

## Rain Brings Mercury Down In Kashmir

Observer News Service

**Srinagar:** The parts of Kashmir continued to receive rainfall for the second straight day while the maximum temperature settled below normal on Saturday.

The light rainfall lashed the southern districts of Kashmir today again, bringing down the mercury here.

As per the details, the day temperature remained below normal today with Srinagar recording a maximum temperature of 24.8 degree Celsius while Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, recorded 24.4 degree Celsius today.

Pahalgam, a famous tourist destination, has recorded a maximum temperature of 21.4 degree Celsius while Kupwara in north Kashmir, has recorded 26.6 degree Celsius. In Kokernag, the mercury settled at 22.5 degree Celsius while Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, recorded 15.4 degree Celsius.

The three stations of Jammu division have recorded above 30 degree Celsius temperature today including Jammu, Banihal and Katra where the maximum temperature settled at 39.7 degree Celsius, 30.4 degree Celsius and 36.5 degree Celsius respectively.

While the day temperature continued to settle below normal in Kashmir parts, there is a possibility of more rainfall at isolated places for the next 48 hours.

Jammu and Kashmir has recorded a deficient rainfall till June 20.

There was a deficient rainfall of 45 per cent in J&K from June 01 to June 20, the data reveals, adding that Kupwara is the only station where a normal rainfall of 35.2 degree Celsius was recorded during the period.

However, | [More on P6](#)

# LG Urges Support From All Faiths For Amarnath Yatra

## Says Security Arrangements Have Been Tightened & Facilities Improved

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: As the annual Amarnath Yatra 2024 is set to begin on June 29, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Saturday appealed to the people of all faiths to continue their age-old custom of supporting the religious journey and providing care for devotees this year as well.

The J&K administration, LG said, besides putting in place heightened security arrangements to ensure a peaceful Yatra, has improved facilities for the pilgrims' en-route cave shrine.

In an effort to make the Yatra more comfortable this year, Sinha said, the Border Roads Organization (BRO) has also expanded the route leading to the cave shrine.

Jammu Additional Director General of Police Anand Jain has reviewed security arrangements along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, emphasising the need for the highest level of alertness to scuttle any



attempt by terrorists to disrupt the pilgrimage, officials said on Saturday.

Taking part in the virtual 'Pratham Puja' of the Amarnath Yatra at the Raj Bhavan in Srinagar on Saturday morning, Sinha said, "Darshan for the pilgrims across the country will begin from June 29. The (Shri Amarnath) Shrine Board and the J&K administration have made special arrangements for the pilgrims. In the last two years, the facilities for the yatris have improved a lot."

Sinha said devotees in large numbers across India are expected to arrive in Kashmir to participate in the yatra.

In order to promote a positive image of Jammu and Kashmir in India and abroad, the LG encouraged the residents of the areas through which the Yatra passes to support the religious pilgrimage and provide care to the pilgrims.

"Yatra may succeed when everyone contributes equally. I hope the J&K people will continue their long-standing tradition of contributing to the annual Hindu pilgrimage this year as well, as they have done in the past, believing it to be their own ritual," he added.

When asked whether the route leading to the cave shrine has been widened, Sinha said, "the BRO has also widened a few portions where they couldn't reach earlier. I hope this year's Yatra will go considerably more smoothly."

The 52-day pilgrimage will begin from the two tracks — the traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam | [More on P6](#)

## "J&K At Forefront Of Promoting Sustainable Tourism"



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday launched various Swachh initiatives of the Directorate of Rural Sanitation for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2024, at Raj Bhawan.

In his address on the occasion, the LG commended the Directorate of Rural Sanitation. He said the new logo, Swachh Yatra Anthem, Website and mobile application will greatly benefit our objective of Zero-Waste Pilgrimage.

The LG highlighted the

integrated strategy of the UT Administration and Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board aimed at Zero-waste, clean and efficient sanitation system and complete protection of natural resources and the environment.

"J&K is at the forefront of promoting sustainable tourism. For this holy Yatra, we have worked a solution through the fusion of technology and human resources," the LG said.

Speaking on the new endeavours, the LG said the logo symbolises the resolve to | [More on P6](#)

## "Prioritise Neutralizing Terrorists, Their Supporters"

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha called for close synergy between the Security forces, Civil and Police administration to dismantle the entire terror ecosystem. He said that terrorists and those aiding and abetting them should be neutralised on priority. | [More on P6](#)

## Yatra Security Our Top Priority: CS

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo said Saturday the security of the Amarnath Yatra is a top priority of the administration, as he chaired a meeting to review arrangements at the Bhagwati Nagar base camp here. Accompanied by the Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), Jammu zone, Anand Jain, Dulloo went | [More on P6](#)

## J&K's Political Landscape Heats Up Again

### Parties Gear Up For High-Stakes Assembly Elections

Agencies

Srinagar In a decisive move, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the forthcoming assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, setting the stage for a significant political showdown. This declaration follows a series of terrorist attacks in the region, with the latest incidents targeting civilians and security forces.

On June 9, just before Prime Minister Modi's swearing-in, terrorists attacked a bus of pilgrims in Shivkhori, resulting in nine deaths and over 33 injuries. This was followed by another incident in Saida Sohal village, Hiranagar, where terrorists attempted to take hostages, leading to the deaths of two terrorists and injuries to a civilian and a CRPF jawan. Additionally, multiple attacks on security personnel have raised

concerns about the ongoing threat of terrorism in the region.

The Prime Minister's announcement has effectively put an end to the decade-long speculation about the timing of assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. In response, political parties are mobilizing their resources and strategizing for the upcoming elections. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has appointed Union Minister G Kishan Reddy as the election in-charge for the region, indicating their serious commitment to the electoral process.

On the other hand, the Indian National Congress is preparing for a crucial meeting in New Delhi on June 27 to discuss election strategies. There is speculation that a senior Congress leader from Punjab may be assigned the role of election in-charge for Jammu and Kashmir, highlighting the party's focus on regaining political ground in the region.

The opposition, particularly the Congress party, has criticized the BJP for | [More on P6](#)

## Jmu-Sgr Rail Line Project: Sangaldan-Reasi Link Likely To Open By June End

Agencies

Srinagar: The Sangaldan to Reasi railway line is nearing completion, bringing the 'Jammu-Srinagar rail line project' one step closer to reality.

Official sources said that the first train between Sangaldan and Reasi is expected to be flagged off by the end of this month, marking a significant milestone in connecting the Reasi district in Jammu to Kashmir via railway.

Sources said that top railway officials will conduct final inspections of the Sangaldan-Reasi section, which includes the world's highest steel arch rail bridge over the Chenab and several major tunnels, later this month.

"If all goes well, regular train services will commence by the end of this month or first week of July", sources said.

Sources further said that the 272-kilometer rail corridor, designed to enhance connectivity and economic



integration in the region, is almost complete.

"Only 17 Kilometre section between Reasi and Katra remains to be operational, with the final segment expected to be finished within the next six months," sources said.

Once completed, the rail link will provide direct train services between Baramulla/ Srinagar in Kashmir and major

destinations such as Jammu, New Delhi, and Kanyakumari.

This development promises to boost tourism and trade and provide travelers with a more efficient mode of transportation across Jammu and Kashmir.

A trial run of the MEMU train (Mainline Electric Multiple Unit) was conducted recently on | [More on P6](#)

## UAPA Tribunal Upholds Ban On Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, Muslim League

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: A tribunal set up under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) on Saturday confirmed the Centre's decision to impose a five-year ban on the Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (Masarat Alam faction) and Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, Jammu and Kashmir.

The one-member tribunal of Delhi High Court judge Sachin Datta was constituted under the stringent anti-terror law in January to assess whether there was "sufficient cause" behind the imposition of the ban.

Upholding the ban, the tribunal held the two organisations were carrying out secessionist activities in the valley with help from across the border to realise the merger of Jammu and Kashmir with Pakistan and establish Islamic rule in the Union Territory.

The tribunal also upheld the Centre's contention that the organisations were acting on behalf of Pakistan-based terrorist organisations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Hizbul

## First Batch Of Hajj Pilgrims Return To Kashmir

Observer News Service

Srinagar: As the annual Hajj-2024 concluded earlier this week, the first batch of pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir landed at Srinagar International Airport on Saturday evening.

The first batch of 320 pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir returned from the Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia on Saturday, officials said.

Executive Officer J&K Hajj Committee, Dr. Shujahat Qureshi told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the first batch of 320 Hajj pilgrims returned today and were received at the Srinagar International Airport by J&K Hajj Committee members, Airport authorities and senior officials from police and civil administration.

"One flight was scheduled today, in which 320 pilgrims—166 males and 156 females—returned and landed here at around 9.15 PM," a senior Airport official said.

Dr. Qureshi said that upon arrival of pilgrims at Srinagar International Airport and after necessary formalities including immigration, the Hajjis will go directly to their homes with their relatives.

"Vehicle passes have already been issued online for those intending to receive the pilgrims. Immigration staff too has been deployed by J&K police, staff of J&K Hajj committee will also be present," he added.

According to the officials, this year, over 7000 pilgrims from the region undertook the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca and Madina. Of these, approximately 6800 pilgrims departed through the Srinagar embarkation point, while over 500 pilgrims traveled from other airports.

J&K Hajj | [More on P6](#)



Mujahideen, and were giving constant on ground support for carrying out militant operations in the valley.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati and advocate Rajat Nair represented the government before the tribunal.

The Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (Masarat Alam faction) was declared outlawed for five years by the government under the UAPA on December 27, 2023 on account of being involved in anti-national and secessionist activities in the Union Territory.

Founded by deceased separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Tehreek-e-Hurriyat (TeH) was outlawed for five years on December 31, 2023. The organisation | [More on P6](#)

## Delhi Court Defers Hearing On Er Rashid's Bail Again

Agencies

New Delhi: A Delhi Court on Saturday postponed hearing of Engineer Rashid's interim bail plea until July 1 for taking oath.

Earlier also the Court deferred the final verdict on the plea of Rashid for granting interim bail for taking oath as Member of Parliament on multiple occasions and the latest one was on June 19, 2014.

Rashid recently emerged victorious over former J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in the Baramulla constituency during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, running as an Independent.

Rashid, imprisoned since 2019, faces charges under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) related to alleged terror funding. He is currently detained in Tihar Jail.

Rashid has moved the court seeking interim | [More on P6](#)

## Will Petrol, Diesel Come Under GST? FM Replies

KO Web Desk

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said the intention of the central government has always been to bring petrol and diesel under GST, and it is now up to the states to come together and decide on the rate.

She said a provision has already been made by former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley by including petrol and diesel into GST law. What is remaining is for the states to come together to discuss and decide on the rate of the levy.

"The intention of the GST, as was brought in by former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, was to have petrol and diesel in GST. It is up to the states now... to decide on the rate. The intent of my predecessor was very clear, we want petrol and diesel to come into GST," Sitharaman said.

When GST was introduced



on July 1, 2017, amalgamating over a dozen central and state levies, five commodities -- crude oil, natural gas, petrol, diesel, and aviation turbine fuel (ATF) -- were included in GST law but it was decided that it would be taxed under GST at a later date.

This meant that the central government continued to levy excise duty on them, while state governments charged VAT. These taxes, with excise

duty, in particular, have been raised periodically.

Sitharaman said the intent of the Central Government when GST was implemented was that eventually sometime (later) petrol and diesel can be brought into GST.

"Provision has already been made that it can be brought into GST. One and only decision which is expected is for the states to agree and come to the GST Council and then decide what rate they will agree on."

"Once the states agree in the council, they will have to decide what will be the rate of taxation. Once that decision is taken it will be put in the Act," Sitharaman told reporters after the 53rd GST Council meeting.

Including oil products in GST will not just help companies set off tax that they paid on input but will also bring about uniformity in taxation on fuels in the country.

Notably, the | [More on P6](#)

## NEET, NET Exam Row Centre Sets Up 7-member Reform Panel

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Amid a row over irregularities in competitive exams NEET and NET, the education ministry on Saturday notified a seven-member panel headed by former ISRO chief K Radhakrishnan to ensure transparent, smooth and fair conduct of examinations through the National Testing Agency (NTA).

"Transparent, tamper-free and zero-error examinations are a commitment. Setting up of the high-level committee



of experts is the first of a series of steps to improve the efficiency of the examination process, put an end to all possible malpractices, strengthen data security | [More on P6](#)

## Govt Removes Exam Body Chief

Facing protests in several parts of the country as well as attacks from the opposition, the Centre has removed the chief of the National Testing Agency (NTA) from his post amid the controversy over | [More on P6](#)

## J&K Govt Proposes Support for Over 25,000 OoSC

Agencies

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir government has proposed to provide financial support to more than 25,000 Out of School children (OoSC) in the academic year 2024-25.

According to the official documents available, the concerned authorities from Jammu and Kashmir have proposed to the Ministry of Education (MoE) for financial support for 25393 OoSC.

"With respect to support through National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) for out of school children, it was informed that special centers have been provided by NIOS across the country for students in government schools," it reads.

The MoE has further said that the registration fees in these special centers have been subsidized at Rs 2000 per student.

"This is a | [More on P6](#)





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## Google Brings AI Assistant Gemini's Mobile App To India In 9 Languages

IANs

Amid the growing debate over artificial intelligence (AI) models, Google has launched its AI assistant Gemini's mobile app in India.

The Gemini app is now available in India, supporting English and nine languages — Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu.

The app allows users to type, talk, or even add an image to get the assistance they need.

"We're also adding these local languages to Gemini Advanced, plus other new features, and launching Gemini in Google Messages in English," Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai posted on X social media platform.

According to the company, Gemini Advanced

users in India can now access the power of Gemini 1.5 Pro, its most advanced model, in nine languages.

"Additionally, we're unlocking new features in Gemini Advanced such as new data analysis capabilities and file uploads, and also launching the ability to chat with Gemini in Google Messages, starting in English," said Amar Subramanya, Vice President, Engineering, Gemini Experiences.

On iOS, Gemini access is rolling out directly from the Google app over the next few weeks.

With a 1 million token context window, Gemini Advanced now has the longest context of any widely available consumer chatbot worldwide.

"We're also introducing Gemini in Google Messages to give you another way to collaborate with Gemini on your phone," said the company.

## 'Family History Could Affect Development Of Siblings Of Children With Autism'

Press Trust Of India

Younger siblings of children with autism could experience more developmental difficulties, especially if they have relatives with conditions such as delayed speech, anxiety or schizophrenia, a study has found. Researchers found that the younger siblings showed more severe difficulties in social communication, a common symptom of the neurodevelopmental disorder autism. Other symptoms could include repetitive behaviours and a heightened sensitivity of senses.

"(Knowledge about) family history of these disorders may improve efforts to predict long-term outcomes in younger siblings of children with autism and inform about factors contributing to (varied observable traits and behaviours among them)," said senior author Katarzyna Chawarska, a professor of child psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine, USA.

Information about family history could also guide parents and pediatricians in monitoring and supporting the development of infants with risk factors for disorders such as autism, according to Chawarska.



The findings are published in the Journal Autism Research.

For the study, the researchers included 229 children having at least one elder sibling with autism and assessed their social, cognitive, language and adaptive skills. The children had an average age of about two years and were enrolled between March 2006 and May 2022.

Parents of the 229 children were interviewed for knowing about

Information about family history could also guide parents and pediatricians in monitoring and supporting the development of infants with risk factors for disorders such as autism, according to Chawarska.

## Scholarships This Week

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

### Scholarship Name Legrand Empowering Scholarship Program 2024-25

Description: Legrand invites applications from meritorious girls, differently-abled girls, LGBTQ+ students, Covid-affected students and students with single parents or orphans pursuing B.Tech., B.E., B.Arch., or other undergraduate degrees in Finance or Science (such as B.Sc., B.Com., B.B.A., etc.) across India. The scholarship is meant to support meritorious students to pursue a career in Engineering, Architecture, Finance and Sciences.

Eligibility: The scholarship is open to meritorious girls, differently-abled girls, LGBTQ+ students, Covid-affected students and students with single parents or orphans across India.

Applicants must have secured admission in B.Tech., B.E., B.Arch., B.B.A., B.Com., or B.Sc. degrees in India.

Applicants must have passed

Class 12 in the year 2023-24.

Girl students must have secured a minimum of 70% and above marks in Classes 10 and 12 examinations.

Special category\* students must have secured 60% marks in Classes 10 and 12 examinations. Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The annual family income of the applicant from all sources must be less than INR 5,00,000.

Preference will be given to special category\* students.

\*Special category: Differently-abled girl students, LGBTQ+ students, Covid-affected students, and students with single parents or orphans.

Prizes & Rewards: Girl students are awarded 60% course fees up to INR 60,000 per year till the completion of course based on academic performance.

Students in the special category\* will be awarded 80% fees up to INR 1,00,000 per year till the completion of the course based on

academic performance.

\*Special category: Differently-abled girl students, LGBTQ+ students, Covid-affected students, and students with single parents or orphans.

- Last Date to Apply: 15-07-2024
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/LFLS9](http://www.b4s.in/observer/LFLS9)

### Scholarship Name Raman Kant Munjal Scholarships 2024-25

Description: The Raman Kant Munjal Scholarships 2024-25 is an initiative by the Raman Kant Munjal Foundation, supported by Hero FinCorp, that aims to help undergraduate students pursuing finance-related courses to pursue their dreams of a promising career and a better life.

Eligibility: Students enrolled in the first year of BBA,

BFIA, B.Com. (H, E), BMS, IPM, B.A. (Economics), BBS, BBI, BAF, B.Sc. (Statistics), or any other finance-related degree courses are eligible.

Applicants must have secured at least 80% marks in Classes 10 and 12.

The annual family income of the applicants should be less than INR 4 lakh.

Open for Indian nationals only.

- Prizes & Rewards: Scholarship from INR 40,000 to INR 5,50,000 per year for three years
- Last Date to Apply: 02-08-2024
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/RMKSP4](http://www.b4s.in/observer/RMKSP4)

### Scholarship Name Aadhar Kaushal Scholarship Program for Youth with Disabilities

Description: An initiative of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL) to ensure equal educational opportunities for all physically disabled students, irrespective of their geographical location, gender, or socio-economic condition.

Eligibility: Students with physical disabilities pursuing general or professional undergraduate courses across India. Pan-India students can apply. Students must have achieved a minimum of 60% marks in the preceding academic year. Applicants with a gross annual family income of up to INR 2.5- 3 lakh are eligible to apply.

- Prizes & Rewards: Scholarship between INR 10,000 - INR 50,000
- Last Date to Apply: 23-07-2024
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: [www.b4s.in/observer/AKSP1](http://www.b4s.in/observer/AKSP1)

### PUBLIC NOTICE

My Name has been wrongly written in my driving licence as Fayaz Ahmad Pandith while my correct name as per aadhaar is Fayaz Ahmad Pandit S/o Mohd Ishaq Pandit R/o Alamdar Pora Magam which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the RTO baramulla within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

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S/o Mohd Ishaq Pandit  
R/o Alamdar Pora Magam

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Niyaz Ahmad Ahangar  
S/o Sonaulah Ahangar  
R/o Goom Ahmad Pora

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Irfan Ahmad Mir  
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### اشتہار برآمد گاہی خاص دوام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدور کے نسبت اول، رپورٹ پٹواری حلقہ سے طلب کی گئی۔ رپورٹ پٹواری حلقہ سے عیاں ہوتا ہے کہ سال کا پاپ غلام حسین ڈار مورخہ 19-11-1996 کو فوت ہوا ہے اور غلام حسین ڈار ولد محمد ابراہیم ڈار کے وارثان ہیں۔

نمبر شمار	نام	رشتہ	حیات / فوت شدہ
۱	شوکت علی ڈار	پسر	حیات
۲	شیر حسین ڈار	پسر	حیات
۳	صیغہ جان	دختر	حیات
۴	حسینہ بانو	دختر	حیات
۵	طاہرہ وزیر	دختر	حیات
۶	عرفان عباس	پوتا	حیات
۷	عشرت مظفر	پوتی	حیات
۸	دریشان زہرا	پوتی	حیات
۹	غلام حسین	پوتا	حیات
۱۰	حاجہ بیگم بیوہ مظفر حسین	بیوہ	حیات

اس کے علاوہ موتی مروری بیوہ شفیقہ بیگم بھی فوت ہو چکی ہے اور ایک بیوہ مظفر حسین بھی فوت ہو چکا ہے جس کے وارثین میں سے کسی بیوہ حاجہ بیگم اور مرغان عباس و غلام حسین پسران اور عشرت مظفر و دریشان زہرا دختران بھی بقید حیات ہیں۔

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fko



## Mirwaiz, Bukhari Greet People On Prakash Purab

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir, Molvi Umar Farooq, has extended his heartfelt felicitations to the Sikh community on the birth anniversary of Guru Hargobind Singh Ji.

In his message, Mirwaiz emphasized that the Sikh community has consistently upheld the principles of humanism, religious tolerance, peace, and brotherhood.

He acknowledged the unwavering support and solidarity that the Sikh community has shown towards their Muslim brethren through thick and thin, which has always been deeply valued and appreciated by the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

Apni Party Presi-

dent Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari also extended warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, especially the Sikh community, on the auspicious occasion of Guru Hargobind Ji's birth anniversary.

In his message, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari expressed his belief that the invaluable teachings of Guru Hargobind Ji would continue to act as a guiding light, leading us towards righteousness, fostering unity and equality, and promoting peaceful coexistence.

He urged the Sikh brethren to pray for the sustained peace and prosperity of Jammu and Kashmir as they celebrate this auspicious occasion with great religious fervor.

## DGP Greet People On Prakash Purab, Kabir Jayanti

Observer News Service

Srinagar: On the auspicious occasion of the birth anniversary of Guru Hargobind Singh Ji and Sant Kabir Jayanti, the Director General of Police J&K, R. R. Swain has extended heartfelt greetings and best wishes to members of Police Pariwar, families of martyrs and people of Jammu and Kashmir.

The DGP in his message said that the Guru Hargobind Singh Ji, the sixth Sikh Guru, a remarkable spiritual leader, warrior and visionary, is revered for his teachings of valor, righteousness, and compassion. His life and legacy continue to inspire millions around the world. "Let us draw inspiration from Guru Hargobind Singh Ji's teachings and work with unwavering dedication, courage, and integrity. Let us uphold the values of justice and sacrifices, ensuring the safety and well-being of our people," the DGP added.

He said that Sant Kabir Ji, the great saint and poet, is celebrated

for his profound teachings of love, harmony, and humanity. His timeless wisdom continues to guide us towards a path of righteousness and unity. Kabir Jayanti is a day to reflect on the values of compassion, equality, and brotherhood. His teachings remind us of the importance of living a life of simplicity, integrity, and service to others, he added.

May we all come together to celebrate the day with joy and devotion, while also committing ourselves to the welfare, prosperity and protection of our society, the DGP said. May the blessings of Guru Hargobind Singh Ji and Sant Kabir Ji guide us in our endeavors and strengthen our resolve to serve and protect with honor and compassion, he added.

## GCoE Srinagar To Host NEP-2020 National Conference

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Government College of Education (GCoE), MA Road Srinagar is organizing a National Conference on NEP-2020 on the theme 'Innovative Pedagogical Approaches & Evaluation Reforms in Higher Education' on 25th-26th June, 2024.

The conference will bring together academicians and educationalists in the field of education from across the country to discuss crucial issues pertaining to pedagogy and assessment in higher education.

During the conference, technical sessions would be chaired by academicians from Delhi University, Tata Institute of Social Sciences,

Mumbai, Jamia Millia Islamia, Jammu University, Kashmir University and Cluster University.

Principal, GCoE, Prof. Seema Naz Principal while giving details about the conference said that it will be graced, among others, by distinguished academic leader and innovator, policy maker and Padma Shri awardee Prof. Dinesh Singh. The other notable dignitaries include Prof. A. Ravinder Nath, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Central University of Kashmir; Prof. Manisha Priyam, NIEPA, Ministry of Education, New Delhi and Prof. Yasmeen Ashai, Director Colleges, Higher Education Department, UT of J&K.

The conference coordi-

who had carved out a niche for himself through his hard work," said G.N Var, president of PSAJK.

"In his splendid career, he made a mark for himself through his brilliant and consistent performance. He was known for his pious nature and smiling face. His death has created a deep void in the field of photojournalism. Our heart goes with his family, relatives and friends."

## PSAJK Condolences Demise Of Photojournalist Nisar Ahmad

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Private Schools Association of Jammu and Kashmir (PSAJK) has expressed its condolences over the tragic demise of senior photojournalist Nisar Ahmad of The Hindu newspaper.

The Association termed it a great loss for the entire journalist fraternity. "He was a highly professional and ace photojournalist



## Gandbal Footbridge To Open For Public In July

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The much-anticipated Gandbal Srinagar footbridge, which was the site of a tragic incident in April this year, is scheduled to be completed and opened to the public in the first week of July, according to officials.

An official from the Roads and Buildings (R&B) department informed the news agency—KNO that the construction of the Gandbal Bridge is progressing rapidly and is on track for completion by early July.

This bridge garnered significant attention in April when a boat capsized in the Jhelum River, resulting in the deaths

of eight people, with one person still missing.

Chief Engineer of the R&B department, Sajad Ahmad Naqeeb, confirmed to KNO that the Gandbal Bridge is expected to be ready for public use by the first week of July.

"The work is going on and will be completed on time," he said.

## Soaring Power Bills Takes Toll On Consumers: Tanvir Sadiq

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Chief Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq on Saturday said consumers across J&K are increasingly feeling the pinch of skyrocketing power bills, as electricity tariffs continue to rise unabated.

In a statement issued, Tanvir

said, "The burden of hefty electricity costs is becoming a significant source of frustration and financial strain for many households. People are feeling the strain from the regular power outages. With the scorching heat bearing down, it's pushing people to breaking point. Local protests are going on in areas hit hardest by increased power tariff and unscheduled

power cuts."

Calling the electricity bills backbreaking and unacceptable, Tanvir sought relief for consumers. "Consumer-friendly electricity tariff charges should be worked out to ensure significant relief for all sections of the society particularly those living at the bottom of the social and economic ladder," he added.

### OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY

I did wash my hand ... but.... did I clean it enough? ?Wash it again? is it clean now?

It's not just RECURRENT HANDWASHING AND CHECKING BUT UNSEEN PAIN distress myths and stigma associated with OCD

KASHMER Kashmir American Society of Healthcare, Medical Education & Research in collaboration with HPVT (Help Poor Voluntary Trust) is initiating a free 8 weeks Group therapy for the individuals suffering with OCD by a team of counselling clinical psychologists led by leading consultant clinical psychologist of J& K.

If you or some one you know is experiencing symptoms of OCD, seeking professional help is crucial.

You do not have to fight your battles alone.

There is no need for referral , simply call us for registration.

Happy & Healthy minds Office, HPVT Building (1st Floor), Daresh Kadal Chowk, Srinagar

9070806160

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

**AIRPORTS**  
SHIEKH UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

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

**HIGHWAY STATUS**  
Sgr-Jammu highway - ( Open )  
Mughal Road - (Open)  
Srinagar- Leh- (Open)

HIJRI CALENDAR 16 Zil-Hajj 1445	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	3: 35
	ZUHR	12:33
	ASR	5: 33
	Magrib	7:49
	ISHA	9: 31

## This Day In History

- 1713- The French residents of Acadia are given one year to declare allegiance to Britain or leave Nova Scotia, Canada
- 1724- Russia and Turkey sign Treaty of Constantinople
- 1757- Robert Clive defeats army led by Suraja Dowlaat Plassey, wins control of Bengal
- 1758- Seven Years' War: Battle of Krefeld - British forces defeat French troops at Krefeld in Germany
- 1760- Battle of Landshut Silesia: Austria beats Prussia
- 1794- Russian Empress Catherine II (Catherine the Great) grants Jews permission to settle in Kiev
- 1821- Dutch troops conquer Palembang
- 1828- Miguel I declares himself King of Portugal after leading an absolutist uprising against Maria II
- 1890- In an effort to solve the "Uitlander" (British and foreign) grievances regarding voting rights, President of Transvaal Paul Kruger institutes a Second Volksraad voting chamber, responsible for controlling local matters
- 1898- Emilio Aguinaldo issues a decree replacing his dictatorial government with a revolutionary government, with himself as President
- 1900- British Governor Frederick Hodgson and some of his British supporters flee Fort Coomassie, Gold Coast, Africa, where they have been under siege since 6 April
- 1900- The Young Turks present a manifesto to the major foreign embassies in Constantinople demanding that these foreign powers end the Ottoman Sultan's rule
- 1908- Shah Mohammed Ali leads a successful counter-revolution in Persia, aided by the Russian legation and a Cossack brigade
- 1908- The USA suspends diplomatic relationships with Venezuela after the refusal of Cipriano Castro's government to compensate Americans for injuries suffered in the uprising of 1899
- 1914- Battle of Zacatecas: Pancho Villa's División del Norte attacks and takes the strategic city of Zacatecas, held by President Victoriano Huerta's Constitutionalist forces
- 1915- Italians launch the first of what will become 11 battles to dislodge the Austrians from the Isonzo River, which keeps the Italians from Trieste
- 1919- Nitti government forms in Italy
- 1925- British warship fires on Hong Kong harbor strikers
- 1928- Commencement of West Indies cricket's first ever Test match; England go on to win by an innings and 58 runs at Lord's
- 1935- UK Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden offers Benito Mussolini a Somalian harbor
- 1939- France turns over Sanjak of Alexandretta (Hatay) to Turkey
- 1940- After conquering France, Adolf Hitler visits Paris and views the Eiffel Tower and the grave of Napoleon Bonaparte
- 1940- RAF bombs Schiphol, Netherlands
- 1941- Germany occupies Telz, Lithuania
- 1942- World War II: Germany's latest fighter, a Focke-Wulf FW190 is captured intact when it mistakenly lands at RAF Pembrey in Wales.
- 1943- RAF discovers Werner von Braun's V1/V2-base in Peenemunde
- 1952- US airplanes bomb energy centers at Yalu Korea
- 1960- Japan signs security treaty with the US
- 1961-The Antarctic Treaty, ensuring that Antarctica is used for peaceful purposes; for international cooperation in scientific research; and does not become the scene or object of international discord, comes into force
- 1972-Hurricane Agnes becomes US's costliest natural disaster, effecting 15 states, with 119 deaths, \$3 billion damage
- 1972- President Nixon & his Chief of Staff H. R. Haldeman agree to use CIA to cover up Watergate
- 1973- World Court condemns French nuclear tests in the Pacific
- 1974 -1st extraterrestrial message sent from Earth into space



# Responsibility Towards Kashmir's Environment

Aubaid Ahmed Akhoon

“Educational institutions should conduct awareness programs to educate students about environmental issues and their impact on living flora and fauna. Clean-up drives, tree planting, and the restoration of degraded springs, canals, forests, and wetlands will contribute significantly to our environment

Kashmir, with its charming, soothing, and beautiful landscapes, is rightly called a paradise on Earth. Its weather, streams, waterfalls, mountains, culture, and unparalleled hospitality are treasures that poets, writers, and intellectuals have long celebrated. Allah Almighty has blessed this land with immense natural beauty and has entrusted humanity with the responsibility to protect and appreciate these gifts. The distinction between good and evil is inspired in man, and it is our duty to safeguard the environment that sustains us.

Take, for instance, the world-famous Dal Lake. Had its cleanliness been maintained from the outset, the government would not need to spend crores of rupees annually for its preservation—funds that could instead have furthered Kashmir's development. Unfortunately, Dal Lake, like many other water bodies such as Wullar Lake and Manasbal Lake, has suffered significant environmental degradation. Environmentalists reveal that 75% of Dal Lake has been destroyed, and the aquatic life severely affected. The Lakes and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA), established to restore Dal Lake's splendor, has failed at various levels.

My hometown panderathan is located on the banks of the Jhelum River. My father reminisces about a time, thirty years ago, when Jhelum's water was safe to drink without filtration. Today, we are wary of using even tap water without filtering it first. This decline reflects the broader environmental crisis we face, one that demands immediate and sustained action.

According to a poignant verse: "The house caught fire with its own lamp." We have, indeed, inflicted damage upon ourselves through negligence. Tourism, a vital component of Kashmir's economy, hinges on our ability to preserve the natural beauty that attracts visitors. With the upcoming Amarnath Yatra, it is imperative that government departments implement effective measures to keep Pahalgam Valley clean and free from environmental pollution.

Two years ago, the government issued an advisory directing the Forest Department to create a digital inventory and geo-spatial database of Jammu and Kashmir's wetlands. This initiative aimed to profile various wetlands and recommend their notification under the Environment Protection Act, 1986, and the Wetland (Conservation & Management) Rules, 2017. Despite having 3,754 water bodies regulated by different departments, significant progress remains unseen.

World Environment Day, celebrated annually on June 5th, aims to raise awareness about environmental protection. This year's theme, "Land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience," and the slogan "Our Land, Our Future," underline the urgent need for collective action. As Saudi Arabia hosts the global celebrations, over 143 countries will collaborate to formulate sustainable policies and address pressing environmental challenges.

The health of humans is intrinsically linked to a clean and healthy environment, which provides essential resources like clean air, pure water, and nutritious food. These are fundamental to life, and their disturbance profoundly impacts human health. The quality of our environment significantly contributes to all sectors of life in Jammu and Kashmir. However, over the last two decades, the region has faced alarming environ-



mental challenges such as global warming, climate change, glacier melting, water crises, pollution, deforestation, and land degradation.

Unbridled anthropogenic activities, including urbanization, technological advancement, agricultural expansion, and industrialization, have exerted tremendous pressure on our natural resources. This reckless exploitation has led to significant environmental degradation. The eco-fragile region of Jammu and Kashmir is teetering on the brink of an ecological disaster, evidenced by the devastation of forests, mountains, glaciers, water bodies, and wetlands.

We must remember the devastating floods of September 2014 and the recent flash floods, landslides, and land sinking incidents—nature's stark warnings. Increasing unregulated construction in eco-fragile areas is transforming our mesmerizing landscapes into urban jungles. Furthermore, outdated industries, brick kilns, cement factories, and stone crushers pose severe threats to air quality and the environment.

Illegal mining activities have damaged fertile Karewa lands and Nallahs, resulting in the loss of aquatic life and jobs for thousands of people. The recent fish deaths in Sukhnag Nallah highlight the severe impact of pollution and illegal mining. It is the collective responsibility of all stakeholders, including NGOs, civil society, religious leaders, teachers, and students, to ensure the protection and preservation of our environment.

Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of environmental stewardship. The Quran states, "And do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption" (Quran 2:60). This verse underlines our duty to prevent environmental harm. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also said, "The earth is green and beautiful, and Allah has appointed you his stewards over it" (Sahih Muslim). This Hadith highlights our role as caretakers of the Earth.

The rapid melting of glaciers in Jammu and Kashmir has affected water availability and hydrological regimes. Many areas face drought, land degradation, and desertification. World En-

vironment Day reminds us of the importance of environmental protection and the need for collective action to create a sustainable future. We must undertake mitigation measures to minimize further damage to our fragile environment.

Educational institutions should conduct awareness programs to educate students about environmental issues and their impact on living flora and fauna. Clean-up drives, tree planting, and the restoration of degraded springs, canals, forests, and wetlands will contribute significantly to our environment. Sustainable practices, such as using eco-friendly products, renewable energy sources, and conserving natural resources, are essential.

Reducing our carbon footprint, controlling deforestation, banning illegal mining, promoting recycling, and implementing strict environmental laws are critical steps. Article 48-A of the Indian Constitution states that the state shall endeavor to protect and improve the environment and safeguard the country's forests and wildlife. Article 51-A emphasizes that every citizen's duty is to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers, and wildlife.

To revive the clean and green Jammu and Kashmir of two decades ago, we must work sincerely for our bruised and battered environment. With collective effort, we can again drink fresh water from our water bodies, breathe clean air, and enjoy the mesmerizing beauty of our landscapes. It is the responsibility of all stakeholders to ensure better protection and preservation of the environment. Together, we can create a sustainable and resilient environment for future generations and ourselves.

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

Kunal Walia & Rositsa Zaimova

Santosh, a small farmer in Uttar Pradesh, is eagerly awaiting harvest season. He recently acquired an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered farm advisory device that was distributed in his village as part of a pilot by a global agri-tech firm. The device runs on a software that assesses weather, soil, and water conditions to predict crop patterns. Having proved useful for farmers in the American Midwest, the technology has generated great excitement in this UP hamlet. A week before harvest, however, Santosh finds that his fields have been destroyed by pests endemic to the region. The software, he learns, is built on data based on North American topography. Santosh now has to rely on informal jobs in the nearest city to make ends meet till the next sowing season.

This scenario illustrates the dangers of positioning AI technologies as transformative without ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the data on which it is built. In March, the European Union approved the Artificial Intelligence Act, which could help address such concerns — including in sectors that have a direct impact on people's lives and livelihoods such as agriculture, healthcare, or education. The pioneering legislation defines four risk levels for AI and poses strict obligations on "high-risk" systems, which include ensuring quality data sets to minimise discriminatory outcomes and biases.

The approval of the law is timely, given that we are increasingly seeing off-the-shelf AI solutions that are trained on western and non-diverse data sets being deployed in developing countries. The new regulation — and the impetus it offers other

regions to draft their own laws — is a useful backdrop against which AI developers and impact institutions could work together to reverse this trend.

### Assessing AI bias

Thinking back to Santosh's predicament, if the inaccurate data used by the tech firm had been detected early on or the AI advisory had been supplemented with locally relevant information, it could have helped him avert disaster. In order for this to happen, people and organisations building AI systems need to introduce an additional layer of testing for bias assessment. Fortunately, there are several frameworks they can choose from.

For instance, retrieval-augmented generation assessment or RAGA, coined by researchers from Facebook AI Research, University College London, and New York University. Retrieval-augmented generation refers to a group of large language model (LLMs) applications that use external data. They have two components: retrieval, the extraction of information from external contexts; and generation of a response based on that information.

Another popular framework, recall-oriented understudy for gisting evaluation, or ROUGE,

uses human output as a metric. This is primarily useful for LLM applications that generate text-based output such as summaries or translations.

Equally important is establishing regular feedback loops through human oversight — what is known as reinforcement learning from human feedback or RLHF. This is indispensable as it allows AI systems to get better at mimicking human output over time so it can perform more layered tasks. Such AI bias assessment frameworks need to be rigorously applied by all stakeholders that have a hand in creating AI tools. Further, productising these frameworks could introduce an even greater degree of compliance within the private sector.

But if well-developed solutions already exist, why is uptake not up to the mark?

### Funding support

Tools that aid rigorous stress-testing of AI models before deployment require large-scale investment. While comprehensive data on AI funding is limited, we know the private sector tends to hold back from investing in areas that do not have demonstrable proof of return on investment. Impact institutions such as philanthropies and in-

ternational development organisations can play a key role in bridging the funding gap.

Social impact institutions are increasingly engaging with AI innovations. For instance, US-AID supports GeoKRISHI, a web application that integrates government, geographical information system, and crowdsourced data to provide evaluations of crop suitability for key stages. It has also invested in Dimagi, which has an open-source platform combining mobile health data and machine learning-based satellite image analysis to identify and forecast Zika virus hotspots. Similarly, the World Bank Group is backing Project Artemis, which is building an AI model to forecast famine risk at a local level.

While this is promising, the scope of support needs to expand to include risk and bias assessment. Dalberg analysis of 10 leading global philanthropic organisations showed that only 23% of the grants towards AI are directed towards addressing concerns around risks and ethics. With a greater push by social impact institutions and the right incentives for the private sector, we can ensure that AI systems become more inclusive of the people they seek to serve. And that the conversation driven by a handful of large institutions in the Global North do not impact the course of action in the Global South.

*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*



# On Innovation

## What Makes People Creative

Muzamil Farooq

Knowing what motivates people to be creative is essential for any manager, teacher, or student concerned with creativity and, ultimately, innovation. So let's take a look at some extremely creative people. What about Leonardo da Vinci, for example, the well-known 15th-century artist and scientist? He created beautiful paintings as well as nice blueprints for various types of innovations, such as aeroplanes, long before they were built. He is regarded as one of the greatest minds that ever lived. How about Thomas Edison? Among many of his novel inventions, he invented the light bulb and the motion picture camera, both of which were implemented in various products and found to be extremely useful. What about the well-known artist Salvador Dali? He was well-known not only for his beautiful surrealist paintings, but also for his sculptures and jewellery. What do these individuals have in common? What inspires these creative geniuses? Some argue that creative geniuses are slightly insane, and that it is the madness that drives them to be creative.

Let's take a look at what inspires people to be creative. Teresa Amabile, a Harvard scientist, developed a model that specifies the factors that are important for people to become creative as early as the 1980s. She specified three variables. The first is expertise, which includes technical, procedural, and intellectual knowledge of the domain in which one works. The second factor is motivation, or the willingness to complete a task. Finally, the third factor is creative thinking abilities, which refer to how effectively and imaginatively people can approach problems. According to the Amabile arc, all three of these factors are required for creativity to emerge. So, rather than having just one of them, you need to have all three to some extent in order to be creative.

Let's take a closer look at these three components. When people consider expertise, they frequently believe that there is such a thing as too much knowledge. And perhaps this is true

in the sense that some people have been working in a job for too long and have learned so much that they can no longer think outside the box. But, in all honesty, what is far more of a problem is a lack of knowledge. Why is a lack of knowledge such

ideas that are completely unrelated. It is therefore difficult to be creative unless you have sufficient knowledge and expertise to speak for these four elements.

Let's take a look at the second aspect of motivation. People frequently distinguish between

you work because you want money or a promotion, or maybe you work to keep your house from being foreclosed on because you owe money on it. All of this is an example of extrinsic motivation. You engage in an activity, but you do so in exchange

advantages. For instance, if you are more intrinsically motivated, you are more likely to overcome obstacles that arise. You are more willing to overcome them and go the extra mile. You are more willing to continue after a failure, and this is an important aspect of

creativity. So, if you want to be creative, it helps to be intrinsically motivated.

Let's take a look at the final aspect of creativity. The final component is called creative thinking skills, and it is all about how adaptable and imaginative you can be when approaching problems. This is difficult because many people live their lives like robots, as if everything is pre-programmed for them, which makes sense because it is very efficient. For example, when we say goodbye to someone, we simply wave and say bye bye. This is something we do automatically. We don't have to consider it. This is also true for many of the things we do. We don't consider them; we just do them. While this is beneficial because it is efficient, it works against you if you want to come up with a creative solution. Being creative may be difficult if you behave like a robot. When you use automatic scripts and schemas from your head, you stop thinking too soon before you find the best solution. You also make far too many assumptions about what is going on. In some ways, it's better to think like a child, like someone who hasn't learned all of these assumptions, all of these automatic scripts and schemas, a person who sees a box and thinks it's more than just a box.

It's a fortress. It's a ship. That kind of thinking, thinking outside of the box, is exactly what it takes to create and be creative. So, let's sum it up. What inspires people to be creative? Is this insane? Perhaps for some, but for others, there are three critical elements. Having enough knowledge, being intrinsically motivated, and having creative thinking skills are all necessary for being creative. Creativity is the generation of novel and useful ideas, while innovation is the successful implementation of these ideas within a company. In other words, every innovation begins with a creative idea, and with the mentioned three elements of creativity, the good news is that everyone has the ability to be creative.

*The author is a Student M.Sc. Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship at NIT Srinagar*



**THERE IS ALSO INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, WHICH IS WHEN YOU DO SOMETHING SIMPLY because you enjoy it and would do it anyway if you didn't get anything out of it other than joy and satisfaction**

two types of motivation when discussing motivation: extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation refers to doing a task not because you enjoy it, but because of something you gain from it. Consider the carrot and the stick. Maybe

for a reward. There is also intrinsic motivation, which is when you do something simply because you enjoy it and would do it anyway if you didn't get anything out of it other than joy and satisfaction. And we know that intrinsic motivation has some

creativity, failing, failing, failing before you can succeed. Intrinsic motivation increases your willingness to work hard and think about the problem continuously, and all of these factors combine to make intrinsic motivation such an important component of

# Estranged by Time

## Alienation in the Aging Process

Nigel R. Bairstow

Aging, an inevitable part of the human experience, is often accompanied by significant social, psychological, and physical changes. The concept of alienation, a term originally rooted in Marxist theory, provides a critical lens through which to examine the challenges and experiences associated with aging. Alienation, in its broadest sense, refers to a sense of estrangement or disconnection from various aspects of one's life or society. When applied to aging, alienation theory helps elucidate the ways in which elderly individuals may feel isolated, marginalized, and disconnected from society, their work, and even their own identities.

The United Nations has launched its first report on the Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030), highlighting efforts to improve the lives of older adults since 2020. The report captures the impact of major challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused over 80% of deaths among those over 60 and showcases activities supporting healthy aging in nearly 50 countries. Significant progress includes increased legislation against ageism, better access to assistive products, comprehensive

health and social care assessments, and the promotion of age-friendly communities, based on a survey conducted across 136 countries.

### The Historical Context of Alienation Theory

The term alienation was extensively developed by Karl Marx, who used it to describe the estrangement of workers from the products of their labour, the labour process, their fellow workers, and their own human potential. Marx argued that under capitalism, workers become alienated because they are deprived of the opportunity to see their labour as an expression of their creativity and humanity. Over time, the concept of alienation has been extended beyond the economic sphere to include various forms of social and personal estrangement.

### Aging and Social Alienation

One of the primary ways alienation manifests in the context of aging is through social alienation. As individuals age, they often experience a shrinking social network due to retirement, the death of peers, and physical limitations. This reduction in social interactions can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. The disintegration of social connections is particu-



larly acute in societies where the elderly are not integrated into the broader community but are instead segregated in nursing homes or retirement communities.

Moreover, societal attitudes towards aging often exacerbate this alienation. Ageism, or discrimination based on age, is a pervasive issue that affects the elderly. Older individuals are frequently perceived as

less competent, less valuable, and more burdensome. These stereotypes can lead to their marginalization and exclusion from meaningful participation in social, economic, and political life. The internalization of these negative stereotypes can also contribute to a diminished sense of self-worth and identity among the elderly.

### Alienation From Work and

### Productivity

The transition from work to retirement is another significant factor contributing to the alienation of the elderly. In many cultures, work is a central component of an individual's identity and self-worth. Retirement, while often viewed as a period of well-deserved rest, can also be a time of significant identity loss. The cessation of work-related activities and the absence of daily routines can lead to feelings of purposelessness and disconnection from society.

Additionally, the economic implications of retirement can contribute to alienation. Many elderly individuals face financial instability due to inadequate pensions or savings, leading to economic marginalisation. The struggle to maintain financial independence can heighten feelings of alienation as they navigate a society that often values individuals based on their economic contributions.

### Alienation From the Self

Aging can also lead to a profound sense of alienation from the self. This form of alienation arises when individuals no longer recognize themselves due to the physical and cognitive changes associated with aging. The loss of physical abilities, chronic illnesses,

and cognitive decline can alter an individual's self-perception and self-esteem. The discrepancy between their internal sense of self and their external reality can create a sense of estrangement from their own bodies and identities.

Moreover, the societal emphasis on youth and beauty can intensify this self-alienation. The media and cultural narratives often portray aging in a negative light, celebrating youth and vitality while depicting old age as a period of decline and obsolescence. This cultural devaluation of aging can lead to internalised ageism, where elderly individuals adopt negative attitudes towards themselves and their aging process.

### Addressing Alienation in Aging

Understanding alienation in the context of aging is crucial for developing interventions and policies that promote the well-being of the elderly. Addressing social alienation requires fostering inclusive communities where the elderly are valued and integrated. This can be achieved through intergenerational programs, community engagement initiatives, and policies that combat ageism and promote social inclusion.

To mitigate alienation from work, societies need to rec-

ognize and value the contributions of older individuals beyond their economic productivity. Flexible retirement policies, opportunities for lifelong learning, and avenues for voluntary work can help maintain a sense of purpose and engagement among the elderly.

Addressing self-alienation involves challenging societal narratives that devalue aging and promoting a positive and realistic portrayal of the aging process. Encouraging self-acceptance and providing support for managing physical and cognitive changes can help elderly individuals maintain a positive self-concept.

In conclusion, alienation theory offers a valuable framework for understanding the multifaceted experiences of aging. By recognising the ways in which elderly individuals may feel estranged from society, work, and themselves, we can develop more effective strategies to promote their well-being and social integration. Addressing alienation in aging not only enhances the quality of life for the elderly but also fosters a more inclusive and compassionate society for all ages.

*The article was originally published by Psychology Today*



# Israel pounds Rafah tent camps, killing at least 25: Gaza officials

Agenceis

Israeli forces shelled tent camps for displaced Palestinians north of Rafah on Friday, killing at least 25 people and wounding another 50 according to Gaza's Heath Ministry and emergency workers, in the latest deadly attack in the tiny Palestinian territory where hundreds of thousands have fled fighting between Israel and Hamas.

According to Ahmed Radwan, a spokesperson for the Civil Defence first responders in Rafah, witnesses told rescue workers about the shelling at two locations in a coastal area that has become filled with tents. The Health Ministry reported the number of people killed and wounded in the attacks.

The locations of the attacks provided by Civil Defence were just outside an Israeli-designated safe zone. The Israeli military said they were looking into the strikes at the reported coordinates. Israel has previously bombed locations in the vicinity of the humanitarian zone in Muwasi, a rural area on



the Mediterranean coast that has filled with sprawling tent camps in recent months.

The strikes came as Israel pushed ahead with its military operation in Rafah, where over a million Palestinians had sought refuge from fighting elsewhere in Gaza. Most have now fled Rafah, but the United Nations says no place in Gaza is safe and humanitarian conditions are dire as families shelter in tents and cramped apartments without adequate food, water, or medical supplies.

Friday's strikes took place less

than a month after an Israeli bombing triggered a deadly fire that tore through a camp for displaced Palestinians in southern Gaza, drawing widespread international outrage including from some of Israel's closest allies over the military's expanding offensive into Rafah.

Israel says it is targeting Hamas fighters and infrastructure and that it tries to minimize civilian deaths. It blames the large number of civilian casualties on militants and says it's because they operate among the population.

With Israel's war against Hamas now in its ninth month, international criticism is growing over Israel's campaign of systematic destruction in Gaza, at a huge cost in civilian lives. The top United Nations court has concluded there is a plausible risk of genocide in Gaza a charge Israel strongly denies.

Israeli ground offensives and bombardments have killed more than 37,100 people in Gaza, according to the territory's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between combatants and civilians in its count.

## Israel-Hezbollah tensions

# Lebanon cannot become another Gaza, says UN chief Guterres

Agenceis

Amid the escalating tensions between Israel and Hezbollah, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday said that Lebanon cannot become another Gaza.

Guterres expressed his profound concerns regarding the intensifying Israel-Lebanon tensions. He said that the UN is working to calm the situation.

While speaking to the reporters, Guterres said "One rash move – one miscalculation – could trigger a catastrophe that goes far beyond the border, and frankly, beyond imagination."

"Let's be clear: The people of the region and the people of the world cannot afford Lebanon to become another Gaza," he added.

Since the Gaza war erupted in October, Hezbollah has been attacking Israel in solidarity with the Hamas. Thousands of people, especially in the border regions had fled due to the intensified attacks.

With Hezbollah's new threat

of waging another war, people are gripped with fear and concerns. Tens of thousands of Lebanese have fled their homes following Israeli strikes in south Lebanon.

Meanwhile, Iran's mission to the UN said on Friday that Hezbollah has the capability to defend itself and Lebanon against Israel, warning that "perhaps the time for the self-annihilation of this illegitimate regime has come". "Any imprudent decision by the occupying Israeli regime to save itself could plunge the region into a new war," Iran's UN mission posted on X.

"UN peacekeepers are on the ground working to de-escalate tensions and help prevent miscalculation," Guterres said. "The world must say loudly and clearly: immediate de-escalation is not only possible it is essential," he added.

The US has also urged Israel to avoid further escalation in Lebanon. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Thursday told Israeli officials of the need to avoid further escalation in

Lebanon amid the war in Gaza. New Hezbollah threats

The recent Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah's threat to Cyprus has sent waves of uncertainty in the country. Nasrallah in its threat told the Middle-East country not to allow Israel's military to use its airports on the island to bomb Lebanon should a full-blown war break out between Israel and the Iran-backed Hezbollah.

Over 400 people, including civilians, have died along the Lebanon-Israel border since the Gaza war began last year.

With the recent killing of Hezbollah's most senior commander by Israel, the tensions have intensified. Hezbollah retaliated by firing hundreds of rockets into northern Israel.

Cyprus and Lebanon have had close and historic relations for decades and the island became a refuge for thousands of Lebanese who resided on the island during Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war. Following the economic meltdown in Lebanon in late 2019 too many Lebanese citizens moved to Cyprus.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Rain Brings

Anantnag, Budgam, Bandipora, Baramulla, Kulgam, Pulwama, Shopian and Srinagar have recorded deficient rainfall during the period.

Srinagar and Pulwama have recorded the highest deficient rainfall of 50 per cent and 55 per cent respectively, the data reveals

### LG Urges Support

route in Anantnag and the 14-km shorter but steep Baltal route in Ganderbal — on June 29, a day after the first batch of pilgrims will leave Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu for the valley.

Over 4.5 lakh pilgrims performed the pilgrimage last year and offered their prayers at the naturally formed ice-shivlingam inside the cave shrine.

ADGP, Jammu on Friday conducted an extensive review of the security arrangements on the 270-km Jammu-Srinagar national highway for the upcoming yatra, a police spokesperson said.

He was accompanied by Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Doda-Kishtwar-Ramban Range, Shridhar Patil, Jammu DIG (Traffic) Dr Haseeb Mughal, Ramban Senior Superintendent of Police Anuj Kumar, SSP (Traffic National Highway) Rohit Baskotra.

ADGP Jain inspected the security measures implemented on the highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, especially at community kitchens, lodgement centres and checking spots at key locations.

Highlighting the potential threats from anti-national elements aiming to disrupt the yatra, Jain underscored the necessity of foolproof security and emphasised the need for the highest level of alertness.

He urged the officers to keep a close watch on any suspicious activity and maintain round-the-clock vigilance, the spokesman said.

Jain also stressed the importance of a coordinated and people-friendly approach to ensure the comfort and security of pilgrims.

The ADGP also gave instructions to the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) personnel to remain extra vigilant and responsive to any emergencies, ensuring prompt rescue operations in case of any unexpected mishaps due to natural or man-made calamities.

During the inspection, Jain checked the functioning of CCTV cameras, the communication network, and transport arrangements of security forces, the spokesperson said.

### “J&K At Forefront

make Yatra memorabilia. A dedicated website shivamsankalpamastu.in and Nandi- the Yatra Saarthi App will be accurate info sources related to Yatra and sanitation, he added.

He also lauded the initiatives aimed at creating awareness among the pilgrims and all the stakeholders. He said the anthem 'Chal Amarnath' symbolises the convergence of spirituality, natural heritage and ecology.

The LG called upon the officials and all stakeholders to make dedicated efforts for the installation of all the requisite facilities in view of the annual Yatra, on priority.

He emphasized on sensitization of sanitation workers on cleanliness and hygiene. We need to pay special attention towards environment-friendly disposal of solid waste and piped water and power connection, lighting, and availability of necessary facilities

at all toilets, he said.

Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Chief Executive Officer, Amarnath Shrine Board; Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Secretary, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Department; Anoo Malhotra, Director General, Rural Sanitation, and other senior officials attended the launch ceremony.

### “Prioritise Neutralizing

The LG on Saturday chaired a high-level security and district development review meeting in Jammu with the DCs and SSPs of 10 districts of the division and senior officials of Civil and Police Administration.

Sinha reviewed the overall security scenario in the region.

The LG also took stock of the development projects and the progress achieved on saturation of social welfare and other government schemes

The DCs briefed the chair on the implementation of Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), development of Industrial Estates and extension of public services.

The meeting also discussed the preparations ahead of the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra and important matters related to Yatra Security; traffic management; essential facilities for yatriss on the route; lodging, upgradation of roads; distribution of RFID Cards etc.

The LG also sought the action taken report on the measures taken by the Districts and Police administration to control the increasing incidents of accidents, illegal mining activities, and the steps taken to curb the drug menace.

He highlighted the growing concern of the people over road safety and road accidents in hilly districts of Jammu division resulting in severe injuries and fatalities.

To address this issue, the LG instructed DCs and SSPs to adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards traffic rule violators and strict monitoring and penalization. He said unfit vehicles flouting rules should be immediately identified and impounded.

The meeting was attended by Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; RR Swain, DGP; Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary Home Department; Vijay Kumar, ADGP Law & Order; Nitish Kumar, ADGP CID; Anand Jain, ADGP Jammu; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to LG; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu, DIGs, Deputy Commissioners, SSPs and other senior officials

### Yatra Security

around the heavily guarded base camp to inspect the arrangements ahead of the annual pilgrimage.

The 52-day pilgrimage will commence via the traditional 48-kilometre Nunwan-Pahalgam route in Anantnag and the 14-kilometre shorter but steep Baltal route in Ganderbal on June 29.

"The first batch of pilgrims will be flagged off from here (Bhagwati Nagar) on June 28 and the yatra will start (in Kashmir) the next day. We have come to oversee the arrangements and had a meeting with officers of various departments concerned," the chief secretary told reporters at the base camp.

"Almost all arrangements are in place and we are working to ensure better facilities for pilgrims to make their stay comfortable," he added.

Dulloo said there has been a manifold increase in the capacity of lodgement centres and other facilities for pilgrims and the pilgrimage will be monitored.

"Adequate security measures are being put in place. Whatever has to be done will be done as yatra security is our top priority," he said.

### First Batch Of Hajj

Committee has already issued the return flight schedule upto 29 June with two flights scheduled for 23 June at 11:50 AM and 4:25 PM

### UAPA Tribunal

was banned for fomenting terrorism and spreading anti-India propaganda in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Union Home Ministry, while imposing the ban, had said the leaders and members of TeH have been involved in raising funds through various sources, including Pakistan and its proxy organisations, for perpetrating unlawful activities, including supporting terrorist activities and sustained stone-pelting on the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir.

The ministry had said TeH and its members by their activities show sheer disrespect towards the constitutional authority and constitutional set up of the country and have been indulging in unlawful activities, which are prejudicial to the integrity, sovereignty, security and communal harmony of the country.

While banning Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (Masarat Alam faction), the ministry had said it was in response to the outfit's involvement in anti-national and secessionist activities in Jammu and Kashmir, with the intent to create a reign of terror in the country.

Masarat Alam Bhat is known for his anti-India and pro-Pakistan propaganda.

Bhat became the chairman of the headline faction of the Hurriyat Conference following the death of Syed Ali Shah Geelani. Currently, he is in jail.

The ministry, in a notification, had stated that the objectives of the Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (Masarat Alam faction) are to attain freedom for Jammu and Kashmir from India, merge it with Pakistan, and establish Islamic rule.

### J&K's Political

rushing into elections under the pressure of the Supreme Court's orders without first restoring statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. Raman Bhalla, the acting president of the state Congress, emphasized the need for statehood restoration and criticized the BJP for failing to ensure security and normalcy in the region.

Similarly, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) echoed the demand for statehood, with general secretary Amrik Singh highlighting the necessity of an elected government to address the administrative and governance issues faced by the common people.

Despite the criticisms, the BJP remains confident. State President Ravindra Raina stated that the party is fully prepared for the elections, buoyed by their performance in the recent Lok Sabha elections. The BJP aims to emerge as the dominant political force in the upcoming assembly elections. (KNO)

### Jmu-Sgr Rail Line

the newly constructed electrified line section (Reasi-Sangaldan), covering a route length of 46 kilometers on the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, at a speed of 40 kmph. Notably, this trial marked the first time a full train crossed over the iconic Chenab River bridge between Dugga and Bakkal stations. This bridge is the world's highest railway bridge, featuring a central span of 467 meters

at an impressive height of 359 meters.

The USBRL project has been progressing in phases, with 209 kilometers already out of the total 272 kilometers already commissioned. The phases include the 118-kilometer Qazigund-Baramulla section commissioned in October 2009, the 18-kilometer Banihal-Qazigund section in June 2013, the 25-kilometer Udhampur-Katra section in July 2014, and the 48.1-kilometer Banihal-Sangaldan stretch in February this year.

With the commissioning of the 46-kilometer Sangaldan-Reasi section, only the 17-kilometer stretch between Reasi and Katra remains to be completed. This segment is expected to be finished by the end of the year, connecting Kashmir with the rest of the country by train. Work on the project began in 1997 and has faced numerous delays due to geological, topographical, and meteorological challenges.

The 1.3-kilometer Chenab rail bridge, located 359 meters above the riverbed and 35 meters higher than the Eiffel Tower in Paris, forms a crucial link in the project. The Jammu and Kashmir Administration has already announced plans to develop the bridge as a tourist spot. The base of the steel and concrete arch bridge between Bakkal and Kauri, 42 kilometers from Reasi town, was completed in November 2017.

Construction of the main arch was finished in April 2021, and the over-arch deck was completed in August 2022 with the 'Golden Joint', paving the way for track laying which was completed the following year.

As the project nears its final stages, the anticipation and optimism surrounding the USBRL project are palpable, with expectations that it will significantly transform Jammu and Kashmir's transportation landscape.

### Delhi Court Defers

bail, or custody parole in the alternative, to take oath and perform his parliamentary functions.

The former MLA's name cropped up during the interrogation of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali, who the NIA had arrested for allegedly funding terrorist groups and separatists in the Valley.

The NIA had filed a charge sheet against several individuals, including Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik, Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed and Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin in the case.

Malik was awarded life imprisonment by a trial court in 2022 after he pleaded guilty to the charges.

### Will Petrol, Diesel

53rd GST Council meeting on Saturday recommended the reduction of Goods and Service Tax (GST) on all kinds of carton boxes from 18 per cent to 12 per cent.

Himachal Pradesh has been persistently pleading for the reduction of GST on apple carton boxes and this reduction will help both horticulturists and the industry in saving costs, a statement issued here said.

Industries Minister Harshwardhan Chauhan, representing the State, thanked the council for taking the decision unanimously on the proposal of the state. He said that the decision would also help the industry reduce working capital costs.

The Council took a number of decisions to ease the compliance burden and grievances of small and medium taxpayers.

A monetary limit has been set for tax department appeals: Rs 20 lakh for

GST Appellate Tribunal, Rs 1 crore for the High Court, and Rs 2 crore for the Supreme Court. The tax department generally won't appeal if the amount is below these limits.

The maximum pre-deposit amount for filing an appeal has been reduced to Rs 20 crore for both CGST and SGST. Services provided by Indian Railways, like platform tickets and retiring rooms, are exempted from GST.

Hostel accommodation services outside educational institutions are exempt from GST if the cost is up to Rs 20,000. It is meant for students or working class and exemption can be availed only if the stay is up to 90 days.

The 53rd GST council meeting was held in New Delhi. The 52nd GST Council meeting took place on October 7, 2023.

### Centre Sets Up

protocols and overhaul and reform the NTA," Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said.

"Students' interests and their bright future will always be our government's top priority," he added.

The ministry's notification comes two days after Pradhan announced the setting up of the committee.

The panel will make recommendations on reforms in the mechanism of the examination process, improvement in data security protocols and the structure and functioning of the NTA. It is supposed to submit its report within two months.

The panel also includes former AIIMS Delhi director Randeep Guleria, Central University of Hyderabad Vice-Chancellor B J Rao, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Civil Engineering at IIT Madras K Ramamurthy, People Strong co-founder and Karmayogi Bharat board member Pankaj Bansal, IIT Delhi Dean of Student Affairs Aditya Mittal and Ministry of Education Joint Secretary Govind Jaiswal.

"The panel will analyse the end-to-end examination process and suggest measures to improve efficiency of the system and to forestall any possible breach. It will conduct a thorough review of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and protocols of the NTA, and suggest measures to strengthen these procedures and protocols along with monitoring mechanism to ensure compliance at every level," the Ministry of Education said in a statement.

The committee has also been tasked with examining the existing security protocols related to the setting of the papers and other processes for different examinations and making recommendations to enhance the robustness of the system.

The NTA, which is under fire over the lapses in the conduct of NEET and UGC-NET, is gearing up to conduct on Sunday a retest for the medical entrance exam for 1,563 candidates who were earlier awarded grace marks to make up for the loss of time at six centres.

While medical NEET is under scanner over several irregularities, including alleged leaks, the UGC-NET was cancelled a day after it was conducted as the ministry received inputs that the integrity of the exam was compromised.

### Govt Removes

the alleged irregularities in NEET-UG and the cancellation of the UGC-NET Exam.

In a statement on Saturday, the Ministry of Personnel announced that Subodh Kumar Singh, who was the director general of the NTA, has been replaced by retired Indian Administration Service (IAS) officer

Pradeep Singh Kharola. Mr Kharola is the Chairman and Managing Editor of the India Trade Promotion Organisation and has been given additional charge as the Director General of the NTA "till the appointment of a regular incumbent or until further orders".

The move comes hours after the government constituted a committee which will give recommendations to improve the functioning of the agency and a day before around 1,500 students who had been given grace marks for NEET-UG will take a retest.

The CSIR UGC NET exam - scheduled to be held from June 25 to June 27 - also had to be postponed due to "logistical reasons" on Friday and the NEET-UG exam, scheduled for Sunday, was rescheduled late on Saturday.

Sources told NDTV that the repeated allegations of leaks in exams conducted by the NTA and the inconvenience caused to students, as well as the outpouring of anger among them, had made Mr Singh's position tenuous. Pressure from a resurgent opposition as well as adverse remarks by the Supreme Court against the NTA also played a role in the decision.

The move is also part of a promised overhaul of the National Testing Agency, which has been spoken about by Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan as well. Sources said that, at a recent Cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had asked Mr Pradhan to take action, and the crack-down has now begun.

Punishing The Guilty

The priority for the government now, they said, is to get to the bottom of the alleged paper leaks and bring the guilty to book. This is especially important since the NTA organises several key examinations, including the NEET and JEE, for which lakhs of students appear. The Supreme Court is also scheduled to hear petitions on the issue on July 8.

Earlier on Saturday, the government constituted a seven-member committee to look at ways of improving the functioning of the NTA. The panel will be led by Dr K Radhakrishnan, a former ISRO chief and the current chairperson of the board of governors of IIT Kanpur, and will have former AIIMS director Dr Randeep Guleria as one of the members.

After the committee was formed, Pradhan said it was the first in a series of steps to improve the efficiency of the examination process.

"Transparent, tamper-free and zero-error examinations is a commitment. Setting up of the high-level committee of experts is the first of a series of step to improve efficiency of the examination process, put an end to all possible malpractices, strengthen data security protocols and overhaul and reform the NTA. Student interests and their bright future will always be our govt's top priority," he posted on X.

### J&K Govt Proposes

special provision made by NIOS for out of school children identified through the PRABANDH portal and examination fees are also exempted for first timers," it reads.

MoE has further mentioned that many states have undertaken enrolment drives for identification and mainstreaming out of school children.

"In this context, it was pointed out that the basic role of the School Management Committees should be monitoring and supervision of this exercise on a regular basis and ensuring all students enrolled are coming to school and not dropping out. For the year of 2024-25," the ministry said—(KNO)



## 70,000 Visitors Throng Doodhpathri On 4 days Of Eid



### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Doodhpathri, a picturesque place in central Kashmir's Budgam district has witnessed a massive rush of visitors during the Eid-ul-Adha celebrations, with nearly 70,000 people visiting over the course of four days.

Chief Executive Officer of the Doodhpathri Development Authority (DDA), Dr Nargis Suraya said the location has been a major draw for festival-goers.

Providing the official data, she said that on June 17, a total of 9,103 people visited Doodhpathri, including 103 locals and 9,000 domestic tourists.

The second day, June 18, saw an increase of 12,400 visitors, comprising 2,400 locals and 10,000 domestic tourists. The

third day recorded the highest influx with 31,009 visitors, including 16,000 locals, 15,000 domestic tourists, and nine international visitors. On the fourth day, June 20, 15,203 visitors arrived, with 4,200 locals and 11,003 domestic tourists.

The CEO, DDA said the government aims to transform Doodhpathri into a year-round tourist destination and has implemented various measures to boost tourism. "Last year, the spot attracted a record-breaking number of visitors, with over three million people visiting throughout the year," she said.

Dr Nargis expressed optimism about surpassing last year's tourist numbers, saying there is a strong potential for a record-breaking year for Doodhpathri.

## PM POSHAN Scheme: Govt Finds Inordinate Delay In Incurring Expenditure Of Funds

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Authorities have said that there has been inordinate delay in incurring expenditure of funds released for clearing the pending liability of 2023-24 under PM POSHAN Scheme.

Jammu and Kashmir Mission Director PM POSHAN issued a communiqué to Directors of both regions.

"It is intimated that the funds to the tune of Rs 5454.67 lakh were released on 14.06.2024 in favour of districts of J&K UT for clearing the pending claims of 2023-24 under PM POSHAN Scheme," it reads.

The Mission Director further added that "Despite repeated telephonic calls and whatsapp messages for incurring maximum expenditure with respect to the clearing of liabilities of

the previous year, only expenditure to the tune of Rs.12.05 Crores, has been incurred till date, as per PFMS Portal."

"Ministry of Education, Gol has issued communication to the Principal Secretary, School Education, J&K for delay in submission of proposal for release of 1st installment under PM POSHAN Scheme," it reads.

According to the official communiqué, it is a prerequisite for submission of proposals that the expenditure must be above 75 percent of available funds.

"In this regard, DSEK are requested to ask the Chief Education officers under their control to incur the expenditure, against the released funds immediately making us eligible for submission of proposal for release of 1st installment of financial year 2024-25," it reads—(KNO)

## South Kashmir Residents Demand Macadamization Of Pulwama-Awantipora Road

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The residents of different areas of South Kashmir here have demanded immediate macadamization of Pulwama-Awantipora road and also the widening of the narrow spots along the route to prevent traffic jams and accidents.

According to the locals, the narrowness of the road at some points from Pulwama-Awantipora road results in traffic jams besides that the condition of the road is very dilapidated.

"The government must take urgent steps to widen this important road, especially in the Kail area," said Sameer Ahmad, a local resident.

He said the road is currently in shambles at several spots and there is an immediate need of repairing this road.

Mudasir Ahmad, another local urged the government to pay particular attention towards this vital road, adding that the narrowness of this vital road connecting Awantipora, Tral, and other areas with the district headquarters has also resulted in frequent traffic mess.

Employees and daily passengers said that the dilapidated condition of the road and narrowness is giving tough times to them, adding that students, elderly people and employees are the worst sufferers.

They said that despite bringing this issue into the notice of concerned authorities several times, nothing has been done in this regard. They requested higher ups to look into the matter at an earliest and take immediate action so that the locals won't suffer anymore—(KNO)

## Pahalgam's Aru Valley Craves For Mobile Network Connectivity

Tourists, Locals Say Mobile Network Woes Impact Businesses



### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The picturesque tourist spot of Aru valley in the famous tourist destination Pahalgam craves for proper mobile network connectivity.

Located around 12 km from Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district; Aru is known for its scenic meadows, lakes and mountains, and is a base camp for trekking to the Kola-hoi Glacier and Tarsar Lake.

However, tourists and locals complain of the lack of a proper mobile network in the area. They said that the lack of mobile connectivity is limiting Aru's potential to become a famous tourist hub in the valley.

"Though we enjoyed the scenic beauty of Aru, the lack of mobile connectivity disappointed us," said Mahesh, a tourist from Uttar Pradesh, adding that he wanted to make a video call to his relatives and friends.

Locals said that only BSNL is working here with very slow internet while the rest of the cellular companies haven't installed their towers here. The government must think about it as it is not far away from Pahalgam, they said.

Local visitors and vendors echoed similar concerns, saying they face difficulties without a mobile network.

## CEO PDA Urges Visitors To Keep Aru Valley Clean

### Agencies

**Srinagar:** While the flow of tourists continues to increase in the higher reaches of Pahalgam including Aru Valley, the authorities here have made fervent appeal to the people with regard to making the picturesque place clean.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Pahalgam Development Authority (PDA), Tariq Hussain Naik said that Aru Valley has cultural and natural significance, but the people visiting the spot are polluting the destination by throwing the waste in an open.

"We need to make sure that the picturesque place belongs to the people and needs to be preserved by keeping

the surroundings neat and clean," he said, adding that the people visiting the spot should use proper mechanism to throw their waste in order to maintain the hygiene at the spot.

Naik further stated that efforts are being made to promote eco-friendly tourism and better waste management. "Therefore, public cooperation in this regard is imperative to encourage sustainable tourism practices," he said.

He advised visitors to have civic sense and throw waste in dustbins so that it can be treated properly. He warned violators to refrain from throwing waste in open, saying that strict action will be taken against those found violating the norms—(KNO)

"All the tourists who come here have always complained about the lack of mobile network. Rest, everything is fine here," said Sameer, who owns a restaurant at Aru.

"That is why no tourist stays here for long."

"This is affecting our business. The government must seriously look into it to attract more tourists here," Sameer added.

Locals along with tourists have sought the attention of Lieutenant Governor Manoj

Sinha and other authorities to this issue so that the area can have more flow of tourists.

The lack of connectivity not only deters tourists but also impacts local businesses that rely on tourism, they added.

An official from the government told KNO that efforts are underway to improve mobile connectivity in Aru.

"We are hopeful that Aru will have a 4G network facility very soon," he said—(KNO)

## Transit Accommodation For Migrant Employees In Budgam Witnesses Rapid Progress

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The construction of a transit accommodation colony in the Kakanmaran area of central Kashmir's Budgam district is progressing rapidly. The colony, consisting of 12 blocks (with 2 blocks yet to receive approval), features 16 flats per block.

The project, initiated under the Prime Minister's package by the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department of Budgam, began in March 2023 and is scheduled for completion in 2025.

MA Construction Builders and Contractors, the construction agency in charge, informed that eight blocks are expected to be handed over by September 2024, ahead of the stipulated deadline. The colony is being built on 42 kanals of land and is designed to provide all necessary facilities for migrant employees.

Sunil Bhatt, President of the Migrant Pandit Colony, praised the project, said, "The construction of transit accommodation is commendable, and it is an



honour that the Deputy Commissioner Budgam and district administration are doing everything possible to accommodate migrant employees."

Bhatt requested the district administration to consider providing more than 1 BHK accommodation to prevent space shortages for families living in these colonies.

Local residents of Kakanmaran Budgam have also expressed their satisfaction with the project, saying it is neces-

sary to ensure that migrant employees receive all necessary facilities to help them return to the lifestyle they had decades ago.

The executive engineer of the R&B department said, "We were given a deadline to complete construction by 2025. Thanks to the rapid work by the construction agency and the oversight by the R&B department, eight blocks will be handed over by September this year. Each block includes 16 flats with 1 BHK capacity."—(KNO)

## Kavach Safety System Still Inactive In J&K Trains



### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Despite being heralded as a groundbreaking safety measure, the 'Kavach' security system remains unused in trains operating from Jammu, languishing in government files. The ambitious scheme, designed to prevent rail accidents, has yet to see implementation, raising concerns about passenger safety.

Following rail accidents, authorities often make lofty promises to enhance safety standards. However, these promises frequently fade over time. The 'Kavach' security system, which could significantly improve rail safety, is one such example. Despite its potential to prevent collisions by ensuring trains on the same track do not meet, it remains absent from Jammu's rail network.

A senior railway officer confirmed the inaction, citing a lack of directives from the Rail-

way Board. "We have not received any guidelines regarding the use of the 'Kavach' security system," the officer stated. The system, which operates via GPS and is attached to the train's engine, is designed to avert accidents, especially in scenarios where two trains are on a collision course.

With 25 to 30 trains arriving and departing from Jammu daily, the implementation of the 'Kavach' system could play a crucial role in ensuring passenger safety. Yet, despite its importance, the system remains unutilized, buried in bureaucratic red tape.

Railway passengers and safety advocates are urging the authorities to expedite the roll-out of the 'Kavach' system. The inaction highlights a persistent gap between safety promises and their fulfillment, underscoring the need for immediate intervention to prioritize passenger safety—(KNO)

## Urs Of Syed Soliha Khansahib (RA) Celebrated With Fervor At Budgam

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The Urs of Sufi saint Syed Soliha Khansahib was celebrated with religious fervor at Khansahib area of Central Kashmir's Budgam district in which thousands of devotees participated on Saturday.

The Urs is celebrated here on 21st June with thousands of devotees thronging the place to participate in the special

prayers.

Mohammad Shafi, one of the devotees, said that "Khansahib is blessed as Syed Soliha Khansahib who resided here and prayed for the peace and prosperity of the region and country and it's the reason that Khansahib has got its name from the name of Syed Soliha Khansahib and said people from various corners visit the shrine on this day."—(KNO)

## Anantnag Town Neglected On Developmental Front: Tarigami

### KO News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Referring to administrative inertia vis-à-vis developmental schemes in South Kashmir particularly in Anantnag town, CPI(M) leader Mohamad Yousuf Tarigami said there are hardly any visible changes on ground with regard to development and infrastructure building. "The tall promises that have been made often by the administration are yet to be fulfilled."

While interacting with a public delegation from Anantnag town, he observed that the government apathy has crossed the limits as the area lacks infrastructure and other facilities despite being vast in size and population.

The delegation expressed serious concern over the deteriorated healthcare facilities of MMABM District Hospital, which is now a part of GMC Anantnag and said that despite the fact that doctors are available in the said healthcare centre, the hospital lacks the advanced equipment vis-à-vis Cardiology, Neurology and Gastroenterology, besides Cancer centre.

The delegation expressed resentment on the economic front when the administration is showing over activity in tourism sector which contributes only 7 to 8 per-

cent of the economy of J&K, essentially under activities in the main vibrant sectors which have the longevity and sustainability, while for Anantnag district it is just 5 percent. The main sector agriculture and its allied belts seem to be deliberately ignored, which has the potential to shown economic growth and generate employment. On the environment front the administration has not shown keen interest for the preservation and conservation of the fragile ecology of the district.

The employment graph of Anantnag as a whole and the Anantnag town in particular is going ballistically high.

The roads, lanes and bylanes of Anantnag town are completely dilapidated and the outlook of this historical town symbolises that of the dark ages.

The happiness index of the town is drastically going down, business of traders in on dip.

The town lacks the facilities of a cricket stadium and community centre. In a nutshell, the problems of Islamabad town are bigger than its size.

Tarigami demanded a comprehensive package of funds for the development of Anantnag area to mitigate the sufferings and hardships of the people.

## Broccoli, Lettuce, Sweet Corn: Kashmir Farmers Shift To Exotic Vegetable Farming, Script Success

### Agencies

**Srinagar** Muhammad Akbar Dar, a farmer from Baramulla would grow traditional vegetables, which would fetch him not enough sum to suffice his family expenses.

As per KNO, though his four kanal land is under vegetable cultivation, the expenses in the form of fertilizers and pesticides, would consume a major part of his income.

Come 2022, he started growing new exotic varieties like broccoli, sweet corn and others, his income improved apart from low maintenance cost.

"I got to know that the agriculture department is promoting these new vegetable varieties

and purchased seeds. Now, my vegetables reach various markets and stores, which has increased my income," Dar said.

Known for apples and saffron, Kashmir is getting recognition for growing exotic veggies, which are doubling the income of farmers.

Broccoli, lettuce, snow peas, parsley, and sweet corn have found fertile ground in the region's temperate climate, offering a lucrative alternative to traditional crops.

Farmers have embraced innovative agricultural practices to grow these exotic vegetables. Leveraging modern techniques and locally adapted methods, they have managed to overcome the challenges posed by



Kashmir's unique geography and climate.

Farmers are reporting handsome earnings from the cultivation of these high-value vegetables, fetching premium prices in local markets as well as attracting interest from regional distributors.

"We saw an opportunity to introduce something different that would thrive in our climate. The response has been beyond our expectations," remarked Shakkor Ahmad, an enthusiastic farmer from Budgam.

Pertinently, the idea of introducing the exotic vegetables dates back to 2019, when the agriculture department imported seeds of these vegetable varieties from Holland and Spain.

The department then targeted to grow exotic crops on at least 500 hectares of land.

Officials from the agriculture department said the idea clicked as many districts have adopted this trend and grow exotic vegetables in "good" quantities.

"Now there are better market facilities and constant expertise from the department. We are hoping that the trend continues and Kashmir produces the best organic exotic vegetables in good quantity," he said.

Currently only 100 of 48,000 hectares of land is under vegetable cultivation in Kashmir. Each hectare of land produces 325 quintals of vegetables—(KNO)



# FC Goa Signs Hammad, Its First-Ever Defender From J&K For ISL Season

Press Trust of India

**MARGAO:** FC Goa announced on Saturday the signing of defender Muhammad Hammad for the upcoming Indian Super League (ISL) season.

The 26-year-old player, hailing from Srinagar, is set to debut in the ISL and becomes the first from Jammu & Kashmir to join FC Goa. While the financial specifics remain undisclosed, the club revealed he signed a multi-year contract.

Hammad commenced his senior career in 2015 with Lone Star Kashmir FC and moved to Real Kashmir FC after two seasons, where he helped secure the I-League 2nd Division title in the 2017-18 season. His defensive prowess also led Real Kashmir to the semi-finals of the Durand Cup in 2019. Last season, he won the 'Jarnail Singh Award' for 'Best Defender' and helped his team finish fifth in the I-League.



On his new opportunity, Hammad expressed, "I look forward to representing the Gaurs and making my mark in the ISL."

This opportunity means a lot to me, and to be the first from my region to play for FC Goa is a proud moment."

His upcoming debut in the Indian Super League (ISL) with FC Goa will be significant as he becomes the first player from

Jammu & Kashmir to represent the Gaurs. Lokesh Bherwani, FC Goa's Director of Football, expressed his enthusiasm about Hammad's signing.

"We are delighted to welcome Muhammad Hammad to FC Goa. His consistent performances, leadership, and versatility make him an invaluable addition to our squad. Hammad's journey reflects his dedication and resilience, and we believe he will continue to grow and contribute significantly to our success in the upcoming season," he said.

Muhammad Hammad also shared his excitement after joining the Gaurs and was elated to play in the ISL in the upcoming season.

"Joining FC Goa is a dream come true for me. The club's vision and commitment to excellence resonate with my personal goals, and I am eager to bring my best to the pitch. I look forward to representing the Gaurs and making my mark in the ISL."

## Virat Kohli First Player To Hit 3,000 Runs Across T20, ODI World Cups



Agencies

Star India batter Virat Kohli made history on Saturday, becoming the first-ever cricketer to score 3,000 runs across both 20-over and 50-over Cricket World Cups. Virat accomplished this milestone during his side's T20 World Cup Super Eights clash against Bangladesh in Antigua.

During the match, after a few poor games, Virat showed glimpses of his vintage self, scoring 37 runs in 28 deliveries. His knock had a four and three big sixes. Virat scored his runs at a strike rate of 132.14. Virat is the leading run-scorer in the history of the ICC T20 World Cup, scoring 1,207 runs in 32 matches and 30 innings at an average of 63.52 and a strike rate of 129.78. Ending unbeaten 11 times, Virat has scored 14 half-centuries in tournament history, with the best score of 89\*.

He also won 'Player of the Tournament' in 2014 and 2016 for his performances. Virat's top campaign in the T20 World Cup was in 2014, scoring 319 runs in six matches at an average of 106.33 with four half-centuries. His strike rate was 129.15. In the ongoing

tournament, Virat has scored 66 runs in five games at an average of 13.20 and a strike rate of 108.19, with the best score of 37.

Coming to the 50-over World Cup, Virat also has a fine record in the larger format. He is the second-highest run-scorer in tournament history, with 1,795 runs in 37 matches and 37 innings at an average of 59.83 and a strike rate of 88.20, with five centuries and 12 fifties. His best score is 117. In a career-best performance during the 2023 50-over World Cup in India, Virat notably top-scored and secured the 'Player of the Tournament' award, scoring 765 runs in 11 matches at an average of above 95, with three centuries and six fifties. His best score was 117. He also registered the most runs by a batter in a single World Cup edition, breaking Sachin Tendulkar's record of 673 runs in 2003.

Overall, across both competitions in 69 matches, Virat has scored 3,002 runs in 67 innings at an average of 61.26. He has scored five centuries and 26 fifties, with the best score of 117. Coming to the match, Bangladesh won the toss and opted to field first.

## England's Semi-Final Hopes Ride On Brook, Livingstone's Crucial Partnership

Agencies

The 78-run partnership between Harry Brook and Liam Livingstone may prove to be crucial for England's semi-final hopes even though it fell just short of getting them a victory over South Africa in the T20 World Cup on Friday, captain Jos

England have a net run rate of 0.412, close to leaders South Africa (0.625) who have four points.

This makes it easier for England to overtake South Africa's net run rate with a win over the U.S. on Sunday, if the leaders lose to West Indies. If South Africa win, England would ensure second place

against defending champions England. USA will be taking on England in its final Super Eights T20 World Cup clash.

After two losses to West Indies and South Africa, the World Cup debutants will not be able to qualify for the next stage of the competition, but have surely won the hearts of



Buttler said.

Brook and Livingstone's fifth-wicket stand helped the defending champions get within seven runs of the target, creating a clearer path to semis despite hosts West Indies pulling ahead in the group with a dominant nine-wicket win over the United States.

"I think Brook and Livingstone had a fantastic partnership on a slow wicket where other guys struggled," Buttler told reporters in Gros Islet. "The big picture is obviously net run rate."

West Indies, tied with England on two points, rose to second place in Group Two thanks to a superior net run rate of 1.814. Third-placed

outright with four points. South Africa, who have won all six matches in the tournament, now face a potential do-or-die scenario where a loss to West Indies may leave them out of the top two and a place in the semis.

**'WANT TO FINISH WITH WIN OVER ENGLAND' - USA SKIPPER**

After his side's loss to West Indies in their Super Eights T20 World Cup clash, USA skipper Aaron Jones said that the team's campaign has opened the eyes of people worldwide towards the associate cricket and expressed a desire to end the things on high with a victory

cricket fans worldwide with their qualification to Super Eights, which includes a win over former T20 WC champion Pakistan and closely-fought games against 2007 T20 WC champions India and South Africa.

"I think the game against England is important. For me personally, every time I put on a US jersey, I want to win the game, regardless of who we are playing against."

"I think over the last couple of weeks, starting from winning the series against Bangladesh, it really and truly opened the eyes of everybody in the world, not only for US cricket, but associate cricket in general." (ANI)

## Short TAKES

### Afghanistan Prepares For T20 Showdown Against Formidable Australia

Afghanistan is set to confront a dominant Australia in their T20 World Cup Super Eight Group 1 match this Sunday. The Afghan team, smarting from a 47-run defeat by India, is under significant pressure to secure a win and improve their Net Run Rate.

Sitting third with a NRR of -2.350, Afghanistan faces a formidable task in climbing the points table within a group that features Bangladesh among other teams. Despite Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran leading the batting efforts with 178 and 160 runs respectively, Afghanistan requires more contributions from their middle and lower-order batters.

### Hope's Blitzkrieg Powers West Indies To 9-Wicket Win Over USA

West Indies batters put on a sensational display of power-hitting to clinch their first win in the Super 8 of the ongoing T20 World Cup for their nine-wicket triumph over the USA at Kensington Oval on Friday (local time). In what turned



out to be a battle between the hosts of the marquee event, the Men in Maroon left the USA dazed.

Hope ended the match with a quick-fire 82\* off 39 deliveries, while Pooran scored 27\* off 12 balls.

Brief Score: USA 128 (Andries Gous 29; Andre Russell 3-31, Roston Chase 3-19) vs West Indies 130/1 (Shai Hope 82\*, Nicholas Pooran 27\*; Harmeet Singh 1-18).

### Babar Azam Likely To Take Legal Action Against Those 'Targetting' Him

Pakistan captain Babar Azam is likely to take legal action against YouTubers and former cricketers who accused him of 'misconduct' during their campaign in the ongoing T20 World Cup, Geo News reported, citing sources. Babar and the Pakistan team were on the receiving end of criticism from former players and fans because of their World Cup campaign.

Sources informed Geo News that during Pakistan's campaign, a social media campaign was used to "target" Babar, which made him feel "disheartened." It was also reported that evidence related to statements made by YouTubers and former cricketers is being collected by the Pakistan Cricket Board's legal department.

### Tennis Star Sumit Nagal Confirms Qualification For Paris Olympics

Indian tennis star Sumit Nagal on Saturday confirmed that he has officially qualified for the men's singles event of the upcoming Paris Olympics.

The Paris Games will be his second stint in the Olympics, having also qualified for the 2020 Tokyo Games, where he made it to the second round.

"Extremely glad to share that I have officially qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics. This is a monumental moment for me as the Olympics holds a special place in my heart!," Nagal posted on X.

### Lando Norris Secures Thrilling Pole Position At Spanish Grand Prix

Lando Norris hailed a perfect lap to put McLaren on pole position for the Spanish Grand Prix on Saturday and deny Red Bull's triple Formula One world champion Max Verstappen the top slot. Verstappen had taken provisional pole with a time that looked hard to beat, and went faster with his final effort, but Norris took it to another level to end the session 0.020 quicker than his Dutch rival.

The pole was only the second of the Briton's Formula One career, the last coming at the Russian Grand Prix in 2021. "It was pretty much a perfect lap. You know when you are on a good lap and you are getting excited," Norris said after setting a time of one minute 11.383 seconds.

## Gautam Gambhir Addresses His Future As Potential India Head Coach

Agencies

Former India cricketer Gautam Gambhir addressed his future as the head coach of the men's national team and stated that he isn't "looking far ahead" as he is in a "happy space" at the moment. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is evaluating the next head coach as the stint of Rahul Dravid is about to reach its conclusion following the end of the T20 World Cup 2024 in June.

Gambhir has been heavily linked with the role, with many former cricketers backing the 2011 World Cup winner to thrive as the head coach of the Indian team. He has already said that he would "love to

coach the Indian team" and it will be an honour for him if he gets the opportunity to do so.

As Dravid's time with the Men in Blue is slowly



reaching towards its end, Gambhir remained tight-lipped about the possibility of replacing his former teammate.

"I don't see that far ahead. You are grilling me, asking me all tough questions. It is difficult to an-

swer right now. All I can say right now is that I am happy being here. Just finished a brilliant journey with Kolkata Knight Riders let's enjoy that. I am in

a very happy space right now," Gambhir said during an event in Kolkata. The left-handed opener served as Kolkata Knight Riders' team mentor in the Indian Premier League 2024. The return of the franchise's former captain saw

the Knights lift their third IPL trophy. He talked about his coaching philosophy and emphasized the need to treat everyone equally rather than focus on a couple of individual players.

"In a team sport, it's the team that matters the most. It's the team that is the most important ingredient in that organisation. Individuals do play a role, and individuals do contribute, but ultimately, if 11 people are treated equally, if 11 people have equal respect, if everyone is treated equally, given the same respect, same responsibility, given the same honour, you will achieve an unbelievable amount of success. You cannot have discrimination in a set-up or in an organisation," he added. (ANI)

## Euro 2024: Scotland In Shot At History Against Hungary

Agencies

**STUTTGART:** History awaits Scotland if they can beat Hungary on Sunday and potentially seal qualification for the knockout stages of a major tournament for the first time at Euro 2024.

In 11 previous attempts, at eight World Cups and three Euros, Scotland have always fallen at the group stage.

A familiar early exit looked on the cards when Steve Clarke's men suffered an opening night humiliation at the hands of hosts Germany.

However, a battling 1-1 draw against Switzerland has re-instilled belief and kept dreams of qualification alive.

Victory would not guar-

antee progress but would almost certainly be enough either for second place in Group A or to be one of the



four best third-placed sides who reach the last 16.

Clarke said before a ball was kicked in Germany that he was targeting four points.

A clash with Hungary, who have lost their two

opening games, appears to offer Scotland's best chance of a first win at a major tournament since 1996.

"When you get a bad result, perspective goes out the window a little bit. It was probably the manner of the defeat the other night which made everyone feel a bit sore and not great."

"As footballers, you have to deal with that. You have to try to put it right. We made the first step of putting it right and we arrive into the game on Sunday now with belief that if we play equally as well, if not better, we give ourselves a right good chance."

Scotland captain Andy Robertson said on the eve of the tournament that this squad could achieve "legendary status" by going where no team has before in the nation's history.