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J&K Set To Hold Panchayat Elections By Year-End

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir is gearing up for Panchayat and urban body elections by December, following the conclusion of the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls.

Officials have confirmed to a Delhi based media outlet that security forces deployed during these earlier elections will remain in place to ensure peaceful conduct of the upcoming polls.

"Preparations are now underway for the Panchayat and urban body elections in J&K. For this purpose, security forces deployed to ensure the peaceful conduct of the Assembly elections will remain in J&K until the municipal and panchayat elections are completed," said an official.

The terms of the municipal corporations in Jammu and Srinagar expired last November, making the elections long overdue. The government is prioritizing the completion of these elections to fulfill legal requirements and restore local governance. | More on P6

J&K Records 63.88% Total Voter Turnout

Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a strong voter turnout of 63.88% across the entire election cycle, as against 58.58 per cent in the Lok Sabha polls, the Election Commission of India (ECI) said on Thursday. In phase-3 of the polls on October 1, when 40 seats went for voting in the Union Territory, the turnout of male | More on P6

Will Soon Crack Terrorists' Encrypted Handsets: GoC

Observer News Service

Srinagar: General officer Commanding (GoC) of army's Srinagar based 15 Corps Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai Thursday said the Army would soon be "able to crack" encrypted handsets used by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir.

Talking to reporters here, Lt Gen Ghai acknowledged that the 'Ultra' communication was giving secrecy to terror groups but he assured that the work is in progress.

"Ultra communication has various layers of encryption and while presently, it is affording them the secrecy that they want.

"But I assure you that work is happening in that regard and soon we will be able to crack that encryption and I am hoping that will further dent the terrorist ecosystem network," Lt Gen Ghai said in his last press conference as commander of valley-based XV Corps. He will soon take over as Director General of Military



Operations.

To a question about weaponization of mobile phones used in Israel-Lebanon conflict, he said, "Every time a new method is employed by any military force across the world, we always take note of it to draw our own lessons, so we can incorporate what is relevant to us and prepare our army and armed forces accordingly."

He added that the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir

are closely monitoring the situation in West Asia to ensure there is no adverse impact on the security scenario in the Union territory, he said.

"Regarding the ongoing global conflicts, such as those in the Middle East, and their potential impact, we have observed some minor effects. There have been some protests even within the valley. Right now, we have no indication that these could escalate into a more concerning



SECURITY FORCES IN J&K ARE CLOSELY MONITORING THE SITUATION IN WEST ASIA to ensure there is no adverse impact on the security scenario in the Union territory."

situation," Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai, General Officer Commanding (GoC) of the Army's strategic Srinagar-based Chinar Corps, told reporters.

He, however, said these conflicts are becoming increasingly intense as the time goes on.

"We will continue to closely monitor the situation to ensure that none of them have an adverse impact on the security situation in our region," Lt Gen Ghai added.

The Ultra sets were

recovered from some of the encounters in the Kashmir valley.

These specialised handsets, exclusively customised by Chinese companies for the Pakistan army, were seized after a gunfight in the intervening night of July 17-18 last year in the Sindarrah top area of Surankote in Jammu region's Poonch district and on April 26 this year after an encounter at the Check Mohalla Nowpora area of Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

The 'Ultra' handsets, which have also been found in the south of the Pir Panjal region, combine cell-phone capabilities with specialised radio equipment that does not rely on traditional mobile technologies like Global System for Mobile or Code-Division Multiple Access (CDMA).

The device operates on radio waves for message transmission and reception, with each 'Ultra' set linked to a control station located across the border, officials said and added that the two | More on P6

Iran Leader's Rare Friday Prayer Appearance Sparks Buzz



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Three days after Iran stunned the world by launching a massive missile strike on Israel, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei has announced that he will be personally leading weekly congregational prayers in Tehran this Friday.

The leader will be appearing in public after several Western media outlets reported that Ayatollah Khamenei has been transferred to a "secure location with increased security measures" following Israel's assassination of Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyad Hassan Nasrallah on September 27 and subsequent Iranian retaliation against Israel.

Sayyed Khamenei will be leading Friday prayers at Imam Khomeini Mosalla in suburban Tehran and his sermon is anticipated to set the tone for Iran's future strategy against Israel. Ayatollah leads Friday prayers only under extraordinary circumstances, the last time was 2020 after American assassination of Gen. Qassem Soleimani.

In Iran Friday prayers are an elaborate affair unlike in the rest of the Muslim | More on P6

'Terrorist Numbers Reduced To 80'

General officer Commanding (GoC) of army's Srinagar based 15 Corps Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai Thursday said that the security situation in Kashmir has shown a significant improvement over the past few years. The biggest challenge for the security agencies is to keep the situation intact as it is today. He also said that terrorism in Kashmir was in the last stage as only 80 terrorists were active at present. Addressing a press

conference, the out-going GoC 15 Corps Lt Gen Ghai said that the situation is considerably good in the region. "Terrorism is being fuelled from across the border and that's very much clear," he said. Lt Gen Ghai is heading for a new posting and he will be succeeded by Lt General Prashant Shrivastava on October 15. Replying to a query as to what was the biggest challenge in Kashmir, the army officer said that Kashmir has seen a good | More on P6

Game-Changer In J&K Polls? 5 Nominated MLAs To Hold Key To Govt Formation

Agencies

Srinagar: For the first time in Jammu and Kashmir's political history, five nominated Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) will have a significant role in forming the new government following a decade-long hiatus.

These MLAs, representing Kashmiri displaced persons and those from Pakistan-Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (POJK), will hold full legislative powers and privileges, just like elected representatives.

As per the details, among the five, two will be Kashmiri displaced members—one woman and one man—while one will represent the POJK displaced community.

This will be a milestone in terms of representation for these communities, as their inclusion in the legislative assembly has been a longstanding

demand.

With this new arrangement, the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly will expand to 95 members, including the five nominated ones, increasing the majority threshold to 48 seats to form a government.

The Lieutenant Governor will nominate these members based on the advice of the Home Ministry. This process follows an amendment to the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019, which was further revised on July 26, 2023, to introduce these nominations.

Political experts said that the system mirrors the legislative structure of Pondicherry, where four nominated members already exist. However, this step has been taken in Jammu and Kashmir following the abolishment of the Legislative Council | More on P6

'Leave Nominations To New J&K Govt'

The Congress party has vehemently opposed the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's attempt to secure the nomination of five leaders to the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly from the Lieutenant Governor prior to the formation of a new government. "Such a move is undemocratic and contrary to the people's mandate," the party said, urging the LG to refrain from taking any | More on P6

Climate Change Woes: Kashmir's Apple Production Drops 30% For Second Year

Agencies

Srinagar: Apple production in Kashmir has plummeted by at least 30% for the second consecutive year due to climate change and erratic weather patterns.

Growers across the region said that a series of adverse weather conditions during the critical fruit set season led to a huge drop in their yields.

Farmers said that March was characterised by dry, high temperatures, followed by a wet, cool April and a prolonged dry spell that adversely affected fruit production.

These erratic conditions disrupted essential spray schedules and led to outbreaks of scab and other diseases which further diminished an already low harvest, they said, adding that recent hailstorms and the prevalence of leaf miners have severely impacted both the quantity and quality of apple production.

Irshad Ahmad, a grower from Anantnag district, said that in some areas, production has dropped to just 70% of last year's yield.

Jahangir Ahmad Dar, a fruit



grower from Watchi Shopian, reported a drastic decline in his harvest. "I went from around 1,200 apple boxes last year to barely 300 this year," he said.

He explained that many marginal farmers are struggling to cover the costs of pesticides and fertilizers, particularly since more expensive treatments were necessary to

combat diseases. After years of challenges, including untimely snowfall and hailstorms, growers had hoped for better returns this year, but those hopes have been dashed.

Recent hail storms in south Kashmir have caused huge damage to apple crops, compelling growers to call for

immediate government action, including the implementation of a crop insurance scheme to mitigate their losses.

Bashir Ahmad Bashir, president of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers and Dealers Association, confirmed that overall production has decreased by approximately 30% this year | More on P6

New Haircuts, Same Streets: Homeless People Return To Life On The Pavement

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: A few months ago, in the Nawakadal locality of Old City, a homeless man sat under the spotlight as camera lenses captured his transformation—a makeover that seemed to promise a fresh start. With every snip of the scissors, onlookers watched in hope, believing the change in his appearance might reflect a change within.

Days later, while his outward appearance may have been refreshed, the man has returned to the streets, highlighting that the deeper issues of homelessness and mental health do not change with a physical makeover.

Recently, an initiative swept across the streets of Srinagar and other districts in Kashmir. A team called Kashmir Youth Courage (KYC), led by Musadiq Bashir, embarked on a mission to offer haircuts, shaves, and clean clothes to the homeless



population. The team, composed of young volunteers, received widespread praise on social media for their efforts to help those who have been living in destitution, often neglected and left to fend for themselves. The sight of unkempt hair, overgrown beards, and ragged clothes was replaced by fresh

haircuts, shaven faces, and clean attire as the KYC team worked tirelessly to give the homeless a temporary makeover. However, this initiative has sparked significant debate within the medical community, particularly among psychiatrists and psychologists, who caution that it is not a solution

to the deeper, more complex issues faced by these individuals. Experts argue that without proper mental health care, rehabilitation services, and ongoing support, the homeless will continue to return to the streets, regardless of how they look.

Speaking to Kashmir Observer, Dr. Yasir Rather, a

professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS), GMC Srinagar, noted that homeless individuals often suffer from chronic mental health disorders such as psychosis, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia.

"A mere haircut cannot change years of mental illness. While these efforts may make them look better temporarily, they do nothing to address the underlying mental health conditions that led to their homelessness in the first place," Dr Yasir said.

He further said that they need proper rehabilitation where they have access to all the facilities including food, accommodation and other such things, which is not being done.

Similar views have been echoed by other mental health professionals. Pointing out that there are already reports of individuals | More on P6

No Need To Criminalise Marital Rape: Centre To SC Says It May Destroy Institution Of Marriage

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Union government has cautioned the Supreme Court against the "far-reaching socio-legal implications" of criminalising marital rape, urging the court to adopt a comprehensive approach that goes beyond a strictly legal framework. In an affidavit submitted to the apex court, the Centre contended that any judicial review on the issue should acknowledge the broader social consequences and the stance of Parliament.

If sexual acts by a man with his own wife is made punishable as "rape", it may severely

impact the conjugal relationship and lead to serious disturbances in the institution of marriage, the Centre has told the Supreme Court.

Opposing the criminalisation of marital rape, which is sought by many petitioners before the apex court, the Centre has filed its preliminary counter affidavit in the top court.

The apex court is seized of petitions raising the vexed legal question of whether a husband should enjoy immunity from prosecution for the offence of rape if he forces his wife, who is not a minor, to have sex.

Under the exception clause of Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), | More on P6



Researchers Link Climate Shocks With Increased Domestic Violence

Press Trust Of India

Climate shocks such as floods and landslides are likely to lead to an increased domestic violence over the next two years, researchers, who analysed survey data from 156 countries between 1993 and 2019, have found. As global warming intensifies, the researchers, led by those at the University College London, UK, urged countries to include funds and gender action plans in climate mitigation to address this issue, even as they said the climate shock-violence link remains complex and challenging to discern in a manner understandable to policymakers. The team did, however, add that domestic violence was increasingly prevalent and severe, especially in countries having patriarchal societies where violence against women is considered acceptable. Violence rates were found to be low in countries having a higher Gross Domestic Product. The analysis, published in the journal PLoS Climate, is the first to provide evidence of how climate shocks can influence national rates of physical and sexual intimate partner, or domestic, violence, the authors said. It also adds to global evidence regarding the social impacts of climate shocks, which can often be felt long after the events, thereby building a case for policymaking and action, they said.



"All of this happens more often and with increased severity in countries that have patriarchal gender norms and where the use of violence against women is widely accepted as normal behaviour," lead author Jenevieve Mannell, from the University College London's Institute for Global Health, said. "Climate-related disasters increase

stress and food insecurity in families in ways that can lead to increases in violence. They also reduce the social services often available for dealing with partner violence, such as police and civil society who are more focused on the disaster," Mannell said. Previous studies have found that rising heat and humidity increases aggressive behaviour.

"We set out to explore what was happening at a national level to help inform international climate change policy," Mannell said. The researchers also included climate shocks data -- floods, storms, landslides, extreme temperatures, droughts, earthquakes, volcanoes, wildfires -- from 1920 to 2022 across 190 countries in their analysis. Floods were found to be the most strongly linked with domestic violence, followed by storms and landslides. Earthquakes, volcanoes, and wildfires, on the other hand, were found to not influence violence rates. "National data representing 156 countries suggest a significant relationship between intimate partner violence and a climate factor composed of storms, landslides and floods," the authors wrote. The researchers said they could not assess as to why certain kinds of climate shocks impacted intimate partner violence more than others. They proposed that varied types of climate shocks can take different times before showing their effects on violence against women, which they said could possibly not be captured within the two-year window of the study period. Therefore, they called for more regular data collection by countries for measuring domestic violence in the context of climate change.

'Housing Sales Rise 5% To 87,108 Units Across Top 8 Cities In Jul-Sep'

Press Trust Of India

Housing sales rose 5 per cent annually during July-September to 87,108 units in eight major cities as demand stayed strong for premium homes, according to Knight Frank India. Real estate consultant Knight Frank India on Thursday released its report 'India Real Estate' for the third quarter of 2024 calendar year through a webinar, showing a modest increase in housing sales in contrast to data provided by Anarock and PropEquity which reported drop in total sales during July-September across major cities. "Momentum in the residential market has trended up well in 2024 with Q3, 2024 recording the highest quarterly sales this year at 87,108 units," the report said. Addressing a virtual press conference, Knight Frank India CMD Shishir Bajjal said, the growth in housing sales is driven by demand for premium housing costing above Rs 1 crore each. "There are concern in affordable housing segment," Bajjal said, adding that sales in this category have declined due to availability and affordability challenges.

Life Expectancy In Men Could Rise By A Year On Cutting Down Smoking: Lancet

Press Trust Of India

Cutting down smoking to five per cent of current rates by 2050 would increase life expectancy by a year among men and 0.2 years in women, according to recent global modelling studies published in The Lancet Public Health journal. The researchers found that based on current trends, smoking rates around the world could continue to reduce to 21 per cent in men and about four per cent in women by 2050. Along with improving life expectancy, accelerating efforts to eliminate tobacco smoking could avoid 876 million years of lives lost to death, researchers forming the Global Burden of Disease, Injuries and Risk Factors (GBD) Tobacco Forecasting Collaborators said. They also found that banning sales of cigarettes and other tobacco products could prevent 1.2 million lung cancer

deaths across 185 countries by 2095. Of these deaths, nearly two-thirds would be averted in low- and middle-income countries, because they tend to have more younger populations compared to



high-income ones, the authors said. "We must not lose momentum in efforts to reduce, and ultimately eliminate smoking around the world. Our findings highlight that millions of premature deaths could be avoided by bringing an end to smoking," said senior author, Stein Emil Vollset, of the Institute for

Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), University of Washington, US, which coordinates the GBD study. The estimates regarding preventable deaths came from analysing how banning tobacco sales would impact lung cancer deaths among people born between 2006 and 2010. They also depict the potential effects of the tobacco-free generation policy, which aims to prevent the sale of tobacco to people born after a specific year. The policy has not been implemented in any country, the authors said. New Zealand's December 2022 legislation to ban the sale of tobacco products to anyone born in or after 2009 was repealed earlier this year. Along with maintaining existing tobacco policies, the authors called for implementing new ones to avoid additional smoking-related risk of disease and ensure that the gains made over the past decades are not lost.

Office Of Advocate Yakoob Hussain Sofi J&K High Court Srinagar
 Chamber No. 07 Munsiff/MFC At Magam
 Cell No. 9906517553, 9419068005

In the case of.
Rafeeq Ahmad Want So Gh Mohi Ud Wani R/o Lalpora Beerwah

...Caveators

Versus

PUBLIC AT LARGE

... Non-caveators

IN THE MATTER OF:
 Caveat Petition in terms of Section 148-A of C.P.C. The Caveators have reasons to believe/apprehension that non-Caveator (s) may file a suit/application/petition or any other type of proceedings before the Hon'ble High Court, District Courts, Revenue Courts or any other forum and may succeed in obtaining some relief/order at their back/ex-part against the caveators and in such eventuality, the caveators will be put to an irreparable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators may be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble Court before passing any order or direction.

bmj

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Lolpora) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Mohd Wasif Dar S/o Manzoor Ahmad Dar R/o Khanbiyar Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 24-07-2021 occurred at SDH Pattan

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan
 Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Lolpora) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Shaziya Mehmood D/o Mehmood Hussain Dar R/o Zadi Mohalla Rakh Dalsipora Tehsil Singhpora District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 24-07-2021 occurred at SDH Pattan

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class
 Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

Public Notice

The name of my son in his bank account details bearing ac. No: 0260040150008038 has been wrongly written as Tawqeer Aijaz while his correct name as per aadhaar is Aadil Aijaz Ahangar which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Branch Manager J&K Khore Sheratej within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Aijaz Ahmad Ahangar
 F/o Aadil Aijaz Ahangar
 R/o Barzulla Karhama Baramulla

bmj

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

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

Subject: NEET-PG 2024(MD/MS/PGD) online registration of eligible candidates of J&K / Ladakh for preparation of Provisional Merit List (PML)- Extension of last date thereof.

Reference: Notification No. 121-BOPEE of 2024 Dated: 27-09-2024.

Notice No. 024-BOPEE of 2024
 Dated: 02-10-2024.

In continuation to Notification No. 121-BOPEE of 2024 dated 27-09-2024, it is hereby notified for the information of all the concerned candidates that the Board has decided to extend the last date of online registration of all the eligible candidates of J&K/Ladakh for admission to NEET PG-2024 (MD/MS/PGD) upto 04-10-2024 (midnight).

The other Terms and Conditions shall remain the same as mentioned in e-Information Brochure / Notifications / Notices issued by the Board from time to time in this regard.

E & O E

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

DIPK-NB-1615/24
 dated: 03-10-2024

No. BOPEE/Exam-12/2024

Dated: 02.10.2024

از عدالت جوڈیشل مجسٹریٹ کولگام
با اجلاس محترمہ مہرین مشتاق

سرکار ملکہ 11 سال 2011

تھانہ پولیس: ہارہ لورہ

بجرام 420, 406 /RPC

حکم نام: بابکاران پولیس ریاست جموں و کشمیر

مقدم مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ملزمان

1. Muna Kumar S/O Sham Behari Chourisia
 R/O Bharti Gang Sasa Ram Bihar and
 2. Akil Ahmad Rain S/O Habibullah Rain R/O Chokhandi Sasa Ram Bihar

کے خلاف وارنٹ عام جاری کی جاتی ہے

لہذا وارنٹ ہذا کی رو سے تمام بابکاران پولیس جموں و کشمیر کو یکدم اختیار دیا جاتا ہے کہ وہ ملزمان متذکران کو جہاں کی بھی اور جب بھی از حدود UT جموں و کشمیر میں پائش توان کو گرفتاری کر کے عدالت ہذا میں پیش کریں۔ وارنٹ ہذا نامہ تالی ملزمان زیر کار ہے۔ وارنٹ آج دستخط و مہر عدالت اجرا ہوئی ہے

تحریر 13-09-2024

چیف جوڈیشل مجسٹریٹ کولگام

DIPK-5624/24 dated: 03-10-2024

از دفتر نائب تحصیلدار پٹن

عنوان:- درخواست منجانب بشیر احمدکار، وعابد احمدکار، ابرار احمدکار، معراج الدین کار، عسما اکبر اولادان محمد اکبر کار، ساکن پکی پورہ تحصیل پٹن، برادرا جرائی OBC تین خود ساکان

استیضار ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست بغرض OBC سرٹیفکیٹ بذمہ کار پیش کی ہے جو کہ زبردستی ہے اس بارے میں پٹن پولیس سٹیشن سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ساکن واقعی تہذبات سے تعلق رکھتا ہے اور ساکن یا کسی پورہ پٹن میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کسی بھی ترک سونٹ نہیں کی ہے ساکن کا کہنے پڑیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

محمد اکبر کار، محمدکار	زمینداری	65 سال
عنتی بیگم زویہ محمد اکبر	گھریلو کام	55 سال
بشیر احمدکار ولد۔	مزدوری	35 سال
معراج الدین۔	مزدوری	31 سال
عابد احمدکار۔	زیر تعلیم	25 سال
ابرار احمدکار۔	--	21 سال
عضو اکبر اختر۔	--	12 سال
جوہرہ بیگم زویہ بشیر احمدکار	گھریلو کام	33 سال
محمد علی کار، ولد بشیر احمد	شیر خواہ	01 سال

سائل مذکورہ OBC سرٹیفکیٹ حاصل کرنے کا خواہ ہے اور کہیں کی سالانہ آمدنی 8000 روپے تک ہے۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عزیار یا عزیار ہو تو وہ بعد مشورہ اخبار رسالت دن کے اندر آمد آئے ہے عزیار اعتراض و ادالت ہذا کو فٹری اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرنے بعد کوئی مذری اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار FKO

UPHC Lal Bazar, Batamaloo Awarded Quality Certification

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In recognition of the high standards of quality and performance maintained by the two Health Institutions of Srinagar District, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India has awarded Urban Primary Health Centre (UPHC) Lal Bazar and UPHC Batamaloo with the National Quality Assurance Standard (NQAS) Certification.

The parameters for the award included 24/7 mandatory service accessibility, availability of curative, preventive, and diagnostic services, implementation of safety measures in primary care facilities, hospital infection control, cleanliness and hygiene, safe and respectful maternity care, infrastructure and equipment availability, initiatives to reduce Maternal and Neonatal Mortality Rates, and increased patient satisfaction.

The UPHC Lal Bazar

underwent National Level External Assessment between 11 September to 12 September 2024, in all 12 departments and got 93.56 percent overall score.

Similarly, UPHC Batamaloo underwent external assessment on 13 September and 14 September, 2024 and obtained an overall score of 92.91 percent.

Speaking about the achievement, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat said that the sincere efforts and hard work put in by our dedicated staff of UPHCs of Lal Bazar and Batamaloo have been recognized.

The DC congratulated the CMO Srinagar and staff members of both the health facilities. He urged them to work with added zeal and dedication and treat patients in a compassionate way.

DC said this award has brought along more responsibilities on their shoulders to uphold high-quality standards at the health Institutions.

Khanqah-E-Hydari Hosts Naatiya Mushaira In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A Naatiya Mushaira was organized by Khanqah-e-Hydari, Ali Abad-Ashmuqam at Dalgate, Srinagar on the occasion of Milad-al-Nabi (SAW).

Dr. Muhammad Sameer Siddiqui, patron Khanqah-e-Hydari presided over the event.

The gathering was attended by a galaxy of guests, including Sajjad Haider, Chief Editor of Kashmir Observer; Farooq Ashaie, a prominent social activist; Gazanfar Shahbaz, a noted literary figure; Rukhsana Jabeen, a noted

poet and Syed Asif Raza, a well-known columnist.

The event was hosted by Dr. Rashid Maqbool, a senior journalist and media trainer.

A host of young poets from various parts of the valley paid rich tributes to the prophet of Islam (pbuh) through their poems and verses. The gathering also paid tributes to Hezbolah chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, reflecting the community's admiration, solidarity and respect for the slain leader.

The evening concluded with prayers, fostering a spirit of unity and reflection among all participants.

Sagar For Effective Arrangements On Urs Dastgir Sahab

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference General Secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar called for effective arrangements during the Ayyam-e-Mutabaruka of Urs Sharief Hazrat Sheikh Syed Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA) to be observed across the Kashmir division with traditional gaiety and fervor.

In order to ensure a smooth and successful event for devotees, Sagar emphasized the need for making ample arrangements to meet the requirements due to the increased footfall of devotees at the Dastagir Sahib shrine in Khanyar during the Urs days.

"It is crucial for both the administration and shrine management to step up and meet the requirements of devotees by providing the best facilities

possible to ensure a satisfying and hassle-free experience," he said.

Sagar has urged the divisional administration to issue necessary directives to all line departments, including the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), to ensure that all basic and effective amenities are provided to devotees during the Urs days at the shrine. "It is imperative that every effort is made to ensure the comfort and well-being of all visiting the holy shrine at Khanyar."

Meanwhile party leaders including Tanvir Sadiq, Shameema Firdous, Sheikh Rafi, Ahsan Pardesi have urged the divisional administration to ensure that all basic amenities are provided to devotees visiting Ziyarat Dastagir Sahib Saraibala, Asar-e-Sharief Pinjoora Shopian, and Ziyarat Sharief Rahbab Sahib.

Bukhari Extend Greetings

Srinagar: The Apni Party president Syed Muhammad Altaf Bukhari has congratulated the people, especially the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir, on the commencement of the annual Urs celebrations of Pir Dastgir Sahab, Starting Friday.

In his message, Syed Muhammad Altaf Bukhari said, "The holy days of the annual Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Syed Abdul Qadir Jilani (r.a) are about to begin. I congratulate the people, especially the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir on this important occasion. Dastgir Sahib (r.a) devoted his entire life to spreading the religion of Islam and during his lifetime he guided millions of people to the blessings of faith and a deeper understanding of spirituality."



A Naatiya Mushaira was organized by Khanqah-e-Hydari, Ali Abad-Ashmuqam at Dalgate, Srinagar on the occasion of Milad-un-Nabi on Thursday.

NCORD Implements Robust Strategy To Combat Drug Abuse Among Students

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The District Level Committee for NCORD has devised a comprehensive strategy to address the rising complaints and evidence of drug and substance abuse, particularly among students residing in hostels and paying guest accommodations (PGs).

In a recent NCORD meeting, chaired by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, the district's action plan and progress in combating substance abuse and dismantling the illegal narcotics trade were discussed.

The minutes of the meeting reveal a significant focus on the issue, particularly regarding students.

During the meeting, the Drug De-addiction Centre at SMHS Hospital shared alarming statistics. From April to August 2024, there were 708 new outpatient department (OPD) registrations, with a cumulative total of 6,818 registered patients.

The centre also recorded 120

Drug De-addiction Centre at SMHS Hospital shared alarming statistics. From April to August 2024, there were 708 new outpatient department (OPD) registrations, with a cumulative total of 6,818 registered patients"

in-patient admissions (IPD) for treatment and a staggering 29,357 follow-up consultations over a five-month period.

Similarly, the Addiction


Treatment Facility (ATF) at SKIMS, Bemina, reported 158 new patients seeking help, with 14,781 cumulative follow-up sessions during the same timeframe.

Law enforcement agencies in Srinagar shared that between April and August 2024, 20 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act were registered, resulting in 35 arrests.

Additionally, 11 individuals were detained under the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (PIT NDPS) Act.

Regarding seizures, 139.65 kg of heroin, 15.105 kg of poppy straw, bhong, 2.69 kg of Charas, 17.8 grams of brown sugar, 36 bottles of psychoactive syrups and capsules, and 3.5 kg of ganja were confiscated in the district during the same period.

The committee also reviewed efforts to eradicate wild cannabis and poppy cultivation. Over 82 Kanals of wild cannabis were reported to have been destroyed.



OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY

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

It's not just RECURRENT HANDWASHING AND CHECKING BUT UNSEEN PAIN distress associated with OCD

myths and stigma

KASHMER / Kashmir American Society of Healthcare.

Medical Education & Research in collaboration with HPVT / Help Poor Voluntary Trust.

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

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

You do not have to fight your battles alone.

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

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

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- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS	
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311	✈
RAILWAYS	
SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259	
ANANTNAG: 01932-228243	
BARAMULLA: 0194-102029	
BUBHERA: 01932-228243	
PAMPORE: 01933-294132	
PATTAN: 01954-293507	
QAZIGUND: 01951-296153	
HIGHWAY STATUS	
Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)	
Mughal Road - (Open)	
Srinagar- Leh- (Open)	

PRAYERS	
FAJR	5: 07
ZUHR	12:21
ASR	4: 32
Magrib	6:19
ISHA	7: 39

- ### This Day In History
- 1363 - End of the Battle of Lake Poyang; the Chinese rebel forces of Zhu Yuanzhang defeat that of his rival, Chen Youliang, one of the largest naval battles in history with 850,000 taking part (approx.)
 - 1537 - The first complete English-language Bible (the Matthew Bible) is printed, with translations by William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale.
 - 1914 - Dardanelles: French & British fleet bombards Turkish forts
 - 1921 - League of Nations refuses to assist starving Russians
 - 1922 - Protocol of Geneva signed: Austria gains independence
 - 1933 - Esquire magazine is 1st published
 - 1940 - 12 German aircrafts shot down above England
 - 1940 - Adolf Hitler & Benito Mussolini confer at Brenner Pass in Alps
 - 1949 - United Nations' permanent NYC headquarters is dedicated
 - 1956 - Great Britain performs nuclear test at Maralinga Australia
 - 1957 - USSR launches Sputnik I, 1st artificial Earth satellite
 - 1958 - Transatlantic commercial jet passenger service began (BOAC)
 - 1958 - Fifth Republic of France is established.
 - 1959 - USSR Luna 3 sent back 1st photos of Moon's far side
 - 1960 - Courier 1B Launched; 1st active repeater satellite in orbit
 - 1961 - USSR performs nuclear test at Novaya Zemlya USSR
 - 1963 - Hurricane Flora, kills 6,000 in Cuba & Haiti
 - 1965 - USSR launches Luna 7; crash lands on Moon
 - 1966 - France performs nuclear test at Mururoa atoll
 - 1967 - 1st World Series since 1948 not to feature NY Yankees, Giants or the Dodgers

From KO Archives

J&K Team For Tibet To Find Truth Of 'Shahtoosh Threat'

Observer News Service

Srinagar- Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah today said the Centre would be approached to seek China's permission for facilitating the visit of a team to Tibet to find if continuing Shahtoosh trade threatens antelope.

Speaking at a function held in observance of the millennium's first wildlife week here this afternoon, the chief minister said the team will comprise wildlife officials and representatives of Shahtoosh traders whose trip would be sponsored by the government. "If the team feels threat to antelope as genuine, the Shahtoosh traders will have nothing to do with it", he said, adding that with this the controversy over the issue would end once for all.

The chief minister said that as a result of measures taken to preserve wildlife, their population is on increase in the state. He stressed for creating awareness among the people especially students about the need for protecting wildlife and said that two zoos would be set up at Manda in Jammu and Dachigam in Srinagar for people to see nature's fauna. He asked for prepar-ing comprehensive plans for conservation of various sanctuaries like Hokersar, Hygam and Mirgund.

Abdullah called for evolving a mechanism and adopt-ing an integrated programme for making use of dead wood as fuel by those living near forest while stringent measures would be taken for preserving the green trees. Steps have to be taken for bridging the gap between energy-need and energy source. This has become imperative in view of growing pressure of forest resource since other sources of energy like electricity and LPG have become costlier and scarce. He made a fervent appeal to the people for making judicious use of electricity, generation of which is affected during winter due to lesser water flow.

(Kashmir Observer, October 04, 2000)

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India's Middle-Income Trap

The World Development Report is a sobering pointer on the need to be humble and nimble, else it will take 75 years for India to reach even a quarter of US GDP



Amol Agrawal,

“
To get rich is glorious. However, the road ahead is tricky as the world economy faces multiple challenges: slowing growth, ageing population, rising debt, intensifying geopolitics, and trade tensions

The World Bank releases an annual thematic report named the World Development Report (WDR). This year's WDR is based on middle-income (MI) trap. The theme is highly interesting as it opens up the debate on the future of the world economy from a different perspective. The WDR also makes an important reading for India's policymakers in their drive to make India a developed economy.

First, what is a MI economy? Since 1987, the World Bank has been classifying economies across four income categories: high income (HI), high middle income, low middle income, and low income. In the 35-year period, the number of HI countries doubled from 41 to 86 and that of low-income countries halved from 49 to 26. The number of MI countries (both lower and upper) has increased from 74 to 108. In 2022, HI countries constitute 16% of the world population and 60% of the global gross domestic product (GDP). MI countries housed 75% of the global population and has about 38% of the global GDP. The share of low-income countries in the world population and GDP were 9% and 0.6% respectively.

What is an MI trap? Another World Bank Report released in 2007 (An East Asian Renaissance: Ideas for Economic Growth) showed that middle-income economies undergo systemic slowdowns and remain trapped in their middle-income status. Specifically, the trap occurs when a country reaches about 11% of the GDP per capita of the US. The WDR shows only 34 economies have succeeded in shifting from the middle-income to high-income category in the last 35 years. Since 1970, the mean income per capita of middle-income countries has never risen above one-tenth of the US'. This systemic slowdown of economic growth is the MI trap.

Why do countries remain in the MI trap? After all, we now know what it takes to shape a developed economy: a solid

macroeconomic foundation inviting both domestic and foreign investment, supported by strong institutions and clean governance. Economic research shows that in the low-income stages, countries can develop by simply channelling savings towards investment. As they reach middle income, diminishing returns from investments set in and they are unable to grow any further. Economic research has cited multiple factors for the trap with different combinations of the factors: volatile economic growth, slow productivity, undervalued exchange rates, less technology-intensive exports, weakening institutions, etc.

What is the solution to escape the MI trap? After all, all middle-income economies have the ambition to enter the high-income club. The WDR has a nice phrase to sum up the ambition: To get rich is glorious. However, the road ahead is tricky as the world economy faces multiple challenges: slowing growth, ageing population, rising debt, intensifying geopolitics, and trade tensions. Yet MI countries are relying on old policies of expanding investment. You can't drive a car looking at a rear-view mirror. At current trends, it will take China more than 10 years and Indonesia 70 years just to reach one-quarter of the US income per capita.

The WDR identifies three drivers of growth in the new playbook: investment, infusion, and innovation, or the three Is. Middle-income economies have to undergo two transitions. First, primarily lower-middle-income countries should complement investment with infusion where focus is on imitating and diffusing modern technologies. Second, innovation is added to the investment and infusion mix, so that now the upper-middle-income countries become modern innovators themselves and join the high-income club.

Japan and Korea are excellent examples of the two transi-

tions where their domestic firms initially licensed technologies from leaders before becoming tech leaders themselves. The WDR also discusses Eastern European economies like Estonia which managed the transition swiftly, Poland steadily, and Bulgaria slowly.

What lessons can be drawn for India? India transitioned from a low-income economy to low-middle-income economy in 2007. In 2022, India's per capita income was \$2,400 which is around 3.1% of the US per capita income (\$76,590). The evidence suggests MI trap starts at around 11% of the US GDP, so there is both high potential but also a long journey to becoming a high-income country. There is tremendous potential for all the three Is to develop in India. However, there is no policy document on the path towards becoming a developed nation. The WDR is a sobering pointer on the need to be both humble and nimble, else it will take nearly 75 years for India to reach even one quarter of the US GDP.

In a way, the WDR is not saying anything new. Adam Smith, in The Wealth of Nations, made similar points albeit in a different jargon. However, economic history shows that transitions are neither linear nor smooth. Marx had argued that these transitions will be embroiled with class conflicts leading to crises. However, it was Schumpeter who showed that creative destruction in capitalism led to both crises and restoration. The WDR, based on Schumpeterian economics, wishes to make the expression "middle-income trap" completely obsolete. Over to the policymakers for distilling lessons from the WDR and acting on them.

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 Financial Express

KO VIEW

Waiting For The Day

After the conclusion of the voting in the Assembly election, all eyes are now focussed on October 8 when the outcome is going to be declared. No one party is favourite is to win the election, although the NC and the BJP seem to have a distinct edge over others. More so, the BJP which operates in a less crowded electoral scene in Jammu division, with the Congress its only major competitor. This is perhaps why the state Congress chief Tariq Hameed Karra on Wednesday extended an invitation to "like-minded" parties for government formation, saying they were open to taking support in case the need arises.

This election did not generate a wave in favour of any political party, including that for Engineer Rashid who was supposed to galvanize a mass mobilization soon after his release. It is true that in the Valley, the NC started as a stronger party in the fray. But the initial perception was dented by the intensifying electoral competition as the campaign progressed. The NC now seems to barely holds on to its initial edge in the campaign. For example, in South and Central Kashmir, where the PDP, Jamaati-Islami and even Rashid's Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) crowded the electoral scene, making the outcome uncertain. The NC's once strong opponent, the PDP, has also showed some spark in its core constituencies in south Kashmir and is expected to garner some seats. The new political outfits like the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) floated by the former top Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad and the Apni Party led by the businessman turned politician Altaf Bukhari were also in the fray, but they seem to have not made much of a mark so far, more so the former.

Although Kashmir has witnessed many elections over the decades, this one is likely to go down as one of the most interesting and fiercely contested. Not only were several political parties vying for votes but there were also many independents in the fray. This confused the voter, probably preventing the formation of a coherent public opinion. Whether the voter exercised his wisdom in casting his ballot will be shortly known.

On the other hand, it would be interesting to see how the BJP fares in Jammu division. Will the party replicate its 2014 performance now? It could very well do so. But the electoral scene for the party is not as conducive as it was in 2014 when the Modi wave was at its peak. But if the saffron party does cross 25 seats in the region, it is certain to be in a driving seat in the government formation. But for now we can only wait and watch and hope for an elected government that gives people a sense of stake in the system.



Did you know?

Simplified Guide to Investing in Gold

Irshad Mushtaq

Investing in gold can be simplified and cost-effective if done correctly. Let's explore two popular methods: Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGB) and Gold Exchange-Traded Funds (ETFs).

1. Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGB)
Interest Benefit: SGBs not only track the market price of gold but also offer an annual interest rate of about 2-3%, which is paid semi-annually. This is an added advantage over other forms of gold investment.

No Making Charges: Unlike physical gold, which incurs making charges between 10% to 25%, SGBs are free from these expenses, making them a cost-effective alternative.

2. Gold Exchange-Traded Funds (ETFs):
Lower Expense Ratio: Gold ETFs provide a lower cost option as they have minimal expense ratios compared to buying physical gold.
Liquidity and Easy Trading: They offer the flexibility of trading on stock exchanges, allowing you to buy and sell anytime, similar to stocks.

Why Physical Gold is Less Favorable
Making Charges and Premiums: Physical gold, such as jewellery or small gold coins, includes making charges and premiums that can be as high as 20% above the market price. When selling, these costs generally cannot be recovered.

Loss of Returns: Buying and selling physical gold repeatedly can eat into your potential returns due to the high transaction costs. The Digital Advantage: The digital shift in gold investment has transformed how we secure and manage our investments.

Paperless Transactions: Buying gold digitally reduces the risk associated with physical storage and insures the investment within the regulated frameworks by entities like the Central Depository Services Limited (CDSL) and the National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL).

Regulatory Backing: Both methods are regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), ensuring safety and credibility in your gold investments. Relying on Tradition vs. Modern Methods: Traditional gold buying has its history, but it is often not the most financially prudent method. It's important to acknowledge that while gold merchants may promise liquidity, during times of financial stress, they may not be able to buy back large quantities. Digital investments, supervised by SEBI, offer a secure and scalable alternative. Lastly, adapting to these modern investment techniques ensures that you capitalize on gold's financial benefits more effectively.

Learn from the insights of @Irshad Mushtaq, Writer, Investor, Entrepreneur & Founder of M I Securities! Connect for valuable financial advice at misecurities@bp.sharekhan.com



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All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, space and accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

MAIL YOUR LETTERS

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Urgent Need for People to Follow Traffic Rules in Kashmir

I am writing to express my concern about the increasing disregard for traffic rules in Kashmir, which has become a serious issue threatening the safety of all road users. In recent years, the number of traffic-related accidents in the region has risen alarmingly, often resulting in injuries and even fatalities. This can largely be attributed to reckless driving, over-speeding, and the rampant violation of traffic rules by both motorists and pedestrians. Kashmir's roads, often narrow

and winding, demand careful navigation. However, it is disheartening to witness drivers ignoring speed limits, overtaking carelessly, and failing to adhere to traffic signals. Pedestrians, too, sometimes cross roads haphazardly, adding to the chaos. Such behaviors not only jeopardize lives but also cause traffic jams and hinder the smooth flow of vehicles, especially during peak hours.

The government has made significant efforts by implementing traffic laws, placing speed cameras, and

conducting awareness campaigns. However, these measures can only be successful if individuals take personal responsibility for their actions on the road. People must realize that traffic rules are designed to ensure everyone's safety, and violating them puts lives at risk.

I urge the authorities to intensify their efforts to enforce traffic laws strictly and hold violators accountable. Additionally, there is a need for continuous public awareness campaigns that emphasize the im-

portance of road safety and responsible driving. Education programs in schools and community centers could also play a crucial role in fostering a culture of road safety among the younger generation.

By following traffic rules diligently, we can prevent accidents, save lives, and ensure that our roads are safer for everyone. Let us all play our part in making this happen.

Farooq Mir

Mindful Fridays

The Role of Bedtime Stories in Children's Mental Health

Fostering Emotional Connection, Reducing Anxiety, and Promoting Relaxation

Wasim Kakroo

Bedtime stories that are read to children as a way to wind down before sleep, have long been a cherished ritual in many households. These stories however, are more than just mere rituals as we will try to discuss in this article. The intimate moments that these rituals provide before sleep might play a significant role in the mental and emotional wellbeing of children. In addition to make children and caregivers feel relaxed.

Beyond the obvious benefits of relaxation, bedtime stories create emotional connections, help alleviate anxiety, and promote a sense of safety. By nurturing imagination and empathy, they also equip children with essential coping skills that enhance their resilience in the face of real-life challenges. These positive effects make bedtime storytelling a vital tool in promoting children's overall emotional well-being.

Building Emotional Connections and Security

One of the key mental health benefits of bedtime stories is their ability to foster emotional bonds between children and their caregivers. During storytelling, children receive undivided attention, creating an environment where they feel valued, secure, and loved. This time of connection reinforces the emotional attachment between the child and caregiver, which is crucial for a child's sense of safety and stability.

A secure attachment, developed through activities like reading together, has been shown to significantly impact emotional development. According to attachment theory, when children consistently experience warmth, presence, and support, they develop a secure bond with their caregivers. This sense of security is essential for building re-



silience, as it creates a safe emotional foundation for children to explore the world, express themselves, and develop healthy coping mechanisms. The emotional comfort derived from regular bedtime storytelling also fosters trust, which is vital for children's mental health and long-term emotional well-being.

Reducing Anxiety and Fostering Relaxation

Bedtime stories provide an excellent way to reduce anxiety in children, especially those who may struggle with fear, stress, or unease before sleep. Children often experience heightened anxieties at bedtime, such as fears of the dark, nightmares, or separation from their caregivers. Stories offer a form of distraction, helping children shift their focus from worries to engaging narratives that calm their minds.

The rhythm of storytelling, combined with the soothing tone of a caregiver's voice, cre-

In addition to fostering imagination and empathy, bedtime stories also provide valuable life lessons that can help children develop coping skills for real-world challenges. Many classic bedtime stories feature characters who navigate difficult situations—whether it's overcoming fear, standing up for what's right, or dealing with loss

ates a tranquil environment that encourages relaxation. Familiar bedtime stories, in particular, can serve as a comforting ritual, as repetition and predictability help children feel in control of their surroundings. This sense of routine helps calm the nervous system, signaling that it is time to transition to sleep. As children become absorbed in a story, they can also mentally distance themselves from their daytime anxieties, creating a peaceful mental space that promotes relaxation and helps ease the transition to sleep.

Moreover, many stories contain moral lessons, empowering children to confront and process their fears indirectly through the characters in the narrative. When a child sees a character overcoming obstacles, they learn that challenges can be managed and fears can be faced, which can subtly reshape how they handle their own anxieties in real life.

Encouraging Imagination and Developing Empathy

Bedtime stories also serve as a powerful tool for nurturing children's imagination and empathy. The creative aspect of storytelling stimulates cognitive development, allowing children to visualize different worlds, characters, and situations. This imaginative process helps children think more broadly about life and other people, fostering a sense of curiosity and wonder.

When children encounter various characters and perspectives in stories, they are exposed to different emotions, experiences, and cultures. This exposure can help develop empathy as children learn to understand and share the feelings of others. By putting themselves in the shoes of the characters, children can begin to see the world from different viewpoints, which enhances their emotional intelligence. Empathy, in turn, plays a key role in building healthy re-

lationships, improving communication, and supporting emotional well-being.

For example, a story about a character facing loneliness or fear can resonate with a child who has experienced similar feelings. The child may find comfort in knowing they are not alone in their emotions, and the story may provide new ways to cope with their challenges. These early experiences with empathy, reinforced through storytelling, can have a lasting impact on how children relate to others and manage their own emotions.

Building Coping Skills for Real-Life Challenges

In addition to fostering imagination and empathy, bedtime stories also provide valuable life lessons that can help children develop coping skills for real-world challenges. Many classic bedtime stories feature characters who navigate difficult situations—whether it's overcoming fear, standing up for what's right, or dealing with loss. These narratives offer children a safe space to explore complex emotions, like sadness, fear, or frustration, while offering solutions or positive outcomes.

By witnessing characters successfully manage their problems, children can internalize these coping strategies and apply them to their own lives. For instance, a story about bravery in the face of adversity can inspire children to approach their fears with courage. Similarly, stories about friendship, kindness, and perseverance can reinforce positive values and problem-solving skills that children can use in their daily interactions.

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

How To Archive Your Photos In The Digital Age

Wasim Ahmad

Taking photographs used to be a careful, conscious act. Photos were selective, frozen moments in time carefully archived in albums and frames. Now, taking a photograph is almost as effortless and common as breathing – it's something that people do all the time in the age of smartphone cameras with seemingly endless digital film. But the downside to capturing every moment is that it creates a mountain of those moments to save for the future. Those photos can be easily lost if they're not archived properly. All it can take is one accidental dip in the toilet for your phone, and all that data is lost forever.

So what's a practical backup strategy for the average person? Here are a few ways to make sure memories are never lost:

Cloud storage

The simplest way to archive your photos is cloud storage. For Apple users, there's iCloud, which starts at US\$0.99 per month for 50 gigabytes all the way to \$59.99 per month for 12 terabytes with various tiers in between. With an average iPhone photo clocking in at 3 megabytes, that's a little over 16,000 photos for the cheap plan and 4 million or so for the largest plan. Google's Google One cloud storage is most cost effective for yearly plans, with 2TB going for \$99.99 per year and 5TB going for \$249.99 per year. The actual amount you can store in that space does vary

greatly with how a file is shot. Video has larger file sizes than photos. HEIF files, a newer format on Apple phones, compresses files into smaller packages, but long-term compatibility is unknown since the format hasn't been in use for as long as the standard JPG file, which has been around since 1992.

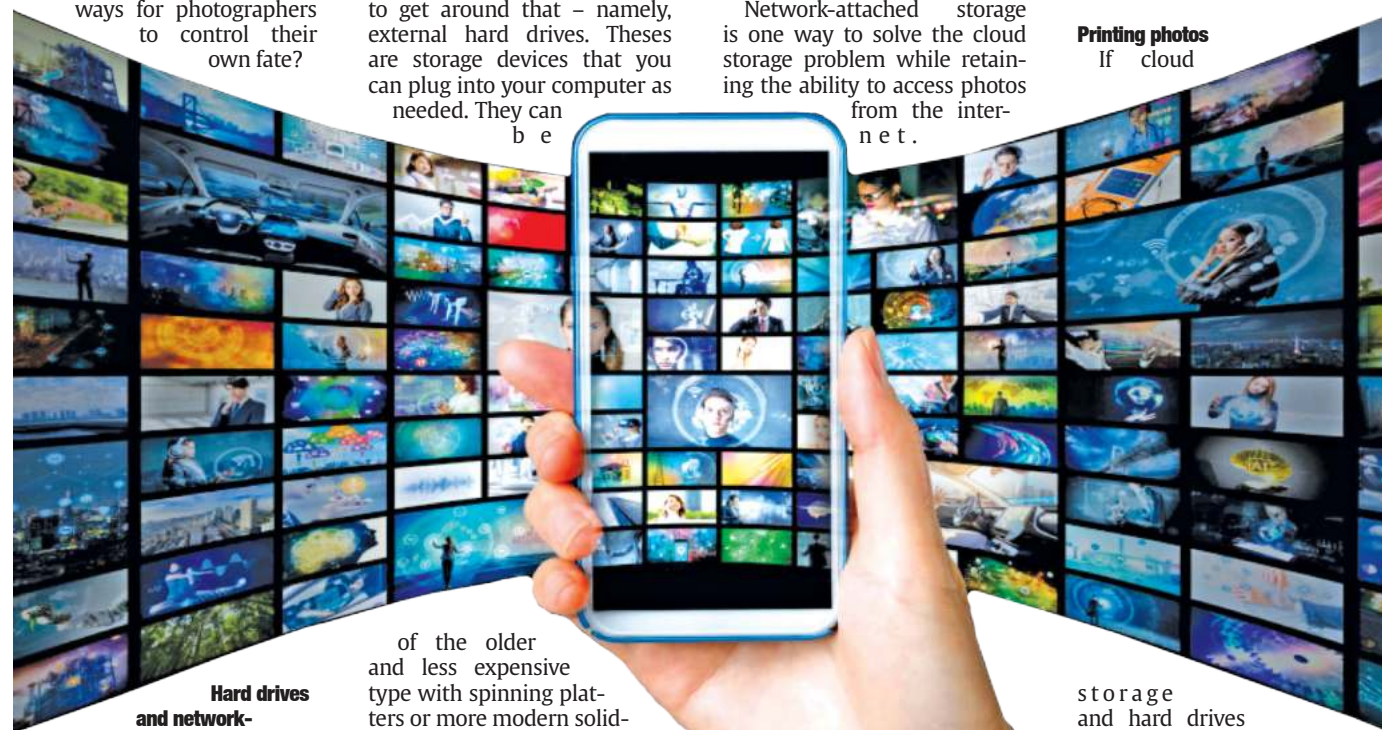
While cloud services from big providers generally provide the easiest way for most average folks to back up their photos, and operate with little to no intervention via apps that are already on the phone constantly uploading every photo taken, there are risks involved.

Big companies often change their policies about how photos are saved. For instance, depending on what phone and when it was bought, Google's cloud storage may have saved photos in a "storage saver" format that lowers the quality of images by sizing them down or compressing them differently. This affects your ability to make high-quality prints or view the photos on high-resolution screens down the road. Unless someone is astute enough to notice small text here and there that mentions it, most users won't even realize it's happening.

And what happens to cloud services when things go badly wrong? Users of photo backup service Digital Railroad found out the hard way. In 2008, the company abruptly shut down and gave its users 24 hours to download everything before the servers were shut down. Photographers rushed for the exits, trying to grab their photos

on the way out, only to strain the servers to the point where few were able to recover anything at all. If this was the only way photos were backed up, it's a lost cause.

So while the cloud is easy, costs can add up and terms of service can change at a moment's notice. What are some ways for photographers to control their own fate?



Hard drives and network-attached storage

Manually taking photos off a phone may take some extra time, but the approach offers peace of mind that cloud services can't necessarily match.

Almost all phones can plug into a computer's USB port and use the built-in photos app on both Windows or MacOS to

download photos to a computer. Apple users can use a method called AirDrop to send photos wirelessly to other Apple devices as well, including laptop and desktop computers.

Now loading photos onto a local hard drive built into the machine can fill it up quickly, but there is a cost-effective way to get around that – namely, external hard drives. These are storage devices that you can plug into your computer as needed. They can be

be

of the older and less expensive type with spinning platters or more modern solid-state drives that can survive a drop and greater temperature changes than the older drives can.

These are different than flash drives, more commonly known as thumb drives because of their small size, that are designed as temporary storage to shuffle photos from one place

to another.

It's easy to buy more than one hard drive to have duplicate backups in case of failure or catastrophe, but the downside is that there's no easy access from the internet to your photos, and backup is generally a process that users must remember to do.

Network-attached storage is one way to solve the cloud storage problem while retaining the ability to access photos from the internet.

net.

These are essentially hard drives – sometimes multiple hard drives linked together for even greater or faster storage – that are connected to a router that allows for access to the internet through specialized software.

While not as easy as most third-party cloud storage services, once it's set up, a network-attached storage unit is a flexible way to store your photos safely and accessibly. There are even companies that specialize in fireproof and waterproof units for extra insurance in case of disaster.

Printing photos If cloud

net.

The easiest and most cost-effective types of printers are dedicated 4x6 printers using a technology similar to professional labs called dye-sublimation. These yield high-quality, waterproof prints that cost about the same as what one would pay for drugstore developing. HP makes its popular Sprocket line of printers, though those require a phone and an app to print from, which makes plugging in a memory card from a professional camera out of the question. However, Canon's Selphy lineup includes many models with screens and a card slot to make that possible.

The rabbit hole goes very deep, and there are many professional printers that can print even larger sizes. Canon and Epson dominate this space, marketing a range of pigment- and dye-based printers that can emphasize archival needs or color saturation, respectively. Another option is ordering a photo book, which, as the name suggests, is a physical bound book of your photos. However, photo books are probably more appropriate for memorializing an event – trip, wedding, project – than general archiving, given the typical costs and number of photos involved. There's little reason to not make some sort of backups of photos in 2024, whether that's on printed media, hard drives or in the cloud. The important thing is not which method to use, but to do it at all.

By arrangements with The Conversation

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Will Soon Crack

'Ultra' sets cannot reach out to each other. They said Chinese satellites are used to carry these messages that are compressed to bytes from the handset to the master server in Pakistan for its onward transmission.

This is yet another help being extended by China to its key ally Pakistan, the officials said.

'Terrorist Numbers

year so far like last year. "We need a few more good years to make peace a permanent feature here. I believe maintaining this peaceful atmosphere is the biggest challenge for the security forces," the GoC 15 Corps said.

LT Gen Ghai said that there hasn't been any active recruitment of terrorists this year. "The numbers were down to a dozen last year and this year it is next to nil," the GoC said.

He said as far as the terrorist-initiated incidents in Kashmir, they are between far and few. "Some incidents were reported where soft targets were made by even an untrained person using a pistol," the army officer said.

On the total number of active terrorists at present, the GoC said: "There are only 80 terrorists active in the region at present which is less than previous years," he said.

To a query whether any troop cut was possible at this juncture, the GoC said, "We are in a consolidation phase and no dilution of counter insurgency and counter terrorism grid is recommended. Both the grids need to be maintained. I definitely won't advocate any dilution to these grids at this stage," the GoC said.

Earlier, in his opening remarks, the GoC said that during the past a year-and-a-half, numerous attempts counter infiltration steps were taken while simultaneously prosecuting a very robust and successful counter terrorist campaign within Kashmir. "While doing this, we have been very conscious of our responsibility and nation building. So we have maintained our connection with the Awam (people of Kashmir)," the army officer said.

He said that the region is seeing a new beginning as numerous significant events are taking place besides development. "This is because of the efforts put in by (Chinar corps) 15 Corps, police, CAPF, police and numerous other security agencies," the GoC said.

Iran Leader's Rare Friday

world. Every city has a Friday prayer Imam appointed by the state and prayers are held only in a central mosque or a major prayer ground. In Tehran tens of thousands attend Friday prayers at Tehran University grounds but this Friday prayers will be offered at Mosala grounds to accommodate larger numbers.

Ayatollah Khamenei is also expected to announce the date of the funeral and burial place of Sayyed Nasrallah which has not yet taken place due to ongoing war in Lebanon.

The Israeli offensive and fear of more attacks have also prevented Hezbollah from organising a nationwide funeral on a scale reflecting Nasrallah's religious and leadership status.

"No one can authorize a funeral in these circumstances," one Hezbollah source said, lamenting the situation in which officials and religious leaders could not come forward to properly honor the late leader.

Several commanders killed last week were buried discreetly on Monday, with plans for a proper religious ceremony when the conflict ends.

Hezbollah is mulling the option of securing a religious decree to bury Hassan Nasrallah temporarily and hold an official funeral when the situation permits, some Lebanese sources said.

Speculation also continues over where Nasrallah will be buried, with conflicting reports suggesting either Lebanon or Iraq as his final resting place, according to an article released on Abu Dhabi-based The National.

Iraqi officials and local media have indicated that Sayyed Nasrallah may be buried at the Imam Hussein shrine in Karbala, as he was an important figure within the Shia community.

Abdul Amir Al Teiban, an adviser to Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al Sudani, posted on X that Nasrallah would be buried "next to Imam Hussein, in Karbala."

Now all eyes are on Friday sermon of Ayatollah Khamenei as speculations are rife that Iran leader will announce funeral date and place of burial of slain Hezbollah leader.

J&K Set To Hold

Security forces, initially deployed for the Amarnath Yatra and later for the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls, will remain in J&K. "The decision to retain the security forces has been taken, keeping in view the high cost associated with to-and-fro movement and redeployment," officials noted.

Once these polls are completed, Jammu and Kashmir will see the full restoration of democratic processes at all levels post the abrogation of Article 370. The Panchayat elections will be conducted by the J&K State Election Commission, rather than the Election Commission of India.

"The 2024 Panchayat poll will be held after fresh delimitation of 'Halqas' (Revenue Villages)," officials added, with almost 30,000 panches and sarpanches having completed their terms earlier this year. (KNS)

J&K Records 63.88%

voters was recorded at 69.37 per cent as compared to 70.02 per cent of women, the Election Commission (EC) said.

Nearly 44 per cent of voters from the third gender category came to cast their votes in phase-3.

Referring to the overall turnout, the Election Commission said it stood at 63.88 per cent with male participation recorded at 64.68 per cent. The overall women turnout was recorded at 63.04 per cent and that of the third gender at 38.24 per cent.

The final votes polled will be available post-counting with counting of postal ballots.

Postal ballots include postal ballots given to service voters, absentee voters (those above 85 years of age, persons with disabilities, those part of essential services) and voters on election duty, the EC noted.

Daily accounts of such postal ballots received, as per established guidelines, are given to all candidates, it said.

Climate Change Woes

due to erratic spring weather and recent hailstorms.

"The apple industry has been facing several challenges," Bashir said, adding that there is a dire need for a crop insurance scheme to protect growers from future losses.

While last year's production was also low, higher prices provided some relief, a situation that has not repeated this year due to decreased demand.

Kashmir typically produces over 20 lakh metric tonnes of apples annually, occasionally reaching up to 25 lakh metric tonnes. The 2017 economic survey of J&K indicated that half of Kashmir's population relies directly or indirectly on the apple industry, with over 3.5 lakh hectares dedicated to apple cultivation.(KNO)

5 Nominated MLAs

(MLC), and the nominated MLAs will be selected soon after the vote counting concludes on October 8, with the government potentially forming by October 15.

The inclusion of Kashmiri migrants and POJK displaced persons is being seen as a push towards addressing the unique issues of these communities. It is being said that such a move would ensure that the grievances of displaced Kashmiri Pandits, who fled Kashmir in 1990, would finally reach the Assembly.

With the amendment in place, lobbying, as per the insidious reports, has intensified among political leaders aiming for these new seats. According to sources, many influential figures, including veterans from the BJP and prominent leaders from the POJK region, are pushing for nominations.

A senior BJP leader wishing anonymity said that the nomination process would commence as soon as election results are declared. "These nominated MLAs will have all the rights like elected ones. The process will begin soon to ensure their inclusion in the new government," he said. (KNO)

'Leave Nominations

such action. Responding to media reports regarding the nominations, the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) said the authority to nominate these five members should rest with the newly formed government.

JKPCC Senior Vice President and Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma said that by-passing this process would undermine democratic principles and betray the will of the electorate.

"The people have cast their votes to elect their representatives to form the government. The party that secures a majority in the elections deserves the opportunity to govern,"

Sharma asserted.

While the Congress party supports the idea of reserving seats in the Assembly for refugees from Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK), Kashmiri Pandits and other minorities, it cautioned against the misuse of nomination provisions to subvert the electoral mandate.

"Using nominations to dilute the people's choice would be a grave injustice," he added. (KNO)

New Haircuts, Same

who received makeovers returning to the streets soon after, Naireen, a psychologist based in Srinagar said that is not unusual for these individuals to go back to their old ways because they need proper psychiatric treatment, not just a superficial change in appearance," she said.

Naireen further said that putting them on social media risks breaching their privacy and is against ethics.

Pertinently, the mental health challenges faced by the homeless population are profound. A 2019 meta-analysis revealed that the prevalence of psychosis (21.2%) and, more specifically, schizophrenia (10.3%) is significantly higher among homeless individuals compared to the general population globally.

Psychologists argue while the haircuts and makeovers have provided a temporary boost in morale and self-esteem for some, the long-term challenges of mental illness and homelessness remain unaddressed.

Waseem Kakroo, another psychologist, voiced concerns about the ethical implications of the move.

"While the effort by the team of youth has been lauded across social media, it needs to be carefully examined. The act of cutting someone's hair, shaving their beard, and dressing them in clean clothes without their consent can be dehumanizing. It takes away their control over their own bodies and perpetuates the notion that people with mental health issues need to be 'fixed' by others. This approach, while seemingly compassionate, may actually reinforce the stigma surrounding mental illness," Wasim said.

Kakroo emphasized the importance of consent and the need for a more thoughtful approach when engaging with vulnerable populations. "At first glance, helping someone who is struggling seems like a praiseworthy act. However, the way it is done matters. Forcing someone to change their appearance without asking them can be disrespectful and unkind. It is crucial that we treat people with mental health issues with dignity and respect, recognizing their autonomy and right to make decisions about their own bodies."

Pertinently, despite videos of homeless people doing rounds on social media, government departments have turned a blind eye towards the suffering of these people.

Although old age homes are operational in various districts of Kashmir, they lack sufficient resources to adequately support individuals facing mental health challenges. Speaking on anonymity, an official from the social welfare department said the government department is not in a position to keep these centers working round the year in all districts.

Musadiq Bashir, the founder of KYC, acknowledged these concerns. Speaking to Kashmir Observer, he admitted that the team's efforts have only scratched the surface of the problem.

"We are aware that we are doing little for the homeless, and we know that many of them are returning to the streets after getting a haircut. However, we are in the process of establishing

a rehabilitation center for the homeless and have approached the government for support in this endeavor."

Musadiq said that they have decided to establish their own center in South Kashmir, where they will avail the services of mental health professionals. "It was after the officials from the Social Welfare Department said that they don't have enough grants to establish the facility. We are awaiting permission and will run the facility in the next ten days."

Syed Mujtaba, a Lawyer, working on mental health rights said that these acts are not only ineffective but these videos also reveal the faces and locations of the persons they are assisting, thereby infringing upon their right to privacy.

"The actions of this group, in recording and disseminating videos without the consent of the individuals concerned, constitute a blatant violation of these legal provisions. Such practices not only demean the dignity of the individuals but also exacerbate their vulnerabilities, potentially leading to further stigmatization and discrimination."

Mujtaba said that the Mental Health Care Act, 2017, explicitly safeguards the privacy and dignity of individuals with mental health illness.

As per Act, "Every person with mental illness has a right to live with dignity and such persons should be protected from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment" Mujtaba said.

With respect to privacy, the privacy of patients must be respected to the extent possible.

Furthermore they have a right to be protected from physical, verbal, emotional abuse. With the extension of their Rights, No person with mental illness should be forced to shave their head as well. Mujtaba said the mental health Care Act 2017, under Sec 100 places duties on law enforcement officials for taking into protection homeless and wandering persons who are suspected of having mental illness.

The concerned police officer has to lodge an FIR for missing, and to report to the Magistrate about ill treatment or neglect. Additionally, Article 21 of the Constitution of India guarantees the right to life and personal liberty, which encompasses the right to privacy.

No Need To

now repealed and replaced by the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his wife, the wife not being minor, is not rape.

Even under the new law, Exception 2 to Section 63 (rape) says that "sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under eighteen years of age, is not rape".

"Furthermore, it is submitted that striking down the exception 2 of section 375 of IPC on the ground of its constitutional validity will have a far-reaching effect on the institution of marriage if sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his own wife is made punishable as 'rape,'" the Centre said in its affidavit.

"It may severely impact the conjugal relationship and may lead to serious disturbances in the institution of marriage," it said.

The Centre said in the fast growing and ever changing social and family structure, misuse of the amended provisions can also not be ruled out as it would be difficult and challenging for a person to prove whether consent was there or not.

It said to decide on the constitutionality of the provision, a holistic approach and consultation with all the states needs to be undertaken after taking their views into consideration.

"This is more so since the issues involved

have a direct bearing on the society in general and is a part of Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India," the Centre said.

It said the issue involved in the matter is more of a social issue rather than a legal issue and the same cannot be decided without proper consultation with all the stakeholders or taking the views of all the states into consideration.

"It is submitted that the act colloquially referred to as 'marital rape' ought to be illegal and criminalised. The central government asserts that a woman's consent is not obliterated by marriage and its violation should result in penal consequences. However, the consequences of such violations within marriage differ from those outside it," the affidavit said.

It said Parliament has provided different remedies, including criminal law provisions, to protect consent within marriage.

"Given the nature of the marital institution in our socio-legal milieu, if the legislature is of the view that, for preservation of the marital institution, the impugned exception should be retained, it is submitted that it would not be appropriate for this court to strike down the exception," the Centre said.

It said the Government of India is committed to fully and meaningfully protect the liberty, dignity and rights of every woman who are the "fundamental foundation and a pillar of a civilised society".

The affidavit said a husband certainly does not have any fundamental right to violate the consent of the wife, however, attracting the crime in the nature of "rape" as recognised in India to the institution of marriage can be arguably considered to be excessively harsh and therefore, disproportionate.

It said the question involved in these petitions may not be treated merely as a question concerning constitutional validity of a statutory provision as the subject matter has and will have very far-reaching socio-legal implications in the country.

"The matter, therefore, needs a comprehensive approach rather than a strictly legal approach," the Centre said.

"Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that if the legislature decides to exempt, from the rigour of such a charge, and such a label, husbands, vis-a-vis their wives, given the intelligible differentia that exists in a marital relationship vis-a-vis other relationships, the said decision and discretion should be respected and not interfered with especially when a separate suitably tailored penal remedy is provided by the Legislature," it said.

The affidavit said the outcome of the petition will have a larger impact on the society, especially considering the concept of marriage in India which creates social and legal rights on the part of both individuals and others in the family.

A bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud is seized of various pleas on the issue.

The top court on January 16, 2023 sought the Centre's response on a clutch of petitions assailing the IPC provision, which provides protection to a husband against prosecution for forcible sexual intercourse if the wife is an adult.

Later, it also issued a notice to the Centre on a similar plea challenging the BNS provision on the issue.

The BNS, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam came into effect from July 1, replacing the IPC, Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Evidence Act, respectively.



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UNRAVEL KASHMIR

Husband-Wife Duo In Baramulla Preserve Kani Shawl Weaving Tradition



Agencies

SRINAGAR: A husband-and-wife duo from north Kashmir's Baramulla district is dedicated to preserving the centuries-old art of Kani Shawl weaving.

Based in Agri Kalan, Baramulla, Bashir Ahmad Ganie and Jabeen Banoo have been involved in this intricate craft for decades, training numerous individuals in the community.

Jabeen, 45, said she learned the art from her maternal uncle and later taught her husband, Bashir, after their marriage.

"I have since trained many people, especially women, enabling them to earn a livelihood through Kani Shawl production," she said. She has also trained her two younger brothers, one of whom is now a master in the handloom department, while the other has received a national award.

Jabeen has devoted herself to mastering the intricate patterns and techniques of Kani Shawl weaving. Through her expertise, she is not only creating stunning pieces but also ensuring that this cultural heritage thrives by passing on her knowledge to the next generation.

Bashir said he learned the craft entirely from Jabeen and has successfully managed their family's affairs through their

Kani Shawl business. Together, they are revitalising this ancient art form, which faces challenges from modern machine-made products.

Ganie said the government support has been vital, particularly through opportunities to participate in exhibitions in Delhi, Haryana and Odisha, which have helped them grow their business.

Despite training many young people, he expressed concern that the younger generation often lacks patience and interest in traditional crafts.

Thanks to their efforts, the couple has improved their living conditions, even building a house and supporting their son's pursuit of an M.Tech degree through their work. "The government should further assist through additional exhibition opportunities," he said.

The couple's commitment to Kani Shawl weaving has earned them considerable praise both locally and nationally. Their work not only helps preserve an essential aspect of Kashmir's identity but also provides employment and skills to many community members, thereby strengthening the region's cultural and economic fabric.

Jabeen further said that she plans to apply for the Padma Shri award once she turns 50—(KNO)

Encash Mahindra Unveils All-New Veero



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Encash Automotive Pvt. Ltd., the authorized dealer of Mahindra & Mahindra for personal and commercial vehicles, is thrilled to announce the unveiling of the all-new Mahindra Veero, India's first multi-energy commercial vehicle platform. This landmark event took place at our dealership in Lawaypora Narbal, Srinagar, in the esteemed presence of Mr. Tajamul Qadri, Marketing Head Kashmir Division of J&K Bank, and Mr. Rouf Ahmad Sheikh, Branch Head of J&K Bank.

The Mahindra Veero is designed with innovation at its core, featuring a modular platform that offers a range of payload options from 1 to 2 tons and various deck sizes. This versatile design not only meets the demands of a dynamic market but also caters to the unique requirements of commercial vehicle users across India.

The Veero offers segment-first safety features, ensuring

the highest standards of protection for drivers and passengers. With a premium cabin experience, the Veero provides exceptional comfort, setting a new benchmark in the commercial vehicles. It has been designed to deliver unmatched savings, the Veero ensures that businesses can operate efficiently without compromising on performance.

It has been built to tackle the diverse challenges of the commercial sector, the Veero promises reliability and strength.

Irfan Ahmad Parry, General Manager (Sales), and Aijaz Mattoo, General Manager (Service), were also present at the unveiling, emphasizing Mahindra's commitment to delivering exceptional service and support to its customers.

The Mahindra Veero embodies the promise of "Soch Se Aage," reflecting Mahindra's vision for the future of commercial vehicles—one that prioritizes safety, comfort, and efficiency.

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 2024

Will Win Absolute Majority On October 8: Ravinder Raina

Agencies

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir chief of BJP Ravinder Raina Thursday said that the way people voted in record numbers in all three phases of Assembly polls held after a decade suggests that BJP will win absolute majority on October 8.

Addressing a press conference in Jammu, Raina said that people from every nook and corner of Jammu and Kashmir came out in record numbers to exercise their right to franchise in all three phases.

"I am of the firm belief that the way people voted in record numbers, BJP will emerge as the single largest party in J&K on October 8. The new government will carry forward the vision and mission of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and take J&K to new heights of development, peace and prosperity," Raina said addressing a press conference in Jammu.

He said the way people voted signals that people have expressed faith in democracy and also in the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that entails—Sab Ka Saath, Sab Ka Vikas and Sab Ka Vishwas.

Asked whether BJP had finalised the Hindu CM candidate if the party wins majority, Raina said lets have some patience till October 8. "For us who is going to be the CM is not the priority. We hope to



see BJP emerging as a party with absolute majority. I believe, the way people voted for BJP, we will come up with a full majority," he said.

The J&K BJP chief said the massive campaigning of Prime Minister Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and BJP national president J P Nadda in Jammu that saw massive participation of people, will bear fruit. "I am sure that not only in Jammu but also in Kashmir Lotus will bloom," Raina said.

Asked whether BJP was mulling Hindu or Dogra Chief Minister in J&K, Raina dodged the question saying, "thoda intezar ka maza lijiye (let's wait till October 8).

He thanked police, CRPF, BSF, SSB and other security agencies for ensuring smooth

and peaceful elections in J&K. "I also thank the Election Commission of India (ECI) for making up to the mark arrangements in J&K for smooth conduct of polls. I also thank the Chief Electoral Office and LG administration for making elaborate arrangements for peaceful and hassle-free elections in J&K," the BJP J&K chief said. "I also thank NGOs, school children and all those who played their part in creating awareness among voters across the J&K UT."

Raina also extended Navratri greetings to people of J&K and rest of the country. "We will celebrate the festival with the grand victory of BJP in J&K polls on October 8," he claimed. He evaded queries whether BJP will forge alliance with PDP or any other party if it falls short of seats, saying that let the results come first—(KNO)

Advertising Policy Of Local Universities Remain Restricted To Urdu, English Languages,

Agencies

SRINAGAR: As part of the efforts, the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) organized a national level conference titled "Promotion of Kashmiri Language" recently. The endeavour by the IUST is being highly appreciated in the literary and academic circles.

However, on the other hand, discontent is also being expressed over the lack of "practical measures" for the promotion and protection of the Kashmiri language. Many activities are being carried out in the varsity regarding promotion of Kashmiri language, but when seen practically, it appears as nothing but public consumption.

Scholars and literary experts have expressed happiness at the two-day conference organized at the Islamic University Awantipora and said that this initiative was important for the promotion of the original culture of this place. However, they said, there is a need to enforce such policies on the ground level. Otherwise, they said, there will be such conferences that serve very little or no results. Kashmiri language experts say that the basic things that must be taken into

account for the preservation of the language and culture is to ensure maximum access to the people. And in contemporary times, they said, the media is a necessary form of it. If any educational institutions want to take practical steps to promote and protect the glorious Kashmiri language and culture, they must take the local media along with it and make the most of it. "Publicity must be ensured," they said, expressing disappointment that not much is being done in this regard. "Here unfortunately the case is reversed," they said.

Kashmiri University and other educational institutions, be it Central University and Islamic University Awantipora, they said, carry out many activities related to Kashmiri language, but all this is done "within the campus". "There is lack of proper promotion thereafter and it does not have much benefit, more so when it comes to the world outside."

It is worthwhile to note here that in the University of Kashmir, there is a department for preservation of Kashmiri language and literature under the name of Sheikh Alam Chair. However many people say hardly anyone knows what the results of this chair has been on

the ground level.

Central University Ganderbal also publishes a journal in Kashmiri language, but its reach is also limited, they point out. Experts say that if these universities use their expertise and experience to promote Kashmiri language and make it popular on the ground level, the results would have been different.

They said that it is strange that only English and Urdu language are used to advertise seminars, conferences and other activities related to Kashmiri language, although there is a well-known and reliable daily published in Kashmiri language, "Kahwat" through which the activities being done for the promotion and preservation of Kashmiri language would have been further strengthened.

It is also noteworthy that Kashmiri University, Islamic University, Central University and other academic and literary institutions have effective advertising policy but for reasons best known to them, use of Kashmiri language as a medium is neglected. Apart from this, other institutions are also required to give priority to Kashmiri media for the promotion of the beautiful language. (KPS)

Khatana Highlights India's Decade Of Growth Under PM Modi

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Inspired by the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the mega exhibition "Rise in Jammu and Kashmir 2024" was inaugurated today at the Royal Estate Resort on Akhnoor Road by Rajya Sabha MP Ghulam Ali Khatana. The event is part of the nationwide Amrit Kaal celebrations, showcasing India's progress and development across various sectors.

The exhibition features display from nearly 45 national and state-level institutions, including major organizations like DRDO, ISRO, Power Grid, Geological Survey of India (GSI), CSIR, Coir Board, ICAR, C-DAC, and ICMR. These institutions are showcasing their achievements, providing a comprehensive overview of advancements made in recent years. Scientists from these prestigious organizations are also present to engage with the public and students.

Speaking at the event, MP Ghulam Ali Khatana emphasized how the exhibition reflects India's growth over the past decade, noting that under



Prime Minister Modi's leadership, the country has embraced the principles of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas." He highlighted that India's all-around development, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir, is being supported by the central government, ensuring that the benefits of progress reach every citizen.

The exhibition is a unique opportunity for Jammu's youth to engage with the country's scientific and technological achievements. Khatana urged young people to make the most of this event, expressing pride that such a prestigious exhibition is being held in Jammu. "This exhibi-

tion will greatly benefit our youth and serve as an inspiration for the future," he added.

As part of the ongoing celebrations for India's Amrit Mahotsav, the exhibition underscores the country's rapid advancements in numerous fields, positioning India as a global leader and setting the stage for a prosperous and self-reliant future.

From October 3 to 5, students from various schools and colleges in Jammu will have the opportunity to explore the exhibits, gaining valuable insights into cutting-edge developments. The exhibition is open to all age groups and is free of charge, making it accessible to the general public.

Jordan Tourist Surprised To See Kashmir's Hospitality, Receives Gifts

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Salsabeel, a young lady from Jordan, recently fulfilled her dream of visiting Kashmir, a destination she first learned about, through a friend's video of the region's beautiful place.

"After seeing the videos, it became my goal to visit and experience those beautiful landscapes myself," she said, adding that the visit far exceeded her expectations, with the natural beauty and the hospitality of the Kashmiri people, leaving her deeply moved.

Salsabeel shared that during her stay, she explored the valley, hiked the Sonmarg mountains, rode boats and experienced the cultural richness of Kashmir's traditions.

"The warmth of the people particularly stood out, as locals welcomed me into their homes and showered me with gifts. The people here treated me like family," Salsabeel recalled.

"Almost everything was new and different for me — from

the climate to school schedules and vacations, and even the food. The wedding customs here are also very unique and special," she added.

While acknowledging minor challenges, she said her experience was overwhelmingly positive, thanks to the guidance of her friend and travel guide, Adnan Dar.

"I had many invitations to local houses, attended weddings, and whenever people found out I was from Jordan, they wouldn't let me pay for anything," she recalled. "I even received gifts from people the very first time I met them. I truly felt lucky and as if I was in paradise — the way they treated me was extraordinary," she said.

Meanwhile, Adnan, who has long worked to promote Kashmir to the Arab world, shared the increasing interest in the region from Middle Eastern travellers. "Kashmir has immense potential on the international stage," Adnan said, sharing the rise in Arab tourism—(KNO)

GOC 9 Corps Reviews Operational Preparedness In Bani, Billiwar Sectors



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Amid the frequent terror incidents in hills of Kathua-Udhampur districts, General Officer Commanding (GOC) of Yol based Rising Star Corps, commonly known as 9 Corp, conducted a comprehensive assessment of the operational preparedness of units deployed in the strategic Bani and Billiwar sectors of Kathua district.

As per spokesperson, the review was part of the ongoing efforts to ensure high levels of readiness and vigilance in the hinterland of Jammu, which became active after around two decades, with an increase in terror incidents in Kathua, Udhampur and Doda borders.

During the assessment GOC interacted with the troops and reviewed their operational capabilities, including logistical support, surveillance mea-

asures, and defensive positions.

He commended the dedication and professionalism exhibited by all ranks in executing their operations, acknowledging their role in maintaining peace and stability in the region despite challenging terrain and weather conditions.

Addressing the troops, the GOC emphasized the importance of continued alertness and adaptability to evolving security threats.

The Rising Star Corps is responsible for security of strategic Jammu, Samba and Kathua districts and recently played a very critical role in neutralizing a terrorist on September 29. In the same operation a police head Constable was also killed.

The GOC's visit underlined the Army's commitment to ensuring operational excellence and its preparedness to meet any contingencies.

DEO Bandipora Visits Counting Centre, Inspects Strong Room



Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: The District Election Officer (DEO) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri on Thursday visited designated counting centre established at HKM Government Degree College Bandipora for Assembly Elections 2024 and inspected strong room where EVMs of three ACs of Bandipora district are securely stored.

During the visit, DEO reviewed the security measures in place to ensure the integrity and safety of the EVMs and emphasized the importance of transparency and preparedness as the counting date approaches.

It is worth mentioning that counting is scheduled to be held on 08 October in Bandipora District and EVMs will re-

main under high security until the counting process.

During the visit, the DEO reviewed key security elements, including round-the-clock CCTV surveillance, deployment of security personnel, and strict access control protocols.

He said comprehensive security protocols, including round-the-clock surveillance and access control measures have been implemented to safeguard the EVMs.

In addition, the DEO reviewed the arrangements for the counting process, highlighting that multiple counting tables have been set up to facilitate efficient and accurate counting besides ensuring that adequate staff and resources are in place to manage the counting operations seamlessly.

COUNTING PROCESS:

Training Held For Counting Supervisors, Assistants

Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: The District Election Office, Shopian on Thursday conducted a day long training programme for Counting Supervisors, Counting Assistants and Micro-Observers at Mini Secretariat Shopian to acquaint them for conducting counting of votes smoothly on October, 08 as per ECI guidelines.

District Election Officer (DEO) Shopian, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar presided and witnessed one training session provided by RO Shopian and Master Trainers.

District Level Master Trainers provided detailed training

sessions to prepare skilled and competent manpower for the counting of votes for two Assembly Constituencies of Zainapora and Shopian.

During the sessions of day long training, the participants were provided procedural knowledge for the smooth execution of the counting process including practical demonstration of handling of EVM, counting procedures, etc

Returning Officer, Shakoor Ahmad while delivering his session, stressed on strictly following the rules and procedures of Election Commission of India (ECI) during the entire process.

Women's T20 World Cup: Bangladesh Crush Scotland In Opener

Press Trust of India

SHARJAH: Bangladesh displayed superb team effort to beat Scotland by 16 runs in the opening match of the Women's T20 World Cup in Sharjah on Thursday.

Opting to bat, Bangladesh posted 119 for seven, riding on Sobhana Mostary's 36 off 38 balls and opener Shathi Rani's 29. Skipper Nigar Sultana made a run-a-ball 18, while Fahima Khatun remained unbeaten on 10 off five balls.

Right-arm spinner Saskia Horley was the pick of the Scotland bowlers, scalping three wickets for 13 runs from her two overs.

Kathryn Bryce (1/23), Olivia Bell (1/23) and Katherine Fraser (1/23) also picked up one wicket apiece.

Scotland wicketkeeper-batter Sarah Bryce tried her best to get her side over the line with an unbeaten knock of 49 off 52 balls in the chase, but she didn't get enough support from her teammates as her side could only manage 103 for seven in their allotted 20 overs.

Scotland kept losing wickets at regular intervals as Bangladesh bowlers tightened their grip on the opposition batters.



Besides Bryce, only two Scotland batters managed double-digit scores -- skipper Kathryn Bryce (11) and Priyanaz Chatterji (11).

Medium pacer Ritu Moni shone for Bangladesh with the ball with figures of 2/15 in her four overs.

Marufa Akter (1/17), Nahida Akter (1/19), Fahima Khatun (1/21) and Rabeya Khan (1/20) also chipped in with wickets for Bangladesh.

Brief Scores:

Bangladesh: 119 for 7 in 20 overs (Sobhana Mostary 36, Shathi Rani 29; Saskia Horley 3/13).

Scotland: 103 for 7 in 20 overs (Sarah Bryce 49 not out; Ritu Moni 2/15).

India's Women T20 World Cup Full fixtures:

- India vs New Zealand: October 4, 7:30 PM
- India vs Pakistan: October 6, 3:30 PM
- India vs Sri Lanka: October 9, 7:30 PM
- India vs Australia: October 13, 7:30 PM

The matches will be broadcast on Star Sports Network in India, with live streaming available on Disney+ Hotstar.

Short TAKES

Inter-School Karate Competitions For Girls Held In Anantnag

District Youth Services and Sports Anantnag conducted karate Competition for Under-14, Under-17 and Under-19 age group girls on Thursday at DYSSO Office Ground Anantnag.

The event featured the girls students of different zones and higher secondary schools of District Anantnag. A large number of students participated in the karate competitions.

"The event successfully raised awareness about benefits of sports activities and served as a platform to promote its adoption for a healthier and more balanced lifestyle," the department said in a press release.

ED Summons Former India Captain Mohammad Azharuddin

The Enforcement Directorate has summoned former India captain and Congress politician Mohammad Azharuddin for questioning in a money laundering case linked to alleged financial irregularities in the Hyderabad Cricket Association, official sources said Thursday.

The 61-year-old former Member of Parliament (MP) has been asked to depose before the federal agency at its office here on October 3, the sources said. The probe is related to alleged financial irregularities in the Hyderabad cricket association in which the ED had conducted searches in November last year.

The money laundering case stems from three FIRs and charge sheets filed by the Telangana anti-corruption bureau (ACB) for alleged criminal misappropriation of the funds of the HCA to the tune of Rs 20 crore.

Irani Cup: Easwaran's Ton Keeps Rol's Hopes Alive

In-form opener Abhimanyu Easwaran sent a timely reminder to the national selectors with his third successive hundred while holding the Rest of India innings together after Mumbai posted a mammoth first-innings score of 537 in the Irani Cup in Lucknow on Thursday.

Easwaran compiled an unbeaten 151 off 212 balls, and laced his innings with 12 fours and a six on the third day of the match at the Ekana Cricket Stadium.

Thanks to Easwaran's second Irani Cup hundred, Rol reached 289 for four in their first innings and reduced the deficit to 248 runs by stumps.

Earlier in the day, Mumbai could add only one run to their overnight score of 536 for nine before getting bowled out, with double centurion Sarfaraz Khan remaining not out on a monumental 222.

Lionel Messi, Inter Miami Win MLS Supporters Shield



Lionel Messi and Inter Miami have another trophy, along with home-field advantage throughout the Major League Soccer playoffs.

Messi scored twice in the final minutes of the first half, goalie Drake Callender stopped a penalty kick in the 84th minute and Inter Miami beat the defending MLS Cup champion Columbus Crew 3-2 on Wednesday night, wrapping up the Supporters Shield given annually to the team with the best regular-season record.

It was Messi's 46th major trophy won for club or country, extending his record for the most by any men's soccer player in history. And it is the second he has won with Inter Miami.

Luis Suarez also scored for Inter Miami, which will open a best-of-three first-round playoff series in the final weekend of October.

UT Level Thang-Ta Championship For Girls U-17 Concludes

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The Inter District UT Level Thang-Ta Championship for Girls Under-17 concluded on Thursday at Indoor Sports Complex, Sehpora, here. The two-day event, organised by the Department of Youth Services and Sports J&K, witnessed enthusiastic participation from various districts across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, highlighting the growing popularity of Thang-Ta among young athletes.

The championship aimed to foster a spirit of competition among the youth of the J&K. Athletes from different districts showcased their skills and determination, reflecting the dedication and



talent of the participants.

District Pulwama emerged as the dominant force in the competition, topping the medal tally with an impressive collection of 3 Gold and 1 Silver. The championship included various categories, allowing athletes to compete at their level and gain learn-

ing experience.

The event was attended by Sheikh Shafiqat Iqbal, the District Youth Services and Sports Officer of Ganderbal, who attended as the chief guest.

The championship culminated in a presentation ceremony where medals were distributed to the winners.

Babar Azam Quit White-Ball Captaincy After Being 'Solely' Blamed For Pakistan's Poor Performances

Press Trust of India

KARACHI: Babar Azam lost his interest in captaining Pakistan's white ball teams after a critical report submitted by head coach Gary Kirsten to the Pakistan Cricket Board, according to sources close to the team.

Babar on Wednesday resigned as Pakistan's white-ball cricket captain for a second time in 11 months, citing a need to lessen his workload and focus on improving his game.

He had stepped down as captain of all three formats last year after Pakistan failed to make the knock-out stage of the 50-overs World Cup, before returning as white-ball skipper in March ahead of the Twenty20 World Cup, where Pakistan did not make it to the Super Eight stage.

Babar was disappointed that he was being blamed for Pakistan's lackluster showing in the T20 World Cup in July in which they were knocked out in the league stage, after suffering a shock loss to hosts USA.

"Babar was not happy with the observations and recommendations of Kirsten and even assistant coach, Azhar Mahmood and felt he was solely being blamed for the disappointing performances," a source was quoted as saying.

"He had indicated to the cricket board after some parts of Kirsten's report became public that he was not interested in remaining captain."

A PCB insider said Babar had complained to some board officials, who had worked a lot with him that it was unfortunate the PCB didn't take his past performances and results into their consideration nor showed the required confidence and trust in him.

Another insider said that the final nail in the coffin was when the PCB didn't announce him as captain



of the ODI squad while confirming him to lead Pakistan in the T20 World Cup.

Kirsten, in his report to PCB, discussed the dressing room environment and also the behaviour and non-cooperation of some players in England and the T20 Cup World Cup.

He also conveyed his opinion on whether Babar was equipped to handle the pressures of captaincy and his more significant role for the team as a specialist batter after the mental stress and criticism he had gone through since last year.

According to one source, the PCB is in no hurry to announce, who will replace Babar as white-ball captain as internally they have told Kirsten, selector Asad Shafiq and some members of the selection committee to take a decision and make a recommendation after much thought and debate.

"Chairman, Mohsin Naqvi has made it clear he wants minutes of all official discussions by the selection committee that includes both foreign head coaches to be recorded so that a clear reason is on record for making the appointment," he added.

Genesis Global Academy Excels At State-Level Panchak Silat Event

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: Genesis Global Academy in Patwaw, Budgam, put in an excellent performance at the recently held State-Level Panchak Silat Championship in Srinagar. The academy's athletes secured a total of 11 medals, showcasing their exceptional talent and dedication.

The team won 8 Gold, 2 Silver and 1 Bronze in various categories, affirming their position as a leading institution in martial arts.

The school's administra-



tion lauded the students and coaches for their hard work and commitment, em-

phasizing the importance of sports in overall personality development.

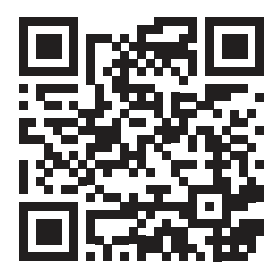
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In our latest podcast, we present Irshad Mushtaq, founder of MI Securities. In addition, he is a financial expert who has helped countless individuals and businesses navigate complex financial landscapes. In this episode, we discussed different investment 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.