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SRINAGAR BOAT TRAGEDY

Body Of Missing Minor Retrieved After 11 Days



KO WEB DESK

Srinagar: The body of a minor, who was missing after the April 16 boat capsize tragedy in the Ihelum river here, was recovered on Friday, taking the death toll in the incident to seven, officials said

The body of a minor boy who drowned in the tragedy in the Gandabal area in the outskirts of the city here, was retrieved from the river near the Old Zero Bridge in the Rajbagh area of the city, the officials said. They said that the body was shifted to SMHS Srinagar for medicolegal formalities.

News of the discovery spread like wildfire through Gandbal. The pall of gloom that had shrouded the community for eleven days deepened. The cries, a constant undercurrent since the boat capsized, rose in a fresh wave of anguish. Women wailed, their grief echoing off through the streets of Gandbal. Men, their faces etched with despair, hurried towards the riverbank.

With the recovery of Haziq's body, the death toll in the Gandbal boat capsize has reached seven while two bodies continue to remain missing.

Locals of Gandbal area of Srinagar said that a body was seen at Zero-bridge and was retrieved without any delay. Later, the body was identified as Haziq Ahmed Sheikh, 11, of Gandbal, who had drowned along with six others in river Jehlum and was missing since April 16. Since then, religious scholars of different schools of thought have visited Gandbal to share the pain and grief of bereaved families. They also prayed for the | More on P10

LS POLLS PHASE II

Jammu Records 71.91 % Voter Turnout

Agencies

Jammu: People in huge numbers came out to vote in the second phase of elections parliamentary for Jammu Lok Sabha seat and enthusiasm was seen among all the age groups as the constituency recorded 71.91 percent of voting all across.

Be it centenarians, retirees, newly married or young, everyone came out

'COMBATING DRUG MENACE'

102-Yr-Old Votes For

Youth Employment

at a polling station in | More on P10

to cast his or her vote. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Assembly segment of district Reasi topped the list with over 79.91 percent polling whereas Bahu Assembly

the

62.34 percent. People Jammu,

Jammu district

lowest turnout at

segment

recorded

Samba and Reasi districts made sure that they come out in large numbers and cast their vote in favour of their candidate who they want to represent them in the Lok Sabha for the next five years. Long queues were seen all across both men and women and even in posh colonies like Gandhinagar and Trikuta Nagar,

people were

n a first of its kind move towards inclusivity and environmental consciousness, the Election Commission of India (ECI) established 109 remarkable polling stations of different | More on P10

109 Special Polling Stations Set Up

Border Residents Vote Without Fear Of Shelling

ithout the fear of Pakistan shelling amid a ceasefire, people living near the International Border and Line of Control in Jammu thronged the polling stations across Jammu to decide the fate of 22 candidates contesting from the constituency in the second phase of Lok Sabha polls on Friday. According to Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Jammu and Kashmir Pandurang K Pole, a total of 158 polling stations, out of 2,416, were set up in the border areas in Jammu and Samba districts besides the Kalakote-Sunderbani segment in Rajouri district. The Jammu parliamentary constituency recorded 67.22 per cent polling, while its border | More on P10

EVM VVPAT CASE

SC Rejects Pleas Seeking Paper Audit Of Votes



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday rejected pleas seeking complete cross-verification of votes cast using EVMs with a Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) and said "blindly distrusting" any aspect of the system can breed unwarranted scepticism.

Maintaining that "democracy is all about striving to build harmony and trust between all institutions", a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta delivered two concurring verdicts and dismissed all the pleas in the matter, including those seeking | More on P10

'Use of School Children For Election Campaign'

102-year-old man, batting for jobs for

Jammu and Kashmir, went out to vote

vouth to tackle the drug menace in

NCPCR Asks ECI To Take Action Against Mehbooba

Agencies

Srinagar: The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) Chairperson Priyank Kanoongo has submitted a written complaint to the Chief Election Commissioner of the Election Commission of India, accusing Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

President Mehbooba Mufti of allegedly using school-going children for the election campaign for the Rajouri-Anantnag seat.

In a letter titled, 'Use of school-going children for the election campaign for Rajouri-Anantnag P.C. by Ms. Mehbooba Mufti,' the NCPCR expressed concern over reports | More on P10

Separatist Ideology 'Dead' In J&K: Sajad Lone

Says People Realised It Is Futile

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: The ideology of separatism is "dead" in Jammu and Kashmir as people realised it is futile, separatist-turned-mainstream politician Sajad Lone said.

In a freewheeling interview with PTI, the Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference (JKPC) chief called for an end



to violence, saying, "India is our land and there is no ambiguity

about that." Asked if the separatist ideology is dead and buried in Jammu

and Kashmir, Lone said, "I think

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yes, it is. I think it is dead. People see that it was futile and I would also add that the ball is in Delhi's court (now)," said Lone. "Kashmiris are ready to be a

part of India but they are looking at a dignified coexistence, they are not looking at the status of indignity or (being) unequal Indians.

They are looking at being Indians with pride and at par with an Indian from Gujarat or Maharashtra or Tamil Nadu," he added. | More on P10

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Er Rashid Files Nomination From Jail

Agencies

Srinagar: The nomination form of incarcerated Kashmiri politician Engineer Rashid, nominated as the Awami Ittehad Party's (AIP) candidate for the Baramulla Lok Sabba seat in north Kashmir, was formally received by his party from the Deputy Commissioner's office in Baramulla on Friday.

Confirming the receipt of the nomination form, AIP spokes-man Firdous Baba said that the party had nominated a covering candidate, Prince Parvez, who is also the party's general secretary, to handle formalities in Engineer Rashid's absence. Parvez collected the form from the DC office today on behalf of Engineer Rashid.

Baba further revealed that the party has dispatched its legal team to New Delhi to ensure all necessary formalities are in order for filing Engineer Rashid's nomination. The Election Commission of | More on P10 LS Polls In Anantnag-Rajouri Seat

Mehbooba, Omar **Warn Against Poll Deferment**

Press Trust Of India

National Srinagar: Conference Leader Omar Abdullah and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti asked the Election Commission not postpone polls in the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat.

The former chief ministers made the appeal after the EC sought a report from Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo and the Chief Electoral Officer on representations submitted by some parties and three candidates seeking rescheduling of elections

Will Respect



constituency in the due to adverse weather conditions.

"I appeal to the EC that such a step should not be taken. The demand for postponement is not from all parties. The weird thing is that some of the people who have written to the EC are not contesting. If I write to the EC about constituencies in Tamil Nadu etc. will they take notice," he told a press conference in Srinagar.

Abdullah said "all options are open", including | More on P10

EC's Decision: JK BJP

■ith some candidates seeking postponement of polls in the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat due to adverse weather conditions, Jammu and Kashmir BJP chief Ravinder Raina on Friday said they will respect any | More on P10

HC Quashes PSA Detention Of Jel Leader

KO Web Desk

Ruhullah's

Nomination

Found Valid

Srinagar: Amidst a controversy surrounding a potential birth year discrepancy, the nomination papers of Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, National Conference candidate for Srinagar Lok Sabha seat were deemed valid by the election authorities on Friday.

During the scrutiny of all 39 nomination papers received for the seat, 29 nominations were found valid as per the guidelines of the Election Commission of India. The rejected candidates include National Conference leader Salman Sagar, who was the covering candidate of the party.

While 29 candidates are in the fray in the Srinagar Lok Sabha seat, with National Conference leader Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi and PDP youth wing president Waheed Parra being the main contenders. | More on P10

Orders Rs 5 lakh Compensation

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has asked government to pay Rs five lakh as compensation to forspokesperson of banned Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI), Advocate Ali Mohammad Lone alias Zahid of Nehama, Pulwama, as it quashed 4th detention order in a row under Public Safety Act against him.

"A quote by Laura Miller "The past is a very determined ghost, haunting every chance it gets" seems to be, though unsaid, but the underlying basis of the mindset of the Sr. Superintendent of Police Pulwama and the purported subjective satisfaction of District Magistrate Pulwama passed on even to the



Govt. in the matter of subjecting the petitioner to suffer fourth time preventive detention in row following each other in the fashion as passing of baton amongst relay race runners," a bench of Justice Rahul Bharti said.

"The petitioner has been made to suffer loss of his liberty for a cumulative period of more than 1080 days of preventive custody covered under the span of four detention orders in row from | More on P10

LAND SINKS IN **RAMBAN** Over 50

Houses, Power Infra Damaged

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: More than 50 houses, four electricity towers, a receiving station, and a main road were damaged in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district dur to sinking of a road, ofdur to sinking or a ficials said on Friday.

Deputy

Commissioner Baseer-ul-Haq Choudhary visited the Pernote village, five kms from the district headquarters, on Friday morning and assured assistance to the affected families and restoration of essential services, including electricity.

Houses started developing cracks and the road connectivity between Gool and Ramban snapped Thursday evening following | More on P10

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Al-Model Developed To Predict Irregular Heartbeat 30 Minutes Before Onset

Press Trust of India

esearchers have developed a new AI-based model that can predict irregular heartbeat, or cardiac arrhythmia, about 30 minutes

The researchers found that the model proved to be 80 per cent accurate in predicting the transition from a normal cardiac rhythm to atrial fibrillation, the most common type of cardiac arrhythmia in which the heart's upper chambers (atria) beat irregularly and are out of sync with the lower ones (ventricles).

The team, including researchers at the University of Luxembourg, said that their AI-model, which gives early warnings, could be easily installed in smartphones to process the data recorded on smartwatches. The warnings could allow patients to take preventive measures to keep their cardiac rhythm stable, they said. The study is published in the journal Patterns.

For developing the model, the team trained it on 24 hour-long recordings gathered from 350 patients at Tongji Hospital in Wuhan, China. The model, that the researchers have named WARN (Warning of Atrial fibRillatioN), is based on deep-learning, a type of machine-learning AI algorithms that learn patterns from past data to make predictions.

Deep-learning is more specialised as it has multiple layers in its decision-making process. The researchers found that WARN gave early warnings, on average 30 minutes before the start of atrial fibrillation, and is the first method to provide a warning far from onset, they said.

"We used heart rate data to train a deep learning model that can recognise different phases -- (normal) sinus rhythm, pre-atrial fibrillation and atrial fibrillation -- and calculate a 'probability of danger' that the patient will have an imminent episode," Jorge Goncalves, from the Luxembourg Centre for Systems Biomedicine (LCSB), University of Luxembourg, and the study's corresponding author, said.

When approaching atrial fibrillation, the probability increases until it crosses a specific thresh-

old, providing an early warning, Goncalves said. Being of low computational cost, the AI-model is "ideal for integration into wearable technologies," the researchers said.

These devices can be used by patients on a daily basis, so our results open possibilities for the development of real-time monitoring and early warnings from comfortable wearable devices," study author Arthur Montanari, an LCSB



Stunting Risk Higher Among Children Living In India's Hills, **Mountains: Study**

Press Trust Of India

hildren living in India's hills and mountains are at an increased risk of stunted growth, with the risk increasing with a rise in altitude, according to new research published in the British Medical Journal Nutrition, Prevention & Health.

Analysing data of more than 1.65 lakh children under five years of age, researchers observed that stunting was more common among those born as a third or later child to parents, and those having a small size at birth.

Data was included from the 2015-16 National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) for analysis. The WHO standards were used to define stunting.

The researchers, including those from Manipal Academy of Higher Education, suggested that continuous exposure to high-altitude environments can reduce appetite and limit oxygen and nutrient absorption, even though a direct causal link was not established in the observational study. The team also said that food insecurity in hilly and mountainous regions tends to be more, arising out of lower crop yields and harsher climate. Providing access to healthcare

menting nutritional programmes, is challenging, they said. The overall prevalence of stunting among these children was found to be 36%. Prevalence was higher among children aged 1.5-5 years (41%) than

in these regions, including imple-

those under 1.5 years (27%). In their analysis, the researchers found that 98% of the children lived at altitudes less than 1000 metres above sea level, and 1.4% lived between 1000 and 2000 metres above sea level, and 0.2% lived at more than 2000 metres above sea level. Children living at locations 2000 metres or more above sea level were found to be 40% more at risk of stunting than those living 1000 metres above sea level.

The analysis also found that stunting was prevalent in 44% of thirdborns or children higher in birth order among siblings, compared to 30% in firstborns. Stunting rates were still higher (45%) among children who were small or very small at birth.

The researchers found that mother's education levels was an influential factor, with prevalence in stunted growth falling with rising educational attainment. They also found that postpregnancy care, including clinic visits, vaccinations, and health supplements, and being located closer to health facilities, were protective factors.

The authors found that not belonging to a particular caste or indigenous tribe too was a protective factor.

"A multipronged approach should combine reproductive health initiatives, women's nutrition programmes, infant and young child feeding interventions, and food security measures," the authors wrote.

"Continued research, monitoring, and evaluation will be key to guide evidence-based policies and targeted action to ensure every Indian child has the opportunity for healthy growth and development," they wrote.

Subject: - Grant of Registration of the Proposed Travel unit under the name & style "M/s Kashmir majesty tour & travels Situated at

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, I Mr./Ms. mohammad Hussain Kand S/o Manzoor Ahmad Kand R/o: Kand mohalla nehru park Srinagar Kashmir intends to apply in the Department of Tourism for Registration of my proposed Travel Unit under the name and style "M/s kashmir Majesty tour & travels situated at DD bagh Hawal Srinagar Kashmir under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12 Newspaper Whereas, I will submit State Subject/ Domicile Certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan Card, Experience Certificate (Minimum 05 Years), Character Certificate (Police Department), Bank State- ment (Minimum Balance 10000), Site Plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested by Sub-Registrar, Printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting Card), Photograph of the Unit (Indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size photographs to the Department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency. Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before my case is processed for registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/ Financial Institutions/Bank/Organization, etc for objection, If any and the same should reach to the Deputy Directo: Tourism Registration (e-mail Id:- ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this no-tice in leading local newspaper/newspapers of the valley. No objections beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained.

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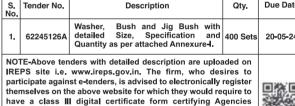
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Anybody having objection in this regard may contact RTO Kashmir within seven days from the publication of this notice. After which no objection will be entertained.

Shakeel Ahmad Matta

S/o: Abdul Rehman Matta R/o: Usmania Colony Bemina Srinagar Kashmir pd

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Amount in Demand Notice (excluding interest and other expenses from 01.03.2023)	Rs.1,82,98,036.55/- (Rupees One Crore eighty two lac ninety eight thousand thirty six & paisa fifty five only)			
Legal and other Charges Due as on 31.03.2024 Amount Due as on 31.03.2024 (Excluding interest from 01-04-2024.	Rs. 2,74,589-/- (Rupees Two Lac seventy Four Thousand Five Hundred And Eighty Nine Only) Rs. 2,27,21,877.55-/- (Rupees Two Crore Twenty Seven Lac Twenty One Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Seven And Paisa Fifty Five Only). INCLUDING LAW CHARGES OF Rs. 2,74,589-/- (Rupees Two Lac Seventy Four Thousand Five Hundred And Eighty Nine Only).			
Description of the mortgaged Property/ Secured Asset (Put on sale)	Residential building along with land measuring 2K 18M 5 Sarsai falling under Khasra No 41 min (02 K 04 M) Khata No 165 Khewat No 26 Khasra no. 285/28min(14M 05 Sirsai) Khewat no. 1 Khata no. 2 situated at Drien Dawlatabad, Tehsil Dooru District Anantnag			
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upto date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of e-auction and get the property redeemed, failing which th Date: 25.04.2024 **AUTHORIZED OFFICER**

DLSA conducts OSC Bemina, DHEW Mission Shakti Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar, under the aegis of the Jammu and Kashmir Legal Services Authority and as per the plan of action for the month of April 2024, visited One Stop Centre (OSC) Bemina and District Hub for Empowerment of Women (DHEW) Mission Shakti Srinagar, today under the guidance of Jawad Ahmed, Chairman (PDJ) DLSA Srinagar.

Jahangir Ahmed Bakshi, Secretary DLSA Srinagar along with Mukhtar Ahmed, District Social Welfare Srinagar, visited One Stop Centre (OSC) Bemina and District Hub for Empowerment of Women Mission Shakti Srinagar to assess the functioning and effectiveness of these facilities.

During the inspection, Adv. Asiya Farooq, Incharge OSC, Ruqaya, District Mission Coordinator of District Hub for Empowerment of Women Mission Shakti Srinagar, Adv. Zainah Amin Para Legal Lawyer, Rubina Shafi and Sabira Bashir, Case workers, Sehar Qureshi, counselor and other staff of OSC and other staff were present.

During the inspection, the team reviewed the functioning of the One Stop Centre and District Hub for Empowerment of Women Mission Shakti Srinagar. It also assessed the facilities and services provided by them and ensured compliance with legal provisions and standards and identified areas for improvement.

During the inspection, it was revealed that from December 2022 to April 2024, the OSC and DHEW have provided various services and facilities to 324 women who have been Survivors of violence in collaboration with District Legal Services Authority, Srinagar. These services include counseling, legal aid, medical assistance, Self help, etc.

In addition, to this the availability of the National Helpline number 181 for women, which provides 24/7 support to women in distress and NALSA Helpline number 15100, which also offers assistance to women in need.

'Contesting Polls To 'Break Prevailing Silence' In Kashmir'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) candidate for Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency, Waheed-ur-Reham Parra on Friday said the party is contesting Lok Sabha elections to "break the silence prevailing for the last couple of vears" in Kashmir.

He said the people are showing their love and affection towards the PDP, which

gives them positive vibes. Parra said the ongoing Lok Sabha elections are more like a chance for the PDP to reach out to the people as they want to "break the silence" here and show solidarity to the people.



Mirwaiz Criticize Authorities For Worsening Electricity Crisis

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Mirwaiz Umar Farooq while addressing the Friday congregation at the historic Jamia Masjid Srinagar on Friday said that the electricity situation in Kashmir has become alarming.

"Although lack of electricity has been an issue since decades, it has never been so bad at this time of year. People from all over the valley have been calling on me and expressing their deep concern about lack of electricity," Mirwaiz said in a statement. "It is the fundamental duty

of the ruling dispensation to provide the basic amenities of electricity to the people. Despite having huge water resources and generation capacity, the electricity produced by the state is exported outside and we who have the first right to it are living in darkness. We are told that great prosperity has come to us when the basic facility of electricity is nowhere. Lack of electricity is severely impacting our daily life, leaving our homes and business powerless," he said.

Mirwaiz said that it is not that people are not paying, in the past few years power tariff has been increased three times, smart meters have been installed all over and yet electricity is elusive.

He urged the authorities to immediately take corrective measures and ensure undisrupted power supply to people who are facing severe problems due

Despite having huge water resources and generation capacity, the electricity produced by the state is exported outside and we who have the first right to it are living in darkness

Weeklong Workshop On 'Fracture & **Fatigue Study' Concludes At NIT Srinagar**

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A weeklong day workshop on 'Fracture and Fatigue Study Using Experimental and Modeling Numerical Techniques,' under the Karvashala scheme concluded at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar.

The workshop, held from 19th to 25th April, 2024, aimed to enhance participants' understanding of fracture and fatigue

phenomena in materials. Students from various parts of India participated in the workshop, which featured lectures delivered by esteemed

faculties from renowned institutions such as IITs and NITs. The workshop also included hands-on laboratory sessions to provide participants with practical experience.

The valediction ceremony, held on Thursday marked the conclusion of the workshop. Prof. A. Ravinder Nath, Director NIT Srinagar was the chief patron of the organizing committee.

Prof. (HAG) G A Harmain, Dean Faculty Welfare, Prof. (HAG) M F Wani, Prof Atikur Rahman Registrar NIT Srinagar were the patrons and Prof Adnan Qayoum was the chairman of the

organizing committee.

The event was presided over by Prof. G A Harmain, Dean Faculty Welfare, who graced the ceremony as the Chief Guest

In his message, Prof. Harmain, who has also worked extensively in the area of fracture and fatigue. commended the coordinators for their efforts in organizing a highly informative and engaging workshop.

> Prof. Adnan Qayoum, HOD Mechanical Engineering Department, expressed his appreciation for the active participation of all attendees and emphasized the workshop's importance in fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Office of the Returning Officer, I-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency

(Deputy Commissioner) Baramulla entbaramulla@bgmail.com, entbaramulla@nic.in

GREATER PARTICIPATION FOR A STRONGER DEMOCRACY

ELECTION URGENT PHONE: 01952-234210 | FAX: 01952-234005

of 1-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency reg.

During the nomination period for the 1-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency, spanning from April 26, 2024 to May 3, 2024, nomination papers will be accepted between 11:00 AM and 03:00 PM on any working day at Office of the Returning Officer (Deputy Commissioner Baramulla) except for the following holidays:

April 27, 2024 (Saturday) - Bank Holiday as per the Negotiable Instrument Act 1881. April 28, 2024 (Sunday) - Sunday.

Please note that nominations will not be accepted on the above mentioned holidays.

No. DEOB/2024/5583-97 Date: 26 /04-2024

Returning Officer 1-Baramulla Rarliamery Constituency (Deputy Commissioner) Baramulla

FORM 1 (See rule 3 NOTICE OF ELECTION

Office Of The Returning Officer 02-Srinagar Parliamentry Constituency

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Contact: 0194-2471194, Email: dcsgr-jk@nic.in, entsrinagar@nic.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

In view o! the Lok Sabha Election-2024, the Election Commission of India has0 appointed Election Observers for 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency. General Public and other stakeholders, through the medium of this notice are hereby informed to approach the respective Observers on the below given contact details, in case of any information, issue or grievance tor free, fair, transparent and smooth conduct of Lok Sabha Elections in O2-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency.

S. No.	Name of Observer	Observer for	Contact No.
1.	Mr. Mukul Kumar (IAS-2011)	General	8491851504
2.	Mr. Sandeep Singh Chauhan (IPS-2005)	Police	8491826997
3. Mr. Sambit Mishra (IRS-2004)		Expenditure	9596855198

Participation of electorates of O2-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency in Lok Sabha Election-2024 is invaluable for upholding the democratic process and your reports/ feedback will surely contribute in maintaining the integrity and credibility of election process.

> (Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat) IAS **Returning Officer** 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency

No.: 834 /DEOS/2024/12048-103 DIPK-221/24 Dated: 25-04-2024

Notice is hereby given that;

- (1) an election is to be held of a member to the House of the People in the 1- Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency;
- (2) nomination papers may be delivered by a candidate or by any of his proposers to the Returning Officer (Deputy Commissioner Baramulla) or to Specified Assistant Returning Officer, Arshad Ahmad Khan (Assistant Commissioner Revenue Baramulla), at Office of the Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Deewan Bagh, Baramulla between 11:00 A.M. and 03:00 P.M. on any day (other than public holiday) not later than the 3rd May, 2024 (Friday);
- (3) forms of nomination paper may be obtained at the place and times aforesaid;
- (4) nomination paper will be taken up for scrutiny at Office of the Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Deewan Bagh, Baramulla on 04th May, 2024 (Saturday) at 10:00 A.M.
- (5) notice of withdrawal of candidature may be delivered either by a candidate or by any of his proposers or by his election agent who has been authorised in writing by the candidate to deliver it to either of the officers specified in paragraph (2) above at his office before 03:00 P.M. on 6th May, 2024 (Monday);
- (6) in the event of the election being contested, the poll will be taken on 20th May, 2024 (Monday) between the hours of 07:00 A.M. and 06:00 P.M.

Place: Baramulla

Date: 26th April, 2024

DIPK-219/24 DATED: 25-04-2024





FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES: 2479488,2452222,2452155

> CAPD: 18001807011 SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

Ambulance: Kashmer EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259 ANANTNAG: 01932-228243 BARAMULLA: 0194-102029 BIJBHERA: 01932-228243

PAMPORE: 01933-294132

PATTAN: 01954-293507

OAZIGUND: 01951-296153



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

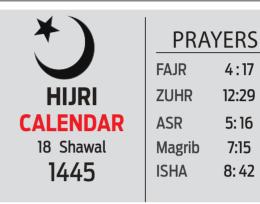
4:17

12:29

5:16

7:15

8:42



This Day In History

- 1296 Battle of Dunbar: The Scots are defeated by Edward I of England.
- 1518 Treaty of St Truiden: anti-French Trapdoors/ Bourgondisch covenant
- 1522- Battle of La Bicocca: a combined French and Venetian was decisively defeated by a Spanish-Imperial and Papal army
- 1522 Battle at Bicacca: Charles I & Dpe Adrianus VI beat France
- 1526- Mughal King Babur beats sultan of Delhi 1650 - The Battle of Carbisdale: Royalist army under Marquess of Montrose invades mainland Scotland from Orkney; defeated by a Covenanter
- 1662- Netherlands & Trance sign military covenant
- 1805 US Marines attack shores of Tripoli 1861- US President Abraham Lincoln suspends
- writ of habeas corpus (US Civil War) 1863 - Battle of Streight's raid: Tuscumbia
- to Cedar Bluff, AL
- 1865 Steamboat "SS Sultana" explodes in the Mississippi River, killing up to
- 1,800 of the 2,427 passengers in the greatest maritime disaster in United States history. Most were paroled Union POWs on their way home.
- 1890- French troops under Capt Archinard occupy Oussebougou West Sudan
- 1909- Sultan of Turkey Abdul Hamid II is
- 1911 Following the resignation and death of William P. Frye, a compromise is reached to rotate the office of President pro tempore (for the time being) of the United States Senate.
- 1911- Indian passive resistance is suspended when Gen. J.C. Smuts enters into negotiations with Mahatma Gandhi.
- 1915-Counterattack launched by Turkish forces under the command of Mustafa
- Kemal Atatürk against allied troops 1941- German troops occupy Athens, Greece
- 1942- Belgian Jews are forced to wear stars
- 1943- Soviet Union breaks contact with Polish government exiled in London 1945-Italian partisans capture Benito Mussolini
- at Dongo (Lake Como) 1945- World War II: The Völkischer Beobachter. the
- newspaper of the Nazi Party, ceases publication.

From KO Archives

Gone Are The Days When We Would Be Dismissed: Faroog

Observer News Service

AMMU: Chief minister Dr. Farooq Abdullah today ridiculed threats of dismissing his government saying the National Conference was governing the state with massive support of the people who were the real fountain of power.

Nobody can; dismiss us, gone are such days, Dr. Abdullah declared at a largely attended rally organised to felicitate the newly elected member to Rajya Sabha, Mirza Abdul Rashid at Zanana Park here

Without naming Mufti Sayed's People's Democratic Party, the chief minister said some parties were roaming in villages saying that their stand on holding talks with militants has been vindicated. Truth is that decision of releasing Hurriyat Conference leaders was taken after consultations between the state and central governments". He said he was not against holding talks with anybody provided these are held within the constitution.

(Kashmir Observer, 27 April, 2000)

SC Seeks EC's Reply On PIL for Fresh Poll If NOTA Gets **Majority In Constituency**

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: In a significant development amid the ongoing general elections, the Supreme Court on Friday asked for a response from the poll panel on a PIL seeking framing of rules to nullify an election and order fresh one if NOTA (none of the above) option gets majority over other candidates.

The top court issued notice to the Election Commission on the PIL filed by author, activist and motivational speaker Shiv Khera.

The NOTA option is provided to the voters in the elections in pursuance of the 2013 apex court verdict.

The top court, in its 2013 judgement, had held that "a provision of negative voting would be in the interest of promoting democracy as it would send clear signals to political parties and their candidates as to what the electorate thinks about them" and directed the Election Commission to provide the option of NOTA in all

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra took note of the submissions of senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for Khera, and issued the

Initially, the bench was reluctant to consider the PIL, saying it was for the "executive to decide'

"We will issue a notice. This is about the electoral process also. Let us see what the Election Commission has to say ..., the CJI said.

The senior advocate said that present plea was important keeping in mind the development at Surat in Gujarat where a BJP nominee was declared winner before polling as some nomination papers were rejected and few withdrew from the race.

"It is most respectfully prayed that this Court may be pleased to issue a writ... directing the Election Commission to frame rules to the effect that if NOTA gets a majority, the election held in the particular constituency shall be declared null and void and a fresh election shall be conducted to the constitu-

ency," it said. The PIL also sought a direction to the poll panel to frame rules stating that the candidates who poll fewer votes than NOTA shall stand debarred from contesting all elections for a period of five years.

It also sought a direction to ensure "proper and efficient reporting/publicity of NOTA as a 'fictional candidate'".



Modi's Guarantee For 2024 Polls - Uniform Civil Code Across India: Shah

Press Trust Of India

Guna, Madhya Pradesh: Union Home Minister Amit Shah today said the BJP-led government at the Centre will implement a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in the country as it is a guarantee of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and accused the Congress of advocating personal laws.

Amit Shah was addressing a rally in Piprai area of Ashoknagar district under Guna Lok Sabha seat in Madhya Pradesh, from where Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia is contesting as a BJP candidate.

Targeting Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Amit Shah said, "Rahul Baba, you can do whatever you want

In 2019, the Modi government abrogated Article 370 in just one stroke. Rahul Baba got afraid and said that rivers of blood will flow...But Rahul Baba,

this is not a Congress government...It's Modi government. They don't even have the courage to hurl a single stone, let alone talk about rivers of blood

for appeasement. As long as BJP is there, it will not allow personal laws. It is our promise and a guarantee of Modiji that we will implement UCC in the entire country as we have done in Uttarakhand."

He also said the Modi government has ended Maoist extremism and terrorism in the country.

"In 2019, the Modi government abrogated Article 370 in just one stroke. Rahul Baba got afraid and said that rivers of blood will flow... But Rahul Baba, this is not a Congress government...It's Modi government. They don't even have the courage to hurl a single stone, let alone talk about rivers of blood," Amit Shah said.

"The government has freed the country from terrorism and Maoist extremism and also liberated Madhya Pradesh from it," he added.

Columbia University Takes Back Deadline Set For Protesters To Leave Campus

Agencies

New York: Columbia University backed off late Thursday from an overnight deadline for pro-Palestinian protesters to abandon an encampment there as more college campuses in the United States sought to prevent occupations from taking hold.

Police have carried out large-scale arrests in universities across the country, at times using chemical irritants and tasers to disperse protests over Israel's war with Hamas.

The office of New Yorkbased Columbia University president Minouche Shafik issued a statement at 11:07 pm (0307 GMT Friday) retreating from a midnight deadline to dismantle a large tent camp with around 200 students.

"The talks have shown progress and are continuing as planned," the statement said. We have our demands; they have theirs.

The statement denied that New York City police were invited on the campus. "This rumor is false," it said.

A student, identifying herself only as Mimi, told AFP she had been at the camp for seven days.

"They call us terrorists. they call us violent. But...

they're the ones that called in the police when students were sitting in a circle," she said.

The police are the ones with guns, the police are the ones with tasers, we only have our voices.'

Student protesters say they are expressing solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza, where the death count has topped 34,305, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry.

More than 200 people protesting the war were arrested Wednesday and early Thursday at universities in Los Angeles, Boston and Austin, Texas, where around 2,000 people gathered again on Thursday.

Riot officers in the southern state of Georgia used chemical irritants and tasers to disperse protests at Emory University in Atlanta.

Photographs showed police wielding tasers as they wrestled with protesters on neatly manicured lawns.

The Atlanta Police Department said officers responding to the school's request for help were "met with violence" and used "chemical irritants" in their response.

The spreading protests began at Columbia University, which has remained the epicenter of the student protest movement.

Pak PM Urged For Trade Talks With India To Revive Economy

Press Trust Of India

Islamabad: Pakistan business leaders in an interactive session with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urged him to initiate trade talks with India to promote business and commerce which would greatly benefit the economy of the cash-strapped country.

Posing tough questions during an hour-long meeting at the Sindh CM House in Pakistan's commercial capital on Wednesday, Karachi's business community appreciated the prime minister's determination to tackle economic issues but advised him to focus on bringing about political stability to "turn around" the economy

The Prime Minister sat down with the business community to find ways to uplift the economy through exports but his resolve was met with apprehensions from industry leaders who said it was "almost impossible" to do business under the current circumstances, particularly

with high energy costs and inconsistent government policies, the Dawn newspaper reported.

After the prime minister's brief speech, the house was opened for a question and answer session, during which business leaders voiced their appreciation for the government's recent moves, but made more demands.

They also shared proposals for economic policies to achieve desired results.

There was a sense of concern among the business leaders over the political instability in the country for which they even advised the Prime Minister to take initiative as the head of the government. "You have made a few

handshakes after taking charge that have produced good results and progress on the IMF deal is one of them,' said Arif Habib, the chief of Arif Habib Group - a capital market giant.

They also asked the prime minister to initiate the trade talks with India, the report added.

"Too Good For NDA": PM Modi As Voting Ends In Phase 2 Lok Sabha Polls

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday that the phase two of the Lok Sabha polls has been "too good" for the BJP-led describing the sunport to the ruling alliance as unparalleled.

He said on X as polling ended, "Phase Two has been too good! Gratitude to the people across India who

have voted today. The unparalleled support for NDA is going to disappoint the Opposition even more." "Voters want NDA's good governance. Youth and women voters are powering the strong NDA support," PM Modi said.

Phase Two has been too good!

Gratitude to the people across India who have voted today. The unparalleled support for NDA is going to disappoint the Opposition even

NEWS MAKERS

more. Voters want NDA's good governance. Youth and women voters are powering the strong NDA support. — Narendra Modi (@nar-

endramodi) April 26, 2024

The prime minister had made a similar assertion after phase one of voting on April 19, saying the ruling alliance has seen a great response.

It is clear that people across India are voting for the NDA in record numbers, he

Voters want NDA's good governance. Youth and women voters are powering the strong NDA support

China Rules Out **Autonomy For Tibet**

Press Trust Of India

Beijing: China today said it will talk only with the representatives of the Dalai Lama and not the officials of the Tibetan government in exile based in India but ruled out dialogue on the highest Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader's long-pending demand for autonomy for his remote Himala-

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin was reacting to reports of the back-channel talks between the Tibetan government-in-exile and the Chinese government when he said China does not legitimise the Tibetan government-in-exile based in Dharamshala.

The so-called Xizang's government-in-exile is totally against the Chinese Constitution and laws. It is illegal,' Mr Wang told a media briefing. "No country has recognised it." he added.

On Thursday, Sikyong or the political head of Tibet's government-in-exile, Penpa Tsering, told a visiting group of journalists in Dharamshala, India, "We have had back-channel (engagement) since last year. But we have no immediate expectations from it. It has to be a long-term (one).

Insisting that the talks are "very informal," the head of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) said, "I have my interlocutor who deals with people in Beijing. Then there are other elements also trying to reach out to us."

According to Mr Wang, the Chinese government has "two basic principles for contacts with this (Dalai Lama's) group.'

"First, we will only have talks with the representatives of the 14th Dalai Lama instead of the so-called representatives of the so-called government-in-exile or the so-called administrative centre," Mr Wang said.

Saudi Arabia Could Get Its First Ever Miss Universe Contestant This Year

iyadh: Saudi Arabia could have its first Miss Universe con-Latestant this year,0 organisers said this week, after a fashion model and influencer claimed she had been selected.

The Miss Universe Organization "is currently undergoing a rigorous vetting process qualifying a potential candidate to be awarded the Saudi Arabia franchise". Maria Jose Unda, the organisation's coordinator of international relations, said in a statement to AFP.

'We'll have a decision on the National Director for Saudi Arabia very, very soon," she said, noting it was "possible" for Saudi Arabia to have a contestant in place before the next edition of the competition, scheduled for September in Mexico.

The statement came after Saudi model Rumy al-Qahtani created a buzz online in late March when she posted to her hundreds



of thousands of Instagram followers that she was "honoured" to represent Saudi Arabia at Miss Universe at the upcoming event.

The post included pictures of Qahtani, a 27-yearold native of Riyadh, in a sequined dress holding the green Saudi flag inscribed with the shahada, or Islamic creed.

Less than a week later, Miss Universe issued a statement referring to Qahtani's post as "false and misleading" and saying no selection process had been carried out in the Gulf kingdom.

Fielding a Miss Universe candidate, if it happens, would mark another step in Saudi Arabia's effort to soften its ultra-conservative image as Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the de facto ruler, tries to lure tourists and investors.

Arabia, Saudi world's biggest crude oil exporter, has long been associated with the repression

of women because of former rules such as a ban on driving and a requirement to wear abaya robes.

While those restrictions have been lifted, human rights activists say a personal status law that took effect in 2022 still discriminates against women when it comes to matters concerning marriage, divorce and child-rearing.

And women, including prominent activists, have been rounded up in a widereaching campaign against dissent.

Among them are two women who in 2022 received decades-long prison sentences for social media posts critical of the government.

'Negative comments'

Speaking at the Riyadh home she shares with her mother and three sisters, Qahtani maintained she was in "negotiations" about participation in Miss Universe but declined to provide further details.

Farmer's Son From Remote Maharashtra Village Is JEE Mains All India Rank 1

rashtra: With perseverance and hard work over the last two years. Nilkrishna Gajare, son of a farmer from Maharashtra's Washim district, has secured All India Rank 1 in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Mains.

Hailing from Belkhed, a remote village in Washim, Nilkrishna followed a rigorous schedule, dedicating more than 10 hours to prepare for the exams every day.

The results of the JEE Mains conducted by the National Testing Agency were announced on Thursday.

Talking to PTI over the phone, Nilkrishna's father, Nirmal Gajare, said he had no words to express his happiness over his son's success.

Nilkrishna did his primary schooling at Rajeshwar Convent in Akola and J C High School in Karanja



Nilkrishna **has** always been a brilliant student and was good at sports. He participated in the district and national level tournaments in archery

Lad in Washim and had lived with his aunt at the time, he said.

"Nilkrishna has always been a brilliant student and was good at sports. He participated in the district and national level tournaments in archery," Nirmal Gajare said.

The 19-year-old is pursuing his studies at Shree Dnyaneshwar Maskuji Burungale Science and Arts College, Shegaon.

"I wanted him to do well in studies and life and motivated him. I want him to achieve things I never could," Gajare said, who is over the moon about his

son's success. Nilkrishna wishes to study at IIT Bombay and would work towards becoming a scientist, he said.

Having conquered one hurdle to achieve his dream, Nilkrishna is in Shegaon preparing for JEE-Advanced, which will be conducted next month.

LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

Border Villages Come Alive With Enthusiastic Voters

RS PURA: In the sprawling wheat fields of RS Pura and Suchetgarh villages, nestled along the International Border, a vibrant celebration of democracy unfolded. These remote communities, despite enduring challenging weather conditions, ensured an unprecedented voter turnout, emerging as beacons of participation.

The journey to polling booths wasn't just a physical one; it was a testament to the unwavering spirit of democracy that runs deep within these communities. First time voter Manish Kumar from Jajowal village of Chakroi in Suchetgarh Assembly Segment, couldn't contain his enthusiasm. "I'm thrilled to cast my first vote," he said while waiting in the queue at the Panchayat Ghar Jajowal polling station. "It empowers us to choose our representative for progress. I've been eagerly waiting for this day!" His excitement echoed the sentiment of many young voters who traveled all the way from Punjab to exercise their franchise in their native villages.

For these villagers, voting transcends civic duty. It's a commitment towards shaping their nation's fu- time voter from Sai Kalan vil-



ture. Decades of enduring cross-border shelling haven't dampened their spirits. Their resolve to vote stems from a deep-seated belief in the power of their ballots.

Beyond the impressive numbers lies a powerful narrative of hope and determination. Each ballot cast is a declaration of resilience, a reaffirmation of faith in the democratic process. These villages, standing tall in the face of adversity, exemplify the indomitable spirit of the Indian electorate. Their overwhelming turnout sends a resounding message: democracy is not just a privilege, but a responsibility they wholeheartedly embrace.

Bipin Singh, another first

lage, Suchetgarh, echoed this his franchise. "It gives me insentiment. "I'm honored to cast my first vote," he said, standing patiently in a long queue. "It's my power, and I'll use it for my area's development." His message resonated with many young voters, urging them to participate and strengthen the nation's

democratic fabric. At polling station 97-Na-kowal, situated along the border village of the same name, Presiding Officer Sahil Rattan and his dedicated team ensured a smooth voting experience. Similarly, nonagenarian Munshi Ram, assisted by his family, cast his vote at 99-Sai Khurd polling station in RS Pura. "Voting makes me happy," he said after exercising ner peace, irrespective of the winner. I'm content knowing I fulfilled my duty.'

Meanwhile, located near the renowned Border Out Post Octroi in RS Pura, polling station 61-Abdal reported a significant turnout with over 50% of registered voters cast-

ing their ballots by 3 pm. Interestingly, BOP Octroi itself is attracting visitors from various regions of the country and highlights the growing popularity of border tourism.

The enthusiastic participation of RS Pura and Suchetgarh villages serves as an inspiration for all: a powerful reminder that democracy thrives when its citizens actively engage in the process.

Two Terrorists Killed In Overnight Encounter In Sopore

Agencies

SOPORE: Two terrorists were killed in an overnight encounter at Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, with the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir confirming one among them is a Pakistani national, while the identity of the other is being ascertained.

Talking to reporters, the IGP Kashmir V K Bhirdi, as per news agency, said that two terrorists were killed in the Nowpora encounter. "As per the documents recovered from the slain, one terrorist has been identified as Saifullah," he said, adding that the identity of the second one is being ascertained.

He said the successful operation reflects the alertness of security forces ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in Kashmir.

"We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for Lok Sabha polls," he said, adding that arms, ammunition and incriminating material have been recovered from the slain terrorists.

Earlier on Thursday evening, officials said that a joint team of Army's 22 RR, CRPF and Jammu and Kashmir Police laid a cordon and search operation in Check Nowpora village of Sopore after having credible inputs about the presence of some terrorists in the area.

As the joint team approached the suspected spot, the hiding terrorists fired upon forces triggering an encounter.

During the operation, two soldiers and a civilian received

Security Forces Resolute To Minimize Terrorist Incidents: IGP

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Zone Vidhi Kumar Birdhi Friday stated that security forces are resolute to minimize terrorist incidents in Kashmir Valley.

Speaking to reporters in north Kashmir's Sopore, IGP Kashmir said that security forces are alert to thwart nefarious designs of terrorist and resolute to minimize terrorist incidents in Kashmir Valley. "We are committed to en-

sure safe and peaceful environment for elections. Further our efforts are on and are determined and resolute to minimize terrorist incidents in Kashmir," IGP Kashmir Zone as per KNS said.

He added the killing of two terrorists in north Kashmir's Sopore is a proof that security forces are alert and committed in making Jammu and Kashmir peaceful.

Responding to a query, the IGP said that two terrorists have been gunned down in Nowpora Sopore gunfight. "After receiving inputs the Army's 22 RR, Jammu & Kashmir Police and CRPF laid siege of the village and started searches. Soon the suspected area was approached the hiding terrorists fired upon the search party, triggering an encounter in the area. The firefight continued throughout the night, resulting elimination of two terrorists," IGP said.

He added arms, ammunition and incriminating material were recovered from the killed terrorists while identification of killed terrorists is being ascertained. (KNS)

bullet injuries. The injured are doing well after receiving immediate medical treatment, they said.

Meanwhile, in response to the gunfight in Sopore town, authorities took the precautionary measure of suspending classwork in the area on Friday.

"All government and private educational institutions, including colleges falling within Sopore tehsil's jurisdiction, will remain closed today," an administrative official told KNO in the

Pertinently, Sopore witnessed the gunfight after 22 months. In 2022, two local terrorists identified as Zahid Ahmad Chopan, a resident of Tengwani Shopian and Mohd Youns Gul, a resident of Washbugh Pulwama of Lashkar e Toiba outfit were killed in the Tulibal area on June 21-

GMC Rajouri Awarded National Bronze Certification

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: In a remarkable achievement. Government Medical College (GMC) Rajouri has been awarded the prestigious Bronze Quality Certificate, underscoring its dedication to delivering top-notch healthcare services to the community.

As per the details obtained by the news agency, Government Medical College Rajouri is the 1st GMC of JK UT to be awarded National Bronze quality certification by the National Quality Council of INDIA under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan

An official of the GMC Rajouri said this recognition is a testamitment and tireless efforts of the hospital's staff in upholding the highest standards of care. GMC Rajouri, known for its commitment to excellence in healthcare, has once again proven its mettle by receiving the Bronze Quality Certificate,

"This esteemed recognition, bestowed upon the hospital by the Quality Council of India, signifies adherence to stringent

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Police have launched

a hunt to arrest the people be-

hind an attempt to "disrespect"

a local shrine and a mosque in

Pulwama district in Jammu and

According to police, the in-

"Yesterday night, some people

cident occurred on Thursday

night in the Dadsara area of Tral

attempted to disrespect the local

shrine and a mosque in Dadsara

in Tral by damaging window-

panes and also tried disrespect-

fully displacing the Quran," a

police spokesman said.

in the south Kashmir district.

Kashmir, officials said.

quality standards and continuous efforts towards improvement," the official remarked. "It also marks a pivotal milestone for GMC Rajouri as it becomes the first GMC in Jammu and Kashmir to receive the prestigious Bronze Certificate, signifying excellence in healthcare quality and service delivery."

The rigorous certification process spanned over the course of one year, involving meticulous desktop assessment and comprehensive onsite evaluation.

The dedication and hard work invested in the quality certification process underscore the commitment of healthcare professionals towards ensuring the highest standards of patient care, the official said.

He said that GMC Rajouri aims to build upon this success and further enhance its services to meet the evolving healthcare needs of the community. "With a steadfast commitment to excellence and a team of dedicated professionals, the hospital is poised to continue making a positive impact on the lives of patients and their families," he

Police suspect that the aim be-

"Besides, being put behind

hind this incident was to disrupt

law and order in the state, he said.

bars, all others who have insti-

gated or facilitated such crimi-

nals with the motive of disturb-

ing the peace by misusing the

highly revered symbols of the

Almighty too will lose all gov-

ernment benefits, government

employment, licences and per-

mits. The full force of the entire

government shall be used to

detect and punish the perpetra-

further investigation is under-

A case was registered and

tors," the police said.

way, he added.

KPDCL Unable To Cater Expected Services To Consumers

Agencies

SRINAGAR,: The Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) is either 'making concocted promises or are unable to cater the expected services to the consumers of the region'.

The news agency— received many calls from the electricity consumers of many areas of valley-complaining of frequent power outages, long durational curtailments and distress cuts.

One of the consumers from south Kashmir's Pulwama district Rashid Jehangir said, "KP-DCL has not met its promises 3Am—reflecting the fake the issue is resolved. to supply round the clock nower to its smart metered areas. We pay monthly tariff ranging from 3000-4000, yet we get electricity for few hours."

Authorities in the previous fiscal undertook power reforms in Kashmir including installing smart meters and insulated power cables to prevent pilferages of electricity and reduce AT&C losses. "But the department has resorted to unscheduled power cuts with metered areas worst affected."

Many consumers in central Kashmir's Budgam district and



Srinagar areas narrated the same ordeal.

One of the electricity consumers in Karan Nagar Farooq Ahmad said, "On Thursday evening, electricity was snapped after two hours of scheduled curtailment at 10 Pm and was restored at around promises made by the Power Development Department."

"I think KPDCL is making concocted promises to its consumers or they are not able to cater the expected services to its consumers in Kashmir which could be the possible reason for the long durational power and distress cuts," Ahmad said.

When contacted KPDCL Chief Engineer (Distribution), Sandeep Seth told KNO that the low power availability was the only reason for long durational power curtailments.

"We are getting nearly a to-

tal power of 1200 Megawatts (MWs) against the requirement of 1600 MWs. This will be settled in a weeks' time,' he said

Seth said that in metered areas KPDCL have curtailed power by only two hours while the non-metered areas are currently facing curtailment of over 10 hours.

On asking about the promise of '24 hours power supply' made by the KPDCL to the smart metered areas, the Chief Engineer said, "We stand with our promise but when it comes to crisis, every consumer needs to be very patient till

"In the month of R. we had enough power availability. During that month, we were distributing nearly 1900 MWs of power," he said.

Pertinently, on April-22, KPDCL said, "Due to limited power availability, there has been an unavoidable increase in power curtailment. These restrictions will be eased once power availability improves. Please bear with us & ensure iudicious use of power, especially during peak hours. Avoid exceeding sanctioned load/ hooking." (SIC)—(KNO)

Awantipora Village Without Power Infrastructure

PULWAMA: Amid the heavy hike in monthly electricity tariffs across Kashmir, residents of Dangerpora Padgampora in Awantipora are still struggling with poor power infrastructure and have demanded enhancement of power infrastructure.

They said that poor LT infrastructure often leads to faults causing unscheduled power cuts.

Mohammad Yousuf, a local, said that the electric lines touch roofs of houses and trees on roads posing risk to life and property and due to low lying overhead transmission lines.

He said that lines are very



Three Notorious Drug Smugglers

Booked In Baramulla: Police

Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the residents said that dangling electric wires tied with trees and old poles are posing grave threat to their lives as well as to their property.

They alleged that they are living under constant fear due to low lying electric wires tied with trees in their villages since decades but no attention is being given towards it.

thereby risking lives of people.

"We have been repeatedly requesting the concerned department to replace the dangling and damaged electric wires and poles but our pleas fell on deaf ears." he said.

Gulzar Ahmad another local said that despite raising the issue in all back to Village programmes, locals are yet to see any development.

Focus On Seed To Silk Instead Of Seed To Cocoon: Director Sericulture

Agencies

PULWAMA: Director Sericulture J&K as a part of his comprehensive outreach programmetoday visited various Nurseries/Farms, Beats of District Pulwama and oversaw the preparations being undertaken for ensuing Rearing Season in District Pulwama. During his tour he inspected the Mulberry Farms atSathirGund, Pamporeand interacted with local Silkworm-Rearers/Farmers. Moreover he also met with the enthusiasts who are keenly interested in Sericulture Sector.

Aijaz Ahamd Bhat further called on the Silkworm Rearersand Farmers hailing from the picturesque VillageSambora, Pulwama and took the opportunity to interact with them and shared his valuable insights into the challenges and triumphs face by Sericulture Industry. During the occasion he lauded their dedication and encouraged them for their relentless efforts.

Moreover, in order to foster collaboration and synergy with the Central Silk Board to effec-

tively work out modalities for achieving goals envisioned to strengthen the Sericulture Sector in a coordinated and coherent manner he met with Dr. Narendra Kumar Bhatia, Director, Central Sericultural Research & Training Institute, (CSR&TI), Central Silk Board, Pampore.

Pamporehe underscored the importance of such dialogues to unravel the new vistas of opportunities, techniques and efficient mechanism to leverage the potential of Sericulture Industry in the region by way of harnessing collective expertise and resources available within the sericulture fraternity to propel the Industry to greater heights of excellence and sustainability.

The Director Sericulture J&K in their own units which will certainly increase their income manifold. These trainings shall be conducted in collaboration with the Central Silk Board and the modalities in this regard is also being worked out by both organizations which was also discussed in detail in the meeting with the Director, Central

pressing his views on the occasion said that the Sericulture is not merely an industry; it is a heritage, a tradition, and a vital component of our cultural and economic landscape. Through concerted efforts and collaborative initiatives, we can unlock the full potential of sericulture, communities, driving economic growth and preserving the rich legacy of Sericulture for generations to come. He reaffirmed his commitment to bolstering the Silk Industry with all-around development apart from focusing on all the aspects of the Sericulture Industry and calls for paradigm shift towards achieving desired results in boosting Silkworm Seed Production, Cocoon Production as well as Silk

SRINAGAR: Acting tough against drug peddlers and to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Jammu and Kashmir Police on Thursday said to have booked three notorious drug smugglers under PIT NDPS Act in Baramulla after obtaining formal detention orders

Agencies

Pertinent to mention here that many cases are registered against these drug smugglers and were involved in promoting drug abuse trade by supplying drugs to local youth of

from competent authority.

Uri, Kamalkote, Madiyan, Pattan, Sultanpora & other areas of District. Despite their involvement in many FIRs, they did not mend their activities and were again involved in promoting drug abuse trade by supplying drugs to local youth.

General public of Baramulla appreciated the role of Police for their action against drug peddlers. Police' consistent actions against the drug peddlers should reassure the community members that police is making all efforts to keep our society free from drug abuse, police

SVEEP Programs Held In Several Pulwama Villages

PULWAMA: The Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiatives were today conducted with great enthusiasm and participation at two venues viz. HSS Panzgam and HSS Chakura, here.

The programs showcased a diverse array of activities aimed at fostering voter education and participation. Highlights included captivating cultural performances, energetic rallies, enchanting Kashmiri Chakri performances by girl groups, and comprehensive

voter awareness sessions.

The programmes witnessed participation of all stakeholders like local bodies, BLO, Aasha workers, lumberdars, Young voters, PWDs and Senior Citizens.

A painting competition and plantation drive were also carried out under the banners of SVEEP.

These events exemplify the District Administration's commitment to empowering citizens with the knowledge and resources necessary to exercise their democratic rights effectively.

Residential Houses Develop Cracks In Ganderbal's Babosipora "School going children, el-

Police Hunt For Mosque And

Shrine Disrespect In Tral

Agencies

GANDERBAL: Residential houses in Bandipora area of Nuner

in Ganderbal have developed cracks due to heavy traffic allowed through the narrow road. The residents of the area told news agency, that infrastruc-

ture isn't designed to handle

residential houses.

derly persons and patients are mainly who are suffering due to traffic jams on the road," residents said. They requested higher ups

and ban the heavy vehicles. The concerned Executive Enheavy volume of traffic, causing gineer R&B Department Gantraffic jams as well as affecting

especially DC Ganderbal to look into the matter at the earliest

derbal did not respond to repeated calls-(KNO)

During threadbare discussions with the Director CSB,

while sharing valuable inputs to reinvigorate the Sericulture Industry, informed that the farmers and youth are being trained in Buniyaad Micro Silk Reeling Machines Operation so that the Cocoons produced by the Silkworm Rearers and Farmers could be processed by them Silk Board Pampore today. Ajaz Ahmad Bhat while ex-

empowering production in the region.

The Role of Early Childhood Care in Education

Mohammad Hanief

66

The National **Education Policy 2020** marked a turning point in India's commitment to shaping a bright future for all children. As 85% of brain development occurs before the age of six years, the Women and Child Development ministry recognizes the pivotal role of early years in development and seeks to strengthen India's Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) landscape

hile it is generally recognised that the right to education is relevant to primary, secondary, tertiary and basic education levels, it is important to recognise that this human right also applies throughout 'early childhood', which the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines as the period from birth up until the age of eight.

Early childhood is understood as a critical developmental phase as it represents the most rapid period of physical, cognitive, social and emotional growth of the human lifespan. These formative early years necessarily require a mixture of care and education for children, with close support by parents, families, other caregivers and broader communities. It constitutes both a significant and meaningful stage itself, and impacts the realisation of other human rights throughout a person's lifetime.

Consequently, the early childhood care and education (ECCE) that children experience, from earliest infancy through to the transition to formal primary schooling, has a direct effect on their well-being, how they make sense of the world, and the extent to which they are able to make the most of future opportunities. Research on ECCE demonstrates its importance in, among other things, tackling gender and other barriers to accessing primary school, increasing participation and achievement in school, and lowering school repetition and drop-out rates - thereby decreasing wastage in

the education system.

It also contributes to reducing gender inequalities and broader societal benefits such as enhanced social cohesion, a lower rate of future violence and crime, higher individual incomes and stronger national economic development, a stronger cultural identity and a reduction in health costs and poverty cycles across generations.

The international human rights framework offers guidance to states and others about a rights-based approach to ECCE. As outlined by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, education in all its forms and at all levels shall exhibit the following interrelated and essential features: availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability of education.

adaptability of education.

As the CRC has explained, these elements must be adapted to the interests, concerns and changing capacities of children during early childhood. States must consider the best interests of the child throughout the early years, promote nurturing and non-violent forms of parenting and education, and – of particular significance at this time of life – ensure the right of the child to rest, leisure, play and to free participation in cultural life and the arts.



The first six of life are critical years of human life since the rate of development in these years is more rapid than at any other stage of development. Global brain research also informs us about the significance of early years for brain development.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) makes a positive contribution to children's long term development and learning by facilitating an enabling and stimulating environment in these foundation stages of lifelong learning.

Parents as caregivers are critical in providing a stimulating learning environment to the child and the first two and a half to three years need not be in a formal learning environment. The National Curriculum Framework acknowledges the significance of involvement of parents, family and community.

The National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Curriculum Framework for all children below six years of age is aligned with the government's vision of ECCE as spelt out in the National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy. The National ECCE Curriculum Framework is informed by the Position Paper on ECCE (National Curriculum Framework, NCERT, 2005) and the curriculum detailed there under.

The National Education Policy 2020 marked a turning point in India's commitment to shaping a bright future for all children. As 85% of brain development occurs before the age of six years, the Women and Child Development ministry recognizes the pivotal role of early years in development and seeks to strengthen India's Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) landscape. In this endeavour, the ministry is launching a National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education for Children from Three to Six Years and a National

Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation for Children from Birth to Three Years.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development empowers and supports mothers and their children under six vears through Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0, together with the Palna and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) Schemes under Mission Shakti. It aims to ensure comprehensive childcare support throughout the day in a secure environment, with trained staff, educational resources, nutritional support, and activities for holistic child development. The Ministry runs 13.9 lakh Anganwadi Centres around the country, catering to more than 8 crore children under the age of six years.

For children from age three to six, the National Curriculum for ECCE 2024 covers all domains of development as per the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage 2022 (NCF-FS), including physical/motor, cognitive, language and literacy, socio emotional, cultural/aesthetic as well as positive habits. It aims to improve the quality of ECCE transacted at the Anganwadi Centre by prioritizing competency-based lesson plans and activities, presented in a simple and user-friendly manner.

It addresses how children learn in the early years, with a focus on playful joy-based learning, in preparation for primary school. The Curriculum is structured to provide a weekly calendar comprising 36 weeks of active learning, 8 weeks of reinforcement and 4 weeks of initiation, together with 5+1 days of play-based learning in one week, and three blocks of activities in one day. It provides for a combination of activities, including in-centre and at-home, indoor and outdoor, child-led and educator-led etc.

Robust assessment tools are provided for tracking progress, tailoring

learning, and celebrating each child's unique journey. Special focus has been given for the screening, inclusion and referrals of Divyang children in every activity. Community engagement has been facilitated through monthly ECCE days and a continuum of home learning activities for each week.

For children from birth to three years, the National Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation 2024 aims to empower caregivers and Anganwadi Workers for holistic early stimulation, through responsive caregiving and opportunities for early learning, for optimal development of children, both body and brain.

It fills conceptual and practical gaps in the understanding of care and stimulation, based on the Nurturing Care Framework. The framework is designed to provide the Anganwadi Worker with a basic understanding of how children grow and develop, the importance of brain development and the need for nurturing care. It focuses on the principles of serve and return, caregiver's three acts: love, talk, play, and positive guidance.

36 month-wise age-based activities are provided that can be conducted both within the household as well as at the Anganwadi Centre or Creche, through all the contact points including home visits, monthly meetings, community-based events etc. Screening, inclusion and referrals for Divyang children are also provided special focus.

The documents have been prepared by the National Institute for Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), with the support of an Internal Committee and development partners. Feedback from Anganwadi Workers has been incorporated to make the curriculum more flexible, activity-based, using more illustrations and less text.

NIPCCD will lead the training of Anganwadi functionaries on the new Curriculum and Framework. Provisions from both the Curriculum and the Framework, including weekly activity schedules, home visit guidance, assesment tools for tracking child development etc. will also be included on the Poshan Tracker. We aim to strengthen and support Anganwadi Workers for the delivery of high-quality ECCE for all children, to ensure that every Anganwadi Centre becomes a vibrant learning centre in the community.

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

> The author can be mailed at m.hanief@gmail.com X (Twitter): @haniefmha

The Spin On Inheritance Tax

The economic justification for levying it in India isn't compelling enough.

Umesh Gala and Dinesh Kanabar,

In the last few years, when the Union budget was around the corner, rumours around the introduction of inheritance tax gained momentum. This year, the subject has landed right in the middle of national elections with all the political spin around it, blurring rational thinking and the motives around it. It, therefore, becomes imperative to look at the subject from the right perspective. Whether inheritance tax is a wise tool to reduce income/wealth inequality and what has been the experience of developed countries is an important question. But it is more important to ask whether it is the right time for a developing country like India, in the thick of a robust economic expansion, to risk such a levy.

A peep into our own history suggests that India had inheritance tax in the form of "estate duty" from 1953. The tax was introduced with an attempt to reduce unequal wealth distribution and increase tax collections. This was the same regime when the combined levy of income tax and wealth tax exceeded the income earned by an individual. The mindset was to levy a very high rate of tax and if anything was left after payment of these taxes, which you want to inherit for future generations, the state would confiscate a bulk of it by levying estate duty. A stiff regressive

levy, planning round exemptions, litigation, etc. ensured that the cost of tax administration for such levy was found to be more than the taxes collected. The duty was levied at a maximum marginal rate of 85% when it was abolished in March 1985 during the Rajiv Gandhi government! In addition to the estate duty, India had a wealth tax regime as well as a gift tax regime for a long time. These have also been abolished with a limited tax on gifts that has been introduced under the Income-tax Act.

Income tax rates have been moderated, and alternative regimes for personal and corporate tax have been introduced with lower tax rates, lower exemptions and deductions, focus on better compliance, data analytics, etc. As a result, the number of taxpayers continues to rise by the day and there is a significant buoyancy in the direct tax and goods and services tax collections exceeding Budget estimates. India remains a bright spot in the global economic environment and our GDP is growing at the highest level among the large economies. We are the third-largest ecosystem for start-ups with many unicorns and more in the making. The last decade has seen significant focus on infrastructure development and massive strides towards rapid expansion of our GDP aimed at making India a developed nation. As more economic activity is poised to shift to India, the introduction of inheritance tax can act as a significant disincentive to a vibrant entrepreneurial mindset vital for economic activity, job creation, and growth.

Internationally, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and G20 ministers have expressed concerns about a distribution mismatch and scarcity of resources in the hands of the poor. Twenty-four out of 36 OECD countries levy tax on the transfer of wealth of the deceased, whereas 10 OECD countries such as Austria, Sweden, New Zealand, and Australia have abolished the levy since 2000. Similarly, developing countries such as Brazil, South Africa, and Republic of Korea also consider inheritance tax a measure to remove the distribution mismatch. The rate of levy also varies across the jurisdictions. The rate of tax applicable in Japan is as high as 55%, compared with the United States of America, the Netherlands, and United Kingdom at around 40%, whereas Algeria taxes at a ratethat can go as low as 5%.

However, internationally, inheritance taxes have failed to achieve the stated objectives and their collections are also below par. Inheritance taxes contribute below 1.5% of the total revenue in OECD countries. The loopholes and the administrative cost involved in implementing inheritance tax outweigh the benefits of economic equality. Developed countries such as the US are at a different stage of their economic journey,

backed up by a robust social security framework and with different imperatives compared to India. India needs a framework which boosts investments, entrepreneurship, wealth creation, and a moderate rate of tax promoting compliance. It may be prudent not to get carried away by the imperatives of developed economies and instead focus on our own priorities.

Undoubtedly, economic inequality is a major concern for a developing nation like India. India has a vast population who are below the poverty line and it poses the unavoidable question of addressing inequality in income and wealth. However, this needs to be addressed with varied mechanisms such as wider access to education and skill development, easy access of finance for a wider entrepreneurial class, infrastructure development, removing supply chain bottlenecks, agricultural and land reforms, rural job creation, etc.

In the present circumstance, the economic justification for the introduction of inheritance tax is not compelling enough.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The article was originally published by Financial Express

BOOK EXCERPT

Clearing the Air

Sreenivasan Jain Mariyam Alavi

Supriya Sharma

To be clear, inadequate funding plagues government schemes for all marginalized groups, not just for Muslims. Welfare measures for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, for instance, are chronically underfunded. But the difference is that Muslims have been largely excluded from one of the most powerful tools in the arsenal of the Indian state to counter historic discrimination—affirmative action in the form of reservations in public employment, education, and legislatures. This, despite the fact that most Muslims are converts from communities that carry the historical burden of caste.

Some believe this may explain why, on certain metrics, Muslims even slip below Dalits and Adivasis

A recent study on intergenerational mobility in India— found that at the 29th percentile of the distribution of parents in the bottom half of Indian society, Muslim sons 'have considerably worse upward mobility today than both Scheduled Castes (38), a striking finding given that, compared to Muslims, STs tend to live in more rural and remote areas'.

The authors of the study tentatively propose an explanation for this divergence between Muslims and SCs and STs: 'we find suggestive evidence that the basket of affirmative action policies targeted to India's scheduled groups (but not to Muslims) has

played a key role in their rising

Data from the National Sample Survey conducted in 2017-18 throws up an even more granular picture of how Muslims have now fallen behind Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. A key metric to gauge the educational levels of a social group is the gross attendance ratio or the total number of children attending school as a proportion of the total number of children from the group. Of every 100 Muslim children, 85 are in school. The corresponding number for SC and ST children is 90 and 87.

Even when it comes to attending college and university, Muslim enrolment numbers have decreased by 8 per cent, while SC and ST enrolment has gone up.

Muslims form 14.20 per cent of India's population. But the All India Survey on Higher Education found only 4.65 per cent of the 41.3 million students enrolled in colleges and universities in 2020-21 were Muslim. In comparison, students from Scheduled Caste groups that form 16.6 per cent of India's population accounted for 14.20 per cent of the enrolment, while students from Scheduled Tribes, that constitute 8.60 per cent of the population, accounted for 5.80 per cent of the enrolment.

Income data also shows Muslims slipping behind. The per capita annual income of Muslims is lower than Dalit Hindus in several states, data from the Indian Human Development Survey of 2004–05 and 2011–12 shows.

As we reported in an earlier chapter, demands that Dalit





ar from being
pampered by the
Congress, Muslims
are at the bottom of the
heap. If the Congress
is guilty of anything,
it is of failing to uplift
Muslims despite
enjoying the longest
stint in power

Muslims (and Dalit Christians) be recognized as Scheduled Castes have been growing. But there is still a long way before this can become a reality. As a halfway measure, some states have included Muslim communities in the list of Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Even these half measures are coming undone. In April 2023, the BJP government in Karnataka scrapped OBC reservation for Muslims, distributing the quota between Hindu communities. Even though the Muslim reservation had been granted on economic grounds, India's home minister praised the move, saying the quotas amounted to minority appeasement and deserved to be done away with.

CONCLUSION: The Hindu Right

culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.'
Clause 1 of Article 30 spells it

Clause 1 of Article 30 spells it out more unambiguously: 'All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice'

These clauses did not emerge out of a vacuum. Decades before India became independent, its leaders recognized the need to safeguard minorities.

In 1930, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote in Young India:

"There is no surer method of rousing the resentment of the minority and keeping it apart from the rest of the nation than to make it feel that it has not got the freedom to stick to its own wavs...Therefore we in India must make it clear to all that our policy is based on granting this freedom to the minorities and that under no circumstance will any coercion or repression of them be tolerated. Indeed we should go further and state that it will be the business of the state to give favoured treatment to minority and backward com-

In hindsight, it could be argued that India's recognition of minority rights was ahead of its time. The rest of the world took almost four decades to catch up.

The article is excerpted with permission from the book "Love Jihad and Other Fictions" by Sreenivasan Jain Mariyam Alavi and Supriya Sharma, published by Aleph Book Company. Views expressed are the author's own

A Detailed Guide to Mahr: Rights and Rulings

Hannah Alkadi

nderstanding mahr, the marriage gift given to a bride, is much simpler than it's drawn out to be. However, many complications come from the feelings that arise around mahr. Some women find it old-fashioned and unnecessary. Others are shy to discuss it because they fear repercussions from their families, potential spouses, and future in-laws. And most of us, sadly, don't know how to feel, as there are rarely any discussions about mahr until it is time to ask for it.

Even if you aren't speaking to anyone at this time, having some idea of how mahr works will help you prepare for the inevitable conversation and ease your anxieties around it.

Mahr Rights

Mahr isn't merely a blessing for women; it's a religious obligation for Muslim men to offer.

"Give women their bridal gift upon marriage, though if they are happy to give up some of it for you, you may enjoy it with a clear conscience." (Surah al-Nisa 4:4)

This verse teaches us two

This verse teaches us two beautiful things: that a Muslim man must offer Mahr, and that it's completely optional for a woman to refuse it. Under no circumstances can a bride be pressured to give up a mahr in its entirety or partiality.

The Qur'an also mentions that mahr is a prerequisite to marriage in a wide variety of cases, even if the woman is:

- 1. not free (Surah al-Nisa, verse 25)
- verse 25)
 2. Jewish or Christian (Surah
- al-Ma'idah, verse 5)
 3. related to the groom
 (Surah al-Ahzab, verse 60)
 4. a revert to Islam (Surah al-
- Mumtahina, verse 10)
 The Sunnah also mentions
 mahr in multiple narrations.
 The Prophet said to a man

The Prophet said to a man, "Marry, even with (a mahr equal to) an iron ring." (Bukhari

We learn that the mahr doesn't have to be extravagant, or even with a standard like gold or silver. The majority of scholars say that there's no minimum to a mahr, nor a maximum. Some even argue that the mahr can be immaterial. However, many scholars

recommend a cash value to the mahr. The Prophet # also discour-

aged marriages without a mahr.

"Allah's Messenger orbade Ash-Shighar, which means that somebody marries his daughter to somebody else, and the latter marries his daughter to the former without paying mahr." (Bukhari 5112)

We see mahr in his blessed

life as well. One of the first questions the Prophet asked a Companion who had gotten married, was: "How much mahr have you paid?" The companion, Abelrahman ibn Auf, replied: "For a date-stone weight of gold." (Muslim 1427e)

All the wives of the Prophet had a mahr upon their marriage, with some the equivalent of 50 dirhams. For Khadijah (may Allah be pleased with her), it was 20 goats, or 20 camels.

There is even a type of mahr known as "mahr fatimi," in reference to Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her), daughter of the Prophet . Think about that for a moment. 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) was one of the first people who accepted Islam. He was someone whom the Prophet considered like a brother. And he was still required to give mahr. And the Prophet 's own daughter accepted that mahr.

accepted that mahr.

And last, but certainly not least: mahr is only for the bride. The family of the bride does not receive a share of it, nor do they have a say in it. Whilst the groom can offer it, the bride can also stipulate it.

Now that we've established mahr as a part of our sacred text, we now need to go about putting it in context. Every bride and groom has different circumstances and stipulations, and alhamdulillah, there's room for all of them.

Mahr Decision Framework

There are two types of mahr: mu'akhar (deferred) and mu'ajjal (advanced). Similar to the way an apartment is rented, a Muslim man may offer the mahr in full, or offer a small payment and then "instalments" later.

Monetary values are also offered when it comes to the discussion of mahr. In the



Hanafi madhab, a monetary value must be assigned to the mahr. Scholars suggest 10 dirhams, which equates to 2.975 grams of silver and £16.67. You can convert to other currencies as well, keeping in mind that 1000 grams are in one kilogram.

Let's try it with mahr fatimi. 1469 dirhams was the total then, which comes to about £3395.96.

So, while a bride may want to ask for something like Hajj, a Sheikh may want to stipulate a pound value equating to that hajj package in the nikkah contract. The intent for hajj can still be there when that money is offered.

Jewellery in gold or silver is also acceptable, as jewellery also has a cash value. And, yes, even a cat can be given as mahr.

Bisma shared that her mahr was in two parts. Her husband's deceased mother (may Allah have mercy on her) had requested that each of her sons give some of her jewellery to her future daughters-in-law as gifts from her. But Bisma's husband then offered to her that he would also take care of Hajj expenses when the time came.

Another common method is mahr mithl. The groom looks at his locality, and what kind of mahr is being offered to brides there. He would then suggest a range or an average from the mahrs given to other women. Some grooms also look at the bride's family, and what her aunts, sisters, mothers, and grandmother may have received in their marriages. Because of the prevalence of marriages nationally and internationally, along with different circumstances for each bride, this may be a trickier method to go with. Converts may not be able to use mahr mithl as well. But mahr mithl can still work for having an idea of where to start from.

"I didn't have a specific amount in mind." Hala wrote. "The mahr was something I saw as having to be fulfilled. Local scholars suggested that I ask my family what the typical mahr was for my female relatives. I asked my grandmother because I figured she'd been around for the most marriages. She gave me a number that I was fine with. When I related it to the local scholars and my fiancé at the time, all parties were happy—it was within his means, and the scholars had us sit two days after our nikkah so that he could give it to me. Then we were done, alhamdulillah!"

These general guidelines will, insha'Allah, help you with the negotiation part of the process.

Negotiating MahrRemember that

Remember that negotiation is a conversation. With Allah's divine blessing, you'll be able to navigate this part with all of its many factors.

If you have a certain lifestyle before your marriage, it's your right to have that lifestyle maintained after your marriage. A mahr is your sole property, and cannot be given back to the husband in the case of divorce. No one else has rights over it.

Mahr is not a reflection of your worth; do not assign a price tag to that. Each woman is priceless.

is priceless.
You should also consider that
mahr is not a divorce or death
safety fund. Nor is it an opportunity to earn extra money. If
you enter a mahr negotiation
with that mindset, it will affect your marriage as a whole.
Be mindful that whatever he
can't pay upfront is legally considered a debt for him. Asking

for three months of his salary, for example, will make him feel immense pressure going into the marriage. Resentment may also come from him or his family. Which would you like to last longer—your marriage, or your mahr payment?

"I've heard horror stories," Dahab told us. "\$20K, \$50K mahr. Mine was standard and traditional for my culture: jewellery. And I love gold! I knew that Allah is the one who provides rizq."

"Right," Humayra agreed, as her friend went on. "I only asked for \$500. I didn't want to keep it large, because I was avoiding the dowry culture from other religions. So I always advise to keep the mahr small. [Your husband's] going to be the provider—the apartment rent, your food, so many other expenses. Make it easy and don't be greedy."

and don't be greedy."

Know that mahr is separate from wedding gifts given during engagements. These fall into the category of hadiyah (gifts). He must specifically designate a mahr and not bring up the hadivals at the last minute.

yah at the last minute.

Think about whether you will work full-time, part-time, or in a domestic role after your marriage. Take also into consideration your husband-to-be's current earnings and what his trajectory looks like. If he is in school, for example, but has a promising career, that's something to keep in mind.

If the mahr is too high, would it cause you to live with your in-laws (and are you satisfied with that?), or delay the purchase of a house (if you'd like one)? How soon would you like to have children? Would you like to travel after your marriage? Lay out your priorities and weed out the nice-to-haves as best as you can.

"I'd been working for a long time, and planned to work after my marriage," Medina, a newlywed in her thirties, said. "So I didn't prioritise mahr. We talked about it. I told my husband that it was whatever he was capable of. He gave me an amount. But out of respect, he went to my dad and brotherin-law with a plan of how he would pay it." The groom decided to give a sum initially, and then pay the rest on a month-to-month basis.

Be wary of pressure from

other people. Some may use the hadith where the Prophet told us, "The best marriage is one that is easiest." (Mishkat al-Masabih 3097) This does not refer to the mahr, rather, it refers to the other expenses of a marriage.

has it backwards. Far from be-

ing pampered by the Congress,

Muslims are at the bottom of the

heap. If the Congress is guilty of

anything, it is of failing to uplift

Muslims despite enjoying the

...There is no evidence to show

that governments have spent

inordinate amounts of taxpayer

money on Muslims. Where does

that leave Muslim appeasement?

Indian Constitution itself.

Appeasement is baked into the

What is seen as an unfair ad-

vantage are cultural and educa-

tional protections enshrined in

Article 29 and Article 30 of the

Indian Constitution. Clause 1 of

Article 29 states: 'Any section of

citizens residing in the territory

of India or any part thereof hav-

ing a distinct language, script or

longest stint in power.

Some suitors may want to lessen the mahr. Again, this is understandable, as we face economic crises and many unforeseeable trials in life. Remember that mahr is a gift in its essence. Do not make it a burden.

The Prophet also told us that "The best dowry is one that is easiest." (Saḥiḥ Ibn Ḥibban 4163) in terms of keeping a mahr small. This approach may work better for a young couple. If both of you are still studying or may have to live separately until living arrangements are made, it may be more practical to keep the mahr a lower amount.

Even if you aren't younger, you may have an offer that is lower than what you were expecting. As will be the case in the rest of your marriage, insha'Allah, you may need to compromise. Know your worth, and pay attention to one of my teacher's advice. "Don't get bullied." Be mindful of the suitor's demeanour throughout this process as well, as it will also give you insight for future important discussions and conversations. Parents, in general, will pressure their sons to pay less, and their daughters to ask for more.

Asel writes, "I've spoken to brothers who were still in school. One had an exorbitant amount of loans from being in medicine, and another planned on getting a doctorate degree. While I initially wanted the cost of a Hajj package for my mahr, I lowered it down to the cost of other religious trips like umrah or visiting Palestine. Although neither mahr negotiations led to marriage, that's still a mahr I want to work with. One of my love languages is quality time. To build our marriage on trips like these... I don't know if there could be a more special trip for us to enjoy each other's company."

Above all, this is a conversation between you, your spouse, and learned people in the community. Some families source mahr fatimi as proof that, since the Prophet ** gave a suggestion for the mahr, they too can get involved in it. However, keep in mind that those people are not the Prophet *. He was acting as a messenger at that moment, not a father. The mahr is a gift from the groom to the bride, that the bride has the right to stipulate. Full stop.

Tips on Getting Started

Sometimes, this conversation comes up organically. A suitor might ask after you've been speaking for some time, "Have you thought about what you might ask for mahr?" Follow his lead from there. If you have an idea, mention it. He may agree, or negotiate.

may agree, or negotiate.

If the two of you are speaking within premarital counselling sessions, you may want to bring this up privately with your counsellor. They will know how to facilitate the conversation from there. Consult with local scholars, teachers, and family members for advice. We recommend keeping things as private as possible.

Feel free to use the following phrases as templates:

- If less than what you were expecting: "I was hoping for a little more. Would you consider paying X amount? How about over time?"
- If more than what you were expecting: "That's generous, and I'm very humbled. However, I look forward to doing X and Y after our marriage, so I'd be comfortable if you lowered it to Z amount."
- If you're happy with the offer: "I'm comfortable with that. What was your timeline?"
- If there is no expectation: "What were you thinking?"
- To those outside of the conversation: "He gave me an amount I was happy with."
 Like all blessings in life, responsibilities come with the

package. Salah, for example, is an obligation, but it is also a gift. The mahr is a sunnah of the Prophet ## and your right. Spend it wisely.

We pray that you are blessed

with an easy mahr negotiation process and an easier marriage.

The article was originally published by Amaliah



Markets Snap Five-Day Rally; Sensex Tumbles Over 600 Pts

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- Market benchmarks Sensex and Nifty wilted under selling pressure on Friday after a five-day rally as investors pared exposure to banking, financial and consumer durable stocks amid mixed trends in global markets.

Rising global crude prices, a depreciating rupee and persistent foreign fund outflows further weighed on sentiment, traders said.

Profit-taking also came into play as the 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 609.28 points or 0.82 per cent to settle at 73,730.16. During the day, it lost 722.79 points or 0.07 per cent to 73,616.65

or 0.97 per cent to 73,616.65.

The NSE Nifty declined 150.40 points or 0.67 per cent to 22,419.95. On a weekly basis, the BSE benchmark advanced 641.83 points or 0.87, and the NSE Nifty climbed 272.95 points or 1.23 per cent.

"The fall was on expected lines as both the benchmark indices had rallied for five straight sessions, and profit-taking has been due for some time.

"Correction is also attributed to global factors after the Japanese Yen fell to a new 34-year low and disappointing US data pushed its benchmark yields to over 4.7 per cent, thus worsening hopes of an interest rate cut in the medium term," said Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd.

Bajaj Finance was the biggest drag on the Sensex chart, skidding nearly 8 per cent after the company's March quarter earnings failed to cheer investors. Bajaj Finserv also declined over 3 per cent. IndusInd Bank, Nestle, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the other laggards.

Meanwhile, Tech Mahindra jumped over 7 per cent after the IT services company's CEO outlined an ambitious three-year roadmap to accelerate revenue growth and lift margins.

Wipro, ITC, UltraTech Cement, Titan and Axis Bank were among the gainers.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 0.83 per cent, and the smallcap index climbed 0.27 per cent.

Among the indices, bankex declined 0.70 per cent, financial services (0.68 per cent), teck (0.26 per cent), auto (0.25 per cent) and telecommunication (0.15 per cent).

FCIK Decries Procurement Policy That Discourage Local MSMEs

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Federation of Chambers of Industries Kashmir (FCIK) has decried the government procurement policy that not only discouraged and sidelined the local industrial manufacturers but also resulted in substantial deficit in UT's balance of trade with increased imports.

After a meeting with a delegation of Kashmir Electrical Manufacturers Association (KEMA), the Advisory Committee FCIK expressed regrets that despite repeated requests, the authorities were yet to take steps in the direction of restoring marketing support to MSMEs to get these relieved

from growing joblessness.

While bringing the plight electric equipment manufacturers to the attention of FCIK, President KEMA, Raja Nayeem Ahmad Khan said that 150 such units faced marketing problems after adoption of General Financial Rules (GFR) by UT government in 2019 which put local units with slew of disadvantages in direct competition with manufacturers of entire country on Government e-

marketplace (GeM) portal. He informed that Power Development Department had also switched over to turnkey system of executions after disbanding store procurement which had resulted in ouster of local manufacturers from schemes and programmes currently being executed by them.

According to Nayeem, the central government last year sanctioned Rs 5200 Crores under Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) for J&K to improve power infrastructure including 33KV and 11KV stations/HT/LTs and other equipment after subsuming many other central schemes with an objective to reduce power losses and ensure uninterrupted power supply to consumers.

He said that disconcerting qualification criteria put by PDD in tenders excluded local units from the competition process and favoured outsiders.

Exemplifying his remarks, Raja said that one of the scores of works taken up by department for execution happened to be augmentation of the existing power infrastructure in industrial estate Sanat Nagar which understandably stands allotted to Telangana based company M/s Gopi Krishna Electricals.

RBI Proposes New Norms For LSPs To Promote Transparency



Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday proposed that lending service providers (LSPs), acting as agents of banks, should give information on all the loan offers available with them to borrowers so that they can make an informed decision. Many of the LSPs offer aggregation services for loan products.

LSP is an agent of a regulated entity (RE) who carries out one or more of lender's functions or part thereof in customer acquisition, underwriting support, pricing support, servicing, monitoring, recovery of specific loan or loan portfolio on behalf of REs in conformity with extant outsourcing guidelines.

In December last year, the RBI announced to issue draft framework saying connected lending or lending to persons who are in a position to control or influence the decision of a lender can be of concern, if the lender does not maintain an arm's length relationship with such borrowers.

Such lending can involve moral hazard issues, leading to a compromise in pricing and credit management, it had said.

"In such cases, particularly where an LSP has arrangements with multiple lenders, identity of the potential lender to the borrower may not be known upfront to the borrower," said the Reserve Bank's draft circular on 'Digital Lending -- Transparency in Aggregation of Loan Products from Multiple Lenders'.

The draft proposed that the LSP should provide a digital view of all the loan offers available to the borrower, as per his/her requirements, from all willing lenders with whom the LSP has arrange-

ments with.

"While the LSP may adopt any mechanism to ascertain the willingness of the lenders to offer a loan, it shall follow a consistent approach in this regard, which shall be disclosed suitably on their website," said the draft on which the RBI has sought comments from stakeholders by May 31.

The digital view should include the name(s) of the RE(s) extending the loan offer, amount and tenor of loan, the annual percentage rate (APR) and other key terms and conditions in a way which enables the borrower to make a fair comparison between various offers, the draft said.

In September 2022, the RBI had issued "Guidelines on Digital Lending" with focus on "customer centricity" and ensuring complete transparency to the borrower in the credit intermediation process.

IndiGo

IndiGo's Wide-Body Aircraft Order Augurs Well For Indian Aviation: CRISIL

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Budget carrier IndiGo's decision to acquire wide-body planes augurs well for the Indian aviation industry as international long-haul routes are comparatively more profitable and will also help in creating an aviation hub in the country, according to rating agency CRISIL.

Till January last year, IndiGo operated single-aisle Airbus aircraft fleet and in February 2023, it started operating wide-body Boeing 777 wet-leased from its codeshare partner Turkish Airlines. Currently, the airline has two wet-leased B777 operating flights to Istanbul from Delhi and Mumbai.

On Thursday, the country's largest airline announced placing a firm order for 30 widebody Airbus A350-900 planes, to be powered by Rolls-Royce's Trent XWB engines, and also has the option to purchase 70 more such aircraft.

"The development (IndiGo's A350 aircraft order) augurs well for the industry as these (international long haul) routes are comparatively more profitable and open up avenues for innovative combinations as Indian carriers have good domestic connectivity as well,"

Jagannarayan Padmanabhan, Senior Director & Global Head, Transport, Mobility and Logistics - Consulting at CRISIL Market Intelligence and Analytics, said on Friday.

Among the Indian carriers, currently, only Air India and Vistara have wide-body aircraft in their fleets. IndiGo and SpiceJet have wet-leased some wide-body planes.

Padmanabhan said the share of Indian airlines in international traffic originating and terminating in India has grown steadily in recent years to around 43 per cent. Air India and IndiGo have, therefore, made this a strategic area for growth, he added.

"The latest order of IndiGo for long-haul flights is to be seen in that context. It had become imperative for the carrier to diversify its fleet - especially of wide-body aircraft - to maintain its competitive edge in long-distance routes and attract both leisure and business travellers," Padmanabhan said.

According to him, the order will also help India strengthen its case for creating an aviation hub in one of the major airports.

IndiGo expects to take delivery of the A350-900 planes from 2027

RBI Invites Pleas From Eligible SFBs To Become Regular, Universal Banks

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Reserve Bank of India on Friday invited applications from small finance banks meeting specified criteria, including a minimum net worth of Rs 1,000 crore, for becoming regular or universal banks.

The RBI, in November 2014, issued the guidelines for licensing of small finance banks (SFBs) in the private sector. There are about a dozen SFBs, including Au Small Finance Bank, Equitas Small Finance Bank and Ujjivan Small Finance Bank.

An SFB aiming to become a universal bank should have a minimum net worth of Rs 1,000 crore as at the end of the previous quarter (audited) and the shares of the bank should have been listed on a

recognised stock exchange, the central bank said.

It should also have a net profit in the last two financial years and GNPA and NNPA of less than or equal to 3 per cent



and 1 per cent, respectively, in the last two financial years.

Other conditions include a prescribed CRAR (capital-torisk weighted assets ratio) requirement and a satisfactory track record of performance

for a minimum period of five years.

On shareholding pattern, the RBI said: "There is no mandatory requirement for an eligible SFB to have an identified promoter. However, the existing promoters of the eligible SFB, if any, shall continue as the promoters on the transition to universal bank".

Further, the addition of new promoters or change in promoters would not be permitted for an eligible SFB during the transition period.

"There shall be no new mandatory lock-in requirement of minimum shareholding for existing promoters in the transitioned universal bank," the circular said.

In December 2019, the RBI provided the transition path for SFBs to convert into universal banks.

Four Entities Pay Rs 3 Crore To Settle Front Running Trade Case With Sebi

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Four entities, including Maxgrow Fintrade, have settled with markets regulator Sebi a case concerning the suspected front-running of trades by paying nearly Rs 3 crore towards settlement charges and agreeing to comply with other conditions.

The other three entities that settled the case with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) are Bhavin Pankaj Doshi, Nitesh Kumar Jain and Atish Shah.

Apart from the settlement amount, the Sebi's committee formulated other conditions to settle the case. These included disgorgement of 'unlawful gain' of Rs 85.12 lakh to be paid jointly and severally along with voluntary debarment for a period of six months from the securities market by each applicant.

The order came after entities filed an application with Sebi in May 2023 proposing to settle the suspected front-running activities by Maxgrow Fintrade



and Bhavin Pankaj Doshi case through a settlement order "without admitting or denying the findings of fact". "It is hereby ordered that

the instant proceedings initiated against the Applicants vide Show Cause Notice dated April 11, 2023, are disposed of," Sebi said in its settlement order.

In its show cause notice, it was alleged that Maxgrow Fintrade and Doshi had front-run the trades of the Big Client. Moreover, Jain had allegedly acted as a tipper and Atish Shah had allegedly acted as an information carrier. Through such acts, the entities allegedly violated PFUTP (Prohibition of Fraudulent and Unfair Trade Practices) rules.

Uday Kotak Loses ₹10,800 Crore In A Day After RBI Action

issues about Kotak's tech-

Bloomber

NEW DELHI: Uday Kotak built his Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. over decades to become Asia's richest banker. After India's regulator slapped his bank with a surprise ban, he's facing one of his biggest tests yet - and a dip in wealth.

The lender's shares tumbled as much as 13% on Thursday after it was barred from adding new customers through its digital channels and from issuing fresh credit cards. As the largest shareholder with a stake of almost 26%, the billionaire founder bore the heaviest brunt from the selldown, the most in four years.

That saw his wealth decline by \$1.3 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index. He was worth \$14.4 billion as of April 24.

Rival Axis Bank Ltd. overtook Kotak's market capitalization for the first time since Sept. 2016. Axis' shares had surged after its earnings

beat analysts' estimates.

The Reserve Bank of India cited governance and risk

nology systems as reasons behind its ban. It found deficiencies and non-compliance in various processes over two years - from a lack of data security and leak prevention strategies to vendor risk management - according to a statement late Wednesday. Kotak said in response

that it has taken measures for "adoption of new technologies to strengthen its IT systems and will continue to work with RBI to swiftly resolve balance issues at the earliest."

It's not Kotak's first runin with the regulator. The billionaire previously took India's central bank to court over the size of his stake in the lender. Mr Kotak ultimately agreed to reduce his ownership in 2020, ending the feud.

NEW CEO

It was only at the start of this year that Kotak handed the reins over to new Chief Executive Officer Ashok Vaswani. Mr Vaswani has said scale will be critical for the bank's growth, and that the lender has been investing in technology.

Kotak, a native of the western state of Gujarat, set up an investment company in 1985 with a 3 million rupee loan (\$41,000) from family and friends and partnered with Mahindra the following year.

The financier was Kotak Mahindra Bank's CEO since its beginning and gained more control of it in 2006 by ending a partnership of more than a decade with Goldman Sachs Group Inc.

Almost 98% of the transaction volume in Kotak's savings accounts were by digital or non-branch methods, according to its most recent investor presentation for the quarter ended Dec. 31.

"The ban on online customer acquisition will have an impact on Kotak Mahindra Bank's growth as it is one of the slowest lenders for physical branch expansions," said Ashutosh Mishra, banking analyst at Ashika. "The RBI ruling will create a negative sentiment on the bank."

Maruti Suzuki Posts Record Rs 3,878 Cr Profit In Q4

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: India's largest carmarker Maruti Suzuki on Friday its highest quarterly net profit in March reported quarter net profit as sports utility vehicles drove an increase in sales and favourable commodity prices helped margins.

Consolidated net profit of Rs 3,877.8 crore in January-March (fourth quarter of fiscal year April 2023 to March 2024) soared 47.8 per cent when compared with Rs 2,623.6 crore in the same period a year back, the company said in a stock exchange filing and media statement

The company, in which Japan's Suzuki Motor Corporation holds 58.19 per cent stake, sold 13.4 per cent more cars in the fourth quarter at 5.84 lakh (including 78,740 units exported) while material cost as percentage of sales dropped 190 bps to 74.2 per cent.

Maruti, however, does not share an exact number of SUVs sold. It sold 71.5 per cent more utility vehicles -- mostly SUVs and multi-purpose vehicles (MPVs) -- at 1.81 lakh. Utility vehicle share was 36 per cent in the March quarter, up from 24 per cent last year.

In an investor presentation, it attributed the rise in profit to "improved capacity utilisation, cost reduction efforts, softening of commodity prices, improved realisation and higher nonoperating income."

These outdid higher sales promotion expense and higher manufacturing overheads.

During the quarter, the company registered net sales of Rs 36,697.5 crore against Rs 30,821.8 crore in the same period of the previous year.

For the full fiscal year (FY24), the company reported a 64 per cent jump in net profit to a record Rs 13,209.4 crore. Sales were up 20 per cent to Rs 134,937.8 crore in April 2023 to March 2024.

During the year, the firm sold 2 million cars.

The numbers "represent the company's highest ever unit sales, net sales, and net profit both for the quarter and the financial year," a company statement said. Addressing a virtual media briefing here, the company's Chairman R C Bhargava said it will start production of the first electric vehicle in the current fiscal.

"As far as EV is concerned, we will start production in this financial year. We have a commitment to export the first lot of cars to Europe," he said.

The domestic market may not see EV cars in reasonable numbers this financial year... maybe in the next fiscal year, he said, while replying to a query. The Board of Directors recommend-

ed highest-ever dividend of Rs 125 per share (face value of Rs 5 per share) for FY24 compared to Rs 90 per share in FY 2022-23.

India's Cotton Yarn, Fabric Exports Rise 7% To USD 11.7 Bn In FY24

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The country's cotton yarn, fabrics/made-ups and handlooms exports rose 6.71 per cent year-on-year to USD 11.7 billion in 2023-24, even as the total exports dipped by 3 per cent in the last fiscal.

According to the commerce ministry data, these exports in March grew by 6.78 per cent to USD 1 billion. In 2022-23, these exports stood at USD 10.95 billion. This is one of the key product categories out of 30 closely monitored by the ministry.

The top five export markets for the sector during the last fiscal year were the US, Bangladesh, China, Sri Lanka, and the UAE.

The US accounts for over 25 per cent of India's total cotton yarn, fabrics/made-ups and handlooms exports, followed by Bangladesh (16 per cent), China (6.6 per cent), Sri Lanka (4.4 per cent), and UAE (2.35 per cent).

In 2023-24, the outbound shipments also entered new geographies like Anguilla, a British Overseas Territory in the Eastern Caribbean; Serbia; Georgia; Sweden; Cyprus; Azerbaijan; and Iran.

The other new markets explored by domestic exporters from the sector include Zambia, Cote D'Ivore, Sierra Leone, and Russia.

An industry expert said that Brazil and Vietnam are promising markets where these shipments can be

On average, India exports of these products worth USD one billion every month.

As per estimates, India is the largest producer of cotton globally, accounting for 23 per cent of the total global cotton production.

This category of exports is contributing to pushing up the country's labour-intensive textiles exports.

In the sixty-three years of his eventful life, the late Maulana In the sixty-three years of his eventful life, the late of the late of the leaft year of the leaft year

Muslim's work was lital his appeal transcended sectarian lines, and followers of various schools of thought came to him with their questions, doubts, and for course, for advice. This across-the-board acceptability made him a potent instrument of peace in highly volatile times. Accessible to everyone at all times he was time and again called to defuse explosive situations in many parts of Kashmir to doing the llames of discord created by misunderstandings. This is a role he performed with extraordinary grace and desterity, winning over both sides. The volidile in this field after his departure can be fell even must.

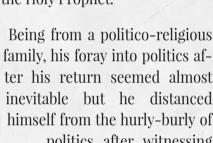
Mandana Mustafa Hussain Ansari had not only lent grace to the pulpit and the altar by his God-given spiritual attainments, but also enriched the intellectual heritage of Kashmirs by the contributions of his line with the altar by his God-given spiritual attainments, but also enriched the intellectual heritage of Kashmirs by the contributions of his linewing pen, from which coming generations will draw sustemance for ages.

The Maulana has also penned down the hiography of the Blessed Prophet, plunt, (Afanto-e-Nahowa, and edition 2006), his first work after his return from trace, and magnum opus; Queel-e-Nahowa, the hiography of Imam Hussain, AS, which was published after he passed away.

Maulana Mustafa also made his mark as a novelist, publishing three highly successful historical novels (histogram, Qabeedak, and Sazzioh) based on events in the tumultuous course of Islam.

Mandana passed away from this mortal world on this day 8 years ago but the seekers-after of knowledge and the spiritually-inclined remember him with great reverence.

Born in Srimagar on March 21, 1945, in the scholarly family of the Ansaris, the Maulana had his preliminary schooling in the valley, and after a brief stint in Lackmow, went to the highest sead of Salamire learning in Agal, trataj no light in the salamina and the presence of the Divine, and his concern for the life abert found unterance in verse. — the poetic side o



10

Body Of Missing recovery of untraced bodies. Emotional

recovery of untraced bodies. Emotional duas were made by the religious preachers for the recovery of those untraced. Locals at Gandbal said they are hopeful that the other two bodies will also be found.

An eyewitness said that as the body of Haziq reached his native area Gandbal, people irrespective of age and colour flooded the little boy's residence amid shrieks and cries while as women were seen wailing. The Gandbal locality of city has been in a state of mourning since past 11 days, owing to the tragic boat capsize incident that claimed seven lives including little Haziq. The father-son duo continue to remain missing under waters.

Regarding the retrieval of Haziq's body, a local, who was part of the sand extraction team at Zero Bridge, Rajbagh, said that they saw the body on the top of the water floating near Rajbagh area on Friday afternoon. "Soon, I along with other men rushed towards the body and handed it to the police, who then took it to the hospital, where medical formalities were done after which the body was handed over to the boy's family." he said.

The two bodies of Showkat Ahmed and Farhan Parray continue to remain untraced. Meanwhile, hundreds of people attended the funeral of Haziq at Gandbal and bid his last goodbye. People from various parts of Srinagar had reached Gandbal to participate in the funeral of the little boy.

Jammu Records

seen standing in long queues to wait for their turn to vote. They tried to brush aside the tag of sitting in air condition rooms and not voting during summer heat.

Jammu Lok Sabha seat comprises 18 Assembly segments including 11 Assembly segments of Jammu district including Bishnah, Suchetgarh, Ranbir Singh Pura (Jammu-south), Bahu, Jammu East, Nagrota, Jammu West, Jammu North, Marh, Akhnoor and Chhamb, three Assembly segments of Samba district including Ramgarh, Samba and Vijaypur, three Assembly segments of Reasi district including Gulabgarh, Reasi and Shri Mata Vasihno Devi and one Assembly segment of Rajouri district Kalakote-Sunderbani.

There were over 17.80 lakh electorates eligible to vote in Jammu PC including 921,095 male, 859,712 female and 28 third gender voters. The chief electoral office had established 2,416 polling stations and over 15000 polling staff were deputed to conduct the elections in a fair and transparent manner.

A total of 22 candidates are in the fray for this seat whereas the contest is mainly between Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Jugal Kishore Sharma and Congress party's Raman Bhalla.

According to the data provided by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) J&K, Akhnoor recorded 78.27 percent votes, Bahhu 62.34 percent, Bishnah 76.54 percent, Chhamb 75.76 percent, Gulabgarh 71.47 percent, Jammu East 66.11 percent, Jammu north 67.29 percent, Jammu West 62.82 percent, Kalakote-Sunderbani 69.10 percent, March 79.31 percent, Nagrota 75.63 percent, R S Pura 68.11 percent, Ramgarh 75.27 percent, Reasi 74.19 percent, Samba 69.23 percent, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi 79.43 percent, Suchetgarh 75.94 percent and Vijaypur recorded 75.67 percent.

The day began with the enthusiasm among people who turned up at polling stations early so that they don't have to stay in long queues during the day when the sun comes out with all its might. For the first half of the day, most of the people had casted their votes which was evident with the fact that by 1 pm, over 42 percent polling was recorded across the 18 segments of Jammu Parliamentary constituency.

This constituency is important as nine out of 18 Assembly segments have voters near the International Border (IB) and Line of Control (LoC) and in a couple of Assembly segments in Reasi district people are scattered in hills where commuting is difficult.

People in all the 18 Assembly were enthusiastic about casting their vote as few were not interested in who the candidates are but they were voting for the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and to elect him as the PM for the third consecutive time. The polarization factor was also there as the recent attack of PM Modi on Congress party's manifesto also echoed here. But there were people who were more interested in voting on local issues which haven't been addressed. Few traders said that they casted their vote to improve the business which has suffered a lot for the

last many years. 102-Yr-Old Votes

Reasi here, in the second phase of elecions on Friday.

Voting began in the second phase of elections in the Jammu parliamentary constituency on Friday, with over 17.81 lakh electorates eligible to vote for 22 candidates

"This generation of youth is getting destroyed due to the drug menace. They are idle as there are no jobs. To tackle the drug menace in J&K, the government should provide jobs to the youth. Whichever government comes to power, they should provide jobs to save this young generation," Haji Karamdin, who voted at a polling station in Reasi.

Brought to the polling station by his kin, Karamdin was received by the presiding officer with red flowers as a welcome step to strengthen democracy.

"I am very happy to vote at this polling

station at this age. I have always voted. This journey is continuing even today at the age of 102," Haji said Haji is one of 666 persons above the age of 100 years who are registered to vote in the Jammu Lok Sabha constituency.

The Jammu Lok Sabha seat is one of the 89 constituencies in 13 states and Union territories across the country going to polls on Friday.

A total of 17,80,835 voters, including 9,21,095 male and 8,59,712 female voters, besides 28 third-gender people, are enrolled in the Jammu Lok Sabha constituency, the officials said.

Early morning, voters were seen heading for the polling stations before polling began, officials said, adding that long lines of voters have been seen in various polling stations in Jammu city.

The sitting MP Jugal Kishore Sharma of BJP is eyeing a third term after winning the seat for BJP in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

This is the first major electoral battle after the abrogation of Article 370 and the bifurcation of the erstwhile state into two Union Territories on August 5, 2019.

109 Special

categories for voters in Jammu Parliamentary Constituency (PC) which went for polling today in the second phase of General Elections to Lok Sabha 2024.

These innovative polling stations viz; women manned, youth manned, PwD manned, Green Polling Stations, Border Polling Stations and Unique Polling Stations were designed to cater specifically to women, youth, Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), promote eco-friendly practices and cater to voters of different kind in the region.

The polling stations were established under specific themes in all four districts of Jammu Parliamentary Constituency.

In Jammu district, three Women manned, three PwD manned, two youth manned, four green, fifty border and three unique polling stations were established. Similarly, three women manned, three PwD manned, three youth manned, three green, twelve border and two unique polling stations were established for ease of voters in Samba district.

Likewise, in Reasi district, three women manned, three PwD manned, three youth manned, four green and one unique polling station was established.

In Rajouri (Sunderbani-Kalakote) district, one Women manned, one PWD manned, one youth manned and one green polling station was established.

The newly established polling stations aim to revolutionize the electoral process by ensuring accessibility and representation for all segments of society. With a special focus on women, youth, and PWD, these stations had been equipped with amenities tailored to meet their unique needs, fostering an environment conducive to active participation in the democratic process.

Furthermore, green practices were implemented at these polling stations.

Border Residents

segments registered more than 70 per cent polling, till 5 pm. It is likely to maintain its history of high voter turnout as in the last parliamentary elections, the constituency registered about 74 per cent polling. Shelling from across the border has remained a major concern for the border residents and the administration alike but this time the elections are taking place in a peaceful atmosphere owing to a renewed ceasefire between the two countries on February 25, 2021.

Last year, a BSF jawan was killed in Pakistan Rangers firing in the Ramgarh sector, the first loss of life on the Indian side in more than three years.

Despite the ceasefire, Pole said a contingency plan has been put in place to ensure no disruption in polling along the borders even if there is a ceasefire violation from across the border. "Earlier, we were living under the looming threat of firing and shelling from across the border but the situation has changed for good ever since the ceasefire came into effect and we are carrying out our daily chores, including farming, normally," former sarpanch Parveen Singh told PTI after casting his vote in a polling station in the last Indian village in Suchetgarh sector on the outskirts of Jammu. Singh said they are happy as almost all government schemes reached the border areas, ensuring the upliftment of the people and the development of the region.

However, former Panch Sham Singh was critical of the government and said the promised five marlas of land for border residents to ensure a roof on their heads during cross-border shelling had remained a distant dream. "We have suffered a big loss due to abrogation of Article 370 (a constitution provision that provided special status to J&K) in August 2019," he said, criticising the government for its alleged failure to generate employment opportunities for the youth, introducing Agnipath scheme and delaying assembly elections. "We want assembly elections so that the popular government is restored. People are for change," he said.

Palvi Chib, a first-time voter, said she wanted the government to focus on employment generation. "I am happy to have exercised my democratic right and I am looking forward to a government which can address people's issues and generate enough employment opportunities," Chib said. Rajni Devi, a resident of village Satrian in the R S Pura sector, said she would like Prime Minister Narendra Modi to return to power as there is a lot of improvement in the lives of the border residents due to the ceasefire and

developmental activities. "We are farmers and want everlasting peace between the two countries so that we can tend to our land on the zero line without any fear. Peace means opportunities and education for our children," another voter, Swarn Lal said. Long queues of voters were seen outside polling stations in the Suchetgarh assembly segment, where 41.85 per cent of voters had exercised their franchise till 1 pm.

SC Rejects Pleas

to go back to ballot papers in elections. The court issued two directives. Pronouncing his verdict, Justice Khanna directed the Election Commission to seal and store units used to load symbols for 45 days after the symbols have been loaded to electronic voting machines in strong

The apex court also allowed engineers of the EVM manufacturers to verify the microcontroller of the machines after declaration of the results on the request of candidates who stood second and third.

Request for the verification of the microcontroller can be made within seven days of declaration of the results after payment of fees, the court said.

"If EVM is found tampered during verification, fees paid by the candidates will be refunded," it said.

An EVM comprises three units -- ballot unit, control unit and the VVPAT. All three are embedded with microcontrollers which have a burnt memory from the manufacturer.

Currently, the Election Commission conducts random matching of VVPAT slips with EVMs at five polling booths per assembly constituency.

"While maintaining a balanced perspective is crucial in evaluating systems or institutions, blindly distrusting any aspect of the system can breed unwarranted scepticism...," Justice Datta said.

The bench suggested the poll panel can examine whether electronic machines can be used for counting VVPAT slips and also whether bar codes can be used for parties along with their symbols.

Besides seeking to return to the ballot paper system, the three petitions before it had prayed that VVPAT slips should be given to the voter to verify and put in the ballot box for counting and there should be 100 per cent counting of VVPAT slips, the bench said.

"We have rejected all of them," Justice Khanna said.

Hearing the matter on April 24, the bench had said it cannot "control the elections" or issue directions simply because doubts have been raised about the efficacy of EVM.

The petitions had claimed the polling devices can be tinkered with to manipulate the results.

NGO Association for Democratic Reforms, one of the petitioners, had sought reversal of the poll panel's 2017 decision to replace the transparent glass on VVPAT machines with an opaque glass through which a voter can see the slip only when the light is on for seven seconds.

The petitioners have also sought the court's direction to revert to the old system of ballot papers.

The seven-phase Lok Sabha polls began on April 19 and will conclude with the annuncement of results on June 4.

Separatist Ideology

Lone, who is contesting the Lok Sabha polls from Baramulla constituency, said one of the reasons he wants to go to Parliament is to strive and advocate for the same set of laws for the children of Kashmir and the rest of the country.

He cited the example of police verifications in Jammu and Kashmir.

While police verification in other parts of the country entails checking if an individual has any criminal antecedents or if an FIR is registered against them, in Kashmir, the entire family tree is investigated, he said.

"So, if in a family of 500 people, cousins and second cousins, one person is involved in violence, 499 will not get police clearance. This means they will not get a job, they will not get a passport, they can't participate in government contracts and probably they (government) might even pass a law that they can't get a bank loan," he said.

Lone also underlined the importance of reintegration in conflict resolution.

"Those who rebelled against the system, how much time will you give them to reintegrate into the system? So, if they are clean for 10 years, it is time to take the stigma off and let them live like normal civilians. This is done in all civilised countries." he said.

In response to a question, the JKPC president said he would not want Kashmir to be an issue between India and Pakistan, and the people of Jammu and Kashmir should focus on their lives and development.

"If there is an issue, the two countries have their foreign ministries to deal with it. We are a union territory, hopefully (will become) a state, and let's focus on development. It (their issues) is something that the two countries will take care of," he said.

He said his opinion might not be politically very correct or palatable but it was the truth which would save lives.

"Anybody saying anything to the contrary is talking about sacrifice. Sacrifice means blood, dead bodies and jail. Whosever says so should first qualify whose children will die and whose children will go to jail.

"I don't want... the army of orphans to supply more (bodies) to the graves," he said.

Lone, whose father and separatist leader Abdul Ghani Lone was assassinated on May 21, 2022, added that he detests violence as he has been at the receiving end.

On his past association with separatist Hurriyat Conference, the JKPC chief said the amalgam never accepted him while the mainstream political parties labelled him as an agent of agencies.

Lone, who is pitted against National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah in Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency, said the mainstream political parties paint him as a separatist as well as a BJP man in the same breath.

"They say his father created militant outfits and in the same breath, they say he is with the BJP. You have to give a prize for fiction and theatre to the National Conference," he said.

Lone, who has been a vocal critic of the NC, said the tenure of the oldest political party of Jammu and Kashmir witnessed the "worst human rights violations, dozens of killings in a single day, blinding (of) people. The menace of pellets was brought here by (former chief minister) Omar Abdullah."

Baramulla goes to polls on May 20 in the fifth round of the seven-phase Lok Sabha polls. The counting of votes for all seven phases will be taken up on June 4.

NCPCR Asks

suggesting Mufti's involvement in utilizing school children for electoral purposes.

The Commission stated that it had received information indicating Mufti's purported engagement of school children in the election campaign for the Rajouri-Anantnag parliamentary constituency. It emphasized that such actions appeared to contravene various guidelines and provisions of the Model Code of Conduct issued by the Election Commission of India.

Citing its authority under Section 13(1) of the CPCR Act, 2005, the NCPCR brought the matter to the attention of the Chief Election Commissioner, urging appropriate action in response to the alleged violation.

The NCPCR, a statutory body established under the CPCR Act, 2005, is tasked with safeguarding child rights and overseeing the implementation of key legislation such as the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012; Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015; and Right to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

Er Rashid Files

India has been contacted, and the party has been informed about the required procedures. Within the next couple of days, the AIP intends to file Engineer Rashid's nomination. Baba expressed confidence in Er Rashid's track record and public support.

"We will initiate our campaign once the form is accepted and will not leave a single corner of this constituency untouched during our campaign trail," Baba said, expressing hope that the people of Baramulla will support Er Rashid wholeheartedly. "People are aware of his commitments and achievements. It is an era of social media. People know which politician has done what in the last five years. We will initiate our campaign once the form is accepted and will not even leave a single corner of this constituency during our campaign trail. We hope people will not dishearten us. What we feel on the ground is that people regret that it should have been Er Rashid instead of Mohammad Akbar Lone in the parliament," Baba said.

ment," Bada said.

In the 2019 Parliament polls, Engineer Rashid's unexpected performance as an Independent candidate turned heads. He secured an impressive 1.01 lakh votes, trailing the National Conference (NC) winner, Mohammad Akbar Lone, by a mere 31,192 votes and falling short of the Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference (IKPC) candidate by only 827 votes.

Baba highlighted the unique circumstances surrounding Engineer Rashid's candidacy, noting that he is currently the only politician behind bars among the contenders. He emphasized that the government cannot detain an individual indefinitely without due judicial process. The AIP spokesman expressed confidence that a victory in the elections would facilitate Rashid's release.

"Once we win and get people's court, the court will be compelled to set him free," Baba said.

Mehbooba, Omar

legal recourse, for his party if the Election Commission decides to postpone the polls.

"All options are open to us. First and foremost, we appeal to the Election Commission not to do it (postpone the elections). The Election Commission should issue a directive to the local administration to keep the road open," he said.

Abdullah, who was accompanied by National Conference candidate for the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat Mian Altaf Ahmad, said the EC should not pay heed to the letter written by some parties and individuals, including the BJP for postponement of the elections under the garb of closure of the Mughal Road, the fair weather road which connects south Kashmir to Poonch-Rajouri region on other side of the Pir Panjal mountain range.

Abdullah said he failed to understand why anyone would seek postponement of an election based on presumption that the road will be closed due to inclement weather.

"The road is open today. Even if there is rain, it won't be difficult to restore the road. Even if the road gets closed,

our candidate is ready to go (to Poonch-Rajouri) by alternative road through Reasi," he said.

"If they can keep the roads to Kargil, Keran, Machil and Gurez open, there is no reason why they can't keep the Mughal road open." he added.

Speaking to reporters in Surankote area of Poonch district, Mehbooba said, "They all have ganged up against me because they do not want to see me in Parliament. The people, cutting across religious and party lines, are coming forward in my support and they are, therefore, using the Election Commission to defer and rig the elections".

The PDP leader said she travelled through the Mughal road which was recently opened for traffic.

"There is no justification in deferring voting in Anantnag-Rajouri seat. My request to the Election Commission is not to postpone the elections when only 10 days are left in the polling. This will send the wrong message and will have serious consequences," she said before leaving for Mendhar town to carry forward her campaign.

Mehbooba referred to the alleged rigging in the 1987 assembly polls leading to eruption of militancy in J-K, and said, "We request Election Commission not to do such an adventure as the people in J-K have already suffered a lot and have little faith left in the electoral process."

She said former prime minister A B Vajpayee had to given an assurance to the people of J-K about free and fair elections from the ramparts of the Red Fort.

Attacking the BJP government at the Centre, Mehbooba said they first reshaped Anantnag parliamentary constituency, using delimitation as an attempt to rig the elections in their favour.

"Don't they have knowledge that the Mughal road traditionally remains closed for six months but they joined parts on both sides of Pir Panjal just to rig elections. This is not happening anywhere else in the country," she charged.

On the intentions to seek postpones

On the intentions to seek postponement of the elections, Abdullah said, "I can't say why they wrote to the EC. Let's accept that BJP does not do anything that does not benefit it".

The NC leader said the people of the Anantnag constituency have been "unfortunate" that whenever it seems like the NC is having an upper hand, the elections are sought to be postponed.

"If you recall, in 2017 also people of

"If you recall, in 2017 also people of Anantnag were disenfranchised. There was a PDP-BJP government in Jammu and Kashmir. Chief minister (Mehbooba Mufti)'s brother was the candidate, who sought deferring the polls days before polling as he feared defeat," he added.

In response to a question, Abdullah said he feels he is the strongest candidate for the Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency. "Earlier, It was said (by PC candidate

Sajad Gani Lone) that I am a tourist Now they are seeking support from everyone. I feel I am the strongest candidate," he said. "I mustered courage and will contest from there (Baramulla). I wish Lone had

Srinagar," he added.
On the Supreme Court dismissing the plea on use of VVPAT on 100 percent EVMS, Abdullah said he wished he apex

mustered the courage to contest from

court had not done so.

Asked about the apprehensions of poll postponement, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said the EC is an independent institution and whatever decision it takes with regard to elections will be followed by the BJP.

The constituency is scheduled to go to polls in the third phase on May 7 to decide the fate of 21 candidates, including Mehbooba, who is facing a challenge from NC leader Minn Altaf

NC leader Mian Altaf.

Among those who have submitted their representation to the EC include J-K BJP chief Ravinder Raina, Apni party president Altaf Bukhari, DPAP candidate, Peoples Conference leader Imran Reza Ansari and two independent candidates.

Will Respect

decision by the Election Commission in this regard.

"It is a democracy. As a citizen of this country, we respect the Election Commission. If the Election Commission takes any decision (with regard to deferring elections in the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat), we will respect their decision," he told reporters here.

Raina said that only two candidates could file their nominations from the Rajouri-Poonch region, while the majority have filed their nominations from the valley due to the closure of the Mughal road connecting Kashmir with the Rajouri-Poonch belt.

The BJP leader said that National Conference leader Omar Abdullah and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti will also face problems as the road connecting Anantnag with Rajouri-Poonch is closed due to snowfall and landslides.

"Omar and Mehbooba will have problems when they will be coming to Rajouri-Poonch for campaigning, Anyone going to Anantnag from Rajouri-Poonch for campaigning will also have problems. The road has been closed due to snowfall and rains," he said.

Raina said the BJP has nothing to do

with the Election Commission taking any decision in this regard or reviewing the situation.
"Why is the BJP continuously being targeted by Omar and Mehbooba Mufti?

Mehbooba took five hours to reach from Pir ki Gali to Poonch," he said. The BJP leader said it is the people who will decide the fate of the parties. "We are also concerned about the people due to

weather conditions," he said.

The J&K BJP chief also brought up the

issue of the failure of candidates to file nomination papers due to the closure of

the Mughal road.

"25 candidates have filed forms from this seat. 23 are from Kashmir, while only two could file nominations from Rajouri-Poonch. The road was closed and they could not reach Anantnag to file the nomination papers," he said. Abdullah and Mufti have asked the Election Commission not to postpone polls in Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat.

The former chief ministers made the appeal after the Election Commission sought a report from Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo and the chief electoral officer on representations submitted by some parties and three candidates seeking rescheduling of elections in the constituency due to adverse weather conditions, including snowfall on Mughal road.

Ruhullah's Nomination

Notably, a recent Right to Information (RTI) inquiry revealed that Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, has allegedly manipulated his birth year on official documents. The RTI also said that the NC candidate may likely face disqualification and potential legal consequences due to alleged manipulation of his birth year on official documents.

According to the RTI filed with the Registrar of Births and Deaths in Srinagar, Aga Ruhullah Mehdi was born on August 11, 1982, at Gupkar Nursing Home. However, since his first election in 2002, all of his election affidavits have stated his year of birth as 1977.

Sources said that the discrepancy has raised concerns, especially considering a previous legal case in 2002 where his uncle, Aga Syed Mehmood, accused him of altering his birth year. Despite the case being dismissed at the time due to lack of conclusive evidence, the recent RTI findings have reignited scrutiny over the matter, they said.

They said that Aga Ruhullah Mehdi's passport also lists his year of birth as 1982, contradicting the information provided in his election affidavits. It is alleged that his birth year was manipulated in 2002, possibly to enable him to contest elections at a younger age, they added.

They further said that the potential consequences for Aga Ruhullah Mehdi could include retrospective disqualification from previous terms as an MLA and possible jail time as per Section 125-A of the Representation of People's Act. If convicted, he could also face a bar from contesting elections for up to 15 years and may be required to reimburse all previous remuneration received as a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

HC Quashes PSA

2019 to ending March 2024," the court said while quashing the PSA detention order dated 14 September 2022 against Lone. The latest preventive detention of the Lone, the court said, is "compounding the illegality attending the breach and violation of the petitioner's fundamental right to personal liberty with impunity and that entitles him to compensation."

"Although the petitioner has claimed compensation of rupees twenty five lacs but this court holds that a compensation of rupees five lacs would meet the ends of justice," the court said, adding, "Therefore besides holding and declaring the preventive detention of the petitioner illegal, also holds the petitioner entitled to compensation of rupees five lacs payable by the respondents within a period of three months from the date of this judgment."

The court also directed The Superintendent of the Jail concerned, where Lone is being detained, to release him "free from his prison."

Meanwhile, a bench of Justice Puneet Guptaquashed detention order passed by District Magistrate Baramulla on 7 February 2023 against one Amir Ahmad Chana of Azad Gunj area of the north Kashmir district. The court ordered his release from custody "provided he is not required in any other case."

Over 50 Houses

the sudden 'sinking of land' in Pernote village, prompting several families to move to safer places.

"This is a natural disaster and being the head of the district, I take full responsibility for providing food and shelter to the affected families," Choudhary, who was accompanied by district Development Council (DDC) chairperson Shamshad Shan, told reporters at the scene.

He said the authorities have summoned geology experts to know the cause behind the sinking of the land, while a team of district officials has been deployed round-the-clock to supervise the rehabilitation of the affected population and restoration of essential services.

"The land is still sinking and our effort is to restore essential services like the road and electricity as our first priority. We will provide tents and other items and also organise medical camps for the victims," the deputy commissioner said.

The deputy commissioner advised people not to panic and take precautionary measures to safeguard their lives.

Local volunteers joined SDRF and NDRF teams in helping the affected people to move their belongings from the damaged houses.

nate road via Sumber-Digdoal has been made operational to connect Gool subdivision with the district headquarters. In February last year also, at least 16 houses were damaged and road connec-

Meanwhile, the officials said an alter-

houses were damaged and road connectivity between Gool and Ramban was snapped due to sinking of land at Duksar Dalwa village in the Sangaldan area.

IPL 2024: Upbeat Delhi Capitals Take On Struggling MI As Playoff Race Intensifies

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: An upbeat Delhi Capitals will look to keep the winning momentum going against an inconsistent Mumbai Indians when the two sides square off in the IPL here on Saturday.

The Capitals have endured a rollercoaster season so far, showing flashes of brilliance while also succumbing to embarrassing defeats.

But three wins in the last four matches have helped them climb to the sixth spot and a win against MI will strengthen their claim to a play off spot.

On the other hand, after a familiar poor start, MI bounced back with three wins in their next four matches but a comprehensive nine-wicket thrashing by Rajasthan Royals put an end to their resurgence. They are tottering on the eighth place on the points table and can ill-afford to lose.

DC's biggest positive has



undoubtedly been skipper Rishabh Pant's form, which appears to be improving with each game

He has looked sharp behind the stumps and seems to be batting with freedom. He was at his belligerent best during a matchwinning unbeaten knock against Gujarat Titans on Wednesday. and Ishan Kishan.

It would be fair to say that the southpaw is in prime position to make India's squad for the T20 World Cup despite stiff

opposition from the likes of Sanju Samson, Dinesh Karthik

David Warner missed out the previous game, making way for Shai Hope, who couldn't capitalise on the opportunity, and the veteran Australian might be brought back in the playing XI.

For Mumbai, Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma have got runs but all of them have found form in patches. It's time for the likes of Tim David, Ishan Kishan and skipper Hardik Pandya to contribute a big way and take some pressure off the top trio.

While the batting department has occasionally looked good, the bowling remains a massive cause of concern.

Jasprit Bumrah has expectedly been MI's standout bowler. He has led the attack with 13 wickets at an economy rate of 6.37.

However, new addition Gerald Coetzee has been inconsistent in his maiden IPL. Though he has an economy of 10.10, the South African pacer has accounted for 12 wickets in eight

But barring the two seamers, Mumbai's bowling has disappointed.

Match starts 7.30pm IST.

Anantnag Army JCO Secures Olympic Quota For Paris Games

Agencies

ANANTNAG: A 29-year-old Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) in the Indian Army from south Kashmir's Anantnag is all set to participate in the Paris Olympics after securing an Olympic quota for the Games scheduled this year.

Hailing from the Damhal village of Anantnag district, Amir Ahmad Bhat's name resonates not just in military circles but also in the world of international shooting.

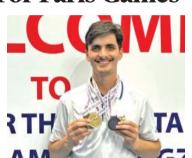
Speaking with the news agency KNO over the phone from South Korea, Amir said, "It was in 2022 when I started the shooting career. When I joined the Indian army, initially, we were trained for basic firing (shooting), and my performance was consistently excellent. Then, I became a sniper and participated

in many events."

He said, "I felt confident in my shooting skills, so I decided to pursue it further. Inspired by shooters like Abhinav Bindra and Indian Army's Vijay Kumar, among others, I chose shooting as my passion. It is an undiscovered sports category in Jammu and Kashmir."

About his achievements, Bhat said, "In 2022, I made my mark on the national stage clinching six medals in various national championships, including two gold, one silver, and three bronze.'

Expressing gratitude, he said, "My family, the Army, Sports Authority of India, and J&K Sports Council supported me throughout my journey. I received training under the Army Marksmanship Unit in MHOW, Indore. Later, I was selected for the Indian team and underwent training at various camps held in



Delhi by the Sports Authority of India. The Indian Army hired my coach, who is based in South Korea and continues to support me." Amir proudly noted, "I am the first

and only para shooter from Jammu & Kashmir to participate in the Paris Olympics this year. Additionally, among all three services (Army, Navy, & Air Force), I am the first medalist para shooter to participate in the Paris Olympics. It is a world record that I secured an Olympic berth in less than two years.'

Reflecting on his international appearances, Amir said he represented India six times internationally. In 2023, he competed in prestigious tournaments in countries like South Korea, Croatia, and Peru and it was in Lima, Peru, where he clinched a gold medal and secured an Olympic quota for the Paris Olympic Games scheduled for the following year.

"In total, I have earned 4 medals on the international platform too, including 1 Gold, 2 Silver, and 1 Bronze," he added.

In the ongoing Shooting World Cup held in Changwon, South Korea, Amir earned a silver medal. Twentysix teams from across the world participated in the tournament.

SVEEP 2024: YSS Organises Mega Cycle Race

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The Department of Youth Services and Sports is undertaking the initiative to raise awareness through the Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program in all the 20 districts of J&K.

This groundbreaking initiative recognizes the significance of engaging the youth in the democratic process, as they are the future leaders and voting citizens of the nation.. The Department of YSS on

Friday, organised a zonal level cycle race for boys of all age groups (AAG) in Sports Zone Tullamulla of district Ganderbal. Shabir Ahmad, Zonal Physical Education Officer Tullamulla and other senior officials of the Department were also present on this occasion. The mega race was flaggedpassing through the Central University of Kashmir road. It finally culminated at GHSS Tullamulla amid applause and jubilation among the participants.

off from the Baroosa Crossing,

The event, aimed at fostering voter awareness among the youth, reiterated the moto. 'No Voter is to be left behind,' emphasizing the crucial role of every vote in the democratic fabric of the nation.

150 enthusiastic young cyclists participated, showcasing zeal and fervor

throughout.

The meritorious participants were honored by the Zonal Physical Education Officer at GHSS Tullamulla, receiving well-deserved trophies in acknowledgment of their outstanding performance.

Meanwhile, in the sports Zone Kangan of the district, an inter-school zonal level Chess tournament for Boys U-14 years took place at MS Kiipara, witnessing the active involvement of numerous enthusiastic students.

Cricket Match Under SVEEP Held At Doru

Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Zonal Physical Education Officer (ZPEO) Doru, in collaboration with the Government Degree College Doru, organized a cricket match today as part of the Systematic Voter's Education & Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program. The event took place at the Sports Stadium Nadoora.

The match aimed to engage youth in the democratic process and promote awareness about the importance of voting. In this programme, Govt Degree college Doru, HSS Kabamarg, HSS Doru



and HSS Hakura participated. In the opening ceremony ZPEO Doru Bashir Ahmad Dar spoke about the importance of voting and voters participation in elections.

On the closing ceremony

medals & trophies were distributed among the players..

Team GDC Doru emerged as winner while team HSS Doru remained as runner up. Overall 64 players participated in this event.

Short TAKES

RR Eye Winning Streak As They Face Resurgent LSG

High-flying Rajasthan Royals will look to continue their winning momentum and consolidate their position at the top when they take on a resurgent Lucknow Super Giants, who would be gunning for revenge at home in an IPL match here on Saturday.

Former champions RR have looked in ominous form this season with seven wins from eight games, and they could be a tough nut to crack for LSG. LSG, meanwhile, too have played some good cricket and are placed fourth with five wins from eight games.

Ishant, Warner Banned From DC's Upcoming Match Against MI

The injured duo of Ishant Sharma and David Warner will not feature in Delhi Capitals' Indian Premier League clash against Mumbai Indians here

Delhi Capitals' Director of Cricket Sourav Ganguly confirmed the development on Friday.

Both players had missed DC's previous game against Gujarat Titans. While Warner had picked up a thumb injury against Lucknow Super Giants earlier this month, Ishant has been facing issues with his

World Wrestling Body Warns Against Reinstating Ad-Hoc Committee

restling's world governing body UWW on Friday threatened to reimpose the ban on India and bar its wrestlers from the final Olympic Qualifiers next month if an ad-hoc committee was brought back to run the sport.

Recently, the Delhi High Court directed IOA to file an affidavit stating the circumstances which led to the dissolution of the ad-hoc committee for running the national wrestling body. The UWW reiterated its stand that they won't allow any third party interference in the running of the national association of any

Eintracht Frankfurt Acquires Hugo Ekitiké From PSG

Eintracht Frankfurt is activating an option to buy Striker Hugo Ekitiké, who has been on loan from Paris Saint-Germain this season.

Frankfurt's move Friday comes despite a relatively slow start to life in the Bundesliga for Ekitiké, who only scored his first goal last week in his 12th game for the club. Frankfurt said Ekitiké has signed a contract through to 2029. Frankfurt is sixth in the Bundesliga and visits Bayern Munich on Saturday.

Chelsea's Fernandez To Miss Rest Of Season After Groin Surgery



helsea midfielder Enzo Fernandez has undergone groin surgery and will miss the remaining six games of the season, the Premier League club said. The Argentine international, who suffered a hernia in December, started in Chelsea's 5-0 thrashing by Arsenal on Tuesday before being substituted in the second half.

The loss of Fernandez is another blow for Chelsea, who are ninth in the league and visit fourth-placed Aston Villa on Saturday.

Yuvraj Singles Out Surya & Bumrah As India's Pivotal Players In T20 WC

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Former India star Yuvraj Singh has identified the swashbuckling Suryakumar Yadav and pace ace Jasprit Bumrah as key to the team's prospects in the upcoming T20 World Cup owing to their ability to "change the complexion of a game" in a jiffy.

Yuvraj, who was pivotal to India's title triumph in the inaugural edition of the tournament back in 2007, said Suryakumar will need to have a good outing for the team to win the cup for the second time while also suggesting that Bumrah needs to be at his

"Suryakumar Yadav (is India's key player)," Yuvraj was quoted as saying by ICC. He added, "Because the way he plays, he can change the complexion of a game in 15 balls. And he is definitely a surety... for India to win this T20 World Cup, Surya is going to be the

"I think Jasprit Bumrah is also the key with the bowling and I would like to see a legspinner in the squad as well, like Yuzvendra Chahal as he has been bowling really well. "But being a batter, I would

say Suryakumar Yadav (is the key player)."

While dissecting the options of who should be India's first-choice wicket-keeper. Yuvraj expressed satisfaction with veteran Dinesh Karthik's form in the IPL but said if he is not part of the playing XI, there is no point picking the 38-year-old in the squad as the younger Rishabh Pant and Sanju Samson have been playing extremely well.

"DK (Karthik) has been batting well, but the thing with DK is that the last time (2022) they picked him and the T20 WC was on he didn't get to play," Yuvraj noted.

'If DK is not in your XI I don't think there is any point in picking him. There is Rishabh Pant, Sanju Samson and both guys are in great form and obviously they are younger.

"I would like to see DK in the mix, but if he is not going to play then you would rather have someone who is younger and can make the difference.'

ROHIT AND VIRAT HAVE EARNED THE RIGHT TO DE-CIDE ON THEIR FUTURE

Yuvraj knows just how important Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are to India's for-



tunes in the T20 showpiece and refused to put an end date on when he thinks the duo

should retire from interna-

Instead, Yuvraj suggested

that Rohit and Kohli should consider giving up on playing T20I cricket after the T20

World Cup and concentrate on

other formats. "As you get older people

start talking about your age and they forget about your form," Yuvraj stated. 'These guys have been great

players for India and they deserve to go (retire) when they

"I would like to see more younger players in the T20 format, because it gets the load off them (experienced playing 50-over players) (ODIs) and Test matches. After this (T20) World Cup I would like to see a lot of younger guys come into the team and make the T20 side for the next World Cup."

DUBE IS THE FUTURE STAR

Yuvraj picked Chennai Super Kings left-hander Shivam Dube as one player that he wants to see in the squad, thanks to his explosive batting. "I would like to see Shivam Dube in the squad," he said.

"He has been in and out of the (Indian) team, but this IPL he has been batting very well and he is someone who can be the game-changer.

"There are a lot of other guys who have been playing for a while now, but I would like to see Shivam Dube in the



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