

## US Gives \$8.7 Billion More Aid To Israel

Agencies

Jerusalem - Israel said on Thursday it had secured an \$8.7 billion aid package from the United States to support its ongoing military efforts and to maintain a qualitative military edge in the region.

Shortly after securing American military aid, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that his government "will not stop" its fight against Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The package includes \$3.5 billion for essential wartime procurement, which has already been received and earmarked for critical military purchases, and \$5.2 billion designated for air defense systems including the Iron Dome anti-missile system, David's Sling and an advanced laser system.

Israel is currently engaged in wars on two fronts, against the Palestinians in Gaza and West Bank and the Hezbollah movement in Lebanon.

The aid announcement came after negotiations at the Pentagon between Eyal Zamir, the director general of Israel's defense ministry, and U.S. defense officials, including acting Under Secretary | [More on P6](#)

# Give Up Arms, Come For Talks: Amit Shah To Terrorists

## Says Congress, NC Already 'Wiped Out' In First Two Phases

Press Trust Of India

Kathua: Extending an olive branch to the terrorists operating in Jammu and Kashmir, Union Home Minister Amit Shah asked them on Thursday to give up arms and come forward for talks with the government or be prepared to get neutralised at the hands of security forces.

"For vote-bank politics, they (opposition parties) are asking for talks with terrorists. If they want to talk, let them come forward after giving up arms. In the northeast, 10,000 people have surrendered," the



senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader said, addressing a poll rally in this Assembly segment in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district. This was Shah's fourth rally of the day in Udhampur and Kathua districts. | [More on P6](#)

## PM To Address Rally In Jammu Tomorrow

Agencies

Srinagar: Ahead of the third and final phase of Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Jammu on Saturday to speak at a large public rally at Maulana Azad Stadium.

BJP leaders see the PM's visit as a key moment in their final effort to win the Assembly elections.

This rally is part of the BJP's strong campaign and comes just days before the last phase of voting on October 1.



"This rally is very important because Jammu will be voting in the third phase. We are expecting more than one lakh people to attend the rally," senior BJP leader Kavinder Gupta said. Preparations for the mega event are in full swing. | [More on P6](#)

## MeT Predicts Rain in J&K Parts

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Meteorological Centre Srinagar has expected a light spell of rainfall and thunder to occur at many places in J&K from Thursday late evening.

A weatherman from the MeT Department said that light to moderate rain and thunder will commence from Thursday late evening or during the night. He said the precipitation would continue till tomorrow (27 September) forenoon.

He further said that the weather would remain generally dry, with a brief spell of rainfall during 28-30 September. The same | [More on P6](#)

## HC Upholds BSF Soldier's Dismissal In 2002

M Ahmad

Jammu: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has upheld dismissal from services of a BSF personnel on 12 December 2002, underlining that members of uniformed forces are expected to observe a higher duty of care in case of abstention from duty.

Hearing a plea against dismissal from services of the paramilitary soldier. | [More on P6](#)

## 'Had There Been No Ban, We Would Have Contested 50 Seats'

### Jama'at Leaders Hail ECI For Peaceful Elections

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Former leaders of the banned Jama'at-e-Islami (JeI) have praised the Election Commission of India (ECI) for conducting elections peacefully and in a transparent manner in Jammu and Kashmir.

These leaders said that had there been no ban on JeI, they would have contested in 50 assembly

constituencies across J&K.

In a joint meeting held in Baramulla, they expressed their support for independent candidates, many of whom are former JeI members, given the ban on their organization. "If there was no ban, we would have contested 50 assembly seats in Jammu and Kashmir. We have always believed in the democratic process," former | [More on P6](#)

## Kashmir Man's 'Cross-border Love' Quest Ends In Jail

### Detained In Gujarat On Way To Meet Pak Woman Met Online

Press Trust Of India

Bhuj: A 36-year-old man from Jammu and Kashmir was detained by police after he arrived in Khavda village in Gujarat's Kutch district, intending to cross the border into Pakistan to meet a woman he connected with online, officials said on Wednesday.

Imtiyaz Sheikh, a resident of Bandipora district, travelled to Kutch with the hope of meeting a Pakistani social media influencer from Multan. Believing he could legally enter Pakistan via the Kutch border, Sheikh sought assistance from local residents to gain permission from authorities.

"Sheikh reached Khavda hoping to cross the border and enter Pakistan to meet a woman he met online. He was under the impression that he could cross into Pakistan from | [More on P6](#)

## KO ANALYSIS

### Why Polls Without 'Boycott Call' Still Face Voter Apathy In Kashmir

KO Political Desk

Srinagar: After over 60 percent polling in the first phase, turnout dropped to 57 percent across the six districts in the second phase, with three districts of Kashmir valley - Ganderbal, Budgam and Srinagar - recording just 45.39 percent voting. In contrast, the three districts of Jammu - Reasi, Rajouri and Poonch - saw 73.70 percent.

The tepid participation in the exercise has taken Kashmir observers by surprise who were expecting a pronounced bump in the polling in areas of Srinagar this time around. But this has not happened. Why? It could be anybody's guess.

The National Conference leader Omar Abdullah said the boycott was the result of New Delhi trying to portray the ongoing polling in Kashmir as a sign of normalcy.

"To be honest, I expected a little more turnout in the



second phase as there was no call for boycott. There were no attacks, no attempt to intimidate voters but I reckon to some extent the central government is also responsible," Omar told reporters during a rally. "They tried to project high turnout as a sign of normalcy. They wanted to show that people are happy after the removal of Article 370. Hence the reaction in Srinagar. People didn't want to send the wrong message."

Omar also blamed the

central government for bringing a team of diplomats to show them voting in Srinagar, which people didn't like.

"They wanted to show the diplomats the change in Srinagar," Omar said. "But people didn't want to be made use of like this."

The ongoing Assembly elections witnessed a notable absence: no call for a boycott of the exercise from any quarters, just as there wasn't one during the recent parliament | [More on P6](#)

## Is NC-Congress Alliance On Brink Of Collapse?

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A rift has emerged between the alliance partners, National Conference (NC) and Congress, as the latter's candidate, Tariq Hamed Karra, found himself in a precarious position for the Central Shalteng constituency, which went to polls on Wednesday during the second phase of the assembly elections. This follows NC loyalists rallying behind independent candidate

Mohammad Irfan Shah, who has filed his nomination against Karra, the official alliance candidate.

Despite a formal seat-sharing agreement between the two parties, Shah's independent candidacy has raised serious questions about the stability of the alliance.

The situation became particularly evident during a major rally addressed by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi earlier this week, which aimed to boost support for Karra. Notably absent were NC leaders, unlike Gandhi's earlier rally in Surankote, where he was joined by NC president Farooq

Abdullah. This absence has led many to speculate about the potential collapse of the coalition.

Senior Congress leader G A Mir expressed disappointment over the NC's inaction regarding Shah's candidacy, saying Congress has always expelled members who defy party decisions. "We have acted swiftly in such cases. The NC's silence on Shah's move raises serious concerns about their commitment to this alliance," Mir said.

NC General Secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar said that they have issued an 'explanation notice' to Shah for his actions

that contradict party directives. "We will also send a copy to party president Dr Farooq Abdullah for any further action," he added.

Irfan Shah's participation as an independent has led to a split vote in Central Shalteng, with NC voters choosing to back him instead of the official alliance candidate, Karra. Notably, during another rally in Sopore on the same day, Rahul Gandhi again found himself without NC leaders in attendance. | [More on P6](#)



**PODCAST**

**INVESTMENT OPTIONS**

KASHMIR OBSERVER

**SCAN**

**THIS TO WATCH**

**THE PODCAST**



In our latest podcast, we present Irshad Mushtaq, founder of MI Securities. In addition, he is a financial expert who has helped countless individuals and businesses navigate complex financial landscapes. In this episode, we discussed different investment strategies, personal finance tips, and wealth building. The full video will be released soon on our YouTube channel. Subscribe Kashmir Observer channel for the latest updates.





# Dopamine Does Not Cause Placebo Effect: Study Contradicts Earlier Research

Press Trust Of India

The placebo effect, or experiencing pain relief by anticipating it during treatment is not caused by dopamine -- the 'pleasure' brain chemical, according to a study. Previous studies have suggested that dopamine-based reward and learning processes contribute to the placebo effect. However, researchers from the University Hospital Essen, Germany, said that the exact role of dopamine in initially producing a placebo effect, and thereafter maintaining it, was unknown. For their study, published in the journal PLoS Biology, the team re-



cruited 168 healthy volunteers, who were divided into three groups. One group was given L-dopa, a drug used in treating Parkinson's

disease, in which dopamine production is affected. The drug is a precursor that converts into dopamine, once it enters the brain.

The second group was administered sulpiride, an antipsychotic agent used for treating psychosis and schizophrenia. It works by suppressing the flow of dopamine, abnormal levels of which have been studied to contribute to psychotic symptoms. Both treatments have been proven in the past to change one's dopamine-related behaviour, such as motivation and social conduct, by altering levels of the brain chemical, the authors said. The third group was given an inactive pill, known to produce no effects. All the participants were informed of the study's objectives. They were then exposed to painful heat on a small portion of their left forearm, which was treated with either a

pain-relieving cream or an inactive cream prior to exposure. Their experiences were recorded as 'pain ratings.' Contrary to previous findings, the researchers found that the drug-induced changes in dopamine levels did not alter a participant's expectation of pain relief. Overall, the data provided strong evidence against a direct influence of dopamine on the generation and maintenance of placebo effects, the team said. "We found no direct analgesic (pain-relieving) effects of the study medication on heat pain sensitivity or pain ratings during conditioning, confirming previous experimental studies using pro- or anti-dopaminergic drugs," the authors wrote.

**From the office of the Adv M.A Sofi, Adv Mohammad Umar & Associates**

In the case of  
 Farooq Ahmad Teli S/o Ghulam Rasool Teli R/o Teli Mohalla Pattan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla kmr

(Caveator)

V/s  
 Public at large

In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A

The caveators have reason to believe that Non-Caveator may file any Application, Petition, Ap- peal, Suit or any other type of proceeding before the Hon'ble Court and on the ground of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked story and may seed in obtaining some relief/order at their back/in exparte against the caveators and in such eventuality the caveators will be put in irrepa- rable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order.

fko Sd/advocate

## 'Govt Committed To Develop Robust Strategies To Protect Citizens' Health'

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- The government is committed to developing robust strategies that protect the health of citizens while contributing to global climate goals, Union Health Secretary Purva Chandra said on Wednesday. The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), inaugurated the Climate and Health Solutions (CHS) India Conclave at Delhi. The two-day conclave aims to address the twin emergencies of climate change and public health by bringing together policymakers, experts, and stakeholders to develop actionable strategies for India's health sector, a health ministry statement said. Chandra in his keynote address highlighted the urgent need for integrating climate considerations into health planning. He said, "The Climate and Health Solutions India Conclave is a testament to our commitment to building a climate-resilient health system that addresses the unique needs of developing nations like ours. India is leading by example, integrating climate considerations into our health policies and emergency response mechanisms." Chandra further added, "We are proud to collaborate with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and other global partners to ensure that our health sector is equipped to tackle unforeseen climate impacts and support sustainable development for all. Together, we can achieve the vision of 'One Health, One Family, One Future.'" Addressing the gathering, Punya Salila Srivastava, OSD, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, highlighted the steps taken to integrate climate considerations into health planning.

## 'Weekend Exercise As Effective In Lowering Disease Risk As That Done Over Entire Week'

Press Trust Of India

People cramming their entire week's exercise in one or two days or over the weekend, could be at a lower risk of developing over 200 diseases, with similar effects to those who exercise throughout the week, a study has found. 'Weekend warriors' are individuals who engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity over the weekend and yet meet the World Health Organization's recommendations of 150 minutes of exercise per week for overall health. However, researchers said it is not clear if 'weekend warriors' experience more health benefits compared to those exercising in smaller amounts, such as 20-30 minutes on most days of the week. "We show the potential benefits of weekend warrior activity for risk not only of cardiovascular diseases, as we've shown in the past, but also future diseases spanning the whole spectrum, ranging from conditions like chronic kidney disease to mood disorders and beyond," said Shaan Khurshid, a faculty member at Massachusetts General Hospital, US and a senior author on the study. In a study, published in July in the Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA), the team had found that the weekend warrior style of exercise was associated with a lower risk of heart disease and stroke compared to exercise performed evenly over a week. The research, published in the journal Circulation, analysed data from nearly 90,000 individuals in the UK Biobank dataset. Participants wore wrist acceler-



**"We show the potential benefits of weekend warrior activity for risk not only of cardiovascular diseases, as we've shown in the past, but also future diseases spanning the whole spectrum, ranging from conditions like chronic kidney disease to mood disorders and beyond"**

ometers for a week between June 2013 and December 2015, which recorded their total physical activity, including duration and intensity. They were classified under 'weekend warrior', 'regular', or 'inactive'. The study examined links between physical activity patterns and incidence of 678 conditions across 16 types of diseases, including mental health, digestive and neurological ones. Both weekend warriors and regulars were found to have significantly lower risks of developing over 200 medical conditions, particularly cardiometabolic ones like hypertension and obesity, compared to those inactive. Further, the disease risk reduction was similar for both weekend war-

riors and regulars, with no significant differences in risk across any condition between the two groups, the researchers said. "Achievement of measured physical activity volumes consistent with guideline recommendations is associated with lower risk for (over) 200 diseases, with prominent effects on cardiometabolic conditions," the authors said. "Associations appear similar whether physical activity follows a weekend warrior pattern or is spread more evenly throughout the week," they added. The findings were consistent across many different definitions of weekend warrior activity, as well as other thresholds used to categorise people as active, said Khurshid.

## NOTICE

I have changed my name from Hammad Rashid to Hammad Rashid Nasti. In future I will be known as Hammad Rashid Nasti. If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days, no objection will be accepted. Dr Hammad Rashid Nasti S/o Dr Abdul Rashid Nasti R/o 10/2 Qazibagh, Rawalpura, Srinagar-190005 J&K

INF

## NOTICE

This is for the information of general public that I, Javed Ahmad Dar Son of Late Ghulam Mohammad Dar R/o H. No. 57, Dar Cottage Parray Pora, Baghat Srinagar, want to change name of my daughter from ZAINAB TO ZAINAB BINTI JAVEED and son ABDULLAH TO ABDULLAH BIN MASOOD. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

inf

**Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Khanpeth**  
 Public Notice

It is informed to al general public through the medium of public notice that the applicant namely Insha Zehra D/o Mukhtar Ahmad Dar R/o Kripalpora Bala Produced the immunization card affidavit duly counter signed by Judicial Magistrate pattan / public notary Affidavit in favour of Insha Zehra D/o Mukhtar Ahmad Dar R/o Kripalpora Bala according which her date of birth is shown as 22-02-2022. Now the applicant intends to obtain DOB certificate in favour of self Insha Zehra D/o Mukhtar Ahmad Dar In This Context If Any Boy Has Any objection regarding the issuance of said certificate may visit this office within a period of seven days . No objection will be entertained after given time.

fko Naib Tehsildar

**Office of the Naib Tehsildar Palhallan**  
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Application Of Parvaiz Ahmad Kumar & Mehraj -udin Kumar Sso Gh Mohd Kumar R/o Palhallan for issuance of OBC certificate

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

General Public is hereby informed through this notice that the applicant file is currently under process in the office of undersigned regarding obtaining OBC certificate. According to the field staffs report the applicants are permanent resident of village Palhallan tehsil Pattan District Baramulla and have been residing here from more than 15 years and has not migrated from the said village the annual family income of the applicant from all sources is Rs 546000 /-. Family details of the applicant are give below.

S.No	Name	Parentage	Age	Occupation
1	Beba Begum	W/o Gh Mohd Kumar	68	H/W
2	Parvaiz Ah Kumar	S/o --	27	Student
3	Mehraj-ud-din Kumar	S/o --	24	--
4	Ruqsana Bano	D/o --	23	--

In this connection If any person(s) has any objection(s) he/ she can visit the undersigned's office within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection will be considered.

fko Naib Tehsildar

# THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS (BOPEE)

Tele/Fax: 0194-2433590, 2437647 (Srinagar); 0191-2479371, 2470102 (Jammu)  
 Website: www.jkbopee.gov.in E-mail: coejakbopee@gmail.com/helpdeskjakbopee@gmail.com

Subject: Provisional Merit List of candidates who have applied for admission to PG Diploma in Rehabilitation Psychology Course-2024 at CRC, Srinagar-Inviting of the objections thereof.

Reference: Notification No. 094-BOPEE of 2024 dated 03-09-2024.

## Notification No. 117-BOPEE of 2024 Dated 24-09-2024

The Board vide Notification No. 094-BOPEE of 2024 dated 03-09-2024 invited offline Application Forms from the eligible candidates for admission to Post Graduate Regional in Rehabilitation Psychology (PGDRP) course-2024 at Composite Regional Centre (CRC), Srinagar. The Provisional Merit List of the candidates who have applied for the said course is hereby notified as Annexure-A to this Notification for objections, if any, which is available on official website of the Board www.jkbopee.gov.in only.

The candidate(s), if any, who intend to submit representation against the position assigned to him/her in the said Provisional Merit List can do the same w.e.f. 25-09-2024 to 27-09-2024 from uploading of this Notification on the official website of the Board.

- Note:**
- No representation(s) / deficient document(s), shall be accepted through e-mail/ WhatsApp.
  - The Provisional Merit List of the candidates has been prepared on the basis of aggregate marks/ percentage obtained in the qualifying examination as per the selection criteria mentioned in Notification No.094-BOPEE of 2024 dated 03-09-2024.
  - Mere figuring in the Annexure-A to this Notification does not confer any right on the candidate(s) for selection to the said course.
  - The intending candidates shall keep ready all their relevant documents including Domicile Certificate issued by the Competent Authority as required by the Board for allotment of seats to them, if any.
  - The Board shall issue Provisional Selection list only after receipt of letter of affiliation of University of Kashmir-Srinagar in favour of the concerned Institution.
  - In case, no representation(s) is received by the Board up to the prescribed cut-off date, the Provisional Merit List shall be treated as final.

The other terms and conditions shall remain the same as notified by the Board through Notifications/Notices etc. from time to time in this regard.

E & O E

DIPK-NB-1598/24  
 dated: 26-09-2024

No: BOPEE-EXAM/2024

Sd/-  
 (Prof. Gurvinder Raj Verma)  
 Controller of Examinations  
 J&K BOPEE

Dated 24-09-2024

# Govt Blocks Websites Exposing Aadhaar, PAN Details Of Indian Citizens

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- The government has blocked a few websites exposing sensitive personal identifiable information, including Aadhaar and PAN Card details of Indian citizens, an official statement said on Thursday. The action was taken after the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, found security flaws in the websites. "It has come to the notice of the MeitY that some websites were exposing sensitive personal identifiable information, including Aadhaar and PAN Card details of Indian citizens. This has been taken up seriously as the Government accords the highest priority to safe cyber security practices and the protection of personal data. In line with this, prompt action has been taken to block these websites," the statement said. The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has lodged a complaint with the police authorities concerned for violation of the prohibition under the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services)



**"The analysis of these websites by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has shown some security flaws in these websites. The concerned website owners have been provided guidance about the actions to be taken at their end for hardening the ICT infrastructures and fixing the vulnerabilities"**

Act, 2016 on public display of Aadhaar information. "The analysis of these websites by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has shown some security flaws in these websites. The concerned website owners have been provided guidance about the actions to be taken at their end for hardening the ICT infrastructures and fixing the vulnerabilities," the statement said. MeitY has notified the Information Technology (Reasonable Security Practices and Procedures and Sensitive Personal Data or Information) Rules, 2011, which provide for non-publication and non-disclosure of sensitive personal data. Any adversely affected party can approach the Adjudicating Officer

of the IT Act to file a complaint and seek compensation. The IT secretaries of the states are empowered as adjudicating officers under the IT Act. MeitY said the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, has already been enacted and the rules under the act are in the advanced stage of drafting. Last week, a cyber security researcher claimed that Star Health Insurance officials had sold data of 3.1 crore customers. The hacker had created Telegram bots to access data of 31,216,953 customers updated till July 2024 and 5,758,425 claims of the company available till early August. The email conversation video showed the email ID of the senior company official. The conversation video shows an email chat as well as a chat on an instant messaging forum between xenZen and the company official for the deal. The deal was initially finalised for USD 28,000, but later, the official demanded USD 1,50,000 on the pretext that he had to pay a share to senior-level management for the continuation of the data leak. Star Health Insurance has sued the hacker, Telegram and others in the case. Any leak of personal details of people makes them vulnerable to online scams.



## Lawyers Body Organizes Free Eye Check-Up Camp

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Kashmir Advocate's Association (KAA) organized a free eye check-up camp Thursday in collaboration with ASG Eye Hospital. The event took place in the KAA Bar Room at the Central Administrative Tribunal Srinagar, aiming to provide essential eye care services to the legal fraternity.

The camp saw a significant turnout, with numerous participants benefiting from comprehensive eye examinations conducted by qualified ophthalmologists from ASG Eye Hospital Srinagar. The initiative underscores the

tage of the free services, which included vision assessments, consultations, and information on eye health. The collaboration with ASG Eye Hospital ensured that participants received professional care and guidance.

KAA expressed its gratitude to ASG Eye Hospital Srinagar for their partnership and emphasized the importance of regular eye check-ups in preventing vision-related issues. KAA hopes to make this initiative a recurring event to further enhance community health services.

As the camp concluded, many attendees praised the effort, high-



KAA's commitment to promoting health awareness and accessibility among the legal fraternity.

Advocates and members of the community were invited to take advan-

lighting the need for such initiatives. The KAA remains dedicated to fostering health and well-being within the legal community, promoting a proactive approach to healthcare.

## Anjuman Auqaf To Organize Religious Event At Jamia Masjid

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid will be organizing a Majlis-i-Rahmatal il Aalameen (S.A.W) on Friday, beginning 12 PM at historic Jama Masjid Srinagar.

The gathering, according to a statement, will feature prominent religious scholars who would be offering their insights and reflections on the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) and will be presided over by Mir-waiz Umar Farooq.

## NIT Srinagar Organizes Workshop For Ministerial Teaching Staff

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Rajbhasha Cell of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Thursday organized a workshop titled 'Use of Rajbhasha Hindi in technical institutions' for the Ministerial, teaching staff of the institution.

On the occasion, Dr. Sakina Akhter, Hindi Adhikari, Central University of Kashmir (CUK) was the main resource person for the workshop. She said that there is a need to work on Hindi language and break the taboos of the past.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath appreciated the Rajbhasha Cell for organizing the workshop during the Hindi Pakhwada. We are putting its best efforts to make sure that all official orders come in bilingual form, he said.

Institute's Registrar, Prof. Atikur Rehman said various efforts are being taken to implement the Rajbhasha on the campus. All-important circulars and orders of the institute are being released in the bilingual mode so that its implementation target is achieved," he said.

Prof. Rehman appreciated the efforts of Dr. RP Shukla, Hindi Officer NIT Srinagar for organizing the workshop on relevant themes. We will continue to provide support to such programs in future, he added.

In her key address, Hindi Adhikari CUK, Dr Sakina highlighted the brief history of Rajbhasha and its importance in

technical institutions like NIT Srinagar.

She said that the central government has taken steps to encourage the use and propagation of Hindi as Rajbhasha while also recognizing and supporting the diversity of languages in the country.

"Until we are not interested and have a lack of will power, it is not possible to implement Hindi at the Institution level. The staff should be loyal towards their job. IT tools are very important in implementation of Rajbhasha," Dr Sakina said.

While sharing her 10-year professional experience, CUK's Hindi Adhikari Dr Sakina said there is no age bar in learning Hindi rather than it will prove more beneficial to the employees.



A man is pushing a shikara filled of fresh veggies through the innards of Dal Lake on sunny Thursday morning, KO photo, Abid Bhat

## Assembly Election-2024

# Farmers In Central Shalteng AC Choose Harvesting Over Ballot

Agencies

Srinagar: As voting for the second phase of Jammu & Kashmir's three-phase assembly elections wrapped up on Wednesday evening, many farmers opted to focus on their fields rather than the polls.

In the golden hues of ripe paddy fields on the outskirts of Central Shalteng constituency, a group of farmers tended to their crops with unwavering determination.

"Elections have lost their allure and we are focused on livelihoods," Touseef Ahmad, a farmer said..

Reflecting years of hardships, another farmer, Bashir Ahmad Bhat said, "We have heard all the promises before. Every election, they come and tell us they will change everything. But once the votes are counted, they forget us. It's the same story every time."

Others echoed similar frustrations as they worked. The air was filled with the rhythmic sound of scythes cutting through rice stalks. Meanwhile, polling stations nearby reported a mixed voter turnout.

Many farmers expressed weariness toward politicians who only appear during election season and vanish afterwards. Their decision to stay in the fields was a practical one. With daily wages for laborers rising to nearly Rs 850, hiring help for harvesting was becoming increasingly expensive.

"Why would I leave my fields and spend hours at the booth?" asked Ghulam Ahmad, another

"The cost of hiring someone for a day could feed his family instead," he explained.

As the sun set behind the mountains, the fields glowed with a warm golden light. The farmers worked diligently, knowing that every grain harvested was essential for their survival through the winter months.

For these Kashmiri farmers, the election symbolized



**Why would I leave my fields and spend hours at the booth?"** asked Ghulam Ahmad, another farmer, focused on his task. **"If I don't harvest on time, it will all go to waste. Politicians won't come to help them**

farmer, focused on his task. "If I don't harvest on time, it will all go to waste. Politicians won't come to help them."

These men, hands hardened by years of toil, valued self-reliance over empty promises. "I would rather work myself than hire labor," one farmer said.

little more than a distant ritual. Their true focus was on securing the fruits of their labor, casting their ballots with each stalk they harvested. In a land where political promises often fall on deaf ears, they found solace and survival in what they could control—their work.

### OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

**8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY**

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

It's not just

RECURRENT HANDWASHING AND CHECKING

**BUT**

UNSEEN PAIN

myths and stigma

distress associated with OCD

KASHMER Kashmir American Society of Healthcare,

Medical Education & Research

in collaboration with

HPVT (Help Poor Voluntary Trust)

is initiating a **free 8 weeks Group therapy** for the individuals suffering with OCD by a team of counselling clinical psychologists led by leading consultant clinical psychologist of J&K.

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

You do not have to fight your battles alone.

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

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

**9070806160**

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

**AIRPORTS**  
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

**RAILWAYS**

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

**HIGHWAY STATUS**

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

<p><b>HIJRI CALENDAR</b> 22 Rabi-ul-Awwal 1446</p>	<p><b>PRAYERS</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>FAJR</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4: 59</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ZUHR</td> <td style="text-align: right;">12:22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ASR</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4: 40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Magrib</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6:26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ISHA</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7: 46</td> </tr> </table>	FAJR	4: 59	ZUHR	12:22	ASR	4: 40	Magrib	6:26	ISHA	7: 46
FAJR	4: 59										
ZUHR	12:22										
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Magrib	6:26										
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## This Day In History

- 1290 - Earthquake in Gulf of Chili China, reportedly kills 100,000
- 1794 - French troops conquer Crèvecoeur
- 1821 - Mexican revolutionary forces led by Agustín de Iturbide occupy Mexico City as Spanish withdraw, bringing an end to the Mexican War of Independence
- 1864 - Battle at Pilot Knob (Ft Davidson) American Civil War, Missouri: 1700 killed/injured
- 1905 - The physics journal Annalen der Physik publishes Albert Einstein's paper "Does the Inertia of a Body Depend Upon Its Energy Content?", introducing the equation E=mc².
- 1938 - League of Nations declares Japan the aggressor against China
- 1940 - Nazi Germany, Italy & Japan sign 10 year formal alliance (Axis)
- 1941 - US launches its 1st Liberty ship, freighter SS Patrick Henry
- 1951 - Persian troops occupy oil refinery at Abadan
- 1953 - Typhoon destroys one third of Nagoya, Japan
- 1961 - Sierre Leone becomes 100th member of UN
- 1973 - Soyuz 12 carries 2 cosmonauts into Earth orbit (2 days)
- 1981 - Iran defends its besieged port of Abadan, driving back Iraqi forces
- 1988 - The National League for Democracy, led by Aung San Suu Kyi is founded in Burma (Myanmar)
- 1991 - US President George H. W. Bush decides to end full-time B-52 bombers alert.
- 1993 - The Sukhumi massacre takes place in Abkhazia.
- 1996 - In Afghanistan, the Taliban capture the capital city Kabul after driving out President Burhanuddin Rabbani and executing former leader Mohammad Najibullah.
- 2001 - At its two-day meeting in Vienna, OPEC decides to keep its production quotas unchanged at 23.2 million barrels per day, despite crude oil being at its lowest price levels since 1999
- 2002 - Timor-Leste (East Timor) joins the United Nations.
- Event of interest/Event of Interest
- 2008 - CNSA astronaut Zhai Zhigang becomes the first Chinese person to perform a spacewalk while flying on Shenzhou 7.
- 2009 - German Federal elections return Angela Merkel for her second term as Chancellor at head of centre-right coalition government
- 2012 - UN publicly releases documents from China and Japan detailing their contesting claims for the Senkoku Islands
- 2012 - The Mars Curiosity rover discovers what evidence of a fast-moving streambed-in Mars
- 2012 - The 2004 Japanese discovery of the 133th element has been confirmed
- 2013 - 7 people are killed in mosque bombings in Baghdad, Iraq
- 2013 - 19 people are killed and 45 are injured in a bus bombing in Peshawar, Pakistan
- 2013 - At least 22 people are killed after a refugee ship capsizes off the island of Java
- 2013 - 60 people are killed after a building collapses in Mumbai, India
- 2014 - 57 people are killed after Mount Ontake erupts in Japan
- 2015 - "Junts per Si" pro-independence alliance win parliamentary majority in Catalonia
- 2015- A "Supermoon" coincides with a lunar eclipse creating a "Blood Moon" over much of the earth
- 2017- Researchers confirm existence of giant tree rat "Vika" in the Solomon Islands that can crack open coconuts
- 2017- Thai Ex-Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra found guilty of criminal negligence in rice subsidy scheme, sentenced to 5 years in absentia
- 2018- India's Supreme Court rules overturns 158-year old rule, section 497, decriminalizing adultery because it was discriminatory against women
- 2018- Justin Milne, head of Australian Broadcasting Corporation resigns amid allegations of firing journalists for the government
- 2019- US Democrats issue their first subpoena to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, in impeachment inquiry



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## Mixed Results in 2nd phase

Second phase of Assembly polls didn't go according to the expectations as far as the polling. An estimated 57 percent voter turnout was recorded across the six districts. And three districts of Kashmir valley - Ganderbal, Budgam and Srinagar - saw polling of just 45.39 percent. On the contrary, the three districts of Jammu, Reasi, Rajouri and Poonch saw 73.70 percent. However, unlike in the past, this election has witnessed a palpable excitement among people. One important factor is that the exercise is being held after a decade, during which Jammu and Kashmir has been under the centre's rule for over six years. Although the future elected government would have far fewer powers, the people have expressed their preference for it over the years of bureaucratic rule. The reason is that bureaucracy by its very nature is mechanical and indifferent. The people want a local representation which is approachable, responsive and accountable to them, something that has been sorely missing in the current administration.

Going forward, the third and the final phase is due on October 1. It will be very crucial to the final outcome. In Kashmir, North Kashmir which following the parliament election has been the centre of attention for choosing Engineer Rashid over heavyweights like Omar Abdullah and Sajad Lone. It will be interesting to see which way the north goes this time and whichever party gets a majority of the 18 seats will be critical to the formation of the next government. If the NC gets the majority of these seats, it could very well emerge as the single largest party in Kashmir Valley, if not in the union territory. Ditto in Jammu, where the BJP is expected to secure a majority of the seats. It will thus be desirable that people vote in large numbers.

Meanwhile, the electoral scene is likely to further heat up for the last phase. Already, the BJP is leaving no stone unturned to not just replicate its 2014 performance but even better it. Union Home Minister Amit Shah is leading the BJP's campaign for the third phase of Assembly polls in Jammu division. The Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath addressed a rally at Kathua on Thursday.

In Kashmir, parties are now going to shift their focus to north Kashmir and a battle royale is likely to shape up - more so between the NC, Awami Ittehad Party and the People's Conference. Here's hoping that the exercise ends well and leads to a new beginning.



Did you know ?

### The Critical Role of Mentorship and experienced Trusted Advisory Services in Financial Growth

Irshad Mushtaq

In today's fast-paced world, navigating the financial landscape can often feel overwhelming. The importance of mentorship and advisory services cannot be understated, particularly in the financial industry. It's not just about making a decision like buying a piece of land—investing in financial assets is far more complex and requires a profound understanding of risks, benefits, and the intricate functioning of financial markets.

Traditionally, many of us have relied on our own intuition and experience when making investment decisions. However, the financial world demands more than just common sense. It requires a deep dive into concepts like Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR), risk profiles, and an understanding of market dynamics. Here is where a trusted financial adviser or mentor becomes invaluable. They help in steering you towards high-quality investment opportunities, ensuring your money grows effectively and safely.

The stock market, for instance, can be a double-edged sword. The more you chase it blindly, the higher the chances of losing money. Conversely, with proper guidance, you can invest in quality companies with robust earnings per share (EPS) or select top-tier mutual funds. This ensures that your investments yield returns without constant worry or intervention, should beat nifty returns that's the more important.

One significant issue is the disparity between what the sellers push and what the investors actually need. Particularly in regions like Kashmir, many financial products are designed to fulfill the seller's requirements rather than the buyer's needs. This misalignment often results in poor investment choices, leading to losses and a general distrust in financial assets.

Therefore, the role of a trusted adviser becomes essential. An emotional connection to your financial journey ensures that your unique needs are met, not just the sellers'. A good adviser customizes your investment strategy to align with your financial goals and risk tolerance.

Financial assets, with their potential for high returns, have historically outperformed other asset classes, including real estate. Yet, their success hinges on the quality of investment. Diversifying your portfolio and carefully selecting assets with the guidance of a knowledgeable consultant can lead to significant financial growth.

In summary, the key to financial prosperity lies in understanding the critical role of mentorship and advisory services. A trusted consultant can help tailor your investments to your needs, ensuring your money works for you, and crafting a pathway to sustained financial growth.

Learn from the insights of @Irshad Mushtaq, Writer, Investor, Entrepreneur & Founder of MI Securities! Connect for valuable financial advice at [misecurities@bp.sharekhan.com](mailto:misecurities@bp.sharekhan.com)

# Ballooning Debts

A time-ticking bomb for the Third World



Azher Ahmad and Maleeha Shafi

Earlier this year, the Kenyan president moved an IMF-backed bill to raise taxes on consumer goods that caused so much uproar that it was ultimately cancelled. Last year, more than half of its revenue went into debt servicing, with a huge total debt of \$80 billion. In addition to this, Down to Earth Magazine reported that 60% of the African low-income countries were in debt distress, which had exacerbated various problems there in the form of inequality, poverty, etc., fueled by the IMF's predatory lending practices.

Between 2010 and 2018, the external debt payments by developing countries grew by 85% as a part of government revenue. All this points to the debt trap that has essentially existed in capitalism in the form of development aid, loans, etc. While most of the conventional literature has focused on the debt trap diplomacy of China, which, by starting the Belt and Road Initiative, was said to have made inroads into the internal sovereignty of various poor and middle-income countries, there has been near to no talk of the debt trap diplomacy of the US vis-à-vis the IMF.

There has been a cross-section of whistleblowers who have time and again exposed the masked intentions of various institutions that were created. John Perkins is one of the people who have written 'Confessions of an Economic Hit Man' and revealed how poor countries were made to bow before the US. After the 2nd world, we are said to have reigned in capitalism that has been characterised by expanding markets and freedom, as Hayek and Friedman vociferously put it. Two institutions were created, the IMF and the World Bank.

However, most people do not know the reason for their emergence. After the great depression of the 1930s, there was the reign of Keynesian economics, which pointed out various failures in capitalism and called for active intervention by various institutions, such as the government.

These two financial institutions were created to intervene whenever there is a market failure: the World Bank by providing loans to poverty-stricken countries and the IMF by

supporting countries in crises for macroeconomic stability.

However, what we see now is a distorted version that functions on the whims of the Washington consensus, which is baptising and proselytising as many countries as possible into markets for developed countries, which is shocking.

These institutions have played an important role in the resurrection of imperialism of the sort that we had, which was direct conquest of countries. We have a whole list of countries that took loans and got trapped in the trap, plunging the health of their economies into an economic crisis. We have cases from Argentina, Bolivia, Tunisia, Chile, Egypt, Iraq, Africa, etc. that are testaments to the failed policy of fiscal austerity imposed in the form of the structural adjustment program. Also, the interest rate charged by it is different, as the UNDP in its human development report has reported that the IMF charges a whopping 17% interest on developing countries and just 4% on developed countries.

that, the US companies are given the responsibility to construct all these facilities, which results in the plunder of local resources and the destruction of local culture, environment, and whatnot.

The root cause of today's debt crisis can be traced to the West's premature inclusion of underdeveloped countries in the international capital market and its tacit approval of their reckless borrowing. Argentina massively borrowed from these institutions in the 1990s, and for some time, it was projected as the most successful project of the IMF. However, after some years, we could see how the debt crisis unfolded, and added to that, what that growth contained was basically socialism for the 1%, which is it had increased the wedge between the poor and the rich.

We have our neighbour Pakistan, which has 71.4% of GDP as its debt, as it has been given various bailouts. The flipside of bailouts is that the money ultimately flows to the US, and the common people get nothing. Bailouts are given by the

The IMF recently reported the debt contained 228% of global GDP, which has become so huge that a country has to rely on external sources to fund projects, and in this way it gets trapped into a vicious circle of poverty. At the same time, it is imperative to expose the hypocrisy of the IMF. In Section 3 of Article 6 of the statute, it says that the members may exercise such controls as necessary to regulate international capital movement, which is again false, as the main target is to expose lower-income countries to the susceptibilities of exchange rate risk, speculative risk, and deindustrialization. The debt trap has a crowding effect in that more loans mean that businesses and governments will always have to pay interest, which will reduce the propensity to consume and invest, thereby causing capital flight. Now that we are in the financial period of globalisation, it is important to have capital controls in place as the crisis of the dot.com bubble and the stock market crash have exposed paltry

“Anything that is done at the behest of the IMF has various political and economic intentions in mind for the US and other developed countries. How they trap countries into debt is shocking and dangerous

Anything that is done at the behest of the IMF has various political and economic intentions in mind for the US and other developed countries. How they trap countries into debt is shocking and dangerous. Firstly, various technical persons who have expertise in public policy are sent to various corners of the world. These are hired by private companies and indirectly supported by the US government to study the socio-political and economic environment of various poor countries. They are essentially tasked with persuading the rulers to invest in infrastructure and showing how it could benefit their country.

The cost of construction of various infrastructural facilities is overestimated by these economic hitmen, and now to finance it, they are asked to take loans from the IMF, which is hefty, and added to

government to various MNCs whose condition becomes worse in the time of the crisis. Joseph Stiglitz, a noted Nobel Prize winner, says that rather than pursuing this supply-side monetary economics by bailing out companies, the money given should be spent on various public works that increase the purchasing power, popularly known as helicopter money.

The policies pursued by the IMF are supply-sided in that they overtly and covertly focus on controlling inflation, which to him has the least impact on improving the employment situation of a country. He also says that in times of crisis, the solution is not to force countries to stop spending on public workers but to increase it as much as possible. Any attempt on the part of the IMF is aimed at increasing the dependency of third-world countries on the US and benefits US companies.

and tawdry free trade. Now that there has been a rise of the far right and neo-conservatism in the west, it shows the value of free trade.

Tunisia's public debt in just one year rose by 18% to 90% of the total output, due to the lifting of the capital controls. The solution per se is not in austerity measures but either debt restructuring or wholesale cancellation of debts; otherwise, it would engulf the whole world in its crisis.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. Read the full version of the article on our website.

The authors are associated with the University of Delhi. Email: [academygeneral543@gmail.com](mailto:academygeneral543@gmail.com)



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## The Power Of Consistency

In a fast-paced and ever-changing world, the path to personal growth and success in one's life lies not in momentary bursts of motivation or in some occasional achievements, but importantly in the daily habits and routines that we cultivate. The seemingly small actions done everyday with precision and meticulousness have the power

to shape our behaviour, mindset, and ultimately our lives. Improving our daily habits is a continuous process, requiring patience, consistency and self-reflection. It is not just about striving for perfection, but for progress as well. Small steps taken consistently over time can lead to significant transformations. Needless to say that incorporating posi-

tive daily habits into our lives is a powerful way to create a positive change. Additionally, it can be beneficial to seek inspiration and guidance from others who have achieved success through their daily habits. It is universally acknowledged that the establishment of daily routines is a cornerstone to prosperity and success. The subtle art of weaving disci-

pline into the fabric of everyday life does not come without its challenges. However, the rewards are manifold and long-lasting. It is through the meticulous crafting of these daily rituals that one can begin to see the transformative power of consistency.

Ranganathan Sivakumar



Mindful Fridays

# The Perfectionism Paradox

Wasim Kakroo

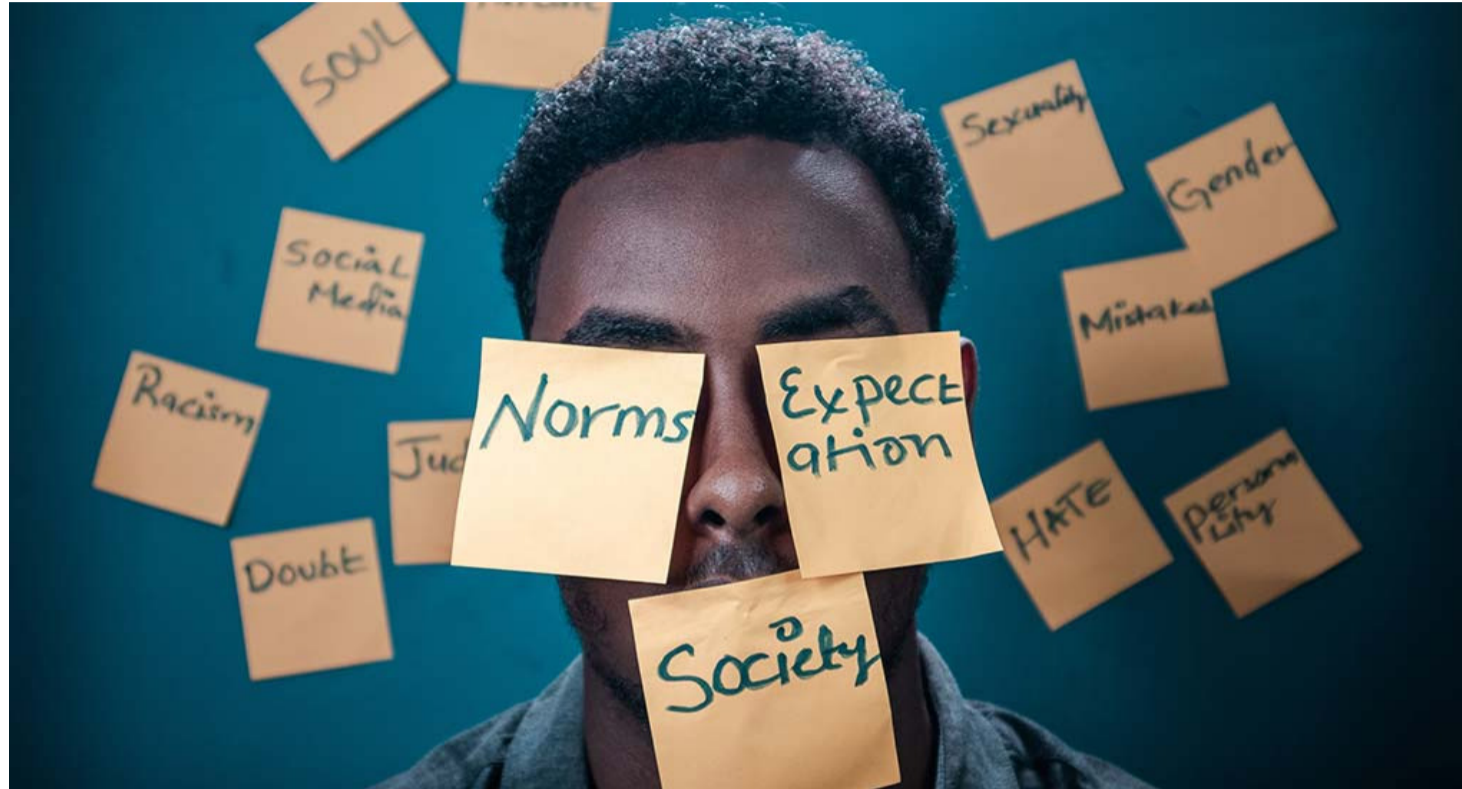
In today's fast-paced, achievement-oriented world, the pursuit of perfection is deeply ingrained in our society. From academic success to social media presence, we are constantly bombarded with the message that perfection is the ultimate goal. In Kashmir, the pursuit of perfection has infested many lives, especially the young. It starts right from the school where new competitions have crept-up to certify who is going to "make it big" by being the best and nothing less. This pursuit stays in the lives of the young as they grow up and manifests in new ways.

However, the relentless pursuit of flawlessness can take a toll on our mental health and well-being. In contrast, practicing imperfection can be a powerful way to live a mentally healthy life.

Perfectionism is a double-edged sword that often leads to an unattainable standard of success. Individuals who subscribe to the tenets of perfectionism strive for flawlessness in every aspect of their lives, setting excessively high standards for themselves in personal relationships, academics, careers, and even in their physical appearance. Driven by an incessant desire to meet these unreachable ideals, they engage in constant self-criticism, berating themselves for any perceived shortcomings.

The pursuit of perfection becomes a relentless and anxiety-inducing journey, as the fear of failure looms large over their lives. They become trapped in a never-ending cycle of dissatisfaction and disappointment, unable to fully celebrate their achievements due to an unquenchable thirst for perfection. This relentless pursuit can cause burnout, stress, and a deterioration of mental health.

While striving for excellence can be a healthy and motivating pursuit, perfectionism takes it to an unhealthy extreme. It stifles creativity and spontaneity, as individuals become paralyzed by the fear of not measuring up to their own impossibly high standards. Moreover, the pressure to



be perfect can alienate others, making it difficult to form meaningful connections with those who may not meet their rigid expectations.

Perfectionism is a trait that can have significant implications for mental health, contributing to various psychological issues such as anxiety disorders, depression, eating disorders, Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD), and Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder (OCPD).

Anxiety disorders are commonly linked to perfectionism. Individuals who strive for flawlessness fear making mistakes and experience constant pressure to be perfect. This self-imposed standard triggers feelings of anxiety and dread, as they worry about negative evaluations from others. Consequently, a form of anxiety, such as social anxiety can arise, hindering their ability to form and maintain meaningful relationships.

Depression is another common mental health issue associated with perfectionism. The relentless pursuit of perfection

**The pursuit of perfection becomes a relentless and anxiety-inducing journey, as the fear of failure looms large over their lives. They become trapped in a never-ending cycle of dissatisfaction and disappointment, unable to fully celebrate their achievements due to an unquenchable thirst for perfection. This relentless pursuit can cause burnout, stress, and a deterioration of mental health**

can take a toll on one's emotional well-being, leading to burnout and a deep sense of inadequacy. The continuous disappointment in failing to meet unrealistic standards can exacerbate feelings of hopelessness and contribute to the development of depressive symptoms.

Perfectionism also plays a significant role in the development and maintenance of eating disorders like anorexia and bulimia. The desire for a perfect body image and the need to control every aspect of life can drive disordered eating behaviors. This quest for an idealized appearance can lead to dangerous patterns of restriction, bingeing, and purging, resulting in severe physical and psychological consequences.

Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) is another condition closely linked to perfectionism. Individuals with BDD obsess over perceived flaws or defects in their appearance, even when these flaws are not visible to others. The pursuit of an unattainable "perfect" appearance becomes all-consuming, leading to significant distress and impairing daily functioning.

Perfectionism plays a significant role in the development, maintenance, and exacerbation of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Individuals with perfectionist tendencies often set unattainably high standards for themselves, leading to increased anxiety when they fail to meet these ideals. OCD symptoms emerge as a maladaptive coping mechanism to alleviate this distress. Compulsions become repetitive rituals aimed at achieving an illusory sense of control and perfection. Paradoxically, these behaviors reinforce OCD's grip, creating a vicious cycle. Perfectionism intensifies the disorder's severity, making it harder for individuals to break free from its clutches.

It is also associated with certain personality disorders. Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is characterized by unstable self-image and intense fear of abandonment. Perfectionism in individuals with BPD may manifest as extreme efforts to avoid perceived rejection or criticism, leading to emotional volatility and difficulty in maintaining stable relationships.

Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder (OCPD) is marked by a rigid need for orderliness and perfectionism in all areas of life. Individuals with OCPD may become excessively focused on detail, work, and rules, to the detriment of their social and interpersonal life.

## PRACTICING IMPERFECTION

Embracing imperfection involves cultivating self-compassion. Instead of harshly criticizing ourselves for not being perfect, we should treat ourselves with the same kindness and understanding we offer to our loved ones. Recognizing that making mistakes is a natural part of being human allows us to embrace imperfection without self-judgment.

Additionally, it is crucial to set achievable and realistic goals. While ambition is commendable, setting unattainable standards only sets us up for failure and disappointment. By setting manageable goals, we can celebrate progress and feel a sense of accomplishment, boosting our self-esteem.

Embracing imperfection also helps build resilience. When we encounter setbacks or failures, we are better equipped to bounce back and learn from our experiences. Resilience enables us to adapt to life's challenges without being overwhelmed by self-criticism.

Practicing imperfection involves challenging negative thought patterns related to perfectionism. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) can be effective in helping individuals identify and change these thought patterns, fostering a healthier mindset.

Embracing imperfection means valuing the journey rather than fixating solely on the destination. By focusing on the process, we can savor the growth, learning, and development that occurs along the way, even if the outcome is not flawless.

*The author is a licensed clinical psychologist (alumni of Govt. Medical College Srinagar) and works as a Child, Adolescent and Family therapist at Centre for Mental Health Services (CMHS) at Rambagh Srinagar. He can be reached at 8825067196*

# How Expressive Writing Can Empower Students

Melissa Rampelli

Late at night, a student sits at her desk while the soft glow of a laptop screen casts shadows across the room. Outside, the city street is quiet, but inside, her mind is racing. Fingers hover over the keyboard and then begin typing—slowly at first, then with a growing urgency. The assignment is an expressive writing exercise for her university course on the relationship between storytelling and healing. After reading others' stories about trauma, obsessive-compulsive disorder, cancer, epilepsy, and more, the student sits alone with her own stories. In the stillness of her room, the student writes freely, pouring thoughts onto the screen. She writes anonymously, and that freedom unlocks something—emotions begin to surface, words flow, and the page becomes a safe space.

In this medical humanities course on storytelling and healing, students do not just study illness and trauma from a distance—they dive into their own emotional landscapes, using writing as both a mirror and a balm. Fashioning my assignments after James W. Pennebaker and John Frank Evans' work in Expressive Writing: Words That Heal, I asked students to write four expressive writing exercises over the course of the semester as well as a final meta-cognitive reflection. As their final reflections suggest, what emerged was an appreciation for narrative as a tool for catharsis, emotional clarity, and long-term self-care, as students discovered that writing can help in ways they had not anticipated.

## WHAT EXPRESSIVE WRITING LOOKED LIKE IN OUR COURSE

In Chapter 11 of Expressive Writing: Words that Heal, Evans presents a six-week program that starts in week 1 with four 20-minute timed free writing sessions. In weeks 2 through 6, the focus shifts to more-structured activities and reflective exercises. Weeks 2 to 5 involve writing poetry, affirmations, transactional letters, and legacies, all based on the material generated in the initial week 1 free-writes.

While Pennebaker and Evans focus on using expressive writing to address trauma, I adapted the exercises to be more accessible for my students; I encouraged them to write about anything that bothered or concerned them—a complicated event or something that "kept them up at night." For each of the four assignments, they wrote continuously about a chosen topic for 20 minutes with the understanding that the writing would become emotional, but if it became too difficult emotionally, they should choose a new topic.

After the initial 20 minutes, each assignment over the course of the semester had a different follow-up task:

1. Write an unsent letter (focused on gratitude, compassion, or empathy).
2. Compose a poem modeled after Jane Kenyon's "Having It Out With Melancholy" or "Otherwise."
3. Reflect on a personal experience with family expectations or a rite of passage, inspired by Langston Hughes's "Salvation."



4. Write affirmations for themselves in six months.

At the end of each assignment, students completed a brief self-reflection, similar to the postwriting check-ins that Evans outlines in Words That Heal. Students did not submit the initial free writing, and I marked all submitted work anonymously as complete/incomplete in the learning management system while also making students aware of my role as a mandated reporter. To provide support, I invited the director of the Masters in Counseling program to speak to the class. He helped de-stigmatize mental health, shared resources for free counseling, and warmly encouraged students to reach out to him if needed.

## KEY EMERGENT THEMES FROM STUDENTS' FINAL REFLECTIONS

The following themes were apparent in students' final reflections:

- **Emotional awareness and catharsis:** Many students experienced emotional shifts through writing, often describing a sense of relief or release, like they "got something off their chest." They reported heightened emotional awareness and clarity in understanding their emotions after writing.
- **Personal growth and self-awareness:** Numerous reflections highlighted personal growth, particularly in emotional intelligence and self-awareness. Students gained insights into their own behaviors and emotional patterns, which helped them recognize areas for self-improvement and emotional regulation.
- **Challenges with vulnerability:** Some students found it challenging to engage with difficult emotions or past traumas, but many also noted that this difficulty was an important part of their personal journey. They tried different coping strategies such as taking breaks or pacing themselves through emotionally intense writing.
- **Coping and healing:** For several students, expressive writing became a coping mechanism, helping them process unresolved emotions or difficult situations. Some students indicated they plan to continue writing as a tool for self-care and emotional management.

- **New perspectives and insight:** Many students reported gaining new perspectives on past events, relationships, and themselves through reflective writing. This led to emotional healing, forgiveness, and personal revelations about how they handle stress and emotional turmoil.
- **Long-term impact and continued practice:** While not all students planned to continue with expressive writing, many saw its long-term potential. Some expressed a desire to integrate it into their lives regularly, using it as a tool for self-reflection and emotional expression in stressful or pivotal moments.
- **Increased comfort with expressing emotions:** Several students noted that writing helped them become more comfortable expressing their emotions, especially for those who struggled with verbally communicating their emotions. This exercise helped them develop a greater ease in externalizing internal emotions.
- **Benefit of structure and prompts:** Some students appreciated the structured nature of the exercises, finding the prompts helpful in guiding their reflection and making the process of emotional expression more manageable.
- **Sense of validation and empowerment:** A recurring theme was the validation students felt when they wrote about their emotions. Expressing emotions in writing helped

them feel heard and empowered, as it allowed them to process feelings they often kept hidden.

## TAKE AWAYS

As a pedagogical tool, expressive writing in a course about storytelling and healing offers unique insights into the power of narrative as a means for recovery. By allowing students to explore their own stories of vulnerability and growth, the course not only teaches them about narrative's capacity to heal but also engages them in that very process. This experiential learning deepens their intellectual engagement with the material while simultaneously fostering empathy and self-compassion, critical skills for any student in the humanities or health-related fields. Moreover, the practice invites students to see their stories as part of a larger human continuum of suffering and healing, encouraging them to connect personal experiences with broader cultural and societal narratives.

For college students, expressive writing could offer a structured way to develop emotional intelligence and self-regulation—skills often expected of students but overlooked in traditional curricula. With mental health challenges amongst college students on the rise, incorporating expressive writing into medical humanities courses provides a proactive approach. By normalizing emotional reflection within academic spaces, we position emotional health and personal growth as integral to learning.

*The article was originally published by Psychology Today*



CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

## Give Up Arms,

which along with Jammu and Samba districts and three north Kashmir districts of Baramulla, Kupwara and Bandipora, are scheduled to go to polls in the third and final phase of the Assembly election on October 1.

"Give up arms and come for talks, otherwise our forces will hunt you down," the home minister said, pledging to bury terrorism in "pataal" (under the ground).

He said the BJP has strengthened grassroots-level democracy in Jammu and Kashmir, which is now moving forward on the path of development after suffering immensely due to terrorism for more than three decades.

Shah took a sharp swipe at National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, mocking his aspirations to become Chief Minister. Shah claimed that both the Congress and the National Conference have been "wiped out" in the first two phases of the ongoing Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections.

"Omar Abdullah is dreaming that he will become Chief Minister," Shah said.

He further accused Abdullah of backtracking on his promise to refrain from contesting elections until Jammu and Kashmir regained statehood.

"Omar used to say that he will not contest in elections until Jammu and Kashmir gets statehood, now he is contesting from two seats."

He added that the first two phases of polling (on September 18 and September 25) are over and we have a record 55-per cent voting. The time has gone when you were getting elected by a few thousand votes, he said, targeting the National Conference (NC), People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Congress leadership.

"The NC and the Congress provided protection to terrorism for 40 years.... We have finished terrorism and opened new avenues of development for Jammu and Kashmir, which is marching forward along with the other parts of the country. We will not rest till terrorism is buried in 'pataal,'" the home minister asserted.

## PM To Address

with local BJP leaders and workers mobilizing support across the district.

The Maulana Azad Stadium, the chosen venue for Modi's address, will be sealed off, and no entry will be allowed until the rally begins.

Security is expected to be extremely tight, with comprehensive arrangements being made to ensure the safety of attendees and smooth conduct of the rally.

The BJP is relying on public support to win key Assembly constituencies in the district. The third phase is crucial for the party's election strategy, as Jammu district has traditionally been a BJP stronghold.

The enthusiasm among the local BJP cadre is palpable, with expectations high for a strong turnout. "We have seen great energy in the first two phases, and we are confident this rally will generate even more momentum," said another party leader.

"The BJP's star campaigners have already visited Jammu and Kashmir and conducted massive rallies in the first two phases of the election campaign. Now, Prime Minister Modi's address in Jammu will give us the final push in the last phase," the BJP leader added.

The third and final phase of polling is set to take place on October 1, with eleven Assembly constituencies in Jammu district going to the polls. The district comprises constituencies such as Bishnah (SC), Suchetgarh (SC), R.S. Pura-Jammu South, Bahu, Jammu East, Nagrota, Jammu West, Jammu North, Marh (SC), Akhnoor (SC), and Chhamb.

With a total of 12,00,977 eligible voters in the district, including 6,19,066 men, 5,81,887 women, and 24 voters identifying as third gender, the stakes are high. The Election Commission of India (ECI) has set up 1,494 polling stations in the district, with 609 urban polling stations and 885 in rural areas, ensuring smooth facilitation of the voting process.

## MeT Predicts

weather condition was told to replicate thereafter till 5th October.

However, the weatherman has not ruled out the chances of thunderstorms and gusty winds in J&K's isolated places.

Meanwhile, the higher reaches were expected to receive light snowfall on the 26th of September night.

## HC Upholds

Kishan Tukaram Gavade of Maharashtra who has been posted in Akhnoor Jammu, a bench of Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal observed that the BSF authorities could not be expected to wait for "indefinite time" for the personnel to join back his services without any intimation from him.

"This Court finds that there is no denial by the petitioner (Gavade) to the fact that though he was required to join duty after casual leave of 07 days w.e.f. 08.06.2002. However, he did not report back and therefore, on the said basis, he was dismissed from service," the court said, adding, "The petitioner has sought to justify his absence from duty on the basis of a medical certificate dated 10.05.2004 issued by Medical Superintendent CI-1 Rural Hospital, Rui, Tehsil Baramati District Pune. However, the mere production of a medical certificate at the end of two years does not justify the absence sans any communication/correspondence with the force."

It is imperative to note that members of uniformed forces in particular, having regard to the nature of the duties enjoined upon them, are expected to observe a higher duty of care in case of abstention from duty, the court said. "As such, in light of these circumstances, the extended period of overstay by the petitioner cannot be justified by taking a mere plea of a medical condition at the end of two years," the court said.

Subsequently, the court held that the BSF authorities cannot be expected to wait indefinitely for the petitioner and that there was no error or infirmity in the order dated 12.12.2002.

"...this Court is of the view that the order of dismissal of the petitioner from service does not suffer from any legal infirmity and the same has been passed by the respondents (authorities) in consonance with the relevant provisions of BSF Act and Rules framed therein," the court said, adding, "Therefore, the instant writ petition, challenging the order of dismissal dated 12.12.2002, being bereft of any merit, is dismissed all along with connected application(s)."

## US Gives \$8.7

of Defense for Policy Amanda Dory, Israel's Defense Ministry said in a statement.

"This substantial investment will significantly strengthen critical systems such as Iron Dome and David's Sling while supporting the continued development of an advanced high-powered laser defense system currently in its later stages of development," it said.

The ministry said the deal underscores the "strong and enduring strategic partnership between Israel and the United States and the ironclad commitment to Israel's security", particularly in addressing security threats to Israel from Iran and its regional allies.

Meanwhile Israeli air force carried out several raids in the Bekaa Valley and southern regions of Lebanon overnight, killing at least 70 people, Al Mayadeen reported.

Lebanon's Ministry of Health said that an Israeli strike on the town of Younin, in the country's northeast, killed 20 people, 19 of whom were identified as Syrian refugees.

According to media reports 32 Syrian workers, including children, were killed in an Israeli strike in Younin Wednesday night.

## 'Won't Allow

the village defence guards to counter the threat.

Shah's remarks came as several hill areas of the Jammu region, including Doda, Kishtwar, Kathua, Udhampur and Reasi districts, have recorded a spurt in terror-related incidents since April.

"Let Pakistan do whatever it wants, we will not allow the shadow of terrorism in the hills of the Jammu region. We have strengthened the VDGs and youngsters in villages and given them INSAS rifles to fight terrorism," the home minister told an election rally in the Bani Assembly segment of Kathua district.

Kathua witnessed a deadly ambush by terrorists on an Army patrol in the remote forest belt of Machedi on July 8, resulting in the killing of five soldiers, including a junior commissioned officer (JCO).

Starting his speech by paying tributes to the fallen soldiers, Shah said the government has taken several concrete measures to ensure that terrorism does not rear its head in the region again.

Slamming the Congress, National Conference (NC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) over their poll promises, he said these parties are talking about releasing stone-pelters and terrorists from imprisonment, but "I want to tell them that the right place for terrorists is in jails and we cannot allow anyone to set them free".

Seeking votes for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidates in the ongoing Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls, Shah said if the saffron party registers an electoral victory in the Union Territory, it will be celebrated across the country.

"If the NC-Congress alliance wins, there will be fireworks in Pakistan. Do you want Pakistan

to celebrate?" he asked the gathering.

The home minister said the opposition parties are talking about restoration of Article 370 of the Constitution and revival of terrorism, but "we will not allow this to happen, let their five generations come to fulfil this promise".

He said the Congress and the NC have joined hands for the Jammu and Kashmir polls and are saying "our friendship is everlasting".

"Rahul baba (Congress leader Rahul Gandhi) does not know that (NC vice president) Omar Abdullah's grandfather, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, was jailed by his grandmother (former prime minister) Indira Gandhi on treason charges," Shah added.

He said Abdullah is dreaming of becoming the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir again. "After two phases of polling (on September 18 and September 25), the NC-Congress alliance has been wiped out. Come October 8, the BJP will form the next government in Jammu and Kashmir," Shah said.

The counting of the votes polled in the Jammu and Kashmir election will be taken up on October 8.

The home minister took a jibe at Abdullah for contesting the election from two seats, after changing his decision not to enter the poll fray till Jammu and Kashmir continues to be a Union Territory, and said this is the outcome of fear.

"Under fear, he said he will not fight (polls) till statehood is restored but changed his mind and announced his decision to contest the election from Ganderbal. Again, the fear of defeat made him file his candidature from another seat (Budgam)," Shah said.

The home minister promised a special recruitment drive for youngsters in Jammu and Kashmir and said "we want to arm our youngsters to safeguard the country."

## If We Win, PoK

(PoK's) merger with Indian Union.

"You have to ensure BJP's victory in the ongoing Assembly polls with a huge majority. If we win with a majority, you will see PoK will be ours," Yogi said while addressing a rally in Ramgrah, Vijaypur in Jammu. Yogi is one of the star campaigners of BJP.

He said that the ongoing Assembly polls in J&K are historic in nature and the "results will be a slap on the faces of NC, PDP and Congress. "In 1990, these parties supported Pakistan and terrorism. Now when Prime Minister Modi has eradicated terrorism from J&K soil, these parties are advocating revival of terrorism here again," said Yogi, who is the star campaigner of BJP for J&K.

He said Pakistan's condition at present is horrific. "The country is falling apart. Rate of one kg Atta in Pakistan costs Rs 500. On the contrary, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gives 80 Crore people of India free ration and 60 Crore are getting free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh which has been enhanced upto Rs 7 lakh. "Pakistan is a sinking ship," he said.

He said it was because of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts that the Kartarpur corridor was thrown open. "Today, J&K is known as the tourism capital instead of terrorism capital," Yogi said.

Yogi said that earlier, Amarnath Yatra was facing threats but today devotees all over the country are coming with the slogans of "Bham Bham Bholay" and taking the fragrance of Lord Shiva to all parts of the country. "Lakhs of people are coming to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine," he said.

Lashing out at NC, Congress and PDP for ruining J&K for 70 years, Yogi said that it was the PM Modi led government that gave voting rights to West Pakistan Refugees and Valmiki, who were deprived of these rights by those who ruled J&K. "These were the parties who supported terrorism in 1990 and enjoyed vacations in Europe and England when Kashmir was boiling," Yogi said in an obvious reference to National Conference chief Dr Farooq Abdullah and his son Omar Abdullah.

The UP Chief Minister, who is the chief campaigner of BJP for J&K, said that huge turnout in J&K is scripting a new history and those opposing BJP will be given a befitting reply. He sought votes for the BJP candidates in fray.(KNO)

## Jama'at Leaders

General Secretary and former district president of the banned Jel, Ghulam Qadir Lone said in his address.

He claimed that Jel is a religious organization that never promoted violence. "There were raids on Jel schools and our homes. Investigating agencies did not find anything illegal. There was neither illegal money nor were there any guns," he said.

He also praised the Election Commission of India for ensuring that the elections were held peacefully and in a transparent manner. "There is no rigging in the elections. We also saw in Parliament elections how elections were conducted in a transparent manner," he added.

Additionally, he expressed disappointment that Kashmir's MPs have failed to raise the issue of the ban on Jel in Parliament. (KINS)

## Kashmir Man's

this border. We detained him after he reached Khavda on Tuesday," said Kutch (west) Superintendent of Police Sagar Bagmar.

After conducting a preliminary investigation and verifying facts with Sheikh's family and local police in Jammu and Kashmir, authorities determined that there was no threat and released him later that evening.

Bagmar said Sheikh appeared to be mentally unsound.

Inspector MB Chauhan said Sheikh's misguided attempt stemmed from his search for a simpler route to meet the influencer, as travelling from Kashmir was not feasible.

"Sheikh was attracted towards a Pakistani social media influencer from Multan city and decided to meet her. He used Google Maps and concluded that Kutch was his best option," Chauhan added.

He sought help from villagers to secure permission from authorities to legally enter Pakistan. "We brought him to the police station after being alerted by villagers," said Chauhan.

## Why Polls Without

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 both a symbol for standing up for a political cause and a default response among a significant section of people, particularly in urban areas. It is an over three decade old habit and also a commitment which may not go away easily. In the last election, Kashmir Valley polled 50.86 per cent 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 while the rural areas generally experience higher voter turnout. Many people have still chosen to boycott, but many others have not as the current trend suggests.

Election boycotts have often profoundly impacted the electoral exercise in the Valley. In case of a 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 is crucial for a city like Srinagar and a few other major towns, 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.

This despite the fact that 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. It is over to the third phase which could be a make or break for parties such as the NC and the BJP.

## Is NC-Congress

which further showcased the divide.

Former Congress legislator Haji Abdur Rashid voiced his frustrations regarding the alliance during Gandhi's presence. He claimed that NC workers had torn apart Congress flags and held a rival rally in Sopore.

"They (NC) tore apart our flags and planned a parallel rally at Sopore, despite knowing Rahul ji is coming here. Is this a coalition?" Rashid said.

Political observers say these incidents—both in Sopore and Central Shalteng—highlight deeper issues within the alliance.

A political analyst remarked, "If the alliance were effective, it would be evident on the ground, but implementation appears shaky at best."

"According to the seat-sharing agreement, the Central Shalteng berth should have gone to Congress's Karra, but it has instead turned into a contentious battle with NC's Irfan Shah, who many believe may be a proxy candidate for the NC," he said.

The analysts said Shah has not been expelled from the party and his independent run is backed by loyalists aligned with NC headquarters.

"The divided outcome in Central Shalteng raises doubts about the viability of continued co-operation between the two parties. The alliance may be more formal than functional," he added.

Experts believe the focus is shifting from the alliance itself to potential government formation. "Discussions about a post-poll alliance may already be underway," a political expert speculated.

As these developments unfold, the NC-Congress alliance appears to be on the verge of collapse, with both parties facing their own challenges. Whether this rift will mend or lead to a permanent split remains uncertain, the alliance's future is increasingly precarious. (KNO)




27<sup>th</sup> year OF PUBLICATION

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## It's Now Or Never To Make A Dogra CM: Sham Lal Sharma

Agencies

**JAMMU:** The Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) candidate for Jammu North Assembly constituency, Sham Lal Sharma has said that it is now or never to make a Dogra Hindu Chief Minister in Jammu and Kashmir.

He asked people to make the BJP win all the 24 seats of Jammu, Samba, Kathua and Udhampur districts going for polls on October 1.

Sharma said this while addressing a series of public meetings in Jammu North and Akhnoor Assembly constituencies of Jammu district today.

He was the one who coined the term Hindu CM while being part of the NC-Congress coalition government in 2014 during a rally in Akhnoor which was welcomed by the people of Jammu Jammu. "I spoke about Hindu CM while I was in Congress party and at a time when thinking about it was like a crime. The time has come to realize this dream and make a Sanatani CM in Jammu

and Kashmir," the BJP J&K vice president said.

BJP has pushed all its machinery including Prime Minister, Home Minister, National President and other senior leaders to campaign for party candidates and they want to win maximum seats so that they can emerge as the single largest party in the state and form the government with a Hindu CM.

Speaking on the occasion, Sham Lal Sharma said that if a Muslim can be the CM of Rajasthan for having just a small population, why not a Hindu can be the CM in J&K. "We have a 32 percent population and we can have the Hindu CM. You people need to make sure that BJP wins all the 24 seats, going for polls on October 1," he added.

To help other BJP candidates, Sham Lal also addressed three rallies in Akhnoor constituency, which has remained his home constituency in the past, in support of BJP candidate and former SSP Mohan Lal Bhagat—(KNO)

## 7 Candidates From Bla Asked To Publish Criminal Antecedents

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** In accordance with the Supreme Court's judgment and the Election Commission of India's directives, several candidates in the electoral fray for third phase of assembly elections have been asked to publish information regarding their criminal antecedents.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the candidates including Shoaib Nabi Lone, representing Awami Ittehad Party (AIP), Manzoor Ahmad Dar, Sayed Nisar Geelani, Mushtaq Ahmad Lone, Mudassar Manzoor, Javid Ahmad Dar, and Nighat Parveen, are required to publicly declare their criminal cases on three occasions in both newspapers and TV channels.

As per the Commission's guidelines, these declarations must be made within the first four days after the withdrawal of nominations, between the 5th and 8th days following withdrawal and from the 9th day until the last day of the campaign, two days prior to the polling.

All candidates must submit reports regarding the publication of these declarations to the Returning Officer and District Election Officer, along with election expense details within 30 days of the election results, an official document accessed reveals.

Failure to comply with these instructions may lead to legal consequences and affect their electoral candidacy, it added.

### The candidates with criminal cases:

Shoaib Nabi Lone, an AIP-backed candidate has a case FIR No 96/2024 of Police Station Baramulla under section 376, 342, 506 of IPC and FIR No 39/2019 of PS Crime Branch Jammu under section 420 and 120 B of RPC.

The brief description of offence in Crime Branch as per the Affidavit submitted are "A dispute arose between shareholders in a private limited co, which led to filing of this FIR and for extraneous reasons it was lodged in Jammu crime Branch instead of crime Branch Kashmir."

Similarly, Nighat Parveen Mir, an independent candidate has a case under FIR No 29/2016 of Police Station Baramulla under section 182, 427, 451 of RPC. The case description reads as "Mischievous".

Javid Ahmed Dar, an independent has a case FIR No 178/2012 of Police Station Baramulla under sections 6/F Act, 379 RPC. With case description mentioned as Acts prohibited in forests.

While Manzoor Ahmed Dar, of Samajwadi Party with a case under FIR No 106/2016 of Police Station Baramulla under section 307, 341/34 RPC and case FIR No 12/2010 of Police Station Sheeri. The case details as per the document "scuffle between two drivers in which I was reconciliatory and was falsely implicated. While in another case, "Forest related offense for collection of firewood from forest."

Sayed Nisar Geelani, an independent candidate with a case FIR No 32/219 of Police Station Chandooosa, under sections 452, 354, 304 (A), 323, 506 of RPC. Mushtaq Ahmad Lone, affiliated with Rashtriya Lok Dal with case FIR No 80/2015 of Police Station Kreeeri under sections 148, 149, 323, 325, 336, 427, 307 of RPC and FIR No 30/2022 of Police Station Uri under section 420, 506 of IPC.

While Manzoor Ahmed, an independent with a case under FIR numbers 63 and 134/2023 of Police Station Baramulla under section 382, 420, 506 of IPC—(KNO)

## 2 Labourers Died, 4 Rescued After They Came Under Debris During Construction Of Bridge In Samba

PTI

**SAMBA:** Two labourers died and four others were rescued on Thursday after a group of construction workers came under a heap of soil while they were working in a large pit dug for building a bridge in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district, officials said.

The six labourers were involved in the construction work of the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway. They were working in a deep pit dug for the construction of a bridge over the Devak river when a heap of soil collapsed on them, leaving them trapped, they said.

After receiving information about the incident, the district administration, along with teams from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF)

and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) launched a rescue operation, the officials said.

After two hours of intense efforts, four labourers were pulled out from the soil. Heavy machinery was deployed to rescue the remaining two labourers, they added.

District Commissioner Rajesh Sharma and Samba Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Vinay Kumar Sharma were present at the site, overseeing the rescue operation.

According to the officials, four of the labourers are stated to be stable while the two critically injured, who were shifted to a hospital in Jammu for treatment, succumbed to injuries.

The deceased have been identified as Sobin Kumar of Bihar and Lal Singh of Reasi.

## Kashmir Fruit Growers Alarmed By Sudden Apple Price Crash

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Fruit growers across Kashmir are expressing deep concern over the sudden decline in apple prices in Indian markets.

Growers from various regions said that this year's production is lower due to damage from hailstorms, which has added to their losses. Initially, there was strong demand for apples, but in the past week, prices have dropped significantly, exacerbating their challenges, they lamented.

Farooq Ahmad Bhat, a grower from Shopian, said that while demand was robust at the beginning of the season, it has since dwindled, resulting in a market downturn of about 30 percent. "Growers are facing losses as the costs of labour, transportation and packaging materials are skyrocketing, yet prices have plummeted," he said. "Many are not even recovering their expenses from this year's crop."

Growers said that the early import of apples from Afghanistan has further diminished the demand for Kashmiri apples. Although the area under horticulture continues to expand



and production is increasing, the market for local apples remains weak, they said.

Despite a decrease in traditional apple production this year, growers are frustrated by low demand, largely attributed to the early arrival of imports from Afghanistan. "The costs of fertilisers, pesticides, labour and transportation are now higher than the returns we receive, despite dedicating a full year to our orchards," they added.

Basheer Ahmad Basheer, president of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers and Dealers Union, an elected body representing all fruit growers in the

valley, told KNO that the market has decreased by almost 30 percent, leaving growers anxious about their future. He said that early imports from Afghanistan, typically starting in late October or November, are a major factor in this downturn.

The fruit drop has a Iso led many growers to harvest apples in bulk, flooding the market and further driving down prices. "There is an urgent need for a ban on apple imports from Afghanistan, Iran and other countries to protect local growers and traders from further financial strain," Basheer said—(KNO)

## Rahul Gandhi To Address 2 Rallies On Sep 27

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Senior Congress leader and All India Congress Committee (AICC) incharge J&K, Bharatsinh Solanki, Thursday exuded confidence that the Congress-NC coalition is set to achieve a landslide victory in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a press conference, Solanki attributed the BJP's desperation to their dwindling fortunes in the state. "The BJP has deployed its top leaders, including the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Defence Minister, and UP Chief Minister, to desperately cling to power by any means necessary."

He emphasized that this desperation stems from the BJP's awareness of their dwindling popularity. Solanki exposed BJP's hidden agenda including exploiting J&K's natural resources and allowing big businesses to loot the state.

"This startling revelation has raised concerns among J&K's citizens, who will not tolerate any compromise on their State's sovereignty and economic well-being," he said.

He stated that the people of J&K will not be swayed by BJP's tactics and will teach the Saffron Party a lesson for its misdeeds during the last 10 years in Jammu and Kashmir.

Solanki announced that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will address two rallies on September 27, while party



leader Priyanka Gandhi will also address rallies on September 28.

"The people of J&K will decide their own future and they will reject BJP and its deceitful tactics," he said, adding that "We have presented a chargesheet, but BJP leaders have failed to respond, effectively acknowledging the allegations against them."

Lambasting the BJP for betraying the people of Jammu and Kashmir, he asked, "On what grounds do they now seek votes from the people? BJP has reneged on its 2014 promises."

"The people of J&K will reject BJP's tactics. Congress and NC are united in our determination to serve J&K's interests," he said.

Solanki questioned BJP's delivery to J&K since the Parliament elections, asking: "What has BJP delivered to J&K since then? What additional packages have they offered? and Why have they failed to respond to the chargesheet presented by Congress?"

Solanki lambasted BJP for

betraying the people of Jammu and Kashmir, reneging on its 2014 promises. He emphasized that BJP's broken promises have eroded trust among the people.

He further said that Congress and NC are united in their determination to serve J&K's interests. "Congress leader Rahul Gandhi remains committed to protecting the wishes and aspirations of J&K's people."

He emphasized that Congress will prioritize the state's emotional integration and economic empowerment.

Solanki also condemned BJP Lok Sabha member Kangna Ranout's statement demanding the implementation of three farm laws previously repealed by the government. "This statement exposes BJP's anti-farmers mindset and disregard for the welfare of J&K's agricultural sector."

He expressed concern over BJP's silence on the Darbar Move issue, which promotes emotional integration and economic empowerment in J&K. "Their silence is deafening, and we demand answers."

"As the state prepares for a new government, the people will not be swayed by BJP's tactics. Congress and NC remain united in their determination to serve J&K's interests, prioritizing the state's sovereignty, economic well-being, and emotional integration," he said—(KNO)

## Pulwama, Shopian Residents Demand Completion Of Trenz Bridge Over Ranbiara

Agencies

**SHOPIAN:** A vital bridge over Ranbiara in Trenz area of South Kashmir's Shopian district is awaiting completion even as the construction work was taken up in 2017.

Locals from different areas of Shopian and Pulwama said that the construction of the bridge was started in 2017, but it hasn't been completed as the work was repeatedly put on halt due to unknown reasons.

During the last seven years, the work was started several times but left midway without completing it due to which the locals were facing hardships.

Mir Aasif, a local resident social activist, told KNO that in the last seven years, the pace of the work was very slow due to which the project is nowhere near completion.

He said that in absence of a bridge, the locals are facing problems while commuting towards Pulwama where hundreds of local residents have to reach for jobs, education and business purposes.



"If this bridge is completed, this will be the shortest route for us to reach Industrial Estate Lassipora Pulwama," he said, adding that this route will pave the way for hundreds of fruit growers to fetch their produce to cold store chains.

Basharat Ahmad, another local said that work is going on the bridge but it is very slow and if the pace of the work is the same, it will take years for the completion.

Locals said that they are waiting for the day when this bridge will be completed.

They said Trenz village in Shopian is close to Pulwama also and this bridge will benefit the people of both districts.

The locals said that they have taken up this issue into the no-

tice of concerned authorities several times but to no avail.

They urged the concerned authorities to pace up the work and complete this bridge at an earliest. An official of R&B said that the bridge is 600 meter long and is being built at an estimated cost of Rs 31 Crore.

He said that work on the bridge is going on and it will be completed as soon as possible. The official said that R&B took over the charge of the bridge recently after JKPC was merged and in the last six months good progress has been made in this regard.

The official said that work is going on at full pace and the project is near completion as 70 percent of the work has already been completed and very soon the bridge will be completed—(KNO)

### SCHOOLS ON STATE LAND:

## SED Asks JKBOSE To Grant Provisional Affiliation As One Time Exemption

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** School Education Department has decided to grant one time provisional affiliation, as a one time exemption to all those private schools who had failed to submit No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the revenue department with regard to functioning of the institute on 'state land.'

The department also said that the decision was taken as the matter has been taken up by JKBOSE with both the Directors of School Education of Jammu and Kashmir, Kashmir divisions, 'but nothing substantial to resolve the issue seems to have happened so far.'

School Education Department in a circular said, "By virtue of SO 177, Section 2B was added to the J&K School Education Rules 2010, mandating that the applications for grant of affiliation and recognition shall be accompanied by a no-objection certificate regarding land use issued by the revenue department."

"Various school management in the J&K failed to furnish the requisite NOC from Revenue Department and thereby extension affiliation and recognition in respect of these schools could not be granted," it reads.

It also said that with a view to protect the academic interest of students enrolled in these schools, tagging with the nearby government schools was implemented as a provi-

sional measure. In the meanwhile many such schools located on Kahcharaie, State and Shamilal land filed writ petitions in the High court of Jammu and Kashmir, challenging provisions of SO 177.

School Education Department said that the matter was taken up by JKBOSE with both the Directors of School Education. "But nothing substantial to resolve the issue seems to have happened so far."

The department said, "Therefore, it is hereby notified for the information of all stakeholders that JKBOSE shall grant Provisional affiliation, as a one time exemption, to all such schools which are without a valid affiliation, both for the earlier academic session 2023-24 (when they were tagged with the nearby government school) and current academic session 2024-25, for nonconformity to provisions of SO 177."

"Further, JKBOSE shall extend all board related facilities including Registration Return (RR) forms, eligibility, migration and examination to such schools for sessions 2023-24 and 2024-25, for classes 9th to 12th," SED said.

It further clarified that this exemption and provisional affiliation is subject to the decision of the Proposed Committee to be constituted by the General Administration Department, as directed by the High Court and may be rescinded if the committee arrives at a contrary decision—(KNO)

## Nizamuddin Bhat Our Alliance Candidate In Bandipora: Omar

Agencies

**BANDIPORA:** National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah on Thursday said that Congress leader Nizamuddin Bhat is the alliance candidate from Bandipora assembly constituency and that party is not supporting any other candidate.

In a joint rally in Bandipora's Ajas, Omar Abdullah, asked the NC workers to fully support Nizamuddin Bhat in Bandipora and not to get swayed by bogus candidates.

He said that there is no other candidate in the field except Nizamuddin Bhat and National Conference worker should fully support him.

"I believe every vote of National Conference worker will be cast in favour of Nizamuddin Bhat in Bandipora and Hi-



lal Lone in Sonawari. National Conference fully supports alliance candidate Nizamuddin Bhat," he clarified.

Notably, a candidate, who had earlier affiliation with the National conference, is now contesting as independent candidate.

The candidate is confusing people while seeking votes, saying she is backed by National Conference.

Omar Abdullah said that their candidate is Nizamuddin Bhat and National Conference is in full support to him—(KNO)

## Speedy Truck Kills Dozens Of Sheep In Wussan, Gbl

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** A speedy truck killed dozens of sheep in Wussan area of Ganderbal on Thursday while the truck driver was arrested, the official said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a speedy truck bearing registration number JK14D-5637 ran over and killed dozens of sheep in Wussan, Ganderbal.

"A case under FIR number 252/2024 has been registered at police station Ganderbal regarding the incident, the involved truck was seized, and the driver taken into custody," he said.

The vehicle along with driver identified as Suran Singh, son of Gurbachan Singh of Battali Rehk Udhampur, Jammu was arrested and a case stands registered and investigation set into motion—(KNO)

## Borders Peaceful, Hopeful Of Peaceful Poll day: PK Pole



Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Chief electoral officer PK Pole on Thursday said that the government is prepared with a plan-B in case of any disruptions in border areas of north Kashmir, expressing hope for peaceful election similar to the first and second phases.

Speaking with reporters in Bandipora, Pole said that if any disruption happens during the election in border areas of north Kashmir, they are ready with plan-B.

"First two phases happened

peacefully in the Valley because of the people and security forces maintaining peace," he said. He said that people now wait in long queues to cast votes and participate in the festival of democracy.

"We have set up 312 polling stations in Bandipora district, and the ECI has completed all formalities for polls on October 1. I visited the border areas today; people are waiting for election day," he added. "Our borders are peaceful, and we hope it will remain so on poll day," he said—(KNO)



# India Poised To Extend Supremacy Over Bangladesh In 2nd Test Today

Press Trust of India

**KANPUR:** India will look for contributions from their star players, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, as they aim for a clean sweep against a struggling Bangladesh in the second and final Test, starting here on Friday.

India's comprehensive victory in the first Test in Chennai showcased their dominance in home conditions, with Ravichandran Ashwin's all-round brilliance, Shubman Gill's sublime hundred, Ravindra Jadeja's assured batting, and Rishabh Pant's roaring return after a long break.

This all-around performance helped India bounce back after a testing first day, reaffirming their supremacy in Test cricket at home, where they are set to extend their record 18th consecutive series win.

Pant, in particular, has shown his growth in Test cricket, now equipped with the ability to curb his aggressive instincts



when necessary, making him even more dangerous. "It seems he has even added one more dimension to his game: curbing his aggressive instinct if the situation demands," the report states.

However, both Kohli and Ro-

hit were relatively quiet in the series opener, with Bangladesh's pace duo, Hasan Mahmud and Taskin Ahmed, bowling probing lines on a supportive track. With a long Test season ahead, the two premier batsmen will be keen to get back among the

runs, with Kohli, in particular, likely to avoid expansive cover drives early in his innings.

**Weather Could Play a Role**

The weather conditions in Kanpur will add another layer of challenge, with high humid-

ity posing difficulties for the players. Rain is predicted on the first and third days, potentially causing interruptions. However, India has never lost a Test match against Bangladesh, and the visitors will need a special effort to change that statistic.

**Teams:**

**India:** Rohit Sharma (C), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, KL Rahul, Sarfaraz Khan, Rishabh Pant (WK), Dhruv Jurel (WK), R Ashwin, R Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohd. Siraj, Akash Deep, Jasprit Bumrah, Yash Dayal.

**Bangladesh:** Najmul Hossain Shanto (C), Mahmudul Hasan Joy, Zakir Hasan, Shadman Islam, Mominul Haque, Mushfiqur Rahim (WK), Shakib Al Hasan, Litton Kumar Das, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Taijul Islam, Nayeem Hasan, Nahid Rana, Hasan Mahmud, Taskin Ahmed, Syed Khaled Ahmed, Jaker Ali Anik.

Match starts at 9:30 AM IST.

## Shakib Al Hasan Retires From T20Is, Kanpur Test Maybe Last



Press Trust of India

**KANPUR:** Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan on Thursday announced his retirement from T20 Internationals with immediate effect and also said that the second Test against India will be his last if his country's board doesn't give him a farewell match at home.

The 37-year-old great, who featured in 129 T20Is for Bangladesh will, however, continue to play in franchise leagues.

"I have played my last T20 match in T20 World Cup. We have discussed this with the selectors. Looking at the 2026 World Cup, this is the right time for me to move out. Hopefully BCB will find some great players and we will perform well," said Shakib on the eve of the second and final Test against India here.

Shakib has played 69 Tests, scoring 4453 runs and taking 242 wickets.

"I have expressed my desire to play my last Test in Mirpur to BCB. They agreed with me. They are trying to organise everything so that I can go to Bangladesh. "If that won't happen, the match against India in Kanpur would be my last in Test cricket," he added.

Shakib was named as an accused in a murder case back home during the political

unrest that led to the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He was a member of Parliament from her party, the Awami League.

**Shakib Revealed Retirement Plans To Teammates On Arrival To India**

Shakib Al Hasan's retirement decision might have come on the eve of Bangladesh's second Test against hosts India here in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, but the foundation for it was laid ahead of the first match of the series in Chennai as soon as Shakib joined the team.

The batting all-rounder bared his heart to teammates, support staff and selector Hanan Sarkar, who is travelling with the team.

"Shakib, who joined the squad later, shared his thoughts with us on arrival. We spoke extensively to him on the issue and later apprised the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) of his decision," Sarkar told TNIE.

Sarkar, a former Bangladesh player, held Shakib one of the finest cricketers the country has ever produced and said it must not have been easy for him to walk away from Test cricket like this.

Sarkar, however, said Shakib has just decided not to play Twenty20 Internationals for some time unlike popular perception and will be available if the BCB needs him.

## Downtown Heroes Bested 3-1 In I-League 3 Playoffs Opener

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Downtown Heroes FC played their first game of the 2024-25 I-League 3 Playoffs opener on Thursday at Naihati Stadium in Kolkata, West Bengal. Carrying huge expectations, the Srinagar-based Heroes played Goan club SESA Football Academy in Group A's opening match.

SESA scored all their goals in the first half, giving Downtown no hope of a comeback. The Vedanta Sports owned club opened the floodgates in the 35th minute through Thokchom Beekham Singh. Sachidanand Laxman Satelkar then scored two goals in three minutes to put the Heroes out of contention. Satelkar made it 2-0 in the 45th, before adding another in the third minute of added time.

In the second half, Downtown Heroes couldn't overcome the deficit even with several chances falling their way. The Ajaz Ahmed Bhat-coached team added eight new faces to their playoffs squad, although the head coach stuck to his trusted players for

Thursday's starting eleven. Former Delhi FC left winger Fahad Temuri scored the lone goal for the Heroes in the fourth minute of added time.

Downtown Heroes will need to retrospect after the heavy defeat, as SESA Football Academy dominated them. Per ScoreBar, the Heroes had 6 shots on target compared to SESA's 12. SESA also led in creating dangerous chances, with 68, while Downtown managed 63. However, the Heroes had more attacks (149) compared to SESA's 130.

With this 3-1 defeat, Downtown will now have to win the rest of its three Group A games to have a shot at finishing in the top two and earn a promotion to I-League 2 for the 2024-25 season.

They will next take on Manipuri team, Keinou Library & Sports Association, on September 28 at 9:00 AM.

**Downtown Heroes Playing XI:** 6 Nirdosh, 2 Abid, 12Zubair, 20Abdul, 33Amit, 10Lalramza, 17Shahmeer, 31Mohammed, 35Arjun, 8 Imad, 34 Fahad



## Without Rodri, Man City Face Stiff Challenge From Newcastle This Weekend

Agencies

**LONDON:** Premier League leaders Manchester City will have a Rodri-shaped hole in their midfield at Newcastle United on Saturday with their title rivals hoping to see early evidence that the Spaniard's absence will leave the champions vulnerable.

Without giving a definite time frame on Rodri's recovery, champion City confirmed that the 28-year-old midfielder anchor sustained ligament damage in his right knee during last Sunday's tumultuous 2-2 draw at home to Arsenal.

If, as seems certain, Rodri faces several months on the sidelines, City manager Pep Guardiola will need to find a solution to a problem that has so far proved beyond even him.

Statistically Guardiola's City are a far more formidable unit with Rodri in the side.

All three of City's Premier League defeats last season came with Rodri missing and tellingly since he joined from Atletico Madrid in 2019, City have lost seven of the 21 Premier League games in which he did not feature -- a loss



rate of 33%.

With Rodri, who has played 174 Premier League games for the club and won four successive titles, the loss rate is 10.9%.

Guardiola describes Rodri as irreplaceable but says he has "a duty" to provide a solution.

"Last season, we were three months without Erling (Haaland), five months without Kevin (de Bruyne) and we found solutions," Guardiola said after City's 2-1 League Cup victory against Watford on Tuesday.

Sixth-placed Newcastle will present a stiff challenge to City who have 13 points from their opening five games and their former striker Alan Shearer believes the loss of Rodri could undermine City's bid for a fifth successive title.

"There isn't anyone better in world football than Rodri at what he does, so to have him out for that amount of time is a huge blow to Man City," Shearer told Betfair.

"There's no doubt that a poten-

tial season ending injury to Rodri will have an impact on Man City's title hopes."

Any City slip-up at Newcastle could allow either Liverpool, Aston Villa, Arsenal or even Chelsea to take top spot.

Second-placed Liverpool, who along with Villa have 12 points, travel to bottom club Wolverhampton Wanderers in Saturday's evening kickoff while Villa go to 17th-placed Ipswich Town on Sunday.

Fourth-placed Arsenal, who have 11 points after their battle with City last weekend, host Leicester City, one of six clubs at the bottom still to record a victory this season.

Arsenal will again be without injured captain Martin Odegaard while Leandro Trossard is unavailable after being sent off at The Etihad Stadium last weekend.

Chelsea, who have 10 points, will look to continue their encouraging run of form as they welcome seventh-placed Brighton and Hove Albion.

Manchester United are at home to Tottenham Hotspur on Sunday.

## Fan Who Racially Abused Vinicius Jr In Mallorca Handed Prison Sentence



Agencies

A fan who racially abused Real Madrid forward Vinicius Jr and Villarreal player Samuel Chukwueze in two games at Mallorca last year said, "Real Madrid ... will keep working to protect the club's values and eradicate any racist behaviour in the world of football and sport."

The aggressor, who was not named in the La Liga club's statement, had his 12-month sentence suspended after apologising in a letter to Vinicius and doing

anti-discrimination training. He was also banned from stadiums for three years.

"This is the third criminal conviction handed down in recent months for racist insults received by Real Madrid players," Real the team said. "Real Madrid ... will keep working to protect the club's values and eradicate any racist behaviour in the world of football and sport."

The abuse of Vinicius and Chukwueze both took place at the Son Moix stadium in Mallorca's capital Palma, two weeks apart.

At the Mallorca v Real Madrid game, supporters could be heard in video calling the Brazilian player a monkey. He has been vocal in denouncing racism at football matches in Spain.

A minor who racially insulted Real midfielder Aurelien Tchouameni in April this year has also apologised and shown repentance, the club said. The youth has been banned from stadiums for one year, will take part in educational activities proposed by the prosecutor's office, and will pay a fine.

### Short TAKES

#### PM Modi Meets Chess Masters



Artificial Intelligence, an upcoming birthday, and the ambition to make India a sporting powerhouse were key topics discussed when Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted India's gold-winning chess teams at his residence.

Both the men's and women's teams, who secured gold medals at the Chess Olympiad for the first time in history, gathered with the PM on Thursday evening. The interaction centred around their experiences, high-pressure moments during the event, and Modi's own interest in sports.

The men's team comprised D Gukesh, the youngest-ever world championship challenger, R Praggnanandhaa, Arjun Erigaisi, Vidit Gujarathi, P Harikrishna, and their captain, Srinath Narayanan. The women's team included R Vaishali, Tania Sachdev, D Harika, Divya Deshmukh, and Vantika Agrawal, led by captain Abhijit Kunte.

#### Arunachal Dominates 33rd Senior National Wushu Championship

Arunachal Pradesh asserted its dominance by clinching the overall championship title with an impressive haul of seven gold medals at the 33rd Senior National Wushu Championship held on Thursday. The All India Police Team secured five gold medals, landing them in second place, while the Services Sports Control Board followed closely with four golds to finish third.

In the Sanda category, Rajasthan emerged as the top contender. Arunachal Pradesh also topped the Taolu category.

#### Wojciech Szczesny To Exit Retirement For Barcelona Return



Polish goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny is poised to exit retirement and join Barcelona, following an injury setback for their first-choice Marc-Andre ter Stegen, who ruptured the patella tendon in his right knee during a 5-1 win over Villarreal. Ter Stegen's surgery means he'll be sidelined for the remainder of the season, prompting Barcelona to look for experienced options.

Szczesny, who retired after leaving Juventus in August, is expected to arrive in Barcelona soon to undergo a medical examination before signing a short-term contract.

#### Bayern Set To Face Leverkusen In Crucial Oktoberfest Clash

Amid the bustling Oktoberfest celebrations, Bayern Munich is gearing up for a crucial Bundesliga match against Bayer Leverkusen. Vincent Kompany's Bayern will host Xabi Alonso's team, a contest that could significantly influence the German league's trajectory.

Bayern has been in formidable form, scoring 20 goals in their last three games, including a 5-0 thrashing of Werder Bremen. Players like Harry Kane, who have been integral to this streak, joined the Oktoberfest festivities in traditional lederenosen.