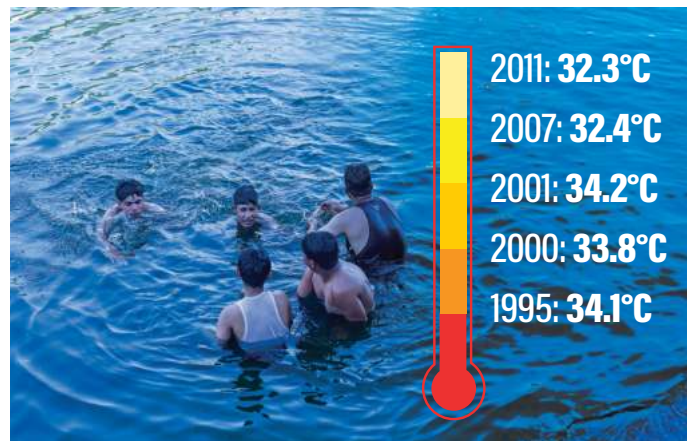


Kashmir Heat Wave

Srinagar Records Hottest May Day in a Decade



Agencies

Srinagar: Srinagar has witnessed the hottest May day on Thursday after 11 years at 32.2 degree Celsius as a similar temperature was recorded in May 2013 while all the other stations amidst the intense heat wave have recorded the hottest day of the season.

According to the details, the heat wave intensified in Kashmir as all the stations have recorded the hottest days of the season today with the local

Meteorological department predicting hot and dry weather conditions ahead.

In Srinagar, the mercury settled at 32.2 degree Celsius, which was the hottest in the last one decade and also similar to the temperature recorded on May 23 in 2013.

Srinagar has recorded above 34 degree Celsius in the past as well. As per the details shared by Independent Weather Forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng, Srinagar has recorded 32.3 degree Celsius in | [More on P6](#)

Campaigning Concludes For Anantnag-Rajouri LS Seat

18,36,576 VOTERS

- 9,33,647 MALE VOTERS
- 9,02,902 FEMALE VOTERS
- 27 THIRD-GENDER VOTERS
- 81,000 FIRST-TIME VOTERS
- 8,000 DIFFERENTLY-ABLED VOTERS

540 VOTERS AGED ABOVE 100 YEARS | 2,338 POLLING STATIONS | 9,000 POLLING STAFF | 17 PINK POLLING STATIONS | 15 GREEN POLLING STATIONS

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: The high-pitch electioneering for the ongoing Lok Sabha polls ended in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday as the campaigning for the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency came to a close in the evening.

The newly-carved out Lok Sabha seat in the south Kashmir-Pir Panjal region is scheduled to go to polls on Saturday, marking the conclusion of voting in Jammu and Kashmir as polling has already been held in the four other constituencies of the Union Territory.

The Anantnag-Rajouri constituency has 20 candidates in the fray, including People's Democratic Party (PDP) president and former chief minister Mehbooba



Mufti, who is hoping to return to Parliament following her defeat in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

With record-high polling in Srinagar and Baramulla, political observers feel that the south Kashmir constituency will also register a higher-than-expected voter turnout.

The aggregate turnout in

the four Lok Sabha seats of Jammu and Kashmir that have already gone to polls was around 59 per cent.

The polling in Anantnag-Rajouri was earlier scheduled for May 7 but was deferred by the Election Commission (EC) due to inclement weather in the region.

Authorities had received more than | [More on P6](#)



'Multi-layer Security In Place'
Press Trust Of India

Multi-layer security has been put in place in the twin border districts of Rajouri and Poonch, particularly along the Line of Control (LoC), part of the Anantnag Lok Sabha constituency that goes to polls on May 25. These measures include increased deployment of security personnel, area dominations in hill regions, additional checkpoints and round-the-clock monitoring in the region and at vital installations, officials said on Thursday.

Several additional companies of security personnel | [More on P6](#)

ANANTNAG TERROR ATTACK

Jaipur Couple Urges PM To Help Arrange Eye Donor

Agencies

Rajasthan: Farha, the woman who was shot at by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag urged Prime Minister Modi on Thursday to help her arrange an eye donor for her husband who also got injured during the firing.

In an incident on May 18, a couple from Jaipur was injured in the Yannar area of South Kashmir's Anantnag district.

The victims were identified as Farha and her spouse Tabrez.

Farha said, "My husband and I had gone to Kashmir on May 13. On May 18, when we reached our hotel, we were shot at by terrorists. While I was trying to protect my son from fire, I got injured. My relatives picked us up and took us to the hospital. Rajasthan CM from here helped us a lot. My husband's eyes have got damaged and he cannot see now. I underwent surgery for my shoulder. I request the PM to help us with eye donation."

Earlier, while reacting to the incident, | [More on P6](#)

'Extreme Forest Fire' Risk In Next 7 Days

Amid soaring temperatures, Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority on Thursday forecasted 'extreme forest fire' risk in next seven days across the Himalayan region.

"Extreme forest fire risk is likely to occur over forest areas in the next 7 days. People are requested to report the incident (if any) on 112 for prompt response. Dial 112 for any help," said JK-DMA in an advisory. | [More on P6](#)

Avoid School Assemblies In Afternoon

The Jammu and Kashmir School Education Department has advised educational institutes to avoid assemblies in the afternoon to prevent heat related illnesses. The department in a guideline to prevent heat-related illness (HRI) | [More on P6](#)

J&K To Prioritize Eco-Tourism In New Master Plan

Agencies

Srinagar: The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has called for the formulation of a tourism master plan for Jammu and Kashmir.

As per a fresh notification from the MoEFCC, the UT administration has been suggested to prepare a tourism master plan consultation with the Departments of Environment and Forests of the Union Territory.

"The Tourism Master Plan shall be prepared by the Department of Tourism, Union territory administration in consultation with the Departments of Environment and Forests of the Union Territory," the notification reads, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

It said the tourism master plan shall form a component of the Zonal Master Plan.

The MoEFCC has asked the Jammu and Kashmir government to come up | [More on P6](#)

Ebrahim Raisi Interred At Shrine In Mashhad

Agencies

Dubai: Iran interred late President Ebrahim Raisi at the holiest shrine in the nation on Thursday, days after a fatal helicopter crash killed him along with the country's foreign minister and six others.

Mourners lowered Raisi into a tomb at the Imam Reza Shrine in Mashhad, where Shia Islam's eighth imam is buried and millions of pilgrims visit each year. Hundreds of thousands of people dressed in black crowded around the sprawling marble floored shrine under its iconic golden dome, wailing and beating their chests in sorrow in a sign of mourning common in Shia ceremonies.

Raisi, who was 63, had been discussed as a possible successor to Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei. Iran has set June 28 as the next presidential election. For now, there's no clear favorite for the position



among Iran's political elite.

Acting President Mohammad Mokhber, a relatively lesser known first vice president until Sunday's crash, has stepped into his role and also attended a meeting between Ayatollah Khamenei and Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh on Wednesday.

Mashhad has long been a base for Raisi. In 2016, Raisi was appointed to run the

Imam Reza charity foundation, which manages a vast conglomerate of businesses and endowments in Iran, as well as oversees the shrine. It is one of many bonyads, or charitable foundations, fueled by donations or assets seized after Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution.

These foundations offer no public accounting of their spending and | [More on P6](#)

No One Dares To Explode Bombs In Kashmir Now: Shah Says BJP Has Already Crossed 310-mark

Press Trust Of India

Uttar Pradesh: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said that Article 370 which was protected by the Congress and Samajwadi Party was removed by Narendra Modi in 2019 and Kashmir was made a part of India forever.

On the abrogation of Article 370, he said, "No one dares to explode bombs there."

Amit Shah claimed that in the first five rounds of polling, "BJP has crossed 310" and that the Congress is "not even getting 40 seats" this time.

"INDI alliance has been wiped out in the first five phases. I am telling you, this time Congress is not even getting 40 seats and Akhilesh Yadav will not even get four seats," said Shah, addressing a poll meeting in Siddharthnagar in support of Domariyaganj BJP candidate Jagdambika Pal.

In another rally in Sant Kabir Nagar, Shah named several leaders



from the opposition parties and accused them of nepotism.

"Lalu Prasad Yadav wants to make his son the chief minister, Uddhav Thackeray wants to make his son the chief minister, Sharad Pawar wants to make his daughter the chief minister, Stalin wants to make his son the chief minister, Mamata Banerjee wants to make her nephew the chief minister and Sonia Gandhi wants to make her son Rahul Gandhi the prime minister," he said, adding, someone who works for his family is not going to work for a constituency.

Shah asserted | [More on P6](#)

HC Quashes PSA Detention Order

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The non-consideration of the representation is violation of the constitutional guarantee, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh underlined as it quashed detention of a detainee from Shopian who was booked under Public Safety Act (PSA) in 2022.

A bench of Justice Puneet Gupta quashed the order dated 28 June 2022 passed by District Magistrate Shopian under PSA against Sartaj Ahmad Naik of Mantribugh, Shopian and directed the authorities to release him from custody forthwith provided he was not required in some other case.

"There appears to be no reason as to why the petitioner should not have been provided with the dossier or any other material pertaining to the detention. This very flaw in the proceedings carried out by the respondents knocks out the validity of the detention order," the court said.

The Court observed that for all practical purposes the grounds of detention were reproduction of the dossier provided by the police to the District Magistrate. "Apparently, the manner in which the grounds of detention have been | [More on P6](#)

भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
Election Commission of India

USE YOUR RIGHT,
FULFILL YOUR DUTY

Come, Let's Vote

LOK SABHA ELECTION 2024

Anantnag-Rajouri

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY
POLL DATE: 25th MAY 2024

TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS
18,36,576

- MALE: 9,33,647
- FEMALE: 9,02,902
- TRANSGENDER: 27
- PwD: 17,967

GO TO THE POLLING STATIONS AND CAST YOUR VOTE

BE INFORMED | GET INVOLVED | MAKE A DIFFERENCE

ISSUED BY: CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER, JAMMU & KASHMIR UT

Babies Of Bilingual Mothers Found To Respond To Wider Range Of Sounds: Study

Press Trust Of India

Newborns of bilingual mothers were found to respond to a wider range of sound pitches, compared to those of mothers speaking one language, according to a new study from Spain. Researchers said that babies in the wombs of bilingual mothers are expected to be exposed to an environment with a richer variety of sounds than those in the wombs of monolingual mothers.

The researchers found that while the brains of the babies of monolingual mothers had learned to respond in a heightened manner to the pitch of one language, those of the babies of bilingual mothers seem to have become sensitive to a wider range of pitches, without giving a heightened response to any one of them. The findings are published in the journal *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*.

Studies have estimated the global bilingual population to be from 43 per cent to over 50 per cent, with bilingualism or multilingualism being the norm in many countries.

"Languages vary in the timing aspects of speech, such as rhythm and accentuation, but also pitch and phonetic information. This means that fetuses from bilingual mothers are ex-



pected to be immersed in a more complex acoustic environment than those from monolingual mothers," said co-corresponding author Carles Escera.

Escera is a professor at Sant Joan de Deu Barcelona Children's Hospital, from where the researchers recruited mothers of 131 one-to-three-day-old newborns for the study.

Responding to a questionnaire, 41 per cent of the mothers said they spoke exclusively Spanish or Catalan, which is related to Spanish and spoken in Catalonia in eastern Spain. The remaining were bilingual - most of them

speaking Spanish and Catalan. Other languages spoken by some of the bilingual mothers included Arabic, English, German and Portuguese.

The researchers measured the babies' specific responses to four types of sounds lasting 0.25 seconds long. The sounds were of vowels used in both Spanish and Catalan.

"Here we show that exposure to monolingual or bilingual speech has different effects at birth on 'neural encoding' of voice pitch and vowel sounds: that is, how information about these aspects of speech has been initially learned by the foetus," said co-first author Natalia Gorina-Careta, a researcher at the University of Barcelona.

"At birth, newborns from bilingual mothers appear more sensitive to a wider range of acoustic variation of speech, whereas newborns from monolingual mothers seem to be more selectively tuned to the single language they have been immersed in," said Gorina-Careta.

The findings stress the importance of exposure of foetuses to language for recognising speech sounds at birth, according to Escera.

However, the "sensitive" period for learning languages lasts long after birth, and thus experiences after birth may overshadow the initial changes experienced in the womb, the researchers said.

“Languages vary in the timing aspects of speech, such as rhythm and accentuation, but also pitch and phonetic information. This means that fetuses from bilingual mothers are expected to be immersed in a more complex acoustic environment than those from monolingual mothers

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

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Pattan) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Abdul Manan Ahanger S/O Rameez Raja Ahanger R/O Para Mohalla Pattan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 24/09/2020 occurred at SDH Pattan

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.
Executive Magistrate 1st Class
fkco
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Pattan) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Liaquat Hussain Dar s/o Ghulam Hassan Dar R/o Hanjiwera Payeen Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 19/03/2012 occurred at Home

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.
Executive Magistrate 1st Class
fkco
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost the number plate of my Scooty bearing regd no: JK05E 9920. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Police Station Mirgund Or ARTO Sopore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Nisar Hussain
R/o Gund Khawaja Qasim
bm

'Men At Higher Risk Of Developing Problems Because Of Diabetes Than Women'

Press Trust Of India

Men with diabetes are at a higher risk of experiencing major health effects than diabetic women, a new research has found. Complications arising from diabetes such as diseases of the heart, leg, foot, kidney, and eye were observed more in men than women, regardless of how long they've had diabetes, according to researchers, which include those from The University of Sydney, Australia.

The study included 25,713 people, all of them aged 45 years and above, and having either type 1 or type 2 diabetes. Through surveys, the partici-

pants were followed up for 10 years for major health problems developed because of diabetes. The responses were then linked to their medical records.

However, regarding the overall risk of developing eye complications, the team found little difference between men and women.

Of the participants, 57 per cent of the men developed these conditions, while among women, 61 per cent developed them. Men were found to have a 14 per cent higher risk of developing sight-threatening eye disease diabetic retinopathy.

"Men had a 1.5-fold increased risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD), lower limb, and kidney complications, and risk of diabetic retinopathy was 14 per cent greater in men than in women. These findings are reflected in the -1.4 times higher 10-year rates for CVD, lower limb, and kidney complications in men compared with women," the authors wrote.

The researchers said that while rates of developing complications because of diabetes rose in tandem with the number of years lived with the metabolic disease for both men and women, the sex-based differences in complication rates persisted.

As a possible explanation, the researchers pointed out that the men in the study were more likely to have well-known risk factors. Men, in general, may also be less likely to make lifestyle changes, take preventive medications, or get health checks to lower their risks, they suggested.

Being an observational study, no causal factors could be established, the researchers said. They also acknowledged a lack of information on potentially influential factors, such as diabetes medications and glucose and blood pressure levels.

The authors said that even though men with diabetes are at a higher risk of developing complications, these rates are high in both men and women. The findings highlighted the need for targeted screening for complications, and prevention strategies following diagnosis, they said.



The researchers found that 44 per cent of the men experienced a cardiovascular complication, including stroke and heart failure, compared to 31 per cent in women. The findings were published in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*.

Further, 25 per cent and 35 per cent of the men were found to develop conditions of leg/foot and kidney, respectively, as compared to 18 per cent and 25 per cent of the women, respectively. Problems of the leg/foot included ulcers and bone inflammation, while those of the kidney included chronic disease and failure.

Overall, the researchers found that diabetic men were 51 per cent more likely to develop heart problems than diabetic women.

Men with diabetes were also found

عالم اسلام اپنے آٹھویں امام حضرت علی ابن موسیٰ علیہ کی ولادت باسعادت کا جشن منانے کی تیاری کر رہا تھا کہ اچانک ایک غم انگیز خبر سننے سے سب سکتے کی عالم میں چلے گئے۔ یہ اسلامی جمہوریہ ایران کے صدر آیت اللہ رئیسی اور وزیر خارجہ جناب امیر عبداللہیان اور تہمیز میں ولی فقیہ کے نمائندے حضرت آیت اللہ آل حاشم کی شہادت کی خبر تھی۔ اسلامی اور قرآنی تعلیمات کی رو سے شہادت کا درجہ اگرچہ سب سے اعلیٰ درجہ ہے جو خداوند متعال اپنے خاص بندوں کو نصیب کرتا ہے، یہ وہ ورثہ ہے جو ائمہ طاہرین علیہم السلام سے ہمیں ملا ہے، لیکن جمہوریہ اسلامیہ کے ایک خدمت گزار صدر مملکت اور وزیر خارجہ کا ہم سے جدا ہونا غم انگیز ہے، ایسا صدر مملکت جس نے اپنی پوری زندگی حضرت امام خمینی علیہ الرحمہ کے قائم کردہ نظام ولایت فقیہ کی خدمت کرنے میں گزار دی، چیف جسٹس کے عہدہ سے لیکر، حضرت ثامن الحجج امام رضا علیہ السلام کے آستان قدس کی خدمت گزار اور آخر کار صدر جمہوریہ اسلامیہ رہ کر ہمیشہ اپنے رُحبر اور ولی امر مسلمین کی پیروی کر کے قدم قدم پر ان کا ساتھ دیا ہو۔

یہ امام خمینی کے انفاں قدس کا اثر ہی ہے جس کے مکتب نے ایسے شاگردوں کی تربیت کی ہے جو ہمیشہ عالمی ایوانوں میں قرآن ہاتھ میں لے کر قرآنی تعلیمات کا دفاع کرتے رہتے ہیں، جو پوری دنیا میں مظلوموں کی حمایت میں مصروف رہتے ہیں چاہے وہ فلسطین کے مظلوم ہوں یا داعش کے ہاتھوں عراقی شہروں میں گرفتار ہوئے ہندو قوم سے وابستہ ہسپتال میں کام کرتے ہوئے نرسیں ہوں، ان سب کی حمایت کرنا علوی اور فاطمی میں تربیت پائے جرتلوں اور ملکی ذمہ داروں کا شیوہ رہا ہے۔

ادارہ اوقاف اسلامی حضرت ابو العباس علیہ السلام و حکیم علی ہمایون ٹرسٹ اس عظیم مصیبت پر حضرت ولی عصر (عج) ان کے نائب مراجع عظام خصوصاً ولی امر مسلمین حضرت آیت اللہ العظمیٰ سید علی خامنہ ای اور پوری دنیا کے مسلمانوں کی خدمت میں تعزیت پیش کرتے ہیں اور بارگاہ الہی میں دست بدعا ہیں کہ خداوندان شہداء کو امام الشہداء کے ساتھ ملحق کرے۔

آمین یا رب العالمین

منجانب: ادارہ اوقاف اسلامی حضرت ابو الفضل العباس و حکیم علی ہمایون ٹرسٹ۔ حکیم محلہ باغبان پورہ

94th Death Anniversary Of Mirwaiz Ahmadullah Shah Observed

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The 94th death anniversary of the prominent religious scholar, the revered personality of Kashmir and former President of Anjuman Nusrat-ul-Islam, Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Moulana Ahmadullah Shah (RA) was observed with great reverence and respect on Thursday.

The Anjuman Nusrat-ul-Islam in a statement said the incumbent President, Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Dr Moulvi Muhammad Umar Farooq, could not attend the special ceremony.

In the special ceremony organized by the Anjuman, the staff, teachers and students paid rich tributes to the late Mirwaiz for his religious, social, and spiritual services. They described him as a true lover of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), a follower of the Sunnah, a leader of 'Shariat Wa Tareeqat', as well as a person of excellent character and morality.

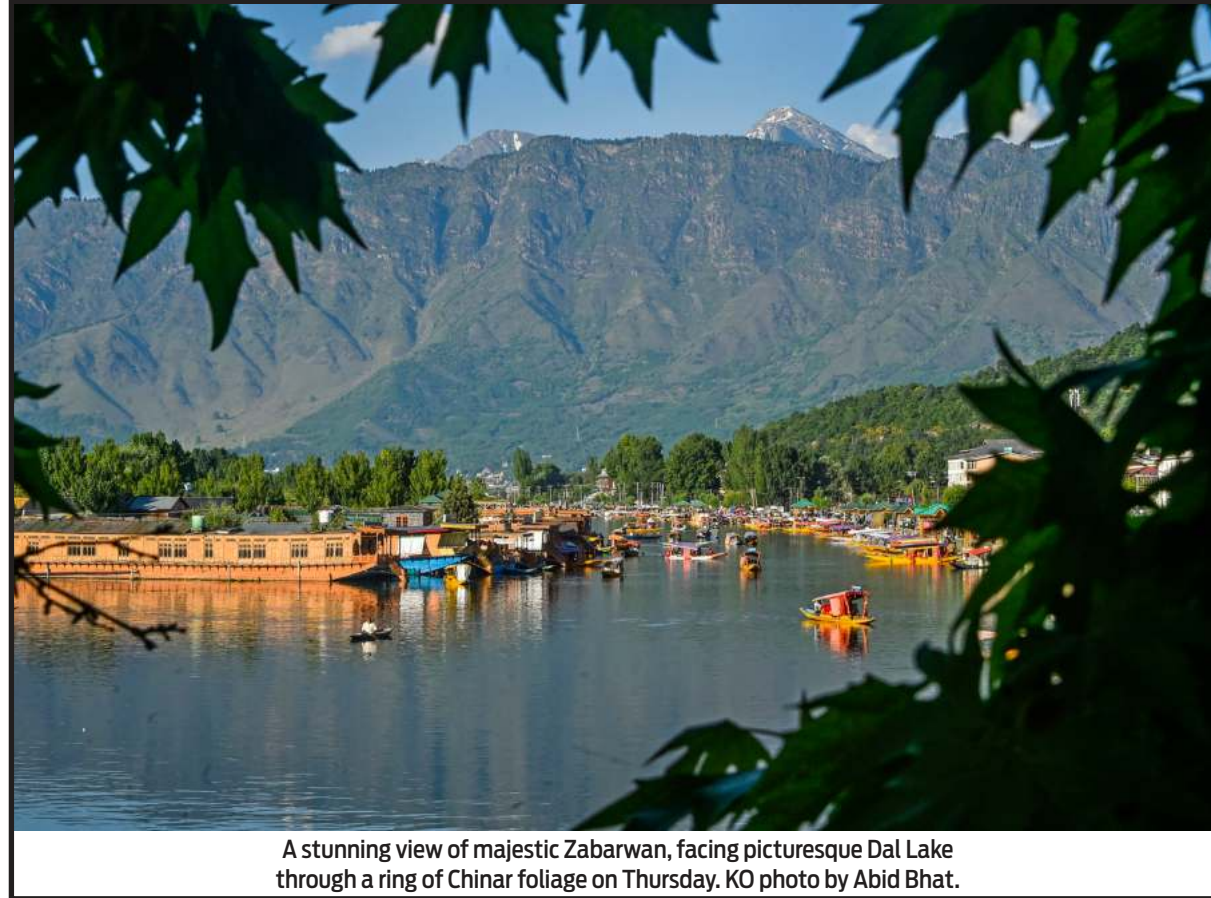
Late Mirwaiz, Anjuma said, during his time, exposed the big conspiracy against the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH). He launched a powerful movement among the public against this mischief, making every pos-

sible effort to save the Kashmiri Muslims from the storm of disbelief and apostasy. He continued to perform his duties and responsibilities diligently until his death.

"It also highlighted that the late Mirwaiz Ahmadullah Shah (RA) was the first in Kashmir to have the honor of signing the historic memorandum presented to the Viceroy of India against the tyrannical rule in the valley and for the restoration of the political and social rights of the Muslims of Kashmir. As a result, he faced severe hardships and persecution," Anjuman Nusrat-ul-Islam said.

It said that the special gathering paid great tribute to the late Mirwaiz for his educational services towards the Anjuman, his reforms, the establishment of Islamia Oriental College under his patronage, and other activities, declaring him an exemplary personality.

Later Quran khwan was held at Islamia Oriental College for the late Mirwaiz, as well as for Mirwaiz Rasool Shah, the founder of the Anjuman Nusrat-ul-Islam Mirwaiz Allama Rasool Shah (RA), his companions, other late presidents, officials, assistants and devotees of the Anjuman.



A stunning view of majestic Zabarwan, facing picturesque Dal Lake through a ring of Chinar foliage on Thursday. KO photo by Abid Bhat.

Houseboats Jam-Packed In Dal Lake As Tourist Flow Surges

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Kashmir's tourism sector is witnessing a boom amidst the soaring temperature in Jammu and Kashmir as all the houseboats in the Dal Lake and adjacent areas are jam-packed.

The tourists from different parts of the valley could be seen enjoying around Dal Lake and adjacent areas here almost every day, which indicates the rise in the footfall of the tourists here.

Wali Mohammad, Shikara Association President said the footfall of tourists has increased in the Valley, but there are hopes of further rise in the tourist arrival in the coming days. "The rush will increase as the

"We have a good rush of tourists in our houseboats and we are hopeful that it will go up further

people outside are busy with the elections and are going to arrive here soon," he said.

Manzoor Ahmad Pakhtoon, President of Kashmir Houseboat Owners Association, stated that it is the peak season for tourism as there are vacations in outside states and people use to visit Kash-

mir during this period especially, which started from May.

"We have a good rush of tourists in our houseboats and we are hopeful that it will go up further," Pakhtoon said.

Gowhar Ahmad, a houseboat owner, said all the houseboats at present are jam-packed. "Those who have to book houseboats need to confirm it before a month as all the houseboats are packed this time," he said.

Perthment, Jammu & Kashmir, particularly Valley has been witnessing rise in the tourist footfall for the last couple of years with the government stating that the record-breaking footfall is expected this year as well—(KNO)

DGP, IG Police Greets People On Buddha Purnima

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Director General of Police (DGP), Jammu and Kashmir, R.R Swain, has extended his warm greetings and best wishes to the police fraternity, families of martyrs, and the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Buddha Purnima.

In his message, DGP Swain highlighted Lord Buddha's timeless message of peace, brotherhood, and compassion, noting that it continues to inspire humanity worldwide and offers guidance to alleviate human suffering.

The DGP prayed for lasting peace in Jammu

and Kashmir and expressed hope that the occasion would bring joy and happiness to the people of the region, including police officers, their families, and the families of police martyrs.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir V K Birdi also greeted people on the auspicious occasion of Buddha Purnima.

IGP, while extending his greetings to the people, prayed for joy and happiness to all.

"IGP Kashmir extends #greetings to the people on the #auspicious occasion of Buddha Purnima. May this sacred occasion bring joy and happiness for all," wrote the Kashmir Zone Police in a post on X.

Secy Transport Reviews Functioning Of Motor Vehicles Department

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Secretary, Transport Department, Neeraj Kumar, today chaired a review meeting regarding functioning of Motor Vehicles Department at Civil Secretariat here.

The meeting was attended by Rajendra Singh Tara, Transport Commissioner J&K, Rajeshwar Singh Charak, Additional Secretary Transport Department, Maqsood Zamaan, DIG Traffic, Vinay Samotra, Joint Transport Commissioner J&K, Paramvir Singh, Additional Secretary Road Safety Council besides RTOs and ARTOs.

The Transport Commissioner gave a brief presentation on e-challenging, establishment of RTDCs/DTCs and ICC, action against traffic violators, RSVF, VLTP, printing of Driving Licenses and other allied matters.

The Secretary emphasized the need for evolving a robust mechanism to ensure prompt delivery of driving licenses to the general public. He said that efforts are be-

ing made to establish ITDR and ICC in Kashmir Division, for which MD JKRTC has already been directed to get these facilities established at Central workshop Pampore.

He also asked for raising the Driving Training Centres (DTC's) in far flung districts both in Jammu and Kashmir division so that the facility is made available to the desirous applicants at their door step.

While discussing the J&K transport subsidy scheme, the Secretary asked the Transport Commissioner to ensure wide publicity of the scheme to benefit maximum eligible applicants towards this important initiative of the Government.

Regarding traffic violations, it was intimated by SSP traffic that MVD and traffic police need to work together in order to curb this menace.

The Secretary issued on-spot instructions for intensifying road checking in all districts. He asked the officers to ensure that the offenders are booked as per provisions of the Motor Vehicle Act.

Tractor Crushes Boy To Death In Padshahi Bagh

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A 7-year-old boy was crushed to death after coming beneath a tractor at Padshahi Bagh area in Sri-

nagar this morning.

Officials told KNT that the kid was enjoying a tractor ride when the driver was tilling the agricultural land.

The kid had a fall and came un-

der the tractor resulting in his on-spot death.

The victim has been identified as Ahmad son of Mohammad Haroon Rather, a resident of Padshahi Bagh Srinagar.

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

HAPPY AND HEALTHY MINDS

خوشحال اور صحت مند ذہن

HAPPY MIND

HEALTHY MIND

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

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

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

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

9070806160

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

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

AIRPORTS
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈️

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR
15 Zil-Qadah
1445

PRAYERS	
FAJR	3: 45
ZUHR	12:28
ASR	5: 24
Magrib	7:35
ISHA	9: 11

This Day In History

- 1153- Malcolm IV becomes King of Scots
- 1218 -The Fifth Crusade leaves Acre for Egypt.
- 1370-Hanzesteden signs peace treaty with Danish king Waldemar IV
- 1595- Nomenclator of Leiden University Library appears, the first printed catalog of an institutional library.
- 1621- The Protestant Union is formally dissolved.
- 1658-Battle of Dunes (Spanish-French War) fought
- 1667- French troops attack into Southern Netherlands
- 1689 - English Parliament guarantees freedom of religion for Protestants
- 1697 - English King William III travels through northern Europe
- 1738 - John Wesley is converted, launching the Methodist movement; celebrated annually by Methodists as Aldersgate Day
- 1775 - John Hancock is unanimously elected President of the Continental Congress
- 1798 - Irish Rebellion of 1798 led by the United Irishmen against British rule begins
- 1809 - Dartmoor Prison opens to house French prisoners of war
- 1815- George Evans discovers Lachlan River, Australia
- 1818- General Andrew Jackson captures Pensacola Florida
- 1822- Battle of Pichincha, Bolívar secures independence of Quito from Spain
- 1832-The First Kingdom of Greece is declared in the London Conference.
- 1846- General Zachary Taylor captures Monterey in Mexican War
- 1861- Alexandria, VA occupied by Federal troops
- 1862- Beardslee field telegraph used for 1st time
- 1881- Turkey cedes Thessaly and Arta back to Greece.
- 1887- Sultan Bargash of Zanzibar grants E Afr Association at East African harbors

From KO Archives

600 Kanal Kah-Charai 'Gifted' To Ikhwanis

Observer News Service

S OPORE- Revenue officials in Bandipore tehsil have blessed a virtual loot of kah-charai (grazing) lands belonging to the village community in several villages of Bandipore tehsil. At the behest of some high-ups, authorities are reported to have allotted 'hundreds of kanals of such land to Ikhwan counter-insurgents during recent times.

According to reports, 500 to 600 kanals of the grazing land on Kuil Gurdal road and Baji road in Malangam had been 'gifted' to the Ikhwanis of Malangam village by revenue officials. The beneficiaries' include Abdul Rahman Khan, Moli Khan Chandi Khan and Sher Dil, all of Malangam. They have raised their houses on the lands and even sold portions of them. The tehsildar, Bandipore has allegedly made the allotments.

Reports said the tehsildar also allegedly allotted a custodian building in the tehsil complex at Bandipore to a ruling National Conference halqa president, Muhammad Muzaffar Malik of Onagam. He demolished the building and raised his own residential house in the sspremises under the tehsildar's nose. The tehsildar, reports alleged, had the temerity to attest the mutations of the grazing lands as well as the building.

Villages that witnessed the virtual plunder of the grazing lands include Kuil, Mangnipora, Aloosa, Gurdal, Malangam and Kema. The people of these areas have expressed grave concern over the loot and urged the authorities to call an immediate halt to the murky deals. They also demanded a probe into the allotments made by the tehsildar so far.

(Kashmir Observer, 24 May, 2000)

KASHMIR OBSERVERTM

Friday | 24-05-2024

Hotter Summer

The intensifying heat wave currently sweeping across Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the Kashmir valley, underlines a troubling pattern of increasing temperature extremes in the region. Reports indicate that Srinagar has recorded its hottest day of the season at 31.6 degrees Celsius on May 22, with similarly alarming temperatures in other parts of the valley and Jammu division. This intensification of heatwaves not only disrupts daily life but also poses significant risks to public health, agriculture, and the environment.

Historically, the region of Jammu and Kashmir, especially the Kashmir valley, has been known for its moderate summer temperatures and cool climate. However, in recent years, there has been a conspicuous shift. This shift points to a broader global trend of increasing temperatures due to climate change, which is now palpably affecting even the cooler regions like Kashmir.

The implications of the rising temperatures are profound. For the agriculture sector, which forms the backbone of Kashmir's economy, the heatwave is a severe threat. The Agrometeorological division has issued advisories to farmers, urging them to take specific measures to mitigate the impact of the heat. These include nursery sowing of heat-resistant rice varieties, soil solarization to combat pests, and irrigation management for vegetable crops. Such measures are crucial but also highlight the increasing burden on farmers to adapt to changing climatic conditions.

Beyond agriculture, the heatwave exacerbates health risks, particularly for vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and those with pre-existing health conditions. Prolonged exposure to high temperatures can lead to heat exhaustion, heat strokes, and aggravate chronic cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. The health advisories issued by local authorities and medical professionals are a necessary step, but they also indicate a reactive rather than a proactive approach to dealing with the heat.

Moreover, the heatwave strains the region's water resources. Increased evaporation rates and the higher demand for water for both agricultural and domestic use can lead to water shortages, further complicating the management of this precious resource. Livestock and poultry are also under threat, with advisories urging farmers to ensure adequate hydration and implement cooling measures for their animals.

The frequency and intensity of these heatwaves is a call for urgent and sustained action. There is a critical need for climate action plans that address both mitigation and adaptation strategies. Mitigation efforts should focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable energy practices, afforestation, and conservation efforts. Adaptation strategies must include the development of heat-resistant crop varieties, efficient water management systems, and infrastructure improvements to protect against heat stress.

The rising frequency of heatwaves in Kashmir is a stark reminder of the realities of climate change. However, there is little that we can do about it. Climate change is a global phenomenon and the heatwaves are its symptom. It is the world that needs to collaborate to save the world from the catastrophe.

Benefits of Right to Education Act Not Realised in Post-Abrogation J&K

Progressive Central laws continue to be kept in a state of suspended animation



Photo for representational purposes only

After the abrogation of Article 370 of Indian Constitution, around 900 central laws have been extended to Jammu & Kashmir under different orders since October 31st 2019 until recently. Most of these laws were not applicable in J&K due to constitutional reasons but J&K Assembly had enacted similar legislations which were mostly repealed and revoked post article 370 abrogation. Some erstwhile state laws of J&K were not repealed and they continue to be operational even today. The details of the saved and repealed laws are available in the gazette notification of J&K Reorganisation Act 2019 which was applied with effect from Oct 31st 2019.

It is now almost 5 years since dozens of central laws have been extended to Jammu & Kashmir but people on the other hand are yet to reap the benefits of many of these laws especially those national legislations which are supposed to benefit people from economically weaker sections -EWS of society. In the past as well, I have analyzed many central laws that are not operationalised on the ground. It is now almost 5 years since central laws are applicable in J&K and if these laws continue to be non-operational, the Govt of India, especially the Ministry of Home Affairs, has to take a serious notice of it.

Local bureaucrats and Govt officials are not capable of making central laws and their enforcement in J&K possible. They need to seek guidance from experts and civil society organizations. There is hardly any serious brainstorming done at the Governmental level on progressive central laws like Forest Rights Act, Right to Information Act, Right to Fair Compensation Act (LARR Act 2013), SC ST Atrocities Act, Right to Education Act. Holding a seminar or a workshop for one day isn't enough, there have to be constant follow ups and advocacy and the Govt must seek public suggestions in making these laws workable on the ground.

Meeting with Union Home Minister

In the past, I have extensively written about different progressive central laws and their benefits, especially the Forest Rights Act, Right to Fair Compensation Act (LARR-2013), Right to Information Act-RTI, Consumer Protection Act, National Food Security Act-NFSA etc. These laws are not implemented on the ground. With an aim to do advocacy on making these laws operational, I along with a civil society delegation brought this matter into the notice of Union Home Minister Mr Amit Shah in November 2022 when he had visited Srinagar. I was accompanying the delegation led by Mr Khurshid Ahmad Ganai former IAS officer and some other prominent



Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

I am hopeful that this write-up will reach LG Mr Manoj Sinha and he would call a meeting about the implementation of progressive central laws, especially Right to Education Act to be enforced into toto, particularly focusing on the implementation of the section 12 (1) (c) of this act

persons including some educationists and senior medical doctors. We had a detailed meeting with Home Minister and I was the spokesperson of that group. I spoke in detail about different central laws extended to J&K and their benefits not reaching to people. During the interaction I spoke about the Forest Rights Act 2006, SC ST Atrocities Act 1989, Right to Fair Compensation Act (LARR Act 2013), Right to Information Act (RTI) 2005 and Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009.

The Union Home Minister had appreciated our delegation as we specifically discussed the importance of these laws and in-fact he assured us that these laws should be implemented in letter and spirit.

The Lt Governor Mr Manoj Sinha, Union Minister of State in PMO, Dr Jitendra Singh were accompanying the Home Minister. The then Chief Secretary Dr A K Mehta and other senior officers of the administration were also present in the meeting. During the meeting, the Union Home Minister clear cut gave directions to the administration that all the provisions of the central laws should be implemented. This boosted our morale and we were hopeful that there would be a followup from the Govt especially the Chief Secretary or Secretary GAD or Law Department would hold another round of meeting with us.

Meeting with LG Manoj Sinha

Infact, before our meeting with the Home Minister in November

2022, I along with some senior members of J&K RTI Movement had once met with Lt Governor Mr Manoj Sinha in January 2022 at Raj Bhavan, Srinagar. We had raised issues related to e-governance and non-updating of Govt websites. In addition, we also discussed bringing Chopan shepherds of Jammu & Kashmir under the ST category. The LG gave us a patient hearing and within a few days a circular was issued by the General Administration Department (GAD) on 29.1.2021.

Vide Government order No: 148-JK (GAD) of 2021 dated: 13.02.2021 the Government accorded a sanction for constitution of a three member committee headed by the Secretary to Government Information Technology (IT) Department. State Informatics Officer (SIO) of National Informatics Centre (NIC) J&K and a representative from J&K e-Governance agency to be nominated by Secretary IT Department are the two other members of the committee. The aim of constituting the committee is to continuously supervise the updating of official websites of Govt departments and districts in J&K. The impact of that meeting was great and dozens of Govt departments created their official twitter handles (now called X) so that aggrieved could tag their grievances to the Govt officials

RTE Act not enforced on ground

As explained above, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act which is commonly known as the Right to Education Act (RTE) is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted on 4 August 2009. This law describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between the age of 6 to 14 years in India under Article 21A of the constitution. In the year 2002, 86th amendment was made in the Indian constitution by making education a fundamental right under Article 12-A. Prior to that, this came under directive principles of state policy.

Right to Education Act (RTE Act 2009) became applicable in Jammu and Kashmir after article 370 was repealed. Infact, J&K had also taken several measures in the past on education especially when Maharaja Hari Singh was the ruler of Kashmir. He had introduced Jabri schools, where children would be taken forcibly. Infact, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah also continued to run those Jabri schools when he ruled J&K from 1948 to 1953.

The J&K School Education Department hasn't come up with the rules that would enable the Directorate of School Education Kashmir and Jammu to enforce the RTE Act, especially its section Section 12. The section 12 (1) (c) of the RTE Act enables students from economi-

cally weaker sections (EWS) to take admission in Private Schools and their fees would be reimbursed by the Govt. In all the Private Schools except Minority Institutions there is a provision of 25% reservation in admissions to children belonging to economically weaker sections (EWS) and disadvantaged groups.

The State of the Nation 2015 report by IIM Ahmedabad, (based on official data obtained from the District Information System for Education) puts the total number of seats under this provision as 1.6 crore over the next eight years (about 20 lakh seats per year). This means that there is a huge untapped RTE potential with respect to economically weaker sections (EWS category). Many states including J&K are yet to fulfill their obligations to their children from weaker sections of society.

It was hoped that post article 370 abrogation J&K Govt would give the benefits of RTE Act 2009 to economically weaker sections of society but that isn't happening. Recently, I highlighted this issue again in my weekly Inkishaf and specifically explained the non implementation section 12 (1) (c) which enables students from lower income groups to get admission in private schools.

Conclusion

Before meeting the Union Home Minister in November 2022, I had the apprehension that the Govt of India was deliberate in not enforcing the central laws like LARR Act 2013, Forest Rights Act (FRA), RTE Act or RTI Act in J&K. However, when Mr Amit Shah gave a clear cut direction to the administration sitting in the Rajbhavan meeting hall that all laws should be enforced in letter and spirit, it gave me great hope.

The Home Minister was very responsive to my suggestions and asked me to meet the LG Mr Manoj Sinha who was sitting next to him. After we finished the meeting, Lt Governor (LG) Mr Manoj Sinha signaled his team to note down my contact details. An officer noted down my contact number but till date I never got a chance to give my feedback to the LG about the non-implementation of central laws. I am hopeful that this write-up will reach LG Mr Manoj Sinha and he would call a meeting about the implementation of progressive central laws, especially Right to Education Act to be enforced into toto, particularly focusing on the implementation of the section 12 (1) (c) of this act.

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

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat is an Acumen Fellow and Founder -Chairman J&K Right to



Accelerate Your Wealth: How Investing in the Auto Sector Can Revolutionize Your Financial Future

Did You Know?

Irshad Mushtaq

Since 2011, the auto sector has soared to new heights, with the auto sector index leaping from 3535 to an astonishing 23339 in May 2024. This represents a remarkable 560% increase, turning an investment of Rs 35 lakh in 2011 into a staggering Rs 2.33 crore today. This phenomenal return can be credited to a portfolio of shares in powerhouse companies like Bajaj Auto, Hero Motors, Maruti, Tata Motors, MRF, Mahindra, and many others.

One of the most compelling aspects of this sector is that there are no ongoing operational costs such as employee salaries or depreciation. The only expense to consider is a 10% tax on profits, leaving you with a considerable sum of money.

Opportunities for All

Investing in the stock market is often perceived as a playground for the wealthy. However, even drivers, travel agents, and transport companies can tap into this lucrative opportunity. The auto sector offers the perfect avenue for SIP (Systematic Investment Plan) investments, allowing you to grow your wealth gradually with small, regular investments.

Why Now Is the Right Time

1. **Electric Vehicles on the Rise:** The automotive landscape is transforming with the rise of electric vehicles. This revolution is leading to new opportunities in the auto sector, making it an attractive investment destination.

2. **Scrap Policy:** The new policy mandates a life span of 15 years for vehicles, driving up the demand for new automobiles as old ones are scrapped. This boom will directly benefit the auto sector, fueling its growth.

Broaden Your Horizons

You don't need to pick individual stocks to benefit. Instead, focus on investing in the entire sector. Diversifying your investment reduces the risks and aligns with the sector's overall growth.

In Summary

The auto sector presents a golden opportunity for dramatic financial growth. Whether you're an investor with deep pockets or someone looking to start small with SIP, the auto market's potential is enormous. With the boom in electric vehicles and the newly implemented scrap policy, the stars are aligning to make this sector one of the most lucrative options available. Don't miss out—accelerate your wealth today by tapping into the auto sector!

The author is an investor, author, founder M I Securities and Business Partner at Sharekhan Srinagar, J&K. He can be reached at Irshad@bp.sharekhan.com



Mindful Fridays

The Perils Of Naive Counseling

Why Your Mental Health Deserves An RCI Licensed Clinical Psychologist

Wasim Kakroo

Mental health is an integral component of overall well-being, yet it often does not receive the attention it deserves. In India, where the conversation around mental health is gradually gaining momentum, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of seeking help from licensed clinical psychologists as per the guidelines of the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) rather than from untrained or naive counselors. The distinction between these two categories is not merely academic; it has profound implications for the effectiveness and safety of mental health interventions.

Understanding the Role of Licensed Clinical Psychologists

Licensed clinical psychologists are professionals who have undergone rigorous training and education. In India, the RCI is the statutory body responsible for regulating and monitoring the training of clinical psychologists. According to RCI guidelines, a licensed clinical psychologist must possess a minimum of an M.Phil. in Clinical Psychology, a two-year, full-time course that includes supervised clinical training and a comprehensive understanding of psychological disorders, assessment techniques, and therapeutic interventions.

These professionals are trained to diagnose mental health conditions accurately, develop and implement evidence-based treatment plans, and provide psychotherapy. Their training includes understanding psychopathology, developmental psychology, neuropsychology, and advanced therapeutic techniques. This extensive education equips them with the skills necessary to address a wide range of mental health issues, from anxiety and depression to severe psychiatric disorders.

The Dangers of Naive Counselors

In contrast, naive counselors typically lack the formal training and clinical experience mandated by the RCI. They might have basic degrees or short-term certifications in counseling, which do not provide the depth of knowledge required for effective and safe mental health



Naive counselors typically lack the formal training and clinical experience mandated by the RCI. They might have basic degrees or short-term certifications in counseling, which do not provide the depth of knowledge required for effective and safe mental health practice. The primary danger of consulting naive counselors lies in their limited understanding of psychological disorders and diagnostic criteria

practice. The primary danger of consulting naive counselors lies in their limited understanding of psychological disorders and diagnostic criteria.

1. Improper Diagnosis: Accurate diagnosis is the cornerstone of effective mental health treatment. Licensed clinical psychologists use standardized diagnostic tools and their extensive training to identify the root cause of a client's symptoms. Naive counselors, without this expertise, might misdiagnose or overlook critical aspects of a mental health condition,

leading to inappropriate or ineffective treatment.

2. Ineffective or Harmful Interventions: Therapeutic interventions need to be tailored to the specific needs of the individual, based on a thorough understanding of their psychological profile. Licensed clinical psychologists are trained to select and apply the most suitable therapeutic techniques. Naive counselors, on the other hand, might rely on generic or unproven methods, which can be not only ineffective but potentially harmful.

3. Ethical Concerns: Licensed clinical psychologists adhere to strict ethical guidelines regarding confidentiality, professional boundaries, and client welfare. Naive counselors, without a regulatory body overseeing their practice, may not follow these ethical standards, risking client confidentiality and the integrity of the therapeutic relationship.

The Importance of RCI Guidelines

The RCI guidelines serve as a benchmark for the training and practice of clinical psychologists

in India. They ensure that only those who meet stringent educational and practical requirements are licensed to practice. This regulation is vital for maintaining high standards in mental health care and protecting the public from unqualified practitioners.

RCI-licensed clinical psychologists undergo continuous professional development to stay updated with the latest advancements in the field. This commitment to lifelong learning ensures that they provide the most effective and current treatment modalities. In contrast, naive counselors often lack access to ongoing education and professional development, limiting their ability to offer the best care.

The Therapeutic Process with Licensed Clinical Psychologists

Engaging with a licensed clinical psychologist begins with a comprehensive assessment, which may include clinical interviews, psychometric testing, and behavioral observations. This

thorough evaluation process ensures a precise diagnosis and helps in formulating a personalized treatment plan.

Licensed clinical psychologists employ evidence-based therapies such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and psychodynamic therapy. These approaches are backed by extensive research and have proven efficacy in treating various mental health conditions. The therapeutic process is collaborative, with the psychologist working closely with the client to set goals, monitor progress, and make necessary adjustments to the treatment plan.

Furthermore, licensed clinical psychologists are trained to handle crises and provide interventions for severe mental health issues, including suicidal ideation and psychosis. Their ability to recognize and address these critical situations can be life-saving, a capability that naive counselors typically lack.

The Broader Impact on Mental Health Systems

The preference for licensed clinical psychologists over naive counselors also has broader implications for the mental health system in India. By ensuring that individuals receive proper diagnoses and effective treatment, we can reduce the burden of untreated mental health conditions on society. This approach can lead to better outcomes in terms of productivity, quality of life, and overall public health.

Investing in the training and regulation of clinical psychologists can also strengthen the mental health infrastructure. It promotes a culture of accountability and continuous improvement, encouraging higher standards of care. As mental health awareness grows, so does the demand for qualified professionals, highlighting the need for robust regulatory frameworks like those provided by the RCI.

The author is a licensed clinical psychologist (alumni of Govt. Medical College Srinagar) and works as a Child, Adolescent and Family therapist at Centre for Mental Health Services (CMHS) at Rambagh Srinagar. He can be reached at 8825067196

Emerald Nation: India's Journey Towards Environmental Resilience

Jannat Un Nisa



INDIA'S JOURNEY TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE IS A TESTAMENT TO THE NATION'S unwavering commitment to safeguarding its natural heritage and ensuring a sustainable future for generations to come

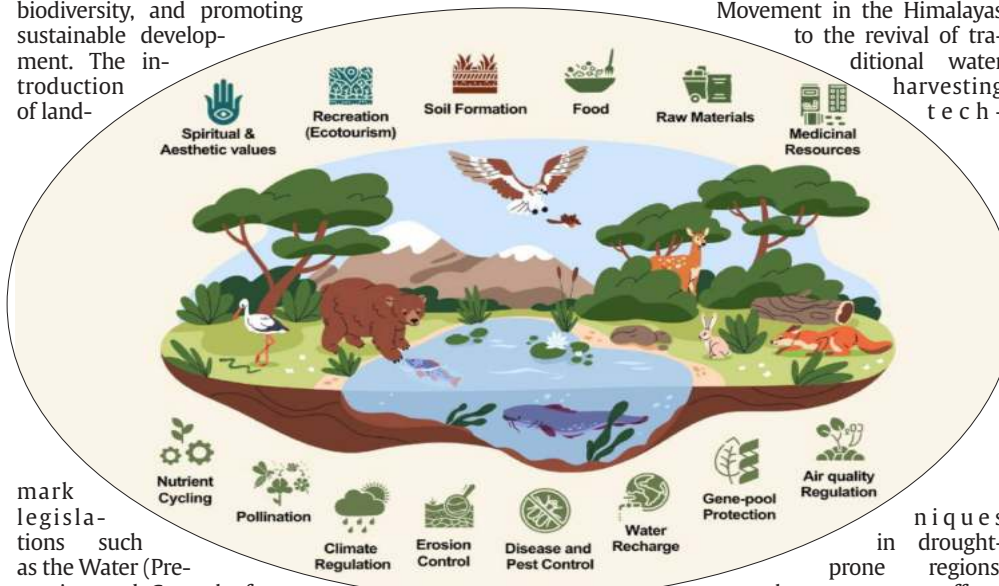
India, often referred to as an "Emerald Nation," is on a journey towards environmental resilience amid myriad challenges. With a rich tapestry of biodiversity, vibrant ecosystems, and a burgeoning population, the country stands at a critical juncture where balancing development imperatives with environmental sustainability is imperative for future generations.

At the heart of India's environmental narrative lies a paradoxical tale of rapid economic growth juxtaposed against escalating environmental degradation. The nation's burgeoning industries, burgeoning urbanization, and expanding agricultural footprint have exacted a toll on its natural resources, air quality, and biodiversity. However, amidst these challenges, India has embarked on a multifaceted journey towards environmental resilience, driven by policy interventions, grassroots movements, and technological innovations.

One of the pivotal pillars of India's environmental resilience journey is policy reform.

Over the years, the Indian government has enacted a slew of environmental regulations and initiatives aimed at mitigating pollution, conserving biodiversity, and promoting sustainable development. The introduction of land-

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan underscores India's resolve to tackle pressing environmental challenges head-on. Moreover, India's journey



mark legislations such as the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, and the Wildlife Protection Act signify the country's commitment to environmental stewardship. Furthermore, initiatives like the National Clean Air Program and the

and local communities are spearheading initiatives aimed at conservation, afforestation, and sustainable resource management. From the Chipko Movement in the Himalayas to the revival of traditional water harvesting tech-

in drought-prone regions, these grassroots efforts epitomize the spirit of environmental activism and resilience ingrained in the fabric of Indian society.

Furthermore, technological innovation is playing a pivotal role in augmenting India's environmental resilience efforts. The country is increasingly embracing renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and hydroelectric power to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. Initiatives like the International Solar Alliance, launched by India in collaboration with France, exemplify the nation's commitment to harnessing clean energy technologies for a sustainable future. Additionally, advancements in wastewater treatment, waste management, and precision agriculture are revolutionizing resource utilization and environmental conservation practices across various sectors.

Despite these commendable strides, India's journey towards environmental resilience is fraught with challenges and complexities. Rapid urbanization, industrial expansion, and unsustainable agricultural practices continue to exert pressure on the country's natural ecosystems. Moreover, climate change-induced phenomena such as erratic weather patterns, rising temperatures, and extreme weather events pose unpre-

cedented challenges to India's environmental resilience efforts. Addressing these challenges necessitates concerted efforts, innovative solutions, and collaborative action at the national, regional, and global levels.

In conclusion, India's journey towards environmental resilience is a testament to the nation's unwavering commitment to safeguarding its natural heritage and ensuring a sustainable future for generations to come. Through policy reform, grassroots mobilization, and technological innovation, India is charting a course towards a greener, cleaner, and more resilient future. However, the road ahead is fraught with challenges, and concerted efforts from all stakeholders are indispensable to navigate the complexities of environmental stewardship in the 21st century. As the Emerald Nation charts its course towards sustainability, it serves as an inspiring beacon of hope and resilience for the global community in the face of escalating environmental crises.

The author is from Sri Pratap Singh College, Srinagar

The growing promise of cancer vaccines

Agencies

No magic bullet is in sight yet, but three vaccines for particular skin and lung cancer types have advanced to the last phase of clinical trials.

A cure for cancer which is second only to cardiovascular diseases in its contribution to the global burden of disease has long been a dream.

While no magic bullet is yet in sight, three vaccines for particular skin and lung cancer types have advanced to the last stage of clinical trials in recent months.

If successful, these vaccines should be available to patients in the next three to 11 years. Unlike vaccines which prevent diseases, these aim to cure them or prevent relapses.

Cancer in every person is different because the cells in every cancerous tumour have different sets of genetic mutations. Recognising this, two of the vaccines are personalised and tailor-made for each patient. Oncologists working with pharmaceutical companies have developed these individualised neoantigen therapies.

A vaccine typically works by training the immune cells of our body to recognise antigens from pathogens, such as viruses against future attacks by the pathogen.

In cancer, however, there is

no external pathogen. The cells of a cancerous tumour undergo continuous mutations, some of which help them to grow much faster than normal cells while some others help them evade the body's natural immune system. The mutated proteins in cancerous cells are called neoantigens.

In individualised neoantigen therapy, the gene sequence of the tumour and normal blood cells are compared to identify neoantigens from each patient, and then a subset of neoantigens are chosen that are most likely to induce an immune response.

The vaccine for an individual patient targets this chosen subset of neoantigens.

These vaccines, jointly developed by pharma giants Moderna and Merck, have been shown in trials conducted so far to be significantly more effective in combination with immunotherapy than immunotherapy alone in preventing both the relapse of melanoma a type of skin cancer and non-small cell lung cancer after the tumours had been surgically removed.

Following these promising results in phase II clinical trials, the vaccines are now being tested on a larger group of patients in phase III trials. The studies are expected to be complete by 2030 for melanoma and 2035 for lung cancer.

The Moderna-Merck

cancer vaccine may not be the first to reach the market. The French company OSE Immunotherapeutics published positive results last September from phase III clinical trials of a vaccine using a different approach for advanced non-small cell lung cancer.

Its vaccine, Tedopi, is scheduled to start confirmatory trials which are the last step before regulatory approval later this year and may be available by 2027.

Vaccines for pancreatic cancer being developed by BioNTech and Genentech, and for colon cancer by Gritstone, are also showing promising results in the early phases of clinical trials. Like the vaccines being developed by Moderna and Merck, these too are individualised neoantigen therapies based on messenger RNA (mRNA).

There is another kind of RNA therapy also under development that uses small interfering RNA (siRNA) and microRNA (miRNA). Since 2018, six siRNA-based therapies have been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of neural, skin, heart and renal diseases.

Several more siRNA drugs are at various clinical trial stages for different types of cancer and a diverse range of other diseases.

Within cells, there are two

kinds of nucleic acid molecules that contain coded information vital to life: DNA and RNA. While DNA contains genetic information, mRNA one among the different types of RNA carries the codes for the proteins.

In addition, there are also non-coding RNA, some of which are functionally important. siRNA and miRNA are examples of such non-coding RNA.

The RNA vaccine for an individualised neoantigen therapy is a cocktail of mRNA carrying the codes for neoantigens the mutated fingerprint proteins in cancerous cells. For the Moderna-Merck study, scientists identified 34 neoantigens per patient.

They delivered the corresponding mRNA vaccine cocktail packed in lipid nanoparticles, just like the mRNA vaccines for COVID-19 developed by Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech.

When the vaccine is delivered after removing the tumour, it trains the immune system to recognise neoantigens and fight back against the cancer returning. Usually, the body's natural immune system corrects mutations and prevents us from having cancers. However, in some cases this natural immune response is insufficient, leading to tumour growth.

WORLD THYROID DAY

Early Detection Key to Managing Thyroid Dysfunction: Doctors

Srinagar: A whopping 42 million people in India grapple with thyroid disorders, a number that continues to climb. Women, in particular, face a higher risk of developing these conditions. The thyroid gland, a small butterfly-shaped organ located at the base of the neck, plays an important role in regulating a person's metabolism, energy levels, and overall well-being. When the thyroid malfunctions, it can take a toll on these vital processes. Doctors, therefore, advise taking charge of one's health by being cognizant of the symptoms associated with thyroid disorders and taking the right course of treatment.

The good news is that thyroid disorders are often easily diagnosed with a simple blood test. Early detection allows for timely intervention and treatment.

Dr Bashir Laway, Senior Consultant, Endocrinology, Paras Health, Srinagar, emphasizes the importance of being proactive about one's thyroid health. "The thyroid gland has a significant impact on our bodies," he states. "It affects everything from our metabolism and energy levels to our mood and cognitive function. Identifying problems early and starting treatment can make a world of difference in a person's life. Unfortunately, the symptoms of thyroid dysfunction can be vague and easily attributed to



other causes. This is why regular check-ups and open communication with one's doctor are crucial."

He adds, "Thyroid conditions can sometimes run in families. If someone has a close relative with a thyroid disorder, they should talk to their doctor about increased risk factors. It is equally important to familiarize oneself with the common signs of hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism as early detection allows for timely treatment and a better quality of life."

There are two main types of thyroid disorders: hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid) and hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid). Hypothyroidism occurs when the thyroid

gland fails to produce the required amount of hormones. Symptoms can be subtle and include fatigue, weight gain, difficulty concentrating, hair loss, and feeling cold. Left untreated, hypothyroidism can lead to more serious health complications. Hyperthyroidism, on the other hand, is caused by an overactive thyroid producing too much hormone. This leads to symptoms like weight loss, anxiety, heart palpitations, difficulty sleeping, and feeling hot.

Currently, various treatment options are available for managing thyroid disorders. The most common treatment involves medications that replace or regulate thyroid hormone levels. Depending on the specific issue, this may involve daily pills. Working with a nutritionist can help develop a plan that supports one's thyroid health. Certain foods may influence thyroid function, and ensuring proper intake of essential nutrients is vital. In some cases, more specialized interventions like radioactive iodine therapy or surgery might be necessary. These options are typically explored when medication or dietary changes are insufficient.

By understanding the signs and symptoms of thyroid dysfunction and getting regular check-ups, one can be an active participant in managing their health.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Srinagar Records

the month of May in 2011, 32.4 degree Celsius in 2007, 34.2 degree Celsius in 2001, 33.8 degree Celsius in 2000 and 34.1 degree Celsius in 1995.

"It is the hottest May day recorded in the last one decade," he said.

Moreover, as per the data, some other parts of Kashmir where the hottest day of season amidst the intense heat wave was recorded include Qazigund, Pahalgam, Kupwara, Kokernag, Gulmarg, Ganderbal, Anantnag and others.

In Qazigund, the mercury settled at 32.6 degree Celsius while Pahalgam recorded a maximum temperature of 27.3 degree Celsius. In Kupwara, the mercury settled at 30.6 degree Celsius while in Kokernag and Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, the mercury settled at 30.1 degree Celsius and 22.0 degree Celsius respectively.

However, in Jammu's three stations including Jammu, Banihal and Batote, the mercury recorded a slight fall as the mercury settled at 40.1 degree Celsius, 29.8 degree Celsius and 29.9 degree Celsius respectively.

Katra has however, recorded further rise as the maximum temperature soared to 36.4 degree Celsius today while in Baderwah, it settled at 32.6 degree Celsius.

Meanwhile, Director Meteorological department, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that the weather is expected to remain generally dry till May 28 while the possibility of thunder-shower activity at isolated places can't be ruled out.

From May 29-31st, the weather would remain partly to generally cloudy with light rain and thunder expected at isolated places.

Overall, no significant weather activity till 31st May, he said.

Meanwhile, the MeT has issued an advisory for farmers, advising them to continue farm operations.

"Heatwave over plains of Jammu division & Kashmir division would likely continue during the next 6 days. Hot and dry weather is expected over hilly districts during the next 6 days," the advisory reads.

The MeT has also advised people to avoid heat exposure and drink a lot of fluid and water, especially vulnerable people like elderly, infants and children. Meanwhile, the MeT has issued an advisory for farmers, advising them to continue farm operations.

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'Extreme Forest

Notably, MeT said that the "heat wave" over the plains of Jammu and Kashmir was likely to continue for the next six days.

"Overall, no significant weather activity is expected till May 31," a MeT official earlier in the day said, adding adding, "Heat wave over plains of Jammu Division & Kashmir Division is likely to continue during next six days even as hilly districts are also likely to experience hot and dry weather during the next six days."

Avoid School

asked the schools to avoid assembling in the afternoon. "Ensure adequate availability of drinking water and water breaks. Also sensitise students to cover their heads," reads the guideline. The department also directed the concerned to report any cases related to HRI, stating that education is not possible without

care.

Campaigning Concludes

2,200 applications from the contesting candidates and political parties, seeking permission for various electioneering activities.

While 1,920 applications for rallies, roadshows and meetings were approved, 303 pleas were rejected on various grounds.

Mufti is facing a tough challenge from prominent Gujjar leader and former minister Mian Altaf Ahmad, who is the National Conference (NC) candidate.

Apni Party's Zafar Iqbal Manhas will be hoping to turn the table on both the PDP and the NC after he managed to get the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) support in the Pir Panjal region.

The Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) of former chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad has fielded Mohammad Saleem Parry from the seat.

According to poll authorities, the fate of the 20 candidates will be decided by more than 18.36 lakh voters of Anantnag-Rajouri.

A total of 18,36,576 voters are enrolled in the five districts of Kulgam, Anantnag, Poonch, Shopian and Rajouri of the parliamentary constituency, including 9,33,647 male and 9,02,902 female and 27 third-gender voters.

Around 18,000 differently-abled people and 540 people aged above 100 years are eligible to cast their ballots.

The EC has set up 2,338 polling stations across the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency. Four election staff, including the presiding officer, will be stationed in every polling booth. In all, more than 9,000 polling staff, including reserves, will be deployed.

There are 19 border polling stations in Rajouri and Poonch.

Polling will be held from 7 am to 6 pm and before that, there shall be a mock poll in the presence of polling agents. The voting will continue after 6 pm if voters are found standing in queues outside polling booths.

Seventeen polling booths ("pink" polling stations) will be managed by women, 15 by differently-abled people and eight by youngsters. Also, there will be 15 "green" polling stations to spread the message about the environment.

The purpose behind these special polling stations is to spread awareness among certain sections of the society, such as women, differently-abled and first-time voters, to motivate them to come forward and exercise their right to vote.

All the polling stations in Anantnag-Rajouri will have CCTV cameras for live webcasting to the control rooms set up at the district and CEO office. The cameras will be positioned in such a way so that they do not violate the secrecy of vote.

There are a few polling stations that fall in communication-shadow areas. Suitable alternative arrangements have been put in place in such areas by providing satellite phones, wireless sets and special runners.

'Multi-layer

have been deployed, reinforcing a security setup managed by Army, police, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Border Security Force (BSF), they said.

Troops have been put on alert along the LoC, and security and contingency plans have been put in place for all border polling stations.

Top civilian and security officials, including Director General of Police (DGP) R R Swain, General Officer Commanding of 16 Corps, Additional DGPs, and Dividing Commissioner Ramesh Kumar recently visited the twin border districts to review the security measures.

Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), P K. Pole said that so far, the polls have been peaceful. "There

has been no poll-related violence; however, an incident of violence in Anantnag and Shopian demanded extra scrutiny. We have ensured that no violence takes place on the poll day for which security deployment has been readied," he said.

"The situation may have been peaceful for the past few years, but that in no way means that we don't need extra precautions. Ample security has been deployed in the region as per the required demand," Pole added.

On the factors for the high turnout, the CEO said, "Though the campaign of candidates holds the utmost importance, the election commission has also played a role in the high voter turnout in the region."

In his message to the voters of Poonch and Rajouri, he said, "People of Jammu and Kashmir have voted in high numbers so far. Areas in south Kashmir and Rajouri have a history of high voter turnout. Basic facilities including water, electricity, toilets and helpers have been arranged at polling stations. The facilities have been organised for the public. They should come and exercise their ballots on May 25."

Polling in Anantnag was earlier scheduled for May 7 but was deferred to May 25 due to adverse weather conditions following requests from several parties, including BJP, Apni Party and Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP).

The Anantnag-Rajouri constituency was re-configured by the Delimitation Commission in 2022, excluding Pulwama and parts of Shopian, while incorporating most of Rajouri and Poonch districts.

Anantnag has witnessed four terror attacks in the past 30 days.

In 2023, Rajouri, Poonch and the neighbouring Reasi district witnessed a series of encounters, resulting in 54 deaths, including those of 19 security personnel and 28 terrorists.

On May 4 this year, an Indian Air Force (IAF) soldier was killed and five were injured in a terrorist attack in Poonch.

There are over 18.30 lakh eligible voters, including 8.99 lakh women and over 81,000 first-time voters, in the Anantnag constituency. They will decide the fate of 20 candidates in the fray.

Among the candidates are former chief minister and PDP President Mehbooba Mufti, National Conference's Mian Altaf and Apni Party's Zafar Iqbal Khan Manhas, who is being backed by the BJP. DPAP leader Mohamad Saleem Parry and 10 independents are also in the fray.

The Anantnag Lok Sabha seat comprises 18 assembly segments -- seven in Anantnag district, four in Rajouri, three each in Kulgam and Poonch, and one in Shopian.

National Conference president Feroq Abdullah and vice president Omar Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti and her daughter Iltija Mufti, BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh and Jammu and Kashmir BJP chief Ravinder Raina, DPAP chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad and Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari campaigned extensively in the constituency to garner support for their parties.

Jaipur Couple

local police said that the injured were evacuated and taken to the hospital for treatment.

Former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Feroq Abdullah said that the incidents like this are affecting the tourism industry of the Union Territory.

Former deputy chief minister of the erstwhile state, Kavinder Gupta, said that the attack was aimed at disturbing and hurting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking to ANI on May 19, the senior BJP leader said, "There was a record tourist footfall in Kashmir last year, with the number of

visitors estimated at 1,70,00,000. Hence, at a time when tourism is looking up and local businesses and livelihoods are booming, the attack was aimed at bringing back the dark days of terror in the region. It was intended to hurt the tourism prospects at a time when there is prosperity all around in Kashmir. I strongly suspect Pakistan to be behind this attack. However, the nefarious designs of people, who carry out terror hits in exchange for money and at the behest of their handlers (across the border) wouldn't succeed. Their bid to bring back the reign of terror in the Valley will never succeed." (ANI)

J&K To Prioritize

with a Zonal Master Plan for eco-sensitive zone.

The notification said the tourism master plan shall be drawn based on carrying capacity study of the eco-sensitive zone.

The MoEFCC said a committee comprising of the Principal Secretary (Environment and Forests), Chairman, Pollution Control Committee, an expert each in ecology and environment and civil constructions from an institute of repute such as IIT, Jammu, and a representative from the Department of Environment and Forests, shall be constituted for suggesting the environmental safeguards or measures for new construction of hotels and resorts, which shall form a component of the Tourism Master Plan.

"The said committee shall put in place a risk assessment study on landslide, slope stability and seismicity and recommend environmental friendly and safe construction measures to be adopted," it said.

It said establishment of new hotels and resorts shall be permitted only in pre-defined and designated areas for eco-tourism facilities as per tourism master plan.

"All new tourism activities or expansion of existing tourism activities within the eco-sensitive zone shall be in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Central Government and the eco-tourism guidelines issued by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (as amended from time to time) with emphasis on ecotourism, eco-education and eco-development," the notification said.

It said until the zonal master plan is approved, development for tourism and expansion of existing tourism activities shall be permitted by the regulatory authorities concerned based on the actual site specific scrutiny and recommendation of the monitoring committee.

Ebrahim Raisi

answer only to Iran's supreme leader. The Imam Reza charity, known as "Astan-e Quds-e Razavi" in Farsi, is believed to be one of the biggest in the country. Analysts estimate its worth at tens of billions of dollars as it owns almost half the land in Mashhad, Iran's second-largest city that's about 750 kilometers east of Iran's capital. Raisi is the first top politician in the country to be buried at the shrine, which represents a major honor for the cleric. His father-in-law serves as the city's Friday prayer leader.

The deaths of Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian come as Iran remains a lead player in the wider Mideast backing resistance groups fighting to end dominance of Israel and the United States. Mourners have chanted against both nations in the ceremonies.

State media circulated photos Thursday showing a meeting between Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard chief and the head of its expeditionary Quds Force and representatives from Hamas, Lebanon's Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthis rebels.

Thursday morning, thousands in black

gathered along a main boulevard in the city of Birjand, where Raisi once served as its member of the Assembly of Experts in Iran's South Khorasan province along the Afghan border. There and in Mashhad, mourners on the streets reached out to a truck carrying his casket, with some tossing scarves and other items against it for a blessing.

Meanwhile, former Foreign Ministers Mohammad Javad Zarif and Ali Akbar Salehi and other dignitaries paid respects to Amirabdollahian at Iran's Foreign Ministry, where his casket was put on display. His body later was interred in Shahr-e Rey just outside of Tehran at the Abdol Azim shrine, another final resting place for those famed in Persian history.

"Give Soleimani our greetings," a religious singer said as Amirabdollahian's body was placed inside its final resting place, referring to the slain general assassinated by the United States in Iraq.

No One Dares

that the PoK (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir) is a part of India and the BJP will take it back.

"Leaders of Pakistan say that PoK is theirs. Congress leaders also say that they (Pakistan) have an atom bomb. BJP people are not scared of atom bombs. PoK is and will remain part of India and we will take it back," he said.

He said the opposition was attempting to end reservation for SC/ST and OBC in order to appease their vote bank.

"Rahul Baba and Akhilesh Yadav you have been blinded by vote banks politics. We will finish reservation on the basis of religion and give it back to the ST/ST and OBCs," he said.

He also pointed out that the INDIA bloc did not have any prime minister face and claimed that the alliance, if it comes to power, will have five PMs. "Can the country run like this?"

Shah alleged that Rahul Gandhi and Akhilesh Yadav have tickets booked for a vacation abroad once results of the Lok Sabha polls are announced, unlike Narendra Modi who works tirelessly for the nation.

"On the one hand, there is Rahul Gandhi who leaves for Italy, Thailand and Bangkok and on the other hand, there is Narendra Modi who has not taken any leave for 23 years and even spends his Diwali with soldiers on the border," he said.

Shah said the BJP ensured OROP (One Rank-One Pension) scheme for the retired army personnel and asserted that India will become the third largest economy in the third term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Shah on Thursday also addressed a poll rally in Khalilabad of Sant Kabir Nagar in support of Praveen Kumar Nishad, who is contesting on a NISHAD party ticket, a partner of NDA.

There, he accused the opposition of stalling the construction of Ram Temple for over 70 years and attributed its construction to Modi.

"This election is between the one who constructed Ram Temple and those who opened fire on Ram Bhakts," he said.

Shah alleged that in the erstwhile SP government "goonda raj" was rampant in Uttar Pradesh, and it was Yogi Adityanath, the current CM, who set all goons right.

Polling in Domariaganj and Sant Kabir Nagar will be held in the sixth phase of ongoing Lok Sabha polls on Saturday.

HC Quashes

formulated by the detaining authority does not make out any independent subjective satisfaction recorded by the (District Magistrate) in the present petition," it said.

Subsequently, the court held that the order of detention bearing No. 144/DMS/PSA/2022 dated 28.06.2022, passed by the District Magistrate Shopian was not sustainable in the eyes of law. Accordingly, it quashed the same.

No Innocents Will Be Detained Under My Govt: Azad

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Chairman DPAP, Ghulam Nabi Azad, addressed the public on the concluding day of the campaign in Dooru, Anantnag. He asserted that during his tenure as CM, there were almost no fake encounters. He recounted an incident where a deputation claimed that individuals presented as militants were actually innocent laborers. Azad immediately ordered an inquiry, confirmed their innocence, and had the responsible officers jailed.



ment, I ensured justice to people, irrespective of caste or religion. Our youth, especially girls, should be able to move freely. Today I received many complaints that police are picking up innocent civilians; this must stop. You are further alienating them. In my government, youth will be given the full freedom to live their lives. This drug menace has harmed our society, and we will ensure better education and jobs." Azad further criticised the

National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) for their silence on critical issues such as Article 370 during parliamentary sessions. He said that the three MPs from these parties failed to speak up when he protested in parliament, showcasing a troubling pattern of inaction. "They are deceiving the people," Azad declared. "They remained silent even on the land eviction order when the government attempted to bulldoze houses and seize land. It was our intervention that halted the government's actions." Azad also accused NC leaders of using religion and caste to divide the population. "At the national level, a party tried to split Hindus and Muslims. Now, these parties are attempting to divide Pahari, Kashmiri, and Gujjars.



AMID THE SCORCHING HEAT, boys cool off by bathing in Dal Lake.

KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

Govt Focusing On Multiplying High-Yield Crop Varieties: Director Agri



KO NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal on Thursday visited Potato Seed Multiplication Farm (SMF) Kalnag, SMF Rampora and Floriculture Farm Sirhama Anantnag, inspected different blocks of these farms and interacted with the concerned technical experts regarding various latest interventions adopted by the farms. Speaking on the occasion, Director Agriculture said that the departmental farms are in a process becoming centers of excellence vis a vis different crop production, protection technologies. He said Departmental farms are focusing on multiplication of high yielding varieties of agriculture crops, appropriate production and protection technologies, post harvest

management and production of good quality seed. Director Agriculture assured the concerned officers of every possible support from the department for strengthening the departmental farms on modern scientific lines. He said that from the last two years the department is diversifying the departmental farms in terms of crops and other agriculture activities. We have achieved good results over the quality of planting material but still there is a great scope for improvement, he added. Earlier, Farm Manager Potato SMF Kalnag briefed Director Agriculture regarding various interventions introduced by the department for the development in the said farm on modern scientific lines. He gave a detailed presentation to the visiting director in this regard.

Women Stop Vande Bharat Train To Protest Against Water Crisis

Agencies

JAMMU: Women stopped the Vande Bharat train on Thursday by staging a protest at a railway station here against the water crisis compounded by heat-wave conditions. The demonstrators threatened to block all incoming and outgoing trains if the water crisis in their colony was not addressed urgently. Scores of women and some children from the Jammu East Colony marched to the Jammu railway station to protest against the administration's alleged failure to ensure a regular water supply. The protesters, some of them carrying buckets, stopped the Vande Bharat train at the station for a brief period before the police and railway authori-

ties intervened. "There has been no regular water supply to our colony for the past four months. We have approached the authorities, but nothing has been done. We have to fetch water from long distances even for cooking and drinking," said Sakshi, a protester. Another protester claimed that life has become "unbearable" in the hot weather conditions. Police and authorities assured the protesters they would address the water supply issue in their colony. "We will ensure that your demand for water supply is addressed soon," a police official told them. However, the agitators warned of further protests if their grievances remained unaddressed. "This agitation will be intensified if our demand is not met," another protester Sonia said.

Doodhpathri Tea Vendors Asked To Vacate In 10 Days

Agencies

SRINAGAR- The authorities have asked the owners of 'illegal' tea vendors in Doodhpathri tourist resort in Central Kashmir's Budgam district to vacate the space they have occupied within 10 days or face action. The order has been issued by Doodhpathri Development Authority (DDA), asking roadside tea vendors to vacate spaces they have occupied "illegally". Chief Executive Officer DDA, Nargis Suraya, as per news

agency KNO said that the department has received multiple complaints that the tea stall owners have been cutting tree branches, thereby harming the picturesque meadows. She also said the unauthorised vendors are located under high-tension transmission lines, posing a risk to their lives and visitors as well. The CEO said a team of Forest Protection Force, DDA, PDD and police recently visited the area and warned the vendors to vacate the space within 10 days or face action.

Ahead Of Electoral Battle, Mehbooba Seeks 'Strength' At Father's Grave

Agencies

BIJBEHARA: PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti paid a visit to the grave of her father, Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, to seek strength as she prepares for the May 25 electoral challenge from the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat. Busy campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections, Mehbooba on Thursday took time to reflect on her emotions.



"I come to this place whenever I feel alone and always wish my father was here with me. I sit beside his grave and gather my strength," she said. Her father, a former chief minister of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state, died in 2016. Despite facing political challenges since the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in 2019, Mehbooba briefly touched upon the May 25 elections while at her father's gravesite. She also took the opportunity to draw attention to her political adversaries, particularly the National Conference, criticising their historical role in the region's affairs. "From 1931, the National Conference has been part of all accords -- I won't call them agreements, I will call them surrender -- and decision with regard to Jammu and Kashmir. The situation we are in today, the problems we face are all because of them," Mehbooba said, emphasising her perspective on the region's political landscape. Expressing optimism over the

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) formed a government in the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state in an alliance with the BJP in 2015. The saffron party withdrew support from the government in 2018. Discussing the PDP's past alliances and achievements, Mehbooba highlighted its endeavour towards dialogue and resolution. She remarked, "If you look at the history of Jammu and Kashmir over the past 70 years, if there has been any party that has come into an accord with the Centre, it was the PDP... we did not (have an) accord with the BJP." She added, "We made them agree to talks with regard to the resolution of the Kashmir issue -- talks with Pakistan, talks in Jammu and Kashmir, removal of AFSPA, protection of Article 370." However, the PDP chief failed to answer how her alliance could protect Article 370, which was abrogated by the Centre on August 5, 2019, besides downgrading the state into a Union Territory and bifurcating it into two.

voter turnout in south Kashmir, Mehbooba anticipates a substantial participation compared to Srinagar and Baramulla, signalling her hope for a successful electoral outcome. The fate of 20 contestants, including Mehbooba, will be decided by more than 18.30 lakh eligible voters, including 8.99 lakh women and over 81,000 first timers. The Anantnag-Rajouri constituency was reshaped on the recommendations of the Delimitation Commission in 2022, excluding Pulwama and some segments of Shopian and bringing in most of Rajouri and Poonch districts. Mehbooba faces a tough challenge from National Conference candidate and influential Gujjar leader Mian Altaf and the Apni Party's Zafar Iqbal Khan Manhas, who has the BJP's backing. Democratic Progressive Azad Party leader Mohamad Saleem Parry and 10 Independents are also in the fray. Campaigning for the elections ended on Thursday.

People Should Ensure The Dynastic Parties Never Return To Power : Bukhari

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Apni Party President, Altaf Bukhari, on Thursday, led a vibrant roadshow in several areas of Anantnag. He addressed several public gatherings during this impressive activity, which was part of the party's campaign for the LS polls in the Rajouri-Anantnag parliamentary constituency scheduled for Saturday. Throughout this vibrant activity, he was accompanied by senior leader and the party's Additional General Secretary, Hilal Ahmad Shah, as well as a number of esteemed leaders and senior workers. The roadshow started from Lal Chowk in Anantnag and went through areas across Achabal, Dialgam, and others. The party also held a public rally in the Dialgam area of the district.



Addressing these occasions, Altaf Bukhari urged people not to vote for the dynastic parties in Jammu and Kashmir. He said, "For the safety and well-being of your children, you must ensure that the Khandani Parties, like NC and PDP, never return to power in Jammu and Kashmir." He added, "You must never forget that these parties and their leaders are responsible for the deaths, bloodshed, and destruction that occurred in Jammu and Kashmir over the

years and decades. They misled people, provoked them to resort to violence, and, in the meantime, they created empires for themselves and established their family rule here. Thus, it is important for the safety and well-being of the people that these parties and their leaders are kept away from attaining power in the future." Taking a dig at the PDP leader for her emotional sloganeering, Altaf Bukhari said, "These days, the leader of the PDP frequently chants the slogan, 'Jis Kashmir ko khoon se sencha, woh Kashmir hamara hai' (The Kashmir that we have watered with our blood, that Kashmir is ours). Someone must ask her, which blood is she referring to? Is it the blood of the innocent children who were gunned down in 2016 while she was in power

in Jammu and Kashmir, or is it the blood spilled in the massacres at places like Bijbehara, Hawal, and Gawkadal in the 1990s when her late father was Home Minister at the centre?" He also blamed NC for its political gimmicks, and said, "NC's leadership was hand in glove with the leaders in Delhi long before 1947. That is why they were handed the government in Jammu and Kashmir post-47, even without a public mandate. However, in later years, NC leadership indulged in political gimmickry to pressure Delhi. They chanted slogans like 'Raishumari' and 'Autonomy' here time and again, just to maintain their hold on power and strengthen their family rule here. They made people scapegoats by raising such emotionally charged slogans here."

Mega Cleanliness Drive Conducted In Gulmarg

KO NEWS SERVICE

GULMARG: In a significant initiative to preserve the natural beauty and cleanliness of international tourist destination Gulmarg, a mega cleanliness drive was today conducted at the scenic locations of Kangdori and Afarwat. This effort was a collaborative endeavour by the Gulmarg

Under the coordination of Was-eem Raja, Chief Executive Officer of GDA, the initiative focused on ensuring a green, clean and plastic/polythene-free Gulmarg. Raja emphasized the GDA's commitment to such cleanliness drives, affirming that these efforts will be sustained for the continuous upkeep of Gulmarg. Tourists and locals alike expressed their gratitude for the



Development Authority and the J&K Cable Car Corporation. The drive commenced at Kangdori and extended to Afarwat, drawing significant participation from both organizations.

efforts of GDA and JKCC. Many highlighted the importance of maintaining cleanliness in these pristine environments and commended the authorities for their proactive measures.

RTO Kashmir Denies Reports Of 'No Driving Tests', Issuance Of Licenses

Agencies

SRINAGAR The Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Kashmir has refuted recent reports circulating on social media claiming that driving tests would be skipped for issuing driving licenses and that private entities had been authorised to issue licenses. RTO Kashmir, Syed Shahnawaz Bukhari, speaking to the news agency, termed these reports as "entirely baseless". "There is no skip to driving tests for seeking a driving licence, and as of now, no private stakeholder has been authorised to issue driving licenses or conduct the driving test," the RTO Kashmir said. In response to the concerns raised by applicants about the backlog of pending licenses, the RTO informed that around

1 lakh licenses have already been printed and were in the process of being dispatched by postal authorities. "Currently, there would be a pendency of around 25% of driving licenses which are yet to be printed, over 1 lakh are already printed and it is the postal authorities who have to dispatch that," he added. Notably, the rumours about changes in the driving license issuance process sparked considerable confusion among the public over the past few days. The social media reports suggested that driving tests would be skipped and that private entities could issue licenses. However, the RTO Kashmir firmly dispelled these claims, reiterating that the government remains the sole authority for issuing driving licenses in the region. --(KNO)

Terrorist Aide Booked Under PSA: Police

Agencies

SRINAGAR: After receiving formal detention orders from the competent authority, Jammu and Kashmir Police Thursday booked a terrorist associate linked with proscribed terror outfit LeT under PSA & four notorious drug smugglers under PIT-NDPS Act in Sopore & Handwara. "The terrorist associate namely Ahsan Ul Haq Khanday son of Nazir Ahmad Khanday resident of Nowpora Kalan Sopore has been booked under PSA while as three notorious drug smugglers namely Barkat Ahmad Dar son of Abdul Ahad Dar resident of Shair Colony Sopore, Umar Bashir Zargar son of Bashir Ahmad Zargar resident of Behrampora Rafiabad

and MUSAIB Bashir Lone son of Bashir Ahmad Lone resident of Wadoora Payeen Sopore have been booked under PIT-NDPS Act in Sopore. The booked persons have been detained and subsequently lodged in Central Jail Kot-Balwal, Jammu," a police spokesman said in a statement issued to the news agency--Kashmir News Observer (KNO). Meanwhile, Police in Handwara booked notorious drug peddler Aijaz Ahmad Bhat @ Tanveer son of Mohd Ramzan Bhat resident of Kralgund Qaziabad under PIT NDPS Act after obtaining a formal detention order from the competent authority. The booked drug peddler has been detained and subsequently lodged in jail, police said. --(KNO)

CSK CEO Drops Major Hint On MS Dhoni's Retirement Plans

Press Trust of India

CHENNAI: Chennai Super Kings CEO Kasi Viswanathan said he is 'very, very hopeful' of former skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni participating in IPL 2025 as a player.

Dhoni, who led CSK to a record five Indian Premier League titles, stepped down as the skipper before the start of the ongoing season, handing the responsibilities to Ruturaj Gaikwad, who led the team to a fifth place finish.

Speculations have been rife that this could be Dhoni's final season in the tournament but Viswanathan asserted that it was completely up to the former India captain to take a final call on his future.

"I do not know. It is a question which only MS can answer. The question for us, we have always respected the decisions taken by MS. We have left it to him," he said to



a question on CSK's YouTube channel. "As all of you know, he has

always taken his decisions and announced them at the appropriate time. We do expect that

we will get a decision as and when he decides. "But we are very, very hope-

ful that he will be available for CSK the next year. That is the view and expectations of the fans and mine."

Dhoni, who had underwent surgery to treat a knee injury issue last year, scored 161 runs in 73 balls at a strike rate of 220.55 this season. He was also good behind the stumps.

A mega IPL auction has been scheduled later in the year and if Dhoni continues, CSK will undoubtedly be retaining him.

However, the number of players allowed to be retained still needs clarity.

Viswanathan said that discussions are yet to take place on the same with the BCCI. "It is too early because we have still not heard from BCCI on the kind of retentions which are going to be part of the next cycle of auction.

"So we are expecting that the BCCI would discuss with all franchise owners before they take a decision on retention."

Ricky Ponting Turns Down India Head Coach Approach



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Australia great Ricky Ponting has revealed that he was approached for the soon-to-bevacant India head coach position but he has declined the offer as it doesn't fit into his "lifestyle" right now.

Ponting, who recently completed seven seasons as the head coach of Delhi Capitals IPL franchise, has been Australia's interim T20 coach in the past.

He did not say whether the feelers for India position came from the BCCI.

"...there were a few little one-on-one conversations during the IPL, just to get a level of interest from me as to whether I would do it," Ponting told the ICC.

"I'd love to be a senior coach of a national team, but with the other things that I have in my life and wanting to have a bit of time at home...everyone knows if you take a job working with the Indian team, you can't be involved in an IPL team, so it would take that out of it as well.

"Also, a national head coach is a 10 or 11-month of the year job, and as much as I'd like to do it, it just doesn't fit into my lifestyle right now and the things that I really enjoy doing," he added.

Ponting said he discussed the offer with his son and he seemed

game for a move to India.

"My family and my kids have spent the last five weeks over at the IPL with me and they come over every year and I had a whisper to my son about it," he recalled.

"I said, 'Dad's been offered the Indian coaching job' and he said, 'Just take it dad, we would love to move over there for the next couple of years'," Ponting quipped.

"That's how much they love being over there and the culture of cricket in India, but right now it probably doesn't exactly fit into my lifestyle," he added.

Some other high-profile names such as Chennai Super Kings head coach Stephen Fleming, Lucknow Super Giants head coach Justin Langer and Kolkata Knight Riders mentor Gautam Gambhir have also been talked about as potential candidates for the position that Rahul Dravid will vacate after India's T20 World Cup campaign next month.

The BCCI has set May 27 as the last date for submitting applications.

"I've seen a few other names thrown about as well. Justin Langer's name got thrown in yesterday, Stephen Fleming's name has been thrown about a little bit," Ponting noted.

"Gautam Gambhir's name has been thrown around a little bit the last couple of days as well. But I think it'd be unlikely for me just on the reasons that I've given there.

Dilshan, Brett Lee Back KKR To Clinch IPL 2024 Title

Agencies

KOLKATA: Former Australia seamer Brett Lee and Sri Lanka opener Tilakratne Dilshan have backed the Shreyas Iyer-led Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to clinch the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 title. The Riders have soared

team that deserves to finish at the number one position. They're straight through the finals on Sunday, so they'll be pretty hard to beat," Lee told ANI.

The 47-year-old stated that the Knight Riders have played very good cricket and they are going to win the 17th edi-

dred this season, following his 109-run blitzkrieg against the Rajasthan Royals.

With the ball, he is the second-highest wicket-taker for the Riders with 16 wickets in 13 matches, conceding runs at a mere economy of 6.90. Along with the former West Indies star, Varun Chakaravar-



high in the ongoing edition of the cash-rich league with a clinical set of performances.

They finished at the top of the group stage for the first time in the history of the tournament. They accumulated 20 points in 14 matches to finish at the top of the table. They stormed into the final with a comprehensive win over free-scoring Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Qualifier 1 on Tuesday.

The former Aussie pacer asserted that the Kolkata franchise deserves to finish at the number one position.

"I picked RCB right from the top and I was disappointed when they got knocked out last night. But if you look on paper and in its current form, it will be tough to beat KKR. I think they're probably the

tion of the cash-rich league. "I think, according to me, consistently performing KKR doing well throughout the tournament. RR played very good, they played very good cricket. But when you are going halfway through, a little bit they are up and down. But KKR doing consistently, they are performing in all three departments, bowling, batting and failing. Hopefully, my view, I think, is KKR going to win this IPL," Dilshan said.

Sunil Narine has been a key player for the Knights in the opening slot as well as with the ball. He is the top-scorer for the franchise this season with 482 runs in his kitty at an average of 37.08 and a mouth-watering strike rate of 179.85 in 13 matches. He also struck his maiden T20 hun-

ty has joined hands with the experienced player to form a formidable spin duo.

The mystery spinner is the leading wicket-taker for the franchise and the third-highest in the ongoing season. He has 20 scalps to his name in 14 matches at a bowling average of 19.65 and has conceded runs at an economy of 8.18.

He is just four wickets shy of the Purple Cap, with Punjab Kings pacer Harshal Patel leading the race with a tally of 24. With the two-time champions already in the final, their opponents are yet to be decided.

Sunrisers Hyderabad will take on Rajasthan Royals in Qualifier 2 in Chennai on Friday. The winner will go on to play the final against KKR on Sunday. (ANI)

Short TAKES

Australia To Celebrate 'Summer Of Cricket' In Chennai

The Australian Government and Cricket Australia will begin the countdown to the blockbuster 2024-25 season with an event in Chennai on May 25. With only six months to go until the start of the Men's Border-Gavaskar Trophy Series, the event will focus on the upcoming tours to Australia of the Indian men's and women's cricket teams.

The evening will see leaders from across industry, business and government join a host of cricket greats to celebrate the Australia-India relationship.

Youngest Indian Kaamya Karthikeyan Conquers Mt. Everest

Sixteen-year-old Kaamya Karthikeyan successfully summited Mt. Everest, becoming the youngest Indian mountaineer to scale the world's highest peak from the Nepal side, the Indian Navy said on Thursday.

The daughter of a naval officer, Kaamya is a class 12 student at Navy Children School, Mumbai.

Kaamya and her father Cdr S Karthikeyan successfully summited Mt. Everest (8,849 m) on May 20, according to a statement issued by a Navy spokesperson.

Michael Schumacher's Family Wins Legal Case Over Fake AI Interview

The family of Michael Schumacher has won legal action against the publisher of a magazine which printed an artificial intelligence-generated interview with the Formula 1 great.

German magazine Die Aktuelle promoted on its cover in April 2023 the words, "Michael Schumacher, the first interview!" It also wrote "it sounds deceptively real" with the supposed quotes attributed to Schumacher generated by AI.

Family spokesperson told AP on Thursday that legal action was successful, without making any further comment.

Nadal To Face World No. 4 Zverev In 1st Round At French Open

Rafael Nadal will face world number four Alexander Zverev in a blockbuster first round match at his farewell French Open while women's champion Iga Swiatek and fellow four-time major winner Naomi Osaka are on a second round collision course.

Defending men's champion and 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic will face French veteran Pierre Hugues-Herbert in his opener.

Nadal, who has won Roland Garros on 14 occasions, is unseeded after injury saw his ranking plummet to 276.

Kroos Retirement Marks Madrid's LaLiga Finale Against Real Betis



Runaway LaLiga champions Real Madrid welcome Real Betis this weekend for the last game of the domestic season in what was supposed to be just a dress rehearsal ahead of next week's Champions League final against Borussia Dortmund at Wembley.

But the shock retirement announcement of midfielder Toni Kroos on Tuesday suddenly changed the significance of Saturday's clash, which quickly lost that end of the season vibe.

Germany's Kroos, 34, said his final match for Real will be next week's Champions League final.

Man City Poised To Shatter Records With FA Cup Final Win

Agencies

LONDON: Manchester City's assault on the record books continues this weekend in the FA Cup final and their stranglehold over English soccer shows no sign of weakening any time soon.

Victory over Manchester United, whose one-time dominance is now a fading memory, will see City become the first club to win the English title and FA Cup in successive seasons. That would come a week after they sealed an unprecedented fourth Premier League title in a row and a year after Pep Guardiola's side matched United's 1999 treble by also winning the Champions League for the first time.

If they beat United, and few expect any other out-

come, it would be the 21st major trophy City have won since Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Mansour acquired the club in 2008. Arsenal pushed them close this season but there was an inevitability that City would claim their sixth title in eight seasons under Spanish mastermind Guardiola.

In the last four seasons, City have amassed an average of 89.75 points in the Premier League. Of the clubs most likely to threaten their monopoly, Liverpool average 77.5, Arsenal 75.7, Manchester United 66.7, Tottenham Hotspur 64.75 and Chelsea 62.

Since 2015 City have exceeded their expected points total based on player wage bills by 15 points -- double the next best club which is Brighton & Hove Albion -- according to the FT.



Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council



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