

## Crime Prevention In Kashmir Gets a Tech Boost

# Police Tracks NDPS Accused With GPS Anklets



### Agencies

Srinagar: After successfully using the GPS ankle trackers on terror-accused persons out on bail, the Jammu and Kashmir police Thursday fixed the GPS anklet on an NDPS accused out on bail in the northern district of Kashmir.

The anklet will help track the movements of the person out on bail so that he remains under constant watch of the police. The GPS tracker anklet is a wearable device affixed around the ankle of the person, aiming to monitor and track the movement of

accused persons on bail. A senior police official while confirming the development said that following bail granted to the accused in case FIR No 283/2022 of Police Station Kupwara, ASJ court here in Kupwara ordered for the GPS tracker deployment.

In order to have a better surveillance over movement of bailed out accused, the devices were fitted on Abdul Majid Bhat and Aabid Ali Bhat – the duo accused in NDPS act by ASP GM Bhat, DySP Ameen Bhat and SHO Kupwara Inspector Ishfaq, a team of [More on P10](#)

## Police Activate AI-based Facial Recognition System In J&K

### Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The police on Friday activated an advanced AI-based facial recognition system at the Navyuga tunnel, marking a significant stride towards bolstering security measures on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway in the Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

This technology is designed to identify and track individuals involved in criminal activities, including terrorists, over-ground workers (OGWs), absconders, history sheeters, thieves, and drug

peddlers, they said. "The advanced AI-based facial recognition system has been set up and activated at the Navyuga tunnel's checkpoint in Banihal, marking a significant stride towards bolstering security measures," the official said. The system's implementation marks a pivotal step in the region's commitment to ensuring public safety and combating crime effectively, they said. They emphasised the significance of the AI-based facial recognition system in swiftly [More on P10](#)

# For Yrs, Congress & Allies Coddled Article 370: Amit Shah

### Agencies

Maharashtra: Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that the PM Modi-led government abrogated Article 370, while the Congress party had continued with it for all these years.

Addressing a public meeting in Ratnagiri, Amit Shah said that while it was difficult to visit Lal Chowk in Srinagar, now Janmashtami processions are proudly carried out there.

He came out heavily against Shiv Sea (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, and said, "For 70 years, Sharad Pawar and company, Congress and company, on whose lap Uddhav ji is sitting now...they kept feeding Article 370 like an orphan kid. You (people) made Narendra Modi ji, Prime Minister for the second time and on 5th August 2019, he removed Article 370 and Kashmir



became part of India forever." "I want to ask Uddhav Thackeray, those people, whose feet you fell on to become CM, what those Congress and Sharad Pawar were doing?...they opposed abrogation of Article 370. Rahul baba, it has been 5 years and nobody has the guts to pelt stones," Shah said.

"This is Narendra Modi's government. Earlier it was difficult to go to Lal Chowk, but now the procession of Krishan Janmashtami is carried with pride," he added.

Attacking the former Maharashtra CM further, the Home Minister said that a leader who went with Rahul Gandhi and Sharad Pawar

can't manage the state's pride.

"I want Uddhav Thackeray to make it clear to the people, do you want the Chief Minister post or the protectors of Article 370...today you (people) have also to decide... someone who went with Rahul Gandhi and Sharad Pawar for power can never manage Maharashtra's pride," he further stated.

He asked if he can take Veer Savarkar's name while being a part of the Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance with Congress and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) in Maharashtra.

"Today I want to ask can Uddhav Thackeray, the President of fake Shiv Sena, dare to utter Veer Savarkar's name?...if you can't then what form of Shiv Sena are you running? The real Shiv Sena is being [More on P10](#)

## Light Rains In J&K Till May 5: MeT

### KO WEB DESK

Srinagar: Partly to generally cloudy weather with light rain and thunder is expected at scattered places in Jammu and Kashmir towards evening till May 4, an official from the meteorological department said.

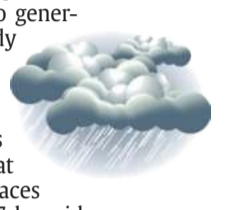
On May 5, he said, generally dry weather with afternoon thundershower activity is likely at isolated places.

Partly to generally cloudy weather with light rain and thunder is expected at a few places on May 6-7, he said.

From May 8-10, generally dry weather with afternoon thundershower activity is expected at a few places, the official added.

Night temperature recorded an increase amid cloud cover but continued to hover below normal in Jammu and Kashmir on Friday.

A meteorological department official said that Srinagar recorded a low of 7.8°C against 5.7°C on the [More on P10](#)



# BJP Skipped Kashmir For Fear of Adverse Verdict: Omar

### Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: National Conference leader Omar Abdullah on Friday asked the BJP why it had not fielded candidates from the Kashmir Valley despite claiming to have put Jammu and Kashmir on the path of development following the abrogation of Article 370.

The BJP has not fielded candidates for the Lok Sabha elections from the three seats in Kashmir.

"We will see how many votes the BJP gets in Kashmir (in the assembly elections). If it did such a great service, then why didn't it nominate even one candidate in Kashmir?" Abdullah told PTI Video after addressing an election rally at Batwara in support of the party's Srinagar candidate Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi.

The National Conference vice-president was asked to comment on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks in a TV interview that he implemented the Indian Constitution in Jammu and



Kashmir after abrogating Article 370.

Abdullah said the BJP did not field candidates from the three seats in the Valley as "it knows where it stands".

Earlier, targeting the People's Democratic Party (PDP) during his address, Abdullah said the people of Jammu and Kashmir have seen representatives who went to Parliament and remained silent.

"It (PDP) sought votes against the BJP and later

aligned with it," he said, referring to the two parties' post-poll alliance in 2014.

Abdullah said people want a representative who will represent them in Parliament and talk about their rights.

"We want someone who will talk about our dignity and that representative is Aga Ruhullah and the National Conference," he said as he sought votes for the party's candidates.

If people want honest, young and dynamic representatives to become their voice, "then give us (National Conference) a chance", Abdullah said.

Lashing out at the BJP, he said the party in power at the Centre "snatched away our identity and our land rights".

"It did not open colleges, universities or schools. In fact, it opened liquor shops. It is forcing youngsters into drug addiction," he added.

Referring to the prime minister's remarks about the Congress' election manifesto, Abdullah said the BJP is talking about "mangalsutra" and land because [More on P10](#)

## Aga Ruhullah Birth Year Controversy Formal Complaint Filed With ECI

### Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: National Conference Lok Sabha candidate Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, contesting from the Srinagar parliamentary constituency, has yet again found himself caught in a dispute over discrepancies in his official documents.

According to reports, a complaint has been formally lodged with the Election Commission of India. The complaint filed by Mubashir Mushtaq, a Supreme Court lawyer, alleged that Ruhullah's affidavit, submitted as part of his candidature, contains errors, particularly regarding his date of birth.

Aga Ruhullah, who shot into prominence after 2019 for his outspoken and fiery speeches, has a clear edge over his electoral rivals, it is widely believed.

Speaking to a news channel, advocate Mubashir urged the Election Commission to take action against Ruhullah well before the elections in



Srinagar Constituency. He said that Ruhullah, whose affidavit claims him to be 46 years old, has deliberately manipulated his birth year.

"Contrary to this assertion, details obtained through a recent RTI (Right to Information) inquiry suggests that Ruhululla was actually born in 1982, which raises concerns about tampering with official documents," Mushtaq said.

Mushtaq alleged that the tampering traces [More on P10](#)

## Sajjad Kargili Jumps In Fray

### KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Socio-political activist and core member of the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), Sajjad Kargili, on Friday filed his nomination as an independent candidate for the Ladakh Lok Sabha constituency.

Accompanied by a throng of fervent supporters, Kargili submitted his nomination papers at the Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) Office in Kargil.

The spirited scene echoed Kargili's determination and grassroots support as hundreds rallied behind him during the nomination filing. Kargili's bid for the parliamentary seat comes on the heels of his notable performance in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. [More on P10](#)

## 38 Candidates File Nominations From Baramulla

### Observer News Service

Baramulla: A total of 38 candidates have filed their nominations for the Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency (PC), with 19 candidates submitting their papers on the last day of nomination here today at the office of the Returning Officer (RO), Minga Sherpa.

Those who filed their nomination papers today included Prince Parvez, Shafeeqa Begum, Bilal Ahmad Wani, Syed Ameer Suhail, Mohammad Sultan Ganaie, Shahdib Hanief Khan, Ghulam Nabi Parry, Ishfaq Ahmad Bhat, Dr. Manzoor Ahmad Bhat, Ashiq Hussain, Shabir Ahmad Malik, Mohammad Abdullah Khan, Haamid Hussain Bhat, Firdous Ahmad Bhat, Shabir



Ahmad Dar and Arun Kumar Raina as independent candidate besides Muneer Ahmad Khan from National People's Front, Mehraj ud Din Ahanger from All J&K Kisan Mazdoor Party and Suraya Nissar from National Republic Party of

India. The scrutiny of the nomination papers will be held on May 04, 2024. The candidate can withdraw their nomination before 3 PM on May 06, 2024 in the office of Returning Officer. [More on P10](#)

## Nayeem Khan's Brother Files Nomination

Jailed separatist leader Nayeem Khan's brother, Munir Khan, on Friday filed his nomination papers from Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency, which is going to polls in the fifth phase on May 20. Nayeem Khan was arrested on July 24, 2017 in a terror-related case. He headed the Jammu Kashmir National Front, which was banned by the government under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Munir Khan, who is a part of the [More on P10](#)

## Efforts To Overcome Dip In Voter Turnout 'Doubled Up': EC

### Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Election Commission on Friday said it has "doubled up" its voter participation interventions to overcome the "small" dip in turnout in the first two phases of the Lok Sabha polls.

The turnout stood at 66.14 per cent in the first phase and at 66.71 per cent in the second phase. Compared to the voter participation in the past, this is "among the best" but "somewhat lags" behind the high benchmarks of the 2019 general elections, it said.

In 2019, a voter turnout of 69.43 per cent was recorded in the first phase and 69.64 per cent was recorded in the second phase.



The weather conditions are predicted to be normal in the 11 states and union territories that will go to polls in the third phase of elections on May 7, the poll panel noted.

Following the dip in the turnout in the first phase, the EC had directed state chief electoral officers of Maharashtra, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Karnataka to [More on P10](#)

## Availing Services Under PSGA

# J&K Govt Likely To Simply Procedures

### Agencies

Srinagar: The government on Friday accorded sanction to the constitution of a Committee for overseeing the need of simplifying procedures/documents and other formalities for availing various services under the Public Service Guarantee Act in Jammu and Kashmir.

Headed by Administrative Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, the 7-members

of the committee include Administrative Secretaries of Department of Forest, Ecology & Environment, General Administration and that of the concerned Department, Secretary Department of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, Special Secretary to the Administration Department and any other member to be co-opted by the Chairman of the Committee, if required. The committee [More on P10](#)

## Encroachments On Mughal-era Canal

# HC Seeks 'Actions Taken' On 21-Yr-Old Communication

### M AHMAD

Srinagar The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has directed authorities to inform it about "actions taken" on an over 21-year-old official communication regarding demarcation and eviction of encroachers on 'Shah Kul', a historical canal and a national monument which had been the main source of supplying water to Nishat Gardens since the time of Mughal Emperor Jahangir. Hearing a Public Interest

Litigation, a division bench of Chief Justice N Kotiswar Singh and Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi passed the directions after advocate Shafiqat Nazir, representing petitioner—Mir Mohammad Shafi—brought attention of the Court to the communication from the Director of Land Records/Settlement Officer, Kashmir, under No. 2701-03/DIR-50/2003 dated 10.03.2003

which ordered a demarcation to be conducted on 11.03.2003 by a team of experienced officials, and carrying out eviction of encroachers, if any, by the staff from Srinagar Municipality and Srinagar Development Authority within a week's time. "This Court desires to know the actions taken or processes undertaken pursuant to the said direction, for which the relevant records shall be

produced by the next date of hearing," the Division bench said and posted the PIL for further consideration on May 8.

The PIL seeks court's direction on removal of encroachments and the restoration of the original status of 'Shah Kul'.

The court had also issued notice to two private persons (respondents 18 and 19) from Deewan Colony Ishber Nishat for their response to the PIL.

However no one appeared for respondent No. 19, one of the private [More on P10](#)

## CBSE Class 10, 12 Results Likely After May 20

### KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) announced on its official website that class 10 and 12 results may be announced after May 20.

The clarification came amid speculation about the announcement of the exam results.

"CBSE class 10 and 12 results are likely to be announced after May 20," the board said in a note on its website. Around 39 lakh students who [More on P10](#)





# Nature Conservation Works, And We're Getting Better At It

## The Conversation

To work in nature conservation is to battle a headwind of bad news. When the overwhelming picture indicates the natural world is in decline, is there any room for optimism? Well, our new global study has some good news: we provide the strongest evidence to date that nature conservation efforts are not only effective, but that when they do work, they often really work.

Trends in nature conservation tend to be measured in terms of biodiversity that is, the variety among living organisms from genes to ecosystems. We treasure biodiversity not only for how it enriches society and culture, but also its underpinning of resilient, functioning ecosystems that are a foundation of the global economy.

However, it is well known that global biodiversity is decreasing, and has been for some time. Is anything we are doing to reverse this trend effective?

As part of a team of researchers, we conducted the most comprehensive analysis yet of what happened when conservationists intervened in ecosystems. These were interventions of all types, all over the world. We found that conservation action is typically much better than doing nothing at all. The challenge now is to fund conservation on the scale needed to halt and reverse declines in biodiversity and give these proven methods the best chance of success.

### First, the less good news

Globally, biodiversity is being depleted by human activities like habitat clearance, overharvesting, the

introduction of invasive species and climate change.

To arrest its decline, people in various places have taken measures including creating protected areas, removing invasive species or restoring habitats, such as forests and wetlands. These efforts are interdependent with traditional stewardship of the world's richest biodiversity by indigenous people and local communities. And in 2022, governments adopted new global targets to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.

Our team, led by the conservation organisation Re:wild, the universities of Oxford and Kent, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, analysed the findings of 186 studies covering 665 trials of different conservation interventions globally over the course of a century.

We wanted to understand whether the outcomes of these conservation actions improved on what would have happened without any intervention. Lots of studies have tried to compare the effects of conservation projects this way, but this is the first time such research has been combined in a single analysis to determine if conservation is working overall.

### And now, the good news

What we found was extremely encouraging: conservation efforts work, and they work pretty much everywhere.

We found that conservation actions improved the state of biodiversity or slowed its decline in the majority of cases (66 per cent) compared with no action. But more importantly, when conservation interventions work, we found that they are highly effective.

Examples from our far-reaching database included the management of



invasive and problematic native predators on two of Florida's barrier islands, which resulted in an immediate and substantial improvement in the nesting success of loggerhead turtles and least terns.

In central African countries across the Congo basin, deforestation was 74 per cent lower in logging estates subject to a forest management plan versus those that weren't. Protected areas and indigenous lands had significantly less deforestation and smaller fires in the Brazilian Amazon. Breeding Chinook salmon in captivity and releasing

them boosted their natural population in the Salmon River basin of central Idaho with minimal side effects.

Where conservation actions did not recover or slow the decline of the species or ecosystems that they were targeting, there is an opportunity to learn why and refine the conservation methods. For example, in India, removing an invasive algae simply caused it to spread elsewhere. Conservationists can now try a different strategy that may be more successful, such as finding ways to halt the drift of fragments of algae.

In other cases, where conserva-

tion action did not clearly benefit the target, other native species benefited unintentionally. For example, seahorses were less numerous in protected sites off New South Wales in Australia because these marine protected areas increased the abundance of their predators, such as octopus. So, still a success of sorts.

We also found that more recent conservation interventions tended to have more positive outcomes for biodiversity. This could mean modern conservation is getting more effective over time.

### What comes next

If conservation generally works but biodiversity is still declining, then simply put: we need to do more of it. Much more. While at the same time reducing the pressures we put on nature.

Over half of the world's GDP, almost USD 44 trillion (35 trillion), is moderately or highly dependent on nature. According to previous studies, a comprehensive global conservation programme would require an investment of between USD 178 and USD 524 billion.

By comparison, in 2022 alone, subsidies for the production and use of fossil fuels which are ultimately destructive to nature as fossil fuel burning is the leading cause of climate change totalled USD 7 trillion globally. That is 13 times the upper estimate of what is needed annually to fund the protection and restoration of biodiversity. Today, just USD 121 billion is invested annually in conservation worldwide.

Potential funding priorities include more and better managed protected areas. Consistent with other studies, we found that protected areas work very well on the whole; studies that highlight where protected areas are not working often cite ineffective management or inadequate resources. More large-scale investment in habitat restoration would also help according to this new research.

Our study provides evidence that optimism for nature's recovery is not misplaced. Though biodiversity is declining, we have effective tools to conserve it and they seem to be getting better over time. The world's governments have committed to nature recovery. Now, we must invest in it.

## Survey Finds Majority Of Indians Are New To Podcasts

Press Trust Of India

India has emerged as the third-largest market for podcast listeners globally even as around 78 per cent of people surveyed got to know about this media recently, a report said on Thursday.

According to the report, around 82 per cent of respondents were initially unaware of podcasts, highlighting a significant opportunity for awareness-building efforts.

"78 per cent of consumers discovered podcasts less than a year ago, indicating a recent surge in interest," the report, The Podcast Pulse:

Unveiling India's Podcast Landscape, stated. India has surged to become the third-largest market for podcast listeners globally, yet only 12 per cent of Indians are currently engaged, leaving a vast untapped audience waiting to be explored, the report prepared by UNPAC Research (OPC) in support of Ideabrew Studios said. Authenticity and vulnerability in podcast conversations are highly valued by listeners, fostering a deeper connection with hosts and content, it said. The report is based on responses from 2,170 individuals across 10 cities in India, including Mumbai, Delhi,

Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Indore, Patna, and Jaipur, the report gauged awareness and listenership statistics. Additionally, detailed interviews with 1,800 active listeners provided invaluable insights into their behaviour and preferences. Sheetal Choksi, Director, UNPAC Research said that the Podcast Pulse is a comprehensive report on podcast consumption in India. Regional podcasts are identified as a driving force in shaping the industry's future, offering audiences a more relatable and culturally resonant listening experience, he added.



## NORTHERN RAILWAY

### E-Tender Notice

Sr. DEE/G/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders ([www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)) against below titled Tenders. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only.

Tender No.	Name of work	App. Cost. (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Completion period	Opening of tender	Website Particulars
251-Elect-T-07-2024-25	Provision of electrical work in C/w Lowering and lifting of submersible pumps and rewinding/repairing of defective submersible pumps motors of Amritsar, Firozpur, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Pathankot Zones and provision of GSM based automation for protection of pumps control system of Firozpur division for two years.	65,98,435.24	1,32,000.00	24 Months	23.05.2024 after 15:00 Hrs.	<a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a>

251-Elect/T.Notice No. 05-Elect/2024-25 Dated : 03.05.2024 1339/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

## Office of the Executive Engineer, Electric Division- Ganderbal.

Email: Edgbl123@gmail.com Tel No. 0194-2416237 Fax No. 0194-2416237

### e-TENDER ABBREVIATED NOTICE

e-NIT No. EDG/026 of 2024-25, dt:02-05-2024

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Electric Division-Ganderbal invites online e-bids from registered A-Class Electrical Contractors/firms for as under:

S.No	Particulars	Estimate d Cost (In Lacs)
1	Supply of LT Cable, Flexible Wire and other allied accessories required for Electrification to various Polling Booths/Strong Room/Collection Rooms/APC Manasbal/Distribution Centre in view of Forthcoming Lok Sabha Election-2024.	3.52

The complete tender document is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidder/tenderers may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below. Bidding Documents contain Qualifying Criteria for Bidders, Specifications, Bill of Quantities, Terms and Conditions of Contract and other details.

i)	Date and Time of downloading/ Sale (Start) of Tender Document	02.05.2024; 16:00 Hrs
ii)	Date & Time of Download/ Sale (End) of Tender Document	08.05.2024; 16:00 Hrs
iii)	Date and time of bidding queries/clarifications	02.05.2024; 16:00 Hrs to 03.05.2024; 16:00 Hrs
iv)	Date & Time of Bid Uploading (Start/End)	02.05.2024; 16:00 Hrs to 08.05.2024; 16:00 Hrs
v)	Commercial/ Technical Bid Opening Date & Time	08.05.2024 at 16:30 Hrs
vi)	Financial Bid Opening	Shall be declared later on for the technically qualified bidders
vii)	Venue of Commercial/ Technical Bid Opening	Electronically on J&K Government e-Procurement System website <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a>
viii)	Cost of e-Bid document	Rs.200.00 (Rupees Two Hundred Only) (Non-refundable) [Treasury Receipt/Demand Draft]
ix)	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit	Rs.7,100/= (Rupees Seven Thousand One Hundred Only)

DIPK-NB-117/24 dated: 03-05-2024

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
Electric Division Ganderbal

## Office of the Naib Tehsildar Tilgam

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Applications of Aamir Ashraf S/o Mohd Ashraf Khan And Moomina Ashraf D/o Mohd Ashraf Khan R/o Wanigam Bala Tehsil pattan regarding obtaining RBA Certificate

### Public Notice

General Public is hereby informed through this notice that the applicant file is currently under process in the office of the undersigned regarding obtaining RBA certificate. In this matter report of patwari halqa wanigam bala reveals that the applicants are permanent resident of said village and is residing here from more than 15 years and have not migrated from the said village. Furthermore, the annual family income of the applicants from all sources is Rs 120000/- . Family details of the applicant are give below.

S. No	Name of the Family Member	Parentage	Age	Occupation
1	Mohd Ashraf Khan	Mohd Afzal Khan	47	Labour
2	Meema Begum	W/o Mohd Ashraf Khan	42	H/W
3	Aamir Ashraf	S/o Mohd Ashraf Khan	23	Student
4	Moomina Ashraf	D/o Mohd Ashraf Khan	18	--
5	Aashia Ashraf	D/o Mohd Ashraf Khan	16	--

In this connection if any person(s) has any objection(s) he/she can visit the undersigned's office within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection will be considered.  
fko Naib Tehsildar

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I Farooq Ahmad Bhat S/O Gulam Qadir Bhat R/O New Theed Harwan wants to upgrade my contractor registration vide No :-SE/hyd/bud/110/23-24/BEE Class/Civil. Issued By I&FC kashmir.

If anyone having any objection please contact the concerned Office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Farooq Ahmad Bhat S/O Gulam Qadir Bhat  
Cell No; +918491948627. pd

## Office of the Secretary Primary Agriculture Cooperation Credit Society Ltd. Nooripora (Pattan)

Sub: Notification To Members

It is for the information of Basic Member of the society that they are hereby cordially invited to office of the Society on 04-05-2024 for receiving dividend fixed Rs 100 for every basic Member of the society acrucl for the year 2023-24

fko Secretary  
PACS Nooripora (Pattan)

**Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited**  
**J&K Bank**  
 Serving To Empower  
 Zonal Office  
 Srinagar

## Extension of time

With reference to the tender notice No. **jkb/zosqr/Est/24 -Dt:-04-03-2024**, issued by this office, regarding advertisement for premises for outright purchase/ on lease basis for housing Branch at Lasjan, Srinagar followed by 1st extension on 12-04-2024, the last date for receipt of the tenders is extended up to 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024. The tender documents can be downloaded from the link [www.jkbank.com](http://www.jkbank.com). The parties who have already applied in response to the tender notice No. **jkb/zosqr/Est/24- Dt:-04-03-2024** & 1st extension notice No. **jkb/zosqr/Est/24-06, Dt:-12-04-2024** need not to apply again.

Other terms and conditions shall remain the same.

No. **jkb/zoSqr /Est/24- 13**  
 Dated:-29-04-2024

Sd/-  
Zonal Head  
Zonal Office Srinagar

Registered office : Corporate Headquarters, M.A.Road, Srinagar 190001, Kashmir, India  
 CIN: L65110JK19385GCC000048 ; T : +91 (0)194 2481 930-35 ; F : +91 (0)194 248 1928 ; E : info@jkbmail.com ; W : www.jkbank.com

DIPK-NB-118/24 Dated: 03-05-2024



## Mirwaiz Placed Under House Arrest, Denied Access To Jamia Masjid

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The chief cleric of Kashmir, Mirwaiz Umer Farooq was again placed under house arrest and not allowed to deliver Friday sermon at the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar, leaving the faithful disappointed.

A spokesman of Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid in a statement alleged that the authorities placed Mirwaiz under house arrest and did not allow him to visit Jamia Masjid wherein thousands of worshippers from length and breadth of the valley had gathered to listen to his Friday sermon.

"Mirwaiz e Kashmir Mohammad Umar Farooq has been again placed under house arrest at his residence this morning by the authorities and was not allowed to address the faithful at Jamia Masjid Srinagar nor offer obliga-

tory Friday prayers," the spokesman added.

Anjuman Auqaf, an organization in charge of the grand mosque in the Nowhatta area of the old city, expressed dismay over continual house detention of Mirwaiz, particularly on Friday.

"Thousands of worshippers from across the valley had assembled at the revered Jamia Masjid Srinagar on Friday to hear his speech, but they were let down to see the pulpit of the mosque empty," he said.

Anjuman appealed to the government to stop arbitrarily arresting Mirwaiz and inflicting suffering to Muslims.

Pertinent to mention that Mirwaiz was released from house arrest last year, more than four years after he had been detained in the wake of Article 370's abrogation on August 5, 2019.



## Police Bust Truck Robbers Gang In Srinagar, 3 Held

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Police on Friday claimed to have busted a gang of truck robbers by arresting three accused persons involved in the commission of crime besides, recovered stolen items from their possession.

On 29/04/2024, Police Station Shalteng received a written complaint from one Hakam Khan (driver) son of Anwar Khan from Rajasthan, stating therein that during the night of April 28/29, around 2:30 am, while driving his truck bearing registration No. RJ19GJ3179 at Maloora, a group of men stopped the truck and forcefully took control of his truck and decamped with a cash amount of 15,000, 02 cell phones including truck cleaner's cell phone, a gas cylinder, 02 watches and the

truck's music system. The driver was also physically assaulted during the incident.

Regarding the incident, a case FIR No 28/2024 under relevant sections of law was registered at Police Station Shalteng and investigation was initiated.

During the course of investigation, the investigating teams raided various locations in Srinagar and after strenuous efforts of territorial officers and with the help of technical data analysis, zeroed in on three accused persons identified as Mohammad Amir Keenu son of Mushtaq Ahmed resident of Palpora A/P Pura Teng Maloora, Adnan Ahmed Shah son of Mohammad Aslam Shah resident of Kanipora Nowgam A/P Padshaha Bagh and Imran Ahmed Shah son of Ghulam Mohammad resident of Kanipora Nowgam.

During preliminary investigation, it surfaced that these criminals operated a well-organized gang with a modus operandi of targeting vehicles plying on the NHW through Srinagar. Stolen goods including gas cylinders, mobile phones etc. have been recovered from the accused persons. They have been arrested and shifted to a police station where they remain in custody.

Pertinent to mention here that these accused persons are also involved in robbery of trucks along Lasjan Highway on 23/04/2024 & decamped with cash Rs 8000, ATM cards, DL and mobile phone of the truck drivers. To this context, FIR 44/2024 stands registered under relevant sections of law in PS Nowgam. Search for other accused persons involved in the crime is underway.

## Officials In huddle After Tragic Death Of Youth On way To Hospital

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Following Thursday's incident in which a 27-year-old youth died on the way to hospital in Sekidafar area of Srinagar due to a massive traffic jam, officials on Friday convened a meeting to address the issue and prevent similar incidents in the future.

Official's privy to the meeting said that serious notice of the traffic gridlocks was taken.

A top official from Traffic Police Srinagar said the main reason behind the incident was that a contractor had dug up a main road in the interiors of downtown without informing officials, causing the patient to take multiple diversions and get stuck in traffic. This resulted in a late arrival to the hospital.

"As the vehicle crossed Safa Kadal, the police were accompanying the patient and marking the way, but due to the road being dug up from Sekidafar towards Noorbagh, with Nawa Kadal and Karan Nagar also undergoing repair work, it led to traffic congestion and became the reason for the patient's death."

When contacted, SSP Traffic Srinagar City, Muzaffar Shah told KNO, "Right now, commuting has become difficult as the roads in Srinagar city are being redeveloped. We have informed all the contractors that if any road needs to be cut because of development, they have to inform us so we can clear alternative routes and place additional men and machinery."—(KNO)

### Integrated Traffic Management System To Be Introduced In City: SSP Traffic

Srinagar: Amidst the growing traffic mess in Srinagar city, the Integrated Traffic Management System (ITMS) is likely to be installed within the next two to three months, according to traffic officials.

Sharing details about the Integrated Traffic Management System (ITMS), SSP Traffic City, Muzaffar Shah, said the ITMS in the city is expected to be functional in the next two to three months.

He said all the initial processes have been completed, and the ITMS is likely to be fully operational in Srinagar city within two to three months. "Only an order is pending in this regard, and that too will be issued soon. After that, the ITMS will be functional in Srinagar city," Shah added.

The ITMS system will automatically capture and record instances of vehicles violating traffic rules. It will identify offenders and promptly issue challans to the respective vehicle owners, ensuring swift and effective enforcement of traffic regulations—(KNO)

## Supplementary Randomization Of EVMs, VVPATs Conducted

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In connection with General Lok Sabha Elections-2024, a Supplementary first Randomization of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) for all the (08) Eight Assembly Segments of Srinagar District was conducted in accordance with the guidelines of Election Commission of India (ECI) on Friday at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex, here.

The Supplementary Randomization process was held under the supervision of District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat in presence of the candidates and representatives of other Candidates contesting from 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency, Deputy DEO, Nodal Officer ETBPS, Nodal Officer EVMs and other

Officers of District Election Authority Srinagar.

During the process, Supplementary Randomization of Ballot Units, Control Units and VVPATs for Eight (08) Assembly Segments of Srinagar District were carried out through dedicated software. Each Assembly segment was allocated an additional required number of EVMs for use during the upcoming polls, as the number of contesting candidates in Srinagar PC is more than 16 candidates.

The additional Assembly segment-wise allocation of EVMs for the conduct of Lok Sabha Elections includes 146 EVMs for 19-Hazratbal, 157 for 20-Khanyar, 160 for 21-Habbakadal, 171 for 22-Lal-Chowk, similarly, 114 EVMs for 23-Chanapora, 179 for 24-Zadibal, 92 for 25-Eidgah and 141 EVMs for 26-Central Shalteng Assembly segments.



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

**HAPPY AND HEALTHY MINDS**  
خوشحال اور صحت مند ذہن



HAPPY MIND



HEALTHY MIND

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

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

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

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

**9070806160**

HPVT فارمیسی بلڈنگ، دوسری منزل -دریش کدل چوک، سری نگر، جموں و کشمیر

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

**AIRPORTS**  
SHIEKH UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈️

**RAILWAYS**

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

**HIGHWAY STATUS**

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

PRAYERS	
FAJR	4:06
ZUHR	12:28
ASR	5:18
Magrib	7:19
ISHA	8:50

### This Day In History

- 1256- Augustinian monastic order constituted at the Leceto Monastery when Pope Alexander IV issues papal bull Licet ecclesiae catholicae
- 1303- Flemish forces conquer Middelburg in Zealand
- 1415- Religious reformers John Wycliffe and Jan Hus are condemned as heretics at the Council of Constance
- 1471-Wars of the Roses: Battle of Tewkesbury-final battle between Lancaster and York sees the Prince of Wales, Edward of Westminster killed and King Edward IV restored to his crown thus extinguishing the Lancastrian of Plantagenet line
- 1493- Spanish Pope Alexander VI divides America between Spain & Portugal
- 1540-Venice & Turkey sign Treaty of Constantinople
- 1776- Rhode Island declares independence from Britain
- 1799- Fourth Anglo-Mysore War: The Battle of Seringapatam: The siege of Seringapatam ends when the city is assaulted and the Tipu Sultan killed by the besieging British army, under the command of General George Harris.
- 1814- Bourbon reign restored in France
- 1818- Netherlands & Britain sign treaty against illegal slave handling
- 1869- The Naval Battle of Hakodate takes place in Japan.
- 1878- Phonograph shown for 1st time at Grand Opera House
- 1888-Italy & Spain sign military covenant
- 1912- Italian mariners occupy Turkish Island of Rhodes
- 1915- Italy drops Triple Alliance with Austria-Hungary & Germany
- 1916- At request of US, Germany curtails its submarine warfare
- 1924- German Republic election fascists & communists win
- 1925- League of Nations conference on arms control & poison gas usage
- 1931- Mustafa Kemal Pasja becomes Turkish president
- 1942- Battle of Coral Sea begins in the Pacific (1st sea battle fought solely in air) between Japanese, US and Australian navies and air forces
- 1945- German troops in Netherlands, Denmark & Norway surrender
- 1960-1st great Delta dam closes, North-South Beveland
- 1961- 1st on-the-road Spacemobile lecture given.
- 1962- US performs atmospheric nuclear test at Christmas Island
- 1964- 70 GATT-countries confer in Geneva
- 1967-Lunar Orbiter 4 launched by US;begins orbiting Moon May 7
- 1978- Russian leader Brezhnev visits West-Germany
- 1979- Margaret Thatcher becomes the first woman to be elected Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
- 1979- NASA launches Fltsatcom-2
- 1983- China performs nuclear test at Lop Nor, PRC
- 1989- US launches Magellan to Venus
- 1989-US space shuttle STS-30 launched
- 2013- 77 people are killed by the Syrian Army in Baniyas
- 2013 Juventus F.C. win their 29th Serie A football title
- 2014- Juan Carlos Varela is elected President of Panama
- 2018- California overtakes Great Britain to become the worlds fifth largest economy
- 2019- Mexican boxer Canelo Alvarez unifies a trio of middleweight world titles in a close, unanimous decision over Daniel Jacobs at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, NV
- 2020- Countries in Europe begin cautious reopening after COVID-19 lockdown, Italy restarts construction and takeaways, Germany reopens schools
- 2020- India begins lifting some restrictions in regions with fewer COVID-19 cases



# Advancing Quality Education in Government Schools

Dr. Rizwan Rumi

“

**The transformation of government schools transcends mere policy imperatives; it embodies a collective commitment to equity, excellence, and social justice. By confronting systemic barriers head-on and prioritizing the educational needs of all children**

Access to quality education is the cornerstone of societal progress, serving as the bedrock for individual growth and national development. Yet, despite strides in educational infrastructure, numerous government schools throughout the country struggle to provide basic amenities essential for effective learning. In Jammu and Kashmir, this challenge is particularly acute, echoing the urgent need for systemic reform to ensure that every child, regardless of socio-economic status, receives a robust educational foundation.

J&K's educational landscape has witnessed commendable expansion, with the establishment of a vast network of government schools, representing a significant milestone in the nation's pursuit of universal education. However, beneath this veneer of progress lie persistent issues plaguing these institutions. The dearth of fundamental facilities such as electricity, playgrounds, adequate classrooms, potable water, and sanitation facilities remains a pervasive obstacle, compromising the educational experience of millions of students.

Recent assessments paint a stark picture of the reality faced by many government schools, revealing a distressing lack of essential resources critical for fostering a conducive learning environment. Shockingly, nearly half of these institutions operate without access to electricity or recreational spaces, while the majority grapple with insufficient classrooms, basic amenities, and sanitation infrastructure. The resulting atmosphere stifles academic engagement and contributes to alarmingly high dropout rates, perpetuating a cycle of educational disenfranchisement.

At the heart of this crisis lies the acute shortage of qualified educators, a challenge exacerbated by inadequate professional development opportunities and reliance on temporary or untrained teaching staff. Despite offering competitive salaries compared to their private sector counterparts, government school teachers often face overwhelming workloads and minimal support, hin-



dering their ability to deliver quality instruction effectively.

Furthermore, compliance with legislative mandates such as the Right to Education (RTE) Act remains a distant reality for many institutions, with only a fraction achieving full adherence to its provisions. Political interference and bureaucratic inefficiencies further impede progress, perpetuating systemic neglect and eroding public trust in government schools.

The ramifications of this educational divide are far-reaching, with parents increasingly turning to private alternatives in pursuit of quality education for their children. Regrettably, this trend exacerbates existing disparities, as economically disadvantaged families are left with limited choices, further entrenching societal inequities.

Amidst these challenges, however, promising initiatives offer glimpses of transformative potential. Programs like Nipun Bharat aim to

address learning gaps through targeted interventions, while visionary leadership in many states and UTs underscores the importance of holistic reform encompassing infrastructure enhancement, teacher capacity building, community engagement, and curriculum innovation.

To chart a sustainable path forward, a multifaceted strategy is imperative. Prioritizing infrastructure development, including investments in digital infrastructure, is essential to meet the evolving needs of 21st-century learners. Concurrently, efforts to recruit and retain qualified educators, coupled with robust professional development initiatives, are paramount to bolstering instructional quality and student outcomes.

Furthermore, fostering collaborative partnerships among schools, educators and communities can facilitate tailored interventions to support marginalized students and bridge the digital divide. Equally crucial is the provision of basic ame-

nities, such as electricity and sanitation facilities, to create safe and hygienic learning environments conducive to holistic development.

Ultimately, the transformation of government schools transcends mere policy imperatives; it embodies a collective commitment to equity, excellence, and social justice. By confronting systemic barriers head-on and prioritizing the educational needs of all children, we can forge a future where every learner has the opportunity to thrive and contribute meaningfully to society's collective progress.

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

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## Powering India's Developed Nation Goal

Measures like using data-driven forecasting to deliver power optimally and fortifying distribution networks will help the sector rise above challenges

Suvojoy Sengupta & Satya Komaragiri

An efficient power sector is a crucial enabler in India's journey to sustained economic growth and development. While the country's distribution companies (discoms) have significantly raised operational and financial performance, they face two challenges — keeping up with fast-expanding demand, and providing high-quality and reliable power supply. Measures such as using data-driven forecasting to plan and deliver power optimally and strengthening distribution networks will help the sector rise above these challenges.

India's power sector has attained 100% electrification and has been integrated in a single grid across the country. Daily power availability has increased to 20 hours in rural areas, and 23.5 hours in urban centres. The aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses have narrowed from 21.2% in FY21 to 15.4% in FY23, according to power ministry data — sufficient savings to power the state of Karnataka or eliminate the need for building a 20 gigawatt (Gw) coal-fired power station. The sector's payables fell from 200 days in FY21 to 120 days in FY23, while capital expenditure increased to ₹70,000 crore in FY23.

However, power demand has been growing at 8-9% per annum, outstripping the baseload capacity additions at discoms. In FY23, as demand levels reached or exceeded baseload contracted capacities, the government directed imported coal-based plants to run at full capacity and domestic power plants to import coal for blending. Several discoms also resorted to expensive short-term procurement from power exchanges, raising power prices by 71 paise per unit during FY23. But only

46 paise were passed on to customers, widening the gap between discom revenue and power costs.

At the same time, the quality of power supply in India could still improve. Metrics that measure average system interruption frequency and duration reveal that urban areas in India face 120 outages and 131 hours of power cuts annually. This compares to less than one outage and one hour of outage in two years in developed economies.

To be an enabler in India's economic development the power sector could focus on four aspects. First, generating a granular forecast to allow discoms to plan power procurement with high-fidelity and ensure resource adequacy will be helpful.

Advanced analytics can help assess any demand additions, changing load profiles, integration of distributed energy sources, and demand migration from open-access users in detail. Such forecasting would let discoms optimise the supply mix across long-term and short-term power purchase agreements as well as purchases from power exchanges.

Second, an improved distribution network will ensure reliable supply. Investments in loss reduction works, prepaid smart meters, additional transformative capacity, and system redundancy would be key. Smart solutions such as GIS mapping of assets, predictive maintenance and network automation tools can boost operational efficiency.

Third, a renewed customer focus is key, especially as enterprises and households demand higher reliability. Ensuring 24/7 supply will nudge commercial and industrial customers away from diesel or gas backup gensets. In other examples of customer-centric efforts, discoms could reduce the time to get new connections, facilitate solar installations, promote digital payments, and

“ However, power demand has been growing at 8-9% per annum, outstripping the baseload capacity additions at discoms. In FY23, as demand levels reached or exceeded baseload contracted capacities, the government directed imported coal-based plants to run at full capacity and domestic power plants to import coal for blending

provide visibility on outages. They could also leverage smart meter data through analytics to unlock value-added services.

Lastly, discoms need a clear road map for seamless integration of renewable energy, with 322 Gw of the planned 469 Gw capacity addition till 2032 expected from renewable sources. However, as solar and wind power generation are intermittent, discoms need to plan for 24/7 availabil-

ity through energy storage, hybrid power plants, green hydrogen, etc. Additionally, demand-side strategies like time-of-day tariffs and demand response management would incentivise customers to shift consumption to peak solar hours.

Some discoms have already started taking steps in this direction. City discoms in Mumbai and in Delhi have invested in building network redundancy and smart solutions for reliable power supply; they are improving consumer experience by developing dedicated apps, messaging systems, and real-time usage monitoring. States such as Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Odisha have implemented green tariffs for high tension consumers. The use of AI is also picking up, with implementation of a demand response system incentivising consumers to modulate demand in Mumbai.

The availability of affordable and reliable power is a prerequisite for India's journey towards greater economic development. Timely investments by the distribution sector to build adequate resources, strengthen capabilities, and improved customer service will be essential to fuel this progress.

Further, as the share of renewable energy in the power mix grows and more consumers demand green energy, discoms need to innovate to mitigate renewable intermittency challenges. Some of the discoms have taken the lead towards these goals; it is time for the entire distribution sector to work together and emerge as a lynchpin in national development.

*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*



# The Snow is Melting Into Music

## Kashmir in prose and poetry

Jhilam Chattaraj

I heard the music of snow in Kashmir. The ceaseless flow of the river Lidder in Pahalgam — its crystal unfolding by day and mellifluous roar by night. I witnessed the water's metamorphosis — frozen peaks softening into stream-songs:

White myths  
chant divine hymns —  
pine glimmer conspire  
a carnival of radiance —  
snow baths

In the warm April air, sporadically seized by icy wind sheets, I fulfilled a secret wish — to meet my namesake, River Jhelum. In Srinagar, the Jhelum flows quietly under the Zero Bridge. I remember reading about Jhelum in Agha Shahid Ali's, *The Country Without a Post Office* (1997): "When I return, the colours won't be so brilliant, the Jhelum's waters so clean, so ultramarine. My love so overexposed". In 2014, Ali's house in Rajbagh, Srinagar was destroyed by the fierce flow of the Jhelum. A decade later, I decided to meet the river—we are both made of the same shivers — unstoppable, unpredictable; we create, we destroy:

Jhelum  
subsumes 'Jhelum'.  
Stirred by Shahid's lament,  
rivers renew marine kinship —  
fate's call

My connection to Jhelum began with the poem, 'Balaka', by Rabindranath Tagore in 1915. The poet visited local writer and scholar Pandit Anand Koul Bamzai's house in the Zaina Kadal area of Srinagar city.\* He wrote a series of poems on the shimmering flow of Jhelum—the quietness and the fury. These poems inspired my mother to name me 'Jhelum'. Perhaps, Tagore's idyllic depiction of Kashmir stirred the hearts of Bengalis. One is not surprised by the range of Bengali voices filling the Ghats of Dal Lake. Kashmiri vendors spoke fluently in Bangla. They aptly dealt with the opinionated and bargain-loving Bengali. The most popular snack in Dal Lake seemed to be Jhal Muri:

Muri  
claims Dal lake's heart.  
Bengal's jhal churns the air—  
far east dreams of summer es-

cape—  
Kashmir

From the vivacious hum of Dal Ghats one could walk further towards the unfrequented walkways, where the waters were still — not sliced by the relentless motion of shikaras. Our boatman, Mansoor played old Hindi songs as he struggled with the wind to keep the shikara steady on the 'ultramarine' infinite of the lake — blue — pure blue:

Dal lake's  
porcelain skin  
wears the blue sky-pheran—  
lotus lips adorn the water's  
neckline

The golden shimmer of the houseboats, the floating cottages and the sway of massive willow trees captivated my heart:

Houseboats  
with saffron shine  
lure stiff souls from flatlands—  
the flamboyance of floating on  
love-lakes

Beneath the water's translucence, one could see weeds that held the weight of the houses — creating a wondrous waterland of wood and concrete —

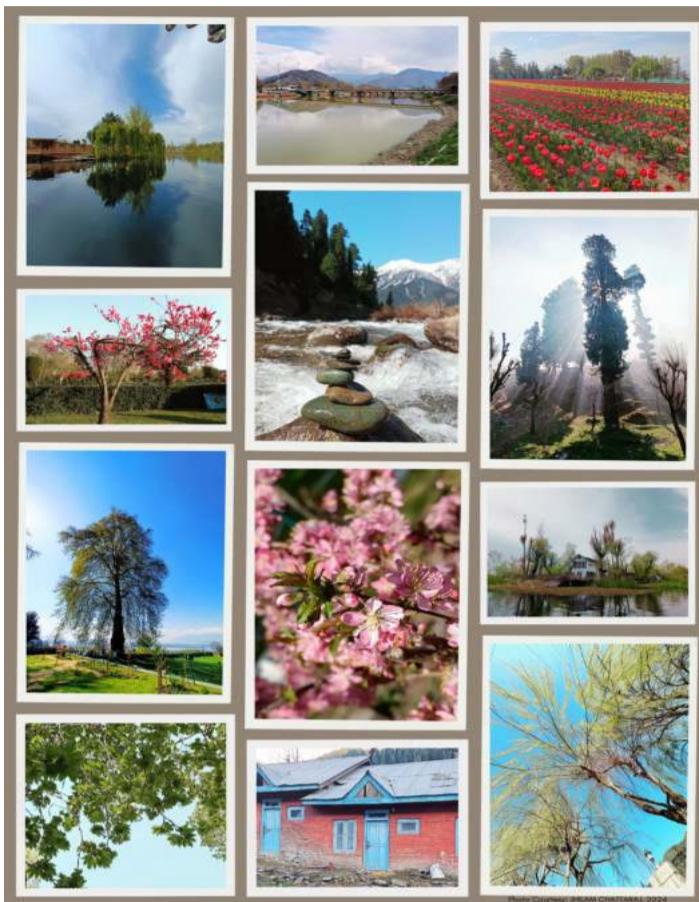
Steel-veined  
grass-loops lift homes  
on Dal Lake — liquid lores  
flourish on glossy reflections—  
green drift

I savoured sweet Kashmiri Khewa, grilled fish, and a few other delicacies while my shikara went wading through water alleys among houseboats. I also learnt how lake life adapted to the protocols of digital deliveries:

Dal Lake's  
dulcet lanes  
row App-stitched shikaras.  
Streets mail food to houseboats —  
urban  
hunger

It was a quaint pleasure to walk along the bustling Ghats of Dal Lake. I noticed the strange juxtaposition of joyous travellers and armed guards. Everyone seemed to have accepted the coexistence of blithe wonder and vigil, of beauty and dread:

Soldiers  
scan hectic eyes.  
Daily demeanour soaks  
gun-light — hopeful of preserving



As we ascended the valley, I could hear the Lidder's choric calls. I read about River Lidder for the first time in Shubhash Kak's *The Secrets of Ishbar* (1996). I was captivated by the river's fearless flow, the lapping mountain waters, and the river bed rich with dappled pebbles

pleasure.  
The sun began to set over the snow—I was enamoured by the blaze of orange radiance through the vibrant bustle of Lal Chowk. The next day, I planned a rendezvous with Kashmir's flowers, mythical trunks of Chinar trees, and the Mughal gardens. For the time, I saw daffodils, cherry blossoms, magnolias, tulips, their deep wild sheen rising towards the bluest sky of spring: a pageant of white, pink, fuchsia, yellow, peach — a salubrious flow of nectarines:

Blossoms  
assume pearl light.

Astral firmament explodes—  
floral supernova kindles  
soul-storms  
Tulips  
open rowed rhythms —  
soft shades stun bunkered hills—  
Gardens embrace a swarm of  
thrilled  
foot-falls.  
The gigantic chinar trees and their lustrous leaves filtered the early daylight. Together they created an unearthly embroidery — leaf motifs on the silken sky:

Star-bursts  
of Chinar leaves  
illuminate Kashmir's skies;

eyes remain fixed at foliage-feasts—  
spring light

"All you need to enjoy Kashmir is time and money," said a boatman near Dal Lake. However, to absorb the geographical and cultural spheres of Kashmir, one needs to harbour awareness; this is not a mere hotel-to-hotel, valley-to-valley, bed-to-baggage travel in air-conditioned cars—but a slow immersion into the rhythms of nature, culture, and future harmonies. We crossed the mustard fields of Pampore, apple gardens before Awantipora and reached the heights of Laripora, Pahalgam. As we ascended the valley, I could hear the Lidder's choric calls. I read about River Lidder for the first time in Shubhash Kak's *The Secrets of Ishbar* (1996). I was captivated by the river's fearless flow, the lapping mountain waters, and the river bed rich with dappled pebbles:

Sunshine  
flows into trees—  
glacial meadows gargle  
Lidder's pulse—cleansed spirits  
worship  
water.  
I could not help but return to my girlhood self and stacked up pebbles of varied sizes and colours. I whispered a prayer hoping they would remain still by the river:

Echoes  
of a bluebird  
raise a temple of stones—  
cleaved souls dance to whirling,  
rippling  
Lidder

I was also captivated by the sheer flush of clear light. Never have I seen such a range of iridescence— earthy yet divine, piercing yet preserving, common yet sacred. Vacant plots in the air were lit by blue, purple, and ash-grey glimmer; they filtered through dark spaces between pine silhouettes rising against the morning sun:

Lavish  
light schemes  
enrich Kashmir's mystical  
paths—  
blue floods enwrap the deepest  
skies—  
snow-sheets  
Lush Green meadows, snow-blankets drenched in sun and rain filled our sights. Enthralled tourists

enjoyed steaming bowls of Maggi noodles, some bargained for shoes and jackets, and others explored the valley on horseback. The village of Laripora was spotted with hotels, guest houses, hamlets, ponies, and children. Plump, freckled faces sauntered their way to the local school. I saw women smiling at my leisurely gait, shepherding their livestock; washing, cleaning, and cooking; chores women usually do. At nightfall, the women would gather at the porch and prepare for the chill evening:

Pine lights  
perforate  
Kashmir's curtains—women  
prepare kangris for the night—  
all

walk warm  
The next morning, I was invited to a conference of birds; mynas, sparrows, blackbirds, and crows; oddly, they competed for my attention:

Blackbirds  
on willow trees  
sing in sunlit rapture.  
Sweet enamour — Crows barge  
in — rhythms  
break down

I was also accompanied by furry friends. I saw one dog fishing in the river. It had the skills to balance on rocks, brave the high currents of the river and fill its belly. Others stopped by for food and love, but none of the dogs ever barked; whether in the city or the village:

Hushed dogs  
claim Kashmir's streets—  
Do they fear the fire's call?  
Silence swallows canine rumble.  
Still nights.

Stillness did not mark my journey's end. I was rather excited to explore the possibilities of motion. In Kashmir, everything flows into the other — snow melts into rivers, rivers entwine lakes, lakes build houseboats, boats invite travellers, and travellers visit gardens, where tiny blossoms imitate the art of snowflakes; they bloom like ice droplets on the grass. In Kashmir, heavenly spheres unite — the valley's composure returns to the river's roar and the love for mystery leads to unmatched discoveries.

The author is an academic and poet based in Hyderabad

## How Do You Develop a Reading Habit at Home?

Joe Walters

Maybe you haven't cracked open a book in a while. Maybe you just can't seem to finish the one you started. Maybe you feel so bogged down by how the heavy world is that it feels like too much work to pick one up.

But you've made it to this blog post, so I'm thinking you'd like to make a change.

And good news: that's the first step.

If you want to make a habit out of reading, you are not too late to get started.

Let's take a look at the reality of 2021's attention landscape, or, in other words, your available sea of distractions:

- Your phone
- Your computer
- Your TV
- Your kids
- Your housekeeping
- Your spouse
- Your things
- Your things
- Your things

So, how do you really make the time to become a reader?

Well...

I was asked recently to contribute to a blog post called, "Top Tips for Book Lovers Q&A: Advice from the Experts." (Check out that blog post if you haven't clicked it yet. There's all sorts of great advice in there.) The question they asked me was this:

**"How do you create a reading habit at home?"**

And, it was, TOUGH.

I obviously want everybody to read more. Reading has transformed my life in an insane number of ways, and I couldn't be more thankful that it's a thing I've made a habit of doing.

But every situation is different. Every life is different. Every reading mind is different. I could tell you to throw your phone out the window (which I will) and

tell you to read different genres at once because your tastes/times will differ from moment to moment (which I will), but damn, man—reading is about gifting yourself time and that's pretty much it.

A thing about free time is that it's yours to do what you want with it. And you won't always have a lot of it. So all I'm proposing here is for you to make reading an option.

(If you want to.)  
Let's get started.

Here are 5 tips for how to develop a reading habit at home:

**#1. Separate yourself from your phone**

I don't know your lifestyle, but I do know that most of you have access to instant gratification that you can choose over reading.

Twitter. Instagram. Facebook. YouTube. Reddit. Netflix. It's difficult to stay away when we feel like we might miss something.

I'm NOT telling you to stop that. It's pretty damn hard, and I'll be the first to admit I don't do as well as I'd like to. But for reading time, I have learned to do a much better job of leaving the internet behind.

When cracking open a book, I implore you to separate yourself from the internet. Leave it on the other side of the room. Go outside and don't bring the phone with you. Go in a different room.

When it's away from you, it requires an extra walk-of-shame-style task for you to give yourself that brain break you tell yourself you need at the end of another paragraph, section, or chapter break. If you need the dictionary, get your phone (or a dictionary, obviously) and just promise me you'll be back as soon as you can.

But separating yourself from the internet is easier said than done.

For me, I gave myself scroll breaks all the time even though I kinda-sorta-all-the-way-didn't-

like how social media operated. I did it anyway. I didn't have any notifications while I was away, or I had ones that I didn't need to know immediately. There are obviously exceptions to the rule, but most days, whatever it is that happened on your phone, social media account, or email (if anything at all) while you were reading, could most likely wait for you to finish that chapter.

You'd be amazed at how much you can move forward in a book when you keep reading the words in front of you instead of the ones on your screen.

**#2. Read a variety of different types of books at the same time**

This one may sound a little loopy if you're not already a "reader," but trust me, you're not always going to want to dive into a big meaty chapter if you don't have the time for it.

Sometimes, you're going to want to dip your toe in regardless of if you're able to finish the chapter or not.

This is where nonfiction comes in handy for me. It's often easy to dive into nonfiction books without the commitment of a full chapter. It's also easier to stop in the middle of a paragraph and resume it without having to reread too much the next time I pick it up.

Because of this, I like to have a slew of different style books at the ready.

Here's a little list of the books that I was reading on the day I started this blog post:

What Storm, What Thunder by Myriam J.A. Chancy — Literary Fiction — Novel. This one has big meaty paragraphs of artful prose and big content about an earthquake in Haiti. It's excellent and I'm really in awe of Chancy's prose, but it's also not something that I dive into when I have a small window. This is my longer stretch of free time book.

Refuse to Be Done by Matt Bell — Nonfiction — Publishing/Writing. This is my pick up and read during a short window book. I read a lot in my field of writing/publishing. You may or may not be in that field with me. Regardless, this one works almost like self-help & educational books, with short sections within sections, headers, subheaders, and easy-to-read prose. I'm never worried when I pick this up that, if house duty calls in some form or another, I can't put this book down without having wasted my productive reading time.

Best Microfiction 2021 edited by Meg Pokrass — Short Fiction Anthology. Is this a great bathroom book because I can finish a few very short stories while sitting on the toilet? Yes. Am I going to talk more about sitting on the toilet? No, goodbye.

From Book to Bestseller by Penny Sansevieri — Nonfiction — Publishing/Writing. This is my current Kindle before-bed read. I am a book marketer for Sunbury Press, and I'm always on the search for new ways to get books into readers' hands. And this book has been helpful and smooth so far. And it's easy to fall asleep with my non-blue-light Kindle. If I tried to read one of my paperbacks/hardcovers at night, I'd have to make the choice to turn the light off, which could wake me up. All I have to do with a Kindle is keep reading until I nod off and it falls on my face.

Runaways by Michael J. Sedlinger — Humor — Novella. Sometimes I get a short book that I want to read right away but also want to make sure it lasts beyond a couple sessions, so I don't make it my primary fiction read. This novella is about a writer who struggles with distractions and intersperses funny tweets about the struggles throughout. As you might be able to guess, I vibed with it pretty hard. I'd read a few

pages before something else or in exchange of something else, depending on my mood.

So...stay flexible! And give yourself an excuse to buy different books and/or grab a few extra books from the library next time you're in. It might just help you create that habit to have the variety.

**#3. Try out different formats (like eBooks & audiobooks)**

Book snobs suck. They'll tell you it's not reading if you can't feel the pages, that eBooks & audiobooks don't count. It is my firm belief that this opinion is a bad one and that these people need a swift kick in the pants. If you don't feel comfortable kicking them, don't call me, because I also won't kick them, but hey, maybe somebody will.

Listen up: You can read however you want. And if you experiment with different formats, you may just find a way where you can finish more books and be smarter because of it.

**Let's tackle eReaders first.**

I used to hate on them. I even remember back in college saying the corniest thing I could think of: "Yeah, but you can't smell the pages on an eReader." I also said that I couldn't annotate the books and that I couldn't share the books I loved with other people. Here's why I now believe all of those answers suck:

You can still smell the pages of physical books if you're into that kind of thing. It just won't be all of your books. And trust me when I say—you don't need to smell all of your books, especially the used ones.

You can absolutely annotate your books in an eReader. I have a Kindle, and I can make notes of sections I love and even search to find those pieces later. It's a legitimately more efficient way to do it.

Do you really like sharing books with other people? How often

do you get it back? How often do people actually read it? With how often you hope to give books away, just read it on your eReader first (if that's what you end up doing), and if you think you want to give it to someone, just get them the physical book or recommend it to them. This shouldn't stop you from taking advantage of the last bullet point...

eBooks are cheaper! If you read three books for the price of one hardcover, you go to prove the point that the more books you read, the smarter you become. It's about the words, not the format.

But probably my favorite thing about eBooks is that I can read them to go to sleep by. They have their own light (and some of them aren't LED for those whose eyes are sensitive like mine) and instead of scrolling or watching dumb stuff on the internet, you don't have to finish in big chunks (like nonfiction) as you're going to sleep, and it can actually help the ZZZZZs arrive.

And lastly, audiobooks rule, especially for nonfiction. They can be narrated by some really terrific voice actors (sometimes even the authors themselves), and it can feel like a podcast or like you're sitting there hanging out with them while you're doing dishes, vacuuming, holding your baby with one hand and patting their butt with the other.

Again, if you're getting the vibe at all from this post yet—making a habit is all about making reading easier on yourself. Expanding your format options is a great way to do that.

Fun Fact: Audible offers a free trial if you want to give audiobooks a shot!

**#4. Stop reading books that aren't inspiring you**

This is a controversial take and everyone's opinion is different, so if you see what I'm saying and

think, "Joe, kindly kick yourself in the pants," that's fine, but hear me out:

A thing about books is that they take the same amount of time to read whether you don't like it at all or if it changes your life forever.

So give that book you bought a shot. No doubt. Maybe even keep reading on if you still have hope for it moving forward. But when you feel uninterested to return to it, don't return to it. You could be reading something that actually alters your worldview for the better, and you can always return to that book you gave up on later if you really want to.

There is one caveat though: you have to finish some books. I'm confident you will if you keep making time for it, but if you are someone whose habit has become reading the first chapter and then abandoning your last ten books, well then maybe you need to finish that next one that you're digging. You'd be surprised at how awesome books are when you get the chance to see the full picture.

**#5. Be patient with yourself**

I get paid to read, and I'm still slow at it. Some brains just work that way. And you better believe that when you jump into reading after not having done it in a while, you're going to move through the pages slowly and you might have to reread some things.

You know what you should do in that case?

Go slow.

Recognize that all you can do is read one word after the other.

As long as you aim to understand what's on the page and not just move through it to get it done, you're going to exit this reading experience one book stronger than when you came in.

The article was originally published by Independent Book Review



# AI-model developed to predict irregular heartbeat 30 minutes before onset

## Agences

Researchers have developed a new AI-based model that can predict irregular heartbeat, or cardiac arrhythmia, about 30 minutes before its onset.

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 threshold, 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 researcher, said.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Police Tracks

Kupwara police, who complied the court order.

It's worth to mention that, Kupwara police in Kashmir region have marked it's first to use the technology on the accused out on bail. Earlier in the year 2023, the device was used to track the terror accused in UAPA act after a special NIA court in Jammu passed an order directing the police to affix a GPS tracker anklet.

Sources in the police said that GPS anklets fitted on the terror accused or drug smugglers out on train helps keep a close watch on the person out on bail. "It helps to see whether the person continues to indulge in the wrongdoings or whether he has mended his ways," sources said, adding that the device has been so helpful in curbing the crime be it terror related or for that matter drug smuggling etc. (KNO)

### For Yrs, Congress

led by Eknath Shinde."

Notably, the issue of 'Veer Savarkar' is considered a divisive issue in Maharashtra. While Congress and Rahul Gandhi have repeatedly spoken against Savarkar, Shiv Sena (both Shinde and Uddhav factions) lauds the revolutionary leader.

Congress and Shiv Sena (UBT) have often confronted each other on the issue, with the latter saying that the disrespect for the leader won't be accepted.

Shiv Sena (undivided), Congress and NCP were part of a MVA coalition government in Maharashtra from 2019-22, after which Eknath Shinde-led faction broke away from the party and formed the government with the support of BJP.

Maharashtra sends 48 seats to the Lok Sabha. Voting on 13 seats has been completed in the first and second phases, while 11 seats will go to polling in the third phase on May 7. The counting is scheduled for June 4.

In 2019, BJP won 23 seats, while its ally undivided Shiv Sena won 18 seats. NCP and Congress could only win four and one seats respectively.

Earlier in the day, Amit Shah addressed a public meeting in Belagavi, Karnataka, where he took a dig at Rahul Gandhi, saying that Sonia Gandhi has tried to launch "Rahulyaan" nearly 20 times and he will lose the election from the Lok Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh.

"We launched Chandrayaan-3 and it was successful. On the other hand, Sonia Gandhiji has tried to launch Rahulyaan nearly 20 times and has failed every time. Now he has run from Amethi and is contesting from Raebareli. I want to tell you (Rahul Gandhi) the result from here, 'Rahul Baba' will lose to the BJP candidate, Dinesh Pratap Singh with a huge margin in Raebareli," Amit Shah said at an election rally in Belgavi's Hukkeri town.

Rahul Gandhi filed his nomination from Uttar Pradesh's Raebareli Lok Sabha constituency on Friday, the last day of filing nominations for the seat. (ANI)

### Light Rains

previous night and it was 1.9°C below normal for the summer capital of JK for this time of the year.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of 6.2°C against 3.6°C on the previous night and it was 2.3°C below normal for the gateway town of Kashmir, he said.

Pahalgam recorded a low of 1.7°C against 1.0°C on the previous night and it was 3.2°C

below normal for the famous resort in south Kashmir.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a minimum of 5.9°C against 4.4°C and it was 2.5°C below normal, the official said.

Kupwara town recorded a minimum of 4.8°C against 4.7°C on the previous night and it was 3.6°C below normal there, the official said.

Gulmarg recorded a minimum of 4.0°C against minus 0.2°C on the previous night and it was below normal by 0.3°C for the famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Jammu, he said, recorded a low of 17.6°C against 15.7°C on the previous night and it was below normal by 5.0°C for the winter capital of J&K. Banihal recorded a low of 8.0°C, Batote 9.5°C and Bhaderwah 6.1°C, he said.

### Police Activate

detecting and apprehending individuals with a criminal record.

The technology's ability to identify a range of threats, from terrorism to local crime, is expected to play a crucial role in maintaining law and order within the community, they said.

The AI-based facial recognition system is an integral part of smart policing initiatives, they said.

### BJP Skipped

"it wants to spread hatred".

"They say Kashmir witnessed prosperity after abrogation of Article 370. But we are a helpless community. We lost young ones in the boat tragedy in Gandbal (last month) just because the bridge there was incomplete. We (National Conference) have been out of power since 2014, then why blame us? Who is responsible for the tragedy?" he asked.

On polling for the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency being deferred, Abdullah said the move has it made it clear that "it (BJP) fears us".

Elections to the redrawn Anantnag-Rajouri seat, which was scheduled to go to the polls on May 7, has been postponed to May 25 by the Election Commission.

Srinagar goes to the polls in the fourth phase on May 13.

### Formal Complaint

back to the 2002 assembly elections, where Ruhullah Mehdi misrepresented his age to qualify for candidacy.

"His date of birth was manipulated in 2002 to enable him to contest elections at a younger age. This is not an accusation; it is based on his filed affidavit and confirmed via an RTI received by the state department," he said.

Mushtaq stated that according to the RTI, his parents married in 1981, making it impossible for him to be born in 1977.

"Our aim is to prove his ineligibility and potentially cancel his candidature under Section 125A of the Representation Act," Mushtaq said.

He suggested that someone else from the NC should contest elections as Ruhullah's candidature can be nullified anytime which will cost the state exchequer. Mushtaq said that Aga must address discrepancies in his documents to the Government of India.

Notably, the nomination papers of Aga Ruhullah Mehdi were deemed valid by the election authorities last Friday.

While 24 candidates are in the fray for the Srinagar Lok Sabha seat, with NC leader Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi and PDP youth wing President Waheedur Rahman Parra being the main contenders.

### RUHULLAH UNFAZED

Meanwhile, addressing his supporters gathered at his Budgam residence late on Thursday, Ruhullah accused his opponents of hatching conspiracies to remove him from the ongoing electoral race.

"If someone who wants to go to the Supreme court, he can go; the informers from my family can also go, let me assure you that we will fight the case and later fight elections and win them," said Ruhullah who turned emotional on the occasion.

In a veiled attack on his uncle, Ruhullah said that Auqaf is being looted by the people who are in charge of it.

"Auqaf is in the wrong hands and public money is being looted by some leaders who lead prayers and they use this money for their personal interests. A large chunk of money is taken from shop owners but that money is being used to buy cars for themselves," he alleged.

While people chanted slogans in favor of Ruhullah, some of his supporters were seen crying.

He affirmed his determination to confront the situation and vowed to contest it in the Supreme Court. "Even if summoned by the NIA or the Enforcement Directorate, I won't back down. I will continue advocating for Kashmiri rights," Ruhullah said.

"Our fight is a fight for Kashmir and against BJP, RSS and its backers," he added.

Pertinently in 2002, his relation Aga Syed Mehmood who was then in PDP and has since rejoined NC, accused Ruhullah 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 debate over the matter.

### Sajjil Kargili

where he clinched the second position with an impressive 31,984 votes.

In a 2.38-minute video message released on Thursday, May 2, Kargili underscored his candidacy plans while invoking divine blessings to guide his path.

"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful," Kargili began, setting a solemn tone for his announcement. He called upon the citizens of Ladakh to unite behind his vision for a brighter future, pledging to champion their concerns with unwavering sincerity and diligence.

Kargili's decision to contest as an independent candidate marks a continuation of his commitment to serving the people of Ladakh. In the 2019 elections, he stood as an independent candidate, securing the second position behind BJP's Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, who garnered 42,914 votes.

The Ladakh parliamentary constituency has been witness to a dynamic electoral landscape over the years. Since 1967, the Congress party has emerged victorious on six occasions, while the National Conference has secured victory twice. Independents have clinched the seat thrice, with the BJP's dominance in recent years, particularly since 2014. Congress's last triumph in the region dates back to 1996, with the National Conference tasting success in 1998 and 1999. However, the subsequent elections in 2004 and 2009 saw independent candidates representing the aspirations of the Ladakhi electorate. Voting in Ladakh will be held on May 20 during the fifth phase of the ongoing Lok Sabha polls.

### Nayeem Khan's

Jammu Kashmir Nationalist People's Front

Party, launched two years ago, filed the nomination papers before Baramulla Deputy Commissioner Minga Sherpa, the returning officer of the constituency.

Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister and National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah, People's Conference president and separatist-turned-mainstream-politician Sajad Lone, former Rajya Sabha MP and PDP leader Mir Fayaz and former MLA Sheikh Abdul Rashid, alias Engineer Rashid, who is currently in jail, have also filed nominations from the seat.

The last date for filing nominations from the seat is May 3, while the polling is scheduled to take place on May 20.

Speaking to reporters after filing the nomination, Munir Khan said if elected, he would focus on triple 'Es' -- education, economy and employment.

He said there was a time when "our society" as a whole went in one direction, apparently referring to militancy and separatism.

"We all have made mistakes in the past. Our youths were especially involved in that, there are many FIRs against them, they have got the tag of being stone-pelters and ex-militants. It is not that a minuscule population is linked to that, there are lakhs of people associated with that.

"Unless we address that core issue, how can we talk about development or 'Naya' (new) Kashmir? How is progress possible without bringing such people, especially the youth, into the mainstream?" he said.

Asked what difference he saw between separatist and mainstream politics, Munir Khan said it is not about differences.

"We have to rise above the levels of separatism, mainstream or A team, B team and C team and think about the nation. That was a time, but that time has gone now. Today, the situation in the world has changed, the situation in India, our country, has changed," he said.

"The situation in Kashmir has changed, much water has flown down Jhelum, and we also have brought a change in ourselves so that we start an era of prosperity," he added.

Replying to a question whether he would persuade his brother to join the mainstream once he is out of jail, Munir Khan said that Nayeem Khan's ideology is his own.

### Efforts To Overcome

come up with additional set of plans to enhance voter participation.

The poll panel also held one-on-one interactions with district electoral officers from low-turnout districts to enhance voter participation.

The EC said it remains committed to taking up all possible interventions to boost voter turnout in the next five phases.

The commission said it is leading a set of additional initiatives for this purpose with chief electoral officers and senior officers at Nirvachan Sadan.

### J&K Govt Likely

has been tasked to oversee the need for simplifying procedures/documents requirements for public service; to look into aspect of linking the services with basic eligibility documents uploaded on digi-locker platform wherever possible and to recommend the amendments in rules so as to notify requirement of essential documents only, for availing public service, according to an order with GNS.

Meanwhile, the government accorded

sanction to the constitution of committee for Interlinking of Budget with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in J&K for achievement of committed targets/goals by 2030.

The task given to committee to analyze the SDG framework adopted in the Union territory of J&K and earmarking the important activities; to map schemes/activities with SDG Goals and Targets; to understand the BEAMS Portal and its interlinking with SDGs; to identify gaps in various sectors as per SDG targets/goals and propose possible interventions through budgetary provisions of concerned departments; to look after the functioning, operation and timely completion of work(s) related to the project; to streamline the state budgetary alignments of BEAMS portal with that of SDGs; to make the budgetary process seamless based on Haryana model of Interlinking of Budget with SDGs and to monitor achievement of targets and goals under SDGs by various departments; and to get the SDG Action Plan prepared from SDG Coordination Center J&K.

### HC Seeks 'Actions

persons, and as such the court has decided to proceed ex-parte against the person.

"On 01.04.2024, there was no appearance on behalf of respondent No. 19. Consequently, this Court ordered on 01.04.2024 that if no one appears on behalf of the respondent No. 19, he shall be proceeded ex parte. Today, as no one appears for respondent No. 19, he is set ex parte," the court said, adding, "We again make it clear in line with observations made by this Court on 27.12.2023, that any illegal construction undertaken without following the due process of law will be at the risk of involved parties and will be dealt with in accordance with law, including demolition of the same."

The PIL seeks the court's intervention for the removal of all illegal encroachments and restoration of the original status of the historical canal.

It also seeks directions for the restoration of adjoining roads allegedly encroached upon by the two private persons.

The PIL also seeks directions for constituting a high-level committee comprising of an officer of ACB and other investigation wings to investigate the gross mismanagement of the official respondents (authorities). It also seeks an investigation by CBI to inquire into the conduct of the officials in the matter.

In support of his contention, the petitioner has also referred to a communication by Divisional Commissioner Kashmir to Directorate Land Records way back in 2004 that Shah Kaul has been encroached upon, resulting into loss of lakhs of rupees "because the water required for Nishat Garden is being now lifted through mechanical pumps".

The Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, had sought the removal of all types of encroachments on the canal and directed appropriate action against the "culprits". "However, no action has been taken," says the petitioner.

### CBSE Class 10,

took the CBSE board exams are currently awaiting the final results. The CBSE Class 12 exams were held from February 15 to April 2, 2024, and the class 10 exams from February 15 to March 13, 2024.

Since the morning, the board's website was temporarily down, causing uncertainty. However, after some time, an official notice was posted on the website stating that the exam results would be available after May 20.

27<sup>th</sup> year OF PUBLICATION

# KASHMIR OBSERVER

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OR SCAN



# CS reviews progress of Jhelum & Tawi Flood Recovery Project

KO NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, on Friday chaired a review meeting here at Civil Secretariat to assess the progress on World Bank-funded Jhelum and Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP).

Chief Executive Officer, Economic Reconstruction Agency (ERA), Dr. Sehrish Asgar, presented a detailed report highlighting significant milestones achieved, so far.

During the meeting, it was informed that the proposals for additional works from six line departments were submitted to the World Bank, with four proposals receiving approval from the World Bank. Besides, the discussions focused on expediting completion of the Bone and Joint Hospital and other crucial projects.

The Chief Secretary emphasized the need for an ex-



pedited procurement process for these new projects within given timelines. He also urged upon the concerned to pursue the Lalla Ded Hospital project approval with the World Bank at the earliest so that the same would be taken up further.

The meeting also reviewed the progress on upgrading 49

dewatering stations, advancing Lalla Ded Hospital project documentation, completing the State Emergency Operation Center structure and on-going electro-mechanical component procurement.

Besides, implementation of Integrated Operational Forecasting System (IOFS), Digital Risk Database (DRDB) and Su-

pervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems was reviewed in detail.

Notably, it was informed that the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) project has connected 72 out of 80 dewatering stations and are ready to be operated remotely by the Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

# CEO Visits Kupwara; Reviews Preparations For Lok Sabha Polls

KO NEWS SERVICE

**KUPWARA:** Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Jammu and Kashmir, P K Pole, on Friday conducted a comprehensive review of preparations being put in place by the district administration for the Lok Sabha Elections 2024.

The CEO was accompanied by the Police Observer, Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency, Ravi Shankar and other concerned officers.

The CEO chaired a meeting of Nodal Officers and AROs, wherein District Election Officer (DEO), Ayushi Sudan, presented the detailed plan of major components of election preparedness through a PowerPoint Presentation. She informed that all arrangements for ensuring free and fair general elections in the district have been made.

Ayushi Sudan said that a contingency and emergency evacuation and communication plan has been prepared for the 75 polling stations of the district which are located at

high altitude areas close to LoC.

The CEO had a detailed constituency wise review of critical components of the ongoing election process including AMF's at Polling stations, plantation, dispatch and reception centers, Transport plan, training and arrangements for polling staff, material management, manpower, SVEEP, MCC, material management, Special Polling Stations and media monitoring.

Highlighting the significance of Adequate Minimum Facilities (AMF) at polling stations, the CEO emphasized the need for creating a conducive environment for voters to exercise their democratic rights freely and fairly. He asked for massive plantation drives at polling stations and open spaces by roping in the Forest department and social forestry. He also emphasized to provide requisite basic facilities in all polling stations on the poll day.

The CEO, while reviewing the status of activities being conducted under SVEEP, directed the concerned Nodal Officer to

conduct robust voter awareness campaigns across the district so as to ensure high voter turnout in the district.

Interacting with the nodal officers, the CEO reiterated the importance of strict adherence to ECI guidelines and robust media monitoring to uphold the sanctity of the electoral process. He directed the officers to exhibit exemplary commitment and sincerity while discharging their election duties, recognizing their pivotal role in facilitating free, fair and peaceful elections. He directed to earmark a Sector Officer for polling stations located at remote areas where travel time is more.

The CEO visited the election control room and Media Certification, Monitoring Committee (MCMC) and enquired about their functioning and activities as well.

Later, the CEO visited the Strong Room and undertook inspection of the arrangements being put in place for safety, surveillance and security of EVMS.

# Teachers Granted Exemption Await Certificates, May Miss Filing Deadlines

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The teachers, who are scheduled to submit their cases after one time exemption, here have alleged that the delay in getting the bonafide certificates, mandatory for the submission, is leaving them to lurch at large.

According to the news agency, the teachers, who were given one exemption to submit their cases of higher education which they have acquired during their services, said that they are facing immense hardships as they are being forced to wait for a long time to get their bonafide certificates that are mandatory to submit their files.

Teachers across Kashmir said that under Government Order No. 188-JK(Edu) of 2024 dated 15-03-2024 one time exemption was granted in favour of teaching/other staff of the School Education Department who have acquired higher qualification during service through distance/online.

"Accordingly, it was impressed upon all the concerned including teaching/non-teaching staff to submit their cases requiring one time exemption complete in all respects, as required under Government Order 940-Edu of 2027 dated 17-11-2017, latest by 15th of May 2024 through proper channel failing which no such cases shall be considered for one time exemption," they said.

They, however, said that in

some districts and zones, the ZEOs and CEOs have kept the last date of filling their cases on May 05 only but they are yet to get the mandatory bonafide certificates.

A teacher from Khag, Budgam told KNO that last date in Khag Zone is May 05, but he has not received the bonafide certificate yet, adding that the teachers have to spend at least 3-4 days for completing the process of getting the particular certificate and opt for a leave during these days, which simultaneously is leading to the sufferings of students.

Another teacher while echoing the similar voice said that they won't be able to submit their cases as they have been continuously waiting to get their bonafide certificates from Kashmir University.

He said that there is a need to have a separate counter for such cases so that they can get certificates on time and get the benefit of one time relaxation. Teachers demanded that separate counters must be started at University of Kashmir for such cases and the date of filling cases must be extended so that all the teachers can file their cases without any torment.

Registrar University of Kashmir Dr Naseer Iqbal told KNO that they are putting efforts to ensure the process is completed at a pace. However, he said that there is no doubt that sometimes it takes a little time to complete the process—(KNO)

# Hopeful For Good Voter Turnout In Baramulla LS Segment: Pole

AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Election Officer J&K Pandurang K Pole Friday hoped for a good voter turnout from north Kashmir's Baramulla Lok Sabha segment on May 20. He urged youth and first-time voters to take part in voting and exercise their democratic right for the better future of the nation.

Pole who visited Baramulla Lok Sabha Constituency today to conduct a thorough inspection of the Counting Center and Strong Rooms designated for the 1-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency at the Indoor Sports Stadium in Baramulla said the visit aimed to ensure seamless arrangements for the Lok Sabha Elections 2024.

He was accompanied by Returning Officer 1-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency, Minga Sherpa, Superintendent of Police, Baramulla, Amod Ashok Nagapure, Nodal Officer Model Code of Conduct (MCC), Syed Qamar Sajad, Assistant Returning Officer, Sopore, Shabir Ahmad Raina, Dy District Election Officer, Ab Rehman Bhat and other concerned officers.

Speaking to reporters, CEO J&K Pole said from last 5 to 6 months the poll preparations have been started however with the announcement of election schedule by Election Commission of India the pace of preparations has been geared up since.

"From Kupwara 19 nominations have been received and it is hoped more candidates will come in the fray. Similarly from Anantnag 20 candidates are in the fray, Srinagar 24, and Baramulla 19," Pole said. He added the footfall of candidates reflect enthusiasm from those who wish to contest elections.

Regarding arrangements he said facilities for smooth conduct of polls have been put



in place. "We will have separate helpers both for men and women at each polling station," he said.

Urging voters to step out on the polling day, the CEO said voters are duty bound to reach polling booths on polling day and exercise their democratic right in favor of their loving candidate. "Young voters are curious and are eagerly waiting for the day when polling take place. I assure youth and first-time voters that all required arrangements will be in place for them. I am hopeful there will be a good voting percentage on May 20 in Baramulla Lok Sabha Constituency," he said. (KNS)

Div com Jmu assesses land sinking damage in Pernote Ramban, "Plans comprehensive rehabilitation for affected families"

Srinagar, May 03 (KNS): The Divisional Commissioner of Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, accompanied by a team of senior officials, embarked on a crucial visit to the village of Pernote in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district today.

The primary objective of the visit was to evaluate the extensive damage caused by a significant landslide and land subsidence that struck the area last week.

The natural calamity wreaked havoc on several houses, leaving a trail of de-

struction in its wake.

Commissioner Kumar engaged with local residents to gain firsthand insights into the magnitude of the disaster and the immediate needs of the affected families. Expressing solidarity with the victims, he assured them of the government's unwavering support in their time of distress. Stressing the urgency of the situation, Commissioner Kumar affirmed that a comprehensive plan for the rehabilitation of the affected families is underway.

This plan will encompass not only immediate relief measures but also long-term strategies to ensure the restoration of normalcy and the rebuilding of livelihoods. The government's commitment to the welfare of the affected communities was reiterated, emphasizing the importance of swift and coordinated action in times of crisis.

As the assessment continues, efforts are being intensified to provide timely assistance and support to those grappling with the aftermath of this devastating natural calamity.

The visit of Commissioner Kumar underscores the government's proactive approach in addressing the challenges posed by such emergencies and underscores its commitment to the well-being of all its citizens. (KNS)

# Wildlife Department Holds Training For Frontline Staff

Syed Mohammad Burhan

**SRINAGAR:** The Department of Wildlife Protection launched a week-long technical workshop cum training programme on human-wildlife conflict.

The workshop was organized with the objective to promote advanced human-wildlife mitigation techniques among frontline staff.

"With a resolute commitment to fostering coexistence between humans and wildlife, the workshop seeks to arm personnel with the knowledge and skills vital for navigating and resolving encounters between communities and wildlife effectively," the department in a statement said.

In this connection, two day technical and interactive workshop cum training on mitigation of human-wildlife conflict for Frontline Staff of Forest (Territorial), Forest Pro-

tection Force and Wildlife Protection Departments was held at Forest Complex, South Division, Bijbehara, Anantnag.

In the inaugural address Wildlife Warden, South Sohail Ahmad stressed upon the fact that such training boosts the morale of the frontline staff and helps them in proper mitigation of human-wildlife conflict. He also put emphasis on the technical enhancement among the frontline staff to tackle human-wildlife conflict.

Ashish Dasgupta, Ex-member State Board of Wildlife (HP) along with his team, equipped the participants with the skills to effectively manage human-wildlife conflict.

The trainees undertook trekking of man-wildlife conflict prone areas and the trainees were educated about various aspects like tracking of Wild animal by direct/indirect evi-

dences and Hands-on training was given to the frontline staff and were acquainted with the knowledge of identification of wild animal movements/direct-indirect evidences.

Dr. Mohsin Gazi, the incharge Veterinary Officer gave an elaborate PowerPoint presentation on an overview of human-wildlife conflict in Kashmir valley. He emphasized the importance of following SOPs during rescue operations and transportation of sick and injured wild animals.

"This concerted effort by the Wildlife Protection Department underscores a pivotal step towards harmonizing the delicate balance between conservation imperatives and human livelihoods, underscoring the department's dedication to proactive and sustainable wildlife management." Dr. Gazi said.

# Band Peathar & Ladishah Spread Voter Awareness In Kulgam

KO NEWS SERVICE

**KULGAM, MAY 03:** In a remarkable initiative aimed at fostering voter awareness and engagement, the District Administration Kulgam through an innovative approach utilizing traditional Kashmiri Folk Theatre, specifically the Renowned forms of Band Peathar and Ladishah today reached out to



the electors across the district. Under the banner of 'Hanste Hanste - Voter Awareness', this initiative has successfully permeated every nook and corner of Kulgam District, bringing crucial information and awareness to the populace.

The District Election Officer (DEO) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan highlighting the significance of the programme said that to raise awareness and in-

crease voter turnout, multifarious activities were carried out across the district under SVEEP.

He said since Kashmiri Folk Theatre - Band Peathar and Ladishah is well connected to the people, they utilized this medium extensively to disseminate voter awareness.

By integrating local artists and performers into the outreach program, the initiative

not only captivated the audience but also ensured that the message resonated deeply within the community, added the DEO Kulgam. Through a series of captivating performances and engaging narratives, the Folk Theatre initiative has succeeded in transcending barriers and reaching diverse demographics, including remote and marginalized communities.

# Innovation Design And Entrepreneurship Held At SSM College



KO NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** A five day "Innovation, Design, and Entrepreneurship (IDE) Bootcamp (Phase III) being organized by AICTE and the Ministry of Education's Innovation Cell concluded today on 3rd May 2024 with impressive Valedictory function wherein mementos, certificates were distributed among guests, expert speakers and participants.

Prof. (Dr.) M.A. Shah, Head Department of Physics NIT Srinagar was the Chief Guest on the occasion and Dr. Elangovan Kariappan, Assistant Innovation Director, Innovation Cell, Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India was Guest of Honour besides senior functionaries and HODs of the College were also present on the

occasion. Before the function Thirteen (13) Innovative ideas pitched by different groups of students from across the country were evaluated by a Team of following Experts/Judges from NIT Srinagar, MSME, University of Kashmir and local experts from Wadhvani Foundation: -

Dr. Saad Parvez, Associate Professor NIT Srinagar, Dr. Ishtiyaq Hussain Qureshi, Associate Professor, Business School, University of Kashmir, Dr. Danish Ahmad, Associate Professor, NIT Srinagar, Dr. Irfana Rasheed, Business School, University of Kashmir, Dr. Tariq Ahmad Lone, Associate Professor, Business School, University of Kashmir, Mr. Bilal Ahmad Khan, CEO of PetKash and Mr. Saeel Allaqband, Assistant Director MSME.

# Siblings Die In Kulgam Road Accident

Agencies

**KULGAM:** Two siblings were killed after being hit by a truck in Khudwani area along Jammu-Srinagar national highway in south Kashmir's Kulgam on Friday, officials said.

An official told the news agency, that two persons riding on a motorcycle died after being hit by a truck. The deceased

have been identified as Adil Ahmad Dar and Shabir Ahmad Dar sons of Manzoor Ahmad Dar both from Khull DH Pora Kulgam. He said the bodies have been recovered by police.

"Both bodies have been shifted to hospital for medical and legal formalities," he said adding the case has been registered while further investigation has been started—(KNO)

# SIA Jammu Attaches Property Of Absconding Terrorist

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The State Investigation Agency Jammu has attached the property of an absconding terrorist in Manjakote tehsil of Rajouri district under UAPA.

According to a statement, issued to the news agency FIR No. 05/2021 U/s 13, 17, 18, 20, 38, 39 UAP(A), section 3 of Official Secret Act, 201 IPC of P/S, JIC/SIA Jammu was registered against Abdul Hameed Khan of Panjgrain along with other associates namely Mohd Rafiq Khan and Gurpal Singh.

The statement reads that the terrorist had exfiltrated to Pakistan for arms training along with other youths of Rajouri in 1992 and presently he is operating from Pakistan under LeT outfit.

"He is also instrumental in a number of terrorist attacks in Rajouri. He is responsible for activating the sleeper cells and attracting the gullible youths to join the LeT outfit through OGWs with the motive for waging the war against Republic of India."

It reads that in this case, the charges were framed against all the accused persons including Abdul Hameed Khan. It added that the SIA Jammu has succeeded to attach the immovable property amounting to lakhs of rupees in village Panjgrain.

"The property has been identified by local revenue staff and found recorded in the name of said absconding terrorist. Now said land has been attached by u/s 33 UA(P) Act."—(KNO)

# Police Takes Cognizance Of Complaints Received From Senior Women Officers

**SRINAGAR:** J&K Police on Friday said that it has received a series of complaints from Senior Women Functionaries holding public office along with other supporting material alleging therein that for last few days a Scurrilous communication is being circulated in various internet based social media (Whatsapp etc) whereby baseless, scandal-

ous and derogatory allegations aimed at harming the reputation and integrity of not only these lady public figures but the public institutions and government organizations.

In a handout to, the police said that authorship of the communication purportedly made in the name of "Manish Sharma" of Pir Panjal Times.



# India Retain Top Spot In White-Ball Formats, Australia No. 1 In Tests

Press Trust of India

**DUBAI:** India have retained their top position in ODIs and T20Is but slipped to the second position in the men's Test Team Rankings in the latest ICC annual ranking update issued on Friday. India conceded the top spot in the five-day format to Australia, the reigning World Test champion, following the annual update that drops results from the 2020-21 season and reflects all series completed since May 2021.

India (120) are just four points behind Australia (124) and 15 points clear of third-placed England. South Africa are the fourth team above the 100-point mark with 103 points.

India slipped mainly because their 2-1 series win in Australia in 2020-21 has dropped from the rankings.

The order of teams ranked from third to ninth remains the same. Only nine teams are now ranked as Afghanistan and Ire-



land have yet to play sufficient Tests, while Zimbabwe too are out as they have played only three Tests over the past three years.

Teams need to play a minimum of eight Tests over a three-year period to get on the

rankings table. India, however, remain atop the ODI and T20I rankings after the annual updates, that weigh matches completed prior to May 2023 at 50 per cent and subsequent matches at 100 per cent.

India may have lost the ODI World Cup final to Australia but have increased their lead over them from three to six points, leading the table with 122 points. There are no changes in the top 10 but Ireland have

overtaken Zimbabwe to 11th position.

Third-placed South Africa have closed the gap with Australia from eight to four points, while Sri Lanka are just two points behind fifth-placed England.

The T20I rankings see Australia move ahead of England to second place but they are seven points adrift of India, who lead with 264 rating points.

South Africa are just two points behind England after leapfrogging two places from the sixth position that they had before the update. New Zealand also have 250 points like South Africa but behind on fractions, while the West Indies are at 249 points, which means that just three points separate third-placed England from sixth-placed West Indies.

In other movements, Pakistan have dropped two places to seventh, while Scotland have overtaken Zimbabwe to 12th position.

## Short TAKES

### Zonal Level Chess & Carrom Competitions Held In Qazigund



The Department of Youth Services and Sports Anantnag on Friday organised an Inter-School Zonal Level chess and carrom competitions for Under-14 and Under 17 Boys at Himalayan Bells International School Badragund, Qazigund.

The Zonal Education Officer Qazigund along with Managing Director of Himalayan International School were the chief guests on the occasion. A total of 248 students participated in the event. Prizes and mementos were distributed at the end of the competition.

### Mohun Bagan Eye Historic Treble In ISL Summit Clash v Mumbai City FC

Mohun Bagan will look to cap off their fairytale season with a historic treble as they face Mumbai City FC in the ISL summit clash at Salt Lake Stadium on Saturday.

The Mariners won the Durand Cup for the first time after 23 years. Antonio Habas took over from Juan Ferrando and led them to their maiden League Winners Shield.

Two weeks after they defeated Mumbai City FC 2-1 to win their maiden Shield.

### Powell To Lead Strong West Indies Team In T20 World Cup

Rajasthan Royals power-hitter Rovman Powell will lead a strong West Indies squad, filled with some of the world's best franchise freelancers, in the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Americas.

One of the prominent names included is rookie pace sensation Shamar Joseph, who is part of Lucknow Super Giants in this edition of IPL. The team also has Nicholas Pooran of LSG, Andre Russell of KKR, Shimron Hetmyer of RR apart from skipper Powell himself being part of the 15.

### Pakistan To Play England, Bangladesh & South Africa In Tests

Pakistan will be playing a total of seven Tests against England, Bangladesh and South Africa between August 2024 and January 2025 as part of the ICC World Test Championship's (WTC) third cycle, which concludes next year.

Pakistan will host England and Bangladesh at home for two and three Tests respectively before heading to South Africa for three T20Is, three ODIs and two Tests in the latter half of this year.

Pakistan is yet to win a Test series in South Africa and Australia.

### Tigers Woods Accepts Special Exemption Into U.S. Open

Tiger Woods has accepted a special exemption into next month's U.S. Open at South Carolina's Pinehurst Resort and Country Club, the USGA said on Thursday.

Woods, who counts three U.S. Open titles among his 15 major championships, most recently competed at the Masters in April where he finished last among the 60 players who made the cut at Augusta National Golf Club.

Woods has hardly been a full-time player in recent years and dropped to 789th in the world ranking.

## USA Call Up Ex-Ranji Top-Scorer Milind For T20 WC

Press Trust of India

**DALLAS:** Former Delhi batter and 2018-19 Ranji Trophy top run-getter Milind Kumar found a place in the United States of America squad for the upcoming T20 World Cup, starting June 1.

The USA, a co-host of the event alongside the West Indies, announced its 15-member squad to be led by Gujarat-born Monank Patel.

Right-handed batter Milind, who scored 1331 runs in the 2018-19 Ranji Trophy season, had before that played seven seasons for Delhi and then migrated to the USA in search of better opportunities. Mil-

ind, a Delhi-born cricketer, played for the state, Sikkim and Tripura in the Indian domestic before migrating to the US.

He made his US cricketing debut in 2021, leading Seattle Thunderbolts in the Minor League Cricket.

Saurabh Netravalkar, another Mumbai-born pacer, played in the 2010 U19 World Cup, the batch that saw stars like KL Rahul, Jaydev Unadkat and Mayank Agarwal going on to represent the senior Indian team.

However, a couple of renowned Indians and members of the 2012 U-19 World Cup-winning team -- Unmukt Chand (skipper) and Smit Patel (wicketkeeper) -- failed to



find a spot in the squad. Pakistan-born pacer Ali Khan is also an inclusion in the squad, who was recruited by Kolkata Knight Riders in 2020.

USA will start their campaign against neighbours Canada here on the opening day, having also been clubbed alongside India, Pakistan and Ireland in Group A.

USA squad for T20 World Cup: Monank Patel (c & wk), Aaron Jones (vc), Andries Gous, Corey Anderson, Ali Khan, Harmeet Singh, Jessy Singh, Milind Kumar, Nisarg Patel, Nitish Kumar, Noshtush Kenjige, Saurabh Netravalkar, Shadley Van Schalkwyk, Steven Taylor and Shay-an Jahangir.

Former Mumbai left-arm spinner Harmeet Singh has also made it to the side.

The 31-year-old Mumbai-born

## KKR's Narine Is A 'Superman', Russell A 'Stylish Icon': Shah Rukh



Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** From hitting massive sixes, to scoring tons of runs, to producing breakthroughs, charismatic all-rounder Sunil Narine has been KKR's go-to man for more than a decade in the IPL, and co-owner Shah Rukh Khan was effusive in his praise for the all-rounder, calling him the "Superman" and the real engine behind the team's success.

Riding on Narine's blazing innings, including a century and two half-tons and nearly a dozen wickets, KKR are currently second on the table. The two-time champions could well break the decade-long jinx of not winning an IPL title if Narine's charisma continues to shine through this season.

"In our house, we call him Superman, the god particle. He's a boss on the field, a player, a bowler, a batsman, a wicketkeeper, a fielder. He's an 'anything' player," Shah Rukh told Star Sports

show 'Knight Club presents - King Khan's Rules' about the 35-year-old stalwart, who played a pivotal role in KKR lifting the trophy in 2012 and 2014.

Narine, the highest wicket-taker in the IPL among overseas spinners, had taken 21 and 24 respectively in the 2012 and 2014 editions, paving the way for the purple and gold jerseys to clinch the two IPL titles.

"He's so spirited, so lovely. We're very fortunate to have players, Indian or foreign, who have deep feelings for the team... Sunil, like I said, he's an 'anything' player." The Bollywood star added that Narine and country-mate Andre Russell were pivotal to the club's ethos, saying any one of them getting injured feels like a body blow to the side.

"Imagine KKR without these guys. When they get injured, it feels awful to wonder how we'll manage without them. It's so crucial.

They've been with us for so many years, and I think the way they've supported the team, they're like part of the family," said Shah Rukh.

Russell is a cut above the rest when it comes to hairstyle, and Shah Rukh said the cricketer is a "fashionista". The mohawk he made popular when he came into the IPL continues to trend even now, though more than a decade has elapsed since the fancy cut was first made popular by the West Indian.

"Such a wonderful person to be around, and such a great cricketer. He reminds us of the first big man like Universe Boss, Mr. Gayle. He's like that, and I love the fact that he's very fashion-conscious. He likes to dress well, do his hair.

"Last night, I asked him, 'Do you have some two-colour shoes?' He said no, but he has designer spikes. So I said, 'Are they Gucci designer spikes?' Wow! Yes, well, I love the way he's a fashionista."

## Manchester City's Phil Foden Wins Footballer Of The Year Award In England

Agencies

**LONDON:** Manchester City forward Phil Foden has been voted Footballer of the Year in England.

Foden's award comes after an outstanding season with 16 Premier League goals so far for the defending champion. He has also provided 10 assists in all competitions for City.

And City made it a double for individual prizes with Khadija "Bunny" Shaw taking the women's award.

Foden received 42% of the votes to beat second-place Declan Rice from Arsenal and City teammate Rodri in third.

"I strive to be the best that I can be every single day and that is all down to the way the manager and my colleagues always seek to improve and get better," Foden said. "Now I am focused on seeking to finish the season as strongly as possible and to try to help



City win more trophies."

The award, which is run by the Football Writers' Association, has been won by City players in three of the last four years, with Erling Haaland taking it last year and Ruben Diaz in 2021. It was first won by England great Stanley Matthews in

1948.

Shaw is the second City player to win the women's award, which also went to Nikita Parris in 2019.

It is the second time in five years that City has done the double, with Raheem Sterling also taking the prize in 2019.

Jamaica international Shaw, who has scored 21 goals in 18 league appearances this season, beat Chelsea's Lauren James to the award with 53% of votes. City teammates Alex Greenwood and Yui Hasegawa were third and fourth.

## Klopp Says 'Pressure Is Off' After Liverpool's Late-Season Collapse

Agencies

**LIVERPOOL:** Jurgen Klopp said the "pressure is off" after his Liverpool team dropped out of the Premier League title race, urging his men to rediscover their best form in the final few games of his Anfield reign.

Liverpool have won just one of their past five league games and it would now take a miracle for them to catch Arsenal and Manchester City.

The club were at one stage on track to win a quadruple but will end the season with just the League Cup, though they are already guaranteed Champions League football for next season.

"It is an achievement," Klopp said. "Does it feel to everybody like that? Probably not, but to me it does and that's how the perspective can change during a season.

"Because for a while we obviously looked like we



could go all the way or at least stay in the race for longer, which was definitely possible.

"For different reasons that didn't work out but it's still probably third place in the league behind two teams who have done really well

and they go all the way."

The German, 56, said he wanted his team to play with freedom in his last three matches, starting with Sunday's home game against fifth-placed Tottenham. "The pressure is off now. That's done. It would be re-

ally cool if we could play really, really good football again," he said.

"That would be absolutely nice because obviously we have been very tense in the last weeks, we had a super-intensive period as well."