27 year of publication **KASHMIR OBSERVER**

Saturday 15 June 2024 | Srinagar | Vol: 27 | Issue: 141 | Pages: 08 | Price: ₹3

www.kashmirobserver.net • twitter.com / kashmirobserver • facebook.com/kashmirobserver • Postal Regn: L/159/KO/SK/2014-2016

G7 SUMMIT IN ITALY PM Holds Bilateral Talks With World Leaders



KO WEB DESK

Italy: Prime Minister Narendra Modi engaged in a series of bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Apulia, Italy, on Friday.

Among the prominent leaders he met, Modi held discussions with French President Emmanuel Macron in the afternoon, focusing on strengthening their partnership across various sectors.

discussions between The Minister Modi and Prime President Macron encompassed areas such as defence, nuclear cooperation, space exploration, education, climate action, digital public infrastructure, critical technologies, connectivity, and

culture. Both leaders agreed to intensify strategic defence cooperation, emphasizing the 'Make in India' initiative.

They also resolved to expand collaboration in artificial intelligence (AI), critical and emerging technologies, energy, and sports, in preparation for upcoming events like the AI Summit and the United Nations Oceans Conference to be hosted by France next year.

Highlighting the importance of a robust Strategic Partnership between India and France for global stability and prosperity, Modi and Macron pledged to elevate their cooperation to new heights. Prime Minister Modi extended his best wishes to President Macron | More on P6

PM Calls For Ending Monopoly In Technology

ime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday called for ending the monopoly in technology and said it must be made creative to lay the foundation of an inclusive society. In an address at an Outreach session of the G7 summit in Italy's Apulia region, Modi said the countries of the Global South are bearing the brunt of uncertainties and tensions around the world. India has considered it its responsibility | More on P6

WE ARE MAKING EVERY POSSIBLE EFFORT TO FULFILL OUR COMMITMENT to achieve the target of Net Zero by 2070. Together we should make efforts to make the coming time a green era"

Major Land Scam Unearthed In Jammu

Jyeshtha Ashtami - Over 30K KP **Pilgrims Converge At Tulmula** LG Sinha Says Yatri Bhawan To Be Completed In 8 Months

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: Over 30,000 pilgrims from the Union Territory and other parts of mainland India arrived to participate in Jyeshtha Ashtami festival at Tulmulla central Ganderbal, in Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Friday, extending his warm wishes to the Kashmiri Pandit community on the occasion.

The LG laid the foundation stone for Yatri Bhawan at Mata Kheer Bhawani Temple, Tulmulla, Ganderbal on Friday. He paid obeisance to Mata Kheer Bhawani and prayed for peace, prosperity, happiness and | More on P6

Majid Nabi Faith More Powerful Than

Fear: KPs

housands of Hindu devotees paid obeisance at the revered Ragnya Devi temple Tulmulla in the central Ganderbal district,

marking the annual Mela Kheer Bhawani, the most significant festival among Kashmiri Pandits on Friday. The Hindu festival, which drew participants from across the valley and other parts | More on P6

Return To Homeland: **Mirwaiz To KPs** Says Time To Rebuild **Broken Bonds**

Press Trust Of India

t is time to reconcile and rebuild the broken bonds, Hurriyat Conference chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said on Friday as he appealed to the Kashmiri Pandits to return to their homeland. In his address at the Friday congregation at the historic Jamia Masjid in Nowhatta area here, he felicitated the Kashmiri Pandit community on the occasion of Mela Kheer Bhawani. Thousands of Kashmiri Pandits paid obeisance at the Mata Kheer | More on P6

Hot, Dry Weather In Kashmir For **Next 5 Days**

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Weatherman here on Friday forecast heatwave over plains of Jammu and hot and dry weather over rest of the places in J&K during next five days.

A meteorological depart-ment official said that there is also a likelihood of a "brief" spell of rain/thunder/lightning on June 19 and 20.

He said on June 15-18, generally dry weather is expected even as light rain and thunder at isolated places can't be ruled out. From June 19-21, he said, generally cloudy weather is expected with a spell of light rain/thunder at scattered places towards afternoon.

"Heat wave over plains of Jammu & hot and dry weather over rest of the places of J&K is expected during next 5 days," he said, adding, "fresh brief spell of rain/thunder/lightning is likely during June 19 and 20." Regarding the temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of 13.4°C against 14.0°C on the previous night and it was 0.9°C below normal for the summer capital of JK for this time of the year.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of 10.2°C against 13.0°C on the previous

J&K Security Situation Amit Shah Calls High-level Meeting On June 16

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday reviewed the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of several terror incidents there, including an attack on a bus ferrying pilgrims, sources said.

He called a high-level meeting on June 16, to be attended by National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and

Kashmir Manoj Šinha, top officials of the Army, CRPF and others to review the prevailing situation in the Union Territory and steps taken to check terror incidents.

Paralympic Games

LG Meets J&K's

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor

Manoj Sinha Friday met Amir

Ahmad Bhat, International Para

Shooter from J&K who is go-

ing to represent India in Pistol

Shooting Competition at Paris

The LG congratulated Amir

Ahmad Bhat for his remark-

able achievements in national

and international events and

conveyed best wishes to him

for the upcoming Paralympic

Games. The International Para

Shooter, hailing | More on P6

arrested so far in connection

Why Were Students Awarded

with the case.

2024 Paralympic Games.

International

Para Shooter

Observer News Service

Paris 2024



During Sunday's meeting, the home minister will also take stock of the preparedness for the annual Amarnath Yatra which will begin on

briefed about the prevailing situation in Jammu and Kashmir and the steps taken following the terror incidents, they said.

Terrorists struck at four places in Reasi, Kathua and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir over the past four days, killing nine pilgrims and a CRPF jawan, and leaving seven security personnel and several others injured.

Two suspected Pakistani terrorists were also killed in an encounter with security forces in Kathua district and a large quantity of arms and ammunition were recovered from them. On Sunday terrorists

Investment, Job Commitments **J&K Govt To Monitor Industrial Estates**

Agencies

Srinagar: In a significant move, the Jammu & Kashmir Government will monitor fulfillment of employment and investment commitments made by industrial unit holders who have been allotted land in government industrial units.

To begin with, the government has constituted a threemember committee to propose a monitoring mechanism to regularly check and evaluate the fulfillment of commitments vis-à-vis proposed investment and employment as per detailed project reports(DPRs)

committee The comprises Director Industries & Commerce Kashmir, Director Industries & Commerce Jammu and Director SIDCO/SICOP.

The panel has been directed to submit its recommendations to the government within 15 days.

The committee has been constituted at a time when the Jammu & Kashmir government is pushing for massive industrial development to create employment avenues for the youth.

In the past few years, the J & K government received investment proposals worth Rs 90182 crore which have potential to generate employment for 4, 01.965 youth



Land Mafia, Govt Officials Collude; 5 FIRs Registered

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The Anti-Corruption Bureau on Friday claimed to have unearthed a major scam involving more than 28 acres of land usurped by the land mafia here in connivance with officials, a senior police officer said.

Five FIRs have been registered against the accused, including government officials, and raids are underway at the premises of 16 people involved in the scam, Deputy Inspector General of ACB. Jammu. Vikas Gupta told reporters here.

Gupta, who was flanked by senior officers including Senior Superintendent of Police, ACB (central) Surinder Kumar Sharma, said a number of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir

(PoK) refugees, who were allotted some of the land in 1955-56 for their settlement, were deputed by the conspirators.

Sharma, who is leading the investigation in the case, said 225 kanals of custodian land in Asarwan, Mishriwala and Bhalwal area of Jammu district has been found usurped by the land mafia in connivance with the officials of the Custodian, Revenue and Police departments.

He said eight to 10 serving and retired revenue officials, including tehsildars, naib-tehsildars and Patwaris, have been named so far in the FIRs.

Inputs were received that custodian land in thousands of kanals had been grabbed by the land mafia and More on P6

June 29, sources said. The home minister was

opened fire on a 53-seater bus carrying pilgrims | More on P6

submitted by the industria unit holders allotted land in industrial estates

Since 2019-20, an investment worth Rs.5319 crore | More on P6

Provocative Speeches In 2010 Delhi LG Gives Nod To Prosecute Roy, Sheikh Showkat Under UAPA

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Delhi Lt Governor V K Saxena has accorded sanction to prosecute author Arundhati Roy and a former professor in Kashmir under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for allegedly making pro-vocative speeches at an event here in 2010, Raj Niwas officials said on Friday.

The FIR against Roy and of former Central University



professor Kashmir Sheikh Showkat Hussain

Metropolitan Magistrate, New Delhi, they added. There was no immediate reaction from Roy and Hussain.

The FIR in the matter was registered on a complaint made by Sushil Pandit, a social activist from Kashmir, on October 28, 2010.

"Delhi Lt Governor VK Saxena has sanctioned the prosecution of Arundhati Roy and former Professor of International Law | More on P6

Explained: What Is NEET-UG Controversy All About?

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Medical entrance exam NEET-UG with over 24 lakh candidates appearing for it has become a centre of controversy over allegations of several irregularities and has triggered protests across the country and a political slugfest. Here is an explainer on what has happened so far:

Alleged Irregularities: There have been allegations of inflation of marks in NEET-UG which has led to a record 67 candidates sharing top rank with perfect score. Last year, two students shared the top rank. Students have been alleging the marks have been randomly reduced or increased for several candidates, affecting their ranks. The grace marks



awarded to over 1,500 students to compensate for loss of time swers for NEET-UG were provided to approximately 35 asfor delay in exams at six centres pirants before the May 5 exam. Thirteen individuals have been is also under scanner. There have been allegations

of paper leak too. The Economic Offences Unit of Bihar Police had last month said that its investigation has revealed that

Grace Marks?

Students from at least six centres in Meghalaya, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Surat and Chandigarh had complained about the loss of time during the exams. At these locations, the students did not get the full 3 hours and 20 minutes to write the exam due to administrative reasons, such as the distribution of the wrong question paper, torn OMR sheets, or delay in the distribution of OMR sheets.

A committee formed by the NTA investigated the matter and chose to use the formula devised and adopted by the apex court in a 2018 judgement, to address the loss of time faced by candidates. The loss of time was ascertained and such candidates were | More on P6

'Moul Mouj Health Centre' **Geriatric Care Center To Combat Elder Abuse Opens In Kashmir**

was registered following

the orders of the Court of

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: 'Moul Mouj Health Centre' - a dedicated facility for senior citizen care - was inaugurated at Karan Nagar, Srinagar on Friday.

Dr. Zubair Saleem, Senior Geriatric Consultant & Head, Moul Mouj Health Centre said the state-of-the-art center is an initiative of Kashmir Clinics and it aims to provide comprehensive healthcare services tailored specifically for the elderly population.

Âddressing the gathering of participants, Dr Saleem said the prevalence of elder abuse



is alarming and psychological abuse is a significant problem among the elderly in Kashmir. "As a geriatrician with 12

years of experience, I have the privilege of treating over 30,000 seniors in Kashmir, witnessing

firsthand the widespread issues they face. It has been seen that those responsible for elder abuse are often the victims' own family members," he said. According to Dr. Saleem, out of approximately 30,000 pa-tients seen in Kashmir, 62 percent reported experiencing psychological trauma inflicted by their married sons, while 20-30 percent reported similar abuse from their daughters-in-law.

"One in two elders in Kashmir is suffering due to elder abuse," Dr. Saleem said, highlighting the critical nature of the issue. "Isolation and elder abuse are most rampant | More on P6



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Men Really Do Eat More Meat Than Women, Study Says

Associated Press

acationing in Chicago this week from Europe, Jelle den Burger and Nirusa Naguleswaran grabbed a bite at the Dog House Grill: a classic Italian beef sandwich for him, grilled cheese for her.

Both think the way their gen ders lined up with their food choices was no coincidence. Women, said Naguleswaran, are simply more likely to ditch meat, and to care about how their diet affects the environment and other people.

"I don't want to put it in the wrong way, that male people feel attacked," said Naguleswaran, of Netherlands, laughing. She said she used to love eating meat, but giving it up for climate reasons was more important to her. "We just have it in our nature to care about others."

Now, scientists can say more confidently than ever that gender and meat-eating preferences are linked. A paper out in Nature Scientific Reports this week shows that the difference is nearly universal across cultures - and that it's even more pronounced in countries that are more developed.

Researchers already knew men in some countries ate more meat than women did. And they knew that people in wealthier countries ate more meat overall. But the latest findings suggest that when men and women have the social and financial freedom to make choices about their diets, they diverge from each other even more, with men eating more meat and women eating less.

That's important because about 20% of planet-warming global greenhouse gas emissions come from animal-based food products, according to earlier research from the University of Illinois. The researchers behind the



C Anything that one could do to reduce meat consumption in men would have a greater impact, on average, than among women

new report think their findings could fine-tune efforts to persuade people to eat less meat and dairy.

'Anything that one could do to reduce meat consumption in men would have a greater impact, on average, than among women," said Christopher Hopwood, a professor of psychology at the University of Zurich and one of the authors of the paper. The work drew on surveys funded by Mercy for Animals, a non-profit dedicated to ending animal agriculture. Hopwood said he is not affiliated with the organization and is not an advocate.

The researchers asked over 28,000 people in 23 countries on four continents how much of various types of food they ate every

day, then calculated the average land animal consumption by gender identity in each country. They used the United Nations Human Development Index, which measures health, education and standard of living, to rank how "developed" each country was, and also looked at the Global Gender Gap Index, a scale of gender equality published by the World Economic Forum.

They found that, with three exceptions - China, India and Indonesia – gender differences in meat consumption were higher in countries with higher development and gender equality scores.

The large number and cultural diversity of people surveyed is "a real strength of this," said Daniel Rosenfeld, a social psychologist at UCLA who studies eating behaviour and moral psychology and was not involved in the study.

The study did not answer the question of why men tend to eat more meat, but scientists have some theories. One is that evolutionarily, women may have been hormonally hardwired to avoid meat that could possibly have been contaminated, affecting pregnancy, whereas men may have sought out meat proteins given their history as hunters in some societies.

But even the idea of men as hunters is intertwined with culture, Rosenfeld said. That's a good example of another theory, which

is that societal norms shape gender identity from an early age and thus how people decide to fill their plates.

Rosenfeld, who said he stopped eating meat about 10 years ago, said his own experience hanging out in college "as a guy hanging out with other guy friends' illustrated the cultural pressure for men to eat meat. "If they're all eating meats and I decide not to,' he said, "it can disrupt the natural flow of social situations."

The same cultural factors that shape gender influence how people respond to new information, said Carolyn Semmler, a professor of psychology at the University of Adelaide in Australia who also studies meat eating and social factors like gender. Semmler was not involved in this study. In some of her past work, she's studied cognitive dissonance around eating meat.

In those cases, she said women presented with information about poor animal welfare in the livestock industry were more likely to say they would reduce their meat consumption. But men tended to go the other direction, she said.

"One participant said to me, 'I think you guys are trying to get me to eat less meat, so I'm going to eat more," she said.

Semmler said meat can be important to masculine identity, noting for example the popular notion of men at the grill. And she said presenting eating less meat as a moral cause can be a sensitive issue. Still, she said, people should be aware of how their food choices affect the planet. But she and Hopwood acknowledged how difficult it is to change behaviour.

"Men are a tough nut to crack," Hopwood said.

Jose Lopez, another diner at the Dog House Grill, said he thought men should eat less meat but said that in general he has observed otherwise



جنت الفردوس نصیب کرے ۔ مرحوم نیک سیرت، ملنساراورخوش اخلاق انسان تتھے۔مرحوم کی اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی مورخہ 16 جون 4 <u>20 2</u>ء مطابق ۹ ذی الحجه ۱۳۴۵ ه بروز اتوارکواُن کے آبائی مقبرہ داقع بابا مزار اقع علمگری بازار میں صبح 6 بجے انجام دی جائے گی۔فاتحہ خوانی کے فوراً بعدایک تعزیتی مجلس کا انعقاد مرحوم کے آبائی گھریمیں ہوگا جو کہ دن تجر ہاں پر جاری رہے گی۔

> موگواراں ح<u>ا</u>لاک خاندان

سنگیت نائک اکیڈی نیود ہلی کی طرف سے اُدم بُرن پیٹن میں کلچرل بروگرام گلمرگ لوک تھٹر پاہالن میٹن نے پیش کیا

آج مورخه 11 جون 2024 أوم يُرن ينن مُدل سكول ميں ايك مادرن فوك بلي صياا كيا جس كانام یا گل تھا جس سے بہت لوگوں نے دیکھااور پند بھی کیا خاص کراسکول بچوں نے اس سے بہت پند کیا۔ یہ پروگرام سناونلہ بٹ کی سربراہی میں منعقد کیا گیااس کی مالی معاونت سنگیت نائک اکیڑمی نیود بلی نے کی تھی۔

> چرمین سناوللد بٹ ساكنديلهالن پيڻن

Earth's Inner Core 'Unambiguously' Slowing Down, Could Change Day's Length, Study Finds

Press Trust Of India

new study has provided

layers-the other two being mantle and crust. Being physically inaccessible,

core, form one of the planet's three core is hotly debated in the scientific community, with some studies even suggesting that it rotates faster than the Earth's surface.

melting of ice in Greenland and Antarctica was affecting global timekeeping by slowing down Earth's rotation.



unambiguous evidence' that the Earth's inner core began to slow down its rotation in 2010, compared to the planet's surface.

Researchers said that the slowing down could change the length of one day on the Earth by fractions of a second.

Also Read:Hot, cold exposure in early life linked with changes in brain's white matter, study finds

The Earth's inner core, a solid sphere made of iron and nickel, is suspended within the liquid outer core (made of molten metals) and anchored in its place by gravity. Together, the inner and the outer

researchers usually study the core by analysing the recordings of waves sent out by earthquakes --seismograms.

"When I first saw the seismograms that hinted at this change, I was stumped," said John Vidale, a professor of Earth Sciences at the University of Southern California, US.

"But when we found two dozen more observations signalling the same pattern, the result was inescapable. The inner core had slowed down for the first time in many decades," said Vidale, also the corresponding author of the study published in the journal Nature.

The slowing down of the inner

It is known that the spin of the inner core is influenced by the magnetic field generated in the outer core and the gravitational effects within Earth's mantle.

However, it is considered that the inner core is reversing and backtracking relative to the surface, because of rotating slower than the mantle for the first time in about 40 years.

"Other scientists have recently argued for similar and different models, but our latest study provides the most convincing resolution," Vidale said. A study published earlier this

year, in the journal Nature, had found that climate change-driven

The author, Duncan Agnew, a geophysicist at the University of California San Diego, showed that the Earth's liquid core was slowing down in its rotation. To counter the effects of this, the solid Earth was rotating faster, said Agnew.

However, this has resulted in fewer 'leap seconds' being needed to be added to the Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) in recent decades, according to Agnew.

Since 1972, once every few years, a 'leap second' has been required to be added, owing to irregularities in the UTC arising out of the fact that the Earth doesn't always rotate at the same speed.

HOSPITALS NEW DELHI SUPER SPECIALITY OPD AT:

Kashmir Clinics Central KARAN NAGAR SRINAGAR



CONSULTANT	SPECIALITY	DATE & TIME 21 JUNE. FRIDAY 11:00 AM TO 03:00 PM 22 JUNE. SATURDAY 11:00 AM TO 03:00 PM 22 JUNE. SATURDAY 11:00 AM TO 03:00 PM		
Dr. Masood Habib	Senior. Consultant Orthopedics			
Dr. Sameer Kaul	Senior.Consultant Clinical Oncology			
Dr. Sanjay Sikka	Senior.Consultant Gastroenterology & Hepatology			
Dr. Gautam Naik	Senior.Consultant Interventional Cardiology Fellowship (UK) Structural Heart	22 JUNE. SATURDAY 11:00 AM TO 03:00 PM		
Dr. Sudheer Tyagi	Sr.Consultant- Neuro Surgery	22 JUNE. SATURDAY 11:00 AM TO 03:00 PM 22 JUNE. SATURDAY 11:00 AM TO 03:00 PM 22 JUNE. SATURDAY 11:00 AM TO 03:00 PM		
Dr. Sandeep Guleria	Sr.Consultant Kidney Transplant Surgeon			
Dr. Neerav Goyal	Senior.Consultant Liver Transplant Surgeon			
Dr. Pakhee Aggarwal	Senior.Consultant Gynaecologist & Obstetrician	22 JUNE. SATURDAY 11:00 AM TO 03:00 PM		
Dr. Sameer Kaul	Sr. Consultant, Clinical, Surgical & Robotic Oncology Indraprastha Apollo Hospital New Delhi	23 JUNE, SUNDAY 11:00 AM TO 03:00 PM		
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KASHMIR OBSERVER | Srinagar | Saturday | 15-06-2024 U

Crochet Artist Breaks Gender Barriers With Art

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A young artist from Srinagar is breaking gender barriers and normalizing the art of knitting and crocheting in society.

Nazar Nasir, 25, a resi-dent of the Lal Bazar area of Srinagar who has completed his Masters in English, has turned his hobby into a very successful business venture.

Nazar said that during the 2016 agitation, his sister visited their aunt, who was a crocheter. During the shutdown, she learned some basics of the chain stitch.

"Later, I used to post pictures of my creations on social media platforms, and I started getting orders for different items that I was making during my leisure time while studying," Nasir added.

He said that he eventually started receiving orders from all over India and even from foreign countries. His work grew and eventually turned into a small business.

Nazar said that after completing his master's, he decided to devote his whole time to crochet work, as it gave him mental peace and freed him from worries.

He said that he has been doing this work on a full-time



Eid-ul-Azha at Eidgah. the city's largest livestock market. KO photo. Abid Bha

Govt School In Srinagar Achieve 100% Result In Board Exams

five specially-abled stu-

dents of Abhinandan Home

Rambagh Srinagar have

achieved outstanding re-

sults in this year's matricu-

lation examinations, prov-

ing that no obstacle is too

great to overcome with hard

dents, hailing from various

areas have not only met

but exceeded expectations,

scoring exceptionally high

marks. Their achievements

have become a beacon of

hope and motivation for

many others facing similar

pal of the Abhinandan Home

Rambagh while talking to

the news agency-KNO,

said that five students from

the School appeared in Class

10th examinations this year

and all have passed with dis-

to the students, who worked

hard despite being deaf and

He said that credit goes

Mudasir Ahmad, Princi-

challenges.

tinctions.

These remarkable stu-

work and dedication.

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Government Girls High School Reitang in Srinagar has achieved 100 percent pass rate in the Class 10 Board exams, bringing immense pride to the local community and the Gujjar community, whose children are also enrolled in the school.

This remarkable success is attributed to the dedication and innovative teaching methods of the school's hardworking teachers.

Parents and local residents have praised the teachers for their tireless efforts.

"The credit for this remarkable achievement goes entirely to the teachers and the headmaster. They have worked tirelessly to ensure that every student receives quality education," said a mother of one local student.

Teachers at the school employed creative teaching strategies, personalized study plans, and provided extra support for struggling students. These efforts ensured that all ten students, both local and from the Gujjar community, who took the exams passed, demonstrating the success of their personalized approach.

The community's gratitude is evident, with students and residents expressing their appreciation for the teachers' hard work. "Our teachers didn't just teach; they inspired us, guided us and believed in us. This result is a testament to their dedication," said one of the successful students. This success has set an example and inspired other government schools in the region. Government Girls High School Reitang is not alone in its achievement; other government schools have also reported improved results this year, indicating a positive trend in the region's education sector. Shuhufta Parveen, the headmaster of Reitang School, expressed pride and gratitude towards her team. "Our teachers have shown what dedication and innovative teaching can achieve. This 100 percent pass rate is a milestone for our school and motivates us to continue striving for excellence,' she said.

5 Specially-Abled Students **Achieve Special Feat**

rinagar: In an inbarriers," he said to his sisspiring display of ter who understands the sign perseverance and language of Aabid. determination, Muskan, who secured

around 75 marks, expressed her gratitude towards her teachers, who employed innovative teaching methods to ensure she could grasp every concept.

These students are determined to continue their academic journey and make significant contributions to society.

They, however, said that there is a need for one specially-abled school at least at Tehsil level so that such students won't suffer and can get education in their own areas.

They said that students from all across Kashmir have only one option that is Abhinandan Home Rambagh and Zaiba Apa Bijbehara but many such students aren't getting educated as they aren't in a position to stav in Srinagar as such students need one normal person to look after them.

They said that after 12th such students have no option





This Day In History

763 BC- Assyrians record a solar eclipse that will be used to fix the chronology of Mesopotamian history

- 778- Willibald, Abbot of Heidenheim, dictates his pilgrimage to the Holy Land fifty years before, to nun Hugburc, who records this and biographies of Willibald and his brother - the first known English woman writer
- 923- Battle of Soissons: King Robert I of France is killed and King Charles the Simple is arrested by the supporters of Duke Rudolph of Burgundy
- 1184- Magnus V Erlingsson, King of Norway (1156-1184), dies in the Battle of Fimreite
- 1246 With the death of Duke Frederick II, the Babenberg dynasty ends in Austria
- 1389 Battle of Kosovo; Turks defeat Serbs
- 1567 Battle at Carberry, Scotland: Protestant troops beat Earl Bothwell's army - 1st fully documented human blood
- 1667 transfusion is performed by French physician, Dr. Jean-Baptiste Denys, when a small amount of sheep blood is transfused into a 15-year old boy, who survives the procedure
- 1808 Joseph Bonaparte becomes King of Spain
- 1826 Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II abolishes the elite Janissary corps executing thousands for treason to make way for a more modern army
- 1864 Battle of Petersburg begins as General Ulysses S. Grant assaults the Confederate line at the important Southern rail center of Petersburg
- 1869 World's 1st plastic Celluloid is patented



'When my sister came back home, she had a ball of yarn and a hook. Out of boredom and curiosity, I asked her to teach me something because there was nothing better to do. I remember the moment I held the hook in my hand; it felt so natural. Slowly and steadily, I learned it," he said.

'When the internet came back, I first searched for its name as I wasn't aware of it and found it is called 'crochet, and in Kashmiri, it is called 'Qureshi.' I downloaded a few videos to learn the basics and other techniques of crochet. After spending days and nights practicing, I managed to make a cap for myself," he said.

Nazar Nasir said the cap was widely adored, and his friends started requesting him to make one for them. "Later. their friends saw it and also started to ask for the same cap. It began to propagate," he said.

basis, and even some women have learned this art and are now self-dependent.

heritage, but we have neglected it. I believe that if we promote our craft well, no one in Kashmir will be unemployed, as handmade work has significant scope," he said.

"I think if you expose your kids to art and crafts at a younger age, they'll have a better prospect of channeling their negativity into something positive," he said, adding, "Youth must understand that not getting a government job isn't the end of the world. Exposure to crafts can make them job providers, not seekers.

Nazar said that during the initial stage, he was taunted; with some saying he was doing women's work. "But one must do what they are best at without worrying about what people will say. I am doing this work to break barriers," he said.

Bukhari Urges For Adequate Arrangements On Eid-ul-Azha

"Kashmir has a rich craft

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Apni Party President, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, on Friday, called upon the administration to ensure all necessary arrangements are in place for the upcoming auspicious occasion of Eid al-Azha.

"The administration must ensure all necessary arrangements, including adequate availability of essential commodities in the markets, and uninterrupted water and power supply to consumers, for the occasion of Eid al-Azha," said the Apni Party leader.

He also called for intensified market inspections across Jammu and Kashmir to effectively monitor and curb black market activities.

Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of proper sanitation and the availability of public transport to ensure



smooth and hassle-free movement of people to major congregational Eid prayers. He also said that the traffic police authorities should ensure the efficient operation of both public and private transport in the city and other significant towns throughout the valley.

Sved Mohammad Altaf Bukhari urged that the administration, especially officials from concerned departments, should be accessible to the public if they have any complaints to address. (CNS)

According to official figures, all ten students who appeared in the exams achieved success.

Aliya Shah, the form teacher of Class 10, expressed her happiness about the results. "We are delighted that our students have reached this milestone. The credit goes to the endumb, and teachers who guided them very well and parents for their support.

He identified the students as Aabid Hussian Sheikh, who secured 402 marks, Tawheeda with 378 marks, Muskan 373 marks. Burhan Favaz 386 marks and Muhammad Umaiq 387 marks.

Among the top performers is Aabid Hussian, who is deaf and dumb. Aabid scored an impressive 80 per cent marks in his exams, attributing his success to his supportive family and dedicated teachers.

"I want to thank everyone who believed in me. This is just the beginning, and I hope to continue breaking

tire teaching staff and all other school staff. We pray that our school continues to shine like this, and we are committed to putting all our energy and efforts into achieving the best results in the future.

This achievement underscores the crucial role that

other than to join a common college where they are unable to grasp things properly.

They said that this is just a beginning as they want to break more barriers but they need government support for schools at tehsil level and separate colleges.

Parents and teachers are hopeful that these achievements will inspire and encourage specially-abled students to pursue their dreams without hesitation.

They said that their exceptional performance highlights the critical role of inclusive education in unlocking the potential of every student.

teachers play in shaping the future of their students and the community. The success story of Government Girls High School Reitang stands as proof of the positive outcomes that can be achieved through dedication, hard work, and innovative teaching.

John Wesley Hyatt, Albany, NY

- 1876 Tsunamis after earthquake floods NE coast of Japan, kills 28,000
- 1878 World's first moving pictures caught on camera (used 12 cameras, each taking 1 picture) done to see if all 4 of a horse's hooves leave the ground
- 1888 Wilhelm II becomes Emperor of Germany
- 1896 Tsunami strikes Shinto festival on beach at Sanriku, Japan; 27,000 are killed, 9,000 injured and 13,000 houses destroyed
- 1911 Tabulating Computing Recording Corporation (IBM) is incorporated.
- 1913 The Battle of Bud Bagsak in the Philippine concludes
- 1916 Boeing Model 1 [B & W Seaplane], the 1st Boeing product, flies for the 1st time
- 1917 In order to calm troubled relations with Ireland, the British grant amnesty to the Prisoners taken during the Easter Rising of 1916
- 1924 Ford Motor Company manufactures its 10 millionth automobile
- 1940 World War II: France surrenders to NAZI Germany, German troops occupy Paris
- 1940 Soviet Army occupies Lithuania
- 1943 Congress of racial Equality (CORE) forms
- 1954 Great Britain's 2 biggest steel factories nationalized
- 1960 Argentina complains to UN about Israeli illicit transfer of Eichmann
- 1965 South Africa begins economic boycott of **Dutch products**
- 1977 Spain's 1st free elections since 1936 (41 years)
- 1978 Soyuz 29 carries 2 cosmonauts to Salyut 6; they stay 139 days
- 198 5 En route to Halley's Comet, USSR's Vega 2 drops lander on Venus
- 1988 NASA launches space vehicle S-213
- 1991 Birth of the first federal political party in Canada that supports Quebec nationalism, le Bloc Québécois
- 1996 IRA bomb in Manchester wrecks city centre at 11.17am, injuring 200
- 2001 Indian epic "Laagan" directed by Ashutosh Gowariker, starring Aamir Khan and Gracy Singh premieres
- 2002 Near earth asteroid 2002 MN missed the Earth by 75,000 miles (120,000 km), about onethird of the distance between the Earth and the Moon
- 2012 Apple I computer sells for a record \$374,500
- 2015 Real estate mogul Donald Trump launches his campaign for US President

Markets Miss Hustle-Bustle Ahead Of Eid-ul-Azha

Observer News Sevice

Srinagar: Just a few days left for Eid-ul-Adha, no hustle and bustle has been witnessed in the markets across Srinagar and elsewhere, pushing the shopkeepers to face huge losses.

Usually, the days leading to Eid are marked by a flurry of activity in markets across

Kashmir, with artisans and vendors displaying their finest goods to cater to the festive demand. However, this year, the situation is starkly different.

As per the details gathered by the news agency—KNO, the silence from the side of shoppers, attributed to various factors including economic uncertainties, logistical chal-

lenges, and "online shopping" that has left many shopkeepers grappling with dwindling stock and uncertain prospects for the festive season.

'It's like the soul has been sucked out of the market," laments Mohammad, a shopkeeper in Srinagar's renowned Lal Chowk. He added that normally, by this time, they would be struggling to keep up with the demand, but this time, it feels like just waiting for customers to walk through the door.

"Before Eid, we usually depend on sales to get through slower months, but this time has been really hard," says Faheem, a downtown Srinagar shopkeeper. "With no

customer rush, we have

to keep our stock within limits and wait for it to be sold out, before we can buy new," he added.

Pertinently, the subdued atmosphere in the markets has not gone unnoticed by shoppers, many of whom are expressing disappointment at the lack of variety and choices available to them this Eid.

With no customer rush, we have to keep our stock within limits and wait for it to be sold out, before we can buy new



Send your write ups and feedback at editpage.ko@gmail.com



NEET RESULTS 2024 Integrity and Fairness Goes For a Toss

Ummar Jamal

he recent announcement of NEET results has caused an uproar across India. With nearly 23 lakh students appearing for the highly competitive entrance exam this year, the stakes were incredibly high. The pressure on students is immense, given the limited number of prestigious medical colleges in the country. The expectation is that such a significant exam should be conducted with utmost integrity. However, recurring discrepancies and issues of paper leaks and exam misconduct have shattered this expectation, leaving students and their families in despair.

Alarming Increase in Paper Leaks and Misconduct

In a disturbing trend, paper leaks and exam-related scams have become increasingly common over the past few years. Just days after the NEET exam 2024, Bihar police arrested 13 individuals involved in a paper leak scandal. On May 10th, a racket assisting NEET aspirants was uncovered in Godhra, Gujarat. Reports indicate that the accused had received large sums of money from students in exchange for completing their answer sheets. This particular scam was run by Parashuram Roy of Roy Overseas Company, along with another individual, Tushar Bhatt.

According to an investigation by the Indian Express, there have been 41 paper leaks in India over the past five years, affecting around 14 million job seekers. Such frequent breaches undermine the credibility of exams and the fairness of the selection process.

The Impact on Students

For students who dedicate a year or more to prepare for these exams, such misconduct is deeply disheartening. Their hard work and hopes are dashed when their efforts are rendered futile by these scams. The introduction of NEET in 2013 was meant to streamline and bring transparency to medical entrance exams. Initially overseen by the CBSE, the authority to conduct NEET was transferred to the National Testing Agency (NTA) in 2019, with the aim of enhancing transparency. Unfortunately, the opposite seems to have occurred.



NTA claimed that these grace marks were awarded based on a 2018 Supreme Court judgment, which allowed for normalization in case of time loss. However, this judgment specifically excluded engineering and medical exams from its purview. How then did NTA justify its application to NEET?

When students find out that their efforts are being undermined by cheating and scams, it only leads to heightened stress and anxiety. The uncertainty about the fairness of the exam results prove deeply unsettling. Discovering that the exam they worked so hard for was compromised leads to significant disappointment and disillusionment. This can be particularly devastating for students who have invested years of preparation.

Questionable Practices and Results

The recent NEET results have raised several red flags. On February 9, 2024, NTA opened registration for the exam, with a deadline of March 9. This deadline was extended by a week, and a month later, the registration link was reopened from April 9 to April 10 "on the request of stakeholders." This raises the question: who were these stakeholders requesting an extension?

After the exam, reports of scams emerged from Gujarat, Bihar, and Odisha. The situation took a bizarre turn on

June 4, when the results were declared, showing 67 students achieving AIR 1. This is unprecedented; in the previous year, only two students scored 720 out of 720, and in 2022, the highest score was 715, with no perfect scores. In 2021, only three students achieved a perfect score. The sudden spike to 67 perfect scores this year is perplexing, especially when experts had predicted lower scores due to the tough paper.

NTA's explanation for this anomaly was vague. They stated that 50 out of the 67 toppers were given grace marks due

to discrepancies in the answer keys and time-related issues. However, this justification raises more questions than it answers. NTA claimed that these grace marks were awarded based on a 2018 Supreme Court judgment, which allowed for normalization in case of time loss. However, this judgment specifically excluded engineering and medical exams from its purview. How then did NTA justify its application to NEET?

A Call for Transparency and Fairness:

The commotion surrounding the NEET results highlights the urgent need for a thorough investigation and systemic reform. The integrity of such critical exams must be preserved to maintain public trust and ensure that deserving students are not unfairly disadvantaged. Without stringent measures to prevent misconduct, the credibility of the entire system is at risk.

Restoring and ensuring the credibility of exams like NEET is not just a matter of academic fairness; it is a national imperative. The government must take a proactive stance in addressing the issue of paper leaks and exam misconduct. By implementing advanced security measures, establishing transparent processes, taking swift action against malpractices, and promoting a culture of integrity, the government can safeguard the future of millions of students and uphold the sanctity of India's education system. The time to act is now, and the responsibility lies with all stakeholders to ensure that the hard work and dreams of students are protected and valued.

Since the NEET results 2024 have been tainted by numerous reports of paper leaks and exam fraud, undermining the hard work and dedication of millions of students who prepare earnestly for this crucial exam. For now, Conducting a new NEET exam is the only viable solution to restore fairness and integrity to the selection process. This moment must serve as a clarion call for comprehensive reforms, ensuring that such scams become a thing of the past.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer The author is a Kashmir based columnist. He tweets at ummar-jamal and can be reached at umarjamal968@gmail.com

An Arbitrary Decision Govt's new policy on arbitration is short-sighted, needs swift reversal.

Sumeet Kachwaha

n June 3, the finance ministry announced a stunning policy decision. After trying to promote India as a hub for arbitration for decades, the government of India now suddenly feels that arbitration does not work for them and that the arbitration clause should be dropped from the contracts of all future government/government-controlled entities (except in relation to minor disputes of a value of `10 crore or less).

The new policy is set out in the form of an office memorandum and provides instead that the government departments/entities/agencies should, ... amicably settle as many disputes as possible... in overall long-term public interest, keeping legal and practical realities in view, without shirking or avoiding responsibility or denying genuine claims of the other party"

To facilitate amicable settlement, the government agencies will constitute "high-level" committees comprising former judges/retired senior officials to vet or approve such settlements. If settlement efforts do not work out, the dispute would be left to the courts for adjudication.

The core reason given in the office memorandum for this dramatic shift in policy is the government's perception that arbitrators often lack integrity and collude with private parties, and the resultant award becomes difficult to dislodge (given the limited grounds available in law to challenge an arbitral

award on merit). The government's change of stance

in abandoning arbitration and pitching all its hope in its ability to settle disputes "without shirking or avoiding responsibility or denying genuine claims" is fundamentally flawed and rests on misplaced wishful thinking. It will also prove to be a costly mistake and a major impediment in bridging the infrastructural gap, rendering projects bankable, and achieving the \$5-trillion economy aspiration.

One may start with the government's perceived lack of trust on arbitrators. First, arbitrators are meant to be independent and impartial and decide disputes on merit. They are not there to toe the government line or do its bidding. If the government is looking for "yes men", it is looking for biased arbitrators and destroying the sanctity of the arbitral process.

The government should be insightful enough to recognise that adverse orders do not necessarily mean that the tribunal has been compromised. More often than not, the correct conclusion to draw is that the government, its agencies, and officials have fallen short in meeting their legal obligations and must, therefore, face the legal consequences (as in any law-abiding jurisdiction). The government's alleged inability to find men and women of integrity and trust them to do the right thing cannot be a reason to abandon a widely accepted dispute resolution method and replace it with a dysfunctional one.

Moreover, if the government does not trust arbitrators as such (though



To facilitate amicable settlement, the government agencies will constitute "high-level" committees comprising former judges/retired senior officials to vet or approve such settlements. If settlement efforts do not work out, the dispute would be left to the courts for adjudication.

it usually nominates former Supreme Court or high court judges as arbitrators), why would it repose greater trust in its officials in negotiating a settlement? It matters little that the settlement is approved by a "high-level" committee (comprising inter alia of former judges) as it is and will remain a voluntary, administrative decision. A mediator (if involved) cannot advocate any particular position.

He or she can only facilitate (and not recommend) any settlement. In terms of transparency and accountability, a settlement can never rest on an

equal footing with an award which is issued following a judicial process and by a process known to law (failing which it is liable to be challenged, including on the grounds of bias, fraud or corruption).

Further, the government is surely overestimating its ability to settle disputes anything close to the scale and extent required. The government is rule-driven and its officials are answerable to multiple (internal and external) authorities.

It is also answerable to courts for any arbitrary or discriminatory decision. The decision-makers are not immune to any later questioning by criminal investigating agencies. It is naïve to imagine that the decision-makers (no matter how senior in the hierarchy) will fearlessly sign off and agree to liability which can run into several hundred crores of rupees. This will be a road to nowhere.

The government's current attitude can be seen from its 2023 Vivad se Vishwas II scheme for contractual disputes, which stipulates that even when an arbitral award is rendered, the government may, instead of honouring the award, agree to a 35% discount on the sum awarded by way of a settlement. It is anybody's guess what its attitude would be when it is on a clean slate and there is no pronouncement of liability by an independent tribunal authorised by law to settle the dispute.

Finally, if there is no settlement, the aggrieved party is left to the mercy of the courts. There can be no two opinions that the courts are not equipped to handle heavy commercial disputes in any sensible wav.

The courts are so overworked that they are barely able to deal with the award challenge proceedings (where the scope of judicial review is minimal). The 2015 amendment to the Arbitration Act prescribes that award challenges shall be disposed of expeditiously "and in any event" within one year.

The reality is that these challenges linger on for five years or so in the court of the first instance alone. What would be the fate of an original suit with substantial stakes, voluminous documents, intricate facts, and expert witness testimony (and where witnesses need to be directly questioned by the judge)?

Arbitrations may not be perfect, but they are clearly more workable than court litigation. To ask the private party to take its dispute to court is to turn a blind eye to reality and throw the litigant under the bus. Effective dispute resolution methods are a necessary adjunct to economic growth including rendering projects bankable and attracting investment.

It is clear that the government has not thought this through, including how it can better address its concerns and what it can do to improve arbitrations. The policy change is short-sighted and needs a swift reversal.

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

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of Kashmir Observer LLP | Printed at: K.T Press Pvt. Ltd 120-Electronic Complex, Industrial Estate, Rangreth-Budgam Published from: 5-Boulevard Srinagar J&K | Editor: Sajjad Haider | RNI Registration No: 69503/98 | Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16 | Legal Counsel: Tasadug Khwaja Switchboard: (0194) 2502327 | +91 1947969705 | Editorial: (0194) 2502327 | Email: editor@kashmirobserver.net



Wall of Perceptions in Our Life

PERCEPTIONS **CAN INFLUENCE OUR BASIC CHOICES** IN LIFE. For example, our choices in clothing are often sometimes influenced by societal perceptions. Certain colours, styles, or brands are associated with specific stereotypes or social statuses



Faria Bhat

Perception, defined as what someone or something, profoundly shapes our world. Often acquired through external influences, these perceptions mould our mindsets and frame our opinions. While perceptions can guide us, they also restrict us, creating barriers that limit our experiences and understanding. This "Wall of Perceptions" is evident in various aspects of life, including our views on people, communities, food, clothing, careers, and interests.

Human beings are inherently susceptible to forming prejudices. These biases, often based on limited or skewed information, influence how we interact with others. For instance, when meeting new people, we might unconsciously judge them based on preconceived notions about their background. This form of prejudice prevents genuine connections and understanding. We miss out on rich, diverse relationships by clinging to stereotypes and failing to see individuals for who they truly are.

In many cases, communities also suffer from the Wall of Perceptions. We tend to categorise people based on their community, leading to generalisations that can foster division rather than unity. Such perceptions hinder social cohesion and perpetuate discrimination, making it difficult to appreciate the unique contributions of different groups.

Career choices are another domain where perceptions hold considerable sway. Young people are often influenced by societal expectations, parental pressure, or myths about certain professions when choosing a career path. These youngsters have preconceived notions which often deter them from pursuing fields they are genuinely passionate about, leading to unfulfilled potential and dissatisfaction.

For example, many might avoid pursuing careers in the arts or humanities because they perceive these fields lack financial stability or societal value compared to careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

This can lead to a homogenised workforce and lack representation in various fields.

Another aspect that often gets overlooked is how we perceive mental health. The stigma surrounding mental health in society often makes it difficult for people to seek the support they truly need. Myths surrounding mental health can create harmful negative perceptions; people may be taught to fear people who have mental health disorders or to think that these people are in some way failing. These perceptions can lead to the isolation of individuals with such disorders, worsening their conditions.

If we can change or at least challenge these perceptions, then we can be hopeful of creating an environment that is largely supportive and has less stigma. This will mean people can have an open presence and kind reactions to people who have a mental health disorder, creating a healthier society.

Perceptions can influence our basic choices in life. For example, our choices in clothing are often sometimes influenced by societal perceptions. Certain colours, styles, or brands are associated with specific stereotypes or social statuses. This can limit our self-expression and adherence to personal preferences. For example, we might avoid wearing a particular colour because it is deemed unfashionable or inappropriate by societal standards.

Perception also greatly influences how we experience food, a significant part of our culture and everyday lives. Many people decide not to taste new foods based on their initial thoughts on the taste and their presumptions about ingredients. Part of what ties us to our food choices is a fear of the unknown and our comfort with familiarity. Hence, sticking to our "safe" food choices limits our ability to explore the world through our culinary experiences.

Lastly, our interests and hobbies are not immune to the Wall of Perceptions. We might avoid certain activities because they do not align with societal norms or because we fear judgment. For instance, a man interested in knitting might hesitate to pursue it due to the stereotype that it is feminine. Challenging these perceptions allows us to explore various activities that bring us joy and fulfilment.

In conclusion, perceptions create barriers to what is feasible in the world. By being aware of our preconceived notions, we can chip away at the Wall of Perceptions and help make the world more inclusive and diverse. Going on this journey of openness and acceptance will improve our personal experience and increase the chance of a more accepting, understanding world.

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How Publishing A Book And Becoming An Author Has Become The Latest Fad

Asha Iyer Kumar

t least three people I know are now in the midst of writing their debut novel, and many others, armed with unique life experiences, have serious intentions of documenting them in memoirs. Writing and publishing a book has never been this easy. Anyone who has a tale to tell or skill to share and a language to say it in is jumping on the bandwagon of authors, aided by tools that make publishing books a heady side hustle. And this, even when writing is not anymore a lucrative business.

Books are rolling out in reams regardless of the fact that readership is rapidly shrinking. Writing is not any longer a serious undertaking that took years and profound thinking to materialise. Given this, I wonder what significance modern writing (I hesitate to categorise today's frivolous bookly endeavours as literature) will have for mankind and its future. Is the era of writing for change, to positively influence societies, to impart courage, to reflect the good and denounce the bad and to comfort a deeply wounded global civilisation over? Is literature now turning into mere candy floss with little gains for the reader except satisfying the senses?

We live in a highly sensitive

world that takes umbrage at the slightest hint of criticism. Rancour is the foremost sentiment that governs human behaviour, and while compassion and empublishers are now betting on the returns a manuscript would bring than the comfort and message it would give. Literature, like all other forms of art, has fallen clusive lives and did not even have their works published during their lifetimes. Their journals were only discovered after their death and publicised.



pathy are still values that are spoken about highly, there is a dearth of these good old qualities in real time. And this dearth probably has begun to show in the kind of writing that is being churned out, making me suspect that we are more easily influenced and shaped by incendiary (and often indecent) works than by narratives of hope. Traditional into a deep malaise characterised by greed and selfishness.

What prompted many distinguished literary figures of the past to put their thoughts on paper was not fame or the reward it was likely to bring, but an urgent, private need to decode themselves and explore their existential strife. Many including Emily Dickinson, Franz Kafka and John Keats led reRabindranath Tagore's Gitanjali is known to have brought comfort to a world torn by war and oppression in the early 20th century. It offered spiritual solace to readers and drew them away from external chaos, inspiring peace and contemplation. Anne Frank's simple yet deeply stirring accounts of war in The Diary of a Young Girl (1946) brought huge respite to populations exposed to the horrors of World War II. Victor Frankl's memoir Man's Search for Meaning chronicling his experiences as a prisoner in Nazi concentration camps couldn't have come at a better time. It underlined the efficacy of literature in bringing hope and purpose to life even in dire circumstances.

People who have gone through turmoil write about it not just to expose the pain they endured, but also to shine a torch on the resilient nature of human beings in the face of hardships. They wrote because they wanted to tell the world that they had survived the worst, and so will we all if we had the will and mindset.

By this, I don't mean that literature has to always have a meditative and philosophical slant, but when writing descends to levels of serving only the senses and not the spirit, it becomes debauched and demeaning. When people write cookie-cut books with the sole intention of adding the suffix of "author" to their names to fuel their professional lives or to boost their egos, literature falls from grace.

It is to such insufferable kitsch that we are largely treated to in the new age of shallow writing ably aided by writing tools and thought purveyors. Somewhere in the midst of telling stories that exaggerate human misery, over-simplify man's failings and crank out sleazy fare that will titillate, writers seem to have given the main purpose of literature – to inspire – a massive pass. Books are getting written for the sole purpose of claiming individual glory and not for a combined cause.

There can be fluffy stuff and chick lit that provide temporary escape to readers from the harsh realities of life and to occupy our breezy layovers; but as along as the written word does not bring perspective to our everyday struggles and give us an opportunity for emotional catharsis and empathetic considerations, no writer has done justice to this glorious craft. The power of the written word lies in its ability to find a universal reason for our existence, by navigating through our experiences and recording them for posterity.

Doubtlessly, the demand for juicy pieces of writing and reporting human conditions will only grow, making us all wanton voyeurs. Writing will plumb the depths of mediocrity further unless as readers we seek uplifting themes, and as writers, we delve into our souls before punching each word down.

The article was originally published by Khaleej Times

CONT. FROM PAGE 1

KASHMIR OBSERVER® SRINAGAR | SATURDAY | 15.06.2024

PM Holds Bilateral

for the forthcoming Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Giving details of the PM's meeting with Macron, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal posted on X: "Taking Strategic Partnership to new levels! PM @ narendramodi met President @ EmmanuelMacron of France on the sidelines of the 50th G7 Summit in Apulia, Italy."

"The two leaders discussed ways to further strengthen the partnership including in areas of defence, nuclear, space, education, climate action, digital public infrastructure, critical technologies, connectivity and culture. They also exchanged views on key global and regional issues," he added.

PM Modi also met UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak during the summit, reaffirming his commitment to strengthen the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Discussions between Modi and Sunak explored avenues for deeper collaboration in semiconductors, technology, trade, and defence.

Additionally, Modi held a bilateral meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and said it was a productive one and that India is eager to further cement bilateral relations with Ukraine. On the war with Russia, the PM reiterated that India believes in a human-centric approach and that the way to peace is through dialogue and diplomacy.

Day one of the summit was dominated by the Russia-Ukraine conflict as the leaders agreed on a US proposal to back a \$ 50-billion loan to Kyiv utilising frozen Russian assets, described by US President Joe Biden as a "significant outcome" and a strong message to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

In his departure statement, PM Modi had said he was "glad" that his first foreign visit in his third term as Prime Minister was to Italy for the G7 Summit.

"I warmly recall my visit to Italy for the G20 Summit in 2021. Prime Minister Meloni's two visits to India last year were instrumental in infusing momentum and depth in our bilateral agenda. We remain committed to consolidate the India-Italy strategic partnership, and bolster cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and the Mediterranean regions," his statement said

In her opening address at the meeting of the G7 leaders, Meloni said southern Italy was chosen as the venue to send a strong message to the Global South. "It is no coincidence that we are hosting the summit in Apulia. We did this because Apulia is a region of southern Italy and the message we want to launch is that the G7, under the Italian presidency, wishes to strengthen its dialogue with the nations of the Global South." she said.

The Prime Minister also held a bilateral meeting with Pope Francis, and they shared a hug. The Prime Minister invited Pope Francis to visit India and said he admires his commitment to serving people and making the planet better.

Prime Minister Modi's participation at the G7 Summit includes engagements with leaders of G7 countries, Outreach Countries, and international organizations, underscoring India's proactive role in global affairs and commitment to en-

pilgrims from the UT's Jammu region had travelled to Kashmir, according to the LG, to attend the special Pooja at the temple in Tulmulla Ganderbal, which is tucked away beneath huge Chinar trees.

Pilgrims from other parts of the country including Delhi, Sinha said, also flocked to Tulmulla to seek blessings of the mother goddess. The LG said district administration Ganderbal had made elaborate arrangements for pilgrims on the occasion.

"On this auspicious occasion of Jyeshtha Ashtami festival, I would first want to extend my sincere greetings to the people of J&K, especially the Kashmiri Pandit community. I also want to express my sincere thanks to all of the society members for planning this mela successfully," the LG told the media.

Sinha reiterated the commitment of the UT Administration to augment the facilities for the devotees of Mata Kheer Bhawani.

He said the Yatri Bhawan, to be constructed at a cost of Rs 3.85 crore, will enhance the pilgrimage experience by offering comforting lodging and sanitation facilities. We are expecting to complete the Bhawan in next 8 months and it will accommodate 1000 pilgrims, he added.

The LG also appreciated the efforts of the District Administration, Relief Commissioner's Office, Police & Security Forces and all stakeholders for the smooth conduct of the Mela.

During his visit to the holy shrine at Tulmulla, Ganderbal, the LG also interacted with the members of Kashmiri Pandit Community and discussed various issues.

Ishfaq, DDC Chairperson Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Nuzhat Ganderbal; Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Secretary, Development & Panchayati Rural Raj Department; Shyambir, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal; senior officials of the Civil and Police Administration and pilgrims in large numbers were present on the occasion.

Faith More Powerful

of India, was held amidst heightened security arrangements.

Devotees from across India throng Kheer Bhawani temple at Tulmulla hamlet in the Ganderbal district of central Kashmir every year to commemorate Zyestha Ashtami, which falls on the eighth day of the Jyestha month in the Hindu calendar.

Arriving far in advance to participate in Puja at the hallowed shrine were devotees from Kashmiri Pandit community and those from other parts of the country as well amidst the chanting of religious hymns and the sound of temple bells.

The devotees, on the occasion, prayed for the peace and prosperity of the region and presented milk and custard as a symbol of respect to the deity at the holy spring.

Since the Muslims in the area make all the arrangements for their Hindu brethren, including putting up kiosks for contributions and flowers, the event has come to symbolize harmony in the community.

"The hue of the holy spring water that runs underneath the temple is thought to be a signnost to the circumstances in the Valley. The water's black or gloomy hue is thought to portend unfavorable times for Kashmir. But this year, the sacred spring is clean, a sign of peace," Shubham Pandita, a KP devotee, told Kashmir Observer. Pandits and Muslims, he said, never miss an opportunity to greet one another, since they hold similar views about the festival. "Besides paying respects to Mata Ragnya Devi, the event brings back fond memories of our time spent in the valley. Meeting new people from my own group as well as longtime Muslim acquaintances make me feel happy," Pandita added. "Everything is in the hands of God. There is some fear but people have come here in large numbers. Faith is more powerful than fear," Sunny, a Kashmiri Pandit from Delhi, said as he and several others from the community congregated at Rangya Devi in the central Kashmir district for the Mela. Besides free transportation for devotees on various routes, the administration had made adequate arrangements for uninterrupted electricity and drinking water supply, transportation, security, fire tenders, rations, beds, medical camps and medical facilities at the temple.

replica of the original shrine here after mass migration of the community from the valley in early 1990's.

"This is our biggest festival which we have been celebrating here for the past three decades ... We prayed for the safety of our country, especially Jammu which has come on the terror radar," Anu, who visited Kheer Bhawani Peeth, said.

Sunny said that the members of the Kashmiri Pandit community felt very good to pay obeisance at the revered shrine.

"It feels very good to have come here. It has been a memorable experience," he said.

D K Kaul, another Kashmiri Pandit who visited the temple here after 20 years, said there seems to be no fear among the pilgrims.

"There are miscreants everywhere and it is their job to create disturbances and wedge between the communities. We have no fear, we have the support of our Muslim brothers. The neighbouring country does not want Muslims and Hindus to live together in brotherhood. We want to live together. We have no complaints or grudges with our Muslim brothers, they provided us shelter in their homes and kept all the facilities," Kaul said.

As devotees jostled with each other to move closer to the main temple complex, walking barefoot and carrying rose petals. the chants of hymns echoed through the temple compound here.

The devotees offered tribute to the goddess as men took a dip in the stream close to the shrine. They paid obeisance to the deity while offering milk and 'kheer' (pudding) at the sacred spring within the complex.

It is believed that the colour of the sacred spring water flowing beneath the temple here reflects the conditions in the valley.

While most of the colours do not have any particular significance, black or darkish colour of the water is believed to be an indication of inauspicious times for Kashmir. However, the water in the spring was clean and milky white this vear.

Sunny said that he hopes to return to his homeland. "Lord Ram returned after 14 years, but our 'banwaas' is going on and we are trying to return to our home, live in our homeland," he said.

"We pray here every time for our return. It has been 35 years that we have left the valley, but have not been able to return. Shri Ram had a 'banwaas' of 14 years, but we have been in 'banwaas' for 35 years. He was a God, we are humans. This is a failure of the government," another pilgrim said here.

He said the community wants to live with their brothers.

"We pray to Mata Kheer Bhawani that make us live like we used to before in peace and brotherhood. We want to return to our homeland," he said.

We are thankful to our Muslim brothers for the arrangements and facilities, he added.

and Kashmir Lieutenant Jammu Governor Manoj Sinha also paid obeisance at the temple here.

Speaking to reporters later, the LG said that over 30,000 devotees paid obeisance at Mela Kheer Bhawani this year.

"More than 30,000 devotees visited he Kheer Bhawani temple. Jammu and

He highlighted the importance of creating an environment conducive to the return of Kashmiri Pandits.

"The need of the hour is to create such an atmosphere that the displaced Kashmiri Pandits can return to their homes and live peacefully with their Kashmiri Muslim brethren," he stated. 'The wounds inflicted by the past 30 years need to be healed and the time has come for the Kashmiri Pandits to return home. Scratching old wounds won't yield any results. Now is the time for healing and a new beginning."

Addressing the recent assumption of office by the Modi 3.0 government at centre, Mirwaiz urged a re-evaluation of its Kashmir policy. He called for dialogue and reconciliation with all stakeholders. "I want the new government to revisit its policies vis-a-vis Kashmir and hold dialogue and prioritize reconciliation with the stakeholders. We have always been in favour of dialogue and reconciliation," Mirwaiz said.

Referring to the incident of two people allegedly consuming liquor during a shikara ride in the Dal Lake here, the Hurriyat chairman said the "outrageous incident has shocked us all".

Police have registered a case into the incident and two people have been arrested.

"Thankfully some action has been taken against it by the authorities. But, the onus of preventing such incidents lies equally on us individually and as a society. Being a tourist place, all kinds of visitors will come here.

"It is for us to ensure that the ethos of Kashmir based on the values and principles of Islam stays intact. We have to be aware of it all the time and consciously work towards preserving it, especially those people who are directly or indirectly associated with tourism," the Mirwaiz said.

He expressed hope that they will continue to play an active role in "preserving our moral and religious character". Hurriyat Conference chairman demanded an investigation into the death

of a youth allegedly while in police custody earlier this month in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir.

The incident should be investigated and the accused punished, he said. Mirwaiz also said dismissal of govern-

ment employees from the service adds to "distress among people". "Such measures only add to the mis-

trust and only deepen the chasm," he added. **Hot, Dry Weather**

night and it was 2.7°C below normal for the gateway town of Kashmir, he said. Pahalgam recorded a low of 6.9°C against 8.1°C on the previous night and it was 1.3°C above normal for the famous resort in south Kashmir.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir. recorded a minimum of 11.2°C against 12.9°C and it was 0.9°C below normal, the official said.

Kupwara town recorded a low of 10.9°C against 11.8°C on the previous night and it was below normal by 1.7°C for the place, the official said.

Gulmarg recorded a minimum of 7.6°C against 6.0°C on the previous night and it was below normal by 1.3°C for the famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district

The Union Territory government

has launched the Jammu and Kashmir

Industrial Policy 2021-30 to attract new

investment, create employment oppor-

tunities for youth, develop backward

regions and expand existing industrial

when it was en route to the Mata

Vaishno Devi shrine in Katra from the Shiv

Khori temple. The bus, carrying pilgrims

from Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi,

plunged into a deep gorge following the

gunfire, killing nine people and injuring

On Tuesday, terrorists fired at a joint

checkpost of the Rashtriya Rifles and po-

lice at Chattergalla in Bhaderwah while a

search party in the Gandoh area of Doda

district was attacked on Wednesday, re-

sulting in injuries to seven security per-

The search operation launched in

Jammu and Kashmir to track down and

neutralise terrorists after the June 9 at-

tack on a bus carrying pilgrims contin-

Officials said security forces launched

a fresh search and cordon operation

in Kathua's Saida Sukhal village on

Thursday following information about

the presence of two more terrorists. This

came a day after two suspected Pakistani

terrorists and a CRPF jawan were killed

in the village after an over 15-hour

A large quantity of arms and ammu-

nition, including one M4 Rifle, an AK

assault rifle, a satellite phone and more

than Rs 2.10 lakh besides Pakistan-made

eatables, medicines and electronics

were recovered from the possession of

the slain terrorists, one of whom was

said to be a top commander of Jaish-e-

sketches of four terrorists involved in two

attacks in Doda district and announced

a reward of Rs 20 lakh for information

Police had on Wednesday released

Mohammad (JeM) outfit.

sonnel, including a police personnel.

Bhaderwah 12.6°C, he said.

has been made in J&K.

Amit Shah Calls

J&K Govt

units

41 others.

ues, officials said.

operation.

leading to their arrest. In Reasi district where terrorists had attacked a bus carrying pilgrims on Sunday, police said so far 50 suspected persons were detained as the search operation was intensified to remote pockets.

Police had also issued an advisory, urging residents of the Jammu region to stay vigilant regarding the movement of suspicious individuals and objects.

The advisory was issued following intelligence inputs suggesting the possibility of a terror threat in parts of Rajouri and Jammu districts.

Meanwhile, police in Jammu and Kashmir have started preparation for the two-month-long Amarnath yatra. Additional Director General of Police Vijay Kumar last week directed the secu-

rity forces to fortify the existing security infrastructure, improve surveillance tactics and bolster personnel deployment along the Amarnath pilgrimage route. He also directed officials to mitigate

potential risks by deploying anti-sabotage teams along the Yatra routes to identify and neutralise any potential terror threats.

Kumar also held a joint meeting with the officers of the police, Army, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and other agencies and discussed the overall security arrangements to be adopted for the safe, smooth and incident-free conduct of the pilgrimage.

Services of specialised forces like the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and Snow and Avalanche Study Establishment (SASE) may also be utilised in order to get vulnerable points along the pilgrimage route mapped so that these can be monitored on a regular basis to enhance the overall safety measures, officials said.

Security will be enhanced to mitigate potential risks by deploying anti-sabotage teams along the Amarnath Yatra route to identify and neutralise any potential terror threats, they said.

Delhi LG Gives

in Central University of Kashmir, Dr. Sheikh Showkat Hussain, under section 45 (1) of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the case," a Raj Niwas official said on Friday.

Last October, the LG had granted sanction to prosecute them under section 196 of CrPC for commission of offences punishable under different sections of the Indian Penal Code: 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony), 153B (imputations, assertions prejudicial to national-integration) and 505 (statements conducing to public mischief).

Roy and Hussain had allegedly made provocative speeches at a conference organised under the banner of 'Azadi - The Only Way' on October 21, 2010 at LTG Auditorium, Copernicus Marg, here.

"The issues discussed and spoken about at the conference propagated the separation of Kashmir from India," said the official.

Those who delivered speeches at the conference included Syed Ali Shah Geelani, SAR Geelani (anchor of the Conference and prime accused in the arliament attack case). Arundhati

The SSP said no one has been arrested

Explained: What compensated with grace marks.

so far.

NTA's Stand On Allegations

The National Testing Agency (NTA) has maintained that the sanctity of the exam has not been compromised. It has attributed the rise in the number of top scorers to increase in the competitiveness of the exam and increase in performance standards.

According to officials, grace marks have been awarded to 1,563 candidates to compensate for the loss of time in line with the Supreme Court approved formula. Out of the 67 candidates who got 720 out of 720 marks, 44 are on account of the revision in one Answer Key of Physics, and six are on account of compensatory marks for loss of time.

This adjustment aimed to address inconsistencies in NCERT textbooks. ensuring candidates were not disadvantaged by factual discrepancies.

Sixty-three cases of students using unfair means were reported in NEET-UG out of whom 23 have been debarred for varying periods.

Education Ministry's Stand

The Ministry has set up a four-member expert panel headed by former UPSC chairman to review the grace marks awarded to students. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has denied the allegations saying there is no evidence of paper leak and claims of corruption in NTA are unfounded. Political Slugfest

The Congress has been demanding a Supreme Court-monitored probe into the NEET Exam, asserting the anger in the country over the matter will "reverberate inside Parliament as well."

Shiv Sena leader Priyanka Chaturvedi slammed the Education Minister for defending NTA, claiming that the Bihar Police investigation has found a paper leak

The Maharashtra government has sought immediate cancellation of the exam, alleging that its results have caused injustice to the students from the state.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin said the trends from the latest NEET results have once again vindicated the DMK on its stand opposing the exam and reiterated that the entrance test goes against social justice and federalism.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and TMC have also demanded a Supreme Courtmonitored SIT probe.

SC's Stand

The apex court has noted that the sanctity of NEET-UG, 2024 was affected and has refused to stay the counselling process for admissions. The NTA expert panel has told the court that the decision to give grace marks to 1,563 NEET-UG candidates for admission to MBBS, BDS and others courses had been cancelled and they would be given an option to take a retest on June 23.

If the candidates do not wish to take up the retest then their earlier marks, minus the grace marks, will be given for the purposes of the results, it said.

The results of the retest will be declared on June 30 and the counselling for admission in the MBBS BDS and other courses will start on July 6.

hancing bilateral and multilateral ties. **PM Calls For**

to put the priorities and concerns of countries of the Global South on the world stage, he said.

"In these efforts, we have given high priority to Africa. We are proud that the G-20, under the chairmanship of India, made the African Union a permanent member," he said.

"India has been contributing to the economic and social development, stability and security of all the countries of Africa, and will continue to do so in the future," Modi said.

The prime minister spoke extensively on the importance of ending monopoly in technology with a particular emphasis on artificial intelligence.

"We must make technology creative, not destructive. Only then will we be able to lay the foundation of an inclusive society. India is striving for a better future through this human-centric approach," he said.

Modi said India is among the first few countries to formulate a national strategy on artificial intelligence.

"Based on this strategy, we have launched the AI Mission this year. Its basic mantra is 'AI for All'. As a founding member and lead chair of the global partnership for AI, we are promoting cooperation among all countries," he said.

The prime minister said at the G-20 summit hosted by India last year, New Delhi stressed the importance of international governance in the field of AI.

"In the future too, we will continue to work together with all countries to make AI transparent, fair, secure, accessible and responsible," he said.

The prime minister said India's approach in the field of energy is also based on four principles -- availability, accessibility, affordability and acceptability.

"We are making every possible effort to fulfill our commitment to achieve the target of Net Zero by 2070. Together we should make efforts to make the coming time a green era," he said.

Jyeshtha Ashtami

well-being of one and all. He interacted with the devotees and extended his heartiest greetings on the auspicious occasion.

More than 200 buses carrying

Worshippers, both inside and outside the temple were provided with adequate provisions on the occasion.

Terrorists struck at four places in Reasi, Kathua and Doda districts in the Jammu province between Sunday and Wednesday, killing nine people, including seven pilgrims and a CRPF jawan. Seven security personnel, 41 pilgrims and a villager were also injured in the attacks.

The pilgrims were attacked while they were travelling in a bus to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu's Katra on Iune 9.

Strict security measures were implemented to ensure the safety of the devotees. A multi-layered security ring was established around the temple complex and along the routes.

Several Kashmiri Pandits also thronged a temple in Jammu city to mark the start of the three-day annual mela, seeking blessings and paying tributes to the victims of terror attacks.

Kheer Bhawani Peeth at Janipur area of Jammu city was constructed as a

Kashmir administration and those who have faith in the deity, have done best arrangements. The devotees were ferried in around 200 buses from Jammu. Some people have come from Delhi also," he said.

Sinha said a 'Yatri Niwas' is being built here which would to accommodate 1,000 pilgrims.

"Last year, when I came here, pilgrims had requested for a Yatri Niwas. I spoke to officials concerned and the Yatri Niwas that will accommodate 1000 pilgrims will be built. I am told that it will come up in the next eight months," he said.

Political leaders, including former chief minister of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir Faroog Abdullah, BIP's I-K president Ravinder Raina, and CPI(M) leader M Y Tarigami, also paid obeisance at the shrine.

Abdullah, the president of the National Conference (NC), said he wants the Pandits to return to their homeland.

"Our brothers and sisters are praying here. They want to return to their homes. We want them to return and live together in peace and brotherhood.

We have come here to pray for the whole country, to live in peace and brotherhood and for the prosperity of the country," Abdullah told reporters. (with inputs from PTI)

Return To Homeland:

Bhawani temple at Tulmulla in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Friday.

Mela Kheer Bhawani -- an annual event at the Kheer Bhawani temple dedicated to Rangya Devi -- is also celebrated in other shrines and temples in Jammu and Kashmir to mark 'Zyeth Atham' or 'Jyeshtha Ashtami'.

A large number of Kashmiri Pandits left their homes and fled the valley in 1990 in the wake of the eruption of militancy in the region.

The Mirwaiz said the community should return to their homeland which awaits them.

"Today is Mela Kheer Bhawani and would like to felicitate our Kashmiri Pandit community on this occasion. I would also once again ask them to return to their homeland which awaits them and live here as they did in the past in our common and shared heritage. It is time to reconcile and rebuild the broken bonds. We owe it to our next generation," he said.

Jammu, he said, recorded a low of Roy, Dr. Sheikh Showkat Hussain and 25.4°C against 28.8°C on the previous night and it was below normal by 0.3°C

Varavara Rao. The complainant filed a complaint for the winter capital of J&K. Banihal reunder Section 156(3) of CrPC before the corded a low of 13.4°C, Batote 14.6°C and Metropolitan Magistrate Court, New Delhi, who disposed the complaint on November 27, 2010 with the directions to register an FIR.

> Accordingly, an FIR was registered and investigation was carried out, they said. Major Land

gangsters after tampering with the revenue records and the land was sold to various people, he said.

Sharma said a formal verification was conducted and it was found that in furtherance of the criminal conspiracy, FORM 3-A (Form Alf) along with power of attorneys (POAS) were obtained from various PoK refugees, alluring them of additional lands and providing them instant money ranging from Rs 5,000 to Rs 50,000 by the conduits of land grabbers.

Thereafter, insertions or additions regarding additional chunks of custodian lands were made in the revenue records by the officials of the revenue and custodian department.

They did this by abusing their official positions and these lands were sold by the conduits and attorney holders to various people, including their own gang leaders and members, by resorting to fraudulent means, thereby causing a huge loss to the government, he said.

Owing to the establishment of, prima facie, nexus of the criminal elements, land grabbers and the Revenue/ Custodian officers/officials in alienation of Custodian land through fraudulent means. ACB has registered five formal case FIRs for investigation under the provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act, criminal conspiracy, cheating, forgery and fraud, the SSP said.

During the course of the investigation, after obtaining the search warrants from the Special Judge Anti-Corruption Jammu, search teams comprising ACB officers, independent witnesses, and magistrates were dispatched to 16 locations throughout Jammu and its adjoining areas, Sharma said, adding the searches were still going on when last reports were received.

In addition to the five FIRs, verification is still in progress to unearth the remaining usurped custodian land, he said.

Geriatric Care

among our elders," he added, pointing to the severe psychological and emotional toll on the elderly population.

He further said that elder abuse can have devastating effects on the physical and mental well-being of older people. It often leads to chronic health issues, depression, and a diminished quality of life. Despite these severe consequences, elder abuse remains a silent crisis, largely unaddressed by locals and social service agencies," Dr Saleem, the Former Head, Geriatric Department, JLNM hospital, said. "We are taking a significant step towards ensuring the holistic mental and physical well-being of our seniors by inaugurating the Moul Mouj Health Centre." Dr Shakeel ur Rehman, Founder & Chairman Kashmir Clinics Group said that in Kashmir there are distressing experiences of elderly patients, many of whom face severe neglect and humilia-

tion, even from well-off families. "This often leads to feelings of hopelessness, some considering extreme steps. Many elderly people suffer due to lack of proper care, and most deaths in this group are preventable with adequate attention," Dr Rehman said.

"Although my colleagues and I run three medical facilities, none are exclusively dedicated to the comprehensive and affordable care of the elderly."

"Witnessing their plight, especially those below the poverty line, we feel compelled to address this issue. I urge society to recognize and respond to the needs of our elders, who have spent caring for us. As doctors, we commit to providing affordable care for the elderly. I discussed this mission with my colleagues, and they are willing to offer their service to make medical care accessible to this vulnerable group."

Dr Rehman further said that addressing this issue requires a collective effort from society. Religious organization community groups must raise awareness about the imporance of caring for our dignity and respect in their later years.

LG Meets J&K's

from Damhall village of Anantnag District, is also serving as a Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) in the Indian Armv

STATE

WORLD BLOOD DONATION DAY

Pulwama Man Donates 203 Pints Of Blood So Far

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A 62-year-old man from Pulwama, who is known for his social work and cleaning hospital premises, is also known as a blood man of Kashmir as he has donated around 203 pints of blood

so far. Abdul Majeed Bhat, hailing from Pingalgam Singhoo Narbal in Kakapora Tehsil of Pulwama district, has been donating blood since

1984 and has so far donated 203 pints of blood.

Majeed, commonly known as Majeed Narbali or Majeed Gamgeen said that since 1984 he has been donating blood and "Every year, I donate blood at least three to four times on humanitarian grounds."

He said that youth in his area have got inspired through his social work and whenever there is an emergency, they themselves visit hospitals and donate blood, adding that his family members are not allowing him to donate more blood

now but despite that he has donated two pints of blood this year as well.

Majeed said that he has never asked anyone about his religion and has been donating blood irrespective of religion as humanity is above everything.

"There were several instances when I received SOS calls for blood donation, I didn't ask them about the credentials of the receiver. I only confirm the address where I have to reach," he said.

Majeed has been very active in arranging money for marriage of orphan girls, arranging food for needy in hospitals besides cleaning hospital premises and other important places. "There is a need to educate

our youth about humanity which most of them are lacking as it is above religion and other things," he said. "In order to get solace, spiritual healing and satisfaction, youth must come forward in all social works including donating blood as it saves lives," he said-(KNO)

CS Launches Competitions On MyGov Portal To Mark 'International Yoga Day'



KO News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Friday launched several online competitions for the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir on MyGov portal (https://jk.mygov.in/) to mark 10th International Yoga Day celebration to be observed on 21st June, 2024.

The competitions, themed 'Yoga for Self and Society', included yoga doodle challenge, essay writing, poster making and story-telling video contests. The competitions are live on the I&K MyGoy portal and registration is open till June 30, 2024. The topper would be awarded with a cash prize of Rs 10,000, second with Rs. 8,000 and the third would get Rs 5.000. The interested participants can register and submit their entries on the MyGov portal. In addition, the portal offers opportunity to the citizens to upload their selfies by June 30, 2024. In this regard, a custom frame has been designed to allow the citizens to capture their yoga selfie sharing moments of achievement, peace and selfdiscovery through Yoga, promoting a movement of wellness and self-care. While launching these competitions, the Chief Secretary asked the concerned for providing opportunity to maximum citizens including school children. He also exhorted upon the Deputy Commissioners to promote citizen involvement at the district level.

Accentuating the significance of Yoga, the Chief Secretary said that the ancient practice fosters mindfulness techniques that aid in relaxation as well as reducing stress and anxiety. "It improves physical, mental and spiritual health by balancing the body, mind and the spirit through postures (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), meditation and ethical guidelines

"Yoga has now become an increasingly popular form of mechanism therapy. and complementary treatment for mental health", maintained the Chief Secretary.

Eid UI Azha 2024

Kajuwala To Jaisalmeri, **Elite Sheep Breeds Flood Kashmir Markets**



Agencies

SRINAGAR: With Eid-ul-Azha nearing, a variety of elite nonlocal sheep breeds are flooding Kashmiri markets to give customers a choice to choose best for the sacrifice.

From Kajuwala to Jaisalmeri, Marwari and others, a heavy quantity of sheep are being imported to Kashmir from various states of India to meet the

demand this Eid- Ul Azha. As per the mutton dealers, both the quality and quantity has been enhanced this Eid -ul

Adha to give the faithful a better choice to choose a healthy and superior sheep breed for sacrifice. "We have a variety of sheep

breeds in the market currently. From local breeds to non-local, enough sacrificial animals are available in the market so that no dearth is faced this week when the demand for sacrificial animals increases," Khazir Mohammad Rigoo, spokesperson for the All Kashmir Mutton Dealers' Association said.

He specified that elite breeds such as Kajuwala, Jaisalmeri, Marwari Garola and others have been imported to meet the expectation of the people.

"These are some of the best sheep breeds who feed on chickpeas to gain weight and Kajuwala, Jaisalmeri in Kash-

miri markets," Rigoo said. Rigoo said a total of 40 trucks loaded with sheep were entering Kashmir on average daily to meet the demand for sacrificial animals.

"More than 40 trucks enter Kashmir on a daily basis. Each truck carries as many as 140 sheep, which means 2,24000 sheep are being imported from various states to Kashmir daily," he said.

Pertinently, people in Srinagar prefer sheep for sacri-

An official from the sheep husbandry department said that almost 40 percent of the demand will be met locally by the bakarwals and farmers in Kashmir.

"Bakarwals have already moved towards plains and they are selling sheep in various markets of Kashmir. Similarly, we have farmers who have set up their units and cater to the demand for Eid," he

J&K Bank Unveils Comprehensive Online Loan Journeys For Housing, Gold Loans

KO News Service EO

SRINAGAR: In a significant step towards complete digital transformation, J&K Bank has rolled out automated processing of Home Loan and Gold Loan products besides launch ing TAB Journey and Current Account Online for customer onboarding. These initiatives aim to enhance customer experience by offering seamless, efficient, and quick loan processing and convenient customer onboarding. MD & CEO Baldev Prakash launched the new digital products at the Bank's Corporate Headquarters in presence of top management and other senior officers of the bank. Speaking on the occasion, MD Baldev Prakash emphasized the bank's commitment to innovation and customer satisfaction. "Our new digital loan journeys are a testament to J&K Bank's dedication to leveraging technology to provide superior banking experiences. By automating and streamlining our loan processes, we are not only enhancing efficiency but also ensuring our customing System (CBS), Risk Scoring System, and third-party solutions from Credit Bureaus and Fintechs. The solution also blends workflow management and decision support systems to enhance process efficiency, eading to improved Turn

Beating The Odds: Bandipora Girl With Visual Impairment Excels In Exams

Agencies

KASHMIR OBSERVER® Srinagar | Saturday | 15-06-2024

SRINAGAR: Sahiba Shakeel, a 15-year-old girl from Ajas village here, has scripted a heartwarming story of resilience and academic excellence. Despite being 90% visually impaired, Sahiba has secured an impressive 409 out of 500 marks in her 10th class exams.

Sahiba's path to success was marked by challenges. Born into a humble background, her father, Shakeel Ahmad Rather, is an auto-rickshaw driver, and her mother is a homemaker. Yet. financial constraints and visual impairment couldn't dampen Sahiba's spirit.

"Sahiba didn't have access to coaching institutes or conventional study materials. But with unwavering support from an NGO run by Naziya Hurra, she excelled," said Shakeel Ahmad. "Since she was six, the NGO provided her with specialized help, including recorded lectures on microchips," he added. "Despite her limitations,

Sahiba displayed remarkable determination," he said. "During exams, a dedicated helper transcribed her dictation. This teamwork, combined with Sahiba's grit, led to her achievement," he further elaborated.

"Being visually impaired, you need help for everything. I'm happy with the results and my performance. I'm grateful for the support from my family, teachers, Naziya Ji, and especially my exam helper Tafia Tariq," Sahiba said, according to Srinagar based news agency Kashmir Dot Com.

"I want to work hard and empower specially-abled people. understand their struggles," she expressed.

Sahiba's story transcends academic success; it embodies perseverance and the human spirit's triumph. In a world obsessed with social media validation of academic feats, Sahiba's journey reminds us that true success stems from grit, determination, and the support of those who believe in us. (KDC)

CUK Organizes Social Service Camp For Devotees

KO News Service

GANDERBAL: The Directorate of Students Welfare (DSW) in association with National Service Scheme (NSS) Unit, Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir) organized a social service camp for the devotees attend-ing the Mela Kheer Bhawani

here on Friday. Hundreds of devotees including men, women and children, who had come from different corners of the Valley and other parts of the country, thronged the camp and consumed the refreshments served by the student volunteers, faculty members, DSW and NSS staff and other officials of the varsity. The

devotees expressed gratitude to the CUK staffers for serving the refreshments during the daylong Mela.

In his message, Vice-Chancellor, Prof. A Ravinder Nath, appreciated the volunteers and other employees of the University for participating in the camp and providing refreshments to the devotees. He said the university has been conducting such camps regularly and offering its services during

the annual Mela every year. Dean DSW, Dr. Irfan Alam, Coordinator NSS, Dr. Shabir Ahmad, Medical Officer, Dr. Sheeba Nazir, faculty members, volunteers, and students were present in the camp

Police Attaches Property Worth 1.43 CR Of Drug **Peddlers In Kulgam**

KO News Service

SRINAGAR: Continuing its action against drug peddlers, Jammu and Kashmir Police in Kulgam on Friday said to have attached properties belonging to notorious drug peddlers in

& are linked with case FIR no 40/2023 U/S 8/15 of NDPS act of Police Station Qazigund and FIR number 26/2024 U/S 8/15 NDPS Act of Police Station Yaripora, respectively, police said. "The properties were identified as illegally acquired proper-

said–(KNO)

meat. Some like to sacrifice Kajuwala, which is a bit costly. Some people like to spend as much as money on the sacrificial animal to earn more rewards. The demand is good for

fice. Apart from sheep, camels, and goats too have been imported by the dealers from various markets of India.

He encouraged the people to overwhelmingly participate in the competitions to share the changes they have experienced by incorporating Yoga into their lives. He reiterated that these initiatives aim to inspire the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir to embrace Yoga for holistic well being and share their personal journeys, fostering a community united by health and harmony.

The Chief Secretary fervently appealed the participants to register and submit their entries on MyGov portal and join the celebration of International Yoga Day throughout the region. Among others present on the occasion included Administrative Secretaries and HoDs of various departments, Deputy Commissioners and other officers.

ers enjoy quick and hassle-free access to credit."

"This digital initiative is part of our broader strategy to modernize our services and meet the evolving needs of our customers. We are confident that these online loan journeys will significantly benefit our customers, offering them flexibility, convenience, swiftness and transparency", he added. The Bank's Deputy General Manager Mohammad Muzaffar Wani gave a detailed overview of the newly launched products on the occasion.

Notably, designed with state-of-the-art features, the Bank's Housing Loan processing is now entirely automated, integrating multiple in-house systems such as Core Bank-

around Time (TAT) and service quality, thereby ensuring a swift, smooth and efficient service delivery.

Meanwhile, for fast-processing of loans against gold ornaments and jewellery, the rolled-out Online Gold Loan is packed with customer-centric benefits like easy application method, instant eligibility check, 10-Minute Quick Processing and disbursal with no foreclosure charges.

Besides, the Bank has further enhanced customer convenience by launching its TAB and Current Account Online Journeys for customer onboarding with assisted account opening journey for both savings and current accounts. For business premises verification of current accounts, it has geo tagging feature with an elaborate system in place for performance tracking.

the district.

Police in Kulgam attached properties (Double storied residential house measuring 1093.50 Sq ft and Cowshed measuring 437.25 Sq ft (both valuing 70 lakhs approx) belonging to notorious drug peddler namely Bashir Ahmad Ganie Son of Mohd Ahsan Ganie a resident of Nassu Badragund, Qazigund presently lodged in central Jail Kot Balwal Jammu under PIT NDPS Act and, newly con-

ties during the course of investigation/enquiry conducted by Kulgam Police. The properties were prima facie acquired from illicit trafficking in Narcotic drug and Psychotropic substances by the above mentioned drug peddlers," police said.

This operation reaffirms the commitment of Police to combat the drug menace. Local people of the area hailed the initiative of Police, the statement added.

Annual Kheer Bhawani Marks Emotional Arrival Of KPs In Kupwara

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The annual Kheer Bhawani festival in frontier Kupwara district saw an emotional and heart-warming reunion, as Kashmiri Pandits from across the Union Territory visited the Valley, many for the first time in the last several decades.

The Pandits expressed their appreciation for the locals as well as administration for ensuring seamless and secure pilgrimage.

Notably, Kheer Bhawani festival, celebrated on Zeisht Ashtami holds great significance for the Kashmiri Pandit community, with the temple dedicated to the goddess Ragnya Devi is considered one of the holiest shrines for Hindus in Kashmir.

Pilgrims expressed optimism and renewed sense of belonging. Many of them hoped the festival would symbolize enduring unity and peace in Kashmir valley.

Speaking on the occasion, the Kashmiri Pandits at Kupwara temple, expressed immense gratitude towards local Muslims, the administration as well as the security agencies for their efforts in ensuring a smooth and secure pilgrimage.

"We are feeling refreshed, good and safe here. The security measures and the facilities are excellent. The warm welcome we received, particularly being greeted with fruits by the security personnel, is a unique and heart-warming experience for us," Chandra Pandita, a Jammu

resident said. Pandita, who originally hails from Watrihani Kupwara, said that she visited after a decade to the valley. The atmosphere here is truly cherishing and brings back fond memories. It fills me with immense joy and nostalgia,

she said.

"This is my first visit to Kupwara temple. I am deeply touched by the warmth and the hospitality of the people here. The locals are loving and helpful and at no point do we feel like strangers," Sumita Bindroo, another devotee said. Bindroo, originally from

Karan Nagar in Srinagar said that she has been to the valley after decades and the experience as well as the atmosphere she got was entirely friendly and brotherly.

The facilities provided are excellent and the respect and the assistance from the security people, administration and especially from the local Muslim community are unforgettable. They ensured we had everything we needed and wanted, she said.

"I pray to Lord for peace in the



valley, so that we can reunite with our Muslim friends, brothon the ground. Returning here ers and sisters," Bindroo added. after 35 years is an emotional "It has been decades since and overwhelming experience. we left the valley, and I can I'm happy to reunite with old see the situation has changed friends here at Mela," a devotee

originally from Botingoo, South Kashmir said.

structed two storied residen-

tial house measuring 941.36

Sq ft (valuing 73 lakhs ap-

prox) of Ghulam Nabi Kut-

tay Son of Abdul Aziz Kuttay

resident of Kaladrund, Frisal,

presently under Police cus-

tody, a police spokesman said

The actions were taken un-

der sections 68-E read with

68-F (1) of NDPS Act of 1985

in a statement.

It was painful and emotional. she said while recalling the moments of leaving the valley. We are incomplete without the Muslim community. We want to be here forever, she said.

We are thankful to the people of Kashmir who played an important role in making the festival a success and grand. It was not possible for the administration alone to accommodate the thousands of devotees here in Tikker Kupwara, the devotee said.

"I observed our Muslim brothers wholeheartedly opening their homes for us, even though several people stayed there, which is a great and positive step. There is always a brotherhood. What was more fascinating was Kashmiri Dum Aloo and Haakh, which keeps our culture and roots intact," said Avtar Krsishan, a devotee, who like others had visited the valley after decades.

The festival served as a platform for healing and reconciliation, as many returning Pandits had not visited the valley since their exodus in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

It's worth mentioning that meticulous security measures were put in place to ensure a smooth and secure experience for the Yatris, even as the Kupwara Police chief, Shobhit Saxena had earlier stated that their aim is to maintain and enhance this environment every year.

Kupwara is fortunate enough to have such a great number of devotees and we are hopeful for an even larger surge in the years to come", the SSP earlier said. He said that it sends a clear and loud message that Kupwara is safe for Yatris and devotees—(KNO)

<u>SPORTS</u>

JKFA Spring Legacy Knockout: ARCO FC Beats SWFC



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Friday's match of the JKFA Spring Legacy Knockout Football Tournament 2024 First Edition saw SWFC Kashmir take on ARCO FC at Polo Ground here. At full time, the game ended in a 0-0 draw and was decided in a penalty shootout. ARCO emerged victorious in the tie-breaker, winning the shootout 4-3. The player of the match was awarded to ARCO goalkeeper Saleem.

CUS Holds Women Hockey Trials



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Cluster University Srinagar on Friday conducted hockey trials to select the university's female hockey team from among the students of its constituent and affiliated colleges.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.) Qayoom Hussain referred to the importance of hockey as India's national game and its role in fostering sportsmanship and teamwork.

Those present on the occasion included Registrar, Dr. Syed Wilayat Hussain Rizvi, Incharge Dean Academic Affairs and Dean Humanities, Dr. Deeba Sarmad, Controller Examinations, Dr. Khurshid Ahmad Mir, Dean Sciences, Dr. Naseer Hussain Shah, Dean Social Sciences, Dr. Nazir Ahmad Kotey, Dean Commerce & Management, Dr. G.M Lone, Dean Teacher Education who is also the Sports Secretary of the university, Dr. Munir Ahmad Mir, hockey coach from Sports Council and other dignitaries. The trials adhered strictly to

the established rules of hockey to ensure fair play and an equitable selection process.

T20 WC: Virat Kohli's Form A Concern As India Faces Canada

Press Trust of India

LAUDERHILL: Star batter Virat Kohli's continuing struggle with low scores is a growing concern for India as they gear up to face Canada in their final group match of the T20 World Cup on Saturday. The hope is that the match in this city remains unaffected by the torrential rains that have tormented parts of Florida. India has already secured its

place in the Super Eight stage with three consecutive wins. Kohli, who dazzled in the IPL with over 700 runs for Royal Challengers Bengaluru, has yet to replicate that success in this ICC showpiece event, seen as his last big hurrah in T20 cricket. Since the tournament be-

gan, Kohli has amassed just five runs at an average of 1.66, including a 'Golden Duck' against the USA. This subpar performance juxtaposes the otherwise inconsequential



match against Canada but offers him a potential turnaround. The Broward County stadium pitch might provide a more favorable condition for Kohli, unlike the challenging tracks in New York.

SHUBMAN GILL & AVESH KHAN RELEASED AHEAD OF SUPER EIGHTS

In a strategic move ahead of the Super Eights stage, the Indian cricket team has decided to release reserve opener Shubman Gill and speedster Avesh Khan following their final T20 World Cup group league game against Ireland. A senior BCCI source, on con-

A senior BCCl source, on condition of anonymity, confirmed that the decision was preplanned and aligns with the team's focus on carrying only essential players. Moving forward, only designated finisher Rinku Singh and left-arm pacer Khaleel Ahmed will remain with the squad for the Caribbean leg of the tournament.

With ample cover for potential injuries to key players like skipper Rohit Sharma and star batter Virat Kohli, the team is confident in their strategy. Notably, Gill did not get significant net time during sessions in New York, and the team sees Rinku's dual utility as vital in the middle order. In the event of any injury to Arshdeep, Khaleel will serve as a like-for-like substitute.

Cycling Gold Medallist Felicitated In Ananatnag



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Government Girls Higher Secondary School Qazigund on Friday celebrated the achievement of its student Muntazir Javaid with a grand felicitation ceremony.

Muntazir, a ninth-grade student, clinched the gold medal in the District Level Cycle Race, organised by the Department of Youth Services & Sports. The race, held over a 5km stretch, saw fierce competition from female students across 12 zones, with Muntazir emerging victorious with a significant time gap, showcasing her dedication and

sportsmanship.

The felicitation ceremony was attended by prominent figures, including the District Youth Services & Sports Officer of Anantnag, Raja Yaqoob Ali, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The institution's Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO), Haseena Parveen, also honored the event with her presence.

Key attendees from the Department of Youth Services & Sports included District Activity Incharge Muhammad Abass Dar, Bilal Ahmad Dar, Ashiek Hussain Lolu, along with media representatives Shahid Altaf Khan and Subzar Akhoon.

Amir, Arshid Named Fitness Trainers For Summer Kabaddi Camp

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Jammu & Kashmir Amateur Kabaddi Association on Friday announced Mohd. Amir and Arshid Ahmed as Coach/ Fitness Trainers for its Summer

tt-Kabaddi Coaching Camp. Both coaches are working with J&K Police department. The camp will be organised under ill the banner of Jammu & Kashmir Amateur Kabaddi Association in collaboration with Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council.

The Summer Kabaddi Coaching Camp for boys will see 70 Junior players from Jammu province compete in Mendhar, Poonch, while 70 Junior players from Kashmir province will train in Bandipora.

Sumit Nagal Enters Perugia Challenger Semis

Press Trust of India

PERUGIA: Sumit Nagal continued his splendid form by entering the semi-finals of the ongoing Perugia Challenger here on Friday. The sixth-seeded Indian overcame the challenge from the unseeded Maks Kasnikowski of Poland in the quarterfinal, winning in straight sets 6-4, 7-5. This is his eighth successive win since the start of Heilbronn Challenger in Germany.



Paris Olympics: AI To Shield Athletes From Social Media Abuse

Agencies

LAUSANNE: The International Olympic Committee will deploy AI in order to block any abuse on social media directed at 15,000 athletes and officials at the Paris Olympics next month, President Thomas Bach said on Friday. The Games are being staged amid ongoing wars in Ukraine, following Russia's invasion in 2022, and between Hamas and Israel in Gaza - events that have already led to cases of abuse on social media.

The Olympics kick off on July 26 with more than 10,500 athletes competing across 32 sports, and is expected to generate more than half a billion social media engagements during the 16 days of the Russian and Belarusian

event, according to the IOC. "The IOC will use AI at Paris in different areas," Bach told a press conference. "One is safeguarding, since we ownest half a billion so

we expect half a billion social media posts during these Games. If someone were to take only one second to read each post it would take them 16 years to go through," he said. "The IOC will instead provide a pro-active AI safeguarding tool to protect athletes from cyberabuse. This AI tool offers extensive monitoring, covering 15,000 athletes and officials. This automatically

f the Russian and Belarusian OC. athletes will not be competing under their flag but have been allowed to take part only as neutral athletes angering

as neutral athletes, angering Moscow. The measures will on sothese just political attacks. The IOC gave no details of what kind o read of access to their accounts these them athletes would be expected to

he give it. rordvelopments in France and upcoming snap parliamentary ool elections only weeks before ng, the Olympics would not derail either preparations or the Games themselves.

