

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Thursday 09 January 2025 | Srinagar | Vol. 28 | Issue: 09 | Pages: 08 | Price: ₹3

www.kashmirobserver.net ● twitter.com / kashmirobserver ● facebook.com/kashmirobserver ● Postal Regn: L/159/KO/SK/2014-2016

....Yellow Alert In J&K

Isolated Cold Wave Till January 10: MeT



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Night temperatures dipped to settle below the freezing point across the Kashmir valley as cold conditions intensified after a brief respite, officials said on Wednesday.

Owing to clear skies, temperatures dipped below the freezing point across the valley, the Met office said.

local Meteorological department (MeT) has issued a yellow warning, saying that there is a possibility of an isolated cold wave till January 10.

Amidst the cast of an isolated cold wave, Director MeT, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that there is a possibility of generally dry weather conditions and cloudiness during the 10th evening and night.

On January 11, he said that generally cloudy weather is expected with possibility of light rain in plains of Jammu and snow at isolated higher reaches of Jammu division & Kashmir division.

On January 12-14, the weather would remain generally dry, | More on P7

2025 Begins With 59% Deficit Rainfall

he New Year-2025 has begun with the deficit precipitation as Jammu and Kashmir has recorded a deficiency of 59 per cent in the first week of January. According to the details, from January 01 to January 08, J&K has recorded a deficit rainfall of 59 per cent despite | More on P7

Veteran Journalist, Filmmaker **Pritish Nandy Dies At 73**

Agenceis

New Delhi: Veteran journalist, poet and filmmaker Pritish Nandy passed away in Mumbai on Wednesday, sources close to him said

Nandy (73) died after a cardiac arrest at his home in south Mumbai and his last rites were performed in the evening, they said.

In a social media post, veteran actor and Nandy's friend Anupam Kher paid glowing tributes to him.

"Deeply deeply saddened and shocked to know about the demise of one of my dearest and closest friends #PritishNandy! Amazing poet, writer, filmmaker and a brave and unique editor/journalist!" Kher wrote.



"He was my support system and a great source of strength in my initial days in Mumbai We shared lots of things in common. He was also one of the most fearless people I had come across. Always Larger than life. I learnt so many things from him. Off-late we didn't meet much. But there was a time when we were inseparable! I will never forget when he surprised me by putting me on the cover | More on P7

Orientation Programme For J&K MLAs To Begin Today

Observer News Service

Jammu: The three day orientation programme for MLAs of Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly will commence from 9th of January, 2025 at Central Hall of J&K Legislative Assembly Complex, Jammu.

The programme is being organised by J&K Legislative Assembly Secretariat in collaboration with PRIDE, Lok Sabha Secretariat.

The inaugural function of the programme will be graced by dis-tinguished dignitardignitaries like Chief Minister, Speaker, J&K Legislative Assembly, Deputy Chief Minister as well as other senior officers.

The first Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir was constituted on 8th October 2024. The ninety (90) Member House presently has eighty eight (88) members, of which, fifty (50) members have been elected for the first time.

In order to help the newly elected members to effectively discharge their onerous responsibilities of meeting the aspirations of people, this three day orientation programme is being held on Parliamentary Practices, Procedure and Conduct of Business in the House.

The programme will feature discussions by eminent Parliamentarians like Dr. Sanjay Jaiswal, Chairperson, Committee Estimates; Premachandran and Dr. Satayapal Singh, former Members Lok Sabha. The subjects to be discussed and deliberated during the programme included Legislative Processes, Budgetary Process, **Executive Accountability** through Questions, Committee | More on P7

'All Hell Will Break Out': Trump's Deadline For Hamas To Release Hostages

New York: US Presidentelect Donald Trump warned that "all hell will break out in the Middle East" if

hostages held by Hamas in Gaza are not released before his inauguration on January 20, CNN reported.

While addressing a press conference at his Mar-a-Lago

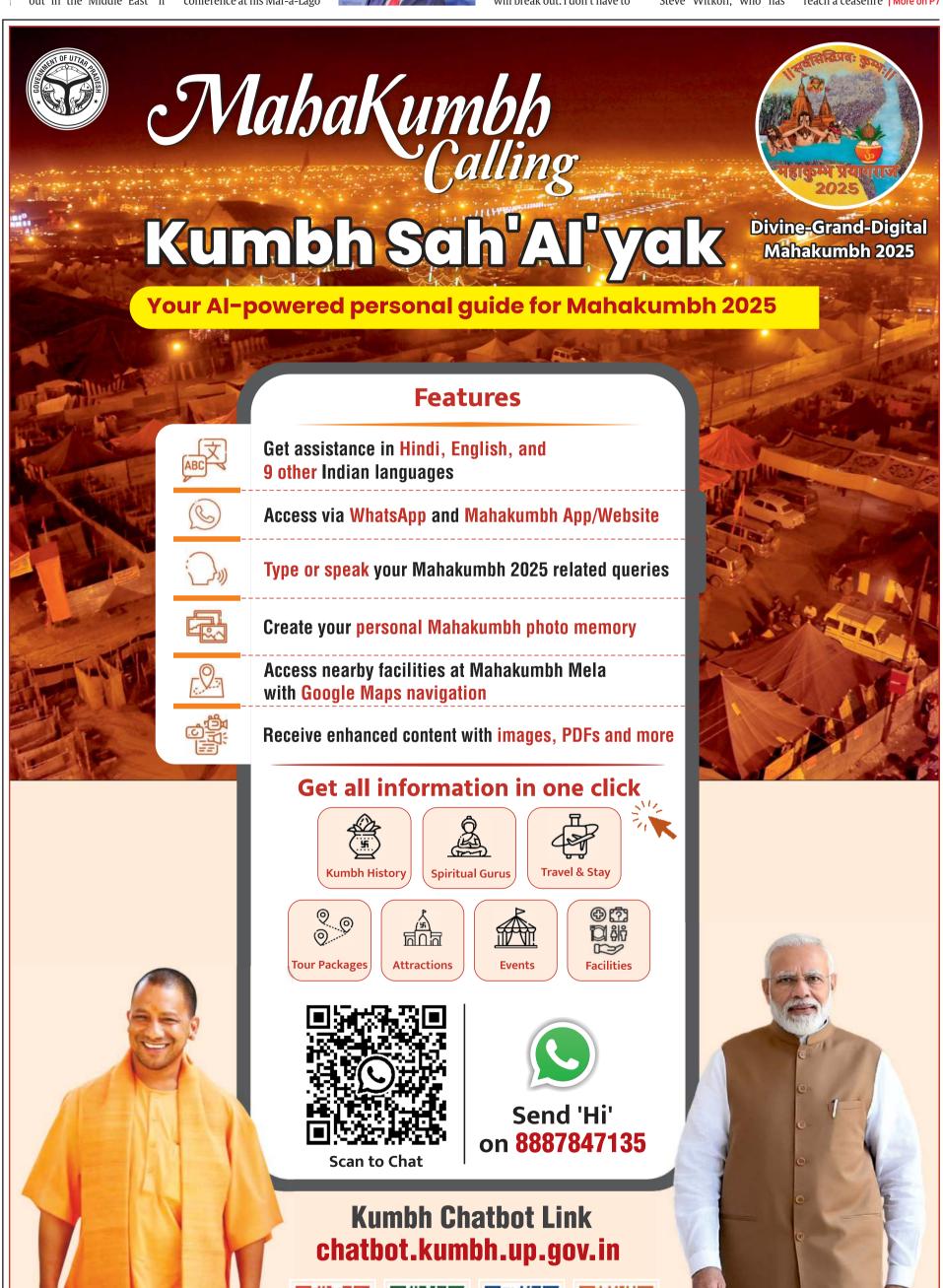


estate in Florida on Tuesday (local time), Trump said, "It will not be good for Hamas and it will not be good, frankly, for anyone. All hell will break out. I don't have to

say anymore, but that's what it is," adding that "there should have never been" the October 7, 2023, attack by Hamas on Israel.

Steve Witkoff, who has

been chosen by Trump to serve as the special envoy to the Middle East, expressed an optimistic view about the state of negotiations to reach a ceasefire | More on P7





Emergency

Administration

No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

KASHMIR OBSERVER® Srinagar | Thursday | 09-01-2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

I intend to apply to change the name in my electricity connection Vide consumer No:- 0204020018304, installation No: 5544822340 for my house situated at Devipora Rangpora, Zakura, Srinagar as Sakina Akhter, W/o: Mohd Farooq Khan, R/o:- Azad Colony Awanta Bhawan, Soura instead of Farooq Ahmad Wani, S/o: Abdul Wahab Wani, R/o: Near Masjid Hanfia illahi bagh chowk, sgr. If any person has any objection in this regard, He/She may convey the same in the office of the Assistant Executive Engineer, electric division IV Khanyar, Sub Division, Rainawari, sgr within week's time. No objection shall be entertained after expiry of a given situplated period.

Sakina Akhter, R/o:- Devipora Rangpora Zakura asrinagar

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of Discharge & Character Certificaes. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/She may contact office of the AL NOOR EDU TRUST PALHALLAN PATTAN within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Saima Bashir D/O Bashir Ahmad Malla R/O Palhallan pattan

Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

Public Notice

The registar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/ Block Development Officer Lolpora) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Saja Begum D/W/o Gh Rasool Khan R/o Babagund Mamoosa Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with vertified date of event (birth) as 10-04-1964 occurred at Home 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

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly spelld in my driving licence bearing dl no: JK-0220020128066 as Ali Mohd Bhat S/o Ab Rehman Bhat while My correct spelling is Ali Mohammad Bhat S/o AB RAHMAN BHAT which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned RTO within seven days . After that no objection shall be entertained.

Ali Mohammad Bhat S/o AB RAHMAN BHAT R/o Lal Pora Baramulla

NOTICE

have changed my name from (old Name) Nadeem Rashid to (New Name) Nadeem Rashid **Kawa.** In Future I will be known as(New Name) Nadeem Rashid **Kawa**. If anybody is having any objection, he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Hilal Ahmad Sofi S/o Mohmad Sultan Sofi & Mumtaz Sofi R/o Soura Misgar Mohalla Srinagar had lost my Passport Somewhere Bearing Passport No:- K 9336050, Now I want to apply for Renewal & Duplicate. In this regard, if anybody is having any objection he/she may file his/her objection to the Regional Passport Office Srinagar within a week's time after that no objection will be entertained.

عنوان: درخواست منجانب منطر راحمه صوفى ولدنذ يراحمه صوفى ساكنه موضع صدر ربل تحصيل پينن

معامله مندرجه عنوان الصدر ایک درخواست بغرض ڈیپندنٹ سرٹفکیٹ موضول ہوئی ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہےاس بارئے میں راقم نے پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی ہےجس سے عیاں ہے سائل صدر ربل پلہالن کاسکونت دار ہے سائل کا والدمرحوم نزیراحم صوفی موخه 15-11-2024 وفوت ہو چکا ہے موتافی کے وارثان بذیل ہے۔ پىرمرحوم زىرتعلىم 20سالل نطز راحمه صوفی محموده بيكم زوجه گھریلوکام 38سال پر زیرتعلیم 18 سال شاكرنذير

ں کے علاوہ اورکوئی افر اوکنجمہ نہیں ہے۔ سرٹھیمیکیٹ زیر بحث اجراءکرنے میں اگر سس کہ اگر سی خض کوئی عزریاا عتراض ہوتو وہ بعد مشتہرا خبارسات دن کے اندرا ندرآ پنے عذریاعتراض ودالت هذ کو دفتری ادقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میعاد کو بی عذریا عتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

Anti-Obesity Class Of Drugs Related With Fewer Post-Surgery Complications: Study

Press Trust Of India

Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)

■ aking the 'GLP-1 receptor agonist' class of anti-obesity drugs is related with lower rates of post-surgery complications in people with diabetes, according to a study.

GLP-1 receptor agonist, or GLP-1 RA, drugs help treat diabetes by weight loss, improving blood glucose levels and increasing insulin sensitivity, low levels of which are a risk factor for diabetes.

Researchers, led by those at Weill Cornell Medicine, the US, analysed hospital records of over 74,400 surgical procedures performed from February 2020 to July 2023 on nearly 22,000 patients with diabetes.

Patients taking the anti-obesity drugs had about 12 per cent lower risk of hospital re-admission within a month of surgery, compared to those not taking these medications, according to the findings published in the journal 'Annals of Surgery'.



risk of wound re-opening within six months of surgery, and about 56 per cent lower risk of haematoma-when blood collects in a tissue due to an in-

ANANTNAG

The team also found 29 per cent lower jury at the surgery site—in this group of patients.

"These findings from such a large number of patients and procedures suggest that taking these drugs shouldn't worsen overall post-surgical complications, and may even reduce the likelihood of some of them," senior author Dr Jason Spector, chief of the division of plastic and reconstructive surgery and a professor of surgery at Weill Cornell Medicine, said.

For the analysis, the researchers recorded the rates of 30-day hospital re-admissions and post-surgical adverse events during the follow-up period of at least six months. The rates were compared among patients with and without active GLP-1 RA drug prescriptions.

The results showed that the patients who were prescribed GLP-1 RA drugs were modestly less likely to require hospital re-admission within 30 days of surgery, implying fewer overall complications.

"An active perioperative GLP-1 RA prescription in patients with diabetes was associated with significant reductions in risk-adjusted readmission, wound dehiscence (re-opening), and haematoma, and no difference in infection and bleeding rates," the authors wrote.

Public Notice

I declare that my father has passed away few years ago. Now I want to change the electricity connection and want to transfer the agreement no 0123040002461 in my name. If anyone has any objection, he/she may contact PDD Pattan within seven days. No objection will be accepted later.

Firdous Ahmad Bhat S/o Late Jalal Din Bhat R/o Iqbal Colony, Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla

JANISAR NEWS AGENCY

abko

KASHMIR

IS AVAILABLE IN SOUTH KASHMIR AT FOLLOWING PLACES

REYAZ NEWS AGENCY	ANANTNAG
RESHI NEWS AGENCY	ANANTNAG
BUDROO NEWS AGENCY	BIJBEHARA
GHULAM HASSAN NEWS AGNECY	SRIGUFWARA
LOORI NEW AGENCY	SANGAM
IRSHAD NEWS AGENCY	KOKERNAG
FRIENDS NEWS AGNECY	KULGAM
JAVAID NEWS AGENCY	KULGAM
MALIK NEWS AGENCY	AERWANI
IRSHAD NEWS AGENCY	KOKERNAG
RAYEES NEWS AGNECY	AWANTIPORA
PAMPORE NEW AGENCY	PAMPORE
SANGAM NEWS AGENCY	SANGAM
GAZI KHURSHEED NEWS AGENCY	PULWAMA
MANZOOR NEWS AGENCY	PUWLAMA
ALTAF NEWS AGENCY	PULWAMA
MANZOOR NEWS AGENCY	NORPORA
JAVAID NEWS AGENCY	AWANTIPORA
LONE NEW/ADVT AGENCY	RATNIPORA, PULWAMA
BOOZE NEWS AGNECY	AWANTIPORA
3 WAY TRAL NEWS AGENCY	TRAL
SYED MAQBOOL NEWS AGNECY	TRAL
DAR NEWS AGENCY	PULWAMA
SHAFI NEWS AGENCY	RAJPORA
REYZ NEWS AGENCY	PAMPORE
QUDOOS NEWS AGENCY	SHOPIAN
TURRAY NEWS AGENCY	SHOPIAN
FAROOQ NEWS AGENCY	KAKAPORA PULWAMA
JAVAID NEWS AGENCY	QAZIGUND
NISAR NEWS AGENCY	BANIHAL

Five Healthy Diet Staples That May Interact With Prescription Drugs

The Conversation

ne of the most popular new year's resolutions is making a commitment to healthier

Whether that's eating more fruits and vegetables, cutting down on meat consumption or even becoming a vegetarian or vegan a few days a week. While there are many benefits that can amounts of grapefruit juice. It may even be best to avoid it altogether.

2. Pomegranate and cranberry juice: Many fruits and fruit juices - especially from the citrus family - can affect the breakdown of drugs in the liver. Pomegranate juice is also shown to block the liver enzymes which break down the anticoagulant drug warfarin. The drug is used to prevent blood clots



come from following a healthier diet, it's important that any diet changes are made carefully. This is especially true if you're someone who takes a prescription drug, as many health food staples can negatively interact with them.

Here are some common foods and drinks interactions you should know

1. Grapefruit juice:

To break down some prescription drugs in the body, the liver uses enzymes called cytochrome P450. But grapefruit juice contains chemical compounds called furanocoumarins which can block the action of these enzymes. If this happens, some drugs can accumulate in the body.

This includes ciclosporin, a drug that's commonly used to prevent organ transplant rejection and manage symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis and skin conditions such as psoriasis. A build-up of ciclosporin can cause many side-effects, ranging from mild nausea and vomiting to kidney and liver damage.

Statins, often used to treat high cholesterol levels and prevent heart attacks and strokes, can also be affected by grapefruit juice through the same mechanism. Increased statin levels in the body can raise the risk of sideeffects, including muscle breakdown, K, which is needed to activate certain which is rare but serious.

Many other drugs can potentially interact with grapefruit juice as well - including amlodipine (a common high blood pressure drug) and sildenafil (an erectile dysfunction drug). If you take any of these prescriptions drugs, it's best to talk to your doctor or pharmacist before drinking even small

from forming in people with heart arrhythmias such as atrial fibrillation or deep vein thrombosis.

Some reported cases suggest that pomegranate juice might increase the international normalised ratio (INR - the time taken for blood to clot) in patients taking warfarin. This means patients may be at higher risk of bleeding.

Pomegranate juice may also affect other drugs, such as tacrolimus, an anti-rejection drug used in organ transplants.

Similarly, a number of case reports suggest cranberry juice can also affect warfarin. There has been one reported death of a patient from bleeding after they had drunk cranberry juice for two weeks prior while taking warfarin.

But results from various studies are mixed – with some showing cranberry affects warfarin in the body while others don't show any effect. Because of this, it may be worth checking the INR more often if you drink these juices or consider that any fluctuations in INR may be due to fruit juices.

3. Green leafy vegetables:

Spinach, broccoli and kale are often hailed as healthy foods because they're filled with nutrients while being low in calories.

However, they're also high in vitamin clotting factors (proteins in the blood which help it clot).

This may be problematic for patients taking warfarin. Warfarin works by blocking vitamin K in order to prevent blood clots from forming. But eating foods rich in vitamin K can lower your INR and increase the risk of developing a blood clot.



KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Thursday 09 January 2025 | Srinagar | Vol. 28 | Issue: 09 | Pages: 08 | Price: ₹3

www.kashmirobserver.net ● twitter.com / kashmirobserver ● facebook.com/kashmirobserver ● Postal Regn: L/159/KO/SK/2014-2016



9 +91-9797703533

Vintage Mall, 2nd floor Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar

This cutting-edge technology effectively reduces dark spots, melasma, and sun damage, revealing a radiant complexion with minimal downtime



Qazi Salman Promoted As Director PIB Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Senior Indian Information Services (IIS) officer Shri Qazi Mohammad Salman has been promoted as Director, Press Information Bureau (PIB), Srinagar, with additional charge as Director News, Doordarshan Kendra (DDK), Srinagar.

The order was issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India today for 27 senior level IIS officers posted across the

Shri Salman was serving as Joint Director, Press Information Bureau (PIB) Srinagar, with an additional charge of the News Unit of Doordarshan Kendra (DDK) Srinagar. In his new role, Shri Salman will continue to oversee the operations of PIB Srinagar and News Unit of DDK Srinagar, ensuring enhanced public outreach and information dissemination in the region.

The officer has vast experience in the field of public information and broadcasting. His leadership in various roles has been widely recognized and instrumental in strengthening the communication of government policies and programmes | More on P7

PM Modi To Visit Kashmir On Jan 13

Likely To Inaugurate **Z-Morh Tunnel**

Observer News Service

Prime Narendra Modi is likely to inaugurate on January 13 the Rs 2,400 crore strategic Z-Morh tunnel on the Srinagar-Leh National Highway, which will be a major step towards making the Ladakh region accessible by road throughout the year. The 6.5 km tunnel is vital in

terms of the defence needs of the country in the Ladakh region and also connecting the youngest union territory to

the rest of the country.

According to an official involved in the construction of the key infrastructure project, if the weather holds good, Modi is likely to physically inaugurate the tunnel.

case of inclement weather, the tunnel will be einaugurated," he said.

The opening of Z-Morh



tunnel will help to keep the vital Srinagar-Leh highway open across the year. The Z-Morh Tunnel, spanning 6.5 km will significantly reduce travel time along the Gagangir-Sonamarg stretch of the road that gets blocked by heavy snowfall and avalanches that hit the area every year.

The Z-Morh Tunnel is named after the Z-shaped stretch of road that the tunnel has replaced (Z-Morh translates to "Z-turn" in English).

The road used before was

avalanche-prone and often got blocked for several months, but the Z-Morh tunnel provides all-weather connectivity to the Sonamarg tourist town. It takes only 15 minutes to travel the 6.5 km long tunnel compared to hours over the zig-zag road up and down the hills.

Together with the adjacent Zoji-La Tunnel, this geostrategically important tunnel on the Srinagar-Leh Highway will provide year-round weather-proof connectivity to Baltal (Amarnath cave), Kargil and | More on P7

Z-Morh Tunnel To Transform Winter Tourism: Omar

ammu and Kashmir is on the cusp of a major transformation in its tourism sector as the much-awaited Z-Morh Tunnel, located in central Kashmir, is set to be inaugurated in the coming days. This vital infrastructure project is expected to be a game changer for the expansion of winter tourism in the valley says Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. He hailed the development, saying its potential to boost the region's tourism industry.

"J&K, especially central Kashmir, looks forward to the inauguration of a vital piece of infrastructure in the coming days. This asset will be a game changer for the expansion of winter tourism

in the valley," he posted on X. The Z-Morh Tunnel is a vital asset for Jammu and Kashmir. It will ensure yearround connectivity to areas



like Sonamarg, unlocking unprecedented opportunities for winter tourism.

The all-weather tunnel, spanning 6.5 kilometers, will provide seamless access to Sonamarg and surrounding areas even during heavy snowfall, which previously rendered the region inaccessible during winter months. This strategic project is expected to attract more tourists for skiing, snowboarding, and other winter activities while creating jobs and | More on P7

Heroin Worth 32 Cr Seized In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar:In a major crackdown on drug trafficking, Srinagar Police intercepted a narcotics consignment smuggled from Pakistan and arrested two alleged drug peddlers, recovering 8 kilograms of heroin from them here, an official said.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Imtiyaz Hussain, told reporters here that during a routine checkpoint at Barthana crossing, the police intercepted a vehicle with two individuals onboard.

A thorough search of the vehicle led to the discovery of six kilograms of heroin concealed beneath the driver's seat, he said.

During the personal search of the individuals, two kilograms of the narcotic substance were recovered from them, the SSP added.

The arrested individuals have been identified as Anas Ajaz Awan, a resident of Dildar Tangdar in Kupwara, and Zahid Ahmad Sheikh, a resident of Channipora in Kupwara's Tangdar.

The narcotics and the vehicle used in the commission of the crime have been seized as evidence, the police | More on P7

Youth Responsible For Shaping J&K's Future: LG

Says J&K Occupies Important Place On National Cultural Map

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Flagging off a youth contingent of Jammu and Kashmir to New Delhi for the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue at the National Youth Festival 2025, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday emphasised that the youth are responsible for writing their destiny and shaping the future of the Union

Territory (UT).
Terming J&K an important place on the national cultural map, the LG highlighted that the youth festival provides a unique platform to showcase the region's rich cultural legacy and enrich society's cultural consciousness.

"Youth are responsible for writing their destiny and shaping the future of Jammu and Kashmir. Never feel satisfied.

"Remove the word 'impossible' from your dictionary and move forward with determination and confidence," Sinha said while interacting with the participants and officials.

He urged the youth to seize this special opportunity to showcase



their leadership talent and display the diversity of J&K in fields like folk dance, poetry, writing, painting and music.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the participants to aim for excellence in their respective competitions while also exploring ways to contribute to nation-building.

Speaking on the vision and objectives of the National Youth Festival, the LG said, "This glorious event prepares our youth to tackle future challenges and responsibilities with a patriotic spirit and a sense of duty toward the nation."

He reiterated that J&K holds a significant | More on P7

High-Speed Trial Run On USBRL Successful CRS Calls It A New Chapter In Indian Railways

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Indian Railways has achieved a historic milestone with the successful completion of a high-speed trial on the challenging 180-degree climb from Katra to Banihal the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project.

development,

Observer News Service

skepticism about the restora-

ture. He accused the BJP of

lined the role of an elected

government, leaving it over-

shadowed by the Lieutenant

designed the system in a way

that even if an elected govern-

ment led by Omar Abdullah is

in place, its authority would

be diminished by the LG.

Whenever the Chief Minister

convenes a meeting, the LG

holds a similar one the next

Ruhullah said, "The BJP has

Be Respectful To Peoples'

Mandate: Ruhullah To Omar

conducted under adverse conditions, marks a major step towards connecting the Kashmir Valley with the rest of India via a direct rail link.

A new chapter was written in Indian Railway history with a successful "rising grade" speed trial in the challenging terrain from Jammu and Kashmir's Katra to Banihal along the USBRL | More on P7

'Winter-Ready' **Vande Bharať For Kashmir Unveiled**

he Railway Board unveiled a Vande Bharat Express train, specially-designed to operate seamlessly in Jammu & Kashmir's challenging winter conditions, for I More on P7

Rising **HMPV** Cases

Special ICU Ward Set Up In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

concerns triggered by the detection of human metapneumovirus (HMPV) cases in the country, the Jammu and Kashmir health department has set up a specialised ICU ward in Jammu to address any potential outbreak of the disease.

"We have prepared a special ICU ward to handle any eventuality. God forbid if a pandemic occurs, we are ready,' Dr Hamid Zargar, medical superintendent of Gandhinagar government hospital, said.

"The centrally-heated ward has eight beds supported by supply," he added.

Doctors have assured the public that there is no need to panic, emphasising that HMPV is not a new pathogen and it is not causing a widespread outbreak.

"It is a mild upper respiratory disease. Six cases have been detected so far (in the country), but there is no need to panic," Zargar said.

To enhance readiness, the administration has convened meetings to review the situation and ensure | More on P7

No Need To Panic: Experts

he Jammu and Kashmir Health Department Wednesday said there is no need to panic in view of the concerns triggered by the detection of human metapneumovirus (HMPV) cases in the country, and said the administration is prepared to deal with any situation. "There is no need to panic. The entire | More on P7

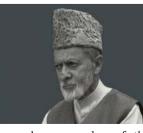
Veteran Political & Social Activist Yousuf Bhutto No More

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: Hakim Muhammad Yousuf, popularly known as Yousuf Bhutto, passed away on Wednesday at his residence in Hakim Mohalla, Baghwanpora. He was 90.

Bhutto was laid to rest at his ancestral graveyard in Hakim Mohalla. A prominent figure in Jammu and Kashmir's political history, he played a significant role as a key member of the Central Working Committee of the All J&K Plebiscite Front in 1974 during which he was

nicknamed Bhutto. He was a vocal critic of the Indira-Sheikh accord. Bhutto



was also a member of the Hurriyat Conference. After the Hurriyat split, he became associated with Hurriyat (G). Despite his political stance, he maintained good relations with Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, according to his brother.

Bhutto also played a crucial role in bringing | More on P7



day, creating the impression that he is in charge." He further highlighted the lack of clarity in the business rules, which he claimed adds to the ambiguity in governance.

Ruhullah accused the BJP of actively seeking ways to disempower the people of Jammu and Kashmir and being dismissive of their aspirations. He alleged that the party's actions reflect a disregard for the popular | More on P7

Mortgaging Property With Bank For Loan Not Money-laundering: HC

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The Act of mortgaging the property with the Bank for securing the loan cannot by any stretch of imagination be termed as money-launder-ing, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has held.

'...in order to constitute an offence of money-laundering as defined under Section 3 (of the Prevention of MoneyLaundering Act, 2002), the most important thing is that there must be an activity connected with the "proceeds of crime", which proceeds of crime in terms of the aforesaid definition would mean any property derived or obtained directly or indirectly by any person as a result of criminal activity relating to a scheduled offence or the value



of any such property," a bench of Justice Javed Iqbal Wani said.

"Thus, in order to constitute an offence under Section 3 of PMLA, Section 2(1)(u) is to be read together with Section 3 of PMLA to find out whether the ingredients of the offence of money-laundering are made out or not."

When read so, the court said, the offence of money-laundering can be said to have been committed by fulfilment of following conditions: i. Scheduled offence must have been committed; ii. Commission of scheduled offence must have resulted in some "proceeds of crime"; iii. Person accused of money-laundering must have indulged in an activity connected with such "proceeds of crime".

"It needs to be mentioned here that the activity connected with the "proceeds of crime" attributed to an accused must be the voluntary act of the accused."

The Court was hearing a plea by Hilal Ahmad Mir and Abdul Hamid Hajam who stated in their petition that they have been working as Chairman and Secretary of a registered Cooperative Society, namely, River Ihelum Co-operative House Building Society which had proposed to develop a satellite township at Shivpora, Srinagar on a big plot of land. They said that the land was | More on P7

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of

Kashmir Observer LLP

Printed at: K.T Press Pvt. Ltd 120-Electronic Complex, Industrial Estate, Rangreth-Budgam

Published from: 5-Boulevard Srinagar J&K Editor-in-Chief: Saiiad Haider News Editor: Farzana Nisar **Opinion Editor**: Tooba Towfig Online Editor: Syed Hamid

Head Lavout & Design: Muntazir Yaseen. Digital Media Head: Amir Ali Shah Business & Sales Head: Namisha Raj Distribution & Advertising: Firdos Ali RNI Registration No: 69503/98 Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16

Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja **Switchboard**: (0194) 2502327 | +91 1947969705

Editorial: (0194) 2502327 Email: editor@kashmirobserver.net

🔌 KO VIEW

Homes for winters

he devastating loss of a family in Srinagar's Pandrethan area last Sunday is a stark reminder of the harsh realities faced by residents of Kashmir during the unforgiving winter months. Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, wife and three grandchildren died of suffocation from the heat when they were sleeping in their rented accommodation. The suspected cause: an electric blower in their rented room, which likely depleted the room's oxygen levels, causing them to suffocate in their sleep. This is not an isolated incident, as there have been many of these before. Though the incidents recur every year, they don't receive the attention they deserve. Pandrethan tragedy should end this apathy. It is a heartbreaking story of the lengths to which families in Kashmir go to protect themselves from the biting cold.

Families need safe heating alternatives and to this end both the government and the civil society should help create a wider awareness. Authorities must prioritize improving the safety and affordability of heating solutions, particularly for vulnerable families living in poorly ventilated homes. Poverty, lack of awareness, and the unavailability of safer, alternative heating solutions leave families vulnerable.

This year winter wrapped Kashmir in an icy grip, with night temperatures dropping to staggering lows. Srinagar, the summer capital, shivered at upwards of -5 degrees Celsius for close to a fortnight in December. On December 21, temperature plummeted to -8.5 degree Celsius, marking the coldest night of the season in the city since 1974. Amid this bone-chilling cold, an intermittent power supply caused more inconvenience to the residents.

That said, while winter remains a harsh reality in the Valley, we have made it harsher by building homes which are largely incompatible with winters. This includes even the affluent section of the population. While traditional homes with thick mud walls and small windows retained heat effectively, modern brick-and-mortar constructions with thin walls and large singleglazed windows fall short, leaving families heavily reliant on unsafe heating methods. Recent research at the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) has highlighted the need for constructing houses that stay warm in winter. Some practical solutions suggested included advanced insulation, doubleglazed windows, and proper building orientation to enhance thermal comfort in Valley's largely cold weather.

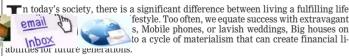
The research has called for reviving traditional techniques like Dhajji-Dewari and combining these with modern innovations. This can transform our homes into safe and warm sanctuaries during harsh winters. Other measures like wall and roof insulation, sealing of gaps, can minimize reliance on heating devices. It is time that people are persuaded to build winter-friendly houses through a sustained awareness campaign. We also need public education campaigns to help people understand the risks of using heating appliances without proper ventilation and to encourage the use of safer alternatives.



Did You Know?

The Dangers of a Lavish Lifestyle in Kashmir : Understanding Financial Responsibility

Irshad Mushtag



The Reality of Lavish Living

Many believe that spending large amounts of money signifies a wealthy lifestyle yet this is far from reality. Major business leaders and affluent individuals under stand the value of money; they prioritize their needs over unnecessary desires. Unfor tunately, in many communities, including Kashmir, we often make purchases that do not serve a real purpose in our lives. This behavior creates clutter and burdens future generations, who may feel obligated to manage the items we buy simply for the sake of appearances, such things now in common even condolence bring a lot of packet big fruit boxes etc.

The Show-Off Phenomenon

Consider the extravagant spending on weddings. These events often become showcases of wealth, with families feeling pressured to demonstrate their financial prowess. Such displays last only a few days, yet the impact on the household can be lasting, often leading to financial strain. The reality is that those living in these homes will be the ones to face the consequences of overspending.

Seeking Balance

It's essential to shift our focus from showy living to a balanced lifestyle. We must learn to distinguish between what we need versus what we want. Compromise on luxury items does not mean compromising on our essential needs. Instead, we can invest our financial resources wisely, ensuring a secure future.

Smart Investments

Instead of spending excessively on material goods, consider investing in highquality shares or mutual funds. A suggested approach is to allocate at least 30% of your savings into sound investments. This strategy can greatly contribute to wealth accumulation in the long run, allowing you to fulfill your wants through the profits

made from wise investments Financial Literacy is Key To make informed financial decisions, we must edu cate ourselves on financial concepts, such as saving and investing. Understanding the importance of money and how to manage it effectively is crucial. By doing so, we can create a sustainable lifestyle that benefits not only ourselves but also the generations to come. Conclusion Ultimately, it is crucial to prioritize financial responsibility over a lavish lifestyle. By adopting a mindset focused on necessity and smart investment we can attain true wealth that supports our needs without burdening future genera tions. Let's foster a culture of understanding and financial wisdom, allowing us to live fulfilling lives while respecting the value of money

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

misecurities@bp.sharekhan.com

Snow Clearance Under MG-NREGA

J&K RDD Minister must take this up with Union Minister soon

Timely snow clearance across all snowbound areas in J&K is not feasible unless the government involves local Panchayats and the Department of Rural Development. NREGA funds and waste management funds can also be dovetailed

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

or more than eight years, have been trying my best to make our government understand the importance of including snow clearance work under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MG-NREGS or MG-NREGA). I have written extensively and met legislators and parliamentarians from J&K to persuade the Government of India to include these provisions in MG-NREGS. In fact, the former MP from Baramulla. Mohammad Akbar Lone, at my request, wrote a detailed letter to the Government of India in January 2022, suggesting the inclusion of snow clearance work under NREGA in J&K and other hill states/UTs such as Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Ladakh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, etc.

Mr. Lone's son, Hilal Akbar Lone, who is the current MLA from Sumbal Sonwari, has also been vocal on this issue and recently took it up with the DC Bandipora. National Conference leader and current MLA of Banihal, Sajad Shaheen, made a similar demand a few years ago, appealing to LG Manoj Sinha to ensure that snow clearance work is taken up under MG-NREGA in the far-flung areas of the Banihal constituency, especially in places like Mahu-Mangit, Neel, Pogal, Maligam, Paristan, and Sarachi. These areas receive heavy snowfall, and authorities are often unable to clear the snow for weeks.

Snowfall and Lack of Service

When winter sets in and snowfall blocks roads, chaos and confusion prevail. Due to the dearth of snow clearance machines, the government hires earth-moving equipment like JCBs to clear roads. While this does remove snow, it damages the road surface, creating further problems. There have been two spells of snowfall this winter, and we expect more until March. However,



the government isn't able to provide the desired level of service, causing significant hardships for

the people. Main roads are cleared of snow with machines, but inner links and roads in remote villages like Kupwara, Kishtwar, Ramban, Bandipora, Baramulla, and Poonch remain untouched. It would be ideal if locals were involved in undertaking this work under MG-NREGA.

Employment Guarantee in Winter

During the winter months, especially in snowfall-hit areas, people are often jobless. The preamble of NREGA is to ensure employment guarantee (Rozgar Guarantee), but the government focuses more on physical asset creation. We cannot have a uniform policy for the entire nation, as India is diverse and geographically distinct. The programs under MG-NREGA in Maharashtra, Rajasthan, or Kerala cannot be replicated in Himalayan states

ike Himachal Pradesh, Uttara t is **Crail a** make chang- **Police time had been** his flags to program. In

responding the same and the same with the same representation of the same r paramous mars of the scheme by providing livelihoods to local This would adhere perfectly to the preamble of MG-NREGA, which focuses on employment genera-

tion (Rozgar Guarantee).

The Rural Development Department (RDD) of J&K claims that clearing snow from lanes, roads, and public spaces cannot be included under NREGA as it does not lead to the creation of physical assets. However, officers must learn from Kinnaur district in Himachal Pradesh. where a local DC set a precedent around 2011–2012 by including snow clearance in NREGA works. Despite this example, the Jammu and Kashmir government is yet to forward a formal proposal to the Ministry of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Government

What Does an Asset Mean?

Timely snow clearance across all snowbound areas in J&K is not feasible unless the government involves local Panchayats and the Department of



If the Government

of Himachal Pradesh

Development. NREGA funds and waste management funds can also be dovetailed. This would eliminate the need for JCBs to clear snow from small roads, which damages the roads and benefits only contractors while leaving locals jobless.

Snow clearance at the right time in remote/hilly areas is an asset, as it generates livelihood for rural youth, especially during a period when they have no work. Why do we view assets as only physical things? Saving blacktopped roads from damage by JCBs is also an asset, as it conserves taxpayer money.

Under the Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin, NREGA funds can be utilized for Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) through convergence. If this is possible for waste management, why can't NREGA funds be used for snow clearance? Many SLWM activities, such as waste segregation, waterbody cleaning, and IEC work, do not involve physical asset creation, yet they are permissible under SBM Gramin guidelines. Why not extend this rationale to snow clearance?

Lack of Understanding

J&K Rural Development Department officers have not provided adequate explanations or presentations to the Union Rural Development Ministry on this matter. which is why the case remains unresolved. Even the former Minister for RDD J&K, Abdul Haq Khan, raised this issue with the Union Minister in 2017 but failed to present valid arguments convincingly. This lack of initiative and understanding has delayed the inclusion of snow clearance work under NREGA in J&K and other states.

Conclusion

If the Government of Himachal Pradesh could allow snow clearance work in Kinnaur dis-



dovetailing different schemes? Providing livelihoods to and snowfall would

be a success story for the government and align perfectly with the Rozgar Guarantee preamble of **MG-NREGA**

ter, Javid Ahmad Da this issue with the ter for Rural Development and Panchayats, Shivraj Singh Chou unemployed youth is han, seen This would benefit not only J&K but also other hilly states that experience snowfall in vinters. I also request MLA Banihal Sajad Shaheen and MLA Stares bal Sonawari Hilal Akbar Lone to raise this issue with the Chief

Minister and RDD Minister Javid Dar, as both have been strong proponents of this cause in the past. Views expressed in the article

are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat is an Acumen Fellow and Chairman of the J&K RTI Movement



OBSERVER

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

MAIL YOUR LETTERS

P.O.Box # 337, GPO, Srinagar-190 001 email: editpage.ko@gmail.com

Encouraging Community Activities to Make Winters Warmer and More Bearable

s winter tightens its grip, bringing with it freezing temperatures and long, Lark evenings, there arises ■ a pressing need to foster a sense of community to counter the isolation and challenges the season often brings. Schools, mosques, and even restaurants can play a pivotal role in this regard by hosting activities that not only engage people but also provide warmth-both physical and emotional—to the community.

Schools can take the lead by organizing winter workshops, storytelling sessions, and cultural events that bring children and their parents together in a shared space of learning and joy. Art, music, and craft activities can serve as excellent outlets for creativity and help families stay connected during the long, cold months.

Mosques, being central to the community, can open their doors for more than just prayers. They could host evening gatherings with tea and snacks, discussions on social topics. or even small classes on life skills, health, or well-being. Such activities would provide a warm space for people, especially the elderly, to come together and feel less alone during winter's harshest days.

Restaurants, too, can contrib-

ute by creating community-focused events. For instance, organizing discounted hot meal nights or offering a communal soup kitchen during particularly cold spells can bring warmth and comfort to those in need. These establishments can also host poetry readings, music nights, or even interactive cooking sessions that encourage people to

step out and connect. The essence of such initiatives lies in bringing people together, fostering a shared sense of belonging, and ensuring that no one feels left out in the cold—literally or figuratively. The warmth of human connection is often the best antidote to winter's chill. I urge local authorities, community leaders, and business owners to come together and make this vision a reality.

Let us make this winter not just bearable but memorable by building stronger, warmer communities.

Mehak Javed

The Forgotten Art of Repair in a Throwaway World

NARAYANAN KIZHUMUNDAYUR

n the contemporary landscape of abundance and convenience, the ancient practice of repair has been relegated to the margins of modern life. Once a celebrated tradition that emphasized resourcefulness, patience, and respect for material goods, repair has been overshadowed by a culture of disposability. The rise of throwaway habits has profound implications—not just for the environment but for the economy and our collective values. Understanding and reclaiming the art of repair is essential to building a more sustainable and thoughtful future.

The Historical Roots of Repair

The practice of repair is as old as human civilization itself. In earlier times, when resources were scarce and production methods were labour-intensive, people viewed their possessions as investments. Objects, whether tools, clothing, or household items, were crafted to last, and when they showed signs of wear, they were repaired, not discarded.

In agrarian and pre-industrial societies, repair was an integral part of life. Communities were home to skilled artisans like cobblers, blacksmiths, and seamstresses who extended the lifespan of goods through their craft. Repair was not merely functional but also deeply symbolic, reflecting values

of thrift, care, and respect for labour. One notable example is the Japanese practice of kintsugi, the art of repairing broken pottery with gold. Far from concealing imperfections, kintsugi celebrates them, transforming broken

convenience

objects into unique and beautiful arti-

facts. This philosophy exemplifies an

approach to repair that sees value in

preservation and creativity, offering a

stark contrast to today's preference for

The Emergence of the Throwaway

The industrial revolution marked

the beginning of a profound shift in

how society approached goods and

their lifespans. Mass production re-

duced the cost of manufacturing,

making products more affordable and

accessible. While this democratiza-

shiny, disposable replacements.

Culture

IN MANY WAYS, REPAIR IS ALSO AN ACT

OF REBELLION AGAINST THE FORCES OF

CONSUMERISM. Choosing to mend rather

than replace disrupts the profit-driven cycle

of disposability, prioritizing sustainability over



tion of goods was a significant social advancement, it also laid the groundwork for a disposable culture.

By the mid-20th century, planned obsolescence-a strategy in which products are designed to fail or become outdated—became a widespread business practice. Manufacturers intentionally limited the durability of their products or made repairs difficult by using proprietary components. This ensured that consumers would have to buy replacements rather than repair their existing items.

The cultural zeitgeist further reinforced this trend. Advertising campaigns emphasized the allure of newness and convenience, portraying repaired or older items as undesirable. This mind-set took deep root, and as

society transitioned into the digital

age, the problem intensified. Devices

like smartphones and laptops became

symbols of status, their frequent up-

grades encouraged by both peer pres-

sure and deliberate design limitations.

The Consequences of Disposability

The environmental costs of this

throwaway culture are staggering.

Every year, millions of tons of waste,

including plastics, textiles, and elec-

tronics, are generated worldwide.

Much of this waste ends up in landfills

or oceans, where it takes centuries to

decompose, releasing harmful toxins

in the process.

Electronic waste, or e-waste, exemplifies the scale of the problem. Smartphones, computers, and other devices contain valuable metals like gold, silver, and palladium, yet only a fraction of these materials is recovered through recycling. The rest is often discarded, contributing to resource depletion and environmental pollution.

The economic implications are equally troubling. The production of disposable goods relies on finite resources-minerals, water, and energy-that are consumed at an unsustainable rate. For individuals, the costs of constantly replacing goods rather than repairing them add up over time, placing unnecessary strain on household budgets.

The Loss of Connection and Craft

Beyond the material consequences, the throwaway culture has led to a loss of intangible values. Repairing an item fosters a connection to the object, imbuing it with meaning and a sense of history. Discarding and replacing goods, by contrast, creates a fleeting relationship, stripping objects of their significance.

Communities have also been affected. In the past, repair services brought people together, forming networks of trust and mutual support. The decline of these practices has contributed to the fragmentation of local economies, as globalized supply chains and mass production replaced neighbourhood artisans.

Reviving the Art of Repair

Restoring the culture of repair is not a backward step but a progressive solution to many of today's challenges. Repair aligns seamlessly with the principles of sustainability, reducing waste and conserving resources. It is also an antidote to overconsumption encouraging mindfulness in purchas-

Efforts to revive repair are already underway. Initiatives like repair cafes, where volunteers teach people to fix their belongings, have gained traction worldwide. These community events combine education with social interaction, demonstrating that repair is not only practical but enjoyable. Similarly, the rise of online platforms offering repair tutorials empowers individuals to reclaim lost skills.

Policy interventions can accelerate this revival. Governments can introduce right-to-repair legislation, compelling manufacturers to make spare parts and repair instructions readily available. Tax incentives for repair businesses and subsidies for repair workshops can further encourage the practice.

Moreover, businesses themselves can embrace repair as a core value. Companies like Patagonia have set a precedent by offering repair services for their products, proving that sustainability can coexist with profitability. Design innovation also plays a critical role; creating modular, easily repairable products can significantly extend their lifespan.

Repair as a Philosophy

The act of repair is more than a technical skill-it is a philosophy that values resilience, creativity, and respect for resources. Repairing something is a tangible expression of care, whether for the environment, for craftsmanship, or for the memories embedded in the object. It challenges the assumption that newer is always better and fosters a sense of gratitude for what we already have.

In many ways, repair is also an act of rebellion against the forces of consumerism. Choosing to mend rather than replace disrupts the profit-driven cycle of disposability, prioritizing sustainability over convenience. It is a small but powerful way of asserting agency in a world dominated by mass production and corporate interests.

Conclusion

The forgotten art of repair offers a pathway to a more sustainable and meaningful way of life. By reviving repair, we can counter the environmental destruction, economic waste, and cultural erosion caused by the throwaway culture. Repair teaches us to value what we have, to nurture creativity, and to build connections—with objects, people, and the planet. In a world that too often equates worth with novelty, the practice of repair reminds us that enduring value lies in care, effort, and preservation.

The author is an Accountant and Malayalam

The Social Media Paradox: Opportunities and **Challenges in Kashmir**

Zaid Malik

ocial media has transformed the methods by which individuals in Kashmir communicate, obtain information, and voice their views. Since Internet access is available to more than 30% of the population, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp have become core to daily life.

According to a recent survey, 70% of internet users in Kashmir are active on social media platforms, with the majority being between the ages of 18 and 35. This demographic phenomenon is important because it shows that the population of young people in Kashmir is the engine driving the social media wave.

However, there are some alarming trends associ-ated with high-level usage of social media in Kashmiri society. There is increasing worry that individuals, and especially adolescents, spend excessive amounts of time engaging with social media and are disconnecting with family and friends. It is not unusual to see people coming home from friends' and their, maybe, families out of loneliness and heading straight to their phones, changing the clock on their hearts to the clock on their phone.

For instance, students are increasingly being targeted by the addictive properties of social media, resulting in a heavy drop in academic concentration. Yet, it seems that all the students are spending more time on social media than on their studies now, and the performance has been deteriorating.

Additionally, the excessive use of social media has also led to a spiritual detachment in the case of Kashmiris. There are those who spend a greater proportion of time on social media than practicing religious acts of worship, prayer, and reading the Holy Ouran. All this has resulted in a decline of the religious values and the sense of alienation from Allah and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Moreover, as an expressive medium and tool of cultural survival, social media has proven to be a powerful tool for Kashmir. Adolescents are using the network, Instagram, and YouTube to share the natural beauty of the region,



istences, and to refute stereo-

On the other hand, social media has also become a source of misinformation and propaganda in Kashmir. Hoaxes and rumors spread rapidly across services like WhatsApp and Twitter and generally fuel social conflict and mistrust between

To help address these challenges, authors cite the need in developing digital literacy, strengthening control over content, and ensuring fair and moral social media use. Parents, educators, and community leaders must, on the other hand, step up and proactively steer children toward responsible social media use.

In conclusion, while social media presents numerous opportunities for Kashmir, its negative consequences cannot be ignored. Due to our Kashmiri identity, we need to recognize the risks of social media overuse and aim for a healthy balance between enjoying the technological advantages and defending spiritual values, cultural heritage, and social ties.

With it, we are able to let it do good and avoid oppression. And all in all, social media stands as a whole lot of avenues for Kashmir, yet its negative outcome cannot be shunned. Thus, being in the Kashmiri identity, our risks over social media are to be looked at and get a healthy share of enjoyment while enjoying technological virtues and defending other spiritual values, cultural heritage, and all social ties intact. Doing so, we can make sure social media is a force for good, not op-

The author is a Kashmirindependent journalist

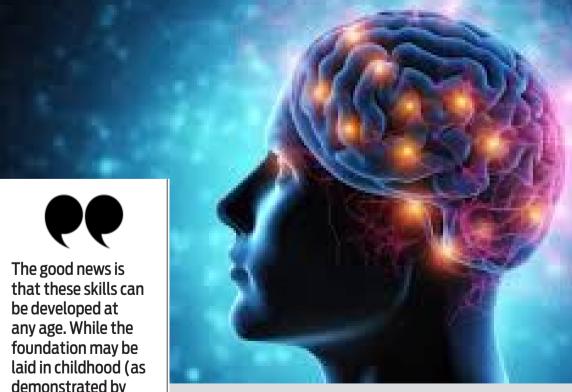
The Power of Waiting: Your Brain's Defense Against Dementia

Bobby Hoffman

The famous marshmallow test (Mischel et al., 1988), where children were given the choice between eating one marshmallow immediately or waiting for two later, may have revealed more than just willpower-it might help explain why some people maintain sharper cognitive function as they age. Recent research suggests that our ability to delay gratification could be a crucial factor in protecting against early onset of Alzheimer's symptoms and other forms of cognitive decline (Wu et al., 2024).

Think of your brain as a muscle that gets stronger with practice. Every time you choose a long-term benefit over immediate pleasure, you're essentially doing a mental workout. This workout engages multiple brain regions, particularly the prefrontal cortex, the brain area that is responsible for planning, reasoning, and controlling impulses. Just as regular physical exercise helps maintain muscle strength, regularly exercising selfcontrol may help maintain cognitive function throughout life. Over time, delayed gratification increases mental tenacity and the ability to persevere through obstacles (Touroutoglou et al., 2020).

The science behind this connection is fascinating. When we resist immediate rewards, we activate "cool" regulation strategies in the right prefrontal cortex, the rational reasoning center of decisionmaking. In contrast, giving in to immediate gratification typically involves "hot" strategies in the



demonstrated by the marshmallow test), adults can strengthen their self-regulation abilities through practice and conscious effort

amygdala and ventral striatum, the brain areas associated with emotional decision-making. The more we practice using these "cool" strategies, the stronger these neural pathways become, potentially creating a cognitive reserve that could help delay or prevent symptoms of cognitive decline (Willoughby et al., 2011).

Future time perspective

But it's not just about willpower. Future time perspective (FTP)—our ability to envision and plan for the future—plays a crucial role. People with a stronger FTP tend to make healthier lifestyle choices, from maintaining regular exercise routines to choosing nutritious foods over quick, unhealthy options. These choices, in turn, contribute to better brain health and potentially lower risk of cognitive de-

The good news is that these skills can be developed at any age. While the foundation may be laid in childhood (as demonstrated by the marshmallow test), adults can strengthen their self-regulation abilities through practice and conscious effort. Simple strategies like setting specific goals, creating detailed action plans, and using monitoring techniques that measure progress can help build these crucial skills. Recent studies have shown that individuals who consistently practice delayed gratification tend to maintain better cognitive function as they age. This isn't just about resisting temptation—it's about developing a more strategic approach to life choices. People who excel at delay of gratification often demonstrate better problem-solving abilities, stronger emotional regulation, and more effective stress management—all factors that contribute to cognitive resilience (Shatenstein et al., 2015)

Physical activity plays a particularly important role in this relationship. Research combining data from the National Health and **Nutrition Examination Survey with** genetic analysis has revealed that higher levels of physical activity are associated with better cognitive function, especially in older adults (Liu et al., 2024). The ability to delay gratification makes it easier to maintain regular exercise habits, creating a positive feedback loop that benefits brain health. What's particularly encouraging is that these benefits appear to be cumulative. Each time we

choose to delay gratification for a better long-term outcome, we're not just making a single good decision-we're strengthening our brain's capacity for self-regulation and potentially building protection against future cognitive decline.

Build your skills

For those interested in developing these skills, start small. Begin with manageable delays in gratification and gradually increase the waiting period. Set specific, achievable goals and create detailed plans for reaching them. Practice mindfulness techniques to become more aware of impulsive urges and develop strategies to manage them effectively. Look out for my forthcoming book, The Paradox of Passion: How Rewards Covertly Control Motivation, which outlines dozens of additional strategies for leveraging our neurological systems to enhance productivity.

Remember, it's never too late to start building these protective cognitive skills. While early development of self-regulation abilities is beneficial, research shows that these skills can be strengthened throughout life. The key is consistent practice and a conscious effort to make choices that prioritize long-term benefits over immediate rewards. This research in aggregate is another powerful reminder that the small choices we make today can have lasting impacts on our mental well-being tomorrow.

 $The \ article \ was \ originally$ published by Psychology Today

Fire Ravages Four Houses In Hazratbal

Srinagar: A devastating fire broke out in Srinagar's Hazratbal area on Wednesday morning, leaving four residential houses damaged. According to locals, the fire originated in one house and rapidly spread to three neighboring properties.

The Emergency and Fire Services Department promptly responded, working alongside locals and police to bring the blaze under control. An official from the department confirmed that two houses, owned by Mehraj Ahmed Shaksaz and Parvez Ahmed Bhat, sustained extensive damage, while two additional houses were partially affected.

"The swift action of our team, along with the support of the local community and police, helped contain the fire before it caused further destruction," the official stated.

Officials said that a case has been registered to determine the cause of the fire, as investigations are ongoing. In response to the incident,

a team from the District Administration Srinagar, acting on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, visited the affected families to offer assistance. Immediate relief, including blankets and Rs 10,000 in interim financial aid from the District Red Cross Fund, was provided to each affected family.

"We are deeply sympathetic to the affected families for their loss of property and have taken swift measures to support them," the District Administration team noted

Further, the Deputy Commissioner directed concerned authorities to assess the damages thoroughly and prepare a detailed report to ensure structure-wise financial assistance under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). Efforts are underway to rehabilitate the families and provide them with the necessary support during this challenging time.

Former Mayor Defends Ruhullah **Amid 'Internal Party Rift'**

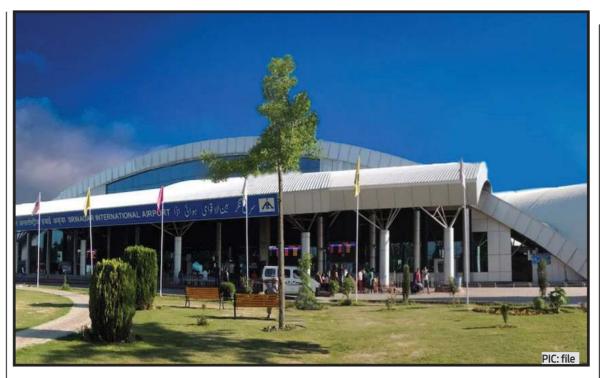
Agencies

Srinagar: Former Srinagar Mayor Junaid Azim Mattu has publicly voiced his support for National Conference leader and Member of Parliament Ruhullah Mehdi, who recently came under fire from several colleagues within his own party. The internal criticism follows Ruhullah Mehdi's protest outside the Gupkar residence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, demanding reforms in reservation policies.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), Mattu condemned the attacks on Mehdi, alleging that they were orchestrated by the party leadership. "Make no mistake about this - every

single insult being heaped on Ruhullah Mehdi by his colleagues in NC has been sanctioned from the CM and his team. These aren't isolated, spontaneous insults but part of a synchronized 'cutting to size' operation. No place in NC for a spine," Mattu wrote, accusing the NC of stifling internal dissent.

The controversy escalated after a video of Omar Abdullah-led government minister Sakina Itoo went viral on social media. In the video, Sakina Itoo criticized the protest staged by Mehdi



Sgr Airport Registers Over 28,000 Flights In 2024

Agencies

Srinagar: Srinagar International Airport witnessed considerable flight activity in 2024, recording a total of 28,348 arrivals and departures. Despite some minor weather-related disruptions, the airport facilitated travel for approximately 4.4 million passengers throughout the year.

Airport officials said flight operations were largely uninterrupted during the year, with only minor disruptions caused by weather conditions.

Data revealed that the airport facilitated smooth operations, handling 28,348 flights in total—14,174 arrivals and 14,174 departures from destinations across India.

Around 4.4 million passengers travelled through Srinagar Airport in 2024, including visitors from various parts of India and international travellers. On average, the airport witnessed 35 to 37 flights daily during the winter months and 45 to 50 flights during the



2024 has been a successful year for Srinagar International Airport, with smooth flight operations despite occasional weather disruptions. This achievement reflects the hard work and dedication of our staff.

summer. Approximately 12,000 passengers arrive and depart daily.

The airline services operating Srinagar International Airport include SpiceJet, IndiGo, Air India Express, Akasa Air, and Air India among others.

The Director of Srinagar International Airport expressed satisfaction with the year's performance, saying, "2024 has been a successful

year for Srinagar International Airport, with smooth flight operations despite occasional weather disruptions. This achievement reflects the hard work and dedication of our staff. We take pride in accommodate ing over 4.4 million passengers from India and beyond.'

Looking forward to 2025, he said they plan to enhance the airport's infrastructure, improve passenger experiences and ensure seamless connectivity for both domestic and international travellers. "Our continued focus will be on safety, efficiency, and reliability to make Srinagar a preferred choice for air travel," he added.

Last year, officials announced the installation of an advanced Instrument Landing System (ILS CAT-II) under the Indian Air Force, which is a crucial technological upgrade designed to facilitate smooth flight operations during low-visibility conditions, such as fog and adverse winter

TRAFFIC POLICE: 9419993745, 01998-266686 PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883 PDD: 0194-2450213

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES: 2479488,2452222,2452155 CAPD: 18001807011

SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081 Ambulance: Kashmer EMS Service: +919484100200

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS



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



PRAYERS FAJR 6:08 **ZUHR** 12:36 **ASR** 4:00 Magrib 5:44

7: 07

This Day In History

475 - Byzantine Emperor Zeno is forced to flee his capital at Constantinople.

ISHA

- 1296 Earl Floris V signs accord with French King
- 1317 Phillips V, the Tall, crowned king of France
- 1431 Judges' investigations for the trial of Joan of Arc begin in Rouen, France, the seat of the English occupation government
- 1493 1st sight of manatees by Christopher Columbus
- 1558 Geneva becomes independent from Berne canton, Switzerland
- 1718 France declares war on Spain
- 1760 Afghans defeat Marathas in battle of Barari Ghat
- 1792 Russia & Turkey sign Peace of Jassy 1812 - Swedish Pomerania (Germany) seized by
- Napoleon 1862 - The first petroleum shipment (1,329 barrels)
- from the U.S. to Europe arrives at Victoria Docks, London, England aboard the Elizabeth Watts
- 1878 Umberto I becomes King of Italy. 1879 - Kirland Warbler discovered on Andros Island
- in Bahamas 1880 The Great Gale of 1880 devastates parts of Oregon and Washington with high wind and heavy
- 1894- New England Telephone and Telegraph installs the first battery-operated telephone switchboard in Lexington, Massachusetts.
- 1912 US Marines send troops to Honduras

the Egyptian border with Palestine.

- 1916 The Ottoman Empire prevails in the Battle of Canakkale, as the last British troops evacuated 1917 - World War I: the Battle of Rafa occurs near
- 1930 Albert Kahn Associates architectural firm become consulting architects for all industrial construction in the Soviet Union
- 1936 Semi-automatic rifles adopted by US army 1942 - US Joint Chiefs of Staff created
- 1943 Japanese government in Java limits sale &
- use of motorcars 1952 Karel Sys wins European heavyweight boxing
- 1957 Karachayevo-Cherkess Autonomous Region reestablished in RSFSR
- 1960 Building of Aswan dam in Egypt, begins
- 1968 Surveyor 7 space probe soft lands on Moon
- 1969 First trial flight of Concorde supersonic jetliner, Bristol, England
- 1969 Prime Minister of Northern Ireland Terence O'Neill travels to London to meet Home Secretary James Callaghan and brief him on the growing violence in Northern Ireland
- 1973 Luna 21 launched, to Moon
- 1975 Australia beat England by 171 runs in 4th Test to regain Ashes
- 1986 After losing a patent battle with Polaroid, Kodak must give up its instant camera business.
- 1987 Chinese Vietnamese border fights, 1,500 killed
- 1990 64th US manned space mission STS 32 (Columbia 10) launches into orbit
- 1998 Anatoly Solovyov & Pavel Vinogradov spacewalk record 3 hrs 8 mins
- 2001 Shenzhou 2, an unmanned Chinese spacecraft, is launched.
- 2001 Apple announced iTunes at the Macworld Expo in San Francisco, for organizing and playing digital music and videos
- 2005 The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, commonly known as the Naivasha Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement rebel group in Naivasha, Kenya.
- 2005 Elections are held to replace Yasser Arafat as head of the Palestine Liberation Organization. He is succeeded by Rawhi Fattouh.
- 2005- The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, commonly known as the Naivasha Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement rebel group in Naivasha, Kenya.
- 2007- Apple Inc CEO Steve Jobs announces the

outside the Chief Minister's residence, dismissing it as a "cheap publicity stunt" without directly naming him.



CS Atal Dulloo Unveils J&K

Bank Calendar - 2025

Observer News Service

Srinagar, Jan 08: J&K Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo unveiled the J&K Bank's much-awaited Wall-Calendar for the year 2025 at a prestigious event held in the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar. The event was attended by the Bank's MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee, Executive Director Sudhir Gupta, General Manager Imtiyaz Ahmad Bhat, DGM Manju Gupta and

other senior officials. During the unveiling ceremony, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo expressed his admiration for the Bank's initiative of releasing a new Calendar for 2025. He said, "I am pleased to see that through this Calendar, J&K Bank has successfully captured the essence of transformation underway in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The depiction of these infrastructural projects is in line with the Government vision of comprehensive and inclusive economic development of

"As the major shareholder in the Bank, the Government of J&K has high expectations from this institution, and we believe that the Bank will achieve new heights while playing a pivotal role in supporting the inclusive economic growth of the people of this region", he added.

While expressing his gratitude for the unwavering support of the J&K Government, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee thanked the Chief Secretary for his valuable guidance and the time. He further stated, "I feel immensely happy at the launch of the Bank's Calendar -2025, which has always been more than a mere date-keeper; it is a symbol of our deep emotional connection with our people and our roots. This year we have tried to capture some of the milestones of developmental vision expressing itself in the form of infrastructural projects representing people's aspirations for their progressive and prosperous future.'





Isolated Cold

he said, adding that on January 15 & 16, generally cloudy weather is expected with possibility of light snow at isolated to scattered places.

He also said the minimum temperature was likely to drop further in the valley and forecast an isolated cold wave over the few days ahead.

The minimum temperature in Srinagar was re-

corded at minus 1 degree Celsius, down from the previous night's 0.9 degrees, it said.

The city had witnessed bright sunshine in the

morning.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 9.8 degrees
Celsius, compared to the previous night's minus 6.6

degrees, and was the coldest recorded place in the valley.

In Pahalgam, the minimum temperature set-

tled at minus 8.2 degrees Celsius against the previous night's minus 7.8 degrees.

Qazigund logged a low of minus 2.4 degrees Celsius while Konibal in Pampore town registered a minimum temperature of minus 1 degree.

Kupwara in north Kashmir recorded a minimum temperature of minus 2.1 degrees Celsius while Kokernag in south Kashmir saw the mercury settle at minus 1.9 degrees. Moreover, the tourists, travelers and transporters are advised to follow administration and traffic advisory.

2025 Begins

the recent snowfall in most parts of the Valley. Against the normal rainfall of 18.4 mm, J&K has recorded a precipitation of 7.6 mm.

Nine stations across J&K including the winter capital of the Union Territory—Jammu recorded large deficit rainfall. The large deficit rainfall is being marked from 60 per cent to 99 per cent.

Four stations including the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar have recorded the normal precipitation during the period. As per the details, Budgam and Ganderbal stations in central Kashmir saw large excess rainfall from January 01 to January 08. (KNO)

Veteran Journalist,

of Filmfare and more importantly The Illustrated Weekly," Kher added.

Nandy was a former Rajya Sabha member of the Shiv Sena and also an animal rights advocate.

His company, Pritish Nandy Communications, made films like 'Sur', 'Kaante', 'Jhankaar Beats', 'Chameli', 'Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi', and 'Pyaar Ke Side Effects' and also produced the web series 'Four More Shots Please!'

Nandy wrote around 40 books of poetry in English and translated poems from Bengali, Urdu and Punjabi into English.

Orientation Programme

System and Information Support to Legislators, Do's and Don'ts for an Effective Legislator and a session on NEVA. The insights gained through these lectures will provide the newly elected members with a deep understanding of working of the legislature and the responsibility they carry as elected representatives. The lectures will also be co-hosted by Senior Officers of the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

This programme is expected to enhance the capacity of MLAs to significantly contribute to policy formulation and ensure its effective implementation for greater good of the Union Territory.

'All Hell Will Break

between Israel and Hamas that would secure the release of the hostages, saying negotiators are "making a lot of progress," CNN reported.

He further said, "It's the president, his reputation, the things that he has said that are driving this negotiation, and so hopefully it'll all work out and we'll save some lives." Earlier, it was reported that Biden administration officials were taking the lead in the talks, while their incoming Trump counterparts were being updated regarding the developments.

A senior Biden administration office offered a much more cautious tone after Trump and Witkoff's statement. Speaking to CNN, the official stated that the negotiations remain difficult. The official, who refused to speak about the status of the negotiations, insisted that despite Witkoff appearing to suggest that the deal was possible before January 20, the talks are challenging.

According to the official, the Biden administration has been working in "close coordination" with the incoming Trump national security team. The Biden administration has been trying to help broker a ceasefire in Gaza for over a year. However, they have not been successful in their efforts. Notably, dozens of hostages were released in the first ceasefire, which was agreed weeks after the October 7 attack. However, efforts to halt the fighting and secure the release of more hostages have failed.

During the press conference, Trump also refused to rule out the use of military force to take control of the Panama Canal and Greenland, and "economic force" to acquire Canada, CNN reported.

When asked whether he would rule out using "military or economic coercion" to achieve his goal of gaining those territories. he responded, "No, I can't assure you on either of those two, but I can say this, we need them for economic security."

Trump said Denmark should give up its control of Greenland or it would face high tariffs. He suggested people of Greenland could vote for independence or to become part of the United States. He said, "I'm talking about protecting the free world."

Since his election, Trump has repeatedly expressed his interest in gaining control of the Panama Canal and Greenland. Trump said later that he would only use "economic force" and not military force against Canada.

Trump criticised former US President Jimmy Carter's decision to hand control of the Panama Canal back to Panama during his presidency, CNN reported. Carter, who passed away at the age of 100 on December 29, negotiated treaties that provided for the handover of the Panama Canal to Panama

for the handover of the Panama Canal to Panama. He said, "The Panama Canal is a disgrace." Trump said, "What took place at the Panama Canal, Jimmy Carter gave it to them for USD 1 and

they were supposed to treat us well."

The US President-elect said that he would be renaming the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America. He said, "We're going to be changing the name of the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of America, which has a beautiful ring. That covers a lot of territory, the Gulf of America -- what a beautiful name. And

it's appropriate."
He slammed the Biden administration's handling of the transition ahead of his inauguration

ceremony on January 20. Trump said the Biden administration is "trying everything they can to make it more difficult" and wants to "block the reforms of the American people and that they voted for."

Trump's remarks come a day after US Congress certified his election victory with no objections from any lawmakers as the tally of states was announced on the House floor. Donald Trump won 312 electoral votes while Harris got 226 votes, a total that was confirmed during the certification on Monday, marking the final step in the election process before Trump returns back to the White House on January 20. (ANI)

Contine from Page 3

Qazi Salman

officials said.

in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

PM Modi To Visit

other places in the Ladakh region. The tunnel will bolster military logistics, ensur-

ing year-round access for the Indian armed forces. Heavy snowfall around the Gund area of Kangan forces the closure of Srinagar-Sonamarg during the winter months. With the opening of the Z-Morh tunnel, the Srinagar-Sonamarg stretch of the road will be an all-weather road and also boost winter tourism in Sonamarg area,

The project has created employment opportunities during its construction phase and will further benefit the local economy by enhancing tourism and allied industries like hospitality, transport, and

The construction of the tunnel began in 2018, facing several challenges due to the rugged Himalayan terrain and extreme weather.

The tunnel workers came under terror attack on October 20, 2024, when two terrorists entered the workers' camp at Gagangir and fired indiscriminately. Seven civilians, including six non-local workers of the infrastructure company building the Z-Morh tunnel, were killed. A local doctor was also killed in the attack.

Z-Morh Tunnel

boosting the local economy.

Tourism stakeholders and locals alike are optimistic about the positive impact of the Z-Morh Tunnel, which is seen as a significant step towards positioning Kashmir as a premier winter destination in India. (KINS)

Heroin Worth

officer said.

He stated that a case under sections 8/21 and 29 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act has been registered and further investigation is ongoing.

"Preliminary investigation has revealed that the recovered narcotics were smuggled from Pakistan as part of a cross-border drug trafficking network," Hussain said.

J&K Police is actively pursuing both backward and forward linkages to dismantle this syndicate and identify all individuals involved in this illicit trade, the SSP added.

He said the police remain resolute in its mission to eradicate drug trafficking and ensure the safety of the community.

Hussain said the police department has a zerotolerance policy towards narcotics. He called on the people to support the police's efforts to create a drug-free society. "We urge citizens to share any information related to drug trafficking or suspicious activities with the nearest police station or by dialling 112," he added.

Youth Responsible

position on India's cultural map.

"The youth festival offers an excellent opportunity to promote our cultural heritage and enhance the cultural awareness of the society," the LG added.

At the UT level, the event serves as a platform for youth from different districts and diverse backgrounds to interact, learn and develop mutual understanding and appreciation of various cultures and talents, he said.

During an interactive session, the youth shared their thoughts on the themes they represent and discussed the role of JK's younger generation in

realising the vision of Viksit Bharat.

"I have full faith in your skills, hard work, and dedication, and I hope that your creative power will help in expediting the process of Vikshit Bharat and building a prosperous Jammu and Kashmir," he said, expressing his confidence in the potential of the region's youth to drive significant of hears.

cant change.
ouching upon the larger picture of India's economic growth, LG Sinha drew attention to the remarkable progress made over the years. "In 1950, our GDP contribution to the global economy was just 4%. Today, it has risen to 15%, and by 2047, we must ensure that our contribution reaches 35%," he said, envisioning a dynamic and globally competitive India by the centenary of its independence.

He added that this vision of a 'Badalta Bharat' (Changing India) could only be realized through the collective efforts of every citizen, with the youth playing a central role in shaping the country's future.

Referring to the objective of the National Youth Festival, the Lieutenant Governor said the glorious event prepares our youth to assume future challenges and responsibilities towards the nation with patriotic feelings.

LG Sinha said, "Jammu Kashmir occupies an important place on the national cultural map. The youth festival will provide an opportunity to make our rich cultural legacy popular and enrich cultural consciousness of the society,"

"At UT level, the event brings youth from different districts and different backgrounds to mingle and learn from each other. This helps in developing better understanding and appreciation of different cultures and talents," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the youth to embrace this special opportunity to display their leadership talent and demonstrate diversity in folk dance, poetry, writing, painting and music.

He asked the youth to achieve excellence in their respective competition and also explore ways to contribute to nation building. "Youth are responsible for writing their own destiny and shaping the future of Jammu Kashmir. Never feel satisfied. Remove the word 'Impossible' from your dictionary and move forward with determination

and confidence," he said.

During the interactive session, the youth spoke about different themes in which they are representing J&K and also shared the role of the younger generation of Jammu Kashmir in realising the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary, Youth Services and Sports Department; Rajinder Singh Tara, Director General, Youth Services and Sports; Jitendra Mishra, Nodal Officer, participating youth and officials accompanying the contingent for National Youth Festival were present on the occasion

High-Speed Trial

project, a top official said on Wednesday.

The remarks by the Northern Circle's Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) Dinesh Chand Deshwal offer a positive indication for an early start to direct rail services between Kashmir and the rest of the country.

However, he said they would analyse the data collected after completion of the two-day statutory inspection later in the day before the Centre might take a decision to start the much-awaited service.

Talking to reporters on reaching Banihal after the successful high-speed trial run from Katra station, Deshwal said his team would return to Katra and all the collected data would be analysed before a decision was taken on the start of direct train services to Kashmir.

"The trial run at 110 kilometres per hour on the 180-degree rising grade in such a challenging geography from Katra to Banihal has written a new chapter in the history of the Railways. The trial run was smooth and filled us with a sense of fulfilment and the credit for it goes to our engineers who have done such great work," the CRS said.

The trial train left Katra station at 10:30 am and reached Banihal station within one-and-a-half hours. The train left for Katra on its return journey at 2 pm and reached its destination at 3:30 pm.

This was the final speed trial run on the trek. Deshwal, who reached Katra on a two-day statutory inspection of the newly completed railway line, said the Centre would take the final decision on the start of services between Kashmir and the rest of the country.

"I am not in a position to talk about it (start of services). The statutory inspection will be completed by this evening and all the gathered data analysed in accordance with guidelines of the Northern Railway," he said.

The CRS said the inspection and the trial run on the trek had been satisfactory so far.

"Our infrastructure is outstanding and very soon a fair decision will be taken based on our report," he added.

On reaching Katra, Deshwal said the speed trial run on the falling gradient from Banihal to Katra was also satisfactory.

"It was fully successful on both sides...the train also passed through T-30 (tunnel-30) at a speed of 110 kmph. This tunnel posed some challenges during the construction process but the engineers overcame the technical solutions and made the track alignment precisely fit for this speed," he said.

Last month, Rail Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced the completion of the Reasi-Katra section, an important development for connecting Kashmir with the rest of the country after nearly three decades of work.

On January 4, a successful trial run of an electric train was conducted on the Katra-Banihal section. The Railways have conducted six trial runs over the past month on various segments of the track, including the two major milestones of the Anji Khad and Chenab bridges.

Of the total 272-kilometre Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, 209 kilometres were commissioned in phases.

Officials said the dream project to link Kashmir by train was started in 1997 and missed several deadlines due to geological, topographical and meteorological challenges.

'Winter-Ready'

the upcoming Katra-Srinagar rail route.

Stationed at Shakurbasti coaching depot in New Delhi, the train has special climate-related features, according to Railways.

Describing its features to mediapersons, Railway officials said that the train has several additional features as compared to the other 136 Vande Bharat Express trains currently running in different parts of the country so that it can meet the operational challenges and passengers' amenities in extreme weather conditions of J&K.

"It has advance heating systems which prevent freezing of water tank and bio-toilet tanks, provide warm air for vacuum system as well as laboratories and ensures air-brake system functions optimally for smooth operations even in subzero temperatures," said Dileep Kumar, Executive Director (Information & Publicity) Railway Board.

He added, "It has embedded heating elements in the windshield so that the driver's front lookout glass gets automatically defrosted ensuring clear visibility in hard winter conditions."

Board officials said that apart from climaterelated features, it has all other amenities that the existing Vande Bharat trains have -- fully air-conditioned coaches, automatic plug doors, mobile

charging sockets etc.

By connecting the Kashmir Valley more effectively to the national railway network, the train is a symbol of India's dedication to bridging geographical and economic gaps, a press statement of the Railways said.

Special ICU Ward

that adequate facilities are in place.
"Our oxygen plant with a capacity of 22,000 LPM is fully functional," Zargar said.

"In addition to the special ward, our hospital has 100 oxygen-supported beds, along with sufficient concentrators and various types of cylinders" he added

First identified in 2001 but known to circulate since the 1970s, human metapneumovirus is a common respiratory virus that causes mild cold-like symptoms.

Health experts have highlighted its potential impact on children and older adults, urging vigilance for the warning signs.

While a few HMPV cases have been reported from Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat, health experts maintain the situation remains under control, calling for calm and awareness among the public.

politic Res leader with the public.

No Need To

machinery is fully geared up to deal with any situation," a health department officer said.

Doctors have emphasized that HMPV is not a new pathogen and is not causing a widespread outbreak.

"This is a mild upper respiratory HMPV disease. Six cases have been detected so far in the South. There is no need to panic," Gandhinagar Hospital Medical Superintendent Dr Hamid Zargar told PTI.

The administration has convened high-level meetings to review the situation, enhance readiness and ensure adequate facilities are in place, he said.

"A meeting chaired by the secretary took place in the civil secretariat yesterday. They stressed us to remain fully prepared. We are fully prepared" Dr Zargar said.

"Our oxygen plant, with a capacity of 22,000 LPM, is fully functional. God forbid if a pandemic occurs, we have kept one special medical ICU ward here (ready) to handle the situation" he said.

ward here (ready) to handle the situation" he said. He said eight beds have been set up, supported by ventilators and a 24x7 oxygen supply. "The ward is centrally heated, and all necessary preparations have been made."

Dr Mudasir, a Pulmonologist, said that there is no need to panic about the HMPV, but the people must remain cautious.

He said that HMPV has been in the community for decades and around 10 percent of the elders being admitted in the hospitals have this virus, so it is a part of community infection.

Usually illness due to HMPV remains mild and there is no specific treatment and vaccine for the virus as most of the patients don't need any treatment.

He said that symptoms of HMPV are running nose, cough, fever, wheezing and shortness of breath. He said that the people must avoid visiting crowded places, especially hospitals.

Dr Khursheed Ahmad said that HMPV is spread through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or through direct contact with contaminated surfaces.

"The virus primarily attacks the respiratory epithelium, leading to inflammation and respiratory distress," he said, adding that young children, elderly, immunocompromised individuals and people with pre-existing conditions like chronic respiratory or cardiovascular diseases are more vulnerable.

He said that severe complications that are rare include bronchiolitis, Pneumonia and exacerbation of Asthma or COPD that requires hospitalization.

Doctors said that preventive measures including hygiene practices, stay away from individuals showing symptoms of respiratory infections, clean frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, toys, and electronic devices, wear a mask in crowded or high-risk areas, especially during respiratory virus outbreaks, maintain a healthy diet, exercise regularly, and get adequate sleep can reduce the risk of infection.

Meanwhile, a top health official told KNO that Jammu and Kashmir Health department has intensified efforts to meet any eventuality to address the situation in case of rising cases of Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV).

He said that as a precautionary measure, the isolation wards are being set up across J&K to ensure preparedness and swift action.

"Our hospitals are adequately equipped with oxygen plants, intensive care units, and oxygen concentrators to manage any emergency," officials said, adding that no HMPV cases have been reported in Jammu and Kashmir so far but the department is prepared to meet any emergency.

Veteran Political

senior Shia leader Aga Syed Hassan into the Hurriyat Conference.

Initially, Bhutto began his career as a papier-mâché artist before being influenced by the political happenings around him.

in abject poverty and remained part of a joint family system with eight brothers. He is survived by his son, Hakim Muneer. Bhutto's demise comes only two weeks after the loss of his son, Hakim Bashir Asim, a noted

poet and nouha writer. Asim's work resonated

According to his younger brother, Bhutto lived

with themes of devotion and spirituality, earning respect on both local and national platforms.

"He lived his life in abject poverty but did not compromise on his principles. What he said on the first day of his political career, he stood by that until his last breath. He will be remembered for his politics of truth and courage," his brother

told Kashmir Observer over the phone.
Political activist Syed Salim Gilani paid tribute
to Bhutto, describing him as "a political philosopher with immense love for the land of Kashmir,
a person of thought and knowledge, and a very

good and friendly individual."

He added, "Hakim Muhammad Yousuf alias Muhammad Yousuf Bhutto has reached his destination today. His voice, which spoke for hours on the politics of Kashmir and the Kashmir conflict, has now fallen silent. Just days ago, he suffered the loss of his son. May Allah Almighty grant this dervish man Paradise and give patience to the Hakim family."

Senior journalist Imdad Saqi also paid homage to Bhutto, saying, "Bhutto was a legendary politician and a living testimony of Kashmir's past. He spent his entire life with honesty and boldness. Above all, he was a beloved and sociable person, embodying humility and friendship."

Saqi recalled, "Until recently, before being bedridden, he would visit my home daily without fail, discussing current affairs and reminiscing about the past. Even until his last breath, his conversations revolved around social and political events. Just a few days ago, I visited him to inquire about his health. Even then, the plight of the nation was his primary concern. Those moments have been

etched in my memory." Be Respectful

mandate given to the National Conference by the people.

"The BJP's strategy is disrespectful to the democratic aspirations of the people of J&K. It undermines their mandate and seeks to weaken their political voice further," he remarked.

Responding to a question, Ruhullah advised NC leader Omar Abdullah to remain closely aligned with the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasized the heavy mandate the NC has received and urged the Chief Minister to respect and uphold it.

"Omar Abdullah must stay connected with the people's aspirations. If he distances himself from their expectations, he risks being seen as a representative of Delhi rather than the leader of Jammu and Kashmir," Ruhullah warned.

He further stressed that the government of India must respect the overwhelming mandate given to the NC, warning that any disregard could be disastrous for the broader idea of India.

Ruhullah also voiced concerns about the future direction of governance in Jammu and Kashmir, suggesting that the BJP is not inclined to meet public expectations. He said Omar Abdullah's leadership would be judged by his efforts to restore statehood and Article 370.

"The people fear that their expectations will not be met. Omar Abdullah must lead the struggle for statehood and the restoration of Article 370, or risk being perceived as a proxy for Delhi," he said. (KNT)

Mortgaging Property

proposed to be purchased by the Society from its land owners for the development of the township.

Mir, one of the petitioners said that he approached the Jammu and Kashmir State Cooperative for grant of financial assistance by way of loan of Rs. 300 crores in favour of the Society for enabling it to acquire the identified land from its owners and its subsequent development for establishment of the satellite township.

The Bank after considering the financial viability of the project and financial interests of the Bank, agreed to finance the project to the extent of Rs. 250 crores and subsequently in the first instance, the Bank released an amount of Rs. 223 crores as loan and directly transferred the same in the accounts of 18 land owners against the land in question measuring 257 Kanal and 18 Marlas in

estate Shivpora, the petitioners said.

The land owners consequently executed an irrevocable power of attorney in favour of Mir in order to facilitate the transfer of the land in the name of the Society.

Subsequently, they said, a "frivolous" investigation was initiated in the matter by the Anti Corruption Bureau after registering FIR No. 4/2020 for commission of offences punishable under Sections 120-B, 420, 467, 471 RPC read with Section 5(2) of J&K Prevention of Corruption Act, wherein the crux of the allegations against the petitioners-Mir and Hajam and other co-accused therein the FIR was that the they had falsely claimed that the Society was a registered Society and succeeded in obtaining a loan of Rs. 250 crores from the Bank on false premise while alleging further that the loan had been sanctioned by the Bank illegally and fraudulently without following the Standard Operating Procedure, proper documentation, KYC norms and also without obtaining tangible security with further allegation that the whole exercise had been undertaken by the petitioners at the behest and instance of the then Chairman of the Bank, namely, Mohammad Shafi Dar, who sought quashment of proceedings

in a separate petition. Meanwhile ACB filed chargesheet against the

petitioners along with the other accused persons. "It is pertinent to mention here and as has been noticed in the preceding paras as well, that during the course of investigation, land in question as also the Bank accounts of 18 land owners, in whose accounts the loan amount had been directly transferred/credited by the Bank were attached to prevent the land owners from withdrawing the money so transferred/credited," the court said, adding, "the said attachment of the Bank accounts of the land owners became subject matter of the litigation before the Apex Court, wherein the Apex Court passed orders to facilitate the land owners the withdrawal of the said money, having been deposited/credited in their accounts in lieu of the land having been perpetually leased out in

favour of the Society."

Having regard to the position obtaining in the matter, the court said, the alleged offence manifestly has not resulted in any "proceed of crime"

in favour of the petitioners (Mir and Hajam).

"A-fortiori, it cannot be said that the petitioners have indulged in any activity connected with the "proceeds of crime" for unless there are "proceeds of crime", there cannot be any activity about the "proceeds of crime", in that, existence of "proceeds of crime" pursuant to the predicate offence is sine qua non for commission of offence of money-laundering, to be precise that if there is no money or property, a question of money-laun-

dering would not arise," the court said.

Admittedly, the court said, no money was transferred to the accounts of the petitioners, therefore, there was no occasion for the petitioners to indulge in any activity associated with the so called "proceeds of crime" as the money that has been released out of the sanctioned loan, which is described as the "proceeds of crime" in the complaint, had admittedly been transferred/credited directly into the accounts of the land owners and the petitioners had never been in possession or control of the said money, which is alleged to have been laundered.

"As has been pointed out earlier, in order to constitute the offence of money-laundering, it is imperative that one should be first in possession of the "proceeds of crime" and then engage in an activity to project it as untainted property, which however, is missing in the instant case," the court said, adding, "In the instant case, "proceeds of crime" in favour of the petitioners would have arisen only had the petitioners developed the plots in the colony and sold them to earn profit in the process, in that, the said profits would have been the "proceeds of crime" and any activity related to such profits may have resulted in money-laundering, which stage in the instant case has not reached."

Thus, the court said, none of the ingredients of the offence of money-laundering against the petitioners is found to be existing in the present case. "...more so in view of the fact that an act of mortgaging the property with the Bank for securing the loan that is said to have been obtained fraudulently without following Banking rules and regulations cannot by any stretch of imagination be termed as money-laundering and that the act of the petitioners herein of having fraudulently secured loan for development and establishment of satellite township by submitting false documents, at the most makes out a case for forgery or Bank fraud," the court said and quashed the complaint filed as regards the petitioners by the Enforcement Directorate before designated court.

Champions Trophy Squad: Will Rahul, Shami & Jadeja Make It?

Press Trust of India

SYDNEY: Out-of-form veterans Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli will continue to form the batting core of India's ODI squad but there are at least three senior players whose future in the 50-over format could be debated when the selectors gather this weekend to pick the squad for the Champions Trophy.

KL Rahul, Mohammed Shami and Ravindra Jadeja's presence in the side is not a surety for the event starting February 19 even though they were a part of last year's World Cup. Since the final, India have

Since the final, India have played six ODIs and while Shami and Jadeja were rested, Rahul was included for both the away bilateral engagements against South Africa and Sri Lanka.

Against Sri Lanka, however, he was dropped in the middle of the series after failing to get going in the middle overs.



The world is also yet to forget how his sedate half century after using up 100-plus deliveries became a prime reason for India's loss on November 19, 2023 against Australia.

It is understood that Yashasvi Jaiswal has a very bright chance of making it to the ODI squad. His inclusion would ensure a lefthanded batter in the top four. But if Rishabh Pant is the

first-choice wicketkeeper, then would there be any point in having Rahul as the back-up? And if Rahul is not keeping, his place as a batter is not guaranteed.

Among his closest com-

petitors, Ishan Kishan hasn't scored enough runs in the Vijay Hazare Trophy while Sanju Samson hasn't been picked by Kerala after he missed the initial games.

If coach Gautam Gambhir still has his say in selection matters like he did till the disastrous

J&K Thang-Ta Team Shines At

Australia tour, then Samson, one of his personal favourites, will surely make the cut.

India will play all their Champions Trophy games in Dubai, starting with the clash against Bangladesh on February 20. This was after the team refused to travel to original hosts Pakistan citing security concerns.

Coming to Mohammed Shami, the veteran pacer's communication with the team management and the selection committee on his fitness status didn't seem to have the required clarity.

However, he has bowled eight overs each in the last two Vijay Hazare Trophy games and in case Jasprit Bumrah fails to make it due to back spasms, Shami's experience will become crucial for the side.

Hardik Pandya is the seam bowling all-rounder and it will be interesting to see if Nitish Reddy will be considered.

J&K Bank Wins 7-0 In Christmas Gold Cup

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: J&K Bank XI registered a thumping 7-0 win on Wednesday in the 18th Christmas Gold Cup Football Tournament 2024-25 at Mini Stadium Parade Ground in Jammu.

The tournament is being organised by All J&K Sports & Cultural Welfare Association in collaboration with J&K Sports Council and J&K Football Association.

J&K Bank played the quarter-final match against City Club Udhampur.

Captain Aakif Reshi put in a brilliant performance, scoring a hat trick in the first half of the game. Aakif netted in



the 8th, 21st and 28th minute, while Farhan scored in the 14th minute. Furqan Nabi made 5-0 in 29th minute.

In the second half, Adnan Ayoub scored in 65th minute, while Prem Kumar made it 7-0 in the 89th.

The chief guest on the ocas-

National Championship

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The J&K Thang-Ta team secured a second-place finish in the 30th Sub-Junior and Senior National Thang-Ta Championship 2024-25, held in Haridwar, Uttarakhand, from January 4 to 6. Competing against 26 states from across the country, the J&K team showcased an exceptional performance, earning an impressive tally of 20 gold, 20 silver and 22 bronze medals. Manipur clinched first

place, while Assam secured third.

In a special moment of recognit

In a special moment of recognition, Ayjaz Ahmad Bhat was awarded the "Best Coach of the Year" title by the President of the World Thang-Ta Federation.

Speaking on the achievement, Satish Sharma, Minister of Youth Services and Sports, J&K, extended his heartfelt congratulations to the team. Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, also lauded the athletes and coaching staff.

Royal Enfield Ice Hockey League S2: Lamos Enters Semis

sion was Yousuf Dar, former

international football player

who also played for the erst-

while SRTC. He was accom-

panied by Ramesh Chander

(International Player), Rakesh

Kumar (International Player),

S. Satpal Singh (Manager Pa-

rade Ground), among others.

Observer News Service

LEH: Tsewang Chuskit's sensational five-goal performance propelled Changla Lamos to a 6-0 victory over Humas Queens, earning them a place in the semi-finals of the women's category in the Royal Enfield Ice Hockey League Season 2 on Wednesday.

In the men's category, Purig Warriors continued their impressive run, registering a 4-2 win over Zangskar Chadar Tamers for their second victory of the season. In another game, United Nubra and Chiktan Royals played an intense

The day ended with another dramatic draw, as defending

champions Kang Sings and Humas Warriors shared points in a 2-2 stalemate.

The Royal Enfield Ice Hockey League Season 2 is being organised in partnership with the UT Administration of Ladakh and Ice Hockey Association of Ladakh at the Nawang Dorjay Stobdan Stadium in Leh.



Short TAKES

Bumrah Continues To Remain No. 1 In Test Rankings

India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah continued to reign supreme at the top of the bowlers' chart with a career-best rating of 908 in the latest ICC Test Rankings released on Wednesday.

Bumrah, who made history ahead of the fifth and final Test against Australia by recording the highest-ever ICC Rankings rating for an Indian bowler at 907 points, improved that tally by one point after taking two wickets in the first innings at the SCG.

However, a back spasm ruled him out of bowling in the second innings, restricting his role to just batting. Left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja, who climbed a spot to be joint-ninth, is the other Indian giving Bum-

rah company in the top-10.

He shares the ninth spot with Australian pacer Scott Boland, who has made a remarkable leap of 29 places to break into the top 10.

Boland's stellar performance in the Sydney Test, where he claimed a 10-wicket haul (4/31 and 6/45), proved too much for the Indian batters on a lively pitch. His efforts were instrumental in Australia's triumph, ending a decade-long wait to reclaim the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

PCB Shifts ODI Tri-Series To Karachi, Lahore; Dismisses Delay

The Pakistan Cricket Board on Wednesday moved the ODI tri-series, also involving South Africa and New Zealand, from Multan to Karachi and Lahore, dismissing the talks about a delay in renovation work at those venues ahead of next month's Champions Trophy.

The triangular series is a curtain raiser to the ICC showpiece which begins from February 19 in Karachi.

The PCB said preparations for the Champions Trophy are in full swing with the renovation work at Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore and the National Bank Stadium in Karachi set to be completed before or around the deadlines.

After the upgrades, spectator capacity at the Gaddafi Stadium has been increased to 35,000, with new chairs installed throughout the venue.

Additionally, 480 state-of-the-art LED lights have been installed to enhance broadcast LUX levels, ensuring superior viewing quality for fans worldwide.

The PCB has also constructed brand-new players'

and officials' hospitality enclosure.

The renovated stadium is set to be inaugurated in the last week of January.

NZ Batter Martin Guptill Retires From International Cricket

New Zealand batter Martin Guptill on Wednesday announced his retirement from international cricket, though the 38-year-old will continue to play in the T20 leagues around the world.

Currently, Guptill, who last played for New Zealand in 2022, is leading the Auckland Aces in this season's Super Smash. "As a young kid it was always my dream to play for New Zealand and I feel incredibly lucky and proud to have played 367 games for my country," Guptill said in a statement issued by the New Zealand Cricket. "I will forever cherish the memories made wearing the silver fern alongside a great group of guys," he added.

Guptill has played 47 Tests but the white ball format was his calling card. He scored 7346 runs from 198 matches with 18 hundreds and 39 fifties.

The right-hander also appeared in 122 T20I for the Blackcaps, making 3531 runs with two hundreds and 20 fifting.

KASHMIR OF PUBLICATION KASHMIR OBSERVER®

The methods used to consume news have changed over time from newspapers, to television, to the Internet on our computers to carrying the news around with us 24/7 on smartphones in our pockets.

Kashmir Observer, with 28 years of experience in news gathering is now available 24x7 on all digital platforms like laptops, cell phones or via Bluetooth on your smart TV's across the world.

Kashmir Observer is a one stop information bank for you. Watch live debates, talk shows and documentaries on critical issues facing Kashmir on KO youtube channel.

VISIT

https://www.youtube.com/c/kobserver

OR SCAN



OUR SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

THE OTHER SIDE



VOX POP

UNRAVEL KASHMIR