

## Don't Consider Opposition My Enemy: PM



KO Web Desk

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that he does not regard opposition leaders as his enemies. In an interview, the PM spoke about a range of issues including opposition attacks, his development philosophy, and the ongoing Lok Sabha elections.

Asked about opposition leaders' criticism, he said, "I never challenge and I want to take them along. I do not underestimate anyone. They have formed the government for 60-70 years. I want to learn the good things that they did. I do not consider the Opposition as the enemy."

PM Modi said he was open to constructive criticism and advice, from experienced Opposition leaders.

"If they have anyone experienced who wants to advise me then I welcome it. They can say whatever | More on P6

## FINAL SHOWDOWN

# Anantnag Goes To Polls Today

Press Trust Of India

**Anantnag:** With the threat of cross-border shelling in some border areas and satellite phones and special runners in place to deal with contingencies, all is in readiness for elections in the controversially redrawn Anantnag-Rajouri constituency from where PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti is contesting.

Contesting against Mehbooba Mufti, working to revive her party's fortunes following its alliance with the BJP in 2015, in the keenly watched election on Saturday are National Conference's Mian Altaf and 18 others.

Elections in the last of the five seats in Jammu and Kashmir take place against the backdrop of four terror incidents, including one



that claimed the life of an Indian Air Force soldier and a former BJP sarpanch.

Nothing is being left to chance, said officials. Multi-layer security arrangements have been put in place in the constituency spread across 18 assembly segments in Anantnag, Kulgam and Shopian in south Kashmir and Rajouri and Poonch districts

south of Pir Panjal to ensure free, fair and peaceful polling.

The Election Commission has set up 2,338 polling stations in the parliamentary constituency, which has more than 18.36 lakh voters. Four election staff, including the presiding officer, will be stationed in every polling booth. In all, more than 9,000 polling

staffers, including reserves, are being deployed and have left for their stations.

With 19 border polling stations along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri and Poonch, a contingency plan has been worked out to deal with cross-border shelling though chances are negligible given the ongoing ceasefire between India and Pakistan that came into effect in February 2021, officials said.

Some polling stations fall in communication-shadow areas and alternative arrangements have been put in place in such areas with satellite phones, wireless sets and special runners being provided in case of a crisis.

The parliamentary seat was redrawn, sparking controversy due to the geographical divide imposed by the Pir Panjal | More on P6

## Over 26K KP Migrants To Vote At 34 Special PS

Press Trust Of India

More than 26,000 displaced Kashmiri Pandit voters from across the country are eligible to vote at 34 polling stations in the sixth phase of the Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag constituency on Saturday. This marks the conclusion of voting in the Union | More on P6

## Ethnic Divide May Influence Voting Dynamics

Agencies

There seems to be an ethnic divide in twin districts of Rajouri and Poonch districts of Jammu and Kashmir during the Parliamentary elections and this is expected to be reflected during May 25 polling day. The two major communities, Gujjars | More on P6

## LS POLLS PHASE 6

# 11.13 Cr Voters To Seal Fate Of 889 Candidates

KO Web Desk

New Delhi: The stage is set for the penultimate phase of the seven-phase Lok Sabha elections 2024, scheduled to take place on Friday. Voting will be held in 58 seats across six states and two Union territories to decide the fate of 889 candidates.

Voting will be held in all seven seats of Delhi. The other states going to polls include Uttar Pradesh (14), Haryana (10), Bihar (8), West Bengal (8), Odisha (6) and Jharkhand (4). The Anantnag-Rajouri seat in Jammu and Kashmir will also go to polls. Voting will also be held for 42 assembly constituencies in Odisha.

Around 11.4 lakh polling officials have been deployed for 11.13 crore voters across 1.14 lakh polling stations in the election-bound states.

According to the Election Commission, the 11.13 crore voters include 5.83 crore men and 5.29 crore women voters. At least 5,120 third gender voters will also exercise their right to vote.

There are over 8.93 lakh registered voters above the age of 85, while | More on P6

## Bishkek Mob Violence

# MEA Urged To Facilitate Evacuation Of Kashmiri Students

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Students' Association (JKSA) on Friday wrote to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and requested that "proactive measures" be taken immediately to ensure the well-being of the Indian students in Kyrgyzstan.

The student body shot the letter following a recent report published in the Kashmir Observer titled 'Kashmiri Students In Kyrgyzstan Desperate To Return Home'.

Notably, Kashmiri students enrolled in different medical universities in Kyrgyzstan requested

to be evacuated following the mob violence against foreign students by Kyrgyz people in Bishkek, killing four Pakistani students while around a dozen Indians suffered critical injuries.

JKSA, in its letter has also highlighted that 180 students from other countries were successfully evacuated from Kyrgyzstan on May 19, but regrettably no Indian students, particularly those from Kashmir, have been brought home so far.

"We are writing to bring to immediate attention the distressing situation faced by Indian students including students from Kashmir, currently stranded in Kyrgyzstan. | More on P6

## Heavy Voter Turnout

# J&K Has Shown Will To Embrace India's Growth Story: Singh

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Union Minister Jitendra Singh said on Friday that the heavy voter turnout in four of the total five Lok Sabha seats in Jammu and Kashmir reflects the people's will to make Kashmir a part of India's growth story.

He said even as the Kashmir-centric regional political parties like the National Conference (NC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) continue to raise the issue of Article 370 in their



election campaign, the common masses in the Kashmir valley are indifferent to the issue.

"The heavy turnout of the voters reflects the will of people to make Kashmir a part of India's growth story instead of being tied down by the self-seeking slogans and rhetoric of the political parties hankering after Article 370 or the so-called special status for Kashmir," said Singh, the Union minister of state for personnel.

People of the Kashmir valley are enthusiastic to be a part of the ongoing election process and to move on as a part of India's development journey, he said. | More on P6

## HC Quashes Detention Under PSA Of Pampore Man

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Friday quashed a detention order under Public Safety Act against a 37-year-old person from Pampore Pulwama and ordered his release if not needed in any other case.

"Once an earlier order of detention stands nullified by the order of the Court, the earlier grounds mentioned in the detention order cannot be the reason for passing fresh one," said a bench of Justice Puneet Gupta while quashing the District Magistrate,

Pulwama Order (No.50/DMP/PSA/22) dated 20 June 2022 against Ghulam Mohi-uddin Lone of Androosa Khrew Pampore.

"The Court is also in agreement with the contention of the counsel for the petitioner (Lone) that the vague grounds in the detention order deprived the petitioner of making statutory representation before the Advisory Board and the government," the Bench said, adding, "The right of representation is statutory right and fundamental in character of which the petitioner has been deprived of due to ambiguous and | More on P6

## 'Not Allotting Contracts For Kin Linked To Militancy'

# HC Quashes Bar On Contractors, Orders Action Against Ex-Com Secy RDD

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Friday quashed communication issued by Commissioner Secretary Rural Development and Panchayati Raj last year whereby a number of contractors were barred from carrying out works in the department for their kin in the past had been involved in anti-national activities.

"...I find merit in these petitions and the same are, accordingly, allowed," a bench of Justice Sanjeev Kumar observed while allowing petitions filed by a number of contractors against communication bearing No.PS/Commr/Secy/RDD-J/79/2023 dated 15th March, 2023, issued



by Commissioner/Secretary to Government, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj.

"The respondents (authorities) shall permit the petitioners to participate in the tendering process, if they are otherwise eligible,

the impugned communication dated 15th March, 2023, notwithstanding."

The court said that it cannot remain mute spectator to such a blatant violation of fundamental rights of the citizens.

"It may not be out of sync to point out that with a view to rehabilitating ex-militants/surrendered militants, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has been promulgating rehabilitation policies. I am reminded of issuance of Government Order No.Home-1376(IAS) of 2010 dated 23.11.2010 laying down the policy and procedure for return of ex-militants to Jammu and Kashmir State," the court said, adding, "As the | More on P6



**PRESIDENT EBRAHIM RAISI'S DEATH:** Mourners in Srinagar took to streets on Friday to express condolences with the Iranian nation.

## 'Fraudulent Mutation In Revenue Record'

# ACB Files 2 Cases Against Girdawar

Observer News Service

Srinagar- Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) J&K on Friday said to have registered two FIRs against Girdawar for disproportionate assets and for illegal and fraudulent mutation in revenue record.

A spokesman in a statement said that Anti corruption Bureau conducted verification into the allegations of accumulation of Disproportionate Assets (DA) through corrupt practices by one Patwari Halqa Matipora Pattan namely Abdul Majid Sheikh @ Malla R/o Wahigund Kunzer, Baramulla, (Now Girdawar Qanoongo Circle Nowshera Tehsil Boniyar). "The verification | More on P6

## Heatwave To Continue For Next 5 Days In J&K: MeT



Srinagar: Weatherman on Friday urged people, especially vulnerable sections, to avoid heat exposure and drink a lot of fluid even as it predicted the heatwave to continue for next five days in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Heat wave over plains of Jammu & Kashmir Divisions is likely to continue during next 5 days," a meteorological department official said.

He said hot and dry weather was also likely over hilly | More on P6

- Hydration
- Appropriate Clothing
- Regulation Of Work
- Limit Outdoor Activities
- Elderly Care
- Recognizing Heat Illness
- Avoiding Deep, Fast-flowing Water Bodies

## DHSK Issues Advisory To Tackle Heat

Amid the weather department's forecast for heatwave, Directorate of Health Services Kashmir (DHSK) issued an advisory, asking people to stay hydrated.

"As summer season has peaked in the Valley, it is crucial to be vigilant about health risks associated with extreme heat. The Directorate of Health Services Kashmir is committed to | More on P6

## J&K Unveils Action Plan To Combat Scorching Temperatures

Auqib Javeed

Srinagar: As the Kashmir Valley is experiencing intensified heat from last week, the government of Jammu and Kashmir has come up with a detailed "Heat wave action plan" for the Union Territory. This plan aims to mitigate the effects of heatwaves, prepare for their occurrence, respond to them effectively, and facilitate recovery efforts.

The Jammu & Kashmir Disaster Management Authority Department (JKDMA) of Disaster Management, Relief Rehabilitation & Reconstruction in a detailed report has outlined the arrangements for the

**KNOWLEDGE OF EFFECTIVE PREVENTION AND FIRST-AID TREATMENT,** besides an awareness of potential side-effects of prescription drugs during hot weather, is crucial for physicians and pharmacists to best mitigate the effects of heat illnesses."

management of heatwaves in Jammu & Kashmir across preparedness, response and recovery. The Heat Wave Action plan aims to provide a framework for implementation, coordination

and evaluation of extreme heat response activities in cities/towns/Panchayats that reduce the negative impact of extreme heat.

The heat wave action plan is intended to mobilize departments and communities against. The Plan also intends to help early warning agencies as well as the media. Taking all administrative/preventive actions that need to be taken by multiple agencies.

The Plan's primary objective is to alert those populations at risk of heat-related illness in places where extreme heat conditions either exist or are imminent, and to take appropriate precautions, which are at high risk.

The report | More on P6





CITY

Singham 3: Filmmaker Shetty Wraps Up Shooting In Kashmir

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Renowned filmmaker Rohit Shetty has concluded the Kashmir schedule for his upcoming film 'Singham 3'.

The director shared this update on Instagram, posting pictures of actor Ajay Devgn on the set amidst the beautiful landscape of Kashmir.

"Schedule wrap! Thank you Kashmir," read the post featuring Devgn, who is reprising his iconic role as Bajirao Singham, adding to the anticipation for the film.

Shetty, as per available details, also heightened the excitement by revealing a glimpse of Devgn's look for the third installment.

He wrote, "BAJIRAO SINGHAM! SSP (SOG) SPECIAL OPERATIONS GROUP JAMMU &

KASHMIR POLICE... SINGHAM AGAIN... COMING SOON."

Additionally, actor Ajay Devgn shared a video message, extending his thanks to the people of Jammu and Kashmir for their support during the shoot. The heartfelt message underscored the warm hospitality and co-operation received by the film crew in the region.

"Singham 3" promises to be another high-octane addition to the beloved action franchise, with Ajay Devgn's character tackling new challenges as part of the Jammu & Kashmir Police's Special Operations Group. Directed by Rohit Shetty, the film will continue the saga of Bajirao Singham, a fearless police officer known for his dedication to justice and unyielding fight against corruption



Mourning Processions Held In Srinagar For Deceased Iranian Leaders

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: Mourning ceremonies in Kashmir continued on Friday after the death of the Iranian president Sayid Ebrahim Raisi and foreign minister Amir Abdollahian.

On Friday, a large number of people took to streets in Srinagar to express condolences with the Iranian nation.

Shia dominated localities in Srinagar, Zaidal and Saida Kadal observed a complete shutdown to mourn the death of the Iranian leaders.

Shops and business establishments remained shut while hundreds of mourners took out a mourning procession that passed through the streets and roads of Zaidal.

The mourners were carrying the photographs of the Iranian late president and Iran's Supreme leader. They raised slogans and ap-

preciated the role of Raesi in raising Palestinian issue and defending the chastity of the Quran at the UN General Assembly last year.

"The Muslim world is sad about the death of a religious scholar. He was more than a President of a country but enemies should know

"As of now, we don't know if he was killed or not but everything looks fishy seeing the kind of support raesi has been lending to palestinians. We are here to pay tributes to the Raesi who died serving his fellow humans"

Meanwhile, many Majalis

The Muslim world is sad about the death of a religious scholar. He was more than a President of a country but enemies should know that others will follow the way shown by our leader

that others will follow the way shown by our leader", Said Afaq Ali, a mourner.

Syed Basit, another mourner said that he is part of the mourning event to pay tributes to the late leader.

were organized in different parts of Srinagar to pay tributes to the later leader. Mourners participating in the day-long majlis and processions were reaffirming their faith and devotion towards the late President.

Lift Restrictions On Mirwaiz: Anjuman Auqaf To Admin

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid Srinagar expressed deep regret that Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir, Dr Moulvi Muhammad Umar Farooq, from 3rd May and for the 4th consecutive Friday, has been prevented from performing the religious

duty of delivering the Friday sermon and conducting prayers at Jama Masjid Srinagar.

Anjuman, in a statement said that this attitude of the authorities deeply hurts the religious sentiments of thousands of people who come from both the city and the countryside to

benefit from Mirwaiz's sermons and advice every Friday, only to return disappointed.

The statement urged the administration to lift the restrictions on Mirwaiz and allow him the freedom to propagate religious teachings and responsibilities.

GMC Srinagar Organizes CME/ Workshop On 'Post-Partum Hemorrhage

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Postgraduate Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics, Government Medical College Srinagar in collaboration with 'Safe Motherhood Committee FOGSI today organised a one day CME cum workshop on the topic 'Post-Partum Hemorrhage (Preventing the Preventable' in the Auditorium Hall of Govt. Lalla Ded Hospital Srinagar.

The conference was inaugurated by Principal GMC Prof. (Dr) Iffat Hassan Shah while Dr. Poonam Goyal and Dr. Deepa Gupta was the guest faculty. The conference aimed to raise awareness, share cutting-edge research, and discuss innovative strategies to combat PPH.

Principal GMC, Dr Iffat Hassan congratulated the organizers for shedding light on such an important topic which will help in managing PPH and reducing natural mortalities. She assured the members of providing all the necessary administrative backup.

Dr. Poonam Goyal reiterated the importance of such a workshop and was all praise for the department for organizing such an event in a short duration.

Earlier, Prof. (Dr) Rizwana Habib, Head of Department OBG GMC Srinagar, in her welcome address said that Postpartum Hemorrhage (PPH) is one of the leading causes of Maternal Mortality, not only in developing countries but developed countries as well.

However it is preventable. Managing PPH needs team work with all members of the team be it doctors, nurses, paramedics, anesthe-

Mourns Demise Of Prof. Dr. Sheetal Singh

Srinagar: A condolence meeting to mourn the sad demise of Prof Dr. Sheetal Singh, Ex-Principal and Dean GMC, Srinagar was held today in Govt Medical College Srinagar.

The condolence meeting was attended by Principal/ Dean Govt Medical College Srinagar, Prof Dr. Iffat Hassan; Administrator Associated Hospitals, Mohammad Ashraf Hakak; Ex-HODs Prof Dr Muneer Khan, Prof Dr Fareeda Ashai, Prof Dr. T.S Sethi, Prof Dr Shafeeqa Aslam, present HODs and Faculty members, Prof Dr. Sajad Nazir, Prof Dr Iqbal Saleem, Prof Dr. Manzoor Ahmad Latoo, Prof Dr. Hina, Prof Dr. Ghulam Mohammad, Prof Dr Sameena Farhath, Prof Dr MR Attri, Dr Sajjad, Medical Superintendent Govt. Lal Ded Hospital and staff of the GMC and Associated Hospitals.

On the occasion, two minute silence was observed in the memory of Late Prof Dr Sheetal Singh.

ologists, etc all knowing their part. As such CME's, workshops and up to date PPH Drills are useful and necessary tools in training the staff. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. (Dr) Syed Masuma Rizvi and Dr Muzaffar Jan (MS LD Hospital) also stressed upon the importance of such events.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice. Sr.DEN-III/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date-13.06.2024 up to 15:00 Hrs.

PUBLIC NOTICE. It is to inform all the villages associations of district Budgam and Baramulla that I firdous hussain am not going to play cricket with royal strikers iskander pora in any village level tournament.

PUBLIC NOTICE. My DOB has been wrongly written in school records as 15-06-2007 while my correct DOB is 01-01-2009 which needs to be corrected.

از دفتر نائب تحصیلدار زونیم سرینگر عنوان: درخواست از جانب شایبہ زونیم شوکت حسن تریبی ساکنان فارق لین باغات شہورہ نسبت اجرائی لیگل ہیر سرٹیفیکٹ

از نیابت گاندویل عنوان: درخواست از جانب فاروق احمدانی ولد غلام نبی دانی لیگل ہیر سرٹیفیکٹ

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 - (Closed) Srinagar-Leh - (Open)

PRAYERS FAJR 3:43 ZUHR 12:28 ASR 5:24 Magrib 7:35 ISHA 9:12

This Day In History

- 1923 - Britain recognizes Transjordan with Abdullah as its leader
1938 - Spanish Civil War: The bombing of Alicante takes place, with 313 deaths.
1940 - German troops conquer Boulogne
1941 - 5,000 drown in a storm at Ganges Delta region in India
1943 - Trident conference in Washington, D.C. (operation plan '43 against Japan)
1944 - Partisan leader Tito escapes Germans surrounding Bosnia
1945 - Arthur C Clark proposes relay satellites in geosynchronous orbit
1946 - Jordan gains independence from Britain (National Day); Abdullah ibn Hussein becomes king of Jordan
1949 - Chinese Red army occupies Shanghai
1953 - 1st atomic cannon electronically fired, Frenchman Flat, Nevada
1961 - NASA civilian pilot Joseph A Walker takes X-15 to 32,770 m
1963 - Great Britain ends its amateur-professional classes in cricket
1979 - Israel begins to return Sinai to Egypt
1982 - Iranian troops reconquer Khorramshahr
1982 - STS-4 vehicle moves to launch pad
1983 - Fire in Nassermeer, Egypt, kills 357
1983 - France performs nuclear test
1985 - Cyclone ravages Bangladesh; 11,000 killed
1989 - Mikhail Gorbachev elected Executive President in the Soviet Union
1992 - Oscar Luigi Scalfaro elected President of Italy
1997 - A military coup in Sierra Leone replaces President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah with Major Johnny

From KO Archives

Centre-JK discuss truce plan

Delhi asks J&K to prepare action plan on CBM's

Observer News Service

Srinagar Centre today asked the Jammu and Kashmir Government to prepare a comprehensive time-bound action plan to implement the Confidence-Building Measures (CBM's) announced in India and Pakistan in the recent joint declaration and on the physical structures needed to implement them.

Meanwhile Centre and J&K government are actively considering a ceasefire with militants in the state. This was revealed by the union home secretary V K Duggal during a press conference here today.

Asked whether there would be a ceasefire between the security forces and the militants, he said: "That is the objective, and I have spoken to the state governor and the chief minister about this but it has to be a consultative process."

"The main important CBM is dialogue process. Any CBM which involves the movement of people, transport, goods and services and implementation of trade needs a dialogue process... When can we start and how can we start," Mr Duggal said.

He said the central government would provide all infrastructure support to the state administration for opening meeting points between the Kashmiris of India and Pakistan, increasing bus services across the border and facilitating trade through the new routes.

He said the other important component of the CBM's is the infrastructure needed to implement them.

"The state government has been asked to prepare the report? What all it can handle and where it needs the support of the central government so that we can consider that," he added.

# Teaching on a Tightrope

## The Plight of Underpaid Private School Teachers

Umam Jamal

“While the profitability of private schools is important, it should not come at the expense of fair wages and job security for teachers. Transparent salary structures and employment contracts, along with timely payments, are essential steps towards ensuring that teachers are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve

Farhan Riyaz, a private school teacher from Srinagar, faces the daunting task of running his household on a meager salary of 8,000 rupees. With a wife and two young children depending on him, Farhan's days are a delicate balance between teaching with passion and ensuring his family's basic needs are met. Despite the financial strain, Farhan pours his heart into his work, knowing that education is the key to a brighter future for his children. Like many private school teachers in the region, Farhan's dreams of a day when his hard work will be recognized and adequately compensated.

Farhan is a fictional character, but his struggles are all too familiar to thousands of teachers striving to make a difference in the lives of their students.

The education sector in India, over the years, has seen significant growth and diversification. But, not much has changed for teachers in private schools. According to official figures, there are approximately 7010 private schools in the region, with 2710 located in Kashmir and 4300 in Jammu. These institutions range from primary to higher secondary levels, collectively educating over 7.5 lakh students and employing around 40,000 teachers and 25,000 non-teaching staff, including drivers and helpers. Despite their critical role in shaping the future of ours, private school teachers face severe financial and job security challenges.

The plight of private school teachers is often overshadowed by the broader discussions about educational quality and access. However, the well-being of these educators is intrinsically linked to the quality of education provided. The stark disparity in remuneration be-



Abid Bhat for Kashmir Observer

tween private and government school teachers is disheartening. Despite possessing the same qualifications, private school teachers earn significantly less than their counterparts in government schools. This gap not only reflects a systemic undervaluation of their work but also perpetuates a cycle of dissatisfaction and demotivation among teachers.

Private school teachers in Kashmir and Jammu often face a precarious employment situation. Without job security, many teachers are hired on a temporary basis, with contracts that can be abruptly terminated. It has come to light that some schools employ teachers from March to October, only to dismiss them before the onset of winter to avoid paying their salaries during the colder months. This practice not only highlights the profit-driven motives of

certain school administrations but also underscores a severe lack of respect for the teaching profession.

The economic plight of private school teachers is further exacerbated by the fact that they often earn less than daily-wage workers employed by the government in the education sector. This disparity is a glaring indication of the systemic neglect and exploitation faced by private school teachers. The financial strain on these educators is immense, leading to a situation where many struggle to meet their basic needs and provide for their families. The resulting stress and discontent has a direct impact on their teaching performance and overall job satisfaction.

The question then arises: who cares for these underpaid private school teachers? The responsibility for addressing this issue lies with multiple

stakeholders. Firstly, private school managements must acknowledge and rectify the exploitation within their institutions. While the profitability of private schools is important, it should not come at the expense of fair wages and job security for teachers. Transparent salary structures and employment contracts, along with timely payments, are essential steps towards ensuring that teachers are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

Secondly, the government has a crucial role to play. Regulatory mechanisms should be strengthened to ensure that private schools adhere to fair employment practices. This includes implementing and enforcing minimum wage laws for teachers and establishing monitoring bodies to oversee compliance.

Moreover, Teacher unions and associations also have a

significant role in advocating for the rights of private school teachers. These organizations should provide a platform for teachers to voice their concerns and demand better working conditions. Through collective bargaining and negotiations, they can push for improved salaries, job security, and other benefits for private school teachers.

Parents and students, too, can contribute to this effort. As primary stakeholders in the education system, they have the power to influence school policies by demanding better treatment for teachers. Parents should engage with school management to ensure that teachers are fairly compensated and that their rights are protected.

Let realization dawn upon us, the issue of underpaid private school teachers is not just a matter of economic justice but a fundamental question of educational equity and social responsibility. Ensuring fair treatment and adequate compensation for these educators is essential not only to uphold their dignity and well-being but also to safeguard the quality of education for generations to come. By collectively addressing the root causes of this issue, we are not only solving the problem of private teachers, but are raising our educational standards. Teachers are nation builders, therefore, teaching should be the most rewarding profession.

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

The author is a Kashmir based columnist. He tweets at umam\_jamal and can be reached at umajamal968@gmail.com

There is a buzz in India today – a sense of limitless possibilities. India has just overtaken its former colonial master (the United Kingdom) to become the world's fifth-largest economy. If it maintains its current growth rate of 6-7% per year, it will soon overtake stagnant Japan and Germany to take over third place.

But by 2050, India's workforce will start shrinking, owing to demographic aging. Growth will slow. That means India has only a narrow window in which to grow rich before it grows old: with per capita income of just \$2,500, the economy must grow by 9% per year for the next quarter-century. That is an extremely difficult task, and the current election may well determine whether it remains possible at all.

### THE CHINA MODEL

In pursuit of rapid growth, the Indian government intends to follow a tested road map: the same path that Japan took in the immediate postwar decades, and that China took after the death of Mao Zedong. During the first stage of the journey, labor flows out of the traditional agriculture sector as employment increases in low-skilled manufacturing – typically stitching garments or assembling components into electronic goods. This output is then exported to the developed world to capture the benefits of producing at scale.

Cheap labor helps compensate for a country's other deficiencies, such as excessive bureaucracy, unreliable power (especially electricity), or poor roads. As firms profit from exports, they invest in equipment to make workers more productive; and as those workers are paid more, they can afford better schooling and health care for themselves and their children. Tax revenues also grow, providing the resources to upgrade the country's infrastructure.

The result is a virtuous cycle, because higher-skilled workers and better infrastructure enable firms to make more sophisticated, higher-value-added products. That is how China has moved from assembling components to producing world-leading electric vehicles in just four decades. Unfortunately, the same strategy is unlikely to work for India today.

# The Indian Election and the Country's Economic Future

RAGHURAM G. RAJAN

### WHY CHINA SURGED AHEAD

It is no accident that India failed to join China in shifting its economy to export-oriented manufacturing, even though the two countries were similarly poor in the late 1970s, when China started on that road. Even low-skilled factory employment requires a minimum level of education and skills. At the time, many Chinese workers met this standard, whereas most Indian workers did not. So, foreign employers found China and its cheap but capable workers more attractive.

Moreover, China's factory workers acquired skills on the job, and their education allowed them to pick up the basic accounting needed to launch their own small enterprises making products like screws and door handles. This explosion of smaller firms contributed immensely to Chinese growth.

China had other advantages, too. Despite the outward perception of centralized rule by the Communist Party of China, provincial and municipal bosses have wielded a great deal of power. Mayors, hoping to be promoted for generating growth, helped local firms navigate the country's otherwise-stifling regulations, overriding a rule here and overlooking one there in the name of getting results. By contrast, Indian bureaucracy in the same period was neither decentralized nor incentivized to promote growth, so it instead became an additional burden on Indian business.

Finally, autocratic China could always favor manufacturing in ways that democratic India could not. For example, the Chinese government appropriated land for commercial purposes where necessary; pressured unions to limit wage demands even as labor productiv-

ity grew; paid depositors in state-owned banks minimal returns so that the funds could be lent out cheaply to firms; and kept the exchange rate undervalued to maintain local firms' international competitiveness. In India, attempts to do any of the above would have met fierce democratic resistance.

### WRONG WAY

Nonetheless, the current Indian government wants to get on board the manufacturing bus. With many others looking to diversify away from producing in China, Indian economic policymakers see an opportunity to make up for lost time. Moreover, Indian infrastructure has improved markedly. Among other things, the country now boasts many world-class airports and ports, increased renewables capacity to bridge power deficits, and an excellent highway system.

But other impediments remain. Over the decade that the Modi administration has been in office, India's garment exports – the iconic bootstrapping good – have grown by less than 5%, while Bangladeshi and Vietnamese garment exports have grown by over 70%, such that their exports are now multiples of India's. Recognizing these continuing impediments, the Indian government has begun offering subsidies to incentivize production in India, as well as raising tariffs on imports (like cell phones) to enhance these manufacturers' profits from selling into the now-protected large Indian market.

While it is still early days, one should be skeptical of this strategy. Production-linked subsidies might induce manufacturers to assemble in India, but those firms still will need to import most components. Moreover, margins will be

small, because Indian workers now compete with modestly paid Bangladeshi and Vietnamese workers, not with well-paid workers in industrialized countries, as in the past. With little profit for firms to reinvest – and with less tax revenue, net of the subsidy – the virtuous circles needed to move India up the value chain will be much harder to achieve.

Worse, even if the Indian government were to scale up manufacturing, the world is not ready for another China-size exporting powerhouse. Given the widespread shift toward manufacturing protectionism and growing concerns about environmental sustainability, the government's emphasis on Chinese-style manufacturing-led development seems incompatible with where the world is headed.

### PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS

There is another way. To drive growth, India could focus on the export of services provided by its well-educated and skilled population. Though this cohort represents a small fraction of the total population, it still numbers in the tens of millions. Such a strategy would build on India's strengths. The country is already well known for its role in the global software industry, and now it exports many other services, too, accounting for over 5% of the world's services exports while its goods exports account for less than 2%.

Multinational firms – from Goldman Sachs to Rolls-Royce – are hiring talented Indian graduates into India-based global capability centers (GCCs), where engineers, architects, consultants, and lawyers create designs, contracts, and content (and software) that are embedded in manufactured goods and services

sold globally. These centers already account for over 50% of all GCCs globally, employing 1.66 million Indians and generating \$46 billion in annual revenues as of March 2023.

Following the pandemic-induced changes in work habits, and given improvements in communications technology, Indians also have started providing a much wider range of remote services, including consulting, telemedicine, and even yoga instruction. Once a service goes virtual, it matters little whether the provider is ten miles or 10,000 miles away. An Indian consultant in Hyderabad can now make a presentation to a client in Seattle on behalf of a team whose members span almost every continent. She not only is well trained and fluent in English; she also costs one-fourth of her US counterpart.

True, Indian manufacturing has also benefited from these changes, but this has happened in precisely those areas where engineering, innovation, and design matter more than just the manufacturing process itself. Hence, Agnikul, a Chennai-based firm working to launch small satellites into space, has dispensed entirely with manufacturing supply chains by 3D printing its customized rockets in its own facility. And Tilfi, which sells authentic hand-woven Banarasi silk sarees globally through its website, employs trained designers to create fresh fashions for traditional craftsmen, who in turn are encouraged to embrace innovation.

It would seem to be a no-brainer that India should build on its strength: millions of high-skilled, creative, educated workers, many of whom speak English. Unfortunately, it's running out of such workers. While India graduates 1.5 million engineers per year, only a minority attend institutions that impart the high-quality education that is in demand at a GCC or a company like Agnikul. Wheebox, a work-skill assessment company, estimates that half of all graduates are unemployable.

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

# Easy Access, Deadly Consequences The Dark Side of J&K's License Issuance

A mere five-minute driving test overlooks the assessment of an individual's overall driving prowess, patience, and road etiquette, potentially jeopardizing road safety.

Farooq Shah

My Valentine boy, Monty, turned 18 this year, and as soon as he did, he went to the Parivahan website managed by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to register for a driving license. To become a legal driver in this mountainous region, he needs to answer some multiple-choice questions to get a Learner's License, followed by a driving test overseen by officials from the Regional Transport Office.

Getting the Learner's License was a breeze for the teenager, as he easily answered most of the multiple-choice questions correctly, even though his responses were mostly guesses. Now, he focused on the road test, which was scheduled for a few months later. He appeared quite relaxed, as if he had been driving his whole life. As a responsible parent, I have never allowed my sons to drive my car without a license. The older one got his license two years ago.

Finally, the day arrived for my son's driving skills to be put to the ultimate test. If he passed, he would be legally allowed to drive, despite having only a few hours of practice. The brothers teamed up, with the older one giving him tips on how to maneuver through the "H" pattern in reverse gear to pass the test. As he headed to the track, an RTO official checked his documents, although not his ID. Monty navigated the track with ease. This track was a modified, easier version of its previous, more challenging "H" design.

Monty emerged from the track with a big smile. Passing the test meant he was now a qualified driver, legally permitted to drive any Light Motor Vehicle (LMV) across India. However, only he knows that his actual driving skills are still lacking and that his license would serve as his defense if he encountered any trouble while driving in the future.

About a week later, he received a flurry of messages from the Parivahan Department, with the final one congratulating him on becoming a legal driver. The SMS informed him that he could download his license on the DiGiLocker and mParivahan mobile apps from RTO Kashmir.

And that's all it takes. To become a legal driver in Jammu



and Kashmir, you only need to pass two straightforward tests: a multiple-choice exam to get your Learner's License and a brief track test where your reverse gear skills are evaluated for just a minute or two.

Some years back, I conducted an interview with a Deputy Commissioner for this publication, during which he openly acknowledged, "Here, licenses are issued to kill," alluding to the lax process of license issuance. He also highlighted widespread corruption within the system, resulting in inexperienced drivers being unleashed onto the roads, which he described as "potential hazards."

Driving is an etiquette, a mindset, and a collection of traits that make you a responsible person on the road. Skipping comprehensive training before being declared a qualified driver, as seen in countries like those in Europe, America, or even the Middle East, is negligent. This is why Indian licenses are not highly regarded abroad, and anyone wishing to drive in foreign countries must undergo the same rigorous tests to become a responsible driver.

In England for example, a typical driving test consists of both practical and theoretical components. During the practical test, the candidate is required to



**D**Driving is an etiquette, a mindset, and a collection of traits that make you a responsible person on the road. Skipping comprehensive training before being declared a qualified driver, as seen in countries like those in Europe, America, or even the Middle East, is negligent. This is why Indian licenses are not highly regarded abroad

demonstrate their driving skills under the supervision of a certified examiner. This includes various maneuvers such as parallel parking, three-point turns, and emergency stops, as well as driving on different types of roads including urban, rural, and dual carriageways. The examiner assesses the candidate's ability to control the vehicle safely, follow traffic signs and signals, and interact with other road users.

In addition to the practical test, there is also a theory test which assesses the candidate's knowledge of the Highway Code, road signs, and general driving theory. This test typically includes multiple-choice questions and a hazard perception test where candidates must identify potential hazards in video clips of driving scenarios.

Obtaining a driving license in Dubai often involves a more stringent process. Aspiring drivers must undergo comprehensive training from approved

driving schools before they are eligible to take the driving test. The training typically includes classroom sessions covering traffic rules, road signs, and driving theory, as well as practical driving lessons with certified instructors.

Once the training is complete, candidates must pass a series of tests administered by the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA). This includes a theory test to assess their knowledge of traffic regulations and a practical driving test to demonstrate their driving skills. The practical test in Dubai is known for its rigor, with examiners closely evaluating the candidate's ability to navigate through challenging traffic conditions, execute precise maneuvers, and adhere to strict safety standards.

Furthermore, Dubai has implemented advanced technology such as smart testing systems and driving simulators to ensure the accuracy and fairness of

the testing process. As a result, obtaining a driving license in Dubai is considered a significant achievement and a dream come true for many residents, reflecting the high standards of road safety and proficiency expected of drivers in the region.

It's ironic that although Indian traffic laws list every offense with hefty penalties for violations, genuine traffic awareness isn't adequately cultivated either by driving schools or by the Regional Transport Offices (RTOs).

We often see common driving violations, like overtaking from the wrong lane, unnecessary horn honking, using mobile phones while driving, risky overtaking, speeding, ignoring pedestrians' right of way, not wearing seatbelts, running red lights, driving under the influence, and tailgating.

This leads to tragic consequences on Indian roads. Despite having only 1 percent of the world's vehicles, India con-

tributes to 11 percent of global road accident deaths, according to a 2021 report from the World Bank. This makes India the country with the highest road accident death rate worldwide. Annually, the country experiences around 450,000 road crashes, resulting in 150,000 fatalities. Over the past decade, 1.3 million people lost their lives, and another 5 million were injured on Indian roads, as stated in the report.

According to a recent report released by the traffic police in Jammu and Kashmir, the alarming statistics paint a grim picture of road safety in the region. In the span of a year, a staggering total of 6,298 accidents were recorded, resulting in the loss of 893 lives. Tragically, these accidents also left 8,469 individuals injured, many of whom continue to grapple with the physical and emotional aftermath.

India is reportedly overhauling its driving license issuance process with new regulations effective June 1, this year. Authorized private driving centers will now conduct tests instead of government RTOs. Trainers must meet strict criteria, and schools must provide suitable testing facilities. Training durations are standardized: 29 hours for light vehicles and 38 hours for heavy vehicles. These changes aim to improve accessibility, efficiency, and road safety.

However, the continued use of the current format for issuing driving licenses in Jammu and Kashmir ensures that the process remains lackadaisical and riddled with inefficiencies. As the RTO Kashmir has confirmed, driving tests will not be skipped, and no private entities have been authorized to conduct these tests.

This means the traditional, government-run RTO system—characterized by minimal scrutiny and inadequate evaluation—will persist, and individuals like Monty will continue to obtain licenses through this process filled with loopholes, unleashing half-baked drivers onto the roads.

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

*The author is an academic and can be reached at mfshah@gmail.com*

## Why Are Screens Bad for Teens?

Aaron Weiner

For psychologists, every month is Mental Health Awareness Month; in May, the general public joins us. This month is when we take extra time to reflect on psychological and emotional needs that often go unnoticed until there's a serious problem. That said, right now there's already a serious problem we need to pay attention to, because it's masquerading as "normal" behavior: teenagers overusing screens.

Recently, the surgeon general released an advisory statement warning that screentime, and social media use in particular, is threatening youth mental health to a degree that he considers it "the defining public health issue of our time."

I couldn't agree more. I routinely give presentations and webinars for middle and high schools all over the country, helping concerned parents and educators recognize the warning signs of screen addiction and learn to attend to mental health red flags in teens. I have witnessed first-hand how many caregivers are beside themselves wanting to do something to change the tide with teens and screens. Many administrators in education are launching new policies to limit

smartphone use in schools, but is that enough to curb the disturbing trends we're seeing?

**Probably not—although I applaud them for trying.**

Unlike many other maladaptive behaviors teenagers are susceptible to, we can't issue a zero-tolerance policy on screens. For drugs or alcohol—it's easy to draw firmer lines in the sand. Vaping, for example, is never healthy for teens and can be avoided entirely. But smartphones and screens are a necessary evil in teenage life, and it's not all bad: they provide connection, ease of communication, assist with learning, and help teenagers gain independence at a critical time for learning such independence.

Unfortunately, they also are fraught with qualities that promote mental illness, especially in teenagers, so threading the needle is exceptionally difficult.

Social media, in particular, poses significant risks to teens, who, according to a recent Gallup survey, spend an average of five hours a day engaging in this online activity. The American Psychological Association (APA) released a health advisory about social media use in adolescents in 2023, as well as a follow-up

last month on the certain features and functions that are most hazardous to teens' mental health. The group highlighted that "platforms built for adults are not inherently suitable for youth," in part due to the neurological and developmental differences between adolescents and adults. In particular, adolescents are more vulnerable to becoming obsessive or anxious about building likes and follower counts, and more impressionable and vulnerable to AI-driven content suggestions, paid advertisements, and suggestions to engage in illegal or harmful behavior. The APA also points out that youth are more vulnerable to excessive use when presented with features like an infinite scroll of content, to distraction when apps are enabled to push notifications to their phone, and to insomnia when they have access to their devices at night and use them instead of sleeping.

Screens are also ways that teens access other potentially addictive behaviors. For example, recent research shows that about 85 percent of teenagers play video games regularly (including 97 percent of boys), for an average of nearly two hours daily. This trend is leading to a rise in internet gaming disorders, gaming addictions,

and serious mental health decline. Results from the largest study to date on the longitudinal impact of gaming and teens demonstrated that 1 in 10 teens exhibited "pathological video gaming behavior," and the effects worsened over time—these teens showed markedly higher levels of depression, anxiety, and aggression. Video games are also gateways to gambling behavior, which can have long-term financial and mental health implications for teens.

But even when kids aren't gaming, using social media, experiencing cyber-bullying, compulsively texting, or generally impacted by the ill effects of screen use, there may be damage being done to the developing brain that isn't immediately apparent. Screen time—particularly in the evenings—can be linked to increased rates of insomnia in teenagers, which, in turn, has a host of side effects, including irritability, difficulty concentrating, a weakened immune system, and heightened anxiety. Research shows that even just having a screen-based device in the bedroom (even if it isn't on or being used) can impede sleep and increase stress levels. Nearly two-thirds of teens who report having technology in their bedrooms ex-

perience problems with sleep and subsequent health-related comorbidities.

**So what can we do?**

Despite the numerous pitfalls, the answer here isn't to bar kids from accessing technology—it's to teach them to use it. Michael Rich, of Boston Children's Hospital, writes in his new book, *The Mediatrix's Guide*, to think of technology like you would a power tool, like an electric drill:

"It is a tool that can provide possibilities and freedom but, used thoughtlessly, can hinder or harm the user and others. It should be provided when the child needs and can use that tool responsibly and with respect for themselves and others."

Harm can be done when smartphones, tablets, and computers are handed to kids without boundaries, directions, guidelines, or close supervision. Part of the problem is the way we think about the integration of screens into our daily lives, and part of the problem is not fully understanding the risks to our kids. We understand, for example, that letting a 13-year-old drive a car is dangerous and life-threatening. Would you hand your teenagers the keys to the car without properly training them how to drive? Of course

not. However, fewer people are aware that heavy use of social media (more than two hours per day) has been associated with an increased risk of suicidal ideation and attempts.

Teenagers need to be taught, trained, and monitored for how to utilize screens safely to help offset the mental health implications that stem from accidental misuse and overuse.

A 2019 study suggests keeping the "4 M's" in mind when moderating screen use in teens:

- **Manage screen use:** parents need to be "present and engaged when screens are used," enforce parental controls and privacy settings, always hold the logins and passwords to their children's media accounts (and check them regularly), and engage in frequent conversations with teens about healthy online behaviors.
- **Meaningful screen use:** place emphasis on educational and social online experiences (e.g., facetime with friends, taking an online class), and help teens choose developmentally appropriate content for engagement.
- **Model healthy screen use:** parents need to put screens away regularly.

Turn off TVs, silence cell phones, make "media free" time normalized in the household, not just a kids-only rule.

► **Monitor for unhealthy screen use:** complaining about boredom without technology, fighting rules for limiting screen time, negative emotions following texting or other online activities, interference with sleep or social activities due to screens are all warning signs and need to be heeded.

Screens provide all of us with unparalleled access to information, entertainment and social connection, and it's understandable that teenagers would want to capitalize on these opportunities. However, now that we are aware that there are major mental health detriments associated with too much screen time, we can take action to do something about them. And while eliminating screens isn't the best option, we can reduce the harm that screens cause, and lean into the positive opportunities that thoughtful, well-monitored screen time can provide for kids.

*The article was originally published by Psychology Today*



## A Matter Of Concern!

# Hospitals Threaten To Halt 'Golden Card' Services Over Unpaid Funds

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The empanelled private hospitals of Jammu and Kashmir have threatened to halt their services under the Ayushman Bharat scheme from June 1, 2024, due to non-receipt of funds since March this year.

According to details available with the news agency, the association of empanelled private hospitals has written to the Chief Secretary of J&K, stating their inability to continue services beyond the end of May 2024.

"The private hospitals and dialysis centres empanelled under the SEHAT scheme have not received any payment since March 15, 2024. We will be unable to continue with the said scheme beyond June 1, 2024," reads the letter, a copy of which is with KNO.

Private hospital owners have stated that they have exhausted

their funds and cannot continue services under the scheme past this month. Last November, IFFCO-TOKIO General Insurance Company, the insurer for Ayushman Bharat in J&K, informed SHA authorities of their decision not to renew the contract after its expiry on March 14, 2025.

Initially, the scheme was implemented through Bajaj Allianz GIC, whose contract ended in 2022. IFFCO-TOKIO was subsequently brought in but attempted to exit the scheme citing financial losses. Despite SHA's requests for them to continue in the interest of patient care, the company refused.

The SHA approached the High Court to stay the exit, but the peti-

tion was dismissed on February 2, complicating matters further for both SHA and beneficiaries across the union territory. The government has since approached the division bench to stay the single bench order, making the issue sub-judice.

Due to non-payment since March 15, empanelled hospitals said they are facing severe financial strain, affecting their ability to provide services under the scheme. Hospital owners have stated that starting June 1, they will not accept golden cards, and patients will need to pay for services.

They have urged higher authorities to address the issue and release pending funds promptly. Officials from SHA assured that the scheme is functioning

normally and that the ongoing dispute with the insurance company does not affect its implementation. Empanelled hospitals are aware that funds are allocated for them, though delays are expected due to the dispute.

Approximately 1,500 patients benefit from this scheme daily in J&K, and services will continue for these patients, according to officials.

Sanjiv M Gadkar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the State Health Agency, Jammu and Kashmir, told KNO that the matter is being resolved. "The matter is being resolved and will be done shortly," he said.

The Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana scheme was launched by the Prime Minister of India on December 26, 2020. Over the past four years, thousands of patients have benefited from this scheme—(KNO)



# BJP to Strengthened Organization In Kashmir After Delimitation

### Agencies

**ANANTNAG:** Ahead of polling in the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha constituency on May 25, Jammu and Kashmir BJP General Secretary Ashok Koul said that the party has strengthened its organization in Kashmir after the delimitation exercise.

Speaking to ANI a day ahead of the polling, Koul also appealed to people to come out and vote on the polling day: "...After delimitation, South Kashmir seat's configuration has changed. It has never been won by the BJP.

But the BJP has strengthened its organization in Kashmir and that can be seen. In 2014 and 2019, we struggled to have people work on polling booths for us but today we have gained much strength and are working on what the party has



has fielded candidates in all three seats of Kashmir.

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti and Mian Altaf of the National Conference are some of the key candidates in the constituency.

Earlier, the polling in the region was scheduled for May 7 in the third phase but the EC postponed it citing adverse weather conditions causing accessibility issues. Jammu and Kashmir has a total of 5 Lok Sabha seats, including Baramulla, Srinagar, Anantnag-Rajouri, Udhampur, and Jammu. The voting in Jammu and Kashmir is being held in five phases.

Lok Sabha elections are being held in seven phases till June 1. Polling for five phases has already been concluded. The counting of the votes will take place on June 4. (ANI)

decided. It will give the results..." Koul said.

"People have voted in large numbers in this year's election, I appeal to people to come out and vote even more on the day of the polling. And to vote in the favour of the candidate for which Prime Minister Narendra Modi has appealed..." he added.

Both the BJP and Congress have not fielded their candidates in Kashmir. The Congress is contesting the polls in alliance with the National Conference which

# Fire Services Issue Fire Prevention Advisory Amid Heat Wave

### KO NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** Taking stock of situation and daily rise in fire incidents, Director Fire and Emergency Services (FES), Alok Kumar issued strict directions and advisory keeping in view the increasing temperatures and heat wave across UT especially Jammu province.

In view of the warning issued by the Jammu & Kashmir Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA), the FES department issued advisory for preventive measures to be taken from Fire Safety point of view in the public interest to minimize the losses due to fires.

The advisory reads as; Remove flammable materials such as piles of dust, leaves, sticks and cardboard from your living area as they may ignite under strong direct sunlight.

Keep your cables tidy and do not overload sockets; Give the electric panels/ gadgets rest and cooling breaks after intervals. Trip off the electricity of the

houses when out of the premises. Avoid placing electric cables under furniture, carpets etc and near plastic sheets or flammable objects. Store matches and lighters out of children's sight and reach to avoid any mischief by children.

Avoid cooking during peak hours. Open doors and windows to ventilate cooking area adequately. Douse the cigarette butts with water and place them in a fire-proof container to safely dispose of after you are sure they have gone out. Don't toss them on the ground.

Extinguish fire pits and campfires when done. Pay attention to local ordinances for trash burning. Use caution when using flammable liquids.

Don't throw lit cigarettes carelessly out of your moving car.

Don't leave the trash/stubble in burning condition. Farmers shall avoid burning of trash/stubble. In case of urgency it shall be completely burnt in their presence and ensure that there is no chance of its re-ignition of fire.

# RTO Kashmir Suspends 14 Driving Licenses

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Invoking section 184, Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Kashmir on Friday ordered the suspension of at least 14 driving licenses for different offences, stating that the suspension shall be revoked only after passing the Driving Institute Refresher Course and a more stringent test for the driving license re-test.

An order issued by the RTO Kashmir, a copy of which is available with the news agency, states that in the exercise of powers vested with RTO Kashmir under Section 19 of the Motor Vehicle Act, 1988 read with Rule 21 of Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989, the driving licenses of the defaulters are suspended. The suspended licenses are linked

to offences such as rash and negligent driving, obstruction to ambulances, breach of route permits, lack of speed-limiting devices, riding without a helmet, and overloading passengers.

Speaking to KNO, the RTO Kashmir stressed that the suspensions will only be revoked after passing the Driving Institute Refresher Course, followed by a more stringent test for the driving license in a re-test. He said the suspension should serve as a deterrent to those who keep on violating the traffic rules and jeopardise their life and the lives of other people on the roads.

"We will be carrying random inspection drives in the coming days and those found violating the traffic and motor vehicle acts will be dealt with as per the relevant laws," the RTO said—(KNO)

# Over 2500 Trout Fish Perish Due To Blockage Of Water In Budgam

### Agencies

**BUDGAM:** Over 2500 trout fish died at a fish farm in central Kashmir's Budgam after the water supply got blocked due to the lifting of material by the government for the construction of road purposes.

The fish farm namely 'Peerzada Brother's Trout Fish Farm' is located along Tosamaidan Road at Donkulibagh Sail Beerwah area.

The owner of the fish farm

who is a postgraduate student and had started this venture told the news agency Kashmir News Trust that water for the fish farm comes from a stream where material is being lifted for road purposes.

"Till Thursday late night, the water supply was smooth. As we woke up on Friday pre-dawn hours we found a large number of fish dead. On inquiry, we found the workers had stopped the water supply leading to the death of over 2500 fish," he said.

# Info Deptt Condolences Demise Of Bashir Ahmad

### KO NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** The employees of Information department Kashmir have expressed deep grief and sorrow over the demise of Bashir Ahmad, Ex. Field Publicity Assistant (FPA) of the Field Publicity Unit of the department, who breathed his last on Thursday.

In this connection, a condolence meeting was held at the Divisional office Kothi Bagh Srinagar, which was chaired by Joint Director Information, Kashmir, M Aslam.

During the meeting, the Joint Director offered his deepest condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for peace to the departed soul besides courage for the bereaved family to bear this loss.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Director (PR) Kashmir, who is also holding the additional charge of Field Publicity Officer Kashmir, Ahsan Ul Haq Chishti; Cultural Officer, Burhan Hussain holding additional charge of District Information Officer Anantnag and other officers have also extended sympathies to the bereaved family and prayed for peace to the departed soul.

Meanwhile, the employees, while expressing their grief and sorrow over the demise, called him an honest and kindhearted colleague.

They offered their deepest condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and patience for the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss—(KNO)

**Jammu & Kashmir Bank Ltd.**  
Terminal Benefits Department Human Resources, Corporate Headquarters,  
M. A. Road Srinagar, 190 001 J&K

**J&K Bank**  
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**Online Request for Proposal (e-RFP)**  
**For**  
**Engagement of Actuary for valuation of Terminal liabilities of Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited**

RFP Notice along with Complete RFP document outlining the minimum requirements can be downloaded from and BIDs can be submitted on the Banks' e-Tendering Portal <https://jkbank.abcpocure.com> w.e.f. May 24, 2024 16.00 Hrs. Tender Document can also be downloaded from Bank's Official Website [www.jkbank.com](http://www.jkbank.com). Last date for submission of Bids is June 07, 2024, 17.00 Hrs.

**e-NIT Ref. No. JKB/CHQ/TBD-HR/Actuary/2024-1086**  
**Dated : 22-05-2024**

Registered office : Corporate Headquarters, M.A.Road, Srinagar 190001, Kashmir, India  
CIN: L65110JK1938SGC000048 ; T : +91 (0)194 2481 930-35 ; F : +91 (0)194 248 1928;  
E : info@jkbmail.com ; W : www.jkbank.com

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**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR**

## JAMMU AND KASHMIR SERVICES SELECTION BOARD

CPO Chowk, Panjthirthi, Jammu / Zamzam Complex, Rambagh, Srinagar ([www.jkssb.nic.in](http://www.jkssb.nic.in))

**NOTIFICATION**

**Subject:- Final Selection List for the post of Election Assistant (Junior Scale), Election Department, advertised vide Advertisement Notification No. 04 of 2020 Dated. 16.12.2020, under Item No. 099- Release of Waiting List.**

Whereas, the Election Department, vide Indent No. 4568/CEO/Estt/SSB/2\*/2775 dated 28.09.2020, forwarded the requisition for making direct recruitment to the 110 posts of Election Assistant (Junior Scale) Level 4-(25500-81100) as per the following break up:

S. No.	Name of Posts as per Indent	Cadre of the post	OM	SC	ST	OSC	ALC/IB	RBA	PSP	EWS	Total posts
1	Election Assistant (Junior Scale) Level - 4 (25500-81100)	UT Cadre	55	9	11	4	5	11	4	11	110
<b>Total</b>											<b>110</b>

Whereas, the requisite qualification for selection against these posts, as per the Indent, is as under:

- i. Graduation from a recognized University having Typing Speed of 35 words per minute and working knowledge of Urdu.
- ii. Six Months Diploma/Certificate course in Computer Applications from recognized Institute.

Whereas, the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB), advertised these 110 posts as per the category-wise break up given hereinabove, vide Advertisement Notification No. 04 of 2020 dated 16.12.2020 under Item No. 099, for seeking applications from the eligible candidates. The cut-off date for the receipt of the online application form was 31.01.2021; and

Whereas, the J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB) conducted the CBT Examination for the post of Election Assistant (Junior Scale) was held on 07.02.2023; and Whereas, the JKSSB notified the Final Selection list for the post of Election Assistant (Junior Scale) advertised vide Advertisement Notice No. 04 of 2020 Dated 16.12.2020 and same was forwarded to the indenting department vide No. JKSSB-Scry/16/2023-03(E-7298728) Dated 14.11.2023. In the Final Selection List of Election Assistant, four posts have been kept reserved for want of certain clarifications (01 under RBA category at Serial No. 10 and 03 posts under EWS category at Serial No. 09,10 & 11); and

Whereas, in the light of SO. 496 of 2023 dated. 26.09.2023, no wait list has been prepared. Further, the General Administration Department issued S.O. 134 of 2024 dated 28.02.2024 for revival of waiting list. The Selection Committee has prepared the waiting List in accordance with the Merit/Eligibility of the candidates and as per the extant rules and was placed before the Board in its 269<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 03.05.2024, which, after deliberations and consideration of the matter approved its notification; and

Now, therefore, after taking into consideration all the aforementioned factors, the Waiting List as per extant norms has been prepared for the post of Election Assistant (Junior Scale), Election Department, advertised vide Advertisement Notification No. 04 of 2020 Dated. 16.12.2020, under Item No. 099, is hereby notified as per Annexure-A, which shall be available on the official website of the JKSSB. It is further notified that:

1. The above Waiting List shall be subject to outcome of the OAs/Writ Petition(s), if any, pending adjudication before any Competent Court of law.
2. The List shall also be subject to the outcome of such enquiry, involving any candidate(s), as figuring in this List.
3. The formal recommendations to the concerned Indenting Department shall be forwarded separately.
4. The candidates whose recommendations are kept withheld shall submit the requisite documents/certificates within a period of one month.
5. The Selection of the candidates has been made on the basis of Self-declaration/Certificates submitted by them and if at any stage, it comes to the light that any candidate(s) has submitted false information or has secured selection on the basis of fake documents/certificates, the selection shall be liable to cancellation at any stage

By Order.

No. JKSSB-SDOSECY(JMU)/2023/(E-7298728)  
Dated: 22.05.2024  
DIPK-625-24  
24/05/2024

Sd/-  
(Sachin Jamwal) JKAS  
Secretary  
J&K Services Selection Board

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

## OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANANTNAG

**Subject: General elections to Lok Sabha 2024-Declaration of "Dry Day" thereof**  
**Ref: Chief electoral Officers letter No. CFO-ELECCOCOF/27/2024-1/2420-45 dated 21-03-2024 regarding Election to look Sabha, 2024 Phase-Wise Dry Day-reg.**

**Order No. 05/DMA/2024 Dated 22/05/2024**

Whereas the Election Commission of India announced the schedule for holding General Election to Lok Sabha vide press Notes No. ECI/PN/23/2024 and No. ECI/PN/24/2024 dated 16-03-2024; and Whereas, Chief Electoral Officer J&K has communicated vide above referred communication mentioning therein that Date of Poll Day and Date of Counting be declared as Dry Days on the scheduled dates of Poll and Counting in respective constituencies/districts; and

Whereas, under Section 135-C of the Representation of People Act, 1951 provides that:

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

In view of the above and in terms of Section 47 of Jammu and Kashmir Excise Act 1958, I, Syed Fakhiruddin Hamid, IAS, District Election Officer/District Magistrate, Anantnag, do hereby order that "DRY DAY" shall be observed in District Anantnag for 45 hours from the hours of close of Poll Campaign i.e. from 06:00PM on 23/05/2024 to 06:00 PM on 25-05-2024 and on Day of Counting i.e. 04-06-2024.

Further, the following shall be strictly observed within the District Bandipora on the Dry Days as per aforementioned schedule:

- a. The liquor shops/Liquor Bars/liquor trades, operating within the district on the designated dry days shall remain closed as per schedule.
- b. No Liquor shall be served in Hotels, Restaurants, clubs and other establishments on scheduled dry days, located within the territorial jurisdiction of District Anantnag.
- c. Non-Proprietary clubs, star hotels, restaurants etc and hotels functioning under different categories of licenses for possession and supply of liquor shall not be permitted to serve liquor on the designated Dry days within the territorial jurisdiction of District Anantnag.

Failure to comply shall invite penal action as envisaged under law.  
Given under my hand and seal of this office, this 22nd day of May, 2024

**NO: DMA/Judicial/Gen/2024/7036-50**  
Date: 22/05/2024

**(Syed Fakhiruddin Hamid) IAS**  
District Election Officer/District Magistrate  
Anantnag

DIPK-633-24  
DT: 24/05/2024

# Jay Shah Denies Approaching Ricky Ponting For Head Coach Job

Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** BCCI secretary Jay Shah on Friday rejected claims that the Board has approached any former Australian cricketer to be India's next head coach and hinted that Rahul Dravid's successor could be an Indian by saying that he should have a "deep understanding" of the game's structure in the country.

While Dravid has reportedly told the board that he is not interested in a third stint, former Australian players like Ricky Ponting and Justin Langer have claimed that they have turned down approaches for the high-profile position.

"Neither I nor the BCCI have approached any former Australian cricketer with a coaching offer. The reports circulating in certain media sections are completely incorrect," Shah said in a statement.

Both Ponting and Langer are involved in the Indian Premier



League (IPL) as the head coaches of Delhi Capitals and Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) respectively. World Cup-winning former batting star Gautam Gambhir, who is currently mentoring Kolkata Knight Riders, is speculated to

be among the top contenders for the post right now.

"Finding the right coach for our national team is a meticulous and thorough process. We are focused on identifying individuals who possess a deep

understanding of the Indian cricket structure and have risen through the ranks," Shah said.

The BCCI secretary also said that having in-depth knowledge of Indian domestic cricket will be one of the important

criteria for appointing the next coach. He said the understanding would be crucial to "truly elevate Team India to the next level."

Ponting had claimed on Thursday that he was approached to take over the role but said that he declined as it did not fit with his "lifestyle" right now.

Ponting told ICC review, "I've seen a lot of reports about it. Normally these things pop up on social media before you even know about them, but 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."

"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," he said.

## Short TAKES

### Stellar Lineup Announced for T20 World Cup Commentary Panel

The ICC on Friday announced some of the biggest names in cricket and broadcasting, including former India coach Ravi Shastri and the legendary Sunil Gavaskar, as part of a robust commentary panel for next month's T20 World Cup.

Dinesh Karthik, who retired from all forms of cricket, has also been named in the commentary panel list. Leading the commentary team are stalwarts such as Shastri, Nasser Hussain, Ian Smith, Mel Jones, Harsha Bhogle and Ian Bishop.

### Historic T20 Triumph: USA Stuns Bangladesh With Series Win

Pakistan-origin pacer Ali Khan's three-wicket burst in his final two overs helped USA piped Bangladesh by six runs in the second T20 International and register a historic series win against an ICC full member nation here.

Riding high on confidence after beating Bangladesh by five wickets in the first T20 here on Tuesday, USA continued in the same vein and stunned the ICC full member nation again on Thursday at the Prairie View Cricket Complex to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

### England Recruits Man City's Psychologist for T20 World Cup

Defending champions England have roped in Premier League winners Manchester City's psychologist David Young for the ICC T20 World Cup beginning in the Americas on June 2.

Young, who was with England during their victorious 2019 World Cup campaign, has rejoined the side for the shortest format showpiece following England's disastrous ODI World Cup campaign in India last year. Young had an impressive stint with the City, who recently won their fourth straight Premier League title.

### Madrid's Tchouaméni To Miss CL Final Due to Foot Injury

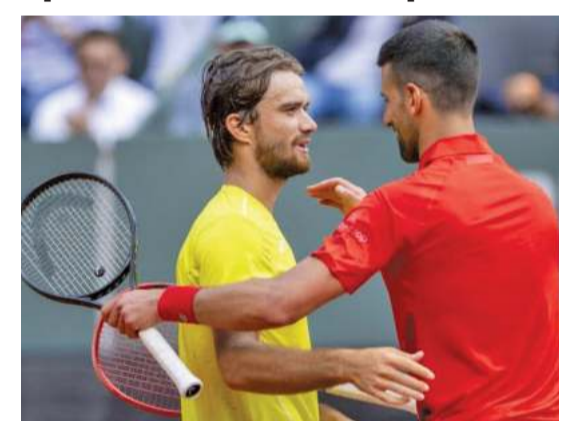
Real Madrid holding midfielder Aurélien Tchouaméni will miss the Champions League final because of a foot injury, coach Carlo Ancelotti said Friday.

The 24-year-old France international won't be available for the European title game against Borussia Dortmund on June 1 in London.

"He won't be ready for the final, he will focus on recovering in time for the European Championship" with France, Ancelotti said.

Tchouaméni sustained a stress fracture in his left foot in the second leg of the semifinal against Bayern Munich.

### Machac Stuns Djokovic, Pulls Off Upset To Reach Geneva Open Final



Czech tennis player Tomas Machac pulled off an upset by defeating world number 1 Novak Djokovic in the semi-final of the Geneva Open on Friday. Machac marched towards his maiden Geneva Open final with a 6-4, 0-6, 6-1 over the Serbian star.

The Czech tennis player featured in his maiden semi-final of the tournament and matched Djokovic's intensity with each stroke. Djokovic featured in the tournament as the oldest semi-finalist in the history of the tournament.

## Pakistan Names T20 WC Squad; Hasan Ali Misses Out



Agencies

**ISLAMABAD:** After hours of speculation, Pakistan on Friday evening announced their 15-player squad for the upcoming T20 World Cup 2024, with Babar Azam leading the Men in Green in the marquee event scheduled to kick off on June 1. The mega tournament will be held in the USA and the West Indies.

The announcement comes hours after Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi halted the formal announcement of the squad for the T20 World Cup, as reported by Geo News sources. Earlier in the day, Naqvi had expressed displeasure over selectors not holding a meeting to discuss the players for the marquee event. Out of the 15 players names of whom were declared by the PCB today, five, including Abrar Ahmed, Azam Khan, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Saim Ayub and Usman Khan, will make their maiden appearance in the upcoming ICC tournament.

"This is an extremely talented and balanced side that has a mixture of youth and experience. These players have been playing together for some time and look well-prepared and settled for next month's event. This is an extremely talented and balanced side that has a mixture of youth and experience. These players have been playing together for some time and look well prepared and settled for next month's event," PCB said in a statement. The statement also provided

an injury update on Haris Rauf, with a declaration about the speedster's full recovery. The PCB is hopeful that he will play a crucial role for Pakistan in the upcoming tournament.

Rauf made his last appearance for the Asian Giants in January and had been on the sidelines after suffering a shoulder injury during a match in the Pakistan Super League. "Haris Rauf is fully fit and bowling well in the nets. It would have been nice if he had gotten an outing at Headingley, but we remain confident that he will continue to maintain an upward trajectory in the upcoming matches, as he will have an important role to play along with other strike bowlers in the T20 World Cup," PCB added.

After inclusion of Rauf, there is no space left for right-arm seamer, Hasan Ali, in the 15-player squad. Ali was recently released from Pakistan's squad for their ongoing T20I tour of England. The Men in Green will kick off their campaign against the USA on June 6. They will face arch-rival India on June 9 at Nassau County International Cricket Stadium, New York.

**Pakistan squad for T20 World Cup:** Babar Azam (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Azam Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imad Wasim, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Amir, Mohammad Rizwan, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Shadab Khan, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Usman Khan

## Sports Council's Departmental Cricket Tournament Underway

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Departmental Cricket Tournament by J&K Sports Council saw two matches take place on Thursday at TRC Ground here.

The matches were played between the Secretary Eleven vs. Exen Eleven and Labour Department vs. Secretariat Titans.

The first match of the day was between Secretary Eleven and Exen Eleven. After winning the toss Secretary Eleven decided to bat first and managed to score 144 runs.

Chasing the target of 145 runs Exen Eleven managed to score only 108 runs and lost the match by 36 runs.

Waris, Naseer, Arvind, Owais, Nusrat, Anjum Shafi were the top performers with bat.

In bowling Sheeraz, Tariq, Sartaj were the top performers.



Later Tariq Sofi was declared Man of the Match for his bowling performance.

The second match was played between the team of the Labour Department and Secretariat Titans. The Labour department after winning the toss elected to bat first and managed to score 118 runs only.

While chasing the target of 119 runs, Secretariat Titans scored the target in 15 overs.

The top performers with the bat were Danish, Adil,

Maqsood and in bowling Tahir, Ajaz and Asif. Later Danish was declared Man of the Match for his brilliant performance with the bat scoring 63 runs in 40 balls.

In Gymnastics, summer coaching camp is being organised by J&K Sports Council at SKISC Srinagar for the age group 5 to 13 years. The selection trials were conducted in a fair and transparent manner and the camp will be held from Friday at SKISC Srinagar.

## Inter-School Zonal Level Competitions Held At Baramulla

Observer News Service

**BARAMULLA:** The Department of Youth Services and Sports Baramulla is holding month-long inter-school zonal level competitions.

On Friday, the competitions were held across three zones at Nehalpora, Singhpora Kalan and Baramulla. Zone Nehalpora hosted carrom and chess competitions for girls aged 14 and 17 at HSS Nehalpora. Over 50 students from both government and private schools showcased their skills and sportsmanship.

In Zone Singhpora Kalan, an inter-school painting com-



petition was organised for girls under 14 and 17 years at HS Singhpora Kalan, fostering creativity and artistic expression among the youth.

Meanwhile, Zone Baramulla witnessed a burst of creativity as over 60 participants from various schools showcased

their artistic talents in an inter-school painting competition held at BHSS Baramulla.

DYSSO Baramulla expressed his gratitude to the field staff for their unwavering dedication in organizing these events and maintaining discipline throughout.

## Barcelona Sack Coach Xavi After Trophyless Season

Agencies

**BARCELONA:** Barcelona sacked coach Xavi Hernandez on Friday after the Catalan giants failed to win a trophy this season.

Xavi will take charge of the team's final La Liga match on Sunday at Sevilla before departing.

"Barcelona president Joan Laporta has told Xavi Hernandez he will not continue as coach for the 2024-25 season," said Barcelona in a statement.

Former Bayern Munich and Germany coach Hansi Flick is heavily tipped to replace Xavi.

In January, Xavi said he would leave at the end of the season but, after a run of strong form, in April he and president Laporta agreed the coach would stay for the next campaign, with his contract expiring in June 2025.

However, the situation quickly changed with Spanish media reporting Laporta was angered by Xavi's comments suggesting it was hard for the financially-hamstrung club to compete with Real Madrid and other elite Eu-



ropean sides. "Barcelona want to thank Xavi for his work as coach, which adds to his unmatched career as a player and the captain of the first team, and wish him all the best in the future," continued Barcelona's statement. "In the coming days, Barcelona will reveal the new coaching structure for the first team staff."

Barcelona won La Liga last season but were not able to successfully defend the title in the current campaign.

They were knocked out of the Champions League in the quarter-finals by Paris Saint-Germain, were hammered by Real Madrid in the Spanish Super Cup final and lost to Athletic Bilbao in the Copa del Rey.

## Maradona Family Bid To Block 1986 World Cup 'Golden Ball' Trophy Sale In France

Agencies

**NANTERRE:** Diego Maradona's heirs have taken legal action in France to block the controversial sale of the Argentine football legend's 'Golden Ball' trophy from the 1986 Mexico World Cup.

The trophy given to the tournament's best player had been missing for decades before being found by an antique dealer in the French capital.

It is due to be sold by Aguttes auction house in Neuilly-sur-Seine, close to Paris on June 6.

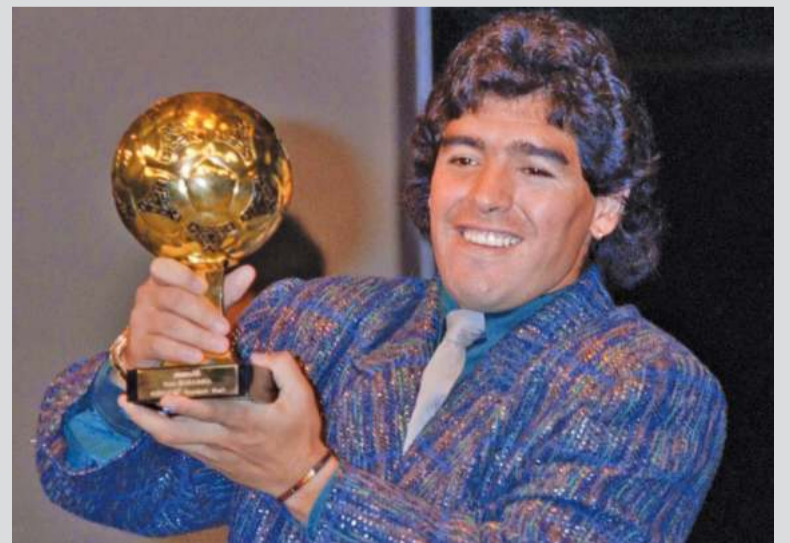
Lawyers for the family of Maradona, who died in 2020 aged 60 years, argued that the latest piece of memorabilia from the player's glittering career

which is expected to fetch millions, rightly belongs to his five heirs.

In 2022, Maradona's Argentina jersey from the 1986 tournament sold for close to \$9.3 million, while the "Hand of God" ball from the quarter-final against England sold for \$2.4 million later that year.

According to the Maradona family, the trophy given to their father in November 1986 at the Lido Cabaret in Paris, was stolen during a bank robbery three years later in Naples.

The player's family claim they only discovered a few weeks ago that it was to be auctioned and immediately took legal action to try to reclaim it.



"The family aims to recover this ball, the Argentine people want to recover this ball," lawyer Lola ChUNET told a court in Nanterre, outside Paris.

Lawyer Arthur Aguttes, argued: "Attempting 35 years after an alleged theft, to claim property without ever having filed

a complaint, is an opportunistic approach that justice cannot condone."

The court will decide on May 30 whether the sale can take place.