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Sachin Tendulkar
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LOK SABHA ELECTION 2024

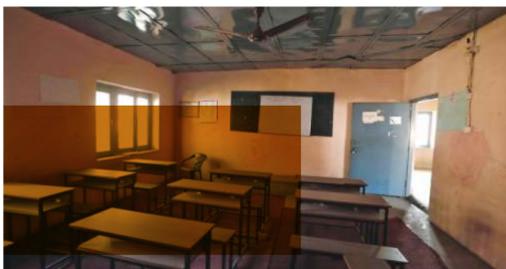


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EMPTY DESKS IN J&K

Over 800 Govt Schools Report Zero Enrollment



Agencies

Srinagar: In Jammu and Kashmir, hundreds of government-run schools are with zero student enrolments. Besides, the majority of the institutions have less than 50 student enrolments.

Moreover, the official documents and latest figures state that more than 18 percent of government schools at elementary level here have an adverse Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR).

The officials from Jammu and Kashmir in 2023 had said that the count of overall public schools had reduced by nearly 19 percent owing to the 'zero or low enrolment of students in government schools'.

However, the Ministry of Education (MoE) in the latest figures regarding the school size and single teacher schools in Jammu and Kashmir has said that, "Out of the total 23,173 schools in the UT, there are 848 schools with zero enrolment."

It also said, "16,179 schools are with less than 50 enrolments. Further, there are 2413 single teacher schools in the UT."

"In addition, the number of schools with adverse PTR at the elementary level is 18.43

- Total Schools - 23,173
- Schools with Zero Enrolment - 848
- Schools with <50 Enrolments - 16,179
- Single Teacher Schools - 2,413
- Schools with Adverse PTR - 18.43%
- Reduction in Public Schools - Nearly 19%
- Identified Low Enrolment Schools - More than 1,200

percent," it reads.

Pertinently, in 2023, it was reported that the count of overall public schools in Jammu and Kashmir have reduced by nearly 19 percent owing to the 'zero or low enrolment of students in government schools'.

The officials of the department had said that it had some government schools wherein the student enrolment was very low or even some with less than five. "We had merged them with the nearby government schools."

It also said that such schools were being reflected on UDISE as separate schools. "Earlier we used to have 23,117 government schools as per UDISE but in the updated database, we have only 18,820 schools," an official said.

The concerned official at that time had also said, "We had nearly 4300 government schools wherein the student enrolment was 1

MUFTI'S LONE BATTLE

Mehbooba Relies On Roadshows In Attempt To Regain Lost Ground



Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: The defeat in 2019 Lok Sabha polls from her party's south Kashmir stronghold — less than a year after heading a coalition government with the BJP in Jammu and Kashmir

— had led to questions about PDP president Mehbooba Mufti's political future, but five years down the line she is again on a campaign trail seeking election to the Parliament from the newly-carved out

Mehbooba's Assets Drop By 13.34 Lakh In 5 years

Former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, contesting from the Rajouri-Anantnag seat in Jammu and Kashmir, has disclosed her financial status in her affidavit. As per her declaration, Mufti's assets have undergone a significant change over the past five years. In 2019, she had declared assets totaling Rs 89.03 lakh, but in her current affidavit, she has disclosed assets worth Rs 75.69 lakh. This reflects a decrease of approximately Rs 13.34 lakh in her assets during this period. As per the

PDP Has Become BJP's C-team: Omar

The PDP has become the BJP's C-team and people should only look towards INDIA bloc candidates in the Lok Sabha elections to defeat the communal forces, National Conference leader Omar Abdullah said on Tuesday. Abdullah made the remarks while speaking to reporters after an election rally in south Kashmir's Kokernag. He said, "We have said from the start. If we have to defeat the BJP in Jammu and Kashmir, if we have to defeat the communal forces trying to spread

NC Working At BJP's Behest To Polarise Voters: Lone



Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: People's Conference president Sajad Gani Lone on Tuesday accused National Conference (NC) leaders Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah of working at the behest of the BJP to polarise voters along religious lines.

"The BJP has run out of polarisation issues... Remember Bihar elections, the BJP was falling weak. Farooq sahib gave a statement that people here are with China. It led to a huge uproar, the elections were over and he has not spoken about China even once.

"I can tell you with authority that even today, they have been tasked to carry out polarisation," Lone told reporters here.

The separatist-turned-mainstream politician was reacting to a statement of National Conference president Farooq Abdullah in which he said, "I want to

BJP Leader Urges Pahari To Vote For Mehbooba

In a fresh development, former minister and senior BJP leader, Syed Mushtaq Bukhari on Tuesday urged members of Pahari community to vote for Mehbooba Mufti in the ongoing Lok Sabha election. The Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary seat is going for polls on May 7 and PDP President Mehbooba Mufti is among several political leaders who are fighting elections from there. "We are very thankful to BJP for granting reservation to Pahari's. The Narendra Modi led government shaped our future and our 30 years of struggle

Man Shot Dead In Rajouri Terror Attack Laid To Rest



Agencies

Jammu: Muhammad Razaq, a victim of terror attack in Kunda village of Shadra Sharief area of Rajouri district, was laid to rest in the local graveyard in which hundreds of people from all over the area participated.

He was given a tearful adieu by the family, relatives and people of the area. The funeral prayers were held at 2.30 pm in Kunda village in which hundreds

of the people participated. After the prayers, Razaq's body was laid to rest in the native graveyard where his father was buried.

His father Muhammad Akber was also a victim of terrorism as his throat was slit by the terrorists in the year 2003. Razaq was appointed in the social welfare department on compassionate grounds after his father's killing and was working as a junior assistant in the

JKP Announces 10 Lakh Reward For Tip-off On Attacker

J&K Police on Tuesday announced a reward of Rs 10 lakh for any information leading to the identification and capture of the terrorist identified involved in the heinous killing of a man in Rajouri district on Monday. The reward has been

Search Operation For Terrorists Intensified

Search operation has been intensified in the Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir to track down the terrorists involved in the killing of a man belonging to the Gujjar community, officials said on Tuesday. The incident occurred on Monday

5 More Candidates File Nominations in Sgr

Agencies

Srinagar: As the process for filing of Nominations by the contesting candidates for the General Lok Sabha Elections-2024 is going on, five more candidates filed nomination papers from 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency in the Office of Returning Officer (RO) 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency here on Tuesday.

The candidates, including Mirza Sajad Hussain Beigh, Jibrin Dar, Shahnaz Hussain Bhat and Shamim Ahmad Parry filed their

nomination papers as independent candidates.

Similarly, Younis Ahmad Mir also submitted his nomination papers today before the Returning Officer (RO) as a candidate of Bharat Jodo Party for the Srinagar Constituency.

The last date for filing of nomination papers in 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency is April 25, 2024 (Thursday) from 11:00 am to 03:00 pm. The Scrutiny of the nomination papers filed by the Candidates will take place on April, 26, 2024 (Friday).

The candidates have the option to withdraw their candidature by or before April 29, 2024 (Monday) until 03:00 pm.

Mughal Road Reopens Partially

Agencies

Srinagar: Ten days after being closed by authorities "till further orders" following fresh snowfall, Mughal Road, connecting Kashmir Valley's Shopian district with twin districts of Rajouri and Poonch, has been thrown open for traffic partially, officials said on Tuesday.

They said that the thoroughfare was opened after clearance of fresh snowfall at several

places along the road including 'Pir Ki Gali.' DTI Mughal Road Kapil Manhas as per news agency GNS said that the road has been opened partially for "emergency purposes."

Meanwhile, traffic on Jammu-Srinagar highway, the only surface link connecting Kashmir Valley with the outside world, is plying from both sides, officials said. Also, one-way traffic is plying on SSG road from Srinagar towards Kargil, they

Girl's Death Due To Falling Tree In 2012

HC Rejects Families Compensation Plea

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh dismissed the plea of a family from Pattan, Baramulla seeking Rs 30 lakh compensation along with 18% interest for the death of their 18-year-old daughter who died after a poplar tree fell on her during a wind-storm in 2012. The HC stated that the poplar trees growing on the roadside are not hazardous and the falling of the tree was due to an act of God (natural calamity) and not due to negligence on the part of the Public Works Department (PWD).

"The trees growing on roadside are not in 'non natural use



of the land or a hazardous activity' to attract the principle of strict liability," the High Court held.

In its plea, the family from Pattan in Baramulla district had submitted that their 18-year-old daughter was walking on the road on 20 March, 2012 when, due to heavy winds, a poplar tree fell on her and injured her critically along with some other

persons. She was shifted to hospital (SKIMS) by the relatives but succumbed to words three days later, they said.

They had submitted that the Public Works Department (PWD) failed in maintaining the trees, which were old and also in a half-broken condition. They claimed that due to "negligence and carelessness", the rule of "Strict Liability", which envisages that many activities which are hazardous and may constitute a constant danger to person and property of others may be allowed to be carried on but subject to the safety measures, is attracted.

The family's

Govt Reveals 140 Cr Action Plan To Clean Doodh Ganga

NGT Warns Of Imposing Environmental Compensation For Continuous Violation

Auqib Javed

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir government has finally developed a detailed project worth 140 crore to clean the Doodh Ganga river, a major tributary of the Jhelum in Srinagar. The Doodh Ganga serves as a crucial source of drinking water for Srinagar and Budgam.

The project, outlined in a status report submitted to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) by the Housing and

Urban Department of J&K, will be taken-up in a phased manner and is expected to be completed by 2025.

According to the report, the action plan for the implementation of sewage projects has been taken and the tenders will be floated on 30 April 2024.

However, the tribunal, in an order dated April 3, 2024 said, in that action plan, the capacity of STP, number of household connections to the STP and the

Congress Cradled Art 370 Like A Baby For 70 Yrs: Shah



Agencies

Maharashtra: In an unsparing attack on the Congress over its alleged handling of the Jammu and Kashmir issue and not settling it decisively during its decades in power at the Centre, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said the grand old party held on to Article 370 and "cradled" it like a baby on a mother's lap till the Centre, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, revoked it on August 5, 2019.

Addressing an election rally at Akola in Maharashtra, Shah also came down heavily on Congress national president Mallikarjun Kharge for questioning PM Modi's invocation of the scrapping of Article 370 from the erstwhile state during a rally in Rajasthan.

"Kharge-ji questioned what the people of Maharashtra and Rajasthan have to do with Kashmir. Kharge Saheb, perhaps, does not know that every youth of Akola cares as much about Jammu and Kashmir as the people in the Union Territory themselves, and are even prepared to lay down their lives for it.

Mir Behri Residents Demand Bridge Repairs After Gandbal Tragedy

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: In the aftermath of a boat capsizing incident at Gandbal, Srinagar, which claimed the lives of six people with three still missing, the residents of Mir Behri Dal find themselves engulfed in frustration and anger over the lack of maintenance of bridges.

The locals residing in the interiors of Saida Kadal said that the tragedy has reignited concerns about the precarious state of bridges in the area, prompting locals to demand immediate action from authorities.

A video shared on social media by Abbas Kashmiri, a social media user, revealed the alarming condition of a bridge in Mir Behri Dal. The footage depicted disjointed wooden planks, highlighting the perilous state of infrastructure in the locality.

"We urge the government to get these bridges repaired so that Gandbal like incidents

do not take place," Abbas said. Abbas emphasized on the urgency of preventing a recurrence of the Gandbal tragedy by addressing the dilapidated condition of bridges across the region.

Imran Renu, a local of Runi Mohalla, Mir Behri said the people are deeply troubled by the conditions of wooden bridges. He voiced concerns about the frequent accidents involving vehicles and pedestrians due to the unsafe bridges.

"There have been instances where E-Rickshaws and two-wheelers had plunged into the lake, fortunately people survived but people won't be lucky all the time," Imran said.

He added that despite repeated pleas from local residents and advocacy efforts, their grievances seem to have fallen on deaf ears.

"There is a dire need for immediate intervention to repair and reinforce the wooden bridges for the safety and well-being of the community," he said.



The search continued for 8th straight day on Tuesday in Gandbal-Batwara for the dead bodies of the three missing people who drowned in the Jhelum last week. KO Photo by Abid Bhat

Cyber Police Unearth Major Mule Account Racket; Case registered

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Cyber Police Station Kashmir Zone, Srinagar Tuesday claimed to have investigated a new modus operandi, where individuals are involved in setting up mule bank accounts.

These accounts serve as channels for the receipt and transfer of unlawfully obtained funds on behalf of cyber fraudsters, a statement reads. Such activities are pivotal to organized fraud operations targeting vulnerable segments of the society, including homemakers, the economically disadvantaged, auto-rickshaw drivers, laborers, and local vendors, it said.

"The funds, often acquired through online fraudulent means such as investment scams, online gaming apps and phishing or identity theft are discreetly shuffled between multiple accounts to evade detection. Perpetrators, operating from outside the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, lured potential victims through emails, chat rooms or social media, offering inducements in exchange for renting out their bank accounts. Once trapped, victims unknowingly help in illegal transactions through mule bank accounts, sending the money to the criminal's main accounts," it said.

Acting upon the matter, Cyber Police Station Kashmir Zone, Srinagar, has filed a case under FIR number 10/2024 under relevant legal provisions and initiated a comprehensive investigation.

"Subsequent inquiries have revealed numerous mule accounts operating in various Districts of Kashmir Zone, with transactions totaling crores of rupees. Four individuals from Srinagar city have been identified in orchestrating and managing these mule bank accounts, as well as enticing unsuspecting individuals to participate in these illegal activities," the

statement added.

Consequently, these four accused persons identified as Sajad Ahmad Rah son of Mohammad Maqbool Rah residing at Chinar Colony Mehjoor Nagar, Srinagar, Tawqair Ahmad Bhat son of Tariq Ahmad Bhat residing at Banpora Nowgam, Srinagar, Ubaid Ahmad Rah son of Mohammad Ayoub Rah residing at Hamdaniya Colony Bemina, Srinagar and Amir Rah son of Mohammad Maqbool Rah residing at Chinar Colony Mehjoor Nagar, Srinagar have been arrested, the statement reads.

Meanwhile, Cyber Police Kashmir urged the public to remain vigilant and guard against falling victim to such fraudulent schemes. Fraudsters often exploit unsuspecting individuals through personal or social media platforms, dangling promises of rewards, incentives, or 'work from home' opportunities. Participation in money mule activities is unlawful and carries severe legal ramifications, including imprisonment. Should you suspect being victimized by money laundering or inadvertently engaging as a money mule, prompt reporting to the authorities is imperative, the statement said—(KNO)

The funds, often acquired through online fraudulent means such as investment scams, online gaming apps and phishing or identity theft are discreetly shuffled between multiple accounts to evade detection

Tulip Garden To Be Closed For Visitors From Today

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The Asia's largest Tulip Garden in Srinagar, which draws lakh's of tourists annually, will be closed for the visitors from Wednesday, officials said.

The garden, according to officials, will be shut after hosting an estimated 4.25 lakh people this year.

The declining blossoms,

officials said, have prompted the decision to shut Asia's largest tulip garden, which is located on the foothills of Zabarwan.

The decision was made as the Tulip Bloom, which lasts from the beginning of March to the end of April, is practically coming to an end.

An estimated 4.25 lakh tourists visited the Tulip Garden this year, setting a record for the number of visitors.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The below mentioned Motor/Fire/Misc. cover notes of the company have been lost:
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Police Report has been lodged with police station Batmaloo, dated 24.04.2024. The company shall not be liable for any loss or liability arising due to the misuse of the above cover notes. Finder may return to:
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media line

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I have changed my name Fedha Rehman to Fida Rehman, in future I will be known as Fida Rehman. Now I want to change in my passport bearing No. E1298422. Now I want to reissue my passport with my new name i.e Fida Rehman. If anybody having any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the passport office Srinagar within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that entertained.

Fida Rehman
S/o Abdul Rehman Sofi
R/o Sheeraz Colony Main Road Soura

Media Line Ads

NORTHERN RAILWAY			
E-Tender Notice			
Sr. DEN-II/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date- 13.05.2024 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker Cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information log on to www.ireps.gov.in			
Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System	
Open	Works	Single Bid System	
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time	
20.04.2024	29.04.2024	13.05.2024/15:00 Hrs	
S.No.	Tender No.	Details of Tender	
1.	18-2024-25-JAT-DRM-FZR	Upgradation/Improvement of Goods shed at Kathua station on JAT-PTK section under ADEN/JAT.	
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money
		9,82,55,326.54/-	6,41,300,00/-
		Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		60 Days	10 Months
		Similar nature of work :- "Any Civil Work other than track work".	
2.	19-2024-25-PTK-DRM-FZR	Upgradation/Improvement of Goods shed at Dhariwal station on ASR-PTK section under ADEN/PTK.	
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money
		3,86,83,031.31/-	3,43,400,00/-
		Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		60 Days	08 Months
		Similar nature of work :- "Any Civil Work other than track work".	
3.	20-2024-25-PTK-DRM-FZR	Upgradation/Improvement of Goods shed at Gurdaspur station on ASR-PTK section under ADEN/PTK.	
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money
		4,79,24,522.05/-	3,89,800,00/-
		Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		60 Days	08 Months
		Similar nature of work :- "Any Civil Work other than track work".	
4.	21-2024-25-PTK-DRM-FZR	Works in c/w Manning of 05 nos Level Crossing on ASR-PTK section in the jurisdiction of ADEN/PTK.	
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money
		1,78,32,501.15/-	2,39,200,00/-
		Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		60 Days	08 Months
		Similar nature of work :- "Any Civil Work other than track work".	
5.	22-2024-25-PTK-DRM-FZR	Construction of 0.795 KM RCC boundary Wall near stations & its approaches and trespassing at various locations as measures to safeguard track and establishment avoiding encroachments on ASR-PTK section under ADEN/PTK.	
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money
		88,61,196.69/-	1,77,200,00/-
		Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		60 Days	06 Months
		Similar nature of work :- "Any Civil Work other than track work".	
6.	23-2024-25-JAT-DRM-FZR	Through Fitting renewal (27.409 km) of the existing 52kg/60kg PSC sleepers at KM 25.5 to 33 km, 35.5 to 37.7 km, 63.378 to 64.00 km, 74.982 to 75.11 km, 75.154 to 76.091 km, 76.122 to 77.447 km, 77.507 to 77.887 km, 77.94 to 79.423 km, 79.453 to 81.954 km, 81.97 to 83.254 km, 83.297 to 84.312 km, 84.343 to 85.344 km, 85.384 to 86.007 km, 86.02 to 87.44 km, 87.473 to 87.62 km, 90.801 to 92.52 km, 92.535 to 93.019 km, 93.36 to 96.00 km on PTK-JAT section under ADEN/PTK	
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money
		46,51,301.44/-	93,000,00/-
		Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		60 Days	08 Months
		Similar nature of work :- "NIL".	
Note 1. Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender. Tender Notice No:- 19,20,21 & 22-2024-25-PTK-DRM-FZR & 18 & 23-2024-25-JAT-DRM-FZR Dt. 22.04.2024			
1210/2024			
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HAPPY AND HEALTHY MINDS

خوشحال اور صحت مند ذہن

ذہنی صحت کی حفاظت کے لئے
مفت مشاورت
ہمارے کلینک پہ روزانہ میسر ہے
اور ساتھ ساتھ ہم ان لائن موڈ میں بھی
مشاورت کے لئے دستیاب ہیں

ہمارے پاس پیشہ ور اور تربیت یافتہ ماہرین کی ٹیم تجربہ کار ماہر نفسیات کی سربراہی میں مختلف اقسام کی نفسیاتی اور منشیات امراض سے چھٹکارہ پانے کے لیے سماج کے متاثرہ افراد کی مدد کے لیے دستیاب ہیں۔

درج ذیل ذہنی صحت سے وابستہ مسائل پہ قابو پانے کے لیے رجوع فرمائیں:

- عصبانیت اور زہنی تناؤ کا درمان
- بھیانک حادثات اور واقعات کے بعد آنے والا ذہنی عارضات، مثلاً بدخواہی، شدید تشویش اور واقعات کے بارے میں قابو میں نہ ہونے والے خیالات (PTSD)
- انفرادی ترقی اور مثبت تبدیلی کی خاطر اپنے فیصلوں پر عملدرآمد کرنے کا عمل
- اداسی کی کیفیت۔
- ذہنی پریشانی کے آثار
- منشیات کی لت پر قابو پانے کے لیے مشاورت
- خودکشی کے انتہائی اقدام سے روکنے کی مشاورت

مفت ذہنی مشاورت کے لیے پیر سے ہفتہ، صبح 10 بجے سے شام 5 بجے تک رابطہ کریں۔

9070806160

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR

15 Shawal
1445

PRAYERS	
FAJR	4: 21
ZUHR	12:29
ASR	5: 14
Magrib	7:12
ISHA	8: 39

This Day In History

- 1479 BC - Thutmose III ascends to the throne of Egypt, although power effectively shifts to Hatshepsut (according to the Low Chronology of the 18th Dynasty)
- 1066 - Halley's Comet sparks English monk to predict country will be destroyed
- 1185 - Battle at Danoura: Yoshitsune Minamoto's fleet beats the Taira during Japan's Genpei War
- 1793 - French revolutionary Jean-Paul Marat is acquitted by the Revolutionary Tribunal of charges brought by the Girondin in Paris
- 1800 - US Library of Congress establishes with \$5,000 allocation
- 1872 - Volcano Mt Vesuvius erupts in Italy
- 1877 - Russo-Turkish War, 1877-78: Russia declares war on the Ottoman Empire
- 1898 - Spanish-American War: Spain declares war after rejecting US ultimatum to withdraw from Cuba
- men of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition launch a lifeboat from uninhabited Elephant Island in the Southern Ocean to organise a rescue for ice-trapped ship Endurance
- 1920 - British Mandate over Palestine goes into effect (lasts 28 years)
- 1920 - Polish troops attack Ukraine
- 1921 - 1st municipal elections for men & women in Belgium
- 1921 - Under Allies supervision, a plebiscite in the Tyrol favors merging with Germany; unhappy with the outcome, Allies give the area to Italy
- 1928 - Fathometer, which measures underwater depth, patented
- 1941 - British army begins evacuation of Greece
- 1950 - Independent republic of South Molukkas declared

From KO Archives

Sayed, Mangat Clash At Cabinet Meeting

Observer News Service

JAMMU - Deputy Chief Minister Mangat Ram Sharma snubbed Chief Minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed at a cabinet meeting here Tuesday, telling him he was not a "headmaster" who could dictate terms to his seniors in politics.

Sharma walked out of the cabinet meeting in a huff, the second time he has done so in the past 16 months. He later flew to New Delhi, telling reporters he would apprise the Congress party leadership about Sayeed's "dictatorial behaviour".

Cabinet meeting was later postponed to April 22. On Jan 24, almost in similar circumstances, Sharma walked out of a cabinet meeting on being overruled on the appointment of Kashmir's senior most Indian Administrative Service officer KB. Pillai as chairman of the State Public Service Commission.

Ultimately, Sharma had to relent and reconcile to the choice of the chief minister.

Tuesday's walkout followed a verbal duel between the two over the use of "improper" language by Sharma while conversing with Chief Secretary Sudhir S Belloria.

The meeting was to discuss a major administrative and police reshuffle in the state.

Sayed termed Sharma's conversation with the chief secretary as "improper."

"You should not use such language with the chief secretary," Sayeed told Sharma in the presence of the entire cabinet and some top officials.

Sharma allegedly told Belloria 'kar do Ji' (do it) instead of 'kar deejie' while marking the agenda for the day.

Sayed corrected him in front of the cabinet after which the deputy chief minister replied that he did not have to be taught how to deal with the bureaucracy.

Sharma told Sayeed: "I am senior to you in politics by 11 years. You cannot treat me like a headmaster, and I am leaving."

Sharma then burst out of the meeting Sayeed, the sources said, rubbed salt into Sharma's wounds by saying: "If you want to go, no one is going to stop you." He suggested that Congress President Sonia Gandhi should be informed about this incident. Chief Minister was quoted as saying: "How can the govt run amid this indiscipline?"

(Kashmir Observer, 24 April, 2005)

KASHMIR OBSERVER™

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Hope for Assembly Polls

The assurance by the union minister Jitendra Singh that the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir will be held soon has generated a fresh hope about the restoration of democratic process in the union territory. Singh's assurance follows Prime Minister Narendra Modi's similar promise during an election speech in Udhampur last week. The prime minister reiterated the commitment of his government to reinstate the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir, thereby allowing its people to once again have a more direct say in the governance.

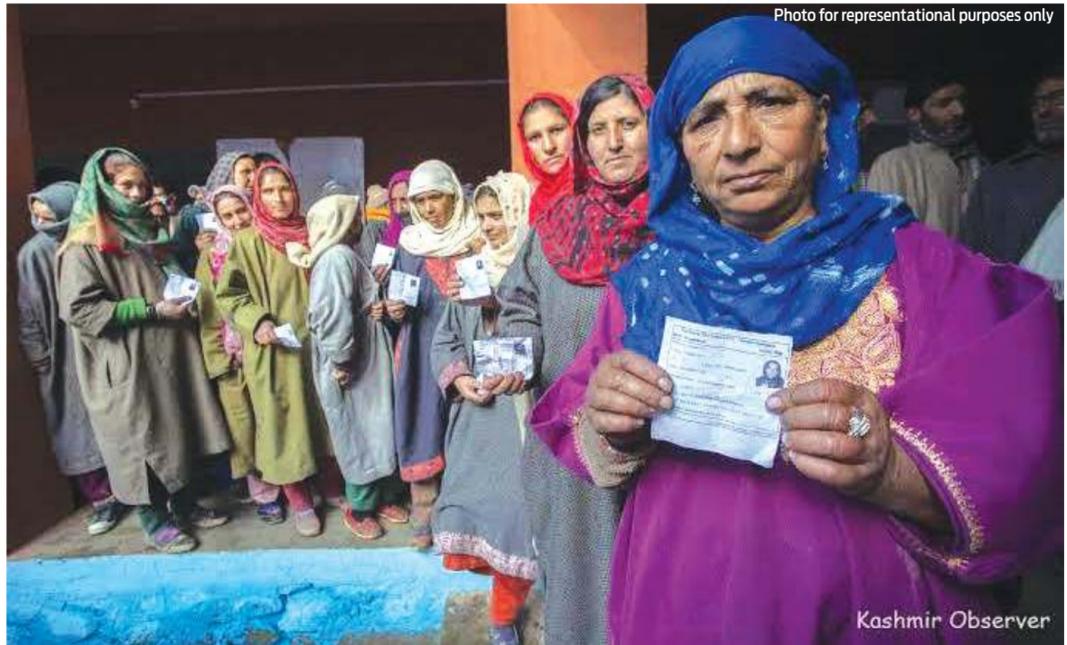
Ever since the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, Jammu and Kashmir has been under direct central rule. While this move was aimed at integrating the region more closely with the rest of the country, the absence of a democratically elected government has been a concern. Should the promise of the early Assembly elections be kept, there is now hope for the people of Jammu and Kashmir to choose their representatives and have a government that truly reflects their aspirations.

Jitendra Singh's said that normalcy has been restored in the union territory, an assertion that should naturally lead to early holding of Assembly polls. A local government and a restored statehood will only strengthen the process of normalization. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have waited long for the return of normalcy and democratic governance. It is now incumbent upon the central government to fulfill its promise and ensure that the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir are realized at the earliest.

J&K has not had an elected government since June 2018 when Governor's rule was imposed after the PDP-led coalition government lost its majority following the withdrawal of support by the BJP. The last five years have witnessed a drastic political makeover of the state-turned-union territory, so much so that in many aspects, the current J&K bears little resemblance to what it was pre-August 2019.

When in December last year, the Supreme Court urged the Election Commission to facilitate assembly polls in J&K by September 30, 2024, it stressed the constitutional imperative to uphold the democratic rights of the people in the region. However, the union government is yet to show any urgency on this score. And it is time the centre does.

The prolonged delay in Assembly elections prolongs the absence of a locally accountable government, which does impact the implementation of policies tailored to address the unique challenges faced by Jammu and Kashmir. Like the rest of the country, the people of Jammu and Kashmir deserve a democratic government for voicing their grievances and aspirations through elected representatives who can engage in legislative processes and policymaking.



Election and Advocacy

Maximum participation from J&K in the upcoming elections holds the potential to rejuvenate faith in the fundamental institutions of the country

Farooq Shah

The commencement of India's monumental national elections, regarded as the most significant in decades, with the power to influence the country's future trajectory are on. With approximately 968 million eligible voters, surpassing the combined populations of the United States, the European Union, and Russia, these elections stand as the largest in the world.

Of particular importance is the context surrounding Kashmir, as India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, has hinted at the potential restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

During a rally in Udhampur, Jammu on April 12, Friday, Modi expressed that the time is approaching when Assembly elections will be conducted in Jammu and Kashmir. He assured that Jammu and Kashmir will regain its statehood status, allowing residents to communicate their aspirations to their elected representatives.

This region was downgraded to the status of a union territory following the revocation of Article 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution on August 5, 2019. Modi's announcement adds a layer of significance to these elections, as they may impact the ongoing political dynamics and future developments in the region.

The instability of sorts in Kashmir has been manipulated by vested interests on multiple occasions, who have incited discord among its peace-loving in-

habitants. This discord escalated into an armed rebellion in 1989 against India's control, notwithstanding at least three attempts by Pakistan to seize the region.

This undoubtedly led to a monumental tragedy, including the displacement of a community that has been deeply ingrained in Kashmir for generations. Without delving into specific statistics, both communities endured significant suffering, leading to a complex situation that plunged the former princely state into a seemingly insurmountable abyss.

While the wounds of these tragedies may remain etched in the Kashmiri psyche for a long time, dwelling on the past, harboring grievances against the Indian state, or waiting for a miraculous solution are not aligned with the current demands of the situation.

Amidst the height of the unrest, certain political parties opted to retreat from the forefront rather than confronting the challenges head-on. This made room for less desirable parties and groups to seize control of the narrative. Their lack of political foresight only exacerbated the situation, prolonging the conflict and adding to the burdens faced by the common people. By making promises they couldn't fulfill and advocating for poll boycotts, they inadvertently instilled a sense of apathy among the masses, where participation or abstention from voting held equal weight.

However, this emotional stance, unjustifiable by any measure, has had significant consequences.

By casting their votes and making their preferences known, citizens exercise their fundamental right to democracy, thereby contributing to the selection of representatives who align with their values and priorities

Regardless of their level of participation in elections, various political parties have formed governments over time. These became the primary avenues for the common people to seek solutions to their problems, whether they agreed with the ruling administration or not.

In the general elections, Kashmiris might face a familiar dilemma, questioning the potential benefits of participating in the electoral process. How-

ever, this election presents an opportunity for them to reintegrate into the system, reclaim lost dignity, and assert that their voices hold significance.

Opting out of elections can lead to the selection of candidates and political parties whose agendas diverge from the common people's aspirations. When individuals abstain from voting, they forfeit their chance to shape policies directly affecting their lives. This can result in the ascension of representatives who prioritize personal interests or pursue ideologies at odds with community needs. The absence of participation allows potentially self-serving factions to dominate, worsening governance and widening the gap between leaders and citizens.

Therefore, it becomes imperative for voters to actively participate in the electoral process, recognizing that their engagement is crucial in shaping the outcome of the elections.

By casting their votes and making their preferences known, citizens exercise their fundamental right to democracy, thereby contributing to the selection of representatives who align with their values and priorities. Failure to engage in the electoral process can lead to a sense of regret and disillusionment if undesired candidates are elected into positions of power. This regretful outcome underscores the importance of voter participation as a proactive measure to prevent the selection of unsuitable candidates and ensure that the voices of the electorate are duly represented in the government.

Maximum participation in the upcoming elections holds the potential to rejuvenate faith in the fundamental institutions of the country, notably the Supreme Court and the Election Commission of India. By demonstrating a strong engagement in the democratic process, voters can signal a positive shift in the political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir, instilling confidence in the integrity and efficacy of democratic governance.

This renewed faith in democratic principles may prompt influential institutions such as the Supreme Court and the Election Commission to view the situation in a favorable light, recognizing the evolving dynamics and the genuine desire for democratic representation in the region.

Consequently, these institutions may advocate for the expeditious initiation of the electoral process, urging the government to prioritize the holding of assembly elections. Such advocacy could catalyze the long-awaited restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, fulfilling a longstanding demand of the populace.

Thus, by actively participating in the electoral process, citizens can play a pivotal role in steering the region towards a future characterized by democratic empowerment and renewed political legitimacy.

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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Direct Shares or
Mutual Funds?

Did You Know?

Irshad Mushtaq

In the bustling world of finance, where saving and investing intertwine to create a tapestry of wealth and security, individuals face a crucial decision: direct shares or mutual funds?

Each option holds its own allure, its own potential for growth and success, but the path chosen must align with individual goals, risk tolerance, and investment horizon. For those seeking a safe harbor for their hard-earned funds, saving is the first step. Saving provides a necessary cushion for rainy days, ensuring that unexpected expenses do not derail financial stability. With options like savings accounts and money market funds, individuals can rest assured knowing that their principal remains intact and easily accessible. Saving is the foundation upon which financial security is built, providing stability in an ever-changing world. But for those with a thirst for more, investing in financial markets beckons. Investing is the key to unlocking potential growth, beating inflation, and building wealth over time. Whether through stocks, bonds, or other securities, investing offers the promise of higher returns, albeit with higher risks. The choice between direct shares and mutual funds becomes paramount, as each avenue offers its own unique advantages and challenges. Direct shares, the foundation of the stock market, entail owning a piece of a company and reaping the rewards of its successes. While the potential for high returns exists, so too does the volatility of individual stock performance. Investing in direct shares requires a keen understanding of the market, time for research and analysis, and a high risk tolerance to weather the storms of fluctuating stock prices. For the bold and the knowledgeable, direct shares can be a path to substantial wealth and financial success. On the other hand, mutual funds offer a more diversified approach to investing, pooling together funds from multiple investors to create a portfolio of securities managed by professional fund managers. With mutual funds, the burden of individual stock selection is lifted, and the risk is spread across a range of assets, providing a level of safety and security. Mutual funds offer a hands-off approach to investing, ideal for those who lack the time or expertise to navigate the complexities of the market. In the end, the choice between direct shares and mutual funds lies in the hands of the individual investor, guided by their goals, risk tolerance, and investment horizon. Saving provides the foundation, investing offers the opportunity for growth, and the decision between direct shares and mutual funds shapes the journey towards financial success. With the right balance of saving and investing, each individual can carve out their own path to prosperity in the dynamic world of finance.

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Elections and Constitutional Morality

As the first phase of polling for India's general elections has commenced a few days ago, "Constitutional morality", the pillar of India's democracy, assumes significance. Right to freedom, rule of law, freedom of choice, equality, due process of law and freedom of expression are some of the key elements of constitutional morality. Interestingly, George Grote, a 19th century British historian had given

one of the first definitions to "constitutional morality." According to him, it meant "utmost devotion and compliance towards the principles of constitution." In India, the concept of constitutional morality was first defined by Dr. Ambedkar. In his opinion, constitutional morality meant effective cooperation between the citizens and the administration for resolving any conflict of interests without any confrontation. The sig-

nificance of constitutional morality is that it ensures the enforcement of the rule of law, and at the same time it also keeps up with the changing times and demands of society. In fact, constitutional morality helps change the perception of the society by abolishing the laws and practices whenever they are found inconsistent. A key example: a law banning the practice of Sati was passed after it was enacted, since there was a significant

change in the mindset of the public towards widows. Constitutional morality makes society more inclusive by recognising the diversity that exists in the society and providing the opportunity for reforms. Constitutional morality has been a significant guiding principle for achieving the ideals of the Constitution.

Ranganathan Sivakumar

Uncertainty The Only Certainty



Dr Rizwan Rumi

In a world where uncertainty looms large, where the only constant is change itself, how do we navigate the tumultuous waters of life with grace and resilience? It's a question that has intrigued philosophers, mystics, and everyday individuals alike for centuries. Yet, amidst the chaos and unpredictability, there lies a profound truth: uncertainty is not to be shunned, but embraced.

Sadhguru, a spiritual leader and visionary, eloquently captures this sentiment in his insightful op-ed for the Economic Times. He posits that uncertainty is not merely a challenge to be overcome, but a gateway to endless possibilities. With each step into the unknown, we embark on a journey of exploration and self-discovery, where the very fabric of reality is woven from the threads of uncertainty.

Indeed, uncertainty is the fertile soil from which opportunity springs forth. It is the canvas upon which we paint our dreams and aspirations, the fuel that ignites the fire of innovation and progress. Those who possess the vision to see beyond the veil of uncertainty will find themselves not hindered by fear, but propelled forward by boundless potential.

But how do we come to terms with the inherent unpredictability of life? How do we find solace amidst the chaos, and cultivate the resilience needed to weather the storms that inevitably come our way?

Donnovan Somera Yisrael, a senior health educator at Stanford, offers valuable insights into this age-old dilemma. He acknowledges the deeply ingrained human desire for certainty, rooted in our primal instincts for survival. Yet, he urges us to reframe our perception of uncertainty, to see it not as a foe to be vanquished, but as a natural part of the human experience.

Yisrael emphasizes the importance of mindfulness and emotional intelligence in navigating uncertain terrain. By cultivating a sense of self-awareness and acceptance, we can learn to embrace the ebb and flow of life with equanimity. Through practices such as meditation and self-reflection, we can develop the inner resilience needed to withstand the trials and tribulations that come our way.

Moreover, Yisrael highlights the power of community and interconnectedness in finding strength amidst adversity. By drawing upon the shared experiences of our fellow human beings, we can



IN A WORLD WHERE SAFETY OFTEN MASQUERADES AS STAGNATION, they remind us that true fulfillment lies in taking risks, in daring to leap into the abyss of possibility

find solace in the knowledge that we are not alone in our struggles. Through acts of compassion and service, we can forge bonds that transcend the boundaries of uncertainty, and find hope in the midst of despair.

Yet, perhaps the most profound

wisdom lies in the words of the anonymous author who reflects on the beauty of a life lived in uncertainty. They speak of the exhilaration that comes from embracing the unknown, of the freedom that comes from relinquishing the need for control. In a world where safety often masquerades as stagnation, they remind us that true fulfillment lies in taking risks, in daring to leap into the abyss of possibility.

In essence, the journey of life is a tapestry woven from the threads of uncertainty. It is a journey fraught with peril and adventure, joy and sorrow. Yet, it is also a journey filled with beauty and wonder, with endless opportunities for growth and transformation.

So, let us embrace the uncertainty of life with open arms, knowing that within its depths lie the seeds of our greatest triumphs. Let us journey forth with courage and conviction, knowing that each step into the unknown brings us closer to our true selves. And let us remember that in the dance of uncertainty, lies the secret to a life well-lived.

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From Rumi's Discipline to Digital Dilemmas The Shifting Paradigms of Teaching

Ehmed Sameer

The dynamic between educators and learners has undergone significant transformation. The reverence once held for teachers and their disciplinary methods has been reshaped by societal evolution, cultural transitions, technological progress, and changes in parenting approaches. Historically, educators possessed a robust authority to discipline, which was believed to maintain order and deter negative influences. In contrast, the contemporary educational landscape prioritizes understanding, communication, and mutual respect, fostering a democratic classroom environment that places teachers and students on equal footing.

This democratization has lifted restrictions on questioning educators, allowing learners unfettered access to their tutors, with technology further amplifying this interaction. However, this familiarity has its drawbacks, as I have personally encountered disrespectful behavior from students, a by-product of this democratic setting.

Reflecting on the era of Moulana Rumi, the esteemed mystic from Konya, educators were granted absolute authority over student discipline. Rumi himself demanded complete trust from a disciple's mother before agreeing to tutor her child, including the use of physical discipline if necessary. Such methods are now rare, as modern educational philosophies discourage physical punishment in favor of positive reinforcement and non-violent disciplinary techniques.

Parenting styles have also evolved, with a child-centric approach becoming prevalent. Parents often prioritize their children's desires, sometimes to the detriment of their development. For example, gifting smartphones as a reward for academic success can inadvertently expose children to the darker aspects

of technology, such as offensive content, cyberbullying, and privacy breaches—issues that parents may be unaware of. Furthermore, the trend of creating short videos and vlogs can distract from academic pursuits, immersing the youth in a delusional virtual world.

In the grand tapestry of education, we observe a paradigm shift from the authoritarian classrooms of yesteryear to today's democratic learning spaces. This transformation, while fostering an environment of open dialogue and accessibility, also brings forth challenges that educators and parents must navigate with care. The balance between empowering learners and maintaining a structured educational framework is delicate and requires constant attention.

In the grand tapestry of education, we observe a paradigm shift from the authoritarian classrooms of yesteryear to today's democratic learning spaces. This transformation, while fostering an environment of open dialogue and accessibility, also brings forth challenges that educators and parents must navigate with care

As we embrace the benefits of technology and progressive parenting, we must also be cognizant of their potential pitfalls. The allure of the digital world, with its infinite distractions, poses a significant risk to the focus and well-being of our youth. It is our collective responsibility to guide them through these formative years with wisdom and foresight.

Let us not forget that the ultimate goal of education is to prepare individuals not just for the workforce, but for life itself. To achieve this, we must strive to create an environment that promotes respect, discipline, and a thirst for knowledge. As we stand at the crossroads of tradition and innovation, let us choose a path that leads to the holistic development of our future generation, ensuring they are equipped to navigate the complexities of the modern world with integrity and purpose.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The author is a teacher with the Department of School Education

How to Handle Difficult People Like a Stoic

Seth J. Gillihan

On a recent road trip with my wife and kids, I found myself being tailgated by an apparently angry and impatient driver. I was going a few miles per hour over the speed limit as I passed a semi on a long downhill stretch through the mountains; when I pulled into the right lane, the driver accelerated past me, blowing his horn for about 10 seconds.

I felt my sympathetic nervous system turn on, and resisted the urge to give him the finger or to passive-aggressively honk a "friendly" beep-beep in return. For several minutes afterward, I was silently seething. It felt like he had gotten away with something, as if I had lost and he had won. Each time I replayed the prolonged honk I felt angry and humiliated. Part of me really wanted to chase down his car and pay him back somehow, but I knew nothing good would come of it.

You no doubt have had similar encounters with obnoxious or pushy people, whether on the road or elsewhere. These episodes are a perfect opportunity to practice the principles of Stoicism.

1. Judgments, Not Events, Disturb People
As I ruminated on what had

happened, I had to wonder—what had that pushy driver actually done to me? The idea that he had "humiliated" me or "won" was based on multiple layers of interpretation. The facts were much simpler:

- A driver wanted his car to go faster than mine was going.
- He drove close to my bumper when my car was blocking his way, apparently angry and annoyed.
- As his car passed mine, he pressed on his horn for several seconds before speeding away.

The powerlessness and sense of victimhood that I felt were not part of the events themselves. Nothing says that honking without retribution equals "winning."

As the Stoic philosopher Epictetus wrote in *Enchiridion* nearly two millennia ago:

"It is not events that disturb people, it is their judgments concerning them."

A few pages later he says: "Another person will not hurt you without your cooperation; you are hurt the moment you believe yourself to be."

It wasn't the driver's actions that upset me, it was the meaning I gave to them. When someone does something that offends you, ask yourself what is fact and what is interpretation.



2. Don't Give Your Peace of Mind to Others

The judgments you make drive your emotional reactions. If you want to "win" against others, guard your equanimity. The only way I would lose to that honking driver was by losing my peace of mind.

Why give difficult people power over how you feel and what you do? Your emotional equilibrium is not to be entrusted to the actions of others. You can let people be rude or unreasonable, without acting as if your only recourse is to get upset and respond in kind.

Remind yourself that no one else is responsible for your emotions. "So when we are frustrated, angry, or unhappy," wrote Epictetus, "never hold anyone except ourselves—that is, our judgments—accountable." When you do, you'll discover true freedom in how you choose to respond.

3. Focus on What You Can Control

The Stoics recognized that peace of mind is found by focusing on what you actually are responsible for. Epictetus advised asking yourself:

"Is this something that is, or is not, in my control? And if it's not one of the things that you control, be ready with the

reaction, 'Then it's none of my concern.'"

That means the things other people think, feel, and do are excluded from your concerns. It doesn't mean you're indifferent to other people, but if you make their responsibilities your own, you'll multiply your misery.

Unfortunately, we often practice anti-Stoicism. We give most of our energy to what others are doing, stewing in our outrage ("They said what?!") and trying hard to force them to change. In the process, we neglect the responsibility we have for ourselves, as if other people are making us behave in a particular way.

If you wish to suffer less, practice treating irritating people like a Stoic would. Recognize that the person is irritating only to the extent that you allow them to be. "Irritating" is a judgment, and your judgments belong to you. Own your reactions. No one can force you to feel or act in ways that you're not willing to.

The battle that really matters is internal. Make a determination to wrestle only with the things you're free to control, and let go of the rest.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today

Over 800 Govt

ess than five or zero. As of now there was no such government school with zero enrolment."

The School Education Department in the year 2022 had said that it had identified more than 1200 such government schools that were having low enrolment of students.

It had said that such schools would likely be merged in accordance to the catchment and feasibility of the students.

In April-2022, School Education Department had said that it was all set to merge hundreds of government-run-schools of Jammu and Kashmir having an inadequate student enrolment

Mehbooba Relies

Anantnag-Rajouri constituency. While rival National Conference has focused on holding mega election rallies in the constituency, Mufti who rose to prominence in the mid-1990s by visiting victims of conflict in the deepest of militancy-infested areas of Kashmir has fallen back on old tactics. Her campaign so far has mainly been to hold road shows in rural areas of the constituency which had whole-heartedly supported the PDP till the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

Hugging the women folk and exchanging pleasantries with the men at every stop in the roadshow, Mufti makes it a point to highlight the absence of support for her during the last election. "I know you did not vote against me in the last election, you stayed away, but this time it is not about bijli, sadak or paani. This time it is about our dignity, our identity and our resources which are under threat. If you want these issues to be raised in the highest forum of the country, you will have to support the PDP," Mufti tells the people.

She learned the art of politics from her father Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, one of the most shrewd and astute politicians to have come out of Jammu and Kashmir. And it seems she wants to change an adverse situation to her advantage. The PDP president carries a bag of candies and toffees in her car and gives away to every child she sees at the stops over. Perhaps, it is an atonement for her. "Toffee, milk" remarks she made as the chief minister when defending the death of young children in security forces action during the 2016 summer agitation in the valley.

Mehbooba Mufti, who is part of the INDIA bloc but decided to contest the elections against the National Conference — a fellow member of the anti-BJP alliance — has been able to generate some sympathy among the electorate. "She is fighting a lonely battle. Every other candidate has support from one national party or the other but it is anybody's game. Anyone can win as this constituency formed after delimitation is so unnatural," Rafiq Ahmad, a resident of Panchpora village, told PTI.

Nazir Ahmad, a resident of Marhama village, takes the conspiracy theory a notch higher. Pulling out a smartphone, he shows a photograph of National Conference leader Omar Abdullah and BJP leader Ravindra Raina, taken at some public function, as proof that the two parties have a covert understanding on the Anantnag-Rajouri seat.

"The BJP has not fielded its candidate and the Congress is supporting the National Conference openly. It's all against one person that is the PDP leader (Mehbooba Mufti)," Ahmad added.

How does the PDP president feel about being on her own, especially after the 2018 exodus of leaders from her party, including former ministers and legislators.

"I am a daughter of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and I have faith in my people. The good thing that happened was that my workers did not leave me when those people (leaders) left. The majority of my workers remained with me and that gave me new energy, enthusiasm. New people have traction with the PDP. They do not join other parties, they come to us and that has infused a new lease of life into our party," she said.

She said that when her father started his political career, he also faced a lot of conspiracies. "There was a social boycott against him. He was called a 'gandi naali ka keeda'. There were many conspiracies against him, he was accused of being anti-Islam, anti-Muslim and anti-Kashmir. But he survived and I am his daughter," she added.

Mufti said that no other party in Jammu and Kashmir has been subjected to what her PDP was made to go through.

"The PDP and Mehbooba Mufti are on the target of the BJP. My party was broken, our leaders were snatched either through lure or blackmail. Then I was thrown out of (government) house in winter. Everyone (leader) has a house, I do not want to name them. I was summoned to the ED office, even my mother was. Our passports were not issued, even my mother's and daughter's, even my brother was summoned by the ED. Many of my workers from Bijbehara are in detention. Arrests are against the PDP only. Attempts are being made to snatch the

rest of the leaders from my party. The PDP is the only target, no other party is," she said.

The PDP president said that she was all for a united fight against the BJP and was prepared to concede all three valley seats to the National Conference.

"But the way Omar called a press conference and made the announcement there saying the PDP had vanished. That hurt my workers and sympathizers and that became a question of their prestige. I think the people have to decide who raised the issues of people, prisoners, oppressed ones in the last five years. The NC had three members in the Parliament, they have to see their performance. Do we have to repeat that or send those people who talk about the people of J-K?" she said. While there are 21 candidates in the fray for PDP President Mehbooba Mufti who is contesting from Anantnag-Rajouri seat.

Mehbooba's Asset

news agency, Kashmir News Observer, Mufti's earnings have fluctuated over the years. In the financial year 2018-19, her total income amounted to Rs 8.63 lakh, which reduced to Rs 84.75 thousand in the subsequent financial year. However, in 2020-21, her earnings surged to Rs 19.98 lakh, followed by a decrease to Rs 12.44 lakh in 2021-22, and further down to Rs 9.85 lakh in 2022-23.

In terms of liquid assets, Mufti has declared possessing Rs 45 thousand in cash and has deposited Rs 23.74 lakh in three bank accounts. Additionally, she has disclosed holding an insurance policy worth Rs 11.94 lakh. Her movable property includes an SNK ISUZU bus valued at Rs 5 lakh, with no jewelry or precious items mentioned.

On the immovable property front, Mufti owns a residential house in Bijbehara, Anantnag district, with a current market value of Rs 35 lakh. Combining her movable and immovable assets, the former Chief Minister's total property amounts to Rs 75.69 lakh.

Mufti's primary source of income, as per her affidavit, is salary/pension. (KNO)

PDP Has Become

poison across the country, people should only look towards candidates of the INDIA bloc — National Conference candidates on three seats of Kashmir and Congress candidates on two seats in Jammu."

The National Conference, People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the Congress are constituents of the opposition INDIA bloc. However, the PDP is contesting the Lok Sabha elections independently while the Congress and the National Conference have joined hands for the polls.

Abdullah further said, "The rest have connections with the BJP somewhere -- be it B-team or A-team who hold late-night meetings with (BJP leader) Tarun Chugh or the PDP. (BJP leader) Mushtaq Bukhari has openly announced to cast his vote in favour of (PDP chief) Mehbooba Mufti."

The National Conference vice-president said he understands the PDP chief will put pressure on the BJP to make Bukhari change his statement.

"I take it that Mehbooba Mufti will put pressure on the BJP to get Mushtaq Bukhari to change his statement but the cat is out of the bag now. After the A-team and the B-team, the PDP has now joined as the C-team of the BJP," Abdullah added.

Mehbooba joined the electoral fray from the Anantnag-Rajouri seat after the National Conference refused to accommodate the PDP chief, citing its victory from all three Lok Sabha constituencies in the Kashmir Valley in 2019.

Asked about the BJP not fielding incumbent Ladakh MP Jamyang Namgyal, Abdullah said it does not concern him.

"It is an internal matter of the BJP. I am only concerned that the Congress should field the right candidate from Ladakh as we are contesting there together. There should be no room for a BJP win there," he added.

NC Working At BJP's

appeal to all three -- Ghulam Nabi Azad, Sajad Lone and Altaf Bukhari -- they should see the attitude towards Muslims of those (BJP) who they are standing for here. That's all I want to tell them. The Muslims they are trying to fool today, will they survive tomorrow?" Abdullah asked. Lone said while his party was only accused of being in league with the BJP, the National Conference has

been in government with the BJP.

"The Babri Masjid was demolished in 1992 after which 2,000 Muslims were killed.

"Did they not remember Muslims when they joined the BJP in the government? The other party which was responsible for the Babri aftermath was Shiv Sena. They have openly joined hands with them (through the INDIA bloc). Are they friends of Muslims?" he asked.

BJP Leader Urges

paid off," Bukhari told media persons.

However, he cautioned members of Pahari community to remain vigilant from nefarious designs of those who used Pahari community for their political gains, and appealed to them to vote for PDP President Mehbooba Mufti who is contesting from Anantnag-Rajouri seat.

"I think it is better to vote for Mehbooba Mufti as she is the only political leader who speaks for the Pahari community," Bukhari said.

Pertinently, Syed Mushtaq Bukhari joined BJP two months ago at New Delhi party headquarters in presence of senior leaders.

Man Shot Dead

department. Razaq's eldest son is just 15 years old.

Earlier, once the bullet-ridden body of Razaq reached his home, the pall of gloom descended in the area as everybody was heading towards his house to pay their respect to the departed soul. According to the locals, he was a kind hearted and helpful person who was always ahead of others in reaching out to the people whenever they were in need.

Locals said that terrorists had reached his home by enquiring from locals without ascertaining their identity. They were hiding in his house and once Razaq entered after completing prayers, he was fired upon by the terrorists and injured him critically. He was shifted to the nearby hospital where he was declared dead on arrival.

They believed that terrorists were probably after Razaq's brother Tahir Khurshid, who is working in the Territorial Army, but there was no confirmation from police and administration.

JKP Announces

announced for the terrorist identified as Abu Hamza for his involvement in terror activities, including the heinous killing of Mohd Razaq in Kunda village of Rajouri on Monday, a police official said. (KNO)

Search Operation

night when the victim, Mohammad Razaq (40), came out of a mosque in his village Kunda Top under the Thanamandi police station area. Razaq's brother, Mohammad Tahir Choudhary, is a soldier in the Territorial Army, police said.

While Razaq succumbed to his injuries, Choudhary escaped unhurt, they said.

The police, army, and CRPF launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) soon after the incident and intensified the searches in the area with the support of sniffer dogs and aerial surveillance to track down the terrorists, they said.

According to the officials, Tahir could have been the target but his brother got shot.

Vehicles are being thoroughly checked, and people are being subjected to frisking at various checkpoints in the district, they added.

A criminal case has been registered in FIR under sections 302 (murder), 120A (conspiracy to commit an offence), 121B (waging war or attempting to wage war against the Government of India), 122 (collecting arms with the intention of waging war against Government of India), 458 (lurking house-trespass or house-breaking by night after preparation for hurt, assault, or wrongful restraint), the Arms Act, and sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) at the Thanamandi Police Station, officials said.

Razaq's father, Mohammad Akbar was also killed by terrorists 19 years ago in the same village. Akbar worked in the Social Welfare Department, and

Razaq was given a job by the government on compassionate grounds in the same department, they said.

Meanwhile, the security forces busted a terrorist hideout in the village of Azmatnagar in Rajouri district last week. They recovered eight Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), two wireless sets, and some ammunition, officials said.

Rajouri and Poonch districts have witnessed targeted attacks by terrorists on the army and civilians in the past few years, they added.

Terror Module

fear and unrest. Pakistan-based operatives were allegedly handling the accused, the DGP said. "Acting swiftly in an intelligence-based operation, Counter Intelligence (of Punjab Police) #Jalandhar averts target killings planned by cross-border operatives. One member of the terror module arrested with a #Chinese pistol and cartridges," Yadav wrote in a post on X.

According to a Punjab Police statement, the arrested accused has been identified as Lovepreet Singh alias Picho of Udho Nangal village in Amritsar.

Police teams have also recovered one .30-bore automatic Chinese pistol along with a magazine and four live cartridges from his possession, it said.

The statement quoting DGP Yadav said that acting swiftly on intelligence inputs, Punjab police teams from Counter Intelligence, Jalandhar laid a special 'naka' (check barrier) in the area of Rama Mandi, Jalandhar, and arrested the accused after recovering the sophisticated automatic pistol from his possession.

Sharing more details, Senior Superintendent of Police, Counter Intelligence, Jalandhar, Navjot Singh Mahal said that the accused has received money in his bank account via Dubai and procured the pistol along with ammunition from Samba in J&K.

A case was registered on Monday under relevant sections of the IPC and under the Arms Act at State Special Operations Cell police station in Amritsar, he said, adding further investigations are going on.

5 More Candidates

The voting is scheduled in the Constituency for May 13 under fourth phase.

With two (02) candidates already filing their nominations on April 22, 2024, the number of candidates to contest from the Srinagar Lok Sabha Seat on Tuesday increased to seven. (KNO)

Congress Cradled

It was Modi-ji, who paved the way for making Kashmir an integral part of the country after making Article 370 history. The Congress, as we all know, kept cradling and safeguarding Article 370 for the last 70 years and it wasn't until you elected Modi-ji as PM for the second time, that it was consigned to history," Shah said, invoking the landmark scrapping of the Article, as part of which certain constitutional safeguards and privileges were vested in the erstwhile state.

In a veiled counter to Opposition claims that the BJP-led NDA will bring changes to the Constitution if elected for a third time by a brute majority, Shah said despite securing a decisive mandate in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the Centre used it to remove Article 370 from the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state as opposed to ring-fencing changes to the country's salient statute book.

Through the passage of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 in Parliament, Article 370, which gave special constitutional privileges to the erstwhile state, ceased to exist.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir was split and reorganised into two UTs—Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh—in August 2019.

Also taking aim at the Congress over its approach to dealing with external security threats while in power, the Union Home Minister said the grand old party chose not to respond to misadventures from across the border, in Pakistan, for the sake of safeguarding its 'vote bank'.

"Under the Sonia-Manmohan Singh government, Pakistan would carry out

attacks against us every day and they remained unmoved for the sake of advancing their vote bank politics. When Pulwama and Uri were attacked, after the BJP came to power, we responded in 10 days. Under the leadership of PM Modi, we crossed over into Pakistan and launched surgical and air strikes on terror launch pads and hideouts in Pakistan. Modi-ji also eliminated the threat of Naxalism from Maharashtra," he said.

He said while India ranked 11th among major economies under the Congress, PM Modi made it the fifth-largest major economy. "If you bring him back as PM for a third time, he will make us the third-biggest global economy," Shah added.

Eight Lok Sabha constituencies of Maharashtra will go to polls in the second phase on April 26. In the first phase on April 19, polling was held in Ramtek, Nagpur, Bhandara - Gondiya, Gadchiroli - Chimur, and Chandrapur.

In the second phase, voting will be held in Buldhana, Akola, Amravati, Wardha, Yavatmal-Washim, Hingoli, Nanded, and Parbhani.

The NDA-BJP and the undivided Shiv Sena-won 7 of these 8 seats in 2019. The BJP bagged Akola, Wardha, and Nanded, while the Sena won Buldhana, Yavatmal-Washim, Hingoli, and Parbhani.

Navneet Rana, who is now with the BJP, won Amravati in 2019 as an Independent and is seeking a fresh term from the seat this year on a safe ticket. (ANI)

Mughal Road

said. "Commuters are advised to follow lane discipline, overtaking will lead to congestion," they added.

HC Rejects

contention was that the poplar trees at the roadside were being managed in a negligent manner by PWD as "there was no pruning and removal of the dry, dead and half broken trees which resulted in the accident."

On the other hand, the authorities said that on the fateful day, there was a huge storm which resulted in uprooting and breaking of many trees throughout the Kashmir Valley, therefore, the damage caused was due to natural calamity i.e., an act of God.

The authorities said that trees were on the road side and did not fall within the dangerous activity or non-natural use of land and as such the liability on them in this regard was very limited.

According to the authorities, the sudden act of nature which could not be foreseen had resulted in falling of the trees which would not make them liable to pay compensation

"The trees which were growing on the side of the road are not in non natural use of the land or an hazardous activity to attract the principle of strict liability," a bench of Justice Sindhu Sharma said, adding, "The wind storm was an act of nature and negligence is not attributable to the respondents (authorities). This apart, the court said, the issue whether there was wind storm on the fateful day and same resulted in falling of the tree on the girl and whether the authorities were negligent in maintaining these trees and had not removed the dead and half broken tree, "are all questions of fact which cannot be considered by this Court in these proceedings." Subsequently, the court dismissed the petition.

Govt Reveals 140 Cr

connection status have not been disclosed.

"In column no. 5 of the tabulated information, the date of AAA (end date) is disclosed as 15.03.2024, but on enquiry, Mr. Narinder Khakuria, Special Secretary, Housing & UD Deptt., appearing virtually, has admitted that the said end date has not been adhered to," the order reads.

NGT has also come down heavily on the Municipal Corporation of Srinagar, Municipal Committee Budgam and Municipal Committee Chadoora for not taking serious efforts in restoring the river.

Earlier, in 2022, the Principal Bench of National Green Tribunal imposed a penalty of Rs 35 Crore on the Jammu & Kashmir administration for failing to prevent the discharge of untreated

sewage into the Doodh Ganga, and Mamath Kull (stream) in Srinagar and Budgam districts.

The report that was submitted by the Housing and Urban Department of J&K states that the legacy waste existed at Mamath Kull under Municipal Council, Budgam has been lifted and processed at Tral under the on-going biomining work contract. However, the NGT raised concerns about a separate Rs 32.94 lakh DPR created for an unclear purpose after claiming waste removal completion.

The NGT order, a copy of which lies with Kashmir Observer, reads, "We also find that along with the report are the minutes of meeting held on 17.02.2024 regarding compliance of direction issued on 07.02.2024 and the said minutes of meeting records the stand of representative of PCB in respect of pollution of river as under:

The representative of Pollution Control Board has expressed that the 2 rivers are still polluted and measures need to be taken to arrest the drainage of garbage and untreated sewage in Doodh Ganga and Mamath Kull due to which water quality is deteriorating day by day."

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat, RTI activist had filed an objection to the report along with the proof to the government's report on February 2, 2024 stating that the waste is still dumped on the bank of rivers and there is no progress at the end of the authorities.

Dr Bhat pointed out that sewage is being discharged in the river and the same polluted water from the river is pumped for drinking purposes which is creating health hazards.

The NGT order acknowledges the lack of significant progress despite previous directives and the seriousness of the situation. It warns of imposing environmental compensation on violators for breaching environmental norms.

"The above sequence of events clearly revealed that though substantial time has lapsed after passing of initial order by the Tribunal and bringing it to the notice of local authorities, the gravity of the situation, yet no serious efforts have been made by the local bodies," the order reads, adding, "Hence, the only option left is to impose Environmental Compensation (EC) on the violators for continuous violation of environmental norms."

The matter has been adjourned to the next date giving opportunity to the government to argue on the issue of imposition of EC on the next date of hearing.

The NGT order said the government may file their response in this regard at least one week before the next date of hearing.

Notably, Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat in his application has submitted that a large amount of discharge of sewage and solid waste is being dumped in rivers Doodh Ganga and Mamath Kull.

He further stated that no STPs has been established by the Srinagar Municipal Corporation or any other Government Body in the entire stretch around river Doodh Ganga as a result of which all the untreated sewage from residential, commercial establishments, shopping malls, butcher houses, poultry shops, laboratories, diagnostic centres and domestic sewage are directly discharged into the river without any scientific treatment.

He submitted that a large number of Municipal Solid Wastes are unscientifically dumped on the banks of river Doodh Ganga and during the present rainy season there is a grave danger of the entire waste to be flowing into the river which is a tributary to River Jhelum.

"SMC is continuously discharging untreated sewage in river Doodh Ganga from 13 dewatering pumping stations installed at various locations on the banks of river Doodh Ganga," Bhat had submitted.

"There is a grave danger of the entire waste flowing into the stream which eventually meets River Jhelum, thereby causing major environmental degradation."

The Tribunal had passed an order on August 18, 2021, taking note of grievance, and repeatedly took up the matter, but "till now, no improvement at the ground level has been noticed," NGT said in the order.

27th year OF PUBLICATION

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OR SCAN

Army Commander Reviews Counter-Terror Training Of J&K Police

Agencies

BHADARWAH/JAMMU: Army Commander Lieutenant General M V Suchindra Kumar on Tuesday reviewed the counter-terror training here and commended the collective efforts of the Army and police towards enhancing operational synergy and interoperability among the forces.

A total of 1,114 police sub-inspectors (PSIs), including 146 females, are undergoing training in guerrilla warfare at the Corps Battle School in Jammu and Kashmir's Bhadarwah area.

The Army commander facilitated outstanding achievers among the trainee PSIs undergoing training since March 18.

During his address, the Army commander emphasised the significance of the joint training programme between the Indian Army and the Jammu and Kash-



mir Police, commending their collective efforts towards enhancing operational synergy and interoperability among the forces.

He exhorted all ranks to maintain physical fitness as a hallmark of a professional responder to all security challenges.

Acknowledging the participation of 136 female PSIs, he underscored the commitment towards inclusive training initiatives.

The collaboration between the Indian Army and the Jammu & Kashmir Police was emphasised as indispensable in striving towards a secure and prosperous Jammu and Kashmir.

An Army spokesperson stated that this is the first major training capsule of its kind, where the Army is training officers of the Jammu and Kashmir Police in such large numbers at one go.

The trainee cops expressed confidence that the training provided by the Army would result in better coordination between the two elite organisations through sharing and understanding each other's strengths, ethos, culture, values, and best practices.

"Obviously, we have learned a lot here, and this has given us a lot of confidence to overcome difficult situations, as evident from the positive change in our behaviour," said Sonalika Sharma, a trainee PSI with the Jammu and Kashmir Police.

Another PSI said that what we have learned here has really boosted our confidence, especially at the beginning of our careers. "Besides this, the joint training with the Army will surely help us work in synergy with the Army and coordinate better to help bring peace in Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

RTI Reveals Increase In Criminal Activities In J&K In Last 5 Years

Agencies

SRINAGAR: There has been a surge in various criminal activities, including cases of police corruption, crimes against women, suicides and cyber fraud, data reveals.

According to the data, obtained through a Right to Information (RTI) request filed by M M Shuja in 2019, and available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the number of cases registered against police personnel in the district Srinagar has seen variations over the years.

In 2019, 8 cases were reported, which increased to 12 in 2020, dropped to 3 in 2021, rose again to 6 in 2022, and declined to 4 in 2023.

Similarly, under the category of Crimes Against Women (CAW), there has been a steady increase in reported cases. In 2019, 48 cases were registered, followed by 47 in 2020, 41 in 2021, 70 in 2022, and a spike to 113 in 2023. Five cases were reported up to January 31, 2024.

The RTI data also reveals other categories of criminal activity. Regarding suicide cases, there were 15 cases registered in 2019, which increased

to 26 in 2020, further rose to 51 in 2021, and decreased to 41 in 2022 and 34 in 2023. In the current year, 3 cases were reported up to January.

Similarly, the number of murder cases varied over the years, with 6 cases reported in 2019, 13 in 2020 and 2022, 24 in 2021, and 6 in 2023.

In 2020, 27 cyber fraud cases were reported, resulting in 7 arrests and recovery of Rs 80 lakh. The figures increased in 2021, with 27 cases reported, 39 arrests made, and Rs 1.60 crore recovered. In 2022, 56 cases were registered, leading to 44 arrests and recovery of Rs 3 crore. In



Only 1 case was reported up to January this year.

Kidnapping and rape cases have also shown variations, with 98 cases reported in 2019, 21 in 2020, 100 in 2021, 128 in 2022, 100 in 2023, and 8 cases reported up to January this year.

The data further shows the prevalence of cyber fraud cases, with variations in the number of cases registered and arrests made over the

2023, 56 cases were reported, 42 arrests were made, and Rs 2 crore was recovered. Up to January 2024, 1 cyber fraud case was reported, with recovery exceeding Rs 50 lakh.

Since 2019, 33 policemen have been implicated in corruption cases in Srinagar, resulting in the recovery of Rs 7.9 crore stolen through cybercrime. A total of 235 policemen have retired during this period—(KNO)

Chairman CEPC Tours Srinagar; Interacts With Artisans, Exporters



KO NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Chairman Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC) and Wool and Woollens Export Promotion Council (WWEPC) under the Union Ministry of Textiles, Dr. Romesh Khajuria, during his two day visit to Srinagar, convened an interactive meeting with the manufacturers, exporters and artisans associated with the Carpet Industry of J&K.

Dr. Khajuria highlighted the significant role that Srinagar, located in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, plays in global market for handicrafts and luxury goods.

Known for its rich cultural heritage and skilled artisans, Srinagar has long been renowned for producing high quality handicraft items that are highly in demand by the consumers worldwide, he added.

Dr. Khajuria interacted with

the artisans of village Wailoo Kunzer of Tangmarg in north Kashmir, who crafted the largest hand knotted silk carpet of the world. Dr. Khajuria extended congratulations to the dedicated artisans behind creation of this masterpiece including Mohammad Ashraf Parry, Firdous Ahmad Dar and Mohammad Maqbool Parry.

He is confident that this remarkable creation will attract buyers worldwide, honoring and supporting these artisans' talent and hard work. He also visited M/S Carpets Creativity of Art in Idgah, Srinagar, who are crafting innovative Silk Pashmina Carpets.

Dr. Khajuria exhorted upon all stakeholders to join hands and work harmoniously to overcome challenges, seize opportunities and propel the handmade Carpet Industry to new heights of excellence and prosperity.

Trio Detained Under PIT-NDPS Act In Kupwara

KO NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Three persons have been detained under Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act 1988 (PIT NDPS) in Kupwara district of North Kashmir, said an official on Tuesday. Quoting an official, news agency GNS reported that three persons were recommended and subsequently detained under the PIT NDPS Act for their deep involvement in drug related activities. "The involvement of the trio was established on multiple instances," the official added.

Identifying the detainees

as, Shabir Ahmad Hajam son of Ghulam Rasool, resident of Chek Halmatpora, Azad Ahmad Khan son of Ghulam Ahmad, resident of Chalgund Haihama and Waseem Ahmad Shah son of Habibullah, resident of Harkarpora Awoora, the official further said that all of them have been lodged at Kot Bhalwal jail Jammu.

Confirming it, a senior police officer said that the district police is continuing with its zero-tolerance policy towards the drug menace. "We will make sure that the district is a drug-free zone sooner than later," the police officer said.

Secy DLSA Visits Child Care Institutions At Ganderbal

KO NEWS SERVICE

GANDERBAL: Secretary DLSA Ganderbal, Nusrat Ali Hakak, on Tuesday visited One Stop Crisis Centre (OSC), Wayil Ganderbal, PALAASH (Children Home for boys), Kangan Ganderbal, PARESHA (Children Home for Girls), Gangerhama Ganderbal, and Duriyateem Social Welfare Organization (for girls), Panzin Kangan. During a visit to Children's Homes/Child Care Institutions, Sec-

retary DLSA Ganderbal ascertained the facilities being provided to the children in the said institutions. She reviewed capacity and overcrowding in the said institutions. She interacted with children and staff of the homes/ institutions and asked them to maintain a healthy and effective environment in their respective institutions. She also met children individually to enquire about their well-being, challenges and difficulties.

Traditional 'Zool' Festival Observed With Zeal At Aishmuqam Shrine

Agencies

AISHMUQAM: Hundreds of devotees thronged the holy shrine of Kashmir's noted saint Sakhi Zainuddin Wali (RA) in Aishmuqam and performed the traditional 'Zool' ritual.

Locals from Ashmuqam told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), this year Zool was performed with religious zeal as last year this festival was performed for short time due to the holy month of Ramadan.

"Zool was performed outside cave and most of the people visited the shrine and cave during the day," they said, adding that hundreds of people continue to throng the shrine.

The ritual is performed by devotees as a mark of respect for the saint as it is held to mark the beginning of agricultural activity after a prolonged winter season.

The Sufi saint is believed to have settled in Aishmuqam and is said to have gone into



deep meditation inside the cave and battled a demon that was petrifying the villagers.

To celebrate his victory, people assemble every year and light up their wooden torches and oil lamps.

More than hundred staircases, leading to the shrine, are also lit up by the devotees on the occasion.

"People enter the cave mausoleum, seeking the blessings to end their miseries," said a

devotee, Tanveer Ahmad.

For the thousands of pilgrims, who gather at Ashmuqam, the annual torch festival also symbolizes the end of the long winter and the beginning of the new sowing season.

People from different communities visit the shrine to spread the message of communal harmony and brotherhood, added Tanveer—(KNO)

Transport Dept Issues Comprehensive Advisory For Tourists, Taxi Unions, Others

Agencies

SRINAGAR: In a bid to enhance tourist experiences, the transport Department of Jammu & Kashmir has issued a comprehensive advisory for the visitors, taxi unions and cab drivers in Kashmir.

The advisory, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) asked that taxi unions and individuals to refrain from obstructing or restricting vehicles with valid permits, leaving such actions to the authority of local administration or traffic, tourist police.

"Taxi Unions or any person representing such unions or any individual driver especially at popular tourist destinations like Pahalgam, Sonmarg, Gulmarg, and Dodhpathri etc. shall ensure that no tourist vehicle that carries an all India/J&K permit is obstructed or restricted in any manner or force any tourist to alight from the vehicle before the conclusion of the journey. Only an authority of the local administration or traffic/tourist police shall be competent to do so," states the advisory.

The advisory, a copy of which also lies with KNO, encompasses various facets of responsible and professional conduct expected from taxi operators, aimed at providing tourists with a hassle-free and enjoyable journey.

According to the advisory issued, transport department has outlined specific guidelines and protocols that taxi drivers must adhere to at all times:

Documentation: Drivers are required to carry essen-



tial documents, including a valid driving license, vehicle registration certificate, fitness certificate, vehicle insurance policy, permit copy, PUC certificate, and a list of tourists.

Display of Information: Clear display of registration number plates and permit type on vehicles is mandated to ensure transparency and accountability.

Vehicle Standards: Vehicles must be well-maintained, clean, and regularly serviced. Neat seat covers and a first aid kit are obligatory.

Uniforms: Drivers must wear prescribed uniforms while on duty, as specified by the Transport Department.

Queue Management: Drivers are expected to follow queue systems at airports and other designated places without manipulation or jumping queues.

Fair Pricing: Overcharging is strictly prohibited, and drivers must adhere to the legal fare without imposing additional charges.

Refusal and Alighting: Refusal to carry tourists or asking paid passengers to alight prematurely is forbidden without valid reasons.

Contingency Measures: In case of mechanical breakdowns

or unforeseen circumstances, drivers must arrange alternative transportation for tourists to reach their destination.

Lost Items: Drivers are obligated to conduct a thorough search for any items left by tourists in their vehicles at the end of each journey.

Customer Interaction: Politeness and respectful behavior towards customers are mandatory, fostering a positive and welcoming atmosphere for tourists.

No Smoking Policy: Smoking while on duty is strictly prohibited.

Complaint Handling: Drivers must provide tourists with complaint books upon request and periodically submit them to permit issuing authorities.

Mobile Connectivity: Drivers should ensure their mobile phones are charged and have internet connectivity enabled whenever possible.

No Cell Phone Use While Driving: Cell phone usage while driving is prohibited, and if necessary, drivers must pull over to the left and halt before talking calls.

Avoid Overloading: Vehicles must not be overloaded with passengers or luggage, ensuring passenger safety and comfort—(KNO)

BJP Drops Ladakh MP Namgyal, Names Local Council As Candidate

Agencies

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Tuesday named Tashi Gyalson as its candidate from Ladakh Lok Sabha seat, dropping sitting MP Jamyang Tsering Namgyal.

Gyalson is the chairman-cum-chief executive councillor of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council in Leh.

Namgyal had hit the headlines in 2019 with his speech in Lok Sabha to defend the Narendra Modi government's decision to repeal Article 370 and making Ladakh as a separate Union Territory.

The BJP's decision to drop



Namgyal comes amid resentment towards the ruling party among a section of Buddhists in Leh.

The local sources said Gyalson, who is also a lawyer, is in a better position to maintain the BJP's hold over the seat, which also includes Muslim-majority Kargil. Polling is scheduled for May 20 in the constituency.

LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

Newton Movie Screened In B'la To Empower New Voters

KONEWS SERVICE

BARAMULLA: In an effort to foster active participation of students and the youth in the Lok Sabha Elections 2024, the District Administration, Baramulla, today organized a special screening of election centric feature film 'Newton' at Sherwani Hall, here. The screening is part of a series of voter awareness programs conducted across the district Baramulla under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program, aimed at educating and encouraging voters, especially the newly registered ones, to participate in the electoral process. The District Election Officer (DEO), Baramulla, Minga Sherpa; Dy District Election Officer, Ab Rehman Bhat; Executive Officer, Municipal Council Baramulla attended the screening of the movie with enthusiastic students from various colleges and schools, reflecting

a collective eagerness and excitement towards participating in democratic exercise of voting. Attendees were captivated by the movie's content during the screening, which provided a wholesome experience about the election process inspiring them to wholeheartedly participate in the Lok Sabha Elections by casting their important votes. Speaking during the event, the DEO highlighted that the movie screening is part of the series of activities that District Administration has been conducting throughout the district under SVEEP to maximize voter participation in the Lok Sabha elections. Minga Sherpa elaborated that this initiative specifically targets first-time voters, aiming to provide them with a comprehensive understanding of the democratic voting process with a goal to empower them to actively participate in exercising their right to vote.

CUKashmir Organises Workshop On Earth Day

KO NEWS SERVICE

GANDERBAL, APR 23: School of Life Sciences and Department of Chemistry, Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir) organized a workshop on Earth Day-2024 on the theme "Plastic vs Plastics" for the students and faculty members at Science campus-Nunar here on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Chinnappan Baskar, Head, Department of Chemistry highlighted the collective responsibility of every individual to focus on the circular economy for sustainability in the modern era. He emphasized on protecting the earth from hazardous pollution.

Prof. Azra N Kamili, Senior Professor of the Department of Botany highlighted the impact of micro plastics on ecosystems

and food chain. She deliberated on the importance of celebrating the earth day to create awareness among the masses about the impact of plastics on ecosystem services.

Prof. Abid Hamid Dar, Dean, School of Life Sciences and HoD Biotechnology emphasized the purpose of celebrating the earth day to educate the young minds of the society about the impact of plastics on human health. He stated that the rampant use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers is making way to the food chain and ultimately responsible for causing dreadful diseases in humans. He described plastic pollution as another major threat to the planet earth and stressed on the multidisciplinary approach to tackle the plastic pollution.

Don't Expect Too Many High-Scoring Games In T20 World Cup: Miller

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: South Africa and Gujarat Titans' middle-order batter David Miller doesn't expect too many high-scoring matches in the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Americas as he feels the pitches there will be on the slower side.

Favourable conditions and the much-debated 'Impact Player' rule have helped batters rule the roost in the ongoing IPL, with teams such as Sunrisers Hyderabad piling up scores in excess of 260 on three occasions.

But Miller feels it won't be the same in the T20 World Cup, to be held in the United States and West Indies from June 2.

"It would be hard to say whether the World Cup will produce high-scoring games because the conditions will be very different. The Caribbean might be on the slower side compared to Indian wickets. It's all about assessing the conditions on the day and playing



accordingly," Miller said.

"We are not concerned about that (crossing 200-run mark). We played Sunrisers,

we beat them. I think it's different conditions for different grounds. At the end of the day we have 4 wins from 8, so we

are very much there.

"We don't want to get caught up in what other teams are doing. We are sticking to our

strength," he added.

India captain Rohit Sharma has made it clear that he is not a big fan of the 'Impact Player' rule as it is hampering the growth of all-rounders. A few other top players, including Miller, have also voiced their opposition to the rule.

The 'Impact Player' rule, introduced in 2023, allows all IPL teams to substitute a player -- batter or bowler -- during their respective innings as per the demands of the match.

"Everyone has got their opinions about it but for me I am not a massive fan of the rule. The game of cricket has 11 players and it would be nice to stick to that.

"Rohit said that international cricket is not like that and I feel it's better to keep it the same as international cricket.

"It's creating 6 bowlers and 8 batters, taking all-rounders out of contention. At the end of the rule is there so we have to play according to the rule," he said.

Rishabh Pant's Captaincy Under Lens As DC Play GT



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Rishabh Pant's leadership skills will be under scrutiny as a struggling Delhi Capitals would seek a much-improved performance from their bowlers when they take on an inconsistent Gujarat Titans in the IPL here on Wednesday.

It was not an ideal homecoming for Pant as after two consecutive wins, DC slumped to a 67-run loss against a marauding Sunrisers Hyderabad at home on Saturday.

The loss saw DC slip to the eighth position with three wins and five defeats. They very well know they can't afford to falter if they want to keep their play-off hopes alive.

Against SRH, Pant erred in his decisions a few times, starting from the toss as he misjudged the dew factor at the Arun Jaitley Stadium and decided to bowl first.

Pant's decision to hand the second over to Lalit Yadav, was even more contentious as SRH were off to a blazing start, scoring a record 125 for no loss in the powerplay.

To chase a target of 267, a team needs its openers to fire from ball one but Prithvi Shaw and David Warner haven't been too successful.

Young Jake Fraser-McGurk smashed 65 off just 18 balls to

keep DC in the hunt but he lacked support from the other end, even though Abhishek Porel (42 off 22) tried his best.

Left-arm seamer Khaleel Ahmed's, whose career has been dogged by inconsistency, decision to employ short stuff in the opening over completely backfired.

Pace spearhead Anrich Nortje has been completely off-colour this season and DC would be desperately hoping veteran Ishant Sharma returns after missing the last game due to a back spasm.

Kuldeep Yadav has been DC's best bowler in the season so far with 10 wickets from five games.

GT have also been equally inconsistent under new skipper Shubman Gill. But the three-wicket win over Punjab Kings in their last game has helped the former champions move up slightly in the pecking order at sixth spot from four wins and as many losses.

The likes of Sai Sudharsan, David Miller and Azmatullah Omarzai also need to let their willow do the talking while Rahul Tewatia would look to continue his pyrotechnics towards the end stage of their innings.

On the bowling front, the likes of veteran Mohit Sharma, Noor Ahmad and Rashid Khan will be expected to deliver the goods.

Cricket Match To Increase Voter Awareness Held In Bijbehara

Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Zonal Physical Education Officer Bijbehara, in collaboration with Government Degree College Bijbehara, organized a cricket match under Systematic Voter's Education & Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme on Tuesday at Sports Ground GDC Bijbehara.

The match was designed to engage the youth and promote their active participation in the democratic process.

On the opening and closing ceremony of the match, awareness about the benefits of voting and the importance of each



voter's voice was highlighted by the invited speakers. At the opening ceremony, Convenor Sports Prof. Mukhtar Ahmad spoke about the significance of voting and participation of youth in electoral process.

On the closing ceremony Prof. Ashfaq Maqsood Ali

highlighted the importance of voting and its role in fortifying democracy.

At the closing ceremony, Vice Principal GDC Bijbehara Prof. Bilal Ahmad, along with other officials, distributed trophies and medals among players of both teams.

ZPEO Soibug Holds Cross Country Run To Start Sports Activities



Younis Paray

BUDGAM: Under the supervision of Department of Youth Services and Sports District Officer Budgam, inter-school level road races were held this week, with children Under-14 and Under-17 from different zones participating in the sports competition.

On behalf of Zonal Office Soibug, the department organized a cross-country race at the inter-school zonal level for children Under-14 and Under-17

categories, in which more than 260 children participated.

The race started at 8:00 AM in the morning from Soibug Chowk and passed through the internal link routes of Soibug and ended at Primary School Hakermulla.

In Under-14 race, Salman Hamid secured first, Mohd Asif second and Muhammad Saadat Malik got the third position. In the Under-17 category, Sahil Qayom clinched the first place, Mubashir Ali got the second place and Yawar Imran was third.

Judo Trials For AAG On April 25

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The J&K Sports Council is set to hold Judo selection trials for boys and girls of all age groups on Thursday, April 25, at Polo Ground Indoor Stadium here.

The trials will take place at 3:00 PM and will be conducted by Kubra Altaf, the only SAI-accredited Judo coach in Kashmir Valley. Interested athletes must bring two passport-sized photographs, a xerox of their Aadhaar Card and a track suit. They can also call on +917889453017.

Short TAKES

Indian Team Owner Faces Match-Fixing Charges In SL Legends League

Indian national Yoni Patel, who owns a cricket team in the unsanctioned Legends Cricket League here, is set to be indicted for match-fixing along with compatriot P Akash, a Colombo magistrate's court official has said.

The Indians have been accused of trying to fix matches in the Legends Cricket League which was held between March 8 and 19 at central Kandy district's Pallekele international stadium. A side called Rajasthan Kings defeated New York Super Strikers in the final.

Shooter To Compete In Olympic Trials Despite Not Meeting Criteria

The national shooting federation seems to have bent the rules for one marksman recently, allowing him to participate despite lower-than-requisite scores.

Trap marksman Karan missed the National Rifles Association of India's (NRAI) criteria for shotgun selection trials by two points but was allowed to compete, while several others were not considered.

NRAI secretary Rajiv Bhatia said that since Karan is a "budding" shooter and his "recommendation had come from the Army", an exception was made for him.

Ireland Postpones Series Against Australia Due To Financial Constraints

Cricket Ireland has postponed their white-ball series against Australia scheduled for August this year due to financial constraints, reported Wisden. Australia was set to tour Ireland for three ODIs and a T20I series in August before their massive three ODI and five T20I series against England.

The chief of Cricket Ireland Warren Deutrom confirmed on Monday that the series was postponed keeping in mind the predicted financial loss the board could suffer because of its organisation.

Hamstring Injury Puts Rizwan In Doubt For Rest Of NZ T20I Series

The Pakistan team suffered a major blow in their ongoing T20I series against New Zealand as star batter Mohammad Rizwan's availability for the remaining two games is in doubt after he suffered a hamstring injury in the third game, according to Geo News.

In the third T20I on Sunday, Rizwan had to retire hurt after scoring 22 off 21 deliveries which saw him surpass Babar Azam and Virat Kohli as the fastest player to complete 3,000 T20I runs.

Bonmati, Djokovic Win Laureus Awards



Spain's World Cup winning midfielder Aitana Bonmati was named the Sportswoman of the Year, while Serbia's Novak Djokovic captured the top men's honour at the Laureus awards ceremony on Monday.

Bonmati, who has cemented her place at the top of women's football by winning FIFA's The Best, Ballon d'Or and World Cup MVP among other accomplishments. Meanwhile, the Serb equaled Margaret Court's all-time record haul of 24 Grand Slam titles after winning US Open last September.

Ten Hag Says Reaction To Man Utd FA Cup Win A 'Disgrace'

Agencies

LONDON: Erik ten Hag says the media reaction to Manchester United's performance in the FA Cup semi-final against Coventry was "a disgrace", robustly defending his side's achievement in reaching a second straight final.

United surrendered a 3-0 lead at Wembley on Sunday and were saved from a humiliating exit in extra time only by a VAR intervention, which ruled out a goal for offside in the final moments.

They eventually scraped through against the Championship side on penalties to set up a re-match of last year's final against City.

Ten Hag admitted after the match his team had "got away with it" but played down any notion of embarrassment.

But he has been widely criticized, adding to speculation he is on borrowed time at Old Trafford.

Former Premier League



striker Chris Sutton said the performance would "cement his sacking".

But Ten Hag was in defiant

mood on the eve of United's Premier League match against bottom side Sheffield United on Wednesday.

"You asked the question: 'Is it embarrassing?' No, the reaction from you was embarrassing," he told reporters on Tuesday.

"It is the comments. Top football is about results. We made it to a final and we deserved it not only by this game but also the other games.

"We lost control for 20 minutes, we also had bad luck, 3-2, 3-3. We were very lucky in the end, it is clear. Penalties was very good and we made it to the final, it is a huge achievement. Twice, in two years, is magnificent. For me as a manager, four cup finals in four years.

"The comments are a disgrace."

United, winless in their past four Premier League games, are in danger of missing out on a European spot next season after a poor campaign.

They are already realistically out of the race to qualify for the lucrative Champions League but still have the Europa League and the Europa Conference League to aim for.

"We have to win every game, we know that," said Ten Hag. "That's what United stands for and that is our approach, go from game to game but we have to qualify for Europe and we now have two opportunities -- in the league and the FA Cup final."

Ten Hag said he would work closely with newly appointed technical director Jason Wilcox to determine the future direction of the club.

Wilcox, 53, has left second-tier Southampton to take up the job at Old Trafford with immediate effect.

"We have to form a partnership, which is very important," said Ten Hag. "We are a little bit behind in the process so we have to catch up and we will go and speed up the process." (AFP)