



Hassan Nasrallah Survives Israeli Assassination Attempt

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Israel carried out multiple airstrikes on Friday targeting Hezbollah's central headquarters in Dahiyeh in southern suburbs in an apparent attempt to kill the group's top leadership.

This was the largest Israeli strike in Beirut since the 2006 war in Lebanon, and Israeli media said the primary target was Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah.

Israeli officials said senior Hezbollah officials were at the headquarters at the time of the attack. There has been no official response as yet from Hezbollah on the attack or on Sayyed Nasrallah's status.

If true, the targeting of Nasrallah would be a large escalation in fighting between Hezbollah-Israel, already teetering on the precipice of a full-scale war.

Israeli military spokesperson

Daniel Hagari confirmed that the Israeli military targeted the Hezbollah headquarters with Israeli media claiming the army used bunker busters - large bombs capable of penetrating deep into the earth before exploding - in the attack.

The explosions rocked the capital city, heard across the city. There were multiple large plumes of smoke billowing from the strike sites, seen as far as the city of Batroun, an hour's drive north of the capital city. According to the Hezbollah-affiliated Al-Manar TV, four buildings were destroyed by the airstrikes.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz wrote on X that "target of Israeli strikes in Beirut was Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah, who reportedly survived the assassination attempt."

Tasnim News Agency said to be close to Iran's IRGC citing security sources, confirmed that Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah was in a safe location. | More on P6

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ECI Revises Phase-II Voting To 57.31% 10 Segments Saw Higher Female Voter Turnout

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The Election Commission of India on Friday said 57.31 percent polling was recorded in the second phase of assembly polls in Jammu & Kashmir.

As per data released by the poll-body, the female voter turnout was recorded higher than male turnout in 10 assembly segments which saw polling in the second phase on September 25.

The statistics released a day after the elections were conducted in six districts of the union territory including Srinagar, revealed higher voter participation among women than among the men.

Kangan Assembly seat in Central Ganderbal District, Kashmir, and Mata Vishno Devi in Katra Jammu



registered the highest voter participation during the second phase of elections, the Election Commission of India (ECI) said on Friday.

While Kangan assembly segment registered the highest voter turnout in Kashmir, Khansahib area in the central

Budgam district recorded the highest percentage of women in the second phase of the elections.

With 68.38 percent voter turnout, polling for the first phase of maiden assembly election following the abrogation of Article 370 in

- **KANGAN** 72.18% (Highest turnout in Kashmir)
- **KHANSAHIB** 72.08% (Highest female turnout in Kashmir)
- **MATA VAISHNO DEVI** 80.45% (Highest turnout in Jammu)
- **BUDHAL** 0.04% (Lowest turnout overall)

Jammu and Kashmir was conducted on September 18. The second phase of elections to the Jammu and Kashmir legislative assembly was held on September 25.

Within the six districts with the highest women voter turnout | More on P6

Gulmarg Receives Season's First Snowfall

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Affarwat in Gulmarg, a famous ski resort in north Kashmir, has received season's first snowfall even as parts of Kashmir Valley received rainfall since yesterday.

An official said that Affarwat recorded 2 inches of snowfall since early morning.

Parts of Jammu and Kashmir also received fresh rainfall, which brought mercury down after heat wave conditions for nearly five days.

An independent weather forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng said that generally cloudy weather is expected across Jammu and Kashmir, with possibility of rain in some parts today.

"Sunny break in between is also possible in few areas," he said, adding that towards night and early morning tomorrow, another rain spell is expected.

"Heavy intensity showers can't be ruled out in Jammu plains while | More on P6

PDP Has Faced Worse Than Hurriyat: Parra

Agencies

Srinagar: People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader Waheed ur Rehman Parra believes that the party will play a pivotal role in the government formation of Jammu & Kashmir. He said the PDP is not fighting against any political party but rather against the "severe crackdown" imposed by the central government.

In an interview, Waheed expressed confidence that similar to 2002, the PDP will surprise everyone and be crucial in determining the next government in Jammu & Kashmir.

He said the party aims to preserve democratic spaces for the people of Kashmir, rather than promoting militancy or separatism.

How do you view PDP's existence before and after Article 370 abrogation as many believe the party is now fighting for survival?

The people of Baramulla have been with the PDP since 2002. They surprised everyone with their | More on P6



J&K Polls: 3 Candidates Seek Record 7th Term



Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: At least three candidates who contested the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections in the second phase were seeking a record seventh term in the House.

These are the first assembly elections being held since 2014 and the first after the 2019 reorganisation of the erstwhile state.

National Conference leader and former finance minister Abdul Rahim Rather is seeking a seventh term from Budgam district's Chrar-i-Sharief constituency, which he represented from 1977 to 2014.

Rather's only electoral defeat came in the 2014 elections, when he lost to People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader | More on P6

HC Upholds Faktoo's 'Imprisonment For Natural Life'

Also Turns Down Plea By Another Convict For Killing BSF Trooper In 1990

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Friday upheld its single bench's 2012 verdict, ruling that separatist group Muslim League's chief Ashiq Hussain Faktoo, alias Dr Qasim, "will serve imprisonment for natural life".

In 2003, 57-year-old Faktoo,

who is husband of separatist group Dukhtaran-e-Millat chief Asiya Andrabi, was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of involvement in murder of Kashmiri Pandit human rights activist Hriday Nath Wanchoo in 1992.

Faktoo was booked in FIR No.204/1992 for offences under Section 302 RPC, 3/4 TADA Act and 3/25 Arms Act registered with Police Station, Shaheed Gunj, Srinagar, and it was alleged that he along with | More on P6

Phase-III: 2.59 Lakh Voters Set To Cast Ballots In Bandipora

Observer News Service

Bandipora: District Bandipora is all set to go for polls on October 1, during the third and final phase of General Elections to the Legislative Assembly, with over 2.59 lakh voters eligible to exercise their right to franchise across the district.

The district comprises three Assembly Constituencies namely Sonawari, Bandipore and Gurez, with a total of 2,59,893 voters including 1,32,679 male 1,27,208 female

and 6 third gender voters. To facilitate the voters, Election Commission of India (ECI) has established 312 polling stations, 46 as urban polling stations and 266 rural polling stations for smooth and hassle free electoral participation in the district.

Among all the three Assembly Constituencies of the district, 14-Sonawari Assembly Constituency has the highest number of 1,21,276 registered voters, comprising 61,473 males, 59,799 females, and 4

transgender voters. A total of 137 polling stations are spread across this constituency with 23 urban and 114 rural, ensuring that every registered voter has opportunity to participate in democratic process

15-Bandipora AC comes next with a voter population of 1,16,326, among which 59,483 are male, 56,841 female and 2 third gender voters. To facilitate the voters, 144 polling stations have been established in the constituency; 23 as urban polling stations | More on P6

PODCAST

INVESTMENT OPTIONS

KASHMIR OBSERVER

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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.

'Rehmat-Al-Lil Aalameen' Conference Organized At Jamia Masjid

Dabirah Hassan

Srinagar: Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid Srinagar on Friday organized a conference titled "Rehmat-al-Lil Aalameen" at the historic Jama Masjid Srinagar to observe the birthday of the Prophet of Muhammad (Pbuh).

Renowned religious scholars from the valley, according to a statement, highlighted various aspects of the life of the Prophet (PBUH) while naat-khans recited praises in the honor of the Last Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

The event was supposed to be presided over by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq but he continues to be under house arrest by the authorities, preventing him from attending the gathering.

Participants and scholars strongly condemned the house arrest of Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir, claiming the move led to the disappointment among the worshippers and devotees who had come to the grand masjid to benefit from his teachings on the last Friday of the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal.

In their addresses, the speakers said that the Prophet's (PBUH) life serves as a guiding light for Muslims throughout history. They said that while Islam is flourishing globally, Muslims seem to be drifting away from Islamic teachings. The main reason for this disconnect is the failure to incorporate the universal principles of Islam and the Prophet's (PBUH) character into their lives, they added.

Among the scholars who spoke were Maulana Shaikat Hussain Keing, Maulana Masroor Abbas Ansari, Maulana M.S. Rahman Shams, Maulvi Ghulam Nabi Bukhari, and Mr Muhammad Rafiq Zargar, who highlighted various aspects of the Prophet's life and urged Muslims to adopt the Prophetic way of life as their guiding principle.

Maulana Masroor Abbas Ansari elaborated on the great teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) and discussed the

Anjuma Auqaf Condemns Detention Of Mirwaiz

Srinagar: Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid Friday lamented and strongly condemned the continued house detention of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq by the authorities that prevented him from discharging his religious duties.

Anjuman, a caretaker body of the grand mosque, said that Mirwaiz was prevented from offering prayers and delivering his sermon for the fourth consecutive Friday at the Jama Masjid.

In a statement issued here, Anjuman said the continuous detention and subsequent barring of the religious leader from performing his religious commitments is deeply disturbing and unacceptable. Mirwaiz has already filed a rejoinder in the court hearing his detention petition.

On the last Friday of Rabi-ul-Awwal, Auqaf had organized a Seerat Conference at Jama Masjid, inviting esteemed ulemas and scholars to speak on the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). "Mirwaiz Umar was supposed to lead the conference. But unfortunately thousands of people, from different parts of the valley who had come to participate in this Majlis, were denied the chance to hear the Mirwaiz on this spiritual occasion," the statement added.

continuous service of the Mirwaizeen-e-Kashmir to Islam since the beginning.

He said, "Currently, our religious rights are being forcibly taken away, and despite the government's claims of Mirwaiz's freedom, he has not been allowed to participate in this significant gathering today nor is he able to fulfill his official responsibilities at the Jama Mosque, which we strongly condemn."



Lal Chowk Hosts 'Gau Pad-Yatra' To Kanyakumari

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The commercial hub, Lal Chowk, witnessed a momentous occasion by playing home for a 'Gau (pad-yatra)' foot-march to Kanyakumari, the final destination of the mainland India on Friday.

The Akhil Bhartiya Gau Sewa Foundation (ABGSF) organized the foot-march from Srinagar to Kanyakumari, with the objective of raising awareness about cow protection across India, including Jammu and Kashmir.

The exquisitely ornamented 'hybrid cow', on exhibit next to the historic Ghanta Ghar, was worshipped by members of the ABGSF before the pad-yatra began.

The pad-yatra, which was launched from Srinagar's Lal Chowk, according to the organizing body, will be completed in 180 days. "We travelled from Ahmed-

er as holy as mothers. The fact that Srinagar played home for pad-yatra makes me extremely happy," Surinder Ambardar, the foundation head told the media. Quoting Sheikh-ul-Alam (R.A.), he said, in Kashmir, a man finds prosperity when he owns a hamam (a traditional heating system) in the winter and a cow in the summer. Ambardar, a 'Gau Rakshak', claimed that cows are as sacred to the people of Kashmir as they are to the rest of India, and everyone in the country has a collective responsibility to protect and care for them.

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"If we have to preserve the earth, we must prioritize the welfare of cows, as they provide us with sustenance through their unadulterated milk after mothers, and we have a responsibility to safeguard and honor them as their progeny," Ambardar added.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Ashiq Hussain Gujjar Dehdad F/O Mohammad Ayaan Ashiq Gujjar Dehdad R/O Patti Drugmulla Kupwara has wrongly mentioned in adhaar card as my sons name as Mohammad Ayaan Ashiq Dehdad Instead Of Mohammad Ayaan Ashiq Gujjar Dehdad. now i want to change it if any body having any objections in this regard he/she may contact concern authority with in 7 days after that no objection shall be entertained jnv

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Downtown Artist Keeps Art Of Acrylic Painting Alive In Kashmir

Agencies

Srinagar: A well-known acrylic painting artist from Srinagar is determined to keep his craft alive despite dwindling demand. Abdul Rashid Rather, a resident of downtown Bohri Kadal, has been painting for 35 years with a unique style that reflects the rich heritage of Kashmir.

Speaking with KNO, Rather said that acrylic painting was once a popular medium, celebrated for its vibrant colors and versatility. "However, with modern tastes shifting towards digital art and mass-produced decor, interest in hand-painted acrylic pieces has significantly declined," he said.

Rather, who is also rec-

ognized for his landscape and oil paintings, has created works on the Lal Chowk flyover and sold pieces to foreign tourists. "While most of my acrylic painting customers come from outside the region, their numbers are decreasing daily," he shared. "There are times when demand is so high that I work day and night to finish a piece, but there are also stretches when I don't see a single customer for months."

"I have witnessed the art world change over the years, yet I firmly believe in the beauty of acrylic painting," Abdul Rashid continued. "Even though the demand has fallen, I am committed to ensuring this art form doesn't vanish."

4th Death Anniversary



Aye Thay Ham Mis-e Bulbul Sair-e Gulshan Kar Chale Sambhal Mali Apna Bagh Ham Tu Apne Ghar Chale

Tamam Ummah Se Dua-e-Magfirat ki Guzarish haii

28 September Fourth Death Anniversary of Abdul Ahad Bhat S/O Abdul Gaffar Bhat R/O Qazi Pora Delina Baramulla Jammu and Kashmir.

We know we all will die one day. But we never thought you would go like this. We still and always miss you Daddy. We love you. Our prayers is always with you. Losing you was something We could not cope with We hope you are fine in Jannah ul Firdous. Always stay close to our hearts Daddy.

Deeply missed by the Family, Relatives, Friends and Neighbours.

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Dated: 26-09-2024

Applications are invited through online mode for admission to Ph.D. Programme 2024-25 (Full time/ Part time) in various disciplines as per the following details:

S. No	Department/Centre/Discipline	Number of Vacancies
1.	Arabic Language & Literature	6
2.	Averroes Centre for Philosophical Studies	3
3.	Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction	2
4.	Chemistry	10
5.	Computer Science & Engineering	8
6.	Economics	3
7.	Environment Sustainability and Climate Change	6
8.	Electrical Engineering	13
9.	Electronics & Communication Engineering	15
10.	Food Technology	12
11.	Frontier Research Institute of Interdisciplinary Science	6
12.	Habba Khatoon Centre for Kashmiri Language & Literature	2
13.	Islamic Studies	2
14.	International Centre for Spiritual Studies*	2
15.	Journalism & Mass Communication	3
16.	Management Studies	8
17.	Mantaqi Centre for Science & Society	2
18.	Mathematics	3
19.	Mechanical Engineering	14
20.	Planning & Geomatics	4
21.	Statistics	2
22.	Watson and Crick Centre for Molecular Medicine	3
TOTAL		129

*The Ph.D Studies shall be interdisciplinary and shall be carried out in collaboration with other Departments like Islamic Studies and Arabic Language & Literature.

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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)

PRAYERS

FAJR 4: 00
ZUHR 12:22
ASR 4: 39
Magrib 6:25
ISHA 7: 45

HIJRI CALENDAR
23 Rabi-ul-Awwal 1446

This Day In History

- 1906 - US troops reoccupy Cuba, stay until 1909
- 1914 - German forces move into Antwerp Belgium (WW I)
- 1915 - Battle of Kut-el-Amara: British defeat Turks in Mesopotamia
- 1923 - Abyssinia (Ethiopia) leaves League of Nations
- 1924 - French government names Gen Serrail governor-general of Syria
- 1926 - Russia & Latvia treaty of neutrality signed
- 1928 - Prussia forbids speech from Adolf Hitler
- 1928 - US acknowledge Chinese government of Chiang Kai-shek
- 1939 - Estonia accepts Soviet military bases
- 1939 - German-Soviet Frontier Treaty is signed by Joachim von Ribbentrop and Vyacheslav Molotov; redraws German and Soviet spheres of influence in central Europe and transfers most of Lithuania to the USSR
- 1944 - Battle of Arnhem, Germans defeat British airborne in Netherlands
- 1950 - Indonesia becomes 60th member of UN
- 1959 - Explorer VI reveals an intense radiation belt around Earth
- 1961 - Syria withdraws from United Arab Republic
- 1972 - Japan & Communist China agree to re-establish diplomatic relations.
- 1982 1st reports appear of death from cyanide-laced Tylenol capsules
- 1982 - NASA launches Intelsat V satellite, no. 505
- 1983 - STS-9 vehicle moves to launch pad
- 1985 - NASA launches Intelsat VA F-12

From KO Archives

Political Strands in Jobs Racket Revealed

'NC Block President Has Earned Rs 40 Lakh Duping Jobless Youth'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Several political strands appear to be attached to the recently unearthed fake jobs scandal in Shopyan, with a block president of a political party arrested along with a gazetted officer and four others so far. Scores of fake appointment orders for government jobs are reported to have been seized from the arrested persons.

Investigations have revealed that the arrested political functionary has extracted Rs 40 lakh from jobless youth so far by luring them with promises of government jobs, and the network was spread all over the valley. The sensational racket came to light when a Chatragam resident, Abdul Ghaffar Bhat, filed a complaint with the Zainapora police that one Ali Muhammad Ganai of his village had demanded a bribe of Rs 1 lakh from his son for securing him a job in the Social Forestry Department, and gobbled up Rs 70,000 as advance.

The complaint said that to dupe people, Ganai used fake appointment orders prepared by his son, Altaf Ahmad.

The Zainapora-police station registered a case under sections 419, 420 and 467 of the RPC, and handed the case over to the superintendent of police for Shopyan, Joginder Singh.

In the meantime, the police arrested Altaf Ahmad, and seized a Social Forestry uniform, an identity card and a fake appointment order from his possession.

The superintendent of police said that a suspicious list of 200 employees under the name of the Social Forestry Department was published in a newspaper, and on investigations it was found to have been issued by a shopkeeper in Budshah Chowk, Srinagar, Manzoor Ahmad.

As the case was pursued, Manzoor told the police that the list had been given to him by an acquaintance who often came to his shop and passed himself off as a DFO.

The superintendent of police laid a trap and arrested the phony DFO when he next visited the shop. He was later identified as Ghulam Nabi Bhat of Kawoosa, Budgam, who was an employee of the forest department.

"Twenty fake appointment orders and a number of identity cards were seized on the instance of Bhat, and during interrogation he had revealed the names of several of his accomplices, following which a gazetted officer of the civil secretariat, Abdul Majeed Zargar of Neehama, Beeru, and Muhammad Yaqoob Sheikh of Makhdoom Sahib Srinagar and Ghulam Nabi Bhat of HMT were arrested.

A further 40 fake appointment orders, state subject certificates and educational certificates were recovered after their questioning. The SP said that Zargar used to work in the secretariat's General Administrative Department, and had been suspended in a case of fictitious appointments, but had later been reinstated.

(Kashmir Observer, September 28, 2000)

Educational Budgetary Cuts

India's Investment in Education is Dangerously Low

Ummaar Jamal

Education serves as the backbone of any nation, shaping the future of its citizens and driving long-term development. For India, a country with an immense youth population, the prioritization of education should be a non-negotiable goal. Yet, despite lofty promises and political rhetoric, India's investment in education remains dangerously low. The result is an education system riddled with overcrowded classrooms, decaying infrastructure, and underpaid, overworked teachers. The dream of delivering accessible, high-quality education to every child remains elusive, and as budget allocations shrink, the very foundation of India's education system is at risk. This underfunding jeopardizes not only academic achievement but also India's long-term prospects for growth, innovation, and global competitiveness.

Unfulfilled Promises

The issue of inadequate funding for education is not a recent development in India. It has been a longstanding concern, as the country consistently falls short in allocating sufficient resources to this critical sector. In its 2014 manifesto, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) pledged to increase spending on education to 6% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), aligning with the recommendations of the Kothari Commission from as far back as 1966. However, this target has yet to be met. In fact, the current budgetary allocation for education stands at a mere 2.51% of GDP, a decline from the already insufficient 2.57% allocated in 2023.

Although the government allocated 1.48 lakh crore for education, employment, and skill development in the 2024 budget, this amount falls woefully short of addressing the deep-rooted problems plaguing the education system. Historically, public expenditure on education in India has fluctuated but has remained critically low. For instance, in 2000-01, the highest allocation was just 3.8%, but this dropped to 3% by 2004-05. Even in 2010-11, when the allocation hovered around 3.5%, it remained well below the 6% recommended by experts.

This chronic underfunding leaves India far behind other nations in terms of educational investment. According to UNESCO's 2012 "Global Education Digest," countries such as the United States (5.4%), the United Kingdom (5.6%), and Australia (5.1%) allocate significantly larger portions of their GDP to education. The disparity between India's rhetoric about prioritizing education and its actual budgetary commitments is stark and widening, raising serious concerns about the future of the country's education system.

The Impact of Low Budget Allocations

Budgetary cuts in education have far-reaching consequences, deeply affecting both the quality and accessibility of learning. One of the most glaring consequences of inadequate funding is the deteriorating infrastructure in many Indian schools, particularly those in rural areas. Many government-run schools lack basic amenities such as



Kashmir Observer

“Jammu & Kashmir Education Budget lays the foundation for several ambitious initiatives to overhaul both school and higher education systems. But it still falls short in addressing the broader needs of the region's educational system”

clean drinking water, functional toilets, and sufficient classrooms. For example, in Karnataka, about 28% of high schools and 32% of primary schools lack access to clean drinking water, according to the State Achievement Survey 2022-23 (SAS) report. Furthermore, only 35% of schools in the state have teachers for all prescribed subjects. The situation is similar across many other states, highlighting the severity of the crisis.

Moreover, budget constraints result in a severe shortage of qualified teachers, exacerbating the challenge of providing quality education. According to a recent UNESCO report, India faces a disturbing shortage of over one million teachers in schools. Over the next 15 years, approximately 30% of the current teaching workforce will need to be replaced, further compounding the issue. In fact, 1.1 lakh schools in India are currently operating as single-teacher institutions, with 19% of all teaching positions lying vacant.

Higher education institutions, particularly public universities and colleges, are also bearing the brunt of budget cuts. Recent reductions in funding for the University Grants Commission (UGC) are particularly alarming. The government slashed the UGC's budget by nearly 61%, reducing it from 6,409 crore to 2,500 crore. This severe underfunding jeopardizes not only the quality of higher education but also access to essential research opportunities and resources. Although the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes the need for innovation and research, the lack of adequate financial backing ren-

ders these goals unattainable.

Moreover, while the government has placed significant emphasis on skill development in recent years, these initiatives have not been matched by appropriate funding. In a rapidly evolving global economy, vocational training is essential to prepare the workforce for modern industry demands. However, insufficient financial support has stunted the growth of such programs, leaving many young graduates without the skills required for meaningful employment. According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), India's unemployment rate stood at a troubling 9.2% in June 2024, a clear indication that existing skill development efforts are failing to bridge the gap between education and employability.

Allocating minimal funds to education is a grave misstep, considering that education is the cornerstone of development. A robust education system fosters innovation, enhances productivity, and drives economic growth by equipping individuals with essential skills and knowledge.

2024-25 J&K Education Budget at a Glance: Promises and Shortfalls

The 2024-25 Jammu & Kashmir Education Budget lays the foundation for several ambitious initiatives to overhaul both school and higher education systems. With a focus on inclusivity, technology integration, and quality improvement, the budget highlights certain critical areas for development, but it still falls short in addressing the

broader needs of the region's educational system.

While Rs 1875 crore is allocated for school infrastructure, this amount is far from sufficient to cater to the vast number of schools that require repairs, modern facilities, and better resources. Schools in rural areas are in desperate need of basic amenities like sanitation, drinking water, and reliable power supplies. A more significant allocation is required to bring all schools up to acceptable standards, especially those in remote regions.

The Rs 475 crore allocation for college and university infrastructure upgrades pales in comparison to the needs of higher education institutions. Universities in J&K are struggling with outdated curricula, lack of research facilities, and insufficient staff, which require more substantial financial commitments. Moreover, there is need for more focus on improving teacher quality and faculty development programs, which have not been adequately addressed.

While the budget includes provisions for ICT labs, smart classrooms, and robotic and virtual reality labs, these initiatives are limited to a small number of schools (2584 out of thousands). The digital divide in J&K remains vast, especially in rural areas where internet connectivity is inconsistent or non-existent. To ensure equitable access to digital education, the government must allocate more funds to expand these initiatives to all schools and focus on improving digital infrastructure across the region.

The introduction of 2176 kindergarten classes is a step in the right direc-

tion, but it is not enough to cover the entire region, which has a large population of young children. Early childhood education plays a crucial role in long-term educational outcomes, and a more comprehensive plan is required to ensure access to quality education for every child, especially in underserved areas.

While the provision of sports equipment to 18,499 schools is commendable, this alone is insufficient to develop a robust extracurricular program. Schools need more trained coaches, better sports infrastructure, and sustained investments in sports education to nurture talent and encourage physical fitness among students.

The budget also provides for the construction of 05 newly established colleges to be completed during 2024-25, 08 colleges to be assessed and accredited in 2024-2 and infrastructure of 233 schools to be upgraded under Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) Scheme.

The budget does not allocate specific resources for improving teacher training and professional development. J&K's teachers are often overworked and lack access to the latest pedagogical techniques and resources. Without well-trained teachers, the ambitious goals outlined in the budget—like introducing cutting-edge technologies and vocational programs—cannot be realized effectively. Increasing the budget for teacher training programs is essential to ensure that educators can keep pace with the evolving educational landscape.

Conclusion

The persistent underfunding of India's education system poses a severe threat to the country's future. With a growing population of young people, the need for high-quality education has never been more urgent. Yet, the current allocation of 2.51% of GDP is far from sufficient to address the multitude of challenges facing the sector. If India is serious about its development goals, it must make a stronger financial commitment to education.

Investment in infrastructure, teacher training, higher education, and skill development programs is essential if India is to equip its youth with the tools they need to succeed in an increasingly competitive world. Without such investment, the country risks not only failing its young population but also stalling its own economic and social progress. The time for India to prioritize education funding is now—before the consequences of inaction become too great to overcome.

In essence, skimping on educational investment is shortsighted; it hampers future prosperity and societal advancement. Prioritizing education in the budget is not just a policy choice but a strategic necessity for sustainable development and national success.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer
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There is no denying that plastics have delivered tremendous benefits over the past century, driving technological innovation, transforming health care, and fueling global economic growth. But as we now know, this progress has come at great cost.

The adverse consequences of our overreliance on plastics are well-documented. From the extraction and transport of the fossil fuels required to produce them, through the manufacturing process, to their everyday use and disposal, each stage of plastics' life cycle implies pollution and environmental degradation.

Plastic pollution endangers wildlife, damages ecosystems, and poses serious risks to human health. Microplastics, along with the toxic chemicals they contain, are found in the air we breathe, the food we eat, and can be absorbed through the skin. As plastic waste accumulates in oceans, rivers, and lakes, harmful chemicals contaminate the soil, disrupting plant life. While the full implications of nanoplastics for human health remain under-researched, it is clear that vulnerable groups – children, women, impoverished communities, and work-

Saving The Planet From Plastics

Jayati Ghosh

ers in plastic production, waste management, and recycling – bear the brunt of these hazards.

The current debate, particularly concerning single-use plastics, often centers on disposal, prompting calls for "circular economy" solutions like recycling. But there are no truly "safe plastics," and product labels claiming otherwise are misleading and obscure the damage caused by oil and gas extraction, which accounts for 99% of the world's plastic. The toxins released during fossil-fuel extraction are known to harm the skin, eyes, and the respiratory, nervous, and gastrointestinal systems, as well as the liver and brain.

Plastic production is not only a direct threat to human health but also a major driver of climate change, accounting for roughly 3-8% of global greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions. Yet, despite the existential dangers posed

by the climate crisis, plastic production continues to surge. OECD estimates suggest that, if current trends persist, global plastic use – and the waste it generates – could nearly triple by 2060. Half of this waste is expected to end up in landfills, with less than 20% being recycled.

Even more alarmingly, recycled plastics are projected to account for just 12% of all plastic use in 2060, while plastic leakage to the environment is set to double, reaching 44 million tons annually, with devastating consequences for human health and natural ecosystems. If the industry's expansion plans are realized, plastic production could consume 31% of the planet's remaining carbon budget for limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius.

This manufacturing surge is increasingly misaligned with projections of future demand. One study suggests that the global production of plastics

like polypropylene may need to decrease by 18 million tons annually by 2030, owing to reduced demand from China and other countries. In fact, petrochemical companies are already grappling with a global glut – yet another example of market forces failing to deliver efficient or even sensible outcomes.

With corporations under growing pressure to reduce GHG emissions, doubling down on fossil-fuel-based plastic production seems not just reckless but also economically shortsighted. Still, a recent study by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis found that even in the face of potential credit downgrades, the world's largest petrochemical companies are "making major investments going in the wrong direction."

Given the stakes involved, it is clear that reducing plastic consumption alone will not be enough to protect

human health, the environment, and the planet. As the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution approaches its final meeting in Busan later this year, ongoing efforts to conclude a global treaty to end plastic pollution must confront the urgent need to curb production.

Regrettably, as with many international negotiations, resistance from powerful vested interests may block essential measures from making it into the final agreement. The Committee's April meeting in Ottawa was a case in point, revealing deep divisions over key strategies. The most contentious issue was the proposal to cap global plastic production, which faced fierce opposition from plastic manufacturers, their host countries, and oil and gas producers. These interest groups favored a narrower approach, focused on recycling. Some petrostates even argued that the treaty should cover only waste management.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The article was originally published by Project Syndicate

NICHE PENMAN

Early Guests on the Moonland of Yore



THE LURE OF THE MOON LAND IN LADAKH HAS BECKONED MANY VISITORS, travellers, scholars, expeditionists and the rest, in the last seven centuries. Most of them Westerners, who have contributed towards a better understanding of this mystery land

S.Sarwar.Malik

All English knowing students of Ladakhi studies, including this humble penman, are indebted to Scores of foreigners who traversed long distances and difficult terrains. Besides other challenges one faces in somewhat difficult parts of this globe, where putting up for prolonged periods, that too in a hostile climate with different people; not only racially but also in terms of language, faith and culture. Different in almost all aspects.

For a moment, dear reader, transport yourself to the past: 19th or 20th century or as distant as Ladakh of 17-18th century AD (Baffled na?). Pursuing their scholarly pursuits! What they bequeath to the subsequent followers is more valuable than the fabled treasures.

Today, in passing, I will mention just two, somewhat recent, great names, i.e., A.H. Francke (cursorily) and D.L. Snellgrove (deserving my tilt). Reason being Snellgrove's *Cultural Heritage of Ladakh*, a 1978-79 publication. Mentioning expressly the debt to Snellgrove, a humble-looking ('ruralite') scholar of Ladakhi studies; N.T.S., who is somewhat dear to me, I confess...

*Ishaare-Ishaq-posheedah!
woh be abb iss peeri main?
Chalo ker kay daikhaein gay.
Chalo ker kay daikhaein gay. //
Zanjeer bajayein 'zindaan walay' //
hum qalam utha kay daikhaein gay!*

...who was just three years older than me. Better equipped with a degree in History and also himself being a native of Ladakh (who inherited Buddhism as faith and worked in our J&K Academy Of Art Culture and Languages, till his retirement in 2010), having organised an impactful Colloquium, and above all produced, (*what endears him more? ...to this humble penman*) 5-6 books. Surpassing thereby, other later writers (local PhDs including the ones of 1st decennial of this century, including those from famous universities of North India) comprehension-wise as well as in terms of head-count of the foreign scholars whom he has read like the fore-mentioned Snellgrove.

A brief digression!

About thirty nine years back, seated on a boulder, in Tang-ts-e area of Ladakh (in Durbuk block bordering Pangong Tso & Nubra), approximately 110 kms away from Leh, suddenly I began to surmise what zeal must have motivated those Christian missionaries (like Father Francesco de Azevedo and

Father Giovanni de Oliveira — the duo that visited Ladakh in Oct 1631, as mentioned in 'Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia', published by C.wessels in 1924), when even after lapsing of nearly three and a half centuries, the total population of local christians in ladakh (i.e., converts), is just somewhere around 150.

On that day of 1984, an uncomfortable feeling followed me as well as the question: "Why had history thrust two wars here on this very region (Mughal-Ladakh-Tibet war of 1679 and Dogra-Tibetan war of 1841)? Through which trade with Central Asia, Turkestan, Yarkand and Tibet etc too was flowing in those distant days, as this route was promoted by the British too, there around.

Writing about Fahien's route Prof. Samuel Beal (Oriental scholar, University college London, d. 1889 AD) records:

"...North of Kashmir is Darail valley of the Dard-country; on the western bank of Indus..." Darail is the tribal territory between Indus Kohistan and Gilgit agency on Pakistan's western borders. Probably, these Dards migrated from Central Asia via Gilgit into Ladakh, long before the advent of Buddhism or Mongoloid nomads; possibly displacing completely the 'Mons' of Ladakh, in 5th or 6th century AD.

Dards came, perhaps, to seek refuge and protection from the advancing Greco-Bactrian Kushans (1st century AD) whose empire extended from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Taxila, to north India etc (in emperor Kanishka's syncretic reign of 2nd century AD). It is said long before the advent of Buddhism, Dards of Ladakh had migrated from Central Asia via Gilgit and as per Dr.A.H.Francke (of Morovian Mission, 1890-1927) they withdrew to Purig-area of Ladakh, where they are called Dok-pas.

The standard Dardish form of language is known as 'Shina' but with passage of time Ladakhi influence changed much of their language, original beliefs and traditions but Ladakhis being obviously *mongoloids* are racially different.

Giving a geographical account, Frederic Drew (Dogra Governor of Ladakh) wrote in 1875, that these people were *migrants*. R.B.Shaw, British historian, in his book, *Stray Aryians in Tibet (1870)*, wrote that these Dards claimed to have migrated from Gilgit, via Astore and Kargil. A.H.Francke wrote in his book, *Ladakh the Mysterious Land (1907)* that *..Brokskat, is an offshoot of Sheena*. That much about these pastoralists.

Now, hastily I give a sketchy roundup of the prominent visitors ever since 1631 but before that let me underline an interesting piece of information for you. That in 1909, Dr.A.H. Francke had found an ancient Bonpo temple with Frescoes of Bon deities in blue and black dress at Lamayuru (approx. 130 kms from Leh) and permit me to defer my stating anything more about the world famous British Tibetologist prof.David .L. Snellgrove (1920-2016; author of 'The Nine Ways of Ladakh, 1977 and Indo- Tibetan Buddhism, 1987).

Now The Visitors

The lure of the moon land in Ladakh has beckoned many visitors, travellers, scholars, expeditionists and the rest, in the last seven centu-



For a moment, dear reader, transport yourself to the past: 19th or 20th century or as distant as Ladakh of 17-18th century AD. Pursuing their scholarly pursuits! What they bequeath to the subsequent followers is more valuable than the fabled-treasures

ries. Most of them Westerners, who have contributed towards a better understanding of this mystery land.

Let us make a brief mention of these first-comers as this, I Believe, is the first compilation on this information.

During the reign of the grandson of Rinchen Lha-Chen-Khri-tzungde, that is between 1380 and 1400 AD, a large number of Nestorian Christians are first believed to have migrated to Ladakh, as refugees from Central Asia. But not much is known about their visit and may be the undeciphered writing on the rock at Tangsey, Durbok in Ladakh belongs to them.

In the first half of the 15th century AD, the two kingdoms of Shey and Basgo were reunited and the founder of the united dynasty took the surname of Namgials. Senge Namgial who ascended the throne

in 1616 A.D was the great king of Ladakh. During his reign Father Francesco de Azevedo and Giovanni de Oliveira visited Ladakh. These Jesuits describe Senge as "a man of tall stature, his ears adorned with turquoise and he wore a string of skull bones around his neck".

In 1715, when Nyima Namgyal ruled, Ipolito Desideri passed through Ladakh and saw the lake of Shey, blue like turquoise; (-alas! At present, there is no trace of this lake. William Moorcroft along with George Trebeck stayed in Ladakh from 1820 to 1822 and it is believed the former put forth the advice of building a fort to the king. During the same time Alexander Csoma de Korosi spent over a year in a monastery in Zanskar. In the wake of stirs of Ranjit Singh's expansionist empire, King Tsemphel Namgial made an offer of allegiance to the East India Company through William Moorcroft.

In 1834-35, Henderson came to Ladakh and acted as informer of Dogras. Commander of Dogras Zorawar Singh invaded Ladakh and built the fort at Leh in 1836. G.T. Vigne, author of *Travels in Kashmir, Ladakh and Iskardo*: was in Leh from 1835-38 and he speaks of the restrictions and the troubles Dogras gave him in Leh.

1838 brought Dr.Falconer to Leh. In 1846-47 Alexander Cunningham surveyed and demarcated the boundaries between Ladakh, Spiti and Tibet. During 1852-54 he wrote his book, *Ladakh and West Himalayan Tibet*. In 1856 Hermann Von and Emil Schlagintweit visited Ladakh. Hermann was the first visitor to have obtained a manuscript of the ex-King of Ladakh, Jygmend Namgial, which was later published in German in 1866. He is also believed to have introduced poultry in Ladakh. In 1862 Frederic Dew, a geologist, travelled to Ladakh and Coyley was the first British Joint Commissioner of Leh in 1867. Johnson, who served as the governor of Ladakh from 1871-83, was the first British to have conducted the geographical survey of Ladakh. Author of *Unknown Life of Jesus Christ: Life of Issa*, of the renowned Nicolas Notovitch, who visited Ladakh during 1866 and also later in 1890 when he was treated by Dr. Karl Marx in Hemis Gompa.

In 1870 and again in 1873, Douglas Forsythe crossed Ladakh while going to Yarkand and Kashgar, forging trade between East India and Eastern Turkestan. In 1871 Robert Shaw, the British Joint Commissioner at Leh and ambassador designate, travelled to Kashgar. His agent Andrew Dalgleish settled in Yarkand and for 14 years was

'engaged actively in Leh-Yarkand trade'. Andrew was assassinated by an Afghan, Daud Mohamad, enroute. In 1864, Morovian mission had penetrated Leh. In 1885 Leh became the headquarters of the Morovian Church mission and the Leh church was established by Rev. Ratslab. Dr Karl Rudolf Marx was the first medical missionary doctor in the mission hospital Leh.

In 1892, two Britons, Major N. Malcolm and Captain Neilly Wellby, accompanied by six Ladakhis; (including Baba Kalam Rasul Malik - the greatest known expeditionist of Ladakh after Galwan Rasool, left from Leh to Peking via Tibet.

In 1902, the English traveller A. Reeve Herber was in Leh. In 1903 Rev. J. Peter of the Morovian Mission started a newspaper- *Ladakh Phoyian*, in Ladakhi language; the first paper in J&K state.

In 1906 the Swedish explorer and author of *Trans Himalaya*, Sven Hedin came to Leh and stayed at Lamayuru gompa in July 1906.

After Karl R. Marx, who died in 1891, his brother in law Dr. A.H. Francke, also of Morovian mission, came to Leh. On being sponsored by the Director General of Archeology in 1909 Francke worked on the same manuscript: (*La-dvags-rgyal-rabs- chronicles of Ladakh*), on which Marx had worked. He compiled *Antiquities of Indian Tibet and History of Western Tibet* - published in 1926 and 1927.[One F.E. Shaw was in Leh during Francke's time. Francke's history of Ladakh is a pioneer and fundamental work which was consulted by all historians and improved by few].

Since the 1930s Prof G. Tucci and Prof L.Petech have become and still remain the chief authorities on the history and culture of old western Tibet. Tucci wrote *Indo-Tibetica and Petech, A Study of the Chronicles of Ladakh*.

Recently in 1986 a Ladakhi scholar brought out a book on the history of Ladakh in Bodhi Language. Snellgrove and Skorupski who worked on Monastic paintings of Ladakh, remained here from Oct 1974 to Feb 1975. The noted writer Heinrich Harrer visited Ladakh six times from 1944 to 1978.

Writings of these leading and undaunted visitors have contributed greatly to the appreciative understanding of this mysterious land, its people, its religion and culture and those like me (& others, in dozens) cannot withhold our appreciative bow.

In the bodhi language that is spoken by Ladakhi's, *yul means land*. Kashmir is Kache-yul; The land where snowfall is witnessed. *Baltistan is Balti-yul, land where Shia's*

Baltistaani people live. Adept in the field say, Ethnically Balti's and Ladakhis are both descendants from the same stock. Both are a blend of the *Aryan, Mongol, Min and Tibetan races*. The Major difference is that of religion; Ladakhi's are largely Buddhist while the people of *Baltistaan* are muslim. The Buddhist presence in Baltistan is said to be very old [-as it is believed that the Buddhist saint of *Mahayana* sect, 7/8th century AD; PadmaSambhava (-Buddha reincarnate for his sect) worked here.]

According to tradition the common language among the Baltis, Zangskaris, Changpas and Purikis was Tibetan. Later in history when the *Baltis* adopted Islam, they lost contact with the *Tibetan script*, ever since the 10th Century, though retaining it greatly in their spoken language.

Among the common inheritance between the people of two faiths, is the story of *Gyalpo Norzang*; the *Kesar Saga*, and *Naga Rai prayers*, *Tibetan canon of Lo-tis-avo Tsul-trim etc* though style of narration differs.

Ladakh and Baltistaan had close economic ties too, and in the trade that happened via different trunk-roads of yore as well as that happened via Central Asia. Both Ladakhis and Baltis were active players.

Baltistaan being the land of *Shiismuslims*. Skardu was an important town of this Baltistaan. Here we reach an interesting milestone of the 16th Century.

King Jamyung Namgial of Ladakh had invaded Chigatan around 1600. Chief of Askardo, Ali Mir, tasted Victory and King Jamyung was captured.

[Elements of rest of the story,... that is what led to the marriage of Ali Mirs daughter, *khatoon*, with this Buddhist/ Ladakhi king Jamyung; for example the Vision that a Tiger jumps on her and enters her womb and birth of a child who in Ladakh's history, came to be known be Sengey Namgyal, surpassed by few, achievement-wise...].may be writer's touch that add flavour to the story, but overall it is an interesting episode, caricatured by history.

Excuse me readers. I have to end today's write-up,(...lest it outgrows the space, that too...) on a sad note:

Later in history, both these areas, Ladakh and Baltistaan, had to undergo a brutal stage. That of the damage caused by Zorawar Singh, the general of Dogra Maharaja Gulab Singh to these two *lands*; reducing their status.

For feedback email: sarwarms@gmail.com

Hassan Nasrallah

Videos showing the site of the airstrike showed several buildings that had completely collapsed, with fires burning under the rubble. Pictures showed a car swallowed by a hole in the ground, while rubble and dust made the asphalt street unrecognizable.

The sound of ambulances rushing to the scene were heard across Beirut, but reports of casualties had yet to emerge.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu abruptly left a press briefing at the UN after receiving an update from his military adviser.

An Israeli official said Israel notified the U.S. minutes before the strike in Beirut, but two senior U.S. officials denied that, telling press they had no prior warning. "We had no knowledge of it or involvement in it," a senior official said. Friday's airstrike was the fifth time that Israel hit the capital city in a week, and came off the back of a week of an intensified aerial campaign against Lebanon. Israel said that it bombed more than 2,000 Hezbollah targets across Lebanon, killing at least 700 and wounding more than 1,835.

ECI Revises

include the seats of Khansahib, Gulabgarh, Reasi, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, Kalakote Sunderbani, Nowshera, Rajouri, Budhal, Thanamandi, Surankote, Poonch Haveli, and Mendhar.

Kangan hamlet in central Ganderbal district, according to ECI statistics, recorded the highest voter turnout in Kashmir with 72.18% followed by 72.08% in Khansahib, 70.27% in Charar-I-Sharif, 66.95% in Beerwah, 57.19% in Chadoora and 52.27% in Budgam.

In Jammu, the highest voter turnout was 80.45% was recorded in Mata Vaishno Devi followed by 74.94% in Surankote, 74.56% in Poonch Haveli, 73.60% in Gulabgarh, 73.56% in Mendhar, 73.05% in Nowshera, 72.88% in Thanamandi, 72.06% in Reasi and 68.82% in Kalakote-Sunderbani.

With 0.04%, Budhal in Rajouri district of Jammu recorded the highest low among all assembly segments in six districts followed by 19.81% in Habba Kadal, 26.09% in Khanyar, 29.53% in Chanapora, 30.78% in Zadibal, 31.84% in Central Shalteng, 32.39% in Hazratbal, 34.15% in Lal Chowk and 36.95% in Eidgah.

Gulmarg Receives

improvement in weather is expected from tomorrow morning or afternoon onwards," he added.

He said mostly dry weather is expected until 4 October, with a significant fall in night temperatures.

J&K Polls: 3 Candidates

Ghulam Nabi Lone Hanjura.

The 80-year-old veteran is up against Hanjura once again as he tries to become the first Jammu and Kashmir politician to win seven assembly elections.

Rather's party colleague and former minister Ali Mohammad Sagar, who is also seeking a seventh term, has never lost an assembly election.

The 66-year-old Srinagar strongman won his first assembly election as a 25-year-old from

the Batamaloos seat, retaining it in the 1987 polls.

Sagar shifted to the Khanyar seat in 1996 and has been an MLA for four consecutive terms.

Hakim Mohammad Yaseen has also won six assembly elections from the Khansahib segment of Budgam district, the first of which came in 1977.

The only exception was in 1996 when he did not contest the polls.

The Charar-i-Sharief, Khanyar and Khansahib constituencies went to the polls in the second phase on Wednesday.

There are several other candidates who are seeking sixth, fifth or fourth terms in the assembly.

Prominent among them is National Conference leader and former speaker Mubarak Gul, who is seeking a sixth term as an MLA from the Eidgah constituency in Srinagar that went to the polls on Wednesday.

CPI(M) leader Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami is seeking a fifth straight term from the Kulgam seat in south Kashmir while the PDP's Abdul Rehman Veeri -- who has represented Bijbehara four times -- is seeking election from the Shangus Anantnag East constituency.

Both these constituencies went to the polls in the first phase.

The last phase of the assembly elections will be held on October 1. The results of the elections will be declared on October 8.

PDP Has Faced

support from north to south in 2014, a scenario shaped by (the party founder) Mufti (Muhammad Sayeed) Sahab. This time, too, we remain optimistic and hopeful that the PDP will surprise everyone again.

Why has PDP distanced itself from an alliance with NC, despite both being prominent regional parties opposing Delhi's policies in Kashmir?

After the abrogation of Article 370, every party has been fighting for survival; it was a direct assault on Kashmir's identity. The PDP faced immense pressure, resulting in a split after August 5, 2019, when around 40 of our leaders, including MLAs and ministers, left. No other party faced such targeted actions as the PDP did. Only (the party president) Mehbooba (Mufti) Ji continued to speak out against these challenges.

Is there a possibility of a post-poll alliance, particularly with the National Conference?

Before August 5, 2019, we advocated for unity, even within PAGD (People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration). Mehbooba Ji pushed for a unified stance, and (National Conference president) Farooq (Abdullah) Sahab was elected chairman of the alliance. However, during the DDC elections, the NC was unwilling to share seats with us, despite our unconditional support. In this assembly election, they neither discussed seat sharing nor recognised the PDP as a significant player. The reality is that the PDP has faced a crackdown while other parties remained untouched. Our decisions on alliances will be based on who aligns most closely with our manifesto.

Why is the PDP often seen attacking NC, despite both facing challenges from the central government?

We didn't start this. NC's leadership targeted

the PDP first, which compelled us to respond. If a party blames you, a reaction is expected.

What is your response to Ram Madhav's claims that PDP and NC support militancy?

Those are his personal views. National politics often revolves around Kashmir, and figures like him blame Pakistan, Hurriyat, militancy and even mainstream parties. The PDP is here to promote constitutional and democratic spaces. We want Kashmiris to abandon violence, but they must have democratic avenues, fair elections and equal participation in the political process. The split within the PDP is part of a broader crackdown, and our struggle is against the government's actions, not against NC.

NC and Jamaat have visible cadres, but PDP's ground presence seems diminished. Why is that?

The PDP has faced a deliberate split, losing 40 members. Post-August 5, 2019, three parties were formed from the PDP, yet none gained significant traction. While we were targeted through government crackdowns and legal actions, we are not contesting against NC, but they've chosen to challenge us. If our cadre isn't visible, it raises questions about why the government worked so hard to divide us.

What is PDP's stance on Jamaat-e-Islami's participation in elections? Will they cut into the party's vote base?

We've always had sympathy for Jamaat. While they never voted openly, we want their ban to be revoked and their leaders released from detention. Exclusion from the democratic process, as seen in 1987, is not what we advocate.

What message do you have for those who consider PDP a sinking ship?

The people will respond to that. The PDP is not fighting against anyone; we are resisting a severe crackdown, including actions under UAPA, PSA, ED and NIA. The PDP has faced challenges greater than even Hurriyat. Mehbooba Ji's house was taken, and she faced legal notices that hindered her ability to perform Hajj--no other party faced such measures.

Your Lok Sabha campaign was perceived as soft. Do you think this impacted core voters?

Our message reached the people, and we were satisfied with our position, securing second place. However, the crackdown on the PDP did impact us, splitting our votes and cadre due to external pressures.

Why couldn't the party prevent the split during the assembly elections?

Some left due to mandate issues, but the post-August 5 split was different. When lives are at risk and legal notices are served, it's challenging to retain members. I was jailed for three years on NIA charges related to terrorism, which affected many.

What's your assessment of the ongoing assembly polls?

I won't give specific numbers, but the PDP will play a key role in government formation. Just like in 2002, we will surprise everyone and be crucial in deciding the next government in Jammu & Kashmir.

Would the PDP consider an alliance with BJP or NC if necessary for government formation?

The party will decide the next move. Mehbooba Ji's stance on the BJP is clear, and we will support those who share our interests and

values for Kashmir. (KNO)

Phase-III: 2.59 Lakh

and 121 rural polling stations. 16-Gurez Assembly Constituency comes last with 22,291 registered voters; 11,723 male and 10,568 female. To ensure a smooth electoral process, 31 rural polling stations have been established across the constituency.

The District Administration has completed all necessary preparations to ensure a fair and transparent election. Adequate measures have been taken to ensure accessibility, security and smooth operations at all polling stations across all constituencies.

As per the guidelines of the ECI, every polling station is equipped with required infrastructure and has taken measures to guarantee the safety and accessibility of voters, especially women, elderly voters, and persons with disabilities, to facilitate a hassle-free voting experience. Additionally, 12 model polling stations have been established across the district; one pink polling station, one green polling station, one blue polling station, and one red polling station in each AC.

Currently, a number of voter awareness programmes are underway in various parts of the district to generate interest among the electorate regarding the importance of exercising their franchise and to maximize the voter turnout.

The voting will take place from 7.00 am to 6.00 pm in the district.

HC Upholds

co-accused was involved in murder of

Wanchoo so as to create an imminent sense of terror in the minority community in Kashmir. Thereafter he was charged along with eleven more persons for offences under Section 302, 120-B RPC and Section 3 of the TADA Act by the Designated Court (under TADA Act, 1987), Jammu. Out of these twelve persons, four died and five others absconded, therefore, the Faktoo along with two other persons was put on trial. They were acquitted of the charges by the Designated Court in terms of judgment dated 14th July, 2001. However, the judgment was assailed by the investigating agency i.e. CBI before the Supreme Court by which on 30th January, 2003, allowed the appeal and the judgment of the Designated Court, Jammu, was set aside. Faktoo along with other accused were convicted of offences under Section 3 of TADA Act as well as Section 302 read 120-B RPC. Consequently they were sentenced to undergo life imprisonment. Faktoo has been in custody since 6th February, 1993.

In his plea before the division bench of the court, Faktoo challenged judgment dated 16 November 2012 passed by the Single Judge, whereby his petition seeking direction to release him from custody on the ground that he has completed more than 20 years in jail, was dismissed. However, the court held that imprisonment for life lasts until the last breath of the convict and that whatever the length of remissions earned, the prisoner can claim release only if the remaining sentence is remitted by the Government.

".....there is no manner of doubt in holding that imprisonment for life would, in all cases, mean imprisonment for natural life of a convict

and unless a part of the sentence is remitted by the appropriate authority in exercise of its constitutional powers under Article 72/161 of the Constitution of India or under Section 432 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the convict has to remain in prison for rest of his natural life," said a division bench of Justice Sanjay Dhar and Justice M. A. Chowdhary said in a 49-page judgment, adding, "He cannot claim his release from prison after undergoing 20 years imprisonment as a matter of right. It is only if the appropriate authority exercises its constitutional or statutory powers of remission in favour of the said life convict that he can be released."

Referring to Faktoo's contention that in view of the provisions contained in explanation to Section 3 of the J&K Prisoners Act and Para (46.18) of the Jail Manual, the life imprisonment has to be taken as imprisonment for 20 years, is concerned, the Division Bench said, "the same is without any merit because, as per explanation to Section 3 of the J&K Prisoners Act, the imprisonment for life has to be taken as sentence of imprisonment for 20 years only for the purposes of execution."

Similarly, the Division Bench said, as per (Para 46.18) of the Jail Manual, imprisonment for life has to be taken as sentence of imprisonment for 20 years only for administrative purposes.

The Single Judge, the Division Bench said, has dealt with this argument of Faktoo in para (17) of the 2012 judgment, "wherein it has been clearly stated that the provisions contained in Jail Manual, Prisons Act and Prisoners Act only lays down the provisions as to how to regulate and manage the prisoners in the prisons."

"We are in complete agreement with the view taken by the learned Single Judge on this aspect of the matter," the court said, adding, ".....imprisonment for life means imprisonment for the natural life of a convict."

The court also upheld the constitutional validity of Rule 54.1 of the J&K Jail Manual (now repealed) and Rule 20.10 of the J&K Prison Manual, 2022 and also dismissed separate plea filed Faktoo challenging the same.

The court also dismissed a plea by another convict, Nazir Ahmad Sheikh who was booked in FIR No.105/1990 for offences under Section 302 of RPC, 3(2) of TADA(P) Act. It has been alleged that the said Sheikh along with other co-accused, were involved in the murder of a BSF personnel, namely, Dharamveer Sharma in 1990 "with a view to spread terror in the Valley amongst the security forces."

Sheikh along with two other co-accused was convicted of offences under Section 302 RPC, 3(2)(i) and 4 of TADA Act and 7/27 Arms Act and sentenced to imprisonment for life.

Meanwhile, the division bench of the court said that it shall be open to the competent constitutional authorities to consider the cases of the petitioners--Faktoo and Sheikh--for grant of remission in exercise of their powers under Articles 72 and 161 of the Constitution of India.

The Division Bench passed the direction after noting that the Constitution of India under Article 72 confers power upon the President to grant pardons and to suspend, remit or commute sentences in certain cases. Similarly, Article 161 of the Constitution vests power with the Governor to grant pardon and to suspend, remit or commute sentences in certain cases.

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J&K Netizens Targeted By Cyber Thugs, Cyber Police Issues Advisory



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Cyber criminals in Jammu and Kashmir are employing new tactics to dupe unsuspecting citizens by sending out fake QR codes in the name of popular shopping app Meesho. Police have issued an urgent advisory, warning the public to remain vigilant against these fraudulent schemes. The scammers are luring victims with promises of luxurious gifts such as cars and expensive items, only to hack their phones once the given QR code is scanned. Cyber criminals target individuals by sending fake coupons to their phones, disguised as offers from Meesho. These coupons claim to reward recipients with expensive items like cars. Victims are asked to "scratch" the virtual coupon, which reveals a supposed prize. To claim it, they are instructed to scan a QR code. However, once the QR code is scanned, the scammers gain access to personal information and documents stored on the device. In addition to these fake coupon

scams, the fraudsters are also targeting individuals by offering fake online investments, further exploiting their stolen data. In response to the rising cases of cyber fraud, the Police Cyber Cell has issued a detailed advisory. The advisory stresses upon the need to avoid scanning unknown QR codes, warns against engaging with suspicious offers, and urges people to protect their personal information such as passwords and PIN codes. It also reminds residents that if they encounter or fall victim to such scams, they should immediately report the incident to the Cyber Police Station or call the helpline number 1930. Police have made it clear that by rejecting unsolicited coupons, avoiding suspicious QR codes, and not sharing sensitive information, people can protect themselves from becoming victims of these evolving cyber-crime tactics. The police urge everyone to remain alert and report any fraudulent activities as soon as possible to prevent further incidents—(KNO)

Progress On PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana Reviewed



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Friday reviewed the progress on PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and solarization of government buildings with senior officers of Science and Technology Department at Civil Secretariat, Jammu. Present in the meeting were Principal Secretary, PDD, Principal Secretary, Finance, Commissioner Secretary, Science & Technology, MD JPDCL/KPDCL, Executive Director, JKSPDCL, CPM REC, Chief Engineers and other concerned officers in person and through virtual mode. The Commissioner Secretary S&T, briefed about the present status and steps being taken to complete targets of PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana. MDs of DISCOMS also briefed the chair about the physical and financial progress achieved, so far, in implementation of this scheme.

The issues which came up for discussion included present status of applications, implementation plan, progress on RTS installations, district wise status of applications received by JPDCL/KPDCL, financial facilitation for PMSG-MBY (subsidized loan facility for consumers), milestones achieved in RTS process, challenges faced by the consumers, vendors and DISCOMS as well. The Chief Secretary asked the senior officers of concerned departments to expedite the process on already received applications and sort out issues for its smooth implementation. On the occasion, other physical and financial issues were also discussed including implementation strategy CAPEX/RESCO model of implementation, capacity of all government buildings identified across the UT and their distribution as per the implementation plan devised by the Department.

CS Reviews Status Of High Speed Internet Connectivity In Far-Flung Areas

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Friday chaired a meeting of the State Broadband Committee of Jammu Kashmir at Civil Secretariat Jammu. Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) IT, Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary, PDD, H. Rajesh Prasad, Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, Mandeep Kaur, Secretary, PWD, Bhupinder Kumar, CGM BSNL, Saurabh Tyagi and other concerned officers of allied departments attended the meeting. The ACS and other senior officers briefed the meeting about the working of SBC and action taken to properly implement the project in letter and spirit. The meeting discussed various issues including State RoW portal issues, RoW clearance, 4G saturation project being executed by BSNL, 5G saturation plan, Call Before U Dig (CBUD), Composite billing scheme and other matters. While taking a comprehensive review of the ongoing brandboard mission, the Chief

Secretary detailed about the objectives of the project. The Chief Secretary asked the concerning officers and agency to expedite the process to clear all requisite formalities to complete the broadband mission timely in every designated area of the UT. He assured the telecom company of full cooperation and all possible assistance on part of the UT government for execution of its programmes. He asked for carrying out a joint survey by the RDD and BSNL to assess the readiness of all the Panchayats for installation of OFC and functionality for VSATs provided earlier. In a presentation, the BSNL gave an overview of detailed performances made by the company regarding the works undertaken under the broadband mission. It was also apprised that the objective of the mission is to bridge the digital divide for empowerment, inclusion of all besides providing affordable and universal access to broadband to the shadow areas of the UT.

All Set For PM Modi's Rally In Jammu At Maulana Azad Stadium

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to arrive in Jammu to lead a highly anticipated Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) rally at the iconic Maulana Azad Stadium. This event is expected to be a pivotal moment in the party's campaign as the region approaches the final phase of elections. Security has been significantly heightened in Jammu ahead of the Prime Minister's visit. The stadium has been sealed off, with security forces conducting multiple rounds of checks to ensure the safety of all attendees during the VVIP event. Additional barricades and checkpoints have been set up in and around the venue. "We are leaving no stone unturned when it comes to security. Every measure is being taken to ensure the event runs smoothly," said a senior police official involved in the preparations. The BJP is banking on this rally to mobilize voters, espe-



cially in the Jammu district, which is seen as a key battleground in the final phase of polling scheduled for October 1. Constituencies such as Jammu East, Nagrota, Bishnah, and R.S. Pura, traditionally BJP strongholds, are critical for the party's ambitions of securing a decisive win. BJP leaders have expressed confidence that Prime Minister Modi's presence will energize their voter base and give the party the final boost it needs to succeed in the upcoming polls. "There's immense excitement on the

ground. People are eager to hear the Prime Minister, and we believe this rally will be a show of strength for us in Jammu," said a local BJP leader. The rally is expected to draw large crowds, with party organizers anticipating a turnout in the thousands. "The energy from the first two phases of polling has been incredible. We are confident that PM Modi's address will inspire even more voters to come out and support us in this crucial phase," added another senior BJP official. Jammu district, with its over 12 lakh eligible voters, is seen as a crucial region for the BJP's electoral strategy. The party hopes to consolidate its position in the area, with a strong push in the final leg of the election. With heightened security and the importance of this event in the BJP's election strategy, all eyes will be on Maulana Azad Stadium as Prime Minister Modi takes the stage.

In Kashmir's Newest Assembly Segment, Traditional Arch-Rivals To Lock Horns

Agencies

KUPWARA: The newly carved out seat of Trehgam in district Kupwara is set to witness a direct fight between Peoples Conference and National Conference. Spread over parts of Kralpora, Trehgam, Keran and Kupwara tehsils, this seat was the lone new seat carved out in Kashmir region during the re-organization of J&K's electoral map by a three-member delimitation commission headed by Justice (retired) Ranjana Desai. With a voter population of more than 78000, this seat is set to witness a direct fight between PC and National Conference. While PC has fielded former

MLA Bashir Ahmad Dar as its candidate, NC has chosen former minister Mir Saifullah as its nominee. According to political observers, there would be a direct contest between PC and NC, even as candidates from other parties are also in the fray. "Both these parties have a traditional support base in the segment," they said. Citing previous elections, they said, PC has an edge over National Conference in Kralpora tehsil which is native place of late Abdul Gani Lone. According to them, PDP candidate Muhammad Afzal (a contractor by profession) and Apni Party candidate Dr. Nooruddin Shah could also

get sizeable chunk of votes in Trehgam tehsil of the segment. Er. Rashid's Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) has fielded Nazir Ahmad Mir, a former bureaucrat, as its candidate. His father late Gulam Qadir Mir was a junior minister in National Conference government in 1977. According to observers, it would be interesting to watch whether he would dent the prospects of the National Conference in the segment. "He comes from a family of traditional NC supporters and political rivals of late Abdul Gani Lone. It would be keenly observed whether his candidate would have any impact on NC vote bank," they said—(KNO)

NC Responsible For Kashmir's Turmoil, Bloodshed: Mehbooba Mufti

Agencies

SRINAGAR: People's Democratic Party (PDP) President Mehbooba Mufti on Friday accused the National Conference (NC) of being responsible for Kashmir's political instability and the bloodshed that followed the 1987 elections. Addressing a gathering in Palhallan, Mufti, claimed that NC's actions, driven by "greed for power", led to election rigging that imprisoned leaders like Yasin Malik and Syed Salauddin and ultimately pushing many towards militancy. "Their lust for the chair in 1987 has left our mothers and sisters mourning at graveyards," she said. The PDP chief held NC responsible for the split of the



People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), which aimed to present a united political front in Kashmir following the abrogation of Article 370. Highlighting her party's achievements during its tenure with NC, Mehbooba mentioned "milestones" such as reopening the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road, dismantling "oppressive" forces like the task force and POTA, and facilitating dialogue between Hurriyat, the Government of India and Pakistan. In a direct challenge to NC vice president Omar Abdullah, Mufti said, "Let Omar present the record of his five years with the BJP, and I will present mine from just two years."—(KNO)

Omar Abdullah Addresses Series Of Election Rallies In Jammu

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah on Friday sought a decisive mandate for the alliance candidates in Jammu. He made these comments while addressing a series of public rallies in Jammu North, Udhampur East, Vijaypur Assembly constituencies. The events were organised by the party's contesting candidates Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, Sunil Verma and Rajesh Pargotra. He was accompanied by party Treasurer Shammii Oberoi, PP Rattan Lal Gupta, Babu Rampal and others. In his address he said, "From opening up Jammu to big retail players thereby pushing small traders to the wall, to the mounting daily issues of inflation, unemployment, toll plaza fees, power tariff hikes, ration curtailment, and the crumbling Dogra heritage sites, the people of Jammu have witnessed BJP years with their own eyes," adding, "The reason for joining forces with the Congress was to establish a united front against the BJP and prevent the splitting of votes. With the grace of God, the alliance will form the government after October 8th." Taking a dig at the normalcy claims



of BJP government, Omar said, "BJP should first answer why militancy is spreading to Jammu region post 2019, especially in the last three years when its graph went up. There is not a single place in Jammu where terror attacks have not taken place — whether it is Chenab valley, Pir Panjal region, Reasi, Kathua, Udhampur, Jammu and Samba...this reflects their [BJP government's] failure and the party should accept it and seek forgiveness from the people." He further added, "The BJP does not talk in one voice. If we are responsible, then why are they not talking to Pakistan? You are blaming us for the militancy thereby giving a clean chit to Pakistan. They are making contradictory statements and talking in different tones to mislead the public," he said.

Aru Wins Best Tourism Villages Award 2024



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Union Ministry of Tourism today announced Aru village, part of Pahalgam in Anantnag, as one of the winners of prestigious 'Best Tourism Villages of India' award. The announcement was made on the occasion of World Tourism Day. Introduced in 2023, the Best Tourism Villages Competition aims to identify and recognize villages that preserve and promote their cultural and natural heritage through community based values and sustainable practices. In the second edition of the competition, a total of 991 ap-

plications were received from 30 States and Union Territories. After a rigorous evaluation process, 36 villages were selected as winners across eight categories. Aru village was declared Best Tourism Village in the "Adventure Tourism Category". Recently, it has been noted for its unique blend of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and community-based tourism initiatives. The recognition of Aru village as a 'Best Tourism Village of India' is a testament to its efforts in preserving and promoting its cultural and natural assets. It is expected to further boost tourism in the region and contribute to the local economy.

SVEEP: Mega Voter Awareness Drive Held At Wetland Reserve Hygam

Observer News Service

BARAMULLA: In an effort to boost public participation in the Assembly elections in district Baramulla, the District Election Office Baramulla, on Friday, organized a Mega Voter Awareness programme under the SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) at the Wetland Reserve in Hygam Baramulla. The event was presided over by the District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, along with Superintendent of Police Sopore, Divya Dev, and was attended by the Nodal Officer SVEEP, Shabir Ahmad, other officers, officials, a large gathering of first time voters, and local residents. The program commenced with the formation of the human chain, which witnessed the enthusiastic participation of hundreds of new voters who came together and joined hands, symbolizing unity and commitment towards a vibrant democratic process. The DEO, accompanied by the SP Sopore, led an enthusiastic voter rally, attended by hundreds of first-time vot-

ers, students, and community leaders, all of whom marched through the streets of Hygam with energy, showcasing their commitment to exercising their democratic rights and encouraging others to do the same. A vibrant array of cultural programs followed the rally at the Wetland Reserve Hygam, with students and new voters enthusiastically performing on election-centric themes, all aiming to promote enhanced electoral literacy. During the event, the DEO along with other participants planted saplings at the wetland to promote greener elections. The participants also took a solemn pledge to actively participate in the elections by casting their votes on Election Day. Speaking on the occasion, Minga Sherpa stressed the importance of such awareness programs in ensuring that every eligible voter understands their responsibility and the power of their vote. Meanwhile, the DEO urged all participants, particularly the first-time voters, to come out and vote on October 1st, the day district Baramulla goes to the polls.

JAMMU: Mega SVEEP Campaign Mobilizes 800,000 Participants In Single Day

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The District Election Office Jammu organized a unique and comprehensive voter awareness campaign featuring over 8,000 events, and a participation of over 800,000 individuals, all within a single day. Held under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program ahead of Phase 3 polling in Jammu district, and spearheaded by Sachin Kumar Vaishya, District Election Officer (DEO), the initiative was one of the most widespread electoral awareness campaigns in the region. The events, organised across the district at all district offices, sectoral offices, sub-offices, polling stations, and in all the educational institutions including University of Jammu, Colleges, and schools, were designed to educate, encourage and em-

power the electorate, focusing especially on new voters, ensuring they understand the importance of their participation in the democratic process. One of the highlights of the campaign was rallies taken out by various colleges including Women's College Parade, SPRM College, Science College, MAM College, Women's College Gandhi Nagar, Polytechnic College, GCOE, GDC Paloura, GDC Kunjwani, which after passing through different routes, culminated at Jammu University. Two rallies, from MAM College and SPRM College, we're flagged off by DEO Jammu. At General Zorawar Singh Auditorium, a special event was organized where DEO Jammu interacted with the first-time voters, urging them to not only vote but also to ask their families and peers to participate actively in the festival of democracy.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-AUCTION NOTICE		
The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Firozpur for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Auction from eligible and registered bidders for the following works over Firozpur Division.		
Catalogue No.	Auction Start date/time	Name of work
EAZR-SLR24-57	11.10.24 at 11:00 Hrs	Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 12550/F1, 12904/F1, 14662/R1, 14662/F1, 16788/F1 & 14610/F1.
EAZR-SLR24-58	14.10.24 at 11:00 Hrs	Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 12484/F1, 19108/F1, 14606/F1, 22432/F1, 20986/F1, 22402/F1, 11906/R1, 22942/F1, 19614/F1, 19226/F1, 11906/F1, 14616/F1 & 19226/R1.
EAZR-SLR24-59	15.10.24 at 11:00 Hrs	Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 12428/F1, 12422/F1, 12470/F1, 12752/F1, 11450/F1, 19612/F1, 12414/F1, 12476/F1, 12478/F1, 14632/F1, 14632/R1, 19028/F1 & 14612/F1.
EAZR-OH24-13	08.10.24 at 11:00 Hrs	1) Allotment of contract for Commercial Advertisement rights on exterior of Overhead of Water Tanks at Sujapur, Sahnawal, Bari Brahmana, Pathankot, Jalandhar City, Jammu Tawi, Amritsar, Baramulla, Sopur, Budgam, Srinagar, Anantnag, Qazigund & Banihal, Railway Station. 2) Allotment of contract for Commercial publicity rights through static media at level crossings adjoining to Jaintipura, China, Verka Patti, Batala, Bhagatwala, Naskodar, SAMBA & Makhru Railway Station.
EAZR-PRK24-6	10.10.2024 12:30 Hrs	Allotment of Parking lot (Mixed) on contract at Hiranagar Railway station.
For other details and registration, please visit Railway website www.irps.gov.in		
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Akash Deep, Ashwin Keep India Ahead On Rain-Hit Day 1 Of Kanpur Test

Press Trust of India

KANPUR: Pacer Akash Deep was impressive in a probing opening spell while Ravichandran Ashwin removed the dangerous Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto before rain halted India's progress in the second Test on the opening day, here on Friday.

Given the forecast, it was expected to be a weather-hit contest from the beginning. Only 35 overs could be bowled after Rohit Sharma invited Bangladesh to bat in overcast conditions as visitors struggled to 107 for three after a brief resistance through Shanto (31).

Mominul Haque (40 batting) and veteran Mushfiqur Rahim (6) were at the crease when heavens opened up.

Overnight rain had delayed the start of the match by an hour. Heavy overcast conditions influenced India's team selection as the hosts kept all three pacers from the Chennai Test, which meant that local



boy Kuldeep Yadav missed out on another Test match.

Akash (2/14 in 10 overs), who bowled round the wicket to the left-handers, consistently hit the good length areas and got the ball to either shape away or

come in with the angle.

Shanto (57 balls, 4x6), though, batted with positive intent, if not combative, to ensure Bangladesh don't lose way from the start.

As expected, the initial

bounce and seam movement had openers Zakir Hasan and Shadman Islam playing in circumspect manner. Islam (24) worked the ball around but an overcautious Hasan (0) simply couldn't get going.

Jasprit Bumrah had the openers squared up as the away-going deliveries kept landing in Rishab Pant's gloves.

Mohammed Siraj induced edges that flew to the slip cordon but none carried to the fielders'. Shadman hit a couple of boundaries off Bumrah in a single over, the first was a flick off the pads, and the second was an uppish drive.

On the other side, Hasan consumed 23 dot balls and was yet to open his account.

Akash, who came in as a second-change, ended his misery by inducing an edge that flew to Yashasvi Jaiswal who went low on his right to grab the chance.

Akash soon sent back Shadman on a ball that came in and caught him in front of the wicket. The opener reviewed the decision but to no avail.

Shanto, who has been in good rhythm, began with two shots to the fence in a sort of statement that he won't get intimidated by the classy Indian bowlers.

Kashmir's Sajid Dar Proceeds To AFC Pro Diploma Final Module

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Kashmir Valley's top football coach Sajid Dar is in Saudi Arabia for the final module of AFC Pro Diploma Course. Sajid, the former head coach of Indian Senior National Women's Team, is among 14 coaches from India participating in the seven-day module, which began on Friday in Riyadh and will continue till October 3.

The All India Football Federation has named Vaithilingam Subramaniam as the lead coach educator, while Vivek Nagul is the assistant coach educator. The module includes Saudi Pro League match observation and analysis, professional club visits and interaction with SAFF officials, the AIFF said in a statement.



"The course began in August last year with Module 1 in Chandigarh, Module 2 in Kolkata, Module 3 in Chennai and Module 4 in Bengaluru," it added.

Meanwhile, the J&K Football Association hailed Sajid Dar, saying his "journey is a testament to his tireless dedication, exceptional leadership, and profound influence on the

football community both in J&K and beyond."

"His achievements not only bring glory to our region but also serve as an inspiration for aspiring football professionals everywhere."

An AIFF Coach and Educator, Sajid Dar currently works as the head football coach at University of Kashmir.

Kanpur: Bangladesh Fan Hospitalised After 'Falling Ill' In Stands

Press Trust of India

KANPUR: A well-known Bangladeshi cricket fan, who dresses as a tiger, had to be hospitalised after "falling ill" while watching the second Test against India at the Green Park Stadium here, an incident that he first indicated to be a case of physical assault.

Self-proclaimed super fan Robi, who is a regular in his team's games and is often seen on camera waving the Bangladeshi flag, was in stand C and had to be carried out of the stadium in a state of distress.

"He was gasping for breath when he met a constable. He became unconscious before we could speak to him, but now he is fine," Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Harish Chander told PTI.

During a brief interaction with me-



dia, Robi indicated that he had been punched in his abdomen during an altercation.

However, in a statement issued from his hospital bed later, he said he merely felt unwell and was given the requisite assistance by the local police.

"I fell ill and the police brought me to the hospital. Now I am feeling much better. My name is Robi and I have come from Bangladesh," he stated in a short video clip.

Kamindu Mendis Equals Bradman, Fastest To 1000 Runs In 75 Years

Agencies

GALLE: Sri Lankan all-rounder Kamindu Mendis has etched his name alongside the legendary Don Bradman, becoming the joint third-fastest player to reach 1000 Test runs.

Kamindu achieved the feat during the second Test match against New Zealand in Galle on Friday, completing 1000 runs in just 13 innings. This milestone makes him the fastest to reach it since 1949, tying with Bradman, who achieved the feat in 1930 against England.

Only two other players, England's Herbert Sutcliffe and West Indies' Everton Weekes, have reached the 1000-run milestone in fewer innings, both achieving it in just 12.

On reaching fifty, Kamindu also became the first player in history to score



a half century or more in each of his first eight Tests. He later brought up his fifth Test century and his second in successive matches.

Short TAKES

Indian Right-Wing Groups Demand Cancellation Of Kanpur Test

Activists from several right-wing groups held a protest on Friday at the Sadhbhavana Chauraha, about 1,500 metres from the Green Park stadium, the venue of the 2nd Test between India and Bangladesh, and demanded that the match, which began on Friday, be cancelled, police said.

Upon receiving information about the protest led by right-wing groups, including the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Bajrang Dal, police officials quickly mobilised.

A heavy police presence, led by Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Ankita Sharma, was dispatched to the site to prevent the demonstrators from advancing towards the stadium.

Senior officials also alerted the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) to maintain close surveillance and be prepared for any eventuality.

All-Female Match Officials Announced For Women's T20 World Cup

The ICC has announced a historic 13-member all-female panel of match officials for the Women's T20 World Cup, set to be held in the United Arab Emirates from October 3 to October 20.

Indian officials GS Lakshmi and Vrinda Rathi are part of this groundbreaking panel that includes three match referees and 10 umpires. Australian officials Eloise Sheridan and Lauren Agenbag of South Africa will officiate the high-profile India vs Pakistan match on October 6 at the Dubai International Stadium.

Windies, CSK Legend Dwayne Bravo 'Bids Farewell' To Cricket

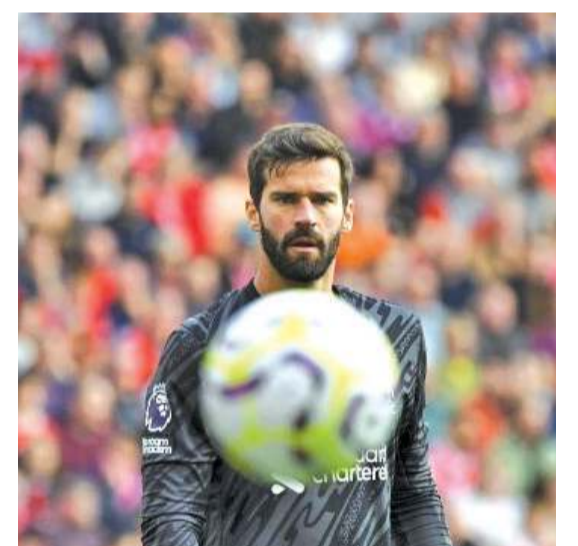
World Cup-winning West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket and will join IPL side Kolkata Knight Riders as a mentor.

The 40-year-old thus replaces Gautam Gambhir, who left the role to take over as India head coach earlier this year.

Bravo's last season of Caribbean Premier League was cut short due to an injury that he sustained earlier this week.

Bravo had stepped away from international cricket in 2021 while concluding his IPL career last year.

Goalie Alisson To Return From Injury For Liverpool In Premier League



Alisson Becker is ready to return from injury for Liverpool's trip to Premier League strugglers Wolves, manager Arne Slot said on Friday.

The first-choice goalkeeper has missed the past two games, with Caoimhin Kelleher deputising, but Slot said the Brazilian was in line to play on Saturday.

Liverpool are second in the Premier League, just one point behind champions Manchester City, with four wins from their first five matches.

Downtown Heroes Play Keinou In I-League 3 Playoffs Today

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Downtown Heroes FC will take on Keinou Library & Sports Association on Saturday in Game 2 of their 2024-25 I-League 3 Playoffs at Naihathi Stadium in Kolkata, West Bengal. The Heroes lost 3-1 to SESA Football Academy in their opening match on Thursday.

Downtown vs. Keinou is set to



kick off at 9:00 AM. The game can be watched live on the Indian Football YouTube channel.

It's a must-win game for Ajaz Ahmed Bhat-coached Downtown Heroes. Only the top two Group A teams will be promoted to I-League 2, and having lost the opener, the Heroes will need to win all their remaining three matchups to stay in contention.

Madrid Likely To Replace Injured Mbappé For Derby At Atletico

Agencies

MADRID: Kylian Mbappé is expected to miss his first big domestic match since joining Real Madrid when the defending champion plays at Atletico Madrid without its injured striker in La Liga on Sunday.

Mbappé will be sidelined for an unspecified period after he hurt a hamstring, the club said this week. His injury came after the France star scored his seventh goal this season for Madrid in a win over Alavés.

Manager Carlo Ancelotti will have to make a choice to fill the void left by the club's biggest blockbuster signing since Cristiano Ronaldo over a decade ago. The Italian coach could maintain his three-strong attacking line if he opts to give fellow newcomer Endrick his first start.

The explosive 18-year-old has already impressed with two goals in a handful of appearances as a late



substitute that have totaled only 47 minutes. Endrick could line up alongside fellow Brazilians Vinicius Júnior and Rodrigo.

The other option for Ancelotti would be to go back to the 4-4-2 setup that won the league and Champions League last year, with the

exception of the now retired Toni Kroos.

That would mean adding another midfielder from among Luka Modric, Eduardo Camavinga, or Arda Guler to play alongside expected starters Jude Bellingham, Federico Valverde and Aurélien Tchouaméni.

"I don't know if (Mbappé) is going to play or not, but they have several good players to turn to," Atletico goalkeeper Jan Oblak said. "Whoever plays will play well and want to win as much as we do."

Atletico was the only team to beat Madrid last season in its domestic title march. Diego Simeone's side won its home derby 3-1 and earned a 1-1 draw at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Madrid is in second place in the league standings at four points behind Barcelona, which has a perfect 21 points after winning all seven games since Hansi Flick took over as coach.

Atletico is third, two points behind Madrid after new arrival Julián Alvarez scored a 90th-minute goal to eke out a 1-0 victory at Celta Vigo on Wednesday. That goal could help Alvarez make the starting 11 alongside the untouchable Antoine Griezmann for the derby.

Spurs To Take Late Call On Son For Manchester United Clash

Agencies

LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur captain Son Heung-min is a doubt for their trip to Manchester United after he came off early in their midweek Europa League clash, manager Ange Postecoglou said on Friday.

Son looked in discomfort in the second half of their 3-0 home win over Qarabag on Thursday and was taken off after receiving treatment, with Postecoglou saying after the game that the 32-year-old forward was fatigued.

He has been a key player for Spurs early in the season with two goals and two assists, and Postecoglou said they will assess him ahead of Sunday's trip to Old Trafford.

"It's still early days from last night. Fair to say the boys that put in a shift are fairly tired," Postecoglou said.

"Apart from Sonny, everyone's ok, but I don't think it's too bad (with



Son). He wants to train tomorrow so we'll see how he goes at training and make a decision from there. We have another day up our sleeve to give him every chance."

Son is in the final year of his contract and Postecoglou said he wants the South Korean forward, who joined the club in 2015, to extend his stay with the north London side with whom he has scored 164 goals.

"I don't have the final say

but my input is significant. The way he's performing and leading the club I want him to stick around for a while," the manager said.

Spurs held United to a draw at Old Trafford last season and Postecoglou said he was looking forward to playing there again, adding there was no fear factor of playing at the iconic stadium.

"I've never been scared of a venue... What makes venues unique is the at-

mosphere and when we played there last year it was brilliant," he said.

"The supporters got behind their club - I'm not sure if that's changed. It's a great stadium with the history and tradition behind it. It's a game players and managers get excited about."

His United counterpart Erik ten Hag has been under pressure to deliver results but Postecoglou said the Dutchman had done a "great job" despite the criticism.