

Security Beefed Up In North Kashmir

Agencies

Srinagar: In anticipation of the Lok Sabha polls, extra security measures have been implemented in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla constituency to ensure incident-free elections, officials said on Friday.

Security officials said that stringent measures have been put in place across all districts of North Kashmir to facilitate peaceful polling.

While acknowledging the prevailing peaceful atmosphere in North Kashmir, officials emphasized the importance of precautionary security measures to enable voters to exercise their franchise freely and securely.

The constituency, spanning across Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora, and select assembly segments of Budgam district, is set to go to polls in the fifth and final phase on May 20.

Additional forces have been deployed, and the administration is committed to ensuring a smooth and incident-free election process.

Crucial security review meetings were held in Kupwara and Sopore, chaired respectively by Senior Superintendents of Police (SSPs) and officers from the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

Discussions at these meetings centered on addressing security concerns and ensuring comprehensive readiness for the upcoming polls, emphasizing the collaborative efforts aimed at enhancing | More on P6

No Power In World Can Revive Article 370: PM

» Congress Will Give All Assets To 'Vote Jihad' People » Lok Sabha Election Results Will Break All Old Records

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday tore into the Congress's election manifesto, dubbing it a "Maoist" document, which he cautioned will put a break on the country's economic growth and lead it to bankruptcy if implemented.

Addressing an election rally in Mumbai three days ahead of the fifth and last phase of Lok Sabha elections in Maharashtra covering 13 seats, the BJP stalwart lashed out at the Congress over its election manifesto.

"The Congress is fighting a battle for its survival and can go to any extent (to save itself). Its Maoist manifesto is eyeing gold from temples and 'mangalsutra' (gold chains) of women. The



Maoist manifesto will put a break on economic growth and lead the country to bankruptcy," he told the gathering at the sprawling Shivaji Park Ground.

The PM had earlier said the Congress poll document had Muslim League imprint.

The BJP's star campaigner alleged the grand old party wants to bring back

inheritance tax (a levy on assets inherited from a deceased person) which was abolished in the 1980s.

"It also plans a 50 per cent inheritance tax... the party is planning an X-ray of your property and handing it over to their vote-bank which speaks of vote jihad," he maintained.

The BJP stalwart said construction of a grand

Ram temple in Ayodhya and removal of Article 370, which provided special status to Jammu and Kashmir, were once considered impossible tasks in the country, but they have now become a reality.

"But they were made possible because of the power of your single vote," he told the large gathering.

Modi asked the people of Mumbai to remember terror strikes and serial bomb blasts that rocked the metropolis in the past and the change in the situation after 2014 when they go out to vote on May 20.

He emphasised bomb blasts and terror strikes are a now thing of the past in the financial capital.

"In the last ten years, they (Mumbaikars) have been feeling safe and secure," the PM said | More on P6

'Congress Will Bulldoze Ram Temple'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday claimed that the Congress and the SP will run a bulldozer over the Ram temple if elected to power, and asked them to take lessons from Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on where bulldozers should be used instead.

Addressing election rallies in Uttar Pradesh, Modi predicted that his government was set to return, scoring a hat-trick in the Lok Sabha elections. The Congress, according to him, had a mission to score just 50 seats to "save its honour".

The prime minister addressed public meetings in Barabanki, Fatehpur and Hamirpur. He accused the opposition INDIA bloc of planning to give their | More on P6

India Reacts To PoK Protests

'Consequence of Pakistan's Policy of Systemic Plunder'

New Delhi: India on Friday said the protests witnessed in several parts of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) are a "natural consequence" of Islamabad's continued policy of systemic plundering of resources from the region that remains under its "forcible and illegal" occupation. India also asserted that the entire Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh "have been, are and shall always remain integral parts of India".

Violent protests erupted in PoK over rising costs of food, fuel and essential utilities as Pakistan reels under a severe economic crisis.

"We have seen reports on protests in several areas of Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir," external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing.

He was responding to a question on the protests in PoK.

"We believe that it is a natural consequence of Pakistan's continued policy of systemic plundering of resources from these territories which remain under its forcible and illegal occupation," Jaiswal said.

"Such exploitative policies deny the local people, rights over their own resources and the benefits thereof," he said.

"We reiterate that the entire Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have been, are and shall always remain integral parts | More on P6

2019 CRPF Convoy Attack SC Clears Path For Prosecution Of 6 Accused

KO Web Desk

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday paved the way for the prosecution of six alleged Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) terror operatives accused of carrying out the failed car suicide bomb attack on a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) convoy in Banihal in March 2019.

A bench of justices MM Sundresh and SVN Bhatti on Friday set aside the April 2021 judgment of the J&K high court, which had affirmed a trial court order to exonerate the six accused of the terror charges on account of a procedural lapse in initiating their prosecution, according to a report in the Hindustan Times.

The unsuccessful attack on the CRPF convoy was likened to and closely followed the 14 February 2019 attack in Pulwama, in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed by a

suicide bomber, owing allegiance to Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM).

The top court said that the procedural lapse was a curable one, putting the authorities concerned at liberty to grant approval for the prosecution of the accused under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) by following the prescribed procedure.

Reading out the operative part of the verdict, justice Sundresh said that it was open for the authorities to grant proper approval, as mandated under the law.

Additional solicitor general SV Raju represented the federal agency in the case.

On March 30, 2019, suspected HM operatives tried to carry out an attack on a CRPF convoy in Banihal on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. The suspect, Amin of South Kashmir, allegedly tried to ram explosives laden Santro car

Amit Shah Wraps Up 'Surprise' Kashmir Visit

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday wrapped up his brief visit to Kashmir Valley during which he interacted with several delegations, including those from the BJP and local Sikhs, officials said.

Shah, who arrived here on Thursday evening, left for New Delhi on Friday morning, they said.

Though his visit in the midst of Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir led to speculation of his meetings with some Kashmir-based mainstream political leaders, there was no official word on the minister's engagements before he left the Valley.

While Baramulla goes to the polls on May 20, voting for the



Anantnag-Rajouri constituency is scheduled for May 25 after it was deferred from its earlier schedule of May 7 due to bad weather.

Sunil Sharma, general secretary of the BJP's Jammu and Kashmir unit, said on Thursday

that the home minister's visit to Kashmir is not political.

"I think the home minister is coming here to review the measures from the security point of view to increase the turnout and create an atmosphere of peace. There is no political activity, but the BJP workers will meet him and discuss the party's organisational matters," Sharma said.

Immediately after his arrival in the city here on Thursday, Shah interacted with several delegations, including BJP leaders of Jammu and Kashmir. A Pahari delegation and a delegation of local Sikhs also met Shah.

Local BJP leaders had said Shah would hold a review meeting on the security situation in Jammu and | More on P6

Mehbooba, Omar Smell Rat

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) President Mehbooba Mufti has appealed to the Union Government and the Home Minister to refrain from

interfering in the ongoing electoral process in Jammu and Kashmir, emphasizing the importance of allowing the elections to proceed

'Silent Village Of India' Finally Gets Special School



Agencies

Jammu: The silent village of India, Dhadkai, finally got a promise fulfilled when a special school was opened for them by a businessman turned social activist Mujtaba Fazili of Kashmir valley.

This school is dedicated to the deaf and mute children of Dhadkai village and has opened in two rooms in the existing Government High School.

Fazili has taken the responsibility of bearing the expenses of salary of the teacher and other things of the school so that these children can have formal

education like other children of the village.

Situated around 220 kms from Jammu, the Dhadkai village came into light when it was observed that many people are born with hearing and talking and it passes from generation to generation. The first case of deaf and mute, according to the locals, was found in 1901 and it spread from one generation to another. At present there are 82 deaf and mute people living in two Panchayats Dhadkai-A and Dhadkai-B whereas the number a few years back had risen to 98. | More on P6

JKAP Suspends SM Influencer Mudassar Aziz

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) on Friday suspended social media influencer and its recent entrant Mudassar Aziz for "exhibiting behaviour inconsistent with the values and ethics upheld by the political party."

The JKAP in a suspension order said, "In light of recent events, it has come to the attention of the Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party that Mr. Mudassar Aziz has exhibited behaviour that is inconsistent with the values and ethics upheld by our organization. The Apni Party is committed to maintaining a standard of integrity, respect, and humanity, which Mr. Aziz's actions have contravened."

"Effective immediately, Mr. Mudassar Aziz is hereby suspended from all roles, responsibilities, and activities associated with the Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party," reads the order.

"Apni Party does not tolerate any inhumane or unethical behaviour and is | More on P6

'6th Schedule For Ladakh' Will Continue Movement Till Demands Are Met: Wangchuk

Press Trust Of India

Leh: In March this year, Leh, known for its breathtaking landscapes and monasteries, made headlines as climate activist Sonam Wangchuk led a 21-day fast in sub-zero temperatures seeking autonomy for Ladakh.

Thousands joined the Ramon Magsaysay Award winner whose life inspired actor Aamir Khan's character Rancho in Bollywood blockbuster "3 Idiots".

After ending his fast on March 26, Wangchuk began a sit-in which was called off on May 10 in view of the Lok Sabha elections.

Though the government did not accede to the protesters' demands for statehood for Ladakh and its inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, Wangchuk says the movement is anything but over.

"On one hand, land is going to corporations and on



the other hand, China is capturing our land, thousands of square kilometres of land. People of the country need to understand our pain," Wangchuk told PTI.

"The Sixth Schedule is required to protect the mountains, glaciers and ecology. Though it is required in the whole country, mountains are ultra-sensitive. The use and throw philosophy of the present times, whether it is a plate or a river or a glacier... we don't want it for Ladakh or the nation," he said.

Wangchuk said that locals are concerned that in the absence of | More on P6

Younger Generation at Risk Hypertension On Rise Among Children, Teens In Kashmir: Doctors

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Around half of the people suffering from hypertension remain unaware of their condition and many hypertensive patients struggle to control their blood pressure, which leads to severe consequences, according to medical experts.

Doctors who spoke with Kashmir News Observer said there is a need to start hypertension education programmes in educational institutions as younger people including school-going children are affected by it.

Dr Muhammad Salim Khan, Head of the Department of Community Medicine at GMC Srinagar said hypertension is the biggest pandemic of global concern among non-communicable diseases.

"Every third or fourth adult here has hypertension but unfortunately, almost half of them are unaware that they



have high blood pressure. This biggest silent killer doesn't show any symptoms during the course of illness except some vague signs attributed to other diseases," he said.

"Unfortunately four out of five hypertensive patients are not keeping the blood pressure under control which leads to severe consequences like heart attack, brain stroke, kidney failure, etc.," Dr Khan said, adding, "Even we have observed hypertension among

school-going children as our lifestyle and food habits have undergone drastic changes which include sedentary life, very less physical activities, high intake of salt, sugar and fat in regular meals and junk foods, smoking and substance abuse, stress."

Against the recommendation of a maximum of five grams of salt intake by a person per day, a Kashmiri takes around 10-15 grams of common salt daily, the doctor said. | More on P6

ACB Books 4 For Land Transfer Scam In Rajouri

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Friday charged four people, including two revenue officials, under the Prevention of Corruption Act for the illegal transfer of a piece of land in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district.

A case was registered against Balwant Singh, former Tehsildar of Rajouri and Mohd Rafiq, former Patwari of Rehtal, along with private beneficiaries Kanwal Singh and Masood Anwar, ACB officials said.

The case emerged from an ACB investigation following a written complaint alleging that in 2010, Balwant Singh conspired with Kanwal Singh to illegally declare him as the sole Tenant-at-will of a property, excluding other legal heirs and successors of the late landowner, Brij Lal, they said.

The verification process revealed that Singh and Rafiq unlawfully transferred land to the beneficiaries by making unauthorized | More on P6

'More Indians Are Travelling Than Ever Before, As 97 Mn Passengers Took Flight In Q1 2024'

Press Trust Of India

Be it international or domestic, more Indians are travelling than ever before, claims a new report, as a whopping "97 million passengers" travelled through Indian airports in the first three months of 2024 alone.



whole year to achieve," read the report.

While domestic air passenger traffic surged 21 per cent above 2019 levels, international travel rose by 4 per cent.

Indian travellers, according to the report, are increasingly exploring key markets, with a 53 per cent increase in visits to Japan, a 248 per cent growth to Vietnam, and a 59 per cent rise in visits to the United States, compared to 2019, despite a stronger US dollar.

lowed by Singapore, London, Frankfurt, and Melbourne are the top five trending destinations that Indian travellers are visiting this summer (June - August 2024), as measured by the change in share of flight bookings in the report.

"Consumers in the Asia Pacific region have an intense desire and willingness to travel and are becoming increasingly savvy to ensure they get the best value and unforgettable experiences from their trips.

Also, Amsterdam, hospitality and F&B sectors, the bottom line is that costs matter," said David Mann, chief economist, Asia Pacific, Mastercard, in a statement.

The report also pointed out how consumers globally continue to prioritise experiences over material goods and the same is playing out in the travel sector where spending on experiences, especially nightlife, totals "12 per cent of tourism sales" -- the highest point in at least five years.

Additionally, a burgeoning fine dining scene in India has translated to marginal outperformance of the fine dining category for in-destination tourism dining, it reported.

"As of March 2024, spending on casual dining rose by 49.2 per cent, while fine dining saw a 55.2 per cent increase compared to the previous year," it added.

Mastercard Economics Institute, launched in 2020, analysis macroeconomic trends through the lens of the consumer.

Government of Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir
Office Of The Executive Engineer
Mechanical And Hospitals Division Srinagar

-----Telefax:- 0194-2496089, Email ID:- xennhchck@yahoo.in-----

Gist of e-tender
NIT No: M&HDS/TS/2024-25/03/e-tendering
Dated:-17.05.2024

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT, e-tenders in two (02) cover system, are invited on item rate basis from authorized dealers of OEMs or registered/reputed and experienced firms for the following work:

Table with 4 columns: Description, Estimated Cost (In lakh of Rs.), Earnest Money (In Rs.), Cost of Bid Doc. (In Rs.), Time of Completion. Row 1: Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Inverter Type Hot & Cold (Reversible ACs) and Bed Head Panels along with allied works for new kidney transfer unit (KTU) facility at Govt Superspecialty Hospital Srinagar.

- 1. Downloading of Bids:- The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in from 17.05.2024 (14.00 hrs) and can be downloaded from 17.05.2024 (14.00 hrs).
2. Uploading: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site 17.05.2024 (14.00 hrs) to 22.05.2024 (14:00hrs) in two (02) covers.
3. Opening of Bids :- The bids received upto due date and time shall be opened on 22.05.2024 at 16.00 (hrs)

No: M&HDS/TS/ 832-36
DIPK-557/24 Dated: 17.05.2024

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
M&H, Srinagar

Table with columns: Jammu & Kashmir Haj Committee, Notification, Subject: Flight Schedule of Haj Pilgrims/Reporting time at Haj House Bemina, Srinagar. It contains a flight schedule for Haj 1445 (H) - 2024, listing flight numbers, names of pilgrims, flight dates, and destinations.

DIT/km/4/24
dated: 17-05-2024

Mirwaiz Barred From Offering Prayers At Jamia Masjid, Says Mosque's Managing Body

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Hurriyat Conference chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq was allegedly barred from offering the congregational prayers at the Jamia Masjid here on Friday as he "continued to remain under house arrest", the managing body of the mosque said.

Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid alleged that Mirwaiz Umar Farooq has been placed under house arrest since May 3, and was again not allowed to go to the Jamia Masjid to deliver the Friday sermon and offer prayers for the third consecutive Friday. The alleged restrictions on the movement of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq

come ahead of the death anniversaries of his father Mirwaiz Mohammad Farooq and separatist leader Abdul Gani Lone, the father of People's Conference chief Sajad Lone.

Farooq and Lone were killed by Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists in 1990 and 2002 for opposing a growing 'gun culture' in the Kashmir valley.

They were both considered advocates of finding a lasting solution through peaceful means.

The government has been placing restrictions on the Hurriyat Conference chairman's movement on May 21 every year. The movement of people towards Eidgah where both are buried is also restricted.

Justice Tashi Interacts With Children On Ill Effects Of Substance Abuse

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The J&K Legal Services Authority in collaboration with District Legal Services Authority, Srinagar and with the support of Delhi Public School (DPS), Srinagar today organized an impactful awareness program for students on the topic "Substance Abuse: Consequences, Prevention, and Challenges" at DPS, Athawajan, here. The event brought together esteemed dignitaries, experts, and passionate students.

Justice Tashi Rabstan, Senior-most Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority was the Chief Guest on the occasion. On his arrival, Justice Tashi accompanied by Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary and Muzamil Hayat Kabli, Under Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority was warmly received by Vijay Dhar, Chairman and Shafaq Afshan, Principal, Delhi

Public School, Srinagar as well as Dr. Arshid Hussain, Professor, Psychiatry Department, GMC Srinagar, Dr. Majid Shafi, Psychiatrist, JLN Hospital Srinagar and Jahangir Ahmad Bakshi, Secretary, DLSA Srinagar.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation of students, faculty members, administrative staff of DPS Srinagar, advocates, law students, staff of J&K Legal Services Authority and DLSA Srinagar as well as Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs).

In his opening address, Vijay Dhar extended a warm welcome to the Chief Guest and expressed gratitude to Justice Tashi for short listing DPS Srinagar for interacting with the students on drug abuse. He further emphasized the significance of conducting such programs which go a long way in raising awareness and diverting the children towards positive societal change.



An angler is seen dragging a boat across the picturesque Dal Lake, with the towering Kohimaran hills in backdrop. KO Photo by ABid Bhat

'Two-Fold' Hike In Power Tariff Triggers Protest In Down-Town

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Locals on Friday staged protests in several areas of the old Srinagar against unprecedented hike in monthly power tariff.

The protesters assembled at Zaina Kadal Chowk after Friday congregational prayers and raised slogans against the Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) for a two-fold increase in monthly electricity fees.

The areas which protested against the hike in electricity bills include Zainakadal, Dallal Mohalla, Chamdoori, Nawab Bazar, Syed Hameedpora and other adjacent sites.

The protest, which commenced from Zaina Kadal Chowk with

People living in these areas are ones barely making their both ends meet, with meager monthly income. The abrupt increase in power tariff is an injustice to us

shouting of slogans, was stopped at Nawab Bazar from where the protesters were not allowed by police to proceed.

"Most of the people residing in Zaina Kadal, Nawab Bazar and other adjoining areas are poor and cannot afford to pay extra fees. They have made a 100% hike in electrici-

ty fee as we received electricity bills double the amount for April 2024," one of the protesters said.

I was earlier paying Rs. 1040 per month, but now April month's bill has been issued at Rs. 2080, which they are asking me to pay despite no electricity for the most part of the day, another protester, Mukhtar Ahmad, said.

"People living in these areas are ones barely making their both ends meet, with meager monthly income. The abrupt increase in power tariff is an injustice to us," they said.

Besides, they also warned to take a stern step if the hike in electricity fee is not rolled back and have decided to hold a meeting in this regard on the 19th of May.

Fire Damages Masjid, Residential House In Shamaswari

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A Masjid and a residential house were damaged in a fire incident that broke out at Shamaswari Khankah Moula area of the old city on Friday, officials said.

An official said that a Masjid along with a residential house were damaged in an early morn-

ing blaze at Shamaswari Khanqah Moula, Srinagar.

He said the attic portion, including roofing, ceiling, doors, windows, and the ceiling of the second floor of the Masjid along with the roofing, ceiling, doors were damaged in the incident

"Windows, and other items of the first floor of the wooden

structure, were severely damaged, whereas the doors and windows of the first floor of the Masjid were partially damaged in the fire," he added.

Moreover, the official added that the cause of the fire is being ascertained while no loss of life or any injury was reported in the incident—(KNO)

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from Bashir Ahmad to Bashir Ahmad Mattoo in future i will be known as Bashir Ahmad Mattoo . If anybody has any objection in this regard he/ she may file his/her objection in the office of the Regional Passport Office Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Bashir Ahmad Mattoo

inf

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

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Pattan) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Afan Reyaz S/o Reyaz Ahmad Mir R/o Janwera Sopore Tehsil Dangeerpora District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 25-04-2022 occurred at SDH Pattan

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

Executive Magistrate 1st Class Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

In The Forum Of Authorized Officer J. V Forest Division Baramulla

Extract order passed by Authorized Officer cum Divisional Forest Officer J.V. Forest Division Baramulla vide No. DFO/JV/A.O/2024-25/34-39 dated: 17-05-2024 in connection with below mentioned cases of Boniyar:-

Sr. No	Case No	Ref Hon'ble Judicial Magistrate No & Date	Date of Seizure	Place of Seizure	Seizure Made	Form-25 No & Dale	Custodian
01	09/2023-24	DFO/JV/AO/130-37 Dtd: 26/06/2023	15-06-2023	65/BNR	D/S 38Nos=52.18Cfts	66554 Dt 17-06-2023	H W Factory Baramulla
02	12/2023-24	DFO/JV/AO/154-61 dt: 13/07/2023	27-06-2023	38/BNR	D/S 67Nos=84.20Cfts	66556 Dt 05-07-2023	H W Factory Baramulla
03	19/2023-24	DFO/JV/AO/291-97 dt 22/08/2023	15-10-2022	50/BNR	D/S 02Nos=27.22Cfts	65145 Dt 15-10-2022	H W Factory Baramulla
04	23/2021-24	DFO/JV/AO/332-39 dt 25/09/2023	13-09-2023	Nowshera	D/S 17Nos= 19.53Cfts	66559 Dt 13-09-2023	H W Factory Baramulla
05	24/2023-24	DFO/JV/AO/ 340-47 dtd 25/09/2023	21-08-2023	18/BNR	D/S 14Nos=58.62cfts	66558 Dt 21-08-2023	H W Factory Baramulla
06	29/2023-24	DFO/JV/AO/ 184-91 dt 11/10/2023	09-07-2023	Nowshera	D/R04Nos=54.00Cfts	66560 Dt 30-09-2023	H W Factory Baramulla
07	31/2023-24	DFO/JV/AO/409-16. dtd 09/11/2023	11-10-2023	54/BNR	D/S 04Nos= 18.66cfts	66563 Dt 11-10-2023	H W Factory Baramulla
08	34/2023-24	DFO/JV/AO/490-97 dtd: 13/01/2024	02-01-2024	54/BNR	D/S 08Nos=67.17cfts	66566 Dt: 03.01.2024	H W Factory Baramulla
Total					D/R/S 154 Nos - 381.58 Cft		

Therefore I am of the opinion that Justice will be done by confiscating the seized timber under sub section 3 of Sec.52 of I.F. Act. The seized timber D/R/S 154 Nos = 381.58cft as per seizure memo's submitted by Range Officer Boniyar (presently lying in Half Wrought Factory Baramulla) is confiscated in favour of the Forest Department.

The copy of said order be sent to Worthy Conservator of Forests Kashmir North Circle Sopore. Besides, one copy be sent to Range Officer Boniyar for information. The copy of this order be published in two leading news papers having wide circulation in the U.T. the files be consigned to records after due completion.

DIPK-549/24

Dated: 17/05/2024.

Satyendra Maurya, IFS Authorized Officer J.V Forest Division, Baramulla

Subject: Grant of Registration of the Proposed Travel Unit under the name and style " M/S: Nroute Visas" situated at Abi Guzar, Lalchowk, Srinagar

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas I Ms: Iqra Nazir D/O Nazir Ahmad Darzi, R/o: Abi Guzar, Lalchowk, Srinagar, Kashmir & Rameez Ashraf Mir S/O Mohd Ashraf Mir R/O Vicharnag, Srinagar, Kashmir, intends to apply in the department of tourism for registration of my proposed Travel Unit under the name and style " M/S: Nroute Visas" situated at Abi Guzar, Lalchowk, Srinagar Kashmir under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12. Whereas, I will submit State Subject/Domicile, Qualification certificate, PAN card, Experience certificate (Minimum 05 years), Character certificate (Police Department), Bank statement (Minimum balance 10000), Site plan, Affidavit, Rent deed duly attested by Sub-registrar, Printing material (Letter head/Visiting card), Photograph of the unit (Indoor and Outdoor) and two passport size photographs to the department of tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to registration of my unit as an Excursion agency/ Adventure tour Operator.

Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before my case is processed for registration by the Competent authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/ Financial institutions/Bank/Organisation etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism registration (e-mail ID: dtreg123@gmail.com) within the period of (07) days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper's of the valley. No objections beyond a period of (07) days shall be entertained.

mzko

NOTICE

I Mohammad Amin Shah want to change my Name in my Electricity Connection bearing Consumer Id 0204040007550 Installation No. 4518 From Mohammad Amin Najar To Mohammad Amin Shah In this Regard, if anybody is having any objection may file his/her objection in the Subdivision office Hawal within a weeks time after that no objection will be entertained.

Media Line

- 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
SHIEK 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 - (Open)
- Srinagar- Leh- (Open)

HIJRI CALENDAR
09 Zil-Qadah
1445

PRAYERS

FAJR	3: 50
ZUHR	12:27
ASR	5: 22
Magrib	7:30
ISHA	9: 05

This Day In History

- 1846- US troops attack Rio Grande occupying Matamoros
- 1860- Republican Party nominates Abraham Lincoln for president
- 1869- Surrender and dissolution of the Ezo Republic to Japan.
- 1896-US Supreme court affirms legitimacy of racial separation (Plessy v Ferguson)
- 1896- Khodynka Tragedy: A mass panic on Khodynka Field, Moscow, during the festivities of the coronation of Russian Tsar Nicholas II, results in the deaths of 1,389 people
- 1899-World Goodwill Day-26 nations meet in 1st Hague Peace Conference
- 1917- US Congress passes Selective Service Act, authorizing the federal government to raise a national army for the American entry into World War I through compulsory enlistment
- 1940- German troops conquer Brussels
- 1941- Italian army in Ethiopia under general Aosta surrenders to Britain
- 1943- Allied bombers attack Pantelleria, an Italian island 100 km southwest of Sicily
- 1944- Expulsion of more than 200,000 Tartars from Crimea by Soviet Union begins, they are accused of collaborating with the Germans
- 1948- Arab Legion captures fort on Mt Scopus during Arab-Israeli war.
- 1948-Saudi Arabia joins invasion of Israel
- 1951- UN moves HQ to NYC

From KO Archives

Bomai Village Rejoices as Pandits Return

Observer News Service

S RINAGAR- The process of homecoming for the Pandits who left the valley over 17 years ago has begun; ripple of joy went through Bomai area of Sopore when 25 Pandit families who had fled in the early nineties, returned to their native village.

Their Muslim neighbours gave them a rapturous welcome, with the local MLA Abdul Rasheed Dar, closely involved with the celebrations.

Chuni Lal who spent the past 17 years living the life of a refugee in Jammu, said that he had thought the day would never come.

"I am looking forward to resuming my life in my native village," he said.

"By the grace of God, hearts pained for years will find solace now with the return of peace in the valley," Lal said.

Another migrant, Maharaj Krishen, said that he has been in the village for the past ten days, and it appeared as if everything had taken on a festive air. He was full of gratitude for his Muslim neighbours who, he said, displayed the same love they more than seven years ago.

Bhushan Lal said that when he arrived in his native Bomai, the people there greeted him with garlands.

The returning Pandits thanked MLA Abdul Rasheed and the sub-district magistrate for making it possible for them to meet their long-separated friends. "We feel as if new life is coursing through our veins," they said.

The MLA announced to release Rs 2 lakh from his constituency development fund for the repair of the local temple.

Reports say that a festive air prevails in Bomai for the past four days, and the Muslim community is overjoyed at the return of their Pandit brethren.

The process of the migrants' return to Bomai is on for the past four days, and the families that have come back are being housed in the local Dak Bungalow for the time being.

(Kashmir Observer, 18 May, 2007)

J&K Macadamisation Manual Must Be Followed in Toto

Bitumen roads must be replaced by cement concrete roads

The harsh winters followed by rains in March and April damage our road surfaces every year and people always wait for the summer to come so that Govt agencies especially PWD R&B would macadamise their damaged road surfaces. The black-topping or macadamisation of roads is a common practice in J&K. The bitumen reinforced blacktopping is done in every nook and corner of J&K as we are yet to replace this with cement concrete roads. The bitumen usually gets damaged in sub zero temperatures, plus the waterlogging on roads in J&K especially in congested towns and villages causes massive damage to blacktopped roads. For the last few years now, the Jal Jeevan Mission programme of the Govt has also caused large scale damages to our roads especially in rural areas as huge water supply pipelines were laid by damaging the bitumen layers. I know many areas in Srinagar, Pulwama and Budgam especially where macadamisation on roads was done in 2021 or 2022 and the same roads were destroyed by the contractors of Public Health Engineering -PHE, Jal Shakti Department to lay the water pipelines. Infact, I have written already about this multiple times but there is a lack of coordination between PWD R&B and PHE. It is also not clear whether the contractors of PHE Jal Shakti pay for the road cuts or not. If this is done, is that money spent on the ground or not? These details need to be made public by both PHE Jal Shakti and PWD for the benefit of people. As the blacktopping season has started in Kashmir, I thought of writing about this issue so that both the Govt as well as the citizens get to know about various aspects of macadamisation and how this can be made better.

Infact in the year 2021, as per media reports, J&K government exceeded targets of macadamisation. Against the set target of 1454.02 kms, the department has macadamised 1657.58 kms in the Valley by the end of October 2021. In 2022 and 2023 as well, the targets were achieved but the work quality is being questioned in many places especially in rural areas. There are two Govt agencies in rural areas which work on macadamisation of roads, PWD (R&B) Department and the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-PMGSY. These agencies are supposed to follow several guidelines issued by the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways-MoRTH and J&K Govt as well.

J&K Macadamisation Manual

The J&K Administrative Council (AC) headed by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha in its decision dated January 9th 2022 adopted the J & K Macadamisation (Execution and Quality Control and DLP Enforcement) Manual. This is part of the engineering manual 2021. After the AC's meeting, the Principal Secretary Public Works department issued a Govt order No: 42 PW (R&B) 3.02.2022 wherein sanction was given for the adoption of the Macadamisation (Execution and Quality Control and DLP Enforcement) Manual. The Department of Public Works J&K Govt has compiled these manuals by incorporating the best practices in the field in accordance with the latest standards and endeavours to bring about uniformity in practices, promote transparency and ensure engineering perfection.



Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

“The macadamisation work has been started in Kashmir and this will be done on a large scale in the upcoming months especially when the Model Code of Conduct -MCC ends. The J & K Macadamisation Manual should be the guiding principle for all the engineers, and work Supervisors of PWD (R&B), PMGSY and other Govt institutions

Categorization of Roads

To improve the quality of J&K's road network, the J&K Macadamisation Manual 2022 categorizes the roads across J&K into Inter-District Roads, Major Roads, District Roads, Rural Roads, Local roads, link roads etc.

The Macadamisation Manual further establishes a Quality Control (QC) and Quality Assurance (QA) protocol that is supposed to be strictly adhered to during laying of bitumen on the roads also known as block-topping or macadamisation. The manual says that in case of any breach in quality, the executing agency/contractor is supposed to be made equally responsible for technical divergences or executing poor quality works.

All the works divisions in J&K have been mandated to review the performance of each and every blacktopping work post-winter/monsoon season. This enables them to assess the work as per specifications and map the same for further action under the Defect Liability Period (DLP) wherein the contractor has to carry on the repairs for 5 years post road construction.

The J&K Administrative Council in its meeting held in February 2022 noted that the J&K PWD Bridge Manual 2022 standardizes the engineering practices in bridge construction which is supposed to bring uniformity, transparency, and accountability in project execution. The Administrative Council impressed upon the PWD R&B to uniformly undertake project preparation, feasibility study, preliminary project preparation, detailed project preparation, project scheduling and monitoring of works, bridge inspection and maintenance etc.

During the said meeting, the Lt Governor was informed that the PWD (R&B) Department was following the Standard Operating Procedures-SOPs for optimal maintenance of roads during snow clearance activities. The SOP lays down the short-term measures to be taken by the PWD in snow clearance operations which include snow clearance with conventional attachments to be provided to all R&B Divisions, Municipal Institu-

tions under Directorate of Urban Local bodies J&K plus Srinagar Municipal Corporation-SMC.

For long-term intervention, the SOPs require the Department of Disaster Management to procure technically approved machinery as is being used in several developed countries for scientific clearance of snow causing minimal damage to the road surface.

Snow clearance protocol

The snow clearance protocol recommends commencement of clearance operations only after 100mm of snowfall by 50mm vehicle blades to avoid damage to the road surface, besides sprinkling of salt over frosted surfaces to improve surface friction. But in many places cranes and JCB's were being used by the PWD R&B contractors which violates the Govt guidelines as the same damages road surfaces as well. However, if the road damage after a snowfall is attributed to poor macadamisation work rather than snow clearance operation, the contract DLP clause will be enforced, and contracting agencies will be made responsible to rectify reported damages due to their negligence. The SOP further allows for the empanelment of private players with appropriate machines for snow clearance operations through incentives like a long-term contract for 10-15 years.

The rates for the snow clearance items are decided on the basis of analysis of rates as per Ministry of Road Transport and Highways-MoRTH and Border Roads Organisation-BRO. Besides, the contracting agencies/unemployed youth will also be incentivized under credit-linked schemes of the Industries & Commerce Department, Labour and Employment Department, and Tourism Department for procurement of suitable machinery under the technical supervision of the Mechanical Engineering Department.

The Administrative Council headed by LG Manoj Sinha had directed the Public Works Department to regularly update the manuals and guidelines and ensure optimal quality and cost efficiency.

Scarifying road surface

It has now become a trend to black-top roads without even scarifying the surface. This increases the height of the roads every year and isn't technically feasible as well. The boundary walls around residential houses located on main roads look short and shabby now as continuous bitumen layers have elevated most of the road surfaces.

Scarifying is breaking up hard or compacted materials to create enough space for material to settle down. Just placing Bitumen filling material on a damaged road surface to fill the ruts and potholes is a temporary fix. The bitumen material does not bind in the ruts and potholes. This only increases the height of the road and makes the surrounding landscape shabby. The proper way to reshape the damaged road is to scarify the surface to the depth of the depressions. This breaks up all the compacted surrounding surface materials. After scarifying the material, the Bitumen can settle down properly.

Cement concrete roads

Instead of Bitumen reinforced macadamised roads, the cement concrete roads have a long service life which can last between 35 to 40 years. On the other hand, roads made up of Bitumen last for around 10 years in areas with no snowfall, but in a place like Kashmir or Ladakh where the temperature drops down to sub-zero and there is heavy snowfall as well, these roads get damaged within 2 to 3 years only. During the service life, concrete roads do not require frequent repairs or patching work like macadamized roads. The vehicles that run over a concrete road, consume 15-20 per cent less fuel as compared to roads made of asphalt-bitumen. This is because of the fact that a concrete road does not get deflected under the wheels of loaded heavy vehicles. During the processing of bitumen, lots of toxic gases are emitted from these plants and subsequent less fuel consumption by the vehicle operating on a concrete road leads to little pollution as well.

Conclusion

The macadamisation work has been started in Kashmir and this will be done on a large scale in the upcoming months especially when the Model Code of Conduct -MCC ends. The J & K Macadamisation Manual should be the guiding principle for all the engineers, and work Supervisors of PWD (R&B), PMGSY and other Govt institutions. There should be proper coordination between PWD and PHE Departments and road cuts should be minimised. The incumbent Chief Engineer PWD (R&B) Central Kashmir Mr Sajad Nageeb is very much proactive in addressing grievances of people and I would appeal to him and his counterparts in South and North Kashmir to ensure adherence to J&K Macadamisation Manual and also start making cement concrete roads in rural areas on pilot basis. On a pilot basis, cement concrete road stretches have been constructed in Srinagar city but we need to take up similar works in other districts as well.

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

It's well-known that spotting signs of cancer at an early stage significantly increases the possibilities of surviving the disease. In India, government projects, including the National Programme for the Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke, recognise this necessity. These programmes have given special emphasis to checking for cervical, oral and breast cancers — they constitute a third of all cases of the disease in the country — before symptoms appear. Yet, successive National Family Health Surveys have revealed that a very small percentage of people in the vulnerable age group — those over 30 years of age — get screened for malignancy. Turning 1,50,000 health and wellness centres (HWCs) into nodal points for cancer detection under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) could have proved to be a game changer. The introduction of screening facilities at these primary healthcare centres could have reduced accessibility-related problems to a great extent. But a Niti Aayog report has flagged “huge gaps” in the performance of these HWCs. Less than 10 per cent of these centres had completed one round of screening

for non-communicable diseases, including cancer, says the report.

In recent years, India has done well in piloting low-tech approaches to cancer screening that can be delivered at scale by community-level workers. AB-PMJAY makes use of these technologies. Global experience shows that the trust enjoyed by grassroots-level professionals is a big positive when it comes to screening people for diseases that may not show any

symptoms. The government, therefore, did the right thing in roping in ASHA workers in its project. However, it does not seem to have invested adequately in the next steps. Given the low awareness of the disease, it was imperative that these frontline professionals were educated about cancer prevention protocols and trained to use the screening techniques. Much before the NITI Aayog's study, analyses conducted with smaller sample sizes had underlined

that ASHA workers should be sensitised to risk factors, symptoms and, in fact, the need for screening itself. These studies also emphasised the need to improve the working conditions of these low-paid and overburdened workers. The AB-PMJAY also refers to such imperatives. The NITI Aayog's study underlines that the upgrades have not been undertaken in adequate measure.

The Union Ministry of Health has designated the Noida-based National Institute for Cancer Prevention and Research as a training hub. The institution's expertise must be summoned for screening malignancy. Experts agree that such instruction can be given online and professionals receiving such training can educate others. Reducing India's cancer burden will require efforts in several directions. The Centre must take the right lessons from the report of the Niti Aayog.

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C the Signs NITI Aayog's Alarm Bells on Cancer Detection

Indian Express

Woes of Our Ancestors

Draagh Tchali, Daagh Tchali Na

Mushtaq Hurra

Calamities, catastrophes, disasters and weather vagaries devastate and ravage cherished human establishments in a jiffy. Calamitous wrath of nature wrecks havoc on prosperously inhabited human settlements and razes them to rubble. Pages of history corroborate the fact that many civilizations have been crumbled and pulverised by episodes of natural blitzkrieg.

High magnitude earthquakes, violent storms, torrential deluges and intensely ferocious Tsunamis have been detrimental in the agony of human beings. Of late, the world witnessed some awful events of natural onslaught. Turkey was shattered during 2023 by cruel jolts when the earth shook vehemently to bury people under massive skyscrapers. Who can forget the years 2001 and 2004 when the Indian Ocean simmered fiercely to demolish its vastly mammoth coastal areas? There are hundreds of instances when the monster of nature tried to devour humans.

Our famed valley is no exception to it. The earthly paradise has undergone many floods, famines and earthquakes, which, consequently, reduced the population of the vale drastically. Known for its breathtakingly picturesque beauty and elegant aesthetics, the valley of velvety meadows has suffered brutal dents at the hands of nature.

Historians have recorded the episodes of natural outrage. Though Kashmir valley is prone to floods, and our ancestors have witnessed some terrible inundations, yet, loss of life has been relatively less. But quakes and famines have been viciously lethal to reduce the population of the valley by manifolds.

Earthquakes of 1864 and 1885 and their aftershocks gave sleepless nights to Kashmiris for months together. Though the population of the valley was very thin then, still the shocks took a heavy toll of life. During the earthquake of 1885, Baramulla and Pattan areas were badly affected.



Downtown, Srinagar. Photograph by Samuel Bourne in 1868.

Rifts and fissures in land were reported in these two towns, and the emission of sulphur fumes coupled with inflammable gases were also found here.

Famines in our valley are believed to be the harshest manifestation of natural calamities. Native historians and chroniclers of the valley have recorded some 19 terrible famines. The gruesome details about these famines send shivers down the spine of readers. Most of the famines were either caused by untimely snowfalls or relentless rains. Walter Lawrence in his famous travelogue - "The valley of Kashmir" makes mention of two dreaded famines of 19th

Inordinate human activities surely aggravate the plight of the planet and nature avenges equally. We need to be more careful and environmentally conscious to live in harmony with nature

century AD.

Famine of Sher Singh is believed to be appallingly awful because the famine had come like a holocaust on the natives of Kashmir. According to calculations and estimations, the cruel famine called Sher Singh reduced the population of Kashmir

valley from 8,00,000 (Eight Lakh) to mere 2,00,000 (Two Lakh). The famine was caused by the ill-timed snow of 1831. According to reliable historical sources, the unreasonable snow perished harvested and standing crops completely which left granaries and stores empty.

Another terrible famine, Kashmiris have combated during 19th century AD belongs to the year 1877-78 when unceasingly rains submerged paddy and other farms fully. Rain started in October 1877 and gates of the skies continued to shower volleys of water on the lands of the valley for almost four months. People failed to bring home their harvested and standing crops. The rains proved a bolt from the blue for the residents of the valley. Historians state that the population of Srinagar city dwindled badly from 1,27,400 to mere 60,000. Hunger killed people ruthlessly. The famines left indelible scars on the spines of our ancestors.

A famous Kashmiri adage narrating the pangs of the famines became famous probably after these famines. Draagh Tchali, Daagh Tchali Na (Famines will go but scars won't). The grievous famines forced our forefathers to eat unripe mulberries and other wildly grown fruits. Bark of elm trees and yew were ground into flour. Many would eat grasses and roots of swamps and forest trees.

The famine turned uglier during 1878. Wells and pits were choked with dead bodies. Non-burial of thousands of corpses created fear-psychosis and terror among Kashmiris. Even prowling dogs are said to have preyed on human carcasses. The horrors of the 1878 famine moistened our eyes even after hundreds of years. The plight of our forefathers went unabated during 1879 as well, though bumper fruit harvest proved a panacea for the peril of starvation, but the cholera of 1879 summer had worsened the situation. Ah! Our poor progenitors and ancestors.

Miseries and pains are stored in our palm lines. Apart from nature's fury and rage, Kashmir valley has undergone political strife and strain for centuries together. Kashmiris have witnessed tough times but our resolve, determination and indomitable attitude to resist boldly, has helped us to conquer adversities and predicaments. We have withstood many turbulent times and vicious cycles of violence and indignation. Year 2024 is somewhat full of climatic chaos. We haven't had sufficient sunshine during the first five months of the year. We have already escaped a major deluge, a couple of weeks ago when Vitasta and its tributaries had swollen angrily. Inordinate human activities surely aggravate the plight of the planet and nature avenges equally. We need to be more careful and environmentally conscious to live in harmony with nature.

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Newsrooms Are Experimenting With Generative AI, Warts And All

Nir Eisikovits

The journalism industry has been under immense economic pressure over the past two decades, so it makes sense that journalists have started experimenting with generative AI to boost their productivity.

An Associated Press survey published in April 2024 asked journalists about the use of generative artificial intelligence in their work. Nearly 70% of those who responded said they had used these tools to generate text, whether it was composing article drafts, crafting headlines or writing social media posts.

A May 2024 global survey conducted by the public relations firm Cision found the slice to be somewhat smaller - 47% of journalists said they'd used generative AI tools like ChatGPT or Bard in their work.

But does the adoption of the technology pose any moral questions? After all, this is a business where professional ethics and public trust are especially important - so much so that there are fields of study devoted to it.

Over the past few years, my colleagues and I at UMass Boston's Applied Ethics Center have been researching the ethics of AI.

I think that if journalists are not careful about its deployment, the use of generative AI could undermine the integrity of their work.

How much time is really saved?

Let's start with an obvious concern: AI tools are still unreliable.

Using them to research background for a story will often result in confident-sounding nonsense. During a 2023 demo, Google's chatbot, Bard,

famously spit out the wrong answer to a question about new discoveries from the James Webb Space Telescope.

It's easy to imagine a journalist using the technology for background, only to end up with false information.

Therefore, journalists who use these tools for research will need to fact-check the outputs. The time spent doing that may offset any purported gains in productivity.

But to me, the more interesting questions have to do with using the technology to generate content. A reporter may have a good sense of what they want to compose, so they will ask an AI model to produce a first draft.

This may be efficient, but it also turns reporters from writers into editors, thus fundamentally altering the nature of what they do.

Plus, there's something to be said for struggling to write a first draft from scratch and figuring out, along the way, whether the original idea that inspired it has merit. That's what I am doing right now as I write this piece. And I'm sad to report that I discarded quite a few of the original arguments I wanted to make, because as I tried to articulate them, I realized that they didn't work.

In journalism, as in art, generative AI emphasizes - indeed fetishizes - the moment in which an idea is conceived. It focuses on the original creative thought and relegates the tedious process of turning that thought into a finished product - whether it's through outlining, writing or drawing - to a machine.

But the process of writing out a story is inseparable from the ideas that give rise to it. Ideas change and take

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shape as they are written out. They are not preexisting entities patiently floating around, perfectly formed, simply waiting to be translated into words and sentences.

AI's undermining of a special relationship

To be fair, only a portion of the journalists in both surveys were using generative AI to compose drafts of articles. Instead, they were using these tools to accomplish other tasks, such as writing newsletters, translating text, coming up with headlines or crafting

social media posts.

Once journalists see that the AI is quite talented at writing - and it is getting better and better at it - how many of them will resist the temptation? The fundamental question here is whether journalism involves anything more than

simply conveying information to the public.

Does journalism also entail a kind of relationship between writers and their readers?

I think it does.

When a reader regularly follows the analysis of someone writing about the Middle East

or about Silicon Valley, it is because they trust that writer, because they like that writer's voice, because they have come to appreciate that writer's thought process.

Now if journalism involves that kind of relationship, does the use of AI undermine it? Would I want to read journalism created by what amounts to an anonymized aggregation of the internet any more than I would want to read a novel created by an AI or listen to music composed by one?

Or, stated differently, if I read a piece of journalism or a novel or listened to a musical piece, which I thought was created by a human being, only to find out that it was largely generated by an AI, wouldn't my appreciation or trust of the piece change?

If the practice of journalism is based on having this kind of relationship with the public, the increased use of AI may well undermine the integrity of the practice, particularly at a time when the industry is already dealing with trust issues.

Being a journalist is a noble calling that, at its best, helps sustain democratic institutions. I assume that this nobility still matters to journalists. But most readers probably would not trust AI to uphold the social role that journalism plays.

AI does not care that "democracy dies in darkness"; it does not care about speaking truth to power.

Yes, those are cliches. But they are also widely held precepts that sustain the trade. Journalists neglect them at their peril.

By arrangements with The Conversation

IPL 2024: RCB, CSK Clash For Final Playoff Berth Amid Rain Threat

Press Trust of India

BENGALURU: Royal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) fairytale resurgent run will be up against the might of five-time champions Chennai Super Kings (CSK) and the weather gods when the two sides clash in an epic do-or-die match to decide the fourth and final team for the Indian Premier League (IPL) play-offs, here on Saturday.

Thursday's washout in Hyderabad meant that Sunrisers Hyderabad joined Kolkata Knight Riders and Rajasthan Royals as the three confirmed teams for the playoffs and the race is now for only one spot with two teams in fray—CSK and RCB.

Boasting of a better Net Run-Rate (NRR) and more points, defending champions CSK (13 points, NRR 0.528) start favourites at a venue where they have lost to the home side only once in eight matches. RCB has 12 points



and a net run-rate of 0.387.

However, what has heightened the drama surrounding the game is the forecast of rain. A washout will take CSK through to the playoffs, while

RCB will need to win by at least 18 runs or chase the target with about 11 balls to spare.

The odds are therefore stacked against the home side, which is the most in-form

unit in the tournament's final stretch.

They've staged a spectacular comeback, securing five straight wins after enduring a six-match losing streak.

Orange Cap holder Kohli has been in phenomenal form with three fifties in last five innings as he is poised to ignite the field with yet another stellar show.

They will hope that skipper Faf du Plessis is back among runs, having capped single digit scores in his last two outings.

For CSK, Rituraj Gaikwad has been the team's top run-scorer this season and is expected to give them a fine start.

Fellow opener Rachin Ravindra is also back among runs and he along with Daryl Mitchell will be expected to lift the top order.

They will hope that Shivam Dube gets back into his rhythm. He has failed to score in his last four outings.

The inspiring presence of Mahendra Singh Dhoni will continue to be a factor for the side but it remains to be seen how big a role he is able to play given some nagging injury concerns. Match starts: 7.30 pm.

Students Shine In Bijbehara Zonal Level Football Matches

Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Zonal Physical Education Officer of Bijbehara resumed the Inter School Zonal Level Football Tournament on Friday at BHSS Ground Bijbehara.

In a day brimming with excitement, a total of three matches were played among six teams in the Under-14 boys category, with nearly 96 students from various Middle and High Schools of Zone Bijbehara participating with great enthusiasm.

In the matches played, the Educator School Bijbehara triumphed over Oxford School Bijbehara, while MS Laribal secured a victory against GMS



Kanelwon and SAPS Suhanpora defeated Islamia High School Bijbehara.

The standout performers of the day were Taizeem Ahmad, Huzaif Ahmad, Himad Ahmad, Momin Mushtaq and Asif Nisar, each showcasing their talent by scoring pivotal goals for their respective teams.

Inter-School Competitions Continue Across Ganderbal

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: As part of inter-school zonal level sports competitions, the Department of Youth Services and Sports Ganderbal successfully organised a diverse range of sports activities across the district on Friday.

In Zone Kangan, an exciting Kabaddi competition for boys under-14 years of age was held at GHS Preng Kangan ground. The event saw participation from 147 enthusiastic students. Later trophies were distributed to the meritorious teams.

Simultaneously, Zone Tullamulla hosted the final match of the inter-school Zonal level Handball competition for boys under 14 years at Tehsilbagh Ground Kharabihama. The final match between PHSS Watlar and MS Banpora ended in a thrilling victory for PHSS Watlar.

Both the winner and runner-up



teams were appreciated and felicitated.

Similarly, Zone Ganderbal organized two inter-school zonal level sports competitions in Football and Handball for girls under 14 years at GCOPE Gadoora Ganderbal. The event witnessed the participation of 310 student players.

Zone Hariganiwan also contributed by organizing intramural sports activities, including Cricket at HS Hayan and Kabaddi and Kho-Kho at MS Yachihama.

JKSC, Senior Players To Promote Hockey Among Toddlers

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The J&K Sports Council on Friday announced an initiative to train toddlers in hockey.

The training program will be held alongside senior players of the sport and is scheduled to commence from Sunday, May 19, and shall continue every Sunday from 9:30 am to 10:30 am.

Recognizing the need for modern facilities, the J&K Sports Council has set up three new astro turf hockey fields: one in Pulwama and two in Srinagar. These facilities provide a conducive environment for young players to practice and hone their skills. Despite challenges like



extreme weather conditions, J&K Sports Council has successfully organized tournaments across different age categories in various districts.

Nuzhat Gul, Secretary J&K Sports Council, expressed optimism about the future of hockey in the region. She

emphasized the importance of nurturing young talent and creating a strong foundation for the sport.

Toddler Hockey workshop will help to strengthen the foundation of the Hockey, and this program will also be replicated in other districts of J&K, she added.

JKSC Launches T20 Cricket Tournery For J&K Govt Employees

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The J&K Sports Council on Friday announced first cricket tournament for government employees of J&K in Kashmir. This will be the first phase of the tournament.

The first game will be played between J&K Sports



XI and DG Budget XI on Saturday, May 18, at TRC Ground. The match begins at 8:30 AM.

J&K Sports Council's Departmental Cricket Tournament provides a golden opportunity to the employees to showcase their talent & passion and be recognized in the field of sports.

#HarDinkhel, #Harekeliyekhel will be emphasized and the facilities and opportunities provided by the government for the youth shall be disseminated. The importance of sports and relieving professionals of stress, related to their job profiles will be emphasized.

Thomas Tuchel Still Leaving After Talks With Bayern Munich Fall Through



Associated Press

MUNICH: Thomas Tuchel says he is still leaving Bayern Munich after talks on extending his stay at the club fell through.

Bayern said in February that Tuchel would leave at the end of the season but the coach said Friday that he held talks with the club on a "180-degree turn" that would have seen him stay after all.

"We found no agreement on further cooperation so the agreement from February remains in force," he said.

In the three months since

Bayern said Tuchel was leaving, he has tried and failed to sign a series of high-profile replacements.

Xabi Alonso is staying with Bayer Leverkusen after beating Bayern to the Bundesliga title. Tuchel's predecessor Julian Nagelsmann signed an extension with the German national team, and Ralf Rangnick remains with Austria.

Bayern is without a trophy this season for the first time since 2012 after losing the Bundesliga title to Bayer Leverkusen, but Tuchel's team was praised for reaching the Champions League

semifinals before a narrow loss to Real Madrid.

There was also a petition from some Bayern fans calling on the club to keep Tuchel.

Strong European performances prompted the club to reach out to him in an attempt to persuade him to stay, the coach said.

Bayern's two-point advantage over third-place Stuttgart and superior goal difference mean that a draw with Hoffenheim — which is seventh and chasing European qualification — should be enough to guarantee second position.

Messi Napkin That Sealed Barcelona Move Sells For \$9,65,000 At Auction

Associated Press

LONDON: The famous napkin that linked a young Lionel Messi to Barcelona sold for 762,400 pounds (USD 965,000) on Friday, British auction house Bonhams said.

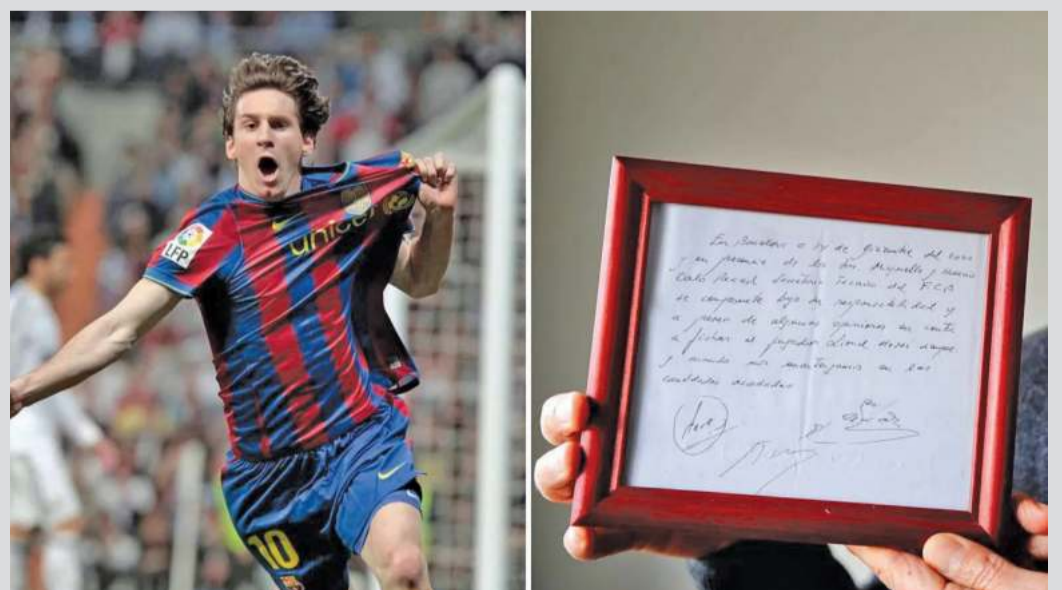
An agreement in principle to sign the then-13-year-old Messi was written on the napkin almost 25 years ago at a Barcelona tennis club. A more formal and detailed contract with the club followed soon after.

An undisclosed percentage of the sale price pays administrative fees for the online auction, in what's called the buyer's premium.

Bonhams said the auction was on behalf of Horacio Gaggioli, an agent from Messi's home country of Argentina who was part of the deal.

The contract language, written in blue ink, was intended to reassure the teenager's father, Jorge Messi, that the deal would go through.

Jorge Messi had threatened to take his son back to Argentina because negotiations with Bar-



celona had stalled.

The napkin, containing the date December 14, 2000, bears the signatures of Gaggioli, another agent, Josep Maria Minguella and Barcelona's then-sporting director, Carles Rexach, who met at a tennis club.

Rexach had asked a waiter

for paper and was given a blank napkin.

The starting price was 300,000 pounds (USD 379,000).

Messi spent nearly two decades with Barcelona after arriving from Argentina at 13 to play in its youth squads. He made his first-team debut in 2004 and

played 17 seasons with the main squad. He helped the club win every major trophy including the Champions League four times and the Spanish league 10 times.

Messi left Barcelona for Paris Saint-Germain in the summer of 2021. He has since joined Inter Miami.

Short TAKES

BCCI Approaches Gambhir To Replace Dravid : Report



The Board of Control for Cricket in India approached former cricketer Gautam Gambhir to replace Rahul Dravid as India's head coach, according to a report from ESPNcricinfo.

The report said Gambhir is BCCI's top pick to become India's next head coach as Dravid's tenure comes to an end after the T20 World Cup 2024. ESPNcricinfo also learned that BCCI will talk to Gambhir after the end of the Indian Premier League 2024.

PSL Set To Rival IPL In Thrilling April-May Showdown

The Pakistan Cricket Board is looking to take advantage of the window set aside for the Indian Premier League (IPL) each year to hold the Pakistan Super League in the same time-frame as very little international cricketing activity takes place during that period.

PCB said on Friday that it had held a meeting with PSL franchises where the advantages of holding the PSL in 2025 and 2026 in the April-May window were discussed in detail.

Formula 1: Ferrari's Leclerc Fastest In First Practice At Imola

Charles Leclerc set the pace in his upgraded Ferrari in first practice for the Italian Formula One team's home Emilia Romagna Grand Prix at Imola on Friday.

The Monegasque, whose home race follows next week, lapped the Enzo e Dino Ferrari circuit in a best time of one minute and 16.990 seconds. George Russell lapped second fastest for Mercedes, 0.104 seconds behind and also on soft tyres, with Ferrari's Carlos Sainz third.

Dutchman Slot Confirms He Is Taking Liverpool Job Next Season

Feyenoord coach Arne Slot confirmed on Friday that he would take the Liverpool job next season after Juergen Klopp leaves the Premier League club at the end of the campaign.

"I can confirm that I will become the trainer there next year," Slot told a news conference, according to ESPN. Feyenoord confirmed Slot's departure, posting a video on X saying: "The Arne Slot era is coming to an end. Let's enjoy the last moments."

FIFA Orders Legal Review Of Palestinian Call To Suspend Israel

Soccer's world body FIFA ordered an urgent legal evaluation on Friday of a proposal by the Palestinian Football Association (PFA) to suspend Israel over the war in Gaza, promising to address it at an extraordinary meeting of its council in July.

FIFA President Gianni Infantino took the decision at an annual Congress in Bangkok, where the PFA president made an emotional plea to delegates to hold a vote to suspend Israel from all club and national competitions, accusing it of multiple breaches of FIFA statutes.