

J&K ROAD SAFETY CRISIS

4251 Lives Lost In 5 Years: RTI



YEAR 2019-2023
Total Accidents: 28,896
Fatalities: 4,251
Injuries: 37,725

CURRENT YEAR (2024)
Accidents: 398
Fatalities: 55
Injuries: 486

Agencies

Srinagar: Startling data released by the traffic headquarters in Jammu and Kashmir has shed light on the alarming number of road accidents in the Union Territory, with a huge toll on human lives and well-being.

Over the past five years, J&K has witnessed a total of 28,896 road accidents, resulting in 4,251 fatalities and 37,725 injuries, the data reveals. Jammu region has recorded the highest number of road accidents.

In 2019, Jammu reported 3,907 road accidents, leading to 695 fatalities and 4,987 injuries, while the Kashmir division recorded 1,889 accidents, resulting in 301 deaths and 2,545 injuries.

In the following years, the Jammu division reported a higher number of accidents compared to Kashmir. In 2020, Jammu witnessed 3,086 road accidents with 487 fatalities and 3,798 injuries, while Kashmir

reported 1,774 accidents resulting in 241 deaths and 2,096 injuries.

The year 2021 saw Jammu division reporting 3,584 road accidents, leading to 560 fatalities and 4,640 injuries, whereas Kashmir witnessed 1,868 accidents, resulting in 214 deaths and 2,332 injuries.

Similarly, in 2022, the Jammu division recorded 3,886 accidents, with 562 fatalities and 5,554 injuries, while Kashmir reported 2,206 accidents, leading to 243 deaths and 2,818 injuries.

In 2023, the Jammu division reported 3,943 road accidents, resulting in 598 fatalities and 5,486 injuries, and the Kashmir division recorded 2,355 accidents, leading to 295 deaths and 2,983 injuries.

As of January 31, 2024, the current year has witnessed 398 road accidents, resulting in 55 fatalities and 486 injuries. Of these, the Jammu Division reported 284 | [More on P6](#)

Extreme Heat To Scorch India During Elections: IMD

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: India is set to experience extreme heat during the April to June period, with the central and the western peninsular parts expected to face the worst impact, the IMD said on Monday as the country prepares for the seven-phase general elections starting April 19.

Addressing a press conference, Union Minister for

Earth Sciences Kiren Rijju said India is anticipated to experience extreme weather conditions in the upcoming two-and-a-half months and this coincides with the general elections in which around a billion people are expected to exercise their franchise.

"It is going to be very challenging for all of us. Since we are the most populous country in the | [More on P6](#)

HC Seeks Status On RTE Rules

List Of Schools Imparting Free Education In J&K Also Sought

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has asked authorities to inform it regarding the status of formulating necessary rules to implement provisions of Right to Education Act in Jammu and Kashmir. It also sought a list of government aided schools which are imparting free education as per the legislation in J&K. Hearing a Public Interest

Litigation, a Division Bench of Chief Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and Justice Mohd Yousuf Wani passed the order after perusal of a status report by the authorities in June last year.

"Status report submitted by the UT Administration on 05.06.2023 mentions in para 3 thereof that in order to effectively implement the provisions of the Act, the Department/answering respondent are in the process of formulating rules under Right to Education Act so as to provide proper mechanism to implement each and every provision of the Act in letter and spirit," the court said, adding, "In view of the | [More on P6](#)



A devotee praying during the night of 21st Ramazan at Imambargah Ayatullah Yusuf Bemina.

UDHAMPUR LS SEAT

From 40 Contenders In 1967 To Mere 12 In 2024

Agencies

Srinagar: The Udhampur Lok Sabha constituency in Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a fascinating evolution in the number and diversity of candidates vying for parliamentary representation.

From a modest three contenders in its debut election to a staggering 40 candidates in 1996, the electoral landscape of Udhampur has reflected the dynamic political fervor of the region. Since its establishment in 1967, the constituency has traversed a remarkable trajectory.

In its inaugural election in 1967, Udhampur saw a modest contest with three candidates. The contenders included representatives from Congress, Bharatiya Jan Sangh, and Jammu and Kashmir | [More on P6](#)

LS POLLS

Mian Altaf Is NC's Candidate For Anantnag-Rajouri Seat

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Renowned Gujjar leader Mian Altaf, a prominent figure among the Bakarwal and Pahari communities, was on Monday declared as the National Conference's candidate for the newly redrawn Anantnag-Poonch-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat, slated for polling on May 7.

The 66-year-old leader is a five-time MLA and former minister in the Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah governments.

Hailing from the ancestral Wangath village in Kangan,



Central Kashmir, known as 'Baba Nagri', Altaf's nomination has sparked enthusiasm among locals, with his inclusive approach being a key highlight of his candidacy. The announcement of his

name by NC vice president Omar Abdullah has set the stage for a competitive election, with various opposition parties, including arch-rival PDP, facing a formidable challenge in countering Altaf's widespread support base.

"There can't be any better choice than Mian (Altaf) Saheb for the Anantnag-Poonch-Rajouri seat. He has never asked votes on religious lines and always kept all sections of the society together," Omar said while announcing his name on behalf of party president Farooq Abdullah. "I appeal to | [More on P6](#)

Nomination Aimed At Fetching Gujjar Votes: Analysts

After the National Conference announced Mian Altaf's candidature from Anantnag-Rajouri seat political analysts have been speculating that the nomination is aimed at fetching Gujjar votes from the Lok Sabha constituency. A political analyst from Rajouri district from Gujjar community, wishing anonymity, said that there are around six lakh Gujjar votes in Anantnag parliamentary seat which is spread in | [More on P6](#)

'AFSPA Rollback, Troop-cut' Security Not A Status Symbol, But Rather A Necessity: DGP

Says JKP To Revamp Security By Integrating Tech, Infrastructure

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir Police is contemplating a new mechanism to integrate technology and physical infrastructure to strengthen the security, including for protected people who are facing threats, officials said.

"We want to promise that through the use of technology, such as CCTVs, physical infrastructure like security



lights and sensors, security will be strengthened." Director General | [More on P6](#)

'Steps Being Taken For Safe Polling Environment'

Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) R R Swain on Monday said that steps are being taken to ensure a safe and secure environment to all during the Lok Sabha polls in the Union Territory. He said that the security forces | [More on P6](#)

US Embassy's Iftar Gathering In New Delhi

Kashmiri Activists' Presence Spark SM Debate

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: In the days following the American Embassy's Iftar gathering in New Delhi where several Kashmiri activists were present, the event has sparked controversy regarding its perceived meddling in "India's internal affairs".

This was the first public event hosted by the US embassy where Kashmiris were present post abrogation of Article

370 in 2019, reports said. The iftar was hosted by Eric Garcetti, US Ambassador to India. "I received the invitation through my mail and I attended the Iftar party," said a Kashmiri activist, who wished not to be named.

He said the officials from the US inquired about the situation in Kashmir and the problem Kashmiri face.

"The officials told us that they will call them regularly," he added.

Those present included BJs Khalid Jehangir and Nadeem Yousuf, Javid Mir, Sajid Yousuf, Nasir | [More on P6](#)

Qadiri Takes Over As DG Floriculture

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Manzoor Ahmad Qadiri (JKAS) assumed charge as Director General Floriculture Kashmir on Monday.

Qadiri received warmly by senior officers of the Department at Directorate Complex Emporium Garden Srinagar.

Manzoor Ahmad Qadiri processes a wealth of experience in different fields. He has served in various capacities in the Administration.

Manzoor Ahmad Qadiri expressed commitment to develop the sector in the region.

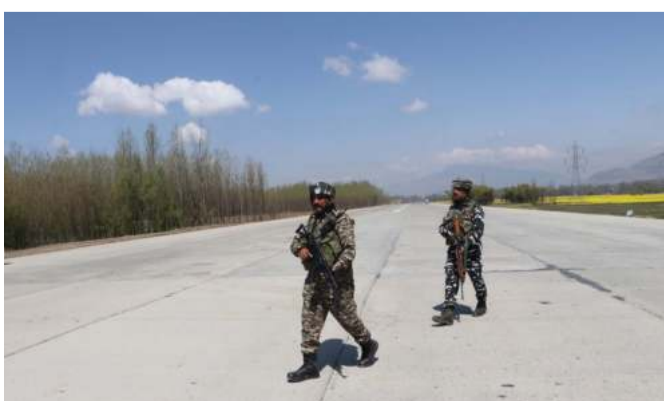
Emergency Landing Facility At Bijbehara

IAF Set To Conduct Trial Run On Highway

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Indian Air Force Chinook and Mi-17 helicopters will land on a stretch of the national highway linking Kashmir with the rest of the country as part of an Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) drill, the first such exercise in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Monday.

According to the officials, around two sorties of the US-manufactured Chinook and the Russian-made Mi-17 helicopters will land on the Wanpoh-Sangam stretch of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway during the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday. The work on the 3.5-km



emergency landing strip was started in 2020 and completed late last year as part of the programme initiated by the IAF with the Ministry of Road

Transport and Highways for the creation of ELFs at different locations across the country. Security has been heightened along the landing | [More on P6](#)

Derecognition Of World Foundation School High Court Stays DSE Order

Agencies

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has stayed the de-recognition order issued by the Directorate of School Education Kashmir against World Foundation School Budgam.

According to details available, counsel for petitioner has stated that impugned order passed by Director School Education Kashmir is in violation of Section 16 of the Jammu and Kashmir School Education Act 2002, which provides reasonable

opportunity of being heard to be afforded to the education agency.

He stated the counsel also states that impugned action culminated in impugned order is also contradictory and contravention to SRO/Notification 123 dated 18th March 2010 (Jammu and Kashmir School Education Rules, 2010).

"A prima facie case is made out for indulgence of this court as also for grant of ad interim relief. Notice in CM as well. Rekha Wangnoo, who is on caveat, has caused appearance and accepted notice | [More on P6](#)

Dr. Iffat Principal GMC Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Health & Medical Education Department, Jammu and Kashmir, on Monday entrusted Incharge Principal Government Medical College Handwara with the additional charge to look after as Principal Government Medical College Srinagar in wake of superannuation of Prof. (Dr.) Tanvir Masood Bhat.

The adjustment has been made amid enforcement of Model Code of Conduct amid upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

"Consequent upon the superannuation of Prof. (Dr.) Tanvir Masood Bhat, | [More on P6](#)



Emotional Response To Climate Change Affects Policy Preference To Tackle It

Press Trust Of India

An individual's emotional reaction to climate change whether it is guilt, anger, hope or fear could have a bearing on their climate policy preferences, a new research has found. It found that while the guilty atone through options requiring them to shell out money like fossil fuel tax, those feeling hopeful or sad about climate change place their faith in proactive policies, such as investing in infrastructure. Individuals angry about climate change too were found to be comfortable with money-extracting policies. However, the research, led by George Mason University, Virginia, US, found that those fearful of climate change were the ones most likely to support any and all kinds of policies, especially regulatory ones such as those around carbon emissions. The researchers said that existing research has not explored the unique links between specific emotions and the types of climate policies these emotions drive an individual to support. The study is published in the journal PLoS Climate.

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The findings showed that emotional investment can help raise awareness of important issues and galvanise an otherwise apathetic public, they said. For example, individuals and organisations advocating for proactive climate solutions might appeal to feelings of hope, they said. For the study, the researchers used surveys to examine how common emotional reactions to climate change -- guilt, anger, hope, sadness and fear -- influenced one's policy preferences. The survey questions enquired about the respondents' emotional response to climate change, and support for specific policies -- for example, "Increase federal funding to low-income communities and communities of colour who are disproportionately harmed by air and water pollution." The surveys were distributed every six months from 2010 to 2022. Of the total 16,605 participants, 51 per cent reported as being women and 73 per cent as being "White, non-Hispanic". On average, they were aged 45-54 years and had received "some college" education.



“We find that in comparison to other policy options: those who are more fearful of climate change are more likely to support regulatory-first approaches to policy; those who feel more guilty support personally costly climate policies; and those who are more hopeful support more proactive climate policies like generating renewable energy on public land”

The questions accounted for political ideologies as well, the team said. They found that the five emotions investigated were uniquely associated with support for specific types of climate policies -- taxes or investments or regulatory ones. However, the stronger the emotionality, the stronger the support for any policy, they found. "We find that in comparison to other policy options: those who are more fearful of climate change are more likely to support regulatory-first approaches to policy; those who feel more guilty support personally costly climate policies; and those who are more hopeful support more proactive climate policies like generating renewable energy on public land," the authors wrote in their study. "Future work should examine experimentally whether messages that target these emotions are more effective at increasing support for the specific policy types, but in the meantime, communicators may wish to consider how their campaign's emotional tones match their targeted policy goals," they wrote.

Deepfakes When You Can't Trust Your Eyes Anymore

360info.org

Deepfakes are threatening privacy and security. Detection methods using deep learning aim to combat this but there's a long way to go. It started in 2017 when Reddit users uploaded sexually explicit videos using the faces of women celebrities superimposed onto adult film actresses' bodies. The emergence of such disturbing videos was a result of a sophisticated deep learning algorithm known as "deepfake". It sent shock waves through the world, threatening privacy and societal security. Within a year, Reddit and other online platforms banned these deepfake porn videos but the problem does not stop there. This advanced technique enables the replacement of one person's likeness with another's.

Some popular examples include applying filters to alter facial attributes; swapping faces with celebrities; transferring facial expressions; or generating a new selfie based on an original photo. The malicious use of deepfakes has the potential to cause severe psychological harm and tarnish reputations, marking it as a powerful tool capable of inciting social panic and threatening world peace. The development of robust deepfake detectors which are trained to identify the distinct features that distinguish a fake image from a real one, is crucial. Traditional approaches focus on analysing inconsistencies in pixel distribution, leading to unusual biometric artefacts and facial textures, such as unnatural skin texture, odd shadowing, and abnormal placement of facial attributes, which serve as key indicators for deepfake detection.

Two-Way Link Found Between PMS In Women, Perinatal Depression In New Study

“It is important that healthcare professionals who meet with women during pregnancy are aware of the link between premenstrual disorders and perinatal depression in order to provide well-informed advice”



Press Trust Of India

Women with premenstrual syndrome (PMS), or symptoms experienced before their periods, are at a higher risk of developing post-pregnancy depression, according to a new research. Conversely, it also found that women with pregnancy-related, or perinatal, depression

have a higher risk of experiencing premenstrual disorders, that can include mood swings and physical discomfort. Researchers, led by the Karolinska Institutet, Sweden, said the findings suggested that a common mechanism could contribute to the two conditions, and that understanding the link could help with extending targeted support to women most likely to be affected.

Using Swedish nationwide registers from 2001 to 2018, the researchers identified roughly 85,000 women having perinatal depression and about 8,50,000 women unaffected women. Almost 3 per cent of women having pregnancy-linked depression were found to have had premenstrual disorders or PMS before pregnancy, compared to 0.6 per cent of unaffected women. That is, women having PMS were

about five times more likely to experience perinatal depression. Conversely, women who experienced perinatal depression were twice as likely to develop premenstrual disorders, the researchers found. "It is important that healthcare professionals who meet with women during pregnancy are aware of the link between premenstrual disorders and perinatal depression in order to provide well-informed advice," said Donghao Lu, Associate Professor at the Institute of Environmental Medicine, Karolinska Institutet and last author of the paper published in the journal PLoS Medicine. The researchers observed the two-way association between the conditions for both prenatal and postnatal depression, regardless of history of psychiatric disorders. They emphasised that more research was needed to understand the biological link between premenstrual disorders and perinatal depression.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost the Number Plate of my vehicle bearing Regd No: JK13C- 5421 Model 2014, from Goushbug To Yadipora Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the ARTO Sopore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Abdul Ahad Yatoo fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Mr. Khalid Qayoom Mir want to bring to the notice of the general public that I want to add surname to my daughter's name studying in class 1st in Presentation Convent Higher Secondary School Rajbagh Srinagar Kashmir under admission number 6771 from "Khadija" to "Khadija Mir". Anyone having objection, if any, shall report to the school office in next 7 working days from the date of publication of this notice after which no objection shall be entertained.
Khalid Qayoom Mir
F/O Khadija Mir ss

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Tilgam

Subject: Registration of Birth and Dath seeking Magisterial Order thereof
Public Notice
 The registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development officer Pattan) has submitted case file pertaining to birth of Shaheena Akhter D/o Ghulam Mohammad Baghat R/o Tilgam Tehsil Pattan Distt Baramulla having verified the date of birth as 10-02-1991 and the event has been shown to be occurred at Home. In this connection if anybody having any objection to the issuance of delay order of birth certificate shall submit his/her claim to this office within seven (7) days after that no objection shall be entertained.
fko Naib Tehsildar

Public Notice

I Reyaz Ahmad Wani S/O Ab Gani Wani R/O Tapper Waripora is applying for pesticide license under name and style Wani Pesticides Situated at Tapper Payeen. If anybody having objection may report to Plant Protection Office of Kashmir, Lal Mandi Srinagar within a period of 7 days of this publication after that no objection will be entertained.
FKO

Public Notice

I have lost my Driving License bearing dl no: JK-0520120034194. Now I have applied for the issuance of duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the Concerned ARTO Office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Abdul Majid Teli S/o Habibullah Teli
R/o Klantra Payeen Bta, fko

The Jammu And Kashmir State Board Of School Education

SUB-OFFICE BANDIPORA

The candidates whose photograph is published in this notice is claiming to have lost the original marks certificate of 10th session Annual Regular 2006 issued by the board of School Education under Below mentioned particulars
 Name - Dawood Hussain Lone
 S/o: Mohd Anwar Lone
 Roll No: 370449
 Year & Session 2006 Annual Regular
 Now the candidate has applied for Duplicate Marks Card. Anybody (if) having any objection may file the same before undersigned with (07) Seven days from the date of publication of this notice. Besides, the original marks card is treated as cancelled.
Sd/ Assistant Secretary
Board of School Education
Sub Office Bandipora
bb

PUBLIC NOTICE

This for the information that my father namely Abdul Rehman Bhat was the only son of his parents Abdul Sattar Bhat and Mst. Fatima who died on 25-10-2005 and 21-06-2016 respectively. Hence He was the only legal heir of his parents. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Tehsildar ChanaPora, SRINAGAR within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Nazir Ahmad Bhat
S/o Late Abdul Rehman Bhat
R/o Natipora Srinagar Kashmir mdl

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Expression of Interest
No. NR-FZR0COML(NFR)/4/2024 Date: 30/03/2024
 For and on behalf of the President of India, Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Firozpur Division, Northern Railway invites the Expression of Interest for Operation, Renovation & Maintenance of Mela Waiting Hall at Railway station Sultanpur Lodhi on non-Mela days. The parties interested are requested to visit the Railway Station/ location/ area and familiarize themselves with the earning capacity and submit their ideas with detail proposal to this office upto 01/05/2024. Final decision on the ideas submitted by the parties will be taken by the Railway Administration. For further detail please visit Northern Railway website <https://nr.indianrailways.gov.in/> or the office of Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, DRM's office, Firozpur Cantt-152001 on any working day during office hours. Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Firozpur Division, Contact No.01632244470, Email: pamcell.fzr@gmail.com
 951/2024
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan
Executive Magistrate 1st Class
Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth
Public Notice
 The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/ Block Development Officer Pattan) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Mohd Ahsanullah Shah S/o Javid Ahmad Shah R/o Om Burn Tehsil Singpora District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 23/07/2020 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.
fko **Executive Magistrate 1st Class**
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir
 e-mail: ddtreg123@gmail.com
Sub: - Grant of registration to the Hotel under the name and style "M/s Trumboo Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd" situated at Sonamarg, Ganderbal.
Public Notice
 Whereas, Mr. Mohammad Shafi Trumboo and Others R/o Ishber Nishat, Srinagar have approached this office for grant of Registration to the Hotel under the name and style /s Trumboo Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd" situated at Sonamarg, Ganderbal;
 Whereas, the applicants have submitted the documents like NOC from SDA Building permission by the Sonamarg Development Authority, Sale Deed, PHE Bill, PDD bill, NOC from F&ES Department issued, NOC from F&ES Department, NOC JKPC, State Subject certificate photocopy, Character Certificate, Ownership papers of land/Revenue Extract, PAN Card, Id Proof, Non-Conviction Affidavit and other related documents etc;
 Whereas, grant of registration certificate for the hotel is purely for purpose of running operation management of the said hotel and does not confer any right of ownership of the hotel or any other entitlement in respect of property disputes and shall also not regularize any unauthorized structure and encroachment on Government land;
 Now therefore, in exercise of powers conferred on me under section 10 of J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/2012, before issuance of registration certificate in favour of Mr. Mohammad Shafi Trumboo and Others R/o Ishber Nishat Srinagar the matter is hereby notified for information of General Public/Financial Institutions/ Banks/ Development Authorities/ PHE Department/ Electric Department etc, that in case of any objection, 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 as per norms and as after submission of all requisite documents.
Sd/-
Assistant Director Tourism
Registration
 No: Reg/UP-98/DTK/01
 DIPK-3/24
 Dated: 01.04.2024

Teenager Stabbed In Srinagar, Hospitalized

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A teenage boy received injuries after being allegedly stabbed in Maloora area on the outskirts of Srinagar late last night. A local news gathering agency reported that a teenage boy sustained injuries after being attacked with a sharp edged weapon

in Maloora area on the outskirts of Srinagar. The injured boy identified as Farhan Rafiq son of Mohammad Rafiq Wagay, a resident of Maloora received head injuries in the attack and was taken to SKIMS Medical College Bemina for treatment. Meanwhile police have taken cognizance and set up an investigation.

Deployment To Be Realigned In Srinagar Ahead Of Eid-ul-Fitr

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Anticipating a surge in traffic ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr, Srinagar traffic police are gearing up to recalibrate their deployment across the city.

A senior traffic police official said the department expects an increase in traffic volume on Srinagar roads ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr, and urged responsible parking behavior from motorists to utilize designated parking areas rather than obstructing vehicular movement on roads. "There is no doubt that traffic load will increase on Srinagar roads. We expect good behavior from motorists and they should park their vehicles in parking, not on roads," the senior officer said. The officer said that

in preparation for the anticipated traffic rush, particularly around the city center, traffic police were in process of strategizing their deployments too to ensure smooth and hassle-free commuting experiences. "As Eid-ul-Fitr draws near, efforts are underway to facilitate safe and efficient traffic management in Srinagar. Traffic police's proactive measures aim to maintain order and safety on Srinagar's roads during this busy period," the officer added. Notably, the last 10 days of the holy month of Ramadan traditionally sees increased footfall of shoppers purchasing items including clothing, groceries, bakery goods, mutton and other household items

Valley Records Growth Of Commercial Floriculture Start-Ups

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Every morning Waseem Ahmad Wani (26) leaves his home with a variety of flower saplings towards Srinagar-Baramulla highway. He stations at multiple places along the highway selling a variety of native as well as exotic flower saplings to the people. This has been his routine during the spring and summer seasons for the last three years and gives him enough returns to make ends meet. "I was earlier working in a private company which gave me a very low salary. In 2021, I learned

about the scope of floriculture in Kashmir and utilized my five marlas of agriculture land growing a variety of follower saplings," he said. Wani said he sought assistance from the floriculture department in growing exotic flower saplings. "I installed a greenhouse and bought some exotic seeds to grow them here. I am now making good money out of this trade and I shall expand it to grow some more varieties in coming years," he said. Like Wani scores of the educated youth are exploring commercial floriculture to generate income and employment.



Devotees raise their hands in supplication as chief cleric of Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar displays holy relic of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the martyrdom anniversary of Hazrat Ali (A.S) on the 21st day of Ramadan. PIC: Abid Bhat/KO

LS Polls-2024: UT Media Nodal Officer Interacts With AROs, NOs In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: UT Media Nodal Officer for General Elections-2024, Sapna Kotwal (Secretary, J&K Advisory Board for Development of Pahari) today held an interaction session with Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) and Election Nodal Officers of District Srinagar here regarding Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) activities taken up in the district.

The meeting was held to take first hand appraisal of progress on activities being held under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) campaign in Srinagar district for voter education, spreading voter awareness and promoting voter literacy in view of the upcoming polls in 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency. On the occasion, the UT Media Nodal Officer was given a detailed PowerPoint Presentation regarding the SVEEP activities held in Srinagar district during 2023-24. She was informed that over 90 thousand eligible new voters were added including over 25 thousand young voters during the SVEEP campaign held across the district. She appreciated the efforts of the SVEEP team of Srinagar district for sensitizing the

DEO Srinagar Holds Meeting with AROs, Nodal Officers

Srinagar: District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat Monday chaired a meeting of Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) and Election Nodal Officers here in his Office Chamber to review the progress of preparation with regard to conduct of upcoming Lok Sabha Elections-2024 for 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency in the District. At the outset, the District Election Officer reviewed Assembly Segment wise status of Election Training imparted to the Polling Staff on handling of EVMs, VVPAT machines in all eight Assembly Constituencies of the Srinagar District. The DEO was informed that as many as 7000 employees have been imparted Election related necessary Trainings in the District so far after the first Randomization process. The DEO asked the concerned Nodal Officers to expedite the process of imparting Election related Trainings to the Poll Staff and undertake the process of conducting a second Randomization of Polling Staff in Srinagar. The DEO directed the AROs and Officers of R&B, PDD, PHE and others concerned to work with utmost coordination to

complete all assigned tasks related to the conduct of the Lok Sabha elections-2024. He stressed that assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) should be ensured for PwD Voters at each and every Polling Station viz Permanent ramps, drinking water, toilet facilities as per norms of ECI. The DEO also enjoined upon the Nodal Officer Postal Ballot & all AROs to take up all necessary arrangements for facilitating voting by Postal Ballots by various categories of Voters including service voters, personnel on Poll Duty (EDC), migrant electors, absent electors, etc so that they cast their vote in upcoming Lok Sabha Election without any difficulty. The meeting was attended by Nodal Officer Permissions, Zahoor Ahmad Mir, Assistant Returning Officer (ARO), Hazratbal, Syed Ahmad Kataria, Assistant Returning Officer (ARO), Hazratbal, Dr. Khalid Hussain, Assistant Returning Officer (ARO), Headquarter, Mohammad Aslam Choudhary, Nodal Officer Trainings, Riyaz Ahmad Shah, Deputy District Election Officer, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Nodal Officer Postal Ballot, Shohab Latief, Nodal Officer ETPBS/IT, Mujtaba Ahmad Bandy and other concerned.

new voters. She asked the officers to continue the SVEEP activities and install hoardings at prominent public places besides publicizing

through different print/electronic and social media platforms to maximize the voter turnout in the district. Besides Deputy Dis-

trict Election Officer, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, the meeting was attended by AROs, Nodal Officer SVEEP and other concerned officials.

Health Secretary Pays Surprise Visit To IMHANS, Inspects Functioning

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Dr Syed Abid Rashid Shah, today paid a surprise visit to the Government Psychiatric Diseases Hospital (IMHANS-K), Srinagar. He took a round of the hospital along with the HoD Psychiatry, Professor Mohammad Maqbool Dar, Professor Arshad Hussien and Medical Superintendent, Dr Ajaz Ahmed Baba and visited various sections like the Crisis Management Area (Casualty), Wards, OPD, ECT, Chronic Wards, MRI and other units and reviewed the functioning. The Secretary interacted with the faculty, resident doctors and the staff besides the patients and attendants and asked them regarding the status of patient care facilities available in the hospital. He also sought feedback from the patients and attendants regarding shortcomings, if any, in working of the hospital. Dr Abid Rashid also re-



viewed the functioning of 24x7 Telemanas Counseling Center and was briefed about its functioning by Nodal Officer Telemanas, Professor Arshad Hussein.

ZEO Office Hawal Flays CEO, Director Education Orders

Observer News service

Srinagar: Office of the Zonal Education Officer (ZEO) Hawal is turning into an alleged hub of favoritism with concerned ZEO who recently attached superannuation not implementing the orders of the directorate, undermining the laid down rules and violating government directives. As per the reports coming to the fore, the ZEO Office at Hawal has sidelined the recently issued order of rationalization issued by Chief Education Officer Srinagar in view of the growing demand of rationalization of teachers in district Srinagar. The Order titled 'Rationalization of Academic Teaching Staff across the UT of J&K' issued Vide Order Number CEO/Sgr/Estt/1880-96, dated:09-03-2024 is yet to be implemented to the fullest with several teachers posted at their earlier postings not asked to join the new places. Sources said there were several teachers within the zone who were attached to different schools of the zone in the past.

However, the latest order issued by CEO Srinagar and even vetted by Director of School Education Kashmir nullified the previous postings or verbal attachments of teachers. "While the latest order had to be implemented in letter and spirit, violations were found and several teachers have been asked not to join their new places of posting. All this is being done insidiously and the palms of a few clerks are being greased by those teachers so that they are not moved away from their choosiest places," says a senior official at the Director School Education office. He added that LG Office may be informed about such gross irregularities within this particular zone and it is highly likely that action is taken against the matter in hand. "We are keeping a very close vigil on this zone and it is concerning that the rationalization order has not been implemented on the ground. We may ask the concerned office to rectify the mistakes sans delay," the officer divulged. (KNO)

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

AIRPORTS
 SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈️

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

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

HIJRI CALENDAR
 22 Ramadan
 1445

PRAYERS

FAJR	4 : 53
ZUHR	12:36
ASR	5: 04
Magrib	6:55
ISHA	8: 15

This Day In History

- 1559 - England & France sign 1st Treaty of Le Cateau-Cambrésis
- 1745 - Austria & Bavaria sign peace
- 1801 - Napoleonic Wars: The British led by Horatio Nelson destroy the Danish fleet in the naval Battle of Copenhagen
- 1819 - 1st successful agricultural journal ("American Farmer") first publishes
- 1865 - Battle of Petersburg ends as the Army of Northern Virginia is forced to retreat under heavy fire from a general Union offensive

From KO Archives

'I Want To Be With My Family Now'
Farooq Announces Retirement From Politics

Observer News Service

Jammu- The Chief minister Farooq Abdullah today made the dramatic announcement of his "retirement from active politics" when he said that he will not contest any more elections in future and nor will hold the post of the president" of the ruling National Conference. "I will not seek an election after the term of present Assembly is over and will quit as national Conference president, before the end of the term of my government" Abdullah said.

Farooq's announcement, both sudden and unexpected, stunned the entire House, especially the members of the ruling National Conference, which he made in course of his reply to the debate on the motion of thanks to the governor's address. "I want to devote my whole time to my family. Let the National Conference look for some new leader" Farooq said.

Abdullah's dramatic announcement was first taken by some members as an "April Fool" joke, but when he went on to talk about the issue, in course of his speech, the ruling party members could be seen in a state of shock and disbelief, both. Incidentally Farooq's "retirement" announcement comes within less than 24 hours of a similar statement made by the Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in the Lok Sabha that it was his last election" and he would never contest again.

What has prompted Abdullah, to take such an extreme decision, political observers here believe, was the "poor performance of the National Conference" both on the political and administrative fronts, with senior leaders taking hardly any interest in strengthening the party at grass root level.

Abdullah expressed his displeasure over the performance of National Conference ministers, at the meeting of the party's working committee, at which he is reported to have openly talked about his intentions to overhaul his cabinet. "My first experience has not worked well. Now, there will be an altogether different team" Farooq is believed to have told his party leaders at the working committee meeting.

In his speech in the Assembly today, Abdullah showered praises on the BJP led government and appreciated its "secular pronouncements" expressing the hope that new government under the "inspiring leadership" Vajpayee would strengthen the country and promote brotherhood and amity. He also hoped that the tyranny of Pakistan on Kashmir would come to an end and "Azad Kashmir" under "illegal occupation of Pakistan" would once again become the part of this state. He referred to Pakistan's abetment to militancy and firing by its soldiers in border areas and said that Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee should "forcefully" tell Pakistan to stop all this. "We don't want war but peace. But at the same time we cannot allow the number of graveyards increasing", he said regretting that hot line between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan failed to stop the border firing.

Abdullah ruled out any talks with the militants or other people, outside the gambit of Indian constitution and said that no Indian Prime Minister can ever think of a dialogue with people who had no faith in Indian constitution. "Who can accept militants or Pakistan's illogical plea that Jammu and Kashmir is a disputed territory", he wondered and said that even those who were aspiring to sit on the chair now held by Vajpayee, could have afforded to yield to such an "absurd proposition".

Without naming Hurriyat leaders, Abdullah said that some elements who while living in India are freely visiting Pakistan high commission in Delhi, enjoy dinners, accept money and other facilities and dance to the tune of that country. It is the greatness of India to have such people here and asked "is this possible in Pakistan". Without naming Mufti Mohammad Syed, who has been advocating an unconditional dialogue with the separatist political leaders and militants, Abdullah said those making such a demand should first consider the "national interest" before saying anything on the issue.

(Kashmir Observer, 02 April, 1998)

The Secretary interacted with the faculty, resident doctors and the staff besides the patients and attendants and asked them regarding the status of patient care facilities available in the hospital

KASHMIR OBSERVERTM

Tuesday | 02-04-2024

Opposition Is No Match

Despite the formidable display of unity among opposition leaders at the "Loktantra Bachao Rally" in New Delhi on Sunday, it remains evident that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's grip on power faces no credible challenge. The rally, orchestrated under the banner of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA), was first such show of strength by a coalition of diverse political factions rallying against the alleged authoritarian tendencies of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). However, while the opposition's rhetoric may be strong, their ability to translate unity into a viable electoral force appears questionable.

The rally underlined several grievances shared by opposition leaders, including concerns over the erosion of democratic institutions, alleged misuse of central agencies for political gain, and the stifling of dissenting voices. Such grievances, though resonant among certain segments of the electorate, have yet to coalesce into a coherent alternative vision capable of challenging the PM Modi's dominance.

One of the primary challenges facing the opposition is the lack of a unifying figure or narrative. While the rally brought together leaders from various regional and national parties, each with their own agendas and constituencies, the absence of a singular charismatic leader capable of galvanizing widespread support dilutes the opposition's collective impact. Despite efforts to present a united front, underlying contradictions and competing ambitions among coalition members undermine the cohesion necessary to mount a credible challenge.

Moreover, the rally's focus on allegations of electoral malpractice and authoritarian tendencies within the BJP government may resonate with committed opposition supporters but may fail to sufficiently sway undecided voters. In the absence of a compelling alternative agenda addressing pressing issues such as economic revitalization, social welfare, and governance reform, the opposition risks appearing reactive rather than proactive in its approach.

Prime Minister Modi's enduring popularity and formidable electoral machinery further reinforce his position as the preeminent political force in Indian politics. Despite facing criticism on various fronts, including economic management and social cohesion, the PM Modi's ability to command broad-based support, particularly among key demographics and in crucial states, remains unparalleled. His adept use of communication channels, including social media and public rallies, allows him to shape narratives and maintain a strong connection with his voter base. Moreover, the opposition's internal fissures and organizational challenges present significant obstacles to mounting a credible electoral challenge. Infighting, conflicting agendas, and opportunistic alliances risk undermining the opposition's credibility and coherence, reinforcing the perception of Modi's invincibility.

While the "Loktantra Bachao Rally" may have served as a symbolic display of opposition unity and resilience, it is unlikely to pose a significant threat to Modi's continued dominance. Without a compelling alternative vision, cohesive leadership, and effective organizational structures, the opposition remains ill-equipped to challenge the BJP's mass support. As India approaches the next general election, the onus is on the opposition to transcend rhetoric and present a compelling agenda capable of resonating with a diverse electorate. Until then, Modi's grip on power appears unassailable.



Politics Without a Cause

Wangchuk's fasting protest inadvertently shines a glaring light on the shallow self-serving politics prevailing in Kashmir

Riyaz Wani

“
In the Valley, the mainstream politicians generally don't think it is their place to struggle for a cause. Their reasons to join are generally self-serving in nature: to enjoy a good life and some petty power

The renowned Ladakhi climate activist Sonam Wangchuk ended his fast after 21 days, a feat in itself even if Ladakh's demands are far from being met. And there's little hope they will be in the near to medium future. For if the centre hasn't been moved by a mass fasting protest led by Wangchuk, it is difficult to see what will. It's not that protests in Ladakh have just begun: Ladakhis have been on the streets over the past four years. They woke up to the drawbacks of the union territory status a year into raucously celebrating when it was granted. Ever since they have been demanding restoration of the lost constitutional safeguards besides a full-fledged statehood. But as the response to Wangchuk's protest shows, the centre is firmly disinclined to make any concessions.

That said, the point here is not to debate Ladakh's demands and chances of these being met by the centre: it is to focus on the person of Wangchuk. He has certainly shown a lot of character by fasting for the region's cause, the like of which hasn't been witnessed in a long time in India since the 2013 India Against Corruption movement. Even then the fasting didn't stretch for three weeks. If anything, this is an instance of genuine leadership, something that isn't easily available in mainstream politics in India, or for that matter even across apolitical activism. Much more so in Kashmir where mainstream politics has largely been anything but genuine.

In the Valley, the mainstream politicians generally don't think it is their place to struggle for a cause. Their politics has hardly been a site for

principles and ideology. It is no place for struggle and sacrifice. People don't join it for conviction or a cause. Their reasons to join are generally self-serving in nature: to enjoy a good life and some petty power. Such political parties may model themselves as a movement for a larger good, but, in practice, they are not fully in control of even the delivery of basic governance, their primary job. A significant proportion of the people who run these political outfits are opportunists. Their words are posturing, their deeds are phony. As for the high-sounding agendas of the parties, they are more of an electoral necessity than a political ideology.

This politics, as a result, doesn't lend itself to a fight for a bigger cause. It offers deep structural impediments for such a pursuit: For its survival, it has to run with its local constituency and hunt with New Delhi. This has created a breed of leaders who defer to New Delhi's conditions and have, in turn, been shaped by them.

Where does this kind of politics leave Kashmir? Nowhere. As it is obvious, this politics is good for nothing, largely unrepresentative. It abdicates its basic role of articulating the interests of its people, let alone being responsive to the sentiment on the ground. The latter it has often found beyond its moral authority to represent. This politics can make a severely limited set of demands, most of these in the domain of development. This is perhaps why, at a time, when Kashmir more than ever needs leadership, no one is ready to step up to the plate.

It is true that Kashmir's political sphere has for decades operated along two paradigms – separatist and the mainstream,

the latter being an euphemism for being pro-India. But while separatists often peddled their cause aggressively, the political mainstream has generally fought shy of espousing its own ideology, presuming it didn't resonate with a large majority of people. However, such an approach has been more of a cop-out than a normal practice of politics. For, between separatism and the pro-India ideologies, there are numerous secular pro-people causes in need of a good fight. But not only has the mainstream chosen to unsee them but also preferred a path of least resistance whenever it is time to stand and struggle for anything. They would rather prefer easy power over a drawn struggle with chances of going to jail.

This sort of politics hardly speaks to its people and goes on regardless. It is also certain to become irrelevant sooner or later. And, of course, it is easily replaceable by a politics that makes common cause with people. For proof, we need only to see what happened to the Congress in India in a different and much larger context. Or for that matter to Sharifs and Bhuttos in Pakistan. Although, they are back in power we know how. Truth is that genuine politics dies the moment it sees power as an end rather than as a means to safeguard and secure the larger interest of people. For example, look at Wangchuk. It doesn't matter that he is not a politician.

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

The author is the Political Editor at Kashmir Observer



Long-term Investing Philosophy

Did you know?

Irshad Mushtaq

Warren Buffett, the legendary investor known for his long-term investing philosophy, has always emphasized the importance of patience and discipline in the world of finance. As the CEO of Berkshire Hathaway, he has built an empire by following these principles, and his advice is sought after by investors around the world.

In a world where instant gratification is the norm, Buffett's words serve as a powerful reminder that true success in the stock market takes time. He compares the process to the gestation period of a baby, highlighting that no matter how much effort is put in, some things simply cannot be rushed. This analogy perfectly encapsulates the essence of long-term investing - it is a slow and steady journey that requires unwavering patience.

One of Buffett's most famous quotes is, "Buy a stock the way you would buy a house." This statement emphasizes the need for a thorough understanding and genuine appreciation of the companies in which one invests. He suggests that investors should view their stock holdings as long-term assets, similar to owning a house, rather than mere certificates of ownership for short-term gain. This mindset can help prevent rash decision-making based on market fluctuations.

Buffett's belief that time is the friend of a great company and the enemy of the mediocre is a fundamental principle of his investment strategy. He understands that quality businesses will continue to grow and thrive over time, while weaker companies will struggle to maintain their value. This insight exemplifies the long-term approach that has made him one of the most successful investors in history.

In line with his commitment to long-term investing, Buffett advises against trading stocks with a short-term mindset. He states, "If you aren't willing to own a stock for ten years, don't even think about owning it for ten minutes." This philosophy reinforces the idea that successful investing requires a steadfast commitment to enduring the inevitable market fluctuations over the years.

Finally, Buffett's view on the stock market is a reflection of his dedication to long-term growth. He does not attempt to make quick money through market timing or speculation. Instead, he operates with the assumption that his investments may be locked away for years if the market were suddenly closed. This mindset showcases the unwavering faith he has in his investment decisions and the enduring nature of his approach.

In conclusion, Warren Buffett's approach to long-term investing is a testament to the power of patience and discipline. His wisdom serves as a guiding light for investors seeking sustainable growth and lasting success in the financial markets. As the oracle of Omaha, his principles will continue to inspire generations of investors to embrace the virtues of long-term investing.

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1 Billion Meals a Day Wasted

It is a matter of grave concern that households across the world have wasted 1 billion meals a day in 2022, which constitutes 60% of the total wastage of food, according to the Food Wastage Index Report 2024, a study co-authored by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). Food loss or waste has indeed become an issue of great public

concern. It must be understood that when a bunch of bananas falls off a truck or restaurant owners fill their rubbish bins with leftover meals, all those resources also essentially get wasted along with the food. It may surprise us, but the fact is that it takes an average of 125 litres of water to produce just one apple. This means that throwing away a damaged apple is akin to pouring 125 litres of water down the drain.

There needs to be a broad spectrum of stakeholders and partners to tackle this mountainous problem. Governments and other international bodies must work in tandem to promote awareness on this critical issue and develop policies to reduce food loss and wastage. There must also be coordination among food supply chain actors – farmers, handlers, processors and traders in collaboration with the

public and private sectors and the civil society to prevent food wastage. Perhaps, educating people in a sustained manner on safe food handling, proper food storage in households and understanding "best before" dates will be of some help in tackling the issue. Discarding food is not sustainable for our earth and the environment.

Ranganathan Sivakumar

EMBRACING THE CHALLENGE

The Intriguing Relationship
Between Science and Math

Dr Reyaz Ahmad

Even though many people appreciate the glories of science, there is a fascinating paradox that comes up when the subject of mathematics is brought up. Frequently characterized as difficult, demanding, and occasionally even unnecessary, mathematics does not appear to elicit the same level of affection. This occurrence raises the question, "Why is math so often looked down upon?"

It's general knowledge that not all subjects are loved by all people, and math is no exception. Although other people might not care too much about it, open hatred seems confusing. Neither math should feel like a chore nor should it cause agony. Removing oneself from the situation could help one's anger to subside and create a neutral position if the urge to interact with math is the source of the problem.

Individuals' choices are as diverse as the people who possess them. For example, a person may enjoy science fiction stories immensely but not care for the movies that adapt them. However, where does this dislike of math come from? Is this feeling fuelled by dissatisfaction with our knowledge, a sense that there isn't enough real-world application, or perhaps by the simplistic and sometimes mocked mathematical models?

Even if mathematical skills are not very pleasant, they are necessary to understand the essence of science. Let's continue to be passionate about science and maybe we may reduce the pressure of learning the more difficult parts of mathematics.



Mathematics is a discipline that involves rigorous proofs, abstract reasoning, and pattern detection. It is much more than just crunching numbers. In terms of problem-solving, experimentation, and the articulation of physical principles and hypotheses, it is similar to science. If you're passionate in science but math seems unappealing to you, it might be time to investigate its hidden sides. You could start by reading up on understudied mathematical ideas or discovering the fun of solving

math puzzles for fun.

Mathematical disciplines such as differential equations and geometry provide beautiful explanations for the mysteries of terminal velocity in freefall and geometric marvels that tessellate a plane, similar to the hexagonal patterns of a honeycomb.

Unfortunately, not many people—even in the scientific community—acknowledge the intrinsic beauty of mathematics. Math was once admired for its "creative" and "artistic" traits, but

somewhere along the line it was relegated to the domains of the "geeky" and "sophisticated." This distorted perspective could be the result of ignorance or a failure to relate mathematical ideas to practical applications.

Furthermore, the importance of educators cannot be emphasized. The beauty of mathematics must be inspired and communicated by a math instructor, and all too frequently, pupils see a teaching approach that prioritizes memorization over creative thinking.

Students may internalize a feeling of failure and get disengaged with arithmetic when they become lost in the cumulative math learning process.

Unlike the physical discoveries of science, the beauty of arithmetic is invisible and requires explanation in order to be fully appreciated. Many people are unable to appreciate mathematics' appeal on their own, even with the help of stimulating literature or puzzles. This deficiency is primarily the result of educational institutions.

In fact, the conventional educational approach to math, which frequently emphasizes memorization and drills, hasn't done much to highlight its elegance or significance. It should come as no surprise that a lot of people decide to give up math as soon as possible when faced with assignments that are challenging, unpleasant, and appear without reward. Social narratives that categorize people as "math people" or not only aggravate this problem by ingraining mathematics into people's identities and preventing them from ever appreciating it in the future.

While there is hope that educational reform will improve the way math is taught and perceived, real transformation is sadly rare. Reform initiatives frequently place more emphasis on test scores than on cultivating awe.

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

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Making AI Fair

Ferdinando Fioretto

Artificial intelligence's capacity to process and analyze vast amounts of data has revolutionized decision-making processes, making operations in health care, finance, criminal justice and other sectors of society more efficient and, in many instances, more effective.

With this transformative power, however, comes a significant responsibility: the need to ensure that these technologies are developed and deployed in a manner that is equitable and just. In short, AI needs to be fair.

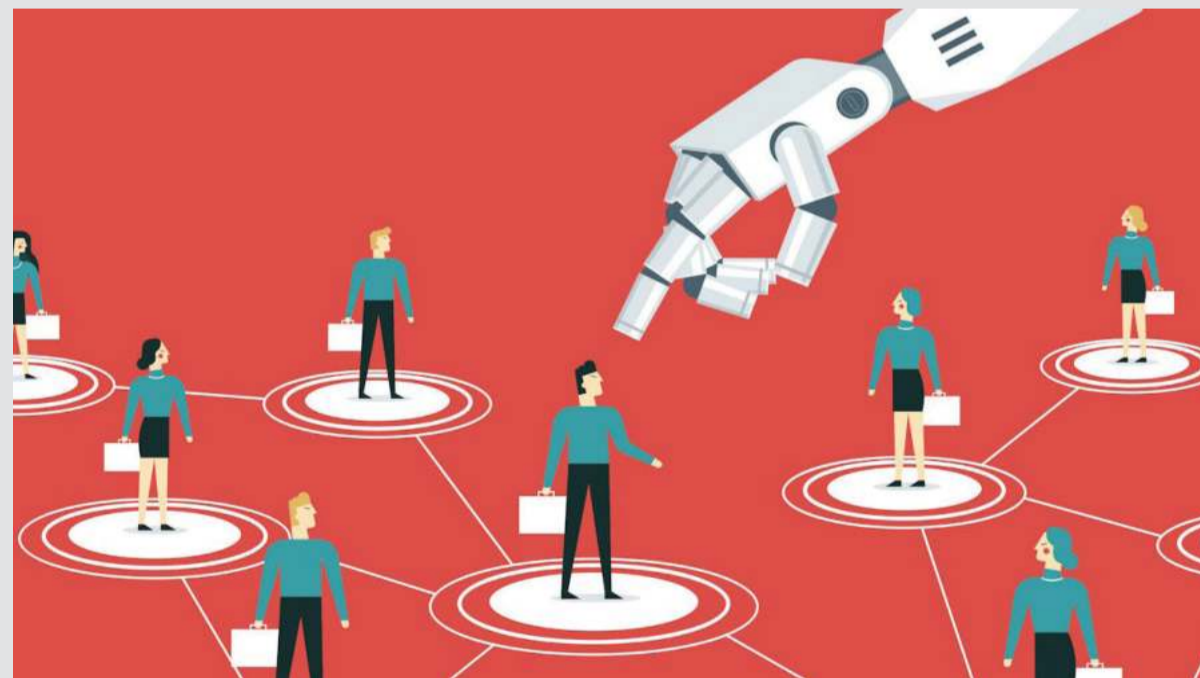
The pursuit of fairness in AI is not merely an ethical imperative but a requirement in order to foster trust, inclusivity and the responsible advancement of technology. However, ensuring that AI is fair is a major challenge. And on top of that, my research as a computer scientist who studies AI shows that attempts to ensure fairness in AI can have unintended consequences.

Why fairness in AI matters

Fairness in AI has emerged as a critical area of focus for researchers, developers and policymakers. It transcends technical achievement, touching on ethical, social and legal dimensions of the technology.

Ethically, fairness is a cornerstone of building trust and acceptance of AI systems. People need to trust that AI decisions that affect their lives – for example, hiring algorithms – are made equitably. Socially, AI systems that embody fairness can help address and mitigate historical biases – for example, those against women and minorities – fostering inclusivity. Legally, embedding fairness in AI systems helps bring those systems into alignment with anti-discrimination laws and regulations around the world.

Unfairness can stem from two primary sources: the input data and the algorithms. Research has shown that in-



put data can perpetuate bias in various sectors of society. For example, in hiring, algorithms processing data that reflects societal prejudices or lacks diversity can perpetuate "like me" biases. These biases favor candidates who are similar to the decision-makers or those already in an organization. When biased data is then used to train a machine learning algorithm to aid a decision-maker, the algorithm can propagate and even amplify these biases.

Why fairness in AI is hard

Fairness is inherently subjective, influenced by cultural, social and personal perspectives. In the context of AI, researchers, developers and policymakers often translate fairness to the idea that algorithms should not perpetuate or exacerbate existing biases or inequalities.

However, measuring fairness and building it into AI systems is fraught

with subjective decisions and technical difficulties. Researchers and policymakers have proposed various definitions of fairness, such as demographic parity, equality of opportunity and individual fairness.

These definitions involve different mathematical formulations and underlying philosophies. They also often conflict, highlighting the difficulty of satisfying all fairness criteria simultaneously in practice.

In addition, fairness cannot be distilled into a single metric or guideline. It encompasses a spectrum of considerations including, but not limited to, equality of opportunity, treatment and impact.

Unintended effects on fairness

The multifaceted nature of fairness means that AI systems must be scrutinized at every level of their development cycle, from the initial design and

deployment to their final evaluation. This happens because the pruning might not consider how different groups are represented in the data and by the model, leading to biased outcomes.

Similarly, privacy-preserving techniques, while crucial, can obscure the data necessary to identify and mitigate biases or disproportionately affect the outcomes for minorities. For example, when statistical agencies add noise to data to protect privacy, this can lead to unfair resource allocation because the added noise affects some groups more than others. This disproportionality can also skew decision-making processes that rely on this data, such as resource allocation for public services.

These constraints do not operate in isolation but intersect in ways that compound their impact on fairness. For instance, when privacy measures exacerbate biases in data, it can further amplify existing inequalities. This makes it important to have a comprehensive understanding and approach to both privacy and fairness for AI development.

The path forward

Making AI fair is not straightforward, and there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. It requires a process of continuous learning, adaptation and collaboration. Given that bias is pervasive in society, I believe that people working in the AI field should recognize that it's not possible to achieve perfect fairness and instead strive for continuous improvement.

This challenge requires a commitment to rigorous research, thoughtful policymaking and ethical practice. To make it work, researchers, developers and users of AI will need to ensure that considerations of fairness are woven into all aspects of the AI pipeline, from its conception through data collection and algorithm design to deployment and beyond.

By arrangements with
The Conversation

Govt Directs All Tertiary Care Hospitals To Establish Control Rooms

Agencies

Srinagar: The Health and Medical Education department has directed all GMCs and other tertiary care hospitals to establish control rooms for inter departmental consultation of indoor patients. As per a circular issued by the Health and Medical Education Department, a copy of which lies with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the hospital authorities have been directed that control rooms should be conspicuous, easily accessible to the attendants and patients. "The setting up of Control Rooms inside the Hospital premises across all Government Health Institutions throughout the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir aims at providing the speedy and quality health care services to patients getting admitted in the hospitals (especially tertiary care institutions)," reads the circular. "The requirements of the Control Rooms are that he Control Room should be conspicuous, easily accessible to the patients and attendants and as much as possible located near the emergency premises of the Hospitals, these should be

equipped with adequate manpower round the clock with proper connectivity of the telephone services. All calls from different departments sent, shall be transferred to the respective departments for prompt and efficient patient care. The personnel/officials manning the Control Rooms shall maintain a record of all calls from different departments, besides, ensuring that these calls are attended to within the stipulated time and the doctors/consultants/faculty members shall mandatorily attend all such calls," it reads. "Consequently, all the Govt. Medical Colleges/other tertiary care Institutions of the Health & Medical Education Department of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir are, hereby, instructed to establish Control Rooms Interdepartmental consultation of in-door patients by consultants/faculty members of different departments and for other emergency contacts/consultations within their respective institutions," it states further. "These circular instructions shall be complied with in letter and spirit by all the doctors/consultants/faculty members without fail," it reads further—(KNO)

Security Meeting Strategizes Peaceful Jammu Elections

Agencies

Jammu: A security review meeting on Monday discussed strategy to ensure a conducive and secure environment for voters to exercise their franchise in Jammu Lok Sabha constituency without fear or intimidation, a police spokesman said.

The Jammu parliamentary seat is going to polls in the second phase on April 26.

The meeting, chaired by Senior Superintendent of Police (Jammu) Vinod Kumar at district police lines, discussed in detail deployment and coordination of security personnel to safeguard polling stations, election officials and voters, implementation of stringent security protocols to prevent any untoward incidents or disruptions during the election period, the spokesman said.

He said collaboration with relevant authorities and stakeholders to address any emerging security challenges or threats, maintenance of law and order, vigilance against any attempts of electoral malpractice or illegal activities that could compromise the integrity of the electoral process also came up for deliberations at the meeting.

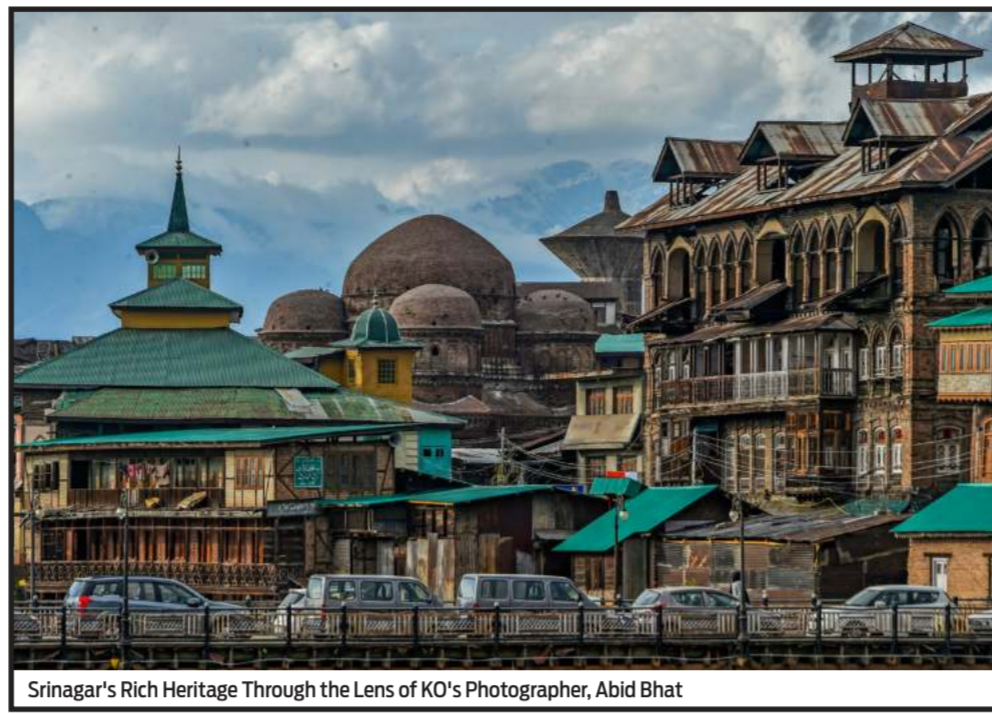
Various aspects of policing, including quality investigation of cases, crime disposal, verifications, disposal of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS)

Collaboration with relevant authorities and stakeholders to address any emerging security challenges or threats, maintenance of law and order, vigilance against any attempts of electoral malpractice or illegal activities that could compromise the integrity of the electoral process also came up for deliberations at the meeting

and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act cases, inquest proceedings, absconding and missing persons and other issues related to accountable policing were also discussed, the spokesman said.

The SSP directed the officers to ensure quantitative and qualitative disposal of cases under investigation.

The SSP asserted that along with quickness in response, polite behaviour and sympathy at heart are required while dealing with the problems of the general public.



Kashmir's Floriculture Start-Ups Flourish, Entrepreneurs Succeed

Agencies

Srinagar: Every morning Waseem Ahmad Wani (26) leaves his home with a variety of flower saplings towards Srinagar-Baramulla highway. He stations at multiple places along the highway selling a variety of native as well as exotic flower saplings to the people. This has been his routine during the spring and summer seasons for the last three years and gives him enough returns to make ends meet.

"I was earlier working in a private company which gave me a very low salary. In 2021, I learned about the scope of floriculture in Kashmir and utilized my five marlas of agriculture land growing a variety of follower saplings," he told the news agency. Wani said he sought assistance from the floriculture department in growing exotic flower saplings. "I installed a greenhouse and bought some exotic seeds to grow them here. I am now making good money out of this trade and I shall expand it to grow some more varieties in coming years," he said. Like Wani scores of the edu-

cated youth are exploring commercial floriculture to generate income and employment. Traditionally known for its saffron cultivation, the region is now embracing the blooming flower industry as a promising avenue for economic growth. In recent years, several entrepreneurs have ventured into floriculture, drawn by the region's conducive climate and fertile soil, combined with increasing

I was earlier working in a private company which gave me a very low salary. In 2021, I learned about the scope of floriculture in Kashmir and utilized my five marlas of agriculture land growing a variety of follower saplings

demand for flowers both domestically and internationally. These start-ups are not only redefining the agricultural sector but also providing employment opportunities and contributing to the socio-economic development of the valley. Another such start-up is "Kashmir Blossoms," founded by Muneer Shah, a young entrepreneur with a passion for floriculture. Shah, a native of Kashmir, recognized the potential of the flower industry and decided to capitalize on it.

"Kashmir has a rich tradition of floriculture, and I saw an opportunity to modernize it by focusing on high-value flowers," said Shah. Shah who hails from Narbal area said as many as 30 families in the village have been associated with commercial floriculture for the last three years. "It was me who started this business in my village and now we have more than 30

such businesses in my area," he said. Moreover, the government's supportive policies and initiatives aimed at promoting floriculture have further propelled the growth of startups in the sector. Officials said the subsidies on equipment, technical assistance, and access to markets have encouraged more individuals to venture into floriculture, thereby diversifying Kashmir's agricultural economy—(KNO)

Tourists Throng Mustard Fields For Photography, Reels

Agencies

Srinagar: With mustard fields in full bloom, hundreds of tourists have been visiting these fields along the National Highway for leisure, photography and reels to catch moments spent in Kashmir in camera for bright memories.

The picturesque fields with yellow and green hues of the flowers have been attracting hundreds of tourists for the last fortnight.

Mohammad Abbas, a resident of Awantipora told the news agency, that hundreds of tourists stop their vehicles and spend some time in fields and take photographs as well

on a daily basis.

Like tourists click photographs in Dal Lake, Pahalgam, Gulmarg, saffron fields and other tourist spots, tourists are mesmerised by the beauty of mustard fields.

Lateef Ahmad, a resident of Aishmuqam area of Anantnag said that visitors are delighted by the beauty of the mustard, prompting them to come out of their vehicles and spend time in mustard.

Gulzar Ahmad, a resident of the Tangmarg area also said that tourists visiting Gulmarg are also spending some time and taking photographs in the mustard fields lying in the outskirts

of Gulmarg.

KNO spoke to the tourists in fields, who said that they find themselves lucky to visit Kashmir in spring when mustard fields are in bloom.

Rahul Tripathi, a tourist from Gujarat told KNO that visiting Kashmir and spending some time in mustard fields is giving him a peace of mind and he prefers to visit Kashmir in spring as Kashmir is more beautiful in this period.

Some tourists from other countries said that the beauty and weather of Kashmir is beyond imagination and one must visit this place at least once in life.

Army Opens Fire After Drone Spotted Along LoC

Agencies

Rajouri: Army troops opened fire after observing movement of a Pakistani drone and suspected persons at two different places along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Monday.

While the drone movement was picked up in a forward area in Sunderbani, the suspicious movement of some persons believed to be terrorists was noticed in Keri sector during the intervening night of Sunday and Monday, the officials said.

They said troops fired at least four rounds to shoot

down a Pakistani quadcopter soon after it entered Indian territory but it returned to the other side of the LoC in the face of firing.

Troops also fired a few rounds after detecting suspicious movement of some persons trying to infiltrate from across the border in Keri sector but they fled towards Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

A massive search operation has been launched to ensure there is no drone dropping or anything suspicious left behind by the suspected persons, the officials said.

The operation was continuing when the last reports came in.

Congress Protests BJP's Action On Opposition Parties

Agencies

Jammu: The Congress on Monday held protests in Jammu and Kashmir against the BJP-led Centre over its alleged attempts to cripple the opposition parties ahead of the general elections.

The protest, outside the party headquarters in Jammu's Shaheedi Chowk, was led by Bharat Singh Solanki, the AICC's Jammu and Kashmir in-charge; Manoj Yadav, the co-in-charge; and the Congress' Jammu and Kashmir chief Vikar Rasool Wani.

Carrying placards and shouting slogans against the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi to denounce the freezing of accounts and serving Income Tax notices on the Congress, and the arrest of opposition leaders such as Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the protesters tried to march forward but were stopped by police.

"The BJP feels that the people have decided to vote it out this time and, therefore, has launched a campaign to curb the opposition parties. It froze the Congress' accounts, served us notices (for Income Tax dues) worth over Rs 3,600 crore and arrested Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and former Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren," Solanki told reporters.

"It is all being done at the directions of the central government to win the general elections," he said.

Questioning the Enforcement Directorate and the Income Tax department's actions against the opposition parties, Wani asked why the entire official machinery is being directed against the Congress and its alliance partners.

"They are not allowing us to fight the elections as our candidates are craving funds. The world used to give the example of India as the biggest democracy but Modi is working like a dictator and using all tactics to suppress the opposition," he said.

Raman Bhalla, the Pradesh Congress Committee's working president and its candidate from Jammu in the Lok Sabha elections, said the party will not be cowed by the Centre's actions and win with the support of the people.

5 booked under Public Safety Act in Baramulla

Agencies

Srinagar: Five people have been booked under the Public Safety Act (PSA) in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district for their alleged involvement in anti-national activities, police on Monday said.

"Acting tough against the anti-national elements, police in Baramulla booked five persons under the Public Safety Act after obtaining formal detention orders from the competent authority," a police spokesman said.

The five accused have been identified as Asif Ali Bhat, Mohammad Yaqoob

Bhat, Waseem Mehraj Farash, Bashir Ahmad Sualiah and Bilal Ahmad Dar alias Shakir, he said.

The spokesman said that the accused persons have been detained and subsequently lodged in District Jail Udhampur and Central Jail Kot Bhalwal Jammu.

"It is pertinent to mention here that many cases are registered against these persons who were involved in disturbance of law and order and subversion. They did not mend their anti-national and anti-social activities despite their involvement in many FIRs," he added.

Martyrdom Anniversary Of Imam Ali Observed Across Kashmir

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: Thousands of Kashmiri Muslims thronged shrines and Imambargahs on Monday to mark the martyrdom anniversary of Hazrat Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (AS), one of the most revered icons of Islam.

Every year, on the 21st day of Ramadan, devout Muslims gather in mosques, shrines and Imambargah across Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh mourning the martyrdom of first Imam and fourth Rightly Guided Caliph of Muslims.

It was on the 19th of Ramadan 40 AH (27 January AD 661), Imam Ali was struck on the head with a poison-coated sword by Ibn e Muljim during the morning prayers in Mosque of Kufa, Iraq. He passed away two days later.

The largest gathering is witnessed in Najaf at Ashraf, martyr Imam's final resting place in Southern Iraq. Millions of pilgrims from

around the globe converged in Najaf to pay their respects to Imam Ali who was declared as Babul Ilm or gateway of knowledge by the Prophet of Islam (Pbuh)

In Kashmir major functions on the occasion were held at Dargah Hazratbal, Zadibal, Hassanabad Sarai Bala in Srinagar, Mirgam in Baramulla and in Budgam town.

Thousands of people joined the congregation prayers at Hazratbal Shrine where a holy relic of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was displayed after every prayer to the faithful.

Mirwaiz Muhammad Umar Farooq addressed a gathering at Dastgeer Sahib Shrine at Sarai Bala and paid tributes to the caliph of Islam who was martyred in the state of prostration.

In north Kashmir, a mourning congregation was organized by Ittihadul Muslimeen at Imambargah Abol Fazlil Abbas (a.s) at Mir-

gund, Pattan. Maulana Masroor Abbas Ansari addressed the gathering, eulogising the great personality of Imam Ali. He described the martyrdom of Shaheed Kufa Hazrat Ali Ibn Abi Talib a great loss for the mankind.

"Imam Ali (A.S) is an eternal and everlasting source of wisdom and guidance which will continue to inspire the generations to come till the end of the world. In our society meaningful change and meaningful revolution can come only when we understand his personality and follow his example by making his life as a beacon" Maulana Masroor said.

He further said that the personality of Imam Ali (A.S) is not specific to any group, religion or nation, but a common legacy of humanity. Peoples Conference leader and President Shia Association Imran Raza Ansari also addressed a gathering at Zadibal Imambargah.



Devout performing Amale Quran on the night of 21st Ramadan at Imambargah Agha Yusuf Bemina- photo Spl arrangement

Molvi Imran described Imam Ali as the sea of patience, tolerance and simplicity. Later, a mourning proces-

sion was taken out with a symbolic coffin from Imam Bargah Zadibal which culminated at Baba Mazar. Mourners participating in the day-long majlis and procession were reaffirming their faith and devotion towards the martyred Imam.

In central Kashmir's Budgam district mourning congregations were held at Budgam by Anjuman-e-Sharie Shiayan led by Agha Syed Hassan al Musawi. Similarly, a mourning congregation was held at Bemina Imambargah led by Agha Syed Hadi Musawi which was attended by thousands of people.

The martyrdom anniversary of Imam Ali was also observed in the twin districts of Ladakh's Leh and Kargil. Night long congregations were also held to mark Shab-e-Qadr which is observed in the last 5 odd nights of the holy month.



BCCI To Meet IPL Team Owners: Auction Purse May Rise

The BCCI has invited owners of the 10 IPL teams for an informal meeting in Ahmedabad on April 16 and there could be discussions on potential increase in auction purse for the franchises and player retention. The meeting will take place on the sidelines of the game between Delhi Capitals and Gujarat Titans at the Narendra Modi Stadium. BCCI secretary Jay Shah, president Roger Binny and IPL chairman Arun Dhimal will attend the meeting.

KKR's Home Match On April 17 Set To Be Rescheduled

Kolkata Knight Riders' home IPL match against Rajasthan Royals on April 17 is set to be rescheduled after the local police expressed its inability to provide adequate security due to Ram Navami celebrations on that day, the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) has informed the BCCI. Bengal is also set to vote on April 19 in the first phase of the seven-phase general elections. The voting in Kolkata will take place on June 1.

Pant Fined Rs 12 Lakh For Slow Over Rate

Delhi Capitals skipper Rishabh Pant has copped a Rs 12 lakh fine for maintaining a slow over rate during the IPL game against Chennai Super Kings here. Delhi Capitals pulled off a comfortable 20-run win over defending champions CSK here on Sunday. "Rishabh Pant, the Delhi Capitals captain, has been fined after his team maintained a slow over rate during their IPL match against Chennai Super Kings," an IPL statement read.

RCB Eye Collective Improvement; LSG Monitor Rahul's Fitness



Press Trust of India

BENGALURU: An inconsistent Royal Challengers Bengaluru would be eager to hit the turnaround button when they host Lucknow Super Giants, who will keep an eye on regular skipper KL Rahul's fitness, in the IPL here on Tuesday. The Royal Challengers are currently eighth on the table with two points from three matches, and alarmingly, their net run rate too has dipped to -0.71 after a heavy defeat against Kolkata Knight Riders here last week. This is not to undermine the side under Faf du Plessis, who himself is struggling for big runs,

but its ability to dish out consistent cricket is a matter of debate at this point.

Several reasons are there for that overbearing feeling. It starts with the RCB batting line-up in which Virat Kohli is the only constant with two fifties from three matches. But Du Plessis, Glenn Maxwell, Rajat Patidar and Cameron Green, who constitute the cream of RCB's top and middle-order, have so far made up for a faltering coalition. The quartet's collective returns from three matches stand at—Du Plessis (46, Avg: 15.33), Maxwell (31, Avg: 10.33), Green (54, Avg: 18) and Patidar (21, Avg: 7), and

termining them underwhelming is an understatement.

It meant that RCB had to often rely on their late-order batters like Dinesh Karthik, Anuj Rawat and Mahipal Lomror to add meat to the total. In that context, the RCB might give a break to Patidar for this game and bring in someone like Suyash Prabhudessai, who can also roll his arm for an over or two. The senior batters' struggles have percolated to their bowling department too. Mohammed Siraj offers the most glaring example. The lead pacer has taken just two wickets in three matches,

conceding 10 runs an over and he needs to step up immediately. Siraj's lack of bite has robbed RCB of a chance to take some early wickets in the Power Play and put the opposition under pressure, something he had done quite consistently during IPL 2023. The situation has turned even grimmer as Siraj's new-ball partner Alzarri Joseph, RCB's Rs 11.5 crore buy in the auction, has been totally rudderless, taking a solitary wicket and leaking 9.4 runs per over. So, the hosts might ponder the inclusion of either Reece Topley or Lockie Ferguson against Lucknow in place of the West Indian. Match starts at 7.30 PM.

Formula One Owners Liberty Media Buy MotoGP For \$4.5 Billion

Formula One owners Liberty Media swooped to buy MotoGP on Monday in a deal valued at around \$4.5 billion, the American company said. MotoGP said in a statement that Liberty Media would acquire "approximately 86 percent" stake from owners Dorna in a deal valued at 4.2 billion euros (\$4.5 billion). Britain's The Financial Times had earlier reported that Liberty were in pole to seal a deal after beating off rival interest from Paris Saint-Germain's Qatari owners and sports and entertainment group TKO.

Bopanna-Ebden Win Miami Open Masters 1000 Crown

India's Rohan Bopanna and Matthew Ebden battled from the brink to get the better of Ivan Dodig and Austin Krajicek and win the Miami Open doubles crown at Hard Rock Stadium on Saturday night. The pair reeled off the final six points of the championship match for a 6-7(3), 6-3, 10-6 victory. The Indo-Australian pair frittered away three set points on serve at 6-5 in the opening set but rallied splendidly in the contest between the top two seeded teams to take the crown.

Novak Djokovic Set To Become Oldest World No. 1

Novak Djokovic continues to rack up records! The Serbian, who has won an all-time record 24 Grand Slam singles titles, began his 419th week as the World No 1 tennis player, extending his huge record. The 24-time Grand Slam champion will become the oldest World No 1 by this end of this week. He will surpass Roger Federer's record as the oldest No. 1 in ATP Rankings history on Sunday when he will be 36 years and 321 days old.

PCB Chairman To Hold Talks With Shaheen Afridi Over Captaincy remarks

Agencies

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Mohsin Naqvi is set to hold talks with Shaheen Shah Afridi over the star pacer's remarks released in a PCB statement regarding the recent captaincy changes in the 'Men in Green', according to GeoNews on Monday. On Sunday, PCB reinstated Babar Azam as the captain of the white-ball format ahead of the upcoming T20 World Cup 2024, which is slated to begin on June 1 in the USA and the West Indies. PCB released a statement to announce Babar as the skipper of the Pakistan men's team. The statement also included Afridi's quotes, which stated that it was his "duty" to back Babar. "It was an absolute honour to captain the Pakistan National Cricket Team. I will always cherish the memories and the opportunity. As a team player, it is my duty to back our captain, Babar Azam. I have played under his captaincy and have nothing but respect for him. I will try to help him on and off the field. We are all one. Our aim is the same, to help Pakistan become the best team in the world," the PCB said in a statement, quoting Afridi, which he denied, according to GeoNews.

On Monday, the sources told Geo News that Afridi is "furious" regarding the matter and will share his concerns during the meeting with Naqvi. "The former skipper had drafted a detailed rejoinder in this regard but was stopped at the last moment, Afridi has been asked by the PCB to not speak on the matter," the sources told Geo News. "Shaheen Afridi came to know about his quotes through social media and he was surprised that how come this is being broadcast everywhere," they added. Afridi was handed the T20I captaincy based on his performances in the Pakistan Super League (PSL), where he led the Lahore Qalandars to consecutive title wins in 2022 and 2023. After being appointed in November 2023, Afridi had only led Pakistan in a single T20I series against New Zealand earlier this year. In his debut captaincy series, Pakistan were outplayed throughout the series and ended up suffering a 4-1 defeat. Afridi's potential to lead also came under scrutiny during the Pakistan Super League (PSL), which was held earlier this year. Under his leadership, Lahore Qalandars won a single game in ten matches and finished at the bottom of the table. (ANI)

DYSS Begins Sports Activities In Qazigund



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Department of Youth Services and Sports kicked off various sports activities at Zone Qazigund on Saturday with competitions in chess and carrom disciplines. The competitions were held for all age groups of boys and girls at

GMS Y.K. Pora and BMS Y.K. Pora. Students of various institutions of Zone Qazigund participated in the sports activities. In the Under-14 category, 145 boys and girls participated, while the U-17 category saw the participation of 167 students. In a postgame ceremony, prizes and mementos were distributed among winners and runner ups.



OUR BEST WISHES TO MUHEET SHABIR FOR THE REMAINING MATCHES IN I-LEAGUE. We hope he will keep on performing to best of his potential and make all football fraternity feel proud."

Real Kashmir Goalie MUHEET SHABIR Seals I-League Golden Glove

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Real Kashmir FC's 3-0 win over NEROCA FC at TRC ground also confirmed team's goalkeeper Muheet Shabir Khan as a sure pick for I-League Golden Glove award. The Snow Leopards have been a defensive force in the 2023-24 I-League season, keeping 12 clean sheets in 22 matches. Twenty-two year-old Muheet has been crucial in the team's improved showing under first-year coach Ishfaq Ahmad. With two rounds of league action still to go, RKFC is third in I-League, picking up 40 points in 22 games. Muheet Shabir Khan, born and raised in Srinagar, began his football journey at the J&K Sports Council Football Academy. After gaining recognition as a talented prospect, he moved to the Kerala Blasters. The J&K Football Association congratulated the young goalie on achieving the feat. "Our best wishes to Muheet Shabir for the remaining matches in I-League. We hope he will keep on performing to best of his potential and make all football fraternity feel proud," the FA said in a statement. Real Kashmir want to confirm a top three finish in its final two games of the season. The team will take on TRAU FC on Saturday, April 6, at Kalyani Stadium, West Bengal. The Snow Leopards play their final game at home against Namdhari FC on Saturday, April 13. The match kicks off at 2:30 PM.

Liverpool Gains An Advantage In 3-Way Title Race As Man City & Arsenal Draw

Agencies

MANCHESTER: Liverpool leads the way in the race for the Premier League title after Manchester City and Arsenal canceled each other out on Sunday. A 2-1 comeback win against Brighton left Jurgen Klopp's team looking down on its rivals — two points ahead of second-place Arsenal and three clear of City in third with nine games to go. "It is a great situation where the boys brought us," said the Liverpool manager, who is aiming to sign off with a second league title before stepping down at the end of the season. There is still some way to go in the three-way fight, but Mohamed Salah's second-half winner at Anfield could be crucial. Even City manager Pep Guardiola admitted it's in Liverpool's hands now. "Always who is first is favorites," Guardiola said. "Second is Arsenal and we are third." Victory had moved Liverpool to the top of the standings before City and Arsenal played out a frustrating 0-0 draw at Etihad Stadium later in the day. The clash between last season's top two had been highly anticipated but failed to live up to the pre-match hype, with few goal-scoring chances. While the result suited Liverpool most of all, it was the latest evidence of Arsenal's growing title credentials after falling away at the end of last season. The Londoners had lost on their previous eight visits to City — including a 4-1 defeat last year that proved costly in the title race. This season, Mikel Arteta's team has taken four points off the defending champions, as well as winning the Community Shield against City in August. But the

Arsenal manager said he was still looking for more from his players to prove they are ready to end Guardiola's dominance with City. "It shows that we are improving and that we are competing better and we are understanding how you have to play these games, but there are other steps to be made to win the championship. You have to come here and you have to win," Arteta said. "Today we were able to draw and we have to still improve a lot to be able to do that." Arsenal has now had the better of both of its title rivals, having also won and drawn against Liverpool. By contrast, City has no league wins against any of the teams above it, having drawn against Liverpool home and away. Sunday was a chance to improve that record — but City instead slipped further adrift of the top. "Now we don't depend on ourselves, we depend on Liverpool and Arsenal now because we don't play against them again," City midfielder Bernardo Silva said. "So we need them to drop points as well as do our job and win our own games." Guardiola is backing his team to do just that as it targets back-to-back trebles after winning the Premier League title, Champions League and FA Cup last season. "My point of view is we are still there," Guardiola said. "I'm satisfied. I said to the team, 'Don't be sad.'" With just three points separating the top three, it looks to set to be the most open title race in recent years. And Brighton's performance at Anfield suggested there could still be some surprises along the way, with Liverpool having to come back from a goal down after Danny Welbeck's strike in the second minute.

