

Govt Releases Hajj Policy 2025

Hajj Through HCl Only Once In A Lifetime Now



Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a significant development, the Government of India has announced that Indian Muslims can perform Hajj through the Hajj Committee of India (HCl) only once in their lifetime under the new Hajj policy 2025.

According to the policy draft, the policy outlines new regulations for seat allocation,

eligibility and procedural improvements to ensure smoother and equitable Hajj pilgrimage.

"Those who have performed Hajj earlier through HCl will not be eligible to apply," the Hajj 2025 policy states.

The policy however, has given exemption for repeated Hajj pilgrimage under specific circumstances for companions and "Mehram" (male guardians) accompanying | [More on P10](#)

Peace Prerequisite For Progress, Prosperity: LG

» Emphasises On 'Whole Of Govt Approach' In J&K's Transformation

» Says Social Equality, Equal Access To Opportunity Is Our Commitment

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, Tuesday addressed the officers of Army, Navy and Airforce undergoing Higher Command Course at Army War College, Mhow. The officers and faculty members are on a visit to the Northern Front.

Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor emphasised on 'Whole of Government Approach' in J&K's transformation and role of an efficient, effective and accountable administration which has transformed the way the government works for the people.

He said the improved security situation has propelled J&K UT towards an era of peace, stability and prosperity and is a testament to the resilience and determination of the people.

"It is my firm belief that



peace is a prerequisite for progress and prosperity. We have been successful in dismantling the terror ecosystem and measures have been taken to sustain peace and stability. It will ensure that the benefits of growth reach all sections of society," the LG said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that the economic

revitalization with fast paced implementation of various initiatives and development projects has ensured a boost in the economy, creating more job opportunities and enhancing infrastructure.

"Social equality and equal access to opportunity is our commitment. The transformative change has been

marked by all-encompassing initiatives taken for youth empowerment and skill development with the aim to create avenues for gainful employment," the LG said.

Maj Gen Gaurav Gautam; faculty members of Army War College, and senior officers of the Security Forces were present on the occasion at Raj Bhawan.

ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION WITH FAST PACED IMPLEMENTATION of various initiatives and development projects has ensured a boost in the economy, creating more job opportunities and enhancing infrastructure."

Hajj Committee Quota Now 70%

Out of the total Hajj pilgrims quota allocated to India, 70 per cent would be handled by the Hajj Committee of India while the remaining 30 per cent will be allocated to private Hajj Group Organisers, according to the government's Hajj Policy for 2025. In 2024, the Hajj Committee of India (HCl) was allotted 80 per cent while the private Hajj | [More on P10](#)

THE POLICY HOWEVER, HAS GIVEN EXEMPTION FOR REPEATED HAJJ PILGRIMAGE under specific circumstances for companions and Mehrams (male guardians) accompanying female pilgrims and those aged 65 or above."

Tourist Trade Rules Released

J&K Govt Hikes Fees For Tourism Industry

Agencies

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has released the draft tourists trade rules in which the rates for registration, renewal of registration of hotels, homestays, houseboats and other hospitality sector related entities have been mentioned.

As per the draft, for a hotel or resort of A category five star deluxe, the owner is subjected

to pay a sum of Rs 2 lakh for two years to the government for the renewal of the property.

Similarly for A Category five star, A Category four star, A Category three star, A Category two star and A Category one star, the owner has to pay Rs 150000, Rs 130000, Rs 100000, Rs 50000, and Rs 30000 respectively for two years.

As per the draft, the owner of guest house, camp hotel, restaurant, Dhaba | [More on P10](#)

'Sexual Assault Of Minor In Srinagar School'

School Admin Faces Backlash, POCSO Case Registered

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Tuesday registered a case of 'sodomy' under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012, following the despicable act of sexual abuse with a minor allegedly by fellow students at a high profile private school in Srinagar.

The unnatural act of sexual abuse with a juvenile at the school located in the civil lines of the city has drawn widespread condemnation and uproar across social media platforms, prompting school administration to file a complaint.

The victim, a juvenile, according to various social media reports, was subjected to unnatural sex by two fellow students and that the incident went 'unreported' for three years.

Reports said that not only



did the minor accused warn the victim to prepare for consequences, but also threatened to harm his sister who also attends the school run by same management, in case he reported the incident to the police or his parents.

The victim was initially denying sexual abuse by two fellow students during school hours, but eventually opened up after his teachers convinced him to speak up against the

cruelty meted out to him. Despite fulfilling challenging formalities, the school administration, according to a social media post, decided to maintain silence against the act.

However, social media uproar over the heinous crime led the school administration to file a written complaint at the concerned police station.

A formal case FIR no. 44 of 2024 under relevant sections of POCSO Act 2012 which include sections 377 (unnatural sex), 511 (attempt to sodomy) and 506 (criminal intimidation), and section 23 of the Juvenile Justice Act at police station Kothibagh in this regard.

Taking to its official X handle, the Srinagar police said the police have taken cognizance upon written information by the administrative authority of a particular school regarding sexual assault on a minor student.

"Case FIR 44/2024 under relevant sections | [More on P10](#)

5,724 Of 6,000 Jobs Filled For KPs Under PM Package

MHA Says Various Measures Taken For Their Security, Employment



File photo of Pandit Colony in Sheikhpora Budgam

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Centre on Tuesday said that the government has taken various measures for the security and employment of Kashmiri migrant pandits in Jammu and Kashmir over the past few years.

In a written reply to a query in the Lok Sabha, minister of state for home affairs

Nityanand Rai said that the government has filled 5,724 of the 6,000 job vacancies designated for Kashmiri migrants under the Prime Minister's Development Package 2015 and the Prime Minister's Reconstruction Plan 2008.

He said that unemployed youth are also being supported through financial assistance under | [More on P10](#)

45 Educational Institutions To Be Renamed

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The government Tuesday ordered the renaming of 45 educational establishments and roads after some eminent personalities and the security forces who lost their lives on the line of duty.

Besides, the government also ordered the renaming of a playground, a PMGSY road and a street link road after the eminent personalities and the security forces.

Commissioner Secretary to the government (GAD) Sanjeev Verna in this regard issued the official order.

The government in the order said that the concerned administrative secretaries shall take immediate necessary steps including amending their records for effecting the changes.

"Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir and Jammu shall personally monitor the naming of the infrastructure and assets in their respective divisions," it reads.

It also said that the Deputy Commissioners shall ensure that appropriate events are held in connection with the naming of these infrastructure and assets.

14 Pilgrims Killed In J&K Terror Attacks Since 2022: Centre



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Centre on Tuesday said that only two terrorist attacks on pilgrims have taken place between 2022 and 2024 in Jammu and Kashmir, with 14 casualties reported in these incidents.

In a written reply to a query from Trinamool MP Abhishek Banerjee, minister of state for home affairs Nityanand Rai

said that no such incident has taken place in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2023.

He said that in 2022 one such incident happened on May 13, when a blast took place inside a passenger bus in Katra, resulting in five casualties.

Similarly, this year on June 9, terrorists attacked a bus carrying pilgrims near the Kanda area of | [More on P10](#)

Amarnath Yatra Sets Record With 5 Lakh Pilgrims

The number of pilgrims who paid obeisance to Lord Shiva at Amarnath cave shrine in South Kashmir in this year's yatra has crossed the five-lakh mark as more than 2,800 | [More on P10](#)

With Over 6000 Contempt Pleas Pending, HC Fumes At Babus

Says Justice Dispensation System Reduced To 'Cruel Joke' In J&K Puts Bureaucracy On Guard: 'It Shall No Longer Be Tolerated'

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has come down heavily on administration over non-compliance with its directions, observing that the justice dispensation system has been reduced to a "cruel joke" in Jammu and Kashmir amid piling of over 6000 contempt petitions before it.

"This reflects a shocking scenario where the Executive is ignoring the orders passed by this Court consistently with utter disdain, cocky that this Court shall take no measures imperilling their liberty for their disobedience," a division bench of Justices Atul Sreedharan and Javed Iqbal Wani said while hearing a contempt plea.

"This environment has come to exist on account of the excessive latitude being shown by this Court, time and again, only to maintain a harmonious relationship between the judiciary and the executive," the court said and put the bureaucracy "on guard" that "what



has been happening till now with the orders of this Court shall no longer be tolerated."

"The number of contempt petitions pending before the High Court as on date is a little over six thousand. In other words, there are at least six thousand litigants in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir who despite having orders in their favour are unable to savour the benefit of these orders," the court underlined.

In some cases, the court observed, there may be more than one petitioner in a contempt petition which would

raise the number of persons awaiting the benefit of the court's orders, phenomenally above six thousand.

"A few of these contempt matters are pending between ten to fifteen years and the cases pending between one to five years are the ones that run into thousands and has reduced the justice dispensation system in the UT to a cruel joke," the court said.

A contempt case, the court underscored, must be concluded ideally in three to five hearings in which the order is complied with, or "there is no need to comply with it as the superior Court or the larger bench has stayed or set aside the principal order itself, or the contemnor is punished in accordance with law."

A "tradition" existed where the contemnors were given repeated adjournments, a multitude of "statement of facts" and "reports" were called for resulting in contempt petitions pending for four to five years, the court said. | [More on P10](#)

J&K Tops National Immunization Chart

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The national full immunisation coverage for 2023-24 was 93.50 per cent, with Lakshadweep and Jammu and Kashmir topping the list, according to the Source Health Management Information System.

In a written reply in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday, Union Minister of State for Health Prataprao Jadhav said Lakshadweep (108.79 per cent) and Jammu and Kashmir (108.66 per cent) were followed by Telangana (106.13 per cent), Delhi (105.03 per cent), Andhra Pradesh (101.26 per cent), Mizoram (101.10 per cent) and Maharashtra (101.04 per cent).

Immunisation coverage was above 95 per cent in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Tripura, Meghalaya, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Chandigarh and Chhattisgarh during this period.

The coverage was the lowest in Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu at 48.03 per cent.

According to health ministry sources, some states and Union territories had figures higher than 100 per cent because of increased coverage by catch-up campaigns such | [More on P10](#)

DC Srinagar Reviews Implementation Of COTPA In District

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In order to review the implementation and enforcement of Cigarette and Other Tobacco Product Act (COTPA) in the District, a Workshop cum Meeting of District Level Coordination Committee(DLCC) was held under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner(DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat here today at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex.

The meeting focused on discussing the implementation of the National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) in Srinagar. Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad, Chief Medical Officer, Dr Tahir Sajad and all concerned were present in the meeting.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the urgent need for a comprehensive approach to combating tobacco use in the region.

During the meeting, DC said that tobacco use is a major public health concern that requires coordinated efforts from all sectors of society.

DC further emphasized that we must ensure that our educational institutions are free from tobacco influence, and this begins with the implementation of the Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions (TOFEEI) initiative."

He also highlighted the importance of vendor regulation, noting that unlicensed vendors contribute significantly to the accessibility of tobacco products, especially among youth.

A robust strategy for vendor licensing is cru-

Chairs Meeting To Finalize District Skill Plan

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, who is also Chairman District Skill Committee today chaired a meeting to finalize the District Skill Plan under SANKALP program here at the meeting Hall of DC Office Complex.

At the outset of the meeting, the Convener District Skill Committee gave a detailed presentation about the skill gaps that have been pointed out by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).

A proposed action plan was placed before the committee consisting of 17 sectors spread over 41 trades with the financial implication of Rs 2,054 Crores and 1230 unemployed youth have been projected under the Plan

to be trained during the next one year.

The DC/Chairman District Skill Committee emphasized that Cross Trade Analysis shall be carried out by the institutions imparting skill training and thrust shall be laid to identify demand driven trades so as to create more employment avenues for unemployed youth.

He also gave directions to Deputy Director Employment and General Manager DIC to identify the trades which will be relevant to the market in the next five years by consulting the existing industrial clusters.

Besides, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad, the meeting was attended by Members of the District Skill Committee and Officers of allied Departments.

Cultural Unit DIPR Organizes Seminar On 'Viksit Bharat'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In continuation to the 78th Independence Day celebrations, a seminar cum cultural event was on Tuesday organized by Cultural Unit Kashmir, Department of Information and Public Relations J&K at MPML Higher Secondary School, Baghi Dilawar Khan Srinagar.

The event provided students a platform to highlight the developmental dimensions of the country under the vision 'Viksit Bharat', in sync with the government's vision to transform the country into a developed nation by 2047.

Earlier, the program kick-started with the National Anthem sung by the students of MPML Higher Secondary School while the artists of Shahkaar Cultural

Society presented a thematic skit and song.

Addressing the gathering, Nikhat Mir, Principal MPML Higher Secondary School appreciated Cultural Unit Kashmir, DIPR for providing a platform to youth especially students to showcase their talent.

She emphasized that these celebrations develop patriotism among youth towards the nation.

AECO Cultural Unit DIPR, Syed Shakeel Shan encouraged the participating students for their love and honour towards the nation. He advised the students to come forward and join hands with the departments and organizations who promote art and culture on broader platforms. At the conclusion mementoes and certificates were distributed among the participants.

SWACHHTA PAKHWADA

Div Com, DC Participate In Cleanliness Drive In Harwan



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In order to give impetus to a massive fortnight campaign of Swachhta Pakhwada, the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri along with Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat visited various areas of Harwan, Dara, Saedpora and Faqir Gujri to participate in the cleanliness drive to highlight the significance of clean & hygienic surroundings, habitations, canals and public places.

The officers led cleanliness drive to demonstrate their concern and responsibility for ensuring healthy environment and underlined the importance of collective efforts of citizens & administration.

Later, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar and Deputy CEO, distributed 19 Solar Home Lighting Systems and 69 Biomass Cook Stoves among the identified Tribal/ Nomadic families of Faqir Gujri, Harwan in a function, here.

6 DIV COM, DC SRINAGAR ALSO PLANTED SAPLINGS AT HARWAN BLOCK TO PROMOTE THE MESSAGE of green environment for healthier society.

The devices were provided by JAKEDA, which aims to provide benefit of non-conventional energy devices to the tribal community.

Speaking on the occasion, Div Com stressed on participation of people in Swachhta Pakhwada initiative and urged them to keep their beautiful landscape, water canals and other places neat and clean by proper waste management techniques to preserve & sustain the environment.

He also encouraged them to participate in plantation drives under the

theme Ek Ped Shaheedon Ke Naam to honor the sacrifices of martyrs and promote eco-friendly practices.

He also administered pledge to the students, locals, civil representatives and officers in view of Swachhta Pakhwada.

Div Com, DC Srinagar also planted saplings at Harwan Block to promote the message of green environment for healthier society.

Addressing the gathering, DC Srinagar gave insights about the Swachhta Pakhwada Campaign, importance of Cleanliness Drives, Plantation Drives and steps taken by the District administration for clean Urban and Rural areas.

While speaking about the usage of non-conventional energy devices as alternate source of energy, DC informed that the administration shall develop Faqir Gujri as a solar village in near future.

The function was attended by officers of District Administration, local representatives and residents besides beneficiaries and students.

Mehjoor Nagar Residents Demand Completion Of Footbridge

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Residents of Mehjoor Nagar area of Srinagar have expressed dissatisfaction over the slow progress of a footbridge, construction of which began in the year 2022 in the area.

The project, which got an allocation of Rs. 4.95 crore budget, was inaugurated by the then Mayor Junaid Azim Mattu



and Commissioner Athar Aamir Khan (IAS) with much anticipation. However, the bridge

has remained incomplete since then.

One local, while speaking to the news agency-

KNO, said, "It seems that the authorities have forgotten to complete the work on a bridge here in Mehjoor Nagar."

When contacted, officials from the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) said there were some issues with locals that led to delay in the project. "We plan to visit the site again in a week or two to assess the situation and resume the work," they added.



Mashq e Arba'een ... Dar'ke Azadari!

WEEK LONG ART, PHOTOGRAPHY, CALLIGRAPHY & POETRY EXHIBITION.

23rd to 30th August, 2024 (17th to 24th Safar ul Muzaffar, 1446 AH)

Timings: 11.00AM – 6.00PM (Tentative)

Registration Opens: Monday, 5th August, 2024 (12.01AM).

Registration Closes: Sunday, 11th August, 2024 (11.30PM).

Submission of Works: Saturday, 17th August, 2024 (4.00PM).

FOR REGISTRATION & FURTHER DETAILS CALL/ WHATAPP: +91 9469037182.

Week Long Art, Photography, Calligraphy & Poetry Exhibition.

"Mashq e Arba'een - Dar'ke Azadari" is a week long Art, Photography, Calligraphy and Poetry Exhibition. The exhibition - beginning with 23rd August, 2024, Friday, 17th Safar ul Muzaffar, 1446 - includes the works of the Artists and other Creative participants including students of different educational institutions under the theme of "Arba'een ... Dar'ke Azadari". It will explore different dimensions of mourning, The Azadari, and understand how the people and the spaces feel during the mourning months of Muharram and Safar. It is our humble tribute to Imam Hussain (AS) and the Martyrs of Karbala through Art and Other Creative Medium. We will have an opportunity to study the multi-dimensional aspects of the observance of the mourning traditions during Muharram in general and Kashmir in particular. For next few days through the series of 'creative works' we will feel and discuss different historical places and meet people and experts of elegies, poetry, photography, paintings, calligraphy, connect emotionally and share our own experiences and to get first hand experience of multi-dimensional aspects of 'Traditions of Azadari'. The effort also envisions bringing together children, parents, educational and other academics, researchers and scholars from varied backgrounds and above all general society members to know how about "Aashura and Arba'een, the Sacrifice of Imam Hussain (AS), the Grandson of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and The Message of Karbala".

Categories:

- Mashq e Azadari - Calligraphy Window.
Aks e Azadari - Visual Window.
Manzar e Azadari - Fine Art & Painting Window.
Harf e Azadari - Story, Elegy & Poetic Window.

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

AIRPORTS SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

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

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

PRAYERS
FAJR 4:12
ZUHR 12:37
ASR 5:28
Magrib 7:30
ISHA 9:01

This Day In History

- 626 - Battle at Constantinople: Slavic/Persians/ Avarenvloot defeated
936 - Otto I the Great becomes King of Germany
1420 - Construction begins on the dome of Florence Cathedral, designed by Renaissance architect Filippo Brunelleschi
1479 - Battle of Guinegate: Emperor Maximilian I vs King Louis XI
1575- Spanish troops conquer Oudewater, almost all inhabitants died
1606- Possible first performance of Shakespeare's tragedy Macbeth, performed in the Great Hall at Hampton Court Palace for King James I
1620- Battle at Pons-the-Ce, Poitou: French king Louis XIII defeats his mother Marie de Medici
1714- The Battle of Gangut: the first important victory of the Russian Navy during the Great Northern War against Sweden
1782- Commander of the Continental Army, George Washington, creates two Honorary Badges of Distinction and a Badge of Military Merit (now the Purple Heart). First time military awards are presented to common soldiers.
1789- US Congress creates the Department of War and the United States Lighthouse Establishment
1802- Napoleon orders re-instatement of slavery on St Domingue (Haiti)
1819- Battle of Boyaca; Bolivar defeats Spanish in Colombia
1864- Battle of Moorefield, West Virginia
1882- Hatfields of south West Virginia and McCoys of east Kentucky feud, 100 wounded or die
1884- Germany annexes Angra Pequena / German South West-Africa (modern Namibia)
1885- Five German warships anchor off Zanzibar
1904- Train derailed on bridge in Eden, Colorado, during a flash flood, kills 96
1908- The first train to travel the length of New Zealand's North Island 'main trunk line', leaves Wellington
1912- Progressive (Bull Moose) Party nominates Theodore Roosevelt for US President
1914 - Russia invades East Prussia
1925 - League of Nation advises against Turk/Iraqi division of Mosulgebied
1927 - Peace Bridge between US and Canada dedicated
1933 - The Iraqi Government slaughters over 3,000 Assyrians in the village of Semail. The day becomes known as Assyrian Martyrs Day.
1944 - US 3rd Army reaches suburbs of Brest, Brittany
1944 - IBM dedicates the first program-controlled calculator, the Automatic Sequence Controlled Calculator (known best as the Harvard Mark I)
1956 - British government sends 3 aircraft carriers to Egypt
1956 - Dynamite transport explodes in Colombia; about 1200 die
1956 - 51-year-old Satchel Paige (Miami Marlins) wins a game before the largest crowd in minor league history, 57,000 at Miami's Orange Bowl; International League: Marlins 6-2 v Columbus Jets
1959 - Explorer 6 transmits 1st TV photo of Earth from space
1961 - Cosmonaut Gherman Titov circles Earth for a full day in Vostok 2
1961 - Soviet premier Khrushchev predicts USSR economy will surpass US
1962 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalinsk USSR
1964 - Turkey begins air attack on Greek Cyprots
1965 - Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister of Singapore signs a separation agreement with Malaysia, after 2 years of political union
1976 - US Viking 2 goes into Martian orbit after 11-month flight from Earth
1976 - Scientists in Pasadena, California, announce Viking I found strongest indications to date of possible life on Mars
1981 - "The Washington Star" ceases all operations after 128 years of publication.
1985 - Takao Doi, Mamoru Mohri and Chiaki Mukai are chosen to be Japan's first astronauts.
1987 - Javed Miandad becomes first to score 6,000 Test runs for Pakistan as he cracks 260 in drawn 5th Test v England at The Oval
1990 - Operation Desert Shield begins - US deploys troops to Saudi Arabia
1997 - STS 85 (Discovery 23) launches into orbit
2008 - Georgia launches a military offensive to surround and capture the capital of South Ossetia, Tskhinvali, from Russian control, starting the South Ossetia War.
2012 - Heavy rain forces 20,000 people to flee their homes in Manila, Philippines
2012 - 200,000 people are evacuated from Shanghai in anticipation of Typhoon Haikui

Bangladesh Opposition Leaders, Jamaat Activists Granted Bail Amid Unrest

Agencies

Dhaka : Families of political prisoners secretly jailed in Bangladesh under the autocratic rule of ousted premier Sheikh Hasina waited desperately Tuesday for news of their relatives, as some of those missing were released. "We need answers," said Sanjida Islam Tulee, a coordinator of Mayer Daak, meaning "The Call of the Mothers", a group campaigning for the release of people detained by Hasina's security forces. Rights groups accused Hasina's security forces of abducting and disappearing some 600 people - including many from the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the banned Jamaat-e-Islami, the country's largest Islamist party. Tulee told AFP that at least 20 families gathered outside a mili-

arrested during the student protests, as well as key opposition leader Zia. "People who were detained between July 1 and August 5 as part of the anti-discrimination protests are being freed, and already many have been freed," Shiplu Zman, a press secretary of the president, said. Former premier Zia, 78, chairperson of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is in poor health and was largely under house arrest after being sentenced to 17 years in prison for graft in 2018. "She is now free," A.K.M Wahiduzzaman, a BNP spokesman, told AFP. **What happened to others?** Among the most high profile of those released on Tuesday was opposition activist and lawyer Ahmad Bin Quasem, son of Mir



tary intelligence force building in a northern Dhaka neighbourhood, waiting for news of their relatives. Former prime minister Khaleda Zia, a bitter rival of Hasina, was also released from years of house arrest. Army chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman announced Monday that Hasina had resigned after weeks of deadly protests, and the military would form a caretaker government. Hours later President Mohammed Shahabuddin - after a meeting with the army chief - said it had been decided to free all those

Quasem Ali, the executed leader of Jamaat-e-Islami. "He was released from secret detention this morning," family friend and relative Masum Khalili told AFP. "He had a medical check-up, his condition is stable." Quasem, a British-educated barrister, was abducted - allegedly by security forces in plainclothes - in August 2016. Others released include former brigadier-general Abdul-lahil Aman Azmi, abducted in 2016, Jamaat-e-Islami said in a statement. His father Ghulam Azam, the former head of Jamaat-e-Islami, died in prison in 2014.

Nobel winner Yunus says ready to head Bangladesh 'interim government'

Agencies

PARIS: Nobel winner Muhammad Yunus said on Tuesday he was ready to head an interim government in Bangladesh after mass demonstrations forced longtime ruler Sheikh Hasina to flee the country. "I am honoured by the trust of the protesters who wish for me to lead the interim government," he said in a written statement to AFP. "If action is needed in Bangladesh, for my country and for the courage of my people, then I will take it," he said, also calling for "free elections." Bangladesh earlier dissolved national parliament, paving the way for the forma-

tion of a military-backed interim government and fresh elections. Bangladesh President Mohammed Shahabuddin took the step to dissolve the current parliament and begin a process to form an interim government, according to his press secretary Joynal Abedin. Shahabuddin directed the authorities to lift the curfew earlier in the day after more than two weeks of clashes between Hasina's supporters, security forces and student-led protesters. Bangladesh's powerful army chief Waker-Uz-Zaman is looking to set up an interim government in consultation with the president.



West Asia Teeters on 'Brink of War of Unknown Proportions': EU

Agencies

Vieana: The European Union's foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, has expressed alarm over the risk of a "war of unknown proportions" as tensions grow in West Asia following spate of assassinations by Israel in the region. Borrell made the remarks in an X post on Tuesday, as Israel's failure in its war on the Gaza Strip has prompted the regime to assassinate resistance leaders and wage attacks on the countries supporting Palestinian people. "Tensions keep escalating in the Middle East, bringing it on the brink of a war of unknown proportions," he said. The top EU diplomat also renewed his call for a ceasefire in Gaza, where the Israeli onslaught has killed at least 39,623 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 91,469 others since October, 7, 2023.

"We all must prevent another catastrophe. The way forward is largely consensual: ceasefire in Gaza, now. All those standing in the way of de-escalation shall be held accountable." Borrell added. Borrell's comments are made as Iran has vowed to give a "crushing response" to Israel after the regime's assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, political leader of the Palestinian group, in the Iranian capital Tehran on July 31. The Iranian military has said the assassination was designed and executed by Israel, with support from the US administration. US President Joe Biden meanwhile met his senior national security team as concerns of a possible Iranian retaliatory attack on Israel grew, the BBC reported. Biden said he had been briefed on preparations to support Israel should it be attacked, while Secretary of State Antony Blinken said officials were working "around the clock" to prevent

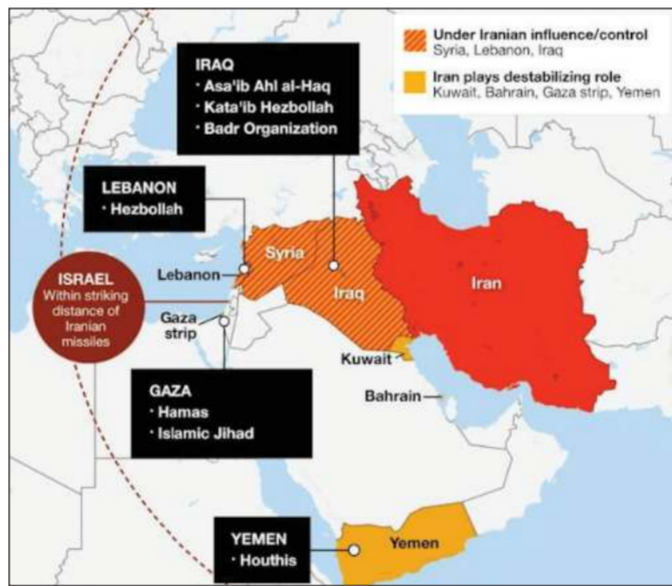
an escalation. The Pentagon said it was sending additional ships and aircraft to the Middle East to protect Israel from imminent Iranian attack. Pentagon spokeswoman Sabrina Singh told reporters Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin "will be directing multiple" force movements to provide additional support to Israel and increase protection for U.S. troops in the region. Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has warned Israel of a "harsh punishment," saying Iran sees it as its duty to avenge the blood of a dear guest. Haniyeh's assassination in Tehran followed an Israeli attack on Beirut that claimed the life of Fuad Shukur, a senior commander of Hezbollah. Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah has said Israel had "crossed red lines" in the assassinations of Shukur and Haniyeh and must expect "rage and revenge on all the fronts supporting Gaza."

We all must prevent another catastrophe. The way forward is largely consensual: ceasefire in Gaza, now. All those standing in the way of de-escalation shall be held accountable

US Says Working to Avert War But Sends Warships To Defend Israel

Agencies

JERUSALEM: The United States said it was working "around the clock" to avert an all-out war in the Middle East, as Israel remained on high alert Tuesday for potential Iranian retaliation for two high-profile killings. President Joe Biden, whose country has sent extra warships and fighter jets to the region in support of Israel, held crisis talks on Monday with his national security team. Biden and his top diplomat Antony Blinken sought to calm tensions that have soared since an Israeli attack in Tehran last Wednesday killed Ismail Haniyeh. Biden called King Abdullah II of Jordan, whose country helped down Iranian drones and missiles in an attack on Israel in April, while Blinken called top officials in Qatar and Egypt, the key intermediaries seeking a ceasefire in the 10-month Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. "We are engaged in intense di-



plomacy, pretty much around the clock, with a very simple message - all parties must refrain from escalation," Blinken said after joining other top officials in a White House meeting.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian hit out on Monday at what he called the "criminal acts" of Israel "against the oppressed and defenceless people of Gaza" as well as for Haniyeh's killing.

India Issues Safety Warning About Travel To UK Amid Riots

Agencies

NEW DELHI: India issued on Tuesday a safety warning for nationals visiting the UK in the wake of riots targeting minority communities. A wave of violent unrest and disorder has engulfed the UK since last week, after a misinformation campaign stoked outrage over a stabbing attack that killed three young girls and injured 10 people - mostly children - in Southport, northern England.

and exercise due caution while traveling in the UK," the High Commission of India in London said in a statement. "It is advisable to follow local news and advisories issued by local security agencies, and to avoid areas where protests are underway." The UK is home to over 1.9 million British Indians and a popular destination for many from the South Asian nation, with more than 600,000 Indian travelers visiting Britain just last year. Ajay Prakash, who is



False rumors spread online that the suspect of the incident was a Muslim asylum-seeker, leading to attacks on immigrants and mosques. India has since joined a growing number of countries - including Australia, Nigeria, and Indonesia - that have issued safety warnings for their citizens in the UK. "Visitors from India are advised to stay vigilant

originally from Bihar and now runs a travel agency in London, said his clients are starting to consider canceling their upcoming trips to the UK because of the unrest. "We are very much concerned. Because of this, we are getting several calls from our own customers who have booked their trips for UK tours specifically... This is impacting our business a lot," he told Arab News in a phone interview.

Lebanon's Hezbollah Launches Swarm Of Drones At Israel

Lebanon's armed group Hezbollah launched a series of drone and rocket attacks into northern Israel on Tuesday but warned that its much-anticipated retaliation for Israel's killing of a top commander last week was yet to come. Hezbollah said it launched a swarm of attack drones at two military sites near Acre in northern Israel, and also attacked an Israeli military vehicle in another location. The Israeli military said a number of hostile drones were identified crossing from Lebanon and one was intercepted. It said several civilians were injured to the south of the coastal city of Nahariya. Reuters TV footage showed one impact site near a bus stop on a main road outside the city. In a statement, the Israeli military said sirens sounded around Acre, but that turned out to be a false alarm. It said its air force struck two Hezbollah facilities in south Lebanon. Fears are rising that the Middle East could be tipped into full-blown war following vows by Hezbollah to avenge Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukur's killing, and by Iran to respond to the assassination in Tehran last week of the head of Palestinian group Hamas. A Hezbollah source told Reuters that "the response to the assassination of commander Fuad Shukur has not yet come."

NEWS MAKERS

From Banker To Spiritual Guru: How Tamil Nadu Man Dodged CBI For 20 Years

New Delhi: A swindler's 20-year cat-and-mouse game with the law ended after his arrest by the CBI while he was allegedly living as a spiritual guru in a Tamil Nadu village - one of the many aliases he used to dodge the law enforcement agency. To evade the law, V Chalapati Rao allegedly created multiple fake identities, forged new Aadhaar cards, lived in many states and took up jobs as a computer operator and a loan recovery agent. Rao was arrested on Sunday from Narsinganallur village in Tirunelveli before he could flee yet again, this time to another country, officials said on Monday. The CBI had registered a case on May 1, 2002 against Rao, who was then working as a computer operator in SBI, Chandulal

Biradari branch, Hyderabad on allegations that he had siphoned off 50 lakh from the bank using fabricated quotations of electronic shops and fake salary certificates created in the names of his family members and close associates, and misappropriated the proceeds of the crime. Two chargesheets were filed in 2006. In the last 20 years, his family made an attempt to declare him dead, seven years after he went missing. Rao, meanwhile, created an Aadhaar card in the name of one M Vineet Kumar and married again in Salem, officials said. "His (first) wife, who is also an accused in the above fraud case, even lodged an FIR at Kamatiyura Police Station dated July 10, 2004. She had also filed a petition in the

Civil Court to declare the absconding accused as dead after completion of 7 years after PO allegedly went missing. In this regard, an order/decreet too was passed by the concerned Civil Court of Hyderabad," a CBI Spokesperson said. He was later declared a proclaimed offender, the official said. Rao's second wife told the CBI that he was in touch with his son from his first wife but before the agency could reach him, he fled to Bhopal in 2014 where worked as loan recovery agent and then shifted to Rudrapur in Uttarakhand, where he worked in a school, the CBI said in a statement. In the ensuing cat-and-mouse game, the CBI team tracked him to Rudrapur but returned empty handed as he had fled from Uttarakhand in 2016.

How Class 10 Student Cheated IAS Aspirants In MP

Indore: Police probing a cyber crime perpetrated on the pretext of selling "leaked" MP Civil Services Exam (Prelims) question papers were surprised when the suspect turned out to be a class 10 student, who learnt fraud skills from YouTube and wanted to splurge on expensive clothes and shoes. Prima facie, the student from Rajasthan decided to dupe job aspirants to earn fast buck to fulfil his expensive desires, including buying stylish clothes and shoes and eating at posh restaurants, an Indore Police officer said on Monday. The student had also allegedly cheated on the pretext of selling the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) paper, he said. Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Tushar Singh said the student

from Jhunjhunu district created a channel on the social media platform Telegram. He claimed access to the preliminary round papers of the Madhya Pradesh Public Service Commission (MPPSC) examination, held on June 23, and offered them for sale at 2,500 each. A QR code was provided on the Telegram channel for payment via UPI, Mr Singh said. "As soon as a person made payment through this QR code in the lure of getting the state service exam papers, the student would block the mobile number of that buyer. In this method of cheating, the student cheated two to four candidates," the officer said. The student did not possess any of the state service exam papers and falsely claimed that the paper was leaked to dupe candidates, he said.

US Woman Chained In Maharashtra Jungle

Mumbai: The 50-year-old American woman found tied to a tree with an iron chain in a forest in Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district has now told police she had shackled herself and no one else was involved in the incident, an official said on Monday. The official cited the woman's mental health conditions for her act of self-harm. The woman, said to be battling with mental health issues, appeared emaciated when a shepherd heard her cries in the forest where she was found tied to a tree with an iron chain on July 27 and alerted the local police, an incident that had caused an uproar and attracted wide media attention. She was rescued by the police and taken to hospital.

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Wednesday | 07-08-2024

Violent Change In Bangladesh

The dramatic ouster of Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina on Monday following 35 days of mass protests could be hoped to bring peace to the country. The protests had begun against the job quotas but soon escalated into a movement against her 15 year rule. Efforts are on to cobble together an interim government which hopefully could address the grievances of the people, especially students, who led protests against Hasina. In the fast changing situation, Bangladesh finds itself in an uncertain territory. The unruly scenes that followed Hasina's ouster were troubling. thousands of Bangladeshi protesters ransacked her palace, ransacking furniture and breaking glass.

Bangladeshi media broadcast images of the crowds descending upon the prime minister's official residence and waving to cameras. Soon the videos circulated on social media, among them one about the vandalization of the statue in Dhaka of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman - Hasina's father and former Bangladesh president. Ironically Mujibur Rehman, who is regarded as the "Father of the Nation," had led the country to its freedom in 1971 by splitting the country from what was then called Western Pakistan.

Over 300 people have died in protests in the country since July 1 when the agitation against job quotas began after a court cancelled the 2018 government notification abolishing quotas, and reinstated them. The dramatic turn of events has steered the country down an uncertain path. Hasina had been ruling the country since 2009, staying popular for the better part of her term. All through her tenure she remained a close friend of New Delhi, something that was resented by a section of public opinion in the country. But after her record fourth straight win in January this year, securing 200 seats in the 300-seat parliament, her popularity saw a steady fall, leading eventually to her unceremonious ouster.

Her exit has been a source of deep concern for India. The new government may not be so favourably disposed towards India. Also, New Delhi has a reason to worry about China's growing influence in the country. This certainly should warrant a review and readjustment of India's foreign policy. That said, we can only hope that after Hasina, Bangladeshis make the right political choices for themselves. The country needs a secular, inclusive and a progressive government which takes minorities along. This is important for the country to stay as one of the vibrant economies in South Asia. For now, however, the priority is for the restoration of peace and the formation of a representative interim government, with hopefully respected economist and Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus helming it.



Investing Needs Discipline and Insight

Did you know?

Irshad Mushtaq

In the stock market, financial losses often result from a lack of education and experience, as well as a speculative mindset. Approach investing with discipline and strategy to achieve success.

Successful stock market investing hinges on comprehensive knowledge and expertise, much like excelling in any specialized field. A primary cause of financial losses in the stock market is a lack of education and experience. Often, individuals approach investing with a speculative mindset, akin to treating it as a lottery rather than employing a disciplined, informed strategy.

Engaging in the stock market without adequate knowledge is analogous to attempting to pilot an aircraft without prior training or performing medical procedures without attending medical school. Achieving success in the stock market necessitates a strategic approach grounded in rigorous research, meticulous analysis, and a commitment to continuous learning.

Novice investors might find it advantageous to begin with mutual funds or diversified portfolios managed by professionals. These instruments mitigate risk and provide market exposure without requiring extensive stock-picking expertise. Investing in such funds enables individuals to observe market behaviors, understand the impact of economic indicators, and learn about market trends.

As investors gain familiarity with market dynamics, transitioning to individual stocks can be considered. Embracing a disciplined approach to trading is imperative, which involves establishing a clear investment strategy, adhering to it, and avoiding impulsive decisions driven by market sentiment.

Effective money management is also critical. This includes investing only what one can afford to lose, diversifying investments to spread risk, and developing a clear exit strategy. Novice investors often make the mistake of ignoring expert advice, bypassing educational opportunities, and maintaining misconceptions about stock market investments.

Patience is a fundamental aspect of successful investing. Contrary to being a quick wealth scheme, the stock market requires time to yield substantial returns. Neglecting to seek advice, follow an educational path, or practice patience can result in missed opportunities and financial setbacks.

In summary, dedication to education, disciplined investing, and effective money management are indispensable for achieving long-term success in the stock market. By adopting a thoughtful and informed approach, investors can navigate the complexities of the market and work towards realizing their financial goals.

Learn from the insights of @IrshadMushtaq, writer, investor, entrepreneur & Founder of MI Securities! Connect for valuable financial advice at misecurities@bp.sharekhan.com



Peerzada Mohsin Shafi

Waters of Promise The Unfulfilled Potential of SHPs in Kashmir

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The Jammu & Kashmir Government introduced a new hydropower project policy in 2022, reiterating the goals of previous policies but with little concrete progress on the ground. The government must develop solid, innovative policies rather than replicating existing ones, such as the draft policy of Solar Energy of Uttarakhand, to fully harness the benefits of hydropower

Water, a divine gift is essential to all living beings. It plays a crucial role in daily life and industries alike. Since the industrial revolution, humanity has recognized the immense power of water and devised methods to harness its benefits.

According to the 2022 report by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on the International Centre for Small Hydro Projects, over 60 percent of the global small hydropower potential remains untapped. Across the globe, there are vast opportunities to utilize Small Hydropower Projects (SHP) for the benefit of local communities and the planet.

Decentralized systems like SHP can significantly contribute to sustainable energy goals. SHP provides a steady baseload of energy, facilitating positive changes in the communities where these plants are constructed, as well as beyond. In regions with low levels of electricity access, SHP plants offer immediate welfare improvements and knock-on benefits such as job creation, income generation, and enhanced delivery of critical social services, including education and healthcare.

India has launched several initiatives to develop SHP projects, recognizing their potential for clean, renewable energy. Key measures include the National Policy for Small Hydropower Development (1999) and the Hydro Power Policy (2008), which promote SHP projects up to 25 MW with simplified clearances and financial incentives.

The Ministry of New and Re-

newable Energy (MNRE) offers subsidies and Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to support the capital costs of SHP projects. Additionally, the government promotes Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) and streamlines clearance processes to attract private investment and expedite project implementation.

These initiatives aim to boost India's renewable energy capacity and rural electrification efforts. Despite abundant water resources, the Government of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) has harnessed only about 15 percent of its potential, primarily through medium and large hydroelectric projects. The total identified potential of small hydel projects (up to 25 MW) in J&K is approximately 1500 MW, indicating significant room for development.

The Jammu and Kashmir Energy Development Agency (JAKEDA) is the implementing agency for SHP in the region, guided by the Policy for Development of Small Hydro Energy for Power Generation, 2016 (up to 10 MW). While hydel policies of 2003 and 2011 offered various incentives to developers, there is ample scope for policy improvement to make it more investor-friendly.

Recently, the Government of J&K enhanced JAKEDA's mandate from 2 MW to 10 MW. The objective was to create an investor-friendly environment to achieve a 1000 MW installed capacity target within the next 10 years, divided equally between Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) mode and Independent Power Producers (IPP) mode.

This initiative aimed to propel JAKEDA into a 5000-crore com-

pany over the next decade, with IPPs allowed to produce independent power for sale. No new data is available on JAKEDA's website after January 2022. As of then, only 4 out of 25 IPPs had been commissioned. In Anantnag district, the Ichoo MHP of 5 MW has been commissioned, but the Dedibal SHP of 1.65 MW lags with only 10 percent of civil works completed. Similarly, in Budgam, the Dudhpathri MHP of 6 MW has only 5 percent of civil work completed. Other projects face similar issues, ranging from land disputes to pending departmental compliances.

The Jammu & Kashmir Government introduced a new hydropower project policy in 2022, reiterating the goals of previous policies but with little concrete progress on the ground. The government must develop solid, innovative policies rather than replicating existing ones, such as the draft policy of Solar Energy of Uttarakhand, to fully harness the benefits of hydropower.

In conclusion, while small hydropower projects have tremendous potential to transform local communities and contribute to sustainable energy goals, significant challenges remain. It is imperative for the government to address these issues with effective, original policies to unlock the true potential of hydro power in the Valley of Kashmir.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The author is a Researcher, Planning and Contracts Engineer



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Forcing Your Children to Marry Unwillingly is Un-Islamic

It is important first to understand how forced marriage differs from arranged marriage. In the latter, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the young people. In forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage and some element of duress is involved. The force may include threats of actual physical or sexual violence, financial abuse (e.g., the taking away of someone's wages) and/or the individual being made to feel they are bringing 'shame' on the family by refusing to marry. Sometimes the victim is unable to explain that no one was physically forcing him to do it but it was clear he had no choice? The pressure to accept was overwhelming. It is important to note that forced marriage is not sanctioned within any culture or by any religion.

Islam and Forced Marriage

Despite numerous contentions to the contrary, forced marriage is not an Islamic tradition; it is a jahiliyyah custom (pre-Islamic era), rooted in indigenous cultures, that has persisted in some Muslim communities. Islam does not sanction or advocate

any form of forced marriage. Unlike secular law, marriage within the ambit of Islam is not only a civil contract but a religious and spiritual contract between two people - which must be entered into freely and with mutual consent. According to Islamic custom, parents and guardians have specific rights in this matter; to arrange the marriage ceremony and conduct it as a respectful family event; give their advice and recommendation for a life partner for their children. These rights are encapsulated within the philosophy of 'willayah'. However, Islam does not allow parents, guardians or other relatives to enforce their will or choice on a boy or a girl since it is they who are the real parties to that contract. The right to exercise free will and consent in choosing a spouse is a God given right.

There are a myriad of reasons for forced marriage. In Muslim communities, misguided religious teachings and perverted interpretations of Islam lead families to believe that they are complying with Islamic ruling. Other factors may include the notion of protecting children; upholding cultural traditions; preserving family honor; social status; and building stronger families. Forced marriage

also is used to prevent so-called "unsuitable" relationships outside regional & ethnic groups.

This is also clearly evident from important commandments given by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in numerous Hadith, which lay down the foundational principles of formulating a marriage contract.

In the Sahih Al-Bukhari, for example, a chapter in the book of marriage has been given the heading: "No father or mother or any close relation can force his/her children to marry anyone against their free will and consent".

Within this chapter Abu Hurairah transmits from the Holy Prophet (PBUH) who said: "No female whether a widow or divorcee will be forced to marry anyone unless her express and categorical consent has been freely taken and in the same way a woman not previously married can never be forced to marry anyone unless her free consent and permission is taken".

Imam Bukhari has set another chapter heading within the book of marriage: "If parents force their daughter to marry someone against her wish then the marriage will be void".

Under this chapter Imam Bukhari reports a Hadith of the Holy Prophet

(PBUH) from Khansa Bint e Hizam Al Ansariyah. She states that her father married her off to someone forcefully whom she did not like. She took her case to the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and upon listening to her; the Holy Prophet (PBUH) rejected the marriage and declared the marriage as void".

In another Hadith in the Sahih of Imam Bukhari it is narrated by Abdullah Ibn Abbas (r.a.d) that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said that if a woman wants to marry and is already a divorcee or widow, her right of free consent and free choice is superior then the right of her guardian. If she is not previously married and this is her first marriage even then her parents or other guardians cannot enforce their choice on her. They are not allowed to force her to marry anyone against her free choice and free consent.

It is thus clearly apparent that forced marriages are totally unacceptable in Islam. Islamic commandments as mentioned above are very categorical in nature. Those who invoke Islam in order to justify their actions do so for ulterior motives. There is a need to educate all and sundry on these issues.

Abid Hussain

The Double-Edged Sword of Technology

Rizwan Rumi

In the modern world, technology is a constant companion, integrated into nearly every facet of our daily lives. From smartphones and tablets to smart home devices and digital assistants, technology makes tasks more efficient and information more accessible. Yet, this ease of access can quickly become an addiction, leading us to question if our reliance on technology has gone too far. This article explores the multifaceted impact of technology on our lives, highlighting its conveniences and potential pitfalls, and proposing strategies to manage our tech dependency.

The Convenience of Technology – A Double-Edged Sword

Technology's primary allure lies in its convenience. With just a few taps or clicks, we can connect with loved ones, shop for essentials, access breaking news, or even perform tasks that once required significant effort and time. Applications like Amazon, Facebook and Snapchat make it possible to perform these actions quickly, saving time and energy.

However, this convenience comes with a cost. Our screens often become substitutes for face-to-face interactions, and digital communication can take precedence over real-life engagements. This shift affects how we connect with others, potentially diminishing the quality of our relationships. Moreover, reliance on technology can erode our ability to perform everyday tasks independently, making us overly dependent on digital solutions for even the simplest of needs.

The Impact on Social Interactions and Relationships

Our increasing reliance on technology has transformed how we communicate. While digital platforms enable us to connect with people globally, they also create a barrier to real-world interactions. As people become engrossed in their devices, they often neglect the world around them, missing out on meaningful experiences and connections.

This phenomenon is particularly concerning within families. Parents might find themselves absorbed in screens rather than engaging with their children, potentially leading to strained relationships and missed opportunities for bonding. Furthermore, the omnipresence of technology can lead to an expectation of instant communication, fostering impatience and frustration when responses are not immediate.



diate.

Productivity and Procrastination: A Delicate Balance

While technology can enhance productivity, it is also a significant source of distraction. Constant notifications and the temptation to check social media or emails can derail focus and lead to procrastination. This is especially problematic in work and academic settings, where concentration is crucial.

The paradox of technology lies in its ability to both aid and hinder productivity. Setting devices to "Do Not Disturb" mode or using apps designed to block distractions can help mitigate this issue. By consciously managing our digital interactions, we can reclaim control over our time and attention.

The Reliability and Risks of Information

Access to information has never been easier, thanks to technology. However, the reliability of information, particularly from social media, is a growing concern. The spread of misinformation and fake news is rampant, making it imperative to discern credible sources from unreliable ones. Traditional news outlets, such as newspapers, often provide more vetted information than social media platforms.

ditional news outlets, such as newspapers, often provide more vetted information than social media platforms.

Technology's Influence on Mental Health

The pervasive use of technology can have profound effects on mental health, contributing to anxiety and depression. Social media platforms, while connecting people, can also create pressure to maintain a certain image or lifestyle. Cyberbullying and the constant need to be online can exacerbate feelings of isolation and inadequacy. Additionally, the blue light emitted by screens can interfere with sleep patterns, further impacting mental health.

The Physical Implications of Tech Dependence

Physical health can also suffer from excessive technology use. Prolonged screen time is linked to eye strain and discomfort, commonly referred to as Computer Vision Syndrome. The sedentary lifestyle encouraged by digital consumption can lead to obesity and related health issues. Poor posture from device use can result in chronic neck and back pain.

Strategies for Reducing Technology Dependence

Given the potential drawbacks of excessive technology use, it is essential to establish a healthier balance. Here are some strategies to consider:

- Designated Tech-Free Times:** Establish specific periods during the day or week when devices are off-limits. This could be during meals, an hour before bed, or on weekends. Use this time to engage in non-digital activities like reading, exercising, or spending quality time with family.
- Limit Screen Time:** Use built-in features on devices to track and limit screen time. Setting boundaries can help ensure that technology use remains purposeful rather than habitual.
- Engage in Offline Activities:** Cultivate hobbies that don't require screens, such as gardening, playing a musical instrument, or painting. These activities foster creativity and relaxation, providing a break from digital stimulation.
- Create Tech-Free Zones:** Designate certain areas in the home as tech-free, such as bedrooms or dining areas. This encourages interaction and relaxation without digital distractions.

5. **Prioritize In-Person Interactions:** Whenever possible, choose face-to-face communication over digital interactions. Plan gatherings and social events that foster genuine connections.

6. **Mindful Technology Use:** Practice mindfulness by setting intentions before using devices. Be aware of your motivations and the impact technology has on your well-being.

7. **Educational Limits for Children:** For families, establish clear guidelines about technology use, including acceptable content and screen time limits. Encourage children to explore a variety of activities to ensure a well-rounded lifestyle.

The Role of Mindfulness in Technology Use

Mindfulness, or being fully present in the moment, can transform how we interact with technology. By consciously choosing when and how to use devices, we can develop a healthier relationship with them.

Practice Mindful Scrolling: Before engaging in digital activities, consider whether they serve a positive purpose or merely fill time.

Set Clear Intentions: Decide what you aim to accomplish before using a device. This focus can prevent distractions and make digital interactions more meaningful.

Notice Emotional Responses: Be aware of how technology use makes you feel. If you experience stress or anxiety, take breaks to engage in activities that bring peace and joy.

Striking a Balance

Technology has undoubtedly revolutionized our lives, offering unparalleled convenience and connectivity. Yet, its potential to detract from our mental and physical health, relationships, and productivity is significant. By adopting mindful practices and setting boundaries, we can enjoy the benefits of technology while minimizing its negative effects.

As we navigate this digital age, it is crucial to remember that technology should serve as a tool to enhance our lives, not control them. By fostering a balanced relationship with technology, we can cultivate a lifestyle that embraces both the digital and physical worlds, enriching our experiences and well-being.

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The Myths About Childhood Trauma and Other Early Experiences

Antonietta Contreras

From the specific situations that trigger trauma to the mechanisms underlying its effects, there exists a wide range of distinguishable forms of this complex phenomenon. Some authors concentrate on naming the different types of traumatic situations (e.g., betrayal trauma, childhood trauma) while others focus on the wide range of symptoms and syndromes that can unfold as a result (e.g., complex posttraumatic stress disorder [C-PTSD], developmental trauma disorder [DTD]).

The growing list of "something trauma" now makes it very challenging to understand what each term means. Is "complex trauma" the same as C-PTSD? What exactly does "childhood trauma" encompass?

Consider that even people exposed to traumatic circumstances—even if they share the same living space and conditions—often display clear differences in how they adapted to the circumstances. This happens because, even when external factors appear similar, each of us deals with individualized internal traumatizing agents (like shame, fear, anger, rejection sensitivity, rumination, and social/familial factors) differently, which impact each one of us uniquely. Allow me to review some common myths surrounding different types of trauma to provide clarity on this important distinction:

Myth 1: Developmental trauma is the same as childhood trauma. Developmental trauma (DT) is often mistakenly equated with childhood trauma (CHT), but they represent distinct concepts. DT specifically denotes exposure to prolonged stress or trauma



and physical effects. These experiences may range from one-time events like a car crash or the death of a pet to chronic stressors that persist throughout childhood, potentially causing developmental delays. It's important not to use CHT to label every aspect of an imperfect childhood. Remember that the exposure alone doesn't constitute trauma unless there are lasting psychological, emotional,

and physical effects. These experiences may range from one-time events like a car crash or the death of a pet to chronic stressors that persist throughout childhood, potentially causing developmental delays. It's important not to use CHT to label every aspect of an imperfect childhood. Remember that the exposure alone doesn't constitute trauma unless there are lasting consequences. As you can

see in this illustration, DT is a subset of CHT.

Myth 2: Relational trauma, complex trauma, and attachment trauma are synonymous. These three terms refer to distinct experiences, with some overlapping. Relational trauma emphasizes the impact of harmful relationships (romantic, professional, familial, or social) on an individual's well-being at any age. Complex trauma underscores the effects of prolonged exposure to traumatic events at any age, encompassing a range of experiences beyond solely relational. Attachment trauma specifically concerns disruptions in early attachment relationships, occurring at birth and during the first few years of life, with caregivers and their enduring consequences.

Myth 3: Developmental trauma and DTD are the same. Here is a good place to clarify a big mistake most people make: There is a difference between terms that refer to the exposure to traumatic events versus the consequences of that exposure as a lasting set of symptoms. Developmental trauma refers to the exposure to experiences of prolonged stress or traumatic adversity during early formative years, typically encompassing the period from birth to early adulthood. These experiences can disrupt a child's cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development, leading to lasting effects on their well-being.

On the other hand, DTD refers to the consequences. This particular name is a proposed diagnosis in the field of psychiatry. It has been suggested to bring attention to the profound and pervasive impact of developmental trauma on an individual's functioning.

Myth 4: Developmental trauma's damage is irreparable. Trauma leaves its mark, but it does not break us irreparably. The way our system is designed causes us to get wounded when we are not able to emotionally handle some stressors or threats, but, like with a broken bone, our bodies have the remarkable ability to heal and become strong again. Scars from traumatic injuries may not disappear—the way scars also stay in our skin after a physical hurt—but we could see them as a life fully lived and also as proofs of our strength and resilience, not just the struggles we faced. This is where the mind needs to become our healing ally. In the aftermath of trauma, our scars may help us reevaluate priorities and gain a deeper appreciation for life.

Myth 5: Intergenerational trauma is unavoidable for those whose grandparents were traumatized. Intergenerational trauma has gained recognition as a term used to describe the effects of trauma transmitted from one generation to the next, often observed in families where ancestors have faced significant adversity or traumatic circumstances such as genocides, racism, and oppression. While epigenetic studies have shown that the effects of traumatization can reverberate through family systems, it is a misconception to believe that intergenerational trauma is inevitable for all descendants of traumatized individuals. These findings indicate that descendants may be prone to developing symptoms even without extreme exposure, but this does not mean they are destined to develop a disorder or that they cannot heal.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today

نَحْنُ قَدَرْنَا بَيْنَكُمْ الْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ

"We have ordained death for all of you, and We cannot be prevented"

- Al Quran (56:60)

A Heartbroken Farewell



Mir Aliza

We are shattered to announce the sad demise of our beloved Mir Aliza, the cherished grand daughter of **Late Haji Ghulam Hassan Mir**; daughter of **Zahoor Ahmed Mir**. A tragic road accident near Handwara claimed her precious life.

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

The void left by our darling Aliza is immeasurable. Her radiant spirit illuminated the lives of everyone she touched.

Congregational Fateh Khawni will be held on Thursday, August 8th, at 10:30 AM at the ancestral graveyard, near Athwajan, Srinagar

We humbly seek Allah's infinite mercy to grant us the strength to endure this unbearable loss. Your heartfelt condolences and prayers are our solace during these darkest hours.

Greif-stricken family

