific paradigm underwent a shift and new facts came to the fore, the

incompatibility of religion with this newly discovered body of knowledge became evident and it came to be concluded that religion is man's primitive and infantile affair which can't withstand the challenges of modern science and philosophy. Thus arose an attitude of mind which worked to exorcise religion from the realm of human affairs and placed it at par with fairy tales and defined it as a story of by-gone days. The philosophical ventures of Locke, Hobbes, Voltaire, Spencer, Kant and others raised issues of epistemological order which brought the axioms of religion under serious scrutiny and forced religion to either flee the ground or redefine its nature, content and conceptualisation. Religion now became an object of inquiry, discussion and analysis which had never been the case in any phase of human history or in any part of the human world. Religion has always been seen as a living force, man's second skin, man's way of doing life, the very ground of life. It now became an object, and not a mere object, but to use the Hegelian term an object of man's self alienating power. From an existential fact, religion came to be reduced to an academic category, an object which man can investigate independently and in a spirit of dispassionate and scathing enquiry and criticism. This change is too humongous for a modern mind to reckon with as it brought with it challenges specific to the post-renaissance existential paradigm. Earlier man felt the need to justify and prove himself before God, to speak metaphorically. But now conditions had changed so that men felt compelled to prove the existence of God, using methods of investigation and inquiry as were prevalent in the times, which had actually no bearing on the truthfulness and the authenticity of religion. Since God was provable neither by telescopic vision nor by microscopic vision, it was decided to leave out God from the scheme of things and to be content with a self-governing universe. Out of the denial of God's existence arose the fallacy of rejection of graded scale of knowl-



**Religion exists because of God, but God doesn't exist because of religion, for he is the ground of existence and exists independent of everything else. But with religion falling under scrutiny and losing its importance in our lives, the reality and finality of God has come not only to be doubted, but rejected altogether**

edge and being. Traditionally, the universe was seen as a panorama of graded existence of matter, life, psyche, angels and God. But this hierarchy was destroyed at once and matter came to be seen as the alpha and omega of existence. There was no place and scope for god in this scheme of things and thus the age came to announce “Death of God”.

While science was bombarding religion with the challenge of empiricism, philosophy was taking its own twists and turns and was shrinking the field for religion. By creating mind-body dualism, Descartes bestowed upon us a problem with which we struggle even today and confined religion to the realm of the spiritual, thus creating an eclipse and split of sorts. Kant demonstrated the impossibility of religion in its true sense, deducing it to a catchism of do's and don'ts. Hegel, in an attempt of philosophical overstretching, arrived at an image of God which was so immanent in the universe and its history that it left little scope for his transcendental independence. Then came

that master of explosives whom Iqbal positively characterised as “Majzooob e firangi” i.e. Nietzsche who once for all narrowed down the width of transcendental slit to the proportions that in his aftermath hardly any light seems to pass this slit and his successors like Heidegger, Sartre, Camus, Buber, Tillich and others have all mourned the closure of this transcendental window and the imprisonment of man in one dimensional world.

The findings of sociology and anthropology have further pressed upon man that religion is nothing like a divine business but a humanly mundane affair which has emerged at a certain historical stage as an inevitable synthesis from social dialect. This notion deeply wounded the believers who held that religion wasn't a human construction, but the result of God's interest, intervention and partaking in human history and the collective destiny of the universe.

The way modern scholars have interpreted the results of various sciences have explicitly created a goddess paradigm and God isn't

needed in any scheme, in any branch of human understanding, to use the Laplacian term which he enunciated before Napoleon. Religion exists because of God, but God doesn't exist because of religion, for he is the ground of existence and exists independent of everything else. But with religion falling under scrutiny and losing its importance in our lives, the reality and finality of God has come not only to be doubted, but rejected altogether. To borrow a line from Richard Dawkins, God is not only unprovable but impossible too. This leap from epistemological limitation one's own to the ontological enunciation of universal order is a mistake of colossal order, but this mistake has indeed captured the attention of large number of youth who have not only abandoned their faith in God, but are finding it increasingly difficult to find a universe compatible with the God Hypothesis.

But if God is nothing except a making of human imagery and religion a hotchpotch of unintelligible rituals, rules and beliefs, one needs to ask how come religion came to have such longevity and how come religion to be the strongest rudder in the course of civilization. For unknown years of human history, mankind has adhered to the religion of one kind or the other, how is it possible to bracket this millennial behaviour as infantile and ungrounded? Is religion really a placebo which numbs us to the bruteness of naked, meaningless universe, is it the older version of the science, is it an evolutionary residual of group building and is it an anaesthesia we employ to deal with our loss, the grief of death or such other psychologically disturbing states? And if so, is God created in the image of man as Xenophones had it or is man the Imagio Dei “The Image of God”? These are the questions not of mere academic interest, but something which have a deep impact on our lives, our world, our civilisation and in fact the entire universe. But the answer to these questions must wait for the sequel of this article.

*Views expressed are personal. The author is a Srinagar based columnist*

# Motherhood and Guilt

Marina Heifetz

This International Women's Day, I would love to contribute to our dialogue about women and motherhood. When we think of mothers, we may immediately visualize warmth, affection, connection, and, more often than not, associated feelings of guilt. Guilt for dropping the ball on registering for that class on time. Guilt for being home late from work and being late to pick up your child. Guilt for not having enough time to prep for dinner. Or, as I notice feeling right now, guilt for procrastinating on other chores while writing this article. While women have increasingly become participants in the workforce, along with balancing family obligations, the conventional ideas of what being a “good mother” means (i.e., constantly devoted and having to sacrifice one's own needs for one's child) continue to prevail.

Adrienne Rich summarized motherhood in her book *Of Woman Born* as “The guilt, the guilt, the guilt.” The unrealistic expectations and ongoing juggling, the extensive mental load of things to balance (routines, groceries, meal planning, clothing, special events, registration in extracurriculars and summer camps, to name a few). All these (and more) contribute to increased stress and guilt for not feeling like we've achieved it all. Oh, and don't forget all that house cleaning, which, it may be accurate to say, is a never-ending task. When we add work into the mix, the anxiety is palpable. After all, these are impossible standards to meet! “I am a terrible parent,” we may say with exasperation.

### MATERNAL GUILT: WHY?

Recent research interviews conducted by Caitlyn Collins of Washington University in St. Louis have shown maternal guilt transcending



national, cultural, and political contexts. Interviewing mothers in various parts of the world, one theme that arose consistently was the idea that “good mothers” need to sacrifice their own needs for their children. While different work-family policies shape which aspects of motherhood produce these guilty feelings, what is clear from this study is that feeling guilty tends to be equated to being a good mother.

Perhaps not surprisingly, then, recent research by Racine and colleagues (2021) found mothers to have significant struggles with mental health. The COVID-19 pandemic also contributed to a great

increase in maternal mental health struggles (e.g., depressive symptoms increased from 19 to 35 percent in Canada).

### SO WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT IT?

As researcher Brene Brown puts it, the question isn't so much “Are you parenting the right way?” as it is “Are you the adult that you want your child to grow up to be?” In other words, are we being our authentic selves and practicing what we are preaching and teaching to our children?

We can start becoming mindful of our emotions, thoughts, and actions by simply practicing following our breath for a few minutes each day.

This can be followed by noticing our bodily sensations, and then by noticing our thoughts, just as clouds passing by. If we can identify our “should” thoughts as simply thoughts, we can learn to respond differently to them. We can bring forward an attitude of self-compassion and acknowledge that the day was hard and that this is okay.

A great resource on self-compassion is the book *Fierce Self-Compassion: How Women Can Harness Kindness to Speak Up, Claim Their Power, and Thrive*. In this book, author Kristin Neff shows how practicing self-compassion builds new habits and trains our brains to respond to our pain and mistakes from

a place of empathy.

### NAME IT TO TAME IT

By acknowledging and embracing our imperfections, we become powerful parenting models for our children to see resilience play out in life, because life has many ups and downs. It's not about doing it “just right”. It's about showing up and allowing ourselves to be vulnerable while also showing ourselves the compassion that we would want our children to show to themselves. We can't do everything... and that is okay.

Brene Brown sums up this idea well: “Language shows us that naming an experience doesn't give the

experience more power, it gives us the power of understanding and meaning.” In fact, researchers have increasingly found that when we express and identify our challenging thoughts and feelings, our thoughts begin to have less power over us.

### THE POWER OF HUMOUR

Research has continuously found bringing in humour to be a powerful way to reduce mental distress. Professor Laurie Santos of Yale University has argued that one of the best ways to optimize our mental health is by having more fun in our lives, which she refers to as “funtervention.” Fun means being actively engaged in something. Watching television or scrolling social media is considered a passive activity. While passive activities may have their place, true fun, according to Santos, is the ability to be present in an activity, such as being goofy with friends, making time for adventures and new experiences, or stepping out of our comfort zone to experience genuine excitement and laughter.

Realistically, making time for fun adventures is not always feasible, given the busy days we typically have. At the same time, as Santos suggests, we can infuse fun into our lives through what she calls “microdoses,” that is, finding opportunities throughout the day to smile and engage with others, reflect on what we value, and try to take actions to get closer to these values. Children can say the funniest, most endearing things. If we attend fully and be in the present with our children's silliness, even for a few minutes each day, we can begin to feel the power of microdoses and, in turn, feel more balanced and lighthearted.

*The article was originally published by Psychology Today*

## Farmers Squat On Rail Tracks In Punjab As Part Of Rail Roko Protest

Press Trust Of India

Chandigarh: Farmers on Sunday squatted on railway tracks at many places in Punjab as part of a 'rail roko' protest called by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha to press the Centre to accept their demands, including a legal guarantee of minimum support price (MSP).

Farmers raised slogans against the Centre for not accepting their demands.

Because of the disruption of train services, passengers will experience inconvenience. The protest will be held from 12 noon till 4 pm.

In Punjab, farmers had announced that they would sit on railway tracks at 52 locations in 22 districts, including Amritsar, Ludhiana, Tarn Taran, Hoshiarpur, Ferozpur, Fazilka, Sangrur, Mansa, Moga and Bathinda.

Farmer leader Sarwan Singh Pandher asked people to join the protest in large numbers.

Bharti Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan), BKU (Dakaunda-Dhaner) and Krantikari Kisan Union, farmer bodies which are part of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, are also participating in the rail

roko' agitation.

The SKM, which had spearheaded the farmers' 2020-21 agitation, is not part of the 'Delhi Chalo' protest but has extended its support to the ongoing farmers' agitation at Shambhu and Khanauri points on the Punjab-Haryana border.

Besides a legal guarantee of MSP, the farmers are demanding the implementation of the Swaminathan Commission's recommendations, pension for farmers and farm labourers, no hike in electricity tariff, withdrawal of police cases and "justice" for the victims of the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence, reinstatement of the Land Acquisition Act, 2013 and compensation to the families of the farmers who died during a previous agitation in 2020-21.

The protesting farmers from Punjab have been camping at the Shambhu and Khanauri border points since February 13, when security forces stopped them from marching towards Delhi.

The farmer leaders have rejected the Centre's proposal for procurement of pulses, maize and cotton at the MSP by government agencies for five years, saying it was not in farmers' favour.

## High Court Relief To 2 Ex Excise Officials In 1993 Mumbai Serial Blasts

Press Trust Of India

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court has granted relief to two retired Central Excise officials, nearly 20 years after disciplinary action orders against them for allegedly allowing landing of explosives

shall be made available to them within two months, the HC said in its judgment on March 4.

Twelve bombs went off at different locations in Mumbai on March 12, 1993, killing 257 persons and injuring more than 700 others.



used in the 1993 serial bomb blasts in the city.

There was no evidence to prove the charges against them in the departmental proceedings, a division bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Arif Doctor said while quashing the disciplinary action orders.

The duo, S M Padwal and Yashwant Lotale, retired superintendents of the Central Excise department, shall be entitled to all consequential benefits such as arrears of salary and pension, which

A special court later convicted 100 persons in the case and acquitted 23 others.

The HC noted that Padwal and Lotale did not face any criminal trial in the case.

Based on the alleged evidence available, the charges against them do not stand proved, it said.

"Our indefeasible conclusion is that it is a case where there was no evidence at all and accordingly, the conclusion arrived at by the disciplinary authority while passing the punishment orders is erroneous," the HC said.



## 5 Killed, 10 Injured As Parachute Fails To Open During Aid Drop In Gaza

Agencies

Jerusalem: A medic at Gaza's largest hospital said Friday a humanitarian aid drop in the north of the Palestinian territory killed five people and wounded 10.

The casualties were taken to Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital, the emergency room's head nurse, Mohammed al-Sheikh, told AFP.

Sheikh said the deadly aid drop occurred north of the coastal Al-Shati refugee camp.

A witness from the camp told the news agency AFP he and his brother followed the parachuted aid in the hope of getting "a bag of flour".

"Then, all of a sudden, the parachute didn't open and fell down like a rocket on the roof of one of the houses," said Mohammed al-Ghoul.

"Ten minutes later I saw people transferring three martyrs and others injured, who were staying on the roof of the house where the aid packages fell," the 50-year-old

**“ Ten minutes later I saw people transferring three martyrs and others injured, who were staying on the roof of the house where the aid packages fell**

told AFP.

The United States and Jordan are among the countries to have carried out aid drops in northern Gaza, where hun-

dreds of thousands of people are facing dire conditions after more than five months of war.

A Jordanian military source told AFP that the kingdom was not involved in Friday's fatal drop.

"The technical defect that caused some parachutes carrying aid not to open and to fall freely to the ground during the aid drop on Gaza on Friday was not from a Jordanian aircraft," the source said.

"The four Jordanian aircraft that carried out the aid drop in partnership with five other countries carried out its mission without any glitches."

Referring to the five killed on Friday, the government media office in Hamas-run Gaza said aid drops were "futile" and "not the best way for aid to enter."

The United Nations has said aid drops or a proposed maritime aid corridor cannot be a substitute for land deliveries, urging more trucks to be permitted to reach Gaza through more border crossings.

## Hezbollah responds after Israel kills entire family in south Lebanon

Agencies

Jerusalem: Hezbollah attacked the Meron settlement on the morning of 10 March in response to the Israeli airstrike that killed an entire family in a home the night before.

"In response to the enemy's attacks on the steadfast southern villages and civilian homes, the most recent of which was the attack on the town of Kherbet Selm and the martyrdom of the family, the Islamic Resistance bombed at 9:15 AM on Sunday morning, 03-10-2024, the Meron colony with dozens of Katyusha rockets," Hezbollah said in a statement.

The resistance group attacked several other sites on Sunday morning, including "a gathering of enemy soldiers east of the Birkat Risha site" and the Ramia site, achieving "direct hits," according to Hezbollah's military media page.

Before announcing the attacks, Hezbollah released statements mourning the deaths of Jaafar Ali Marjeh, Ali Jaafar Marjeh, and Hassan Jaafar Marjeh, who were killed in an Israeli airstrike on Saturday evening.

The father and his two sons were members of Hezbollah's reserve force who had been internally displaced to Kherbet Selm with their family. The mother and wife, Ahlan Hassan Fakih, was also killed in the Israeli strike on the house.

At least nine others, including teenage girls and a pregnant woman, were wounded in the attack.

Israeli airstrikes on south Lebanon have been indiscriminate, and continue to target residential areas, journalists, and civilian infrastructure.

Hezbollah has been attacking Israeli military sites and settlements in support of Gaza since 8 October.

Washington has been trying to pressure Lebanon into a de-escalation agreement involving Hezbollah's withdrawal from the border area. The proposed deal draws no concessions from Israel and has been described as one-sided and impartial by Lebanese officials. The resistance has rejected the proposal, and Lebanon's government has not responded to it.

Last week, western diplomats cited by Lebanese daily Al-Akhbar said that Israel has informed certain countries of a 15 March deadline to reach "a political settlement with Lebanon," after which Tel Aviv says it plans to "escalate military operations to a broad war."

## PM Launches Projects Worth Over Rs 34,000 Crore In UP

Press Trust Of India

Azamgarh (UP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated and laid the foundation stones of several development projects worth more than 34,700 crore across the state. He was accompanied by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and other BJP leaders as he visited the Manduri area of the district.

PM Modi inaugurated Azamgarh, Shravasti, Chitrakoot, and Aligarh airports and a new terminal of Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport, Lucknow.

He also inaugurated Maharaja Suhel Dev State University, Azamgarh, constructed at a cost of 108 crore.

He inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of five major National Highway projects worth 11,500 crore.

More than 5,342 km of roads built in 59 UP districts under the PM Gram Sadak Yojna worth 3,700 crore were also inaugurated by him.

PM Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 12 railway projects across UP worth 8,200 crore.

He also inaugurated three sewage projects built under Namami Ganga Yojna worth



1,114 crore in Prayagraj, Etawah, and Jaunpur districts of the state.

The prime minister is also slated to inaugurate the Light House Project (LHP) in Lucknow under which more than 1,040 affordable flats have been built with modern infrastructure.

## Parties Calling Bandhs Over CAA Could Lose Registrations: Sarma

Press Trust Of India

Guwahati: Political parties could lose their registrations if they call bandhs in violation of court orders, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said today.

Any opposition to the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019 should be taken to the Supreme Court and protests on the streets would serve no purpose as the law had already been enacted, he said.

"Everyone has a right to protest. But if a political party disobeys the court order, its registration may be cancelled," he said, adding that while it is permissible for student organisations to call for a bandh, political parties cannot do so in the state due to a Gauhati High Court order prohibiting it.

"If any political party violates the High Court order, we will go to the Election Commission," he added, referring to the Opposition announcing intensified agitations if the CAA is implemented.

The Chief Minister said those opposing the CAA should place their views before the Supreme Court as it is the only authority that can scrap the law now.

"If more intense agitation was to take place, it should have been done before the law was passed. Now it is only a matter of notifying the rules, which the government is bound to do. Even if some agitation happens now, I guarantee that no new person will join it," Mr Sarma added.

Opposition parties, students, and other organisations have announced inten-

sified protests against the CAA, which seeks to provide Indian citizenship to Hindus, Jains, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Parsis who entered India on or before December 31, 2014, from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan and lived in the country for five years after.

The 16-party United Opposition Forum, Assam, (UOFA) staged a sit-in demonstration in the state's Kallabor on Friday when Prime Minister Na-



rendra Modi arrived on a two-day visit to the state.

The forum said a state-wide bandh will be called the very next day the contentious Act comes into force, followed by 'gherao' of the Janata Bhawan - the secretariat.

It also submitted a memorandum to President Droupadi Murmu, saying they would undertake a "democratic mass movement" across the state if the CAA is not repealed.

The state witnessed massive protests after the Rajya Sabha passed the CAA on December 11, 2019, with agitators engaging in pitched battles with security forces, forcing the administration to impose curfew in several towns and cities.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Asif Ali Zardari: 'Artful Dodger' Returns As Pakistan President

Islamabad, Pakistan: Asif Ali Zardari, the widower of Pakistan's slain first female premier Benazir Bhutto who has had a life storied equally by tragedy and farce, was on Saturday voted president for a second time.

Initially a background character as Bhutto's consort, Mr Zardari was stained by a bevy of corruption and other allegations, including absurd kidnapping plots and taking kickbacks lavished on hoards of jewellery.

Despite a reputation as "Mr. Ten Percent" - the alleged cut he took for rubber-stamping contracts - a sympathy vote propelled him to office when his wife was assassinated in a 2007



bomb and gun attack.

Between 2008 and 2013, he ushered in constitutional reforms rolling back presidential powers, and the 68-year-old's second term will see him steer a largely ceremonial office.

He has spent more than 11 years in jail, a long time even by the standards of Pakistani politicians, with a wheeler-dealer's talent for bouncing back after scandals.

Back in 2009, the New York

Times said he had a knack for "artful dodging" - "maneuvering himself out of the tight spots he gets himself into".

Newly sworn-in national and provincial lawmakers and senators voted him in under the terms of a coalition deal brokered after February 8 elections marred by rigging claims.

Under that deal, Zardari's Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) took the presidency, while its historic rivals the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party secured the prime minister's position for Shehbaz Sharif, who was officially sworn in on Monday.

Mr Zardari is expected to take his oath on Sunday.

## Man Kills Brother For Turning Off Music At Family Function

Satna: A man allegedly hacked his brother to death with an axe after the latter turned off the music and stopped him from dancing at a family function in Madhya Pradesh's Satna district, police said on Sunday.

The police have arrested the accused, Rajkumar Kol (30), for the murder that occurred at Mauhar village under Kothi police station limits on Friday night, an official said. Rajkumar's brother Rakesh (35) had organised a function at his house, during which music was being played on a sound system, said Rupendra Rajput, in-charge of Kothi police station.

The victim later turned off the music, and the ac-



cus wanted to continue dancing, he said.

An argument ensued between the brothers, and in a fit of anger, Rajkumar allegedly attacked Rakesh with an axe and killed him on the spot, the official said.

The accused fled the scene and was later apprehended near a culvert where he was hiding, he said.

The accused was placed under arrest, and the weapon used in the crime was seized, the official said.

## Lemon Sold For Rs 35,000 At Auction In Tamil Nadu Temple

Erode, Tamil Nadu: A single lemon fetched Rs 35,000 at an auction held at a private temple at a village near here, the temple authorities said. As per custom, the lemon and other items including fruits offered to Lord Shiva during the Mahasivarathri festivities observed on Friday night at the Pazhappoosai temple near Sivagiri village, 35 km from here, were auctioned.

As many as 15 devotees participated in the auction and a lemon was sold to a devotee from Erode for Rs 35,000, the temple authorities said.

The temple priest placed the auctioned lemon before the presiding deity and conducted a small puja and returned it to the person who made the highest bid in the auction in the presence of hundreds of devotees.

## SMC Conducts Cleanliness Drive Under "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav" Campaign

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) carried out an impactful cleanliness drive on Sunday in Zone East, Ward eighteen, as part of the ongoing "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav" campaign.

Today's initiative focused on cleanliness of Jhelum Bund from Cement Kadal to Safakadal to elevate cleanliness standards and promote hygiene in the specific zone.

The drive was led by the Chief Sanitation Officer, along with Zonal Sanitation Officers and other SMC officials.

The activity enhanced overall cleanliness and visual appeal of the designated area as a large quantity of waste was collected and disposal off in a proper manner besides unwanted vegetation and grass was also cleared.

Srinagar Municipal Corporation works to establish a cleaner and healthier environment for the residents, thereby contributing towards the welfare of the city.

The SMC also works to instill a sense of civic duty among citizens and encourage adoption of sustainable and hygienic practices.

## Committed To Best Possible Healthcare: SMHS Hospital On Youth's Death

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The authorities on Sunday said that a 20-year-old youth was admitted to a private hospital and was referred in a critical condition to SMHS hospital last night, however, on arrival he was diagnosed with acute abdomen with sepsis and septic shock.

In a statement, a hospital spokesperson said that he was resuscitated and his condition explained to the family attendants and high risk consent for urgent surgery was obtained.

"He was operated upon at 3:30 am. He was having Faecal Peritonitis secondary to ileal perforation. Post operation he was on a ventilator and was extubated during the day. His condition suddenly worsened around 6:00 pm. An ICU consultation was sought and while intubation was being at-



tempted the patient succumbed," the statement reads.

It reads that Faecal Peritonitis with Septic shock carries a high mortality (50-90%) around the world.

"In view of the patient reporting late to the hospital due to prolonged shock, faecal peritonitis, septicaemia and septic shock evident from

his clinical picture and despite immediate resuscitation and timely surgery patient could not come out of irreversible shock," it reads.

It added that SMHS and other associated hospitals remain deeply committed to patient care and providing the best possible healthcare services to patients.

## Awareness Program on PM Vishwakarma Scheme Organized At Banquet Hall

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The District Administration Srinagar in collaboration with the Ministry of Micro Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME), Skill Development and District Industries Centre today organized a one-day awareness program on the PM Vishwakarma scheme launched to uplift traditional Artisans and Craftspeople.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat was the Chief Guest of the program held at Banquet Hall.

The program was attended by stakeholders and beneficiaries to further amplify the awareness to ensure effective implementation of the scheme and fully harness



its potential for the betterment of the Artisan community.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner stressed on better implementation of the scheme to ensure that its benefits reach to the Artisans contributing in preservation of traditional and heritage crafts.

Highlighting the features of PM

Vishwakarma initiative, the DC said that the scheme will directly benefit the Artisans of the District working with their hands and tools, besides transforming the lives of the Artisans and Craftspeople contributing in preservation of traditional and heritage crafts.

The DC further said the scheme will enable the recognition of Ar-

tisans and Craftspeople as Vishwakarmas (Traditional Artisans) making them eligible to avail the benefits under the Scheme.

The DC emphasized on implementing the scheme effectively to cover all eligible beneficiaries across the District in the identified trades to enhance livelihood opportunities at grassroots level.

Earlier, Assistant Director MSME underlined the collaborative effort of the Ministry of MSME field Office Srinagar and the District Administration Srinagar signifying a proactive approach to empower local Artisans and promote sustainable socio-economic growth of the Artisans and craftspeople in the District.

Pertinent to mention that PM

Vishwakarma scheme offers a range of benefits including toolkit incentive of Rs 15,000, training to artisans, Rs 500 per day during training, collateral-free credit support up to Rs 1 lakh (first tranche) and Rs 2 lakh (second tranche) at a concessional interest rate of 5%, incentives for digital transactions and marketing support.

At present Government has recognized 18 trades under PM Vishwakarma scheme including Carpenter, Boat Maker, Armorer, Blacksmith, Hammer and Tool Kit Maker, Locksmith, Goldsmith, Potter, Cobbler, Masons, Basket/Mat/Broom Maker/Coir Weaver, Doll & Toy Maker, Barber, Garland Maker, Washerman, Tailor and Fishing Net Maker.

## Sopore's Unique Boat Race Promotes Electoral Awareness

KO NEWS SERVICE

**SOPORE:** In an endeavour to encourage young prospective voters and first-time voters to participate vehemently in the electoral process, District Administration of Baramulla, in collaboration with the Watlab Conservation and Management Authority (WCMA) and the Local Sports Association, orchestrated a series of impactful activities under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative at Wular Lake.

The proceedings were led by the Additional Deputy Commissioner of Sopore, Shabir Ahmad Raina, who inaugurated the first of its kind boat race aimed at raising awareness among fresh voters about the electoral process by exercising their right to



vote.

Speaking during the event, the ADC highlighted the paramount importance of new voters in actively participating

in the democratic process. He underscored the pivotal role of selecting representatives who resonate with the aspirations of the youth and are committed to

addressing their concerns.

Shabir Ahmad further highlighted that the objective of organizing these events is to foster collective commitment

towards culture of electoral literacy and to educate individuals especially first-time voters with the requisite knowledge and resources to become proactive stakeholders in the electoral process.

The event witnessed the active engagement of Booth Level Officers (BLOs), who meticulously educated participants about the electoral process and enlightened them about their right to franchise and their pivotal role as integral members of our thriving democracy.

Later, the ADC distributed awards among the participants of the boat race as a token of appreciation, acknowledging their contribution towards fostering a culture of electoral awareness and participation among the youth.

## Director Agriculture Launches Medicinal Plant Promotion Program

KO NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal on Sunday Inaugurated a capacity building programme on "Promotion of Medicinal and Aromatic plants" under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme at Sub-division Chadoora, Budgam.

Speaking on the occasion, director Agriculture enumerated the initiatives by the department for the promotion of Medicinal & Aromatic plants on commercial basis in the region. He said that

the department has already brought new areas and lands under the cultivation of Medicinal & Aromatic plants on a commercial basis.

Under HADP the cultivation has been extended, introduced to all the districts of Kashmir division, he added.

Chowdhury said that there is a vast potential for the promotion of these plants in the region. He said that the department has not only provided planting material to the concerned farmers but is working in close coordination with the farmers and offering them the technical guidance

during their crop cultivation activities.

He impressed upon the participants to work in close coordination and ensure maximum awareness among the farmers regarding the various projects under HADP.

Meanwhile, he distributed Medicinal & Aromatic plants among the concerned farmers.

M.Y. Shakoor DLSMS, Fayaz Ahmad War SDAO Chadoora, Syed Mubashir Qamar AEO Chadoora, other concerned officers and a large number of farmers were present in the programme.

## Andrabi Lays Foundation Stone Of Jamia Masjid Rajouri



**RAJOURI:** Chairperson, Jammu & Kashmir Waqf Board, Dr. Syed Darakhshan Andrabi on Sunday laid foundation stone for Jamia Masjid at Ziyarat Shahdara Sharief and Markazi Jamia Masjid here.

After inauguration, the Chairperson addressed a mammoth gathering, during which she highlighted that J&K Waqf Board has now become a strong organization and developmental activities in all parts of J&K have been expanded on big scale. "During the past two years, infrastructure facilities at Shahdara Sharief have got a big boost", Dr. Andrabi said.

She added that in Rajouri district, Waqf Board has taken up many new projects out of Board resources and all projects will be completed within the stipulated time.

The Chairperson expressed gratitude to people of J&K for

their immense support to Board in making it more transparent and auditable. "The resources of the Board belong to the public and assets have to be utilized as per the broader public requirements and needs", she asserted.

She added that the reformative steps taken by the Board have yielded great results and the process will continue.

Earlier, the Chairperson also presided over Annual Day Celebrations of Himalayan Education Mission and Himalayan College at Rajouri and released their periodical. She also gave away Himalayan Mission Awards to the civil services persons for their exemplary contribution to the society.

The Chairperson was accompanied by Secretary, Civil Aviation and Planning & Monitoring departments, Aijaz Assad and other senior officers.

## 3-Week Long MSME Residential Workshop On Advanced ESDP & MDP Concludes

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The three weeks workshop on Advanced Entrepreneurship and Skill Development and Advanced Management Development sponsored by Ministry of MSME under the ESDP Scheme organized by IIED Centre of National Institute of Technology (NIT), Srinagar concluded with resounding success.

The workshop was impeccably designed and coordinated by Dr. Dinesh Kumar Rajendran the Nodal officer of MSME (ESDP, Design and IPR Schemes) from the Department of Mechanical Engineering along with the other coordinators Dr. Noor Zaman Khan, Dr. Deepak Kumar Naik, Dr. Sandeep Ratee Assistant Professors from Mechanical Engineering, Dr. Nasir F. Bhat Assistant Professor from HSS&M and Dr. Syed Irshad Ahmad Qadri Superintendent Workshop, NIT Srinagar.

Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath, Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman, Dean R&C Prof. M.F. Wani, Dean Faculty Welfare Prof. G. A. Harmain, Dean Alumni Prof. S. Nazir Ahmed, Dean Planning & Development Prof. Yeswant Metha, Head Mechanical Prof. Adnan Qayoom, Head IIED Centre Prof. Saad Parvez, Assistant Director MSME Mr. Saheel Allaqband congratulated the whole team for making the event grand success attracting the entrepreneurs across India for various Advanced skill development program including 3D Printing, Welding & CNC and Management Development Program on IPR & Risk Management.

This interdisciplinary workshop, conducted saw participation from a diverse range of

regions, including the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Delhi as well as the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamilnadu, among others.

The event commenced with a valedictory address by Dean Planning and Development Prof. Yeswanth Metha. It featured a distinguished panel of guest speakers, each an expert in their respective fields and associated with prestigious institutions.

Prof. Metha highlighted the pivotal role of such events in advancing technology, particularly in the skill development, and stressed the importance of ongoing government focus in this field.

The esteemed speakers included Prof. Sheikh Gulam Mohammed, Director KU North Campus, Mr. Satish Kumar, Assistant Director, MSME Delhi, Mr. Parvez Principal Associate Khurana IP Mumbai, Adv.Swarna Srivatsav Director, Zeya IP, Delhi Advt. Swati Varshaney, Director IStopIP Solution, Delhi, Adv. Arishie and Adv. Iftikar from Arooj Associates Srinagar.

Dr. Varthini Rajagopal, GCE Tamilnadu, Dr. Sajid Yousef Bhat, University of Kashmir, Mr. Hafizulla Khan, Senior Trainer Oman, Dr. Shiva, IIT Jammu, Mr. Ajaz Hussain, PDPC Sanat Nagar Dr. Saad Parvez, Dr. Noor Zaman Khan, Dr. Sandeep Ratee, Dr. Asma Iqbal, Dr. Nitika Kundan, Dr. Parameswar, Dr. Dinesh Kumar Rajendran, Mr. Nadeem, NIT Srinagar.

Participants were provided with hands-on learning opportunities, with 3D Printing, CNC Wood Carving, Underwater Welding, Patent Drafting, E Filing of Patent, Design, Trademark, Startup Pitching.

## Govt Will Revive J&K's Cultural, Literary Legacy: Gupta

KO NEWS SERVICE

**KATHUA:** In its endeavors to promote and preserve cultural and literary legacy of the region, the government has devised a multi-pronged strategy to revive and revitalize these fields in the Union Territory in general and Kathua district in particular.

Principal Secretary, Culture, Suresh Kumar Gupta, stated this during his extensive visit to the district. He said that instructions have been issued to the J&K Academy of Art, Cultural & Languages (JKAACL) for expediting the construction work on Regional Cultural Centre, Kathua which would be a step forwards in this direction.

The cultural centre, construction of which is underway at Kathua, is being built with state-of-the-art technology having an auditorium, guest rooms, library and office space.

Giving details, Suresh Kumar said that the Culture Department through JKAACL would work in close contact with writers and experts in different art forms to promote rich cultural and literary heritage of the area. He assured that the Academy's sub-office at Kathua would be geared up to broaden its activities which, on account of lack of space and allied facilities, had more or less remained restricted to holding local mus-hairas and seminars.

## Wullar Bachav Front Meeting Held At Bandipora



**BANDIPORA:** Wullar Bachav Front convened a meeting with the Mahigeer Association Bandipora to address the challenges and hardships faced by the fisherfolk and other communities residing near Wullar Lake.

The meeting was attended by President Farooq Ahmad Kawa of Mahigeer Association Bandipora, Habibullah Dar, Ab Samad Dar, Tehsil President Hajin.

Shakeel Ur Rasool, Chairman of Wullar Bachav Front, General Secretary Mushtaq

Ahmad Dar, Publicity Secretary Saimul Haq, and Organizer Sajad Maqbool were also present in the meeting where they discussed key issues concerning the community.

President Mahigeer Association Bandipora and Chairman Wullar Bachav Front highlighted significant concerns during the session. The participants resolved to collaborate for the betterment of marginalized communities dwelling around Wullar Lake.

## FCS&CA Office Guttred in Overnight Fire Mishap in Uri

Agencies

**URI:** A Food Civil Services & Consumer Affairs department office was gutted in a fire mishap on intervening Saturday and Sunday night.

Official sources said that an FCS&CA office building situated at Main town caught fire last night, razing the structure to ashes.

"The structure comprised the office of Tehsil Supply Office and one another room," they said.

"The fire was controlled after hours of hectic efforts by fire-fighters and locals," said the sources adding, "Fortunately the office records were saved in the incident." The cause of the fire in the meantime is yet to be ascertained. (GNS)



## India No. 1 In Test Rankings, Reign Supreme In All Formats

Press Trust of India

**DUBAI:** A day after India crushed England in Dharamsala to win the five-match series 4-1, Rohit Sharma's side claimed the top spot in the ICC Test rankings, overtaking Australia in the latest pecking order released by the world governing body for cricket on Sunday.

India, who are already heading the World Test Championship (WTC) standings, are now at the summit of the ICC rankings in all three formats of the game.

Rohit's side will remain at the top of the chart irrespective of the result of the second Test between New Zealand and Australia currently underway in Christchurch.

Australia, the reigning World Test Championship winners are leading the two-Test series 1-0 following their 172-run victory in Wellington.



India, with 122 rating points, are five points ahead of Australia in the Test ranking, while

England are third with 111 rating points.

In ODIs, India have 121 rating points, with Australia a close second with 118 points.

In the T20Is, India have 266 rating points, with England (256) at the second spot.

India were the world No.1 Test side from September 2023 to January 2024, before they slipped to second spot after a drawn away series against South Africa.

Australia overtook India at the top of the Test rankings, after sweeping the three-Test series against Pakistan at home.

India's five-Test series against England saw them lose the first Test in Hyderabad by 28 runs. But the home team bounced back in style to win the remaining four Tests. Victories in Visakhapatnam, Rajkot, Ranchi and Dharamsala helped them reclaim the top position in the Test rankings.

### Short TAKES

#### Bowlers Give Vidarbha Edge Over Mumbai In Ranji Final

Outstanding spells from Yash Thakur and Harsh Dubey gave an upper hand to Vidarbha in the final of the 2023-24 Ranji season against Mumbai at Wankhede Stadium here. At Day 1 Stumps, Vidarbha are 31/3 with Atharva Taide (21) and Aditya Thakre (0) unbeaten on the crease and they still trail by 193 runs.

In reply to Mumbai's total of 224 runs, Vidarbha didn't get the start that they wanted, losing opener Dhruv Shorey at the score of 1.

#### Punia, Dahiya Eliminated From Paris Olympics Race



Bajrang Punia and Ravi Dahiya -- the Tokyo Games medalists -- were on Sunday eliminated from the race for the Paris Olympics qualification after losing their respective bouts in the selection trials for the national team.

Punia, who was a prominent face of protest against former WFI President Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, suffered a crushing 1-9 defeat in the men's freestyle 65kg semifinal against Rohit Kumar.

This was after he barely managed to win against Ravinder (3-3 on criteria) in the opening round.

## YSS Organises Skiing Training Course At Gurez



Observer News Service

**GUREZ:** The Department of Youth Services and Sports is continuing with its efforts to promote skiing in far-off places like Gurez, and conducted a training program in skiing. The arrangements were made by the Zonal Physical Education Officer Gurez. The course witnessed enthusiastic participation and remarkable skill development among the participants.

The Snow Skiing Course,

designed to provide a unique opportunity for participants to explore the pristine snow slopes of the Habba Khatun Peak Ranges, has established itself as an exceptional platform for individuals to enhance their skiing abilities while fostering a love for winter sports. Situated amidst the majestic surroundings of Gurez Valley, the course promises unparalleled natural beauty, making it an ideal destination for winter sports enthusiasts.

As the course continues,

participants have been actively engaged in a series of training sessions, focusing on various aspects of skiing techniques and safety measures. The expert instructors have been instrumental in imparting their knowledge and skills.

The event witnessed a remarkable turnout of individuals passionate about snow skiing. Participants from different age groups, backgrounds, and skill levels united in their shared enthusiasm for winter sports.

## PCB Chairman Wants BCCI's 'Assurance' For 2025 Champions Trophy

Press Trust of India

**LAHORE:** Newly appointed PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi would be eyeing an assurance from BCCI secretary Jay Shah on India's participation in next year's Champions Trophy in Pakistan during next week's ICC Meeting in Dubai but is unlikely to make headway as of now.

The ICC Executive board will

"The biggest worry for the PCB is whether India will send its team to Pakistan and there is no repeat of last year's Asia Cup issues," a PCB source said, citing the 'Hybrid Model' that was used last year.

Last year, PCB was forced to agree to a sharing formula under which it hosted four games of the Asia Cup and the rest were held in Sri Lanka since the



meet in Dubai next week and Naqvi plans to speak to the global body's brass as well as Indian board's top boss Shah on the sidelines but for a tournament scheduled in February-March of 2025, there is no way that Indian board will right away make any commitments of travelling to Pakistan with nearly one year left.

While Champions Trophy is an ICC tournament and with every other cricketing nation travelling to Pakistan, the BCCI will not entirely close its door but any clearance from the government of India will not come at least weeks before the tournament commences.

BCCI made it clear that it cannot send its team to Pakistan because of non-clearance from its government.

"This is an ICC event and Pakistan went last year to India for the World Cup. Naqvi will try to convince the ICC and BCCI that they need to confirm that India will be coming to Pakistan as early as possible as it will help promote the CT for them," the source added.

"Naqvi will try to assure the BCCI representatives that with elections (in Pakistan) completed and a new government in place, there will be no security or other concerns for them to play in Pakistan."

## Real Kashmir Draw 1-1 With Gokulam Kerala In I-League

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Real Kashmir FC dropped two points in the 2023-24 I-League title race after drawing 1-1 with Gokulam Kerala on Sunday at EMS Stadium in Kozhikode.

The Kerala side is now third in the I-League table with 33 points, while the Snow Leopards

have 34. Table toppers Mohammedan SC has 36.

Gnohere Krizo had given Real Kashmir the lead in 65th minute, only for Matija Babovic to equalize for Gokulam Kerala in the 68th.

The Srinagar-based club next play Shillong Lajong FC on Wednesday, March 13.

## Ligue 1 Leader PSG Draws Again As Mbappé Left On The Bench

Agencies

**PARIS:** French league leader Paris Saint-Germain drew 2-2 at home to Reims on Sunday as Kylian Mbappé was left on the bench for the second straight league game.

It was defending champion PSG's third straight league draw and the attack looked tame without him. Mbappé came on in the 73rd minute with the score 2-2. He curled a shot just wide soon after, missed the ball attempting a bicycle kick and looked frustrated after shooting straight at the goalkeeper from 20 meters out. PSG is 10 points clear of second-place Brest with nine games remaining.

Mbappé scored both goals on Tuesday as PSG beat Real Sociedad 2-1 to reach the Champions League quarter-finals. But, coach Luis Enrique is rotating his players to prepare for next season without Mbappé, who is leaving this summer.

Reims took the lead after



seven minutes following a defensive blunder from right-back Achraf Hakimi, who lost the ball in the penalty area allowing midfielder Marshall Munetsi to score. PSG equalized 10 minutes later when Reims captain Yunus Abdelhamid tried to defend a corner and deflected the ball into his net. Last

week, Abdelhamid's careless backpass allowed Lille striker Jonathan David to score.

Gonçalo Ramos started in attack and put PSG 2-1 up in the 19th minute after Reims failed to clear a cross and the ball fell kindly to him. The visitors pulled level just before the break when Emmanuel Ag-

badou's pass found striker Omar Diakité, whose shot beat goalkeeper Keylor Navas and went in off the post.

Later Sunday, third-place Monaco played at Strasbourg and resurgent Marseille faced Nantes having scored 16 goals in four games since coach Jean-Louis Gasset took charge.

## Son Stars As Tottenham Routs Aston Villa 4-0 In Premier League

Agencies

**BIRMINGHAM:** Tottenham boosted its bid to qualify for the Champions League by routing 10-man Aston Villa 4-0 in the Premier League on Sunday. Fifth-placed Spurs moved to within two points of Villa in fourth with a game in hand.

Goals from James Maddison, Brennan Johnson, Son Heung-Min and Timo Werner secured a resounding victory at Villa Park. Villa's cause wasn't helped by John McGinn being sent off in the 65th, but Unai Emery's team was already trailing 2-0 by that point.

Maddison opened the scoring in the 50th when poking home Pape Sarr's cross from the right. Johnson doubled Spurs' lead three minutes later after an assist from Son.

Villa captain McGinn had described the clash as "the most important game in the club's recent history," but his sending off effectively killed off any hopes of a comeback from the home team. He was shown a straight red for taking down Destiny Udogie and from there Villa's challenge collapsed.

Son lashed in Spurs' third in the first minute of stoppage time after a cross from Dejan Kulusevski and substitute Werner rounded off the



win three minutes later, with Son the provider again.

**ARTETA 'PLEASED' WITH ARSENAL'S 2-1 WIN OVER BRENTFORD**

Following Arsenal's 2-1 win over Brentford in the Premier League (PL) at the Emirates Stadium in London, the Gunners' head coach Mikel Arteta said that he was "pleased" with

their performance. While speaking at the post-match press conference, Arteta said that Arsenal's 2-1 win over Brentford "felt great". He added that to be on the top of the points table, they have to win such close games.

When asked about Kai Havertz, the Spanish coach said that he was "happy" with the German striker's performance.