

BJP's New List Of Candidates Final

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Despite resentment shown by some party leaders over selection of candidates for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections, the BJP on Tuesday released its revised list of 29 nominees for the second and third phase, without making any major changes except replacing one contestant.

With the release of the fresh list, the party has so far named the candidates for 45 assembly segments, including nine in the Kashmir Valley where it has not been able to open its account in the past assembly elections.

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, which has a 90-member assembly, is going to polls in three phases on September 18, 25 and October 1. This will be the first assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir after it was downgraded to a Union Territory in August 2019 with its special status under Article 370 of the Constitution also revoked.

The BJP has made one change from the now-rescinded list, which was put out on Monday, as it has named former MLA Baldev Raj Sharma from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi seat in place of Rohit Dubey. All other names are the same for the same set of constituencies, announced yesterday before being withdrawn.

The party's latest list has 10 candidates for the second phase of polls | [More on P6](#)

J&K Assembly Elections

279 Candidates File Nomination Papers For Phase 1

Observer News Service

Srinagar: As many as 279 candidates have filed their nomination papers across 24 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) of seven districts of Jammu and Kashmir which are going to polling in the first phase of J&K Assembly Election 2024.

Tuesday was the last day of filing nomination papers for the first phase of the Assembly Election scheduled to be held on September 18, 2024.

A statement from the office of Chief Electoral Officer detailed the candidates who have filed their nominations.

A total of 72 candidates have filed their nominations in Anantnag district, followed by 55 in Pulwama district, 41 in Doda district, 32 in Kishtwar district, 28 in Shopian district, 28 in Kulgam district, while 23 candidates have filed nominations in Ramban district.

In Anantnag, several constituencies have



multiple candidates. The Dooru Assembly Segment has 12 candidates, including Gh Ahmad Mir, who is backed by the National Conference-Congress alliance. The Kokernag ST Assembly Segment has 11 candidates, while Anantnag West has 14 candidates, including Ab Majeed Bhat Larmi of NC and Ab Gaffar Sofi of PDP. The main Anantnag seat

has 12 candidates, including Mehboob Beigh of People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Peerzada Mohammad Syed of Congress. In the Bijbehara-Srigufwara constituency, three candidates are in the fray, including Dr Bashir Ahmad Veeri of NC, Iltija Mufti of PDP, and Sofi Yousuf of BJP. Anantnag East (Shangus) has 13 candidates, | [More on P6](#)

Omar Takes U-turn, To Fight From Ganderbal

National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah will contest the Jammu and Kashmir assembly elections from the Ganderbal segment, the party said on Tuesday, in what marks a U-turn for the former chief minister who had vowed to not fight for a seat in the legislature of a union territory. The party released a list of 32 candidates which included Omar Abdullah for the Ganderbal assembly seat, a constituency that he represented from 2009 to 2014 when he was the chief minister of the NC-Congress coalition government. Omar Abdullah had dropped hints on Monday that he is likely | [More on P6](#)

Iltija Mufti Files Nomination From Bijbehara

Iltija Mufti, daughter of PDP president Mehbooba Mufti, on Tuesday became the third generation politician from the Mufti family to jump into electoral fray as she filed her nomination from party's stronghold Bijbehara assembly seat in Jammu and Kashmir. Accompanied by | [More on P6](#)



Congress Releases First List Of Candidates

Observer News Service

New Delhi: The Congress on Monday issued its first list of nine candidates for the three-phase assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, fielding party general secretary Ghulam Ahmad Mir from Dooru and former state unit chief Vikar Rasool Wani from Banihal.

The announcement came after the Congress clinched a seat-sharing deal with all National Conference (NC).

The NC and the Congress agreed to contest 51 and 32 seats respectively for the assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir.

One seat each has been allotted to the CPI(M) and the Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party (JKNPP), the allies announced at a joint press conference at NC president Farooq Abdullah's residence in Srinagar after day-long negotiations.

They also said there will be a "friendly contest" on five seats of the Union territory.

Hours after the announcement, the Congress put out a list of nine candidates for the polls, fielding Mir from Dooru and Wani from Banihal.

The party also fielded Surinder Singh Channi from the Tral seat, Amanullah Mantoo from Devsar, Peerzada Mohammad Syed from Anantnag, Shaikh Zafarullah from Inderwal, Nadeem Sharief from Bhadarwah, Sheikh Riyaz | [More on P6](#)

Many Ex Jama'at Members Also Join Fray

Several former members of the banned Jama'at-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday filed nomination papers to contest the Assembly polls in the Union Territory as independent candidates. Sugra Barkati, daughter of jailed separatist worker Sarjan Barkati, also filed nomination papers on behalf of her father. While Jamaat cannot take part in the elections due to the ban imposed on it by the Union home ministry, it had shown interest in participating in the polls during the Lok Sabha elections if the ban were removed. Jamaat has not taken part in any elections after 1987 and had been a part of separatist amalgam Hurriyat Conference, which advocated for poll boycotts, from 1993 to 2003. Talat Majeed, former ameer (chief) of Jamaat, filed his nomination papers from Pulwama constituency as an independent candidate. Majeed said that after pondering over the changing | [More on P6](#)

Aga Hassan's Son Joins PDP Ahead of Elections

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Aga Syed Muntazir, the son of the president of Anjuman-e-Sharie Shiyayan Aga Syed Hassan Al Musavi Safavi, Tuesday joined the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Budgam. This is seen as a significant gain for the PDP in the Budgam district assembly seat.

Aga Syed Muntazir was welcomed by the party's president, Mehbooba Mufti, at ASH Mall Budgam.

Lawyer by profession, Aga Muntazir belongs to the influential Aga family of Budgam and is cousin of NC leader and Lok Sabha MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mahdi.

Muntazir's father, Aga Syed Hassan al Mosavi al-Safavi is a senior Shia leader from the Hurriyat faction, once headed by Syed Ali Shah Geelani. He is the president of Jammu and Kashmir Anjuman-e-Sharie Shiyayan.

While addressing the gathering, | [More on P6](#)

US Diplomats In Kashmir Ahead Of Elections



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: A three-member delegation of US diplomats visited Srinagar on Monday ahead of the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir after a gap of 10 years. "The visit is well within the boundaries of the diplomatic outreach mechanism of the US State Department," government sources said.

According to the sources,

the visits are not unusual as similar visits with diplomats were common in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. "They get a chance to make on-ground assessments," he said.

The delegation included Minister-Counselor for Political Affairs Graham Mayer, First Secretary Gary Applegarth, and Political Counselor Abhiram Chadyalpatil. They met political leaders from Kashmir including former | [More on P6](#)

Disgruntled Leaders Rebel, Launch Independent Bids

Observer News Service

Srinagar: As assembly elections gain momentum in Jammu and Kashmir, a wave of nominations and candidate announcements has stirred the political arena, with some party members breaking ranks to launch independent bids. Expressing displeasure over the party's decision, two leaders from National Conference (NC) have decided to contest the upcoming assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir as independent candidates.

The duo include Shabir Ahmad Kullay from Shopian and Dr Ghulam Nabi Bhat from Tral. Shabir Ahmad Kullay said that after fighting the last election as an independent candidate, NC approached him and promised that he will be given a party ticket for the next elections.

During the recent parliamentary elections, he parted ways from NC but at that time again, he got a promise of a mandate and thus rejoined the party, he said.

However, he added that since the party couldn't stick to its promise, he has decided to fight elections as an independent candidate. "I have decided to contest as an independent candidate and filed my nomination papers," he said.

In the 2014 assembly | [More on P6](#)

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Integrated Election Control Room, MCMC, Media Centre Set Up In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In order to ensure a smooth, transparent and fair electoral process in the Srinagar District for conduct of upcoming General Elections to Legislative Assembly-2024, an Integrated Election Control Room, Media Certification & Monitoring Committee (MCMC) and Media Centre have been established at DC/DEO Office Srinagar.

The facilities have been set up as per the guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI) at the District Level to

ing Social Media, e-papers & Cable Network during General Elections. A dedicated email ID mcmcsgr@gmail.com has been established for the purpose.

Similarly, the Media Centre is also fully operational with the important responsibility of disseminating real-time information related to the election process to the public, media, political parties and other stakeholders, ensuring that all election-related developments are communicated effectively to the public.

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keep close vigil on paid news, Pre-certify Political Advertisements and ensure smooth electoral process during the General Elections to Legislative Assembly-2024 in Srinagar District.

The MCMC will also provide certification after scrutinizing Political Advertisements to be telecast/ broadcast over TV/ Radio Channels/ Audio - Video displays/ cinema halls/ Internet based media/ Websites includ-

Control Room is also currently in operation and is functioning round the clock to manage various aspects of the electoral process and facilitate the electorate of the District with the relevant information. The Control Room is responsive and responding to the queries and questions on any aspect of electioneering. The numbers for the Integrated Control Room are 1950, +91 194 248 3651 and +911942471194.



Assembly Elections-2024

DEO Srinagar Interacts With Political Representatives, ROs

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Ahead of Nomination filing for General Elections to Legislative Assembly-2024 in District Srinagar, an interactive meeting cum sensitization session of Returning Officers of all 08 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) of District Srinagar and representatives of various Political parties & candidates was today held at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex.

The meeting was chaired through virtual mode by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, who is also the District Election Officer (DEO). Besides, Additional District Development Commissioner, Srinagar, Ghulam Hassan Sheikh, the meeting was attended by Returning Officers (ROs) of Assembly segments of 19-Hazratbal Syed Ahmad Kataria, 20-Khanyar Aijaz Ahmad Shah, 21-Habba Kadal, Ghulam Jeelani Zargar, 22-Lal Chowk Amir Choudhary, 23-Chanapora Suhail ul Islam, 24-Zabibal Khalid Hussain Malik, 25-Eidgah Bashir Ahmad Paddar and 26-Central Shalteng Muzamil Maqbool.

While the representatives of JKNC, PDP, BJP, J&K Apni Party, JKNPP, Aam Aadmi Party and Independent Candidates were also present in the meeting.

The meeting was held to familiarize Political Parties and Candidates with the ROs of respective Assembly Segments and to share with them the Office Address and Contact details of ROs to facilitate them in filing Nomination papers General Assembly Elections in the District Srinagar being held under 2nd Phase.

The District Election Officer Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat while addressing the meeting virtually, maintained that the Administration is committed to conduct free, fair and transparent elections for General Assembly Elections 2024 in the District.

He urged the aspiring Candidates to avoid last hour rush for filing nomination papers and stressed on them to go through the updated ECI guidelines to submit correct nomination papers & affidavits.

On the occasion, ADDC Srinagar sensitized representatives of political parties & others regard-

ing ECI guidelines, Model Code of Conduct, proper permission for organizing political meetings & rallies, maintaining discipline during campaigning, upholding rule of law and following provisions of People's Representatives Act.

The representatives on the occasion sought updated electoral rolls of the District. It was informed that the final list shall be shared with them after the last date of withdrawal of Nomination while the list updated till date shall be provided by the office of Deputy Election Office on request.

The representatives were informed that facilitation centres have been set up in every RO's Offices to provide any assistance required by the candidate in filing nomination forms.

Similarly, representatives of Political Parties were informed that to facilitate the process of granting permission for organizing any political gathering or rally, Chief Planning Officer, Srinagar, Fayaz Ahmad Dar has been designated as Nodal Officer for Permissions. They were informed to apply for permission 48 hours before the scheduled event and the permission shall be granted on First Come First Serve basis.

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DIPK-NB-1482/24 dated: 27-08-2024

Mega Voter Awareness Program Held At Nehru Park

Observer News Service

Srinagar: With an aim to spread voter awareness, promote electoral literacy and maximize electoral participation in upcoming General Elections to Legislative Assembly-2024, a mega Voter Awareness program under SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) was held at Nehru Park in Dal Lake here today.

The Voter Awareness program as organized by Returning Officer, 24-Za-

dibal Assembly Constituency, Dr. Khalid Hussain Malik aimed to educate citizens about the importance of voting, voter registration processes, and electoral participation.

The event drew a diverse crowd, including local voters, women, students, and teachers, all eager to learn and participate.

During the awareness program, speakers underscored the vital role of every vote in shaping the future governance. They encouraged attendees not only to cast their votes but also to inspire others in their

communities to do the same.

With the Assembly Election in Srinagar District set for September 25, 2024, the message was clear that active participation of all eligible voters is crucial in strengthening democratic setup.

The event also served as an educational platform, particularly for youth on various aspects of the electoral process. The active involvement of these groups highlighted the community's dedication to strengthening democracy.

شاہ خاندان (گنڈر پورہ عید گاہ) کا اظہار تشکر

اللہ تعالیٰ کے قائم کردہ نظام حیات و موت کے تحت مورثہ ۱۵ ماہ صفر المظفر ۱۴۴۶ھ مطابق 21 اگست 2024ء بدھوار ہماری نعت بجز جو اس سال اظہار بخیر و خیر بخیر احمد شاہ انتقال کر گئیں۔ اور یہ حادثہ حرکت قلب بند ہونے سے ظہور پذیر ہوا۔ موصوفہ نماز جنازہ عید گاہ سرینگر میں بزرگ عالم الدین علامہ شوکت حسین کیگیب کی قیادت میں ادا کی گئی جس میں بے شمار لوگوں نے شرکت کی۔ بعد میں انہیں آبائی مقبرہ میں سپرد خاک کیا گیا۔ جمعیت المبارک کو فاتحہ خوانی انجام دی گئی اور جلسہ تعزیت و خراج عقیدت میں بھی بے شمار لوگوں نے شرکت کی۔ اس مصیبت میں ہمارے ساتھ عزیز واقارب، دوست و احباب اہل علاقہ و اہل محلہ کے ساتھ ساتھ مختلف دینی و سیاسی تنظیموں اور سوشل میڈیا، سماجی ادارہ جات و تعلیمی ادارہ جات کے ذمہ داران نے گھر آ کر یا بذریعہ فون و سوشل میڈیا یا الیکٹرانک میڈیا یا ڈگارس بندھائی اور اٹھارہ سالہ بچی کی وفات حسرت سے پیدہ شدہ صورتحال میں ہمارے ساتھ اظہار ہمدردی کی قابل تحسین ہے ہم فرد آفر د آسب کا شکر یہ ادا کرنے قاصر ہیں۔ بھرجی جناب میر واعظ عثمانی ڈاکٹر عمر فاروق صاحب، جناب مولانا سید محمد فرید الرحمن بخاری (اور ان کے رفقتے کرام) جناب نقیب ملت مولانا غلام محی الدین صاحب نقیب جناب مولانا سید بلال احمد صاحب کرماتی، جناب مولانا مبارک حسین نعمانی نقشبندی، مولانا رئیس الحق، مولانا نقیہ و ز احمد نقشبندی، جناب عرفان احمد صاحب متون (پنی سی لیڈر عید گاہ) جناب امتیاز احمد خان (کانگریس لیڈر عید گاہ) عوامی مجلس عمل، انجمن تبلیغ الاسلام، انتظامیہ کیٹی با یا نصیب الدین غازی، سنگم عید گاہ، انتظامیہ کیٹی با یا داوود مشکواتی، انتظامیہ مسجد شریف (مشکواتی) انتظامیہ مسجد علی ثانی پتاروڈ عید گاہ، ریلیف کمیٹی گنڈر پورہ، دعوت اسلامی دربار قادریہ عیش مقام کا خصوصی شکر یہ ادا کرتے ہیں کہ انہوں نے از راہ انسانیت و اسلام اپنا فریضہ پورا کیا۔ اللہ تعالیٰ کے درجات بلند کرے۔

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ASR 5: 13
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ISHA 8: 30

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1446

This Day In History

- 476- German ruler Flavius Odoacer captures Pavia
- 1521- Belgrade captured by troops of Turkish Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent
- 1542- Turkish-Portuguese War (1538-1557) - Battle of Wofla: the Portuguese are scattered, their leader Christovão da Gama is captured and afterwards executed.
- 1789- William Herschel discovers Saturn's moon Enceladus
- 1845- Scientific American magazine publishes its first issue.
- 1849- Venice under Daniele Manin surrenders to Austrians under Radetsky, having been under siege since July 20 after proclaiming independence
- 1859- A geomagnetic storm causes the Aurora Borealis to shine so brightly that it is seen clearly over parts of USA, Europe, and even as far afield as Japan.
- 1861- Battle of Fort Hatteras, NC
- 1862- Battle of Thoroughfare Gap, VA
- 1864- The first Geneva Convention, governing rules of warfare, signed by 26 nations.
- 1884-First known photograph of a tornado is made near Howard, SD
- 1910- Nicholas I, who first assumed power in 1860 and had his reign interrupted by Turkish rule, again proclaims himself king
- 1916- Germany declares war on Romania
- 1916- Italy declares war against Germany
- 1924-Georgian opposition stages the August Uprising against the Soviet Union.
- 1937- Toyota Motors becomes an independent company.
- 1943- Denmark declares a universal strike against Nazi occupiers
- 1964- US weather satellite Nimbus 1 launched
- 1973-India & Pakistan sign POW accord
- 1974- Soyuz 15 returns to Earth
- 1993- Dam breaks in Qinghai West China, 223 killed
- 1995- Kuwaiti Oil Minister Abdul Mohsen al-Medej announces that his country will increase its oil production capacity to as much as 3.5 million barrels per day by 2005

From KO Archives

Officer Shifted For 7th Time, Goes On Leave

Observer News Service

Srinagar - The principal secretary, revenue, Sonali Kumar, has proceeded on leave following the recent transfers and postings in the state administration.

The high-ranking bureaucrat has been transferred for the seventh time in the changes announced yesterday.

During the two-and-a-half year tenure of the coalition government, Kumar has been shifted six times from her posts.

Before the coalition government came to power, Sonali Kumar had been made the commissioner secretary, education, on May 1, 2002.

Soon after the new government took over, she was transferred to the technical education department as commissioner secretary in November 2003. In February the next year, she was transferred to industries and commerce, and four months later, in July 2003, to the higher and technical education department

After serving on that post for one year, she was transferred again in July 2004, and made the principal secretary of the forest department. The government shifted her again in April 2005, this time to the health and medical education department.

Yesterday's revamp, which made her the principal secretary of the revenue department, was the sixth time she was transferred in 2-and-a-half years.

Ped up with the repeated transfers and postings, Sonali Kumar, has gone on leave in protest, sources told the KNS. She has asked the government to grant her leave till October.

(Kashmir Observer, August 28, 2000)

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Wednesday | 28-08-2024

Election Sans Boycott

The ongoing Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir are witnessing a notable absence: there has been no call for a boycott of the exercise from any quarters, just as there wasn't one during the recent parliament election. This marks a significant departure from the norm established since the beginning of the separatist struggle in 1989.

However, the absence of a boycott call does not guarantee a high voter turnout in the Valley elections. The reason is that the poll boycott has become a default response among a significant section of people, particularly in urban areas. It is an over three decade old habit which may not go away easily. In the last election, Kashmir Valley polled 50.86 percent votes in the three parliamentary seats — Srinagar, Baramulla, and Anantnag-Rajouri

Since the early nineties, separatists have championed the boycott of elections, although this trend has seen diminishing returns over the years. The urban areas still witness significant boycotts but the rural areas generally experience higher voter turnout.

The question now arises whether people in cities and towns will vote in large numbers in the absence of a public boycott call. Many may still choose to boycott, but the most may not as the current trend suggests.

Election boycotts have often profoundly impacted the electoral exercise in the Valley. In case of boycott, even a candidate with little political influence could secure victory. Over the past three decades, there have been numerous instances where candidates with minimal support won elections by narrow margins, subsequently assuming prominent government positions.

The ongoing election will be crucial for cities like Srinagar, which have consistently boycotted polls since 1987 Assembly polls which were widely perceived to have been rigged. The city has been in a limbo ever since. Although there have been unprecedented changes in the region in the past five years, such as politicians campaigning deep into Srinagar's interiors, active political participation remains elusive.

But more people are expected in the Assembly election. In recent years, people in the Valley have eagerly waited for the restoration of democracy. They have looked forward to the assumption of power by an elected government, giving them both a sense of involvement in decision making and also enabling them to hold the rulers accountable, something that is not possible under a bureaucratic rule. But a better and a representative elected government can only be formed if people participate in the election in large numbers. And they should.



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Why First-Time Investors Should Start with Mutual Funds and SIPs

Irshad Mushtaq

Investing can feel daunting for newcomers to the financial markets, but Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs) in mutual funds offer a simplified pathway. Here's why this method is advantageous:

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Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024

A Threat to Religious Autonomy?

Madiya Mushtaq

The term waqf, in its literal sense, means "to enclose", "to block" or "to fix". In legal definition, it is the permanent dedication of property for pious purposes. Any property, whether movable or immovable, that has been permanently devoted for religious, pious, or charitable purposes as recognized by Islamic law is referred to as waqf property under the Waqf Act, 1995. Such property is dedicated by a Muslim person or group, and after it is proclaimed waqf, it is thought to be irrevocably and eternally in God's possession, with its profits used to support the general welfare or particular religious objectives. The Waqf properties are managed by Mutawallis. According to a report, the Waqf Board manages 8.7 lakh properties, in around 10 lakh acres, with a value of around 1 lakh crores.

Why was Waqf Act, 1995 passed?

In response to the increasing demand for a more complete and stronger legal framework for the administration of waqf properties—which, according to Islamic law, are set aside for charitable, educational, and religious purposes—the Waqf Act, 1995 was passed in India. The administration of waqf properties was beset by corruption, incompetence, and inefficiency prior to the legislation.

The Waqf Act, 1995 was passed with the following main objectives:

- To offer improved waqf administration and management, including for waqf properties and other associated matters.
- To create and support the efficient operation of State Waqf Boards and the Central Waqf Council, which will also advise the State and Central Governments about the management of waqf.
- Shared distribution of power between waqf boards and the chief executive officer.
- To appoint an executive officer to the Waqfs, whose performance is not satisfactory and the income is above 5 lakhs or above.
- A regulatory/judicial framework related to the disputes of Waqf.
- To overlook the powers, functions and duties of mutawallis.
- The alienation of the Waqf property was made challenging.
- To undertake surveys by designating a Survey Commissioner and the number of Additional or Assistant Survey Commissioners that the State deems necessary in accordance with Waqf Act, 1995, Chapter II, Section 4.
- To improve the waqf's financial standing for management. A mutawalli's board contribution has increased from 6% to 7%.
- To eradicate intrusions from waqf in accordance with Section 54 of the statute.
- creating the waqf maintenance budget for the upcoming fiscal year while overseen directly by the board.
- to keep records and to carry out record inspections.
- to achieve national uniformity in the waqf administration process.

The Waqf Amendment, 2013:

The management and control of waqf properties in India underwent a number of important modifications brought about by the waqf (Amendment) Act, 2013. These are a few of the significant changes:

Council of Central Waqf: The Central Waqf Council was created by the Act to supervise State Waqf Board operations and provide consistency amongst them.

State Waqf Boards: The Act placed a strong emphasis on the establishment of State Waqf Boards in order to efficiently manage waqf properties at the state level. These boards now have additional authority to file lawsuits to stop encroachment and improper usage of waqf properties.

Audit of Waqf Properties: In order to guarantee openness and appropriate administration, the amendment required periodical audits of waqf properties.

Dispute Resolution: It established a tribunal to handle disputes pertaining to waqf properties and offered a procedure for resolving them.

Management and Accountability: By establishing rules for the management of waqf properties and guaranteeing that the monies are used for the appropriate purposes, the Act aimed to increase the accountability of waqf management.

Transparency procedures: It instituted procedures, such as the need to keep public records and make information available to the public, to promote transparency in the management of waqf properties.

Waqf Amendment Bill, 2022:

Presented in the Indian Parliament, the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2022, brought about a number of significant updates and improvements to the waqf property administration system. The bill sought to provide better governance and address a number of concerns pertaining to the administration of waqf properties.

A. Enhancement of the Central Waqf Council (CWC): The bill suggested enhancing the Central Waqf Council's responsibilities in order to guarantee better supervision and cooperation between the Central and State waqf boards. The CWC would be able to oversee State waqf boards and guarantee consistency in their operations with more authority.

B. Waqf Tribunal: The National Waqf Tribunal was to be established under the bill in order to settle disputes about waqf properties. In order to address matters involving waqf property management and encroachments, this tribunal would act as a specialized authority.

C. Enhanced Accountability and Transparency: It suggested steps to improve accountability and transparency in the administration of waqf properties, such as mandating frequent reporting and financial audits of the operations and financial statements of waqf boards. The bill contained clauses pertaining to the up-keep and updating of public records pertaining to waqf properties.

D. Management and Administration: By establishing more precise rules and regulations for the management of waqf properties, the measure sought to simplify the administration of these estates. It suggested more stringent guidelines for the selection of mutawallis, or waqf property managers, and provided a clearer description of their duties.

E. Property Development: To ensure that waqf properties are used optimally for the welfare of the society and to generate money, the bill encouraged the development and use of waqf properties.

F. Encroachment and Recovery: Mechanisms for reclaiming encroached land and property were added in the provisions aimed at strengthening the measures against encroachment on waqf properties.

G. State Waqf Boards: The bill included improvements to property management procedures and enhanced legal authority to prosecute infractions in order to enhance the performance of State waqf boards.

By establishing stronger administrative and legal frameworks, the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2022 sought to address long-standing problems with the management of waqf holdings and enhance the Waqf Act's overall efficacy.

The Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024

The Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024, poses a significant intrusion on the Muslim community's fundamental rights. The measure threatens the community's right to administer its religious and philanthropic assets by consolidating authority over waqf properties and weakening the independence of traditional

Islamic institutions. The Central Waqf Council and the Board of Auqaf's religious character is upset by the appointment of non-Muslim members, which may jeopardize the administration of waqf properties in line with Islamic law. In addition, the Collector's involvement in validating waqf properties along with the necessary public notice time for land record updates pose bureaucratic obstacles that may cause delays, conflicts, or even the unjust confiscation of waqf holdings.

Concerns against the state's excessive involvement in religious matters are raised by these laws, which violate the community's right to self-governance and religious freedom. Under the pretense of openness and inclusivity, the law runs the risk of undermining the waqf, an ancient Islamic institution, and infringing upon the fundamental rights of the Muslim community.

Below mentioned is the comparison between the Waqf Act, 1995 and the proposed amendment bill, 2024. In the form a chart, the changes are detailed and explained:

Sections	Current Waqf Act	Proposed changes in Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024	Explanation of changes
Section 3(r): Definition of Waqf	"Waqf" means the permanent dedication by any person of any movable or immovable property for any purpose recognized by Muslim law as pious, religious, or charitable.	"Waqf" now requires the person to have practiced Islam for at least five years and have ownership of the property being dedicated.	Stricter criteria for who can create a Waqf, ensuring the person is a practicing Muslim for a significant period and owns the property being dedicated.
Section 3(r)(iv): Waqf-alal-aulad	Allows the creation of Waqf-alal-aulad (endowment for the family) under Muslim law.	Income from Waqf-alal-aulad, when succession fails, must be spent on education, welfare, and maintenance of widows, divorced women, and orphans, as prescribed by the Central Government.	Provides clarity on the usage of income from Waqf-alal-aulad when there is no heir, ensuring it serves social welfare purposes.
Section 3(da): Position of Collector	Not present in the current Waqf Act	Introduces the position of Collector, who will exercise powers previously held by the Auqaf Board.	Establishes a new authority (Collector) to oversee certain functions, possibly to streamline administration and increase government oversight.
Section 3A: Conditions for Creating Waqf	Not present in the current Waqf Act	1. Only a lawful owner can create a Waqf. 2. Creation of Waqf-alal-aulad must not deny inheritance rights of heirs, including women.	Ensures that Waqf creation is legally valid and protects inheritance rights, particularly those of women, aligning with principles of justice and equity.
Section 3B: Filing of Waqf Details	Not present in the current Waqf Act.	Requires all Waqfs registered before 2024 to file details on a government portal, including deed, income, pending cases, etc.	Enhances transparency and accountability by mandating the digitization and public availability of Waqf details through a centralized portal.
Section 3C: Wrongful Declaration of Waqf	Not present in the current Waqf Act	Government property identified or declared as Waqf shall not be treated as Waqf unless confirmed by the Collector.	Protects government property from being wrongfully claimed as Waqf, ensuring due process through investigation and reporting by the Collector.
Section 3(k): Waqf Asset Management System	Not present in the current Waqf Act.	Defines a centralized system for Waqf registration, accounts, audit, and other details, as prescribed by the Central Government.	Introduces a digital system for better management and oversight of Waqf properties, ensuring consistency and ease of access for monitoring purposes.
Section 4: Preliminary Survey of Auqaf	The State government must appoint a Survey Commissioner to conduct a survey of auqaf in the State.	The position of Survey Commissioner is replaced by the Collector, who shall exercise jurisdiction over the survey of auqaf. The definition of Waqf now includes 'Aghakhani waqf' and 'Bohra waqf'.	Shifts the responsibility from a specialized Survey Commissioner to a government-appointed Collector, potentially centralizing authority. Expands the definition to include more types of waqf.
Section 5: Publication of List of Auqaf	After the Survey Commissioner's report is examined by the Waqf Board, it is forwarded to the State government for publication in the official gazette. The revenue authorities update the land records accordingly.	Before updating land revenue records, revenue authorities must issue a 90-day public notice in two daily newspapers, one of which must be in the regional language, to allow affected persons an opportunity to be heard.	Introduces a mandatory public notice period, ensuring transparency and providing an opportunity for the public to challenge the listing before land records are updated.
Section 6: Disputes Regarding Auqaf	Disputes regarding whether a property is waqf or whether it is a Shia or Sunni waqf are decided by a Tribunal consisting of three members (civil judge, state civil services officer, and an expert in Muslim law). The Tribunal's decision is final, and no suit can be instituted after one year from the publication of the list of auqaf.	The decision of the Tribunal is not final. A suit can be instituted within two years from the publication of the list of auqaf, with provisions for filing even after two years if sufficient cause is shown. Section 40, which allowed the Waqf Board to collect information regarding any property believed to be waqf, is omitted	Extends the timeframe for challenging the Tribunal's decisions and allows for more flexibility in filing suits. The omission of Section 40 reduces the Waqf Board's proactive role in identifying waqf properties.
Section 9: Constitution of Central Waqf Council	The Central Government appoints members, including "at least two members to be women."	Only two women members may be appointed among the specified list, and two non-Muslim members shall also be appointed.	Reduces the mandatory inclusion of women from "at least two" to "only two," and includes non-Muslim members to ensure broader representation
Section 14: Composition of Board of Auqaf	The composition includes women members, with a general representation of Muslim communities.	Only two women members shall be appointed, and two non-Muslim members will be included. Also, one member each from Shia, Sunni, OBC Muslims, and one from Bohra and Aghakhani if they have functional auqaf in the State.	Reduces the number of women members, introduces non-Muslim members, and ensures representation from various Muslim sects and communities, including Bohra and Aghakhani.
Section 36: Registration of Auqaf	Registration of Auqaf was prescribed by the regulations provided by the Auqaf Board.	No waqf shall be created without the execution of a waqf deed. Registration must be done through an online portal and database. The Collector must inquire into the genuineness of the application.	Mandates the execution of a waqf deed for registration, introduces an online system for transparency, and requires the Collector to verify the property's status before registration.
Section 47: Audit of Accounts of Auqaf	Accounts of auqaf are audited by an auditor appointed by the Auqaf Board, with the possibility of being audited by the State Government.	Auditors must now be from a panel prepared by the State Government. The Central Government can direct an audit by an auditor appointed by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India and order the publication of the audit report	Enhances the oversight and accountability of waqf accounts by involving state-approved auditors and allowing the Central Government to intervene directly in the audit process.

The goal of these modifications is to increase transparency, but they run the risk of putting up bureaucratic obstacles that slow down the registration process and cause conflicts over properties that can be mistakenly designated as belonging to the government

Conclusion

Concerns over the Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024's potential effects on the Muslim community's fundamental rights are warranted because it would significantly alter the way waqf properties are governed and managed. The bill could jeopardize the

Central Waqf Council's and the Board of Auqaf's ability to govern waqf properties in accordance with Islamic law by allowing non-Muslim members into historically Islamic organizations. The measure also requires a waqf deed to be executed, moves the registration procedure online, and includes the Collector in the waqf property verification process.

The goal of these modifications is to increase transparency, but they run the risk of putting up bureaucratic obstacles that slow down the registration process and cause conflicts over properties that can be mistakenly designated as belonging to the government. Moreover, the waqf boards' autonomy is diminished by the centralization of control brought about by the consolidation of audit tasks under state-approved panels and the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India. This centralization violates the community's right to self-governance and religious freedom along with the additional bureaucratic restrictions.

The bill's provisions directly challenge the community's fun-

damental rights and set a worrying precedent for the loss of religious freedom by upsetting the management of waqf properties and undermining the autonomy of religious institutions. As such, a thorough reassessment of the bill is necessary to protect and uphold the rights and customs of the Muslim community.

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

Sustainable Urban Flood Solutions

The Role of Green Infrastructure in Smart Cities

Dr. Aamir Ishaq Shah

In recent years, we have been witnessing erratic and unforeseen weather activities. Intense, short-duration downpours are responsible for triggering frequent urban flash floods. The situation has further worsened due to rapid urbanization where rainfall is unable to find a way to reach the soil matrix. The lack of permeable ground surfaces, paved roads and streets cause the rainwater to accumulate and lead to frequent urban flash floods. The problem has exacerbated since urban runoff carries sediments and floating garbage, which clogs the stormwater conveyance network.

An inundated road after a high intensity rainfall

The Government of India in 2015 started National Smart Cities Mission with the ambitious goal of transforming cities across the country into more citizen-friendly and sustainable environments. Srinagar city is also being developed on the lines of smart city project. The smart city project aims to improve the living standards by various innovative and inclusive solutions. However, the ground reality is that these projects have largely neglected the crucial aspect of sustainable urban development. Instead, many of these "smart cities" are rapidly evolving into concrete jungles, where mere road paving and sewer installation fail to meet the comprehensive criteria of a truly smart and sustainable city. A smart city should embody sustainability, eco-friendliness and a harmonious integration with nature. Addressing the challenges posed by rapid urbanization is critical to mitigating the occurrence of urban floods.

Green infrastructure offers a sustainable, long-term, economical, aesthetically pleasing and environmentally friendly solution to urban floods. It mimics the natural hydrology of an area, captures rainwater where it falls and recharges it into groundwater. The concept of green infrastructure holds the potential to enhance urban sustainability, providing long-term flood prevention, rainwater filtration, and groundwater recharge. Green infrastructure techniques include green roofs, bioretention cells, permeable pavements, bioswales, planter boxes, green



streets and alleys, etc. each of which can serve a specific purpose in urban rainwater management and beautification.

Green Roofs

Green roofs are a modification of traditional roofs which consists of placing a waterproof membrane overlaid by growing media where vegetation is grown. These roofs absorb the rainwater, a part of which is used by plants and returned to the atmosphere via evapotranspiration. They can retain up to 70-90% of the rainfall that falls on them, significantly reducing stormwater runoff and thus reducing the strain on sewer systems during peak flow periods. Green roofs mitigate the urban heat island effect by providing a natural green cover in urban areas, thereby moderating the temperature of the buildings. Beyond these benefits, green roofs

The lack of permeable ground surfaces, paved roads and streets cause the rainwater to accumulate and lead to frequent urban flash floods. The problem has exacerbated since urban runoff carries sediments and floating garbage, which clogs the stormwater conveyance network

have been attributed to result in improved air quality, noise reduction, enhanced biodiversity and overall better health and wellbeing.

Bioretention Cells

Bioretention cells are the artificial imitation of an ideal natural soil system with comparatively higher hydraulic conductivity and significant water quality improvement potential designed for managing urban stormwater. They are the most widely adopted green infrastructure practices for managing urban stormwater. A typical bioretention cell can infiltrate as much as between 85 to 90% of the annual stormwater runoff, replenishing our groundwater resources. They have been found to be very effective in attenuation of peak rates of stormwater runoff generated by rainfall events of varying intensities. In addition to reducing runoff,

bioretention cells are highly effective in mitigating pollution and enhancing groundwater recharge. Bioretention cells can also be constructed economically using the locally available material and growing native plant species. The cost of construction varies between Rs. 125 to 250 per square foot to 335 to 500 per square foot (Albert Jarrett, 2022).

Permeable Pavements

Conventional pavements consist of hard concrete surfaces that prevent water infiltration, leading to the accumulation of stormwater and resulting in flash floods. Permeable pavements, on the other hand, are designed to treat, infiltrate, and replenish groundwater. Permeable pavements include porous asphalt, pervious concrete and permeable interlocking concrete pavers. Permeable pavements aim to restore the hydrological balance

of urban paved areas by capturing rainwater and allowing it to slowly infiltrate the ground instead of flowing into stormwater drains. The cost of installation may vary between Rs. 170- 335 per square feet depending upon the type of permeable pavements installed (Minnesota Stormwater Manual).

Bioswales

Bioswales are linear shallow landscaped depressions designed for the collection, filtration, infiltration and conveyance of stormwater. The working principle is the same as that of bioretention cells, however unlike bioretention cells which are excavated depression, bioswales are vegetated channels that treat and infiltrate stormwater while conveying the same. Bioswales are best suited for highways and residential road runoff due to their linear nature. They are aesthetically pleasing than the traditional concrete gutters and use native plants and soil mix to absorb and filter stormwater.

Green Streets and Alleys

Green streets and alleys represent an excellent and innovative concept of integrating all green infrastructure practices in the urban infrastructure design process. Bioretention cells, bioswales, permeable pavements and trees can be used together to provide different environmental benefits in an urban ecosystem. The greenery and effective drainage in addition to growing biodiversity provide an excellent space for the local community to walk, play and interact. They turn uninviting alleys and streets into inviting and aesthetically pleasing public spaces bustling with various recreational activities.

Prioritizing green infrastructure not only enhances environmental sustainability but also improves the quality of life in urban areas. By integrating these practices, cities can mitigate environmental impacts and create vibrant, resilient communities that thrive amidst urbanization. It is a need of hour to embrace the concept to create a favorable urban living space for our future generations.

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The Great AI Detection Dilemma

John Nosta

Just who (or what) wrote what? This seems to be a prevailing and resonant question that seems to be focused on author over content.

Recent research has uncovered a significant challenge in this curious authorship debate of artificial intelligence (AI): neither humans nor AI systems are consistently able to detect AI-generated content in online conversations. This finding might have significant implications for digital communication, online trust, and the future of human-AI interaction. Or, on the other hand, it might just be a wild goose chase that drives a wedge between human and AI creativity and productivity.

A New Take on the Turing Test

Researchers conducted a novel experiment, expanding on the classic Turing test. They presented transcripts of conversations between humans and AI to both human participants and AI models, asking them to determine which was which. The results were striking and unexpected.

Displaced human judges (those reading transcripts) performed no better than chance in identifying AI participants. Even more surprisingly, AI models like GPT-3.5 and GPT-4, when tasked with the same identification, showed similarly poor performance. Perhaps most intriguingly, the most advanced AI conversationalist was more likely to be judged as human than actual human participants.

Blurring Lines in the Digital Landscape

These findings suggest that as AI language models become more sophisticated, the line between human- and AI-generated content is becoming in-

creasingly blurred. This has important implications for our digital interactions and raises important questions about the nature of online communication.

As AI systems become more prevalent in digital spaces, it may become increasingly difficult to discern whether we're interacting with humans or machines. This challenge extends beyond mere curiosity—it can strike at the heart of digital trust. How can we verify the source of information or the identity of those we're communicating with in an environment where AI can convincingly mimic human discourse?

The Hunt for Reliable Detection Methods

The study also explored various methods of AI detection, including statistical approaches and the use of AI to detect other AI. While some methods showed promise, they all had significant limitations.

- ▶ Statistical Approaches: Statistical methods could identify some patterns in AI-generated text but struggled with more advanced models. As AI language models improve, these statistical signatures become increasingly subtle and difficult to detect reliably.
- ▶ AI Detecting AI: AI detectors performed better than chance but still made many errors, especially with more sophisticated AI-generated content. This suggests that even AI, trained specifically for this task, struggles to consistently identify its own kind in conversational settings.
- ▶ The Human Element: Interestingly, interactive human interrogators performed better than those reading transcripts, but they still struggled to consistently identify AI participants. This highlights the value



of direct interaction in detecting AI but also underscores the sophistication of modern AI language models.

Does It Really Matter?

As we grapple with the challenges of AI detection, a question emerges: Does it really matter? In an increasingly AI-integrated world, the distinc-

tion between human and AI-generated content might become less relevant in many contexts. Consider how we've seamlessly integrated spell-check and autocorrect into our writing process—we rarely pause to consider whether a correctly spelled word is the result of human knowledge or technological assistance. Similarly, as AI becomes more

deeply woven into our digital interactions, we might find ourselves focusing less on the origin of the content and more on its value and relevance.

This perspective doesn't negate the importance of transparency in high-stakes situations, but it does suggest that in many everyday interactions, the pursuit of distinguishing between human and AI contributions might be unnecessary or even counterproductive. Instead of "chasing the author," we might be better served by developing frameworks to evaluate the quality, ethics, and impact of digital content, regardless of its origin. This shift in focus could lead to more productive discussions about how we can harness the combined potential of human and artificial intelligence to enhance our digital experiences and decision-making processes.

Embracing Complexity

The difficulty in distinguishing between human and AI communication underscores the remarkable progress in AI technology. However, it also highlights the complex challenges we face in an increasingly AI-integrated world. Today, and into the future, it will be crucial to approach these challenges with nuance, balancing the potential benefits of AI with the need for transparency, trust, and human-centered design in our digital ecosystems.

In the end, this research doesn't just reveal our limitations in detecting AI—it opens up new questions about the nature of communication, intelligence, and what it means to be human in a world where machines can convincingly mimic our most distinctive trait: the ability to converse.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today

Court Convicts Doctor For RTI Application Personation

Likely To Award Sentence Today

M Ahmad

SRINAGAR: A court here on Tuesday held a medical officer from Indian Systems of Medicine (ISM) guilty on charges of cheating by personation by filing an application under RTI Act in the name of another person and using the same being a "forged" document to be genuine.

"The prosecution has proved its case beyond any reasonable doubt to the extent that the accused had cheated the officials of department of ISM by pretending to be Muzaffar Ahmad Ganaie by filing an RTI application in his name and thereby using a forged document as genuine," 2nd Additional Munsiff, Ahtzaz Ahmed, said while convicting Dr Zahoor Ahmad Tantray of Kupwara for offences punishable in terms of RPC sections of 419 (cheating by personation) and 471 (using genuine as genuine a forged document).

The court has posted the case on Wednesday for hearing the arguments on the quantum of sentence to be imposed upon the accused.

The case was filed on 30-10-2013 on the basis a communication received from the then Director, Indian Systems of Medicine, stating that the accused, putting up in a rented accommodation in Bemina Srinagar, was transferred from Unani Dispensary Gulab Bagh

to Unani Dispensary Khanaid, Udhampur because of his "misconduct". Also it was reported that the medical officer was harassing the officials of the department by filing the RTI applications using different names so that he could escape from the "departmental enquiry" and could pressurize the officers of the Department.

As per the communication, the department grew suspicious on receipt of chain of RTI applications on "stereotype ready-made proforma" filed by impersonating different persons.

The medical officer, as per the communication, had filed one of the applications in the name of Muzaffar Anwar Ganie who happens to be the son of the owner of the house where the doctor was residing.

The department sent a copy of RTI application to Muzaffar Anwar Ganie who on its receipt contacted the department and refused to have sought any such information.

Similarly, the communication said, another RTI application in the name of one Mohammad Ashraf Ganaie was received against the officers who were conducting an inquiry against Dr Zahoor.

The communication alleged that Dr Zahoor actually wanted to escape from the departmental enquiry by harassing and causing distress to the officers and employees of the department.

Authorities Set Up Helpdesk To Reach Out To Kashmiri Migrant Voters

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: As preparations for assembly elections gain momentum in Jammu and Kashmir, the relief and rehabilitation department has established a helpdesk to assist eligible voters from the displaced Kashmiri community residing across the country.

This initiative aims to facilitate smooth polling at special polling stations and through postal ballots, according to officials.

The department has intensified efforts to ensure free and fair elections for Kashmiri migrants, with the Election Commission (EC) setting up 24 special polling stations and a postal ballot scheme for displaced community voters in Jammu, Udhampur, and Delhi, they said.

"A helpdesk has been established in our office and across various zones. Several employees have been deployed to ensure seamless facilitation of migrant polling," Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner Dr Arvind Karwani told PTI.

Karwani emphasized that the helpdesk is actively addressing



issues faced by migrants, with the goal of enhancing voter facilities ahead of the upcoming assembly elections starting September 18.

"Kashmiri migrant voters opting to vote in person via electronic voting machines (EVMs) will have access to 24 polling stations, including 19 in Jammu, 1 in Udhampur, and 4 in Delhi," he said.

Karwani, who is monitoring the control room for the helpdesk, assured that all necessary arrangements have been made at these polling stations in accordance with EC guidelines.

The EC issued a notification on August 22 outlining the voting options for Kashmiri migrants, offering choices of both in-person voting at

special polling stations and through postal ballots.

"Special polling stations have been set up in Udhampur, Delhi, and Jammu. Alternatively, Kashmiri migrants can opt for postal ballots," he added.

Karwani said the updated electoral rolls, detailing migrant electors in various zones of Jammu and Udhampur mapped to respective special polling stations, will soon be published.

"Corrections or objections will be accepted within a seven-day period", he added.

The 90 assembly constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir are scheduled to go to polls in three phases beginning September 18, with counting of votes slated for October 4.

STANDARDIZATION BOOST

BIS Director General Chairs 2-Day Review Meeting In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A two-day review meeting of the Northern Regional Office of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) commenced on Tuesday at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar.

Director General of BIS, Sh. Pramod Kumar Tiwari, IAS was the chief guest at the event.

The meeting, attended by senior officials and stakeholders, aimed to assess the regional office's performance and discuss strategies for enhancing standardization and quality control in the region. The Director General emphasized the importance of ad-



hering to global standards in product quality and safety, stressing its impact on trade and consumer protection.

Key issues addressed during the meeting included the implementation of new standards, certification process, and the role of BIS in promoting Make in India initiatives.

The meeting is expected to

conclude tomorrow with a set of recommendations for improving the region's standardization ecosystem.

This review meeting underscores the government's commitment to strengthening the country's quality infrastructure, aligning with global best practices, and driving economic growth through standardization.

Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation Programme Held

Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: An awareness rally as part of SVEEP was held at Hapatnagar, a picturesque village with a high population from Tribal communities.

The event witnessed active participation of first-time voters, female voters from Tribal and other communities. The aim of the event was to promote enthusiastic participation of voters in the upcoming elections to the Legislative Assembly.

The event was held under the overall guidance of the District Election Officer. The Nodal Officer (SVEEP) speaking on the occasion educated the masses about the importance of voting and their role in the democratic process.



They were also informed about the various initiatives taken by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to increase voter turnout and ensure free and fair elections.

The participants were lat-

er administered the voters' pledge. At the end, a mega rally was conducted to encourage the general public to vote in the upcoming General Elections Legislative Assembly (GELA-2024) in large numbers.

'Non-Release' Of Payments

Patients Hit Streets, Seek Continued Treatment Under Golden Cards

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Patients, suffering from renal failures and cancer, Tuesday staged a protest in Srinagar and demanded the resumption of free-treatment facilities under Golden cards at empanelled health centres in the valley.

The aggrieved patients said that treatments like dialysis and cancer therapies, provided to them under Golden cards at health centres without any cost, have been stopped after the arising of the payment issue.

"All the dialysis centres and cancer treatment centres run privately, whether in central, south or north Kashmir, have told patients to make payments for their dialysis or cancer ther-

apies from Ist. The officials in private hospitals, which were empanelled to do surgeries or treatments for different ail-



ments under Golden cards, have categorically refused to do so," said one of the protesters.

While management of the

private hospitals were asked by patients for the reason of not extending health-care facilities to them under Golden cards, "they told us (patients) that payments of earlier dialysis and other treatments are pending with the concerned entity, compelling us (hospitals) to ask for your treatments' charges," the protesting patient said.

Other patients said that they were receiving free treatments at the health centres for years and are now left to fend for themselves.

They requested the LG Administration for immediate intervention into the matter so that they could continue to receive free treatments under Golden cards. (CNS)

Bodies Of Two Cloudburst Victims Recovered In Ramban

Press Trust Of India

RAMBAN/JAMMU: Two bodies, including that of a 12-year-old boy, were recovered on Tuesday as rescue operation continued in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district to trace five other missing people following a cloudburst, officials said.

The cloudburst occurred in Panchayats Kumate, Dhraman and Halla in Rajgarh tehsil late Monday afternoon, causing flash floods in Tanger and Dadi streams, they said.

Seven people of three different families were reported missing in the flash floods, Tehsildar Rajgarh Major Singh told PTI.

Despite the inclement weather, the rescue team has so far managed to retrieve bodies of two persons -- Yasir Ahmad (20) of Gadgram and Khalid Ahmed Parihar (12) of Suli-Kumate, Singh, who is supervising

the rescue operation, said.

He said efforts are underway to locate the remaining five missing people -- Ahmad's mother Naseema Begum (42) and sister Shazia Banoo (6), Parihar's mother Gulshan Begum (42) and sister Seerat Banoo (8), and six-year-old Qazia Banoo of Dugar Dandillah.

The rescue team includes personnel from the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), local police and volunteers.

Singh said that continuous rain has slowed down the rescue operation, as the rivulets are in spate. It took nearly three hours for the rescuers to reach the affected villages on foot, he added.

At least two government schools at Gadgram and Son-sua, and a couple of other structures also suffered damages, while three parked private vehicles were washed away by the flash floods, the officials said.

Two Gurez Villages See Electricity 'For The First Time'



Agencies

SRINAGAR: The villages of Refugee 1 and Refugee 2 in Gurez Valley in north Kashmir's Baniptora district experienced a momentous occasion on Tuesday as they saw electric light "for the first time since 1947". This historic event was made possible by a solar grid project inaugurated by the Aseem Foundation, a Pune-based NGO.

The entire communities of Refugee 1 and Refugee 2 were filled with joy and celebration, marking the first time these villages have been illuminated since their establishment.

Ali Teru, a local resident, expressed his amazement, saying, "My eyes have seen the light for the first time since I was born. I can't believe it's really happening in our village. Not only me, but the entire village is grateful to the Aseem Foundation for this light."

Parvaiz Ahmed, another local, saw the light as a symbol of hope. "This light is not just light

but a ray of hope," he said.

The women of the village were particularly excited. They celebrated the arrival of light in their own special way. "Today, for the first time, we will eat under the light. We are speechless in expressing our gratitude to the Aseem Foundation," a group of women said.

Dr Sarang Gosavi, President of the Aseem Foundation, said the new solar grids provide a reliable 2KW power supply to each village. The project also includes an innovative Power Limiter to ensure equal distribution and cost-effectiveness, promoting sustainable energy use, he added.

The Aseem Foundation has previously implemented similar solar grid projects in other remote villages such as Gagar Hill, Jabri and Sumwali, Dr Gosavi said, adding that the organisation has been active in the region since 2002, focusing on the development and empowerment of border communities—(KNO)

Sarjan Barkati To Contest Assembly Polls As Independent Candidate

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A prominent religious cleric, Sarjan Ahmad Wagay, who is presently languishing in jail in a terror funding case, has decided to contest

the upcoming assembly election in Jammu and Kashmir as an independent candidate.

An official said that the family of Sarjan has filed the nomination papers today at Deputy Commissioner's office Shopian.

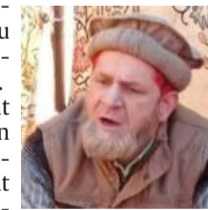
Sugra Barkati, daughter of Barkati said that they have already conducted a meeting with locals in Reban, the native village of Barkati and have filed his nomination papers today.

She said that when their fa-

ther was in jail, her mother used to take care of them but now she is also in jail, thus they are facing a difficult situation in absence of their parents.

Sugra further said that as her father had given sacrifices, people of Zainapora segment will also give sacrifice for him by voting in his favour. Barkati, who was the face of the 2016 agitation after the killing of Hizb Commander Burhan Wani, was arrested on October 01, 2016 and was released in October 2020.

He was later rearrested by the State Investigation Agency (SIA) in August last year in a terror funding case and is still under custody. Later, his wife was also arrested—(KNO)



Kavinder Slams Omar For U-turn On Contesting Assembly Polls

Agencies

JAMMU: Senior BJP leader and former deputy chief minister Kavinder Gupta on Tuesday launched a scathing attack on former Chief Minister and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, calling him an opportunist who has once again shown his true colours by changing stance not to contest the Assembly elections until the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

In his statement, the BJP leader criticized Omar Abdullah for misleading the people of Jammu and Kashmir. "Omar Abdullah has proven that he cannot be trusted. He made grand claims, saying that he would not participate in any Assembly polls until statehood was restored, but now, in a clear act of political opportunism, he has accepted his candidature from Ganderbal constituency. This is a blatant betrayal of the people who believed his words," the senior BJP

functionary said and added that Omar's actions reveal his desperation to regain political power at any cost.

"His words do not hold value, they do not stay on his tongue. He is trying to manipulate public sentiments for personal gain, and this deceit must be exposed", he said while claiming that the BJP is the party which is committed to ensuring transparency and accountability in the political process and will not allow opportunists like Omar Abdullah to mislead the people of Jammu and Kashmir for their political survival. He said that the unprincipled decision of Omar Abdullah of making a U-turn over his pledge has not only surprised the gullible electorate but it has also upset the NC's dedicated leadership which was expecting a seat from the constituency which the NC Vice President has now 'grabbed in an unprincipled manner' to satiate his hunger for power.(KNS)

Tarigami Files Nomination For Kulgam Seat

Agencies

SRINAGAR: CPI (M) leader and former MLA M Y Tarigami on Tuesday filed his nomination papers from the 39-Kulgam assembly constituency.

As per the news agency CNS, Tarigami filed his nomination papers in the office of the Returning Officer for the Kulgam constituency, the polls for which will be conducted during the first phase of the Assembly Elections scheduled on 18 September 2024.



CPI (M) leader while heading to file his nomination papers was accompanied by party workers and supporters, who electrified the environment by sloganeering.

A roadshow was also held from Bus stand Larnoo to mini stadium Chawalgam in which a number of locals took part.

Tarigami will contest the 39-Kulgam assembly seat to fight other contesting leaders, including PC's Nazir Ahmad Laway. (CNS)

Jay Shah Elected Unopposed, Becomes Youngest Ever ICC Chairman

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: BCCI secretary Jay Shah was elected unopposed as the next ICC chairman here on Tuesday, making him the youngest ever to reach the pinnacle of global cricket administration.

The 35-year-old Shah, who has been the BCCI secretary since 2019, will take over from 62-year-old incumbent Greg Barclay on December 1 after the New Zealander decided against running for a third consecutive term of two years.

Shah, who is the son of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, will relinquish his position in India at the BCCI's Annual General Meeting likely to be held towards the end of next month or in October.

Shah became the fifth Indian after late Jagmohan Dalmiya, Sharad Pawar, N Srinivasan and Shashank Manohar to be elect-

ed for the high-profile job.

The Ahmedabad-based administrator, who was the sole nominee for the chairmanship, emphasised his commitment to expanding the global reach and popularity of cricket, especially with its upcoming inclusion in the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics.

"I am humbled by the nomination as the Chair of the International Cricket Council," Shah stated in an ICC release.

He also acknowledged that international cricket stands at a critical juncture and it would be important to balance the coexistence of multiple formats, promote the adoption of advanced technologies, and introduce marquee events to new global markets.

Being a powerful decision-maker in the richest cricket board of the world, which contributes more than 75 per cent of the revenue for the global



body, Shah's election was never in doubt once he threw his hat in the ring.

It is understood that one among the powerful SENA cricket boards (South Africa, England, New Zealand and Australia) was Shah's proposer and another one of these countries seconded the nomination. And

he remained the lone contender on the last day of nominations.

As per the ICC constitution, there are 17 votes -- 12 full Test playing nations, chairman, deputy chairman, two associate member nominees and one independent female director.

That he is a likely choice was evident when he was ap-

pointed the head of ICC's most powerful sub-committee -- the Finance and Commercial Affairs (F&CA) in 2022.

The timing couldn't have been better for Shah, who would have had to go on a mandatory cooling off period in 2025 for a period of three years till 2028.

The BCCI constitution allows office-bearers to stay in office for a cumulative period of 18 years -- nine in national board and nine in state units.

But at a stretch, a person can remain office-bearer for a period of only six years after which a three-years cooling off period is necessary.

Shah, if all goes well, can have two terms in the ICC and come back to complete his remaining four years in BCCI in 2028 albeit as president of the board.

Baramulla Clinches Provincial Under-17 Cricket Tournament



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: Baramulla won the grand finale of the Provincial Level Inter District Under-17 Cricket Tournament on Tuesday. The tourney was organised by the Department of Youth Service and Sports and was hosted by DYSSO Anantnag.

Baramulla defeated Shopian in the final match by 8 runs at Railway Ground in Hassanpora, Bijbehara. Batting first, Baramulla set a target of 134 runs in 20 overs, with Ansh Pandith scoring 22 runs. Arhan,

Maiser and Jerjes took 2 wickets each. In reply, Shopian failed to chase the target and lost the match by 9 runs. Arfat Qayoom top scored with 30 runs. For Baramulla, Junaid Ashraf took 3 wickets.

In the post match presentation, DYSSO Anantnag Raja Yaqoob along with other officials of DYSS Anantnag presented the trophies to both the teams. Junaid Ashraf from Baramulla was declared as man of the match for his outstanding performance, scoring 15 runs and taking 3 wickets.

Santosh Trophy Trials From Sept 1

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: J&K Sports Council and J&K Football Association on Tuesday announced selection trials for the 78th Senior Men's Santosh Trophy and 29th Senior Women's National Football Championship 2024-25.

The open selection trials for the J&K contingent to participate in the 78th Senior Men's Santosh Trophy will be held from September 1 to 3 at Polo Ground in Srinagar and Synthetic Turf Parade Ground in Jammu.

The trials for the 29th Senior Women's National Football Championship will be held on September

4 and 5 at Polo Ground in Srinagar and Synthetic Turf Parade Ground in Jammu.

The trials will be held at 3:00 PM. "Selected players from these trials will have the opportunity to attend a specialized coaching camp to further hone their skills and prepare for the prestigious tournament," a statement said.

"For any queries, please contact: Mehrajuddin Wadoo, Football Coach JKSC: 7889557053, Khalid Qayoom: 7006336998, Mohammad Latief Bhat: 7889409438, Qudsiya Altaf, Khelo India Football Mentor JKSC: 7006299377, Satpal Singh: 7006693441, Rajesh Sumbria: 9419141270," it added.

IUST Inter-Departmental Cricket Concludes At Uni Grounds

Observer News Service

AWANTIPORA: The Inter-Departmental Cricket Tournament at Islamic University of Science and Technology concluded on Tuesday, with the final match between the Department of Civil Engineering and the Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering.

The Department of Civil Engineering emerged victorious, showcasing excellent teamwork and sportsmanship.

The award ceremony was graced by Sameer Wazir, Finance Officer IUST, as the Chief Guest. The event was attended by faculty members,



sports coordinators, and other dignitaries. Dr. Hilal Ahmad Rather, Assistant Director of Physical Education and Sports, welcomed the participants and introduced the teams' players.

Wazir announced that the university would be organizing

selection trials for the formation of a cricket team to represent IUST in the upcoming North Zone Cricket Tournament. He also praised the DPE&S for their meticulous efforts in ensuring the smooth conduct of the Inter-Departmental Cricket Tournament 2024.

Inter-School Sports Competitions Underway In Budgam

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: The Department of Youth Services and Sports Budgam is organising Inter-School Zonal Level competitions across the district, under the guidance of the Joint Director DYSS Kashmir Mohd Rashid Kohli.

In Zone Beerwah, the Department conducted the Inter-School Zonal Level Selection Trials for Athletic Meet (Girls AAG) at DIET ground, Beerwah. The trials were inaugurated by the Principal of DIET Beerwah, alongside Mohd Yaseen Jan, Incharge Activity ZPEO Beerwah. Key officials from Zone Beerwah were also in attendance.

The trials saw participation from around 275 athletes representing various schools within the zone.

During the event, Mohd Yaseen Jan commended the athletes for their active par-



ticipation. He also encouraged other students to engage in athletic events organised by the department in the future.

Short TAKES

Jammu To Host Speed Fest India

Jammu will host the "Speed Fest India, a premier car racing event" from August 30 to September 1 at the MA Stadium, Jammu. The three-day festival is set to energize motorsports enthusiasts across J&K.

The event is being organized by BSR MotorSports in collaboration with the Directorate of Tourism Jammu and J&K Sports Council.

Speed Fest India aims to enhance the motorsports and automobile industry in the region. It will offer a platform for local talent and car enthusiasts to demonstrate their skills and passion.

Harmanpreet To Lead India In Women's T20 World Cup

The big-hitting Harmanpreet Kaur will lead a 15-member Indian squad unveiled on Tuesday for the Women's T20 World Cup in the UAE from October 3.

Top-order batter Yastika Bhatia and spin all-rounder Shreyanka Patil were also included in the squad subject to fitness.

Star batter Smriti Mandhana has been named Harmanpreet's deputy.

India, placed in Group A along with Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, will aim for their maiden T20 World Cup trophy.

Pakistan Slip To Eighth Spot In WTC Standings

Pakistan have slipped to eighth in the World Test Championship standings following their 10-wicket loss to Bangladesh and a subsequent over rate penalty in the series-opener in Rawalpindi.

With 16 points and a winning percentage of 22.22 after six games, Pakistan languish in the second-last position in the standings ahead of the West Indies.

Bangladesh, who recorded their maiden Test win against Pakistan on Sunday, are seventh in the standings with 21 points, having won two out of their five games thus far.

Stone Replaces Wood In England Team For 2nd Test v Sri Lanka

Fast bowler Olly Stone will replace the injured Mark Wood in the England team to play Sri Lanka in the second Test at Lord's, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said on Tuesday.

Wood injured his thigh during the first Test and has been ruled out for the rest of the series.

The 30-year-old Stone, who has made three Test appearances in an injury-plagued career, will play in his first Test since June 2021.

Man United To Sign Ugarte From PSG & Sell McTominay To Napoli



Manchester United looks ready to take its summer spending on new players to around \$240 million by signing Uruguay defensive midfielder Manuel Ugarte from Paris Saint-Germain.

United has reached an agreement in principle to sign Ugarte for 50 million euros plus 10 million euros in potential bonuses, British media reported Tuesday.

The arrival of Ugarte would be offset by the departure of Scotland midfielder Scott McTominay, who is set to join Napoli for a reported 25 million pounds.

New Champions League Format Promises Everything Storied Clubs Wanted From UEFA

Agencies

GENEVA: The new Champions League format this season will see more teams playing more games for more prize money.

On Thursday, UEFA makes the draw in Monaco for the match schedule of the new single-standings league phase that replaces the traditional group stage.

The first new Champions League format since 2003 promises more of almost everything that Europe's wealthiest and most influential clubs wanted from UEFA.

There are four more places in a 36-team lineup; at least eight games each instead of six; Champions League games scheduled in January for the first time; a prize money rise of at least 25 per cent to a minimum 2.5 billion euros (USD 2.8 billion).

There also was more evidence, at UEFA's European Championship this summer, that constant expansion of international competitions is leaving players tired and unable to perform at their best year-round.

The new league phase in European club football's marquee

event will have 144 total games compared to 96 in the group stage last season.

The "key aims," UEFA said, is to "improve competitive balance and sporting interest and in the process increase the number of meaningful matches - matches with something at stake for both sides - throughout the competition."

In the eighth and final round, all 36 teams play on the same Jan. 29 evening to finalize the standings which will decide which eight teams advance directly to the round of 16 - and with what seedings in a tennis-like knockout bracket - as well as which 16 go into a new knockout playoff round in February, and which 12 are eliminated.

"We simulated that qualification should be possible with an average of 7.6 points, which means two victories and two draws," said UEFA's head of competitions strategy, Stéphane Anselmo.

WHY CHANGE SUCH A SUCCESSFUL COMPETITION? Money, mostly, though that's not the only reason.

The Champions League in Eu-



rope has for the past 32 years showcased the highest quality play in world football. It let UEFA steer billions of euros (dollars) of prize money to clubs who pay the highest transfer fees and salaries.

Still, influential officials at the European Club Association (ECA) got bored of the group stage, saying it was too repetitive and lacked drama. They wanted more games against stronger opponents that would be more valued by broadcasters, viewers, and new fans worldwide. Their leverage over UEFA was potentially launching their own breakout competition.

The road to agreeing to the

format was rocky. A controversial first proposal in 2019, favoring storied clubs, was stopped by a backlash from mid-ranked clubs and domestic leagues.

There was intense turmoil sparked by the failed Super League launch in April 2021 by most of the same club officials who negotiated Champions League reform with UEFA.

Final format approval came in May 2022 - when Real Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus were exiled from the talks and still pursued UEFA in court - and it was broadly what the rebel Super League clubs had negotiated.

WHAT IS THE NEW FORMAT?

Out goes the group-stage format played for 21 seasons where 32 teams were put into eight groups of four teams from a seeded draw. The top two in each group advanced to the round of 16. Groups gave each team six games from September into December, playing each rival once at home and once away.

In comes a single-standings league - 36 teams each playing eight games against eight different opponents through January.

The top eight in the standings go direct to the round of 16 in March. Teams ranked ninth to 24th go into the knockout playoffs in February. The bottom 12 teams are eliminated.

In the playoffs, teams ranked Nos. 9-16 are seeded in the draw to play second legs at home against unseeded teams Nos. 17-24.

WHO GETS THE FOUR EXTRA PLACES?

Two for countries whose teams collectively had the best record in UEFA club competitions in the previous season. That was Italy and Germany so the fifth-placed teams in Serie A and the Bundesliga qualified: Bologna and Borussia Dortmund.

The fifth-ranked national league (based on five years of results in UEFA club competitions) gets a third direct entry. That is currently France and Brest was third in Ligue 1.

An extra place goes to the qualifying rounds path for national champions from lower-ranked countries. They now play for five total qualifying places instead of four last season.

HOW WILL THE DRAW BE DONE?

The 36 teams come out of four seeding pots graded by each team's "UEFA club coefficient" - its ranking by results in five years of European competitions. The top-seeded pot contains recent Champions League winners and beaten finalists, plus Leipzig and Barcelona.

When a team's ball is drawn, its slate of eight opponents - two from each seeding pot, one to play at home and one away - will be allocated by a software program and displayed within seconds.

Match dates will be confirmed Saturday, to avoid city clashes with Europa League and Conference League games being drawn Friday in Monaco. Those lower-tier competitions also are a 36-team single-standings league. Conference League teams play just six games.

BILLION-DOLLAR PRIZE MONEY FUND

Winning the Champions League title in 2023 earned Manchester City 135 million euros (USD 151 million) from UEFA. This season's winner can reach

150 million euros (USD 168 million), with total competition revenue boosted by selling 189 total games instead of 125.

Commercial strategy is managed by a UEFA-ECA joint venture, and new sponsors for the Champions League include a cryptocurrency trading platform and a betting site.

Each of the 36 teams gets a basic 18.6 million euros (\$20.8 million), then 2.1 million euros (USD 2.35 million) for each game won and 700,000 euros (USD 782,000) per draw.

Each place in the standings is worth more money with shares of 275,000 euros (USD 307,000) per place: 36 shares, or 9.9 million euros (USD 11 million), goes to the team finishing top in January and a single share to the last-place team.

Bonuses escalate from 11 million euros (USD 12.3 million) per team for advancing to each knockout round.

Another prize fund of 853 million euros (USD 953 million) is allocated based on teams' historical record in UEFA competitions and the value of national and global broadcast deals.