

CONGRESS ALLIANCE TALKS

Rahul, Kharge Arrive In Srinagar



KO Photo | Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge arrived in Srinagar on Wednesday on a two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir to take stock of the party's preparations for the upcoming assembly elections in the Union Territory and explore a likely alliance with the National Conference.

The two leaders are visiting the UT for key meetings in connection with the three-phased assembly elections beginning September 18, a senior Congress leader said.

There were no official meetings scheduled for the two leaders on Wednesday, he said.

The two leaders will engage in extensive discussions with party leaders and workers of 10 districts of the Kashmir valley on Thursday. The meetings will begin at 10 am after which the two are likely to interact with the media here.

They are also likely to meet National Conference (NC) leadership to discuss a possible pre-poll alliance.

After wrapping up interactions here, they will fly to Jammu in the afternoon to continue their | More on P6

Congress-NC Alliance Hits Roadblock

As Congress party and National Conference are likely to forge an alliance for Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, talks on seat sharing are stuck on Doda Assembly Constituency. Sources said that both the parties want to contest on Doda seat which traditionally has remained a stronghold of Congress party. "The coordination committee of both the parties have | More on P6

THE TWO LEADERS WILL ENGAGE in extensive discussions with party leaders and workers of 10 districts of the Kashmir valley on Thursday."

BJP Likely To Hold CEC Meeting On August 25

Agencies

New Delhi: As the Election Commission of India announced the dates of the state assembly elections in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir, the BJP is making preparations and is likely to hold its Central

Election Committee meeting on August 25, 2024, at the BJP headquarters in Delhi.

According to a top source, "The CEC meeting will be held on August 25 for both Haryana and J&K. The names of the candidates will be discussed and decided in the | More on P6

Assembly Elections

MCC Violations: Command & Control Centres Set Up In J&K

Observer News Service

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir authorities on Wednesday set up command and control centres in Jammu and Srinagar to check violations of the Model Code of Conduct in force for the upcoming assembly elections, officials said.

The centres have been established at the offices of chief electoral officer at the twin capital cities to curb the spread of misinformation and uphold the integrity of the electoral process, an official statement said.

Round-the-clock control rooms have also been made functional in all 20 deputy commissioners' offices.

The model code of conduct came into force in Jammu and Kashmir on Friday with the announcement of the schedule for the assembly elections in



the Union Territory.

Assembly polls will be held in three phases – September 18, September 25 and October 1. The counting of votes will be held on October 4.

Equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure, the command and control centres would keep a close vigil on all poll-related activities,

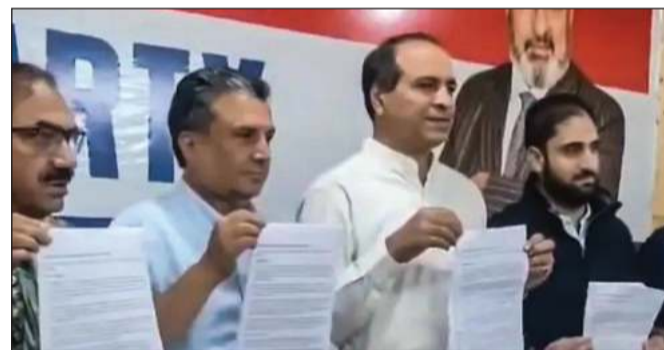
ensuring prompt action, including against any suspected case of fake news, said the statement from the office of the chief electoral officer.

"In addition to electronic channels, the Command and Control Centre is also keeping a strict vigil on social media channels and media portals | More on P6

Over 28K Defacements Removed Within 72 Hrs

The J&K Election Department has removed more than 28 thousand defacements across Jammu and Kashmir within 72 hours after the announcement of J&K Assembly Election 2024. With the announcement of the Assembly Election in Jammu and Kashmir on 16 August 2024 by Election Commission of India (ECI), the Commission had issued directions for the effective enforcement of provisions of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) in J&K Union Territory. Taking the ECI directives regarding the implementation of MCC after the | More on P6

Apni Party's Election Manifesto Out Bats For Restoration Of Statehood, CM Powers



Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The Apni Party on Wednesday released its manifesto for the assembly elections, promising to press the Centre for constitutional guarantees to preserve culture and special identity of Jammu and Kashmir, and to work for the restoration of statehood of the Union territory.

"The Apni Party will press for constitutional guarantees to preserve the culture and special identity of Jammu and Kashmir, similar to the provisions of

Article 371 in some north-eastern states. This includes land and job protection, addressing the people's sense of loss," the manifesto read.

It also promised the annulment of existing central laws that were extended to J&K following the abrogation of Article 370.

"The Apni Party will revisit and restore all the laws that were withdrawn or amended over time. Our party will secure constitutional guarantees for the protection of land and job security for local | More on P6

List Of 8 Candidates

Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party on Wednesday released its first list of eight candidates for the upcoming assembly elections in the union territory, according to a party spokesperson.

The list was recommended by Mohammad Dilawar Mir, chairman of the party's parliamentary affairs committee, and was approved by party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, the spokesperson said. Earlier in the day, the Apni Party released its manifesto for the assembly elections, promising to press the Centre for constitutional guarantees to preserve culture and special identity of | More on P6

GAZA BACKLASH

Israeli Film Festival In Mumbai Cancelled

KO Web Desk

New Delhi: The National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) has cancelled the Israel Film Festival in Mumbai in response to an online signature campaign against the event. The festival was scheduled to be held at the National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) between August 21 and 22, 2024.

A group of citizens on Monday urged the National Film Development Corporation of India to cancel a festival showcasing Israeli films, scheduled to be held in Mumbai on Wednesday and Thursday at the National Museum of Indian Cinema. The signature campaign was organised by the India Palestine Solidarity Forum, an informal group dedicated to raising awareness about the on-going genocide in Gaza.

"This screening by the NFDC [National Film Development Corporation] is shamefully being held at a time, when the entire world is witness to Israeli war crimes, the ongoing Holocaust and the genocide in Gaza, and across all of Palestine," the | More on P6

Er Rashid Moves Delhi Court Seeking Bail

Court Seeks NIA's response

New Delhi: A Delhi court has sought the National Investigation Agency's response on an application filed by jailed Kashmiri parliamentarian Rashid Engineer seeking regular bail.

Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, was arrested in a 2017 Jammu and Kashmir terror funding case. He defeated former chief minister and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah in Baramulla in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Additional sessions judge (ASJ) Chanderjit Singh issued notice to the NIA on Tuesday and directed it to file its response by August 28.

The court had earlier granted Rashid custody parole to take the oath of office on July 5. Rashid has been in jail since



2019 after he was charged by the NIA under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the alleged terror funding case. He is at present lodged in Tihar jail.

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

The NIA had filed a charge sheet against several individuals, including Kashmiri separatist leader | More on P6

Govt Report On Wetlands: HC Seeks Response

M Ahmad

Srinagar: J&K and Ladakh High Court has directed Amicus Curiae to file response to the status report filed by the government regarding conservation and protection to wetlands in Kashmir.

Hearing a public Interest Litigation, a Division Bench of Chief Justice (Acting) Tashi Rabstan and Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi observed that a status report in terms of order dated 9 September 2022 has been filed.

Subsequently, advocate Nadeem Qadiri, Amicus Curiae, sought time to file response and suggestions, if any, to the status report filed by the authorities. "The respondents shall provide all possible assistance to the learned Amicus Curiae during his visits to different wetland sites," the court added. | More on P6

Absence Of Doctor At Jammu Hospital Dying Man Gets CPR From Son, Probe Ordered

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: A 71-year-old man died on Wednesday allegedly because there was no one to give him CPR at a hospital in Ramban district, an official said.

Chulam Nabi Bhat, who was suffering from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, was rushed to Sub-District Hospital in Banihal by his son Altaf Ahmad, but he was forced to perform Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) on him



because there was no doctor or paramedical staff available at the moment.

A video of the son trying to revive his father on a hospital bed has gone viral since. After half an | More on P6

CMO Ramban Refutes Allegations

The CMO office Ramban has strongly refuted the allegations that no medical staff attended an elderly person at Sub-District Hospital Banihal and "after half an hour since his arrival, the patient was rushed to the casualty room where he was declared dead." "This statement is incorrect and misleading," Chief Medical Officer Ramban, Kamal Je Zadoo said. | More on P6

Preventing 2014-Like Floods

HC Grants Govt Week's Time To File Compliance Report

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has granted the government week's time for filing a composite compliance report, detailing steps as regards prevention of floods in Kashmir Valley.

Hearing a Public Interest Litigation filed by an NGO Environmental Policy Group, a division Bench of Chief Justice (Acting) Tashi Rabstan and Justice Puneet Gupta passed the directions after government advocate Faheem Nissar Shah submitted that status report is ready and sought a short adjournment of one week to file the same. While granting him the time, the court directed that a copy of the same shall be provided to Amicus Curie "who shall then submit his response within



importance for this Court is to prevent the possibility of recurrence of such a devastating flood, which had occurred in September, 2014 for which a number of directions have been issued by this Court, including directions issued on 18.08.2017 and 11.09.2017," the court had said.

"This Court, vide order dated 9.10.2017 with regard to the directions issued from time to time particularly on 18.08.2017 and 11.09.2017 reminded the authorities that the Court is not powerless in matters involving public interest," the Division Bench had said, adding, "It was further observed that this Court is sufficiently empowered to take such action which would constrain the authorities to follow the dictates of law."

The Court, | More on P6

J&K FFRC Imposes 9 Lakh Fine To Private School

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Committee for Fixation and Regulation of Fee of Private Schools (FFRC) has imposed a fine of Rs 9.60 lacs to a private school in Srinagar for not complying to its orders.

According to the FFRC orders, the school management have been directed to pay the fine within ten days.

FFRC in an order said that on May-20-2024, penalty of Rs 3.20 lacs was imposed on the School Management of Minto Circle English Medium Senior Secondary school, Aloochoi Bagh, Srinagar.

It also said that the penalty was imposed on account of the school charging excess money against the fees determined by this committee.

In terms of Rule 12 sub clause (e) and (f), the non-compliance of | More on P6

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CS Reviews Functioning Of Transport Department

Asks For Improving Challan Disposals, Strictness Against Violators

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting of the Transport Department to review its functioning.

Besides the Secretary, Transport; the meeting was attended by IG Traffic; Transport Commissioner; MD RTC; Director, Motor Garages and other concerned officers.

During this meeting the Chief Secretary enjoined upon the Traffic Police to carry out the follow-up invest

igation in each accident happening on the roads. He made out that the traffic violators should be booked as per the law without showing any kind of leniency.

He asked them to show results on ground by expediting the completion of projects taken-up by the Department. He also called for taking steps for standardiza

tion of helmets and increasing the monitoring of revenue collection in RTC buses to stop its pilferage. In his presentation, the Secretary Transport, Niraj Kumar apprised the meeting about the overall performance of the Department regarding implementation of different projects and schemes.

He informed the meeting that of the 3, 16, 330 hard copies of driving licenses, 2, 40, 000 had been dispatched till now. About the action against



traffic violators the RC/RP of 8194 vehicles had been recommended for suspension by the Traffic department and 5380 notices issued to habitual offenders. It was further given out that 1347 suspension of licenses of habitual offenders had been forwarded for suspension by the Traffic department and 1098 notices issued against the violators.

On the occasion, the DEO stressed on ensuring all requisite/Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) facilities at all designated Polling Stations, Distribution/Collection centers and at designated Strong Rooms in Srinagar.



DEO Srinagar Reviews Arrangements For Assembly Elections

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In order to review the progress of arrangements being put in place with regard to conduct of upcoming General Elections to Legislative Assembly in all Eight Assembly Constituencies of the District, a meeting was held under the Chairmanship of the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex here today.

The DEO took a detailed appraisal from all Assistant Returning Officers and Officers of the line Departments about the arrangements being made at Polling Stations Collection /Distribution Centers and at designated Strong Rooms in Srinagar.

On the occasion, the DEO stressed on ensuring all requisite/Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) facilities at all designated Polling Stations, Distribution/Collection centers and at designated Strong Rooms.

The DEO directed the Officers to work with utmost coordination

Srinagar Police Establishes Special Helpline

Srinagar: In an attempt to ensure free and fair elections, the Srinagar Police has introduced a special helpline number to report any objectionable messages that may violate election laws and the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) in the district.

The move comes following the directions of the Election Commission of India.

The Srinagar police in a post on X wrote the initia

tive follows the directives of the Election Commission of India (ECI).

"In compliance to the directions of Election Commission of India, Srinagar Police has designated 9596222551 as the special mobile phone no. for reporting of objectionable msgs in violation of Election laws & MCC through SMS or Social Media platform," Srinagar police wrote.

to complete all assigned tasks related to the conduct of the Assembly Elections-2024. He stressed that Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) at each and every Polling Station viz Permanent ramps, drinking water, toilet facilities as per norms of ECI.

The DEO stresses the officers

to focus on meticulous preparations to reflect the commitment of conducting a successful Assembly Election in 2024 in the District.

The DEO emphasized officers to uphold electoral laws, regulations, and ethical standards to ensure the integrity and fairness of the electoral process.

Fire Breaks Out At Hotel In Civil Lines

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The attic portion of a hotel in Rajbagh area of the civil lines was damaged in a fire incident here this afternoon, officials said.

The fire, according to the officials, broke out in a five storey hotel Lucky Akbar in Rajbagh, damaging its attic portion. However, no loss of life or injury was reported in the incident.

They said the fire tenders and staff of three nearby stations were pressed into service to contain the fire, which according to officials, broke out around 1:30 in the afternoon.

Confirming the incident, Assistant Director Fire Services Aqib Hussain Mir said the fire broke out in the attic portion of a hotel in Rajbagh which was later contained and the cause of the fire is being ascertained.

"The control room received information about the fire incident at around 1:40 at a hotel in Rajbagh. The fire operation was launched as soon as the information was received and the staff and fire tenders of the three nearby stations were pressed into service to bring the fire under control," Mir told Kashmir Observer, adding, the cause of fire is being ascertained.

AAC Condolences Demise Of Party Member

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Awami Action Committee (AAC) Wednesday expressed deep sorrow and grief over the demise of Ghulam Mohiuddin Saad, the Halqa President of the organization's of Patthar Masjid, Dallal Mohalla, Halqa

AAC in a statement hailed Saad's invaluable services to both the organization and the Mirwaiz family as unforgettable.

It extended condolences and sympathy to the bereaved family on behalf of party head Mirwaiz Umar Farooq

In a condolence statement, the AAC said the deceased dedicated his entire life serving the or

ganization, both alongside its founder, Shaheed-e-Millat Mirwaiz Moulana Mohammad Farooq, and after his martyrdom, with the current head of the organization, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq. He remained steadfast in his principle stance of the organization until his death.

Saad's demise has created a void within the organizational circles, and his notable services will be remembered for a long time.

Meanwhile, a delegation from the organization visited Patthar Masjid, Dallal Mohalla, to attend the deceased's funeral prayers and conveyed Mirwaiz's condolence message to the grieving family.

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 - BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
 - BIJHERA: 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: 27
ZUHR	12:35
ASR	5: 17
Magrib	7:16
ISHA	8: 41

HIJRI CALENDAR
16 Safar
1446

This Day In History

- 1942 - Brazil declares war on Germany, Japan & Italy
- 1943 - Soviet troops free Karkov
- 1944 - Adolf Hitler orders Paris to be destroyed
- 1953 - Shah of Iran returns to Tehran
- 1956 - US President Eisenhower and VP Richard Nixon renominated by Republican convention in San Francisco.
- 1958 - Great Britain performs atmospheric nuclear test at Christmas Island.
- 1962 - Failed assassination attempt on French president Charles de Gaulle
- 1962 - USSR performs nuclear test at Novaya Zemlya USSR
- 1963 - NASA civilian test pilot Joe Walker in the X-15 rocket plane achieves a world record altitude of 354,200 feet (107,960 m, 67 miles)
- 1964 - Guinea, Liberia & Ivory Coast form joint market
- 1968 - The Society of Labour Lawyers (SLL) publishes an 'interim report' about alleged discrimination in Northern Ireland; the report is heavily criticised by unionists.
- 1971 - Approximately 130 non-Unionist councillors announce their withdrawal from participation on district councils across Northern Ireland in protest against Internment (allowing suspected terrorists to be indefinitely detained without trial)
- 1972 - Rhodesia is expelled by the International Olympic Committee for its racist policies.
- 1982 - Israeli General Ariel Sharon urges Palestinians to discuss peaceful coexistence
- 1984 - The United Democratic Front, an internal coalition of anti-apartheid groups in South Africa, organizes a highly successful boycotts of the Colored and Indian elections to parliament.
- 1985 - Airtours Boeing-737 crashes at Manchester airport, 55 killed
- 1986 - Gas from Volcano Chamberoen kills 1,734 (Cameroun)
- 1986 - NASA announces tests designed to verify ignition pressure dynamics

From KO Archives

Gunmen loot Budgam village

Mushtaq Aftab

CHADURA (BUDGAM)- Police are on the lookout for some unidentified gunmen who 'raided' several houses in a village here to extort money. They decamped with the booty ranging between Rs five and Rs 2,000. In another case, where a shopkeeper was relieved of Rs 8,800, an FIR No 2472 was lodged with the police on Friday.

According to reports, unidentified 'gunmen swooped on Chil Yech village in this district at about 8 p.m. on Sunday. They forced their entry into several residential houses asking the inmates not to leave their premises. Then they went on relieving them of whatever they had in cash on gunpoint. Reports identified the victims as Muhammad. Yousuf Wani, Muhammad Shafi, Abdur Rahman Dar, Jahangir Alam, Jalal-ud-din Paul, Fayaz Ahmad Sofi, Nazir Ahmad Paray, Ghulam Rasool Guiri, Amma Paray and Abdul Rasheed Gujri. The gunmen managed their escape under the cover of darkness. Villagers lodged a complaint with the police who launched a manhunt to nab the gunmen.

Earlier, on Friday, some unidentified gunmen waylaid Abdul Ahad Sheikh, of Danchera, when he was on his way back home from Utligam in Beerwah area. They relieved him of Rs 8,800. An FIR was lodged with police at Beerwah on the same day. However, no arrest has been made so far. Unidentified gunmen also snatched Rs 400 from a shopkeeper of Utligam on the same day.

(Kashmir Observer, August 22, 2000)

انتقال
یہ برائے نامی دکھ کے ساتھ جانی ہے کہ اہلیہ پیر زادہ حاجی فاروق احمد قادری ساکن اندرونی کالجی دروازہ (حال علمدار کالونی نوپورہ) 20 اگست 2024ء بمقام 14 صفر المظفر 1446ھ کو اس دار فانی سے رخصت ہو گئیں۔
مرحوم کی اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی بروز جمعہ 23 اگست 2024ء ان کے آبائی مقبرہ واقع کستور پنڈی خانہ صاحبہ میں بعد از نماز جمعہ ذی حجی بجے ادا کی جائے گی (بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ)
سوگواران
پیر زادہ حاجی فاروق احمد قادری
علمدار کالونی نوپورہ مری نگر
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Thursday | 22-08-2024

Mpox Outbreak

While the world is basking in the triumph over Covid-19 pandemic that killed millions of people around the world, another contagion is upon us: it is called Mpox, the latest public health emergency. The disease like Covid also spreads by contact between people, mainly through close contact, and occasionally from the environment to people through objects and surfaces touched by a person with Mpox. What is more, the disease can spread from humans to animals who are susceptible to virus, and also from animals to humans. The Mpox already caused a global outbreak in 2022. Now it has become a multi-country outbreak, leading to a WHO public health emergency. The disease can be fatal too, between 0.1 percent and 10 percent of people who have become infected with Mpox, have died.

Mercifully, a vaccine exists. However, mass vaccination, which was rolled out during the COVID-19 global pandemic, has not been recommended yet. Meanwhile, the disease has got some foothold in our part of the world. Some cases have already been reported in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. And this should be a case of deep concern for us.

On a positive note, the centre has taken note of the development. The airports, ports and border authorities have been directed to remain vigilant in response to the global rise in Mpox cases. So far, there is no reported case of Mpox in the country. According to the current assessment, the risk of a large outbreak in the country is low. But that should be no reason for any complacency. It is time that the Government invests in creating public awareness about the disease without triggering undue panic. The contagion is unlike Covid-19 but may never reach the level of the latter's penetration. Covid-19 had wrought havoc in India but ultimately infection died down as the country developed a herd immunity. One of the factors for this was that India experienced a nationwide explosion of Covid infections during the virulent Delta wave in the beginning of 2021. Thousands died as a result. This, together with a successful vaccination programme, could be credited to have built mass immunity among the people.

Mpox is altogether a different disease and much worse, in some aspects. Complications of Mpox infection include permanent skin scarring. We need to be particularly on guard against the disease in the Valley as it is a tourist place. We get tourists not just from the rest of the country but also from across the world. So, it is time that the government initiates steps to screen the arrivals in the Valley both by air and the road.



Did You Know?

Financial Literacy: The Missing Piece in Our Education System

Irshaad Mushtaq

Many people hesitate to invest due to gaps in education and mindset. Factors like acceptance, attitude, and financial literacy play a significant role. Our education system heavily emphasizes traditional subjects, often overlooking crucial aspects of financial education. From an early age, students are steered towards professional roles and high grades, neglecting the importance of financial wisdom.

Financial literacy isn't a standard part of most curricula, leaving many individuals unaware of essential finance and investment concepts. As a result, people spend long hours working yet fail to learn how to make their money work for them, perpetuating a cycle of hard work over financial acumen. Understanding finance and investments requires strategic thinking and an early start. Unfortunately, many realize the importance of investing too late, making it harder to adapt.

It is crucial to foster financial awareness early on, appreciating the significance of financial planning and investing. Globally, most millionaires and billionaires owe their wealth to smart investments, not just hard work. While hard work builds capabilities, true wealth creation necessitates savvy investments.

The unfortunate truth is that many of us struggle financially because we lack education in financial literacy. Financial education is key to achieving financial freedom. We can learn much from those who have succeeded in life through wise financial decisions. Although money isn't everything, it is a vital tool that allows us to meet our basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life.

Without money, we face numerous limitations: we can't purchase basic things, medicine, travel, eat comfortably, educate our children, pay school fees, access healthcare, or arrange significant life events like weddings & houses. To cover our basic necessities, we need money. Thus, it is imperative to educate ourselves about financial management early.

By becoming smarter about finances and investing, we can save time and reduce stress, allowing more quality time with our families. While money may not be the ultimate goal, it is an essential tool for living comfortably and is worth our time and effort to understand deeply. Financial literacy should be a core part of our education to ensure everyone has the opportunity for financial well-being.

Financial literacy is the missing piece in our education system. Don't get left behind!

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

NC Should've Made Its Draft Election Manifesto Public for Comments

On July 1st, the J&K National Conference constituted a committee headed by its senior leader and former Finance Minister Abdul Rahim Rather to develop the party's manifesto for the upcoming assembly election. After the approval from party President and Vice President, the party General Secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar issued an official order regarding the formation of the Election Manifesto Committee. The manifesto committee had been tasked to present a draft of the manifesto within 45 days but the same was not made public and instead the party came up with the full fledged Election Manifesto on Monday August 19th 2024. In addition to Abdul Rahim Rather, senior party leaders including Mian Altaf Ahmed, Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, Justice (ret'd) Hasnain Masoodi, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, Nasir Aslam Wani, Rattan Lal Gupta, Sakina Itoo, Sharifuddin Shariq, Muhammad Yousef Tasing, Prof Nisar Ali, Khalid Najeeb Suhrawardy, Adv Muzaffar Ahmad Khan and Adv Shaikat Ahmad Mir were nominated as members of this manifesto committee.

Election manifestos have been prepared by local political parties in the past as well but majority of the promises have not been fulfilled. This is why, in 2014, I had suggested that the Election Commission must make sure that Election Manifestos of political parties be declared as a legal document supported with an affidavit. In case a majority of the promises are not fulfilled by the political parties who come to power, legal action should be initiated against them.

During the 2014 elections, I had analysed NC's 2008 election manifesto and most of the promises were not fulfilled between 2008 to 2014 when the party was in power. Similarly, when PDP came with its election manifesto in 2014 (An Aspirational Agenda) majority of the promises remained unfulfilled.

What NC had promised in 2008 ?

Among other things, the National Conference in its 2008 Election Manifesto had made the following promises, most of which remained unfulfilled even as the party remained in power for 6 years with Congress:

- unchecked Restoration of Autonomy of J&K
- unchecked Formation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- unchecked Revocation of AFSPA and DDA
- unchecked Setting up Hill Councils for Chenab & Pir Panjal regions
- unchecked Setting up a Women's University

These promises were not fulfilled.

However, there were some important agendas that had been incorporated in NC's 2008 election manifesto like the enactment of a strong Right to Information law. The party fulfilled this promise and enacted a strong law, J&K RTI Act 2009, on March 20th 2009. Unfortunately, this law like many other erstwhile state laws were repealed after the abrogation of Article 370. Infact, this author along with my other associates of J&K RTI Movement had been in touch with Mr Omar Abdullah and Mr Abdul Rahim Rather those days (Oct-Nov 2008) when the manifesto was being prepared and our suggestions on RTI had been well considered but after coming to power frequent discussions could not be held except one meeting with Chief Minister in 2010-2011.

What PDP promised in 2014

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) also came up with its election manifesto in 2014 known as "An Aspirational Agenda." Its draft was also not made public. The document was attractive but remained unfulfilled as the PDP-BJP Govt collapsed and prior to that Mufti Mohammad Syed expired while he was the Chief Minister of J&K. From its self rule agenda to strengthening civil society and other institutions,



Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat



The election manifesto that was released on Monday by the National Conference is good, provided it is implemented if they form the next Govt in J&K. This document could have been much better had the party made its draft public a week back and sought comments from people

PDP couldn't do anything. Even the things which could have been done like setting up Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs), the PDP Government could not do that as well. Another promise was to take cross LOC trade to the next level but it was stopped by PDP and now NC has promised to restore it again. The concept of organic farming, ecotourism, transparent governance also could not be taken up by PDP-BJP Govt between 2015 to 2018.

NC's 2024 Election Manifesto

The National Conference (NC) in its election manifesto has promised several things. It has promised to strive for restoration of autonomy, Article 370 and statehood of Jammu & Kashmir.

The party also promised several things on the developmental front and addressing the civic issues including free electricity, creation of jobs, safeguarding land rights and also release of political prisoners, besides urging for facilitation of talks between India and Pakistan.

The party has promised support to artisans, waiving off KCC loans, working for regularisation of casual and daily wage employees and addressing the issues of unemployed Dental Surgeons. These are some important issues and I appreciate these have been included in the election manifesto.

With regard to Mining Contracts, the party has assured that they will be given to locals but there is no mention of sustainable mining practices. As I have filed around 3 cases on illegal riverbed mining cases in National Green Tribunal (NGT) and have been involved in lot of activism around this issue for last 5 years, I have come to this conclusion that mining work in rivers is mostly done by the local contractors who are plundering our riverbeds. The clay mining in Karewas hasn't been mentioned as these geographical formations are being plundered in Pulwama, Budgam and Baramulla districts and there is no policy at all to streamline this work. Kashmir valley and Jammu region as well is getting choked with solid waste and all the waste management rules are being violated by urban and rural local bodies and funds provided under swachh bharat mission urban/rural needs to be audited as on the ground waste is not treated but simply relocated or dumped unscientifically.

The party has promised holding ULB and Panchayat elections in time and this is indeed appreciable. Some other issues which NC has made part of its election manifesto are providing Rs 5000 per month to families headed by women. Enhancing the old age-pension to Rs 3000 per month, free travel for women in public transport, enhancement of marriage assistance from Rs 50K to Rs 75,000 is appreciable. It would have been great if there was a mention about the persons with disabilities (PWDs) and setting up of special skill development centers for them and the enhancement of their monthly stipend from Rs 1000 to Rs 5000 per month especially for 100% blind people and those whose movement is restricted and can only move with the help of wheelchair.

Need for a Green Manifesto

NC's manifesto lacked more focus on sustainable development of Jammu & Kashmir especially controlling water pollution, air pollution, streamlining cement or brick kiln industries, restoration of wetlands, streamlining clay and riverbed mining, ensuring proper drainage system in Srinagar and other towns etc.

As we are facing unregulated tourism due to heavy rush the manifesto should have come up with an eco tourism policy.

Had the draft manifesto been made public, people like me and many others would have given more suggestions. It is never too late and I would request the party

leaders that if they come to power, they must take these suggestions into consideration vis a vis environment and climate change.

Capacity building of Govt officers

With regard to good governance, I would suggest making sure Govt officers frequently undergo capacity building programmes on various issues which they have to deal with in their offices. Unfortunately, very few such workshops and trainings are held in the Government sector while private sector employees off and on are made to participate in such roundtables and training.

The Govt run J&K Institute of Public Administration and Rural Development (IMPARD) is not able to do justice to its work and it is better we have at least one administrative training institute in every district. If Govt cant set them up, private training institutions should be asked to set up these centres where brainstorming and training would be given to Govt officers round the year to ensure better governance.

I know many officers in Forest, Rural Development and Revenue departments who are not well versed with Forest Rights Act, Right to Fair Compensation Act and many similar laws and there is hardly any training given to them. Even the Sub Judges, CJMs, SDMs, ADCs are not well versed with land revenue, environmental and forest laws and this makes people suffer a lot as they don't get justice from subordinate courts and quasi judicial institutions.

The Subordinate Judicial Officers, Govt officers, officers of ULBs and PRIs need to be more focussed and professional and without frequent training and roundtables we won't be able to achieve that. The progressive laws extended to J&K post article 370 like Forest Rights Act, Right to Education Act, SC ST Atrocities Act, Right to Fair Compensation Act are not enforced in letter and spirit on the ground and the reason is that our officers are not well versed with these laws and to overcome it we need one or two institutions in every district.

Conclusion

The election manifesto that was released on Monday by the National Conference is good, provided it is implemented if they form the next Govt in J&K. This document could have been much better had the party made its draft public a week back and sought comments from people. In fact a few brainstorming sessions in Srinagar and Jammu with civil society, traders, academicians, activists, retired bureaucrats and Judges would have added more flavour to this entire exercise and made this election manifesto drafting more participative.

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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From Carefree Days to Countdowns



Mudasir Kouf

Time is a fascinating concept that shapes our lives in profound ways. Our perception of time changes as we grow older, and this shift is particularly noticeable when comparing childhood to adulthood. In childhood, time seems to stretch endlessly, filled with carefree days and endless possibilities. However, as we transition into adulthood, time appears to speed up, and we find ourselves constantly chasing deadlines and counting down the hours.

Childhood is often characterized by a sense of timelessness. Days seem to last forever, and the concept of time is fluid and malleable. Children live in the present moment, fully immersed in their experiences without worrying about the passage of time. Whether they are playing with friends, exploring the outdoors, or lost in a book, children are blissfully unaware of the ticking clock.

As we enter adulthood, our perception of time undergoes a significant shift. The demands of work, family, and responsibilities create a sense of urgency, and time begins to feel scarce. We find ourselves constantly racing against the clock, juggling multiple tasks and trying to fit as much as possible into each day. The carefree days of childhood are replaced by the pressure of deadlines, appointments, and commitments.

One of the factors contributing to this shift in perception is the way we measure time. In childhood, time is often marked by significant events such as birthdays, holidays, and the start or end of school vacations. These milestones provide a sense of continuity and structure to the passage of time. As adults, we rely on calendars, schedules, and reminders to keep track of our days, weeks, and months. We become acutely aware of the passing of time as we count down to important deadlines or eagerly anticipate upcoming events.

Another factor influencing our perception of time is our level of responsibility. In childhood, our primary concerns revolve around playtime, learning, and

social interactions. As adults, we take on numerous responsibilities, including work, finances, household chores, and caring for others. These obligations create a sense of time pressure as we strive to meet deadlines and fulfill our commitments.

Furthermore, our understanding of time is shaped by our experiences and memories. As children, we often recall events in terms of how they made us feel rather than specific dates or times. In contrast, as adults, we tend to mark the passage of time by significant life events such as graduations, weddings, career milestones, and personal achievements.

The shift in perception of time from childhood to adulthood has both psychological and practical implications. Psychologically, the awareness of time passing can lead to feelings of anxiety, stress, and a sense of urgency. Adults may experience a constant pressure to mark the most of their time and accomplish their goals before it's too late. On a practical level, this shift in perception influences how we organize our lives, plan for the future, and prioritize our daily activities.

Practically, the evolution of our perception of time shapes the contours of our existence, guiding how we organize our lives, plan for the future, and prioritize our daily activities. Time management becomes not merely a skill, but a survival mechanism, as we strive to navigate the tempestuous waters of adulthood with grace and resilience.

In conclusion, the journey from carefree days to countdowns is a symphony of contrasts, each note a testament to the inexorable passage of time. As we navigate the labyrinth of existence, may we embrace the dance of time with open hearts and steadfast resolve. For in the tapestry of life, it is not the minutes or hours that define us, but the moments we cherish and the memories we hold dear. So, let us savor each fleeting instant, for in the tapestry of time, every moment is a masterpiece waiting to be unveiled.

The author is a writer



The shift in perception of time from childhood to adulthood has both psychological and practical implications. Psychologically, the awareness of time passing can lead to feelings of anxiety, stress, and a sense of urgency

Is Digital Overload Increasing Your Anxiety?

Alane K. Daugherty

On my morning run, I saw a woman with a shirt that said, "Create your own calm." I was struck by how simple the statement was and yet how essential the concept is to our mental and emotional health.

Look at stress, anxiety, and our current culture through the lens of psychophysiology, or how our mind and body work together. We can see why these disorders are at an all-time high and why we have a greater responsibility than ever to be intentional about counteracting them. Although it may sound dramatic, we are now responsible for creating our emotional homeostasis more than most times in human history. If we don't, our mental health will suffer.

Good or bad, you are constantly transforming

Our mental and emotional health is in constant metamorphosis or reconstruction. They mold from every momentary experience and create a greater capacity to live in those states. You transform every moment of every day. You are constantly and consistently creating capacities to live full-time from the emotional states you experience most often.

Every momentary experience you have carries a physiological imprint; your thoughts and emotions register throughout your brain, your biochemistry, and your heart coherence patterns. Further, your mind-body complex is a system of adaptation. It not only reflects your moment-to-moment emotional experience but begins to adapt accordingly.

We know that if you exercise or eat right, your body changes. By practicing a math problem or

riding a bike, you get better at those things. Your systems adapt to how you train them, and your emotional systems adapt as well. You are training your emotional system (and overall mental health) with every momentary experience.

tional and mental health.

When you are in your fear response drive too often or too long, you experience anxiety, nervousness, worry, an inability to concentrate, narrowed thoughts, powerlessness, hopelessness, stress, anger, depres-

sion, and emotional health. Conversely, creating moments where your calm and connection drive is dominant creates a greater capacity to live from that drive. But, unless we are intentional, our current culture is often at odds with cultivating calm

and anxiety. danger—or from whatever we perceive to be dangerous. When your fear response system is activated, it sends an all-out alert throughout mind and body that floods you with stress hormones and activates your fear neural networks; it is a whole-body, all-consuming response to stress and anxiety.

Your fear response on overdrive

Our systems react the same now as they have throughout history; however, what we perceive to be threatening has drastically changed. And remember, the more your system is in any emotional state, the better it gets at living from that state — healthy or not. In ancient times, our village may have been threatened by a Saber-toothed tiger, sending out an all-out alert through our mind-body complex, but after the danger had passed, our systems would calm down and return to homeostasis. There was a better balance between times of alert and times of calm. We had the necessary times of "coming back to calm" built into our daily lives.

Fast forward to our current culture. Now, our fear response systems are activated almost 24/7. Our perceptions of threat are largely due to our interactions with technology, and many of us are in digital overload 24 hours a day. Whenever we hear a ding, a vibrate, a buzz, or feel a haptic on our wrist, our fear response systems engage, and our necessary moments of calm dwindle. While each interaction alone may seem insignificant, they add up and can be detrimental to our overall mental health. Unbeknownst to us, we are training our systems to be on constant alert, and our stress and anxiety levels soar. However, intentional calming behavior can

begin to re-wire and reverse this downward spiral.

Intentional calm is more important than ever for mental health

Our mind-body complex needs times of homeostasis, or a calm system, to be emotionally healthy and balance the times of alertness. Technology is here to stay and likely to dominate more and more of our lives. Given that constant influx, we must, now more than ever, be intentional about creating moments of calm. Our culture no longer provides them automatically; we must be proactive about including them in our lives constantly and consistently. As the shirt said, we must create our own calm.

How can we better incorporate moments of calm into our daily lives? Simple practices, done consistently over time, begin to significantly change the activation levels of our fear response system. The critical concept is to spend intentional and routine time in your calm and connection system. Everyone is different; find what calms you and spend time doing it. The following are just a few examples:

1. Meditate — great apps are available for guidance.
2. Find moments of presence with those you love or by yourself.
3. Do a digital detox — an hour a day or an occasional full day.
4. Spend time in nature.
5. Engage in a hobby.
6. Laugh.
7. Soak in the good around you.
8. Make a list of what works for you and engage with it daily.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today



Understanding your two drives

Also, you have two primary drives that govern your emotional health. One is your fear response drive, and the other is your calm and connection drive. They are two completely different physiological states. We need both drives to survive as a species, but we can't be in both at the same time (one or the other is always dominant). The one you are in most often is the one that begins to dominate your emo-

sion, and more. When you are rooted in your calm and connection drive, among other things, you experience optimism, resilience, creativity, an enhanced ability to cope, greater problem-solving skills, less loneliness, and you more readily see opportunities, possibilities, and solutions.

Although your fear response drive is necessary for survival, residing in it too long or too often can be detrimental to your

and connection.

Why are anxiety and stress disorders at an all-time high? And what does our current culture have to do with it? A look at the intersection of anthropology and psychophysiology can shed some light.

Our fear response drive is deeply wired in our mind-body complex as a means of survival. This drive has been necessary throughout history to mobilize us and keep us safe in times of

Rohit Calls Dravid, Agarkar, Shah 'Three Pillars' Credits Them For T20 WC Win

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: Star batter Rohit Sharma on Wednesday said former head coach Rahul Dravid, chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar and BCCI secretary Jay Shah backed him to the hilt in his effort to extract the best from players without worrying about results, eventuating in India's T20 World Cup triumph under him.

Under Rohit's leadership, India triumphed in the ICC showpiece in June beating South Africa in the final. It was their second T20 world title after 2007, and Rohit also brought curtains on his career in the shortest format with that victory at Barbados.

"It was my dream to transform this team and not worry too much about the stats, the results, to make sure that we



create that environment where people can go out there and play freely without thinking too much," Rohit said after being named the men's international cricketer of the year at the CEAT Cricket Rating Awards here.

"That is what was required. I got a lot of help from my three pillars, who are actually Mr Jay Shah, Mr Rahul Dravid (and the) chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar," he said.

me to do what I did and obviously not to forget the players, who came in at different points in time and helped the team to achieve what we achieved," he said.

Rohit said the feeling of win-

ning the World Cup that ended India's decade-long drought in global tournaments could not be described in words.

"(It was) a feeling that cannot come everyday. It was something that we were really hoping for. When we won the World Cup, it was important for all of us to enjoy the moment which we did pretty well and thanks to our nation as well for celebrating with us," he said.

"As much as it meant for us, it meant a whole lot to the entire nation as well. It felt really great to bring it (trophy) back home here and celebrate with everyone here."

"(It is) a fantastic feeling that can never be put out in words. I don't think it's a feeling that can be expressed. It won't do justice to our effect when all that happened," Rohit said.

Downtown Heroes FC Name Arun Malhotra As The New Sporting Director



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Downtown Heroes FC on Wednesday announced the appointment of Arun Malhotra as the new Sporting Director of the club.

In his role, Malhotra will oversee all football operations of Downtown Heroes, with a particular focus on employing experts in specialist areas to ensure the club's continuous growth and success. His responsibilities will include implementing effective structures and methods to enhance various critical areas such as recruitment, analysis, and operations.

"Malhotra brings with him a wealth of experience and expertise in football management, having held various key roles in the industry," the club said in a statement.

"Malhotra's appointment marks a significant step forward for Downtown Heroes FC as the club strives to achieve both short-term success and long-term sustainability. His strategic vision and leadership are expected to play a pivotal role in the club's journey towards establishing itself as a dominant

force in Indian football," it added. "We are thrilled to welcome Mr. Arun Malhotra to Downtown Heroes FC," said a spokesperson for the club. "His vast experience and deep understanding of the game will be invaluable as we work towards our goals. With Mr. Malhotra at the helm of our football operations, we are confident in our ability to build a strong and sustainable future for the club."

Arun Malhotra expressed his excitement about joining Downtown Heroes FC, stating, "I am honored to take on this role at such a dynamic and ambitious club. I look forward to working closely with the team to develop a robust footballing infrastructure that will not only bring immediate success but also ensure the club's long-term growth and stability."

"Downtown Heroes continue to pave the way for football in Srinagar, and with the appointment of Mr. Arun Malhotra as Sporting Director, the club is poised to reach new heights both on and off the pitch," the club added in its statement.

Provincial Inter District Cricket Tournament Begins In Anantnag

Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Department of Youth Services and Sports Anantnag is hosting the Inter-District Provincial Level Cricket Tournament, which began on Wednesday at four different venues across district Anantnag.

The tournament was formally inaugurated by Tehsildar Qazigund Showkat Husain Rather along with DYSSO Anantnag Raja Yaqoob at the Qazigund venue. Meanwhile, at Bijbehara venue, it was inaugurated by Principal BHSS



Bijbehara Nasreena Akhter.

Arwani.

On the opening day of tournament, matches among U-14 boys were held on four different venues, which include Bijbehara, Qazigund, Dooru and

Athletic Competitions Organised By ZPEO Narbal

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: The Department of Youth Services and Sports Zone Narbal organised Inter School Zonal Level Athletic meet for Boys of all age groups at open ground Batapora on Wednesday.

The athletic meet was inaugurated by incharge activity ZPEO Narbal Bashir Ahmad Sheikh, along with overall incharge Mohammad Ashraf Ganie PEM and other officials of Zone Narbal.

In these competitions around 108 athletes of different schools of Zone Narbal participated. At the prize distribution ceremony, the overall incharges and other officials distributed certificates among position



holders.

While speaking on the occasion, overall incharge appreciated all the athletes for

participating in these competitions and also stressed other students to compete in such events in future.

Saim, Saud Rescue Pakistan On Day 1 Of First Test Against Bangladesh

Agencies

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan overcame a jittery start on a rain-hit opening day of the first Test against Bangladesh in Rawalpindi as Saim Ayub and Saud Shakeel scored fighting half-centuries to guide the hosts to 158-4 at stumps on Wednesday.

Opener Ayub fell for 56 while Shakeel was unbeaten on 57 as the duo steadied the ship with a 98-run stand after Bangladesh won the toss and wreaked havoc through their pace bowlers on a helpful pitch.

As batting conditions improved under the sun, the pair led the hosts to 81-3 at tea before continuing to milk runs in the final session until Bangladesh struck back by removing the dangerous Ayub in the 32nd over.

In a momentary lapse of concentration, the left-hander attempted an expansive drive against Hasan Mahmud but edged the ball to Mehidy Hasan Miraz in the slip cordon. Shakeel, who earlier



became the joint-fastest Pakistan batsman to 1,000 Test runs alongside Saeed Ahmed, marked his 20th innings with his seventh half-century. Mohammad Rizwan was unbeaten on 24 at stumps, as Pakistan gave them-

selves a good platform to build on in new head coach Jason Gillespie's first match in charge of the red-ball team.

A soggy outfield ensured there was no action in the morning and Pakistan suffered a setback shortly af-

ter play began at 2.30 p.m local time when Abdullah Shafique's loose shot was plucked out of thin air by Zakir Hasan at gully.

Shoriful Islam struck twice in as many overs to reduce the hosts to 16-3 with captain Shan Masood

and Babar Azam both back in the pavilion after being caught behind by Litton Das.

Masood was fuming following his controversial dismissal as TV replays showed the ball had clipped his pad after going past the bat without contact.

Short TAKES

With Eyes On Prize, Indian Paralympians Take Off To Paris

Eying an unprecedented five gold and a dozen medals in total, the first batch of the Indian contingent, including star javelin thrower Sumit Antil, left for the Paris Paralympics in advance to get acclimatised to the conditions.

The 16 para athletes will stay at hotels in Paris for a few days before entering the Games Village on August 25, three days before the Opening Ceremony. Para athletics events will be held from August 30 to September 8.

Ronak Wins Bronze At U-17 World Wrestling Championship

India's Ronak Dahiya bagged the bronze medal in the 110kg Greco-Roman category at the U17 World Wrestling Championship in Amman, Jordan.

In the bronze medal play-off, Ronak, currently ranked two in the world in his age-group weight category, comfortably disposed the challenge of Turkey's Emrullah Capkan 6-1 to claim India's first medal from the championship on Tuesday.

Earlier, Ronak had lost to eventual silver medallist Zoltan Czako of Hungary in the semi-final. The gold was won by Ukraine's Ivan Yankovskiy.

'PCB Committed To Hosting ICC Champions Trophy 2025'

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) rubbished reports about rescheduling of next year's ICC Champions Trophy.

PCB issued a statement after chairman Mohsin Naqvi spoke about stadium redevelopment -- ahead of the upcoming Champions Trophy 2025 which will be held in Pakistan. PCB has directed the renovation of the National Stadium in Karachi, Rawalpindi International Cricket Stadium and Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore at the cost of Rs12.8 billion, according to Geo News.

Germany Keeper Manuel Neuer Retires From International Football

Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer announced his retirement from internationals on Wednesday after playing 124 times for his country since 2009.

The 38-year-old Bayern Munich player who won the golden glove when Germany won the 2024 World Cup in 2014.

"Today marks the end of my career in the German national football team," Neuer wrote on Instagram. Neuer's club Bayern, with whom he has won 11 Bundesliga, two Champions League and two Club World Cup titles, play Wolfsburg on Sunday.


Manchester City's Phil Foden Named PFA Player Of The Year

Manchester City's England midfielder Phil Foden won the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) Player of the Year award on Tuesday after helping his club win a record fourth successive Premier League title.

The 24-year-old scored 27 goals in 53 appearances in all competitions last season as Pep Guardiola's City also lifted the UEFA Super Cup and Club World Cup and were FA Cup runners-up.

"Winning this award is something very special and I am very proud and grateful for it," said Foden.





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