

## Heat Wave To Continue For Next 7 Days: MeT

Jammu Records Season's Hottest Day At 43.6°C



### Agencies

**Jammu:** Jammu and its suburbs reeled under searing heat wave conditions on Tuesday, with mercury settling at 43.6 degree Celsius, thereby recording the hottest day of the season so far.

Amid the hot and unbearable conditions, Directorate of School Education, Jammu also announced summer vacations from June 1, which normally starts from the second week of June.

As per India Meteorological Department (IMD) intense heat wave conditions will continue in Jammu for the next seven days.

The region has been suffering from extreme heat wave conditions for the past week, with temperatures consistently rising above 40 degrees Celsius since May 16.

"There will be no respite in heatwave or hot and dry weather conditions over plains of Jammu Division during next seven days," | [More on P6](#)

## Fire Engulfs Forest Areas Of Kathua, Rajouri

The forest areas in Kathua and Rajouri districts of Jammu and Kashmir have been engulfed by fire, causing significant damage to forest wealth, officials on Tuesday said.

The officials said the fire started in Dhara Dogano area of Basholi belt in Kathua district and soon | [More on P6](#)

**ALL THE GOVERNMENT AND RECOGNISED PRIVATE SCHOOLS FALLING** in the summer Zone of Jammu Division shall observe summer vacation from June 1, 2024, to July 16, 2024."

## Health Experts Warn Of Heatstroke Risks

### Agencies

Srinagar: As temperatures soared across Jammu and Kashmir in the last few weeks, health officials have raised concerns about the dangers of heatstroke.

Experts explained that heatstroke occurs when the body's temperature regulation system is overwhelmed by high heat and humidity, leading to a rapid rise in body temperature.

Symptoms of heatstroke include dizziness, confusion, rapid heartbeat, headache, and hot, dry skin, they said, adding that if left untreated, heatstroke can result in organ damage and even death.

Dr Showkat, a doctor at the Directorate of Health Services Kashmir (DHSK), said that certain groups are particularly vulnerable to

heatstroke, including the elderly, children, individuals with chronic medical conditions, and outdoor workers. "As climate change continues to drive up temperatures, it's essential for everyone to take precautions to stay safe in the heat," he said.

Preventive measures recommended by health officials include staying hydrated by drinking plenty of water, wearing lightweight and light-coloured clothing, seeking shade during peak sun hours (12 noon to 4 pm), avoiding strenuous activity in hot weather, and never leaving children in parked vehicles, as temperatures inside can quickly reach dangerous levels.

Dr Mohammad Salim Khan, head of the Department of Community Medicine at

## Article 370 Wasn't Agenda Of People Of Kashmir: PM Modi Says Record Turnout Has Sent Message To The World

### Agencies

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that Article 370 was neither the agenda of the people of Kashmir nor of the country but only of "four-five families" and that it is a matter of greatest satisfaction for him that the brothers and sisters in Kashmir came forward to vote with great enthusiasm in the Lok Sabha polls. In an exclusive interview with ANI, the Prime Minister said there is a feeling of more unity with the removal of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, the feeling of belongingness is increasing and the result is visible in the elections and in the increase in tourism.

"Article 370 was the agenda of only four-five families, it was neither the agenda of the people of Kashmir nor



the agenda of the people of the country. For their benefit, they had built such a wall of 370 and used to say that if 370 is removed, there will be a fire...Today it has become true that after the removal of 370, there is a feeling of more unity. The feeling of belongingness is increasing among the people of Kashmir and hence its direct result is also visible

**VOTING MEANS THAT THE VOTER ACCEPTS THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA** and expresses his dedication towards the entire spirit of India... As a result, voting records of 40 years have been broken."

in elections, tourism," he said. The Modi government abrogated Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019, months after it came to office for the second successive term. The Prime Minister noted that the people in Kashmir warmly welcomed the delegates during events related to the G20 summit.

Srinagar, Baramulla and

Anantnag-Rajouri parliamentary constituencies in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir saw record turnout in Lok Sabha polls held in different phases earlier this month. Srinagar recorded 38.49 percent polling, Baramulla 59.1 per cent and Anantnag-Rajouri 51.35 per cent as of 5 pm on April 25, the day the polling was held on the seat. The polling has been the highest since 1989. These were the first Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370. The Prime Minister said that the decisions of the government were always for a good cause.

"First of all, I would like to pray to the justice system of our country that if the government wants to do any work, they have a design, strategy to do | [More on P6](#)

## Job Ban For Terrorist Kin Amnesty For Confessions In Anti-national Activities: BJP Leader

### Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The restriction on government employment for the relatives and family members of terrorists and stone-pelters may be repealed if those facing criminal charges confess to their complicity in anti national activities, Jammu and Kashmir Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) General Secretary, Ashok Kaul said on Tuesday.

The BJP leader's statement comes day after the Union Home Minister Amit Shah declared that no family member of terrorists or stone-pelters will be eligible for government jobs in Jammu and Kashmir.

Kaul also claimed that with the saffron party poised to emerge as the single largest party in India, Narendra Modi will once more serve as the nation's prime minister.



He said the way the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and other senior party functionaries run election campaigns, it's certain that BJP will form the government on June 4.

Reacting to the Union Home Minister Amit Shah's assertions that no family member of terrorists or stone-pelters will be eligible for government jobs in Jammu and Kashmir, Kaul said the order could be revoked

under general amnesty in the future.

He said those with a terrorist mindset would go to any extent and harm anyone for financial gain and that, at this point, offering employment to them would be comparable to committing a sin.

"We support the honorable Union Home Minister's statement; his stern stance on terrorists and stone-pelters is obvious. Those who have had FIRs registered against them for engaging in acts of terrorism and stone-throwing are testament to their involvement in anti national activities," Kaul told reporters at BJP head office here.

He was however quick to add that the government could review the ban and grant amnesty to those who confess to their involvement in terrorist and stone-pelting | [More on P6](#)

## Existing Power Curtailment Schedule To Continue:KPDCL

### Agencies

Srinagar: The Power Development Department (PDD) Tuesday said that it was supplying adequate electricity to its consumers and the existing power curtailment schedule will continue to remain in effect in Kashmir valley.

Besides, the department further said that the local power generation capacity has increased significantly and the region was receiving more power than the hottest region of the Union Territory.

Top official of Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL) said that the Kashmir region was currently receiving an adequate power supply.

The official said, "Currently,



**1.90 LAKH INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED** in last 6 months, Rs 27.74 cr fine imposed against violators."

the consumers in Kashmir valley are getting more power than the Jammu region."

"As of now, the ongoing power curtailment schedule will

continue to remain in effect across Kashmir valley," he said.

Meanwhile, Principal Secretary Power Development Department, Rajesh Prasad told KNO that there was no new development in changing the power schedule.

Besides, Prasad further said that the local power generation capacity in Kashmir valley has increased.

"The local power generation capacity has significantly increased in Kashmir. Earlier, we used to generate nearly 500 Megawatts of power but from the past couple we are generating nearly 1000 Megawatts of power," he said.

Pertinently, KPDCL on April-22 said that there would be further increase in power curtailments in | [More on P6](#)

'HOOKING, METER BYPASSING'

## KPDCL Serves Notices To Consumers

**K**ashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) has warned its consumers to desist from illegal power usage, failing which permanent disconnections with recovery of the unaccounted energy consumed shall be effected including registration of FIRs, under the Electricity Act. KPDCL has also started | [More on P6](#)

## "AVOID HIGHER TDS" Link PAN With Aadhar By May 31: I-T Dept

### KO Web Desk

New Delhi: The income tax department today asked taxpayers to link PAN with Aadhaar by May 31 to avoid tax deduction at a higher rate.

As per income tax rules, if a Permanent Account Number (PAN) is not linked with biometric Aadhaar, TDS is required to be deducted at double the applicable rate.

Last month, the income tax department issued a circular stating that no action will be taken for short deduction of TDS in case the assessee links his/her PAN with Aadhaar by May 31.

"Please link your PAN with Aadhaar before May 31, 2024, if you haven't already, in order to avoid tax deduction at a higher rate," the department posted on X.

In a separate post, the I-T department asked reporting entities, including banks, forex dealers, to file SFT by May 31 to avoid penalties.

"The deadline to file SFT (Statement of Specified Financial | [More on P6](#)

## Pak "Violated" Lahore Agreement Signed With India In 1999: Nawaz Sharif

### KO Web Desk

Lahore: Former Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday admitted that Islamabad had "violated" an agreement with India signed by him and ex-prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1999, in an apparent reference to the Kargil misadventure by Gen Pervez Musharraf.

"On May 28, 1998, Pakistan carried out five nuclear tests. After that Vajpayee Sahab came here and made an agreement with us. But we violated that agreement...it was our fault," Sharif told a meeting of the PML-N general council that elected him president of the ruling party six years after he was disqualified by the Supreme Court.

After a historic summit here, Nawaz Sharif and Ata Bihari

Vajpayee signed the Lahore Declaration on February 21, 1999. The agreement that talked about a vision of peace and stability between the two countries signalled a breakthrough. Still, a few months later Pakistani intrusion in the Kargil district in Jammu and Kashmir led to the Kargil conflict.

Pak 'Violated' Lahore Agreement Signed With India In 1999: Nawaz Sharif

It was a reference to the Kargil misadventure by Gen Pervez Musharraf.

Lahore: Former Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday admitted that Islamabad had "violated" an agreement with India signed by him and ex-prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1999, in an apparent reference to the Kargil misadventure by Gen Pervez Musharraf. | [More on P6](#)

## Pahalgam Terror Attack 2 Hybrid Militants Held

### Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Security forces in Anantnag district have arrested two hybrid militants for a terror attack in Pahalgam earlier this month in which a tourist couple was injured, officials said on Tuesday.

Those arrested have been identified as Waseem Ahmad Shah and Adnan Ahmad Beigh, both residents of Anantnag, they said.

A pistol along with a magazine and eight rounds, a grenade, and 120 AK rounds were recovered from their possession, the officials said.

"Security forces solved the Pahalgam terror attack by arresting two | [More on P6](#)

### Bishkek Mob Violence

## Coordinate Travel With Varsities: Indian Mission Advises Students

### Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The Consular Section of the Embassy of the Republic of India in Kyrgyzstan today advised the Indian students enrolled in different universities in Kyrgyzstan to plan their travel to India in consultation with their respective universities.

The development comes days after the Jammu and Kashmir Students' Association (JKSA) shot a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to consider the immediate evacuation of Indian students, especially those from Kashmir back to India, following mob attacks on foreign students in Bishkek, the capital of



Kyrgyzstan.

Notably, the Kashmiri students enrolled in different medical universities in Kyrgyzstan had requested to be evacuated

following the mob violence by Kyrgyz people in Bishkek, killing four Pakistani students and critically injuring around a dozen Indians. | [More on P6](#)

## Revenue Official Arrested On Bribery Charges

### Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The CBI on Tuesday said it has arrested a revenue official for allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 18,000 from a person for processing his application for land settlement in in Banihal area of Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district.

Mohd Ishaq Bhat, who was posted as Office Qanoongo in Banihal Tehsildar's office, was arrested on Monday after he was caught red-handed while accepting the bribe money from the complainant, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said in a statement here.

Searches were conducted at residential and official premises of the accused which also led to recovery of over Rs.3.71 lakh and other documents, it said.

A case was registered by CBI against the accused on allegations that he was demanding a bribe of Rs 20,000 from the complainant for processing his application for land settlement.

After negotiation, the accused agreed to accept the bribe amount of Rs 18000 from the complainant, the agency said.

The CBI said further investigation in the case is continuing. | [More on P6](#)

## Jal Shakthi Cracks Down On Illegal Water Connections

### Warns To Regularize Connections Within 10 days Or Face Action

### Agencies

**Srinagar:** The Jal Shakti Department on Tuesday issued a stern warning to people with illegal water connections, asking them to regularize their connections within a stipulated period of 10 days or face action.

Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti Kashmir, Vivek Kohli said that the challenge for the department amid the ongoing intense heatwave is to provide drinking water to every household. He assured that the department is



ready to face any forthcoming challenges that may emerge due to the surging temperatures in the valley. He added that providing drinking water to far-off hamlets is a priority for the department, and fleet tankers have been | [More on P6](#)



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# 'Urbanisation Led To 60% More Night-Time Warming In Indian Cities Than Non-Urban Areas'

Press Trust Of India

Urbanization has led to nearly 60 per cent more night-time warming in over 140 prominent Indian cities compared to non-urban areas surrounding them, a new research from the Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar has found.

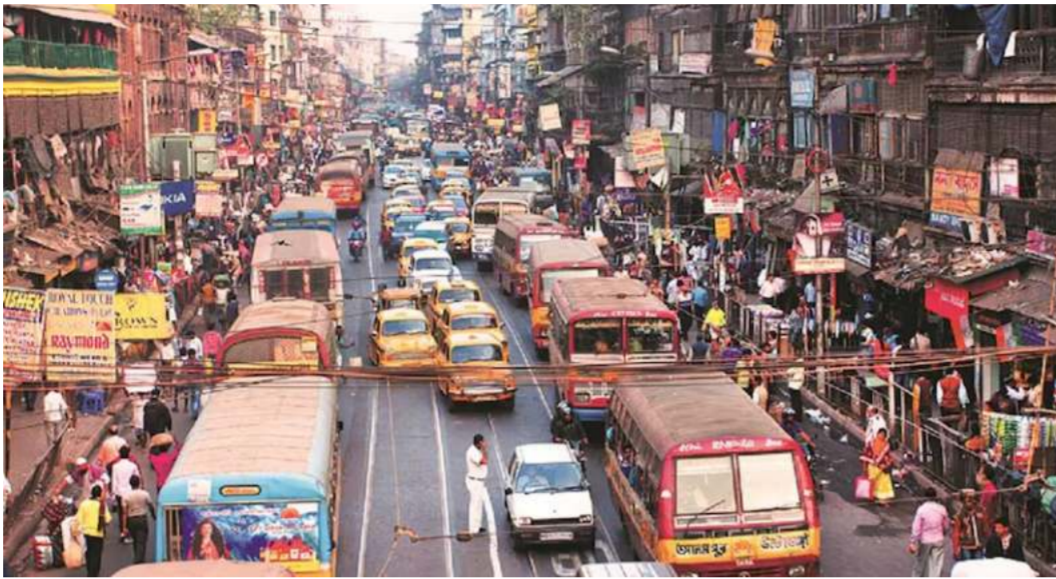
According to the research, Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Rajkot had the highest urban effect, while Delhi-NCR and Pune were found to be at the fourth and fifth position, respectively.

Urbanisation is known to be responsible for the urban heat island (UHI) effect, in which the concrete and asphalt (used in constructing roads and pavements) surfaces store heat during the day and release it in the evening, thereby raising night-time temperatures.

Over time, this heat further affects other aspects of climate, including rainfall and pollution, researchers said in the study published in the journal Nature Cities.

The study sought to determine how much urbanisation and local climate change each contributed to raising night-time temperatures over the past two decades (2003-2020).

"The mean urban effect for all these cities across India was found to be 0.2 degrees Celsius per decade. This leads to an estimate of 37.73 per cent of the total urban warming being linked to urbanisation -- that is, nearly 60 per cent enhancement



"The mean urban effect for all these cities across India was found to be 0.2 degrees Celsius per decade. This leads to an estimate of 37.73 per cent of the total urban warming being linked to urbanisation -- that is, nearly 60 per cent enhancement of warming relative to the surrounding non-urban areas

of warming relative to the surrounding non-urban areas," the authors wrote.

They also found that cities in the northwestern, northeastern and southern regions showed a "more pronounced increase" in night-time temperatures than in the other parts of the country.

However, the contribution of urbanisation towards night-time warming was higher in the

eastern and central Indian cities, which are developing and thereby, undergoing rapid expansion, the researchers said.

Almost all the cities, included in the analysis, showed rising night-time surface temperatures, which have increased by about 0.53 degrees Celsius on average every decade.

Further, the trend of hotter night-time temperatures was not

limited to the cities, as most of India warmed by 0.26 degrees Celsius on average every decade during the period studied, the researchers said.

This indicated that cities were warming at almost double the rate at which the whole country was warming, they said.

The authors explained that as cities are highly vulnerable to the combined effects of urbanisation and climate change, the people

and the infrastructure in these areas are on the "frontlines" of climate change consequences, such as heatwaves, extreme weather events and flooding.

They said the study highlighted the need for diverse mitigation efforts for effectively lowering the ongoing urban warming.

According to an analysis by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi, cities are not cooling down at night like they used to during 2001-2010 because they have "become more concretised in the last two decades" contributing to the rise in heat stress.

They said that while increasing green cover can moderate day-time heat, it is ineffective for arresting night-time heat.

According to the World Resources Institute (WRI) India Ross Center, seven out of 10 people around the world are projected to live in urban areas by 2050. While about 90 per cent of the growth is expected to happen in the Global South, a significant fraction of this will occur in India, it said.

Currently, 36 per cent of India's population, or about 40 crore, is urban and will double to 80 crore by 2050, according to the WRI India Ross Center.

With India projected to become the fastest growing economy globally, and expected to witness the greatest urban growth, the latest findings could help urban planners and policymakers better allocate resources and understand the scale of planning required for building sustainable cities, the authors said.

## از نیابت گوم احمد پورہ

درخواست از جانب فیصل رشید مندرہ رشید پورہ پان ساکن گوم احمد پورہ تحصیل چٹن بارہمولہ بنش حصول موئل کاسٹ سرٹیفیکٹ تحت آراء ۱۲۹ مزہ چہ پان۔

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معاملاً مندرہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل کی سرٹیفیکٹ بنش حصول موئل کاسٹ سرٹیفیکٹ تحت 126 SRO دفتر خطا میں زیر کار دانی ہے۔ لہذا استخبار ہراڈا گاہی خاص و عام کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض یا عذر ہو تو وہ اپنے عذرات دفتر خطا میں اندر سات پیم پیش کرے۔ بعد گزرنے میجا کوئی عذریا اعتراض قابل ساعت نہیں ہوگا۔ اور یہ قطعی مہلت تصور کی جائے۔ تحریر

نائب تحصیلدار

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# NOTICE

I **DR SHEEMA** Want To Disconnect My Electricity Connection bearing Consumer id:-0204040023927 Installation no 36748 at Zahid pora I 250 KVA Srinagar. Regarding this, if anybody is having any objection he/she may file his/her objection to the Sub division Office Hawal Srinagar within a week's time after that no objection will be Submitted.

**DR SHEEMA**

Media Line

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My DOB has been wrongly written in Aadhaar Card as 07-05-2008 while my correct DOB as per school records is 02-03-2010 which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. Gazala Mohammad D/o Gh Moammad Bhat R/o Batapora Kanihama Block Narbal Distt. Budgam bmg

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from Rasik Shabnam Majeed to Rasik Shabnam Majeed Wani in future I will be known as Rasik Shabnam Majeed Wani. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the regional passport office srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. inf

## The Jammu And Kashmir State Board Of School Education News Campus Bemina Srinager

The candidate whose photograph is published in this notice is claiming to have lost his DOB certificate of secondary school examination class 10th issued by the Board of School Education with following particulars:



Name: Maymoona Akhtar D/O: Mohd Ismiel Wani Mothers Name : Jana Bagum Class 10th .Roll No:734192 Session : April-May 1991 DOB: 25/02/1972 R/O Ladhoo Pampore

Now the candidate has applied for the duplicate certificate of the same. Anybody having any objection in this regard may file the same before undersigned within seven days of period from the date of publication of this notice. After due date no objection will or shall be accepted. Besides the original certificate bearing S.No 157821 be treated as cancelled.

Sd/

Assistant Secretary certificates KD

fko

## The Conversation

It's a Saturday afternoon at a kids' birthday party. Hordes of children are swarming between the spread of birthday treats and party games. Half-eaten cupcakes, biscuits and lollies litter the floor, and the kids seem to have gained superhuman speed and bounce-off-the-wall energy. But is sugar to blame?

The belief that eating sugary foods and drinks leads to hyperactivity has steadfastly persisted for decades. And parents have curtailed their children's intake accordingly.

Balanced nutrition is critical during childhood. As a neuroscientist who has studied the negative effects of high sugar "junk food" diets on brain function, I can confidently say excessive sugar consumption does not have benefits to the young mind. In fact, neuroimaging studies show the brains of children who eat more processed snack foods are smaller in volume, particularly in the frontal cortices, than those of children who eat a more healthful diet.

But today's scientific evidence does not support the claim sugar makes kids hyperactive.

## The hyperactivity myth

Sugar is a rapid source of fuel for the body. The myth of sugar-induced hyperactivity can be traced to a handful of studies conducted in the 1970s and early 1980s. These were focused on the Feingold Diet as a treatment for what we now call Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), a neurodivergent profile where problems with inattention and/or hyperactivity and impulsivity can negatively affect school, work or relationships.

Devised by American paediatric allergist Benjamin Feingold, the diet is extremely restrictive. Artificial colours, sweeteners (including sugar) and flavourings, salicylates including aspirin, and three preservatives (butylated hydroxyanisole, butylated hydroxytoluene, and tert-Butylhydri-quinone) are eliminated.

Salicylates occur naturally in many healthy foods, including apples, berries, tomatoes, broccoli, cucumbers, capsicums, nuts, seeds, spices and some grains. So, as well as eliminating processed foods containing artificial colours, flavours, preservatives and sweeteners, the Feingold diet eliminates many nutritious foods

helpful for healthy development.

However, Feingold believed avoiding these ingredients improved focus and behaviour. He conducted some small studies, which he claimed showed a large proportion of hyperactive children responded favourably to his diet.

## Flawed by design

The methods used in the studies were flawed, particularly with respect to adequate control groups (who did not restrict foods) and failed to establish a causal link between sugar consumption and hyperactive behaviour.

Subsequent studies suggested less than 2 per cent responded to restrictions rather than Feingold's claimed 75 per cent. But the idea still took hold in the public consciousness and was perpetuated by anecdotal experiences.

Fast forward to the present day. The scientific landscape looks vastly different. Rigorous research conducted by experts has consistently failed to find a connection between sugar and hyperactivity. Numerous placebo-controlled studies have demonstrated sugar does not significantly impact children's behaviour or attention span.

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## HEADQUARTERS JKAP-9th BATTALION ZEWAN, SRINAGAR

No. Estt/F-Notice/AP-9th/2024/8314-16

Dated:-28 .05.2024

## FIRST NOTICE

Constable Ankush Kumar, No. 656/AP-9th Bn. PID.NO.ARP-169107 S/o Tirath Ram. R/O Mehari Manyallan. P/S/Teh/Distt. Rajouri.

Subject:- Show Cause Notice/Attendance Notice.

- Whereas, you proceeded on (15) days earned leave on 31.01.2024 and further extended by (20) days making in all (35) days vide this office order No. 54 of 2024 dated 14.02.2024.
- Whereas you were supposed to report back for duties on 07-03-2024 FN to which you failed and was marked absent in daily diary vide DDR NO.09 dated 07.03.2024.
- Whereas, you have been informed though your concerned police station from time to time to resume your duties but you failed and remained at large without any intimation to the department.
- Whereas, remaining absent from duties deliberately is gross negligence and carelessness on your part and indicates that you are not interested to serve the department more.

Now, I, Khalil Poswal-JKPS-SSP, Commandant JKAP-9th Battalion, Zewan Srinagar, in exercise of powers conferred to me by virtue of J&K Police Rule 359 sub section 11(2) and rule 128 of J&K CSR call upon you through the medium of this notice that why stern action should not be taken against you on account of your continued absence from legitimate duties w.e.f 07.03.2024. You are at liberty to appear before undersigned within 07 days from the receipt of this notice for personal hearing/resume duties, failing which it shall be presumed that you have nothing to say in your defence and departmental proceedings under rule shall follow.

DIPK-693/24  
DATED: 28-05-2024

(Khalil Poswal)JKPS  
Commandant JKAP-9th Bn. Zewan Sgr.



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2.	Haji Mohamad Ali	JKB044688	508075	15384301-15390300	6000	C/o Shuja Furniture, R/O Bagh Khomany,Kargil-194103
3.	Mohamed Sidique Lone	JKB016256	506903	13145111-13146110	1000	Bijhama Uri Baramulla Kashmir-193122
4.	Tripta Sharma	JKB022476	500755	1456411-1457410	1000	H No 466 Lane No 17, Greater Kalish, Sainik Colony, Jammu-180001

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Corporate Headquarters  
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For Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd.  
Ref. No.: 02/2024-25

Place: Srinagar  
Date: 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2024

Share Transfer Agent  
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Selenium Tower B, Plot 31&32  
Financial District, Nanakramguda,  
Serlingampally Mandal,  
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Sd/-  
(Mohammad Shafi Mir)  
Company Secretary

DIPK-NB-254/24 dated: 28-05-2024

## Commercial Complex Among 4 Structures Gutted In Raj Bagh

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Four structures including two commercial buildings were gutted in a fire incident in the uptown Rajbagh area of Srinagar on Tuesday.

Officials said that a fire broke out from the top floor of the commercial building owned by one Haji Abdul Rashid Dar. The fire spread quickly to other buildings damaging another commercial building owned by the late Muhammad Dar.



Two firefighters also suffered injuries in the incident who were later evacuated to the hospital for treatment. The injured firefighters were later identified as fireman Basit (30), who

fell unconscious due to suffocation, and Akshy Sehgal, who fell down from the staircase of the building.

Two residential houses, officials said, were also partially damaged in the fire incident.

They said two commercial buildings owned by the Dar brothers suffered extensive damage. Several private offices were functioning from these commercial buildings.

Locals said that the fire spread quickly due to the blowing of winds



Beating the heat\_ children swimming in refreshing waters of picturesque Dal Lake amid scorching heat on Tuesday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

## People Hit Streets As Water Scarcity Hits Srinagar Amid Heat Wave

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Amidst the intense heat wave in Jammu & Kashmir, several areas across Srinagar have been grappling with a severe water scarcity over the past few days, prompting the residents to stage protests in the areas including Batamaloo and Padshahi Bagh on Tuesday.

The residents, as per KNO, took to the streets and staged a protest to express their resentment against the water scarcity in their area.

They said that the inadequate water supply amidst the persistent heat wave has been pushing them to the wall. “We are facing immense hardships in absence of the water supply especially at a time when the scorching heat has witnessed a rise in the Valley,” the residents said.

They appealed to the concerned

authorities to look into the matter and ensure that the adequate water supply is provided to them.

When contacted, Chief Engineer

being utilized by the Department of irrigation. The additional demand has led to a lower water level in the canal,” he said.

“We are facing immense hardships in absence of the water supply especially at a time when the scorching heat has witnessed a rise in the Valley

of the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Kashmir, Vivek Kohl said the water level in the key water treatment plants like Ranguil has dropped significantly.

“This decline is attributed to the Sind extension canal, which supplies water to these plants, also

Kohli added the situation is being addressed and said it as a “minor issue” that will be resolved shortly. “We have coordinated with the Power Development Corporation, and we expect the water supply to be restored to normal within the next 2 to 3 days,” he said.

## NIT Srinagar, BIS J&K Host Educational Outreach Prog

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar NIT Srinagar, in collaboration with Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Jammu and Kashmir branch offices (JKBO) organized an Educational Outreach programme for faculty members and research scholars.

Director, NIT Srinagar, Prof. A Ravinder Nath, alongside Prof. Najeeb Uddin, Chairperson IIEDC, and over 50 faculty members and research scholars from various disciplines of NIT Srinagar, participated in the program with immense zeal and enthusiasm.

Meanwhile, a team of BIS officers including Tilak Raj, Director and

Head JKBO; Devansh Deolekar, Joint Director, LTID; Pradeep Singh Shekhawat, Joint Director, CED; Tejas Sandeep Mahale, Deputy Director SCMD; Mohit Garg, Deputy Director, CHD; and Saaqib Rahi, Deputy Director, MTD, served as speakers for the workshop.

The workshop covered various aspects, including an overview of the BIS and standardization ecosystems in the country, the significance of research projects in standard formulation, BIS's digital initiatives, such as becoming a member of the technical committee, proposals for new standards, guidelines on Research and Development Projects by BIS, and Terms of Reference.

### World Environment Day

## Extempore Competition On ‘Mission LiFE’ Organized

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a significant move towards promoting Environmental Sustainability and as a prelude to World Environment Day 2024, the Department of Ecology Environment & Remote Sensing (DEE&RS) EIACP Hub Jammu & Kashmir organized an Extempore Competition on the theme ‘Mission LiFE’ at Iqra Educational Institute, SDA Colony Bemina, Srinagar.

The event aimed to

raise awareness about the importance of the Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) in our daily lives.

The competition witnessed enthusiastic participation from students who passionately articulated the significance of integrating the principles of Mission LiFE into everyday activities. Their speeches underscored the urgent need to adopt sustainable practices, reduce environmental impact, and contribute to a greener planet.

### 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 Adil Ahmad Parra S/o Gh Nabi Parra Mamooosa Pattan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 20-01-2000 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  
Naib Tehsildar Pattan


fko



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?Wash it again?  
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- PDD: 0194-2450213
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- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BUIBHERA: 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 20 Zil-Qadah 1445	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	3 : 40
	ZUHR	12:28
	ASR	5: 26
	Magrib	7:38
	ISHA	9: 16

## This Day In History

- 363- Roman Emperor Julian defeats the Sassanid army in the Battle of Ctesiphon, under the walls of the Sassanid capital, but is unable to take the city
- 757- St Paul I begins his reign as Catholic Pope
- 1138- Anti-Pope Victor IV (Gregorio) submits himself to Pope Innocentius II
- 1167- Battle of Monte Porzio: Holy Roman army supporting Pope Alexander III is defeated by Christian of Buch and Rainald of Dassel
- 1176- Battle at Legnano: Lombard League beats Frederick I Barbarossa and the Holy Roman Empire
- 1233- Chinese city of Kaifeng, capital of the Jurchen Jin dynasty, surrenders to the Mongols under General Subedei after a siege of more than a year
- 1328- French King Philip VI of Valois crowned at the Cathedral in Reims, France
- 1415- Pope John XXIII [Baldassare Cossa] formally deposed as Pope at the Conference of Constance, Germany, after he had fled the town in disguise
- 1453- Constantinople, capital of the Eastern Roman Empire falls to the Turks under Mehmed II; ends the Byzantine Empire
- 1576- Spanish army under Cristóbal de Mondragón conquers Zierik sea
- 1592- Battle of Sacheon: Korean navy led by Admiral Yi Sun Shin repels a Japanese fleet - first use of Korean Turtle ship
- 1648- King Charles I of England attempts to escape captivity at Carisbrooke Castle, Isle of Wight, for second time by hacksawing through a barred window but caught in the act
- 1652- Battle of Goodwin Sands, off Folkestone, Kent: English 'General at Sea' Robert Blake drives out Dutch fleet under Lieutenant Admiral Maarten Tromp
- 1677 - Treaty of Middle Plantation establishes peace between the Virginia colonists and local Native Americans
- 1692- Battle at La Hogue: English and Dutch fleet beat France
- 1733- The right of Canadians to keep Indian slaves is upheld in Quebec City
- 1780- Battle of Waxhaw Creek: alleged massacre of 113 of Colonel Abraham Buford's continentals by Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton's troops after the continentals raised a white flag
- 1886- American pharmacist John Pemberton begins to advertise his patent medicine - Coca-Cola in Atlanta, Georgia
- 1916- Official flag of President of the United States adopted
- 1916- US forces invade Dominican Republic, stay until 1924
- 1919- Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity, that when light passes a large body, gravity will bend the rays confirmed by Arthur Eddington's expedition to photograph a solar eclipse on the island of Principe, West Africa
- 1988 - Pakistan President Zia ul-Haq dismisses government and disbands parliament
- 1989 - Student protesters in China construct a replica of Statue of Liberty
- 1990 - An earthquake hits Peru, killing over 200
- 1990 - Boris Yeltsin is elected President of the Russian Republic
- 1996 - Space Shuttle STS 77 Endeavour 11), lands
- 1997 - Span scientists announce new human species in 780,000 year old fossil
- 1999 - Space Shuttle Discovery completes the first docking with the International Space Station.
- 2001 - Natural gas futures plunge 6% to a 10-month low on speculation that growing US inventories will help power plants meet summer demand for air-conditioning
- 2004 - The World War II Memorial is dedicated in Washington, D.C.
- 2012 - Facebook's problematic public listing could cost those involved \$115 million from technical glitches
- 2012 - Indonesian police make the biggest drug bust in ten years after seizing over a million ecstasy pills valued at \$45 million

KASHMIR OBSERVER<sup>®</sup>

Wednesday | 29-05-2024

Lingering  
Gaza horror

The Israeli airstrike on a refugee camp in Rafah, resulting in the tragic deaths of 45 civilians, has once again highlighted the urgent need for global intervention to stop the ongoing catastrophe in Gaza. The incident, which the Israeli military claims was a mistake, highlights the dire humanitarian crisis unfolding in the region and the urgent need for a collective international response.

The United Nations Security Council's emergency meeting is a crucial step towards addressing the immediate violence, but it must lead to a concrete action that prioritizes the protection of civilians and the cessation of hostilities. The global community cannot stand by as Gaza, already besieged and suffering from severe shortages of essential supplies, becomes further engulfed in violence.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres tellingly said: "There is no safe place in Gaza. This horror must stop." His words resonate with the grim reality faced by the people of Gaza, who live in constant fear of bombardment. The international condemnation following the Rafah strike, including from the EU, France, and the United States, and calls for accountability is good but condemnation alone is insufficient.

Immediate and decisive actions are required. The world must come together to enforce a ceasefire, ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid, and facilitate negotiations for a lasting peace. This involves pressuring all parties involved to cease military operations that endanger civilians. The international community, particularly influential bodies like the UN and the EU, must leverage diplomatic, economic, and political tools to bring about an end to the conflict.

On the other hand, the recognition of Palestinian statehood by Spain, Ireland, and Norway marks a significant step towards justice and a potential pathway to peace. However, it has also been met with resistance and punitive measures by Israel. Diplomatic efforts must therefore be intensified to ensure that the recognition of Palestinian statehood contributes to a constructive dialogue and a sustainable peace process.

The humanitarian implications of the ongoing conflict are devastating. The displacement of thousands, the destruction of homes, and the loss of innocent lives demand immediate attention. International humanitarian organizations must be granted unfettered access to provide critical aid, including food, medical supplies, and fuel, to the beleaguered population of Gaza.

The recent directive from the International Court of Justice, calling for Israel to halt any offensive actions that could lead to the physical destruction of Palestinians, must be heeded. This legal mandate stresses the need for adherence to international law and the protection of human rights, principles that are foundational to global peace and security.



Systematic Investment Plan in  
Mutual Funds : A Steady Path  
to Financial Growth

Did You Know?

In today's dynamic financial landscape, Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs) have emerged as a compelling option for both novice and experienced investors. SIPs offer a disciplined and systematic approach to investing in mutual funds, providing an effective strategy to build wealth over time. This article will delve into the many benefits of SIPs, explore their mechanisms, and highlight why they are particularly suited for long-term financial growth.

What are SIPs?

A Systematic Investment Plan is a method of investing a fixed amount of money at regular intervals (e.g., monthly) in selected mutual funds. The primary objective is to instill a sense of financial discipline and make investing affordable by breaking down large sums into smaller, manageable amounts.

Why SIPs?

1. Rupee Cost Averaging: SIPs benefit from the principle of rupee cost averaging, which mitigates the impact of market volatility. By investing a fixed amount regularly, investors buy more units when prices are low and fewer units when prices are high, ultimately averaging out the cost per unit over time.

2. Compound Growth:

One of the most powerful features of SIPs is the compounding effect. Regular investments grow exponentially as earnings are reinvested along with the principal amount, leading to significant wealth accumulation over the long term.

3. Affordability:

SIPs allow investors to start with small amounts, making them accessible to a wide range of individuals. This affordability encourages consistent investing without straining finances.

4. Flexibility:

SIPs offer immense flexibility. Investors can increase or decrease their contributions, pause payments, or even stop the plan without significant penalties, accommodating various financial situations and goals.

Sectoral Opportunities

India's growth trajectory in sectors like infrastructure, healthcare, electric vehicles, pharmaceuticals, artificial intelligence, technology, and solar energy presents substantial investment opportunities. SIPs in mutual funds focused on these sectors can yield substantial returns over time, aligning with the nation's developmental priorities.

Investor Protection

The Securities and Exchange Board of India's regulations ensure a secure investing environment. However, investors must remain vigilant against cyber scams and unauthorized requests for sensitive information.

Conclusion

In an ever-fluctuating market landscape, SIPs offer a stable and strategic path to financial prosperity. Consulting with financial advisors can help investors choose the right mutual funds and tailor their SIPs to meet long-term financial goals. By embracing SIPs, investors can make informed, disciplined, and profitable investments, ensuring a financially secure future.

Learn from the insights of writer, investor, founder of MI Securities and business partner at Sharekhan. Reach out to him at Irshad@bp.sharekhan.com for valuable knowledge on financial matters

Farooq Shah

“This confirmed that the unit was secure and not vulnerable to hacking attempts. Notably, the Control Unit lacked a USB port or any other interface that could be exploited to connect unauthorized devices. This design feature reassured me that the system was well-protected against potential security breaches

EVM-Based Election

A Presiding Officer's First-Hand Account



Critics, including the Congress and other opposition parties, have raised concerns about the reliability of India's Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), which, despite not being internet-connected, could theoretically be "pre-programmed" to record votes inaccurately.

Issues cited include potential tampering and hacking, software vulnerabilities, lack of transparency, and incidents of malfunction. While the Election Commission of India asserts that EVMs are secure and tamper-proof, the debate persists, with calls for greater transparency and enhanced security measures.

With a postgraduate diploma in software engineering, I possess a greater digital literacy and a better understanding of chip-based devices compared to the average person. This expertise allows me to assess the hackability of various computer gadgets, including Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). Previously, I had neither examined the hardware of EVMs nor observed their voting process, so I couldn't provide an informed opinion on the recent allegations by some political parties regarding their susceptibility to hacking. However, my recent appointment as a presiding officer in the Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency elections has changed that.

Srinagar's election featured around 25 candidates, including the NOTA option, necessitating the use of two ballot machines linked to a single control unit. The inclusion of the Virtual Voter Paper Trail (VVPT), which lets voters verify that their vote was cast correctly, added an extra layer of security to the process. Additionally, CCTV cameras monitored all proceedings, ensuring no unauthorized activities occurred and that the process concluded smoothly and without external interference.

Although the training I had received did not fully prepare me for operating the EVM, conduct a mock poll, and oversee the voting process, I was confident that my knowledge of the electronic gadgets would allow me to manage everything smoothly. When I unpacked the units, it felt instinctive, as easy as connecting a printer to a CPU—a task I had done countless times before. Watching numerous YouTube videos on operating the machine made it simple for me to connect the various cables to the control unit, despite the warnings we received during our training sessions. Honestly, I had skipped most of the training due to the presence of inadequately prepared trainers.

I thoroughly examined the Control Unit, inspecting its connections multiple times to ensure there were no external ports that could be linked to any external computer or laptop. This confirmed that the unit was secure and not vulnerable to hacking attempts. Notably, the Control Unit lacked a USB port or any other interface that could be exploited to connect unauthorized

devices. This design feature reassured me that the system was well-protected against potential security breaches, further ensuring the integrity and reliability of the voting process. My detailed inspection gave me confidence that the EVMs were robust against external tampering and manipulation.

After successfully conducting the mock poll, I was pleased to see that the buttons pressed on the Ballot Unit accurately matched the results displayed on the VVPT, as well as the voter slips collected in the box below. The digital results aligned with the manual counts, confirming the integrity of the process. As a presiding officer, I felt satisfied that the procedure was as transparent as one could hope for. I personally applied multiple seals to the Control Unit and the VVPAT, ensuring both units were securely closed. I meticulously penned down the serial numbers for recording in various forms, ensuring all equipment was properly accounted for and secured.

Overall, it was a smooth day for

able Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)—is equipped with digital certificates and performs mutual authentication when linked. As a result, connecting any unauthorized machine to the ECI-EVM is impossible.

In response to allegations that EVMs were hackable, the Election Commission in 2017 challenged political parties to prove it by attempting to hack its Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). The Commission also organized a hackathon, wherein it invited opposition parties to demonstrate their claims that the EVMs were, or could be, tampered with.

Recently, the Supreme Court of India warned against publicizing EVM source code apprehending that such disclosure will make the machine prone to hacking.

The source code is a set of human-readable instructions that tells the machine what to do. If altered, the source code can change the outcome of an election.

In September last year, a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud had disal-

“Up to this stage, there is no room for any misconduct to disrupt the voting process. With impartial security personnel monitoring the proceedings outside the polling stations, it's practically unreasonable to question the integrity of the EVM-based voting process

as I officially closed the voting at precisely 6:00 PM. My team and I then secured the units in their respective casings, sealed them properly, and sealed the casings as well. Within about half an hour, we arrived at the collection center and handed over all the equipment.

Up to this stage, there is no room for any misconduct to disrupt the voting process. With impartial security personnel monitoring the proceedings outside the polling stations, it's practically unreasonable to question the integrity of the EVM-based voting process.

The Election Commission of India has repeatedly asserted that the machines are completely tamper-proof and cannot be hacked. The Commission lodged a police complaint regarding allegations made by US-based Indian "cyber-expert" Syed Shuja at a London event, claiming that India's EVMs could be tampered with.

Shuja, who also claimed to be a former employee of the Electronic Corporation of India Ltd (ECIL), made a series of unverified allegations about the vulnerability of electronic voting machines used in India, including in the 2014 general election.

The Commission asserts that the EVM is an independent device with no external wired or wireless connections beyond its own system. Furthermore, it explains that each component—the Ballot Unit (BU), Control Unit (CU), and Voter Verifi-

lowed a petition for an audit of the source code public, saying this would make the machines vulnerable to hacking.

"If we start putting out the source code in the public domain, you know who will be able to hack that," the bench had told the petitioner.

Given these concerns, the Supreme Court and the Election Commission must take extraordinary measures to ensure the integrity of elections in India, the world's largest democracy. Conducting elections in India involves immense human and financial resources, and the stakes are incredibly high.

With the eyes of the world often on its democratic processes, India cannot afford to tarnish its image. To uphold the sanctity of its electoral process, authorities must implement rigorous checks and balances at every stage. These measures should be designed to address and dispel any fears or doubts, thereby maintaining the credibility and trust that underpin the entire gamut of India's democracy.

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.

# Overcoming Math Phobia in India

Using AI Tools Like OpenAI's GPT-4o and Google's Gemini Live

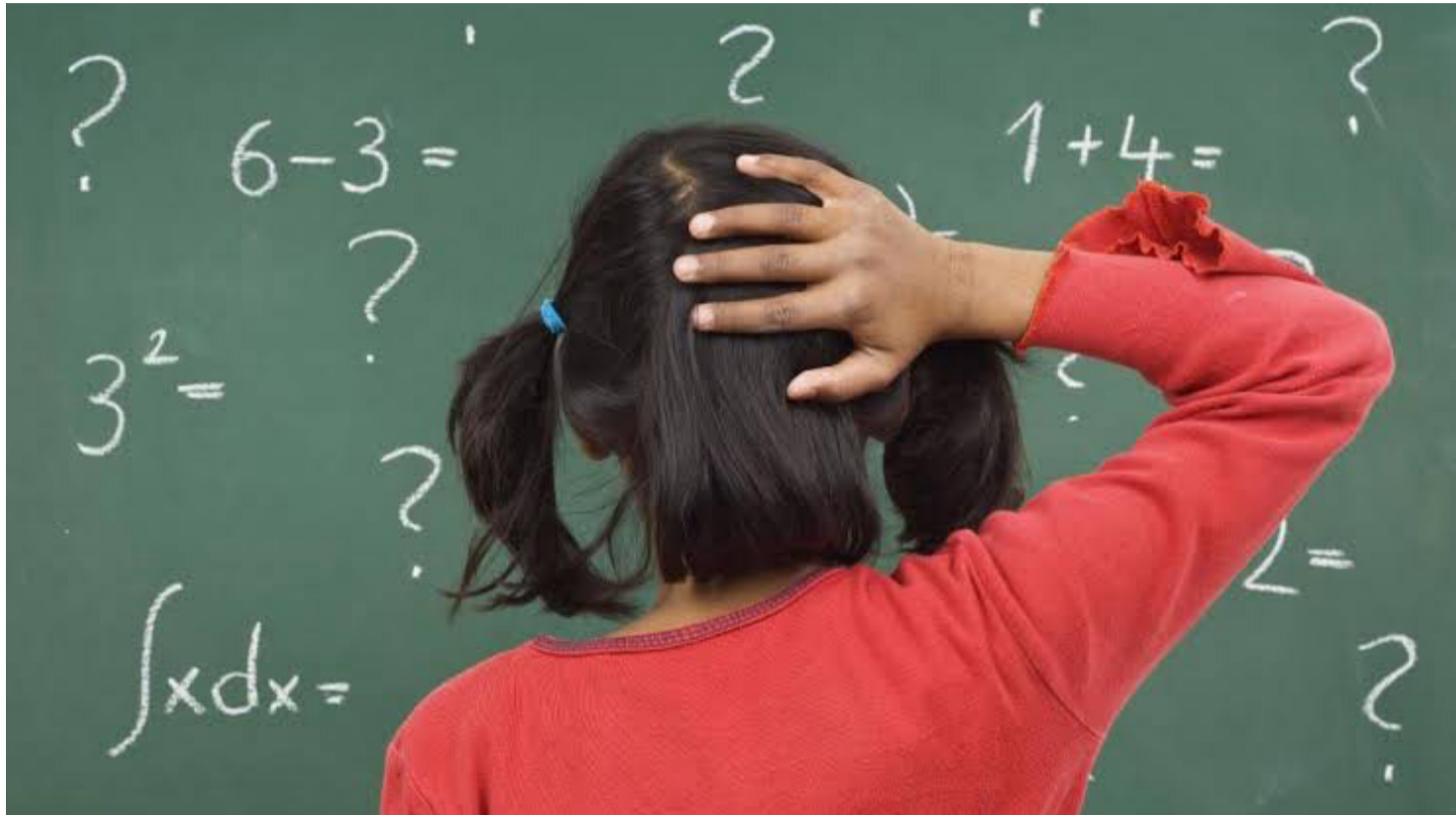
Umair Ali

In a recent demonstration of the potential of AI in education, Sal Khan, founder of Khan Academy, and his son used OpenAI's GPT-4o to solve a geometry problem. This practical application of AI showcases how tools like GPT-4o and Google's Gemini Live can provide step-by-step guidance, making math more accessible and less intimidating for students. With AI's capability to offer personalized, interactive and engaging instruction, there's a promising path to addressing the widespread math phobia among students in India.

According to a survey conducted by Cuemath, 82% of students from classes 7 to 10 in India experience significant anxiety towards mathematics, with only 10% expressing confidence in their abilities. This anxiety worsens as students progress through school, with negative perceptions of math increasing from one in seven students in class 7 to one in four by class 10. Additionally, proficiency in basic math declines from nearly 60% in class 7 to just 33% in class 8, highlighting an urgent need for innovative solutions. I believe AI tools when developed fully in a period of few years can somehow solve this issue.

#### Innovative learning approaches

Dr. Priya Patel, in her article "Transforming Math Education in India: Innovative Approaches," discusses the potential of project-based and game-based learning to alleviate math phobia. These methods make learning interactive and enjoyable, encouraging students to engage with mathematical concepts practically and hands-on. AI-driven platforms can seamlessly incorporate these methodologies. For example, in recently introduced GPT-4o, it was demonstrated how it can guide students through project-based learning activities, offer



ing step-by-step assistance and contextual explanations. These tools can explain a single mathematical question in a number of ways. Thus a student can choose an explanation that fits his background in Mathematics. Game-based learning modules, powered by AI, can transform mathematical problem-solving into an exciting and rewarding experience, shifting students' perceptions of math from daunting to enjoyable.

#### Bridging the mathematics education gap

Research by S. Maikandan et al. titled "Math Phobia among School Students: A Comparative Design" shows that math anxiety is higher in government schools than in private schools. This gap is often due to the lower quality of resources and education in government

**S**tudent can choose an explanation that fits his background in Mathematics. Game-based learning modules, powered by AI, can transform mathematical problem-solving into an exciting and rewarding experience, shifting students' perceptions of math from daunting to enjoyable

schools, where many students come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Supercharged AI assistants like GPT-4o and Google's Gemini Live might offer a cost-effective solution to bridge this educational gap as GPT-4o is free. However, the free version as of now has a limited capacity. However, those who have OpenAI's paid plan can access at \$20 (approximately Rs. 1650) per month but they will have 5 times more capacity on GPT-4o. Similarly, Gemini Live will be free for first two months and thereafter, people will be

charged \$20 per month. By providing high-quality, personalized learning experiences accessible to anyone with an internet connection, AI can democratize Mathematics education, ensuring that students from lower-income families receive the same level of support as their more affluent peers.

#### Reducing the gender gap in Mathematics

Research indicates a persistent gender gap in mathematical performance, with boys outperforming girls across all classes.

Factors such as societal expectations and a lack of confidence among female students contribute to this disparity. Alauddin Dafadar, in his research titled, "A Survey of Mathematics Anxiety and Mathematical Resilience in Upper Primary School Level" published in the journal, "Batter College Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies," highlights that the lack of clear explanations in textbooks, weak teaching methods, and insufficient foundational knowledge exacerbate math anxiety.

AI supercharged assistants can

help bridge this gap by offering tailored explanations and adaptive learning paths that cater to individual learning styles. These tools show a potential to provide real-time feedback and support, enabling students to grasp fundamental concepts more effectively. By offering a non-judgmental and supportive learning environment, AI can empower female students to build confidence in their mathematical abilities.

#### Combating weak teaching methods

Weak teaching methods and fragile foundational knowledge significantly contribute to math anxiety, as identified by Alauddin Dafadar. AI tools can supplement traditional teaching by providing consistent and high-quality instructional support. These can serve as a virtual tutor offering 24x7 service, offering personalized attention that might not be feasible in a crowded classroom. This AI can identify areas where students struggle and provide targeted practice and explanations, ensuring that foundational gaps are promptly addressed.

#### Conclusion

The integration of AI tools like GPT-4o and Google's Gemini Live into the educational landscape holds immense potential to revolutionize math education in India. By offering personalized, engaging, and supportive learning experiences, these tools can help overcome the pervasive math phobia among students. They can also play a crucial role in bridging the gender and economic gaps, ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to develop confidence and proficiency in mathematics. As we move towards a more technologically integrated educational system, embracing AI could be the key to transforming math education and alleviating the anxiety that so many Indian students face.

# Diet, Genes and Progeny

Nathaniel Johnson

Hasan Khatib

Thomas D. Crenshaw

Within the last century, researchers' understanding of genetics has undergone a profound transformation.

Genes, regions of DNA that are largely responsible for our physical characteristics, were considered unchanging under the original model of genetics pioneered by biologist Gregor Mendel in 1865. That is, genes were thought to be largely unaffected by a person's environment.

The emergence of the field of epigenetics in 1942 shattered this notion.

Epigenetics refers to shifts in gene expression that occur without changes to the DNA sequence. Some epigenetic changes are an aspect of cell function, such as those associated with aging.

However, environmental factors also affect the functions of genes, meaning people's behaviors affect their genetics. For instance, identical twins develop from a single fertilized egg, and as a result, they share the same genetic makeup. However, as the twins age, their appearances may differ due to distinct environmental exposures. One twin may eat a healthy balanced diet, whereas the other may eat an unhealthy diet, resulting in differences in the expression of their genes that play a role in obesity, helping the former twin have lower body fat percentage.

People don't have much control over some of these factors, such as air quality. Other factors, though, are more in a person's control: physical activity, smoking, stress, drug use and

exposure to pollution, such as that coming from plastics, pesticides and burning fossil fuels, including car exhaust.

Another factor is nutrition, which has given rise to the subfield of nutritional epigenetics. This discipline is concerned with the notions that "you are what you eat" – and "you are what your grandmother ate." In short, nutritional epigenetics is the study of how your diet, and the diet of your parents and grandparents, affects your genes. As the dietary choices a person makes today affects the genetics of their future children, epigenetics may provide motivation for making better dietary choices.

Two of us work in the epigenetics field. The other studies how diet and lifestyle choices can help keep people healthy. Our research team is comprised of fathers, so our work in this field only enhances our already intimate familiarity with the transformative power of parenthood.

#### A story of famine

The roots of nutritional epigenetics research can be traced back to a poignant chapter in history – the Dutch Hunger Winter in the final stages of World War II.

During the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, the population was forced to live on rations of 400 to 800 kilocalories per day, a far cry from the typical 2,000-kilocalorie diet used as a standard by the Food and Drug Administration. As a result, some 20,000 people died and 4.5 million were malnourished.

During the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, the population was forced to live on rations of 400 to 800 Calories per day, a far cry from the

typical 2,000-Calorie diet used as a standard by the Food and Drug Administration. As a result, some 20,000 people died and 4.5 million were malnourished.

Studies found that the famine caused epigenetic changes to a gene called IGF2 that is related to growth and development. Those changes sup-

offspring that may have serious implications for their health.

#### The role of the mother's diet

Until this groundbreaking work, most researchers believed epigenetic changes couldn't be passed down from one generation to the next. Rather, researchers thought

advantage for researchers is that the rats and sheep used in these studies reproduce more quickly than people, allowing for faster results. In addition, researchers can fully control animals' diets throughout their entire lifespan, allowing for specific aspects of diet to be manipulated and examined. Together, these factors



pressed muscle growth in both the children and grandchildren of pregnant women who endured the famine. For these subsequent generations, that suppression led to an increased risk of obesity, heart disease, diabetes and low birth weight.

These findings marked a pivotal moment in epigenetics research – and clearly demonstrated that environmental factors, such as famine, can lead to epigenetic changes in

epigenetic changes could occur with early-life exposures, such as during gestation – a highly vulnerable period of development. So initial nutritional epigenetic research focused on dietary intake during pregnancy.

The findings from the Dutch Hunger Winter were later supported by animal studies, which allow researchers to control how animals are bred, which can help control for background variables. Another

allow researchers to better investigate epigenetic changes in animals than in people.

In one study, researchers exposed pregnant female rats to a commonly used fungicide called vinclozolin. In response to this exposure, the first generation born showed decreased ability to produce sperm, leading to increased male infertility. Critically, these effects, like those of the famine, were passed to subsequent generations.

As monumental as these works are for shaping nutritional epigenetics, they neglected other periods of development and completely ignored the role of fathers in the epigenetic legacy of their offspring. However, a more recent study in sheep showed that a paternal diet supplemented with the amino acid methionine given from birth to weaning affected the growth and reproductive traits of the next three generations. Methionine is an essential amino acid involved in DNA methylation, an example of an epigenetic change.

#### Healthy choices for generations to come

These studies underscore the enduring impact parents' diets have on their children and grandchildren. They also serve as a powerful motivator for would-be parents and current parents to make more healthy dietary choices, as the dietary choices parents make affect their children's diets.

Meeting with a nutrition professional, such as a registered dietitian, can provide evidence-based recommendations for making practical dietary changes for individuals and families.

There are still many unknowns about how diet affects and influences our genes. What research is starting to show about nutritional epigenetics is a powerful and compelling reason to consider making lifestyle changes.

There are many things researchers already know about the Western Diet, which is what many Americans eat. A Western Diet is high in saturated fats, sodium and added sugar, but low in fiber; not surprisingly, Western diets are associated with negative health

outcomes, such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and some cancers.

A good place to start is to eat more whole, unprocessed foods, particularly fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and fewer processed or convenience foods – that includes fast food, chips, cookies and candy, ready-to-cook meals, frozen pizzas, canned soups and sweetened beverages.

These dietary changes are well known for their health benefits and are described in the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and by the American Heart Association.

Many people find it difficult to embrace a lifestyle change, particularly when it involves food. Motivation is a key factor for making these changes. Luckily, this is where family and friends can help – they exert a profound influence on lifestyle decisions.

However, on a broader, societal level, food security – meaning people's ability to access and afford healthy food – should be a critical priority for governments, food producers and distributors, and non-profit groups. Lack of food security is associated with epigenetic changes that have been linked to negative health outcomes such as diabetes, obesity and depression.

Through relatively simple lifestyle modifications, people can significantly and measurably influence the genes of their children and grandchildren. So when you pass up a bag of chips – and choose fruit or a veggie instead – keep in mind: It's not just for you, but for the generations to come.

By arrangements with The Conversation

# Did Activist Sonam Wangchuk Demand "Plebiscite" For Kashmir? A Fact Check

KO Web Desk

New Delhi: Many social media users recently shared a video of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk claiming that he demanded a referendum for Kashmir. In its investigation, the PTI Fact Check Desk found that a selected short part of Mr Wangchuk's recent interview was taken out of context and shared on social media with misleading claims.

Sonam Wangchuk, a renowned engineer and environmentalist, recently led a 21-day fast in sub-zero temperatures over his demands of statehood for Ladakh and its inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, among others.

## Claim

A Facebook user shared a video on May 19 of Sonam Wangchuk claiming that he demanded a plebiscite for Kashmir.

The video's caption read: "True colours of Magsaysay Award now coming out... Dubious Activist Sonam Wangchuk in Leh demanding a plebiscite for Kashmir. Now, he has become a separatist. The environmentalist was just a mask."

## Investigation



Starting the investigation, the Desk ran the video through InVid Tool Search and found several keyframes. On running one of the keyframes through Google Lens, the Desk found several posts carrying the same video with similar claims.

The video was widely shared on Twitter.

The Desk then conducted a customised Google search with specific keywords and found the complete version of Mr Wangchuk's interview, whose clip was shared on social media.

While watching the 15:35-minute video, the Desk found the viral video clip from a 14:50-minute timestamp. In the extended video, Mr Wangchuk discusses the Sixth Schedule and its importance.

At the timestamp of 14:23 minutes, the interviewer asks Sonam about his views on the residents of Kargil who continue to associate strongly with Kashmir, to which he responds, "So this is what I was asking that people can have their views. But if it is of the whole region or population... then we will pray and work hard to ensure it happens. Be it any area in the world... it should be happy; people should be free to go where they want. So that's why you must have heard about referendums and plebiscites. So, if everyone thinks the same, why not in Kashmir?"

It is worth mentioning here that representatives from the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), which represent the

social, political and religious groups of the two areas, have held a series of meetings with a high-powered committee of the Union home ministry over their demands for 6th Schedule implementation, statehood, job reservation, a separate public service commission for Ladakh and two parliamentary seats for Leh and Kargil.

In the next part of its investigation, the Desk scanned Sonam Wangchuk's official social media handles (Twitter and Facebook) and came across a video in which he clarified the viral video.

The caption of the post, dated May 20, 2024, read: "Sad to see my statement being twisted beyond recognition. But I can understand how the doctored version of my video could be misunderstood when taken out of its context. Please spread truth, not lies. Satyamev jayate".

Taking a cue, the Desk conducted another customised keyword search on Google and came across a PTI report from The Week on May 20.

The report's title was "Did not make any statement on Kashmir Sonam Wangchuk on claims he sought referendum."

According to the report, Sonam Wangchuk told PTI that his statement was twisted and he was quoted out of context. The activist stated that, "A politician

from Kargil said Ladakh should be re-merged with Kashmir. I objected to that and said it was ok if this was his personal view, but if all people of Kargil feel this way, they can do that. But Ladakh will continue to be a UT. We are not interested in re-merging with Kashmir. That was the context. A small clip from that (interview) was shown in a way that appeared I was talking about Kashmir and giving an anti-national statement."

Responding to a question on views expressed by some leaders in Kargil on re-merging with Jammu and Kashmir if statehood is not granted, Mr Wangchuk had said, "It may be the personal opinion of some people. But if someone feels they want to return to J&K, the government can look at it."

Subsequently, PTI reached out to Mr Wangchuk for his reaction to the viral video. "It's sad when statements are twisted and small clips are circulated, whether with me or with Amit Shah ji, as happened recently. Twisting statements is not right. I have not said anything on Kashmir," he told PTI.

Subsequently, the Desk found that a selected portion of Mr Wangchuk's interview was taken out of context and shared on social media with misleading claims.

# IGNOU Starts Admission Process For July 2024 Session

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Indira Gandhi National Open University starts the admission process for its various academic programs for July 2024 admission cycle. The process started from 15th May onwards in which several new academic programs have been launched from the July 2024 admission cycle including M. Sc. Chemistry, M. Sc. Zoology, M.Sc. Geography, MA in Journalism and Electronic Media (MAJEM), MA in Journalism and Digital Media (MAJDM), MSC in Information Security (MSCIS), Masters in Urdu (MAUD), PG Diploma in Environmental Management and Law (PGDEML), Post Graduate Diploma in Agribusiness (PGDAB), and various Under-Graduate Honours programs in several academic disciplines.

The University has also launched a four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP) in alignment with NEP 2020. The university has also got approval from UGC and AICTE for four new MBA programmes; MBA Human Resource Management (MBAHRM), MBA Marketing Management (MBAMM), MBA Finance Management and MBA Operations Management (MBAOM). Besides, the university has already been running MBA in Banking and Finance, MBA

(General) in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode and MBA (General) in online mode. There is no need to appear in any entrance test to take admission in any of these seven different MBA programmes. Revised programme of Masters of Computer Applications (MCA) has also been launched with the approval from UGC & AICTE and will be now of two years duration. The eligibility for the programme has also been relaxed in terms of having Mathematics as one of the subjects at UG level and there is also no need to appear in any entrance test to take admission in this programme.

Regional Director IGNOU Srinagar Dr Shah Nawaz Dar informed that the information regarding the newly launched and other programs offered by the university is available on the official website of IGNOU in a common prospectus, which is also available on the IGNOU Regional Centre Srinagar website ([www.rc-srinagar.ignou.ac.in](http://www.rc-srinagar.ignou.ac.in)). Desirous students can use the Samarth portal of IGNOU (<https://ignouadmission.samartha.edu.in>) to take admission in any of the programmes offered by the university for the July 2024 admission cycle. The last date of Fresh Admissions for the July 2024 Session is 30th June 2024. Re-registration for the July 2024 admission session is also going on and the last date is 30th June 2024.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Heat Wave To

an advisory issued by the department reads.

The advisory said a potential slight relief from May 30 to June 2 in most parts of the Kashmir division and some hilly areas of Jammu division is expected. Another spell of heat wave is expected to return from June 3 to 5, it added.

To give people some respite from the increasing temperature, Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) today pushed its vehicles in service to sprinkle water on roads so that people get some respite. Even at some religious places including temples and Gurdwaras, water was sprinkled on devotees to get a sigh of relief.

To beat the heat people are heading towards water bodies nearby or are reaching to the nearby hill stations to spend some days in the woods.

As per the MeT, Katra has also recorded the hottest day of the season at 39.4 degree Celsius. Kathua also simmered where the hottest day of the season was recorded at 47.1 degree Celsius.

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has recorded a soaring temperature, where the mercury settled at 32.6 degree Celsius while Qazigund the gate way of Kashmir has recorded a maximum temperature of 33.4 degree Celsius.

Pahalgam, a famous tourist resort, has recorded 27.8 degree Celsius while Kupwara, Kokernag and Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort recorded a maximum temperature of 30.9 degree Celsius, 31.0 degree Celsius and 22.4 degree Celsius respectively.

In light of the persistent heat wave, the department has also urged residents to take precautions. "People going to work should avoid being outdoors between 12 to 3 pm due to the high prevalence of harmful radiation. If necessary, they should carry water, cover their heads, and wear light-coloured clothing to mitigate the effects of the heat wave," a MeT official said.

The infant and elderly people have been advised to remain indoors in cool environments and avoid strenuous activities during the day.

The IMD bulletin stated that Jammu recorded a minimum temperature of 23.6 degrees Celsius which is almost near normal during this part of the season.

The intense heat wave has also triggered a power and water crisis in many parts of Jammu region as there were reports of drinking water sources drying up in rural pockets while groundwater level has plummeted in several areas.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar also has directed the administrative officers to establish a dedicated control room along with a nodal officer in each district to address public complaints related to power and water supply.

Meanwhile, amid hot days, the Directorate of School Education Jammu (DSEJ) ordered summer vacation for all government and private schools from June 1 to July 16 in summer zone areas of the region.

"All the government and recognised private schools falling in the summer Zone of Jammu Division shall observe summer vacation from June 1, 2024, to July 16, 2024," read an order. It is also ordered that teachers remain available for any online guidance of students during the vacation period. "Any default on the part of the Head of the School or Teaching staff in observance of the above schedule shall attract action under rules," the order further read.

The Board of School Education has also adjusted school timings to protect children from the extreme heat, ensuring they attend school during cooler hours, he added.(KNO)

### Fire Engulfs Forest

spread to nearby regions.

The forest department officials and local

residents launched an operation to extinguish the flames, successfully bringing the fire under control after several hours today, they said.

The officials said that a fire broke out in Sawni Sassalkote area in Rajouri district and spread to adjacent areas due to strong winds.

The forest department and Forest Protection Force have initiated a large-scale firefighting operation, which is still ongoing as efforts continue to control the blaze.

The officials said that some areas in Rajouri have been experiencing forest fires for the past three days, with continuous efforts being made to contain them.

Despite the severity of the fires, no human casualties have been reported.

According to the fire service department, there are currently 10 to 13 fire incidents occurring daily, attributed to the rising temperatures.

### Article 370 Wasn't

that work. To solve such problems, work had to be done under that strategy. Now sometimes I have to shut down the internet for that. Some NGO went to court and it became a big issue in the court but today the children there proudly say that the internet has not been shut down for the last 5 years and we have been getting all the facilities for the last 5 years. There was some pain for a few days, but it was for a good cause... It is very important to save the country from such NGOs," he said.

The Prime Minister said that enthusiastic participation of voters in Lok Sabha polls has given a message to the world and "those who had doubts". "When the common man votes there, it is not just to make someone win, voting means that the voter accepts the Constitution of India and expresses his dedication towards the entire spirit of India... As a result, voting records of 40 years have been broken. It is a matter of greatest satisfaction for me that my brothers and sisters from Kashmir came forward to vote with great enthusiasm. By voting, they have given a message to the world and to those who used to have doubts," he said. Voting has been held in six phases of Lok Sabha polls and will conclude with the last phase on June 1. Votes will be counted on June 4, (ANI)

### Link PAN With

Transactions) is May 31, 2024. Avoid penalties by filing accurately and on time," the department said.

The reporting entities which are required to file SFT returns with tax authorities include forex dealers, banks, sub-registrars, NBFC, post offices, issuer of bonds/debentures, mutual fund trustees, company paying dividend or buying back shares.

These specified institutions are required to furnish the details of certain financial transactions or any reportable account registered/recorded/maintained by them during the year.

Delay in filing of SFT returns may attract a penalty of up to 1,000 for each day of default. Non-filing or filing inaccurate statement may also lead to levy of penalty.

Through SFT, the income tax department keeps a track of high value transactions undertaken by an individual.

### Amnesty For

related activities.

Regarding BJP's chances of victory in Lok Sabha elections, Kaul said the party will again surpass the 400 mark and become the single largest party to form the next government in the country.

"Is there any doubt that BJP will again emerge as a winner, the party will form the next government with absolute majority and Narendra Modi will again lead the nation as Prime Minister," he added.

Replying to a query that a major reshuffle

within the J&K unit is on cards, the BJP leader said nothing of the sort will happen but the elections on party lines to elect national, state and constituency presidents will be held as soon as the Lok-Sabha elections are over.

"The party polls could not be conducted in view of the Parliamentary elections last year. The party president JP Nadda was granted an extension, and with the Lok-Sabha elections about to conclude, fresh party elections will transpire," Kaul added.

### Pak "Violated"

"On May 28, 1998, Pakistan carried out five nuclear tests. After that Vajpayee Saheb came here and made an agreement with us. But we violated that agreement...it was our fault," Sharif told a meeting of the PML-N general council that elected him president of the ruling party six years after he was disqualified by the Supreme Court.

After a historic summit here, Nawaz Sharif and Ata Bihari Vajpayee signed the Lahore Declaration on February 21, 1999. The agreement that talked about a vision of peace and stability between the two countries signalled a breakthrough. Still, a few months later Pakistani intrusion in the Kargil district in Jammu and Kashmir led to the Kargil conflict.

PlayUnmute Fullscreen "President Bill Clinton had offered Pakistan USD 5 billion to stop it from carrying out nuclear tests but I refused. Had (former prime minister) Imran Khan like a person been on my seat he would have accepted Clinton's offer," Sharif said on a day when Pakistan marked the 26th anniversary of its first nuclear tests.

Sharif, 74, talked about how he was removed from the office of the prime minister in 2017 on a false case by then Chief Justice of Pakistan Saqib Nisar. He said all cases against him were false while the cases against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder leader Imran Khan were true.

He also talked about the role of former ISI chief Gen Zahirul Islam in toppling his government in 2017 to bring Imran Khan into power. He asked Imran Khan to deny that he was not launched by the ISI.

"I ask Imran not to blame us (of being patronised by the army) and tell whether Gen Islam had talked about bringing the PTI into power," he said and added Khan would sit at the feet of the military establishment.

The three-time premier talked about receiving a message from Gen Islam to resign from the office of prime minister (in 2014). "When I refused, he threatened to make an example of me," he said.

Sharif also praised his younger brother Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for standing by his side through thick and thin. "Efforts were made to create differences between us but Shehbaz remained loyal to me. Even Shehbaz was asked to become PM in the past and leave me but he declined," he said.

Sharif said after assuming the office of the PML-N President he would renew efforts to strengthen the party.

### Health Experts

GMC Srinagar, said there are unprecedented higher temperatures observed these days and called for following basic safety tips.

The tips, Dr Khan shared, include staying indoors during peak heat hours unless absolutely necessary, consuming 1-3 litres more water/fluids than usual, depending on indoor or outdoor activities, preferring ORS solution, lassi, chaach (buttermilk), and soups to compensate for water and mineral losses, avoiding tea, coffee, and carbonated drinks as they increase urination, avoiding sugary drinks and juices due to increased caloric intake, wearing light-coloured, loose clothing instead of dark, tight clothes, using scarves, caps, or umbrellas to cover the body and applying sunscreen to

prevent UV ray damage and skin tanning.

He called for avoiding outdoor sports activities during hot days, taking extra water/fluids when sleeping under a fan to replenish water losses due to excessive evaporation, avoiding stale food from food outlets to prevent diarrheal diseases, which are more common during this season, ensuring raw fruits and vegetables are washed thoroughly before consumption, taking extra care of children and elderly persons.

Dr Salim further advised that anyone feeling symptoms such as exhaustion, laziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, headache, dizziness, mental clouding, or disorientation should visit a nearby health facility immediately.

Doctors said that by staying informed and taking proactive steps to prevent heatstroke, people can protect themselves from the potentially deadly effects of extreme heat. (KNO)

### Existing Power

the existing 'unscheduled power cuts and power outages'.

The department had said that it had limited power availability and there were some unavoidable things that had led to increase in power curtailment.

KPDCL however had said that it will lift these restrictions once power availability improves.

In the meantime, Jammu Power Development Corporation Ltd (JPDC) on Monday issued a new power curtailment schedule for the region saying that the limitation will be done in three shifts.

Pertinently, the new curtailment was issued at the time when the region was reeling under intense heatwave.

Earlier this week, JPDC had said that it was bringing additional 200 Megawatts of power to bring respite to the people of Jammu.

### KPDCL Serves

serving Notices to the consumers found using power illegally by way of hooking and meter bypassing, with copies sent to the concerned Police Station for registration of FIRs.

In a statement released on Tuesday, a KPDCL spokesman said Inspection Squads are vigorously patrolling on roster basis and mapping all those consumers found hooking on bare conductor, meter tampering and bypassing and exceeding sanctioned load in flat-rated areas. "In order to thwart attempts of large-scale power pilferage, Inspection Squads have been manning all sections at Subdivision level to prevent consumers from using power illegally," he stated.

The spokesman added that over 1.90 lakh inspection and disconnection drives have been conducted by KPDCL field staff over the last 6 months and a large number of consumers have been caught using power unauthorisedly. "Against recovery on account of energy consumed illegally worth Rs.27.74 crore, Rs.11.04 crore have been realised," he said, adding that non-payment of dues on account of illegal use of energy are being reflected in the power bills against those consumers who have failed to deposit.

KPDCL further stated that FIRs are being registered and more applications are being moved with names and Consumer IDs of such consumers caught either hooking or bypassing/tampering meters.

Highlighting the role of the centralised and fully autonomous Central Inspection Squad of the KPDCL, the spokesman stated that as many as 4,110 inspections have been conducted over the past six months and a large number of meter tampering cases have been detected. "82 confirmed cases of meter tampering have been reported for registration of FIRs under the Electricity Act by CIS," he said and added that all these consumers will be remotely disconnected permanently.

Laying stress on revision of sanctioned load

in flat-rated areas till these are smart-metered under the premier Loss Reduction Scheme of RDSS, the spokesman said the load of the consumers is being enhanced in a calibrated manner, in an attempt to bring down AT&C losses. He further stated that a large number of consumers are far exceeding their sanctioned loads, sometimes even by 4-5 times, which is adversely affecting the billing efficiency of KPDC.

The KPDC spokesman further advised its consumers to use electricity judiciously, which shall go a long way in providing reliable and quality power supply to all its consumers. He also urged the domestic consumers to avail the waiver on late payment surcharge under the Government's Power Amnesty Scheme which shall remain in force till March 31, 2025.

### 2 Hybrid

hybrid terrorists," the officials said.

On May 18, a tourist couple from Rajasthan's Jaipur were shot at by militants at an open camp in Pahalgam tourist resort.

### Coordinate Travel

All universities have resumed regular sessions as a result of the Kyrgyzstani authorities' prompt action in bringing the situation under control after a series of mob attacks in Bishkek, according to a letter from the Embassy to the JKSA.

"Students have been advised to plan their travel for vacation by commercial flights in consultation with their respective university administrations after completion of their exams. I would like to inform you that students have already started returning to India using commercial flights," reads the letter, a copy of which is with Kashmir Observer.

Following attacks, the student body had urged the Union Ministry of External Affairs, to take immediate steps to facilitate the evacuation of Indian students stranded in Kyrgyzstan, asserting their safe return should be priority to prevent any further distress or potential harm.

The letter further reads that the situation in and around capital Bishkek in the Kyrgyz Republic is stable following swift action from the authorities and that there are no restrictions either on the movement or transportation of people.

"The Manas International Airport in Bishkek remains accessible to Indian students. Air connectivity to India remains operational. There are direct flights to India from Bishkek and also through other cities such as Almaty, Dubai, Istanbul and Tashkent," Second Secretary (Cons) Susmath V. Anand has said.

### Jal Shakthi Cracks

pressed into service for this purpose.

The Chief Engineer stated that the department is scheduling water supplies properly to ensure that no household faces any scarcity of drinking water. "People need to understand that it is drinking water being supplied for drinking purposes. They should not irrigate lawns or wash vehicles with this water. This causes huge wastage and leads to scarcity. We are urging people to use the water judiciously," Kohli said.

Providing further details, Chief Engineer Jal Shakti Kashmir said that the department requires 76 MGD (million gallons per day) but faces a shortage of six MGDs, supplying only 70 million gallons per day. "This is because people do not use water judiciously. They make ruthless use of water in kitchen gardens and lawns. This is wrong and must be avoided, particularly in these two to three months when the requirement surpasses the supplies. At the same time, I urge people with illegal water connections to get those connections regularized within 10 days or face action," said the Chief Engineer. (KNO)

# Kashmir Records Over A Million Tourist Arrivals

## Agencies

**SRINAGAR:-** More than a million tourists have visited Kashmir till mid-May, with the J&K administration readying for the record breaking tourist numbers this year.

Kashmir, this year is witnessing a boom in tourism with promising foreign arrivals. Hotels, houseboats and homestays are witnessing a complete occupancy this season.

"We have already received more than a million tourists till mid-May. We are having a good season compared to last year with promising foreign arrivals," Director Tourism Kashmir, Raja Yaqoob told news agency. The director tourism said they are expecting to surpass the previous record given the sustained flow of tourists in Winter, Spring and summer so far.

"The previous year's record of mammoth tourists arrivals will be broken this year. We are ready for a record breaking number this year," he said.

Yaqoob said apart from the main tourist destinations, offbeat

places like Daksun, Doodhpathri and others equally receive good number of tourists this year.

"The good thing is that we witness that tourists are exploring offbeat destinations in Kashmir. From Daksun to Doodhpathri, Keran and other places tourists love to explore them," he said.

The director tourism is seconded by the Travel Agents Association of Kashmir (TAAK), which claims that the summer season is fully packed with booking from tourists across India and worldwide.

"We are witnessing an uninterrupted flow of tourists currently. We are expecting the flow to sustain for the rest of the months and hope to break previous tourism records," he said.

The valley is currently receiving bulk tourists from Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, where the temperature is abnormally high this season.

"Currently, higher flow of tourists is being witnessed from Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal

and Chennai. We are equally receiving a good number of tourists from Bangalore also," he said.

Hoteliers said currently all the hotels are booked till the second week of June. "We have 100 percent occupancy right now. As summer vacations will be over in Maharashtra and Gujarat in the second week of June, we will receive tourists from New Delhi and Punjab June onwards. We are expecting the flow of tourists to continue throughout the year," a hotelier, Waheed Ahmad Bazaz said.

Houseboats owners said the current heat wave countrywide has increased the flow of tourists to Kashmir.

Manzoor Ahmad Pakhtoon, president Kashmir Houseboat Owners Association said the occupancy in the houseboats was 'satisfactory'. "Since the heat wave is prevailing within the rest of India, we are witnessing good bookings and occupancy. We expect the flow to continue for the rest of the months as well, especially during Amarnath yatra," he said—(KNO)



**GHANTA GHAR**, the heart of bustling Srinagar, now a major draw for tourists

KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

## Will ensure Arrangements for Kheer Bhawani & Urs Shah-e-Hamdan: Div com



### KO NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** The Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Tuesday convened a meeting of officers to review arrangements for the celebration of Mela Mata Kheer Bhawani at Tulmulla Ganderbal and other districts including Kulgam, Anantnag and Kupwara.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners of Ganderbal, Kulgam, Kupwara and Anantnag; Director Tourism; Director Health Services, Kashmir; officers of FCS&CA, KPDCL, Information, Transport, PHE, Fire & Emergency Services, SMC, SRTC, Relief and Rehabilitation, besides representatives of Mata Kheer Bhawani Ji Yatra Welfare Society.

Addressing the meeting, Div Com directed officers to ensure all civil arrangements including electricity and drinking water at important temples of Tulmulla, Ganderbal; Tikker, Kupwara; Laktipora Aishmuqam, Anantnag and Mata Tripursundri Devsar and Mata Kheerbhawani Manngam in Kulgam district.

He also directed the con-

cerned to ensure adequate transportation facility to the devotees so they do not face inconvenience during their visit to Mata Kheer Bhawani Temple. He also instructed for making buses available at various transit camps.

Besides, he directed SMC to provide mobile toilets during the period of Mela, and also asked concerned agencies for completion of renovation and upgradation works at Tulmulla before the start of Mela Kheer Bhawani.

Div Com instructed DC Ganderbal to make adequate arrangements of blankets to the management of the temple for devotees besides making arrangements of water proof tents to facilitate participants of Mela Mata Kheer Bhawani.

He asked DC Ganderbal to appoint a Nodal Officer for timely communication of arrival of yatris for regulation of entry of devotees in the premises to avoid crowding for darshan.

Further, Bidhuri directed all the concerned officers to enhance the arrangements by 20 percent in view of an influx of more yatris than previous year.

## Kashmir Welcomes Foreign Film Crews

### Agencies

**ANANTNAG:** After a decline in film shootings in Kashmir post-1990s, recent developments such as the introduction of a New Film Policy have reignited interest from Bollywood and British actors in filming in the picturesque locales of Kashmir.

Tourist spots in south Kashmir's Anantnag district like Verinag, Sinthan Top and Daksum Kokernag are witnessing the filming of a movie titled "A Million Dollar Tourist" featuring actors from London. The primary goal of the movie is to attract foreign tourists, reminiscent of those who visited Kashmir before the 1990s.

Speaking with the news agency, Kary Shaw, one of the British actors, expressed excitement about filming in Kashmir. "I am very excited to be here, and I believe foreign tourists should come; it is a safe and brilliant place," she said.

A scriptwriter for the movie said the script was designed to facilitate collaboration between European locals and Bollywood artists. He said that while many foreign tourists travelled to Kashmir in the past, their numbers have dwindled over



the years.

"The main aim of the movie is to attract international tourists, and this movie should serve as an attraction for them," he said, adding that foreign tourists should visit Kashmir not only for movie shootings but also to boost tourism.

Another actor in the movie expressed joy at filming in Verinag and encouraged both Bollywood and Hollywood industries to consider Kashmir for their shoots.

"There are three projects planned in the valley, all set to be shot in south Kashmir, including Shopian," the actor said, adding that 70 percent of the production costs

would be spent in south Kashmir.

The movie's director said, "Since the abrogation of Article 370, I have visited Kashmir three times, and it's unbelievable. This inspired me to shoot the feature film 'A Million Dollar Tourist'. We have British actors, crews from Mumbai, and local actors from the valley."

He praised the suitability of south Kashmir for filming and lauded the overall safety and beauty of the region for movie shoots. "We obtained all necessary permissions for our movie within two to three days, thanks to the new film policy," the director added—(KNO)

## CS Reviews Progress On Budget Utilization For 2024-25

### KO NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Tuesday convened a meeting with the Administrative Secretaries to review progress on utilization of funds released after passing of Vote on Account (VoA) for 2024-25 besides assessing Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) implementation in Jammu and Kashmir.

Dulloo took stock of the works being uploaded by each department on BEAMS and the funds released on this account. He enquired about the expenditure made, so far, and the progress on completion of these works.

The Chief Secretary impressed upon the Administrative Secretaries to review the list of works of their respective departments on BEAMS and remove the long pending incomplete projects from the portal. He asked for further streamlining the fund releases on BEAMS so that the seasonal activities in Agriculture Production Department and land acquisition through Revenue and Forest Departments are culminated in time.

Dulloo asked the officers to lay focus on funding of critical projects transferred from JKPCC to PWD so that are completed at the earliest. He also asked for pacing-up



the expenditure on NABARD funded works for accessing more tranches from this organisation.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the JKIDFC funded projects and asked for adjusting rest of the funding of incomplete projects out of the regular budget. He emphasised on exploring the possibility of taking up works of critical village infrastructure including ensuring last field irrigation facilities under convergence with MGNREGA.

Regarding collection of non-tax revenue, the Chief Secretary emphasised the officers to step up efforts to further increase it from that of the previous year. He called for making this collection more efficient by employing technology and other requisite measures.

In his presentation, Principal Secretary, Finance, Santosh D.Vaidya, threw light on different aspects of this year's budget. He also gave brief analysis

of its spending during the past decade right from 2014-15. He elaborated on the current expenditure trends registered, so far, in the UT.

The other major features of the presentation included expenditure-wise categorization of works, delays recorded in their completion, Revenue, Capital and own resources expenditure besides highlighting the issues concerning each scheme and the department hampering smooth execution of projects.

The meeting was apprised that both the completion of projects and the budget has witnessed a quantum jump during the past 5-6 years. It was revealed that the total expenditure during 2014-15 was just Rs 35681 crore which increased to Rs 87501 crore during 2023-24. It was added that the capital expenditure also escalated from mere Rs 9330 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 22628 crore in 2023-24.

## St. Soldier Group Announces Scholarships for Kashmiri Students

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** North India's Leading Education Provider Group St. Soldier Group of Institutions; Jalandhar on Monday announced that they will offer Master Raj Kanwar Chopra Scholarships worth Rs. Two Crore for deserving students in Jammu and Kashmir.

These Scholarships, according to a statement, are available for all the students aspiring to get education in St. Soldier Group of Institutions

According to Prof. Manhar Arora, Managing Director St. Soldier Group of Institutions Looking at the intelligence and willingness to acquire Technical education by the students of Jammu and Kashmir, St. Soldier Group of Institutions have decided to offer Scholarships for

deserving students.

While mentioning the criteria Prof. Manhar Arora said We will offer scholarships flat from 25% to 100% to all those students who would secure marks between 75% and 100% in their qualifying exams, for the courses like B.Tech, B.Architecture, MBA, MCA, BBA, BCA, Polytechnic Diploma, BSc. Media, Bachelor in Physiotherapy, Para Medical Courses and BSc. in Hotel Management.

In addition to this Prof. Arora said that the Institution will offer free education to SC/ST Students.

"They can join any program in St. Soldier Group of Institutions and they do not have to pay any tuition fee. In addition to this students can study free under the Jammu and Kashmir Special Scholarship Scheme (JKSSS) in St. Soldier Group of Institutions," the statement reads.

## Dabur Donates 250 Bee-Boxes Among Youth



### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Moving forward on its mission to provide income-generating opportunities to local youth from Kashmir, India's leading Science-based Ayurveda major Dabur India Ltd joined hands with Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Science and Technology-Kashmir (SKUAST-Kashmir) to engage them in beekeeping.

As part of this initiative, Dabur India Limited donated 250 bee-boxes along with 2,000 bee frames with bees and other related beekeeping equipment to 27 local farmers and youth.

Dabur India Limited Marketing Head-Health Supplements Mr. Prashant Agarwal said Dabur, along with SKUAST-Kashmir, also provided them training on best practices in beekeeping to help them in efficient management of bee colonies.

He said that the training will go a long way in providing income-generating opportunities to the local youth while bridging the skill deficits at the ground level.

"We are thrilled to partner with SKUAST-Kashmir in this initiative to provide income-generating opportunities and livelihood to local youth from Kashmir. This initiative is an extension of our World Bee Day celebrations, and we are proud to contribute to the preservation of biodiversity and support sustainable livelihoods through this beekeeping training program," Mr. Agarwal said.

He said by distributing bee colonies and essential beekeeping equipment to the youth, we are not only fostering

environmental stewardship but also empowering the next generation to engage in productive and eco-friendly practices.

Mr Agarwal said that this initiative reflects our commitment to community development and sustainability.

A seminar was also organised on the occasion, which provided an extensive platform for knowledge sharing on various aspects of beekeeping, including colony management, honey extraction, and the vital role bees play in pollination and maintaining biodiversity.

"Bees are vital to our environment, and beekeeping can provide sustainable income opportunities for the youth. By distributing beekeeping equipment and colonies, we aim to encourage young people to engage in beekeeping as an income-generating exercise," he said.

Mr. Agarwal said that these resources will serve as the foundation for their beekeeping ventures, offering the initial impetus needed to embark on this rewarding journey.

"We recognize that success in beekeeping requires more than just equipment. Therefore, in addition to tangible resources, we will also offer training and mentorship to ensure that our youth are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in this endeavour," Mr. Agarwal added.

He said Dabur India Ltd is one of India's leading FMCG Companies. Building on a legacy of quality and experience for over 140 years, Dabur is today India's most trusted name and the world's largest Ayurvedic and Natural Health Care Company.

## IGNOU Starts Admission Process For July 2024 Session

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR :** Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has started the admission process for its various academic programs for the July 2024 admission cycle.

The process started from 15th May onwards in which several new academic programs have been launched from the July 2024 admission cycle including M. Sc. Chemistry, M. Sc. Zoology, M.Sc. Geography, MA in Journalism and Electronic Media (MAJEM), MA in Journalism and Digital Media (MAJDM), MSC in Information Security (MSCIS), Masters in Urdu (MAUD), PG Diploma in Environmental Management and Law (PGDEML), Post Graduate Diploma in Agribusiness (PGDAB), and various Under-Graduate Honours programs in several academic disciplines.

"The University has also launched a four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP) in alignment with NEP 2020. The university has also got approval from UGC and AICTE for four new MBA programmes; MBA Human Resource Management (MBAHRM), MBA Marketing Management (MBAMM), MBA

Finance Management and MBA Operational Management (MBAOM). Besides, the university has already been running MBA in Banking and Finance, MBA (General) in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode and MBA (General) in online mode," a statement issued here said.

It further said there is no need to appear in any entrance test to gain admission in any of these seven different MBA programmes. The revised programme of Masters of Computer Applications (MCA) has also been launched with the approval from UGC & AICTE and will be now two years in duration. The eligibility for the program has also been relaxed in terms of having Mathematics as one of the subjects at UG level and there is also no need to appear in any entrance test to gain admission to this programme.

Regional Director IGNOU Srinagar Dr Shahnawaz Dar informed that the information regarding the newly launched and other programs offered by the university is available on the official website of IGNOU in a common prospectus, which is also available on the IGNOU Regional Centre Srinagar website ([www.rcsrinagar.ignou.ac.in](http://www.rcsrinagar.ignou.ac.in)).

# 23 Dead, Several Missing As Rain, Landslides Wreak Havoc In Mizoram

Press Trust of India

**AIZAWL:** At least 23 people, including 13 in a stone quarry collapse, were killed in Mizoram on Tuesday due to landslides and incessant rain in the aftermath of cyclone 'Remal', state disaster management authority said.

Several other people went missing in landslides, mostly in the state capital region, which was cut off from the rest of the country for several hours during the day and bore the brunt of the natural calamities.

In a massive landslide, at least 13 people, including two minors, were killed and eight others were missing as a stone quarry collapsed in Aizawl district, the Mizoram State Disaster Management Authority (MSDMA) said.

Three persons were also killed and 17 others injured in separate incidents in Assam on Tuesday as heavy rain accompanied by strong winds lashed the state in the aftermath of the cyclone. Two persons died and over 500 others were injured as downpours wreaked havoc in Meghalaya.

The stone quarry collapse incident in Mizoram happened around 6 am in an area between Melthum and Hlumen on the southern outskirts of the Aizawl town, an official said.



The MSDMA stated that several houses and worker camps caved in due to the impact of the landslide, burying at least 21 people beneath the debris.

So far, 13 bodies have been recovered and eight people are still missing, it said.

"Among the deceased in the stone quarry collapse are a four-year-old boy and a six-year-old girl," a police officer said.

Aizawl's Deputy Commissioner Nazuk Kumar told PTI that the search operations will continue till the entire site is cleared.

"Twenty-two bodies have been recovered. The number could go up. There was an abandoned stone quarry and not functional for the last three decades. Houses near the quarry collapsed," Mizoram Director General of Police Anil Shukla to PTI.

He also said the rescue operation is underway.

"Those involved in the rescue operations are facing difficulties during the night. We are still searching for survivors. Five-six are still missing," the DGP said, adding that heavy rain was af-

fecting the operations.

Shukla said the rain-triggered landslides at several other places in Mizoram were reported and several other persons have been "swept away".

"We have rescued two persons alive from the stone quarry site," he added.

At nearby Hlumen of Aizawl district, at least five people died and four others are still missing when several houses collapsed in a landslide, the MSDMA said.

A building in Aizawl's Salem Veng caved in due to a landslide, following which three

persons went missing and their bodies were recovered later, an official said.

He also said that one person each died in Falkawn and Lungsei of Aizawl district when landslides buried their houses.

The MSDAM also stated that eight members of a family inside a house were swept away by a heavy landslide at Chawn-pui of Aizawl district.

The state capital was cut off for the whole day from the rest of the country due to landslides on National Highway-6 at Hunthar and NH-54 at Bung-bangla. The road blockages were cleared in the evening and the traffic movement was restored, the officials said.

According to the India Meteorological Department's regional centre in Guwahati, light to moderate rain is very likely to occur at most places over Mizoram on Wednesday, while thunderstorms and lightning with gusty wind reaching up to 30-40 kmph speed are very likely to occur at isolated places in the hill state.

The Mizoram government has ordered the closure of all offices and PSU units on Wednesday in view of the weather warning issued by the IMD, except those departments involved with disaster management and essential services.

## DU Begins Admissions For New Academic Session, Introduces Single Girl Child Quota Across Courses

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi University will provide single girl child quota across its programmes from the academic session 2024-2025, varsity officials announced on Tuesday as it began the admission process for the undergraduate courses. At a press conference here, DU officials launched the Common Seat Allocation System (CSAS) for UG admissions into 69 colleges and departments with 71,000 seats on offer.

Within three hours of the launch the CSAS website received 5,911 applications, officials told PTI.

While there are no major changes in the admission policy this year, the varsity, in a first, has introduced reservation for single girl child in all programmes as part of the supernumerary seats, DU registrar Vikas Gupta said.

Asked about the procedure to identify the single girl child, Gupta told PTI, "We are working on modalities to identify the single girl child claimants."

Last year, DU introduced a supernumerary category to provide admissions to orphan students; a male and a female in each programme of each college.

The admissions will be held in two phases -- first for registration at the CSAS portal and second for seat allotment.

A mid-entry option will also be provided to applicants who failed to register on CSAS by paying a non-refundable fee of Rs 1,000. However, such candidates will not have the right to claim a seat which has been allocated to another candidate who applied through CSAS in the initial phase.

The CSAS website has been opened for registration for students, dean admissions Haneet Gandhi said while addressing at the conference. It will remain opened for about a month, she added.

The second phase of DU admissions will start after declaration of the CUET UG results.

Currently, the CUET UG exams are underway and results of the same are expected to be released on June 30.

Like last year, Delhi University will take admissions based on the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) scores for both its UG and PG courses and also provide admissions PhD courses based on the same.

DU will also start admissions for the School of Open Learning (SOL) and Non-Collegiate Women's Education Board (NCWEB) from next month.

The portal for registration for SOL and NCWEB programmes will become operational on June 3.

SOL director Payal Mago informed admissions into Bachelor's programmes in SOL and NCWEB will be held based on marks obtained in class 12th. However, some PG courses in SOL will also consider CUET scores for admissions.

About nine UG and eight PG programmes in SOL are on offer for admissions while NCWEB will offer 12 combinations of BA programme and B.Com Pass across its 26 affiliated colleges.

## Couldn't Go To The Airport Because I Was Nervous About Facing People In A Wheelchair: Pant

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Dashing Indian wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant revealed that he was reluctant to visit the airport after his life-threatening injury as he was apprehensive about facing people while wheelchair bound.

The 26-year-old had suffered multiple injuries following a near-fatal car crash on the Delhi-Dehradun highway in December, 2022.

He miraculously cheated death but the injuries required a major knee surgery and an extensive rehabilitation about which Pant has already opened up.

"The accident was a life-changing experience for me. When I got up after it, I wasn't even sure if I would be alive, but God was very kind to save me," Pant said on "Dhawan Kareng", a talk show hosted by India cricketer Shikhar Dhawan.

"I couldn't go to the airport because I was nervous about facing people in a wheelchair. I couldn't even brush my teeth for two months, and for six to seven months, I suffered unbearable pain," Pant recalled.

However, the flamboyant batter returned to action after 14 months in the recently concluded IPL, giving glimpses of his devastating best.

## Sachin Tendulkar Likely To Be Present In New York For T20 World Cup Game Between India And Pakistan



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Rohit Sharma-led Indian cricket team will have a very special person supporting them as the legendary Sachin Tendulkar is expected to be present during their marquee T20 World Cup clash against arch-rivals Pakistan in New York on June 9.

According to a source close to ICC, 51-year-old Tendulkar, who is associated with a brand that is one of the key sponsors of the global body, will be in attendance at the Nassau County ground in the outskirts of New York, which is expected to be full on that particular morning.

"Yes, if all goes well, Sachin will be watching the match in New York and cheering the Indian

team," a source working closely with the ICC told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"It is still not known if he would meet the players prior to the game or not but his mere presence in the stands will certainly be a morale booster for Rohit Sharma and his men in what will be the most important group league assignment."

Tendulkar, inarguably the greatest ever Indian cricketer to grace international cricket still tops the run-scoring charts in both Tests and ODI cricket. He has played six 50-over World Cups between 1992 and 2011.

He has earlier also been a 'Brand Ambassador' of ICC during the 2015 ODI World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

## No MotoGP In India In 2024 As Race Shifted To 2025

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The India round of the MotoGP championship will not take place on the scheduled date in September and instead has been moved to March 2025, local promoters of the race told PTI on Tuesday.

Reports claiming that the race promoters had not cleared all their dues with rights holders Dorna after the inaugural round last year had led to uncertainty over the second edition scheduled from September 20-22.

However, after Tuesday's meeting involving all stakeholders -- Dorna, and, co-promoters Fairstreet Sports and Uttar Pradesh government -- it was decided to shift the round to a yet to be decided date in March.

"It was mutually decided to shift the race to March next year. We are looking at first or second week of March. All the stakeholders including Dorna agreed that the September weather is not conducive for the race and it is tough on the riders and marshals as experienced last year," Fairstreet Sports CEO Pushkar Nath Srivastava told PTI.

When asked if the postponement of the race had anything to do with unpaid

dues, Srivastava responded with a clear "no".

"All payments were being made in between and whatever is left will be paid by next month. So that was not really a factor in shifting the race to next year. We also thought of

in Doha on March 10 and the organisers can slot the India round in the following week. Ahead of the 2023 edition, Dorna and local promoters had signed a seven year agreement to stage the race in India.



doing it in November but that would have meant four back-to-back races which would have been tough on the teams and the riders," said Srivastava.

More than 50,000 fans turned up at the Buddh International Circuit during the inaugural race, just enough to fill half of the facility.

"We also expect more fans to turn up in March as the weather will be better," said Srivastava.

The current season began

Uttar Pradesh government which was a sponsor last year has now become a co-promoter, raising hopes of a long-term future of the high-profile event.

The 2023 MotoGP round in India, won by Marco Bezzecchi, was the biggest motorsports event held in the country since the last Formula 1 race that took place in 2013. Formula 1 could only last three years in India due to financial and taxation issues.

# Far From IPL, Bowlers Set To Lord Over Batters In T20 World Cup

Press Trust of India

**BENGALURU:** Put through the wringer in the IPL, can bowlers hope to breathe a bit easy in the T20 World Cup next month?

The genesis of this question lies in the transformation that T20 batting underwent in the latest edition of the IPL.

The 250-mark was breached only once in the league till this season, but teams went past that point eight times in the just-concluded edition.

Many of the batters who led that revolution, such as Australian Travis Head and West Indian Andre Russell, will be seen in action in the ICC showpiece in the Americas next month.

So, it's quite natural for fans to expect another batting waltz.

But their approach cannot be as one-dimensional in the World Cup as it was in the IPL for a variety of reasons.

To begin with, teams will not have the luxury of an Impact Player in the World Cup. So, they will have to be ready to switch to an attritional style of cricket as and when the situa-

tion demands.

Mitchell Starc underlined that point after playing a big role in guiding Kolkata Knight Riders to their third IPL title.

"There is an Impact Player Rule here (in IPL) and not in the T20 World Cup. You are going to rely more on your all-rounders. You cannot put your batting all-rounder at No. 8, like you did in the IPL.

"I don't think that you'll see these kind of high scores in the T20 World Cup, purely because there will be one batter less," said Starc.

In the earlier part of the IPL, Chennai Super Kings used Shivam Dube, a pace bowling all-rounder, exclusively as a batter through the Impact Player rule, though he usually walked in at No. 4 or 5 in place of a bowler.

Dube produced a couple of match-winning knocks against Royal Challengers Bengaluru and the Knight Riders.

But in the World Cup, the left-hander will have to showcase his bowling skills too to get a slot in the eleven as vice-captain Hardik Pandya plays a similar role and remains



the first-choice. Skipper Rohit Sharma has made that bit quite clear already.

"I will be expecting if we need Shivam to ball a few overs, he will. Same with Hardik, he has come and bowled whenever needed. All-rounders must do that whatever their role is,"

he had said after the announcement of India's squad.

However, that's just one part of the story. The batters will also have to negate pitches that will be very different from the ones they got used to in the IPL.

"The West Indian pitches are no longer what they used to be

in the '80s or in the '90s. They are now slower, and at times gripping," a veteran curator told PTI.

"I am sure the bowlers, particularly spinners, will have much more say than in the IPL, especially from the second week of the tournament.

"India have included four spinners in their squad. It was maybe because of the nature of the pitches in the West Indies. Hence, I don't think we may see all those 250 totals there," he added.

In the USA, only Florida has prior experience in hosting high-profile cricket matches. New York and Texas are bracing for their maiden foray into the sport.

Will that have an impact on the scoring rate?

"Yeah! it can be as initially the teams might be looking to assess the pitch and other conditions. I think these drop-in pitches that are being used in some of these venues are more consistent than the natural pitches. So, we may see a few high scores in that round," he said.

David Warner, who has immense experience in playing international and franchise cricket in the West Indies, concurred.

"The pitches in the Caribbean being dry, the ball will get roughed up and it's going to spin. I don't think they're go-

ing to be as compact as they are here (in the IPL). The lacquer on the ball is staying longer (in IPL) and hence it's not getting chewed up and hence very little turn on offer.

"I've played a lot of cricket over there and played in the CPL (Caribbean Premier League). The wickets tend to get lower and slower," Warner pointed out.

The average run-rate in this IPL was a whopping 9.56, the highest ever in the history of the tournament, and the average score remained upwards of 180. The average first innings score in Hyderabad was in the vicinity of 230.

However, the stadiums in the West Indian islands are cut from a different cloth as some statistics will reveal.

The average T20 score in Antigua is a dawdling 123 and at Barbados it is 138. It is even bleaker in Guyana at 124, at 115 in Trinidad and at 118 in St. Vincent. Gros Islet tops the chart with a princely 139.

By the look of things, the bowlers are set to be royalty in T20 at least for a month.