

Kashmir Outpaces Jammu In Corruption

70% of Cases Concentrated In Valley



Agencies

Srinagar: Cases of government employees accepting bribes remain rampant in Jammu and Kashmir. Despite efforts by the Anti-Corruption Bureau to curb corruption, 70 percent of cases of corruption by government employees registered since 2021 are from Kashmir with Jammu amounting to mere 30 percent.

Over the past ten years, numerous scandals have emerged, wreaking havoc on the careers of many young individuals. Among these, the Sub Inspector Recruitment and JE Recruitment scandals stand out. Also notable among these are the Roshni Scheme scam, the Rs 3,000 crore scandal involving the Jammu and Kashmir Bank, the distribution of four lakh fake gun licenses, and recruitment scams within the Police Sub Inspector and JE

Civil departments.

However, a senior ACB official said that there is some relief in the fact that national investigating agencies like the CBI and ED are taking stringent action. "Over the last three years, the CBI has exposed numerous scams, registering more than 40 cases related to corruption. This marks a significant departure from the past, where only four such cases were registered in the preceding 70 years," the official divulged. Some of the most notorious scams include:

The Roshni Scam, which has seen the registration of 11 FIRs by the CBI, implicating prominent figures such as former minister Lal Singh's wife, former minister Abdul Ghani Kohli, and former Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah. The scam involves approximately Rs 25,000 crore and spans about 25 lakh kanals of land. | [More on P6](#)



Children attend Quran recitation classes during Ramadan in the interiors of Dal Lake. KO Photo Abid Bhat

Conversion Of Non-Local At Dargah J&K Police Registers FIR

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir police have registered an FIR into an incident that took place on Jummat-ul-Vida, wherein a non-local reportedly converted to Islam, termed by the police FIR as a "forced conversion." The video of the conversion incident went viral on social | [More on P6](#)

Mosques, Shrines In Kashmir Reverberate With Prayers On Shab-e-Qadr

Agencies

Srinagar: The auspicious occasion of Shab-e-Qadr, also known as 'Lailatul Qadr,' was observed with religious fervor and devotion across Jammu and Kashmir.

The air was filled with a sense of spiritual anticipation and devotion as devotees thronged mosques and shrines across Kashmir valley for prayers and recitation of the Quran as the Muslim

fasting month of Ramadan is about to end.

Dargah Hazratbal and other mosques and shrines across the valley were brimming with devout Muslims, late night reports reaching Kashmir Observer said.

The Night of Qadr can fall on any of the odd-numbered nights of the last asra of Ramadan. While most people believe it is likely to fall on the 27th night, some also believe that it falls on the 23rd night.

Muslims across the world perform night-long prayers to celebrate the first revelation of the Holy Quran to Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh).

Preachers and religious scholars highlighted the teachings of Islam and various aspects of the life of the Prophet and urged Muslims to follow the same.

Speaking about the significance of Shab-e-Qadr, local resident of Hazratbal, Mohammad Umer | [More on P6](#)

Dry Weather Till April 10 In J&K: MeT

Agencies

Srinagar: Generally dry weather has been forecasted in Jammu and Kashmir till April 10 even as night temperature recorded a drop at most places barring Gulmarg and Jammu on Saturday.

A meteorological department official said that on April 11-12, weather is likely to be generally cloudy with possibility of light rain/snow at isolated places.

From April 13-15, he said, generally cloudy weather is expected with likelihood of intermittent light rain/snow at many places.

Regarding the temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a minimum of 4.5°C against 7.4°C on the previous night and it was 2.4°C below normal for the summer capital of JK for | [More on P6](#)

3.8 Magnitude Quake Jolts Kishtwar 3rd In Two Days

Agencies

Srinagar: An earthquake of magnitude 3.8 struck the Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, the National Centre for Seismology (NCS) said.

"Earthquake of Magnitude: 3.8, Occurred on 06-04-2024, 14:53:21 IST, Lat: 33.33 & Long: 76.73, Depth: 5 Km Region: Kishtwar, Jammu and Kashmir," the National Centre for Seismology (NCS) posted on X.

According to the National Centre for Seismology, the earthquake occurred at 2:53 pm at a depth of 5 km. Earlier on Friday, an earthquake of magnitude 3.2 struck the Kishtwar | [More on P6](#)

Muslim Daughters Will Bless Modi For Centuries: PM

KO Web Desk

Saharanpur: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said Muslim women will bless him for centuries to come as he has removed the "sword" of triple talaq hanging over them and their families. Addressing an election rally in Saharanpur, PM Modi reached out to the Muslim community, which has a sizeable population in the Lok Sabha constituencies of western Uttar Pradesh, saying real secularism is when all get the benefit of government welfare schemes irrespective of their caste and religion as has been seen during the BJP rule.

"The BJP government has ended the evil practice of (instant) triple talaq. We enacted a strong law in the interest of crores of Muslim sisters" and protected their families, he said.

Some are saying Muslim women



have benefitted but "they do not have a complete understanding. It is not that only Muslim women have benefitted" but also their parents and brothers who were always worried as to what would they do if their daughter or sister had to go through triple talaq. | [More on P6](#)

"INDIA Bloc Is About Commission, NDA About Mission"

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday launched a blistering attack on the opposition INDIA bloc, saying their aim is to earn "commission" after coming to power while the BJP-led NDA is working with a "mission" to make India a developed nation. Addressing an election rally in Saharanpur, which goes to polls in the first phase of general elections on April 19, Modi said the opposition alliance was fighting just to stop the BJP from winning more than 370 seats. He cornered the main opposition party | [More on P6](#)

Electoral Bonds 'World's Biggest Scam': Rahul

In a scathing attack against the BJP-led Central government, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday alleged that the electoral bonds scheme was the "world's biggest scam" and claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has "his people" in the election commission. The Supreme Court had struck down the electoral bonds scheme as unconstitutional in a ruling in February. Addressing a rally on the outskirts of Hyderabad a day after the release of Congress's

Prevented Further Bloodshed In J&K: BJP

Accuses Abdullahs, Muftis & Gandhis Of Ruining J&K

Observer News Service

Srinagar: BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh who is also party in-charge of J&K, said here today that three prominent families – the Abdullahs, Muftis, and Gandhis – have exploited and ruined the lives of the people of Jammu and Kashmir for an extensive period.

Addressing the media during 44th party foundation day of the BJP here, Chugh said that the trio of families remain unashamed despite



the considerable bloodshed in Jammu and Kashmir during their tenure, showing no mercy. "The dirty politics of these three families no longer resonate with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, who have opted for the path of development, | [More on P6](#)

'Central Leadership Will Decide On Candidates'

Jammu and Kashmir BJP president Ravinder Raina on Saturday said the party's central election committee will take a call on fielding candidates in the three parliamentary constituencies in Kashmir Valley. | [More on P6](#)

2022 SI Recruitment Scam In J&K ED Attaches Properties Worth 1 Cr

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday attached movable properties in the form of bank balances to the tune of Rs one crore related to some of the accused, including mastermind Yatin Yadav, in the 2022 police sub-inspector scam in Jammu and Kashmir, the agency said.

The Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) conducted the examination in March 2022 but the selected list of 1,200 candidates was cancelled by the administration in July following allegations of paper leak and malpractice. The CBI, which was handed over the case, filed its chargesheet against 33 accused, including Yadav from Haryana, in November 2022. Subsequently, the ED, Jammu, registered a case against the accused under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

"ED, Jammu has attached movable properties in the form of bank balances relating to accused Yatin Yadav, M/s New Global Fumigation Corporation, | [More on P6](#)



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Appointment based TIMINGS: MONDAY TO SATURDAY 3.30 to 6.30 For appointments Contact: 9797703533 Receptionist: +91 95969 87949 +91 7780-969328

Scholarships This Week

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

Scholarship Name 1: Goonj Setu Fellowship 2024-25

Description: Goonj Setu Fellowship 2024-25 is an opportunity offered by Goonj, a non-profit organisation to graduates aged between 21 to 30 years by 31st July 2024.

Eligibility: Open to applicants between 21 and 30 years as on July 31, 2024, having graduated from a recognised institution by the same date.

- Prizes & Rewards: A fixed monthly fellowship stipend ranging between 20,000 and 22,000, depending on the city.



Scholarship Name 2: Vardhman Foundation Shakun Oswal Scholarship

Description: An initiative of Vardhman Textiles Limited that aims to support the educational needs of diploma/ITI students.

Eligibility: Students studying in any year of diploma/ITI courses after Class 10 and/or 12 are eligible.

Prizes & Rewards: Financial support for key educational expenses. Last Date to Apply: 30-05-2024.

- Prizes & Rewards: 20,000. Last Date to Apply: 20-04-2024.

Scholarship Name 3: The Cadence Scholarship Program 2024-25

Description: Cadence Design Systems Private Limited & Concern India Foundation invites applications from students pursuing undergraduate or postgraduate courses in the Delhi NCR, Bangalore, Pune, or Ahmedabad regions to continue their education.

Eligibility: Open to applicants residing and studying in Delhi NCR, Bangalore, Pune, or Ahmedabad (Indian nationals only) pursuing undergraduate and post-graduate courses.

- Prizes & Rewards: Financial support for key educational expenses. Last Date to Apply: 30-05-2024.

ASF ENTERPRISES

Sale and Services of Computers 2nd. Floor Munir Manzil Regal Chowk Srinagar (J&K), Ph.0194-24 77949, 9419001176, 9419776235

Sale and Sendee of Laptops. Desktops. Printers, Photocopiers. Faxes, ,CCTV Cameras, Security System and Refilling of all Types of Cartridges, Toners Registered Government order Suppliers.

University of Kashmir, Srinagar

Notice

The candidate whose particulars are given below has reported to the University that he/she has lost his/her University Migration Certificate/s and has applied for issuance of duplicate certificate/s:

Name: Nusrat Nabi Paretnage:- Ghulam Nabi Sofi Registration No : 30328-IC-2011 Migration Certificate no:- 54979 dated: 6/7/2017 Roll No/s:- 41270, 33199,26786 Session/ Year 2013, 2014, 2015

Before University will consider issuance of Duplicate Certificate/s in favour of the candidate, any person having any objection shall report to the undersigned within one week from the date of issuance of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice I have lost the number plate of my Motor Cycle bearing regd no: JK01AG3274 while travelling from Gumboora 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 RTO Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost the number plate of my scooty bearing regd no: JK04F- 7353 while travelling from Yaripora 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 Budgam within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my J&K Bank Account as Asadullah Rather while my correct name as per Aadhaar is Mohd Asadullah Rather which needs to be corrected.

How Invasive Species Colonise New Ground Exposed By Melting Glaciers

Press Trust Of India

The melting of glaciers in a warming climate exposes new ground that are then colonised by invasive species, a new research has found.

The study, conducted by UK-based researchers, looked at how living organisms colonise new ground laid bare by retreat-

by "progressively covering more ground" and "increasing number of species", the team led by the UK's Durham University said.

Native plant species apart, exotic plants and invertebrates are also taking advantage of the newly-uncovered bare ground, the researchers found.

They were further "surprised" to see that two plant species originating from



ing glaciers, called "forelands", on the British Overseas Territories.

Surveying glaciers on the island of South Georgia in the Atlantic Ocean, the researchers found that invasive species -- one of the main causes of the ongoing biodiversity crisis -- will likely spread as fast as the glaciers are retreating.

They explained that similar to cold regions around the world, climate change is melting many of the sub-Antarctic island's glaciers, exposing large areas of newly-uncovered bare ground.

This exposure of bare ground is followed by the arrival of pioneer plants, which remain low on the ground to maximise sunlight intake and are known to grow quickly.

These plant species "colonise" the area

temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere had colonised the sites faster than any other species.

The two species -- annual meadow grass and mouse-ear chickweed -- "are widespread on South Georgia and have successfully invaded most islands in the sub-Antarctic", the researchers wrote in their study, which has been published in the Neobiota journal.

The team also wrote that the temperate plant species are "more abundant in recently rather than in older deglaciated sites, indicating that these species are effective pioneers on glacial forelands along South Georgia's coast".

Office Of The Chairman Madina Public High School Nooripora, Pattan.

In pursuance to the meeting of the Managing body dated 22-02-2024 elections were held for the Managing body through secret ballot on 05- 03-2024. The following persons have been elected for the Managing body of Madina Public High School Nooripora, Pattan.

- 01. Mr. Showkat Ali Malla 02. Mr. Altaf Hussain Rather
- 03. Mr. Akhter Ali Para 04. Mr. Zulfikar Ali Para
- 05. Mtr. Sakeena Bano 06. Mtr. Kaunsar Abdullah
- 07. Mr. Ghulam Mohammad Beigh 08. Mr. Mohammad Maqbool Wani
- 09. Mr. Mohd Amin Bhat

Table with 6 columns: S.No, Name, Parentage, Residence, Qualification, Occupation, Designation. Lists members of the managing body.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Dooru NOTICE INVITING TENDERS NIT NO 01 OF R&B/Dooru/2024-25 /E-TENDERING/_EED/T-1/89-96 DATED_05-04-2024

از عدالت ایکویٹی میجر سیٹ باجلاس تحصیلدار نارہ مل طلوع بدگام عنوان: درخواست رہیں راہی والد حبیب اللہ گھام ساکنہ موضع ڈوون تحصیل نارہ مل طلوع بدگام

از نیابت گوم احمد پورہ درخواست از جانب عاشق حسین شیخ ولد محمد قاسم شیخ ساکنہ موضع گوم احمد پورہ تحصیل پٹن بارہولہ برادر وصول D.O.B. سرٹیفیکٹ محمد عباس شیخ

Major Shrines In Kashmir Revamped, Old Furnishings Replaced Ahead Of Eid

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Ahead of Eid ul Fitr, the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board has started replacing 'matting' in major shrines across Kashmir, sources said here.

They added matting has been changed at three prominent locations with plans underway to complete the process at four additional sites in the coming days.

Reliable sources in Jammu and Kashmir Waqf board informed that almost after three decades, J&K Waqf Board has commenced the replacement of "matting" of major shrines including Dargah in Hazratbal, Char-E-Shareef, Pathar Masjid Srinagar and Baba Reshi shrine among others.

A Board official said the decision to undertake this extensive renovation underscores the commitment to preserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the region.

ment to preserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the region.

"With Eid on the horizon, these efforts promise to offer worshippers and visitors a renewed spiritual experience as they visit these revered sites," he added.

"We also have many more development projects in frame at shrines and at Dargah Hazratbal. We are also looking forward to curb dog menace, and stop them of entering Hazratbal premises and also many more development projects of the shrine are also in place," he said adding as off now the matting of all the three levels of Hazratbal has been changed, while the matting of outhouse has also been refurbished.

On special occasions like Eid, the Board is now matting for tents as well, he added.



As springtime arrives, people stroll across a daisy field at the Emporium Garden in Srinagar on Saturday. KO Photo by Abid Bhat

Jamia Masjid Shut On Shab-e-Qadr, Mirwaiz Continues To Be Under House Arrest

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar was again closed for night long prayers on the eve of Shab-e-Qadr, leaving thousands of faithful disappointed on Saturday.

Mirwaiz Umer, the head priest of Kashmir, was placed under house arrest for the second day in a row while the gates of the central mosque, the site of a significant gathering on Shab-e-Qadr, were locked to worshippers.

A Spokesman of the mosque's governing body, Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid, in a statement said, the gates of the grand mosque were

A Spokesman of the mosque's governing body, Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid, in a statement said, the gates of the grand mosque were locked by the police as soon as the (Fajr) morning prayers were offered.

locked by the police as soon as the (Fajr) morning prayers were offered.

The governing body, he said, was informed by the police that Taraweeh or nightlong prayers on the auspicious occasion of Shab-e-Qadr will not be allowed

in the mosque.

Anjuman Auqaf expressed disappointment over the decision of the authorities for not allowing nightlong prayers and Taraweeh, calling it a repressive measure.

It may be in place to mention Central Jamia Masjid located in the Nowhatta area of the old city, was locked by the authorities on Jumat-ul-Vida, the day signifying the conclusion of the holy month of Ramadan.

Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, the chief cleric of Kashmir, was reportedly placed under house arrest and was thus unable to deliver the Jumat-ul-Vida Sermon at the revered mosque.

Bukhari Urges Admin To Ensure Adequate Arrangements On Eid-ul-Fitr

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari Saturday called upon the J&K administration to ensure all necessary arrangements are in place for the upcoming auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

In a statement, he said, "I urge the administration to ensure all necessary arrangements, including adequate availability of essential commodities in the markets, and uninterrupted water and power supply to consumers, for the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr."

"The administration must remain vigilant to ensure that essential commodities such as ration, mutton, chicken, vegetables, fruits, bakery products, LPG, etc., remain available in adequate quantities in the markets," he added.

Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari also urged the concerned departments to ensure arrangements for sanitation facilities, especially at the places

where congregational prayers are to be held. He also emphasized facilitating hassle-free transport service for the people on auspicious occasions.

Furthermore, the President of the Apni Party emphasized the need for conducting market inspections during these days.

He said, "There should not be any complaints about hoarding, black-marketing, and profiteering in the markets. Shopkeepers and traders found failing to maintain the quality of food items, selling expired products, or not displaying rate lists of essential commodities should be dealt with according to the law. Also, the administration, particularly key department officials, should be accessible to the public in case they have any complaints to bring to the notice of these officials."

Moreover, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari stressed the administration to ensure uninterrupted power and water supply for the people during the Eid days.

PDP Nominates Umar Dar As Organizational Secretary For Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: People's Democratic Party (PDP) on Saturday nominated Umar Dar as Organizational Secretary for district Srinagar.

This was disclosed by the party today and best wishes to Dar for the assignment.

The entire district unit of PDP and constituency in-charge Lal

Chowk Zuhaib Yusuf Mir congratulated Dar for being nominated as the party's Organizational Secretary.

Umar Dar has earlier worked as district Secretary for Youth and had an overwhelming contribution to enhance the party structure in Srinagar.

Meanwhile Dar thanked the party for appointing him as organizational Secretary for Srinagar district.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Son's mothers name wrongly mentioned in school records as Syed Masrat Bukhari instead of Masrat Mohi ud Din. Now I am applying for its correction if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may Contact Principal Hanfia ModelHr Sec School Kreeri within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

SYED SHOWKAT HUSSAIN BUKHARI
F/O SYED HUJATULLAH BUKHARI
R/O KREERI

kri

Office Of The Chairman Madina Public School Ahmadpora, Pattan.

In pursuance to the meeting of the Managing body dated 15-02-2024 elections were held for the Managing body through secret ballot on 01-03-2024. The following persons have been elected for the Managing body of Madina Public School Ahmadpora, Pattan.

01. Mr. Gh. Hassan Rather	02. Mr. Fayaz Ahmad Bhat
03. Mr. Aijaz Ahmad Dar	04. Mr. Gh. Hassan Rather
05. Mr. Ghulam. Mohammad Joo	06. Sajad Hyer Wani
07. Mtr. Sadaf Sakeena	

S.NO	Name	Parentage	Residence	Qualification	Profession	Designation
01	Mr. Gh. Hassan Rather	Ali Mohammad Rather	Matipora	10+02	Pvt. Service	Chairman
02	Mr. Fayaz Ahmad Bhat	Ab. Aziz Bhat	Agri Kalan	M.A. B.Ed.	Principal	Member
03	Mr. Aijaz Ahmad Dar	Mohammad Qasim Dar	Tantraypora	BCA	Staff-Representative	Member
04	Ghulam. Hassan Rather	Mohd Abdulla Rather	Tantraypora	M.A.	Shop Keeper	Parent Member
05	Mr. Ghulam Mohammad Joo	Ali Mohammad Joo	Tantraypora	P.U.C	Shop Keeper	Parent Member
06	Mr. Sajad Hyer Wani	Ghulam Mohammad Wani	Goom- Ahmadpora	10+02	Teacher	Member
07	Mtr. Sadaf Sakeena	Ali Mohammad Malik	Goom- Ahmadpora	M.A., B.Ed.	Pvt Service	Member

Chairman

Government of Jammu and Kashmir J&K Services Selection Board

CPO Chowk Panjthirith, Jammu/ZamZamComplex, Rambagh, Srinagar
(www.jkssb.nic.in)

Sub : Advance Notice for conduct of Examinations to various Posts.

It is hereby notified for the information of aspirants/candidates that the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) is going to conduct written test for various posts tentatively as per the details given in Annexure "A", "B" and "C" to this notice.

This is an Advance Notice for the information of concerned candidates. The exact dates along-with the schedule of downloading of Admit Cards shall be notified separately in due course of time.

The candidates are advised to visit www.jkssb.nic.in for the detailed notice.

Sd/=

Reyaz Ahmed Malik (JKAS)
Controller of Examinations
J&K Services Selection Board

No:JKSSB-COE0EXAM/10/2022-04(7055504)

DIPK-42/24

Dated:06.04.2024

J&K Bank Limited Estates Department Zonal Office Srinagar Website: www.jkbank.com

PREMISES REQUIRED

The Jammu & Kashmir Bank invites offers from owners of premises for outright purchase/ on lease basis for housing its Branch at Brein, Nishat, Srinagar.

Carpet Area of Premises	Location
Approximately 1500-2500 Sft	In the vicinity of erstwhile Branch Brein, Nishat, Srinagar.

The interested parties/persons owning the premises and having a clear title over the property should submit their offers at Estates Dept Zonal Office Srinagar, M.A Road Srinagar by or before 28-04-2024.

The tender documents and the terms and conditions relating to same can be obtained in person from Zonal Office mentioned above during working hours and also can be downloaded from Bank's website www.jkbank.com from 08-04-2024.

The Bank reserves the right to cancel/reject any/all offer(s) without assigning any reason thereof.

Note: Only those parties having valid commercial permission of the offered premises need to apply.

Ref: jkb/zo_sqr/Est/24-03
Dated: 03-04-2024

Sd/-
Zonal Head

Registered office : Corporate Headquarters, M.A.Road, Srinagar 190001, Kashmir, India
CIN: L65110JK1938SGC000048; T : +91 (0)194 2481 930-35; F : +91 (0)194 248 1928;
E : info@jkbank.com; W : www.jkbank.com

DIPK-NB-32/24
dated: 06-04-2024

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

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR
27 Ramadan
1445

PRAYERS

FAJR	4 : 45
ZUHR	12:34
ASR	5: 07
Magrib	6:58
ISHA	8: 22

This Day In History

- 1946 - Syria's independence from France is officially recognised.
- 1953 - 1st west-to-east jet transatlantic nonstop flight
- 1954 - US President Dwight D. Eisenhower in news conference is first to voice fear of a "domino-effect" of communism in Indo-China
- 1956 - Spain relinquishes her protectorate in Morocco
- 1964 - IBM announces the System/360.
- 1967 - Israeli Syrian border fights
- 1969 - Supreme Court strikes down laws prohibiting private possession of obscene material
- 1978 - US President Jimmy Carter defers production of neutron bomb
- 1982 - Iran minister of Foreign affairs Ghotbzadeh arrested
- 1983 - Oldest human skeleton, aged 80,000 years, discovered in Egypt
- 1983 - STS-6 specialist Story Musgrave & Don Peterson 1st STS spacewalk
- 1988 - Russia announces it will withdraw its troops from Afghanistan
- 1996 - Sri Lanka's Sanath Jayasuriya hits fastest ODI fifty off 17 balls v Pakistan, Singapore
- 1996 - Pakistan beat Sri Lanka to win Singer Cup in Singapore
- 1999 - The World Trade Organisation rules in favor of the United States in its long-running trade dispute with the European Union over bananas
- 2001 - Mars Odyssey is launched

From KO Archives

Blazing Start To Historic Bus

Observer News Service

Srinagar - With barely hours left for the Muzaffarabad bag to roll and despite unprecedented security measures, militants attacked the Tourist Reception Centre (TRC), where the passengers have been lodged under heavy armed guard.

The front building of the complex was on fire within minutes of the initial shots ringing out at around 3:45 this afternoon.

A union of four militant groups that have issued threats against the bus service has claimed responsibility for the attack, which took place hardly 200 yards away from the venue the prime minister will flag off the bus service from.

An officer of the security forces said that militants had entered the building with guns blazing and later set it on fire. Seven employees, including a woman, were injured in the heavy firing while the building which houses several government offices was being evacuated.

Security officers said that Muzaffarabad-bound passengers were safe as they had been lodged in a different wing of the complex.

They put the number of attackers at two and said the one of them was killed soon after the attack and the other in the subsequent action by security forces. Evacuation of the civilians from the building was carried out swiftly by the police as fire tenders went into action to control the blaze that spread from the attic to the lower floor within no time.

Reports said that the militants attacked from the main gate opening indiscriminate fire as they stormed into the complex.

The state police, BSF and CRPF immediately surrounded the site and launched the operation against the militants. Among the injured were Roushan Ara of Hyderabad, Vakil Ahmad Pandith of Tangmarg, Basheer Ahmad of Wanabal.

Records or nearly score of government offices housed in the building have been lost in the fire. The losses in terms of property are expected to run into crores.

Even though the fire tenders and firemen desperately fought the flames, the building mainly constructed of timber was reduced to a burning hulk.

The building also housed an office of the State Road Transport Corporation, which has to operate the Indian sector of the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service.

The other offices that were located in the building, include the branches of Jammu and Kashmir Bank and the State Bank of India; an office of Tourism Development Corporation, Indian Airlines, post office, offices of fisheries and wild life departments, and the tourist police office.

(Kashmir Observer, 07 April, 2005)

The Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh grabbed headlines in the last few weeks over Chinese protestation against PM Modi's visit to the state on March 11 and again on March 25 in response to Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar rebuffing Beijing's claims as ludicrous. Following closely on this recent tussle, Beijing on March 28 commemorated the 'Democratic Reform Day' in Xizang (Mandarin term for Tibet) which marked the 65th anniversary of Tibet's 'liberation from earlier feudal serfdom'. What is of significance is that the above mentioned celebrations were held in the newly built Xiaokang (well-off) villages constructed along the borders of India and Bhutan. This action, in the light of recent events including the India-China border stand-off since 2020 and negotiations over settling the Sino-Bhutanese boundary (with implications for India), can be seen as a grey zone warfare tactic by Beijing.

Grey zone warfare broadly refers to the methods of indirect warfare or competition between nation states which lie in the area between peace and full-scale war. It includes a vast array of options such as economic coercion, blockade of vital supplies, cyberwarfare, disinformation, and narrative building and influencing campaigns. China is no stranger to such warfare given its pre-eminence in ancient Sinic military treatises such as The Art of War and the application of such tactics against India and Taiwan.

With respect to the Chinese celebrations above, the first aspect to note is the location i.e. the Xiaokang villages. These villages, numbering around 628, have been built along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) straddling the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and the Indian territories of Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh under the ostensible purpose of poverty alleviation and development in border areas; however, it is alleged that they are dual-use in nature and have been built with the purpose of stationing PLA troops and equipment. In addition to the LAC, these villages have also been constructed along the disputed Sino-Bhutan boundary in the backdrop of negotiations between Beijing and Thimphu. More worrying for India is the fact that such villages have also cropped up in the strategically sensitive Doklam tri-junction which has the potential implications for the Siliguri Corridor connecting the Indian mainland to its North-Eastern region. It is also to be underlined that Doklam is one of the main areas of dispute between Bhutan and China and of strategic importance for India which saw a tense 73 days standoff between New Delhi and Beijing in 2017.

In terms of grey zone warfare, the celebrations in the villages situated along the above disputed areas were meant to substantiate China's claims over the latter and in a way, normalise the occupancy of the same. Moreover, the celebration of the Democratic Reform Day provides an occasion for Beijing to highlight the 'development and prosperity' of these villages and thereby

'Democratic Reform Day' New Chinese Gray Zone Warfare Against India

ANURAAG KHAUND



buttress its claims towards the seemingly non-military character and aims of the settlements. At the same time, the timing of the celebrations immediately following the Chinese response to Indian to the rebuttal on Arunachal Pradesh are also aimed at reinforcing and reiterating Beijing's claim over the region which it refers to as Zangnan or southern Tibet. In addition, the emphasis on 'continuous, rapid development' of the border as well as announcement of 'promoting frontier prosperity, reinforcing border defence, border security, and the happiness of border residents' can be seen as an apparent jibe aimed at recent Indian attempts at strengthening border infrastructure along the LAC including the recently inaugurated all-weather Sela Tunnel reaching the strategic region of Tawang which drew the Chinese uneasiness on 9 March. Similar messages have also been conveyed through celebrations in villages to Bhutan and indirectly to India by holding events in villages at the Yadong county situated in the tri-junction.

What should India do?
Along with the current efforts at addressing the infrastructure deficit along the border, India should learn and adopt

similar tactics of grey zone warfare. For starters, there should be frequent visits by the Prime Minister and other Central Ministers to Tawang a region coveted by China both for its strategic location as well as its importance in Tibetan Buddhism. Such regular visits would help in reinforcing the already evident Indian sovereignty over not just Tawang, but the entire state of Arunachal Pradesh. This would also serve as a corrective to the earlier administration's stance of not undertaking frequent high-profile visits to Tawang during official tours of the state of Arunachal Pradesh due to apprehension over Chinese actions. Along with this, such high-level delegation including the PM should actively take part in the Statehood Day celebrations of Arunachal Pradesh on 20th February every year to further buttress the above action. Along with the implementation of the Vibrant Village Programme aimed at bolstering the development of remote villages along the LAC, in a way similar to the Chinese celebrations, India too should regularly highlight the achievements and development of these areas to not only stem the migration from these areas but also counter Chinese attempts at psychological warfare.

On the diplomatic front, India should use its current international weight and multiple partnerships to influence its partners to issue statements similar to the US reiterating Indian sovereignty over Arunachal Pradesh while condemning baseless Chinese irredentist claims. In this regard, New Delhi can reach out to countries like Philippines whose sovereignty claims in the South China Sea (SCS) has been supported by India including calls to adhere to the 2016 ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration on the same. Similarly, India can seek out other partners such as Japan and Vietnam to do the same in exchange for stronger support to their claims in the SCS and other benefits.

Narrative constitutes a vital stratagem of grey zone warfare which China has never shied away from using. In response to its narrative of historical control over Xizang (Tibet) since time immemorial, India should invest its cultural resources in developing its own narrative highlighting the historical, religious and cultural links between Tibet and the Indian subcontinent as well as recognising the existence of separate Tibetan kingdom and culture militarily

occupied and annexed by the People's Republic of China in 1950. In addition, as a response to the commemoration of 28 March, the Government of India can participate in the official events organised by the Tibetan Government in Exile such as the annual anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising of 1959 on 10 March and unofficial presence during Tibetan Independence Day celebrations on 13 February, thereby highlighting the violent history of the Chinese occupation often brushed under the carpet. Moreover, the proposal of granting Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama should also be considered along with allowing the latter to make frequent visits to the historic Tawang monastery an important seat of Tibetan Buddhism which would also bolster the legacy and connection of India with the same. At the same time, as a rebuff to the usage of terms like Xizang and Zangnan, India should use the term Tibet to refer to the region and should even skillfully utilize the term 'Indo-Tibetan border' to refer to the LAC in unofficial responses as done by certain quarters of the government in 2020. Consideration should also be given to counter-measures such as re-naming places in Tibet as a signal of stronger Indian assertiveness.

With regard to Bhutan, while India has increased its outreach and level of support to the country, New Delhi should also strive to increase the level of its commitment and re-assurance to backing Bhutan's claims including supporting Thimphu's voice in the international fora. Such strong support would not only help India's own strategic concerns but also raise its standing in its near and extended neighbourhood as a trusted and reliable partner vis-a-vis China. New Delhi should especially try to channelise robust assistance towards aiding Bhutan in developing its own border areas with China and its military capabilities. Such efforts would perhaps encourage Thimphu to emulate similar grey zone tactics as mentioned above on its own accord.

As outlined by Dr S Jaishankar in his book Why Bharat Matters the crux of the positive development of the Sino-Indian ties lie in 'three mutuals- mutual respect, mutual sensitivity and mutual interests'. A cursory glance at the history of the ties since 1950 will show that while New Delhi has adhered to the three 'mutuals', Beijing has and continues to violate them till date. Hence, it is time, to employ the same tactics from China's own playbook to make Beijing realise that 'it would get as hard as it gives' which should hopefully make it curtail its ambitions and exhibit responsible behaviour.

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

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Malice of 'Mullah' Bashing

Amir Suhail Wani

A video has been making rounds on Facebook and people have been indiscriminately sharing and commenting upon it. The video is in itself the trailing of a growing paradigm of thought which insists upon ascribing all evils, the causes of decadence and the pervasive presence of all sorts in a Muslim society to Mullahs, Maulanas, religious clerics and the preachers in general. A consensus seems to have been built around the narrative that religious figures or Mullahs, as they are heuristically called, are intrinsically evil, retrograde, mischief makers and embodiments of evil. To worsen the situation and to win the argument, irrespective of truthfulness and consequences, Sufis/Mystics/Sages have been portrayed as standing parallel and in opposition to Mullahs and their open-mindedness, liberating praxis, love for and hatred for none have been posited as the ultimate antithesis to the theory and practice of Mullahs. This has served the dual purpose of deepening fault lines between the mystic and Mullah and has been a tremendously successful tactic to malign and mischaracterize Mullahs and to create among masses the image that is repugnant, disrespectful and demeaning. It is intended here to look at the contours and consequences of this mischaracterisation, its deviation from facts, the covert intentions behind the ploy and the impact it has on religious and spiritual consciousness in general.

Every facet of life derives its legitimacy and rulings from the men of expertise and specialisation who dedicate their

lives to the particular field and thereby qualify themselves to form an opinion or take the custodianship of that particular enterprise of human life. A layman is not supposed to propose a scientific theory or disagree with a particular scientific view on the mere pretext of his 'feeling' for he lacks the necessary training and requisite qualification to make any judgements to this effect. This respect for specialisation is maintained everywhere except in matters of religious import where every one of us takes liberties to express him/herself on the issues of utmost complicity and sensitivity.

It has happened, unfortunately, that each one of us feels entitled to the religious opinion - an uninformed opinion without giving a prior thought to our abilities in these matters and without caring an iota about the consequences of these ill formed opinions. This trend was set in motion long ago, when Muslims were reeling under colonial pressure and every attempt was made by the colonisers to deface and efface the identity of Muslims and for the fact that Mullahs were the foremost symbols of Islam, they were indiscriminately maligned and presented in bad colours. These are not the conspiracy theories but hard historical facts which authors like Edward Saied et Al have well commented upon and traced the pedigree of this line of thinking. Religion in general and the religion of Islam in particular was antidote to all placebos of progress and Modernity West was peddling across the globe. Leaving apart if the progress has been real or hallucinatory, but it is an agreed upon fact that the West mobilised its men and machinery to present

the image of religious scholars in worst terms possible and made words like Mullahs, Maulvis, Maulanas synonymous to regress, backwardness, inhumanity and all colours of evil. Mullahs were, as history shows, at the forefront of rebellion against the imperial powers and no wonder that they faced a strong backlash and were so presented in their societies that the word itself became abusive and derogatory. A more profound historical reason is to be traced to the spread of Islam beyond the boundaries of Arabia. In an attempt to fight and deter the spread of Islam, cultures like Persia and India created a dichotomy of Rind O Zahid, Shaikh O Salik, Sufi O Mulla and many other binaries. In this binary, an attempt was made to posit Zahid/Shaiikh/Mulla with artificiality, narrow mindedness and anti-intellectual tendencies and to associate Rind/Salik/Sufi with progression, enlightenment, universalism, inclusion and all elements of human nature. This approach, to say the least, is both historically falsifiable and factually incorrect. Let us recall Maulana Rumi, Imam Ghazali, Mohiuddin Ibn Arabi, Mulla Jami, Mulla Sadra and countless others. These are the names Muslim modernity and western scholarship have come to take special interest in and have come to be identified as the icons of Progress, Enlightenment, Universal message of salvation and as the exemplars of highest manifestation of religion. But how many of us know or bother to know that all these were scholars in the traditional sense of the word and were actually what we now derogatorily label as Mullahs. They were all taught and brought up in traditional and

orthodox schools of learning and had a strong and rigorous training in the sciences of Shariah. It is left to the judgement of the reader to judge if this upbringing and training played a positive or negative role in making them what they became and it makes us rethink if the category of Mullah is truly so bad as to demonise and derange it?

There is another subtle and deeper aspect of the problem which, as raised in the above quoted video, needs immediate response. Time and again it has been said that Mullahs represent the harsher, legalistic and "wrathful" aspect of God as opposed to their Sufi compatriots, who represent mercy, grace, forgiveness and the "Jalaali" aspect of divine. What this line of thinking and these people demand in effect is that there shall be no norms of behaviour, no laws of ethics and morality, no bounds on human behaviour in any way conceivable. But what religion shall it be that does not discourage evil and promote virtue, define the contours of acceptable and normal paradigms and patterns of behaviour, draw a line of distinction between the good and the evil and forewarn people of the consequences thereof. It is said that the Mullahs emphasise the "Jalaali" or the majestic aspect of God and thereby generate fear and repulsion in the hearts and minds of people. But is not jalaal an aspect of divinity and if it is so, on what grounds shall it be discounted and seen in a negative framework and haven't Sufis said that divine wrath is actually a different manifestation of divine mercy.

What is wrong if Mullahs remind us of divine laws and the consequences of the violations thereof, the laws and regu-

lations which are enshrined in the scripture itself? And divine wrath is not what people usually make out of it. It is not a bloodthirsty and revengeful God spying upon his creatures with a whip in his hand. It is not a dictator who is annoyed and irked at the disobedience of his orders. It is nothing like that and what it is in reality has been well explicated by our scholars and Sufis in their valuable texts. And what do these people mean (as has been well articulated in the link given above) that Mullahs push people away from God, whereas Ibn I Arabi, the greatest of the sufi theoreticians asked surprisingly "Is there anything, anywhere away from God"? Even when we think, by our finite human minds that this and that is farther and away from God, we are actually ignoring the basic ontological principle that the Quran says "I am, where you are", also "Wherever you turn, there is the Face of God". So Mullahs and Maulvis do not push anyone away from God, they wake us to the aspects of Divine which compensate for and equilibrate the liberty and infinite mercy preached by Sufis, which if allowed to run its course freely, can usurp the normative order of the world. Human and Muslim well being lies not in positing Mullah and sufi against one another, but to look at them as complimentary and to benefit from the sobriety of Mullah and the intoxication of Sufi, for partialities are always incomplete and the whole includes all opposites in its perfection.

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Aitikaaf

A Sacred Journey Towards Spiritual Refinement and Divine Grace

Aubaid Akhooon

In the serene ambiance of the last ten days of Ramadan, Muslims worldwide immerse themselves in an ancient and deeply spiritual practice known as Aitikaaf. This period of seclusion and intense devotion offers a unique opportunity for believers to strengthen their faith, seek divine forgiveness, and reconnect with their Creator away from the distractions of daily life.

"The one who secludes himself for worship in the mosque during Ramadan with sincere faith and hope for a reward from Allah, all of his previous sins will be forgiven."—Sahih Bukhari

Origins and Significance of Aitikaaf

Aitikaaf is highly recommended, during the last ten days of Ramadan, which are considered the most blessed and spiritually charged days of the month. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) used to observe Aitikaaf every year during the last ten days of Ramadan, and it is recommended for Muslims to follow beloved Prophet's Sunnah (way of life).

Aitikaaf, rooted in the Islamic tradition, finds its significance in both the Quran and Hadith. It is a time-honored spiritual retreat aimed at fostering a closer relationship with Allah through dedicated worship, contemplation, and the recitation of the Quran. This practice exemplifies the profound commitment to faith and the pursuit of spiritual purity.

The Essence of Aitikaaf

At its core, Aitikaaf is more than just physical seclusion; it is a journey of the heart and soul towards divine presence. By withdrawing from the chaos

of worldly engagements, believers embark on a spiritual voyage to purify their hearts, reflect on their lives, and seek the mercy and blessings of Allah. It is an opportunity to transcend earthly desires and attain a state of peace and contentment.

Enhanced Spiritual Connection

Aitikaaf serves as a conduit for deepening one's connection with Allah. In the tranquility of the mosque, away from worldly dis-



tractions, worshippers can engage in sincere supplication, meditate on the meanings of the Quran, and perform additional prayers. This uninterrupted devotion allows for a profound spiritual awakening and reinvigoration of faith.

A Means of Divine Forgiveness

One of the most cherished outcomes of Aitikaaf is the opportunity for forgiveness. The Hadiths promise immense rewards for those who dedicate these days to worship with pure intentions, highlighting that even previous sins can be forgiven. This prospect of spiritual cleansing and renewal underscores the mercy

and compassion of Allah towards His servants.

The Social and Community Aspect of Aitikaaf

While Aitikaaf is a personal journey, it also reinforces the sense of community and brotherhood among Muslims. Observing Aitikaaf together in a mosque creates a powerful sense of unity and shared purpose, as all participants are bound by their common goal of seeking Allah's favor.

kaaf is upheld without causing undue hardship.

A Journey of Spiritual Renewal

Aitikaaf remains a profound spiritual practice that offers Muslims a pathway to divine closeness, introspection, and spiritual growth. It is a testament to the timeless nature of Islamic worship practices and their relevance in guiding the faithful towards moral and spiritual excellence. As we observe

It is a reminder of the Ummah's collective spiritual aspirations and the strength found in unity.

Updated Guidelines and Considerations

In observing Aitikaaf, it is essential to approach with sincerity and adhere to its traditional practices while remaining open to contemporary interpretations that respect the essence of this spiritual retreat. Participants should ensure that their seclusion does not hinder their responsibilities towards their families and communities. It's crucial to maintain a balance, ensuring that the spirit of Aiti-

kaaf, let us embrace the opportunity to renew our faith, purify our hearts, and contribute positively to our communities, holding firm to the rope of Allah.

By embracing the spirit and practice of Aitikaaf, we not only follow in the footsteps of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but also partake in a transformative experience that elevates our spirituality and brings us closer to achieving inner peace and divine favor.

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Shab-e-Qadr: The Night of Decree in Islam



Waris Nissar

Shab-e-Qadr, also known as the Night of Decree or Power, holds immense significance in Islam. It is believed to be the night when the Quran was first revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) by Allah through the Angel Gabriel. This sacred night falls within the last ten days of Ramadan, with particular emphasis on the odd-numbered nights, especially the 27th night. Muslims around the world observe this night with intense devotion, prayer, and seeking forgiveness.

Historical Context

The importance of Shab-e-Qadr is emphasized in the Quran itself, where it is described as "better than a thousand months" (Surah Al-Qadr, 97:3). This indicates the extraordinary value and blessings associated with this night. According to Islamic tradition, the exact date of Shab-e-Qadr was intentionally concealed to encourage believers to seek it earnestly during the last ten nights of Ramadan.

Spiritual Significance

Shab-e-Qadr is a time for Muslims to engage in various acts of worship, seeking spiritual closeness to Allah and seeking forgiveness for past sins. It is believed that during this night, angels descend to the earth, bringing blessings and mercy. Muslims spend the night in prayer, recitation of the Quran, supplication (dua), and reflection. It is considered an opportunity for

believers to purify their hearts and strengthen their connection with Allah.

Observance and Rituals

Muslims observe Shab-e-Qadr with special prayers known as Taraweeh, which are performed in congregation at mosques. Many Muslims also engage in I'tikaf, a spiritual retreat where they seclude themselves in the mosque for the last ten days of Ramadan, focusing solely on worship and contemplation. Additionally, charitable acts and acts of kindness are encouraged during this blessed night.

Seeking Laylat al-Qadr

While the 27th night of Ramadan is commonly associated with Shab-e-Qadr, Islamic tradition holds that it could fall on any of the odd-numbered nights of the last ten days of Ramadan. Therefore, Muslims are encouraged to seek Laylat al-Qadr fervently throughout this period, dedicating themselves to worship and supplication.

Conclusion

Shab-e-Qadr holds immense spiritual significance in Islam, representing a night of divine mercy, forgiveness, and blessings. Muslims around the world observe this sacred occasion with devotion and sincerity, seeking spiritual elevation and closeness to Allah. Through prayers, recitation of the Quran, and acts of charity, believers strive to make the most of this auspicious night, hoping to attain its countless blessings and rewards.

What Is Zakat al-Fitr, the Special Ramadan Zakat?

Zakat Foundation

Zakat al-Fitr, or the Zakat of Breaking the Fast of Ramadan, is the special obligatory alms paid by all Muslims at the end of the Ramadan fasting month.

It is also called Sadaqat al-Fitr, "the Charity of Breaking the Fast" of Ramadan, and Zakat al-Fitrah, the Alms of Human Nature, or the Human Creation, because it is a mandatory charity due on every Muslim at the end of Ramadan, regardless of age or gender.

Its obligatory payment is termed fitrah, derived from the Arabic term fitr, a word which signifies the "nature" upon which God created the human being, related also to the Arabic word for "fast-breaking" (iftar), eating after a period of abstention from this "natural" and defining human activity.

Zakat al-Fitr's Background

Zakat al-Fitr comes into existence as an obligatory alms in Sha'ban, the eighth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, in 2H, or the second year of the Hijrah.

(The Arabic word hijrah (sometimes represented as Hejra or Hira in English) means "migration," or "emigration." It denotes the migration of the Prophet, on him be peace, and his followers away from the persecution of the idolaters of Arabia's central trade and holy city of Makkah. From there, they went north to the agrarian city of Yathrib, which then became known as Al-Madinah Al-Nabi, or the City of the Prophet, shortened to simply The City, or Al-Madinah. The Muslim hijri calendar, or Hijrah year, begins with that migration.)

The obligation to pay the alms of Zakat al-Fitr at Ramadan's end coincides with God's revealed commandment in 2H for Muslims to memorialize the beginning of the Quran's revelation to the Prophet Muhammad, on him be peace, 15 years before. It was revealed in the month of Ramadan, the ninth month in the Islamic lunar year, by reestablishing a primordial worship form, fasting (from dawn to sunset), for the entire month whenever its new crescent appears.

O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it has been prescribed for those who have believed before you, so you may be ever God-fearing. It is for a specified number of days. ... It was the month of Ramadan in which the Quran was first sent down as guidance for all people, having in it clear proofs of divine guidance and the criterion for right and wrong. So whoever among you bears witness to the month shall then fast it. (Surat al-Baqarah, 2:183-85)

Zakat al-Fitr differs from other kinds of alms or charity in that it is imposed on the individual Muslim and not on his or her measures of wealth or earnings.

Is Zakat al-Fitr Obligatory on All Muslims?
Yes. The Prophet, on him be peace, specifically called the Ramadan Fast-Breaking Alms "Zakat," and the Quran says:

And duly establish the Salah-Prayer and give the Zakat-Charity. (Surat al-Baqarah, 2:110 and Surat al-Nisa', 4:77)

The Companions of the Prophet, on him be peace, report: The Messenger of Allah, God bless him and grant him peace, "imposed" the Zakat of Fast-Breaking [at the close of Ramadan] at the measure of one sa' (4 double-handfuls) of dates or one sa' of barley, on every Muslim, free or bondsman, male or female.

The vast majority of scholars recognize this wording as enjoining an "obligatory" alms levy. Similar prophetic reports use other language that directly "commanded" every Muslim to give a required alms payment at the conclusion of Ramadan.

There is a technical difference between the four major schools of Islamic Law only in that Hanafis distinguish the "obligatory" as two categories: an explicit prescription of Revelation that relates to the soundness of one's belief they term fard, obligatory, and non-explicit practical instructions they call wajib, mandatory. So all schools hold Zakat al-Fitr as religiously compulsory, carrying a strength of legal ruling similar to scholarly consensus, or ijma'.
What is the Purpose of Zakat al-Fitr?
Zakat al-Fitr has two primary purposes, one spiritual for the in-

dividual worshiper and the other communal.

The Spiritual Function of Zakat al-Fitr

As a worship form, fasting constitutes, if you will, a "spiritual technology" that God has taught the human being. Its purpose is to help someone unfetter his or her soul for an interim from the worldly appetites that preoccupy it, to free its heavenly nature somewhat from its clay confines so that it may draw itself nearer in consciousness to God. This, as we've just seen, the Quran itself tells us: So that you may be ever God-fearing.

Practically speaking, the Arabic word that "God-fearing" translates is the unique religious term taqwa, meaning, in its essence, to keep mindful of God so that one becomes habituated to doing what He commands and resolute in holding back from what He forbids.

As such, the perfection of fasting, the worship rite, demands of one more than merely depriving his or her body of drink, food and passionate fulfillment. It aims to train the human spirit to master the physical nature that frames it. So fasting also requires us to hold our tongues from unseemly speech (In the past, fasting meant to some no speech at all. See Mary, mother of Jesus, peace on him: Indeed, I have vowed a fast to the All-Merciful. Thus, I shall not speak today to any human being (Surat Maryam, 19:26)); and to keep our hands from bad action; as well as to deny our hearts impure thought.

This is fasting in its purity — an ideal, perhaps, no human being can attain. Zakat al-Fitr, the obligatory alms at the breaking of Ramadan's month-long fast cleanses our fast from the adulterations we have accumulated in the course of observing it.

The Communal Function of Zakat al-Fitr

Ramadan's fast concludes with one of the two great celebrations in the Muslim year, Eid al-Fitr, the Commemoration of Fast-Breaking. On this day of joyful prayer and gathering (may Allah return it to us soon), every Muslim in every locality is to receive it with an obligatory charity, communal Salah-Prayer, and a feast. Zakat al-Fitr infuses the fasting

and believing poor with the food resources to whole-heartedly glorify God, celebrate the Eid Prayer, and share the day's merriment and delight with their children and families. The Prophet, on him be peace, famously said in this regard: "Gratify [the poor] on this day" (Al-Shawkani, Nayl Al-Awtar).

Who Must Pay Zakat al-Fitr?

Every Muslim: A number of the Prophet's Companions, God be pleased with them — particularly some associated with preserving and conveying the statements of the Prophet, on him be peace, like Abu Hurayrah and Ibn Umar — note that Zakat al-Fitr is a universal Muslim obligation. That is, every Muslim is liable for its payment. In the words of Abu Hurayrah, it is due on "every Muslim, free or bondsman, male or female, young or old, poor or rich" (Bukhari).

Married Muslim women: The vast majority of scholars hold that Zakat al-Fitr falls due for every single Muslim, with no exception. The Hanafis (and Zahiris) believe that the individual obligation for its payment includes Muslim women, married or unmarried, from their own wealth. The other legal schools require husbands to pay Zakat al-Fitr on behalf of their Muslim wives. The Hanafi position, here, seems stronger in light of the hadith just cited, but bear in mind that, in the end, the Zakat al-Fitr payment must still be remitted for each individual.

Children: If children possess wealth, Zakat al-Fitr comes due out of their individual holdings, otherwise the child's guardian pays on behalf of his son or daughter. Some scholars say only a father as guardian must pay it for his child, while it is not due on the orphan (in Islam, the fatherless). A few scholars rule that Zakat al-Fitr amounts to only a faster's obligation, as it amends the faster's mistakes or purifies one's fast from moral contaminants.

But the position that the Zakat al-Fitr payment is due for every Muslim, "young or old," is the stronger and more widely held opinion. This does not include the unborn child still in the womb, according to the vast majority

of scholars, though the practice of some of the most prominent Companions, like 'Uthman ibn 'Affan, God be pleased with him, seems to encourage fathers to pay it for their babies unborn.

The poor: Most scholars say each Muslim bears the obligation to pay Zakat al-Fitr, even if they are poor, because the obligation falls on the person and not on a person's wealth, unlike Zakat Al-Mal, the Obligatory Alms of Wealth. The only exemption is for one who does not possess food sufficient for the day of Eid, shelter, clothing and similar essentials. (For a discussion on basic needs see What Requirements Qualify Wealth for Zakat?) Nor does deferred debt exempt one from paying Zakat al-Fitr, unless that debt is due the day of Eid and its payment reduces one to an insufficiency of food for the day and basic needs, as just described.

Can the Payment of Zakat al-Fitr Be an Equivalent Value of Money?

Yes, according to most contemporary scholars. The report from the Companion Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri (and other Companions, God be pleased with them) forms the basis for the amount and kinds of Zakat al-Fitr. "We used to pay Zakat al-Fitr at the end of Ramadan when the Messenger of Allah, God bless him and grant him peace, was among us with one sa' of food, one sa' of dates, one sa' of barley, one sa' of raisins, or one sa' of dried yoghurt. We continued to do this until Mu'awiyah came to us in Madi-nah and said: 'I think two muds of Syrian wheat is equivalent to one sa' of dates.' People accepted this." Most hadith collections add to this that Abu Sa'id then said: "But I continued paying it the same way I used to."

Recall that a sa' is a volume measure equal to four double-handfuls and a mudd is a quarter-sa', one double-handful. Here's a chart of volume measures used at the time of the Prophet, on him be peace.

The point most scholars today make is that this hadith clearly shows value equivalency, as wheat, at the time, was rare in Arabia and deemed of comparatively higher worth. Traditionally, most scholars did

not approve payment of Zakat al-Fitr in money, but either restricted its payment to the food items the Prophet, on him be peace, mentioned, or to food staples common to the Muslims of the region in which it was being paid. But Abu Hanifah, and some other prominent individual scholars, did allow for payment of Zakat al-Fitr in value.

Payment in value is now widely accepted among Muslims, with many Zakat-collecting agencies, like Zakat Foundation of America, converting that currency payment into foodstuffs for distribution at the time of Eid to the destitute, refugees, the displaced and the egregiously poor.

Note that Zakat al-Fitr must be transported to reach the poor, even in other countries, to reach its most desirable recipients on the day of Eid.

Zakat al-Fitr paid in money is simply much more useful today than donations of food items. In addition, most scholars consider the foodstuffs mentioned by the Prophet, on him be peace, to have been common among the community of the time, and, therefore, most beneficial and useful to its poor. Thus, they view these items as exemplary suggestions, establishing the relative value and purpose of Zakat al-Fitr.

In addition, most scholars now establish the value of Zakat al-Fitr as equal to what will "gratify" or "enrich" a poor person in food for the day of Eid based on the cost of a common food staple or type in the place where that poor person lives.

The Hanafi position here, again, has seemed to carry, in that the legal school does not rule as to which type of Zakat al-Fitr is better to give — food items (as expressed in the hadith or analogized based on it) or its value in money. Rather, the Hanafi ruling emphasizes the payment method that proves most beneficial to the poor recipient of the Zakat al-Fitr.
Can the Payment of Zakat al-Fitr Be More than the Minimum?
Yes. In fact, one is encouraged to pay more than the minimum Zakat al-Fitr required, if one is able. "Ali, God be pleased with him, reportedly said that 'when Allah gives you prosperity, you too should give more'" (see Zaid

Al-Ma'ad, also Fiqh az-Zakat, 586).

When Should Zakat al-Fitr Be Paid?
Scholars have traditionally focused the question of Zakat al-Fitr's time for payment on its last allowable time. The Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali say its due time is sunset of Ramadan's last fasting day. The Hanafis and others (including another Maliki position) say before the Eid Salah-Prayer.

Some hold that the best time for payment is early on the day of Eid. Others allow payment a day or two before. Still others say it is obligatory to pay Zakat al-Fitr before the Eid Prayer, based on a statement of the Companion Ibn 'Abbas: "It is accepted as Zakat for one who pays it before the Eid Prayer. It is a charity like other charities for one who pays it after" (Al-Shawkani, Nayl Al-Awtar).

Al-Shafi'i says Zakat al-Fitr can be paid anytime in Ramadan. Abu Hanifah rules it can even be paid at the beginning of the year, like Zakat al-Mal, Obligatory Alms on Wealth. All scholars deem it sinful to delay its payment until after Eid day.

Abu Sa'id, God be pleased with him, said: "We used to pay, during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah, God bless him and grant him peace, on the day of fast-breaking" (meaning the day of Eid, without specifying any time marks, like the Eid Prayer or sunrise).

The point of these late-date payments is to ensure the happiness and distribution to the poor on Eid day, for their gratification, in compliance with the Prophet's instruction, on him be peace.

In our current context, distribution of Zakat al-Fitr to its intended recipients, the poor, for its intended social reason — to "gratify" them on Eid day — becomes much easier to manage when it is paid early in Ramadan. Alhamdulillah, the latitude for this option in the unparalleled enlightenment of Islam's multiple schools of Law seems now a mercy and a sign.

Who Can Receive Zakat al-Fitr?
All Muslim scholars agree that poor Muslims are legitimate recipients of Zakat al-Fitr (Ibn Rushd, Bidayat Al-Mujtahid).

The article was originally published by Zakat Foundation America

Amit Shah Hits Out At Congress Chief Over His Remark On J&K In Rajasthan

KO Web Desk

NEW DELHI: Union home minister Amit Shah on Saturday hit out at Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge over his remark on Jammu and Kashmir at a rally in Jaipur.

"It is shameful to hear that the Congress party is asking, 'Kashmir se kya waasta hai (What is the relation with Kashmir)?' I would like to remind the Congress party that J&K is an integral part of India, and every state and citizen has the right over J&K, just as the people of J&K have the right over the rest of India," Shah said in a post on social platform X.

"The Congress doesn't know that many brave sons of Rajasthan have sacrificed their lives for peace and security in Kashmir. But it is not merely the fault of the Congress leaders. It is mostly the Italian culture of the Congress party that is to blame for not



understanding the very idea of India. Such statements hurt every patriotic citizen who cares for the unity and integrity of the nation. People will certainly answer Congress," he had said.

On Saturday, Kharge had hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for mentioning Article 370 abrogation in Rajasthan's Churu.

"Yesterday PM Modi addressed a rally in Rajasthan's

Churu. There are a lot of issues related to the farmers. The farmers are suffering and thousands of them have died by suicide. Instead of speaking about their issues, PM said he removed 371. What do the people here have to do with it?" Kharge said.

"You go to Jammu and Kashmir and say about Article 370 abrogation. But here, tell us what you did for the farmers?" the Congress president

added.

Shah further said, "And for the kind information of the Congress, it was not Article 371, but Article 370, that was abrogated by the Modi government. However, it is only expected of Congress to make such horrendous mistakes. Such blunders made by it have haunted our nation for decades now."

The Congress held a rally day after unveiling its manifesto for the Lok Sabha elections. Prime Minister Modi hit out at the Congress poll promises, dubbing it an 'imprint of Muslim League'.

"Every page reeks of breaking India into pieces. The Congress manifesto reflects the same thinking that was prevalent in the Muslim League during the freedom movement. 'It completely bears the imprint of the Muslim League and whatever is remaining is completely dominated by the Leftists,' Modi said.

Multiple Births In First Delivery

Children Education Allowance To Cover All: J&K Admin

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The J&K administration has clarified that in the event of multiple births more than two in the first childbirth, reimbursement of Children Education Allowance may be allowed for all children born in the first childbirth.

The explanation was provided after the references were received seeking clarification regarding the admissibility of Children Education Allowance in case of multiple births in the first childbirth event.

The Finance Department in a notification provided clarification

regarding Grant of Children Education Allowance (CEA) and Hostel Subsidy to the Employees of Union Territory of J&K.

"Sanction has been accorded to the grant of Children Education Allowance and Hostel Subsidy in favour of Employees of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, at par with the Central Government Employees," it reads.

"The reimbursement of Children Education Allowance/ Hostel subsidy can be claimed only for the two eldest surviving children with the exception in case the second child birth results in twins/multiple birth."

In case of failure of sterilization operation, the CEA/Hostel Subsidy would be admissible in respect of children born out of the first instance of such failure beyond the usual two children norm".

References have been received seeking clarification regarding the admissibility of Children Education Allowance in case of multiple births in the first childbirth event, it added.

"Multiple Birth in first child birth' is out of human control, accordingly, in case of multiple births (more than 02) in first birth, reimbursement of CEA may be allowed for all children born in first childbirth," it said.

CEO J&K Assures Smooth Election Readiness

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Jammu and Kashmir, P.K. Pole, has reassured that election preparedness is progressing smoothly according to the schedule.

Non-Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) materials are currently being dispatched to their respective locations, and kits are being assembled in preparation

for the upcoming elections.

Also, arrangements have been made to provide postal ballots for voters with disabilities exceeding 40%.

Emphasizing the adherence to the established timeline, Pole affirmed that the distribution of Non-EVM materials to their designated destinations is underway, ensuring that all necessary resources are in place for a successful electoral process.

Furthermore, as part of the meticulous planning, election officials are diligently assembling kits essential for the smooth conduct of the elections.

These kits are being tailored to meet the specific requirements of polling stations and election personnel, aiming to streamline operations and enhance efficiency during the voting process, he added.

JAMMU LOK SABHA SEAT

Nomination Of 3 Candidates Rejected, 23 Found Valid

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The nomination of three candidates were rejected during scrutiny of papers for Jammu Lok Sabha constituency on Saturday, leaving 23 candidates in the fray, officials said.

The Lok Sabha polls in Jammu constituency will be held in the second phase of elections on April 26.

Returning Officer for Jammu parliamentary constituency Sachin Kumar Vaishya, conducted the scrutiny of nomination papers submitted by the candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, they said.

After thorough scrutiny, the nomination forms of 23 candidates were found valid, while the candidature of three candidates, two covering candidates - Chanranjeet Chargoita (BSP) and Indra Bhalla (Congress)

- and Independent Ravinder Singh, were rejected as per norms, the officials said.

A covering candidate is fielded as a back up by parties in case the main nominee's papers get rejected by the returning officer.

Among the 23 candidates, BJP's incumbent MP Jugal Kishore and Raman Bhalla of Congress are engaged in a direct fight. Kishore is looking for a hat-trick of wins after he successfully retained the Jammu Lok Sabha seat in the 2014 and 2019 polls.

Jagdish Raj of Bahujan Samaj Party and Ankur Sharma of Ekam Sanatan Bharat Dal are the other prominent candidates from the seat.

As per the issued election notification, the candidates can withdraw their nomination before 3 pm on April 8 in the office of the returning officer.

Committed To Restore Statehood, Hold Assembly Polls In J&K: CPI(M) Manifesto

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The CPI(M) has released its manifesto for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections 2024, promising to restore statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and holding assembly elections immediately in the Union Territory.

The CPI(M) said that it is the bounden duty of every patriot to first and foremost ensure the defeat of the BJP and its allies. The CPI(M) pledges to do everything in its capacity to strengthen this collective duty and to help the establishment of a secular government at the centre. For this, and to ensure pro-people policies, a stronger presence of the CPI(M) in Parliament is essential.

The CPI(M) pledges to fight for an uncompromising adherence to the principle that religion is separated from politics, the State, the government and administration. It will fight for a law against hate speech and crimes. It is committed to scrapping the CAA.

The CPI(M) stands for the scrapping of all draconian laws like UAPA and PMLA; for steps to protect and strengthen the autonomy of independent institutions, for defence of the democratic rights of the people.

The CPI(M) is committed to policies to protect India's economic sovereignty. It holds that privatization of the public sector must be revisited and reversed. A tax on the super-rich along with a general wealth tax and an inheritance tax must be legislated, workers' rights reflected in pro-worker laws must replace the labour codes; food security depends on ensuring security of the farmers of India though a legal guarantee of MSP according to the Swaminathan Commission recommendations.



The CPI(M) stands for the inclusion of the Right to Work as a constitutional right. The vacancies in government and public sector posts must be filled urgently. Strengthen and expand MSMEs which can generate jobs. The budgetary allocations for MGNREGA must be doubled; a new law guaranteeing urban employment must be legislated and an unemployment allowance must be provided. The deconstruction of India's demographic dividend must be reversed through a change in current policies of job loss growth.

Strengthen the Universal Right to Education, Stop Privatization of Higher Education. The CPI(M) stands for an increase to at least 6 per cent of GDP in budgetary allocations for education; It stands for a reversal of the policies of commercialization, communalization and centralization

The CPI(M) stands for the restoration of the constitutional rights of the states which have been severely diluted by the Modi government. The CPI(M) stands for devolution of 50 per cent of the total collection of Central taxes to the states, including share of surcharges and cesses levied by Centre.

It stands for a Governor to be chosen out of a panel of three eminent persons proposed by the Chief Minister; for an end to policies which promote centralization at the expense of the states.

The CPI(M) stands for a law for reservations in the private

sector and for immediate filling of vacancies in reserved posts without dilution; for protection of constitutional and legal rights of adivasis and an end to cultural assimilation.

In order to acquire proper data on the OBCs in the country it is necessary to conduct a caste census along with the 2021 general census that is overdue. It stands for the immediate implementation of one-third reservations for women; for strengthening processes of justice for women victims of crimes.

The CPI(M) stands for urgent electoral reforms to curb the use of money power in the electoral system. For this, the Party wants State funding of elections and a ban on corporate donations to political parties. Corporates must fund to strengthen democracy and such contributions must be credited in a State electoral fund and used for State funding.

The CPI(M)'s continuing commitment to the autonomous status granted by Sec 370 of J&K is reflected in its using every fora to defend the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The CPI(M) stands for immediate elections to the State Assembly and also for the restoration of full statehood as a first step.

The CPI(M) stands for a non-aligned foreign policy which best serves the interests of our own country. It stands for good relations with our neighbours while defending every aspect of our country's security.

Given the grievously deteriorating living conditions of the people the current policy direction of crony capitalism and the communal-corporate nexus must be reversed.

The alternative policies that the CPI(M) is placing before the people is detailed in the Part II of the Manifesto.

Advocating Statehood, Raising People's Issues DPAP's Agenda: Azad

Press Trust of India

JAMMU: Advocating restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and raising people's issues, including land and job rights, are the agenda of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party, its chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad said on Saturday.

Addressing a public meeting in the Hiranagar area of Kathua in the Udhampur parliamentary constituency, from where senior leader G M Saroori is seeking election, the former J&K chief minister appealed to voters to carefully consider candidates who are committed to representing public interests in the Parliament.

"A strong presence in the Parliament is essential to advocate for the interests of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The people should unite and support DPAP's efforts to secure statehood and protect their rights," he said.

Azad, who himself is fighting the Lok Sabha elections from Anantnag-Rajouri seat, highlighted his record of raising ma-

nor issues in the Parliament as the leader of opposition during his long association with the Congress, contrasting it with the "silence of the members of Parliament from other parties (from J&K)."

"The other MPs have failed. What do you expect from them? If you need public issues to be raised, you should vote for our party, whose symbol is a bucket," he said referring to the role of the National Conference MPs, including its president Farooq Abdullah, after the abrogation of Article 370 and bifurcation of J&K into two Union Territories in August 2019.

He reiterated his stance against the revocation of statehood and his efforts to safeguard land and job rights in the region.

"We must reclaim our statehood and fight for our land and job rights in the Parliament. My sole purpose is to serve my people and that is why I have returned to my state," Azad, who resigned from the Congress and formed his own party in September 2022, said.

Army Opens Fire After Noticing Suspicious Movement In J-K's Rajouri

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Army troops opened fire and subsequently launched a search operation after noticing suspicious movement near their camp in a village in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district early Saturday, officials said.

There was no report of any casualty in the firing at the Srotha Morha village in the Darhal area, the officials said.

They said a sentry fired a few rounds on seeing the move-

ment of a group of unidentified persons towards the camp under the cover of darkness.

The group retreated into the nearby village, following which a search operation was launched, the officials said, adding the operation was going on when last reports were received but there was no clue of the suspected persons.

The officials said security forces also carried out a search operation in the Sharda Sharief area of Rajouri on Saturday morning but no one was arrested.

BJP Workers Ensured Agenda Of Pak, China Does Not Succeed In J&K: Chugh

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The BJP workers have worked tirelessly to ensure the agenda of Pakistan and China does not succeed in Jammu and Kashmir, party general secretary Tarun Chugh on Saturday said.

Presiding over the BJP's 44th foundation day, Chugh said the list of workers who made the supreme sacrifice is very long from T L Tiploo in 1990s to Waseem Bari last year.

"S P Mookherjee made the sacrifice in this land so that people of Jammu and Kashmir get more rights and also libera-



tion from Article 370 and 35A," Chugh told reporters here.

"I pay tributes to the large number of party workers who worked selflessly for the BJP over the past several decades," he added. The BJP on the occasion paid tributes to its workers and leaders from Kashmir who laid down their lives for the country's unity and integrity.

Shrine Board Inks Pact To Set Up Health ATMs On Vaishno Devi Temple Track

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) has inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the installation of nine cloud-enabled health ATMs along the pilgrimage track in the Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir, an official said on Saturday.

The shrine board inked the pact with Hewlett Packard Enterprise for health ATMs and one Telemedicine Studio at Katra, the base camp for the pilgrims visiting the shrine, the official said.

He said the move is part of the board's commitment to providing good and easily accessible health care services to the pilgrims.

"This initiative is being undertaken by the Shrine Board as per

the directions of (Lt Governor) Manoj Sinha who is also its chairman, in collaboration with HPE as part of its CSR to enhance Health Care accessibility for the pilgrims, stakeholders, besides, local inhabitants on the yatra track round the clock," the official said.

In addition, he said the installation of one telemedicine Studio at Katra shall bridge the gap and enhance patient outcomes by enabling seamless virtual consultations between pilgrims and Health Care providers through high definition video conferencing regarding level of geographic barriers.

The health ATMs can instantly check 50 plus parameters within 10 minutes which include blood pressure (BP), sugar, body temperature, oxygen level, BMI, body fat index, dehydration and pulse rate.

POOR MAINTENANCE OF POLICE RECORDS

DIG Orders Action Against 3 Cops In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Authorities on Friday issued a show-cause notice to a sub divisional police officer, ordered an inquiry against a station house officer and recommended the suspension of a head constable for not maintaining police records, officials said on Friday.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Jammu-Samba range, Dr Sunil Gupta paid a surprise visit to the police station in Janipur, inspected the record room and 'mal-khana', they said. On checking, most registers were not found to be maintained properly, an official said.

A show-cause notice is being issued against SDPO, Bakshi Nagar on the directions by the DIG, a departmental enquiry is ordered against SHO, Janipur for his poor supervision, and a head constable of Janipur Police Station is recommended for suspension, the official said.

During the inspection, the DIG stressed upon the SDPO and SHO, other staff to maintain extra vigil in their area due to the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. He also directed the SDPO and SHO to redress public grievances in a time-bound manner.

Two Booked Under PSA In Baramulla

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Saturday booked two persons under Public Safety Act in North Kashmir's Baramulla district.

"Acting tough against ANEs Baramulla Police booked two persons namely Abdul Rashid Sheikh son of Ali Mohd resident of Lalpora Kharkhal Kunzer & Mohd Akbar Malik son of Abdul Gani resident of Lalpora Wanikhal Kunzer under Public Safety Act after obtaining formal detention orders from the competent Authority," said a statement.

"The booked persons have been detained and subsequently lodged in District Jail Udhampur."

"Pertinent to mention that many cases are registered against these persons and were involved in disturbance of L&O and subversion. Despite their involvement in many FIRs, they did not mend their anti-national & Social activities," the statement reads further.

Around 400 Posts Lying Vacant At GMC Kathua

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Approximately 400 positions, including gazetted and non-gazetted roles, remain vacant at Government Medical College (GMC) Kathua.

According to information obtained by the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO), in the past five years, GMC Kathua has conducted over 40,000 surgeries, with approximately 1800 reported deaths. These statistics were revealed through a Right to Information (RTI) filing by RTI activist MM Shuja.

Among the 267 gazetted positions sanctioned for GMC Kathua, 154 are currently filled, leaving 113 vacant. Similarly, out of the 433 non-gazetted positions sanctioned, 206 are occupied

while 227 remain unfilled.

Out of the 116 Class IV positions, 78 are filled, and 38 remain vacant. Overall, out of the total 816 sanctioned positions, 438 are occupied, and 378 are vacant.

Over the past five years, the hospital has recorded a total of 1791 deaths, with the following breakdown: 47 in 2019-20, 256 in 2020-21, 577 in 2021-22, 529 in 2022-23, and 382 in 2023-24. Notably, approximately 80% of in-patient cases were covered under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme.

Meanwhile, the hospital has performed 16,003 major surgeries over the past five years. These include 2,768 in 2019-20, 3,272 in 2020-21, 3,661 in 2021-22, 3,426 in 2022-23, and 2,876 in 2023-24.

Chennai's Shivam Dube In The Reckoning For India's T20 World Cup

Agencies

CHENNAI: India appears spoilt for choices in their batting lineup ahead of the T20 World Cup in June with Shivam Dube emerging as the latest candidate for a place in the crowded middle order with his consistency in the Indian Premier League (IPL). The Chennai Super King player's tally of 148 runs from four matches places him among the top 10 batters this season, and only two other players in that group boast a better strike rate than Dube's 160.86.

All-rounder Hardik Pandya, wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant, and death-overs hitter Rinku Singh will fancy their places in India's middle order at the World Cup but Dube's name is also doing the rounds for the showpiece in West Indies and the U.S.

"I would select him if I were



a selector," former India all-rounder Irfan Pathan told Star Sports after Dube's 45 off 24 balls against Sunrisers Hyderabad on Friday night.

"We have seen this in this IPL and the previous season as well. We have seen him against



quality wrist spinners, against finger spinners," said Pathan, who was part of India's T20 World Cup-winning team in

2007. "When you have a batter like that, why won't you take advantage of that?"

Conditions in the West Indies are expected to suit spinners, and Pathan said Dube's proven skills as a finisher would come in handy. Dube is not equally dominating against pace but he could prove effective in the slow pitches in the Caribbean, Pathan said.

Former Australia opener Matthew Hayden was also impressed by Dube's consistency. "Generally, power-hitters who love to hit the ball in these sort of ranges, they can dominate in the Caribbean. So that's an exciting prospect," Hayden told the channel.

"I think it's an interesting call...and he's not doing it this season, he has done it last year as well. He has done it for a very long period. Last year also, he was top class."

Real Kashmir Stunned By Bottom-Ranked TRAU In I-League

Agencies

KOLKATA: Striker Robinson Singh's decisive header deep into injury time helped TRAU FC clinch a shock 2-1 victory over Real Kashmir FC in an I-League 2023-24 match at the Kalyani Municipality Stadium, West Bengal, on Saturday. All the goals came in the second half.

TRAU FC's Danish Aribam opened the scoring in the 56th minute. However, the Snow Leopards quickly responded, as Carlos Lomba (59') found the equaliser three minutes later. It was Robinson Singh (90+9'), who sealed the match in favour of the Red Pythons with an opportunistic header after goalkeeper Shivam Pednekar fumbled to collect the ball.

TRAU FC, who have already been relegated, slightly improved their position with the three points from this match. They now have 13 points from 22 matches. This was their fourth win of the season and the first after a gap of five matches.

On the other hand, the defeat was a



setback for Real Kashmir FC, as it ended their impressive nine-match unbeaten streak. At the same time, the defeat also dented their aspirations to finish runners-up. Currently, they maintain their position in third place with 40 points from 23 matches. They now have 11 wins, seven draws, and five losses against their name. The Srinagar side have a lot to blame themselves as they missed a penalty when the scoreline was 1-1.

Faltering MI, DC Desperate To Arrest IPL Slide

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: A fit-again Suryakumar Yadav will be expected to immediately deliver the goods when faltering Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals lock horns in a bid to arrest their slide in their Indian Premier League clash here on Sunday.

With three losses in a row, MI are languishing at the bottom whereas Delhi Capitals

has notched up a big score yet. The same can be said about the other Indian batters such as Tilak Varma and Naman Dhir, who, irrespective of how appealing they have looked in the middle, are yet to deliver a match-winning performance.

Even the embattled captain Hardik Pandya has not been able to inspire his side. However, for someone who has been subjected to brutal reaction from fans inside the

found consistency with two consecutive fifties but he needs support from the others.

Enduring the worst outing so far with the ball wherein DC bowlers kept erring with the line and lengths to allow Kolkata Knight Riders pile up a humongous 272/7, the Pant-led side was short of spunk in reply with the bat to be bowled out for 166.

David Warner (148 runs)



have spiralled down to the ninth spot in the 10-team points table following a 106-run hammering in their last match.

If MI have once again made a characteristic start of falling into a hole with a string of defeats, the misfiring Delhi Capitals have had a similar fate suffering three losses from four outings and are under pressure to bounce back.

At the top, both Rohit Sharma and Ishan Kishan have looked promising but neither

stadiums so far, there could be some respite as the contest on Sunday afternoon will be attended by more than 20,000 children.

Akash Madhwal's three-for in their last match was the only positive from the bowling front, wherein MI changed the way they used Jasprit Bumrah by giving him three overs in the powerplay but did not have enough runs to challenge Rajasthan Royals.

For DC, comeback star Rishabh Pant (152 runs) has

and Tristan Stubbs have been marginally better than the other batters but Delhi will hope get the more out of swashbuckling Prithvi Shaw, for whom the Wankhede Stadium is a homeground.

Mitchell Marsh has featured in each of Delhi's four matches so far but the burly Australian has not been able to impose himself on the opposition. Like a few others in his camp, Marsh too will be desperate to get a big score under the belt.

KIC Shopian Trainees Shine In Wushu Championships

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Trainees of Khelo India Wushu Centre Shopian have shined in the 23rd Sub Junior Wushu Nationals and Khelo India Wushu Women's League.

Four players of Khelo India Wushu Centre Shopian bagged three medals in the 23rd Sub Junior Wushu Nationals and one in Khelo India Wushu Women's League.

In the 23rd Sub Junior Wushu Nationals, Sana Sheeraz bagged a



gold medal while Musab and Ahsan Ul Haq bagged Bronze medals.

In Khelo India Wushu Women's League, Hurrain Iqbal bagged a silver medal.

De Bruyne Sparks Man City's 4-2 Win Over Crystal Palace

Agencies

LONDON: A stunning strike by Kevin De Bruyne elicited kisses from the sideline from Pep Guardiola and launched title-chasing Manchester City's comeback in a 4-2 win at Crystal Palace in the Premier League on Saturday.

City's four-month unbeaten streak in all competitions was placed in jeopardy almost immediately after kick-off at Selhurst Park when Jean-Philippe Mateta gave Palace a third-minute lead with a goal on a breakaway.

In the end, there was nothing for City to worry about.

De Bruyne equalized 10 minutes later and it was one for the season highlight reel as the Belgium playmaker cut inside from the left and curled a right-footed shot from the corner of the area into the top corner of the net.

The excitable Guardiola responded by placing his fingers on his lips and blowing kisses to De



Bruyne. And, the manager also enjoyed a strike by Rico Lewis two minutes into the second half that put City in front for the first time.

Erling Haaland scored for the first time in four City matches by tapping in De Bruyne's cross in the

66th for his league-leading 19th goal of the campaign.

De Bruyne sealed City's impressive recovery in the 70th by ramming home a left-footed shot off Rodri's layoff for his second, before substitute Odsonne Edouard grabbed a consolation for Palace.

City joined first-place Liverpool on 70 points ahead of the Reds' match at fierce rival Manchester United on Sunday. Third-place Arsenal, which plays Brighton later on Saturday, is two points back.

Pulisic Has Best Scoring Season, Puts Milan On Path To Win

Agencies

MILAN: United States standout Christian Pulisic reached double figures in goals for the first time in a league season after his sublime strike set AC Milan on the way to a 3-0 win over 10-man Lecce in Serie A on Saturday.

Pulisic's early goal and 10th in the Italian league surpassed his previous best of nine in the 2019-20 English Premier League for Chelsea. The winger also has three goals in Europe and has already bettered his overall scoring record.

Olivier Giroud and Rafael Leão also scored against Lecce, having played the entire second half with 10 men after forward Nikola Krstovic was sent off.

Milan could even afford to ring the changes in the second half with Thursday's Europa League quarter-final against Roma in mind. Roma was playing Lazio in the capital derby later Saturday.

Second-placed Milan trimmed the gap to run-



away Serie A leader Inter Milan to 11 points ahead of the Nerazzurri's match at Udinese on Monday. Lecce remained four points above the drop zone.

On a warm and sunny day at San Siro, Samuel Chukwueze did well to cut

inside from the right and beat two defenders before finding Pulisic on the edge of the area. The American controlled the ball and unleashed an unstoppable left-footed strike.

That was with less than six minutes on the clock.

Pulisic almost doubled his tally immediately, but Lecce goalkeeper Wladimir Falcone parried the header from point-blank range.

Milan got the second in the 20th when Giroud headed in at the near post.

Short TAKES

Virat Kohli Slams Ton As RCB Make 183 Against RR



Virat Kohli slammed a record-extending eighth IPL century as Royal Challengers Bengaluru posted a total of 183 for 3 against Rajasthan Royals in an IPL 2024 game on Saturday in Jaipur.

Kohli achieved a historic feat as he became the first-ever batter in IPL history to reach the milestone of 7500 runs. He also surpassed Dhoni in the list of players with most IPL sixes.

RR was yet to play when this report was filed.

Mohammedan SC Crowned I-League Champions, Promoted To ISL

Century plus old Mohammedan Sporting Club on Saturday clinched their maiden I-League title after they beat Shillong Lajong FC 2-1 in their penultimate match here, a result which also promoted them to the top-tier Indian Super League.

Alexis Gomes put Mohammedan Sporting in the front in the first minute of the game itself before the home side's Douglas Tardin restored parity in the 15th minute. Evgeni Kozlov scored the decisive goal for Mohammedan Sporting in the 62nd minute.

Australia Rout Indian Men's Hockey Team 5-1 In First Test

The Indian men's hockey team was expected to put up at least a decent fight but was hammered 1-5 by Australia in the first Test of the five-match series here on Saturday.

The Australians controlled the tempo of the match from start to finish.

The Indian team showed some sparks in the final quarter but it was too late by then.

Verstappen Takes Pole At Japan GP For Third Year In A Row

Formula One world champion Max Verstappen took pole position for a third straight year at the Japanese Grand Prix on Saturday, with Sergio Perez qualifying a close second to ensure a Red Bull front-row lockout.

Verstappen set the pace with a lap of one minute 28.197 seconds - 0.066 seconds clear of Perez - becoming the first driver to take pole in the opening four races of a season since Lewis Hamilton nine years ago.

Liverpool Face Manchester United Title Test Today

Premier League leaders Liverpool head to Manchester United on Sunday looking to move a step closer to equalling their bitter rivals' record of 20 English titles.

In a gripping title race, Arsenal and Manchester City will hope for a Liverpool stumble, while the top four battle and relegation survival fight are also heating up.

Memories of their painful FA Cup quarter-final defeat at Manchester United still fresh, blowing the lead in a 4-3 defeat.