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

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: Amidst the hustle-bustle of Anatnag'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

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

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

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

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





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,

Deficient Rainfall Recorded In 7 Kashmir Districts

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 the period. More On P6

(KNO), the data prepared by the Meteorological depart-ment (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

Kashmir Braces Up For Wet Spell

rinagar: 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



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

Promise Made In View Of LS polls: Omar

'Withdrawal Of Troops, AFSPA'

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

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

Lal Singh Files **Nomination For Udhampur**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu:Eight more candidates, including Congress nominee Choudhary Lal Singh, filed their nomination papers from Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur Lok Sabha constituency which is going to polls on April 19.

Singh, who recently rejoined the Congress, organised a massive rally shortly after submitting his papers in the office of the returning officer in Kathua.

The rally was attended by leaders of INDI alliance parties, including the National Conference and PDP besides the chairman of the National Panthers Party (NPP) and former minister Harsh Dev Singh.

All India Congress Committee in charge of Jammu and Kashmir Bharatsinh Solanki and Pradesh Congress Committee president Vikar Rasool Wani were among other prominent people who addressed the rally, seeking votes for the INDIA bloc candidate.

Others who filed their nomination papers included the 'cover' candidate

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.

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: 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 GoI'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 mani-

festo 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**

M AHMAD

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 Satypal 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

Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)

No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir



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, asresidential 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 (clotcaused) 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 sleeppromoting 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

oogle 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 ware 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

website: www ik Prisons.org

email: jk.prison@gmail.com

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 cryptoraphic 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

Government Of Jammu And Kashmir

Office Of The Director General Of Police,

Prisons Department, J&K

3rd Extension Notice

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

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

Phone FAX Srinagar (May-Oct) 0194-2457969 2457811

Jammu (Nov-Apr) 0191-2561004 - 2561008

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's performance. A 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.

Public Notice

It is informed that we have made changes regarding the name of my daughter; earlier her name was recorded as Noor ul Haram, now it is changed as Hoorab Mehraj in birth records. The same has to be updated in school records, also. Anyone having objection may contact Principal, The Legends School of Education, Naseem Abad Srinagar within 7 days of the publication of this notice. No objection will be entertained after the expiry of the stipulated time.

Mehraj ud Din Gujri F/O - Noor ul Haram (Old Name) Hoorab Mehraj (New Name) Class - LKG -Red (2023-2024 Session)

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/ Block Development Officer Pattan) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Ajwa Tariq D/o Tariq Ahmad Malla R/o Nihalpora Pattan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with vertified date of event (birth) as 02/05/2020 occurred at SDH

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

SAD DEMISE



We inform the sad demise of Abrar Rashid Bhat S/O Late Abdul Rashid Bhat /R/O Mian Shah Sahib Rainawari Srinagar who died on 26-03-2024. His fateh Khawani will be observed on 28 March 2024.

Bereaved Family Ajaz Ahmad Bhat (Brother) 9960667596

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir

Tel:0194-2315378, , e-mail: ddtreg123@gmail.com.

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 incum-

bent, Partnership Deed executed before sub-registrar, Domicile Certificates, Aadhar Cards, Pan Whereas, inclusion of name of Mr. Arsalan Shah and Mr. Bakhtawar Shah in the registration certificate of the said hotel is purely 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 Ahamd Shah and Mr. Bakhtawar Shah S/o Rouf Ahamd 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.

> Assistant Director Tourism, Registration

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registar 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 vertified date of event (birth) as 11/05/2021 occurred at

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

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registar 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 vertified 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

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registar 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 vertified date of event (birth) as 11/03/2024 occurred at SDH

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate. If anybody has any objection in this regrd 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 after that no objection she be entertained. Ahmad Azeem

S/o Mohmmad Azeem R/o Lalpora Kunzer

bmg_r

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

inf

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of ward has been wrongly written in his school records as Davim Raza Kuthoo S/o Aiaz 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 F/o Dayim Raza Kuthoo R/o Mufti Bagh Barji Payeen Harwan Srinagar

inf

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 occured 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

1 Bid submission documents End 03.04.2024 upto1800 Hrs Date and time 2 Date and Time of opening of Techni-04.04.2024 1400 Hrs in the office cal Bids in online mode of Director General of Prison J&K

This office E-NIT No. 01 of 2024 dated: 14.02.2024, 1st

Subject:- Supply of Dietary items to Central Jail Srinagar.

tice No. Acctts/N/7407473/11220 dt. 15.03.2024

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

No:Reg/1083/994/DTK

DIPK-18222/23

Dated:27.03.2024

AIRPORTS

RAILWAYS

HIGHWAY STATUS

CALENDAR

17 - Ramazan

1445

This Day In History

the Battle of Medelin.

Russia (Crimean War)

TRAFFIC POLICE: 9419993745, 01998-266686

Ambulance: Kashmer EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

PRAYERS

5:00

12:36

5:01

6:51

8:12

FAJR

ZUHR

ASR

Magrib

ISHA

1809 - Peninsular War: France defeats Spain in

1845 - Mexico drops diplomatic relations with US

1854 - Britain & amp; France declare war on

1885 - US Salvation Army officially organized

1891 - 1st world weightlifting championship held

1904 - Japanese troops advance in Korea, defeat

the Russians at Chengiu, and capture the town

1910 - 1st seaplane, takes off from water at

1866 - 1st ambulance goes into service

PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883 PDD: 0194-2450213

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259 ANANTNAG: 01932-228243

BARAMULLA: 0194-102029

BIJBHERA: 01932-228243

PAMPORE: 01933-294132

PATTAN: 01954-293507

Mughal Road - (Closed)

Srinagar-Leh- (Open)

QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)

CAPD: 18001807011

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES: 2479488,2452222,2452155

SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

Over 51,000 Tourists Visit Tulip Garden In 5 Days

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Asia's largest tulip garden in Kashmir Vallev 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 Mudasir, 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.

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 To streamline the visitor surge in visitors after Eid.'

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 Sta-

tion viz. Permanent ramps,

drinking water, toilet facili-

Dr Bilal enjoined upon

the Nodal Officer Postal

Ballot and all AROs to take

up all necessary arrange-

ments for facilitating voting

by Postal Ballots by various

categories of Voters includ-

ing service voters, person-

nel on Poll Duty (EDC),

migrant electors, absent electors, etc so that they ex-

ercise their franchise with-

He stressed the officers

to focus on meticulous

preparations and maxi-

mum voter participation

to reflect the commitment

of conducting a successful

Lok Sabha Election in 2024

ficers to uphold electoral

laws, regulations and ethi-

cal standards to ensure the

integrity and fairness of

ing of polling staff, the DEO

asked for setting up of fa-

cilitation centres in all tan-

ning centres of all 9 Assem-

bly segments of the District.

tended by all Assistant Re-

turning Officers, Superin-

tendent of Police, Deputy

District Election Officer,

Nodal Officer, SVEEP/AMF,

Officers of R&B, PDD, PHE

besides other concerned.

The meeting was at-

With regard to the train-

the electoral process.

The DEO emphasized of-

out any difficulty.

in the district.

ties as per norms of ECI.



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 ongoing SVEEP campaign in the district.

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

SKIMS Soura Urges

SRINAGAR: SKIMS Soura on Wednesday urged people, intending to visit the health facility for treatment, to make use of the On-

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

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/pa-

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

DEP.

23:00

TRAIN NO. 05551

TRAIN NO. 05575

DEP.

09:30

17:45

Ex. Anand Vihar (T) on 30.03.2024.

<u>Accommodation</u>: AC 3 Tier & Sleeper.

ARR.

05:15

Trips TRAIN NO. 05119

ARR.

DEP.

ARR.

Mirwaiz To address Aali Masjid Today

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 Moulana Muhammad Yusuf Shah (RA).

here, Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid Srinagar in a statement said the esteemed scholars of the valley will speak on the occasion.

ticipate in the event.

04088/04087 Delhi Jn. - Saharsa Jn. - Delhi Jn.

Unreserved Special Express Train

STATIONS

Delhi Jn.

Saharsa Jn.

STATIONS

Gonda Jn, Sitapur Jn., Moradabad and Ghaziabad stations.

STATIONS

Saharsa Jn.

Anand Vihar (T)

Days of Run: 05575 Ex. Saharsa Jn. on 29.03.2024 and 05576

Stoppages: Simri Bakhtiyarpur, Khagaria Jn., Begusarai.

Barauni Jn, Hajipur Jn, Chhapra, Gorakhpur Jn, Basti,

Gonda Jn. Sitapur Jn., Moradabad and Ghaziabad stations.

STATIONS

Chhapra

05119/05120 Chhapra - Anand Vihar (T) -

Chhapra Special Train

05575/05576 Saharsa Jn. - Anand Vihar (T) - Saharsa Jn. Special Express Train

05551/05552 Saharsa Jn. - Anand Vihar (T) -Saharsa Jn. Special Express Train

Faithful At Eidgah

Observer News Service

According to a statement issued

It has urged the people to par-

TRAIN NO. 04087

ARR. DEP.

Trips

Trips

DEP.

09:30

Trips

DEP.

TRAIN NO. 05120

ARR.

09:30

TRAIN NO. 05576

ARR.

06:30

TRAIN NO. 05552

ARR. DEP.

13:15

1913 - Guatemala becomes a signatory to the Buenos Aires copyright treaty. 1920 - Anton Denkin's White Russian troops defeated by Bolsheviks/Soviets at Novorossiisk

Martinques France (Henri Fabre)

on the Black Sea (The British aid Denkin in his

From KO Archives

Soz Revolts, Blasts Faroog

Abdullah's Decision 'Insult To Kashmir Genius'

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 Faroog 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 Faroog on phone late last evening and this morning, but seems to have failed in persuading his leader to change the stand.

Soze, 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 Faroog 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)

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.

People To Use Online **Appointment System**

Observer News Service

line Appointment System.

optimal use of the Online Appointment System.'

tientAppointment/index.

We request all to cooperate and help us to serve you better, it added.

POST HOLI FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2024 For the convenience of the passengers Northern Railway will run the following TRAIN NO. 04088 Festival Special Trains during the post Holi ARR. period. The details are as under :-04069/04070 New Delhi - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi 03:15

Katra - New Delhi Reserved Special Express Train			roce Train	Tripo	03.13 V Saharsa 311 07.50					
Katra - New Deini Reserved Special Express Train					Days of Run: 04088 Ex. Delhi Jn. on 28.03.2024 and 0408					
TRAIN	IO. 04069	STATIONS	TRAIN NO. 04070		Ex. Saharsa Jn. on 30.03.2024.					
					EX. Saliai Sa Sil. Oli 30.03.2024.					
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.	Accommodation: General.					
	23:45	New Delhi	09:30		Stoppages: Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur, Gonda Jn., Bast					
12:00		Shri Mata Vaishno		20:25	Gorakhpur Jn., Siwan Jn., Chhapra Jn., Hajipur Jn					
		Devi Katra	<u> </u>		│ Muzaffarpur Jn. Samastipur Jn., Barauni Jn., Begusara					
Days of Run: 04069 Ex. New Delhi on 28.03.2024 and 04070				Khaqaria Jn., Mansi Jn. and Simri Bakhtivarpur stations.						

Ex. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra on 31.03.2024. Accommodation: 2 Tier Cum 3 Tier, AC3 Tier, Sleeper & General.

Stoppages: Sonipat, Panipat, Karnal, Kurukshetra Jn, Ambala Cantt, Ludhiana, Jalandhar Cantt, Pathankot Cantt, Jammu Tawi and Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan stations. 04082/04081 New Delhi - Varanasi Jn. - New Delhi 02

	Reserved Special Express Train			Trips		09:30	Saharsa Jn.	06:30		
TRAINI	NO. 04082	OTATIONO	TRAIN NO. 04081		05:15	\	Anand Vihar (T)		09:30	
ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS	ARR.	DEP.	Days of Run: 05551 Ex. Saharsa Jn. on 28.03.2024 and 05552					
	20:45	New Delhi	12:30		Ex. Anand Vihar (T) on 29.03.2024. Accommodation: General.					
13:00		Varanasi Jn.		21:00						
Days of Run: 04082 Ex. New Delhi on 28.03.2024 and 04081 Ex. Varanasi Jn. on 31.03.2024.				nd 04081	Stoppages : Simri Bakhtiyarpur, Khagaria Jn., Begusarai,					
				Barauni Jn, Hajipur Jn, Chhapra, Gorakhpur Jn, Basti,						

Accommodation: 2 Tier Cum 3 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & General. Stoppages: Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Lucknow and Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn. stations.

5/04086 Varanasi Jn. - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Varanasi Jn. Special Express Train **Trips TRAIN NO. 04085** TRAIN NO. 04086 **STATIONS** ARR. DEP. DEP. ARR. Varanasi 14:00 23:45 17:50 Shri Mata Vaishno 21:30 Devi Katra

Days of Run: 04085 Ex. Varanasi Jn. on 28.03.2024 and 04086 Ex. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra on 29.03.2024. Accommodation: AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & General. Stoppages: Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn., Lucknow NR), Bareilly, Moradabad, Saharanpur, Ambala Cantt, Ludhiana Jalandhar Cantt, Pathankot Cantt and Jammu Tawi stations.

04412/04411 H. Nizamuddin - Ujjain Jn. - H.

Nizamuddin Superfast Special Express Train

RAIN N	IO. 04412	STATIONS	TRAIN NO. 04411					
ARR.	DEP.	SIAIIONS	ARR.	DEP.				
	23:00	H. Nizamuddin	04:40					
10:50		Ujjain Jn.		15:00				
Days of Run: 04412 Ex. H. Nizamuddin on 28.03.2024 and								
14411 F	y Iliiain I	n on 29 03 2024						

Accommodation: 2 Tier Cum 3 Tier, Sleeper & General. Stoppages: Mathura, Kota, Nagda Jn. and Ratlam stations

04096 New Delhi - Patna Jn. Unreserved Superfast Special Exp. Train **TRAIN NO. 04096 STATIONS** DEP. ARR. New Delhi 19:05 Patna Jn. 12:50

Days of Run: 04096 Ex. New Delhi on 28.03.2024. Accommodation: General. Stoppages: Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Jpadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara and Danapur stations.

11:50 Anand Vihar (T) Days of Run: 05119 Ex. Chhapra on 29.03.2024 and 05120 Ex. Anand Vihar (T) on 30.03.2024. Accommodation: AC2Tier, AC3Tier, Sleeper&General.

Stoppages: Siwan, Deoria, Gorakhpur, Khalilabad, Basti Gonda, Burhwal, Sitapur Jn., Bareilly Jn. and Moradabad stations.

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Thursday | 28-03-2024

Listen To Ladakh

he 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 ingression 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.



Saving Decisions Did you know?

Irshad Mushtaq

t is crucial to acknowledge the importance of establishing saving habits early and making informed investment pounding. 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 Hyderporaincreased from kh to Rs 2.50 crore over 20 years. which

kh to Rs 2.50 crore over 20 years, which vestment. 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.

The writer is entrepreneur partner, M I Securities, Sharekhan Email:irshad@bp.sharekhan.com



The Rise of Social Media Reporters

Has Journalism Lost Its Credibility?

Ikkz Ikbal

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

midst 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 trem-

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

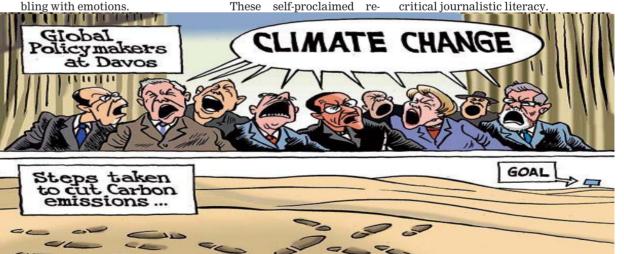
a story. Gone are the days when

they would always adhere to an established code of conduct.

These self-proclaimed re-

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.



tion 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 als 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

nalism 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



All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, spaceand accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

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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 Bengalurubased 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 diseaserelated 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

■he 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 itself, 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





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

elcome 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

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-

spent primarily studying.

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

comfortable and disappoir 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 provided 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-belience.

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 rameezmasw@gmail.com

Anurag Thakur Slams Kejriwal For Not Quitting Delhi CM Post

Says No Corrupt Person Will Be Spared

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Union Minister Anurag Thakur on Wednesday hit out at Arvind Kejriwal for not quitting as Delhi chief minister after being arrested in a corruption case, saying his ambition to remain in power is so strong that he has not resigned despite being be-

The law of the land is equal for everyone and no corrupt person will be spared by the Narendra Modi government, he said.

Kejriwal, who is also the AAP national convener, was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on March 21 in connection with an excise policy-linked money laundering case. He has been remanded in the ED

custody till March 28.

While campaigning for Union Minister Jitendra Singh in Udhampur, Thakur dismissed the opposition INDIA bloc's "maha rally" at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan on March 31, saying "chor chor musere bhai", which roughly translates to all the corrupt people

Despite being in jail, Kejriwal's ambition for the chief minister position remains steadfast with corruption allegations against him breaking records, Thakur said.

He also wondered whether the Congress had lost its conscience as it was supporting Kejriwal, who had once sought Sonia Gandhi's arrest.

Charging Retrospective Fees

FFRC Warms Private Schools Again

Observer News Service

Srinagar:Taking a serious view into complaints regarding charging of school fee in retrospective manner, by some private educational institutions, the Committee for Fixation & Regulation of Fee of Private Schools, Jammu and Kashmir (FFRC), warned the erring institutions of action in accordance with law.

The FFRC, J&K in an order,

observes that the private educational institutions are either in process of completing the admission process or have completed the same. "Complaints are pouring in from the parents, that some schools are charging fee retrospectively for the months the student has not been on rolls of the school and has not availed any services from the school."

In this regard, the order says, all the private schools are put under orders not to charge fees retrospectively for the period a student has not been on the rolls of school, "The school shall charge a fee from the date a student is actually admitted in the school," reads the order.

"Any violation (of the order) shall warrant action in accordance with law, which may include recommending to the government for derecognition/ dis-affiliation of the school," the

CONTD. FROM **FRONT** PAGE

Kashmir's Ramazan

are attributed to this Ramadan boom, with the most evident being the shifting food habits of people. People are more likely to splurge on healthier alternatives, and the desire to create a variety of dishes during Iftar fuels demand for a wider selection of these items.

The demand for dates, imported from various Middle Eastern countries, experiences a notable upswing as they become a favored choice for breaking the fast.

According to reports, dates worth 3 crore rupees are sold in Kashmir per day during the month of Ramazan. It is estimated that the sale of dates may surpass 100 crores in the holy month this year.

Some reports said that Kashmiris consumed 100 trucks of dates in the first 20 days of the fasting month last year.

Cashing in on the Ramadan shopping frenzy, many shopkeepers are offering tempting discounts on their dates. Owais Ahmed, a salesman at Arabian Treasure, a date and dry fruit shop at Residency road, Srinagar, said that this Ramazan they have around twelve varieties of dates, directly imported from Saudi Arabia.

"The most selling date in our shop is Ajwa, followed by Amber. Mabroom is mostly consumed by kids and those looking for a soft texture date consume Majrol during the holy month," Owais said.

Owais further said that they are also offering a discount on dates to woo customers.

"Sugayi dates which are usually sold for Rs 850 per kg are being sold for Rs 650. Similarly, Majrol is being sold for 615 instead of 850 per kg. Sukhri, dates usually sold for 900 per kg are being sold at 720 per kg," Owais elaborated.

However, it's not just dates that witness a surge in sales. During Ramazan, Kashmiris also consume watermelon in large numbers, with previous years witnessing record-breaking sales. As per news reports, Kashmir sold watermelons worth Rs 5 crore every day during the month of Ramazan in 2023.

Bashir Ahmad Bashir, President of Fruit and Vegetable Association Kashmir, last year said that at least 25 trucks loaded with watermelon reach Kashmir every day. "Each truck contains around eleven to twelve tones of watermelon."

However, this year's festivities were marred by a social media uproar triggered by a doctor's tweet cautioning against artificially ripened watermelons. The warning sparked confusion and financial strain for watermelon vendors across Kashmir valley. Expressing dismay, vendors highlighted the unwarranted backlash, attributing it to a significant drop in sales as consumers heeded the advice.

Following assurances from the Food Safety Department that watermelons in the Kashmir Valley are safe for consumption, sales appear to be bouncing back.

One might expect a lull in restaurant business during Ramazan, a month of daytime fasting. But in a surprising turn of events, eateries in Kashmir have come up with innovative ideas that cater to the unique dining habits.

While some restaurants have specially curated Iftar menus that offer delicious and convenient options for breaking the fast at sunset, many have started a novel trend of offering iftar platters at discounted rates.

Speaking to the Kashmir Observer, Ahmad, Manager Miles Fine Dine Restaurant at Sanat Nagar, said, "We understand that dining habits shift during Ramadan. People are looking for different options to break their fast. That's why we created our Iftar platter – a complete feast at a competitive price point (999 rupees) featuring all the classics like kebabs, rice, and tikka, alongside refreshing fruits, sharbat and sweet treats."

"It's a way for us to adapt to the changing needs of our customers while keeping the spirit of Ramadan alive. The positive response has been truly gratifying," Ahmad added.

Mohammad Rafiq from Meerz, is another business owner offering Iftar platter at discounted prices. On average, Rafiq said they serve 25-30 people for Iftar which is keeping their restaurant business alive.

Economist Ayoub said that the restaurant owners make up their mind that they will have certain disruptions during Ramazan, some of them are creative enough to come up with platters in order to stay relevant as most of the people prefer breaking their fast at their homes.

"There are disruptions in their businesses but it is kind of a seasonal thing and they have dwelled on wavs to deal with it," Ayoub said.

Against this backdrop of commerce and consumption, Ramazan advertising campaigns also emerge, centered on themes of family, community, and spirituality. Through heartfelt narratives and evocative imagery, these campaigns resonate deeply with audiences, which translates into economic benefits for many.

Beyond culinary delights, Ramazan witnesses a surge in demand for religious garments as some seek to adorn themselves in traditional attire for prayers and gatherings.

Mohammad Tahir, selling modest attire in Jamia Market, Nowhatta, reveals soaring demand for modest clothing during the sacred month of Ramazan. Tahir said, "Compared to the rest of the year, the sale of two-piece abayas, jilbabs, and more increases during this

Amidst evolving fashion landscapes, Tahir's offerings seamlessly blend tradition with contemporary allure, catering to the discerning tastes of modern Muslim women. "Preferences of women have evolved over time. Today's fashion-conscious women seek modest attire infused with a touch of trendiness," Tahir added.

This isn't all. Another big aspect of Ramazan is the charity economy. Most of the people pay Zakat during this month.

Ayoub said that over the years there has been substantial increase in the per capita income of people which has increased the people obliged to pay Zakat.

He said that the flow of charity money in organizations sees substantial increase during this month, once this money reaches the poor people, their propensity to spend this money is

"They are bound to spend this money due to unmet needs and end up spending a good chunk of it on basic necessities, which leads to an increase in the demand for other goods and services," Ayoub said.

This interplay between faith, fashion, and commerce highlights the multifaceted nature of the Ramadan economy. It's a period where religious devotion fuels specific consumer demands, creating a win-win situation for both businesses and the faithful.

49 Drowning

particularly during recreational activities near water bodies," they said.

They urged the people to remain vigilant and prioritise safety protocols when engaging in activities near water bodies. "Proactive measures are essential to mitigate risks and prevent loss of life," they said. (KNO)

Lal Singh Files for Congress' Divya Suraj Partap Singh, Raiesh Manchanda of Rashtriva Krantikari Samajwadi Party, Sachin Gupta from Inqilab Vikas Dal, Manoj Kumar from Ekam Sanatan Bharat Dal and independents Mehraj Din and Pankaj Sharma, an official said.

A 'cover' or substitute candidate is fielded by political parties in case the candidature of the main candidate is rejected.

With the filing of nomination papers by eight candidates today, the total tally of candidates contesting from Udhampur has gone up to 15. They include Union Minister litendra Singh and Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) vice chairman G M Saroori.

The last date for filing nominations for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections ended on Wednesday. The scrutiny of papers will be held on March 28, while a candidate can withdraw his/her nomination before 3 pm on March 30. Addressing the rally in support of Congress

candidate Lal Singh, NPP chairman Harsh Dev Singh said his party is part of the INDIA bloc and "we will together defeat the ruling party".

"BIP gave us nothing but took away everything from us. They destroyed the historic state, bifurcated and downgraded it to a Union territory. They have deprived us of democracy and it is time to oust them from power to safeguard the country and its institutions," he said.

Solanki, Vikar and Lal Singh expressed confidence in winning all the five seats of Jammu and Kashmir for the INDIA bloc.

Deficient Rainfall

Anantnag however, has recorded a rainfall of 74.0 mm against the normal precipitation of 125.6 mm while Budgam recorded 58.2 mm rainfall against the normal of 10.3.0 mm during

Bandipora and Randerbal recorded a deficient rainfall of 49 per cent and 24 percent respectively, the data said, adding that Kulgam and Kupwara have recorded a deficient rainfall of 44 per cent and 46 per cent respectively.

According to the data, Shopian district in South Kashmir have recorded a large deficient rainfall of 76 percent as against the normal precipitation of 101.2 mm, the station has recorded just 24.3 mm rainfall.

Baramulla and Pulwama stations have, however, recorded normal precipitation during the period, the data added.

Kashmir Braces

"From March 27 evening to 28, generally

cloudy weather is expected with light rain (in plains)/snow (higher reaches) at many places," a meteorological department official said.

On March 29, the MeT official said, partly cloudy weather with light rain/snow is expected at isolated places.

From March 30-31, he said, partly to generally cloudy weather with intermittent light

rain/snow is expected at a few places. With overnight cloud cover amid forecast for wet spell, night temperature recorded an in-

crease in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday. A meteorological department official said that Srinagar recorded a minimum of 9.5°C against 5.4°C on the previous night and it was above normal by 34°C for the summer capital of JK for this time of the year.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of 8.0°C against 4.4°C on the previous night and it was 3.3°C above normal for the gateway town of Kashmir, he said.

Pahalgam recorded a low of 4.7°C against 0.7°C on the previous night and it was 3.3°C above normal for the famous resort in south Kashmir.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a minimum of 7.7°C against 6.6°C on the previous night and it was 3.5°C above normal, the

Kupwara town recorded a low of 7.7°C against 3.3°C on the previous night and it was 3.2°C above normal there, the official said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of 3.0°C against 2.8°C on the previous night and it was above normal by 3.8°C for the famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Jammu, he said, recorded a minimum of 18.0°C and it was above normal by 1.4°C for the winter capital of J&K.

Banihal recorded a low of 10.2°C, Batote 13.5°C and Bhaderwah 9.0°C, he said.

Political Parties

and Kashmiris languishing in jail 'without

"PDP has consistently demanded the revocation of draconian AFSPA along with a gradual removal of troops. It also formulated an important part of our Agenda of Alliance wholeheartedly agreed upon by BJP. Der aaye durust aaye.

"Better late than never but only if it isn't jumlebaazi like generating two crore jobs every year or empty promises of depositing 15 lacs into bank accounts," Mufti said.

The former J-K chief minister hoped that the government would fulfil its commitment in case of AFSPA revocation as it would bring relief to the people of the Union territory.

"One can only hope that they fulfil their commitment at least in this case since it would bring a huge relief to the people of J&K. To walk the talk perhaps MHA can start by releasing journalists & thousands of young Kashmiri boys currently languishing in jails without any charges or prosecution," she added.

Mufti's daughter, Iltija Mufti, who is her media advisor, said the party welcomes the announcement and it is a good start.

"We welcome it because the PDP's approach and its manifesto has always stood for the revocation of AFSPA which is a draconian law. The PDP also stands for withdrawal of armed forces from civilian areas," Iltija Mufti told reporters

Terming the announcement as a good start, she, however, said whenever the PDP president states the same thing, "she is dubbed as anti-national".

"If the Home Minister really wants to do it, then as a goodwill gesture before the Eid, hundreds of young Kashmiris and journalists who are in jails under UAPA and PSA should be released," she added.

Iltija Mufti said the party, however, has an apprehension that this should not be a "Jumelbaazi" because the BJP knows that their position in J-K and Ladakh is not good and it does not look like they will perform well electorally.

Asked about the Shah's other statement that the government has plans to pull back troops in the UT and leave law and order to the Jammu and Kashmir Police alone, the media advisor to the former CM said the BJP does not do what "First, they should revoke the AFSPA and

withdraw the Army, then we will see who they empower. There is a slip between the cup and the lip. As far as the BJP is concerned, the distance between the cup and the lip is huge, they do not do what they say," she said.

Jammu and Kashmir unit of BJP said the UT has witnessed a transformation after August 2019, when the Centre abrogated Article 370.

"NC is the party which implemented laws like AFSPA, but the BJP is a party which is in the process of revoking it as the situation has improved in J-K," BJP's J-K spokesperson Altaf Thakur said.

He said J-K is moving towards peace and

prosperity and the time has come to revoke

Peoples Conference chief Sajad Lone said the proposed removal of AFSPA was an excellent

"Removal of AFSPA will be an excellent step. People of Kashmir will welcome it. Let us take the HM for his word and let us hope he honours his word," Lone said in a post on X.

In an apparent jibe at the NC and the Congress, Lone said to those Kashmiri leaders who ruled J-K and their national partners who brought in AFSPA and never took it back "can u please have the decency of shutting up".

Former governor of Jammu and Kashmir N N Vohra on Wednesday also hailed Union Home Minister Amit Shah's statement that the Centre plans to pull back troops from the Union Territory and leave law and order to the police

Vohra also welcomed Shah's intention to revoke the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) from Jammu and Kashmir.

He hoped that the government would follow a similar approach and withdraw the military from other areas in the country where it may have been deployed for long periods to carry out internal security duties.

"The state police must be made to discharge its primary duty of maintaining public order and free the military to return to its essential duties," Vohra said in a statement here.

Vohra was governor of Jammu and Kashmir from 2008 to 2018 before the state was bifurcated and turned into a UT.

He had also served as the home secretary of Punjab during the period of serious disturbances after Operation Bluestar, and later, as defence secretary and home secretary with the Central government.

Sonam Wangchuk
the Civil Disobedience Movement,"

Wangchuk said. He said the Leh-based Apex body will lead the march to highlight the ground realities of Ladakh. Wangchuk alleged that nomads were losing prime pasture land to huge industrial plants to the south and Chinese encroachments to the north.

"The Changthang grazers, famous for producing Pashmina wool, are being forced to sell their animals because over 20,000 acres of grazing land was taken by industrialists to set up their plants... we do not want solar energy at the cost of our people's livelihood and dislocation," he claimed.

"They are taking away our land because there are no safeguards available...," Wangchuk

He said if the government has nothing to hide, "we will be allowed to proceed but if they stop us from undertaking the march, we will launch a 'jail bharo andolan' which will be followed by a non-cooperation movement."

Accusing the BJP of backtracking from its promises to the people of Ladakh, Wangchuk said the representatives of the Apex Body and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) were left shocked when the Union home ministry straightway rejected their demands on March

"We are seeking our rights and fulfilment of the promises. Parliamentary polls have been announced and the BJP is again making various guarantees to the people but who is going to buy these promises this time," he said. expressing hope that the government will reconsider its decision and announce statehood

Wangchuk added that he was ready to go on a hunger strike once again if the demands of the people of Ladakh were not met as "we are fighting for our future and the children".

He also questioned claims of pumping large amounts of money and demanded an inquiry into where the money is being spent.

The Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), separate groupings of various political, social and religious organisations, are jointly spearheading the agitation to demand statehood for Ladakh and its inclusion in the Sixth Schedule, and have held five rounds of talks with the home ministry.

The Sixth Schedule contains provisions related to the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram through autonomous district councils.

Govt Orders Security

Managing Directors of various PSUS/Boards/ Corporations etc. to ensure security audit of their websites/applications periodically, at least once a year, in compliance with security policy, guidelines, and procedures, laid down by the CERT-In and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India.

Notwithstanding the instructions, the government noted that a "large number" of websites hosted on State Data Centre by different departments are still un-audited resulting in increased risk of cyber attacks as also reported by the CERT-In.

"Keeping in view the criticality of the matter, it is enjoined upon all Administrative Departments/Heads of Departments/Deputy Commissioners/Managing Directors of various PSUs/Boards/Corporations to ensure security audit of their departmental websites/applications through CERT-In empanelled agencies within a period of one month, to protect the Government entities against cyber threats," the circular. In case of failure, the government said that the application from the State Data Centre shall be discontinued/shutdown, for which the concerned "Head of the Department shall bear the responsibility."

NC Will Repeat subsidiary parties in J-K have united against the party is because it has not accepted the actions of August 5, 2019.

"These strange bedfellows were forced to club together despite their differences. There is nothing in common between them. They don't look into each other's eyes. Yet they were forced to club against us," he said, apparently referring to the reports of an alliance between various regional political outfits like the Democratic Progressive Azad Party, the Apni Party and the Peoples Conference.

The former J-K chief minister said it was not the first time that New Delhi is "pitching" par-

ties against the NC. "We have outlived such situations successfully in the past as well. 1977 elections witnessed how New Delhi propped up a massive alliance of politicians, religious leaders and other organisations against us. But, the people outright rejected them. Today also, the people are with us, and as long as we have the peoples' support, no power on earth can harm us,"

HC Declines

Abdullah said.

Government employees and an amount of Rs.61.44 crores was paid to M/S RGICL as first instalment of premium and out of that premium, an amount of Rs.4,36,07,033/ has been admittedly received by M/S Trinity Reinsurance Brokers Limited as brokerage

"The second contention raised by the petitioner is that once the ACB had enquired in detail the similar allegations, the impugned FIR could not have been registered by the respondent No.1 (CBI) at the instance of respondent No.3 (J&K government)," the court said, adding. "The perusal of the communication dated 23.03.2022 addressed by respondent No.2 (ACB) to respondent No.1 (CBI) reveals that the respondent No.1 (CBI) was requested to investigate the matter only after the reported submitted by the ACB was considered and the learned Senior AAG appearing for respondent No.3 (govt) is right in his submission that in order to get fair, independent and transparent investigation, it was thought proper by the respondent No.3 to get the matter regarding allotment of contract investigated independently as huge public money was involved." This Court, the bench said, has examined the record produced by the CBI and has found that the CBI is not only investigating the allotment of contract to M/S RGICL but also the engagement of M/S Trinity Reinsurance Brokers Ltd as

insurance broker. "This Court would not like to comment in respect of the mode and manner in which the petitioner was engaged as insurance broker at this stage because the matter is still being investigated by the respondent No.1," the court said, adding, "This aspect of the case was never enquired into by the ACB, J&K. Therefore, the contention of the petitioner in this regard too is not sufficient for quashing of the impugned FIR."

The third contention raised by the petitioner company, the court said, is that there is a delay of four years in registration of FIR.

"Simply on the ground that the FIR has been registered after a huge delay, the same cannot be quashed as earlier the matter was being enquired into by the ACB which submitted its reports on 27.11.2019 and 08.02.2022," the court said, adding, "After considering the report submitted by the ACB, the matter was referred to the respondent No.1 (CBI) for investigation ... on 23.03.2022. Therefore, it cannot be said that there is a huge and unexplained delay on the part of respondents in registration of FIR. This contention of the petitioner too is rejected.'

While declining to show indulgence for the purpose of quashing the FIR, the court however directed CBI to conclude the investigation of the case as expeditiously as possible. "The petitioner-company is directed to participate in the investigation so as to enable the respondent No.1 (CBI) to conclude the investigation

Stakeholders Fear Airfare Hike's Impact on Kashmir's Tourism Seasons

SRINAGAR: With airline companies hiking airfare, tourism players fear it could impact the ongoing spring and summer seasons during which Kashmir receives a major chunk of tourists.

As per news agency, for the last few weeks airline companies have made a steep hike in airfare. It has worried the tourism players, who claimed that their packages are getting costlier, following which the majority of the tourists cancel their plans.

"Airfare hikes have always been an issue with Kashmir tourism. It becomes one of the major deterrents to our promotion activities. We have been always requesting the governwe lose a huge chunk of tourists due to the unaffordable air tickets," said President Travel Agents Association of Kashmir Rauf Tramboo.

He said the Kashmir packages have become costlier due to the airfare hike by the airline companies. "Such is the situation that a trip to Dubai or Thailand becomes cheaper than a Kashmir trip. Tourists prefer international over

Kashmir due airfare hike," Tramboo said. He said the number of que-

ries has dipped for the last few weeks due to the airfare hike. "If we were receiving 1000 que-

now get some 300-400 queries a day. We appeal to the government to deploy additional flights and regulate airfare,"

Tramboo said. man i manimum -Pertinently,

arrival Spring season, Kashmir is witnessing a rush of tourists particularly from Maharashtra and Gujarat following which the hotels and houseboats are booked till the month of April.

airfare from various destinations to Kashmir has been increasing

 $m\ o\ r\ e$ than 60 per cursory look at the airchart by including

MakeMy Trip and Ease-MyTrip shows that the tariff from the nearest destination New Delhi to Kashmir for the next two weeks has gone up to

Barely one or two weeks before, the airfare from the same destination to the valley was just Rs 5000-5500 per passenger. The return ticket from Kash-

mir to Delhi has also witnessed a hike of nearly 30 per cent and sells at Rs 83,00 per person. A one way air ticket from Ma-

harashtra, where from the valley receives bulk torists during ongoing season, sells between Rs 15000 to 18000 per person. The return ticket from Srinagar to Mumbai too has hiked between 18000 to 25000 per person.

From Gujarat and Kolkatta, which too contribute to the growing tourists number in Kashmir, the airfare too has kvrocketed

From both these destinations, the airfare has gone up by more than 50 percent in the last two weeks-(KNO)

Blast In Poonch: Two Suspects Detained For Questioning

Agencies

POONCH: Two suspects were detained in connection with a blast in the vicinity of a hospital in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said on Wednesday.

The blast triggered by a handmade crude substance took place in a lane adjacent to a religious place in the vicinity of the district hospital in Poonch town late Tuesday night, causing panic among locals.

"We have received information of a suspected small intensity explosion-like sound from an area near Poonch hospital. Necessary investigation into the matter has been set into motion to ascertain the exact nature of the blast," a police spokesman said.

He said the blast was apparently caused by a handmade crude substance.

Officials said two suspected persons were detained for questioning in connection with the explosion.

'Rumour Monger' Booked in **Pulwama: Police**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police in Pulwama said to have booked a 'rumour monger' in the district on Wednesday.

"Today Police station Rajpora has registered FIR against one rumour monger namely Sameer Ahmed Paray son of Ab Rasheed Parray, resident of Kabikoot CB Nath as the said person has recently uploaded a false post on his fake Facebook ID "Babar Azam" in which he has uploaded a photo depicting Arms and ammunition and has claimed that a new one from pulwama has joined militancy," reads a statement.

The said person, the state-

ment reads, has been found circulating incriminating content on social media there by disrupting public peace and tranquility.

"In this regard a Case FIR no 23/2024 u/s 505(b)/IPC has been registered in police station Rajpora and investigation set into motion.

"General public is requested to abstain from posting any false content on social media. Strict action will be taken against any person found involved in posting malicious content on the internet. Pulwama police is committed to the safety and security of its citizens," the statement reads further.

Higher Edu Dept Seeks Clarification on Assigning Charges Amid MCC

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Higher Education Department has sought clarification as to whether it can assign look after charges of principals of colleges during the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

The department in a communique to government has informed that a large number of principals of the government degree colleges are attaining the age of superannuation during the months of March and April, 2024.

"In order to run the affairs of these colleges smoothly, the Department intends to allow senior most faculty members amongst the faculties of the same college to look after the charge of the principal in addition to their own duties til permanent arrangement is made by the Department," it reads.

In a communique the official said that the Higher Education Department may be advised as to whether assigning of the look after charge to the se-



nior most faculty members in the respective colleges can be made by the department during the currency of the Model Code of Conduct in the interest

of administration and students. "The Higher Education Department has received select lists from the JKPSC for the appointment of Assistant Professors in respect of various subjects, which may also involve their postings in the department," it reads.

It also said that the Department is receiving the character and antecedents verifications from CID.

The Election Commission of India in a communication regarding enforcement of MCC, Dos and Don'ts, wherein Point No. 22 allows regular recruitment or appointments or promotion through the UPSC, State Public Service Commissions or the Staff Selection Commission or any other statutory authority can continue," it reads.

The communique further reads that the recruitment through non statutory bodies will require prior clearance of the Commission.

"In this regard, the Department may kindly be advised as to whether the appointments on the recommendations of the JKPSC could be effected."

"The Higher Education Department may be advised whether the placement of the eligible Assistant Professors to the next higher grades under Career Advancement Scheme could be considered or otherwise, during MC or not," it

CS Reviews Development Of 'Kisan Khidmat Ghar' Portal

KO NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dullo, today had a detailed review of development of 'Kisan Khidmat Ghar' portal for Agriculture Production Department by BISAG-N in asso-

ciation with the NIC and IT Department of the Union Territory. Apart from Prin-

cipal Secretary, APD the meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, IT, MD, HADP, HoDs of Agriculture Department, representatives from SKUAST

Jammu/Kashmir, J&K Bank and other concerned officers of the department. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary held detailed deliberation over the services, applications and information to be made available over this multi-faceted web portal. He

also asked for making it a 'one

stop solution' for availing all

kinds of agriculture/horticul-

ture related activities.

The Chief Secretary also discussed the type of services to be taken onboard on this new portal. He had feedback from all the stakeholders including the officers, IT professionals, agricultural academia besides the bank represen-

engineers.

It was given out in the meeting that the broad contours around which the portal is being designed inculcates Booking/Buying farm

tatives and BISAG

inputs/machinery, applying for scheme based incentives, introducing farmer support system, looking for sale/marketing of products, getting skilled and extension of credit support.

It was further added that currently the work on data collection/collation is going on along with developing of relevant content and other APIs for synchronizing it to make Kisan Khidmat Ghar a viable solution for all Agri related avenues and enterprises.

Anurag Thakur Leads Rally In Support Of Dr. Jitendra Singh



Agencies

JAMMU: Union Minister Anurag Thakur embarked on a significant tour to Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, marking a pivotal moment in the state's political landscape. Upon his arrival at the Jammu airport, he was warmly welcomed by state BJP leaders.

According to the reports received by news agency Thakur proceeded to Udhampur by road, where he actively campaigned in support of Union Minister and BJP candidate Dr.

The rally, commencing from Ambedkar Chowk in Jakhaini, traversed through various squares and intersections of the city, drawing enthusiastic crowds along the way. The culmination of the rally saw participants converging at the district party office.

Addressing reporters, Thakur underscored the transformative initiatives initiated by the Modi government for the holistic development of Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasized that the region. once plagued by the scourge of terrorism, had witnessed a paradigm shift under BJP governance. He lamented the tragic loss of over 45 thousand lives due to terrorism and separatism under previous administrations.

Highlighting the monumental decision to revoke Articles 370 and 35A, Thakur lauded the government's efforts in usherng in a new era of development and progress in Jammu and Kashmir. He cited the surge in tourist footfall and the proliferation of employment and self-employment opportunities as tangible evidence of the positive impact of these reforms on the state's socio-economic landscape—(KNO)

Rural Areas In Budgam Face Severe Waste Management Crisis **Agencies** problem persists, highlighting a prolonged neglect. Both locals

BUDGAM: Residents of rural areas of Central Kashmir's Budwaste management crisis, with road sides and several designated dustbin sites turning into dumping sites despite numerous government initiatives, while the situation has raised significant environmental and health concerns.

The news agency, has found that several places in rural areas of district Budgam are struggling with the issue of waste management, with villages, roadsides, and recently installed dustbin sites becoming overwhelmed

Despite the implementation of various government schemes, the

collective failure to safeguard the

As per the data, under the wachh Bharat Mission Grameen initiative, as many as 6,535 waste collection and segregation sheds were constructed in the UT as part of the initiative and around 50,000 dustbins, soak pits, compost pits were set up for the first time to manage solid liquid waste. However, despite these efforts, the intended waste segregation and disposal processes have not been effectively executed.

Government officials had envisioned residents segregating their waste and depositing it in designated dustbins, which would then be transported to the sheds for composting. However, the reality is far from this ideal



scenario.

Instead, residents are filling the sheds indiscriminately with various types of waste, including sanitary pads, food items, plastic items, medical waste, electronic waste, and other things.

"Given dustbins are either overflowing or have been taken back to various places. Locals throw trash everywhere-including in local rivers, canals, and roadsides-because there is no effective waste management solution in place, putting at risk our environment constantly." said Chadoora resident Mushtaq

Ahmad. The surplus trash bins in several villages paint a grim picture of the situation, with sanitation standards plummeting due to

and officials are being held accountable for the worsening condition, emphasizing the urgent

"We are deeply concerned about the deteriorating waste management situation in our district," said Manzoor Ahmad, a local resident from Budgam. "It is disheartening to see our beautiful villages marred by garbage, and it is high time we all take responsibility for our actions.'

Another resident Nisar Ahmad Malik from Beerwah echoed the sentiment, stating, "We urge both the residents and officials to work together to address this crisis. It is imperative that we act responsibly and dispose of our waste properly in designated soakage and compost pits." —(KNO)

H&ME Constitutes Committees For Rationalization Of Manpower

SRINAGAR: The Health and Medical Education fepartment has constituted divisional level committees for rationalization of the manpower in the department.

As per the order issued by the Health and Medical Education Department, a copy of which lies with the news agency, the committees have been asked to suggest an alternative course of action for meeting out man-

power deficiency. Director of Health Services of both divisions will be Chairpersons of their respective divisions while other members of the committee include Chief Accounts officers of respective divisions. Deputy secretary/under secretary health and medical education, chief medical officer of the concerned department and any other member co-opted by the committee while deputy director planning of respective directorates will be

member secretary of the committee. For government medical colleges, Principal GMC Srinagar and Jammu will be chairpersons of their respective divisions.

The other members of the committee include Personnel Officers of the New Medical Colleges, Deputy Secretary/under secretary of Health and Medical Education Department, registrar Paramedical Council J&K and any other member co-opted by the committee while administrators of GMC Srinagar and Jammu will be member secretaries of the The terms and references of the Commit-

tee are that the Committee shall examine the sanctioned strength of each institution viz a viz IPHS/NMC norms and point out the deficient/surplus manpower, the Committee shall identify the posts which have become redundant with the passage of time for their abolition and corresponding creation of new posts in the category(ies) where there is an actual shortage of manpower, by analysing the work done reports. Besides the committee shall also propose new creation of posts for enhanced health care Infrastructure, if needed and the Committee shall suggest an alternative course of action for meeting out the manpower deficiency, if any in the Institutions by shifting or utilization of services from other Institution on temporary basis till the regular posts are created in the Institution.

'The Committee shall also suggest utilization of doctors having super- specialization for the best possible health care in the Secondary/tertiary care facilities and the Committee shall also look into the utility/requirement of Medical Officers/Dental Surgeons in the Urban PHCs or those PHCS/Dispensaries located in the vicinity of Secondary and Tertiary Health units besides that the Committee shall submit its recommendations to the Government (Health and Medical Education Department) with in a period of 30 days after the issuance of this Order. —(KNO)

Ex-MC President Booked for Misappropriation of Funds in Rajouri

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Anti-corruption Bureau on Wednesday booked several office bearers, including the then President, Executive Officer and Storekeeper, for alleged misappropriation of funds in Thanamandi of Rajouri district.

"Anti-Corruption Bureau registered a Case FIR no. 01/2024 at Police Station ACB Rajouri U/s 5(1)(c) (d) r/w section 5(2) of Prevention of Corruption Act, Svt. 2006 and section 120-B RPC against Shakeel Ahmed Mir, then President Municipal Committee Thanamandi, Mushtaq Ahmed, then Executive Officer, Riyaz Ahmed, then Storekeeper and other officers/officials of Municipal Committee Thanamandi as well as against Proprietor of M/s Gouri Sales Agencies and others," reads a statement.

The instant case, the statement reads. was registered on the outcome of verification conducted by ACB into the allegations that Municipal Committee Thanamandi, Rajouri invited tenders for installation of street lights in the limits of Municipal Committee vide No. MC/ T/19/193-97 dated 06-03-2019 worth lakhs of rupees for specific brands as well as specifications i.e., Havells, Syska or Philips with two years guarantee/replacement, but the concerned Executive

Officer, by abuse of his official position, connived with supplier firm and accepted supply of LED bulbs of very inferior quality instead of quoted brands.

"During the course of verification, it surfaced that President Municipal Committee Thanamandi Rajouri invited tender notice vide No. MC/T/19/193-97 dated 06-03-2019 for purchase of street lights having specific brands mentioned above. As per record, 100 streetlights of 60 watt, make Mos-Lites, were received from M/S Gouri Sales Agencies in Municipal Committee Thanamandi instead of prescribed brand i.e., Syska/Havells/ Philips. The same was found in the receipt register without mentioning the date of receipt as well as the brand. Out of said 100 street lights, only 42 lights were identified by staff of Municipal Committee Thanamandi, whereas 58 lights could not be traced. These lights were also found purchased at exorbi-

tant rates.' "The Anti-Corruption Bureau after registration of case under relevant sections of law, also conducted searches with the help of local police/ magistrates/ independent witnesses at residences of above-named accused public servants situated in District Rajouri," reads the statement, adding, further investigation in the case is going on.

Anantnag's Incomplete Shopping Complex Frustrates Locals, Shopkeepers Agencies

ANANTNAG: A shopping complex built by the Urban Local Bodies (ULB) in the heart of Anantnag town nearly 20 years ago remains incomplete, leaving locals and shopkeepers frustrated over the prolonged delay.

According to an official speaking to the news agency, the construction of the shopping complex began in 2004 under the ULB's jurisdiction. However, despite two decades having passed, the project remains unfinished.

"The construction work was paused in 2009 due to insufficient funds. It was later resumed in 2015 after a six-year hiatus, with the project cost revised to Rs 19.28 crore from the initial estimate of Rs 8.65 crore." the official revealed.

The project has faced multiple setbacks over the years, resulting in repeated abandonment and delays, much to the dismay of local shopkeepers and residents.

Expressing his frustration, a local shopkeeper lamented, "The government invited people to deposit money for shop bookings, yet the complex remains incomplete. It's unjust to those who deposited tokens nearly two decades ago, still waiting for their shops.'

Another shopkeeper said if



the complex is completed, everything would be available for customers under one roof. "It would have also provided space for those currently occupying footpaths, potentially easing traffic congestion," he said.

Locals raised concerns about the complex's current state, saying the incomplete structure has become a haven for drug addicts, posing a safety concern for the community. They expressed disappointment with the authorities' inaction despite repeated notifications about the issue.

"Despite being aware of the situation, authorities have failed to address the matter effectively and are resorting to delaying tactics for reasons unknown," the concerned residents said.

With approximately 90 percent of the complex already constructed, locals are urging the intervention of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to expedite the completion process and ensure deserving individuals are allocated shops as originally intended—(KNO)

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

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.

stan. 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

"We're so excited to host Paki-

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 calender.

"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

"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, Sha-

heen 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 owers 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 Žaka 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 Oalandars 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

IAIPUR: 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



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

''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.

Short TAKES

SRH Smash Highest Ever IPL Total Of 277 Against MI

Cunrisers 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-yearold record. The previous highest total was 263 for five by

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 Islamahad United

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

Medvedev, Alcaraz Reach Miami Open Quarterfinals

efending Miami Open champion Daniil Medve-Ddev 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

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

helsea 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

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.

DYSS Hosts Sports Events



Observer News Service

D hijbehra and Bidder in Anantnag wit-**D**nessed an 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.

In Bhijbehra & Bidder Zones



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

"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 Nether-

"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

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.

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.

Startup Kashmir

