

## Broken Bonds, Broken Health: What Money Couldn't Buy This Srinagar Man?

Farzana Nisar

**Srinagar:** The harsh fluorescent lights of Shri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) Hospital cast long, sterile shadows across the ward. Fractured conversations echo, a disjointed chorus of worry and comfort. A young woman, her voice choked with tears, promises her ailing grandmother they'll

be back home soon. A man, his arms wrapped around his son, chuckles softly at a whispered joke.

Unlike others, Mukhtar's (name changed) bed is an island of solitude. No concerned face hovers above him, no comforting hand holds his. Loneliness, a monstrous beast he spent years trying to outrun, has finally cornered him.

**WHILE MUKHTAR'S SIDE OF THE STORY REMAINS** Largely untold, a puzzle missing key pieces, one truth shines undeniably clear. Wealth cannot buy the most important things in life - neither health, nor relationships. Despite having everything, he had nothing."



He sometimes jumps out of bed and tries to run away from everything. At other times, he mutters words, some barely understandable, a jumbled mess of thoughts and frustrations.

For Mukhtar, it has been a whirlwind these past few days. Just last week, Mukhtar existed in a self-imposed exile within his own home. The once

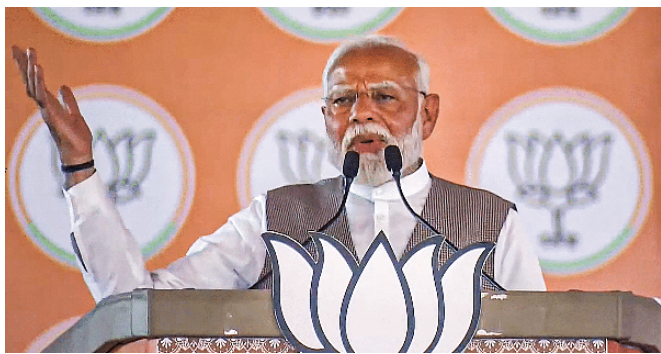
opulent residence, a monument to his past success, now echoed with the deafening silence of abandonment. He shuffled through his days, a shell of his former self, haunted by the ghosts of broken relationships.

Then came the phone call. A concerned neighbor, unable to bear witness to his deteriorating state any longer, alerted SRO Kashmir - a non-profit

organization in Srinagar.

"We received a call about someone living alone who was in critical condition," Mohammad Afaq Sayeed, Director of Social Reforms Organisation (SRO), Kashmir told Kashmir Observer. "The caring neighbor said that there is no one to take care of him and wanted to know if he dies, could we perform | [More on P6](#)

## Kashmir Moving Ahead On Path Of Development: PM



Press Trust Of India

Ambala: Prime Minister Narendra Modi sharpened his attack on the Congress on Saturday and said it was his "dhakad" (strong) government that brought down the wall of Article 370 and as a result, Kashmir is now moving ahead on the path of development.

Modi said the history of the Congress has been of betraying India's forces and soldiers as he referred to the "Jeep scandal", the "first scam" during the grand old party's rule.

"Could a weak government have changed the situation in

Jammu and Kashmir?" Modi asked the gathering, addressing his first Lok Sabha poll rally in Haryana.

Referring to Haryana contributing a sizable number of soldiers in the armed forces, he said when the Congress was in power, mothers in Haryana were a worried lot thinking about their children's safety.

"Have such things stopped now or not?" he asked the audience that responded with a loud "yes".

"Modi's dhakad (strong and decisive) government brought down the wall of Article 370 and Kashmir is | [More on P6](#)

### "Art 370 Buried In Graveyard"

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday kept up the attack on the Congress, saying it should forget the "dream" of bringing back Article 370 as it has been "buried" in the "kabristan (graveyard)". Addressing a rally at Gohana, his second of the day in Haryana, Modi referred to the Lok Sabha polls as a "kurukshetra (battle)" in which "there is development on one hand and | [More on P6](#)

**I WANT TO TELL THOSE ASSOCIATED** with the Congress that only tricolour will fly in Kashmir now."

## Poplar Pollen Sparks Allergy Surge In Kashmir

Medics Recommend Use Of Masks

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: Residents from various parts of the Kashmir Valley are raising alarms over a surge in respiratory problems due to pollen produced by Russian poplar trees. The cotton-like fluff, containing the pollen, is causing a range of symptoms, including eye irritation, persistent sneezing, and breathing difficulties, with children being particularly affected.

"Every year as the spring arrives in the Kashmir, the Russian poplars start pollinating and release their cotton fluff into the air, | [More on P6](#)

## Justice Tashi Praises Child Care Institutions' Service

Observer News Service

Srinagar: To ensure better care and protection of children especially residing in various Child Care Institutions in UT of J&K and Ladakh, Justice Tashi Rabstan, senior most Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority and Chairman, Juvenile Justice Committee, High Court of J&K and Ladakh today visited "Pareesha" (Home for Girls) and "Phulwari" (Specialized Adoption Agency) at Khansahib, Budgam.

Justice Tashi Rabstan accompanied by Rajni Rabstan and Amit Kumar



Gupta, Member Secretary J&K Legal Services Authority also Ex-officio Member Secretary, Juvenile Justice Committee, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh

## Campaigning Ends, Baramulla Set To Go For Polls On May 20

Observer News Service

**Srinagar:** The fervent campaigning for the Baramulla Lok Sabha seat culminated on Saturday evening, with candidates making their final pitches to voters ahead of the crucial election on May 20.

Around 17,37,865 electorates would be casting their ballot in 2,103 polling stations established across the Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency during 5th phase of ongoing Lok Sabha elections scheduled to be held on May 20.

"These total 17,37,865 lakh voters enrolled in the phase V included 8,75,831 male and 8,62,000 female voters besides 34 third gender electorates. There are around 17128 Persons with Disability and 527 persons

above the age of 100 years who will be exercising their franchise," read a communiqué received from office of Chief Electoral Officer, J&K.

The communiqué added that around 2,103 polling stations have been set up in the fifth phase across 4 districts of Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora and parts of Budgam. The election staff including Presiding Officers will be stationed in every polling station. In total, more than 8,000 polling staff, including reserves, will be deployed on duty on the polling day. Besides, there are 28 border polling stations in Kupwara and Baramulla districts

The communication added that the voting will take place from 7.00 am to 6.00 pm and | [More on P6](#)



### All Arrangements In Place: RO

As the fifth phase of elections for the Baramulla parliamentary constituency approaches, Returning Officer Minga Sherpa on Saturday said that all necessary arrangements, | [More on P6](#)

### Section 144 Imposed

In view of the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections in Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency, the authorities on Saturday imposed restrictions under section 144 CrP, which will remain applicable till | [More on P6](#)

## Er Rashid's Assets Increase Since 2019

Press Trust Of India

**Baramulla:** Independent candidate from the Baramulla Lok Sabha seat Abdul Rashid Sheikh, who is lodged in Bihar for alleged terror-funding activities, has significantly reduced his liabilities and increased assets in the last five years, his poll affidavit shows.

Better known as 'Engineer Rashid', the former MLA's assets are now valued at Rs 1.55 crore compared to Rs 80 lakh in 2019. It includes a 41,072 sq ft non-agriculture land in his home town Langate and a house in Srinagar worth Rs 90 lakh.

A science graduate with a diploma in civil engineering, Rashid has declared Rs 11.31 lakh home loan and Rs 3.11 lakh Kissan Credit Card loan as liabilities.

The 59-year-old former MLA has only Rs 1,424 in his sole bank | [More on P6](#)

## J&K SED Delays Implementation Of Section 12 Of RTE Act

Auqib Javeed

Srinagar: Years after the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009 became applicable in Jammu and Kashmir, the state education department is yet to implement the Section 12 of the RTE Act, which has left many students from economically weaker sections (EWS) and disadvantaged groups locked out of educational institutions.

Notably, under Section 12 of the Right to Education Act, there is a provision of 25 per cent reservation in admissions to children belonging to BPL families, Economically weaker sections (EWS) and disadvantaged

sections in the top notch private schools. There is also a provision of fee reimbursement for such students.

Over four years after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led government revoked Article 370 of the Indian Constitution and extended several central Laws, including Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, kids from the poor families are yet to reap benefits of the act as government has not implemented Section 12 of the RTE Act.

However, as of now the students of EWS aren't able to take admission in leading schools of the Valley as the | [More on P6](#)

## AMARNATH YATRA 26 Lodgement Centers Set Up In Samba

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: A total of 26 lodgement centers have been set up in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district for pilgrims who will undertake the annual Amarnath Yatra in south Kashmir Himalayas, officials said on Saturday.

The 52-day pilgrimage to the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine will commence from twin tracks --the | [More on P6](#)

**LOK SABHA ELECTION - 2024**

चुनाव का पर्व  
DESH KA GARV  
LOK SABHA ELECTION 2024

**ALTERNATIVE DOCUMENTS TO PROVE YOUR IDENTITY AT THE POLLING BOOTH**

**LIST OF ALTERNATIVE DOCUMENTS YOU CAN USE TO VOTE IN LOK SABHA ELECTIONS, 2024**

- Aadhaar Card
- MNREGA Job Card
- Indian Passport
- Smart Card issued by RGI under NPR
- Driving License
- PAN Card
- Pension Document with photograph
- Passbooks with photograph issued by Bank/Post Office
- Health Insurance Smart Card issued under the scheme of Ministry of Labour
- Service Identity Cards with photograph issued to employees by Central/State Govt./PSUs/ Public Limited Companies
- Official Identity cards issued to MPs/MLAs/MLCs
- Unique Disability ID (UDID) Card M/o Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India

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# Sunscreen Won't Stop You Making Vitamin D - Here's What You Should Know

## The Conversation

It's all kicking off on social media, again. This time it's about wearing sunscreen. The argument began when Tim Spector, a professor of genetic epidemiology at King's College London, raised concerns that daily sunscreen use could lead to vitamin D deficiency.

While Spector's post gained a lot of attention, it isn't the first time an argument against using sunscreen has been brought to social media – with countless posts discussing the matter.

Most of these concerns stem from the fact that sunscreen blocks ultraviolet (UV) radiation – which our body needs to synthesise vitamin D in the skin. Fortunately, research shows us that this is probably not an issue for most people.

Vitamin D is an essential nutrient. It helps regulate calcium absorption, which is important for bone health. A growing body of research also suggests vitamin D may be important for other aspects of health, too, including boosting immunity, reducing inflammation and keeping the heart healthy. However, more research is needed to confirm these findings.

While we can get vitamin D from certain foods – such as oily fish, egg yolks and fortified dairy products – our

bodies mainly rely on sunlight to produce it in our skin.

When we're exposed to the sun's ultraviolet B radiation (UVB), a series of processes in our skin cells transform a cholesterol-like molecule into vitamin D3.

Since vitamin D production requires exposure to UVB radiation, it could be expected that sunscreen use inhibits vitamin D synthesis.

Sunscreen acts as a filter, absorbing or reflecting solar UV radiation. The higher a product's sun protection factor (SPF), the better it is at preventing sunburn (which is mainly caused by UVB radiation).

By preventing this radiation from reaching and mutating DNA in skin cells, sunscreens can lower skin cancer risk. Sunscreens have also been shown to reduce UV-radiation-induced skin ageing.

However, sunscreens are not 100 per cent effective – mainly because most people don't use them as directed. People typically only apply around one-quarter to one-third of the required amount of sunscreen – and most don't reapply as instructed. This means some UVB is still able to reach the skin's surface.

### Sunscreen and vitamin D

Many studies have investigated the effect of sunscreen use on vita-



min D levels.

Overall, findings indicate that with typical use, sunscreen still allows sufficient vitamin D production to happen.

In a study conducted by our research team, we performed a one-week experiment on 40 holidaymakers in Tenerife, Spain. Participants were taught to correctly apply an SPF 15 sunscreen to protect their skin.

Not only did the sunscreen protect participants from sunburn, their vitamin D levels improved. This showed us that even when sunscreen was used, a sufficient amount of UVB radiation still reached the skin, allowing vitamin D to be produced.

These findings align with two reviews that also examined real-world sunscreen use and vitamin D levels.

Most of the studies included in these reviews either reported that sunscreen use had no effect on vitamin D levels or that sunscreen use led to higher vitamin D levels. This was particularly true with field studies, which would have provided the best reflection of real-world sunscreen use and sun exposure.

However, these reviews also found several experimental studies (with more controlled conditions) that showed sunscreen use can prevent vitamin D synthesis.

However, these studies used UV sources that were not representative of solar UV radiation, which may limit their relevance for real-world conclusions.

Another limitation of the studies evaluated in these reviews were that most used low SPF sunscreens (around SPF 15 or lower). Public health advice recommends the use of at least SPF 30 sunscreen, which potentially could have a greater inhibitory effect on vitamin D production.

And most of these studies only used white participants. White skin has less melanin pigment, which acts as natural sunscreens – protecting against UV damage (including sunburn).

Melanin may also have a potentially small, inhibitory effect on vitamin D production. Observational studies have consistently shown that people with dark skin tend to have

poorer vitamin D levels than people with lighter skin tones living at similar latitudes. This disparity becomes even more pronounced at higher latitudes, where levels of UVB radiation are lower.

One review also found that people with lighter skin types produced more vitamin D.

However, this discrepancy is probably due to differences in the way the studies included in the review were conducted. Some used artificial radiation sources, which do not represent solar UV radiation and may give unrepresentative results.

There's a clear need to conduct more studies that include people with darker skin tones and use higher SPF sunscreens. But based on the evidence we have available, typical sunscreen use does not inhibit vitamin D production. It also has the added benefit of preventing the damaging effects of UV exposure.

Given people with darker skin tones are at greater risk of having low vitamin D levels, spending more time in the sun may be of benefit. But while people with dark skin have a 20-60 times lower skin cancer risk than people with lighter skin, it's still important to avoid the sun when it's at its most powerful and wear sunscreen or cover up if you are outside on sunny days.

## Jammu & Kashmir Haj Committee

Hajal Hajji, Haj House, Bemina, Srinagar  
Under Department of Haj & Umrah, Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir  
(Ph. No. 0194-2455585, 0194-2455587, www.hajal.org, mail at hajal@gmail.com)

### Notification

**Subject: Flight Schedule of Haj Pilgrims/Reporting time at Haj House Bemina, Srinagar.**

In continuation to this office notification dated: 16-05-2024, the flight schedule for 20th May, 2024 is hereby published for information of the concerned Haj pilgrims.

Reporting time of pilgrims at Haj House Srinagar as per their flight number is notified as under:

Sno.	Flight No.	Date of Departure	Reporting time at Haj House	Destination
1	SG-5120	20-05-2024	07:30 AM	Makkah Via Jeddah

The pilgrims are advised to report on time at Haj House, Bemina, Srinagar.

**It may be noted that Ahram shall be kept in hand baggage so that the same can be worn at Srinagar International Airport.**

The flight timing for remaining flights shall be notified separately.

Dr. Shujaat Ahmad Qureshi (JKAS)  
Executive Officer.

No: Haj/2024/CS/274/17

Dated: 18-05-2024

### JAMMU AND KASHMIR HAJ COMMITTEE FLIGHT ALLOTMENT FOR HAJ 1445 (H) - 2024

Sno.	Cover No	Name of Pilgrim (s)	Flight Date	Flight No.	78	JKF-236-2-0	RAJA BANU	20-05-2024	SG-5120	166	JKF-1441-2-0	NISAR AHMAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	264	JKF-3269-4-0	Zahir	20-05-2024	SG-5120
1	JKF-12-2-0	MASOODA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	79	JKF-238-2-0	AB	20-05-2024	SG-5120	169	MASOODA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	265	JKF-3269-4-0	AB	20-05-2024	SG-5120	
2	JKF-12-2-0	MOHD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	80	JKF-242-1-0	MASOOD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	170	JKF-1454-2-0	BASHIR AHMAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	266	JKF-3309-1-0	MOHD	20-05-2024	SG-5120
3	JKF-42-2-0	DILSHADA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	81	JKF-248-1-0	MOHD SAJAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	171	JKF-1484-2-0	Amina	20-05-2024	SG-5120	267	JKF-3361-4-0	HAJIRA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
4	JKF-42-2-0	MOHD AFZAL	20-05-2024	SG-5120	82	JKF-250-1-0	MOHAMMAD ISMAEEL	20-05-2024	SG-5120	172	JKF-1484-2-0	Gh Mohd	20-05-2024	SG-5120	268	JKF-3361-4-0	RAFIQ	20-05-2024	SG-5120
5	JKF-63-1-0	MOHAMMAD SIDIQ	20-05-2024	SG-5120	83	JKF-251-1-0	MOHD SHABAN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	173	JKF-1547-2-0	AB HAMID	20-05-2024	SG-5120	269	JKF-3361-4-0	FATIMA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
6	JKF-64-2-0	RAJA BANO	20-05-2024	SG-5120	84	JKF-252-1-0	ABDUL RASHID	20-05-2024	SG-5120	174	JKF-1547-2-0	HAKIM UD DIN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	270	JKF-3361-4-0	GHULAM	20-05-2024	SG-5120
7	JKF-64-2-0	AB MAJEED	20-05-2024	SG-5120	85	JKF-261-2-0	MOHD YOUSUF	20-05-2024	SG-5120	175	JKF-1553-2-0	HANEefa BAGUM	20-05-2024	SG-5120	271	JKF-3371-3-0	AFSHANA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
8	JKF-73-2-0	Neelofar jan	20-05-2024	SG-5120	86	JKF-261-2-0	MOHAMMAD RAMZAN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	176	JKF-1553-2-0	MOHD SULTAN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	272	JKF-3371-3-0	MUMTAZA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
9	JKF-73-2-0	Abdul Hamid	20-05-2024	SG-5120	87	JKF-263-2-0	SHAFIQA BEGUM	20-05-2024	SG-5120	177	JKF-1578-3-0	Jameela	20-05-2024	SG-5120	273	JKF-3371-3-0	PEERZADA MANZOOR	20-05-2024	SG-5120
10	JKF-76-2-0	RAJA BANOO	20-05-2024	SG-5120	88	JKF-263-2-0	ABDUL RASHID	20-05-2024	SG-5120	178	JKF-1578-3-0	Sikander	20-05-2024	SG-5120	274	JKF-3390-3-0	raja	20-05-2024	SG-5120
11	JKF-76-2-0	MOHAMMAD AKRAM	20-05-2024	SG-5120	89	JKF-264-2-0	REHTI	20-05-2024	SG-5120	179	JKF-1578-3-0	Shabir	20-05-2024	SG-5120	275	JKF-3390-3-0	jana	20-05-2024	SG-5120
12	JKF-77-2-0	ZARINA BANO	20-05-2024	SG-5120	90	JKF-264-2-0	WALI MOHD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	180	JKF-1592-2-0	MOHAMMAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	276	JKF-3390-3-0	mohd	20-05-2024	SG-5120
13	JKF-77-2-0	Shafiq BANOO	20-05-2024	SG-5120	91	JKF-267-2-0	AMINA BEGUM	20-05-2024	SG-5120	181	JKF-1592-2-0	ASAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	277	JKF-3397-2-0	MEHAR	20-05-2024	SG-5120
14	JKF-93-2-0	Mughli	20-05-2024	SG-5120	92	JKF-267-2-0	AB RASHID	20-05-2024	SG-5120	182	JKF-1674-2-0	RAHTI	20-05-2024	SG-5120	278	JKF-3397-2-0	RAJA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
15	JKF-93-2-0	Mohammad	20-05-2024	SG-5120	93	JKF-309-2-0	RAZIA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	183	JKF-1674-2-0	MOHD ASHRAF	20-05-2024	SG-5120	279	JKF-3402-2-0	HASEENA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
16	JKF-96-2-0	RUBEENA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	94	JKF-309-2-0	ASHAQ	20-05-2024	SG-5120	184	JKF-1687-2-0	RASHIDA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	280	JKF-3402-2-0	ALI	20-05-2024	SG-5120
17	JKF-96-2-0	MOHAMMAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	95	JKF-483-2-0	RAJA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	185	JKF-1687-2-0	ABDUL	20-05-2024	SG-5120	281	JKF-3418-2-0	SAFEENA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
18	JKF-99-2-0	MEEMA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	96	JKF-483-2-0	ABDUL	20-05-2024	SG-5120	186	JKF-1840-1-0	Abdul Qayoom	20-05-2024	SG-5120	282	JKF-3418-2-0	HAMID	20-05-2024	SG-5120
19	JKF-99-2-0	KHURSHIED	20-05-2024	SG-5120	97	JKF-489-2-0	SYED GULSHAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	187	JKF-1918-2-0	SALEEMA AKHTER	20-05-2024	SG-5120	283	JKF-3511-1-0	MOHD SULTAN	20-05-2024	SG-5120
20	JKF-110-2-0	HAFA SA AKHTER	20-05-2024	SG-5120	98	JKF-489-2-0	SYED MOHD SHAFI	20-05-2024	SG-5120	188	JKF-1918-2-0	MOHAMMAD AMIN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	284	JKF-3553-2-0	SAKINA AKHTER	20-05-2024	SG-5120
21	JKF-110-2-0	TARIQ AMIN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	99	JKF-529-1-0	ALI	20-05-2024	SG-5120	189	JKF-2136-2-0	NAJMA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	285	JKF-3553-2-0	AB	20-05-2024	SG-5120
22	JKF-121-2-0	KOWSAR PARVEEN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	100	JKF-531-2-0	Shameema	20-05-2024	SG-5120	190	JKF-2136-2-0	MISBAH HAMID	20-05-2024	SG-5120	286	JKF-3559-3-0	NOOR	20-05-2024	SG-5120
23	JKF-121-2-0	KHURSHID AHMAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	101	JKF-531-2-0	Mohd	20-05-2024	SG-5120	191	JKF-2143-3-0	ZAMROODA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	287	JKF-3559-3-0	SHAZIA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
24	JKF-134-2-0	Night Shaheen	20-05-2024	SG-5120	102	JKF-546-2-0	NISAR	20-05-2024	SG-5120	192	JKF-2143-3-0	PARVEEZ SAJAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	288	JKF-3559-3-0	YASIR	20-05-2024	SG-5120
25	JKF-134-2-0	Saqib Manzoor	20-05-2024	SG-5120	103	JKF-546-2-0	AB	20-05-2024	SG-5120	193	JKR-2309-2-0	BILQUES	20-05-2024	SG-5120	289	JKF-3585-2-0	IRSHADA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
26	JKF-146-2-0	SALIMA BANO	20-05-2024	SG-5120	104	JKF-559-3-0	NUSRAT HUSSAN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	194	JKR-2309-2-0	SHABIR	20-05-2024	SG-5120	290	JKF-3585-2-0	NAZIR	20-05-2024	SG-5120
27	JKF-146-2-0	MOHD MAQBOOL	20-05-2024	SG-5120	105	JKF-559-3-0	HAJIRA BEGUM	20-05-2024	SG-5120	195	JKF-2410-3-0	ABDUL RASHID	20-05-2024	SG-5120	291	JKF-3599-2-0	MASOODA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
28	JKF-156-2-0	Naseema	20-05-2024	SG-5120	106	JKF-559-3-0	GH	20-05-2024	SG-5120	196	JKF-2410-3-0	FATIMA MAHTAB	20-05-2024	SG-5120	292	JKF-3599-2-0	BASHIR	20-05-2024	SG-5120
29	JKF-156-2-0	Basil	20-05-2024	SG-5120	107	JKF-560-2-0	JAMEELA BANOO	20-05-2024	SG-5120	197	JKF-2410-3-0	MUSHTAQ AHMAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	293	JKF-3611-2-0	JANA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
30	JKF-161-4-0	NAYEEMA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	108	JKF-560-2-0	BASHIR AHMAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	198	JKF-2454-3-0	Mohammad Bhat	20-05-2024	SG-5120	294	JKF-3611-2-0	ABDUL	20-05-2024	SG-5120
31	JKF-161-4-0	ABDUL MAJEED	20-05-2024	SG-5120	109	JKF-563-1-0	AB HAMID	20-05-2024	SG-5120	199	JKF-2454-3-0	Naseema Bhat	20-05-2024	SG-5120	295	JKF-3636-3-0	GH MOHIUDDIN	20-05-2024	SG-5120
32	JKF-161-4-0	ASIMA ARA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	110	JKF-615-3-0	RAJA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	200	JKF-2454-3-0	Mudasiir Bhat	20-05-2024	SG-5120	296	JKF-3636-3-0	MOHAMMAD AKBAR	20-05-2024	SG-5120
33	JKF-161-4-0	FAIAZ AHMAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	111	JKF-615-3-0	AMINA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	201	JKF-2871-2-0	Ghulam	20-05-2024	SG-5120	297	JKF-3636-3-0	MOHD JAMAL	20-05-2024	SG-5120
34	JKF-167-2-0	HASEENA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	112	JKF-615-3-0	AB RASHID	20-05-2024	SG-5120	202	JKF-2872-4-0	AYSHIA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	298	JKF-3784-3-0	RAJA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
35	JKF-167-2-0	KHURSHIED	20-05-2024	SG-5120	113	KHJ-KF-623-1-0	SHAHNAWAZ	20-05-2024	SG-5120	203	JKF-2872-4-0	RAFIQ	20-05-2024	SG-5120	299	JKF-3784-3-0	ZAINA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
36	JKF-175-2-0	Dilshada	20-05-2024	SG-5120	114	JKF-626-2-0	RUQAYYA JAN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	204	JKF-2872-4-0	NASEEMA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	300	JKF-3784-3-0	AB	20-05-2024	SG-5120
37	JKF-175-2-0	Farooq	20-05-2024	SG-5120	115	JKF-626-2-0	NAZIR AHMAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	205	JKF-2872-4-0	ABDUL	20-05-2024	SG-5120	301	JKF-3791-4-0	TAJA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
38	JKF-178-2-0	MASOODA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	116	KHJ-KF-628-1-0	SHABIR AHMAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	206	JKF-2873-1-0	MOHD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	302	JKF-3791-4-0	AB	20-05-2024	SG-5120
39	JKF-178-2-0	SAJAAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	117	JKF-636-2-0	ZARIFA BANO	20-05-2024	SG-5120	207	JKF-2880-3-0	Farooqa	20-05-2024	SG-5120	303	JKF-3791-4-0	SAUIDA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
40	JKF-179-2-0	Farhat	20-05-2024	SG-5120	118	JKF-636-2-0	GHULAM NABI	20-05-2024	SG-5120	208	JKF-2880-3-0	Ghulam	20-05-2024	SG-5120	304	JKF-3791-4-0	ABDUL	20-05-2024	SG-5120
41	JKF-179-2-0	Shabir	20-05-2024	SG-5120	119	JKF-657-3-0	RAJA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	209	JKF-3805-2-0	Ghulam	20-05-2024	SG-5120	305	JKF-3804-4-0	FEHMIDA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
42	JKF-180-2-0	MUDASIR	20-05-2024	SG-5120	120	JKF-657-3-0	GH	20-05-2024	SG-5120	210	JKF-3805-2-0	Mohamed	20-05-2024	SG-5120	306	JKF-3804-4-0	NAZIR	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					121	JKF-657-3-0	SHABIR	20-05-2024	SG-5120	211	JKF-3805-2-0	SHAMAS UD DIN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	307	JKF-3804-4-0	SUMIA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					122	JKF-724-1-0	ABDUL	20-05-2024	SG-5120	212	JKF-2889-5-0	BASHIR	20-05-2024	SG-5120	308	JKF-3804-4-0	JAVID	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					123	JKF-745-4-0	MUGHLI	20-05-2024	SG-5120	213	JKF-2889-5-0	JAN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	309	JKF-3804-4-0	ZAREFA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					124	JKF-745-4-0	HASEENA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	214	JKF-2889-5-0	RESHMA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	310	JKF-3805-2-0	MOHD	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					125	JKF-745-4-0	AB AHAD	20-05-2024	SG-5120	215	JKF-2889-5-0	MOHD ISRAIL	20-05-2024	SG-5120	311	JKF-3805-1-0	mohd	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					126	JKF-745-4-0	GHULAM NABI	20-05-2024	SG-5120	216	JKF-2894-2-0	SHER	20-05-2024	SG-5120	312	JKF-3919-2-0	WAHEEDA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					127	JKF-790-1-0	Abdul Ahad	20-05-2024	SG-5120	217	JKF-2894-2-0	GULZARA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	313	JKF-3919-2-0	SHOWKAT	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					128	JKF-811-2-0	SHAMIMA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	218	JKF-2897-2-0	MUSHTAQ	20-05-2024	SG-5120	314	JKF-3921-4-0	PARVEENA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					129	JKF-811-2-0	MOHD YASIN	20-05-2024	SG-5120	219	JKF-2897-2-0	AKHTER	20-05-2024	SG-5120	315	JKF-3921-4-0	RAFEEQ	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					130	JKF-842-3-0	SAJA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	220	JKF-2899-2-0	SHAMAS	20-05-2024	SG-5120	316	JKF-3921-4-0	SHAMIMA	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					131	JKF-842-3-0	ABDUL	20-05-2024	SG-5120	221	JKF-2899-2-0	HAFAZA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	317	JKF-3921-4-0	HAFAEEZ	20-05-2024	SG-5120
					132	JKF-842-3-0	WALI	20-05-2024	SG-5120	222	JKF-2901-2-0	REHAINA	20-05-2024	SG-5120	318	JKF-3922-2-0	PARVEENA	20-05-2024	SG-5120



## DG NCC, Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh Wraps Up Three-Day Srinagar Visit

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Director General of the National Cadet Corps (NCC), Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh wrapped up a three-day official visit to Srinagar.

Lt Gen Singh, according to a statement, engaged in various activities aimed at bolstering the NCC's presence and operations in the region.

"Upon his arrival on May 16, he was warmly welcomed by Maj Gen Rajesh Kumar Sachdeva, Additional Director General NCC, Jammu Kashmir, and Ladakh Directorate, along with Brigadier Deepak Sajjanhar, Sena Medal Group Commander NCC Group Srinagar," reads the statement.

The highlight of his visit was the interaction with NCC cadets and officers at the NCC Group Headquarters in Gogji Bagh, Srinagar. Lt Gen Singh emphasized the significance of the smooth establishment of new NCC Battalions in Jammu and Kashmir, recognizing the challenges posed by security, terrain, and weather.

Acknowledging the dedication and excellence of NCC cadets and staff, Lt Gen Singh presented awards to those who have excelled in ensuring the smooth conduct of NCC training in the Kashmir Valley. He also released a quotes book compiled by the NCC Directorate Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh, showcasing the spirit and ethos of the Organization.

Addressing the cadets, Lt Gen Singh reiterated NCC's commitment to nurturing future leaders and instilling



ing values of discipline, dedication, and service to the nation.

He encouraged the cadets to embrace a 'Never Give Up' attitude, fostering resilience and determination.

During his visit, Lt Gen Singh met with key stakeholders including the GOC 15 Corps and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to discuss the expansion of NCC activities and infrastructure in the region. The establishment of an Air Squadron in Udhampur was announced, fulfilling a long-standing aspiration of NCC cadets in Jammu and Kashmir.

In a meeting with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Lt Gen Singh discussed various matters pertaining to the expansion and enhancement of NCC operations in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The Lt Governor presented a Unit Citation to the NCC Directorate for its outstanding performance and well-organized training initiatives in the region.

Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh's visit underscores NCC's steadfast commitment to empowering youth and fostering a culture of service and leadership, the statement added.

## Ajay Devgan Starrer 'Singham Again' Shooting Enthralls Old City Audience

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The historic Zainakadal area in downtown Srinagar witnessed an electrifying atmosphere on Saturday as the acclaimed Bollywood filmmaker Rohit Shetty commenced shooting for his highly anticipated action movie, 'Singham Again'.

Crowds gathered in excitement, watching the cast and crew bring the bustling streets to life with action sequences.

'Singham Again', also known as 'Singham 3', is the latest installment in Rohit Shetty's Cop Universe.

The film stars Bollywood heavyweights' part of the movie includes Ajay Devgan, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Deepika Padukone, Tiger Shroff, Arjun Kapoor, and Jackie Shroff.

The film promises to deliver the action and drama that the franchise is known for. The Shetty crew is likely to be shooting for the project for more days as the locations and schedule have not been publicly disclosed. However, excitement has filled the air with a part of the movie shot today at historic Zaina Kadal Srinagar.

One local resident, Muntazir Bashir, shared his excitement, saying it's thrilling to see such a big film being shot here in Srinagar. The energy is incredible, and it's great to see our city on the big screen.



Another local added, "I have been a fan of the Singham series for years. Watching the shoot up close is a dream come true. The entire neighborhood is buzzing with excitement."

Today's shoot featured Ajay Devgan in his iconic role as DCP Bajirao Singham, navigating the narrow, bustling streets of Zainakadal.

The scene, a high-stakes chase sequence, showcased the area's vi-

brant backdrop, adding a unique charm to the film's visual narrative.

Adding to the buzz, Rohit Shetty yesterday took time from his busy schedule to call on the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha, at Raj Bhawan in Srinagar.

Pertinently, 'Singham Again' is directed by Rohit Shetty. It was announced in September 2017 and officially titled in December 2022—(KNO)

## International Museum Day: Culture Department Organizes Seminar In Srinagar

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Commemorating the celebration of International Museum Day, the Culture Department today organized a one day seminar on the theme "Museums for Education and Research" besides a special exhibition on Painting Heritage and a photo exhibition of monumental glory of J&K at S.P.S Museum Lal Mandi Srinagar in collaboration with Archaeological Survey of India, J&K, Srinagar.

Principal Secretary Culture, Suresh Kumar Gupta, inaugurated the event.

Mohammad Rafi, Director, Libraries & Research, Sanjeev Rana, Secretary JKACL, Mushtaq Ahmad Beigh, Deputy Director, Archives, Archaeology & Museums, Kashmir, Gowhar Ahmad Khan, Archaeological Engineer, ASI, Srinagar Circle and other officers were present on the occasion.

Suresh Kumar underscored the importance of preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of Jammu & Kashmir for the posterity.

The theme for International Museum Day 2024 encourages people to be more aware,

adopt sustainable practices, and be inclusive by highlighting how museums can promote learning and creativity at the same time. In order to raise awareness about the importance of cultural heritage and celebrate the diversity of our shared human history, this day offers an opportunity to raise awareness among the general public/masses about the diversity of cultural heritage and its protection, preservation and conservation for the future generations and represents a collective effort to preserve heritage around the world.

The Principal Secretary said that the Museums serve as the gatekeepers and bookkeepers of history; they help preserve the treasures of the past, document the stories of the present and enlighten the path for future generations. By inviting people of all backgrounds like scholars, students, art lovers and the general public to visit museums and explore their collections, International Museum Day aims to inspire curiosity, broaden perspectives, and foster understanding and appreciation of the world's diverse cultural heritage, he maintained.

## NIT Hosts 1st Int. Conference on 'Technology Interventions For Elderly and Disabled'

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Centre for Technology intervention for elderly and disabled (CTIED) National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Saturday organized the first International Conference on 'Technology Interventions for Elderly and Disabled' in collaboration with NAB India, Chinar

Kashmir and AADI India.

The inaugural session was presided over by President Chinar Kashmir (NGO) Nazir Ahmad Qureshi, while Institute's Registrar, Prof. Atikur Rehman, Dean FW(HAG) Prof. G.A Harmain, Dean AA, Dr. Mohammad Shafi Mir, Dean A&IA, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Sheikh, Dean P&D Dr. Yashwant Mehta, Prof. Javed Ahmad Naqash and Secretary Chinar Kashmir, Pirzada Mumtaz Ahmad, graced the occasion.

Director NIT Srinagar Prof. A. Ravinder Nath was the Chief Patron of the conference, Chairman, CTIED, NIT Srinagar, Prof. M. A. Bazaz, while as Dr. H. S. Pali, Dr. Neeraj Gupta and Dr. Ravi Bhushan were the organizing secretaries of the conference.

On the occasion, Institute's

Registrar, Prof. Atikur Rehman said such conferences are vital and urged the youth to come forward and work for the betterment of society.

"We should use the term 'specially abled' instead of 'disabled' as God has gifted many qualities to this community. The conference is dedicated to advancing the utilization of technology for the betterment of elderly

and specially abled populations," he said.

Prof. Rehman also shared his experiences at HMT Bengaluru and Mumbai, where specially abled employees were highly appreciated for their work.

He stressed the need to introduce similar mechanisms in our workplaces to empower the community, NIT Srinagar will continue

to support initiatives both on and off-campus," Prof. Rehman said.

In his keynote address, Secretary Chinar Kashmir, Pirzada Mumtaz Ahmad said both differently abled and elderly are two different things, people often get confused about their meaning. The problems of both are entirely different and they should be treated differently.





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## Flash Floods Kill At Least 68 People In Afghanistan

AP

Islamabad, May 18 : Flash floods from heavy seasonal rains have killed at least 68 people in Afghanistan, Taliban officials said Saturday, adding the death toll was based on preliminary reports. Afghanistan has been witnessing unusually heavy seasonal rains. In the hard-hit western province of Ghor, 50 people were reported dead, said Abdul Wahid Hamas, spokesman for the provincial governor. He also said the province has suffered significant financial losses after thousands of homes and properties were damaged and hundreds of hectares of agricultural land destroyed following Friday's floods, including the capital city Feroz Koh. Meanwhile, 18 people in the northern province of Farayab were killed and two others injured on Friday, according to Esmatullah Moradi, the provincial governor's spokesman. Damages to property and land were reported across four districts and over 300 animals were killed, he added. The UN food agency posted on social media platform X, saying Ghor was the most affected by the floods where 2500 families were impacted. WFP

assessment teams are on the ground to deploy assistance, the post said. The Taliban's government chief spokesman mourned "the loss of our fellow Afghans," and urged "responsible authorities ... to provide all necessary support to alleviate the suffering," in a post on X. He also called on "our benevolent donors" to help and humanitarian organisations to provide the affected communities with aid. Last week, WFP said the exceptionally heavy rains in Afghanistan have killed more than 300 people and destroyed thousands of houses, mostly in the northern province of Baghlan, which bore the brunt of floods on May 10th. Survivors have been left with no home, no land, and no source of livelihood, the World Food Organisation said. Most of Baghlan is "inaccessible by trucks," said WFP, adding that it is resorting to every alternative it can think of to deliver food to the survivors. The latest disaster came on the heels of devastating floods that killed at least 70 people in April. The waters also destroyed about 2,000 homes, three mosques and four schools in western Farah and Herat, and southern Zabul and Kandahar provinces.

## Singapore Seeing New COVID-19 Wave, Minister Advises Wearing Of Masks

Press Trust Of India

Singapore, May 18 : Singapore is seeing a new COVID-19 wave as the authorities recorded more than 25,900 cases from May 5 to 11 even as Health Minister Ong Ye Kung on Saturday advised the wearing of masks again. "We are at the beginning part of the wave where it is steadily rising," said Ong. "So, I would say the wave should peak in the next two to four weeks, which means between mid- and end of June," The Straits Times newspaper quoted the minister as saying. The Ministry of Health (MOH) said the estimated number of COVID-19 cases in the week of May 5 to 11 rose to 25,900 cases, compared with 13,700 cases in the previous week. The average daily COVID-19 hospitalisations rose to about 250 from 181 the week before. The average daily intensive care unit (ICU) cases remained low at three cases, compared with two cases in the previous week. The MOH said that to protect hospital bed capacity, public hospitals have been asked to reduce their non-urgent elective surgery cases and move suitable patients to transitional care facilities or back



home through Mobile Inpatient Care@Home, an alternative inpatient care delivery model that offers clinically suitable patients the option of being hospitalised in their own homes instead of a hospital ward. Ong urged those who are at greatest risk of severe disease, including individuals aged 60 years and above, medically vulnerable individuals and residents of aged care facilities, to receive an additional dose of the COVID-19 vaccine if they have not done so in the last 12 months. Ong said that if the number of COVID-19 cases doubles one time, Singapore will have 500 patients in its healthcare system, which is what Singapore can handle. However, if the number of cases doubles a second time, there will be 1,000 patients, and "that will be a considerable burden on the hospital system", he pointed out.



## PM Modi Avoids Debate On Adani Links: Rahul Gandhi

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi, May 18 : Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday claimed that Narendra Modi is refusing to have a debate with him as the prime minister cannot answer questions about his "links" with a few favoured businessmen and how he "misused" electoral bonds. Addressing a public meeting organised by the Congress in Delhi, he urged workers of his party and of the Aam Aadmi Party to work together and ensure victory for their alliance on all seven Lok Sabha seats in the national capital. "It's interesting that I'll vote for AAP and Arvind Kejriwal will vote for Congress in these elections," he said. Gandhi said the first aim of everyone should be to save the Constitution from those "hell-bent on destroying it". Attacking the prime minister, the Congress leader said, "PM Modi is giving non-stop interviews to his favourite journalists but he will not have a debate with me because he knows he cannot answer

my questions." PM Modi talks about the Congress getting tempo-loads of money from Adani-Ambani, but he doesn't dare to get it probed," he said. "I'm ready to debate with PM Modi whenever and wherever he wants, but I'm sure he won't come. The first question I would ask PM Modi is what is his relationship with Adani, next I want to ask him about electoral bonds," the former Congress chief said. Gandhi said the debate would end after these two questions only, but he also wants to ask the prime minister why did he ask the public to bang plates and flash mobile phones when people were suffering from the Covid pandemic. "He won't join a debate with me but he speaks in his rallies only about issues I raise. When I said why he does not talk about Adani-Ambani, he talked about it immediately," he said. Gandhi also hit out at the media, alleging they were "friends of 2-3 industrialists" as they would either show Ambani weddings, Bollywood stars or Narendra Modi

on their channels round the clock. "Still, stringers and cameramen working for these media houses will vote for Congress only," he said. In his speech, the senior Congress leader also referred to his questioning by the Enforcement Directorate. "They got me interrogated by ED for 55 hours till they got tired... They snatched my house, I told them I don't want your house as the entire country is my home," he said. On those joining the BJP, Gandhi said he was fine with it. "We don't want 'darpok' (coward) leaders, we want 'Babbar Sher'. We don't want those who cower fearing CBI-ED action." Talking about Congress and INDIA bloc plans if they are able to form government, Gandhi said, "We will throw the Agniveer scheme in the dustbin, simplify GST and help small businessmen rather than big industrialists." He alleged that Prime Minister Modi has done nothing for small businessmen, but gave Rs 16 lakh crore to industrialists like Adani and Ambani.

## Nawaz Sharif Set To Be made President Of Ruling PML-N Party On May 28

Press Trust Of India

Lahore, May 18 : Pakistan's ruling PML-N party on Saturday decided to appoint three-time former prime minister Nawaz Sharif as its President on May 28 and nominated Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as the party's acting president till then, media reports said here. Shehbaz Sharif had, earlier this week, resigned from

the same post citing the "unjust" disqualification of the party supremo and his elder brother Nawaz Sharif from the PM Office stressing that it was time for the latter to "resume his rightful place as the president of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz party." The decision was taken by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party's central working com-

mittee meeting earlier in the day. It was also confirmed by the party's Lahore chapter President Saif Ul Malook Khokhar, The News International reported. The party's general council meeting, previously scheduled for May 11, is slated to be held on May 28 on the occasion of "Youme-e-Takbeer," it said, adding, "Nawaz is poised to retake the PML-N presidency."

## Lebanon's economic crisis endures, as does the EU's 'fear' of refugees

Justin Salhani | Aljazeera

Beirut: Lebanon and the Lebanese people are still suffering a debilitating economic crisis that has gripped the country since 2019. The pound has plummeted to less than 10 percent of its value before the crisis, savings have disappeared both in terms of exchange rates and actual deposits as banks announce they have no cash to release, and more and more people worry about simply staying alive. About 80 percent of the population is below the poverty line and 36 percent is below the "extreme poverty line", living on less than \$2.15 a day. A recent deal worth 1 billion euros (\$1.06bn) with the European Union may have been seen as a godsend in such circumstances, but it has brought to the fore even more problems. 'Shameful' EU grants over the past three years are not purely to help Lebanon's economy. Rather, they are mostly to "ensure the wellbeing of host communities and Syrian refugees", as European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said. Nearly three-quarters of the package is earmarked for that in hopes that refugees will be dissuaded

from heading for Europe. Lebanon has taken in millions of Syrian refugees who have fled their country's 13-year war. As more Lebanese people found their lives devastated by the economic crisis, hostility towards refugees has risen, encouraged by a public campaign backed by mainstream Lebanese media and state figures. The EU package was strongly criticised by human rights workers and analysts, who said the deal rewards the state's financial mismanagement and mistreatment of the Syrian community. More than 300 Syrians have returned – or been returned – to their home country in what Lebanese authorities call a "voluntary return" programme. But rights groups have panned the initiative, which comes off the back of 13,000 forced deportations of Syrians in 2023 alone, violence towards refugees in Lebanon and ongoing conflict in Syria itself. "Human Rights Watch has documented the summary deportation of thousands of Syrians in 2023 and [the] deportation of opposition activists and army defectors this year," Ramzi Kaiss, a researcher in the Middle East and North Africa Division at the right group, told Al Jazeera.

## Paris QR Code Entry Sparks Concerns Over Digital Exclusion Ahead Of Olympics

Agencies

Paris: Paris is planning to require visitors and residents to show a QR code on their phones to enter certain parts of the city for the upcoming Olympic games. This has raised concerns about digital exclusion, as not everyone has a smartphone or the ability to use one, according to The Metro. This is not a new issue. During the pandemic, QR codes were used for things like checking vaccination status and accessing menus at restaurants. This left some people unable to participate in these activities. The trend of using QR codes and apps is continuing. Many restaurants now use QR codes for menus and ordering, and car parks are moving towards cashless payment systems that require QR codes or apps. This can be a problem for people who don't have smartphones or who are not comfortable using them. For example, one lady, Linda Raddon, told The Metro that her father cannot order his own repeat prescriptions online because the service is now digital. He also relies on Linda to manage his banking because many local bank branches have closed. "Fortunately, my dad has a Blue Badge, so he can usually park for free without registering," says Linda, a later life coach who helps carers of elderly parents craft and enjoy their own happier later lives," she said. "But he doesn't have a smartphone and would struggle to use a parking machine that needed registration and payment details. I can see how this would hinder people's independence-even if you are well enough to drive and go out alone, you can't because of the technology." As society becomes increasingly reliant on technology, it is important to consider how this can exclude people who are not able to keep up.

## Violence In Bishkek: Indian Mission Asks Indian students To Stay Indoors

New Delhi: India on Saturday asked its students in Bishkek to stay indoors after the Kyrgyz capital city reported mob violence targeting international students, especially from South Asia. The Indian embassy in the Central Asian country said it is in touch with the Indian students and the situation is "calm" now. The mission asked Indian students in the city to stay indoors. In a statement, the Kyrgyz foreign ministry said that "destructive forces are deliberately disseminating untrue and false information" about the situation in Bishkek. It said the situation in the city is "calm and under full control", adding all necessary measures have been taken to ensure security. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar advised the Indian students to stay in regular touch with the



Indian embassy. "Monitoring the welfare of Indian students in Bishkek. The situation is reportedly calm now. Strongly advise students to stay in regular touch with the Embassy," he said in a post on X'. The Indian embassy said, "We are in touch with our students. The situation is presently calm but students are advised to stay indoors for the moment and get in

touch with the Embassy in case of any issue." Police in riot gear were deployed in part of Kyrgyzstan's capital overnight as large crowds gathered in anger over an alleged fight between local and foreign people, The Times of Central Asia reported. The incident appeared to reflect tension over the presence of migrants, many from South Asia, in Kyrgyzstan,

it said. The number of Indian students in Kyrgyzstan is estimated to be around 15,000. It is not immediately known how many of them are in Bishkek. The Kyrgyz foreign ministry said destructive forces are deliberately disseminating untrue and false information about the situation in the Kyrgyz Republic in foreign mass media and social networks, especially in the territory of Pakistan. It said the situation in the city of Bishkek is calm and under full control. All necessary measures have been taken to ensure security, and maintain peace and stability, it said. "Therefore, the ministry asks the representatives of mass media, blogger community, as well as foreign colleagues to be guided only by the official and confirmed information of the competent bodies," the Kyrgyz foreign ministry added.

## 'Will Go To BJP Office On Sunday': Kejriwal

Dares PM to get them arrested

New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Saturday that he and other AAP leaders would go to the BJP headquarters on May 19 "so that the prime minister can send anyone he wishes to jail". The BJP is saying they will send AAP MP Raghav Chadha, who had just returned from the UK, and Delhi ministers Atishi and Sarabjot Singh to jail too, he claimed at a press briefing hours after his aide Bibhav Kumar was arrested in connection with the alleged assault on his party's parliamentary Swati Maliwal. Kejriwal, who is also the AAP national convener, however, asserted that his party could not be crushed by sending its leaders to jail. Accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "playing the game" of sending AAP leaders



such as Manish Sisodia, Satyendar Jain, and Sanjay Singh to jail, he said, "I am coming to BJP headquarters with all my big leaders, MLAs, MPs, everyone, at 12 noon tomorrow. Whoever you want to put in jail, put them in jail," he said. He claimed that the AAP's "fault" was that its government in Delhi built good schools, set up Mohalla Clinics, provided free treatment and ensured free round-the-clock power supply in the city which the BJP could not do. Kejriwal, who was arrested in a money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam, has been granted interim bail till June 1 by the Supreme Court to campaign in the Lok Sabha polls. He will have to surrender and go back to jail on June 2, a day after the last phase of polling in the general elections. "This country will produce

100 times more leaders than the number of AAP leaders you put in jail. Tomorrow at 12, I am coming to the BJP headquarters with all my leaders. Whoever you want to put in jail, put them in jail," he said. He claimed that the AAP's "fault" was that its government in Delhi built good schools, set up Mohalla Clinics, provided free treatment and ensured free round-the-clock power supply in the city which the BJP could not do. Kejriwal, who was arrested in a money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam, has been granted interim bail till June 1 by the Supreme Court to campaign in the Lok Sabha polls. He will have to surrender and go back to jail on June 2, a day after the last phase of polling in the general elections.



# LS polls: Sixth schedule, employment key issues in Ladakh

## Agencies

**LEH:** As Ladakh votes to elect its MP for the first time since the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution, safeguards under the sixth schedule, statehood and employment are the key issues in the two distant districts of the constituency that is the largest in the country in terms of area.

Spread over more than 59,000 square kilometres -- around 40 times the size of Delhi -- the two districts of Leh and Kargil are divided by geography and religion. Buddhist-dominated Leh and Shia Muslim-majority Kargil have come together over four demands -- safeguards under the sixth schedule of the Constitution, statehood, reservation in jobs for locals and a separate public service commission and two Lok Sabha seats for the region.

After the abrogation of Article 370, Ladakh, which shares its border with both Pakistan and China, was carved out as a Union Territory without legislature. While Leh welcomed the move initially, people in Kargil were unhappy about the

split. However, soon the concerns over safeguards for land and jobs took over, and protests erupted.

Padma Stanzin, a student leader from Leh, said employment is a major concern as not a single recruitment on a gazetted post has taken place since 2019.

"We were assured of better employment opportunities but that has failed. Some government recruitment has taken place, but all for class-4 posts," Stanzin told PTI.

Similar concerns were raised by Nordon, a young woman from Leh who stressed that the sixth schedule is not just a political demand but that of the people.

"More than 90 per cent of the population here is tribal. Jobs are a major concern as Ladakh has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the country," she said.

"Any party that promises to fulfil our demands will get our support," Nordon said.

The two main political parties in Ladakh are the BJP, which has fielded Leh Autonomous Hill Development Council Chairman Tashi Gyalson in

the election, and the Congress, which has picked the Leader of Opposition in the council, Tsering Namgyal, as its candidate. The third candidate is Mohammad Haneefa Jan from Kargil, popularly known as Haji Haneefa, who is contesting the polls as an independent after quitting the National Conference.

In its manifesto, the Congress has promised safeguards under the sixth schedule, while Haneefa has mentioned all four demands. The BJP's manifesto is silent on the sixth schedule and statehood, but Gyalson and other leaders of the party, during their campaign, have assured the locals that the talks will continue.

Locals say there is anger against the BJP for not keeping its word on the sixth schedule, which was promised in the run-up to the 2019 Lok Sabha polls as well as during the Leh hill council polls in 2020.

"We were assured safeguards, but nothing has happened so far. That is why we are demanding the sixth schedule so that our interests can be protected. For that a rally was held on March 3 and then from

March 6, Sonam Wangchuk sat on a fast," Stanzin said.

A sit-in protest that started in Leh on March 6 went on for 66 days and was suspended ahead of the election. Renowned educationist and social reformer Sonam Wangchuk had led the protest.

Mehdi Shah from Turtuk, one of the remotest villages of India, says there is fear over losing the cultural identity as well as damage to the environment.

"There is a fear of losing our cultural identity and the fragile ecosystem being damaged if rampant development takes place. That is why the demand for the sixth schedule has become the main issue in this election," he said.

Haji Riyaz Ahmed, a septuagenarian who runs a shop in the Leh market, agrees that employment and livelihood are a major concern.

"Earlier, one could get a job after graduation. Now, even with a PhD, people are unable to get jobs. The employment that comes in the tourist season is temporary. Even in this market, there are only a few shops that belong to Ladakhis," he said.

## 'Not Possible To Support Leh Candidate'

### Agencies

**KARGIL:** Amid a three-cornered fight in Ladakh, Independent candidate Mohammad Haneefa Jan said his focus remains on the demands such as safeguards under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution and statehood raised with the Union government.

Haneefa, who was a National Conference (NC) leader till recently, quit the party along with the entire Kargil unit to contest the Lok Sabha elections from Ladakh. While he belongs to Kargil, INDIA bloc's Tsering Namgyal and BJP's Tashi Gyalson are from Leh.

It is believed that being the lone candidate from Kargil gives Haneefa an edge over the other two candidates.

Of the around 1,84,000 voters in Ladakh, Kargil has around 95,000 voters while Leh has around 89,000 voters, according to the local

officials. With votes from Leh likely to split between Congress's Namgyal and BJP's Tashi Gyalson, Haneefa seems to have an advantage.

Haneefa told PTI that he is getting support from all social and religious groups in Kargil. His team is also campaigning in the Leh district with a four-point demand in focus.

The Ladakh seat was given to the Congress under the seat-sharing arrangement of the INDIA bloc. Namgyal, the leader of opposition in Leh Autonomous Hill Development Council, was announced as their candidate.

The entire unit of the NC in Kargil resigned citing pressure to support the Congress candidate. The local unit of the Congress is also backing Haneefa.

"We were hoping that the Congress will give a chance to a candidate from Kargil this time. We had decided that we will give a candidate from the NC.

"I had already been an-

nounced as the candidate. Unfortunately, the decision went in favour of Leh," Haneefa told PTI in an interview.

He said under the seat-sharing deal of the INDIA bloc, the Ladakh seat was given to the Congress. The NC's Kargil unit was under pressure to support the Congress candidate.

"We said the whole Kargil is united. The whole NC's Kargil unit resigned," he said.

Haneefa said supporting the opposition bloc candidate from Leh could have worked in favour of the BJP.

"It was not possible to support the Leh candidate at the ground level. That would have meant the BJP's victory or the emergence of some other independent candidate," he said.

At his rallies in Kargil, 'ittehad' or unity is the key word, as all social, political and religious groups are backing him under the banner of Ladakh Democratic Alliance (LDA).

## Mehbooba Mufti's Escort Vehicle Meets With Accident

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** An ITBP personnel was injured after an escort vehicle of People's Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti met with an accident near Uranhall Bijbehara area of Anantnag district on Saturday, officials said.

Quoting an official, news agency KNO reported that Mehbooba Mufti was on way to

Bijbehara from Anantnag town when one of her escort vehicles met with the accident near Uranhall locality.

He said that an ITBP personnel got injured in the incident, who was shifted to SDH Bijbehara, where from he was referred to GMC Anantnag.

The official said that Mehbooba Mufti is safe and has proceeded towards her destination.

## Ex Police Officer Arrested For Violating Official Secrets Act

### Agencies

**JAMMU:** A former police officer has been arrested under the Official Secrets Act for publishing 'sensitive information' in his recently released book here, officials said on Saturday.

Retired Superintendent of Police Mohammad Aslam Sheikh was arrested from his residence at

Gandhi Nagar area of Jammu city late Friday night, the officials said.

They said Sheikh had joined the police as Assistant Sub-Inspector in 1986 and retired last year.

He had published a book which contained copies of First Information Reports and other sensitive information which violates the Official Secrets Act, the officials said.

## Shopkeeper Stabbed To Death In Ganderbal

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** A shopkeeper was stabbed to death at his shop in Perpora, Kachan area of Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Saturday, officials said.

Quoting an official, news agency KNO reported that a shopkeeper was attacked with a sharp-edged knife in Perpora Kachan, Ganderbal this afternoon, leaving

him severely injured.

He added that the man identified as Fayaz Ahmad Dar (32), son of Gh Haasan Dar, from Perpora Kachan, was taken to the hospital for treatment.

The official added that Fayaz Ahmad was shifted to SKIMS, Soura where he was declared brought dead on arrival. Meanwhile, police have taken up the investigation into the matter.

### LOK SABHA ELECTIONS 2024

## Distt Admin Bandipora Organizes Mega Event Under SVEEP At Picturesque Chittarnar



**BANDIPORA:** In a major last-mile effort to boost voter awareness and participation, a mega awareness programme was organized today under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative at picturesque Chitarnar Bandipora.

The event showcased a variety of cultural programmes emphasizing the importance of voting in a democratic society. It aimed to empower citizens with knowledge about their voting rights and responsibilities ahead of the Lok Sabha Elections-2024 scheduled for May 20, 2024, in Bandipora District, which is part of the 1-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency.

On the occasion, District Election Officer (DEO) Shakeel ul Rehman, along with Additional Deputy

Commissioner (ADC) Umar Shafi Pandit, Deputy District Election Officer (DyDEO) Mohammad Rafeeq, Padmashri Faisal Ali Dar, and other officials, flagged-off awareness vans to promote voter awareness and participation.

In his address, DEO highlighted the extensive range of activities organized under the SVEEP initiative to enhance voter engagement. The initiative witnessed a tremendous turnout of people from all age groups and different walks of life, marking a significant step towards creating a more informed and engaged electorate. He stressed the critical role of active voter participation in shaping the nation's future and the transformative power of informed decisions in strengthening democracy.

## Army Reviews Security Situation In South Kashmir

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General M V Suchindra Kumar on Saturday reviewed the security situation and counter-terror grid in south Kashmir.

"#LtGenMVSsuchindraKumar, #ArmyCdrNC accompanied by #ChinarCorps Cdr visited Victor Force to review the prevalent security situation," Army's Northern command said in a post on X.

Victor Force is the Army's counter terror force based in south Kashmir. The Army said the Northern commander was



briefed on the counter terrorism grid and operational preparedness of the force.

The Army Commander motivated the troops to remain in a

high state of operational alacrity to meet all forthcoming challenges and commended them for their high morale and vigil, the Army said.

## Amit Shah Visited Kashmir To Direct 'Proxies' Against NC: Omar

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah visited Kashmir to issue directions to the administration, the BJP and its "proxies" on defeating the National Conference, party leader Omar Abdullah alleged on Saturday.

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

Though his visit in the midst of Lok Sabha elections 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.

"We have not been able to understand yet what the aim of the (home minister's) visit was because the BJP has not fielded candidates here. First, there was a rumour that he had come for a security review meeting but no meeting took place," Abdullah told reporters in the Magam area of Central Kashmir's Budgam district.

The area is a part of the



Baramulla constituency, which the National Conference vice-president is contesting.

Abdullah claimed Shah's visit was aimed at giving "directions to the administration, BJP and its 'B', 'C', 'D' and 'E' teams on how to defeat the National Conference".

The BJP has not fielded its candidates for the three Lok Sabha seats in Kashmir but unofficially extended support to some of the new political parties formed after the abrogation of Article 370.

Abdullah, a former chief minister of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state, has been targeting the People's Conference, Apni Party, Democratic Progressive Azad Party and the People's Democratic Party throughout his campaign, calling them BJP's "proxy parties".

These parties have come to-

gether to defeat the National Conference on the directions of the BJP, he said. "But, by the grace of God, people are with us and we will prove that on June 4."

"Don't you think it is strange that the person who used to claim till yesterday that he will win the elections, his aim has now changed. Today, the People's Conference does not talk of winning the elections, it talks about defeating Omar Abdullah. This tells you that all these parties follow the BJP's instructions. Their only target is the National Conference," Abdullah said.

Asked about claims that the National Conference won elections in the Valley because of vote boycotts, Abdullah said the rival parties will now claim that the increase in voter turnout also favours his party.

"...our opponents had to find an excuse for that (electoral losses). They used to say the National Conference benefited from the boycott but now they will say that since the voting percentage increased, it also benefits the National Conference. What can I say to that?" he asked.

## DC Baramulla Urges Voters To Exercise Their Franchise

**BARAMULLA:** The Returning Officer (RO), 1-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency, Minga Sherpa today called a press conference and briefed the press regarding the arrangements put in place by the administration for successfully conducting the Lok Sabha elections in 1-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency.

During the press briefing, the RO assured the media that the administration has meticulously made all necessary arrangements to enhance the voting experience for citizens on 20th May, the day of polling in 1-Baramulla PC. These measures include ensuring ba-

sic amenities (AMFs) at polling stations, such as wheelchairs, ramps, and other facilities, to assist all voters and polling parties effectively.

Meanwhile, the RO emphasized the administration's dedicated efforts through the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative. These efforts included comprehensive voter awareness campaigns involving all communities across the parliamentary constituency with a primary goal to inspire and encourage all the eligible voters to actively engage in the electoral process.

Minga Sherpa further updated the press about the suc-

cessful completion of Home Voting process and appreciated the work done by the dedicated polling teams who visited the homes of senior citizens (85+) and Persons with Disabilities (PwD) voters to facilitate their participation in the democratic process, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for all eligible voters.

The RO through the medium of press strongly urged all the eligible voters of 1-Baramulla PC to come out in large numbers on 20th May, on the day of poll, and cast their votes to contribute to the success of this democratic process and shape the future of the nation.



## Pampore Residents Demand Shifting Of Dumping Site From Saffron Land

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The residents of Patal Bagh area of Pampore in South Kashmir's Pulwama district have demanded shifting of dumping site from saffron land so as to save the heritage crop of Kashmir.

The residents of the area told the news agency that authorities have been dumping garbage in the middle of the saffron land at Patal Bagh and that is having a negative impact on the saffron industry.

Irshad Ahmad, a known progressive farmer, said that authorities have been dumping garbage in state land in the middle of the saffron land that is attracting dogs and wild animals like porcupines, who are damaging saffron corns.

He said that the government should handover the state land to the floriculture department so that the garden will be developed there where tourists visiting saffron fields can rest.

He said that thousands of tourists have been visiting these fields but when there will be garbage, how will they visit there.

On one hand the government

has been claiming that they are taking steps to promote agro tourism but on the other hand dumping sites in saffron land is clearly against such claims, he said.

Dilshada Banoo, a local resident said that women folk are unable to visit their saffron fields due to the fear of dogs.

She said that if people won't visit and take care of land, saffron production will decrease day by day and very soon may lose this heritage crop.

She said that the government has taken various steps for the promotion and development of the saffron sector but dumping of garbage there is having a negative impact on this vital industry.

Locals said that dozens of youth have been earning their livelihood by selling saffron and other products to tourists visiting these fields but if the authorities continue to dump garbage there no body will visit there and people earning their livelihood will come on roads.

They said that they have brought this issue in notice of the concerned authorities and are hopeful that positive steps in this regard will be taken up.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

#### Issuance of DOB certificate

It is to notify all that i Javeed Ahmad Baba need to apply for issuance of birth certificate for my son Mohammad Uzair Baba R/o Pushwari Machil with DOB as 27-08-2013.

If anybody has any objection with regard he/she may kindly approach the tehsil office within seven days of issuance of this notice.

Mohammad Uzair Baba S/o Javeed Ahmad Baba  
Mother name: Atiqah Begum.  
R/o Pushwari Machil.  
DOB 27-08-2013

INFO

Subject: - Grant of Registration of Paying Guest House/ Home stay under the name and style "AEROHOME STAY " Situated at Sheikhpora Humhama Budgam

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Where, I Mr. Malik Zada Towfeeq S/O Mohd Sikander Malik R/O Lisser Chawalgam Anantnag A/P Sheikhpora Humhama Budgam Kashmir, intends to apply in the office of Prescribed Authority of Directorate of Tourism Kashmir for registration of my proposed Paying Guest House /Home Stay under the name and style AEROHOME STAY Situated at Sheikhpora Humhama Budgam Kashmir under the Tourist Trade Act 1928/82/2011.

Whereas, I will submit Landownership Certificate from Concerned Tehsildar with attested photographs of the unit through Dy. Commissioner concerned, Rent/Lease Deed/Partnership Deed/issued by concerned Sub-Registrar, Judicial Magistrate (if applicable NOC from the owner to the effect that the property can be used as Home stay), Character Certificate of the applicant from the concerned Police Station, undertaking from the owner as self declaration, Public Notice inviting objections , if any in print media, list of family members Name, Age, and Photograph self attested by owner, Photographs of the unit as mentioned in the application (each of exterior and individual bed rooms and bathrooms), Inspection report by the Committee (The recommendation of the inspection Committee shall decide whether to issue a registration to the unit or not keeping in view, the type of accommodation and amenity, adhar card.

Now before my case is processed for registration by the Prescribed Authority. The matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/organizations for objections if any and the same should reach to the office of Prescribed Authority within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper of the Valley. Objections received beyond the period of 7 days from the date of publication shall not be entertained and the case shall be processed under rules as per merit.

NJ



# Yes, UPSC Is Good But There Are Far Better Options

Ummar Jamal

“

**The disparity in coverage raises concerns about society's fixation on UPSC, overshadowing other remarkable accomplishments. Securing the Rhodes scholarship is as noteworthy as cracking UPSC, yet our societal narrative remains fixated on the latter. If a person who finds his name at the bottom of the selection list makes headlines, why doesn't a remarkable feat like getting a Rhodes scholarship even find mention in the last pages of newspapers?**

In Indian society, only few achievements hold as much sway and reverence as cracking Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) examination. UPSC is often hailed as the gateway to a prestigious career in the civil services, promising power, influence, and a sense of societal impact. However, amidst the fervor and frenzy surrounding this exam, it's essential to acknowledge the reality: UPSC is over-hyped, and it's not the end of the world if one doesn't crack it.

While UPSC is a prestigious service but we must understand that there are many other which are far better. Had it not been so, Syed Sabahat Azim, Rajan Singh, Pravesh Sharma, Roman Saini, Vivek Kulkarni, Sanjay Gupta, GV Roa would not have left civil service to become entrepreneurs. Our youth must understand that while UPSC may have an upper limit to take a stipulated number of civil service aspirants per year, there is no limit as to how many youth may become entrepreneurs per year.

It's crucial to recognize that UPSC is just one avenue among many for ways for serving and making a meaningful contribution to society. There are countless individuals who, despite not clearing UPSC, have excelled in their respective fields and brought about positive change in their communities. Success should not be measured solely by one's ability to clear a standardized exam but by the impact one creates in their chosen sphere of influence. Had Kapil Sibal not left civil service to start a career in law, he would never dreamt of achieving what he achieved after leaving the service.

UPSC is quite over-hyped. For instance, this year, two Kashmiris achieved a monumental feat by receiving the prestigious Rhodes scholarship, considered the epitome of academic excellence globally. Despite its significance, all major local newspapers overlooked this achievement. Had it been about UPSC, headlines would have flooded the papers. The disparity in coverage raises concerns about society's fixation on UPSC, overshadowing other remarkable accomplishments. Securing the Rhodes scholarship is as noteworthy as cracking UPSC, yet our societal narrative remains fixated on the latter. If a person who finds his name at the bottom of selection list makes headlines, why doesn't a remarkable feat like getting Rhodes scholarship even find mention in the last pages of newspapers? This reflects as how we as a society has become obsessed with UPSC, which is taking a heavy toll on intellectual growth of our youth. They are not able to think beyond UPSC.

We should leave the over obsession with UPSC. There are innumerable ways though which we can do a lot for society and for ourselves. There are numerous avenues where individuals can make a



A still from the hit Bollywood movie 12th fail, based on a true story of a UPSC aspirant's journey to success

meaningful difference, be it in entrepreneurship, research, arts, social work, or even in unconventional fields like sports and entertainment. There are limited number of seats in UPSC CSE examination. Lakhs of students every years prepare for the exam and only few hundreds make to the list. While we should recognise the hard work and competence of those who qualified, we must not make the unsuccessful candidates feel failure in UPSC was end of their world. And the basic issue is we must not over hype UPSC to a way where our youth find UPSC as the only thing to do in world. Glorification of UPSC often overshadows the multitude of career paths available outside the civil services. While being a civil servant is undoubtedly prestigious and impactful, it's not the only way to contribute to society or achieve success.

The focus on UPSC as the ultimate measure of success perpetuates a narrow definition of achievement. Success should not be solely defined by one's ability to clear a particular exam or enter a particular profession. It's about personal fulfillment, growth, and the positive impact one can make in the world, regardless of the career path chosen.

UPSC requires a particular skillset and qualities from an individual, say patience, consistency etc. A person may be intellectually very sound, but would well still flunk in UPSC examination. We have over-hyped UPSC to such a level that those who fail to qualify it, society starts judging their

intellect and competence, which in turn pushes them to self-doubt.

It's essential to debunk the myth that failing to crack UPSC equates to failure in life. Many successful individuals have pursued alternative careers and thrived, contributing significantly to society in their own capacities. Each person has unique strengths, passions, and talents that can be channeled into diverse fields, beyond the confines of the civil services.

While UPSC undoubtedly holds significance in the Indian context, it's crucial to recognize that it's not the be-all and end-all of one's journey. It's time to dispel the over-hyped narrative surrounding UPSC and embrace the multitude of opportunities available. Success comes in various forms, and it's essential to carve out a path that aligns with one's passions, values, and aspirations, irrespective of whether it involves cracking a particular exam or not.

*Author is a Kashmir based columnist. He tweets at ummar\_jamal and can be reached at umajamal968@gmail.com*

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

## The US, India, And Detering China

Even if the US takes an “allies first” approach in the Indo-Pacific to keep Chinese expansion under control, it is still in non-aligned India's favour.

Anita Inder Singh,

For the US, it is allies first in the Indo-Pacific, not non-aligned India. The US wants to deter Chinese expansionism in Asia. In early April, China's provocation to the Philippines, one of its oldest post-1945 allies, was the immediate precursor to the idea of creating a deterrent. China then fired water cannons towards Philippine vessels in the South China Sea. Chinese ships and planes had also been crossing the Taiwan Strait for some time.

The US had already been constructing a new quadrilateral group—the “Squad”—distinct from the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue in which India is the only non-ally. Japan, Australia, and the US are the other members. For the moment, the Squad will comprise old allies dating from the cold war, including the US, Japan, Australia, and the Philippines.

The Quad is not about deterrence but discusses certain issues. In terms of deterring China with other members and economic capacity to do so, India is the weakest link there. Now, the US and its allies are highlighting military substance. Joint statements issued after the past three Quad leaders' summits have included references to “peace” and “stability” but have never mentioned deterrence.

Japan and the Philippines are now the pillars of the US' anti-China military deterrent. The new deterrent highlights the meaning of an alliance with binding commitments. The Philippines

reinforces both commitment and strategic alignment to the Squad. It is also in the midst of a \$35 billion military modernisation program and aims to become a fully-fledged “middle power” with technologically advanced naval and air forces.

The Philippines may give the US and other Squad members greater access to its northernmost provinces, which are just 88 miles away from Taiwan. Such access could become a military necessity in the event of China trying to invade Taiwan, although all countries recognise Taiwan as part of China under the One-China Principle and do not accord it diplomatic recognition as a state.

The allies also want to deter China's intimidating “grey zone” tactics in the South China Sea. Such tactics are threatening and raise fears of war. The US has therefore reiterated its mutual defence treaty obligations, dating from 1951, to the Philippines. Washington will also coordinate various diplomatic, economic and military counter-measures to confront Chinese imperialism in the international waters of the South China Sea. In the meantime, the Squad sends a reminder to China that the Philippines is not alone. Apart from being an US treaty ally, the Philippines also has special military agreements with Australia and Japan. Together, all four countries will strengthen interoperability and coordination to deter China's territorial prowling.

The Squad will be further strengthened by the end of Japan's post-1945 pacifism and decision to militarise af-



ter Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. As one of the most economically advanced Asian countries, Japan is expected to become the world's third largest military power within the next five years and will establish itself as Asia's counterpoise to China. The Quad will remain, but India's top priorities will still be its border disputes with China and Pakistan.

Neither the US nor its Asia-Pacific allies can take peace for granted. Washington and its NATO allies have lost some credibility by their slow delivery of weapons to a war-ravaged Ukraine. That stands out as an example of the military and humanitarian disasters that have occurred when the US and its divided European allies have failed to give timely aid to Ukraine against an aggrandising Russia which has bro-

ken international law.

“Ukraine today may be East Asia tomorrow”, warned Japanese prime minister Fumio Kishida in June 2022. The US' Asian allies have joined Tokyo in condemning Russia's assault on Ukraine and Japan has imposed sanctions on Russia.

In contrast, Indo-US relations have not been at their best, in view of India's refusal to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Delhi's continued buying of large quantities of Russian oil, for which it is paying in Chinese yuan, US dollars and UAE dirhams. Recent Indian hopes of a Quad summit and Biden's attendance at the Republic Day parade on 26 January were dashed because of his busy schedule, which included his March 7 State of the Union address

and Kishida's official visit to Washington on April 10.

At another level, the US State Department chronicles India's declining democracy, much to Delhi's annoyance. Additionally, the US and Canada believe that Indian intelligence masterminded assassination operations against their citizens for extremism. In 2020 Australian Security Intelligence concluded that Indian intelligence officers carried out surveillance of Khalistani separatists in their country. New Delhi's denials and expressed willingness to cooperate in investigations have yet to clear the air with any of these friendly countries.

Unlike Europe, the US' Asian allies are already strengthening their military capabilities, but they cannot replace US power. China is the main security threat to many of its Asian neighbours and to the stability of the Indo-Pacific.

Any deterrence against China, involving the US and its Asian allies, will be of help to non-aligned India. Strategically autonomous India should upgrade its own border defences. It should also pay attention to the east, as its distant Asian friends, with whom it does not have strong military or economic ties, tighten old alliances with the US and each other.

*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*





# PATHOLOGICAL OVER-PARENTING

## A Review of the Movie “Run” by Aneesh Chaganty

MUGEES UL KAISAR

Parenting is inherently a problematic affair simply because the child is, fundamentally, torn between two worlds: inner drives and the outer reality. Parenting becomes more problematic when it does not receive proper critical attention. Parenting may always miss the mark and it can only become worse by neglect or overprotection. The latter two are – what we may refer to as – forms of toxic parenting. The toxic parenting of denial where the child is treated with indifference and insignificance needs a separate discussion in and of itself. Here, in this review, let us focus on the other form and that is “over-protection”. As the saying goes, “I killed a plant once because I gave it too much water; Lord, I worry that love is violence”.

A mother, naturally, more often than not, is extremely loving towards the child. It might take an effort to suffer the distance from the child whereas love comes more naturally. (Again, we are not dealing here with the opposite pathologies where malevolence comes more naturally.) But the downside, rather, the paradox, of an extremely loving mother is that she, unintentionally, to be sure, turns into a “devouring mother”. The mother loves her child to the extent that the child is left absolutely incapable to later face the real world which is not mother-like. The world is the plane of strife and struggle; the fray. A child who is either completely forsaken (as Gabor Maté usually warns) or completely embraced (here, Maté seems to lose nuance) will not be able to properly engage with the imperfect & contingent world that it has to inevitably enter into & contend with. A child needs a sufficient amount of skill set (both physical and psychological) to face the world. This is possible only if the child is gradually provided with its own independent space & exposure. The child has to learn the requisite interface with the world one way or the other; over-protective parenting ensures that the child learns it the hard way – in a far more painful way, with shock, at the face of reality which



The movie brilliantly captures this in one of the most unnerving scenes of the movie where the daughter asks her mother, “You poisoned me?” and the mother replies, “I protected you”; it is exactly this unchecked urge to overprotect that forgets to gradually leave appropriate independent space for the child to grow and enter into the world

is not necessarily embracing or loving.

Over-protective parenting can lead to a sort of an enduring “mother complex” due to which the child remains ever dependent on the unconscious expectations of love & mercy from the external reality/others which may not reciprocate like the mother/parent/caretaker. Mother-complex creates escapism. Just because one fails in something in life, as most certainly everyone inevitably does, one descends into a feeling of “abandonment” simply because the person hasn’t consciously realized the dif-

ference between parent and the world; the person expects the world to function like a parent. Just the simple conscious act of realization that the sphere of the world is far more complex, greater and larger, outside the fortress of parental protection (outside the Buddha’s heaven created by his father), can to a large extent cure a sudden, shocking & resentful reaction at – supposedly – “mal-functioning” world.

Aneesh Chaganty’s Run is a brilliant cinematic portrayal of this very problem at our disposal. The movie is a horrific narration

of how a mother cripples her daughter (a deeper spoiler avoided here) just to keep her in her house permanently by her side. In this film, we can most lucidly see as to how our dreams convert meaning contents into symbolic representations. Toxic overprotection, in the movie, is symbolically transposed into the mother secretly feeding dog medicine (in the form of pills) i.e. “poison” to her daughter which, medically, is supposed to cripple her by interfering with her neural biology. Over-protection is literally transposed into “poison” here. The story basically conveys

the point that over-protecting the child, no doubt done out of love, to keep the child (even after gradually but surely breaking free of infancy and childhood) under constant supervision, actually amounts to poisoning the child with incompetency and dependency.

The movie brilliantly captures this in one of the most unnerving scenes of the movie where the daughter asks her mother, “You poisoned me?” and the mother replies, “I protected you”; it is exactly this unchecked urge to overprotect that forgets to gradually leave appropriate independent space for the child to grow and enter into the world.

The psychology of the devouring mother archetype goes like this: I will dedicate my whole life and being to my child with no other preoccupations; once I fully invest myself in the child, then there is nothing left in me (as an independent person) or for me as a significant meaning in life except my child and therefore I will necessarily need my child forever; as the mother in the movie, in one of the scenes, malevolently says to the daughter, “You’ll be my baby forever”. For a baby to become adult, baby has to die. A mother having no other significant reality attached to her life or no other deeper alternate meaning (& independence) is more vulnerable to this loving but unintentionally damaging relationship towards the child. The movie brilliantly captures this idea, when in one of the intense scenes, the daughter replies to her mother, “You didn’t do this for me. You did this for you”. Alfred Hitchcock’s classic masterpiece The Birds, among other critical themes, also portrays the typical case of a “devouring mother” with similar genesis of a lack of an alternate substantial meaning and engagement in life.

The meaning and the significance of the title should not be lost on us. It is not just that the kid has to escape the devouring mother, but she has to now “run” or learn to run by coming out of her crippled stage to face the outer world. Towards the end of the movie, when the daughter visits the mother in a hospital, where she has been moved to after a bloody encounter with police, finally says to her, “I think it is time for me to go”.

# Dune’s Eco Activism

Devin Griffiths

“Dune,” widely considered one of the best sci-fi novels of all time, continues to influence how writers, artists and inventors envision the future.

Of course, there are Denis Villeneuve’s visually stunning films, “Dune: Part One” (2021) and “Dune: Part Two” (2024).

But Frank Herbert’s masterpiece also helped Afrofuturist novelist Octavia Butler imagine a future of conflict amid environmental catastrophe; it inspired Elon Musk to build SpaceX and Tesla and push humanity toward the stars and a greener future; and it’s hard not to see parallels in George Lucas’ “Star Wars” franchise, especially their fascination with desert planets and giant worms.

And yet when Herbert sat down in 1963 to start writing “Dune,” he wasn’t thinking about how to leave Earth behind. He was thinking about how to save it.

Herbert wanted to tell a story about the environmental crisis on our own planet, a world driven to the edge of ecological catastrophe. Technologies that had been inconceivable just 50 years prior had put the world at the edge of nuclear war and the environment on the brink of collapse; massive industries were sucking wealth from the ground and spewing toxic fumes into the sky.

When the book was published, these themes were front and center for readers, too. After all, they were living in the wake of both the Cuban missile crisis and the publication of “Silent Spring,” conservationist Rachel Carson’s landmark study of pollution and its threat to the environment and human health.

“Dune” soon became a beacon for the fledgling environmental movement and a rallying

flag for the new science of ecology.

### Indigenous wisdoms

Though the term “ecology” had been coined almost a century earlier, the first textbook on ecology was not written until 1953, and the field was rarely mentioned in newspapers or magazines at the time. Few readers had heard of the emerging science, and even fewer knew what it suggested about the future of our planet.

While studying “Dune” for a book I’m writing on the history of ecology, I was surprised to learn that Herbert didn’t learn about ecology as a student or as a journalist.

Instead, he was inspired to explore ecology by the conservation practices of the tribes of the Pacific Northwest. He learned about them from two friends in particular.

The first was Wilbur TERNYIK, a descendant of Chief Coboway, the Clatsop leader who welcomed explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark when their expedition reached the West Coast in 1805. The second, Howard Hansen, was an art teacher and oral historian of the Quileute tribe.

Ternyik, who was also an expert field ecologist, took Herbert on a tour of Oregon’s dunes in 1958. There, he explained his work to build massive dunes of sand using beach grasses and other deep-rooted plants in order to prevent the sands from blowing into the nearby town of Florence – a terraforming technology described at length in “Dune.”

As TERNYIK explains in a handbook he wrote for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, his work in Oregon was part of an effort to heal landscapes scarred by European colonization, especially the large river jetties built by early

settlers.

These structures disturbed coastal currents and created vast expanses of sand, turning stretches of the lush Pacific Northwest landscape into desert. This scenario is echoed in “Dune,” where the novel’s setting, the planet Arrakis, was similarly laid to waste by its first colonizers.

Hansen, who became the godfather to Herbert’s son, had closely studied the equally drastic impact logging had on the homelands of the Quileute people in coastal Washington. He encouraged Herbert to examine ecology carefully, giving him a copy of Paul B. Sears’ “Where There is Life,” from which Herbert gathered one of his favorite quotes: “The highest function of science is to give us an understanding of consequences.”

The Fremen of “Dune,” who live in the deserts of Arrakis and carefully manage its ecosystem and wildlife, embody these teachings. In the fight to save their world, they expertly blend ecological science and Indigenous practices.

### Treasures hidden in the sand

But the work that had the most profound impact on “Dune” was Leslie Reid’s 1962 ecological study “The Sociology of Nature.”

In it, Reid explained ecology and ecosystem science for a popular audience, illustrating the complex interdependence of all creatures within the environment.

“The more deeply ecology is studied,” Reid writes, “the clearer does it become that mutual dependence is a governing principle, that animals are bound to one another by unbreakable ties of dependence.”

In the pages of Reid’s book, Herbert found

a model for the ecosystem of Arrakis in a surprising place: the guano islands of Peru. As Reid explains, the accumulated bird droppings found on these islands was an ideal fertilizer. Home to mountains of manure described as a new “white gold” and one of the most valuable substances on Earth, the guano islands became in the late 1800s ground zero for a series of resource wars between Spain and several of its former colonies, including Peru, Bolivia, Chile and Ecuador.

At the heart of the plot of “Dune” is a battle for control of the “spice,” a priceless resource. Harvested from the sands of the desert planet, it’s both a luxurious flavoring for food and a hallucinogenic drug that allows some people to bend space, making interstellar travel possible.

There is some irony in the fact that Herbert cooked up the idea of spice from bird droppings. But he was fascinated by Reid’s careful account of the unique and efficient ecosystem that produced a valuable – albeit noxious – commodity.

As the ecologist explains, frigid currents in the Pacific Ocean push nutrients to the surface of nearby waters, helping photosynthetic plankton thrive. These support an astounding population of fish that feed hordes of birds, along with whales.

In early drafts of “Dune,” Herbert combined all of these stages into the life cycle of the giant sandworms, football field-sized monsters that prowl the desert sands and devour everything in their path.

Herbert imagines each of these terrifying creatures beginning as small, photosynthetic plants that grow into larger “sand trout.” Eventually, they become immense sandworms that churn the desert sands, spewing spice onto the surface.

In both the book and “Dune: Part One,” soldier Gurney Halleck recites a cryptic verse that comments on this inversion of marine life and arid regimes of extraction: “For they shall suck of the abundance of the seas and of the treasure hid in the sand.”

### ‘Dune’ revolutions

After “Dune” was published in 1965, the environmental movement eagerly embraced it.

Herbert spoke at Philadelphia’s first Earth Day in 1970, and in the first edition of the Whole Earth Catalog – a famous DIY manual and bulletin for environmental activists – “Dune” was advertised with the tagline: “The metaphor is ecology. The theme revolution.”

In the opening of Denis Villeneuve’s first adaptation, “Dune,” Chani, an indigenous Fremen played by Zendaya, asks a question that anticipates the violent conclusion of the second film: “Who will our next oppressors be?”

The immediate cut to a sleeping Paul Atreides, the white protagonist who’s played by Timothée Chalamet, drives the pointed anti-colonial message home like a knife. In fact, both of Villeneuve’s movies expertly elaborate upon the anti-colonial themes of Herbert’s novels.

Unfortunately, the edge of their environmental critique is blunted. But Villeneuve has suggested that he might also adapt “Dune Messiah” for his next film in the series – a novel in which the ecological damage to Arrakis is glaringly obvious.

I hope Herbert’s prescient ecological warning, which resonated so powerfully with readers back in the 1960s, will be unsheathed in “Dune 3.”

By arrangements with The Conversation



# 'Climate Change Likely To Impact People With Brain Conditions'

Press Trust Of India

Climate change is likely to negatively affect the health of people suffering from brain conditions such as migraine and Alzheimer's, new research published in The Lancet Neurology journal has found.

Extreme temperatures, both low and high, and greater changes over the course of the day -- driven by climate change -- were shown to have an impact on brain diseases, explained lead researcher Sanjay Sisodiya from the University of College London's Institute of Neurology, UK.

"Night-time temperatures may be particularly important as higher temperatures through the night can disrupt sleep. Poor sleep is known to aggravate a number of brain conditions," he said.

The study, reviewing 332 papers published from around the world between 1968 and 2023, looked at 19 different nervous system conditions, including stroke, migraine, Alzheimer's, meningitis, epilepsy and multiple sclerosis.

The researchers found an increased



number of admissions, disabilities or deaths resulting from a stroke due to higher temperatures or heatwaves.

They also said that people having dementia are vulnerable to damage from extreme temperatures and extreme weather events such as floods and wildfires as cognitive impairment can limit their ability to adapt to envi-

ronmental changes.

The team also examined how climate change impacted several serious yet common psychiatric disorders, including anxiety, depression and schizophrenia.

Sisodiya said that climate anxiety was "an added, potentially weighty influence".

"Many brain conditions are associated with a higher risk of psychiatric

disorders, including anxiety, and such multimorbidities can further complicate impacts of climate change and the adaptations necessary to preserve health," he said.

With extreme weather events becoming more severe and global temperatures rising, the researchers acknowledged that people are being exposed to worsening environmental factors that may not have been severe enough to affect brain conditions in some of the earlier studies they reviewed as part of the analysis.

Therefore, they said, it was important to ensure that research is up to date, and looks at not only the present state of climate change but also the future.

"This work is taking place against a worrying worsening of climatic conditions and it will need to remain agile and dynamic if it is to generate information that is of use to both individuals and organisations," said Sisodiya.

Forward planning is made more challenging as few studies estimate the consequences for brain diseases under future climate scenarios, he said.

# Healthcare Privatisation Linked With Worse Outcomes, Higher Profits: Lancet

Press Trust Of India

Privatisation of healthcare was found to almost never have a positive effect on the quality of care, and was associated with higher profits, a research that reviewed previous studies of high-income countries (HICs) such as the US, Germany, Canada, and South Korea has claimed.

Researchers said the findings, published in The Lancet Public Health journal, challenged the theory that privatisation can improve the quality of healthcare through increased market competition, and by enabling a more flexible and patient-centred approach.

In their analysis, the researchers, led by those at the University of Oxford, UK, included long-term studies looking at increase in private providers and measuring quality of care, eventually effecting health outcomes.

The researchers also found that the higher profits at hospitals, converting from publicly-owned to privately-owned, mainly came from reducing staff and lowering the number of patients having limited health insurance coverage.

Higher levels of hospital privatisation were linked to higher rates of avoidable deaths, the authors found in some of the studies they reviewed.

As governments around the

world consider their response to the continuing consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on healthcare systems, the authors found evidence suggesting a risk that governments seek short-term reductions at the expense of long-term outcomes.

"There is a risk, however, that seeking short-term reductions can come at the expense of long-term outcomes, since outsourcing services to the private sector does not seem to deliver both better care and cheaper care," said study co-author Aaron Reeves, from the Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford.

Outsourcing of services is a popular form of privatisation in which

a publicly-funded service maintains the decision-making powers, but contracts a private organisation for fulfilling agreed services. The researchers found evidence suggesting that outsourcing tends to worsen health outcomes.

Despite looking at HICs, the study is "very much relevant" to India, a low- and middle-income country, according to a health policy and systems researcher, Vikash R. Keshri.

"As the HICs with their robust regulation and governance could not optimise the private sector for equitable healthcare, the LMICs with not-so-strong regulation and institutional framework are expected to struggle," Keshri told PTI.

## Scholarships This Week

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

**Scholarship Name**  
Mirae Asset Foundation Scholarship Program 2024-25

**Description:** Mirae Asset Foundation invites applications from students who are currently pursuing undergraduate or postgraduate courses across India.

**Eligibility:** Open to students who are currently pursuing undergraduate or postgraduate courses across India. Applicants must have scored at least 60% in the previous academic year. The annual family income of the applicants must not exceed INR 8,00,000.

- Prizes & Rewards: Scholarships up to INR 50,000
- Last Date to Apply: 26-06-2024
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/MAFSI](http://www.b4s.in/observer/MAFSI)

**Scholarship Name**  
Aspire Leaders Program 2024

**Description:** The global Aspire Leaders Program is a fully funded 14-week online leadership program offered by the Aspire Institute. It has been designed to help students unlock their potential and become well-rounded professionals.

**Eligibility:** This program is open for students within the age group of 18-29 years. The annual household income of the applicants should be less than 8,00,000. Only first-generation learners are eligible to apply for the program. Participants who have enrolled in or completed an undergraduate program in the last three

years can apply. Applicants must have an intermediate level of proficiency in English.

- Prizes & Rewards: Free access to training modules, live sessions by Harvard faculty, and much more
- Last Date to Apply: 03-07-2024
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/ALPSI](http://www.b4s.in/observer/ALPSI)

**Scholarship Name**  
India Fellow Social Leadership Program 2024-25

**Description:** India Fellow Social Leadership Program 2024-25 is an opportunity offered by the India Fellow for graduate students and young professionals between 20 and 30 years of age. It is an 18-month leadership program designed to help participants develop their skills and make a positive impact on communities.

**Eligibility:** Open for Indian citizens aged between 20 to 30 years. Applicants must be graduates in any discipline or about to complete graduation by the fellowship start date. Students must be ready for an 18-month full-time commitment to the fellowship and prepared to be placed in any part of the country and any thematic area.

- Prizes & Rewards: A monthly stipend of up to 22,000 and other benefits
- Last Date to Apply: 31-05-2024
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/IFSA2](http://www.b4s.in/observer/IFSA2)

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My DOB has been wrongly written in my school records as 7-7-2011 while my correct DOB is 7-7-2010 which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Principal Islamic Leek Model School Takiya Batpora within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Muzammil Ahmad Wani  
S/o Mohd Ashraf Wani  
R/o Kamcha Mattipora Karhama Barmullah

bmg

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change the name of ward in school records from

	Name	Father's Name	Mothers Name
Old details	Ajwa	Nisar Ahmad	Rubeena Yousuf
New details	Maryam	Peerzada Nisar Ahmad	Rubina Yousuf

More the DOB of my ward has been wrongly written in the school records at the time of admission as 25-05-2016 while the correct DOB is 25-05-2018 which needs to be rectified. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Principal Crescent Hr. Sec Institute Budshah Nagar Natipora Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Rubina Yousuf W/o Peerzada Nisar Ahmad  
R/o Trenz Shopian A/P Iqbal Colony, Natipora Srinagar

fko

Subject:-Grant of Registration of the Proposed Travel unit under the name and style "M/S Apex Holiday Tours & Travel" Situated at Gole market Karan Nagar Srinagar.

### Public Notice

Whereas, I Mr/Ms Shazia Zubair S/O D/O W/O Zubair Ahmad Shora R/O Bagati Kanipora Nowgam Srinagar, Kashmir intends to apply in the Department of Tourism for the Registration of my proposed Travel unit under the name and style "M/S Apex Holiday Tours & Travel" Situated at Gole Market Karan Nagar Srinagar, Kashmir under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12. Whereas, I will submit State Subject/Domicile Certificate, 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/Organization, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director: Tourism Registration (e-mail [ld-ddtreg/123@gmail.com](mailto:ld-ddtreg/123@gmail.com)) within a period of 21 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/newspapers of the valley. No objections beyond a period of 21 days shall be entertained.

Media Line

(Government of Jammu &amp; Kashmir)

## Office Of The District Magistrate / District Election Officer Kupwara

Subject: General Elections to Lok Sabha 2024-Declaration of "Dry Day" thereof.

Reference: Chief Electoral Officer's letter No. CEO-ELECCOCOF/27/2024- 1/2420- 45 dated 21-03-2024 regarding Election to Lok Sabha, 2024 - PHASE WISE DRY DAY- regarding

## ORDER

**WHEREAS**, the Election Commission of India announced the schedule for holding General Election to Lok Sabha vide press Notes No. ECL/PN/23/2024 and No. ECI/PN/24/2024 dated 16-03-2024.

**AND WHEREAS**, Chief Electoral Officer, J&K has communicated vide above referred communication mentioning therein that Date of Poll Day and Date of Counting be declared as Dry Days on the scheduled dates of Poll and Counting in respective constituencies/Districts.

**AND WHEREAS**, under Section 135-C of the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951 provides that:

"No spirituous, fermented or intoxicating liquor or other substances of a like nature shall be sold, given or distributed at a hotel, eating house, tavern, shop or any other place, public or private, within a polling area during the period of forty- eight hours ending with the hour fixed for the conclusion of the poll in that polling area." for any election"

**IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE** and in terms of Section 47 of Jammu and Kashmir Excise Act 1958, I, **Ayushi Sudan, IAS, District Magistrate Kupwara** do hereby order that "DRY DAY" shall be observed in District Kupwara for 48 hours from **06:00PM on 18-05-2024 to 06:00 PM on 20-05-2024** and on the Day of Counting i.e. **04-06-2024**.

Further, the following shall be strictly observed within the District Kupwara on the Dry Days as per afore-mentioned schedule:

- The liquor shops/Liquor Bars/liquor Trades, operating within the District on the designated dry days shall remain closed as per schedule.
- No liquor shall be served in Hotels, Restaurants, Clubs and other establishments, on the scheduled dry days, located within the territorial jurisdiction of District Kupwara.
- Non-Proprietary Clubs, Star Hotels, Restaurants etc. and hotels functioning under different categories of licenses for possession and supply of liquor shall not be permitted to serve liquor on the designated Dry Days within the territorial jurisdiction of District Kupwara .

- Non- Proprietary clubs, star Hotels, Restaurants etc and hotels functioning under different categories of licenses for possession and supply of liquor shall not be permitted to serve liquor on the designated dry days within the territorial jurisdiction of District Kupwara.

Failure to comply shall invite penal action as envisaged under law.

Given under my hand and seal of this office, today on **18<sup>th</sup> of May, 2024**.

No: DCK/PS/2024/209/1139-47  
DIPK-570/24  
Dated: 18-05-2024

District Magistrate,  
Kupwara

(Government of Jammu &amp; Kashmir)

## Office Of The District Magistrate / District Election Officer Kupwara

Subject: Conduct of General Elections to Lok Sabha 2024-Imposition of Restrictions under Section **144 Cr.PC**-regarding

## ORDER

**WHEREAS**, the Polling (Phase-5<sup>th</sup> ) for General Elections to Lok Sabha-2024 for 1- Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency is scheduled on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024;

**AND WHEREAS**, it is essential to conduct the Elections in free, fair and transparent manner and it is equally important to maintain public peace, order and tranquility as per the Law and Model Code of Conduct, as applicable with effect from **16-03-2024**.

**AND WHEREAS**, under Section **126** of the Representation of **Peoples Act 1951**, no public meetings, processions, musical concert or rally or any kind of propagation of any election matter for campaigning or electioneering is to be allowed in the last 48 hours from **06:00 PM on 18-05-2024 to 06:00 PM on 20-05-2024**;

**AND WHEREAS**, I am satisfied that the circumstances do not permit to serve the notices individually upon the persons against whom this order is directed and therefore, under the powers vested in me under sub section (2) of Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973, hereby pass the order ex parte;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ayushi Sudan, IAS, District Magistrate, Kupwara** in exercise of the powers vested in me under the provisions of **Section 144 of CrPC. 1973**, do hereby order that From **06:00 PM of 18-05-2024 to 06:00 PM of 20-05-2024** in the jurisdiction of District Kupwara .

- There shall be complete ban on holding of public meetings.
- There shall be complete ban on gathering of 05 or more persons.
- There shall be complete ban on use of loudspeakers:
- Any other prohibitions as envisaged in Hon'ble ECI's instructions and guidelines also to be observed during 48 hours silence period.

The undersigned further direct that this order shall not apply to the public servant on duty and to bonafide marriage, funeral processions or any other such functions.

Also this order shall not apply to the officers authorized for Election Duty by District Election Officer, Kupwara or the UT Government/Central Government including the Polling Officers /Magistrates/Police Officers/Government Staff.

Failing to comply with this order shall be liable for necessary action under Section 188 of Indian Penal Code, 1860 and other relevant provisions of law in force.

**This order shall be applicable within the territorial jurisdiction of District Kupwara.**

This shall remain in force till **20<sup>th</sup> May 2024**.

Given under my hand and seal of this office, today on 18<sup>th</sup> of May, 2024.

No: DCK/PS/2024/209/1148-56  
DIPK-569/24  
Dated: 18-05-2024

District Magistrate,  
Kupwara



## India, UK Reaffirm FTA Commitment At Strategic Dialogue

Press Trust Of India

**LONDON:** India and Britain have reaffirmed their commitment to conclude a mutually beneficial free trade agreement (FTA) at the annual UK-India Strategic Dialogue here, as the two sides reflected the "good progress" on the 2030 Roadmap since the last review.

Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra, who is on a visit to the UK, held discussions with his counterpart, Sir Philip Barton, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) on Friday. After their meeting, the FCDO said the two leaders reviewed the progress made on the UK-India 2030 Roadmap since the last strategic dialogue in January last year and looked ahead to the next phase of bilateral cooperation.

"The two reflected on good progress on the 2030 Roadmap since the last review, noting key areas where the UK and India have worked together to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges," the FCDO said in a statement.

"This included collaborating on the world's first malaria vaccine, working closely on India's successful G20 Presidency and increasing opportunities for students and entrepreneurs



under the Migration and Mobility Partnership. Alongside celebrating the milestones since the last review, this year's dialogue included the ongoing commitment to negotiate a mutually beneficial free trade agreement (FTA), and enhance defence cooperation," the statement added.

The India-UK FTA negotiations, which opened in January 2022, are aimed at significantly enhancing bilateral trade – currently worth around 38.1 billion pounds a year as per official statistics from earlier this year. The talks are now in their 14th round of talks, going at a slower pace during the phased Indian general elections.

Earlier, the High Commission of India in London said Kwatra also had a "fruitful meeting" with UK Minister of State for Defence Procurement James Cartlidge, during which they discussed ongoing India-UK defence capability cooperation initiatives and avenues for future collaboration.

## Markets End Special Trading Session With Gains



Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI:** Equity benchmark indices closed the special trading session on a firm note on Saturday, extending their rally to the third day running amid fresh foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 88.91 points or 0.12 per cent to end at 74,005.94. During the session, it jumped 245.73 points or 0.33 per cent to 74,162.76. The NSE Nifty advanced 35.90 points or 0.16 per cent to 22,502.

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) and BSE on May 7 said they will conduct a special trading session in the equity and equity derivative segments on May 18 to check their preparedness for handling major disruptions or failures at the primary site.

The special live trading session will have an intra-day switchover from the Primary Site (PR) to the Disaster Recovery (DR) site.

In separate circulars, the two

exchanges said there will be two sessions -- the first from 9:15 am to 10 am from the PR, and the second from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm from the DR site.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies reached an all-time peak of Rs 4,12,36,791.05 crore in the special trading session.

Among the Sensex components, Nestle, Power Grid, Tata Motors, Tata Consultancy Services, HCL Technologies, Hindustan Unilever and State Bank of India were the major gainers.

JSW Steel, Mahindra & Mahindra, Maruti and Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the laggards.

Wall Street ended mostly higher on Friday.

"The Dow Jones Industrial Average has hit 40,000 for the first time, buoyed by optimism from a softer-than-expected April inflation report, which has increased bets on a September rate cut by the Federal Reserve.

## FSSAI Asks Traders, Not To Use Banned 'Calcium Carbide' For Fruit Ripening

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Food regulator FSSAI has asked traders and food business operators not to use the banned product 'calcium carbide' for ripening of fruits.

In an official statement, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) said it has "alerted traders/ fruits handlers/Food Business Operators (FBOs) operating ripening chambers to strictly ensure compliance with the prohibition on calcium carbide for artificial ripening of fruits, particularly during the mango season".

FSSAI has also advised Food Safety Departments of states/UTs to remain vigilant and take serious action and deal stringently against person(s) indulging in such unlawful practices as per the provisions of the FSS Act, 2006, and rules/regulations made thereunder.

"Calcium carbide, commonly used for ripening fruits like mangoes, releases acetylene gas, which contains harmful traces of arsenic and phosphorus.

"These substances, also known as 'Masala', can cause serious health issues such as dizziness, frequent thirst, irritation, weakness, difficulty in swallowing, vomiting and skin ulcers, etc," FSSAI said.



Additionally, acetylene gas is equally hazardous to those handling it.

"There are chances that calcium carbide may come in direct contact with fruits during application and leave residues of arsenic and phosphorus on fruits," the regulator said.

Due to these dangers, the use of calcium carbide for ripening fruits has been banned under the Regulation of the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011.

This regulation explicitly states, "No person shall sell or offer or expose for sale or have in his premises for the purpose of sale under any description, fruits which have been artificially ripened by use of acetylene gas, commonly known as carbide gas".

Considering the issue of rampant use of banned cal-

cium carbide, FSSAI has permitted the use of ethylene gas as a safer alternative for fruit ripening in India.

Ethylene gas can be used at concentrations up to 100 ppm, depending upon the crop, variety and maturity.

Ethylene, a naturally occurring hormone in fruits, regulates the ripening process by initiating and controlling a series of chemical and biochemical activities.

The treatment of unripe fruits with ethylene gas triggers the natural ripening process until the fruit itself starts producing ethylene in substantial quantities.

Further, the Central Insecticides Board and Registration Committee (CIB & RC) have approved Ethephon 39 per cent SL for the uniform ripening of mangoes and other fruits.

## Pakistan IMF To Hold Talks On Fresh Bailout Package

Press Trust Of India

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan, seeking a fresh USD 6 billion to USD 8 billion loan package from the IMF, will hold talks with officials from the Washington-based lender to discuss the terms of the fresh bailout for the cash-strapped country, according to a media report on Saturday.

An IMF support team has reached Pakistan to hold talks regarding its request for a fresh bailout package under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF).

Pakistan has made a formal request for a fresh bailout package of USD 6 to USD 8 billion under the EFF with the possibility to be augmented through climate finance. If successful, it would be the 24th IMF bailout programme for the country.

"Right now, a mission team led by Nathan Porter, our Mission Chief, is meeting with the authorities this week to discuss the next phase of our engagement with Pakistan," International Monetary Fund's Communication Director Julie Kozack said on Thursday.

IMF's Resident Representa-



tive for Pakistan Esther Perez Ruiz said a team, led by Porter, would meet Pakistani authorities "to discuss the next phase of engagement".

She had further said that the aim of the negotiations was to "lay the foundation for better governance and stronger, more inclusive, and resilient economic growth that will benefit all Pakistanis", Geo News reported.

The team is expected to stay in the country for more than 10 days and would receive data from different departments and would also discuss the upcoming budget for the fiscal year 2025 with the Ministry of Finance officials, Geo News reported quoting sources.

Last Tuesday, Pakistan and the IMF started negotiations for a fresh bailout package to address the cash-strapped country's fiscal challenges and implement crucial reforms, media reports said.

Last month, Pakistan completed a short-term USD 3 billion programme with the IMF, which bailed the country out of any default.

It was unclear whether the IMF mission would end with a formal staff-level agreement for the next bailout package, according to The Express Tribune newspaper.

The duration, instrument, and size of the next IMF programme were open to discussion, the report said, quoting sources.

## FDI Norms in Certain Sectors Likely to Be Eased Under New Govt: DPIIT Secy

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** India has recently relaxed foreign direct investment norms in the space sector and there is a possibility of further FDI liberalisation in certain other areas when the new government will come to power, a top official said on Saturday. Secretary in Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Rajesh Kumar Singh said that in the last few years, India has liberalised FDI policy in many segments.

India has one of the most liberal foreign direct investment (FDI) policies in the world and in fact more liberal than many Southeast Asian countries that the country is often compared with, he said. Recently FDI norms were eased in the space sector and "it is quite possible that under a new government, we can attempt some further liberalisation of any pockets that are left and where some liberalisation is possible," Singh said here at CII's annual business summit.

The Lok Sabha elections are underway in the country and the counting is scheduled for



June 4. The government has eased FDI norms in the space sector by allowing 100 per cent overseas investment in making components for satellites, as part of efforts to attract overseas players and private companies into the segment.

FDI in India declined 13 per cent to USD 32.03 billion in April-December 2023, dragged down by lower infusion in computer hardware and software, telecom, auto, and pharma sectors, according to the government data. Talking about the success of the production linked incentive schemes (PLI), the secretary said so far Rs 1.13 lakh crore of investments have come in and the beneficiary companies have recorded over Rs 9 lakh crore of sales, exports of Rs 3.45 lakh crore and created jobs for over 8 lakh people.

## Indian Delegation Holds Talks With Key Entities In UAE On IMEEC



Press Trust Of India

**DUBAI:** An inter-ministerial Indian delegation on the framework agreement on the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) has visited the UAE for the first time to hold discussions with the key entities there on co-operation for the empowerment and operation of the strategically vital project.

The visit, which took place within three months of signing the Agreement, reflects the importance both governments attach to the IMEEC project, a press statement by the Embassy of India, Abu Dhabi said.

The Corridor will provide effective alternate supply routes generating efficiencies and reducing costs. Both sides agreed to continue discussions for early implementation of the Agreement, it said.

"India Middle East Europe Corridor (IMEEC) takes shape with the 1st visit of an Indian Inter-Ministerial Delegation to the UAE for the India-UAE Intergovernmental Framework Agreement on IMEEC. Amb @sunjaysudhir led the discussions with key UAE entities like @DPWorldUAE, @ADPortsGroup @CUSTOMSUAE,"

the Indian mission posted on X.

The IMEEC will comprise two separate corridors, the east corridor connecting India to the Gulf and the northern corridor connecting the Gulf to Europe.

The corridor will provide a reliable and cost-effective cross-border ship-to-rail transit network to supplement existing maritime routes. It intends to increase efficiency, reduce costs, secure regional supply chains, increase trade accessibility, enhance economic cooperation, generate jobs and lower greenhouse gas emissions, resulting in a transformative integration of Asia, Europe and the Middle East (West Asia).

The IMEEC corridor, which aims at integration of Asia, Europe and the Middle East involves multiple stakeholders and is at an incipient stage, the Ministry of External Affairs said in February this year.

The visit by the Indian delegation to hold meetings under the Framework Agreement between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) concerning cooperation for the empowerment and operation of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) to the UAE took place from May 15 to 17, the statement said.

## Banking Industry Doyen N Vaghul Dies At 88

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI:** Veteran banker N Vaghul, who led the transformation of ICICI into a private sector lender, died on Saturday afternoon due to health complications. He was 88.

Vaghul took over the reins of ICICI, then a public finance institution, in 1985 and turned it into a universal bank during his 11-year stint at the helm with the help of a young team as the economy liberalised.

He fell down at his Chennai home a few days ago and had to be put on ventilator support at a private hospital, where he breathed his last, sources said.

Vaghul is survived by his wife Padma, son Mohan and daughter Sudha, family sources said, adding that both the children are settled abroad.

The last rites of Vaghul are expected to be held in Chennai on Sunday, according to sources. Vaghul was honoured with the country's third highest civilian award Padma Bhushan in 2010.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman paid condolences on the demise, calling Vaghul an eminent banker, team builder and mentor.



## Nepal Bans Sale Of Indian Spice-Mix Products Over Quality Concerns

Press Trust Of India

**KATHMANDU:** After Singapore and Hong Kong, Nepal has also banned the sale and import of certain spice-mix products manufactured by Indian brands over alleged quality concerns.

Four spice-mix products by MDH and Everest were banned in the Himalayan nation from Friday due to suspected ethylene oxide or EtO contamination, according to the Department of Food Technology and Quality Control here. Under this, Madras Curry Powder, Sambhar Mixed Masala Powder; Mixed Masala Curry Powder of MDH and Fish Curry Masala of Everest have been banned in Nepal.

"As residue contents of ethylene oxide are found to be exceeding the prescribed limit in these four products, the import and sale of these products are banned within the country as per Article 19 of the Food Regulation 2027 B.S.," the department said in a notice issued on Friday.

"Our serious attention has been drawn towards media reports about the sale of these sub-standard products in the



market, and they are harmful for consumption," it said.

The food quality control watchdog has also urged importers and traders to recall these products from the market.

Last month, Singapore and Hong Kong halted sales of some spices produced by MDH and Everest over suspected elevated levels of EtO linked with some cancers.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has since initiated steps to examine the quality of powdered spices from various brands in the country.

On Friday, the Federation of Indian Spice Stakeholders (FISS) said India's spice export may decline nearly 40 per cent in FY25 if the issue of ethylene oxide contamination in spices meant for exports is not addressed at the earliest.

## ‘Expecting Good Response From Several Firms On EV Policy’

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The government on Saturday said India is expecting good response from many automobile companies on its electric-vehicle (EV) policy, which was released in March to attract global players like Tesla.

Secretary in Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Rajesh Kumar Singh said that in the policy, the government has used tariff tweaks without actually spending any money to seek commitments from manufacturers to set up base in India.

"Everybody talks about one company (US-based EV major Tesla), but we are expecting responses from many companies to that policy," Singh said here at CII's annual business summit.

On March 15, the government approved an electric-vehicle policy, under which duty concessions will be given to companies setting up manufacturing units in the country with a minimum investment of \$500 million, a move aimed at attracting major global players like Tesla.

As per the policy, a company will get three years to set up manufacturing facilities in India, and start commercial production of e-vehicles, and reach 50 per cent domestic value addition (DVA) within five years at the maximum.

The companies that would set up manufacturing facilities for EV passenger cars will be allowed to import a limited number of cars at lower customs/import duty of 15 per cent on vehicles costing \$35,000 and above for five years from the date of issuance of the approval letter by the government.

At present, cars imported as completely built units (CBUs) attract customs duty of 70-100 per cent, depending on engine size and cost, insurance and freight (CIF) value less or above \$40,000.

The policy seeks to promote India as a manufacturing destination for EVs and attract investment from reputed global EV manufacturers. According to the scheme, the company will be allowed to import CBUs of e-4W manufactured by them at a reduced customs duty of 15 per cent, subject to the conditions.

Singh also said that they have also managed to get commitments for investments in India in the tyre sector from two major multinational firms.

"Two major multinationals came to us with certain products that were on a restrictive (import) list and they wanted that (those goods) to be allowed for imports. We told them that okay, we will allow you to import but we want these product lines to be manufactured in India. Once they

gave us those commitments, we allowed those relaxations," he added.

India has imposed mandatory quality control norms for certain types of tyres in India, besides putting some on the licence list to boost domestic manufacturing.

Citing the example of EVs and tyres, he said, "there are other ways to ensure that the kind of goals that we have under the PLI (production linked incentive) scheme for investments can be met even by prudent use of tariff-and non-tariff policies".

Talking about India and the four-nation European bloc EFTA (European Free Trade Association) free trade agreement, which was signed in March here, the secretary said this is a first of its kind pact where investment commitments are there.

"Those commitments are going to be monitored and there is a provision even to claw back the market access if those commitments are not met," he said.

On March 10, India and EFTA signed a free trade agreement (FTA) under which New Delhi received an investment commitment of \$100 billion in 15 years from the grouping while allowing several products such as Swiss watches, chocolates and cut and polished diamonds at lower or zero duties.



# T20 WC: Majority Of Indian Players To Leave For New York On May 25

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The majority of the Indian players along with the jumbo support staff will be flying out to New York on May 25, with the rest leaving for the T20 World Cup only after the May 26 IPL final.

Earlier, the members of teams failing to qualify for the play-offs were supposed to leave for New York on May 21, two days after the final league game of the IPL on May 19 but it has since been learnt that there has been some change in plans and now the first batch will leave on May 25.

"The likes of skipper Rohit Sharma, Hardik Pandya, Suryakumar Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Rishabh Pant, Arshdeep Singh, Axar Patel are some of the players along with support staff who are expected to leave on May 25," a BCCI source told PTI on the condition



of anonymity. "Earlier, departure date for first batch was May 21 but since India is playing only one warm-up game (vs Bangladesh on June 1), the players will get

to spend some extra days at home," the source added.

Only those players who are part of the IPL final will stay back and will leave for New York on May 27.

This will also give adequate time to the squad to reduce jet lag and have at least three to four quality net sessions before the Bangladesh warm-up game.

India will open their campaign against Ireland on June 5 in New York, followed by the marquee clash against Pakistan on June 9.

India squad: Rohit Sharma (Captain), Hardik Pandya (Vice Captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant (WK), Sanju Samson (WK), Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Siraj.

## IPL 2024: RR Aim For No. 2 Spot Against KKR



Press Trust of India

**GUWAHATI:** Rajasthan Royals will be desperate to snap their four-match losing streak and finish in the top two when they meet table toppers Kolkata Knight Riders in an important IPL game here on Sunday.

Having secured the playoff berth with 16 points, Royals have started floundering at the business end of the tournament losing four matches on the trot.

Their batting flair has eluded them as they have not managed to cross the 150-mark in their last two matches, and with their star England opener Jos Buttler returning home for national duty, the Royals have big shoes to fill.

Their top three batters Yashasvi Jaiswal, skipper Sanju Samson and local hero Riyan Parag will have to shoulder additional responsibilities if they are to snap the losing streak and head to the playoffs finishing in top-two, that will give them two cracks to reach the final.

KKR (19 points), on the other hand, have already assured themselves a table top position after a washout against Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad in the previous round handed them one point.

They will be high on confidence but at the same time they may have

to guard against complacency.

Since their win in the return leg clash against Mumbai Indians at Eden Gardens on May 11, KKR have not played any match with the washout in Ahmedabad.

Travelling to Ahmedabad and then back home in Kolkata for a day's practice and again heading to Guwahati for the final league clash could be quite frustrating and break their rhythm of four-match winning streak.

It remains to be seen if the Gautam Gambhir-mentored side manage to hold on to the winning momentum without appearing to be rusty.

In between, they have lost their in-form opener Phil Salt, their second leading rungetter this season as the Englishman is back home for the series against Pakistan in the build up to T20 World Cup next month.

Salt and Narine, the two KKR openers, have scored 897 runs with seven fifties and one century between them at strike rate of 182-plus each.

The duo's top form has been a key element in KKR's journey to their first playoffs since 2021.

As KKR will be keen to keep their rhythm intact, the onus will be on the likes of skipper Shreyas Iyer, finishing duo of Rinku Singh and Andre Russell to fire in unison.

## Kashmir Fitness Trainer Gets Offer From Qatar's Popular Gym Chain

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** A Kashmiri powerlifter and trainer has been called upon by a popular gym chain of Qatar.

Farhaan Muneer (22) from Khayam area of Srinagar, who has an expertise in fitness and powerlifting, made it to the selection list of trainers at Balance Body Studio.

Balance Body Studio is one of the popular gym chains in Qatar.

"I competed with many popular fitness trainers and was finally selected as a trainer at Balance Body Studio. I am scheduled to leave for Qatar by next week and will hold gym sessions at the facility," he said.

Farhaan, who has been participating in powerlifting competitions, completed a certifica-



tion course in bodybuilding and fitness in 2022. He was declared as youngest certified trainer of Kashmir by Global Indian Fitness Federation.

Farhaan said he is going to provide top-tier training and coaching to its members.

"I have been in the fitness industry for many years and have been already working as a trainer in many gyms of Kashmir. The jury looked at my achievements and certificates and chose me to lead as a trainer at Balance Body Studio," he said.

Farhaan said his expertise, particularly in powerlifting, will add a unique dimension to the gym's offerings, catering to a diverse clientele seeking specialized fitness programs.

"Moreover, my experience as a trainer will enable me to contribute significantly to the development of fitness regimes tailored to individual needs and goals," he said.

Farhaan's encounter with bodybuilding has been a coincidence since he took this profession for mere physical fitness.

"It was a kind of coincidence with me. I would hit the gym just for a good physique but then I started getting interested in bodybuilding. I learnt about bodybuilding from my gurus and last year I was awarded a certificate by the Global Indian Fitness Federation," he said. (KNO)

## YSS Doru Holds Road Race, Football Continues In Bhijbehara

Observer News Service

**ANANTNAG:** The Department of Youth Services and Sports Zone Doru organised an Inter School Zonal Level Marathon/Road Race from Shah-i-Hamdan petrol pump to GDC Dooru via College Road.

The event saw enthusiastic participation, competing in the U-14 and U-17 categories for boys and girls. The race concluded with a prize distribution ceremony for the top performers.



In the U-14 Boys category, Rasik Mushtaq from DPS Doru secured 1st place. For the U-14 Girls, Hazika Rasool from SS-MEI Doru claimed the top spot.

In the U-17 Boys category,

Monis Fayaz of HSS Doru achieved 1st position. In the U-17 Girls category, Hajab un Nisa from HSS Hakura secured 1st place as a total participation of 166 students.

## Arsenal Must Not Get 'Too Emotional' On Final Day: Odegaard



Agencies

**LONDON:** Arsenal players must not let their emotions get the better of them as they chase the Premier League title into the final day of the season, captain Martin Odegaard said ahead of their match against Everton. Arsenal are two points behind leaders Manchester City going into Sunday's final round of fixtures. The Gunners must win to stay in contention, while City could lift their fourth title in a row if they beat West Ham

United.

Arsenal's hopes of ending their 20-year wait for the league title dwindled after City's 2-0 win at Tottenham Hotspur on Tuesday put the Manchester side at an advantage. "We spoke about it the day after (City went ahead)," Odegaard told TNT Sports. "We have to focus on ourselves, we can't get too emotional about it."

"We have one more game, at home, it's the last game of the season and our goal and our task is clear, we have to

win that. "We'll see what happens. That's our mindset now, win that last game, give the fans a good last game and we'll see. It's out of our control, we just focus on our game."

The Norwegian midfielder said his side have been amazing this season. "We've taken good steps and I feel like we're a much better team compared to last season," he added. "We've had some really good games, some good results, and we are now there until the last day, to push for it."

## Impact Player Rule Has Disrupted Balance Of Game: Virat Kohli

Press Trust of India

**BENGALURU:** Echoing India skipper Rohit Sharma's sentiments, star batter Virat Kohli has criticised the Impact Player substitution rule and said it is "disrupting the balance" of the game.

The mid-innings substitution rule, adopted in the previous edition of the IPL, has sparked a row with Kohli expressing his displeasure in a podcast last month.

Now, Kohli has urged for a rethink of the rule.

"I agree with Rohit. Entertainment is one aspect of the game but there is no balance," Kohli said on Jio Cinema. "I think it has disrupted the balance and a lot of people are feeling this way, not just me," he said.

Rohit in the podcast had said, "I'm not a big fan. It's going to hold back all-rounders. Cricket is played by 11, not 12 (players)."

Punjab Kings set the record for the highest successful chase in T20 history when they overhauled Kolkata Knight Riders' 262 with eight balls to spare.



Sunrisers Hyderabad also smashed the record for the highest-ever total in franchise cricket by posting 287/3 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

This edition has witnessed eight 250-plus totals and Kohli felt the bowlers' pain.

"Bowlers are feeling like what they should do," Kohli said.

"I have never experienced anything like it where bowlers think they will concede four or a six on every ball. Not every team has a Bumrah (Jasprit) or the mystery of Rashid Khan," he said.

"I am telling you, with one extra batter there is a reason I am playing with 200-plus strike rate in the powerplays. I know there is a batsman waiting at No.8 as well."

"We are playing a high level of cricket and it should not be that dominant in my opinion. There is a beauty about having an equal balance between bat and ball," Kohli added.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah has said that the Impact Player rule is a "test case", implemented to give two Indian players opportunity in a game.

He has also indicated that they would talk to the stakeholders for using it in future editions of the IPL.

"I am sure Jay (Shah) bhai has mentioned it already that they will review it and I am sure that they will come to a conclusion which brings the game into balance," said Kohli.

"As a batsman, I can say this rule is good but the match should be exciting. Only fours and sixes are not exciting in cricket. Exciting is that you can defend 160 as well," Kohli said.

### Short TAKES

#### RCB Posts 218-5 Against CSK In Battle For Playoffs Spot

RCB's top-order, led by skipper Faf du Plessis, fired in unison as they posted a solid 218 for five against defending champion CSK in their must-win IPL clash here on Saturday.

Du Plessis hit three fours and three sixes on his way to a 39-ball 54, his fourth fifty of the season, while Virat Kohli (47 off 29 balls), Rajat Patidar (41 off 23 balls) and Cameron Green (38 off 17 balls) also went on a six-hitting spree to put RCB on solid ground.

#### MI Skipper Hardik Pandya Fined Rs 30 lakh For Slow Over-Rate

Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya has been fined Rs 30 lakh and suspended from his team's opening match of the next edition of IPL for slow over-rate offence for the third time in the competition.

With Mumbai Indians' IPL 2024 campaign ending on Friday after their final league game against Lucknow Super Giants, Pandya's suspension will only come into effect during team's opening game next season. All other members of the team have been fined 50% or Rs 12 lakh.

#### Brazil To Host FIFA Women's World Cup 2027

Brasilia [Brazil], May 18 (ANI/WAM): At the 74th FIFA Congress in Bangkok, Thailand, Brazil was announced as the host nation of the tenth FIFA Women's World Cup to be held in 2027, becoming the first South American nation to host the tournament.

This announcement comes after the most comprehensive FIFA Women's World Cup bidding process ever, and - for the first time ever - was decided through an open vote at FIFA Congress. Brazil received 119 votes while the joint bid of Belgium, Netherlands and Germany received 78 votes.

#### Southampton Secures Spot In Championship Final Against Leeds

Southampton will face Leeds United for a spot in next year's English Premier League after beating West Brom 3-1 in the second leg of their Championship playoff on Friday.

Southampton and Leeds will meet at Wembley on May 26 to decide who joins the already promoted Leicester City and Ipswich Town in the top flight.

The Saints progressed 3-1 on aggregate after a goalless first-leg at the Hawthorns last Sunday.

#### Man City's Foden Voted Premier League Player Of The Season



Manchester City's Phil Foden has been voted the Premier League's player of the season, the league announced on Saturday after the 23-year-old had the best campaign of his career.

Foden has scored 17 goals and grabbed eight assists in 34 league games this season to bring City to the cusp of their fourth Premier League title in as many years, heading into the final day of the season.



CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Broken Bonds,

his last rites. We immediately agreed, but felt compelled to pay a visit first.”

When their team arrived at Mukhtar’s residence at Batamaloo, the stench of neglect that greeted them was a stark contrast to the grandeur of the quarter. A foul odor hung heavy in the air, a testament to the neglect that had taken hold.

The man who once moved through life with an air of quiet authority, who once wielded wealth and influence, was found in a state of disarray. Disoriented and weak, his clothes were soiled, and despair etched deeply on his face. Convincing him to leave was a negotiation fraught with resistance and tears.

“We rolled out sleeves to do what was needed first. We bathed him with hot water. We dressed him in neat clothes.

Then we tried to convince him to shift to the hospital. He was adamant and resisted forcefully,” Afaaq said, adding, “We somehow managed to take him to SMHS.”

Doctors revealed a close call – a near-fatal heart attack that could have been avoided with earlier intervention. He now battles multiple ailments including Kidney failure, but the pain of “abandonment” seems the most persistent.

The story of how Mukhtar ended up in this desolate state remains shrouded in whispers, with details revealed only in bits and pieces gleaned from those who knew him. Was it a bitter falling out that drove his loved ones away? Did life’s harsh realities slowly erode the bonds he once held dear? Where are his children, the ones who should be a source of strength in his time of need?

Most say that it were his own choices, made in his pursuit of happiness, that led to unintended consequences. His once-illustrious career as a high-ranking officer had secured him a life of privilege, a family, and seemingly, everything he desired. However, his life took a sharp turn when he chose to leave his first family for a new marriage.

While such choices aren’t uncommon, life had a harsh lesson in store. After his second wife passed away, he was left utterly alone.

“He would go to restaurants, Wazas and wherever his appetite took him, brought cooked food in Tiffins, enough to last him for the whole week. He would repeat the same, next week,” Mukhtar’s neighbors revealed.

Retirement brought isolation, and his health deteriorated. According to a neighbor, Afaaq said, “He grew dependent on medicines. There was no one to take care of him. No one would give him food on time and no one would take care of his medication. His house would stink and he would stay awake during nights, seething in pain. He would cry during the nights, much to the inconvenience of his neighbors.”

“His neighbors would occasionally feed him and clothe him.”

It was during this increasingly isolated time that Mukhtar made a perplexing decision. He donated a significant portion of his wealth to a local religious seminary.

Perhaps, he feared that someone after his death might claim it all. His children from his first wife (a son and two daughters), harboring resentment from his past decisions, distanced themselves.

“His family members have abandoned him after he abandoned them in his youth, when they needed him the most,” a neighbor said.

“It’s a sorry state of affairs all around.”

Now, as Mukhtar lies in a hospital bed, vulnerable and battling his ailments, his close relatives remain unresponsive. Despite his dependence and the need for constant care, including a diaper, he finds himself without any support.

Even the religious seminary, a beneficiary of his past generosity, has turned a blind eye.

SRO Kashmir tried contacting Mukhtar’s nephew, but he refused to take any responsibility.

“We came to know that one of his very close relatives was a doctor working in SMHS. He was called. He came and asked us to leave him in the hospital. He promised us that he would take care of him,” Afaaq said.

But nothing really changed. It was then that Afaaq decided to take matters into his own hands. He crafted a poignant post on his Facebook handle, detailing Mukhtar’s story and issuing a public plea to his family, relatives, and the seminary to fulfill their moral and religious obligations.

“I warned them that if they didn’t come forward, we shall name and shame them publicly,” Afaaq told Kashmir Observer.

The post somehow has proven to be a catalyst. A stir of activity has broken the monotony of Mukhtar’s hospital bed as his daughters and ex-wife come to visit him. But their visits are brief, only during the day, an uncomfortable formality punctuated by long silences and nervous glances away. They stay for a short time, and then retreat, leaving Mukhtar to the oppressive silence of his solitude.

Judgments have been swirling in Mukhtar’s case. Some claim Mukhtar’s son, despite financial struggles of his own, should step up. Others point fingers at Mukhtar himself, accusing him of hoarding his wealth and neglecting his daughters’ well-being, even during their weddings. Regardless of past hurts, regardless of financial limitations, the belief resonates – in this hour of vulnerability, a basic human decency demands that the family step forward, if not for love, then for shared humanity. The question remains: would they rise to the occasion?

“It’s not about who’s right or wrong,” Afaaq said. “Right now, this man needs someone by his side.”

“Our responsibility was to rescue him, but SRO Kashmir does not have the required manpower to look after the abandoned patients in hospitals,” Afaaq added.

Afaaq has another concern too. While the seminary undoubtedly benefited from Mukhtar’s generosity, he wonders whether a more thorough due diligence process might have revealed the potential for competing claims on his resources. Perhaps a deeper understanding of his personal circumstances could have ensured his well-being remained a priority, even after his donation.

“Given that his son is financially struggling, my plan is to reach out to the seminary and explore the possibility of redirecting a portion of

Mukhtar’s donation to him. This way he can step forward to take care of his father,” Afaaq said.

Mukhtar’s story also underscores the critical role that well-managed old-age homes can play. While the introduction of such facilities in Kashmir last year received mixed reactions, with some fearing a breakdown of traditional family structures, Mukhtar’s situation highlights a harsh reality.

“Old age homes are a necessity. This can be a lifeline for those who lack strong family support or require specialized care,” Afaaq said. According to him, SRO Kashmir has been increasingly receiving distress calls about people abandoning their old and sick.

While Mukhtar’s side of the story remains largely untold, a puzzle missing key pieces, one truth shines undeniably clear. Wealth cannot buy the most important things in life – neither health, nor relationships. Despite having everything, he had nothing.

Kashmir Moving

now moving ahead on the path of development,” the prime minister said.

In August 2019, the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre abrogated the provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution that had bestowed special rights on Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcated the erstwhile state into Union territories.

Modi said only 17 days are left for June 4, when the Lok Sabha poll results will be announced.

The Congress and its partners in the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) have drawn a blank in the first four phases of polling, he claimed.

Patriotism runs in the veins of Haryana, Modi said, adding that the “state understands anti-national forces. Therefore, each house in Haryana is saying -- phir ek baar” and the crowd responded, saying “Modi sarkar”.

“When there is a dhakad government in the country, the enemy thinks 100 times before doing anything,” the prime minister said.

He said Pakistan, which earlier had bombs in its hands, now has a “bheekh ka katora” (begging bowl) in its hands.

“When there is a dhakad sarkar, the enemy is terrified,” Modi said.

Voting for the 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana will be held in the sixth phase of the seven-phase election on May 25.

Among those present at the rally were former Haryana chief minister and the BJP’s Lok Sabha poll candidate from Karnal, Manohar Lal Khattar, the party’s Ambala and Kurukshetra candidates, Banto Kataria and Naveen Jindal.

Earlier, Modi paid tributes to former Union minister Rattan Lal Kataria. Saturday marked the death anniversary of Kataria, who represented Ambala in the Lok Sabha. His wife Banto Kataria is the BJP’s Lok Sabha poll candidate this time.

“Art 370 Buried

‘vote jihad’ on the other”.

Striking a chord with the locals, Modi referred to Gohana’s famous “Matu Ram ki jalebi” to target the opposition.

Attacking the INDIA bloc, he said they have a formula of having five prime ministers in five years if they come to power. “Ask them is the prime minister’s post our Matu Ram ki jalebi”.

“In the 2024 ‘kurukshetra’, there is development on one hand and ‘vote jihad’ on the other,” he said. “I want to ask the people of Haryana... who will win?”

He waited for people to respond before saying, “Your reply has decided ‘Phir Ek Baar,’” and the crowd went, “Modi Sarkar.”

Modi said now the Congress is not even hiding its “desh-virodhi agenda (anti-national agenda). They are saying openly what Modi did in 10 years they will reverse it if they come to power, he said.

But their “dream” of bringing Article 370 back will never be fulfilled, he added.

“They are saying that we will restore Article 370 in Kashmir... This means once again a free run for terrorism and bloodshed in the Valley,” he said.

“From the brave land of Haryana, I want to tell those associated with the Congress that only tricolour will fly in Kashmir now,” he said. “Forget the dream of bringing back 370 in Kashmir. And if you try to do it ‘lene k dene pad jayenge’ (you will pay very heavy price).”

“Dhara 370 ki deewar hamne kabristan me gaad diya hai...We have buried the hurdle of Article 370 in kabristan (graveyard),” he asserted.

Modi said the Congress is out of power for 10 years and therefore they are jittery. They are remembering their old days when the “shahi parivar” used to run the government with a remote control, he said.

On the opposition naming their grouping INDIA, he said, “The reality does not change by changing name. This INDI Alliance is a gang of the corrupt. (jamaatof ghotalebazaaz).”

“They want power at any cost. And what is that cost? It is the country’s security, stability and respect. And five prime ministers in five years. This is their formula to run the government,” he said. “Will the country benefit, if there is new PM each year. What will they do? Will you allow the country to go back to that period of instability.”

Among those present on the occasion included Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini and the BJP’s Lok Sabha poll candidate from Sonipat Mohan Lal Badoli.

Voting for the 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana will be held in the sixth phase of elections on May 25.

Campaigning Ends

before that there will be mock poll in the polling stations in presence of the polling agents. Also, the voting will continue even after 6.00 pm, if the voter’s queue is still there in the Polling Station premises to exercise their right to vote.

Every polling station will be provided with Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs) like drinking water, electricity, toilet, ramp, furniture, verandah / shed besides wheelchairs will also be provided to the needy. The ballot unit will also have a list of contesting candidates in braille script. Whereever required, there will be separate queues for senior citizens and specially-abled persons facilitating them in every polling station. Additionally, there will be a voter help desk, manned by the concerned Booth Level

Officer (BLO).

There will be 18 polling booths managed by women (also called as pink polling stations), 17 polling booths manned by specially abled persons and 18 by youths. Also, there will be 21 green polling stations in order to spread messages about environmental concerns. The purpose behind these special polling stations is to spread awareness among sections of the society like women, specially abled, first time young voters to come forward and exercise their right to vote.

Aimed at to facilitate the voters in identification and increase voter turnout ratio, all voters have been provided with voter information slip with all requisite information like Polling Station name, date and time of poll, serial number of voter in the list, his full name, QR code but not the photograph of the voter. Hence, the voter Information Slips will not be allowed as proof of the identity of voters. Also, the citizens can view details of the Polling Station, Parliamentary Constituency and get the contact details of the Booth Level Officer, Electoral Registration Officer among other services, through Voter Helpline App (VHA). This mobile app is available on the Google Play store and Apple App Store.

In addition to the Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC), 12 types of documents will also be allowed to verify a voter and allow him for vote. EPIC cards are not mandatory for voting. The requisite documents included Aadhaar Card, MGNREGA Job Card, Pass books with photograph, Health Insurance Smart Card issued under the scheme of the Ministry of Labour, Driving License, PAN Card, Smart Card issued by RGI under NPR, Indian Passport, Pension document with photograph, Service Identity Cards with photograph issued to employees by Central/StateGovt./PSUs/ Public Limited Companies, Official identity cards issued to MPs/MLAs/MLCs and Unique Disability ID (UDID) Card, issued by Union Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry.

All Arrangements

including security, are in place for the smooth conduct of the polls.

Improved security situations, absence of boycott or hartal calls, and active political campaigning are expected to result in a historic voter turnout, he said.

Addressing the media persons, Sherpa said the district is prepared for any eventualities, including network connectivity issues at eight polling stations—six in Uri and two in Rafiabad—which will be managed with wireless communication.

In anticipation of weather-related challenges, over 20-25 pieces of machinery, including JCBs, are on standby to ensure all polling parties reach their destinations, he added.

The RO provided further details on the election arrangements, announcing that a total of 905 polling booths have been set up across 722 locations in Baramulla district, which has 715,000 eligible voters.

“In total, 2103 polling stations have been established in the Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency. Among these, 905 polling booths in Baramulla district are designated as critical stations, with robust security arrangements in place,” he said, adding, “Over 200 companies of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) have been deployed by the district police in Baramulla and Sopore. Additionally, over 40,000 first-time voters have been enrolled.”

The Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency, divided into 18 assembly segments, has 1.74 million eligible voters. Sherpa expressed optimism for a high voter turnout, similar to the historic numbers seen in the fourth phase of Srinagar elections. This is due to the improved security situation and the absence of boycott calls, he said.

The Returning Officer said special arrangements have been made with seven pink polling stations established in the district. These stations, he said, feature buildings painted pink, special gates, and all-women polling parties.

Minga Sherpa urged all eligible voters to contribute to the democratic process and shape the nation’s future by participating in the elections on May 20.

Responding to a query, he said the entire elections process remains challenging. He, however, said the campaigning period was peaceful. There was good cooperation from political party candidates and minimal violations of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) were recorded, the RO said. He thanked them for “spirited and disciplined” campaign.

The Baramulla Lok Sabha segment elections, scheduled for May 20, will see 22 candidates contesting, including prominent figures such as National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah, People’s Conference president Sajad Gani Lone, Mir Fayaz Ahmed of the Peoples Democratic Party, and Er Rashid of the Awami Itiihad Party, among others.

Section 144

21st of May.

The restrictions are imposed to ensure free and fair elections, officials said.

The restrictions will remain applicable across the Baramulla Lok Sabha parliamentary constituency, including Baramulla, Bandipora and Kupwara districts besides, few Budgam assembly segments.

The restrictions as per the top administrative official is essential to conduct the general election in free and fair manner and to maintain public peace, order and tranquillity as per the provisions of law and Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

“There is possibility or political dispute, confrontation, violence and breach of peace during poll which may result in public nuisance and law and order problems, which can cause damage to human life and property,” an official said.

“During the period, there shall be complete ban on holding of public meetings, gathering of 5 or more persons, use of loudspeakers. Failure to comply the order shall be liable for necessary action under section 188 of IPC, 1860 and other relevant provisions of law in force.”

However, there are some exemptions which includes those of public servants on duty and to bonafide marriage or funeral processions or any other such function, Police and paramilitary, central armed police and military or any other government employees on official duty besides, door to door campaigning by the candidates/political

parties, official added.

Notably, Baramulla parliamentary constituency is going for polls on May 20 (Monday), with 22 candidates in fray including NC’s Omar Abdullah, PC’s Sajad Gani Lone, PDP’s Mir Fayaz Ahmed and

AIP’s Er Rasheed besides others

Rajasthan Couple

late on Saturday night, they said.

“#Terrorist fired upon and injured a lady Farha R/O Jaipur and spouse Tabrez at Yannar, #Anantnag. Injured evacuated to hospital for treatment. Area cordoned off. Further details shall follow,” Kashmir Zone Police posted on X.

The injured, residents of Jaipur, were admitted to a nearby hospital, police said.

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti condemned the terror attack in Pahalgam. “While we condemn the attack in Pahalgam today that resulted in injuries to two tourists followed by another attack on a sarpanch in Hurpora, Shopian - the timing of these attacks given that the South election was delayed without any reason is a cause of concern. Especially keeping in mind normalcy claims touted by GOI.

Er Rashid’s Assets

account, his financial disclosures show. In the affidavit, he has cited pension as his source of income and his spouse works as a “housemaid”.

Five years earlier, he had declared a residential house in the posh Jawahar Nagar locality of Srinagar, purchased in 2017, as his only asset and also stated that he had a liability of Rs 60 lakh towards a home loan from a bank.

Rashid was arrested in 2019 after his name cropped up in a case registered by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) related to money laundering and waging war against the country.

He has been navigating a complex web of allegations and forging ahead in his political pursuits with the help of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party led by Gulam Nabi Azad.

Rashid won the Langate assembly segment in 2008 and 2014 and also unsuccessfully contested the 2019 parliamentary elections. On October 7, 2017, he sparked a major controversy by hosting a beef party on the lawns of the MLA hostel in Srinagar and said, “No court or legislature can prevent the people from eating what they want.” He was assaulted by BJP MLAs inside the assembly the next day.

Rashid has floated the Awami Itihad Party and is fighting the Lok Sabha polls this time as an Independent. Claiming that he is innocent, the former MLA’s supporters are seeking votes by raising the slogan “jail ka badla vote se”. His son Abrar and ex-Congress MLA Shoib Lone are leading Rashid’s campaign from his traditional Langate seat in North Kashmir.

According to the FIR by the NIA, the case against Rashid was registered for raising, receiving and collecting funds through illegal means to fund separatist and militant activities in Jammu and Kashmir and for causing disruption in the Valley by way of pelting stones on the security forces, burning schools, damaging public property and waging war against India.

His name cropped up during the interrogation of businessman and co-accused Zahoore Watali. Later, Rashid’s bail application was rejected by a special court in Delhi, stating that the accused had received unaccounted funds from Watali against whom there had already been reasonable grounds for a prima facie case under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Poplar Pollen

thousands of people are taken ill. People are afflicted with allergies with symptoms ranging from congestion, runny or itchy nose, sneezing etc.,” said Shadab Abbas, a resident of Srinagar.

“I am myself allergic to pollen. The elderly and children are more prone to the infection. This leads to a substantial rise in the number of patients visiting hospitals which in turn leads to a spike in the sale of the anti-allergic medicines,” Abbas said.

Medical professionals ascribe allergy to the presence of pollen within the airborne fluff, which causes ocular irritation and incessant sneezing to grave respiratory impediments, particularly prevalent among pediatric cohorts.

“The pollen menace is still less in Srinagar than in villages. If I look outside the window all of our garden is covered by pollen as if it has snowed,” said Afreen, a student of Kashmir University from Sopore.

Dr Khursheed Ahmad Dar, Medical Superintendent, Chest Diseases (CD) Hospital, Srinagar said that the patient inflow in the Outpatient Department increases during the season.

“Usually we witness a surge in the patients with allergies during this season of the year and there is a surge this year as well. People are complaining of allergies,” he said.

Speaking to Kashmir Observer, Pulmonologist and Ex-Director SKIMS Parvaiz Koul said that the pollen has the potential to cause allergies; it can also lead to conjunctivitis in the eyes and exacerbate asthma cases.

“People should use masks to prevent inhaling or ingesting it,” Koul said.

Many have called for the cutting down of the poplar trees, which were initially planted in large numbers for their fast growth and economic value, particularly for timber and plywood production.

“We need the authorities to address this problem seriously and remove these trees to prevent further health complications,” a resident of Srinagar send.

The administration has been requested to implement measures to mitigate the impact of this seasonal health threat. Suggestions include not only cutting down the existing poplar trees but also replacing them with less problematic species. Additionally, there is a demand for the immediate cleaning of public spaces to remove the accumulated fluff and reduce exposure.

In response, a senior official acknowledged the concerns and assured that steps would be taken. “We understand the severity of the issue and are considering various measures, including the phased removal of poplar trees and increasing public awareness about the problem,” the official stated.

Pertinently, the J&K High Court in June 2015 order, had observed that it was a “common knowledge that pollen seeds of this poplar species adversely affect health of the general public, mostly of elderly people and children, adding that the pollen seeds of these trees had given rise to chest diseases in the Kashmir valley.” The court has ordered the non-native poplars eradication from Kashmir.

The Russian poplar brought from the US was introduced in Kashmir in 1982 as part of the Social Forestry Scheme. The reason for this was that it takes less than 15 years to mature as compared to 40 years for the Kashmiri poplar. So, it is considered quite lucrative in the timber trade. According to an estimate, there are about 20 million Russian poplars in the Valley now and their population is growing every year.

It has been around nine years since the High Court order banning the cultivation of these poplars but far from any reduction in their population, the trees are only growing in number.

J&K SED Delays

schools do not reserve any quota for the poor students.

“I tried to get my daughter admitted to a leading school in Srinagar but the administration cleared told me that they can’t provide the admission under this quota,” said Bashir Ahmad, a fruit vendor from downtown area of Srinagar.

Ahmad said that he was very happy to learn that the kids from the poor families can also study in top education institutions but was disappointed after not securing the admission for his daughter.

Salaam Hagroo, another parent from Khanyar area of Srinagar told Kashmir Observer that it was his dream to send his two kids to top educational institutions.

“...But due to some financial constraints, I am unable to do that,” Hagroo, who serves as a security guard at a private hospital.

Like Hagroo, there are many parents across the valley who belong to EWS hope that the act gets implemented and they too get an opportunity to get their wards enrolled in good schools.

Notably, in April 2023, the Jammu and Kashmir government directed all private unaided schools functioning on state land to provide free education to children from weaker and disadvantaged sections.

According to the Act, the government will cover the expenses of educating these underprivileged children.

An official from the school education department told Kashmir Observer that the government is not ready to reimburse fees to the private schools that’s why the private schools are reluctant in providing the admission.

Piyush Singla, Principal Secretary to Government, Higher Education Department and Tasaduq Hussain Mir, Director School Education Kashmir didn’t respond to phone calls of this reporter. We will update the story as the response comes.

Justice Tashi

were warmly received by Jahangir Ahmad Bakshi, Secretary, DLSA Budgam, Malik Tariq, SDM Khansahib, Budgam, Ubaid-ul-Khazir, District Social Welfare Officer, Budgam, Gulam Mohi-ud-Din Malik, SDPO Khansahib Budgam, Mohsina, Superintendent, Pareesha and Rifat, Coordinator SAA.

Ubaid-ul-Khazir, DSWO Budgam gave a brief presentation about the facilities being provided to the children staying in Preesha and also informed Justice Tashi that presently 25 girls are putting up there who are students between class First to class Ninth and native of different areas of district Budgam. He also pointed out that a female child of Preesha got recently promoted to class 9th after scoring 85% marks in the 8th standard.

During interaction with the children, Justice Tashi patiently listened to them about their daily routine, the quality of food being served to them, their involvement in extracurricular activities and their interest areas as well as hobbies.

Thereafter, Justice Tashi inspected the rooms, wash rooms, kitchen cum dining hall, computer lab and recreation hall and expressed satisfaction regarding the facilities being provided to the children. While addressing the gathering Justice Tashi said that the Child Care Institutions in district Budgam are doing commendable service to the society.

Subsequently, Justice Tashi inspected “Phulwari” and took stock of the operational framework where he was informed that already eight children have been adopted by the families within and outside the UT of J&K and at present only one infant child is being taken care of by the said agency. A few issues were raised by the Superintendent “Pareesha” regarding which on the spot instructions were issued to SDM Khansahib, Budgam for their resolution as early as possible.

The staff of Pareesha, Phulwari and District Social Welfare Officer thanked Justice Tashi for visiting the said Institutions, spending time with the children and boosting their morale.

26 Lodgement

traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and 14-km shorter but steep Baltal route in Ganderbal district -- on June 29.

A total of 26 lodgement centers have been set up at different places in Samba district along the Jammu-Pathankot National Highway for hassle-free conduct of the pilgrimage, the officials said.

They said the information was given at a meeting chaired by Deputy Commissioner, Samba, Abhishek Sharma to discuss the arrangements for the annual Amarnath pilgrimage.

The deputy commissioner asked stakeholder departments to adopt a proactive approach and put in coordinated efforts to make holistic arrangements for the pilgrims.

Sharma said the district administration will ensure best facilities for the pilgrims besides setting up two Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) issuing counters at Chichi Mata and Nonath Ashram.

He also directed the concerned departments to formulate a comprehensive sanitation, health, traffic management and lodging plan for the comfort of the pilgrims.





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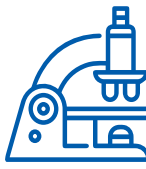
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