

LS Polls For 3 Seats Of Kashmir Valley Over 1.13 Lakh Migrants Eligible To Vote



Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Over 1.13 lakh Kashmiri migrants are registered to cast their votes for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections for three seats in the Valley, officials said.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration will hold special awareness camps for Kashmiri migrants in Jammu and Udhampur districts from April 3 to 14 to ensure their participation in the Lok Sabha elections.

"We have 1.13 lakh registered Kashmiri migrant voters as of now. The updated voter list is being prepared as per the election process," Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner Arvind Karwani told PTI.

Karwani, who is looking after the arrangements for the polling of migrants, said that polling will be held in three phases in the Valley.

"In Anantnag, polling will be held on May 7, followed by Srinagar on May 13 and Baramulla on May 20. It will be held in three phases, and polling stations for each constituency will be the same," Karwani said.

A total of 26 polling stations have been set up for the migrants, out of which 21 polling stations have been set up in Jammu, four in Delhi and one in Udhampur, Karwani said.

"The migrant voters can vote in two ways. First, they can do so by filling up an M-form, | More on P6

HC Seeks Status On Setting Up Of J&K Commission For Protection Of Child Rights Warns To Direct Personal Appearance Of Officers For Explanation

M Ahmad

Srinagar: Considering its important statutory role, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has directed authorities to intimate it "without fail" the status regarding the constitution of J&K Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

Hearing a Public Interest Litigation, a division bench Chief Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and Justice Mohammad Yusuf Wani observed that the court had on 7 August last year directed authorities to apprise it regarding the progress of the constitution of J&K



Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

"On 16.08.2023, it was submitted on behalf of the respondents (authorities) that Committee was convened on

08.08.2023 and the authorities will apprise this Court as to the result of the same by the next date," the court said, adding, "On 04.12.2023, 20.12.2023, 28.02.2024 and

01.03.2024, time was sought on behalf of the respondents to apprise this Court. However, nothing has been made known to us as to the stage of the process of the outcome of such a meeting for appointment of the members of the Commission for Protection of Child Rights."

The Court said that it was unable to understand as to whether authorities had really taken any concrete steps or not. "We take this matter with utmost seriousness it deserves in view of the important statutory role the Commission | More on P6

'Preparedness For Upcoming Festivals' LG Chairs High Level Meeting

Observer News Service

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha chaired a high-level meeting today to review the preparedness of concerned departments and agencies for upcoming Eid, Navratras and Baisakhi festivals.

The meeting was attended by Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; RR Swain, DGP; Vijay Kumar, ADGP, Armed, Law & Order; Anand Jain, ADGP Jammu; Administrative Secretaries; Divisional Commissioners; Deputy Commissioners and senior officers of Civil and Police administration.

The LG directed the DCs and SSPs to visit the | More on P6

First LS Poll Where Corrupt Rallying To Stop Action On Corruption: PM

Press Trust Of India

Jaipur: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday hit out at the opposition INDIA bloc and said this is the first Lok Sabha election in which the corrupt are rallying together to stop action on corruption.

He also said Congress leaders are threatening that if the BJP wins, the country will be on fire. "Modi has been extinguishing such fires for the last 10 years," the prime minister said while addressing a public rally in Rajasthan's Kotputali.

Speaking about the



country's development, Modi said a lot happened in the last 10 years but whatever happened was just a "trailer", a lot still has to be done.

He asserted that the third

term of the BJP-led government will be about taking "historic decisions".

"This election is to uproot corruption, to fulfil the dream of self-reliant India, to resolve for the prosperity of the farmers and to provide tap water to every household...but the Congress and its INDI Alliance are fighting the elections not for the country but for their own selfish motives," Modi said.

He said this is the first election in which family-based parties are holding rally after rally to save their families.

"This is the first election in which all | More on P6

Emergency Landing Strip On Jmu-Sgr Highway

5 IAF Helicopters Conduct Overnight Trial

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Five IAF helicopters, including the recently inducted US-manufactured Chinook, landed on a stretch of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway as part of an Emergency Landing Facility drill, the first such exercise in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Tuesday.

With this, Jammu and Kashmir became the first Union territory to operationalise an Emergency Landing Facility (ELF). Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan are the three states where these

emergency landing strips are currently operational.

According to the officials, two US-manufactured Chinook, one Russian-made Mi-17 and two Advance Light helicopters (ALH) of the Indian Air Force (IAF) landed on the Wampoh-Sangam stretch of the national highway linking Kashmir with the rest of the country in the early hours of Tuesday.

The entire drill ended by 2.50 am, during which the helicopters landed at the stretch and carried an exercise of picking up troops lying on the ground, the officials said, | More on P6

Azad To Contest From Anantnag-Rajouri LS Seat

Agencies

Srinagar: Former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir Ghulam Nabi Azad will contest the Lok Sabha elections from Anantnag-Rajouri constituency, his party DPAP said.

Azad left the Congress in 2022, ending his five-decade-long association with the party, and floated his own political outfit-Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP).

"Today the core committee of DPAP met and we have decided that (party president) Ghulam Nabi Azad will contest the Anantnag-Rajouri seat," DPAP leader Taj Mohiuddin told reporters here.

This will be the first Lok Sabha election for Azad after he lost from Udhampur constituency in 2014 to BJP leader Jitendra Singh.

On the possibility of an alliance with the Apni Party of Altaf Bukhari, Mohiuddin said no progress has been



made on that front.

"We are short of time and there was not much headway in talks. So it is better they do their bit and we do ours. They were not in any case interested in Anantnag seat," he added.

Mohiuddin said candidates for other Lok Sabha Seats in Kashmir will be decided in due course.

Hailing from Doda, Jammu, Azad embarked on his | More on P6

NC, PDP Part Of INDIA Alliance: Omar

Hints At PDP Not Fielding Any Candidates Against NC

Pahalgam: National Conference leader Omar Abdullah on Tuesday scoffed at suggestions that party candidate for Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat Mian Altaf Ahmad was an "outsider" to the constituency, saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi hails from Gujarat but contests elections from Uttar Pradesh.

"How is Mian Sahib an outsider? He is as much from Rajouri-Poonch as much as he is from here (Anantnag) or elsewhere in Kashmir. If PM Modi can come from Gujarat and contest in Uttar Pradesh, your channels have no problems with that," Abdullah said.

"Leaders from south India go to the Rajya Sabha from north India seats, you have no issues with that. Mian Sahib contests from within Kashmir valley and you start raising questions. Does he not have the right to contest from the Rajouri-Poonch Anantnag seat?" he asked. The former | More on P6

Bhalla Files Nomination From Jammu

Amid support of thousands of Congress workers, Congress candidate Raman Bhalla, filed his nomination for Jammu-Reasi Lok Sabha. Accompanied by scores of jubilant supporters, Bhalla reached the office of Returning Officer, Sachin Kumar Vaishya and filed | More on P6

Eid-ul-Fitr Date Announced In Pakistan

KO WEB DESK

Srinagar: Pakistan's Meteorological Department has once again said that the Shawwal moon is likely to be seen on April 9 in the region.

While predicting the rise of Eid-ul-Fitr moon, the department said the moon would conjunct with the sun on April 8 at 11:21pm (local time). On April 9, the age of the moon will be 19 to 20 hours. It will be visible to the naked eye for about 50 minutes after sunset and the first of Shawwal will be on April 10. "The Met Office forecast that in the southern regions of the country the sky will likely be clear, while the sky could be cloudy in the northern regions", it said, according | More on P6

ED Seizes Assets Worth 1.56 Cr In PMLA case

Agencies

Srinagar: Enforcement Directorate (ED) Srinagar has taken a significant action in a case involving a Junior Engineer of the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department in Jammu & Kashmir.

"Under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, ED officials provisionally attached movable and immovable assets totaling Rs. 1.56 Crore belonging to Niamat Ali Bhat. The attached properties include land measuring 01 Kanal and 03 Marlas situated in Srinagar,

Jammu & Kashmir, along with a two-storey residential house constructed on the land. Additionally, a vehicle owned by Niamat Ali Bhat has also been seized," the ED said.

"This action comes in connection to an investigation into alleged financial irregularities and money laundering activities involving Hakeem Imtiyaz. The ED probe uncovered suspicious transactions and assets linked to Imtiyaz, prompting authorities to widen the scope of their investigation".

The ED further said "Niamat | More on P6

'Information On Qasim Gujjar'

JKP Offers 10 Lakh Reward

Agencies

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir police have kept a bounty of Rs 10 lakh on one of the most wanted terrorists of Jammu region Muhammad Qasim Gujjar alias Suleman of district Reasi.

The terrorist is presently staying in Sialkote area of Pakistan.

Jammu and Kashmir police has released a poster with two pictures of Muhammad Qasim Gujjar and has asked people to provide information about the terrorist. "The identity of the person will be kept secret and Rs 10 lakh will be given to the one who provides the information," the poster reads. Police have | More on P6



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6 Genes Found To Control One's Personality, Affect Health, Well-Being

Press Trust Of India

Six genes have been found to be at the heart of emotional response and meaning perception, in turn making up one's personality, including their outlook and functioning, according to new research.

These genes were also found to be "highly preserved" throughout evolution, from single-celled organisms to modern humans, a finding that researchers said confirms their crucial role in the functioning of all forms of life on Earth.

The study examined how personality regulates an individual's gene expression and hence, affects their health and well-being. Gene expression happens at the fundamental level of one's being where genes translate into observable traits and behaviour.

The researchers said the findings shed new light on the "long-standing mystery" behind how the mind and body interact.

The international team of researchers, including genetics and psychology specialists, led by the Uni-



versity of Grenada, Spain, employed artificial intelligence in analysing data of 459 adults in Finland collected over four decades.

Data was collected on participants' health, physical condition and lifestyle, along with their personality assessments regarding habits and emotional response (temperament), and goals and values (character).

"In our research, we made two key discoveries about the expression and

organisation of genes according to the personality profiles of these individuals," explained Coral del Val, a researcher at the University of Grenada, and co-lead author of the study published in the journal Molecular Psychiatry.

The researchers discovered a network of 4,000 genes expressed in specific brain regions, and some of which have been previously linked to the inheritance of human personality. They found these genes to be clustered into

several modules, involved in regulating gene expression and helping an individual adapt.

"The modules turned on and off in a flexible manner, facilitating adaptation to the everyday challenges we all face, and choreographing our development," said del Val.

"What's most remarkable is the fact that the networks for emotion and meaning (and controlling these modules) are coordinated by a control centre made up of six genes," said Elisa Diaz de la Guardia-Bolivar, University of Grenada, the other co-lead author of the study.

"It is particularly interesting that we found that the six genes of the control hub are highly preserved throughout evolution, from single-celled organisms to modern humans. This finding confirms their beneficial role in regulating the functioning of all forms of life on Earth," she said.

The researchers also found that while certain outlooks on life are conducive to a healthy, fulfilling and long life, others lead to a stressful, unhealthy and short life.

NOTICE

I want to transfer electricity connection under consumer ID No:0204040029848 from Ashiq Hussain Shah to Syed Ashiq Hussain husband of Zamrooda resident of Chishti Mohalla Mandibal, Nowshera, Srinagar.

If anybody having any objection in this regard may contact concerned authorities within a period of seven day after publication of this notice. After that no objection will be entertained.

ZAMROODA

W/o: Syed Ashiq Hussain
 R/o : Chishti Mohalla Mandibal,
 Nowshera, Srinagar.

inf

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost the Number Plate of my vehicle bearing Regd No; JK05D-5287 from Habak To Magam . 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 Baramulla within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohamad Maqbool Mir
 S/o Gh. Ahmad Mir
 R/o Habak Tangoo

BMG

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 Salman Qadir Wani s/o Ghulam Qadir Wani R/o Hathlangoo Dangerpora Tehsil Dangerpora District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 13-05-2020 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.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Pattan) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Aafiyah D/o Javid Ahmad Ganie R/o Ganiepora Burn Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 05-03-2023 occurred at SDH Pattan

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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Executive Magistrate 1st Class
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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Notice

I Nazir Ahmad Bhat S/o late Abdul Rehman Bhat R/O Natipora Srinagar I am the lonely son of my parents whose names are Late Abdul Rehman Bhat S/o Abdul Sattar Bhat and late Mst. Fatima D/o Mst. Zooni R/o Natipora Srinagar who expired on 25th October 2005 and 21st June 2016 respectively. Therefore, I am the onl son and the only legal heir of my parents and they have left no any other legal heir except me. Regarding this, if anybody has any objection he/she Should Report In the Office Of Tehsildar ChanaPora, Srinagar within a week's time after that no objection will be submitted.

Media Line

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 Hurain Bashir D/o Bashir Ahmad wani R/o Andergam pattan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 13-07-2020 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.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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Executive Magistrate 1st Class
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Office of the Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Baramulla

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

Fresh E-NIT NO: 22/SE/PMGSY/Bla/e-tendering of 2023-24 Dated 25-03-2024`

For and on behalf of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Baramulla invite e-tenders on Percentage Basis from the eligible & approved contractors of J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other States/Central Governments for the following works including their maintenance under DLP as defined in SBD.

S. No	Name of Work with Package No. and Name of Division	Tendered Cost including GST (Rs in Lacs.)			Cost of document (Rs in Lacs)	Earnest Money (Bid Security) (Rs in Lacs)	Time of completion	Tender Call	Time and Date of opening of tenders online(Technical Bid)	Class of contractor
		Construction Part	Maintenance Part	Total cost of work						
1	Construction and Maintenance of road from Limber to Budrali Balance Work Stage 2 Package No JK03147 Length 5.55 Kms PMGSY Division Uri	174.64	20.96	195.60	0.06	3.91	90 Days	3 rd	04-04-2024 AT 10:30-AM	"A" Class in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/ Railways and other state Governments.

- Date of release of Invitation for bids through e-procurement: 25-03-2024.
- Cost of Bid Form: Rs. 6000/- per package (non-refundable) only in form of online Payment mode
- The payment of Bid security and cost of Bid document is to be done online on e-tendering website alongwith the submission of Bids.
- Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and bid should be submitted online on website www.pmgstenders.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in PMGSY may obtain the same from the website: www.pmgstenders.gov.in. Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the valid digital signature issued from authorized CA scan use the same in this tender.
- The Bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://www.pmgstenders.gov.in> from 25-03-2024 (6:00 PM) to 03-04-2024 upto (5:00 PM).
- The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website <http://www.pmgstenders.gov.in> from 26-03-2024 (2:00 PM) to 03-04-2024 upto 5:00 PM. The bids uploaded on the Web Site up to due date and time will be opened online on 04-04-2024 at 10:30 AM in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
- The complete bidding process will be on line.
- The advertised rates are exclusive of GST. The bidder shall quote %age (above or below) for the construction component only. The deductions on account of GST / income tax will be at the prevailing rates and will be deposited with concerned quarters. In case of change of these rates, the extra burden will be borne by the allottee contractor.
- A Pre-bid meeting will be held on 26-03-2024 at 11:00 AM in the Office of Superintending Engineer PMGSY (JKRRDA) Circle Baramulla PWD (R&B) Complex Baramulla to clarify the issues and to answer questions on any matter that may be raised at that stage as stated in Clause 9 of instruction to bidders of the Bidding documents. The intending Bidders, before attending the Pre-bid meeting, are advised to visit the site of work and acquaint themselves with the site conditions. It has been made mandatory for all the intending bidders to participate in the pre-bid meeting on the scheduled date and time.
- Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and bid should be submitted online on website www.pmgstenders.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in PMGSY may obtain the same from the website: www.pmgstenders.gov.in.
- The bidder is not required to quote his rate for routine maintenance. The rates to be paid for routine maintenance are indicated in the Bill of Quantities. Further, the payment for routine maintenance to the contractor shall be regulated based on his performance of maintenance activities.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than ninety days after the deadline date for bid submission.
- Bidders may bid for any one or more of the works mentioned in the Table above. To qualify for a package of contracts made up of this and other contracts for which bids are invited in the same NIT, the bidder must demonstrate having experience and resources sufficient to meet the aggregate of the qualifying criteria for the individual contracts.
- The site for the work is available.
- The Hard Copy of original instruments in respect of original copy of affidavits and credit facility must be delivered by the first lowest bidder in the office of Superintending Engineer PMGSY (JKRRDA) Circle Baramulla PWD (R&B) Complex Baramulla on a date not later than three working days after the opening of financial qualification part of the bid either by Registered Post or by hand failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive.
- The bidders are advised to upload the required documents/information strictly as per the formats given in Section 3-Qualification Information. The bidder who fails to comply with the said instructions shall be declared as non-responsive.
- The date and time of opening of Financial-Bids shall be notified on Web Site <http://www.pmgstenders.gov.in>. This is conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial-bids shall be opened accordingly online on same Web Site at the Office of Superintending Engineer PMGSY (JKRRDA) Circle Baramulla PWD (R&B) Complex Baramulla.
- Other detail scan be seen in the bidding documents. The Employer shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders' responsibility to verify and check the website for the latest information related to the tender. Corrigendum (if any) will be posted on the <https://www.pmgstenders.gov.in>. All future correspondence/ corrigendum shall be published on the same website which should be regularly monitored by the intending tenderer.

No.-SE/PMGSY/Bla/e-Tendering/3534-61
 Dated: 25-03-2024

Sd/-
 Superintending Engineer
 PMGSY Circle Baramulla

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Office of the Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Baramulla

Extension of Date

Subject: Submission of bids for NIT No. 22/SE/PMGSY/Bla/e-tendering of 2023-24 Dated: 25-03-2024.

The last date for submission of bids for NIT issued by this office vide No. 22/SE/PMGSY/Bla/e-tendering of 2023-24 dated 25-03-2024, is hereby extended upto 15-04-2024 at 5:00 PM. Opening of tenders is accordingly extended upto 16-04-2024 at 10:30 AM.

No. SE-PMGSY/Bla/ 02
 Dated 02-04-2024

Superintending Engineer
 PMGSY Circle Baramulla

DIPK-7/24
 dated: 02-04-2024

Div Com Chairs Meeting On Comprehensive Drainage System Of City

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today convened a meeting for the completion of the Comprehensive Drainage System of Greater Srinagar under JnNURM.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-ud-din Bhat; CE, R&B; CE, UEED; Officer of NBCC, PHE and I & FC.

The meeting discussed the completion of the pending work on the Comprehensive Sewage Drainage System which shall cover a vast area of the city and end the woes of about forty percent of the population.

The meeting deliberated for completion of Trunk Sewer Line which stands 99% completed, 60 MLD Sewer Treatment Plant, 60 MLD Infall Pumping Station, House Connections and power connections to the sewage treatment plants. Div Com emphasized on providing power connectivity to treatment plants to make 70% of Drainage System operational.

Inspects Functioning Of IMTS Cameras At TM&MCR

Srinagar: The Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Tuesday inspected the operation and functioning of IMTS cameras at Traffic Management and Monitoring Control Room at the office of SSP Traffic, Srinagar.

On the occasion, the Div Com directed concerned officers of SSCL to ensure round the clock glitch less functioning of cameras for regulation of traffic flow and maintaining of strong vigilance.

He also directed the integration of IMTS service with National Informatics Centre (NIC) for online challan of vehicles for violation of traffic rules.

It was informed that 700 cameras installed at different junctions of the city are presently providing seamless feed and are monitored from ICCV, HMT.



The Asia's largest Tulip Garden, located at the foothills of the majestic Zabarwan, has welcomed eleven lakh visitors since its opening this year. KO Photo by Abid Bhat

Pull Down Hate Mongers From Pulpits: Mirwaiz

Religious Organizations To Evolve Strategy On Drug Menace After Eid

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, the chief cleric of Kashmir on Tuesday appealed for harmony and togetherness across all sects, saying those propagating hate should be explicitly pulled down from pulpits.

Addressing the sermon organized in connection with the martyrdom anniversary of Hazrat Ali (A.S) at Astan-e-Aliya Dastgeer Sahib (RA) Sarai Payeen, Mirwaiz said regretfully, attempts are being made to fan sectarian strife rather than nurturing the flame of unity and consensus.

"Is there any room for sectarian animosity when we our creator is one, one Prophet, and one Qur'an? He questioned, invoking religious unity above sectarian strife," he said.

He said that Hazrat Ali (RA)'s profound ethics and wisdom, which are evident in his perceptive sermons collected in his book 'Nahjul Balagha', are proof of his brilliance and in-depth knowledge of a wide range of disciplines.

Instead of encouraging sectarianism, Mirwaiz stated that mosques, seminaries, shrines, Imambargahs, and other religious institutions should be used to promote religious unity.

The chief cleric of Kashmir, also that Jum'at-ul-Vida, or the last Friday of Ramadan, will be observed in Kashmir as Yaum-e-Dua (Day of Prayer) with a large number of devotees from across the valley anticipated to swarm the historic Jamia Masjid on the occasion.

The special congregations for repentance and forgiveness will be conducted at Jamia Masjid this year, Mirwaiz announced, expressing satisfaction over the planned hosting of special programs vis-à-vis Jum'at-ul-Vida, Shabi Qadr, and Eid-ul-Fitr after five years at the historic mosque.

In addition, Mirwaiz also announced that a conference of all religious organizations will be held after Eid-ul-Fitr in order to devise a plan of action to combat the growing drug abuse in Jammu and Kashmir.

"A gathering of all religious organizations will be held after Eid-ul-Fitr to address a number of concerns, such as the drug problem and the hate speech given by religious clergy against one another," Mirwaiz told reporters after reviewing arrangements at Jamia Masjid here.

Invoking the support of the government to guarantee the smooth ex-

ecution of these significant religious events at Jamia Masjid, Mirwaiz said that all necessary arrangements for energy, water supply, and cleanliness had been finalized in this direction.

Asserting that his organization will always be at the forefront of ensuring a drug-free society, Mirwaiz also extended his support to the administration in its battle against drug abuse.

The youth were also urged by the chief cleric to abstain from illicit activities, such as drug addiction, and instead engage in charitable and religious activities.

"I am going to deliver a comprehensive sermon on drug addiction on Jum'at-ul-Vida with the aim of increasing awareness about drugs and other social evils in the society. My message to the young will be to refrain from illegal activities and instead become involved in religious and charity endeavors," said Mirwaiz.

We are quite happy that, after perhaps four or five years, there will be special activities for Eid ul Fitr, Shab-e-Qadr, and Jum'at-ul-Vida. A large number of devotees from across Kashmir are anticipated to swarm Jamia Masjid on the occasion, he added.

Tulip Garden Attracts Over One Lakh Tourists In 11 Days

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Over the past 11 days, Asia's second-largest Tulip Garden, in Srinagar, witnessed a rush of more than one lakh tourists, including both domestic and foreign visitors.

The Tulip Garden was opened to the general public on March 23 this year, and it witnessed a significant influx of tourists during the first week. The garden, managed by Khan Mudassir, witnessed an unprecedented response from visitors within the first five days of its opening, with 105,861 tourists having visited since March 23.

He said this year saw a mix of both domestic and foreign tourists, with a significant increase compared to last year. While only around 1,500 foreign tourists visited last year, a total of 415 foreigners and 5,112 locals have visited

the garden so far this year.

The officers informed that the number of local visitors has crossed the 100,334 mark, making the total count of visitors to the Tulip Garden this year reach 105,861.

Moreover, 100,334 tourists from various parts of the country have visited the garden within the past 11 days. To enhance the visitor experience and reduce long queues, the garden management has introduced online ticket processing, which has been well-received by tourists.

To encourage educational visits, a special 20% discount on tickets has been extended to students until April 10, as announced by the contract overseeing the garden.

Visitors have hailed the government's efforts in ensuring a smooth and enjoyable experience, expressing satisfaction with the arrangements made.

Boy Drowns To Death In Jhelum At Noorbagh

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A class 4th student drowned to death in river Jhelum near Noorbagh, Srinagar when he was trying to collect the cricket ball from the river this afternoon.

An official said one Muneer Ahmad Khanday (12), son of Mohammad Maqbool Khanday, slipped into the river Jhelum at Noorbagh in the afternoon.

He said the boy slipped when he was collecting a cricket ball.

"Moreover, Muneer, a class 4th student was rescued and shifted to SMHS for treatment, where doctors declared him dead."

Meanwhile, the locals in the area demanded proper fencing to prevent such incidents in the future.

Secretary Health Visits SKIMS MC&H; Reviews Functioning

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, today visited SKIMS Medical College and Hospital (MC&H) and reviewed the functioning of the institute.

He had a comprehensive round of various units of the hospital to assess the medical facilities available for the patients.

During his visit, the Secretary also interacted with the faculty and the students and underscored the need for a broad based

interaction among the students and the teachers.

He assessed the current state of healthcare infrastructure and services at SKIMS MC&H, focusing on patient care, infrastructure, medical equipment and overall operational efficiency of the hospital.

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Corporate Headquarters
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Masaaken CHARITABLE SOCIETY **چیر ٹیبل سوسائٹی**

And spend [in the way of Allah] from what We have provided you, before death approaches one of you, and he says, "My Lord, if only you would delay me for a brief term so I would give charity and be among the righteous". (Qur'an, 65:30)
Quran says if you secretly give charity to the needy, it is much better for you. - The noblest of the noble deeds is that which has no witness except Allah.
Without letting the donor and donee know each other, Masaaken Charitable Society does the following:

- 1) Looking after the orphans and the destitute
- 2) Assisting orphaned and children of very poor parents to get proper education;
- 3) Helping someone for treatment of disease, etc.
- 4) Helping someone to establish himself in business
- 5) Construct a humble dwelling for shelter less

Here is the snap short of our work for the period 01-04-2023 to 31-03-2024 (12 months)
(Amount in Lacs of Rs)

Sustenance	Education	Medical	Housing	Marriages	Rehabilitation	TOTAL
21.43	6.63	22.11	36.68	8.84	9.59	105.28

It is to mention that an amount of Rs 1.20 lacs as office expenses (rent, electricity, stationary, etc) has been borne by working body members from their own pockets during the above period.

We at Masaaken Charitable Society express sincere gratitude to you for trusting us and letting us to do it for you. Hope to enjoy your trust continuously, we assure you again that every single penny donated by you reaches to most deserving and truly needy persons for which extensive verification is made at our end without letting anybody else to know about it lest it may hurt the self respect of the persons, who is the purpose of us being here.

Donation, even if little, counts and what means little to you can make a world of difference to the people in distress. However, present situation demands extra ordinary participation of one and all as the queue of needy is getting alarmingly longer day by day.
Please increase your contribution a little bit in this extreme inflation and also motivate others to be part of this noble mission by paying Zakat / Sadaqaat in our following account:-

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We shall feel honoured to have your suggestions as well to guide us in performing better in this crisis.

with regards
CHAIRMAN
Masaaken CHARITABLE SOCIETY

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PATTAN: 01954-293507
QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

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

HIJRI CALENDAR
23 Ramzan
1445

PRAYERS
FAJR 4 : 52
ZUHR 12:34
ASR 5: 04
Magrib 6:55
ISHA 8: 18

This Day In History

- 1513 - Explorer Juan Ponce de León claims Florida for Spain as the first known European to reach Florida
- 1559 - England & France sign 1st Treaty of Le Cateau-Cambrésis
- 1745 - Austria & Bavaria sign peace
- 1917 - US President Woodrow Wilson asks Congress to declare war against Germany
- 1944 - Soviet Army marches into pro-German Romania
- 1945 - Diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Brazil are established
- 1960 - Cuba buys oil from USSR
- 1963 - Explorer 17 attains Earth orbit (254/914 km)
- 1963 - USSR launches Luna 4; missed Moon by 8,500 km
- 1964 - USSR launches Zond 1 to Venus; no data returned

From KO Archives

Basketful Of Apples To Say Thank You

Srinagar - Apple growers of Kashmir have sent a gift of 12 cartons of apples to Pakistani and Indian leaders with a message "From Kashmir with Love." Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Congress party president and Chairperson of the National Advisory Council, Sonia Gandhi will be among the recipients.

Apple growers are sending mix cartons of the world famous apples to Pakistani leaders as a thanksgiving gesture for starting the bus service' between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad on April 7, which will link divided parts of Kashmir for the first time in 58 years.

Six other cartons are being sent to New Delhi for Dr. Singh and Mrs. Gandhi before both leave for Srinagar to inaugurate the historic bus service next week.

The bus service is being seen as one of the most tangible signs of a fledgling peace between the nuclear rivals after decades of enmity. It will travel 170 km on the highway between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad in the Pakistani sector.

Apple growers say a carton each will be gifted to Musharraf and Aziz, while the other four will be given to other political leaders.

Ghulam Rasool, the President of Fruit Growers Association here, said with the opening of the bus service, there it hope it would revive trade links.

"Kashmir is known in, the world for its fruits. So this time we will gift baskets of apple to Pervez Musharraf, Shaukat Aziz and the Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan. When we had a good trade in apples 1947 the wholesale market was in Rawalpindi and we used to send apples to Amritsar, Delhi Karachi etc from there and when we heard about this (the bus service), we decided then itself that we will gift six basket of apples to Pakistan and seven basket of apples for our Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and other leaders which includes Ghulam Nabi Azad and Sonia Gandhi," he said.

India had said on Friday it hoped free trade with its nuclear-armed neighbour Pakistan would happen within one to two years, as their sluggish peace process moves forward.

Around 600000 families' are directly involved in the valley's fruit business and if the market opens for their produce in Pakistan, growers are optimistic that both the countries could overtake Gulf countries. Ghulam Mohammed, a senior member of Fruit Growers Association, said fruit trade via Pakistan could also solve the unemployment problem.

"A lot of unemployment problems will also be solved. More youths will be engaged in work as there is no other viable industry and only Fruit industry is the living industry," said Rasool. With 1.2 million metric tonnes of apple production, Kashmir is the biggest producer of apples in India. Barriers to commerce cemented by more than a half-century of hostility mean companies selling everything from wheat to tyres to Pakistan are forced to make costly detours into countries like Afghanistan and the United Arab Emirates.

Trade is on course to rise more than 150 percent in the financial year which ended in March to about \$500 million, but businessmen predict it could reach 10 billion dollars within five years of signing a free trade agreement.

Pakistan, with 66 million dollars worth of exports to India in the eight months to November, were dwarfed by imports of 315 million dollars. (ANI)

(Kashmir Observer, 03 April, 2005)

KASHMIR OBSERVER[®]
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A Step Towards Justice

The recent statements by Union Home Minister Amit Shah regarding the potential revocation of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from Jammu and Kashmir have sparked cautious optimism. This legislation, in force for decades, has been a contentious issue in the region, symbolizing the fraught relationship between security imperatives and human rights concerns. As discussions around its potential repeal gain traction, it is imperative to underline the urgent need for its abolition as a crucial step towards fostering peace, restoring civil liberties, and promoting justice in Kashmir.

AFSPA, enacted in 1958, grants sweeping powers to security forces operating in areas designated as 'disturbed.' Under its provisions, security personnel are granted broad authority, including the power to arrest without a warrant, use force against civilians, and even to shoot to kill, all with virtual immunity from prosecution. This legal framework has often been criticized for creating a culture of impunity, leading to allegations of human rights abuses, extrajudicial killings, and arbitrary detention.

The continued presence of AFSPA has been a source of deep-seated resentment among the people of Kashmir. For decades, Kashmiris have borne the brunt of its provisions, enduring a climate of fear and suspicion. The act's existence has only served to exacerbate tensions, alienate communities, and fuel grievances, further complicating efforts to achieve lasting peace in the region.

The potential revocation of AFSPA, promised by no less than the home minister, represents a significant opportunity to address these longstanding grievances and chart a new course towards reconciliation and justice. By revoking it, the government can signal its commitment to upholding the fundamental rights, and enabling a climate of trust and accountability.

Moreover, the repeal of AFSPA is not only a matter of legal reform but also a moral imperative. It is a recognition of the inherent dignity and rights of every individual, regardless of their circumstances. It is a reaffirmation of the principles of justice, equality, and respect for human rights that lie at the heart of any democratic society. The revocation of AFSPA can also serve as a confidence-building measure, paving the way for meaningful dialogue and reconciliation between the state and its citizens. It can help rebuild shattered trust, bridge divides, and lay the groundwork for a more inclusive and participatory political process in Kashmir.



Investors and Indian Economy's Stability Status
Did you know?

Irshad Mushtaq

Over the past 10 years, India has experienced a remarkable level of government stability and policy continuity. This has had a significant impact on the country's macroeconomic stability, with key indicators such as interest rates and inflation remaining relatively stable. As a result, the equity market has seen substantial growth, with more and more investors turning to real asset classes and investing through SIPs (Systematic Investment Plans). The number of demat accounts has also seen a dramatic increase, from 4 crore a few years ago to 14 crore today.

This stability and growth can be attributed to a number of important factors coming together. Political stability and a strong policy framework have created an environment conducive to economic growth. As a result, high corporate and larger companies are performing well, and the overall infrastructure of the country is becoming more organized. India's position in the global economy is also on the rise, with the country enjoying a sweet spot in terms of economic prospects.

However, while the market has been on a continuous upswing, it is important to remember that there may be times when corrections occur. It is essential to have patience and take a long-term view of investments. Despite these potential market corrections, there is a strong belief that the Nifty will continue to rise, possibly reaching 1 lakh at some point in the future. This belief is fueled by the understanding that the market operates in rotation, with different sectors coming into focus at different times.

In the context of the stock market, government policy plays a crucial role. When good valuations are available, it is important to be selective and consult trusted financial professionals to ensure proper diversification. Through careful and informed decision-making, one can make the most of the opportunities presented by the market.

In conclusion, the past 10 years have seen significant growth and stability in the Indian economy, driven by political stability and sound policy decisions. This has led to a thriving equity market and increased investor participation. While there may be some short-term fluctuations, the long-term outlook remains positive, and it is essential for investors to maintain a patient and informed approach.

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

Refining Reservation

Balancing Equity With Meritocracy

Ummar Jamal

While one can't be against the concept of 'reservation' per se, for it is mandated by constitution in its part 3rd, but the manner in which it is being now implemented raises questions about their effectiveness and impact.

Reservation was envisioned by our constitutional framers to rectify past and historical injustices against backward classes in India and not to uproot the meritocracy. When a community is given reservation well beyond the backwardness and disadvantages, the idea of reservation dies.

The recent decision to increase the Scheduled Tribe (ST) quota by 10% and the Other Backward Classes (OBC) quota by 4% in Jammu and Kashmir, enhancing the total reservation to 70%, is one such example. This move, announced on 16th March, comes amidst the inclusion of four new tribes into the Scheduled Tribes category. While purported to be for inclusivity and emancipation of the four tribes, the decision raises critical concerns.

The proposed 10% reservation for Paharis and other three tribes is utterly disproportionate, both in terms of their backwardness as well as their demography. Without clear evidence of widespread disadvantage and systemic discrimination faced by the Pahari community and the other three tribes, the rationale behind the 10% reservation remains questionable.

The new reservation rules added 15 new castes in the already long list of OBC castes and they were increased to a 4 percent quota and here we see 10% reservation for merely four tribes. Why this preferential treatment to these four tribes? The justification for a 10% reservation raises legitimate concerns about the criteria used for determining reservation quotas.

The decision overlooks the principle of proportionality and balance in the new reservation policy. The allocation of 70% reservation in Jammu and Kashmir, where the open merit population constitutes approximately 69% population, raises questions of arbitrariness and violates the right to equality under Article 14 of the Constitution. The people in power must also consider the rights and opportunities of the general population.

The reservation scenario in Jammu and Kashmir prior to the recent decision was tenable, with various quotas allocated for different categories, including SCs, STs, OBCs, residents along the Line of Actual Control/International Border, Residents of Backward Areas (RBA), Economically Weaker Sections (EWSs), Ex-servicemen, and Persons with Disabilities (PWD). Despite the existing reservations totaling 56%, the decision of 16th March to further increase the 10 percent quota for Paharis and other three tribes breaches the 50% cap set by the Supreme Court.

Many argue that the EWS category is not included when counting the 50% cap but we need to understand, whether 10 percent of EWS are counted or not, it does reserve 10 person seats for those who are economically weak. So there comes no question of arguing the quota for open merit is 40 percent and not 30 percent. And let's be mindful, be it horizontal reservation or vertical reservation, all it does is it reduces the quota for open merit candidates.

As the percentage of reservations increases, the available opportunities for individuals outside reserved categories diminishes. In a scenario where 70% of positions are reserved, the remaining 30% quota for the open merit population cannot be sufficient to accommodate their aspirations and talents. Where will the 70% of the population go? Aren't they entitled to get jobs and admissions?



“ In a scenario where 70% of positions are reserved, the remaining 30% quota for the open merit population cannot be sufficient to accommodate their aspirations and talents. Where will the 70% of the population go? Aren't they entitled to get jobs and admissions? ”

Dr Ambedkar, the founding father of the Constitution, emphasized the need for reservations to be limited to a minority of seats, ensuring a balance between affirmative action and meritocracy. On November 30, 1948 had a note of caution for future governments — large-scale reservation quotas could destroy the rule of equality of opportunity. He advocated that reservation quotas be consistent with Article 10 (now Article 14) of the Constitution and must be confined to a minority of seats.

The concept of affirmative action through reservations finds its roots in the Indian Constitution, with provisions enshrined under Articles 15(4), 15(5), and 16(4) aimed at uplifting marginalized communities, including Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). However, these provisions are subject to a judicially-mandated ceiling of 50%, established by the landmark Indra Sawhney v Union of India case in 1992.

The judiciary has consistently emphasized the need for reservations to be confined within the 50% limit, barring exceptional circumstances. The Indra Sawhney judgment acknowledges the possibility of breaching this ceiling only in extraordinary situations, such as for remote and marginalized communities. However, the recent decision fails to demonstrate the existence of such extraordinary circumstances, thereby raising concerns regarding its constitutional validity. The judiciary's interpretation

of the Indra Sawhney judgment emphasizes the need for prudence and caution when considering any breach of the 50% cap. The absence of compelling evidence justifying the expansion of quotas beyond this limit undermines the foundational principles of equality and fairness enshrined in the Constitution.

The judicial response to similar instances of exceeding the 50% reservation cap underscores the importance of upholding constitutional principles. In cases such as the Maratha reservation in Maharashtra and the reservation laws in Chhattisgarh, Orissa, and Rajasthan, the courts have consistently struck down attempts to surpass the prescribed limit.

I understand, reservations are essential for promoting inclusivity and addressing historical injustices but they must not come at the expense of merit-based selection processes. The Indra Sawhney judgment rightly emphasized the importance of striking this balance, ensuring that reservations do not undermine the principles of meritocracy and efficiency.

But unfortunately the evolution of reservation policies over time has deviated from the vision of our constitutional framers, who conceived reservations as a means to empower the marginalized and promote social justice. Instead, reservations have often been politicized and manipulated for narrow political gains, leading to distortions in their implementation and outcomes.

It is crucial to acknowledge that reservations, when implemented judiciously, can serve as a powerful tool for empowerment and inclusion. They provide opportunities to historically disadvantaged groups and address systemic inequalities that have perpetuated social and economic disparities. However, the effectiveness of reservation policies hinges on their ability to target and uplift the truly disadvantaged segments of society.

There is an urgent need to strike a balance between meritocracy and reservation, as articulated in the Indra Sawhney judgment, to ensure that reservations empower the disempowered rather than displace opportunities for the empowered.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer
Ummar Jamal is a Kashmir based columnist and National General Secretary of J&K students Association. He tweets at ummar_jamal and can be reached at ummarjamal968@gmail.com



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Plight of Rehbar-e-Khel Teachers

I pen this open letter to LG Manoj Sinha. With utmost respect & reverence, I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. I am writing to your good self today as a Rehbar e Khel teacher, a position I hold with great pride and dedication. However, I find myself in an excruciatingly difficult situation that compels me to reach out to you with a heavy heart. I am not just a teacher; I am a parent responsible for three young children and elderly parents who depend on me for their well-being. The honorarium I receive for my service, a mere Rs. 4000 per month, is barely sufficient to cover the cost of commuting to work. Unfortunately, this leaves my family in a state of constant hunger and deprivation. My children and aging parents go to bed hungry, unable to have a decent meal, and

it breaks my heart. I am left feeling broken, hopeless, and overwhelmed by despair, with thoughts of desperation and even suicide haunting my mind. Witnessing the suffering of my loved ones, especially my children and elderly parents, is a torment I cannot bear.

I acknowledge the recent decision by the administrative council to increase the honorarium of Rehbar e Khel teachers in J&K by 50%, as per Order No. 09- JK (YSS) of 2024 dated 26-02-2024. However, the previous monthly honorarium of 4000 rupees, with the recent 50% increment, brings the total to 6000 rupees per month, which we find unjust and inadequate. It has come to our notice that our counterparts in the Union Territory of Ladakh have received a significant hike in their honorarium, now standing

at 18000 rupees per month, following a decision by the Lieutenant Governor. Both sets of teachers were recruited under similar policies, yet such a glaring discrepancy in compensation exists. This discrimination against the Rehbar e Khel Teachers of J&K is untenable and against the principles of equity. We firmly demand that the honorarium for J&K Rehbar e Khel teachers be increased to 18000 rupees per month, aligning it with the compensation received by their counterparts in Ladakh. The current honorarium of 6000 rupees per month is insufficient to meet the basic needs and expenses of Rehbar e Khel teachers in today's world, making survival challenging.

Sir, I implore you with folded hands and the utmost sincerity to consider the plight of not only myself

but also my fellow teachers in similar circumstances. We are on the brink of desperation and require your immediate intervention. I beseech you, for the sake of humanity, to take action and provide us with the support and assistance we need to put food on our tables, ensure our families' well-being, and restore hope in our lives. I have faith in your compassionate leadership and the potential for positive change. Please, Sir, let us not continue to suffer in silence. Extend your helping hand to us, and together, we can overcome this harrowing ordeal.

With deep respect and a heavy heart.

Syed Aijaz Shah
syedaijazshah601@gmail.com

Understanding Alzheimer's

A Guide to Compassionate Care

Mehvish Shakeel
Hina Mehraj

Alzheimer's disease (AD) presents itself as a formidable challenge, impacting millions globally and deeply affecting the lives of those diagnosed and their loved ones. As a progressive neurocognitive disorder, it gradually diminishes memory, cognition, and the ability to perform daily tasks, significantly reducing one's quality of life. Notably, dementia is more prevalent among women and in rural areas. A recent pan-India study conducted in February 2023 shed light on the prevalence of dementia, particularly high in Jammu & Kashmir compared to other regions, the prevalence of dementia among the elderly population in J&K is the highest in the country at 11 percent against the national average of 7.4 percent. Emphasizing the urgency of addressing this issue nationwide. Research attributes stress, dietary habits, sedentary lifestyle, loneliness, family history, socioeconomic status, and genetics as primary factors contributing to dementia in Kashmir.

Understanding the Causes

Age: Increasing age is the primary known risk factor for Alzheimer's disease. While it's not an inevitable part of aging, the likelihood of developing AD increases with age. The likelihood of developing the condition increases with advancing age, with the majority of cases occurring in individuals over 65.

Family History and Genetics: A family history of Alzheimer's, especially among first-degree relatives, elevates the risk. The complex interplay of genetic factors in familial cases remains largely unexplained.



The journey through Alzheimer's is marked by distressing symptoms, including memory lapses, difficulty with communication, and challenges in daily tasks. Caregivers play a pivotal role in providing support and assistance, despite the absence of a cure

Alzheimer's disease.

Navigating the Journey

The journey through Alzheimer's is marked by distressing symptoms, including memory lapses, difficulty with communication, and challenges in daily tasks. Caregivers play a pivotal role in providing support and assistance, despite the absence of a cure. Strategies such as tailored activities, effective communication, and maintaining structure

can enhance the quality of life for individuals with Alzheimer's.

Supporting Loved Ones

Tailored Activities: Planning activities based on the individual's abilities and interests helps maintain cognitive function and promotes a sense of purpose.

Effective Communication: Patience and understanding are key when communicating with individuals with Alzheimer's. Effective communication is like a special language we use to understand each other. When someone has Alzheimer's, talking might become tricky, but there are other ways to connect. A smile, a hug, or just being there can say more than words sometimes. So, let's find new ways to show we care, even when words are hard to find.

Advocacy and Research: Raising awareness, advocating for improved support services, and advancing research and treatment are essential in alleviating the burden of Alzheimer's and improving the lives of those affected.

Conclusion

While Alzheimer's disease poses significant challenges, the dedication of caregivers and the relentless efforts of researchers and healthcare professionals offer hope. By fostering awareness, advocating for better support systems, and continuing to pursue advancements in treatment and care, we can strive to mitigate the impact of Alzheimer's and provide meaningful support to those affected by this devastating condition.

The authors are Clinical psychology students

PERFECTIONISM

A Common Result of Childhood Trauma

Kaytee Gillis,

Omar grew up one of ten siblings in a crowded Milwaukee apartment complex. He remembers having to fight, sometimes literally, for attention from his parents, both of whom were often stressed and overwhelmed. He learned quickly to minimize emotional struggles or needs, as these seemed to annoy his parents. Instead, good grades, making varsity letters at school, and being the first in his family to master English earned him the praise that his developing soul craved.

In adulthood, Omar was known as a "workaholic" among his friends and co-workers, and his wife jokes that "I never have to pick up his socks because he's never home anyway!"

His work had become his identity, and the accolades that came from that were the sustenance that sustained him. He did not know how to feel OK with himself unless he was achieving—and achieving perfectly. Any mistake was met with ridicule and self-loathing. This was unrealistic for anyone, but to someone who grew up without the message that they are worthy just for being themselves, it's a common result.

Despite so many professional and personal achievements, Omar always felt incomplete and defective. "I will feel OK for a little bit after finishing a project or getting an award, but then I'm back to just feeling, it's hard to explain, like I am not good enough. I know that sounds weird coming from me."

In truth, it doesn't. In fact, some of the highest-achieving and perfectionistic individuals are hiding their inner shame. While this does not mean all perfectionism comes from inner shame, there is a common link (Howard et al., 2023).

Perfectionism often emerges as a coping mechanism in response to the shame that comes from childhood trauma, as individuals strive to gain a sense of control and security in their environment. Rooted



in fear of failure or abandonment, perfectionism becomes a way to avoid criticism, rejection, or further trauma by striving for flawlessness in every aspect of life. However, this relentless pursuit of perfection can lead to high levels of stress, anxiety, and self-criticism, ultimately hindering emotional well-being and preventing individuals from experiencing genuine satisfaction or fulfillment. Recognizing and addressing that perfectionism is often a response to childhood trauma can help in fostering self-compassion, resilience, and developing healthier coping strategies.

Perfectionism often stems from inner shame, especially in the aftermath of childhood trauma (Maté & Maté, 2022). Driven by a deep-seated belief of unworthiness or inadequacy, individuals may strive for perfection as a way to counteract or conceal their perceived flaws and vulnerabilities. This relentless pursuit of flawlessness becomes a coping mechanism to manage feelings of shame and self-doubt, as individuals seek external validation and acceptance to quell their inner turmoil. However, perfectionism ultimately perpetuates a cycle of self-criticism and anxiety,

reinforcing the underlying shame and preventing authentic self-acceptance. Recognizing perfectionism as a response to inner shame is crucial in fostering self-compassion and healing from past traumas.

Healing from perfectionism involves cultivating self-awareness and self-compassion and adopting healthier perspectives on success and failure. Here are several strategies to support this process:

- Start by considering whether you have realistic goals: We often compare ourselves to others, and then, when we fall short, assume we are inadequate. But this is not only unrealistic, it is unfair. Although it can feel very uncomfortable at first, slowly start to allow yourself to embrace vulnerability and authenticity. Admitting shortcomings is not only a normal part of being human but can also be seen as a sign of maturity.
- Practice self-compassion: Cultivate kindness and understanding toward yourself, recognizing that imperfection is a natural part of being human. Treat yourself with the

same empathy and compassion you would offer to a friend facing similar challenges.

- Start small: Slowly start to become OK with recognizing that you make mistakes occasionally and that this is OK. By shifting your perspective, you can start to become more comfortable with the idea of making occasional mistakes and recognize that it does not diminish your worth or value as a person.

Reach out to trusted friends, family members, or mental health professionals for support and guidance. Therapy can provide valuable tools and strategies for navigating perfectionism and healing from underlying emotional wounds, but it is not for everyone. There are many tools along the path to healing.

By implementing these strategies, individuals can gradually shift away from perfectionism and toward a healthier and more compassionate relationship with themselves and others.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today

Artificial Intelligence and Our Future

ZAFFAR HUSSAIN

We are living in an era of amazing technological advancements that were once only imagined in science fiction stories. At the forefront of these innovations is artificial intelligence (AI) technology. AI systems are increasingly becoming a normal part of our everyday lives.

We are all familiar with AI assistants like Siri, Alexa, or Google that help with reminders, music playlists, and internet searches.

However, modern AI can do much more than that. AI systems are quickly changing and reshaping many major industries like healthcare, transportation, and content creation.

AI's abilities now impact almost every important field.

At its most basic level, AI refers to computer programs that can work in smart and efficient ways similar to how humans think. AI runs on advanced algorithms and massive computing power to process and analyze huge amounts of data at very high speed.

So how exactly is AI changing the world we live in? Let me give you an overview:

Healthcare Revolution: AI is becoming an invaluable tool for doctors. It can swiftly analyze massive amounts of medical data like patient records, test results, and symptom details. By examining this data, AI can detect diseases and recommend treatments with higher accuracy than human doctors alone. AI is revolutionizing drug discovery processes by accelerating research. It's also enhancing how medical professionals interpret complex imaging like X-rays and MRI scans. Additionally, AI enables remote monitoring of patients' health conditions from long distances. It can even predict if someone is at high risk of developing a disease early on by finding patterns in their data that might be missed by humans.

Transportation: Transportation and mobility are being completely transformed by AI as well. We are witnessing the rise of self-driving vehicles that utilize AI algorithms along with cameras and sensor technology to safely perceive their surroundings and navigate roads without human input. AI is increasing road safety while simultaneously optimizing routing and logistics for delivery companies and transportation services. Moreover, AI is a key component of developing "smart cities" by using AI to optimize traffic flow, prevent congestion, and efficiently manage public transit systems like buses and subways.

Businesses' Strategic Advantage: Businesses across all sectors are tapping into the powerful predictive capabilities of AI. By analyzing massive datasets that would be incomprehensible to humans, AI can identify future trends and patterns that provide strategic advantages. This potent forecasting ability is being leveraged for a wide range of applications like sales projections, targeted marketing campaigns, financial risk assessment, and

much more. AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants are also revolutionizing customer service and sales by providing human-like dialogue and personalized user experiences at scale.

Emerging Technologies: New AI-driven technologies seem to be emerging daily that are changing how we work, live, and communicate. There are various tools. For example, "deepfake" technology uses advanced machine learning to generate fake yet remarkably realistic audio and video content that could greatly disrupt media, entertainment, communications, and even politics if misused. Furthermore, AI capabilities in natural language processing (NLP) are enabling virtual assistants and chatbots to communicate in increasingly human-like ways, allowing for more natural language interactions.

Generative AI and Creativity: Generative AI is an exciting frontier that involves AI systems that can generate virtually any type of digital content - images, videos, music, text, code, and more - based solely on a descriptive prompt or input. Innovations like DALL-E for creating original images and ChatGPT for human-like dialogue are just the start of AI's creative potential for new forms of artistic and literary expression.

AI-First Approach: Many major tech companies have adopted an "AI-first" strategy. Google has integrated AI assistance into products like Gmail for predictive text entry. Businesses everywhere are exploring ways to utilize generative AI tools and virtual assistants like myself to automate processes, reduce human errors, and allow employees to focus their time on more strategic priorities and innovation.

New Industries and Jobs: AI is also creating entirely new industries and categories of jobs that didn't exist before. With AI rapidly advancing, there is now a growing skills gap and soaring demand for roles like machine learning engineers, data scientists, AI ethics researchers, and more. This has led to a surge in new educational curricula, training programs, and certifications focused on developing AI capabilities. There are also increasing opportunities for entrepreneurship with new AI-powered products, services, and consulting offerings.

As remarkable as AI's current impacts are, experts agree we are still in the very early stages of what will be possible with continuing advancements in AI capabilities. We should keep ourselves updated. Many predict that AI will be the driving force behind "hyper-automation" across all sectors while simultaneously helping to solve some of humanity's most complex challenges like climate change, food and water insecurity, incurable diseases, and more - by finding solutions through large-scale data analysis on a level.

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Terror Module Busted In Rajouri, Poonch

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Police busted a module of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) in the twin border districts of Rajouri and Poonch, arresting three out of seven identified members involved in receiving and distributing arms, ammunition, explosives, cash and narcotics dropped through drones from across the border, officials on Tuesday said.

Police issued a poster with a Rs 10 lakh award for the mastermind of the module, Mohammad Qasim of LeT based in Pakistan.

"In a planned manner, Zone police and CIB have identified individuals involved in receiving arms, ammunition, IEDs and narcotics dropped through drones from across the border in Rajouri," Director General of Police (DGP) R R Swain told reporters here.

"Cases were registered against them and their premises were searched. During the past 24 hours, ten places were searched and seven persons were identified. Three of them were already arrested," he added.

The DGP said it was proven through evidence that they have received consignments of arms, ammunition, IEDs, cash and narcotics dropped through drones from Pakistan

and distributed them further to forward linkages.

Both CID and police worked well in coordination and performed the best groundwork together to bust this module, he said.

Those arrested include notorious OGW in jail under UAPA, Talib Shah's wife Gulshan Naaz, Imtiaz Ahmed (both from Kotranka) and Abid Shah of Budhal area, he said, adding that they were involved in receiving material dropped from Pakistani drones.

"We have digital and electronic evidence against them. They were in touch with the mastermind in Pakistan. They have also distributed to forward linkages. Forward linkages, to whom they distributed money, are also being investigated," he said.

The money has come in lakhs and was distributed to several people in small amounts, Swain said, adding that they are categorized as over ground workers (OGWs). The DGP said that their mastermind is Mohammad Qasim alias Salman alias Sulliman of Mahore (Reasi) currently based in Pakistan.

"He is a LeT leader. He has been declared a designated terrorist by the Government of India. We have announced a Rs ten lakh award on Qasim. A poster has been released in this regard," he said.

Gulmarg Gondola Breaks Records

Over 1 Million Tourists Drive Rs 110 Cr Revenue

Agencies

Srinagar: In a historic achievement, the Gulmarg Gondola, one of Asia's highest aerial ropeways, witnessed over a million tourists and locals enjoying rides during the financial year 2023-24, contributing to the J&K Cable Car Corporation's revenue of more than Rs 108 crore for the year.

Officials attribute this surge in visitors to the Gulmarg Gondola as a catalyst for tourism, breathing new life into the valley's tourism sector. The cable car has become a symbol of adventure and beauty, attracting travellers from far and wide to experience its breathtaking views and thrilling rides.

Gulmarg Gondola soars to new heights! For the first time ever more than 1 million tourists took the Gulmarg Gondola Cable Car Ride in FY 2023-24. Revenue crosses more than 110 Crores. J&K Tourism sees unprecedented growth which continues to surpass all previous figures," J&K Tourism Department shared on a social media site X.

Tourism officials highlighted the integral role of the Gulmarg Gondola in enhancing the tourist experience. They said visitors often express that their trip to Gulmarg would feel incomplete without experiencing the



iconic cable car ride.

Notably, the Gulmarg Cable Car comprises two phases; one from Gulmarg resort to Kongdori valley and the second from Kongdori to Apharwat Peak. The first phase reaches an altitude of 8,694 feet, while the second ascends to the towering Apharwat peak at 13,058 feet. With 108 cabins and 18 towers, the Gulmarg Gondola provides a safe and exhilarating experience for all visitors.

However, last year (2022-2023), the number of tourists who had a Gondola ride was 8.5 lakh, while in 2021-2022, 6 lakh tourists took the ride. The demand is 7000-8000 per day, but as per capacity, the Gondola

can only ferry 3400-3500 tourists daily.

The inception of the Gulmarg Gondola project dates back to 1988, and despite facing challenges, the first phase was completed in 1998, opening its doors to the public. Since then, it has remained a cornerstone of Kashmir's tourism industry, captivating the hearts of millions of visitors with its charm and beauty.

The ascent of the Gulmarg Gondola reflects not only its increasing popularity but also the enduring allure of Jammu and Kashmir's breathtaking landscapes. As tourism continues to flourish, the skies are truly the limit for this Himalayan gem. (KNO)

'Demanding Admission Fee' FFRC Summons Pvt School Principal

Agencies

Srinagar: Following the 'non-compliance' of Fee Fixation and Regulation Committee (FFRC) orders, the committee Tuesday directed a principal of a private school to appear before the committee.

FFRC said this while taking a suo-moto cognizance of a concerning video circulating on social media wherein serious allegations have been made against management of Kashmir Haward school Naseem bagh Srinagar.

FFRC Chairperson in an order said that It has been alleged that the school is demanding Rs 85,000 as admission fee for the admission of her child which, if proven true, warrants immediate action.

It said that charging of admission fee has been barred by statute and any fee charged in contravention of FFRC directives is strictly prohibited by law.

"No educational institution is authorized to impose any fees without prior approval from the FFRC. Such actions not only raise moral and ethical concerns but also violate legal statutes," it reads,

The FFRC order further reads that during the investigation, it has come to fore that the school has failed to submit the requisite documentation and file for the regulation of fee structures for the academic session 2024-25.

"As per the established timeline, the school was obligated to submit this documentation to the Fee Fixation and Regulation Committee (FFRC) by or before December 31, 2023," it reads.

FFRC chairperson further said that the school is not authorized to unilaterally enhance its fee structures without the necessary approvals from the FFRC.

"The failure to adhere to the submission deadline for fee regulation documentation raises serious concerns regarding compliance with regulatory requirements," it reads.

FFRC said that following the serious allegations, the Chairman or Principal of the school is hereby directed to appear at the Fee Fixation and Regulation Committee (FFRC) office in Hyderpora on April 3, 2024, at 12:20 pm along all factual details and information pertaining to the matter for thorough examination.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Over 1.13 Lakh

which is prior information and can vote in the special polling set up for them," he said.

The second option is voting through postal ballots for which they have to fill up Form-12C. "They can get a vote from the assistant returning officer (ARO) and cast it through the postal ballot process," he said.

He further urged the Kashmir migrants to vote in large numbers.

"It is our appeal to all migrant voters to take part in voting in large numbers and exercise their democratic right. We have made facilities for them and authorised zonal officers and camp commandants to distribute and attest M-form on the spot," he said.

Migrant voters from places like Bangalore, Delhi and Mumbai can also use the state Election Commission's portal to get the M-form.

"The AROs have been appointed in Delhi, Jammu, and Udhampur for polling. Once they get the M-form, they will enlist their votes in particular polling stations as per the law," he said.

"We are making all efforts to ensure that awareness about the voting process reaches migrant electors. For this, we have started special awareness camps from April 3. The camps will be held in all the four migrant camps and non-camp areas where there is a major concentration of the Kashmir migrants in Jammu," he said.

Efforts would be made to hold such camps in Delhi too, he added.

HC Seeks Status

plays," the court said, accordingly directed that the authorities shall without fail intimate it as to the status of the process for appointment of the members of the Committee by the next date of hearing on April 29 "failing which, we would be compelled to call the concerned official respondents to remain present in person before this Court to explain before us."

LG Chairs High

prominent holy places and take every possible measure to ensure smooth conduct of the festivals. All the arrangements must be put in place as per the ECI guidelines, he said.

The LG directed for adequate security arrangements, Traffic & Crowd management; identification of parking spots; availability of essential items on notified rates, constitution of teams for regular market inspection, uninterrupted water and power supply, medical facilities, fire and emergency services and arrangements for sanitation and cleanliness.

First LS Poll

corrupt people are rallying together to stop action on corruption. I say remove corruption, they say save the corrupt," he said.

Modi made the remarks days after the INDIA bloc held a rally in New Delhi to protest against the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case.

"Congress people have started showing their dangerous intentions. This election is very important to save the country's future and to make the lives of future generations prosperous," he said.

The prime minister said he was not born to have fun but to work hard for the welfare of the country.

He said that this Lok Saha election is not a normal election, it is an election of the resolve for development of India and making it the third largest economy in the world.

"This is the first election in which big leaders of the Congress are not talking about winning the polls, but they are threatening that if the BJP wins, the country will be on fire," he said.

Modi said that he has been there for 10 years and extinguishing the fires set by them.

He said that during the Congress' term, India was known as the "world's largest arms importer" and today the country is an arms exporter.

The prime minister said he has taken the decisions awaited for decades.

"That is why some people have started saying that so much has happened, Modi ji, what is left now, now take rest. But such people forget that Modi was not born to have fun...Modi is born to work hard," he said.

He highlighted his government's decisions like abrogation of Article 370, construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya and a law on triple talaq.

"When I talk about the development of India and when I take action against corruption, people from the Congress and INDI Alliance abuse Modi," he said.

The prime minister said that the BJP takes the pledge of 'nation first', while the Congress party is looking for an opportunity to loot the country.

"Today, on one side is BJP which considers the country bigger than its family, and on the other side, there is Congress which considers its family bigger than the country. The BJP is making India proud in the world while the Congress abuses the country abroad," he said, adding for him, India is his family.

He alleged that the Congress never got time to take care of farmers, workers and labourers.

"Modi provided the facility of 'One Nation One Ration Card', and launched a pension scheme for them. Our government is giving free ration to 80 crore people. The government has decided that free ration will continue for the next five years. I cannot think of someone sleeping on an empty stomach," he said.

Modi said the Congress party is being seen as the root cause of every problem in the country.

"There was poverty in the country because of the Congress. The party did not allow the Army to be self-reliant. During the time of Congress, India was known as the world's largest arms importer, today it is an arms exporter. The country has exported defence goods worth Rs 21,000 crore. India sells Made in India weapons to more than 80 countries," he said.

The prime minister also sought votes for the party candidate from Jaipur Rural seat Rao Rajendra Singh in the rally.

Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma and other senior BJP leaders were present in the rally.

Beginning his Lok Sabha campaign in Uttarakhand from Rudrapur in Udhampur Singh Nagar district, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asserted that the action against the corrupt will go on and he cannot be deterred by threats and abuses. He also said that more development work has been done in Uttarakhand over the last 10 years than in the 50-60 years before that.

"Don't you think the corrupt should go to jail. The corrupt are threatening and abusing me. But they can't deter me. Action against each one of the corrupt will continue," Modi said.

The prime minister's remarks come amid opposition onslaught against the ruling party in the wake of arrest of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and JMM leader Hemant Soren.

Asking people to further strengthen him, Modi said he has guaranteed making India the third biggest economy in the world in the third term.

Modi's guarantee means fulfilment of the guarantee, he said.

"Development happens when the intentions are right. Right intentions lead to good results," the prime minister added.

Emergency Landing

adding the exercise was held without any problems, they said.

Work on the 3.5-km emergency landing strip was started in 2020 and completed late last

year as part of a programme initiated by the IAF along with the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for the creation of ELFs at different locations across the country.

Chinook helicopters, which have a top speed of 310 kmph and a travel range of 741 km, are used for heavy lifting and the main cabin can hold over 33 fully-equipped troops. It can also be used for medical evacuation and has space for 24 stretchers.

The Mi-17 helicopters can accommodate up to 35 troops. The ALH is an indigenously developed utility aircraft by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) with a twin-engine. It is used for causality evacuation.

These helicopters have been pressed into relief and rescue operations during natural disasters.

The ELF drill is to showcase the synergy and liaison between civil agencies, such as the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), district administration and state police, and the air force towards the conduct of complex multi-faceted activities.

Azad To Contest

political journey as the Secretary of the Block Congress Committee in 1973. With his nomination, he brings a wealth of experience, having previously served as a Member of Parliament and held various prominent positions in the government.

The National Conference (NC) has also revealed its candidate for the Anantnag-Rajouri seat, nominating Mian Altaf, a seasoned Gujjar-Pahari leader and five-time MLA, for the upcoming elections. This announcement comes on the heels of the NC's decision to replace sitting MP Hasnain Masoodi with Altaf.

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) are yet to unveil their candidates for the coveted seat. Speculations abound regarding the BJP's potential choice of a Muslim candidate, while the PDP, a member of the India alliance alongside the NC, remains tight-lipped about its electoral strategy.

The Anantnag-Rajouri parliamentary seat, formed post-delimitation, encompasses Rajori and Poonch and is slated for voting in the third phase on May 7. As the election fervor picks up, political parties are gearing up for an intense battle, with nominations set to commence on April 12 and conclude on April 19.

While the NC has declared its intention to contest three Lok Sabha seats in the Kashmir Valley, including Anantnag-Rajouri, the PDP is expected to field candidates for two of the three seats. However, formal announcements from both parties are pending, along with the BJP's candidate revelation.

The Anantnag seat has historically been a key battleground, witnessing significant electoral contests. Former MP Mehbooba Mufti's victory in 2014 and subsequent resignation in 2016 triggered prolonged vacancy, with elections delayed for security reasons. In 2019, Hasnain Masoodi clinched victory amidst subdued voter turnout, marking a turning point in the political landscape of the region. (with inputs from PTI)

Bhalla Files

his papers in presence of National Conference patron and member of INDI Bloc, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, All India Congress Committee in charge J&K Affairs Bharatsingh Solanki, JK Congress President Vikar Rasool Wani along with several senior leaders of JKPC.

Congress supporters started assembling near Maharaja Hari Singh Park in the morning and then took the shape of procession towards Shaheedi Chowk to DC office.

Later, on way back, while addressing a large gathering at Shaheedi Chowk, Solanki appealed to the people to vote for change and uproot the dictatorial regime of BJP. The people's

participation in large numbers shows the mood of the people and claimed that both Lok Sabha seats of Jammu and Udhampur will be pocketed by the congress party with thumping majority. The people have made up their mind to bring about change at the Centre and the Modi Government will go after elections and INDIA block will form the Government.

Congress candidate Raman Bhalla thanked the people for the huge participation in the rally today from all parts and appealed to throw the arrogant regime out of power for the large interest of poor and common man.

"People of Jammu have suffered a lot and will teach BJP MP and its leaders a lesson through ballot, in this election. He said that congress will come back to solve the problems of common man who are under huge economic distress and facing a lot of hardships due to tax terrorism and price rise, record unemployment and lopsided development" he said.

Earlier, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Jugal Kishore Sharma filed his nomination papers. Sharma is seeking re-election from this constituency for the third consecutive term. He was elected to the Lok Sabha from this constituency in 2014 and 2019. The constituency goes to vote on April 26 in the second phase.

Jugal is in the fray to reclaim this seat, straight for the third time. In 2019, he had defeated the Congress candidate Raman Bhalla with a margin of 3,02,875 votes as NC and PDP had not fielded their candidates. In 2014, Jugal had won this seat again defeating Congress candidate Madan Lal Sharma, with a victory margin of 2.57 lakh votes.

Congress has also repeated its nominee i.e., former minister Raman Bhalla, who is a common candidate of I.N.D.I. Alliance of which both National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) are constituents. He will file his nomination paper on April 2.

Following delimitation, Jammu parliamentary constituency comprises 18 assembly constituencies which include 11 from Jammu; three from Samba and Reasi district each and one Rajouri's Kalakote assembly constituency. Total electors are 17.66 lakh.

As per the notification, nomination papers can be filed by candidates or their proposers not later than April 4, 2024. Scrutiny of the nomination papers will take place on April 6, 2024 at 11 am at Deputy Commissioner's Office Jammu. The candidates have the option to withdraw their candidature on April 8, 2024 until 3 pm. The polling on April 26 will be conducted from 7 am to 6 pm—(KNO)

NC, PDP Part

chief minister was talking to reporters after a party rally at Liver-Pahalgam in this south Kashmir Lok Sabha constituency.

Abdullah also hit out at the media for making efforts to create a wedge between his party and the PDP, which are partners in the opposition INDIA bloc.

"Why are you making the PDP fight us? Has the PDP said anywhere that they will contest elections? It is you people who are fuelling this. I heard the speech of Mehbooba Mufti in Delhi, she said Farooq sahib and we are together and we will not break the INDIA alliance. Why are you trying to make us fight?" he asked.

Asked if the National Conference (NC) was contesting all three seats in Kashmir due to pressure from the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Abdullah said that the decision was taken on the basis of having won the previous elections.

"For DDC polls, we took the 2014 assembly election results and wherever PDP had won, they contested the DDC polls and wherever NC had won, we got the opportunity. PC was also with us then and they chose their candidate where they had won. We used the same formula here as well. Where does the ED come in this?" he asked.

Concerns Arise As Udhampur-Doda Polls Clash With Friday Prayers

Apprehension of less voting percentage in Muslim dominated Chenab Valley

Agencies

DODA: As the campaigning for the Udhampur-Doda parliamentary constituency is in full swing with political parties trying to get people on their side, people of Chenab valley have some reservation towards the polling day which is falling on Friday, April 19.

Talking to the news agency people of Chenab valley expressed that they will be losing time on the polling as it falls on Friday. "On Friday from 12.30 pm to 2.30 pm, all Muslims head towards Masjids (Mosques) for prayers and they even close all of their business establishments. There will be very few people in polling stations during this time which will have



an impact on the voting percentage as well," said Bashir Ahmed, a shopkeeper told KNO.

The Udhampur-Doda Lok Sabha constituency comprises five districts of Jammu region including Kathua, Udhampur, Ramban, Kishtwar and Doda and out of these five districts, Doda, Ramban and Kishtwar (part of Chenab valley) are Muslim majority

areas. This constituency is going to poll during the first phase on April 19, which falls on Friday.

Even the non-Muslims of the area feel that it will certainly have an impact on the voting percentage as most of the Muslims will not be able to vote during the prayer time.

"Muslims mostly go for prayers on Friday and polling

stations are certainly going to give a deserted look. The polling should have been on any other day except Friday. As the date has already been notified, people will have to adjust accordingly," said Rishi Kumar, a resident of Kishtwar district.

The Udhampur-Doda Lok Sabha seat is going to witness one of the biggest rivalry between Bharatiya Janta Party's (BJP) sitting Member Parliament (MP) Dr. Jitendra Singh (MoS in PMO) and former MP and Congress leader Choudhary Lal Singh. Both the leaders will be eyeing to get maximum Muslim votes from Chenab valley and secure the win but apprehensions of less voting percentage due to polling day falling on Friday will have a negative impact

CPI(M) Opts Out Of LS Polls To Consolidate Votes Against BJP: Tarigami

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Senior CPI(M) leader in Jammu and Kashmir M Y Tarigami on Tuesday accused the BJP of resorting to dictatorship and said his party would not contest in the Lok Sabha seats in the Union territory to consolidate votes and get rid of "tyrants".

He sought to downplay the reported bickering within the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) constituents over seat sharing for the Lok Sabha polls, saying it is not an electoral alliance and every constituent has their own political interests.

"We will not contest (the Lok Sabha polls in Jammu and Kashmir) directly. Our political approach in today's times would be to defeat the BJP, to stop them from forming government. They have already done a lot of damage to Jammu and Kashmir," Tarigami told PTI-Video in an exclusive interview here.

"We also appeal to other political parties to ensure that votes do not get divided. We hope we get rid of the tyrants soon," he said.

Asked about reports suggesting the coming together of the Ghulam Nabi Azad-led Democratic Progressive Azad Party, Altaf Bukhari's Apni Party and Peoples Conference headed by Sajjad Lone, Tarigami questioned the move and said, "We should have been loyal towards our people."

"They are stitching together a grand alliance. Against whom? I would have welcomed it had



BJP had a clear roadmap, they would not have resorted to dictatorship. They downgraded Jammu and Kashmir into a Union territory. Look at the plight of government employees here. They are not even allowed to protest... Do you think people will show support towards BJP?"

Tarigami, who is also spokesperson of the PAGD, said it is not an electoral alliance and every constituent has their own political interests.

PAGD is an alliance of five political parties -- National Conference, PDP, CPI(M), Awami National Conference and CPI -- seeking the restoration of the special status to Jammu and Kashmir which was revoked with the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.

"The DDC (District Development Council) elections were fought together despite the differences... Jammu and Kashmir had its own constitution but that's gone now. Our flag is gone, our land rights are gone, our permanent residency rights are gone. Statehood is also gone."

"Jammu and Kashmir is the only place where assembly elections have not taken place in the last 10 years. A state was divided without taking into consideration the aspirations of the people. Whatever statements the constituents have given do not change the very idea of PAGD. It will always be relevant," he said.

Tarigami said there are disagreements even among leaders of the BJP.

Shopian Residents Demand Shifting Of Proposed Railway Line

Agencies

SHOPIAN: The residents of Reshipora and its adjacent areas in Zainapora hamlet of South Kashmir's Shopian district staged a protest yet again against the proposed railway line and reiterated their demand of shifting the railway line.

The residents of the area told the news agency that the government must either shift this proposed railway line or

shouldn't construct it as the project will render hundreds of families landless.

Mohammad Akbar, a senior citizen of the village told KNO that they have planted apple trees 3-4 decades ago and since then they have been taking care of them by spending their money and time. He said that when these trees started bearing fruits, the government proposed a railway line that is going to render them landless.

Locals said that they have brought this issue up repeatedly in notice of administration and concerned authorities several times who assured that they will look into it.

They said that despite assurances from administration, the railway authorities have been marking their land, which is the source of livelihood for them.

Shakeel Ahmad, another local, said that most of the people in the village are dependent on

their orchards for their livelihood and if this railway line will be constructed, it will snatch their livelihood.

He said they don't need such projects that will snatch their livelihood and even many people will become homeless as well.

Locals said that people will lose their orchards on which they are solely dependent, therefore the project if executed will push them towards starvation.

Mega SVEEP Prog Held At Gulmarg

KO NEWS SERVICE

GULMARG: With an aim to enhance public participation in the upcoming General Elections to Lok Sabha, 2024, the District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa on Tuesday kick started a mega Voter Awareness programme under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative at the International tourist destination Gulmarg.

The DEO kick-started the proceedings of the event at the majestic Afarwat Peak, standing at 14,500 feet above the sea level, where hundreds of tourists visiting from across India captured memorable selfies at the SVEEP selfie stand set up by the District Administration Baramulla

Minga Sherpa interacted with the tourists and took selfies with them at the SVEEP selfie stand while encouraging them to participate in the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024.

As part of the campaign, a vibrant snow bike and ski rally was held which was flagged-off by Minga Sherpa from the Kongdori Ski-Point, to encourage youth especially first time voters to participate in the electoral process. Youth from across the Baramulla district partici-



pated in the rally which culminated near the Gondola Phase-I.

At the Kongdori, the DEO visited the state of art Mock Igloo Polling Station constructed by the youth services department with a theme "Vote for democracy" under SVEEP initiative. The election officials demonstrated to the visiting tourists the process of seamless use of the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) at the polling centre, thereby empowering them to effectively participate in the democratic process.

Speaking during the event, Minga Sherpa said that the primary objective behind organizing such events is to enhance voter awareness and boost the public participation in the electoral process in the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections of 2024.

The DEO further emphasized the importance of every citizen's active involvement in the democratic process, underlining that a well-informed electorate is fundamental to ensuring a vibrant and representative democracy.

Nodal Officer SVEEP, Sapna Kotwal emphasized the role of SVEEP in educating people about the electoral process and entrusted the media to give wide publicity to such events for the wholesome voter awareness.

Later, a vibrant cultural programme was organized under SVEEP at the Club Park Gulmarg, where students from different schools and other artists showcased their performances and participated in the painting competition focusing on voter awareness.

J&K Bank Adds New India Assurance As Its Partner

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Fortifying its commitment further to provide comprehensive financial solutions to its customers, J&K Bank today entered into a Corporate Agency Agreement with the country's premier general insurance provider New India Assurance Co. Ltd (NIACL).

The Bank's Executive Director Sudhir Gupta chaired the



MoU signing ceremony held at Bank's Corporate Headquarters, wherein General Manager (Cross Selling) Narjay Gupta signed the papers on behalf of the Bank while General Manager (NIACL) Mukta Sharma put in her signatures for the company in presence of Deputy General Managers Sapna Gupta (Bank) and Kiran Jacob (NIACL) besides senior officers from both the or-

ganisations.

Reiterating Bank's commitment to provide one-stop insurance solutions to its customer base, Executive Director Sudhir Gupta called for making the association beneficial for the Bank's massive clientele besides fruitful for both the organisations

He said, "This strategic collaboration aims to enhance the scope of financial protection and

insurance solutions offered to the Bank's customers across various segments. Our Bank is the major financial institution in J&K & Ladakh with strategic pan India presence and NIACL is the leading general insurer in the country, so coming together of two giants, I am sure, will provide convenience and choice to our customers in terms of choosing variety of insurance products."

Govt Employees Intending To Perform Hajj Await Clearance For Leave

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Government employees, who aspire to undertake the holy pilgrimage of Hajj, have voiced their anger and disappointment over the prolonged delay in the approval of their leave applications by the authorities.

Many employees from several departments desiring to fulfil their religious obligations have encountered obstacles due to the bureaucratic inertia surrounding the sanctioning of their leave.

Employees who spoke to the news agency, said in the midst of anticipation and preparation for pilgrimage find themselves entangled in administrative procedures, causing distress

and uncertainty.

"The delay in leave approval has disrupted our plans but has also added undue stress to our already demanding professional lives," said an employee from education department on pleading anonymity.

He added that they have submitted their leave application in March and till now response has been received.

"My name is in the first list, and my flight is scheduled on 1st May, and I have already deposited my advance payment. I recently went to the office of the director of JK Bose but received zero response from there, and I requested the authorities to kindly hurry on our leave as we can prepare ourselves for Hajj," he added.

Workshop On Sufiyana Music Concludes At Chadoora

KO NEWS SERVICE

BUDGAM: A two weeks workshop on Sufiyana Music organised by Sheikh Ul Alam Calligraphy and Cultural Organisation concluded at Hanjigund Chadoora on Monday.

The programme was organized with the financial support of Sangheet Natak Academy, New Delhi.

The sufiyana musical workshop saw active participation from numerous artists associated with this art.

The participants had the opportunity to delve into various as-

pects of this rich musical tradition, including mastering instruments such as Santoor, Kashmiri Sehtar, Tabla, and Saaz-i Kashmir, alongside exploring traditional Maqam like Maqam-i Bahr, Maqam-i Nawa, and Maqam-i Sahnai.

Under the expert guidance of Ustad Manzoorul Haq (Sangeet Natak Academy Yuva Awardee) and Ustad Muhammad Maqbool Bhat, the training workshop was deemed a resounding success, offering valuable insights and fostering artistic growth among the younger generation.

ED Attaches Properties Worth Rs 1.56 Crore

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday attached properties worth Rs 1.56 crore in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

The properties include land measuring over 6,000 square feet along with a two-storey residential house and a vehicle belonging to Niamat Ali Bhat, the probe agency said.

"ED Srinagar has provisionally attached movable and immovable properties worth Rs 1.56 Crore in the form of land, measuring 01 Kanal, 03 Marlas, situated in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir along with a Two-storey residential house made thereon and a vehicle of Niamat Ali Bhat in a case related to Hakeem Imtiyaz, Junior Engineer of R&B Department, J&K under the provisions of PMLA, 2002," the ED posted on X.

"Shah had said that first there would be delimitation, then elections and then statehood. What happened to that chronology? If the environment (in J-K) is feasible for Lok Sabha elections, then why not for assembly polls? You must be knowing about the Pathribal, Machil and Shopian (fake) encounters. We all condemned the impunity that was given to the forces. We do not need these draconian laws in a democratic setup," he added.

IT Dept Warns Of Strict Action On TDS Violations In Govt Offices

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Income Tax Department has issued a stern warning against the misuse of Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) mechanism within government offices.

As per the news agency, concerns have been raised regarding instances where private individuals, engaged by government bodies for assistance in taxation matters, have exploited the system to claim fraudulent refunds.

In response, stringent guidelines have been outlined to safeguard against such deceptive practices, emphasising the crucial role of government officials in ensuring the integrity of TDS deposition. As such a circular has been issued by the Finance Department Directorate General of Accounts and Treasuries.

The Commissioner of Income Tax (TDS)-1, Chandigarh vide above referred communication has informed that there have been some unrelated instances of the misuse of AIN (Account Office Identification Number) and TAN (Tax Deduction Account Number) by private persons whose services have been taken by some unrelated Government Offices for help in taxation matters at their respective ends, it reads.

It has been further brought into the notice that the TDS mechanism has

been misused by such unscrupulous persons with an intention of claiming bogus refunds. An entire chain of bogus/false claims in Form 24G statements filed under the AIN are created, false TDS quarterly statements are filed and ultimately ITRs claiming bogus refunds are filed. These frauds are serious in nature, it added.

In this context, the Income Tax



department has shared a brief note on the mechanism of TDS deposit by Government Offices and checkpoints for exercising due diligence and due care by the AIN holders and TAN holders which is as follows:-A. Mechanism of TDS deposition for Government Offices: The Income Tax Law provides that where tax is deducted/collected by a Government office, the Tax so deducted/collected

at source can be remitted to the Central Government without production of income-tax challan (ITNS 281).

"Government Accounting System, each DDO who is responsible for tax deduction at source (TDS) is allotted a TAN and he is responsible for filing of TDS Statements like Form 24Q and Form 26Q," it said.

Each DDO reports to a Pay and Accounts Officer (PAO)/District Treasury Officer (DTO)/ Cheque Drawing and Disbursing Officer (CDDO) (hereinafter mentioned as 'Accounts Officer'). These persons are allotted AINs (Account Office Identification Numbers).

The information regarding TDS deducted against payments is passed on by the DDO who holds the TAN to the Accounts Officer who holds the AIN.

The Accounts Officer makes a book entry for the transfer of TDS credit to the account of the Central Government by filing Form 24G every month as per ITD Notification no. 41/2010 dated 31 May 2010 using the Accounts Office Identification Number (AIN).

After filing of Form 24G, Book Adjustment Identification Number (BIN) is generated for each DDO. Using the BIN (Book Adjustment Identification Number), the DDO files quarterly TDS/TCS statements in Form Nos. 24Q/26Q/27Q/27EQ (as may be applicable).

Three Terror Associates Arrested In Baramulla

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Security forces on Tuesday arrested three terrorist associates from Sopore area of Baramulla district in Jammu and Kashmir, police said. A pistol and other incriminating materials were recovered from their possession, a police spokesman said.

He said the security forces estab-

lished a joint checkpoint and noticed three suspicious persons attempting to flee from the spot. "However, the alert party apprehended them tactfully. They have been identified as Faisal Ahmad Kachroo, Aqub Mehraj Kana and Adil Akber Gojree. During search, a pistol, mobile phones and other incriminating materials were recovered from their possession," the spokesman said.

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR NOC

I am presently residing in plot No. 313 measuring 30x350 situated Meerak Shah Colony (Panjkhar-wai Housing colony) Habak Srinagar since last 23 years and now I want transfer the said plot in my name in the revenue records and I want to get NOC from the department of Lakes Division 1st (LAWDA) Miskeen Bagh Srinagar. Objections, if any may be conveyed to the concerned authority within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. However, no objections will be entertained after expiry of above said period.

Mukhtar Ahmad Sofi S/o Mohammad Abdullah Sofi R/o Meerak Shah Colony (Panjkharwari Housing Colony) Habak Srinagar

IPL: New Skipper Pandya Under Fire From Rohit Fans As Mumbai Slump

Agencies

MUMBAI: Hardik Pandya has been facing the wrath of jeering fans in the Indian Premier League this season, with the Mumbai Indians struggling since he took charge from the much-loved Rohit Sharma.

Five-time winners Mumbai replaced Rohit, who leads India in all formats, as captain before the IPL season started last month after the India all-rounder Pandya returned from Gujarat.

The homecoming has been tough for Pandya, who has been booed incessantly as his side slumped to three consecutive defeats, the latest at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium on Monday.

In contrast, the Chennai Super Kings have reported a "seamless transition" of leadership after their old warhorse Mahendra Singh Dhoni handed over the captaincy to Ruturaj Gaikwad on the eve of the IPL's 17th edition.

Pandya's reception could not have been more different.



After being traded from Gujarat back to Mumbai for \$1.8 million, his immediate elevation as captain

went down badly with the legions of Rohit fans. Rohit, 36, remains an icon in

Mumbai after leading the team to five IPL titles since taking over from Australia's Ricky Ponting in 2013.

Mumbai's winless record with Pandya in charge this season has done nothing to win over the fans in the cricket-mad country.

Pandya began with a loss at Ahmedabad, home of Gujarat Titans, who won the title in their inaugural season in 2022 under the Indian all-rounder's dynamic leadership.

The 30-year-old had another forgettable evening on Monday against Rajasthan Royals, even being jeered at the toss by home fans, prompting presenter Sanjay Manjrekar to call on them to "behave".

But the crowd kept up their hostility towards Pandya throughout, with Rohit gesturing to the fans to stop at one point.

Pandya, who was once regarded as a possible successor to the ageing Rohit to captain India's T20 team, admitted it was a "tough night".

The tattooed star with his love for watches is still searching for a first win in charge at Mumbai, who are rooted to the foot of the 10-team table. (AFP)

Short TAKES

RCB v LSG: De Kock, Pooran Power Lucknow To 181/5

Quinton de Kock manifested his exceptional hitting skills with a fifty but Lucknow Super Giants could not progress beyond a par 181 for five against Royal Challengers Bengaluru in their IPL match in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

De Kock (81 off 55) selected the bowlers and positions around the ground to play his shots with precision but the RCB bowlers did not allow other batsmen, except Nicholas Pooran (40 off 21), a free run on a pitch that sported a generous tinge of green.

KKR-RR, GT-DC Matches Rescheduled: BCCI

Kolkata Knight Riders' home IPL game against Rajasthan Royals was on Tuesday advanced by a day to April 16, while Gujarat Titans-Delhi Capitals fixture in Ahmedabad was also rescheduled by the BCCI which did not give any reason for the move.

The PTI had on Monday reported that the KKR-RR tie was set to be rescheduled due to Ram Navami, but the Board did not specify any reason for the rescheduling of matches on these two dates.

Russia Accuses IOC Chief Of 'Conspiracy' To Exclude Its Athletes

Russia accused International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach on Tuesday of taking part in a "conspiracy" with Ukraine to exclude its strongest athletes from this year's Paris Games.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova made the allegation after two Russian pranksters known as Vovan and Lexus published a recording of a conversation with Bach in which he was falsely led to believe he was speaking to an African sports official.

Boniface Back In Leverkusen Squad For German Cup Semi-Final

Bayer Leverkusen striker Victor Boniface will be back in the squad for Wednesday's German Cup semi-final against Fortuna Dusseldorf following a three-month injury absence, coach Xabi Alonso said on Tuesday. The 23-year-old underwent surgery on an adductor muscle injury in January after being injured while preparing with Nigeria for the Africa Cup of Nations.

Leverkusen are on course for a first ever Bundesliga title with a 13-point lead over second-placed Bayern Munich and seven games remaining.

Sports Events Held In Two Zones Of District Anantnag



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Department of Youth Services and Sports Anantnag organised sports activities at various zonal levels in the district.

At Zone Verinag, DYSS organised competitions in Tug of war, Table Tennis and Carrom for Under-14 and Under-17 boys and girls at Govt Girls Higher Secondary School Verinag. At least 200 students from various institutions of Zone Verinag participated in these activities. The event was inaugurated by ZPEO Verinag Mohd. Ashraf Shah.

In another event on Monday, DYSS held sports activities in Zone Mattan at High School Poshkreeri. The competitions were held in the disciplines of Chess, Carrom and Badminton for all age groups of boys and girls. The programme was inaugurated by head of HS Poshkreeri Gh. Rasool Parray in presence of Zonal Physical Education Officer Mattan. Over 75 students competed in these events.

An introduction session was carried out by Shaibir Ahmad (ReK) about the importance of sports. At the end of competition, prizes were distributed to winners.

Delhi Ready For Kolkata Challenge In IPL

Press Trust of India

VISAKHAPATNAM: Delhi Capitals would be keen to prove that their comfortable win against Chennai Super Kings was not a flash in the pan while Kolkata Knight Riders would be eyeing a hat-trick of victories when the two sides face off in the IPL here on Wednesday.

The Capitals would be buoyed by the 20-run victory here on Sunday, their first of the season, against defending champions CSK who were outsmarted by Rishabh Pant and Co. in all departments of the game.

And come Wednesday, the Capitals will have to put another such performance against KKR, whose batters pummelled Royal Challengers Bengaluru bowlers to notch their second win of the season on March 29.

For DC, the onus will be on Prithvi Shaw and veteran Australian David Warner to provide a solid start.

Meanwhile, Pant continues his inspirational journey. After two scratchy innings, the skipper gave a glimpse of his devastating best as he scored his maiden fifty of the season and seems to be slowly finding his groove.

The likes of South African Tristan Stubbs and Australian Mitchell Marsh, both capable of launching an assault on the opposition, need to be better towards the end as DC lack domestic power hitters.

While Stubbs showcased his prowess with the bat against Ra-



asthan Royals, a consistent show from him will do a world of good for DC.

On the other hand, Marsh is yet to produce a glimpse of his brute power with the willow which could prove to be DC's lethal weapon.

South African Anrich Nortje is yet to find his rhythm as he returned to action after a long injury layoff. The Capitals' Indian pace unit will thus have to punch above its weight against a formidable KKR side.

Khaleel Ahmed's performance against CSK was commendable, yet his long-standing fielding troubles remain a concern.

Mukesh Kumar lacks pace while veteran Ishant Sharma is more

than capable of asking pertinent questions.

KKR, on the other hand, have looked good this season, registering two wins from as many games. Opener Phil Salt, all-rounder Andre Russell and Venkatesh Iyer have been in good nick in the first two games and would look to pose a challenge for the Delhi pacers.

Skipper Shreyas Iyer also got some runs under his belt in the win against Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

Rookie pacer Harshit Rana has impressed so far, picking five wickets in two outings, but Mitchell Starc, their record buy, and Varun Chakravarthy have gone for runs aplenty.

Match starts at 7.30pm IST.



Agencies

PARIS: Manchester United defender Raphael Varane has said concussions have damaged his body as he stressed the importance of creating more awareness among players around the dangers of heading. The Frenchman said he had suffered a concussion a few days before playing in France's 1-0 defeat to Germany in the quarter-finals of the 2014 World Cup, as well as his former club Real Madrid when they lost to Manchester City in the last 16 second leg of the 2020 Champions League.

The 30-year-old retired from international football

after a 10-year career with Les Bleus, during which he won the World Cup in 2018 and was a runner-up four years later.

"My seven-year-old son plays football and I advise him not to head the ball. For me, that's essential," Varane told French daily L'Equipe.

"Even if it doesn't cause any immediate trauma, we know that in the long term, repeated shocks can have harmful effects.

"Personally, I don't know if I'll live to be 100, but I do know that I've damaged my body. The dangers of headers need to be taught on all amateur football pitches and to young people."

Researchers have found

evidence suggesting that repetitive heading of balls during a professional soccer career is associated with a higher risk of cognitive impairment in later life, according to a study commissioned by England's Football Association (FA). The FA have trialled removing deliberate heading in matches across the Under-12 level, with other countries including Scotland banning heading on the days immediately before and after matches.

The International Football Association Board in March said additional permanent concussion substitutions will be enshrined in football's laws but it remains an option which is up

to organisers of individual competitions to implement.

"No matter how much the player says he wants to play, the medical staff have to veto it, because it puts players' lives at risk," Varane said.

"We also have to make the player understand that it's not showing his strength to continue playing after a serious injury, but that the real strength lies in getting out, stopping playing and resting.

"This can be difficult for a top-level athlete to take on board."

Varane added that he missed a few games for United this season due to symptoms of concussion.

Ben Stokes Pulls Out Of T20 World Cup

Press Trust of India

LONDON: England's star player Ben Stokes on Tuesday pulled out of the upcoming T20 World Cup, saying the "sacrifice" will help him focus on regaining his fitness to bowl full throttle and be the "all-rounder I want to be for the foreseeable future".

The country's Test captain has informed the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) about his decision, two months ahead of the showpiece that will be held in the USA and West Indies.

"I'm working hard and focusing on building my bowling fitness back up to fulfil a full role as an all-rounder in all formats of cricket.

"I'm working hard and focusing on building my bowling fitness back up to fulfil a full role as an all-rounder in all formats of cricket.

"Opting out of the IPL and the World Cup will hopefully be a sacrifice that allows me to be the all-rounder I want to be for the foreseeable future," Stokes said in a statement issued by the ECB.

Stokes, 32, was in-charge of the team that suffered a 1-4 Test series loss to India earlier this year and said the tour made him realise that he isn't quite up for it when it comes to bowling.

"The recent Test tour of India highlighted how far behind I was from a bowling point of view after my knee surgery and nine months without bowling.

"I'm looking forward to playing for Durham in the County Championship before the start of our Test summer. I wish Jos (Buttler), Motty (Matthew Mott) and all the team the best of luck in defending our title."

England will be defending the title in the Caribbean having triumphed in the last edition of the tournament in Australia in 2022, with Stokes hitting the winning run in the final for a five-wicket victory over Pakistan at the MCG.

However, he has only played two T20 matches since, both at last year's IPL.

