

Oppn-Govt Faceoff

No Waqf Bill This Session



KO Web Desk

NEW DELHI: The contentious Waqf Amendment Bill, aimed at reforming the management and regulation of Waqf properties across the country, is now likely to be tabled during the Budget Session in February 2025, sources said.

The bill has been deferred to the next Parliament Session due to heated debates and disruptions within the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)

tasked with reviewing the bill.

The panel decided to seek more time at its meeting on Wednesday. The panel, led by BJP's Jagdambika Pal, was tasked to submit the report by November 29, the last day of the first week of the session.

Pal told reporters after Wednesday's meeting that the committee was unanimous in its view as it has to listen to some other stakeholders, including six states, where there are disputes between

“The opposition members of the committee on Wednesday staged a walkout and slammed Pal, who is the joint parliamentary committee chairperson, for asserting that the panel's draft report was ready.”

Cyber Crimes: Govt Blocks 6.69 Lakh SIMs, 1.32 Lakh IMEIs

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Centre has blocked 6.69 lakh SIM cards and 1.32 lakh International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) numbers reported by police authorities to check cyber crimes in the country, Rajya Sabha was informed Wednesday.

In a written reply to a question, Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar said the central government and

Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) have devised a system to identify and block incoming international spoofed calls displaying Indian mobile numbers appearing to be originating within India.

“Such international spoofed calls have been made by cyber criminals in recent cases of fake digital arrests, fedex scams and impersonation as government and police officials,” the minister said.

Directions have been issued to the TSPs for

blocking of such incoming international spoofed calls, he said.

“Till November 15, 2024, more than 6.69 lakh fake SIM cards and 1.32 lakh IMEIs as reported by police authorities have been blocked by the government of India,” he said.

The citizen financial cyber fraud reporting and management system under I4C has been launched in year 2021 for



‘Need To Strengthen Existing Laws Governing SM’

NEW DELHI: Information & Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Wednesday called for stricter laws to curb vulgar content on social media, saying absence of editorial oversight has led to “uncontrolled expression” on such platforms.

Replying to supplementaries in the Question Hour in Lok Sabha, he said there



was a vast difference in the cultural sensitivities in India and the countries

where these social media platforms were created.

“The cultural sensitivities of India vastly differ from those of the regions where these platforms were created. This makes it imperative for India to make existing laws stricter and he urged everyone to come to a consensus on this matter,” the minister said in response to a question raised

by BJP member Arun Govil. Vaishnaw said the Parliamentary Standing Committee should take up the issue and also called for a consensus to frame stricter laws in this regard.

He said earlier there were editorial checks on publishing content, but the same has diminished since the advent of social media and OTT platforms.

Lebanese Return To Homes As Truce Begins

Agencies

BEIRUT: As a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah came into effect, much of Lebanon was quiet for the first time following 14 months of a conflict that has killed thousands of people.

The displaced residents of southern Lebanon started returning to their homes amid celebrations hours after the ceasefire started at 4am (02:00 GMT) on Wednesday.

While there were concerns about whether the truce would hold and lead to the permanent end of fighting between the Israeli military and the Hezbollah, there was also relief across the tiny Mediterranean nation.

Thousands of people made their way to southern Lebanon, defying a warning from the Israeli military to stay away from previously evacuated areas.

Cars jammed the highway linking the capital, Beirut, to the south, with people returning with their belongings tied on top of their cars. Traffic was gridlocked at the northern entrance of the port city of Sidon.

Displaced people also started returning to the

Light Rains, Snow Likely From Tomorrow

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Three feeble back-to-back Western Disturbances (WDs) are affecting Jammu and Kashmir for the period of over one week, while the light snowfall in higher reaches and rains are expected in the plains November 29 evening to December 3 and in between December 7 and 8.

The Meteorological department (MeT), has stated that the weather conditions are expected to remain generally dry for the next two days while there is a possibility of light wet spell from November 29 evening.

‘Breach Of Privilege’ Notice

Waheed Para Gets 7-days To Respond

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly has given PDP legislative party leader Waheed-ur-Rehman Para seven days to respond to a “breach of privilege” notice issued over his speech in the House early this month.

Para, a first-time member of the legislative Assembly, is accused of breach of privilege by National Conference MLA Nazir Ahmad Khan Gurezi. “The office is in receipt

of a communication from Gurezi addressed to the Speaker in which it has been stated that Para, during his speech on Motion of Thanks to the Lieutenant Governor’s Address on 8th of November 2024, has levelled some allegations and used derogatory remarks against him.

“Accordingly, the matter was placed before the Speaker, who desired to seek comments from Para in the first instance before proceeding ahead in the matter,” Qazi Mushtaq

Attempt To Silence Opposition: Para

SRINAGAR: Reacting to the notice of “Breach of Privilege”, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader Waheed Ur Rehman Para Wednesday termed that as a ‘deliberate’ attempt to suppress the opposition’s voice in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

Para’s strong reaction comes after he was given seven days to respond to allegations made by National Conference (NC) legislator Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurezi), who accused him of making derogatory

Airlines Received 994 Hoax Bomb Threats This year

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Airlines received 994 hoax bomb threats this year till November 13 and robust protocols are in place to handle such threats, the government has said.

To deal with the menace of hoax calls in a comprehensive manner, the civil aviation ministry plans to amend the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Civil Aviation Act, 1982, and Aircraft (Security) Rules, 2023.

A total of 1,143 hoax bomb threat messages/calls were received from August 2022 till November 13, 2024, Minister of State for Civil

NIA To Seek Special Powers In Er Rashid’s Case

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The NIA on Wednesday informed a court that it was likely to move the Delhi High Court seeking grant of special powers to a court currently hearing the terror-funding case against J&K MP Rashid Engineer, to enable it to hear the case.

Principal District and Sessions Judge Vimal Kumar Yadav was hearing the matter recommended by a special judge over the transfer of the terror-funding case to a court designated to try lawmakers after observing

that Rashid was now a member of Parliament.

The counsel appearing for the NIA made the submission before the district judge, seeking 10 days to the probe agency to receive a response from the high court.

The district judge listed Rashid’s interim bail application December 6 to enable him to attend the ongoing Parliament sessions.

During the arguments on Wednesday, senior advocate and special NIA prosecutor Siddharth Luthra informed the district judge that the case should not be

India Will Shape A Peaceful World For Future Generations: LG

Observer News Service

JAMMU: India with its rich historical and cultural heritage and its talented human resources is marching towards the goal of developed India by 2047, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Wednesday.

“In this journey, enlightened people from every field, especially scientists and spiritualists, need to come forward and give new impetus to the development process,” he said.



The LG presented the Kailash Sanskrit Ratna Award for the year 2024 to Param Pujya Niranjan Peethadhishwar Shri Shri 1008 Acharya Mahamandaleshwar

Swami Kailashanand Giri Ji Maharaj, at a ceremony organised by Shri Kailash Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust at Jammu.

“Propagation of all-embracing Indian

HC Orders Compensation For Land Occupied By Army For 46 Years

M Ahmad

SRINAGAR: Observing that no one can be deprived of his or her property other than following due procedure of law, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has directed Union of India to pay compensation to a resident of Tanghdar for over 12 kanals of land under occupation by the army since 1978.

In his petition, the resident had submitted that authorities did not pay any rent to him for the

occupation of his proprietary land nor they have initiated any proceedings for its acquisition, thus depriving him of his land without following due process of law.

“...this Court is of the view that the action of the respondent-Union of India is illegal and unconstitutional which cannot sustain the test of law in the light of the stand taken by the Revenue Authority.”

a bench of Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal said after hearing counsel for the

resident as well as the authorities.

Subsequently, the court directed the Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, to constitute a team of revenue officers headed by Tehsildar concerned for taking necessary steps for assessment of rental compensation with regard to the occupation of land by the Army within two weeks.

While asking the DC to associate the petitioner and other stakeholders in the process,

Entry Banned Into Wetlands Without Permission

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Department of Wildlife Protection has banned the entry of people into the wetland without prior permission.

The department issued a notice which reads that migratory birds will inhabit and move between the wetlands during the winter months and to ensure their safety and protection, the Department of Wildlife Protection is entrusted with safeguarding these migratory birds.

The notice further reads that some individuals with ill intentions attempt to harm the birds or disrupt their habitats and to ensure the safety of the birds, nobody will be allowed to enter the wetlands without seeking prior permission.

The authorities said that anyone found entering the wetlands without permission will be considered in violation of the Wildlife



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In my J&K Bank account bearing A.NO: 0740040150000001 My name has been wrongly entered as Huzair Ahmad Shah while my correct name is Uzair Ali Shah 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 Bank Ratnipora Shopian within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Uzair Ali Shah
S/o Ali Mohd Shah
R/o Ratnipora Shopian **fko**

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have Lost my wallet between nigeen lake to dargah which Contains PAN card, Four debit cards, My father's disability certificate, Rs 2000 cash, Voter card, 5 passport size photos and other necessary documents. If any incident happens in the future and my wallet is found there I am not responsible Or if anyone found please return Otherwise I am going for duplicate certificates
Name : Satyendra Kumar S/o: Gyan Das
R/O: Darapur Raisaini, Po: mustafabad
PS: Jaserana District Firozabad Uttar Pradesh
Currently present at National Institute of technology Srinagar
Cell: 7055821423 **inf**

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my driving licence bearing DL No: JK0420110012554 while travelling from Paarypora To Magam . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the ARTO Budgam within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Gowhar Mohi-U-Din Beigh
S/o Ghulam Mohi-u-Din Beigh
R/o Paarypora Magam **bmj**

The Jammu And Kashmir Board Of School Education
New Campus Bemina Srinagar

I have passed/appeared in Secondary School Examination (Class- 10th) under Roll No.: 139072003 Session: 2023-2024 year 2024 through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. Due to the error committed by the concerned School/parent board against my name as Akeel Altaf instead of Akeel Altaf Pandit and my mother name as Farida instead of Farida Pandit



Now, I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education, New Campus Bemina. Srinagar, if any person has any objection in this regard, may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of Publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained.
Akeel Altaf Pandit
Father's Name: Mohammad Altaf Pandit
Mother's Name: Farida Pandit
R/o. 35 A Wazir Bagh Srinagar **inf**

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my Shikara Licence under name and style Khan Palace as Hilal Ahmad Thabou S/o Mohd Amin Thabou while my correct name as per adhaar card is Hilal Ahmad Dar S/o Ghulam Mohi Ud Din Dar 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 Dy Director Tourism Kashmir within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Hilal Ahmad Dar
S/o Ghulam Mohi Ud Din Dar
R/o Gadi Mohalla Abi Karpura Dalgate Srinagar **iko**

از ریاست تحصیلدار اٹکام
درخواست منجانب: ابوصالح دانی ولد محمد یوسف دانی ساکن اٹکام کوثر ناگ ضلع اہل نگر
حصول آر بی اے سرٹیفکیٹ
معاہدہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدور میں ساکن صدر نے اس کی درخواست بغرض حصول آر بی اے سرٹیفکیٹ
دفتر بارہ میں پیش کیا ہے حسب رپورٹ پٹواری حافظہ تفصیلی فراڈ کیڈ پیل درج ہے۔

نام صاحب کیمہ ولدیت	عمر	پیشہ	آمدنی
محمد یوسف ولد محمد یوسف دانی	68 سال	عمر سیدہ	---
منیر یوسف ولد محمد یوسف دانی	60 سال	---	---
محمد رفیق پسر	40 سال	مزدوری	16000
شازی بی بی الدین زین محمد رفیق دانی	38 سال	گھر بیگام	---
محمد جلد دانی پسر	36 سال	زیر تعلیم	---
ابوصالح ولد محمد یوسف دانی	32 سال	---	---
محمد اسد ولد محمد رفیق دانی	06 ماہ	خیر خواہ	---

اسکے علاوہ اور کوئی فرد کسی بھی موجود نہیں ہے ساکن کے گھرانے میں ماہانہ زرعی و دیگر زرعی آمدنی = 16000 ہے اس حوالے سے اگر کسی شخص یا شخص کو کوثر ناگ ضلع اہل نگر کے نام سے کوئی نذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض دفتر بارہ میں پیش کریں۔ معاہدہ کرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
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JNA7780878931

Metabolic, Bariatric Surgery Safe & Effective For Severely Obese Patients: Study

IANS
Metabolic and bariatric surgery is a potent and safe intervention for patients with a body mass index (BMI) exceeding 70, finds a study on Friday. The popular weight loss surgery is majorly done in people with a BMI of 35 and above, and when diet and exercise haven't worked. People with serious health problems because of weight are also likely to undergo the surgery. There is no accepted maximum BMI value considered to be prohibitive for those in need of bariatric surgery. However, it is commonly known that an increased BMI can raise the risk of post-surgical complications. The research led by a team from the Pennington Biomedical Research Centre in the US analysed the data of 84 patients with excess obesity who received metabolic or bariatric surgery. The findings, published in the journal Obesity Surgery, showed that the surgery-based obesity treatment led to low rates of complications 30 days post-operation. "Patients with this level of obesity represent a growing demographic and one that requires nuanced care. The good news is, though these patients may be considered high risk



due to their BMIs, bariatric and metabolic surgery remain largely safe for these patients," said Dr. Florina Corpodean, postdoctoral

researcher and surgical research fellow at Pennington Biomedical. With the escalating prevalence of obesity, healthcare providers are increasingly managing patients with a BMI exceeding 70. The surgical procedure alters the stomach and intestines to help with weight loss. It also helps treat obesity-related metabolic disorders. The researchers showed that the severely obese patients had a robust weight loss following their metabolic or bariatric surgery. Importantly, the results were durable up to one year following the operation. Further, the patients also demonstrated low rates of complications and reoperations within the first year following surgery.

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 Mariya Parveez D/o Parveez Ahmad Khan R/o Shahabad Sopore Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 07-05-2020 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

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice
Tender Notice No.- No 770-W/169/WA-1/FZR-240-2024-25-PTK-DRM-FZR (to be opened on date 16.12.2024) acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date 16.12.2024 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.

Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System
Open	Works	Two Packet System
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time
21.11.2024	02.12.2024	16.12.2024

S. No	Tender No.	Details of Tender	Advertised Value (Rs.)	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
1	240-2024-25-PTK-DRM-FZR	Protection work of BR. NO. 232 by providing piles and retaining wall along PTK end abutment of UP line bridge in c/w Retrofitting Measures due to damage near Railway bridge no 232 over Chakki River (Pathankot, Punjab) in JUC-PTK Section under ADEN-IPTK.	17,65,15,566.98	90 Days	06 Months

NOTE:- Contractors are advised to go through the IREPS website for any corrigendum issued against this tender before submitting the bids. 3646/2024
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

'Most Gen Z Professionals Prefer Growth Path Mentorship Over Salary'

Press Trust Of India
Around 80 per cent of Gen Z professionals prioritise mentorship and career growth over traditional metrics like salary, reflecting a stronger focus on personal and professional development, a report said on Tuesday. Gen Zs (people born between the mid-to-late 1990s and early 2010s) adopt a more deliberate approach, seeking clarity and purpose in their careers, unlike those from previous generations for whom financial stability was the primary concern, said a report by jobs and professional networking platform apna.co. They aim to build skills that naturally lead to rewards, emphasising a future-oriented, strategic mindset instead of short-term gains, said the report. The report is based on a survey carried out among 10,000 Gen Z professionals during October and November to explore their professional preferences and workplace expectations. Positive work environment emerged as a critical factor for 74 per cent of respondents, indicating the importance of inclusivity, respect and active engagement, it said. While people of earlier generations often overlooked mentorship and structured learning, Gen Zs demand continuous feedback, collaboration, and recognition. Gen Zs reject working in isolation or receiving occasional acknowledgement. Instead, they value workplaces that align personal and professional growth, it stated. This marks a shift from routine, sloop work towards a culture of curiosity, mentorship, and impactful teamwork, emphasising their need for holistic growth and purpose-driven careers, the report added. According to the survey, 68 per cent of Gen Z prefer a hybrid working model over fully remote or onsite roles. This preference reflects Gen Z's recognition of the value of team collaboration and in-person mentorship for skill development and cultural alignment. Hybrid work allows them to benefit from office interactions while maintaining the flexibility to focus on creative, innovation-driven projects independently, it stated. "The Gen Z generation is redefining professional success, moving beyond monetary rewards to seek purposeful, growth-oriented roles. The findings are not just data points, they are a call to action for companies to reimagine workforce engagement strategies and foster environments where talent feels empowered and valued. As Gen Z continues to drive this transformation, businesses must align with this vision of purpose and progress to thrive in the future of work," apna.co founder and CEO Nimit Parikh added

NOTICE

I intending to apply for the Reserve Backward Areas (RBA) at Tehsil Office Kangan in District Ganderbal. If anybody have any objection in this regard may contact the concerned authorities within a period of seven days after publication of this notice. After that no objection will be entertained.
Rafaqat Kareem Pakhtoon
S/o Abdul Kareem Pakhtoon
R/o Wussan Kangan, Ganderbal **jvd**

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify That I arwaa mir my name has been wrongly mentioned in my aadhar card bearing aadhar no 759162769943 as waheeda bano now I want to change it to my new name Arwaa mir. If anybody has any objections in this regard he/she may kindly approach the concerned office within seven days. No objection will be entertained after the said time period.
jvd

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify all that my name has been wrongly mentioned as Velfina Walter Burboz in my adhaar card bearing aadhar no 408915342201. Now I want to apply for change in name in my adhaar card with the following corrections. My new name is Amina jan . If anybody has any objections in this regard he/she may kindly approach the concerned office within seven days. No objection will be entertained after the said time period.
jvd

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify all that my name has been wrongly mentioned as Amjed Ahmad Chowhan in my adhaar card. Now I want to apply for a name change in my adhaar card with the following corrections. My new name as Amjed Ahmad Bakerwal . If anybody has any objections in this regard he/she may kindly approach the concerned office within seven days. No objection will be entertained after the said time period.
jvd

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify all that my name has been wrongly mentioned as Arsheda bano in Aadhar card. Now I want to apply for name change in aadhar card with the following corrections. My new name as Arshida bano . If anybody has any objections in this regard he may kindly approach the concerned office within seven days. No objection will be entertained after the said time period.
jvd

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Traffic Police Makes Helmets Mandatory For Pillion Riders

Agencies

Srinagar: Traffic police in Srinagar have made helmets mandatory for pillion riders on two-wheelers. Violators, including the riders and pillion passengers not wearing helmets, will face fines and challans starting Thursday, November 28, 2024.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic, Muzaffar Ahmad Shah said that the initiative aims to enhance road safety.

"Today, we distributed helmets to pillion riders in Srinagar and provided counseling. Starting tomorrow, we will impose fines and issue challans for any violations. We urge two-wheeler riders to carry a spare helmet for pillion passengers," Shah said.

The SSP emphasized that both the rider and pillion passenger must wear helmets to avoid penalties. He further noted that similar enforcement drives will continue in the future,

with strict action taken under the Motor Vehicles Act against those flouting the rules.

The traffic department has already issued warnings in recent days, highlighting the critical importance of helmet use. "Many road accident cases show that riders often escape with minor injuries, while pillion riders suffer severe injuries or even lose their lives," Shah stated. He appealed to all two-wheeler riders to follow traffic rules and support the police's efforts to save lives.

In Srinagar, the summer capital, there were 394 accidents this year, claiming 50 lives and injuring 411 people. Jammu and Kashmir has recorded 4,990 road accidents so far this year, resulting in 703 deaths and 6,820 injuries. Official data reveals that over 12 lakh challans have been issued across J&K this year, with Srinagar topping the list at 3.37 lakh—(KNO)



JKRTC Claims 50 Percent Revenue Loss As Bus Operations Halted In City

Agencies

Srinagar: Amid ongoing restrictions preventing JKRTC buses from entering Srinagar city, the corporation has warned that the abrupt suspension of services has led to a 50 percent drop in its daily revenue, threatening its financial stability.

A senior JKRTC officer said that following the commencement of the J&K assembly session earlier this month, the corporation was "suddenly" instructed to halt bus operations in the city, causing inconvenience to commuters and further impacting its revenue.

"I don't understand why we are being selectively targeted," the officer said. "Private buses are still operating within the city, and we have evidence to back this up. This will negatively affect the functioning of the corporation."

The officer said that while the northbound and southbound vehicles had previously accessed the city, they were now required to stop at Patnachowk and Parimpura due to the assembly session. "While fleets of similar e-buses from other companies were allowed to operate in the city, our own fleet of pollution-free e-buses and other modern vehicles was restricted from going beyond Parimpura and Panthachowk," he said.

Currently, only a portion of their fleet is operational, as buses are being stopped beyond these two points, the officer said, adding that they had raised the matter with traffic authorities but had not yet received a response.

In a related development, the Managing Director (MD) of JKRTC has written a letter to the Inspector General of Police (IGP), saying that the corporation's daily earnings have halved

and has dropped from Rs 8 lakh to Rs 4 lakh due to the restrictions on bus entry into Srinagar. This, the MD said, has led to financial losses for the state exchequer and inconvenienced the general public.

In the letter, the MD urged the IGP to allow JKRTC buses to resume operations within Srinagar city to alleviate the hardships faced by both commuters and the corporation. The restriction of buses from entering the city has been in place since November 4, when the first assembly session began, he said.

"The north sector buses are being stopped at Bemina Bypass, and the south sector buses are being halted at Panthachowk by the police authorities. As a result, the public is facing difficulties and frequently approaching JKRTC with their complaints," the letter stated.

The MD said these buses were part of a Rs 200

crore government initiative launched in 2021 to make the corporation self-sufficient while providing economical and eco-friendly transportation options to the public.

"Under this initiative, the corporation purchased 655 vehicles (buses and trucks), of which 125 buses were allocated for district services in Kashmir for inter/intra-district operations. These BS-VI, pollution-free buses cater to the transport needs of every corner of the UT of J&K and have become a lifeline for the people of the Kashmir Division," the letter stated.

The JKRTC appealed for the immediate lifting of the restrictions, requesting that buses be allowed to operate through Srinagar city as they had been doing since October 2021. The corporation said that lifting the restrictions would end the ongoing hardships for both commuters and JKRTC—(KNO)

Amandeep BR Medicity Organizes Free Health Camp At KU

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a commendable initiative aimed at promoting health and wellness in the community, Amandeep BR Medicity organized a Free Health Camp in collaboration with the Health Centre of

Medicine), Dr. Ifrah Muzammil (Physiotherapist) and Dr Liman (MO).

During the camp, a total of 350 patients received comprehensive health screenings, reflecting the community's positive response to this initiative. The doctors



Kashmir University. The event saw the participation of esteemed medical professionals, including Prof. Naseer Iqbal, Registrar, and Dr. Khalid, Incharge of the Medical Centre at Kashmir University. The health camp featured a team of skilled doctors, including: Dr. Burhan Nazir (Orthopedic), Dr. Munaza Shora (Gynecologist), Dr. Rouf Hussain Tak (Internal

provided valuable consultations and guidance, ensuring that patients received the necessary care and information for their health concerns.

This collaborative effort underscores the commitment of Amandeep BR Medicity and the Health Centre of Kashmir University to enhance community health and wellness, making essential medical services accessible to all.

Drug Peddler Arrested In City

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, police on Wednesday said to have arrested a drug peddler in Srinagar and recovered psychotropic substance from his possession.

"A police party of Police Station M.R Gunj arrested a drug peddler identified as Altaf Ahmad Shah son of Gulam Hassan Shah resident of Dalal Mohalla Zainakadal. The police team recovered 500 tablets of banned composition and 15 bottles of Codeine Phosphate from Hyundai i-20 bearing registration number JK15A-8122 driven

by the aforementioned accused person who had intentionally hidden these in the boot cavity & underside of driver seat of the car. Vehicle used in the commission of crime has also been seized," a police spokesman said in a statement said.

Accordingly, police said that a case under FIR number 48/2024 under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station M.R Gunj and further investigation has been initiated.

"Community members are requested to come forward with any information regarding drug peddling in their neighbourhood. Persons found indulging in drug peddling will be dealt as per law," police said.

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, myths and stigma associated with OCD

KASHMER Kashmir American Society of Healthcare,
Medical Education & Research
 in collaboration with
HPVT (Help Poor Voluntary Trust)
 is initiating a **free 8 weeks Group therapy** for the individuals suffering with OCD by a team of counselling clinical psychologists led by leading consultant clinical psychologist of J&K.

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

You do not have to fight your battles alone.

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

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9070806160

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

AIRPORTS
 SHEIK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

 HIJRI CALENDAR 25 Jumada al-Awwal 1446	PRAYERS FAJR 5: 45 ZUHR 12:17 ASR 3: 47 Magrib 5:27 ISHA 6: 50
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This Day In History

- 587 - Treaty of Andelot: King Guntram of Burgundy names cousin Childebert II as heir
- 1443 - Albanian George Kastrioti Skanderbeg and his forces liberate Kruja in Middle Albania from the Ottomans and raise the Albanian flag.
- 1520 - Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan begins crossing the Pacific Ocean
- 1660 - The Royal Society is formed at Gresham College, London, after a lecture by Christopher Wren, Gresham Professor of Astronomy
- 1785 - The Treaty of Hopewell is signed between the Confederation Congress of the United States of America and the Cherokee people
- 1814 - The Times of London first printed by automatic, steam powered presses built by German inventors Friedrich Koenig and Andreas Friedrich Bauer - makes newspapers available to a mass audience
- 1821 - Panama declares independence from Spain
- 1843 - Ka Lahui: Hawaiian Independence Day - The Kingdom of Hawaii is officially recognized by the United Kingdom and France as an independent nation.
- 1862 - Battle at Cane Hill, Arkansas (475 casualties)
- 1862 - Battle of Hooly Spring, MS
- 1864 - 3rd day of Battles at Waynesboro/Jones's Plantation, Georgia
- 1875 - British explorer Verney Cameron reaches East Africa
- 1879 - Battle at Lydenburg South Africa: Gen Wolseley beats Sekhukhnes Pedi-Zulu
- 1899 - Battle of Mud River (Boer general Cronjé beats British gen Methuen)
- 1911 - Zapata proclaims Plan of Ayala Mexico
- 1912 - Ismail Qemali declares Albania independent from Turkey in Vlorë
- 1914 - World War I: Following a war-induced closure in July, the New York Stock Exchange re-opens for bond trading.
- 1939 - Soviet government revokes Russian-Finnish non-aggression treaty
- 1958 - Chad becomes an autonomous republic within French community
- 1958 - Congo & Mauritania become autonomous members of French Community
- 1960 - Mauritania gains independence from France (National Day)
- 1962 - Telegraph between Netherlands & Indonesia restored
- 1967 - 1st radio pulsars detected by British postgraduate Jocelyn Burnell and her supervisor Antony Hewish at Cambridge University
- 1973 - Arab League summit in Algiers recognizes Palestine
- 1975 - Democratic Republic of East-Timor proclaimed
- 1983 - 9th Space Shuttle Mission-Columbia 6-is launched
- 1986 - OPEC reaches oil production accord
- 1987 - South African Airways Boeing 747 crashes into Indian Ocean, 159 die
- 1990 - Conservative Party chooses John Major to succeed Margaret Thatcher as leader and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
- 2012 - 54 people are killed and 120 are injured by two car bombs in Damascus, Syria
- 2016 - Plane carrying Brazilian Chapecoense football team crashes near Medellin, Colombia killing 71 players and journalists.
- 2017 - India's Supreme Court rejects appeal to block global release of controversial film "Padmavati"
- 2017 - Uhuru Kenyatta sworn in for a second term as president of Kenya
- 2019 - European parliament declares a climate emergency
- 2019 - Iraqi security forces open fire on protesters killing at least 25 in Nasiriya a day after the Iranian embassy in Najaf is burnt down
- 2019 - Zimbabwe on the brink of man-made starvation according to the UN
- 2020 At least 110 people killed in attack on Koshobe village in north-east Nigeria by Boko Haram jihadist group
- 2020 - Thousands of farmers begin entering Delhi to protest proposed agriculture reforms

KASHMIR OBSERVER™

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KO VIEW

Pakistan's Crisis Deepens

Pakistan is once again in turmoil. The last few days have been marked by violent clashes between the incarcerated former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan's supporters and state forces. Over a hundred people have been killed in the unfolding violence. The country has witnessed an unprecedented deployment of forces to thwart the protests by the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI), Khan's party, seeking his release. However, despite the lockdown, demonstrators, some armed with slingshots and sticks, pushed through security barriers and reached the capital's D-Chowk area despite heavy resistance.

The situation looks set to get worse before it improves. Both sides - PTI and Pakistan's Army-government combine - have dug in their heels. They are unwilling to give in or reach a negotiated settlement. Khan has apparently refused to cut a deal. He has a point when he says that the last year's elections were rigged to bring the current Muslim League-PPP coalition to power. He wants the power to be handed over to the PTI, widely believed to have won the last year's polls.

Pakistan's mounting political challenges have been compounded by its ongoing economic crisis. The country was bailed out last year by the International Monetary Fund that has put its own strict conditions while extending the financial package. In addition to that, the country's current political climate is hopelessly polarized.

So we have a situation where a cascade of crises are colliding in the country. Khan's continuing arrest and the unfolding mass protests could push the country to the brink. The lingering unrest if not addressed in the near future could also have repercussions for regional stability. But it is only Pakistan that can save itself. Its coalition government, the powerful military establishment and the judiciary have to work together to resolve the unsettling situation. Failure to do so will be catastrophic for the country.

Democracy in the country for all its trappings isn't organic. The establishment is widely believed to have a role in who rules Pakistan. Khan himself was once accused of being propped by the Army and now the current rulers are also facing the same accusation.

That said, this is not the concern that is at the heart of the current turbulence in the country. The question is a larger one: What constitutes a nation and who does it essentially belong to? A no-brainer answer to this is that people make up a nation. And by that definition, the legitimacy or otherwise of any action can be gauged by how it corresponds with the interests of people.

In Pakistan it is this contest that is currently playing out, a tug of war between its people and its elite. Truth is Khan is arguably the most popular leader now in the country, something that is also borne out by an overwhelming public groundswell in his favour and also by the recent by-polls. And any solution can only result if Khan is released and the true mandate of last year's election is respected.



Did You Know?

Investing for Beginners: The Mutual Fund Advantage

Irshad Mushtaq

Are you new to investing and looking to build wealth without diving directly into the stock market? Mutual funds might be the ideal solution for you. Here's a breakdown of why mutual funds are an excellent choice for first-time investors.

Mutual Funds: A Simple, Affordable Start

With mutual funds, starting your investment journey is easy. Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs) allow you to begin investing with as little as 500 per month. This gradual approach suits those new to investing and builds financial discipline over time.

Diverse Investment Options

Equity mutual funds must invest at least 65% in equities, providing a balanced approach to growth. Mutual funds offer a variety of portfolios, including large-cap, small-cap, and mid-cap funds. Additionally, business cycle funds, innovation funds, and flexi-cap funds offer flavorful investment choices tailored to market trends.

Professional Management and Regulation

Mutual funds are managed by skilled fund managers who handle investment strategies on your behalf. Each mutual fund is regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and the Ministry of Finance, ensuring transparency and security. This means you can invest with confidence, knowing your money is being managed responsibly.

Convenient and Flexible Access

Investing in mutual funds is a digital process, offering convenience and efficiency. You can redeem your investments as needed, providing liquidity and flexibility for financial planning. Whether your goal is education, homeownership, or wealth building, mutual funds adapt to your financial needs.

Long-term Growth Potential

While mutual funds may experience short-term volatility, they offer promising growth over longer periods. Quality mutual funds often yield positive returns, making them suitable for long-term wealth building.

Consult Professional Advisors

Before investing, consult financial advisors for personalized guidance, ensuring your investment aligns with your financial goals and risk tolerance. By choosing mutual funds, you're setting a solid foundation for financial growth without the complexities of direct stock market investing. Whether for education, a house, or general wealth building, mutual funds provide a practical and well-regulated investment pathway.

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



Maha Win Revives BJP

The BJP's decisive Maharashtra triumph cements its dominance, reshaping national politics while signaling a prolonged hold over Jammu and Kashmir's governance

Riyaz Wani

“What could be the likely impact of the BJP's Maharashtra victory on Jammu and Kashmir? A section of opinion in the union territory believes that one of its significant outcomes could be the delay in restoration of statehood

The Mahayuti alliance's triumph in Maharashtra has brought the BJP back on the national scene, and how. Winning Maharashtra is no small feat. More so, when the BJP-led coalition was the incumbent and had been formed after splitting Shiv Sena. Just four months ago in parliamentary elections, Mahayuti had lost a majority of seats in the state to the INDIA Alliance. But the exact opposite has happened now. Why and how are questions that are being fervently debated. There have been reams of assessments and analysis on the topic in newspapers besides hundreds of hours of discussions on broadcast media.

But now all such analyses are in hindsight, so don't hold much value. Winning makes all means to achieve it look good. A more meaningful analysis would involve predicting a party's chances of winning or losing an election while its strategies are being executed, not when we have the outcome. But that is rarely the case.

This, however, doesn't mean that a post facto analysis doesn't count. A party's victory can be directly attributed to the strategies adopted by it. And it is now apparent that the BJP's combative, no-holds-barred style of campaigning gave it a distinct edge over its complacent opponents.

After the Maharashtra result, one can't help but wonder what makes the BJP tick and frequently come back from behind to stage a spectacular return to the centre stage? What makes the party grow from strength to political strength with such effortless ease, after some occasional reverses? The answer to the question is complex, yet seems very self-evident. In over ten years that the saffron party has been in power at the national level, it has inventively expanded its political appeal to be all things to all the people -right from its core

rightwing base through the centre to the left.

For example, the party's social, economic and ideological agenda and its credibility to execute these on the ground make all the difference. The BJP is strongest on all these fronts. More so, in its ideological agenda: Hindutva has now widest acceptance across the country. No other party's ideology comes even close, least of all that of Congress whose secular credentials now carry little conviction even within the party itself. The parties like the AAP have left this area conspicuously ambivalent. The actions of Kejriwal in recent years clearly suggest that the AAP has made not so subtle appeals to Hindu religion and majoritarianism to protect and grow its base. The party's trump card, however, has been its model of governance that it has perfected in Delhi, and which over the years has attracted notice from across the country.

As things stand, the lacklustre politics of the opposition remains its bane. It will have to get its act together in the months to come to offer a more credible political challenge to the BJP. It would be an uphill task. The BJP in its current avatar will not only need the opposition unity but also an alternative ideological narrative. The saffron party offers a deft blend of ideology, welfare, and sectarian politics. It has Prime Minister Narendra Modi as an overarching leader. With its robust electoral machinery, the BJP has evolved into a formidable and all-encompassing political force.

Congress, on the other hand, comes alive spasmodically, and then retreats into a shell. For all its brief revival during national polls, the party's presence on the ground is depleting by the day and one can't see even distant signs that it will recover sustainably anytime soon. That

is, unless there is a fundamental shift in the kind of politics the party has been practicing for many years now. It is clear from its current plight that the party lacks ideas, ideology, organization, and above all leadership.

That said, what could be the likely impact of the BJP's Maharashtra victory on Jammu and Kashmir? A section of opinion in the union territory believes that one of its significant outcomes could be the delay in restoration of statehood. With the saffron party back in the ascendant after a setback in general elections, it will be under no pressure to let go of the control of J&K that it indirectly rules.

The BJP is the second largest party in the J&K Assembly with 29 seats, all of them from Jammu where it continues to wield significant influence. Only thing that prevented it from forming the government in the union territory was that the voters in Kashmir largely rallied around the National Conference that got 42 seats. The NC-Congress-CPI(M) have 49 seats between them. And in the case of any unlikely defection in the NC in future, the BJP could very well be forming J&K's first Jammu-dominated elected government, led probably by a Hindu chief minister. However, even otherwise, the BJP-led central government is a de-facto ruler in the existing hybrid arrangement with power being shared between the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and the NC-Congress alliance - albeit unequally in favour of the former. The arrangement suits the BJP and it may prefer to stick with it for an indefinite time.

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



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On Self Medication

MANY thanks to Kashmir Observer for publishing a very useful and informative article on the dangers of 'self-medication' online. ("The rise of 'Dr. Google'", Aug. 24). Living in the e-world, naturally the internet is an endless source for information. And for many of us, it is our 'first go-to' for just about everything we want

to know. It is also a tempting tool for medical self-diagnosis, but which one should be extremely careful of. For their illness, the temptation of people to treat themselves through online medication is totally wrong and highly dangerous.

When you self-diagnose, you are essentially assuming that you know the subtleties that diagnosis consti-

tutes. This can be fatal as people who assume that they can surmise what is going on with themselves may miss the nuances of diagnosis. Says eminent Radiation Oncologist Sean Vance: "The wealth of medical information we have at our fingertips can be empowering. But we need to be really choosy about the sources we are using, especially when searching

topics like cancer, stroke and heart attack." The problem with seeking medical advice through the internet is that you could end up being provided with completely incorrect information, which could become an added detriment to your health.

Ranganathan Sivakumar

The Gig Economy in India

A Double-Edged Sword

Narayanan Kizhundayur

The rise of the gig economy in India represents a profound transformation in the country's labour market. Enabled by rapid digitization, growing smartphone usage, and platforms like Uber, Swiggy, and Zomato, millions now perform short-term "gigs" without formal employment. This shift promises flexibility for both businesses and workers, offering companies an on-demand workforce while allowing workers immediate earnings. Yet, this transformation has a dual nature: while it offers flexibility and income opportunities, gig work also brings challenges, such as the lack of stable employment and security.

Many gig workers, especially younger individuals, are drawn by the freedom to choose when, where, and how much they work. Gig work allows them to balance multiple jobs, pursue education, or meet family obligations, often with minimal entry barriers. For instance, a Swiggy delivery worker can begin earning almost immediately, with just a bike and smartphone. The gig economy has also created opportunities for women and marginalized communities who may lack access to traditional employment, offering pathways to financial independence. Many women now use freelance platforms for home-based work like content creation, graphic design, or tutoring.

However, this flexibility comes with trade-offs. Gig work is often precarious, with workers lacking basic labour rights such as minimum wage, social security benefits, or healthcare. This "invisible workforce" exists in a grey area, neither fully employed nor fully independent, and thus lacks the legal protections afforded to regular employees. Without health insurance, pen-



CRITICS ARGUE THAT THE GIG ECONOMY'S MODEL RELIES ON EXPLOITATION, CLASSIFYING WORKERS AS "independent contractors" to avoid paying employee benefits. Although platforms exert significant control over workers' tasks and performance, they evade the costs and obligations of formal employment

sions, or paid leave, gig workers are left vulnerable, especially

during times of illness, injury, or personal crisis. Furthermore, al-

gorithms that control gig work—whether for ride-sharing or food

delivery—are opaque, making earnings unpredictable. A driver for an app-based cab service, for example, might see earnings drop overnight due to changes in the platform's commission structure, with little recourse.

Critics argue that the gig economy's model relies on exploitation, classifying workers as "independent contractors" to avoid paying employee benefits. Although platforms exert significant control over workers' tasks and performance, they evade the costs and obligations of formal employment. Many gig work-

ers work long hours for low pay, without any say in their terms of employment. In the absence of labour regulations suited for gig work, exploitation continues, with food delivery workers often working 12-hour shifts to meet minimum earning thresholds. The competitive nature of gig work further drives down wages, as platforms benefit from a large labour pool willing to endure poor conditions for a living.

Despite these challenges, the gig economy in India is projected to grow, potentially employing over 90 million workers by 2028. To ensure that growth benefits both workers and the economy, policymakers need to address the existing gaps in legal and social protections for gig workers. The government has introduced the Social Security Code, 2020, which aims to extend certain benefits, such as life and disability insurance, provident fund schemes, and maternity benefits, to gig workers. However, effective implementation is critical.

Additionally, the private sector must play a role in ensuring fair wages and benefits for gig workers. Platforms could explore profit-sharing, offer basic health insurance, or allow workers to form associations to negotiate better conditions. Without addressing these issues, the gig economy may become unsustainable, leading to workforce dissatisfaction and potential labour conflicts. To make the gig economy a pillar of India's labour market, a balanced approach is necessary—one that combines flexibility with the rights and protections workers need for economic security.

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

AI that Mimics Humans: Risks and Consequences

Pasquale Minervini
Edoardo Ponti
Nikolay Malkin

OpenAI recently unveiled its latest artificial intelligence (AI) models, o1-preview and o1-mini (also referred to as "Strawberry"), claiming a significant leap in the reasoning capabilities of large language models (the technology behind Strawberry and OpenAI's ChatGPT). While the release of Strawberry generated excitement, it also raised critical questions about its novelty, efficacy and potential risks.

Central to this is the model's ability to employ "chain-of-thought reasoning" – a method similar to a human using a scratchpad, or notepad, to write down intermediate steps when solving a problem.

Chain-of-thought reasoning mirrors human problem solving by breaking down complex tasks into simpler, manageable sub-tasks. The use of scratchpad-like reasoning in large language models is not a new idea.

The ability to perform chain-of-thought reasoning by AI systems not specifically trained to do so was first observed in 2022 by several research groups. These included Jason Wei and colleagues from Google Research and Takeshi Kojima and colleagues from the University of Tokyo and Google.

Before these works, other researchers such as Oana Camburu from the University of Oxford and her colleagues investigated the idea of teaching models to generate text-based explanations for their outputs. This is where the model describes the reasoning steps that it went through in order to produce a particular prediction.

Even earlier than this, re-



searchers including Jacob Andreas from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology explored the idea of language as a tool for deconstructing complex problems. This enabled models to break down complex tasks into sequential, interpretable steps. This approach aligns with the principles of chain-of-thought reasoning.

Strawberry's potential con-

tribution to the field of AI could lie in scaling up these concepts.

A closer look

Although the exact method used by OpenAI for Strawberry is shrouded in mystery, many experts think that it uses a procedure known as "self-verification".

This procedure improves the AI system's own ability to perform chain-of-thought rea-

soning. Self-verification is inspired by how humans reflect and play out scenarios in their minds to make their reasoning and beliefs consistent.

Most recent AI systems based on large language models, such as Strawberry, are built in two stages. They first go through a process called "pre-training", where the system acquires its basic knowledge by running

through a large general dataset of information.

They can then undergo fine-tuning, where they are taught to perform specific tasks better, typically by being provided with additional, more specialised data.

This additional data is often curated and "annotated" by humans. This is where a person provides the AI system with additional context to aid

its understanding of the training data. However, Strawberry's self-verification approach is thought by some to be less data-hungry. Yet, there are indications that some of the o1 AI models were trained on extensive examples of chain-of-thought reasoning that have been annotated by experts.

This raises questions about the extent to which self-improvement, rather than

expert-guided training, contributes to its capabilities. In addition, while the model may excel in certain areas, its reasoning proficiency does not surpass basic human competence in others. For example, versions of Strawberry still struggle with some mathematical reasoning problems that a capable 12-year-old can solve.

Risks and opacity

One primary concern with Strawberry is the lack of transparency surrounding the self-verification process and how it works. The reflection that the model performs upon its reasoning is not available to be examined, depriving users of insights into the system's functioning.

The "knowledge" relied upon by the AI system to answer a given query is not available for inspection either. This means there is no way to edit or specify the set of facts, assumptions, and deduction techniques to be used.

Consequently, the system may produce answers that appear to be correct, and reasoning that appears sound, when in fact they are fundamentally flawed, potentially leading to misinformation.

Finally, OpenAI has built in protections to prevent undesirable uses of o1. But a recent report by OpenAI, that evaluates the system's performance, did uncover some risks. Some researchers we have spoken to have shared their concerns, particularly regarding the potential for misuse by cybercriminals.

The model's ability to intentionally mislead or produce deceptive outputs – outlined in the report – adds another layer of risk, emphasising the need for stringent safeguards.

By arrangements with The Conversation

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

No Waqf Bill

the waqf and the state governments.

He explained, "Today we asked some questions to the Ministry of Minority Affairs. They will answer those questions. We had a few questions that the 123 properties of the Govt of India in Delhi dating back to 1911... Later the Waqf Board laid its claim on those properties. So, for clarification on that, the Ministry of Urban Development and DDA will have to be called. Similarly, Odisha, UP, MP, Rajasthan, Bihar - a total of six states - where government properties are being claimed by the Waqf. So, we told the ministry's secretary today that we have not received a response on this... So, we will also have to call state's chief secretaries or secretaries of Minority Affairs in states..."

The JPC has been marred by discord since its inception. According to reports, meetings have often devolved into heated exchanges between ruling BJP members and the Opposition leaders. From verbal sparring to reports of a bottle being smashed during deliberations, the JPC has struggled to maintain decorum. These conflicts have delayed key state visits and hampered progress.

The opposition members of the committee on Wednesday staged a walkout and slammed Pal, who is the joint parliamentary committee chairperson, for asserting that the panel's draft report was ready.

Temperatures cooled down after Pal and the BJP members of the committee reached out to them, indicating their willingness to press for an extension of the committee's deadline of November 29 to submit its report to Lok Sabha.

The Lok Sabha, which had constituted the committee, later listed in its list of business for Thursday a motion to extend the time for the presentation of its report "upto the last day of the Budget Session 2025".

Earlier, Pal, who is a BJP MP, said after the committee's meeting that its members were unanimous in its view as it has to listen to some other stakeholders, including six states, where there are disputes between the waqf and the state governments.

"We feel that there is a need to extend its deadline," Pal told reporters.

BJP MP and committee member Aparajita Sarangi said the panel will request Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to extend the time for submission of its report to the House upto the last day of the Budget Session of 2025.

Pal and another BJP MP Dilip Saikia will move the motion in the Lower House to this effect.

The committee is expected to visit a few states to meet different stakeholders.

Following the last meeting of the committee on November 21, Pal had said its draft report is ready. He indicated that the committee's consultation with stakeholders is over and its members will now discuss the report and suggest changes, if any, before it is adopted.

The opposition members took strong exception to this stand in Wednesday's meeting and soon stormed out. They claimed that Birla had assured them that its tenure will be extended.

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi said, "We haven't received the assurance from the committee chairperson that we have received from the Speaker. The Speaker says one thing while the chairperson says another thing. "It seems some big minister is directing the action of the chairman," he said.

DMK MP A Raja said all the stakeholders have not been heard yet.

AIMIM member Asaduddin Owaisi said the committee will not be able to submit its report by November 29 if it follows the due process.

AAP member Sanjay Singh also slammed the committee's proceedings under Pal's leadership, while Trinamool Congress member Kalyan Banerjee called it a mockery.

However, Pal and other BJP members like Nishikant Dubey and Sarangi reached out to the opposition members. They held an informal sitting outside the meeting's venue to thrash things out before the opposition members agreed to be part of the formal discussion. The committee was constituted on August 8, soon after the contentious bill was introduced in Lok Sabha.

Opposition parties have stridently criticised the amendments proposed by the bill in the existing Waqf Act, alleging that they violate the religious rights of Muslims.

The ruling BJP has asserted that the amendments will bring transparency in the functioning of the waqf boards and make them accountable.

funds by the fraudsters, he said. "So far, a financial amount of more than Rs 3,431 crore has been saved in more than 9.94 lakh complaints," he said.

Need To Strengthen

"We are living in the era of social media and OTT platforms. However, the democratic institutions and traditional forms of the press that once relied on editorial checks to ensure accountability and correctness of content, have seen these checks diminish over time," Vaishnav said.

He said due to the absence of editorial oversight, social media has become a platform for freedom of press, but at the same time it has also become a space for uncontrolled expression, which often includes vulgar content.

Vaishnav said the Government has notified Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021) that provide for a Code of Ethics for publishers of online curated content (OTT platforms).

The rules require the publishers not to transmit any content which is prohibited by law for the time being in force and to undertake age based classification of content into five categories, based on general guidelines provided in the Schedule to the Rules, he said.

The Code also provides that the OTT Platform will put in place adequate safeguard for restricting age inappropriate content for children.

The minister said in March, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has taken action and blocked 18 OTT platforms for publishing obscene and vulgar content.

"So far as the content on intermediary platforms like YouTube, Facebook, etc. is concerned, IT Rules, 2021 cast obligation on such platforms to make reasonable efforts by itself and to cause the user of their computer resource to not host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, etc. knowingly and intentionally any information which is obscene, pornographic, paedophilic, invasive of another's privacy, including bodily privacy, insulting or harassing on the basis of gender, racially or ethnically objectionable, or that is harmful to child," Vaishnav said.

Lebanese Return

coastal city of Tyre on motorcycles and in cars.

The vast scale of the Israeli military's strategy of forced displacement and intense bombardment that laid waste to towns and cities means that many people may not have much to return to.

As dawn broke in Beirut, plumes of smoke were visible from areas hit by Israeli strikes before the ceasefire took effect.

On Tuesday, residents in the capital and its southern suburbs endured the most intense day of strikes since the war began.

At least 42 people were killed by Israeli attacks across Lebanon on Tuesday, according to local authorities. Hezbollah also fired rockets into Israel, triggering air raid sirens in the country's north.

At least 3,823 people have been killed and 15,859 wounded in Israeli attacks in Lebanon since the war on Gaza began last October.

Meanwhile reacting to the Lebanese deal Hamas said the ceasefire Israel eventually clinched with Hezbollah has shattered Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's "illusion" of reshaping West Asia by force.

"The enemy's acceptance of the agreement with Lebanon without fulfilling the conditions it set is an important milestone in shattering Netanyahu's illusions of changing the map of the Middle East by force," Hamas said in a statement published on its Telegram channel on Wednesday. It said Netanyahu's "illusions of defeating the Resistance forces or disarming them" were also sent to oblivion.

"We commend the pivotal role played by the Islamic Resistance in Lebanon, in support of the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian resistance, and the great sacrifices made by Hezbollah and its leadership, led by the late Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah."

"We appreciate the steadfastness of the brotherly Lebanese people and their constant solidarity with the Palestinian people in confronting the Zionist occupation and its brutal aggression, asking God Almighty to protect Lebanon and its people from all harm and evil," Hamas said.

the weather would remain cloudy while light snowfall is expected in Bandipora and Kupwara higher reaches from November 29 late evening.

"These higher reaches may also receive light snowfall on December 01 while the rains would lash plains in between December 2 and 3," he said, adding that all the WDs affecting J&K are feeble.

As per the details, the weather would remain generally dry from December 4-6 while another light wet spell is expected between December 7 and 8 during which light rains and light snowfall in the higher reaches at isolated places are expected.

However, he said that no major activity is expected during the period.

Meanwhile, the MeT has also issued an advisory, advising the tourists, travellers, transporters to follow administration and traffic advisory.

Moreover, the night temperatures barring Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, settled above freezing point.

In Gulmarg, the mercury settled at minus 1.3 degree Celsius while in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu & Kashmir and Pahalgam, a famous tourist destination, it settled at 0.9 degree.

Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, recorded 1.1 degree Celsius while Kupwara recorded 1.8 degree Celsius. Kokernag has recorded a minimum temperature of 2.1 degree Celsius. (KNO)

Waheed Para

Ahmad, under-secretary in J&K legislative assembly secretariat, said in a communication to Para on Tuesday. The letter asked Para to furnish his response in the matter within seven days so that the same could be placed before the Speaker.

Attempt To Silence

remarks during a recent Assembly session and 'breaching' legislative privilege.

Speaking to the media, Para said, "the government claims to give voice to the people, but when we, as the opposition, attempt to raise their issues and sentiments in the Assembly, they are met with such actions."

He said that they did not make any mistake and that when they spoke about Article 370, the speaker 'ignored' them, stating that he did not hear. He said despite submitting notices, resolutions, and amendments, none were acknowledged.

Parra added, "The breach of privilege motion seems to be a tactic to threaten and silence us. We are only a few opposition members in the Assembly trying to represent the people's voices. But we will not be intimidated or silenced. This motion was initiated because we resisted when a legislator made derogatory remarks against Jamaat-e-Islami and Mufti Sahab. Let them know that we will not back down."

Notably, PDP leader and member of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Waheed Ur Rehman Para, has been asked by the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly to respond to allegations of 'breaching legislative privilege' within seven days.

"The Office is in receipt of a communication from Mr. Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurezi) Hon'ble Member, addressed to Hon'ble Speaker in which it has been stated that Mr. Waheed Ur Rehman Para, Hon'ble Member during his speech on Motion of Thanks on the Lieutenant Governor's Address on 8 of November 2024 has levelled some allegations and used derogatory remarks against him," reads the letter.

According to the communication addressed to Para, Khan has alleged that the PDP member made derogatory remarks and levelled accusations and used derogatory remarks against him during his speech on the Motion of Thanks to the Lieutenant Governor's address on November 8, 2024.

As per the communication by the Qazi Mushtaq Ahmad, Under Secretary in J&K legislative assembly secretariat, to Para on Tuesday, the letter states that the matter was brought to the attention of the Speaker of the assembly, who has desired Para's comments on the issue before proceeding ahead in the matter.

"I am, accordingly, directed to forward the copy of the said communication with the request to kindly furnish your comments in the matter within seven (7) days positively so that the same could be placed before the Hon'ble Speaker for his kind perusal," reads the letter. (KNO)

Airlines Received

Aviation Muralidhar Mohol informed Rajya Sabha on November 25.

During the period from August 2022 to December 2022, there were 27 threats and the number rose to 122 last year.

From January to November 13, 2024, the total threats received stood at 994, as per the data shared by the minister in a written reply to the Upper House.

"The recent threats were hoax and no actual threat was detected at any of the airports/aircraft in India. As per assessment of BTAC, operations of some of the flights were affected," the minister said.

The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) has mandated robust protocols for handling such threats and Bomb Threat Contingency Plan (BTCP) is in place to handle such threats.

"As a part of BTCP, every airport has a designated Bomb Threat Assessment Committee (BTAC) which analyses the threat and act accordingly. As per assessment of BTAC, hoax bomb calls result in adversely affecting operations of some of the flights resulting in impact on airlines, airports and other stakeholders."

"BCAS has issued advisories to all the Civil Aviation Installations in the country to streamline security measures and to prevent any unlawful interference with civil aviation," Mohol said in another written reply.

As per Section 3(1)(d) of the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Civil Aviation Act, 1982, if any person communicates such information which he knows to be false so as to endanger the safety of an aircraft in flight, the person shall be punished with imprisonment for life and shall also be liable to fine.

"Amendment in the above Act and in Aircraft (Security) Rules, 2023 is under consultation to make it more comprehensive as per evolving threats," Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoan Naidu said in a separate written reply.

He also said no amendment to the Aircraft Act, 1934 is under consideration of the government.

NIA To Seek

transferred from the special court as it would delay the proceedings. Previously, the counsel for Rashid and the NIA jointly sought the matter to remain in the court hearing it.

Apart from the case lodged by the NIA and the regular bail application of Rashid, the special judge had also recommended transferring a related money laundering case to the special court for lawmakers.

Rashid was elected from the Baramulla constituency in the Lok Sabha elections and has been lodged in Tihar Jail since 2019 after the NIA arrested him under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the 2017 terror-funding case.

Both the cases filed by the NIA and the ED also involve Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba chief and 26/11 Mumbai attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed, Hizbul Mujahideen leader Syed Salahuddin and others.

The ED filed a money laundering case against the accused persons on the basis of the NIA's FIR, which accused them of "conspiring to wage

war against the government" and fomenting trouble in the Kashmir Valley.

India Will Shape

culture, core values, artistic traditions and the spirit of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the world as one family" is our priority. India will shape a sustainable, peaceful and progressive world for future generations," the LG said.

On the occasion, Sinha called upon the saints, enlightened citizens and the administrative machinery to serve humanity unitedly.

"Saints have to be the conscience keepers of the citizens in enabling equity and justice. A social awakening is needed for the society to prosper. It is for each individual of society, intelligentsia, saints to strive to inculcate core values to create a brighter future," he said.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor described Swami Kailashanand Giri Ji Maharaj as an enlightened saint, Yoga Guru and renowned scholar and lauded his stellar contribution towards promotion of Sanskrit and promoting ideals and values of India's great civilisation.

Swami Ji's selfless service to Sanskrit and social upliftment is inspiring all of us to rededicate ourselves to strengthen our traditional & cultural values and work for the cause of the society, he said.

At the award ceremony, the Lieutenant Governor shared the government's resolve, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to preserve and promote India's rich traditions and cultural heritage.

The Lieutenant Governor further called for collective efforts to ensure that the fruits of development percolate to the grassroots and spread the benefits among all people and manage the process of change with sensitivity.

"Quest for peace and prosperity call for leadership in every walk of life. Individuals must rise above vested interest to fulfill the responsibilities," the LG said.

He also commended the valuable contribution of Mahant Rohit Shastri and Shri Kailash Jyotish & Vedic Sansthan Trust for promoting and popularizing Sanskrit Language through its various endeavours like Mobile Sanskrit Gurukul, Saral Sanskrit Bodh publication, Kartavya Path magazine etc.

Sham Lal Sharma, Member of Legislative Assembly; Prof BN Tripathi, Vice Chancellor SKUAST Jammu; Mahant Rohit Shastri, President, Kailash Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust; senior officials, spiritual leaders; heads of religious organizations, prominent citizens and students were present

HC Orders

the court ordered that the assessment report to be made by the Revenue Authority after proper verification shall be forwarded to the Union of India within a period of two weeks, thereafter.

"The respondent-Union of India

is directed to pay the rental compensation after due verification to the petitioner on the basis of the assessment report for which he is entitled w.e.f. 1978 till the same was in active possession of the Army with respect to the land measuring 12 Kanals 14 Marlaswithin a period of one month from the date of receipt of assessment report to be submitted by the Revenue Authority," the court said.

The Court also made it clear that in case the rental compensation as directed by it was not released in favour of resident within the stipulated period, he will be entitled to claim interest at the rate of 6% per annum from the date the rental compensation was payable to him and "denied" by the authorities.

"It is further provided that in case the aforesaid land of the petitioner is further required by the respondent-Union of India or any other Agency for any public purpose or otherwise, they are under legal obligation to follow the procedure as envisaged under law for acquiring the land by affording an opportunity of hearing to all the interested parties including the petitioner," the court said, adding, "in such eventuality, the compensation be paid to the petitioner after following due process of law and necessary verification."

The court also directed payment of token compensation of Rs. 1 lakh to the resident for "illegally depriving" the resident of his land without any authority of law and, thus, "violating his human right".

"This amount in addition to the rental compensation be paid to the petitionerwithin a period of two weeks from the date a copy of this judgment is served upon them."

Entry Banned

Protection Act, 1972, and added, "strict action will be taken against the violator under the provisions of the Act".

"The Department of Wildlife Protection informs the general public that migratory birds from various parts of the world have begun arriving at the wetlands of Kashmir. These birds will inhabit and move between the wetlands during the winter months".

"To ensure their safety and protection, the Department of Wildlife Protection is entrusted with safeguarding these migratory birds. Unfortunately, some individuals with ill intentions attempt to harm the birds or disrupt their habitats. To prevent such activities; no one shall be allowed to venture into the wetlands without prior permission; individuals interested in bird watching must obtain proper authorization. This measure helps the department identify legitimate visitors; or anyone found entering the wetlands without permission will be considered in violation of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and strict action will be taken against them under the provisions of the Act," the advisory reads.

The officials sought cooperation of the public in providing a safe environment for these migratory birds during their stay in Kashmir.

Cyber Crimes

immediate reporting of financial frauds and to stop siphoning off

Light Rains

Director MeT, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that there is a possibility that

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Reckless Driving, Traffic Violations Won't Be Tolerated: SSP Rural

Agencies

Srinagar: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic Rural Kashmir, Ravinder Pal Singh on Wednesday warned that rash driving, passenger overloading and speed limit violations will not be tolerated. He said that unfit vehicles will be seized on the spot.

Speaking during a visit to north Kashmir, Singh said that maintaining discipline in driving is key to reducing accidents. "Adhering to traffic rules is essential to prevent accidents and ensure road safety," he said, adding that every one must follow these rules.

SSP Singh said that a lack of civic responsibility among some motorists is leading to road safety issues. He called for awareness campaigns to ensure better discipline on the roads. "Rash driving, overloading of passengers and speed limit violations will not be tolerated," he warned,

adding that zero-tolerance measures are now in place to tackle such infractions.

The SSP urged drivers to ensure that they have all necessary documents, including High-Security Registration Plates (HSRP), insurance and pollution control certificates. "There will be regular vehicle inspections, particularly in remote areas," he said, adding that unfit vehicles will be seized.

Singh has appealed to parents to discourage teenagers from driving. "Issuing vehicles to teenagers is not only irresponsible but also punishable," he said. "Parents must promote discipline and avoid shielding such behaviour."

Following a series of recent fatal accidents in Srinagar, extensive traffic drives have been launched to reduce congestion, raise awareness and enforce compliance. These efforts have led to the seizure of thousands of vehicles in recent days—(KNO)



A Kashmiri artisan skillfully weaves a wicker basket as an Iranian artisan observes keenly at SKICC, showcasing a blend of traditional craftsmanship and cultural exchange. KO Photo Abid Bhat

Vaishno Devi Ropeway Row

Two Union Leaders Detained In Fresh Protests

Agencies

Srinagar: Two labour union leaders including Congress party's contesting candidate for Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Assembly Constituency were arrested in Jammu's Katra following fresh clashes between traders and police on Wednesday after former protested the proposed ropeway line from Katra town to the Hindu shrine of Vaishno Devi in the area.

Bhupinder Singh Jamwal, who also unsuccessfully contested assembly election from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra constituency on Congress party's mandate and Sohan Chand, the representatives of labourers and shopkeepers in Katra were detained after fresh protests at the Katra base camp against a proposed ropeway project along the trek route to the Vaishno Devi shrine. Both Bhupinder Singh and Sohan Chand were released after an hour-long detention by the police.

Jammu and Kashmir Congress members, who met the divisional commissioner in support of the protesting shopkeepers, reached out to them in Katra to extend their support.

According to police, an FIR

was registered against eight people on Tuesday (November 26, 2024), a day after violent protests in Katra in which a policeman got injured. Protestors, led by Singh and Chand, took out a rally against the proposed ropeway project. However, officials said the police stopped the protestors from moving ahead, resulting in clashes between them. Singh and Chand were detained and taken away from the spot in a police vehicle, they said, adding that the protestors were also dispersed from the scene. Udhampur DIG (Reasi range) Rayees Bhat said the detainees were not arrested. The two men were released from the police station in Katra after an hour.

After the release, Singh said, "We called off the agitation following the intervention of the administration, which requested time to hold talks to resolve the grievances. We gave them time, but over the past two days, there have been arrests by the police. Several youths were detained."

"During the protests, police questioned us as to why we are taking out the rally when time has been given until December 15," he said.

"We clarified to them that we were approaching the police to understand why people were being arrested and why they were in the process of identifying them. The police can take any action against those involved in the violence. We will not support such actions," Singh said. He said that the police and CRPF are our own people.

"We request the boys who threw bricks and engaged in violent acts to surrender to the police. We do not support their actions," he said, adding that if the issues were not resolved by December 15, they will resume the protest.

Meanwhile, in Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir Congress team led by Working President Ramnan Bhatta met the divisional commissioner in Jammu and took up the issue of him in bid to ensure its resolution. Supporting the protesting shopkeepers over the ropeway project, the team reached out to them in Katra to extend their support to protestors. "We have come here to extend our full support to the protestors", a leader said. The demonstration was triggered following the registration of an FIR in the Monday (November 25, 2024) clash. (KNO)

Efforts Being Made To Address Shortcomings In Health Dept: Sakina Itoo



Agencies

Srinagar: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakina Itoo said on Wednesday that efforts are being made to address the shortcomings in the health department across Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking to reporters after visiting District Hospital Shopian, Itoo said that while there are existing gaps in the health department, substantial strides are being made to overcome these challenges.

"The health department in J&K has highly qualified doctors who provide excellent patient care, but there are gaps in infrastructure that need to be addressed," Itoo said. She called for upgrading facilities so that patients do not have to seek treatment outside the region.

Accompanied by senior National Conference (NC) leaders, including MLA Shopian Showkat Hussain Ganie, the minister said the District Hospital Shopian is experiencing a high patient flow, especially from Poonch and Rajouri via the Mughal Road. However, she added that the hospital lacks adequate space and sev-

eral doctor and paramedic positions remain vacant.

"Upgrading infrastructure and filling the vacant positions are being prioritised," she said. "Although District Hospital Shopian is a 100-bed facility, only 60 beds are available. We will make efforts to secure additional space to ensure that patients receive better care."

Sakina said that health care is a fundamental right of every citizen, and no region should feel neglected. "We are prioritising resource allocation to areas that need it the most," she said.

Residents of Shopian have expressed hope that these initiatives will ease their struggles in accessing adequate medical care.

The minister also praised the state of education in government schools, saying that both teaching facilities and faculty are of a high standard. "Government school students have been excelling in various fields, and the education department will work to encourage parents to admit their children to government schools for a bright future," she said—(KNO)

Police Solve Palhallan Hit & Run Case, Analysing 50 CCTVs

Agencies

Srinagar: Police in north Kashmir's Baramulla have cracked a hit-and-run case that occurred on November 15, 2024, near Palhallan, which resulted in the death of a pedestrian. The breakthrough came after an exhaustive investigation, which included analysing footage from over 50 CCTV cameras.

The vehicle involved in the incident has been seized, and the driver responsible has been arrested.

Speaking during a press briefing, SDPO Pattan Shah Jahan Choudhary said that the police took swift action after receiving information about the accident. "A pedestrian was critically injured and later succumbed to his injuries at the hospital. A case (FIR No. 314/2024) was reg-

istered at PS Pattan, and an extensive investigation was launched to trace the vehicle and its driver," he said.

The investigation included reviewing footage from over 50 CCTV cameras along the route from Palhallan to Sheeri. While initial findings only provided limited clues about the vehicle, such as its model, the breakthrough came when police traced the vehicle to a Territorial Army (TA) recruitment event in Sheeri.

"After meticulously analysing footage from rear cameras and cross-referencing data from November 14 along the Palhallan to Srinagar route, the vehicle was eventually spotted in Hanjivera and tracked to Budgam. Police examined data from 2,500 vehicles in Baramulla district and another 500 vehicles in Budgam, eventually identify-

ing a suspect," the SDPO said.

Upon interrogation, the youth admitted to hiring the vehicle for the recruitment event. The vehicle, bearing registration number JK04J 0917, was recovered from Zangam Budgam. In an attempt to evade detection, the accused had painted the vehicle white, the SDPO added.

Choudhary commended the relentless efforts of the investigation team and said that technology played a critical role in solving the case. "The driver is now in custody, and further legal proceedings are underway," he said.

Notably, an unidentified speeding vehicle struck Nazir Ahmed Sofi, an elderly man from Palhallan, on November 15, resulting in his death. The vehicle involved in the incident had fled the scene, following which the police launched an investigation—(KNO)

J&K Bank Settles Insurance Claims Worth Rs 1.23 Crore

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a significant step to support bereaved families during their time of loss, J&K Bank has swiftly facilitated the settlement of MetLife & Life Suraksha (MLLS) insurance claims for its deceased borrowers from branches across the Anantnag Zone. A total of Rs 1.23 Crore has been disbursed to 28 families, offering vital financial relief in their time of need.

The Bank's Zonal Head (Anantnag) Khursheed Mu-

ciate the prompt settlement of claims. PNB MetLife's assistance has been crucial in easing our financial burden during such a difficult time."

Addressing the gathering, Zonal Head Khursheed Muzaffer emphasized the value of loan insurance in safeguarding families from unforeseen financial stress. "When our customers face hardships, it is our moral and professional duty to ease their burden. By securing loans through MLLS, we protect the financial interests of all the stakeholders in-



zaffer and Associate Director & Head - Credit Life (JKB Relationship PMLI) Irfan Ali Zargar displayed the Symbolic Cheque of Rs 1.23 Crore - an amount that was handed over to the nominees/legal heirs of the deceased customers - along with the Cluster Head (Anantnag) Layek Jan in presence of Branch Managers and Manager Advances (Anantnag), Zonal Insurance Coordinator Ayman Ali Malik, and PNB MetLife's Regional Manager Peer Jeelani.

Expressing gratitude to the Bank and its insurance partner PNB MetLife for their timely support, recipients of the claims said, "We are thankful to the Bank for insuring these loans and appre-

ved."

"To stand with our customers through thick and thin has been our legacy and we are carrying it forward successfully," he added.

Reiterating the Bank's commitment to client well-being, Associate Director & Head - Credit Life (JKB Relationship PMLI) Irfan Ali Zargar highlighted the importance of insurance as a financial shield. "While we cannot replace the emotional loss, we can provide much-needed financial support in such unforeseen events. Settling these claims is part of our promise to the borrowers, and it is fulfilling personally as well as professionally to assist families in their challenging times."

Multimedia Journalist Dabirah Hassan Awarded



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Multimedia journalist Dabirah Hassan, was awarded for her exemplary work in the field of journalism at the 7th Annual State-wide Rehmatan lil Alameen Conference held at Tagore Hall, Srinagar.

The ceremony celebrated individuals excelling in different fields, emphasizing

the importance of dedication and service to society.

The event was attended by people from various fields including Dr. Sameer Siddiqui, a prominent scholar from South Kashmir and Maulana Masroor Abbas Ansari besides others.

Dabirah Hassan was recognized for her outstanding work in journalism, showcasing her dedication to highlighting important issues and stories.

Despite Completion Of Building, Old Age Home Awaits Shifting In Gbl

Agencies

Ganderbal: The residents of Ganderbal here have raised concerns over the delay in relocating the old age home to its newly constructed facility at Pandach, despite the completion of the building.

Currently, the old age home continues to operate from a rented building, sparking frustration among residents, who are eager to see the elderly community moved to the new premises.

The locals have questioned the delay in shifting the old age home, especially since the new facility is ready for use.

They stressed that it would be more beneficial and comfortable for the elderly to reside in the purpose-

built facility as soon as possible.

The delay has raised concerns among the residents, with many expressing worry that the prolonged wait is causing unnecessary inconvenience for the elderly individuals, who rely on the home's services.

District Social Welfare Officer, Bashir Ahmed, explained that the delay is due to the ongoing procurement process for necessary furniture and other essential items.

He assured that the tendering process had been completed and that the final steps of the procurement would be concluded within a month.

He expressed confidence that the old age home would be operational at its new location shortly thereafter—(KNO)

Agencies

Srinagar: The Haigham Wetland Conservation Reserve, a key ecological site in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, is experiencing severe degradation, locals said here on Wednesday.

Once a thriving habitat for migratory birds and a source of livelihood for local communities, the locals said that the wetland is now largely barren, with dried grass and fallen vegetation replacing its once-vibrant ecosystem.

Covering an area of 16,000 kanals, the wetland has been impacted by unchecked encroachment and a lack of effec-

tive management.

Areas that were once home to diverse flora and fauna have been converted into playgrounds and plantations.

This transformation has disrupted the delicate balance of the ecosystem, leaving it unable to support the species that once depended on it, including migratory birds.

The local residents, who once relied on the wetland for resources such as chestnuts, Nadroo, and fish, are now facing economic hardship. "The wetland used to provide us with everything we needed for our daily life, but now, there's nothing left," said Aftab Ahmed, a local fisherman. "We

are struggling to find ways to make a living."

This has exacerbated the situation, as conservation efforts appear to have been neglected, despite significant funds allocated for the wetlands protection.

"The decline of the Haigham Wetland is a direct result of poor administration and lack of accountability," Mujeeb Ahmad, a local said. "We have seen similar destruction in the past, and it is crucial that the authorities take immediate action before it is too late," he said.

Migratory birds, which have used the wetland as a stopover for centuries, have

disappeared entirely. "The birds are gone," said Parveen Akhtar, a local environmental activist. "This wetland used to be their home, but now it's a wasteland. It's heartbreaking."

The locals have urged environmental conservation authorities and the local administration to take immediate action to restore it.

Meanwhile, the Environmental Policy Group (EPG) in its recent report has also revealed the alarming environmental degradation of the Haigham Wetland Conservation Reserve. It demanded a comprehensive inquiry and urgent restoration efforts to prevent further ecological loss—(KNO)

Once Home To Migratory Birds, Haigham Wetland Turns Into Wasteland

2nd Test: Australia Face Selection Dilemma As Marsh's Fitness In Doubt

Press Trust of India

Uncapped all-rounder Beau Webster is set to be drafted into the Australia squad for the second Test against India as a cover for Mitchell Marsh who battled with niggles in the series opener at Perth.

Fox Cricket reported that Webster has been added to the squad for the day-night Test at Adelaide, beginning December 6.

"(Marsh) He has been battling a couple of little niggles since the UK tour," Australian captain Pat Cummins said following the 295-run loss to India.

"He was a little sore towards the end of this Test match (Perth), so the next 10 days he has a chance to freshen up and try to get it right. We'll see how he goes."

If Marsh doesn't recover in time for the second Test, Webster could be handed a debut.

The 30-year-old hails from



Tasmania and has been one of the star performers in the Sheffield Shield over the past two years, collecting 1788 runs including five hundreds and nine fifties. He is also a right-arm

pacer like Marsh.

He starred in Tasmania's Sheffield Shield match against New South Wales earlier this week, striking a 61 and 49 besides taking five wickets.

"(Webster's) a special player at the moment," Tasmanian captain Jordan Silk told reporters after the domestic game.

"Anytime I feel like we're in trouble, I feel like I can throw him the ball and he just seems to be able to create something, or anytime we're in similar trouble with the bat then he's able to dig us out of it."

"He showed his class again this game with valuable runs, first and second innings, and then obviously to take the last two wickets."

Despite the heavy defeat, Australia are unlikely to make wholesale changes to their playing eleven and have retained the same squad for the Adelaide fixture.

Short TAKES

Bumrah Regains Top Spot In ICC Test Bowling Rankings

India pacer Jasprit Bumrah on Wednesday topped Kagiso Rabada and Josh Hazlewood to regain the top spot in ICC Test bowling rankings on the back of his match-winning spell against Australia in the first Test at Perth.

Stand-in skipper Bumrah returned with excellent match figures of 8 for 72 as India crushed Australia by 295 runs to take 1-0 lead in the five-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Bumrah, who was at No. 3 ahead of the Perth Test, now has career-best 883 ranking points while moving ahead of South African Rabada (872 points) and Aussie Hazlewood (860 points).

Bumrah's teammate Mohammed Siraj also made good ground, moving up three places to 25th following his five scalps against the Aussies.

Yashasvi Jaiswal, who made a scintillating 161, leaped to second spot with career-best 825 points behind England's Joe Root (903 points) in the rankings for batters.

Star batter Virat Kohli continued charting his way up as he improved nine spots to reach 13th following his 30th Test century.

ILT20 Season 3 To Start On January 11

Defending champions MI Emirates will face runners-up Dubai Capitals in the opening match of the Season 3 of the DP World International League T20 on January 11, the organisers announced on Wednesday.

Fifteen matches will be played at the Dubai International Stadium, while Abu Dhabi's Zayed Cricket Stadium will host 11 matches.

The remaining eight matches will be staged at the iconic Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

A total of 34 matches will be played in the month-long tournament which will conclude with the final at the DIS on February 9.

The six ILT20 franchises are: MI Emirates, Dubai Capitals, Abu Dhabi Knight Riders, Desert Vipers, Gulf Giants and Sharjah Warriors.

Some of the premier T20 talents from across the world such as Andre Russell, Sunil Narine (Abu Dhabi Knight Riders), David Warner, Nicholas Pooran, Jason Roy, Lockie Ferguson will be seen in action during the tournament.

Messi's Son Debuts At Argentina Youth Tournament

Thiago Messi, the eldest son of the Argentina star, has made his debut in the "Newell's Cup" tournament in the countryside city of Rosario.

The 12-year-old Messi played with the No. 10 jersey of an Inter Miami youth team, which lost 1-0 on Monday to host Newell's Old Boys in the traditional under-13 competition. The team also played Tuesday.

Lionel Messi took his first steps as a footballer in the Argentinian club in Rosario, 300 kilometers (186 miles) northwest of capital Buenos Aires.

Thiago's mother, Antonela Rocuzzo, and several members of his family, including grandparents Jorge Messi and Celia Cuccitini, were in the stands to watch him play. Lionel Messi did not attend.

Thiago, who was substituted in the second half, played with his friend Benjamin Suárez, son of Uruguayan striker Luis Suárez. Messi's teammate and close friend at Barcelona and now at Inter Miami.

The youth tournament in Argentina brings together eight teams from North and South America.



Afreen Hyder Wins Silver At China Taekwondo Championship

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Kashmiri Taekwondo athlete Afreen Hyder earned a silver medal at the China Open International Taekwondo Championship, held in Shaoxing, China, from November 21 to 26.

Competing in the under-62kg category, Hyder lost a closely contested final to her Chinese opponent.

This achievement adds to Hyder's growing list of national and international accom-



plishments, bringing recognition to Kashmir on the global sports stage. Apni Party President Syed

Mohammad Altaf Bukhari was among the first to extended his congratulations to Afreen Hyder.

"It always gives me immense pleasure to see our young boys and girls showcasing their excellence and mettle in various fields on national and international platforms. My heartfelt congratulations to Afreen Hyder for achieving this milestone. I wish her continued success in her future endeavours," Bukhari said.

If I Join BJP My Ban Will Be Lifted: Bajrang On NADA Suspension

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Suspended for four years due to his "refusal" to provide sample for dope test, Olympic medallist Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia on Wednesday said it was a vindictive move by the government which would quash the ban if he joins the BJP.

NADA said Bajrang violated the rules by refusing to give sample during selection trials for the national team on March 10.

The anti-doping body had first suspended the Tokyo Games bronze medallist wrestler on April 23 for the offence following which, the sport's world governing body UWW had also slapped him with a suspension.

"It is not shocking because this issue about trial has been going on for last one year. I have said in the past too that I have not refused to give sample to NADA. When they visited my home to conduct the dope test, they came with an expiry kit (in December, 2023). I have also posted this on social media," Bajrang told reporters.

Punia, along with fellow wrestler and Olympian Vinesh Phogat, have joined the Congress Party earlier this year.

Bajrang added in his defence, "You can't give expiry kit to any player and as far as I am concerned, my team was there, so they saw it. They came carrying expiry kits dated 2020, 2021, 2022."

"I gave my urine sample but then my team checked the kit and found



out that it was expired. So we made a video of the kit and we mailed NADA, called them to inform about the mistake. But they did not accept their mistake."

The wrestler alleged that the government is looking to get back at them for their involvement in the long-drawn sit-in protest against former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, a BJP politician.

"I also feel that because of our protest in support of the women wrestlers, they are trying to exact revenge because all the agencies are fall under the purview of the government."

"I have been competing for the last 10-12 years and I have given sample during all tournaments, during the India camps. But the government's motive is to break us, make us bow down to them. If I join the BJP then I think all my bans will be lifted," Bajrang claimed.

The suspension means that Bajrang will not be able to return to competitive wrestling or apply for a coaching job abroad, if he aspires to, till April 22, 2028.

Sub Junior National Badminton Championship Begins In Jammu

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Minister for Youth Services & Sports, Science & Technology, FCS&CA, Transport, IT, ARI & Training, Satish Sharma, on Wednesday declared open the Yonex-Sunrise 36th Sub Junior (U-13) National Badminton Championship 2024 at Indoor Sports Complex, MA Stadium here.

The championship has been organised by Badminton Association of India in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council under the auspices of Badminton Association of India.

MLA Chander Parkash Ganga, was the guest of honour on the occasion, who is also the President of J&K Badminton Association.



While speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that government is keen to promote young talent and robust sports infrastructure in the UT. Reiterating government's commitment towards promoting genuine sports talent,

the Minister assured that only deserving athletes would be supported.

The competition will take place from November 27 to November 30. Approximately 400 athletes and officials from 31 states and the UTs are taking part in this massive event.

Pep Guardiola Clarifies 'Self Harm' Remark After Man City's Latest Bad Result

Agencies

MANCHESTER: Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola has moved to clarify a light-hearted remark he made about wanting to harm himself following his team's match in the Champions League.

Guardiola emerged to speak to media after the 3-3 draw with Feyenoord on Tuesday — during which City conceded three goals after the 75th minute to squander the lead — with a cut on his nose as well as some scratches across the top of his head.

Asked about those marks, Guardiola said: "Yeah, my finger. Here," as he performed a rapid downward motion along his nose. "My nail." Then he added with a smile: "I want to harm myself."

On Wednesday, a post from Guardiola's account on social media platform X made reference to that remark, with the Spanish coach saying he had been "caught off guard" by the question and his "answer was in no way intended to make light of the very serious issue of self harm."

"I know that many peo-



ple struggle with mental health issues every day," continued the post by Guardiola, who recommended that anyone seeking help should contact Samaritans.

Guardiola is enduring the worst run of his managerial career, with City — the winner of the last four Premier League titles — having lost five straight games in all competitions for the first

time before the implosion against Feyenoord.

No team in the Champions League had ever lost a three-goal lead as late as the 75th minute and failed to win the game, stats supplier Opta said.

It could get worse for City, which was humiliated in a 4-0 home loss to Tottenham on Saturday.

Next up is a trip to Liverpool, the Premier League leaders, on Sunday. A loss would leave City 11 points behind Liverpool after just 13 games and midfielder Ilkay Gundogan acknowledged it was a game the struggling champions cannot afford to lose.

"To stay in the title race, probably yes, because 11 points would be a huge gap," Gundogan said. "Anfield is always tough, no matter the situation. We've struggled in recent years going there and we know Liverpool are a great team full of confidence right now."

"It's going to be as tough as it is possible to be, but that sums up the situation right now. It seems we have to go through this season the toughest way possible."

8-Year-Old Indian Chess Genius Takes The World By Storm

Press Trust of India

On a pleasant November afternoon in Hyderabad, a cherubic six-year-old, his face framed by oversized spectacles, displayed remarkable play in a challenging endgame to leave none other than India's World Championship hopeful, D Gukesh, "shocked" by his skill and composure.

He wasn't able to defend successfully and lost the position to Gukesh and Arjun Erigaisi in a simultaneous exhibition chess event. But he earned high praise from the Gukesh: "This boy is playing exceptionally. I am shocked actually."

Two years down the line, an 18-year-old Gukesh is locked in a battle for the world crown with Chinese Ding Liren in Singapore.

The Hyderabad boy, now eight, meanwhile, has emerged as the latest Indian chess sensation by becoming the under-8 champion at the world cadet event in Monteseilvano in Italy.

Divith, who has a FIDE rating of 1784 points currently, won four matches on the trot, including the last two against higher-rated opponents, to finish in a three-way tie with compatriot Sattwik Swain and Ziming Guo of China. But the Telangana boy clinched the gold with a better tie-break score.



Divith's journey into the world of chess started at a tender age, with his software engineer parents taking note of his curiosity and love for solving puzzles.

"Initially, he enjoyed solving puzzles. As the complexity increased, his interest grew," his father Mahesh Reddy recalled while talking to PTI from Italy. The family enrolled Divith in a local puzzle institute. However, the early experience didn't work out, leading them to explore other avenues.

When Divith was just six, he participated in the U-8 National Chess Championship.

It was there that his father saw his child excel that prompted him to contact their coach and from there onwards began his journey under Rama Krishna Polavarapu.

As his coach is from of Visakhapatnam, most of learning happens online. The decision to train online was a strategic one, as Reddy and his wife wanted to "save time and minimise travel".

Divith's schooling also moved online to complement his chess journey.

April marked a breakthrough when Divith won the world rapid age group title in Armenia and also a bronze in blitz. He also finished fifth in classical format in U-8 World Cup.

Currently Abhimanyu Mishra of the USA holds the record for the youngest Grandmaster, at the age of 12 years, four months, and 25 days. Reddy is confident that Divith's extraordinary potential will allow him to achieve this feat even sooner.