

Kashmir's Ramazan Economy: A Multifaceted Intersection Of Faith & Commerce

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: Amidst the hustle-bustle of Anantnag's busy bus stand, Haji Bashir's cart catches the eye of passersby, drawing them in like moths to a flame. Some reach for plump dates, others fill their small bags with almonds, cashews, and pistachios. The air is alive with customers haggling over prices.

This is not your average day at a Kashmir market; it's the holy month of Ramazan. "Ya Allah (Oh God),"



- Shifting food habits
- Religious garments
- Charity economy
- Strategic Discounts
- Restaurant Innovation

For Bashir, Ramadan is more than just a religious observance; it's a time when his business booms. "Like previous years, the demand is good," Bashir said, adding that, "It's a time of giving, of families coming together, and of course, everyone wants the best ingredients to prepare their Iftar."

This surge in demand is a common thread amongst vendors across Kashmir's markets. While mosques resonate with piety, markets experience a surge in demand for specific food items.

Experts say the sales of consumer

goods experience a significant surge during Ramazan, injecting a temporary yet vital boost into Kashmir's economy. Ejaz Ayoub, a Srinagar based economist explained this surge as a result of the overall growth of India's economy which, in effect, contributed to an increase in people's purchasing power.

"The aggregate demand increases in the holy month of Ramazan due to more demand than the supply, giving the economy a boost," Ayoub said.

Several factors [More On P6](#)

he mutters with a tired but grateful smile, wiping the sweat from his brow. "The blessings this month bring are unlike any other."

Kashmir's Deadly Waters 49 Drowning Incidents In 14 Months: SDRF

AGENCIES

Srinagar: The Kashmir Valley has witnessed an alarming surge in drowning incidents over the past 14 months, raising concerns and an urgent need for preventive measures to curb such tragedies.

Data accessed from the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) department reveals a total of 49 drowning incidents reported in the Kashmir Valley from January 01, 2023, to March 06, 2024.

SDRF officials said that out of the 49 reported incidents, the bodies of 35 victims have been successfully recovered. However, the status of nine individuals remains unknown, while efforts to retrieve the remaining bodies are ongoing, they said.

Breaking down the incidents by district, an official of the SDRF said that Srinagar recorded the highest number of casualties, with 19 drowning incidents reported. Baramulla followed closely with 11 incidents, while other districts also reported varying numbers of cases.

The rise in drowning incidents underscores the critical need for enhanced water safety measures and public awareness campaigns throughout the Kashmir Valley, the SDRF officials said.



6

Srinagar recorded the highest number of casualties, with 19 drowning incidents reported. "

"There is a need for collaborative efforts among stakeholders to prevent further tragedies and ensure the safety of residents,

[More On P6](#)

Deficient Rainfall Recorded In 7 Kashmir Districts

AGENCIES

Srinagar: At least seven districts of Kashmir division have recorded deficient rainfall in the ongoing season till Wednesday (March 27) while Shopian district has become the only place where large deficient precipitation has been recorded during the period.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer

(KNO), the data prepared by the Meteorological department (MeT) said that Srinagar, Anantnag, Budgam, Bandipora, Ganderbal, Kulgam and Kupwara have recorded deficient rainfall from March 01–March 27, 2024.

Srinagar, as per the data has recorded a precipitation of 80.5 mm rainfall against the normal precipitation of 102.2, recording a deficit of 21 per cent during the period. [More On P6](#)

Kashmir Braces Up For Wet Spell

AGENCIES

Srinagar: The weatherman has predicted intermittent wet spells in Jammu and Kashmir until March 31, stating that two back-to-back Western Disturbances are going to affect the Union Territory from Wednesday evening. [More On P6](#)



Sheep graze amidst a blanket of fallen almond blossoms in south Kashmir's Pulwama. KO Photo Abid Bhat

'Withdrawal Of Troops, AFSPA'

Political Parties In J&K React To Shah's Statement

Promise Made In View Of LS polls: Omar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar: Two former chief ministers Wednesday welcomed the proposed revocation of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) from Jammu and Kashmir, but expressed fears that it might be just a poll promise of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Former chief minister and National Conference (NC) vice president Omar Abdullah said the promise of revoking the AFSPA has been made in view of the upcoming Lok Sabha polls as he feared that the people here would be cheated just like those in Ladakh were on the promise of the Sixth Schedule.

Another former chief minister and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti welcomed the Shah's statement but hoped it would not be a

"Jumelbaazi" like the BJP promise of providing two crore jobs in the country every year.

Both the leaders were reacting to local media reports that quoted Shah as saying that the BJP-led Centre will surely consider revoking the AFSPA from Jammu and Kashmir in the future.

"I am waiting for this day since 2011. We made a lot of efforts to remove the AFSPA (when he was the chief minister) as well, but I fear that the people of Jammu and Kashmir will be misled and cheated like the people of Ladakh were misled and cheated on the promise of the Sixth Schedule as elections are here," Abdullah told reporters in Budgam district.

The NC leader said the law, which gives widespread powers and immunity against prosecution to security forces in disturbed areas,

should be revoked right away in view of the statements made by central leaders about restoration of normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir.

"As far as revoking the AFSPA is concerned, start from today. When they say the situation is normal and militancy has ended and there is no separatist thought left, then what are they waiting for?" he asked.

Private television news channel -- Gulistan News -- quoted Shah as saying that "the situation is getting normal and we are speedily considering revoking the AFSPA from Jammu and Kashmir and a state of change is being considered".

The Lok Sabha polls are scheduled to be held in seven phases starting April 19.

Meanwhile, in a post on X, PDP chief Mufti said, "As a first step, the Central government can release journalists [More On P6](#)

Statehood For Ladakh

Sonam Wangchuk Announces 'Border March'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Leh: Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk on Wednesday announced the agitation to demand statehood for Ladakh will be intensified and a 'border march' will be held on April 7 in the eastern part of the Union territory to highlight ground realities, including alleged encroachments by China.

Wangchuk, who is part of the Leh-based Apex body that comprises social, religious and political organisations, said they are adopting the Gandhian approach in their agitation, which is vital to safeguard the fragile environment of the region and the indigenous character of its population.

"We are followers of (Mahatma) Gandhi's Satyagraha. We are

demanding the fulfilment of the promises made to us by this (BJP) government through its manifestos which led its candidates to win parliamentary polls (in 2019) and hill council polls in Leh (2020)," he told a gathering here.

The activist ended his 21-day-long hunger strike in support of the demand for statehood for Ladakh and its inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution on Tuesday evening.

"The first phase of the hunger strike will be followed by a chain hunger strike by women, youths, religious leaders and elders. On April 7, we will launch a march to Changthang (in the east of Leh along the border with China) like Gandhi's Dandi March under [More On P6](#)

Threat Of Cyber Attacks

Govt Orders Security Audit Of Websites

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar: The government on Wednesday ordered Administrative Departments, HoDs, Deputy Commissioners, Managing Directors of various PSUS, Boards and Corporations etc to ensure security audit of their departmental websites/applications through CERT-In empanelled agencies within a period of one month.

In a circular, the government said that the information Technology Department has time-and-again issued instructions to all the Administrative Departments/Heads of Departments/ Deputy Commissioners/ [More On P6](#)

NC Will Repeat 1977 Victory Against BJP, Its Subsidiary Parties: Omar

Says LS Polls A Chance To Show Rejection Of Art 370 Abrogation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar: The Parliamentary election is an opportunity for the people of Jammu and Kashmir to show their "rejection" of the Centre's August 5, 2019 decisions to abrogate Article 370 and divide the erstwhile state into two Union territories, NC vice president Omar Abdullah said on Wednesday.

"The upcoming general election provides us an opportunity to show our rejection for Gol's (Government of India's) August 5, 2019 actions," Abdullah said while addressing a



party function in central Kashmir's Budgam district.

He said while the party would come up with a road map to address the "mounting public woes" in the upcoming assembly elections "when they are held in August and September later this year", the Lok Sabha election is

about showing the country and the world that "the people of J-K did not approve of the August 5, 2019 decisions".

"We will come up with a manifesto to ease administrative discomfort, address soaring unemployment, sky-rocketing electricity bills during the run-up to assembly elections. This time it's about making our stance clear to powers in Delhi and the world that we didn't approve of the decisions of August 2019," Abdullah added.

The National Conference (NC) leader said the reason why the BJP and its [More On P6](#)

J&K Insurance Scam

HC Declines To Quash FIR Registered By CBI

MAHMAD

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Wednesday declined a plea by M/S Trinity Reinsurance Brokers Ltd to quash FIR registered by CBI against the company in alleged insurance scam regarding awarding of contracts for a group medical insurance scheme for government employees in erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The CBI has registered FIR in connection with corruption allegations levelled by former Satyapal Malik in the awarding of contracts for a group medical insurance scheme for government employees.

"...allegations levelled against the petitioner and other government officials as well as against RGICL (Reliance General Insurance Company Limited) which are required to be probed in detail and at this stage when investigation has not reached at the final stage and the investigating agency is still in the process of gathering evidence, the FIR cannot be quashed," a bench of Justice Rajnesh Oswal said.

In its plea, M/S Trinity Reinsurance Brokers Ltd said that there are no allegations against it in the FIR in respect of the commission of any offence whatsoever. It said that the premium paid to the RGICL was deducted from the salaries of the [More On P6](#)



Exposure To Outdoor Artificial Light At Night May Increase Risk Of Stroke

Press Trust Of India

People being continuously exposed to outdoor artificial light at night may be at a higher risk of having a stroke, a new research reviewing more than 28,000 adults in China has found. The researchers said the excessive use of artificial light for enhancing visibility at night has resulted in about 80 per cent of the world's population living in light-polluted environments. The team, including researchers from Zhejiang University School of Medicine, China, as-

sessed the adults' exposure to residential outdoor nighttime light using satellite images that mapped light pollution. Cases of stroke were confirmed by the hospital medical records and the death certificates, they said. Their analysis after following up the participants over a six-year period showed that 1,278 people developed cerebrovascular disease, including 777 ischemic (clot-caused) stroke cases and 133 hemorrhagic (bleeding) stroke cases. The people with the highest levels of exposure to outdoor light at night were also

found to have a 43 per cent increased risk of developing cerebrovascular disease compared to those with the lowest levels of exposure. "Our study suggests that higher levels of exposure to outdoor artificial light at night may be a risk factor for cerebrovascular disease," said Jian-Bing Wang, a researcher in the department of public health and department of endocrinology of the Children's Hospital, Zhejiang University School of Medicine, Hangzhou, China. "Therefore, we advise people,

especially those living in urban areas, to consider reducing that exposure to protect themselves from its potential harmful impact," said Wang, one of the corresponding authors of the study published in the journal 'Stroke'. Continuous exposure to artificial light from fluorescent, incandescent and LED sources can suppress the body's ability to produce melatonin -- the sleep-promoting hormone, thereby disrupting the 24-hour internal clock and impairing sleep, the researchers said. "We need to develop more

effective policies and prevention strategies to reduce the burden of disease from environmental factors such as light as well as air pollution, particularly for people living in the most densely populated, polluted areas around the world," said Wang. While light pollution has been previously studied to increase the risk of developing cardiovascular disease, the researchers said this was one of the first studies to explore the relationship between exposure to light pollution at night and the potential risk to brain health and stroke.

How Long Before Quantum Computers Can Benefit Society? That's Google's \$5 Million Question

The Conversation

Google and the XPrize Foundation have launched a competition worth US\$5 million (4 million) to develop real-world applications for quantum computers that benefit society by speeding up progress on one of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, for example. The principles of quantum physics suggest quantum computers could perform very fast calculations on particular problems, so this competition may expand the range of applications where they have an advantage over conventional computers.

In our everyday lives, the way nature works can generally be described by what we call classical physics. But nature behaves very differently at tiny quantum scales below the size of an atom. The race to harness quantum technology can be viewed as a new industrial revolution, progressing from devices that use the properties of classical physics to those utilising the weird and wonderful properties of quantum mechanics. Scientists have spent decades trying to develop new technologies by harnessing these properties.

Given how often we are told that quantum technologies will revolutionise our everyday lives, you may be surprised that we still have to search for practical applications by offering a prize. However, while there are numerous examples of success using quantum properties for enhanced precision in sensing and timing, there has been a surprising lack of progress in the development of quantum computers that outdo their classical predecessors.

The main bottleneck holding up this development is that the software using quantum algorithms needs to demonstrate an advantage over computers based on classical physics. This is commonly known as quantum advantage.

A crucial way quantum computing differs from classical computing is in using a property known as

entanglement. Classical computing uses bits to represent information. These bits consist of ones and zeros, and everything a computer does comprises strings of these ones and zeros. But quantum computing allows these bits to be in a superposition of ones and zeros. In other words, it is as if these ones and zeros occur simultaneously in the quantum bit, or qubit.

It is this property which allows computational tasks to be performed all at once. Hence the belief that quantum computing can offer a significant advantage over classical computing, as it is able to perform many computing tasks at the same time.

While performing many tasks simultaneously should lead to a performance increase over classical



computers, putting this into practice has proven more difficult than theory would suggest. There are actually only a few notable quantum algorithms which can perform their tasks better than those using classical physics.

The most notable are the BB84 protocol, developed in 1984, and Shor's algorithm, developed in 1994, both of which use entanglement to outperform classical algorithms on particular tasks.

The BB84 protocol is a cryptographic protocol a system for ensuring secure, private communication between two or more parties which is considered more secure than comparable classical algorithms.

Shor's algorithm uses entanglement to demonstrate how current classical encryption protocols can be broken, because they are based

on the factorisation of very large numbers. There is also evidence that it can perform certain calculations faster than similar algorithms designed for conventional computers.

Despite the superiority of these two algorithms over conventional ones, few advantageous quantum algorithms have followed. However, researchers have not given up trying to develop them. Currently, there are a couple of main directions in research.

The first is to use quantum mechanics to assist in what are called large-scale optimisation tasks. Optimisation finding the best or most effective way to solve a particular task is vital in everyday life, from ensuring traffic flow runs effectively, to managing operational procedures in factory pipelines, to streaming services deciding what to recommend to each user. It seems clear that quantum computers could help with these problems.

If we could reduce the computational time required to perform the optimisation, it could save energy, reducing the carbon footprint of the many computers currently performing these tasks around the world and the data centres supporting them.

Another development that could offer wide-reaching benefits is to use quantum computation to simulate systems, such as combinations of atoms, that behave according to quantum mechanics. Understanding and predicting how quantum systems work in practice could, for example, lead to better drug design and medical treatments.

Quantum systems could also lead to improved electronic devices. As computer chips get smaller, quantum effects take hold, potentially reducing the devices' performance. A better fundamental understanding of quantum mechanics could help avoid this.

While there has been significant investment in building quantum computers, there has been less focus on ensuring they will directly benefit the public. However, that now appears to be changing.

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class
Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth
Public Notice
 The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Pattan) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Zohra Shafi D/O Mohammad Shafi Dar R/o Nowpora Kalan Sopore Tehsil Sopore District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 11/05/2021 occurred at SDH Pattan. In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.
Executive Magistrate 1st Class
Naib Tehsildar Pattan
 fko_

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class
Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth
Public Notice
 The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Pattan) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Hoorain Bilal D/O Bilal Ahmad Gojri R/o Chichilora Tehsil Kwarhama District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 02/11/2021 occurred at SDH Pattan. In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.
Executive Magistrate 1st Class
Naib Tehsildar Pattan
 fko_

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class
Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth
Public Notice
 The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Pattan) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Mukadis Manzoor S/o Manzoor Ahmad R/o Hanjiwera Bala Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 11/03/2024 occurred at SDH Pattan. In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.
Executive Magistrate 1st Class
Naib Tehsildar Pattan
 fko_

PUBLIC NOTICE
 Public Notice I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Municipal Committee Magam within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Bilal Hussain Yatoo (DOB: 21-03-1994) BMG
 S/o Mohd Jaffar Yatoo R/o Yagipora Magam

PUBLIC NOTICE
 I have lost my RC bearing R/C No:- DL8CAE-7323 , during traveling for Tragpora - Rohama . Now I want change my Registration Certificate form Arto Delhi to Arto Baramulla the NOC of the same Vehicle has been transferred to ARTO Baramulla vide NOC No:- DL-2024-NOC-3190A ,if any body has any objection in this regard he/she may Contact ARTO Baramulla within 7 days from the publication of this Notice after that no objection she be entertained.
 Ahmad Azeem bmg_r
 S/o Mohmmad Azeem
 R/o Lalpora Kunzer

PUBLIC NOTICE
 The name of ward has been wrongly written in his school records as Sibtain Abbas while his correct name is Sibtain Abbas Khutoo which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Legends School Of Education Kanitar Sadrabal Hazratbal Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Aijaz Hussain Kuthoo inf
 F/o Sibtain Abbas Kuthoo
 R/o Mufti Bagh Barji Payeen Harwan Srinagar

PUBLIC NOTICE
 The name of ward has been wrongly written in his school records as Dayim Raza Kuthoo S/o Ajaz Hussain while his correct name is Dayim Raza Kuthoo S/o Ajaz Hussain Kuthoo which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Legends School Of Education Kanitar Sadrabal Hazratbal Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Ajaz Hussain Kuthoo inf
 F/o Dayim Raza Kuthoo
 R/o Mufti Bagh Barji Payeen Harwan Srinagar

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI
 (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)
Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.
PUBLIC NOTICE
 The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of NISARA BEGUM D/O MOHD IBRAHIM SOFI R/O AUT-HOORA Tehsil kreeri Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth, as 02/01/1972 and event has been shown to be occurred at home for issuance of delay order. In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine
Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri
 NJ

website: www.ik.Prisons.org Phone FAX
 email: jk.prison@gmail.com Srinagar (May-Oct) 0194-2457969 2457811
 Jammu (Nov-Apr) 0191-2561004 - 2561008

Government Of Jammu And Kashmir
Office Of The Director General Of Police,
Prisons Department, J&K

3rd Extension Notice
Subject:- Supply of Dietary items to Central Jail Srinagar.
Ref:- This office E-NIT No. 01 of 2024 dated: 14.02.2024 , 1st

Extension Notice No. Acctts/N/7407473/10936 dt. 07.03.2024 and 2nd extension Notice No. Acctts/N/7407473/11220 dt. 15.03.2024

Due to poor response, it is notified for the information of all concerned that the dates of online submission, and date of opening of technical bids in respect of e-Nit No. 01 of 2024 dated: 14.02.2024 for supply Dietary items to Central Jail Srinagar are extended as under:-

1 Bid submission documents End Date and time	03.04.2024 upto 1800 Hrs
2 Date and Time of opening of Technical Bids in online mode	04.04.2024 1400 Hrs in the office of Director General of Prison J&K

All other terms and conditions of the e-NIT shall remain unchanged.

No. Acctts/N/7407473/ 11515
 DIPK-18230/23
 Dated: 27-03-2024

Financial Advisor/CAO
 Prisons Department J&K,
 Jammu,

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir
 Tel:0194-2315378, e-mail: ddtreg123@gmail.com.

Sub:- Application for inclusion of partners in the registration certificate of Hotel "Royal Apartments" located at Rajbagh, Near Presentation Convent School, Srinagar.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Mr Naseer Ahmad Shah S/o Gh. Qadir Shah R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar has approached this office for inclusion of partners namely Mr. Arsalan Shah and Mr. Bakhtawar Shah in the registration certificate of hotel under the name and style "Royal Apartments" located at Rajbagh, Near Presentation Convent School, Srinagar;

Whereas, the Hotel has been registered with this Department in the name of Mr Naseer Ahmad Shah S/o Gh. Qadir Shah R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar on 15.10.2016 vide Registration No. JKHT00001534 and the Registration Certificate is renewed upto 31.12.2022;

Whereas, the applicant has submitted documents including Character Certificates of new incumbent, Partnership Deed executed before sub-registrar, Domicile Certificates, Aadhar Cards, Pan Card of the unit;

Whereas, inclusion of name of Mr. Arsalan Shah and Mr. Bakhtawar Shah in the registration certificate of the said hotel is for purpose of running operation management of the said hotel and do not confer any right of ownership upon the registration certificate holders;

Now therefore, in exercise of powers conferred on me under section 39 of J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/2012, before changes are made in the registration records of this Department in respect of inclusion of partners namely Mr. Arsalan Shah and Mr. Bakhtawar Shah in the registration certificate of the above named hotel and issuance of registration certificate bearing names of Mr. Naseer Ahmad Shah S/o Gh. Qadir Shah, Mr. Arsalan Shah S/o Rouf Ahmad Shah and Mr. Bakhtawar Shah S/o Rouf Ahmad Shah, the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/Financial Institutions/ Banks/ Development Authorities/ PHE Department/ Electric Department that in case of any objection/s, the same should reach the office of undersigned within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objections beyond a period of 07 days will be entertained and the request of the applicant will be considered under rules, after submission of requisite documents.

Sd/-
 Assistant Director Tourism,
 Registration

No:Reg/1083/994/DTK
 DIPK-18222/23
 Dated:27.03.2024

Over 51,000 Tourists Visit Tulip Garden In 5 Days

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Asia's largest tulip garden in Kashmir Valley has seen a remarkable influx of tourists, with more than 51,000 visitors gracing its vibrant blooms since its opening on March 23, officials said. They said that despite the ongoing holy month of Ramadan, tourists, both local and international, have flocked to witness the spectacular display of tulips. The garden, managed by Khan Mudassir, has witnessed an unprecedented response from visitors within the first five days of its opening, with 51,786 enthusiasts exploring its winding pathways and colorful floral arrangements. To further enchant visitors, the floriculture department has introduced five new varieties of tulips, adding to the garden's allure. To streamline the visitor

experience and reduce long queues, the garden's management has introduced online ticket processing, a move that has been warmly welcomed by tourists. Additionally, to promote educational visits, a special 20% discount on tickets has been extended to students until April 10, announced by the contract overseeing the garden. Moreover, visitors have lauded the efforts of the government in ensuring a seamless and enjoyable experience, expressing their satisfaction with the arrangements made. "Despite challenges such as pre-booked accommodations hindering travel to Kashmir, the garden is expected to surpass last year's record of 366,000 visitors," the officials said, adding, "With an all-time high in tourist numbers, they anticipate a further surge in visitors after Eid."



Abid Bhat/KO

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092, 2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488, 2452222, 2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS

SHIEKH UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

RAILWAYS

- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BIJBHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

- Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)
- Mughal Road - (Closed)
- Srinagar-Leh - (Open)

HIJRI CALENDAR
17 - Ramadan
1445

PRAYERS

FAJR	5:00
ZUHR	12:36
ASR	5:01
Magrib	6:51
ISHA	8:12

LS POLLS-2024

Polling Station Wise Review Of Preparedness Held In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In order to review the progress of preparation being put in place with regard to conduct of upcoming Lok Sabha Elections for 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency, a meeting was today held under the Chairmanship of the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex here. The DEO took a detailed appraisal from all Assistant Returning Officers about the arrangements being made at Polling Stations, Strong Rooms and Counting Centre's in Srinagar. He also took stock of the on-going SVEEP campaign in the district. On the occasion, the DEO stressed on ensuring all requisite/Assured Minimum Facilities(AMF) facilities at the all 929 designated polling stations, besides making welfare measures for the polling staff on polling day as per the laid guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI). He asked them to formulate a comprehensive action plan for the welfare of polling staff well in advance. He also asked the Nodal Officer SVEEP/AMF to further intensify awareness campaigns to encourage young voters for maximum voting turnout. The DEO directed the AROs and Officers of R&B, PDD, PHE and others concerned to work with utmost

coordination to complete all assigned tasks related to the conduct of the Lok Sabha elections-2024. He stressed that Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) should be ensured for PwD Voters at each and every Polling Station viz. Permanent ramps, drinking water, toilet facilities as per norms of ECI. Dr Bilal enjoined upon the Nodal Officer Postal Ballot and all AROs to take up all necessary arrangements for facilitating voting by Postal Ballots by various categories of Voters including service voters, personnel on Poll Duty (EDC), migrant electors, absent electors, etc so that they exercise their franchise without any difficulty. He stressed the officers to focus on meticulous preparations and maximum voter participation to reflect the commitment of conducting a successful Lok Sabha Election in 2024 in the district. The DEO emphasized officers to uphold electoral laws, regulations and ethical standards to ensure the integrity and fairness of the electoral process. With regard to the training of polling staff, the DEO asked for setting up of facilitation centres in all tanning centres of all 9 Assembly segments of the District. The meeting was attended by all Assistant Returning Officers, Superintendent of Police, Deputy District Election Officer, Nodal Officer, SVEEP/AMF, Officers of R&B, PDD, PHE, besides other concerned.

Poll Staff Imparted Training On Handling Of EVMs, VVPAT Machines

SRINAGAR: Ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections, a series of training sessions on proficient handling of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines for polling staff were today held in all Assembly Segments of Srinagar District. At Government College of Education, the Training session was conducted under the supervision of District Election Officer (DEO), Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to impart the necessary training to the designated polling staff on efficient operation of EVMs and VVPAT machines in the upcoming elections.

On the occasion, practical demonstration was given to the participant trainees regarding the functioning of EVMs and VVPAT machines to boost their understanding and proficiency in managing the voting process. Speaking at the occasion, the Deputy District Election Officer highlighted the importance of election training to the polling staff. He said training enables polling officials to understand the election system, learn handling and operation of EVMs to ensure an error-free election process. He also educated participants about their role and responsibilities in the fair and free conduct of elections.

SKIMS Soura Urges People To Use Online Appointment System

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: SKIMS Soura on Wednesday urged people, intending to visit the health facility for treatment, to make use of the Online Appointment System. A spokesman in a statement said "It is to inform masses in need to visit SKIMS for treatment in any specialty except for General Medicine and General Surgery are requested to make optimal use of the Online Appointment System." It was further said that the patients need to first register at the SKIMS MRD counter and then they can book an appointment online at the link <https://patient-appointments.skims.ac.in/PatientAppointment/patientAppointment/index>. We request all to cooperate and help us to serve you better, it added.

Youth Found Dead At Home In Habba Kadal

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A 20-year-old youth was found dead at his home in Karfali Mohalla area of Srinagar's Habba Kadal here this morning, officials said. An official said the youth identified as Rayees Ahmad Dar (20), son of Mushtaq Ahmed Dar, was found dead under mysterious circumstances at his residence at Habba Kadal. He said the body has been sent for postmortem to ascertain the cause of death. Police have taken cognizance of the incident and investigation has been initiated.

Mirwaiz To address Faithful At Eidgah Aali Masjid Today

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Umar Farooq will address the faithful at the historic Aali Masjid Srinagar on Thursday, 17th Ramadan-ul-Mubarak, after the Zuhr prayer until Asr, in commemoration of the Youmul Badr and the 57th passing away anniversary of Muhajir-e-Millat Mirwaiz Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Shah (RA). According to a statement issued here, Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid Srinagar in a statement said the esteemed scholars of the valley will speak on the occasion. It has urged the people to participate in the event.

POST HOLI FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2024

For the convenience of the passengers Northern Railway will run the following Festival Special Trains during the post Holi period. The details are as under :-

TRAIN NO.	STATIONS	TRIP
04088/04087	Delhi Jn. - Saharsa Jn. - Delhi Jn.	02 Trips
Unreserved Special Express Train		
TRAIN NO. 04088	ARR. DEP.	TRAIN NO. 04087
---	23:00	ARR. DEP.
---	23:00	Delhi Jn.
---	03:15	ARR. DEP.
---	03:15	Saharsa Jn.
---	07:30	---
Days of Run : 04088 Ex. Delhi Jn. on 28.03.2024 and 04087 Ex. Saharsa Jn. on 30.03.2024.		
Accommodation : General.		
Stoppages : Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur, Gonda Jn., Basti, Gorakhpur Jn., Siwan Jn., Chhapra Jn., Hajipur Jn., Muzaffarpur Jn., Samastipur Jn., Barauni Jn., Begusarai, Khagaria Jn., Mansi Jn. and Simri Bakhtiyarpur stations.		
05551/05552	Saharsa Jn. - Anand Vihar (T) - Saharsa Jn.	02 Trips
Special Express Train		
TRAIN NO. 05551	ARR. DEP.	TRAIN NO. 05552
---	09:30	ARR. DEP.
---	09:30	Saharsa Jn.
---	05:15	ARR. DEP.
---	05:15	Anand Vihar (T)
---	09:30	---
Days of Run : 05551 Ex. Saharsa Jn. on 28.03.2024 and 05552 Ex. Anand Vihar (T) on 29.03.2024.		
Accommodation : General.		
Stoppages : Simri Bakhtiyarpur, Khagaria Jn., Begusarai, Barauni Jn., Hajipur Jn., Chhapra, Gorakhpur Jn., Basti, Gonda Jn., Sitapur Jn., Moradabad and Ghaziabad stations.		
05575/05576	Saharsa Jn. - Anand Vihar (T) - Saharsa Jn.	02 Trips
Special Express Train		
TRAIN NO. 05575	ARR. DEP.	TRAIN NO. 05576
---	09:30	ARR. DEP.
---	09:30	Saharsa Jn.
---	05:15	ARR. DEP.
---	05:15	Anand Vihar (T)
---	09:30	---
Days of Run : 05575 Ex. Saharsa Jn. on 29.03.2024 and 05576 Ex. Anand Vihar (T) on 30.03.2024.		
Accommodation : AC 3 Tier & Sleeper.		
Stoppages : Simri Bakhtiyarpur, Khagaria Jn., Begusarai, Barauni Jn., Hajipur Jn., Chhapra, Gorakhpur Jn., Basti, Gonda Jn., Sitapur Jn., Moradabad and Ghaziabad stations.		
05119/05120	Chhapra - Anand Vihar (T) - Chhapra	02 Trips
Special Train		
TRAIN NO. 05119	ARR. DEP.	TRAIN NO. 05120
---	17:45	ARR. DEP.
---	17:45	Chhapra
---	11:50	ARR. DEP.
---	11:50	Anand Vihar (T)
---	14:50	---
Days of Run : 05119 Ex. Chhapra on 29.03.2024 and 05120 Ex. Anand Vihar (T) on 30.03.2024.		
Accommodation : AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & General.		
Stoppages : Siwan, Deoria, Gorakhpur, Khalilabad, Basti, Gonda, Burhwal, Sitapur Jn., Bareilly Jn. and Moradabad stations.		
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This Day In History

- 1809 - Peninsular War: France defeats Spain in the Battle of Medelin.
- 1845 - Mexico drops diplomatic relations with US
- 1854 - Britain & France declare war on Russia (Crimean War)
- 1866 - 1st ambulance goes into service
- 1885 - US Salvation Army officially organized
- 1891 - 1st world weightlifting championship held
- 1904 - Japanese troops advance in Korea, defeat the Russians at Chengliu, and capture the town
- 1910 - 1st seaplane, takes off from water at Martinique France (Henri Fabre)
- 1913 - Guatemala becomes a signatory to the Buenos Aires copyright treaty.
- 1920 - Anton Denkin's White Russian troops defeated by Bolsheviks/Soviets at Novorossiysk on the Black Sea (The British aid Denkin in his escape)

From KO Archives

Soz Revolts, Blasts Farooq Abdullah's Decision 'Insult To Kashmir Genius'

Observer News Service

NEW DELHI: Senior National Conference leader and former union minister Saifu-ud-din Soz, today revolted against his party leadership's decision to support the BJP led government at the center and made an "impassioned" appeal to Farooq Abdullah to "reconsider your stand" in the interests of people of Kashmir. "RSS will continue to guide and inspire the destiny" of the Vajpayee government" and the contention of Farooq Abdullah that he needed maximum support (funds) from the center, for the welfare of the state and had this compulsion for supporting the BJP government "is fraught with dangerous consequences", Soz said in a strongly worded statement issued here late this afternoon. He said that "short run political and economic gains involving many awkward compromises are no substitutes for long term and enduring political assertions" adding that even after Abdullah offered his party's support to the BJP, there was "no guarantee" that the ruling alliance will support National Conference commitment to restore internal autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir. "I don't think that Farooq is naive and does not understand that, in response to a coalition consensus, the BJP has just temporarily put the abrogation of Art. 370, uniform civil code and Ram Mandir on a back burner", Soz said in his statement. The four-time Lok Sabha member and "official spokesman" of the National Conference, Soz, is said to have tried his best in last few days to convince Abdullah against taking any "hasty decision" on extending support to Vajpayee government. Soz is learnt to have been in touch with other senior National Conference leaders on this issue and most of them, including some senior ministers of Farooq government are reported to be in unanimity with Soz's stand. Soz, sources said talked to Farooq on phone late last evening and this morning, but seems to have failed in persuading his leader to change the stand. Soz, as already reported, attended the meetings of the United Front, even after Farooq Abdullah declared to have severed his relations with the Front, regretted that Abdullah took such a major decision without taking into confidence his senior party colleagues and also putting the issue before the party working committee, highest decision making body. This stance of Farooq Abdullah, not convening the party working committee before taking such an important decision "is an insult to the genius" of the people of Kashmir, Soz said and asked "are the people of Jammu and Kashmir supposed to live at the mercy of a central government of the day?" Soz also charged Farooq Abdullah with "misquoting" his father, Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, in dealing with the center. "All the Sheikh said was that center and state should endeavor to maintain a harmonious relation within the frame work of center-state relations", Soz said and added that Farooq was "mistaken in his belief that generally people have short memories. He said that Farooq's announcement that he would be placing the issue of extending support to BJP after having taking the final decision himself, was "nothing short of adding insult to the injury". Soz advised Farooq Abdullah, to reconsider his decision, "even at this late stage" and try to appreciate the fact that "short run political or economic gains involving many awkward promises are no substitute for long term and enduring pro-people assertions which always rest on calm reflections and cool thinking". "My worry is that Doctor Sahib, in his hurry to drove-tail short run situations of advantage with his politics of compromise, might cripple the very goose that invariably laid the golden eggs for him", Soz said. (Kashmir Observer, 28 March, 1998)

KASHMIR OBSERVERTM

Thursday | 28-03-2024

Listen To Ladakh

The 21-day hunger strike of the renowned climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, demanding protections for Ladakh's ecology and culture, has brought to the forefront the union territory's disillusionment with the post-Article 370 state of affairs.

Wangchuk's fast symbolized a desperate plea for attention to Ladakh's plight. The urgency of preserving Ladakh's fragile ecosystem amid India's ongoing tensions with China cannot be overstated. Wangchuk's advocacy extends beyond environmental concerns; it reveals a larger anxiety about the preservation of Ladakh's identity and autonomy.

The jubilation that greeted the bifurcation from Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 has given way to disillusionment, as the promises of empowerment and decentralization remain unfulfilled. Wangchuk's journey from endorsing the Union Territory status to advocating for greater constitutional protections mirrors the collective sentiment of Ladakhi society.

Central to Ladakh's identity struggle is the demand for statehood and inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. These aspirations stem from a deep-seated desire for self-governance and cultural preservation. The unity between the Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance reflects a rare consensus born out of shared grievances and aspirations.

Yet, Ladakh's quest for recognition faces formidable obstacles. The reluctance of the central governments to address these demands shows a broader pattern of neglect towards border regions. Ladakh's struggle for constitutional rights poses a moment of reckoning for New Delhi, necessitating a nuanced approach that balances regional autonomy with national imperatives.

The solution lies not in stonewalling legitimate demands but addressing them by moving to protect the region's unique heritage. Wangchuk's hunger strike, culminating after three weeks, serves as a poignant reminder of the pressing issues facing Ladakh – issues that demand urgent attention and concerted action.

In Ladakh, the underlying issue of ecological conservation intertwines with the region's quest for identity. Its tribes find themselves at the frontline of environmental degradation and encroachment. The loss of grazing lands to Chinese ingress along the LAC, is an existential threat to their way of life. Wangchuk's call for a border march of "10,000 Ladakhis" for an "on-ground check" of this encroachment, likely on March 27 is to highlight the region's current troubles. He has urged prime minister Narendra Modi and home minister Amit Shah to act not as politicians but as statesmen.

The turn of events in Ladakh has created a difficult situation for the union government. It can't be seen extending constitutional safeguards to Ladakh which could trigger similar demands from the other regions. At the same time, it is crucial for the union government to work towards a solution that ensures Ladakh's constitutional rights and preserves their cultural identity.



The Rise of Social Media Reporters Has Journalism Lost Its Credibility?

Ikkz Ikbal

Amidst the hustle and bustle of the streets of downtown, a scene unfolded recently. He was pursuing his target with a mobile phone's camera in one hand and a microphone, tightly gripped, in another one. And she was in distress and anguish, covering her face to avoid his lens and the people around.

"Why are you hiding from the camera?", he asked her in an accusing tone.

"Don't you want to tell your side of the story?"

"I just want to be left alone," she stammered, her voice trembling with emotions.

"I have done nothing wrong. Please, stop."

His loud voice and camera lens directed at her face was enough to overpower her. His questions were awkwardly annoying. He seemed oblivious to her distress and was in pursuit of sensationalism for views.

Is this Journalism?

Journalism is a noble profession and cardinal in every functional democracy. It plays a pivotal role in ensuring accountability and is at its core, pro-public.

But in today's digital age, social media has brought in new challenges in the process of revolutionising news and information consumption.

Everyone possesses a camera phone and this has enabled a good precedent for citizen journalism. However, a line is being crossed in the name of journalism. It has crossed all levels of decency and is borderline harassment now.

The so-called self-made "Facebook Journalists" or social media reporters are growing rapidly. Everyone is quick to

take out their phone and report events, share opinions or even conduct investigations.

This has led to Journalism losing credibility drastically in Kashmir, especially over the last few years. This has given rise to ethical and professional concerns.

Usually, the "Social Media Journalists" lack formal training and accreditation. Gone are the days when Journalists would check and double-check sources, or take time to develop a story. Gone are the days when they would always adhere to an established code of conduct.

These self-proclaimed reporters on social media platforms lack basic knowledge and ethical framework essential to responsible journalism. Without a certificate or degree in journalism, these individuals may inadvertently perpetuate misinformation, engage in sensationalism, or even resort to defamation in their pursuit of views and engagement.

The instantaneous nature of social media journalism where everything must be shared NOW, sometimes leads to disastrous consequences. The harm caused by irresponsible reporting is inevitable. The race of breaking news first without fact checking and accuracy leads to spreading rumors and falsehood. Some individuals engage in harassment and character assassination.

The advent of Social Media Journalism raises fundamental questions about the credibility and integrity of the fourth estate. However, all hope is not lost for the future of journalism. As the concerns about misinformation and unethical behavior in Journalism rise, the importance of media literacy and ethical guidelines has become

the need of the hour. Initiatives need to be made for the promotion of responsible journalism. The masses must distinguish between credible sources and fake journalism. A collective effort is required to uphold the principles of journalistic integrity.

As we navigate the complexity of modern journalism, it is crucial to know that the democratization of journalism brings both opportunities and responsibilities. While many social media influencers have participated in public discourse like never before. There is a need for robust ethical standards and critical journalistic literacy.

The credibility of journalism depends not on the medium through which it is presented, but on the principles of accuracy, fairness and accountability.

While holding your smartphone in your hand, journalists must uphold these principles to safeguard the integrity of their profession and earn the trust of their audience.

In an era where the distinction between citizens and journalists is becoming increasingly blurred, it becomes crucial for all of us to critically evaluate the information we consume and to demand integrity, transparency and ethical behavior from journalists. Only through collective vigilance and a commitment to truth can we ensure that journalism fulfills its essential role in a democratic society.

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

Ikkz Ikbal has a PG in Biotechnology and is Administrator in Maryam Memorial Institute



Saving Decisions Did you know ?

Irshad Mushtaq

It is crucial to acknowledge the importance of establishing saving habits early and making informed investment decisions in order to take advantage of the power of compounding. The accumulation of wealth through saving and investing can help to fulfill significant financial obligations such as funding higher education for children, covering the expenses of a daughter's marriage, and providing for retirement income. Regrettably, contemporary society often prioritizes consumption, emphasizing luxury items and unnecessary spending on assets that depreciate in value, while also accumulating debt through credit card payments, loan installments, and various other forms of borrowing. This excessive spending not only increases financial strain but also negatively impacts long-term financial well-being. By comprehending the significance of saving and investing wisely, we can ensure that our assets are generating returns. For instance, land in Kashmir has historically provided double-digit annual returns through compounding, such as when the selling price of land in areas like Lal Bazar and Hyderpora increased from approximately Rs 10 lakh to Rs 2.50 crore over 20 years, which represents a 17.50% investment. In the year 2004 today, 2024, in gold, a historical return of 11.50% over 20 years makes the value 88.20 lakh, meaning 8 times. Bank fixed deposit, with an average return of 8.5% annually over 20 years, becomes 51.12 lakh (adjusted for inflation) - 5 times. So, it's clear that in the bank 5 times, gold 8 times, and land 25 times. If money is not saved and spent on unnecessary things like loan EMIs and car loans, there will be a deficit in the future when it is needed to discharge liabilities. Hence, it is compulsory to always save at least 33% of total savings and invest this amount in appreciating assets before buying depreciating assets. It is crucial to understand which asset class can give us a return of 15% to 20% annually, for the next 10-20 years. The answer is simple: our investment in quality equity mutual funds, as the Indian economy is growing in terms of technology, government initiatives, infrastructure, artificial intelligence, and electric vehicles. One should start a SIP in mutual funds so that earnings should be at least 12% to 20% annually through compounding. For example, if someone saves 10,000 per month for 20 years, the total saving would be 24 lakhs. At a 15% annual return, it becomes 1.08 crores; at 18% per annum, it becomes 1.92 crores, and a one-time investment of 24 lakhs for the next 20 years at 18% becomes 6.57 crores (27 times in 20 years). If 15% annually, then 24 lakhs at 15% for 20 years becomes 3.92 crores (16 times).

It is imperative to prioritize saving at least 33% of our overall income. Additionally, we should aim for a double-digit annual return of 15-18%. By minimizing unnecessary loans on depreciating assets and carefully monitoring our spending, we can effectively maintain our financial well-being.

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“In an era where the distinction between citizens and journalists is becoming increasingly blurred, it becomes crucial for all of us to critically evaluate the information we consume and to demand integrity, transparency and ethical behavior from journalists”



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Work Life Imbalance

Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy's recent suggestion for "70-hours-work-a-week" among Indian youngsters will no doubt boost productivity, but it will certainly affect the balance of work-life approach, which is equally important. Unsurprisingly Mr. Murthy's comments have evoked a nationwide controversy, with many have criti-

cised his idea. In fact, a Bengaluru-based Cardiologist wrote in his X (formerly Twitter) account saying, "such an inhumane working hours can create a whole generation with a host of heart-related comorbidities." The Cardiologist's comment gains prominence, as WHO says that India accounts for at least one-fifth of the 17.9 million cardiovascular disease-

related deaths globally, especially in the younger generation. Currently, India's labour codes mandate that workers put in 8-hours of work a day, capping the weekly work hours at 48. Despite this, global data shows that India ranks fifth in the world among countries with long working hours. Research has revealed that productivity falls sharply after 50

hours per week, and drops off a cliff after 55 hours. Rather than extended working hours, a streamlined approach with set working hours will work for large enterprises that have plentiful resources.

Ranganathan Sivakumar

Make Mosques Inclusive Again

Amir Suhail Wani

The life and teachings of the Prophet of Islam and the Quran demonstrate the inclusive, merciful and compassionate nature of Islam. Within the holy life of the Prophet himself, we come across incidents where the Prophet embraced not only marginalised and oppressed but his enemies and the enemies of Islam too, with the spirit of extending the canopy of mercy to all. This tradition has lately waned away and what we see is stark and ugly growth of ideology in the guise of Islam that is interested in exclusion more than inclusion – a circle under implosion. When one talks of Islam, one is inadvertently driven to the institution of the mosque and the overt and covert manifestations of exclusion in this Islamic institution of primary social importance. Mosques in Islam, aren't simply sacred spaces devoted to worship, but importantly, they function as indispensable social institutions within Islamic society with diverse social functions attached to them. But what has been tragically happening for quite some time now is that Mosques are turning more and more exclusive, closing their doors, literally as well as symbolically to those who otherwise need these spaces the most. A halo of hollow piety and misplaced religiosity has turned spaces of inclusion into spaces of exclusion, thereby violating the very essence of Mosques and demeaning their role and importance in Muslim societies.

Quran described the Prophet as one who cleanses people's hearts of filth, removing the unwanted substances from their souls and teaching them the book (The Quran). This explicitly translates into the fact that the responsibility of the men of the pulpit (Maulanas) isn't only to dispense, like a machine, the subtleties of religion to people. They are expected and supposed to act as models as well as sculptures of moral sublimity and ethical perfection. But this is possible only when our preachers are ready to accept humans as humans with all their fallacies and shortcomings. It is very much antithetical to the spirit of Islam to engage in "moral profiling" and ignore those who do not fit into these profiles. The need is instead to open hearts for those who stand in need of support and guidance, those who want to turn to their creator, mend their



Kashmir Observer



THE YOUNG GENERATION, RAISED UP IN MODERN ACADEMIA AS THEY ARE, ARE CONDESCENDING ABOUT RELIGION, DESPITE THEIR POORER UNDERSTANDING OF THE SAME. This bilateral ignorance has widened the gulf between the youth and the scholars, bringing them at loggerheads with one another.

ways and rebuild themselves but are not shown acceptance at the Mosques or by religious clerics. This has had a regressive impact on how our youth engage with religion and in turn with society and ultimately themselves. The exclusion and rejection they endure stiffens them in their behavioural patterns and having been deprived of their right to mercy, participation and inclusion, they end up messing their lives, the lives of people around them and the society at large. This is not merely a hypothetical construct, but a real life issue which plays out in society now and then. It is not the prerogative of fallible humans to enumerate the criteria for inclusion/exclusion and then classify people

into either of these classes. The realistic and only acceptable attitude for a preacher (Da'ee) is to leave open all portals of mercy and all avenues of inclusion. The transformation that the Prophet ushered by embracing those who were otherwise apparently not eligible for the same initiated one of the greatest revolutions in human history. A historian has described the companions of the Prophet as "nursery of heroes", but when one looks at their pre-Islamic career, they appear to be no more than ordinary tribesmen, at perpetual war with one another. Thus Islam is an alchemy of transformation, transforming the baser humans into paragons of humanity. It is not intelligible to Islam to pre-classify people

into pious and wicked and prefer former over latter in an attempt of social Reformation and moral upliftment. It is an eye-opener to those religious men of our times who behave otherwise and in so doing tamper the spirit and essence of religion and scripture.

The last century has seen the sprouting of various religious movements in Islam emphasising inclusion and participation of one and all in the marathon of salvation. In the wake of these movements, the Mosques turned more inclusive, participatory and liberating, extending themselves to socially marginalised, religiously oppressed and underprivileged. In this way, the Mosques to some extent restored their social functionalism and

cultural dynamism. But a crass misgiving characterising these movements was that like their predecessors, they paid little or no attention to gender inclusion and left out of the religious sentiments and issues of half of the population unaddressed. The fact was glossed over and forgotten that Islam rose to the occasion as an emancipatory and inclusive movement, including within the horizons of its messages all diversities of Cast, Creed, Gender, Geography and Ethnicity. But the passage of time blinded Muslims to these brighter of their religion and Muslim obsession with issues of little importance blinded them to the compassionate and ever embracing aspects of religion.

It is no impossibility that the religion which harbours inclusion, equality, social dynamism and the cultural compatibility will rise and reassert these liberating values again. But this path to liberating praxis is beset with ignorance of the fundamental and essential teachings of religion both on part of schol-

ars and the youth. Our scholars, well versed in the traditional sciences as they are, are equally unaware of the challenges that modern world has thrown open at the religion. The young generation, raised up in modern academia as they are, are condescending about religion, despite their poorer understanding of the same. This bilateral ignorance has widened the gulf between the youth and the scholars, bringing them at loggerheads with one another. The way out to bridge this gap lies in revisiting the schemes – both of religious and secular education. The path to reconciliation and inclusion has to pass through the meadows of learning and understanding.

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

The author is a freelancer, R&D Engineer and comparative studies scholar

MY STORY

Transforming Life Through Fitness and Dedication

Rameez Rasool

Welcome to the realm of fitness and vitality, where the gym serves as a haven for strength and renewal. More than just a place for physical activity, the gym embodies a sanctuary for self-improvement and overall wellness. Here, individuals embark on transformative journeys, shaping both body and mind through exercise and sports.

The gym is celebrated as the ultimate destination for those seeking to rejuvenate their lives, offering a plethora of benefits that transcend mere physicality. Regular exercise at the gym is scientifically proven to enhance energy levels, uplift mood, and promote holistic well-being. It acts as a crucible for muscle development, where every repetition and lift contribute to a stronger, healthier self.

My enthusiasm for the gym began during my university days while pursuing post-graduation in 2019 at the University of Kashmir. Residing in the hostel, I received invaluable advice from my professor, Dr. Sarafraz, on study techniques, time management, and maintaining a schedule. One particularly crucial suggestion was to be mindful of



overeating, a habit often acquired during university life spent primarily studying.

Despite heeding most of his advice, I neglected to regulate my calorie intake, resulting in significant weight gain, reaching 92 kg. My physique suffered, impacting my performance in physical tests for roles like the police and army. Criticisms regarding my ap-

pearance, including from my professor, left me feeling uncomfortable and disappointed.

DETERMINED TO CHANGE

I joined the nearest gym with a serious mindset. Observing younger individuals assisting me with respect motivated me to fully commit to my workout routines and follow the instructions pro-

vided by my coach diligently. I immersed myself in recommended workout videos and adhered to the schedule and guidelines with earnest dedication.

My coach, with his affectionate demeanor, extensive qualifications, and knowledge, greatly impressed me. His appreciation for my dedication and respectful attitude further

fuelled my determination to excel in my fitness journey.

After consistently working out for three months, I've achieved significant results, including stronger muscles, improved fitness, and a more defined physique. I've also managed to reduce my weight to 62 kg. I always follow my coach's guidance and stick to a proper diet plan.

This journey has been incredibly rewarding, with widespread appreciation and respect from others. Many influential individuals have reached out to me seeking advice on weight loss. Additionally, the gym owner recognized my efforts by featuring me on the official page. Relatives and acquaintances have commended my dedication to shedding weight.

RISING ABOVE CHALLENGES

This journey has been profoundly beautiful and motivating, yet challenges are essential for progress. In the beginning, I encountered difficulties in handling my finances, daily schedule, and adjusting to a new diet. As I embarked on this journey, I also established a new kitchen. Occasionally, my family struggled with my working style, causing irritation. Nonetheless, as I achieved positive outcomes, these challenges faded, and my family found happiness in my accomplishments. They now affectionately refer to me as a true athlete.

In conclusion, my journey from struggling with weight gain and criticism to achieving significant physical and mental transformation through dedication to fitness has been nothing short of remarkable.

The gym, with its supportive environment and knowledgeable coaches, provided me with the tools and guidance necessary to overcome obstacles and reach my goals.

Through perseverance and commitment, I not only shed excess weight but also gained strength, confidence, and a renewed sense of purpose. The challenges I faced along the way served as stepping stones rather than stumbling blocks, teaching me valuable lessons about discipline, resilience, and the power of self-belief.

As I continue to embrace this lifestyle of health and vitality, I am grateful for the unwavering support of my family, the encouragement of my coach, and the inspiration of those around me. My journey serves as a testament to the transformative potential of the gym as a sanctuary for self-improvement and holistic well-being.

May my story inspire others to embark on their own fitness journeys, to rise above challenges, and to discover the limitless possibilities that await them on the path to a stronger, healthier, and more fulfilling life.

Rameez Rasool Mir is a Social Worker and Poet from Lolab Valley and can be reached at rameezmasa@gmail.com

Cricket Australia Not Averse To Idea Of Hosting India-Pakistan Test Series

Press Trust of India

MELBOURNE: Cricket Australia has yet again expressed interest in hosting an India-Pakistan Test series if the two Asian neighbours agree to play against each other in future at a neutral venue.

India and Pakistan have not played a bilateral series since 2012-13 due to the diplomatic tension between the two nations. They lock horns only at the ICC or continental events. Both India and Pakistan are scheduled to tour Australia in November this year.

Pakistan will play three ODIs and T20Is before India's five-Test series against the hosts.

The Melbourne Cricket Club



and the Victorian government had expressed interest in hosting the two teams in bilateral matches at the MCG after close to one lakh people thronged the

iconic stadium to watch India and Pakistan clash during the 2022 T20 World Cup.

"I think anyone that was here for the India-Pakistan game at

the MCG, it will go down as one of the most memorable occasions, not just sporting occasions, that I've ever been to," CA chief executive Nick Hockley said according to ESPNcricinfo. "So people want to see that contest. We would love to host that if the opportunity arose. If we can play a role, we'd love to play a role."

"We're so excited to host Pakistan. We're so excited to host India. If we can help, that's great. But I think in many ways, that's a bilateral series. It's really for others to make that happen."

CA's head of scheduling Peter Roach acknowledged said they are not averse to idea of hosting on tri-series ODI, involving India and Pakistan, like it happened back in 1999-2000 season,

though he admitted that it will be difficult to squeeze in a series in an already choc-a-bloc calendar.

"We haven't got a tri-series in the FTP. Going forward, we're always interested in opportunities for matches and contests that will engage our fans. It's fair to say every country in the world would love to see India and Pakistan compete in their country."

"We're on record as saying we're one of those countries that has asked the question. There's no room in the schedules to do that at the moment. We'll keep talking to them in any other opportunities that arise, but in this specific example there are not going to be any changes to the schedule."

PCB Looking To Bring Babar Azam Back As Captain: Sources



Press Trust of India

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board it appears has lost faith in the ability of Shan Masood and Shaheen Shah Afridi to lead the national side and feels former skipper Babar Azam is the best choice to captain the side once again.

Babar had quit as Pakistan captain across all formats after his team failed to make it past the group stages during the ODI World Cup in India last year.

While Masood was appointed captain in the Test format, Shaheen was made the T20I skipper.

Sources in the PCB think-tank said the board had come to the conclusion that, with no viable option available, Babar was the best choice to lead the side again.

"The funny part is that the powers that be appear to have lost faith in Shan Masood and Shaheen Shah Afridi's ability to lead the national side in Test and T20 formats with the change in the board's chairmanship," a source confided.

The source added that the interesting part is that Babar is now showing some attitude.

"Feelers have been sent out to Babar to find out if he is ready to take charge again and he has shown some reservations. Apparently, he wants some assurances from the board chairman,"

the source added.

Babar was removed as captain in the white-ball format immediately after the World Cup when Zaka Ashraf was PCB chairman. He then opted to step down as red-ball captain as well.

Babar had held the position of captain in all formats since 2020 but poor performances in the Asia Cup and World Cup led to his axing.

"Shaheen, during Zaka's time, was seen as the saviour of Pakistan cricket as T20 captain as he had won two finals for Lahore Qalandars in the Pakistan Super League. But he now appears to have run out of favour very quickly with the change of guard in the board," another source said.

Shaheen not only lost his first series as captain in New Zealand (1-4) but returned to see Qalandars finish at the bottom of the points table in the PSL this year.

The source added that the current chairman, Mohsin Naqvi, was relying heavily on the advice of former players in take important decisions.

The source said that with the return of seasoned players like Imad Wasim and Muhammad Amir from retirement, it has also been decided that the chairman will meet the duo along with Babar soon to sort out any misunderstandings.

Nortje, Ishant Are Fully Fit To Play Against RR: Ganguly

Press Trust of India

JAIPUR: Delhi Capitals' Director of Cricket Sourav Ganguly said pacers Anrich Nortje and Ishant Sharma have regained full fitness, bolstering their bowling attack ahead of the IPL clash against Rajasthan Royals here on Thursday.

Led by Rishabh Pant, who returned to the cricket field after almost 15 months following a horrific car crash, DC didn't have the best of starts, losing by four wickets against Punjab Kings (PBKS) in Chandigarh last Saturday.

But Ganguly said it is just the start of a long tournament and it augurs well for DC that the likes of Nortje and Ishant have regained full fitness.

"It's just the early part of the tournament. We worked hard before the season, and hopefully, we will play well. The



first game in Chandigarh didn't go our way because we lost Ishant, but that's the way it is in T20s. It's a new game tomorrow," Ganguly said in a release.

"We are full strength now, with Nortje back in the side. With Nortje, Khaleel (Ahmed), Mukesh (Kumar) and Ishant back in the team and fit, and with the two spinners Axar (Patel) and Kuldeep (Yadav), our bowling is definitely our

strength.

"With Rishabh back as well, the batting has got stronger than what it was last year because in IPL if you lose a major Indian player, it becomes a big hole to fill."

While Nortje missed DC's IPL opener as he was yet to recover fully from a back injury, Ishant just bowled two overs before limping off the field with a twisted ankle.

DYSS Hosts Sports Events In Bhijbehra & Bidder Zones



Observer News Service

Bhijbehra and Bidder in Anantnag witnessed several sports events organized by the Department of Youth Services & Sports. The events showcased various competitions, including an intense Tug of War tournament at BHSS Bhijbehra for students aged between 14 and 17. With a remarkable turnout of 136 students, the host institute clinched victory in the U-17 category, while BMS HP Tawaila secured the top spot in the U-14 age group.

Meanwhile, in Bidder Zone, spirited participation was observed in Chess and Carom, with girls taking the forefront. The event saw 56 students competing in the Under-14 and 17 age categories.

Germany Celebrates Turnaround As Confidence Grows Before Hosting Euro 2024

Agencies

BERLIN: The pessimism and frustration shrouding Germany's soccer team ahead of this summer's European Championship have been lifted and replaced by confidence that the host can now win the tournament.

All it took was a win over France for the Germans to cast aside their doubts.

"Everything fits together," former Germany great Lothar Matthäus said after the France game, which was followed up by a 2-1 win over the Netherlands on Tuesday. "The team not only can be European champion, it must be European champion!"

It's a remarkable turnaround for a team that had lost its previous games against Austria and Turkey in November, and which had only two wins from its previous 10 matches before beating France 2-0 in Lyon on Saturday.

"Something has come out of the last week that wasn't there before," said



Toni Kroos, who came out of international retirement to rejoin the team for Euro 2024.

"There's a confidence in our actions and I hope we take that with us toward the tournament because then we can be confident of always doing well."

Germany needed to dig deep to beat the Dutch in Frankfurt after Joey Veerman's fourth-minute goal for the visitors. But, goals from Maximilian Mittelstädt and Niclas Füllkrug consolidated the team's new-found bullishness and

rewarded coach Julian Nagelsmann for some brave calls in squad selection.

Nagelsmann had called up six new faces and coaxed the 34-year-old Kroos back from retirement.

The Real Madrid star's return had arguably had the greatest impact because of his leadership qualities and a calm composure that helped settle the players around him.

Kroos began by setting up for Germany's fastest-ever goal after just seven seconds in the win

in France, then delivered both corners that led to the goals against the Netherlands.

"I know that the team is coming from a really tough time," Kroos said. "What's good is that few took that baggage with them, that it was left behind through the relatively radical changes and you could see that."

Kroos' return allowed Ilkay Gündogan to push further forward, Wirtz and fellow youngster Jamal Musiala starred on the wings, and in-form Arsenal forward Kai Havertz started up front.

Bayer Leverkusen's tough-tackling Robert Andrich made his second and third Germany appearances beside Kroos in midfield.

Nagelsmann named the same starting lineup for the Netherlands as he had for France, and - barring injuries - it will not change much from the team that will start Euro 2024 against Scotland in Munich on June 14.

Short TAKES

SRH Smash Highest Ever IPL Total Of 277 Against MI

Sunrisers Hyderabad smashed 277 for three, the highest total in IPL history, to leave Mumbai Indians shell shocked here on Wednesday.

Travis Head (62 off 24) and Abhishek Sharma (63 off 23) came up with a sensational display of power-hitting, while Heinrich Klaasen (80 not out off 34 balls) provided the fireworks in the end to help SRH break an 11-year-old record. The previous highest total was 263 for five by RCB in 2013.

PCB In Negotiations With Luke Ronchi For Head Coach's Job

The Pakistan Cricket Board has narrowed down its search for a new head coach to former Australia and New Zealand wicketkeeper-batter Luke Ronchi.

A PCB source said on Wednesday that "extensive discussions" had taken place with the 42-year-old Ronchi, who has also coached Pakistan Super League side Islamabad United.

He said the contract with Ronchi should be finalised in the next few days before the home T20 series against New Zealand commences.

Medvedev, Alcaraz Reach Miami Open Quarterfinals

Defending Miami Open champion Daniil Medvedev won his 350th career match to move into the quarterfinals for a fourth straight year, beating Dominik Koepfer 7-6 (5), 6-0 on Tuesday.

Top-seeded Carlos Alcaraz also advanced with ease in a 6-3, 6-3 win over No. 23 seed Lorenzo Musetti.

Alcaraz, who beat Musetti in less than 90 minutes and looked comfortable as ever on the court, said he's "probably" playing his best tennis since last summer.

Chelsea's Lavia Out For The Season Due To Hamstring Injury

Chelsea midfielder Romeo Lavia will miss the rest of the season after suffering a setback in his recovery from a hamstring injury, the Premier League club said on Wednesday. The Belgium international was injured during his Chelsea debut, a 2-1 win over Crystal Palace in late December.

The 20-year-old former Manchester City and Southampton player joined Chelsea in August on a seven-year contract in a deal worth a reported 55 million pounds. Chelsea, 11th in the Premier League table, host Burnley on Saturday.

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