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BOOK
APPOINTMENT

Digital Fraud, Deepfakes Serious Challenges: President

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: President Droupadi Murmu on Friday said digital fraud, cybercrime and emerging technologies such as deep fakes pose challenge to India's social, economic, and national security.

Addressing both the Houses of Parliament assembled together in the Lok Sabha chamber, Murmu said the government has taken numerous measures to control these cyber threats, creating opportunities for employment in the field of cybersecurity for the youth.

"Digital fraud, cybercrime, and emerging technologies like deepfakes pose challenges to our social, economic, and national security," the President said.

"My government is continuously working to ensure competence in cybersecurity. As a result of these efforts, India has achieved tier-1 status in the Global Cybersecurity Index," she said.

Murmu said the government has emphasised e-governance to minimise government



interference in people's daily lives.

"For instance, DigiLocker has enabled individuals to access and display their important documents anytime, anywhere. However, in an increasingly digital society, cybersecurity has become a crucial issue of national importance," she said.

Furthermore, she spoke on the Waqf Bill, which seeks to introduce greater transparency and efficiency in the management of Waqf properties, ensuring better governance of these religious endowments.

'Train To Kashmir A Milestone'

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday said the people of Jammu and Kashmir deserve commendation as both assembly and Lok Sabha elections were held peacefully in the union territory after a conducive environment was created following the abrogation of Article 370.

Addressing a | More on P6



DIGITAL FRAUD, CYBERCRIME, AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES like deepfakes pose challenges to our social, economic, and national security."

2 Shot Dead Along LOC

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Two infiltrators were killed on Line of Control in Poonch sector on Friday.

"Alert troops scuttled their attempt to infiltrate from across the Line of Control in Poonch district," officials said on Friday.

"The incident took place in the Khari Karmara area of Poonch district on Thursday (January 30, 2025) and a massive search operation was under," they said.

"Terrorist movement was detected last

SC Notice To Centre, BCI On Plea For Bar Council In J&K

Press Trust of India

New Delhi- The Supreme Court on Friday sought responses from the Centre, the Bar Council of India and others on a PIL seeking a bar council in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

A bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta took note of the submissions of senior advocate Javid Shaikh, appearing for the Kashmir Advocates Association, and issued



notices to the Centre, the BCI and the Registrar General of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

A state bar council is a statutory body that regulates enrolment of law graduates as lawyers and the practice of law in a state.

The senior lawyer, assisted by advocate Adil Muneer Andrabi, stressed on the need for a bar council in Jammu and Kashmir and sought an interim relief underlining the necessity of government- | More on P6

Forest Fire Triggers Landmine Blasts Along LoC

Observer News Service

Jammu- Several landmines, part of an anti-infiltration obstacle system, exploded due to forest fire at two separate places along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district on Friday, officials said.

The fire broke out in Dhari Dabsi forest in Mendhar and Sona Gali in Mankote sectors this afternoon, causing over half-a-dozen landmine blasts, the officials said.

The forward areas along the LoC are dotted | More on P6

Online Gambling Pushes Many Kashmir Families Into Financial Ruin

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar: Online gambling has become a growing menace in Kashmir, driving several families into severe financial distress and emotional turmoil. The easy accessibility of online betting platforms has lured many, particularly youth, with the illusion of quick financial gains. However, this often results in heavy monetary losses, debt and psychological suffering.

According to details, a youth from south Kashmir initially won Rs 10,000 in online betting



within a few days. Encouraged by this, he borrowed lakhs of rupees from neighbours and relatives, promising to repay them double within days. However, when he invested lakhs into the game, he lost

everything and went missing for several days. His family had to step in and clear his massive debts to bring him back home.

Another young gambler shared his ordeal, narrating how he initially won Rs 10 lakh, which fueled his addiction. However, as he continued playing, he not only lost his winnings but also an additional Rs 5 lakh.

"I understood too late that even if one wins in gambling, they ultimately lose. It has ruined me and my family. I suffered massive business losses due to online | More on P6

Dark Nights Ahead As Kashmir's Hydel Power Generation Falls by 76 %

Agencies

Srinagar: Owing to the low water level, the Power Development Department (PDD) is currently able to produce only 24 Megawatts (MWs) of electricity against the total capacity of around 250 MWs from the power plants in Kashmir region.

Quoting an unnamed senior official of the Power Development Corporation (JKSPDC) Kashmir News Observer reported that "From Kashmir power plants, we have a power generation capacity of around 250 MW out of which currently, we are



producing only around 60 MW power."

"In view of low water availability, we are able to produce only 40 MW of power from lower Jhelum in the night hours and 5 MW during the other hours and 15 MW at Kangan," the official said.

The official further said that from the power plants in Kangan, water was available for only one machine which has a power producing capacity of 150 MW. As of now we are able to produce only around 15 MW of power from Kangan.

"As of now we are reserving

the water to generate power during the peak hours. This is the routine power generation but in upcoming month, we are expecting increase in power generation," he said.

The official further said, "We are in the middle of lean season and this year it started earlier in comparison to previous years."

There is a total power generation capacity of around 1200 MW from the power projects of Jammu and Kashmir and 2250 MW from NHPC.

Pertinently, Jammu and Kashmir was facing power generation shortage of nearly 80 % in | More on P6

LG Summons J&K Assembly on March 3



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has summoned the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly to meet in Jammu on March 3, 2025.

The order issued by Legislative Assembly Secretariat reads, "I, Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, in exercise of the powers conferred upon me under Section 18(1) of the Jammu | More on P6

Higher Reaches Receive Snowfall, Rains Lash Plains

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The higher reaches of Kashmir Valley once again received light snowfall while the rains lashed plains on Friday, bringing down the mercury in the Valley.

Light snowfall was experienced in the higher reaches of Gurez valley, Sonamarg, Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, Sinthan Top, Pir ki Gali and other areas.

In Gurez, 4 inches of snowfall was recorded till this evening while 8 inches of snowfall was recorded in Sonamarg. 3 inches of snowfall accumulated in Sinthan Top and Pir ki Gali also, shared Aadil Maqbool, an Independent Weather

Forecaster.

Reports of light snow were also received from DK Marg, Noorabad Kulgam and Baltal Pahalgam. It was snowing at Gulmarg and other parts when the report was last filed.

Moreover, the plains of Kashmir including Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, were lashed by the rains today, bringing down the mercury across Kashmir. Below normal temperature was recorded at Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Qazigund and Kokernag stations.

According to the Director Meteorological department, there is a forecast of more snow in the next 24 hours, saying that light rain and | More on P6

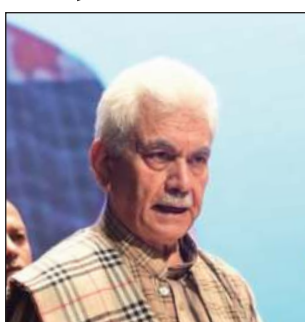
Very Few Regions Possess Youth Power Like J&K: LG

Observer News Service

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday termed the National Cadet Corps (NCC) as one of the finest organizations for young people globally, emphasizing that very few regions in the country possess the youth power that Jammu and Kashmir does.

Interacting with NCC cadets who returned from the Republic Day Camp in New Delhi, LG Sinha said, "NCC is a unique organization that instills discipline, patriotism, and leadership qualities among youth. There is no other organization in the world like the NCC for young people."

Acknowledging the dedication and contributions of the



NCC cadets towards the society, he said, "NCC cadets have always come forward to help people in times of disaster, demonstrating their discipline and commitment."

Encouraging the cadets, the LG noted their eagerness to learn and develop new skills. He reiterated | More on P6

UNION BUDGET 2025

Kashmir Citizens, Traders Share Expectations

Saliq Manzoor

Srinagar: As Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman prepares to present the Union Budget on February 1, 2025, the people of Kashmir eagerly await measures that address their unique challenges and aspirations. Citizens, traders, and entrepreneurs are hopeful for specific allocations and policy changes to promote economic growth, infrastructure development, and employment generation.

Javid Ahmad, a resident of Ganderbal, emphasized the need for significant funds for Jammu and Kashmir. "There are many unresolved issues, with several major projects pending. The government should



address the concerns of daily wagers and unemployed SPOs by releasing special funds. We urge the central government to allocate sufficient funds so that Jammu and Kashmir can progress at the grassroots level," he said.

Manzoor Ahmad, a youth

from Ganderbal, expressed hope for special scholarships for the youth. "The budget should be designed in a way that benefits the middle class and unemployed youth," he said.

Businessman Bashir Ahmad highlighted the need for government intervention to revive

the struggling trade sector. "The government must focus on trade and bring it back on track as it once was. We are unable to pay bank EMIs, school fees, or make payments to our dealers. We hope the central government will announce a special package for businessmen. We want development, increased tourism, and more visitors to Kashmir," he added.

Bilal Ahmad from Ganderbal said, "The common people look at food prices and daily essentials every year when the budget is announced. We are hoping for relief in terms of tax benefits, subsidies, healthcare, education, and infrastructure. The government should consider the issues faced by common people | More on P6

Working On Early Visit Of PM Modi To US: MEA

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: India on Friday said it is working with the US on an "early" visit to Washington by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to further deepen the comprehensive global strategic partnership between the two countries.

Following a phone conversation with Modi this week, US President Donald Trump said the Indian prime minister "is going to be coming to the White House, over next month, probably February".

It would be Modi's first bilateral visit to Washington after Trump became US president for a second term.

While confirming discussions between India and the US on the proposed visit, | More on P6



Muscle Fat Can Increase Risk Of Heart Disease, Regardless Of BMI: Study

Press Trust Of India

Fat stored in muscles can damage blood vessels and increase risk of hospitalisation or death due to heart disease, regardless of body mass index, according to a new study. Researchers, led by those at Brigham and Women's Hospital, US, found that every one per cent increase in muscle fat was associated with an increase of two per cent in risk of coronary microvascular dysfunction -- when small blood vessels of heart malfunction -- and that of seven per cent for serious heart disease, irrespective of known risk factors.



The findings, published in the European Heart Journal, added evidence that existing measures, such as body mass index or waist circumference, are not adequate to evaluate the risk of heart disease accurately for all people.

"Obesity is now one of the biggest global threats to cardiovascular health, yet body mass index -- our main metric for defining obesity and thresholds for intervention -- remains a controversial and flawed marker of cardiovascular prognosis. This is especially true in women, where high body mass index may reflect more 'benign' types of fat," lead researcher Viviany Taqueti, a director at Brigham and Women's Hospital, said. She explained that compared to subcutaneous

“Intermuscular fat (hidden inside muscles) can be found in most muscles in the body, but the amount of fat can vary widely between different people

ous fat (stored beneath the skin), fat stored in muscles can contribute to inflammation and altered glucose metabolism, potentially leading to insulin resistance and metabolic syndrome.

These "chronic insults" can then damage blood vessels, including those supplying the heart, the researcher said. "Intermuscular fat (hidden inside muscles) can be found in most muscles in the body,

but the amount of fat can vary widely between different people," Taqueti said. However, it is not yet known how the risk of heart disease could be lowered in people having fatty muscles, she said. For the study, nearly 670 people with no evidence of obstructive coronary artery disease were examined. They were being evaluated at the hospital for chest pain and shortness of breath. Most were women, and about half of the study group were non-white.

The researchers calculated fat stored in muscles through the ratio of intermuscular fat to total muscle plus fat, and termed it 'fatty muscle fraction'. Positron emission tomography (PET) and CT scans were taken to assess each individual's body composition, measuring the amounts and location of fat and muscle in a section of torso, and see how well their heart was functioning. The patients were followed up for about six years. "Increased intermuscular fat is associated with (coronary microvascular dysfunction) and adverse cardiovascular outcomes independently of BMI and conventional risk factors," the authors wrote.

"What we don't know yet is how we can lower the risk for people with fatty muscles. For example, we don't know how treatments such as new weight-loss therapies affect fat in the muscles relative to fat elsewhere in the body, lean tissue, and

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN.

Sub. Application of Rehana Rasheed, Muskaan Rasheed D/o Abdul Rasheed Chopan R/o Mamoosa Tehsil Pattan for obtaining OBC certificate in favour of self.

Public Notice

IT is inform to general public that applicants OBC certificates are under process in this office in this matter report was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that applicant's are residing in village Mamoosa with her father and belongs to Chopan caste the monthly income of applicant family is Rs 8000 and family members are as under.

- 1 Abdul Rasheed Chopan s/o Mohd Subhan 46y Labour
- 2 Haseena Begum w/o Abdul Rasheed Chopan 45y H/work
- 3 Rehana Rasheed D/o Abdul Rasheed Chopan 20y student
- 4 Muskaan Rasheed D/o Abdul Rasheed Chopan 18y student
- 5 Quratul Qulab D/o Abdul Rasheed Chopan 17y student.
- 6 Asar Ahmad s/o Abdul Rasheed Chopan 08 student

In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 03 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

fko SD Naib Tehsildar Pattan

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of "D Class" Contractor Card. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the R&B Baramulla within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Showket Ahmad Mir fko
 S/O Mohammad Yousif Mir
 R/O Usan Khai Baramulla Pattan

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of Pesticide Licence under name and style 'Alpine Ago chemicals' Situated at Seer Jagir Sopore. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the plant protection officer Lal Mandi Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

IRSHAD AHMAD MIR fko
 S/O MOHAMMAD YOUSUF MIR
 R/O SEER JAGIR SOPORE

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am Applying for the registration of my tour and travels agency under the name and style of Meadows and glacier travels at kunzer bonagam baramulla. Anybody having any objection may file the same to asstt director tourism gulmarg within 14 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained after that

Name:- Rakiya hameed fko
 Daughter of: Abdul Hameed Rather
 R/o : Bongam
 Tehsil: karhama

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas I Mohammad Umar Bhat S/o Ghulam Mohammad Bhat R/o Wanigam Payeen Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla intends to apply in the department of tourism for registration of my proposed travel unit under name and style of Luxury Travels Network agency situated at Pattan under tourist trade act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas I will submit state domicile, qualification, pan card, experience (min 5yrs) character (police verification) back statement (10000) site plan, affidavit, rent deed, daily attested by sub registrar printing material (letter head visiting card), photograph of the unit (indoor & outdoor) and 2 passport size photograph of the department of tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency. Now as per J&K registration of tourist trade act 1978/82/2011/12 before my case is processed for registration by the competent authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/financial institutions/bank organization etc. For objection, if any and the same should reach to the assistant Director tourism Gulmarg registration (email id info@luxury-travels.com) within a period of 15 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 15 days shall be entertained.

fko

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN.

Sub . Application of Sabreena Ahad , Nuzhat Ahad D/o Abdul Ahad Chopan R/o Mamoosa for obtaining OBC certificate in favour of self.

Public Notice

It is inform to general public that applicants OBC certificates are under process in this office in this matter report was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that applicant's are residing in village Mamoosa with her father and belongs to Chopan caste. Monthly income of applicant family is 8000 and family members are as under.

- 1Abdul Ahad Chopan s/o Subhan Chopan 47y Labour
- 2 Shakeela Begum w/o Abdul Ahad Chopan 46y H/work.
- 3 Asifa Ahad D/o Abdul Ahad Chopan 25y H/work
- 4 Nuzhat Ahad D/o Abdul Ahad Chopan 21y Student
- 5 Sabreena Ahad D/o Abdul Ahad Chopan 18 student
- 6 Sahil Ahad s/o Abdul Ahad Chopan 13y student
- 7 Farzi Begum w/o Subhan Chopan 63y old aged
- 8 Bashir Ahmad Chopan s/o Abdul Ahad Chopan 28y Labour.

In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 03 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

fko SD Naib Tehsildar Pattan

'Diabetes Drugs Lower Heart Disease Risk, Raise Gastro, Arthritic Disorders'

Press Trust Of India

Commonly used diabetes drugs could lower the risk of cardiometabolic conditions but heighten the risk of gastrointestinal and arthritic ones, hypotension, among others, according to a study. Researchers from Washington University in St. Louis analysed data from the US Department of Veterans Affairs to examine links between taking 'GLP-1RA' drugs and 175 health outcomes. Data from 2.4 million participants with diabetes were analysed.



GLP-1RA, or glucagon-like peptide 1 receptor agonists, are drugs that work by mimicking the action of the hormone GLP-1 that helps control blood sugar and promote feelings of satiety. Through weight management, the drugs can also treat type 2 diabetes. While the GLP-1RA class of drugs have become popular for weight loss, their effectiveness is also being evaluated for a wider range of conditions, including Alzheimer's disease, osteoarthritis and sleep apnea, the researchers said.

However, previous studies have reported adverse effects of these drugs, such as thoughts of committing suicide and gastrointestinal complications. In this study, published in the journal Nature Medicine, about half of the 2.4 million participants continued the use of non-GLP-1RA drugs, such as sulfonylureas and SGLT2 inhibitors, while the rest were initiated with GLP-1RA.

“However, previous studies have reported adverse effects of these drugs, such as thoughts of committing suicide and gastrointestinal complications.

The authors found the anti-obesity drugs to be associated with a decreased risk for 42 health outcomes and an increased risk of 19. "Compared to usual care, GLP-1RA use was associated with a reduced risk of substance use and psychotic disorders, seizures, neurocognitive disorders (including Alzheimer's disease and dementia), coagulation disorders, cardiometabolic disorders, infectious illnesses and several respiratory conditions," the authors wrote.

"There was an increased risk of gastrointestinal disorders, hypotension, syncope (low blood pressure), arthritic disorders, nephrolithiasis, interstitial nephritis and drug-induced pancreatitis associated with GLP-1RA use compared to usual care," they wrote. The findings could help describe the broad health effects of GLP-1RAs, the authors said but added that further research is needed to confirm results in other cohorts, including more diverse ones.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my son in his adhaar cards has been wrongly written as Aanis Shabir While his correct name is Mohammad Manan Reshi which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Shabir Ahmad Reshi fko
 F/o Mohammad Manan Reshi
 R/o Reshipora Tehsil Zainapora

NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC THE JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

CERTIFICATES-KD, NEW CAMPUS BEMINA SRINAGAR

ATTENTION PLEASE

I have passed /appeared in SSE/HSE-I/HSE-II (Class 11th/12th) under Roll Nos. 217004265 / 317016089 Session Annual 2021 / 2023. Through the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed by the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education against my Marks Cards 11th & 12th as MOHAMMAD MUJTABA BHAT instead MOHAMMAD MUJTABA BHAT.



Now I have applied for correction / rectification of error in the Jammu & Kashmir board of School Education, New campus Bemina, Srinagar. If any person has any objection in this regard may file the same in the office of the Deputy Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period, no objection will be entertained.

This is published for the information of the general public. The Correct particulars be recorded as under:

Name: MOHAMMAD MUJTABA BHAT, fmo
 Fathers Name: RIYAZ AHMAD BHAT,
 Mothers Name, HASEENA
 Date of Birth: 28-06-2003,
 Residence:- Ichigam Budgam.
 Mobile No: 9906410976 mcb

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FOR ANY QUERY, CALL CIRCULATION DEPTT. : 0194-2502327

Rodents Found In Street Food Oil At Hazratbal

Agencies

Srinagar: Rodents were found in oil used for street food on the auspicious occasion of Friday following Mehraj-ul-Alam (SAW) at Dargah Hazratbal in Srinagar, while officials took action against violators.

A video showing rodents in oil used for street food, commonly known as Monji Gool, has gone viral on social media, raising concerns about unhygienic food.

Soon after the video surfaced, the Food and Safety Department rushed to the spot and challaned the street vendor.

An official from the Food and Safety Department, while speaking to media persons said, "We were already inspecting the area and directing vendors to maintain hygienic food and



We warn all those who do not maintain hygiene and request everyone to ensure proper hygiene

proper maintenance."

"But unfortunately, today, a video went viral showing rodents in street food oil. We reached the spot and challaned the vendor. Additionally, three more violators among street vendors were challaned, and strict action will follow," he said.

"We warn all those who do not maintain hygiene and request everyone to ensure proper hygiene," the official added. (JKNS)



Friday Following Meraj-Ul-Alam Nearly One Lakh Devotees Converge At Hazratbal

Agencies

Srinagar: Nearly one lakh devotees from different parts of the Valley converged at the Dargah Hazratbal shrine on Friday following Meraj-ul-Aalam (PBUH) to participate in the special prayers.

The congregation reflected deep-rooted faith and devotion of the people, who thronged the shrine to seek blessings.

According to the details, from early hours of the morning, men, women and elderly devotees in large numbers made their way to the shrine.

As the holy relic, believed to be of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), was displayed after the Friday prayers, the atmosphere turned emotional, with people breaking into tears. "The air was filled with hues and cries, as many raised their hands in supplication, overwhelmed by the moment of divine connection."

Among the crowd was Ghulam Ahmad, an elderly devotee from Baramulla, who while wiping his tears, said this is a

blessed occasion, and coming here fills my heart with immense peace. Seeing the holy relic is a spiritual experience that words cannot describe, he said.

Similarly, the shrine echoed with the recitation of Quranic verses, Darood, and Naats, as thousands engaged in prayers, seeking mercy and guidance.

Religious scholars and clerics also delivered sermons, noting the significance of Meraj-ul-Aalam and reminding the faithful of the Prophet's (PBUH) journey and its lessons for humanity.

Wahid Bhat, a devotee from Tral, said that every year, he makes it a point to visit Hazratbal on this occasion. "It is a day of blessings, and witnessing the holy relic strengthens our faith," said Wahid.

Meanwhile, authorities also made arrangements to facilitate the smooth conduct of prayers. "Security personnel were deployed in and around the shrine, while traffic management plans ensured a hassle-free experience for the devotees," said an official—(KNO)

SKIMS Organizes Medical Camp For Devotees

Agencies

Srinagar: A medical camp was set up outside the shrine of Dargah Hazratbal, Srinagar to cater the medical needs of devotees attending the Ashar-e-Sharief on Friday following Mehraj-ul-Alam.

The camp was extended to the prayers to accommodate more worshippers and was organised under the banner of Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS).

According to details, under the guidance of expert doctors and the supervision of seniors, the camp provided free consultations, medicines, ECG, and ambulance services to devotees who visited the shrine.

Similarly, a team of expert doctors and paramedical staff ensured smooth medical assistance.

Man Succumbs To Injuries Following Nowgam Road Accident

Agencies

Srinagar: A man who was critically injured in a road accident in Srinagar's Nowgam area on Monday passed away at SKIMS Soura this morning.

The deceased has been identified as Nazir Ahmad Naqash, a resident of Srinagar's uptown Baghat Barzulla. According to reports, he had suffered severe head injuries

after being struck by an Alto K10 vehicle in Nowgam earlier this week.

After the accident, Naqash was initially taken to a nearby Hospital for medical attention before being shifted to SKIMS Soura for advanced treatment.

On Friday morning, he succumbed to his injuries.

Notably, police had already registered a case regarding the incident. [KNT]

Drug Peddler Arrested At Pantha Chowk

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Police claimed to have arrested a drug peddler and recovered contraband substance from his possession.

In a statement issued, a Police team of Police Station Panthachowk at a checkpoint established at Khanmoh, intercepted a person identified as Farooq Ahmad Lone son of

Mohd Sadiq Lone resident of Khanmoh.

Further it reads, during search, substantial quantities of narcotics recovered from his possession.

The accused person has been arrested.

Case vide FIR No. 14/25 under relevant sections of NDPS Act has been registered and investigation initiated.

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

AIRPORTS
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR

2 Shaban
1446

PRAYERS

FAJR	6: 03
ZUHR	12:44
ASR	4: 22
Magrib	6:04
ISHA	7: 26

This Day In History

- 772- Adrian I begins his reign as Catholic Pope
- 1327- Edward III is crowned King of England aged 14, though the country is ruled by his mother Queen Isabella and her lover Roger Mortimer
- 1622- English East India Company forces capture the Portuguese fort on the island of Hormus in the Persian Gulf, an important trading center on the route to Mughal India
- 1713- The Kalabalik or Tumult in Bender - Ottoman troops of sultan Ahmed III attack camp and seize his unwelcome guest, King Charles XII of Sweden
- 1864 - 2nd German-Danish war begins
- 1909 - US forces withdraw from Cuba after liberal Jose Miguel Gomez becomes president; ensuing political instability will bring a threat of US intervention in 1912
- 1923 - Fascists Voluntary Militia forms in Italy under Benito Mussolini
- 1924 - Ramsay MacDonald's incoming Labour government formally recognizes the Soviet Union
- 1944 - Supreme Soviet increases Soviet republics' autonomy
- 1948 - Palestine Post building in Jerusalem bombed
- 1950 - USSR demands condemnation of Emperor Hirohito for war crimes
- 1951 - 1st X-ray moving picture process demonstrated
- 1951 - 1st telecast of an atomic explosion
- 1951 - UN condemns People's Republic of China as aggressor in Korea
- 1951 - US performs nuclear test at Nevada Test Site
- 1958 - 1st US satellite (Explorer I) launched
- 1958 - Egypt & Syria announce plans to merge into United Arab Republic
- 1961 - 1st full-scale test of US Minuteman ICBM is successful
- 1968 - Former US VP Richard Nixon announces candidacy for president
- 1970 - West-Germany & USSR sign gas contract
- 1974 - Kuala Lumpur is declared a Federal Territory.
- 1979 - Ayatollah Khomeini returns to Iran after 15 years in exile
- 1981 - French government accord sends 60 Mirage fighter jets to Iraq
- 1981 - One of cricket's biggest controversies; Australian captain Greg Chappell instructs bowler (and younger brother) Trevor to bowl underarm to Brian McKechnie with New Zealand needing 6 from final ball to tie 3rd World Series Cup ODI in Melbourne; Australia wins by 6
- 1982 - Senegal & Gambia form loose confederation (Senegambia)
- 1983 - USSR performs underground nuclear test
- 1984 - China & Netherlands regain diplomatic relations
- 1991 - US Air & Skywest Fairchild jet collide at LA Airport killing 32
- 1993 - Soyuz TM-16 lands
- 2003 - Space Shuttle Columbia disintegrates during reentry into the Earth's atmosphere, killing all seven astronauts aboard.
- 2004 - 251 people are trampled to death and 244 injured in a stampede at the Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia.
- 2005 - Nepalese King Gyanendra exercises Coup d'état to capture the democracy becoming Chairman of the Councils of ministers.
- 2012 - At least 73 people are killed in the Egyptian football riots in Port Said.
- 2013 - John Kerry succeeds Hillary Clinton as US Secretary of State
- 2014 - Syrian civil war death toll reaches 130,000, while 4 million are displaced.
- 2015 - France defeats Qatar, 25-22 to win the World Men's Handball Championship in Lusail, Qatar
- 2016 - WHO declares a global public health emergency over the rapid spread of zika-linked conditions

SAD DEMISE

With profound grief and sorrow, we announce the sad demise of Shakeela Begum, beloved wife of Late Abdul Ahad, who departed for her heavenly abode on Friday, 31st January 2024. Taziyat will be observed for three days only at Umarabad HMT, Opposite Noora Hospital. We kindly request ladies not to bring any eatable items. May Allah (SWT) grant the departed soul eternal peace and Jannat-ul-Firdous. May He also give strength and patience to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Grief-Stricken:
Sons:
Jahangir Ahmad Malik | Mohammad Altaf Malik
Contact: 88999 27510 | 70063 42835

EXTENSION OF VISTA DOME TRAIN SERVICE

For the convenience of rail passengers, Northern Railway has decided to extend the periodicity of run of following Vista Dome Train Service as per details given below:-

Train No.	Train Name	Frequency	Earlier Notified Upto	Extended Upto
04688	Budgum-Banihal	Except-Friday	31.01.2025	01.02.25 to 28.02.25 =24 Trips
04687	Banihal-Budgum	Except-Friday	31.01.2025	01.02.25 to 28.02.25 =24 Trips

For any kind of information and detailed time-table etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

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365/2025

Visit us at: www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

Sr. DEN-IV/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date-18.02.2025 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft Banker Cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information logon to www.ireps.gov.in

Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System
Open	Works	Single Bid System
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time
27.01.2025	04.02.2025	18.02.2025 15:00 Hrs

S.No.	Tender No.	Details of Tender			
1	303-2024-25-MCTM-DRM-FZR	Establishment of the Intermediate Block Station (IBS) between Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra (SVDK) and Chakrawahal (CRWL) (single line).			
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		1855564.17	37100.00	60 Days	4 Months
		Similar nature of work - "Nil"			
2	304-2024-25-BDGM-DRM-FZR	Miscellaneous P.way works for track maintenance in the section of SSE/P.way/BDGM from km 46.00 to 117.96 in QG-BRML section under ADEN/BDGM.			
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		4498906.46	90000.00	60 Days	8 Months
		Similar nature of work :- "CTR/TRR/TFR/TTR including raising of track, screening, distressing of track, pre & post works for track maintenance machine like tamping machines/ballast screening/regulating machines & TTR by T-28"			

Note 1:- Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against the tender.
Tender Notice No:- 770-W/169/WA/FZR/2024-25 Date: 31.01.2025

343/2025

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Digital Addiction

Can We Afford a Generation of Brain-Rotten Idiots?

Nasir Hamid Khan

"I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interactions. The world will have a generation of idiots."

Albert Einstein

Well, here we are — a generation of idiots amusing ourselves to death, oblivious to what may possibly be the last great pandemic known to humankind. We are unaware of the fact that handing over digital devices/screens to kids and adolescents will irreparably damage their brains in their formative years. It is akin to connecting your home power circuit to an ultra-high-voltage power line. The current condition of our brain is not much different from what would remain of the home circuit. Our 1.7 million-year-old mind is simply not equipped to handle the endless stream of digital information and algorithms that we are being exposed to. The result is isolation and impaired relationships, reduced attention spans, insomnia, stress, reduced cognition, creativity blocks, sadness, anxiety, depression, suicide, and much more. It is the fastest and most pervasive addiction known to humanity.

Smartphones and the allied digital lures are engineered and designed to be addictive, and this addiction kills all creativity, meaning, and purpose from the lives of its users, turning them into digital junkies. Neuroscientists have termed the dopamine deficit state as 'learned helplessness'.

We recently organized an event under the 'Common Interest Conversations' program at Amar Singh Club, Srinagar, presided over by Prof. S.A. Romshoo, Vice Chancellor, Islamic University of Science & Technology, and chaired by eminent senior advocate Mr. Zaffer A. Shah. The conversation left me scared and anxious as I woke up from my high-octane, digital-stimuli-infused slumber. I am slowly coming to terms with the disastrous power I allowed technology to have over me and the costs in terms of lost time and relationships. Expert views shared by me in this article are mostly attributable to Dr. Anna Lembke, a renowned American psychiatrist, a world-leading expert on addiction, Medical Director of Addiction Medicine at Stanford University, and author of three important books on the subject, including the New York Times bestselling book *Dopamine Nation*. Inputs have also been taken from Netflix documentaries *The Social Dilemma* (nominated for seven Emmys) and *Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy*. I strongly recommend watching them, as well as Fabeha Syed's Urdu drama episode on "Brain Rot" to gain a deeper understanding of the scale of this addiction.

Incidentally, the Oxford Word of the Year for 2024 is 'Brain Rot', which describes the negative effects of consuming too much online content, es-



“The conversation left me scared and anxious as I woke up from my high-octane, digital-stimuli-infused slumber. I am slowly coming to terms with the disastrous power I allowed technology to have over me and the costs in terms of lost time and relationships

pecially low-quality or unchallenging material. In Urdu, it can be translated as 'Zehani Zawaal'.

The digital world today provides endless opportunities for education, research, and enrichment of the mind, which responsible users are effectively utilizing to their advantage and to the world's benefit. However, they are in the minority, as this virtual world appears to have been taken over by vested commercial interests that make more money from increased online time. We need to draw a clear distinction between healthy usage and problematic usage, which results in impaired minds and disrupted lives. I am reminded of the words of Urdu poet Vikas Sharma Raz: "Mayreh Urooj Ki Likhi Thi Dastaan Jisme, Meray Zavaal Ka Kissa Bhi Uss Kitab Main Tha". Those connected with the online business are today the richest human beings in the history of humankind. Billions and trillions of dollars are being made without a thought for the costs and consequences to humankind and the planet. Fifteen out of the top twenty in the latest Forbes Billionaires List are connected to this business. This has given rise to many unfair practices and manipulations, as they remain focused on sales and profits alone. Surveillance Capitalism and Planned Obsolescence are cornerstones of the new business methodology. The product is you and your on-screen attention span.

A joint study by the Shanghai Institute of Early Childhood Education and the Faculty of Education and Human Development, Education University of Hong Kong, concludes

as follows:

"...digital addiction in children and adolescents leads to structural brain changes, including reduced grey and white matter volume in various regions involved in executive function, reward processing, and sensorimotor activities, impacting cognitive capabilities and contributing to problematic smartphone use, internet gaming disorder, and internet addiction."

Studies have established the negative impact of digital addiction on children and adolescents from multiple aspects — physical, emotional, cognitive, and brain structure and function. For example, vision and hearing, social skills, social relationships, aggressive behavior, high frequency of depression and anxiety, reduced attention span, memory, and problem-solving skills. The smartphone has been termed the modern-day hypodermic needle to which we turn for quick digital hits, seeking attention, validation, and distraction with each swipe, like, and tweet. The obsession with instant gratification means we are constantly living in our limbic brain, which processes emotions, rather than in our prefrontal cortex, which deals with future planning and problem-solving and is essential for personality development.

Experts warn that behavior which we initially find pleasurable and which engages us in approach behavior, puts us in such a dopamine deficit state that we continue to indulge in that behavior not to feel good, but to stop feeling bad. We don't enjoy it, but yet we just cannot stop

going back to the screen.

Homeostasis is any self-regulating process by which biological systems tend to maintain stability while adjusting to conditions that are optimal for survival. If homeostasis is successful, life continues; if unsuccessful, disaster ensues. The idea was first explored by French physiologist Claude Bernard in 1849, and the word homeostasis was coined by American neurologist and physiologist Walter Bradford Cannon in 1926. When the system of dynamic equilibrium is disturbed, built-in regulatory devices respond to establish a new balance, as in the control of body temperature to a steady 98.6°F.

Modern-day psychiatrists have discovered that abstinence from any drug or addiction for a month is the minimum time required for brain neuroadaptation to restore homeostasis balance and decrease the anxiety and depression that social media can induce. This 30-day abstinence allows us to realize the true impact of compulsive overconsumption on our lives. It is required to reset our brain pathways to be able to re-engage in recovery work and reassess our goals. The goal is how to do nothing. It's crucial to take time just to be. Scientific studies have observed the importance of "resting mental networks," meaning that between activities, people demonstrate a synchronicity between different parts of the brain that has its own rhythm and breathing. This state contributes to original ideas and a general sense of wellness. An example of this can be found in the interview of popular actor Aamir Khan, who says: "When I stopped using the

phone, I didn't realize how big a step it would be. It has totally changed my life as I have started thinking, and mental windows started opening up so fast. Mobile devices had made us stop thinking. I have managed to complete my assignment in 6 weeks, which would otherwise have taken no less than two years. As we used to do before, I have now started thinking about my children, my family, and my work."

Apart from the structural brain damage it causes, the time wasted scrolling through trivial and junk data on your phone is a waste of your life because time is also a measure of life, just as moments are.

The main problem with treating digital addiction is that the user is unaware of being afflicted with this disease. For a start, it is critically important that such awareness is raised. The support of family and community must play a significant role. The problem I see here is that the family and community may itself be afflicted to a considerable degree. A look around us would answer this beyond a doubt. It is the sheer scale of this addiction that is worrisome and unprecedented. We can beat our digital dependencies by embracing a more monastic mindset. Experts warn that we need to stop hunting for pleasure all the time, and this hunting needs to be replaced by what they term as "painful pursuits" like exercise, fasting, prayer, meditation, and other mind-engaging activities. We need to consider how this addiction affects our ability to be a good parent, spouse, or friend.

Here, I would humbly suggest to the readers that what neuroscience has discovered recently was revealed to us by our beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) more than 1400 years ago. Every Muslim, every year, is required to fast and reflect for a month during the most holy and sacred month of Ramadan. It is a time to practice self-control, gratitude, and compassion. Sawm (fasting) is the fourth pillar of Islam, and abstinence forms its core. Other religions also practice fasting and abstinence for spiritual reasons.

Keeping in view the views expressed above, there is a dire need for our society to rise together in solidarity to fight this addiction. I would suggest to all residents of Jammu and Kashmir, irrespective of their religion, to come together as human beings and collectively withdraw from the digital world and give their minds time to breathe, think, and restore mental balances that are vital for our present and future. Let us collectively abstain, or to the extent possible reduce, the use of digital devices during the holy period of Ramadan.

The author is the Secretary, Amar Singh Club, Srinagar and the Former Senior Vice President, Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry

The education system in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) is in a state of crisis, with numerous challenges undermining its effectiveness. Among these challenges, the failure of flagship programmes like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) highlights the systemic inefficiencies that plague the region's educational infrastructure.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan also appears to be a vision which is now derailed. Launched with the vision to provide free and compulsory education to children aged 6 to 14 years, the SSA aimed to bridge educational gaps by establishing schools in far-off areas of J&K. Since its inception in the early 2000s, the programme led to the establishment of 18,021 schools across the region, including 10,690 primary schools and 7,331 upper primary schools. This effort raised the total number of government-run schools in J&K to 23,117.

However, the scheme's execution was marred by haphazard planning and poor management, leading to the closure of 24% of these schools, primarily due to zero or minimal enrollment. As per updated official figures, at least 119 schools in J&K were operating without a single student enrolled. Shockingly, 238 teachers were still posted in these schools, effectively drawing salaries despite no active teaching responsibilities.

This mismanagement underscores the broader issues within the education system. On average, seven teachers were deployed in schools, even those with negligible or no enrollment, highlight-

The Defunct Education System in J&K

Ikkz Ikkbal

ing resource misallocation and inefficiency.

Data-Driven Insights: UDISE and Beyond

The Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) data further reveals the extent of these inefficiencies. In July 2024, reports stated that out of the 23,117 government schools, 4,394 schools were removed from UDISE due to closure or lack of functionality. This alarming figure reflects a significant regression in the accessibility and availability of education, particularly in remote areas.

Impact on Educational Equity

The closure of schools under the SSA has had a cascading effect on the region's literacy and enrollment rates. While J&K's overall literacy rate stands at 77.30%, disparities persist, particularly among females, whose literacy rate is 68%, compared to

the male literacy rate of 85.70%. The closure of schools in remote areas has further exacerbated this gap, denying children access to education and perpetuating socio-economic disparities.

Underlying Challenges

Many SSA schools lacked basic facilities such as proper classrooms, sanitation, and learning materials, leading to a lack of trust in government institutions. Additionally, schools were established without considering the local population's needs, resulting in schools in areas with insufficient student populations. Moreover, the deployment of teachers in non-functional schools reflects a lack of monitoring and accountability within the system.

To address these systemic challenges, a comprehensive overhaul of the education system in J&K is essential.

1. Data-Driven Planning: Conduct detailed population and enrollment surveys before establishing schools to ensure resources are utilized effectively.
2. Infrastructure Development: Invest in building and maintaining school infrastructure to create a conducive learning environment.
3. Teacher Training and Deployment: Implement transparent policies for teacher recruitment and ensure equitable distribution of qualified teachers.
4. Community Engagement: Foster community involvement in monitoring and supporting schools to enhance accountability and trust.
5. Monitoring and Accountability: Establish independent bodies to regularly evaluate school performance and address inefficiencies promptly.

The defunct state of the education system in Jammu and Kashmir, as exemplified by the failure of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, is a sobering reminder of the need for effective planning, execution, and accountability. The closure of schools, misallocation of resources, and declining enrollment rates have created a crisis that threatens the region's socio-economic future. Immediate and sustained efforts are required to address these issues and ensure that the vision of quality education for all becomes a reality in J&K.

The author has a PG in Biotechnology and is Administrator Maryam Memorial Institute Pandithpora Qaziabad. He tweets @IkkzIkkbal

Dr Lone's Work on Enduring Legacy of Two Pioneering Muslim Reformists

DR TAUSEEF AHMAD PARRAY

Dr Lone's book is a concise yet insightful exploration of enduring legacies of two pioneering Muslim reformists, Abduh and Sir Syed, in a lucid style

A decade ago (in 2014), Dr Ab. Hamid Lone (a College Professor of Arabic in the Higher Education Department, J&K) published an Urdu book titled *Imam Muhammad Abduh: Hayat-o-Khidmat* (Muhammad Abduh: Life and Legacy), which delved into Abduh's contributions to various fields, including literary, cultural, journalistic, intellectual, religious, ethical, political, and educational facets in the framework of Islamic reformist thought (*I had reviewed this book in Kashmir Reader on 20th June, 2017*).

Recently (in mid-2024), Dr Lone (now retired) has come up with another scholarly work, *Sheikh Muhammad Abduh aur Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: Ek Taqabuli Mutala* (Sheikh Muhammad Abduh and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: A Comparative Study). This book provides a thorough and comparative analysis of the ideas and contributions of these trailblazing reformist thinkers in an accessible Urdu style. Both Abduh and Sir Syed have significantly contributed to the reformist legacy, driving Islamic reform through their focus on socio-religious and educational aspects. They have been labelled, and fairly so, as "pioneers of Islam modernism".

The book, published by *Takbeer Publications* Srinagar, consists of seven (7) chapters, preceded by a 'Foreword' by Dr Jauhar Qudussi (pp. 7-9), a 'Preface' by Dr Muzaffar Hussain Nadwi (pp. 10-14), an Introduction (pp. 15-16) by the author, and ends with a 3-page Conclusion (pp. 96-99) and a Bibliography (pp. 101-105). The chapters examine lives and legacies of Abduh and Sir Syed, highlighting the similarities and differences in their ideas and approaches in areas like educational reform, journalistic services, contribution to Quranic exegesis, and response to orientalist propaganda.

Dr Qudussi and Dr Nadwi, two renowned Kashmiri scholars of Urdu and Arabic respectively, applaud the author's effort by describing it as an "appreciable research work" on an important topic that aids in understanding, in a comparative manner, different

dimensions of the life and ideas of these two pioneering figures" (pp. 7, 9, 13-14).

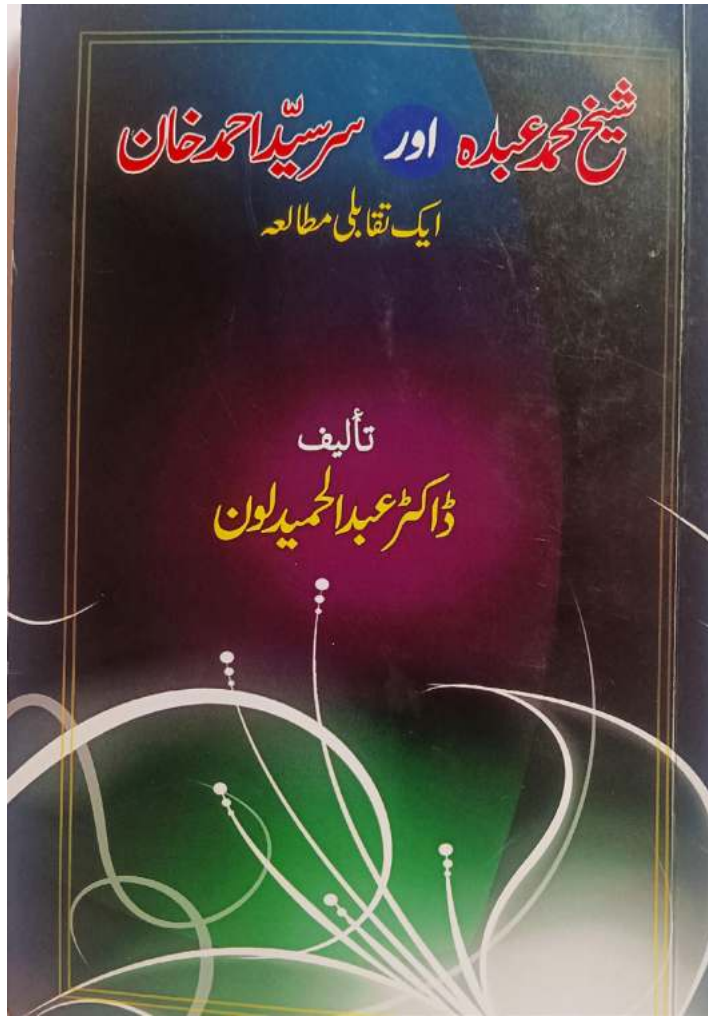
Dr Lone outlines the objectives for writing this book in the Introduction, arguing that he not only identified many commonalities in the thinking of these reformist pioneers, but also found potential to deliver solutions to the concerns and challenges confronting Muslims today (pp. 15-16).

In the first chapter, Dr Lone, situates the biographical sketch of Abduh and Sir Syed within their respective socio-political and intellectual contexts, setting the ground for the subsequent discussions. Despite their variance in ideology and perspective, he argued, both these visionaries converged on the imperative of "revitalizing Muslim ummah to ensure its survival and progress" (p. 19).

The second chapter compares in detail their approaches on the "Acquisition of Education and Training" (pp. 24-51) highlighting their major initiatives, curriculum reforms, and approaches that emphasized modern education, reform of traditional education, promoting critical thinking, and focusing character development in line with the Islamic sources. Summarily, while both shared similar educational reform goals, their techniques and beliefs differed in terms of emphasis on Islamic education, religion's role, methodology, and context.

The third chapter concentrates on the literary oeuvre ("Books and Literary Works", pp. 53-59) of Abduh and Sir Syed and provides a long list of works authored, compiled, and translated by them with a brief description that helps in understanding the overall theme of each work. This description not only helps in understanding their respective fields and levels of interest and expertise, but also in gauging the significance and influence these works have on the Islamic intellectual tradition. For Dr Lone, "Abduh left behind a prodigious academic legacy, which was centered on exploring themes of reform and Islamic topics" with modern interpretations, and Sir Syed too has made "a commendable contribution through his prolific writings" (pp. 53, 57).

The fourth chapter focuses on their "Journalistic Services" (pp. 61-70) as both contributed their writings to various newspapers and periodicals with the purpose



Title of the Book: *Sheikh Muhammad Abduh aur Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: Ek Taqabuli Mutala*

Author: Dr Ab. Hamid Lone

Publisher: Srinagar: Takbeer Publications, 2024

Pages: 112; **ISBN:** 978-81-922895-7-1; **Price:** 230/-; **Paperback**



RECENTLY (IN MID-2024), DR LONE (NOW RETIRED) HAS COME UP WITH ANOTHER SCHOLARLY WORK, "Sheikh Muhammad Abduh aur Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: Ek Taqabuli Mutala" (Sheikh Muhammad Abduh and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: A Comparative Study). This book provides a thorough and comparative analysis of the ideas and contributions of these trailblazing reformist thinkers in an accessible Urdu style

of fostering socio-religious, intellectual, and educational reform within their communities. Abduh frequently penned articles in Arabic advocating for Islamic reform, social justice, anti-colonialism, Muslim solidarity, and the necessity for Muslims to return to the original sources of Islam. Sir Syed sought to advance social reform and Muslim welfare, highlighting the importance of modern education, science, and technology for Muslim progress through an accessible Urdu style. Thus, both utilized journalism as a "powerful tool for promoting their ideas and thoughts, the central axis of which were the Islamic teachings" (p. 70). Through their unique writing style and intellectual perspective, as Dr Lone further asserts, many journalists and writers were greatly impacted and, as a result, contributing in various manners to transformation in their communities (pp. 63, 69).

The fifth chapter, "Responses to Orientalist Criticisms" (pp. 71-79), addresses the misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and biases presented by certain Orientalists and Christian missionaries in their writings concerning Islam and Islamic subjects. It aims to expose their focus on Islam's rational and intellectual heritage and on presenting the true portrayal of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), which was misrepresented in numerous Orientalist texts. For instance, Dr Lone mentions Sir Syed's *Khutbat-e-Ahmadiya/ Essays on the life of the Prophet (pbuh)* as a response to *The Life of Mahomet* (London, 1858-61) by Scottish orientalist William Muir (1819-1905) and Abduh's writings like *Islam and the Response to the Critics*, several articles in *Al-Manar* and *Islam and Christianity in relation to Science and Civilization* countering the writings of Farah Antun (1874-1922), Gabriel Honotaux (1853-1958) and Ernest Renan (1823-1892). These orientalist claims that Islam was rigid, stagnant, and incompatible with reason, science and progress. Abduh and Sir Syed refuted these claims with robust arguments, authentic evidence, and objective and thoroughly analysis (pp. 73, 74, 79).

The sixth chapter examines the "Contributions of Abduh and Sir Syed to the Quranic Exegesis and a (Critical) Review of their Opinions" (pp. 81-95), highlighting their innovative methodologies and approaches

to interpret the Qur'an by combining rational and scientific methods with the main objective of promoting "social and religious reform" (p. 81). He further asserts that although their interpretations faced criticism from traditional Muslim scholars, the reality is that within the context of their socio-political and intellectual climate, their contributions as exegetes remain substantial. Both thinkers recognized the need for a "contextually relevant interpretation of the Qur'an, distinct from traditional commentaries", though they "exhibit limited ideological convergences" (p. 94).

These chapters are succeeded by brief "Concluding Remarks" (pp. 97-98) that offer a succinct overview of the ideas, insights, and impacts of Abduh and Sir Syed. Their contributions, as reformers, have made an "exceptional impact on the Muslim Ummah" (p. 97), motivating and shaping an entire generation of Muslims worldwide, as "the ideas of both these thinkers possess an inherent spirit to catalyze significant change", resulting in the formation of two well-organized movements: 'Aligarh Movement' and 'Al-Manar movement' (pp. 98-99). The author anticipates a reevaluation of their contributions in the contemporary context (p. 99).

The book has two major limitations: the absence of Urdu translations for Arabic and English quotes and statements (see, e.g., pp. 19, 67, 68, 69, 77, 95), which hinders the readability and comprehension; and the lack of full bibliographical details for the journal articles (pp. 107-108); though the Bibliography is arranged and organized language wise and into two broad categories: Arabic, Urdu, and English Books and Periodicals and Journals.

Overall, Dr Lone's scholarly work represents a significant addition to the literature on reform and reformist thought, offering a comprehensive and comparative analysis of Abduh's and Sir Syed's contributions, illuminating their shared concerns, unique methodologies, and distinctive approaches. The book has the potential to benefit scholars and students alike.

Dr Tauseef Ahmad Parray is Assistant Professor, Islamic Studies, at GDC Ganderbal, Kashmir. Feedback at tauseef.parray21@gmail.com

ECHOES OF MIND

ALIYA MANZOOR



MY YOUTH WAS SPENT TRYING TO MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND. I can neither replace you nor erase you, but I hope you'll realize that you snuffed out my youth, right from my childhood. If you lead by example, all will be transformed. Yet, I tremble at the intensity of your gaze, which stores even the darkest of souls

Alima, I am that common girl, always searching for my identity in the midst of the world's chaos. Sometimes I roam around, searching in my home, streets, village, and city, trying to find my own recognition, my true self. I am not capable of taking care of myself in this terrifying time. I remember, I recall my childhood, when you would scold your own children. I would watch, longing, as you pushed them away from me. I, too, would feel weak and helpless.

I am unique because of you. I am distinct from everything, even the sky and the entire world. You didn't make me yours, yet you made me cry with love. I still remember those days; they still make me cry sometimes. The feeling of every time still causes pain and stress. You held me captive, draining my strength. Your words cut deep, silencing my voice and shrouding me in shame.

I am torn between two states. You would inflict immense pain upon me, and yet I would look at you with eyes of love. Sometimes I rise as high as the sky, and then I am affected by the bad things that come from the sky. I haven't seen them, but they're accusing me of the love that existed between us in the past. I was thirsty for love, but they didn't fulfill it. You showed me darkness, then led



me to light, only to make me cry again. You revealed to me the terror of human nature, yet instructed me to place my faith in them despite all. I was longing for something, and you made me cry by placing it right in front of me.

My complaint is not with time, but with myself. I managed to hold on to myself for a little while, but now I'm struggling to keep myself together. I have isolated myself because I need your support. I am too overwhelmed to handle difficult situations alone. I didn't find a home, nor did I find a family. You were always lost in your own thoughts,

and I was lost in gazing at you.

I carried the scars of my childhood within me, absorbing all the pain. I was weak, yet I continued to smile. You, however, showcased your strength and tyrannized me. I thought you understood me, and with that hope, I had pinned my expectations on you. I fear that you'll try to make me like you, and then blame me and my bloodline. The glance you cast upon me, the face you make, it's a perpetual anguish that haunts my being.

I wanted to set myself free, but your memories have arrested me. I carry a burning fire in my heart, yet I meet you every day.

Despite this, the fear of society has killed me. I am that girl who always gets punished for doing nothing. I am the one whom the world has scattered. If I ever try to rise and be genuine, I am definitely humiliated and made to feel ashamed. I was crushed by the whims of fate, left to wither, worn and weary.

My youth was spent trying to make you understand. I can neither replace you nor erase you, but I hope you'll realize that you snuffed out my youth, right from my childhood. If you lead by example, all will be transformed. Yet, I tremble at the intensity of your gaze, which stores even the

darkest of souls.

When will you bring justice to this cruel, unjust, and harsh world? I am aware of everything, but I won't say anything. I see all, but I remain silent. I used to think that the people around me would understand and appreciate my worth. But they didn't remember me, and now I realize that was just a foolish imagination. This loneliness, this injustice, has become poison in my heart. When will you understand that love is not about your own blood, child, beauty, money, necessity, or wealth? If you could understand how pre-occupied my heart and mind are with your words, I'd consider myself half-mad, summoning you myself.

I wish the world would understand me, and then comprehend its own perspective, for our future is drowning in the gestures of others. I have the capacity to give the world so much from my treasure, but I fear that you'll erase me with your words. I've seen tears in my own eyes, and then seen myself holding on, persevering. What can you take away from me now? I've been estranged from your love for a long time, and I've been angry with this entire world.

All I can do is pray that I can understand myself somehow, because thinking about you day and night gives me nothing.

An orphaned girl's echoes of her mind.

Mehbooba Urges Nitish, Naidu To Oppose Waqf Bill



Srinagar- Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti has written to Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) chief N. Chandrababu Naidu, urging them to 'oppose the proposed Waqf amendment bill'.

In a letter shared on her social media handle, the former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister expressed deep concern over the bill, calling it "unconstitutional, unconscionable, and authoritarian." She argued that the proposed amendments directly undermine the core purpose of the Waqf Act, which is to protect and preserve properties dedicated to religious and charitable causes for the Muslim community.

"The bill comes at a time when, for the past decade, Muslims have been systematically disenfranchised, disempowered, and marginalized politically, socially, and economically," Mufti wrote.

She accused the government of disregarding opposition concerns, calling the parliamentary consultation process a "farce" without genuine efforts to engage with the affected community.

She further warned that the bill represents "a direct assault on the fundamental rights guaranteed by our Constitution" and reflects "majoritarianism that has fueled bigotry and the marginalization of Muslims since 2014."

Mufti also invoked Mahatma Gandhi's vision of an inclusive India, saying that the bill "threatens the secular fabric of the nation."

Appealing to Nitish Kumar and Naidu, both key allies in the NDA government, she urged them to use their influence to halt the bill, warning that its passage could "harm national unity and communal harmony."

"You have always been staunch believers in our Constitution and have consistently championed the spirit of Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb (composite culture). Today, as key members of the NDA, you are uniquely positioned to influence this matter and prevent this onslaught," she wrote.

The proposed Waqf amendment bill has sparked widespread debate, with opposition parties and minority organizations voicing strong objections.

iPhone Was Top Selling Model In India In Oct-Dec, It Is A Huge Market: Apple CEO

NEW DELHI, Jan 31: Apple is very keen on India where it has seen record business during the December quarter with iPhone emerging as the top-selling smartphone model, a top company official said on Friday.



During the company's earnings call, Apple CEO Tim Cook said India offers a huge growth opportunity for the company.

"We have had great results in the emerging market. I am particularly keen on India. India has set a December quarter record. iPhone was top selling in India for the quarter. It is the second-largest smartphone market in the world and third largest for PCs and tablets. So there is a huge market," he said.

"We have a very modest share in these markets. I think there are lot of upsides there..." Cook said.

He said the company has announced plans to open more Apple stores in India.

According to Counterpoint Research, Apple led the India market in 2024 with 23 per cent share in terms of value of total smartphones supplied in this matter and prevent this onslaught," she wrote.

The proposed Waqf amendment bill has sparked widespread debate, with opposition parties and minority organizations voicing strong objections.

will launch a localised English version in India in April.

On financial performance during the December quarter, Cook said Apple has registered an all-time record revenue of USD 124.3 billion, up about 4 per cent on a year-on-year (YoY) basis.

The company, however, posted a decline of about 7 per cent in net income to USD 36.33 billion during the October-December period from USD 33.91 billion a year earlier.

The product sales of the company grew 1.5 per cent to USD 97.96 billion from USD 96.45 billion and services sales grew about 14 per cent to touch record high quarterly revenue of USD 26.34 billion

from USD 23.11 billion on a year-on-year basis.

The iPhone sales during the quarter declined marginally to USD 69.13 billion from USD 69.7 billion a year ago.

Sales of Apple's Mac PC increased 15.5 per cent to USD 8.98 billion from USD 7.78 billion and iPad sales grew about 15 per cent to USD 8 billion from USD 7 billion on a year-on-year basis.

The company's sales grew across all geographies except in China where it manufactures the majority of Apple products.

Apple sales in China declined 11 per cent to 18.5 billion during the December quarter from USD 20.8 billion a year earlier. (Agencies)

Gold Prices To Decline, Silver To Rise In 2025: Economic Survey



New Delhi: Gold prices are expected to decline in 2025 while silver prices may increase, according to Economic Survey 2024-25 tabled in Parliament on Friday.

Citing the World Bank's Commodity Markets Outlook for October 2024, the economic survey highlighted that commodity prices are projected to decrease 5.1 per cent in 2025 and 1.7 per cent in 2026.

The projected declines are led by oil prices but tempered by price increases for natural gas and a stable outlook for metals and agricultural raw materials.

Among precious metals, gold prices are expected to decrease while silver prices may increase. Prices for metals and minerals are expected to decline, primarily due to a decrease in iron ore and zinc prices, the economic survey said.

"In general, the downward trend movement in prices of commodities imported by India is a positive for the domestic inflation outlook," it added.

Meanwhile, the survey said "a global rise in uncertainty has led to fluctuations in the composition of foreign exchange reserves. CY24 saw gold bullion holdings nearing their highest level since World War II, which was largely driven by an

accumulation of gold by emerging market central banks".

Gold imports have increased, influenced by higher global prices, early purchases ahead of festive spending, and demand for safe-haven assets.

The survey observed that uncertainty in global markets has led to fluctuations in the composition of foreign exchange reserves, as central banks adjust their holdings to mitigate risks.

Further, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has noted steady changes are underway in the global reserve system, including a gradual movement away from dollar dominance and a rising role of non-traditional currencies, it said.

The survey suggested that while the projected decline in gold prices may affect investor sentiment, the expected rise in silver prices could provide some support to the bullion market.

As the government prepares for the upcoming fiscal year, it expects to closely monitor price movements of the bullion and their impact on inflation, trade, and foreign exchange reserves.

India, one of the world's largest importers of gold, has traditionally witnessed strong demand for the metal, particularly during the festival and wedding seasons.

LG Inaugurates 32nd International Conference Of Indian Association Of Palliative Care At AIIMS Jammu

SAMBA, Jan 31: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha inaugurated the 32nd International Conference of the Indian Association of Palliative Care (IAPC), at AIIMS Jammu.

More than 800 national and international delegates will join deliberations to foster advancements and innovations in palliative care for quality of life for patients diagnosed with terminal illness. The three-day conference is being organised by IAPC J&K Chapter and AIIMS, Jammu.

In his keynote address, the Lieutenant Governor exhorted the experts to keep Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) up to date and be more sensitive towards the needs of individuals diagnosed with life-threatening disease, well-being of families, alleviate pain and suffering and

provide spiritual support.

The Lieutenant Governor asked the private sector to work with the administration to set up Palliative care centres in backward and remote areas.

"In J&K, the administration in 2022 had set up 10-bed state-of-the-art Palliative and Geriatric Care Wards in all the districts. We have tried to bridge urban-rural divide to certain extent. Our aim is to deliver medical and psychological support at people's doorstep," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that all the experts and the Indian Association of Palliative Care should work together to promote multi-sectoral partnerships so that a human resource pool of trained care-givers is made available.

"In Palliative care, health



ecosystem and healthcare professionals have a moral responsibility to reduce the pain and suffering of patients. Apart from adopting innovative approach to pain management, health care professionals at all levels should be given training for continuity in the care of such patients," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor made valuable suggestions for seamless integration of curative care and Palliative care in health ecosystem. He suggested that uniform SoPs may be prepared for community awareness, palliative support and pain management at the district level.

Palliative Care system is

constantly evolving and we need to work on strategic framework, SoPs and its effective implementation, he said.

The Lieutenant Governor further highlighted the need to bridge the gap in healthcare facilities and special services for the ageing population.

"By 2050, 20.8% of India's total population will be above 60 years of age. This increase in the elderly population requires us to develop a strong care economy to ensure that our elders can live healthy, dignified and fulfilling lives," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He also suggested developing a comprehensive healthcare package which includes regular check-ups, geriatric care, mental health support and palliative care.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor

inaugurated Radiotherapy Oncology and Operation Theatre Complex at AIIMS Jammu. He launched AIIMS Pain Policy and lauded the AIIMS Jammu's vision of pain-free patient care.

He also commended the Indian Association of Palliative Care for playing a significant role in the expansion of specialized care based on the principles of palliative care.

Meanwhile, the Lieutenant Governor inspected various blocks at AIIMS, Jammu and interacted with the medical staff. Standard Operating Procedures of Department of Anaesthesiology and the Patient Information Booklet of Chemotherapy were also launched.

The establishment of Radiotherapy Oncology facility at AIIMS Jammu will reduce the need for patients to travel long

distances for radiation therapy, ensuring timely diagnosis and treatment within the region. The service will cater to increasing number of cancer patients, offering advanced radiotherapy techniques, personalized treatment plans and multidisciplinary care. The Hospital-Based Cancer Registry, under ICMR's National Cancer Data Project has also been commenced which will further aid in shaping effective cancer care operations and strategies.

The Operation Theatre Complex featuring 08 advanced operation theatres at AIIMS Jammu, includes Four Integrated OTs with live surgical broadcasting for real-time medical training, One Hybrid OT with rotatory MRI and CT scan technology for complex procedures like transplants and cochlear implants.

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

'Train To Kashmir

joint sitting of Parliament at the beginning of the Budget session, Murmu also said that the final phase of eliminating Left-wing Extremism has begun and due to the government's efforts, the number of districts affected by the menace has reduced from 126 to 38 today.

"After the abrogation of Article 370, there is a conducive environment for the development in Jammu and Kashmir. Both the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections were conducted in a peaceful manner in Jammu and Kashmir. The people of Jammu and Kashmir deserve commendation for this achievement," she said.

Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, was abrogated on August 5, 2019, and the erstwhile state was divided into two union territories - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

The President also referred to the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP), which has been launched in the country's first villages located along the border.

The central government approved the VVP as a centrally sponsored scheme on February 15, 2023, with a financial outlay of Rs 4,800 crore from 2022-23 to 2025-26 for comprehensive development of the select villages in 46 blocks in 19 districts abutting the northern border. (PTI)

Dark Nights

November and December months.

From across the regions, PDD was generating only 200-260 MW of power from all power projects in Jammu and Kashmir.

LG Summons

and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, do hereby summon the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly to meet at Jammu on Monday, the 3rd day of March, 2025 at 10:00 AM, reads the order.

Higher Reaches

snow could occur at scattered places towards evening and night to February 01 morning or forenoon.

He said that partly to generally cloudy weather is expected on February 02 while on February 03, generally cloudy weather is expected towards evening with the possibility of light rain and snow at isolated places.

On February 04, there is also the possibility of light to moderate rain and snow at many

places while on February 5, there is possibility of light rain and snow at scattered places towards early morning and forenoon, he said, adding that the weather would remain generally cloudy from February 06 to 08.

In its advisory, the MeT has advised the tourists, travelers and transporters to follow administration and traffic advisory.

2 Shot Dead

night at the Line of Control in Poonch sector. Alert troops swiftly engaged the infiltrating terrorists, triggering an intense and heavy firefight," Army's Jammu-based White Knight Corps said in a post on X.

The Army said the operation continued through the night, leading to the neutralisation of two terrorists. "The search of the area thus far has resulted in the recovery of a number of weapons and war-like stores," Army officials said.

SC Notice To

issued welfare stamps used on pleadings, typically published at the request of a bar council.

He pointed out in the absence of a bar council, the high court was performing the relevant functions.

The bench observed it couldn't pass an interim order at the present stage and said, "Whatever system is there so far will continue. Is the high court a party? Let the notice go, and let them come." The top court posted the hearing after four weeks.

Forest Fire

with landmines as part of an anti-infiltration obstacle system to prevent terrorists from intruding into this side from across the border.

The fire was still raging and efforts are on to douse the flames, the officials said.

Online Gambling

betting," he said.

While online gambling and betting games are legally permitted in India, their addictive nature has caused irreversible damage to many individuals and families. Due to social stigma, many families remain silent about their struggles alone rather than seek help.

Online gambling also takes a severe psychological toll, leading to anxiety, depression and a sense of hopelessness. Many addicts experience strained family relationships, with

increasing conflicts and emotional disconnect.

Dr Altaf, a psychologist, likened the spread of online gambling to a plague. "People must understand its destructive impact. Even a financially stable person can lose everything if they become addicted to these platforms. Support groups and counselling services can play a crucial role in helping individuals recover and rebuild their lives," he said.

Dr Abrar Guroo, a psychiatrist at IMHANS Srinagar, highlighted how online games introduce players to gambling through psychological manipulation. "Many online games offer lucrative rewards, requiring players to buy levels, skills or unlock features. These mechanics mimic gambling and desensitize players to its risks, creating a pathway for addiction."

He added that many adolescents unknowingly spend large sums of money on such features, often without understanding the consequences. "I have treated several teenagers who transitioned from gaming to full-fledged gambling addiction. The impact is alarming, and I believe stricter regulations and increased parental awareness are necessary to curb this rising threat," Dr Guroo said-(KNO)

Very Few Regions

that the youth of Jammu and Kashmir have the potential to lead, stating, "Your achievements will inspire others to join the NCC." Highlighting the role of experience and learning in nation-building, LG Sinha said, "Anubhav aur sikhna ki parikriya hi ko hum rashtriya nirman ka pillar mantay hai" (Experience and learning are the foundation of nation-building).

Quoting British writer James Hobb, he said, "The strength and safety of the community consist in the virtue and intelligence of its youth, especially young men and women."

He also cited Swami Vivekananda, saying, "The principle of action always keeps the strength of youth everlasting."

He emphasized that ordinary people have achieved extraordinary feats through determination and hard work.

LG Sinha congratulated Ekta, a daughter of Akhnour, for leading the All India NCC girls' contingent at Kartavya Path in New Delhi, calling her an inspiration for other young cadets.

Reflecting on the lessons learned by the NCC cadets from J&K during their participation in Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi, LG Sinha asked the cadets to work on five resolutions- rapid development of Jammu Kashmir,

quality of life to the citizens, creation of social units dedicated to nation building, inspire constructive social change through the ideals and values of NCC and ensure the participation of every section of the society in nation's development journey.

LG Sinha said that the NCC cadets should contribute towards building a "strong and disciplined society."

FOCUS ON SELF-IMPROVEMENT, CONTRIBUTE ACTIVELY TO SOCIETY

Emphasizing discipline and responsibility, he urged young people to focus on self-improvement and contribute actively to society.

"The youth have a vital role in making Bharat Viksit. They are the future and the hope for a better world and a brighter tomorrow for J&K," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said, "Youth are the future. They are our hope for a better world and a brighter tomorrow for J&K. Youth have a great responsibility to carry forward the ideals and values of our ancient civilization and build a stronger J&K UT."

He said, "Spirit of NCC will help them to power the mission of peace and progress and to achieve the goal of constructive social changes. NCC cadets should motivate and encourage youngsters to contribute in nation building activities."

He said the historic participation in the Republic Day celebrations, securing several prestigious awards and accolades has reinforced the NCC's vital role in nurturing future leaders of the nation.

The Lieutenant Governor felicitated the cadets with the Certificates of Excellence for their significant contributions to the success of the contingent.

To mark the occasion, Maj Gen A. Bevlil, Additional Director General of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh Directorate, presented a memento to Lieutenant Governor as a token of gratitude for his continuous support to the NCC's initiatives.

The vibrant cultural performances by the NCC cadets symbolising India's unity in diversity received special appreciation from the Lieutenant Governor.

A total of 127 cadets of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh NCC Directorate had participated in this year's Republic Day celebration. 17 NCC cadets were selected to march on the Kartavya path and 05 cadets were selected for Guard of Honour.

SUO Ekta Kumari led the All India NCC Girls Contingent during the Republic Day Parade 2025 on Kartavya Path, earning appreciation from the President of India and the DG NCC Commendation Card.

JUO Abida Afreen, recognized for her outstanding performance, has been honoured with the Raksha Mantri Commendation Card. She has also been selected to scale Mt. Everest later this year, serving as a role model and an inspiration for aspiring youth.

SUO Ekta, Cadet Alankrita Sharma, ANO Dr. Lt Nitika Kundan and Second Officer Ashaq Hussain were honoured with DG NCC Commendation Cards for their exceptional contributions during the camp.

The Contingent Commander, Col Amit Bhardwaj, and Nb Sub Yashbir Singh were also honoured with DG NCC Medallion. Furthermore, 8 cadets from the contingent were awarded the prestigious DG NCC Medallions for their exceptional performance.

Kashmir Citizens

before announcing the budget."

Mohammad Sidiq Ronga, President of JK Goods Transport Companies, highlighted the challenges faced by the transport sector. "Many sectors are struggling, including bus, mini-bus, and auto transport. Transporters have been burdened with multiple permits and are unable to pay bank instalments. We hope the government keeps these issues in mind and announces a budget that benefits all sectors," he said.

Working On

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal did not mention any possible time-line for the trip.

In their phone conversation on January 27, Modi and Trump vowed to work towards a "trusted" partnership with a focus on boosting India-US cooperation in areas of trade, energy and defence.

"PM Modi and President Trump had a telephone conversation recently. The two sides are working on an early visit of the PM to the US to further deepen India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership," Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing while replying to a question.

"Specific dates for the visit would be announced at the appropriate time," he said.

It is learnt that both sides were initially looking at the window between February 12-14 for Modi's visit but there has been no finality on it yet.

International Conference Of IAPC Begins In Jammu



Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The 32nd international conference of the Indian Association of Palliative Care (IAPC) commenced at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here on Friday, officials said.

Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha inaugurated the three-day conference at the Vijaypur campus of AIIMS where more than 800 national and international delegates will join deliberations to foster advancements and innovations in palliative care for quality of life for patients diagnosed with terminal illness.

The conference is being organized by IAPC J&K Chapter and AIIMS, Jammu, an official spokesman said.

In his keynote address, the Lt Governor exhorted the experts to keep Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) up to date and be more sensitive towards the needs of individuals diagnosed with life-threatening diseases, the well-being of families, alleviate pain and suffering and provide spiritual support.

Sinha asked the private sector to work with the administration to set up palliative care centers in backward and remote areas.

"In J&K, the administration in 2022 had set up 10-bed state-of-the-art palliative and geriatric care wards in all the districts. We have tried to bridge the urban-rural divide to a certain extent. Our aim is to de-

liver medical and psychological support at people's doorstep," he said.

The Lt Governor emphasized that all the experts and the IAPC should work together to promote multi-sectoral partnerships so that a human resource pool of trained caregivers is made available.

"In Palliative care, the health ecosystem and healthcare professionals have a moral responsibility to reduce the pain and suffering of patients. Apart from adopting innovative approaches to pain management, healthcare professionals at all levels should be given training for continuity in the care of such patients," he said.

The Lt Governor made valuable suggestions for the seamless integration of curative care and Palliative care in the health ecosystem.

He suggested that uniform SoPs may be prepared for community awareness, palliative support and pain management at the district level.

"Palliative Care system is constantly evolving and we need to work on a strategic framework, SoPs and its effective implementation," he said.

Sinha highlighted the need to bridge the gap in healthcare facilities and special services for the ageing population.

He also suggested developing a comprehensive healthcare package that includes regular check-ups, geriatric care, mental health support and palliative care.

Schools Have Critical Role In Preventing Drug Abuse: Sakeena Itoo

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, Friday addressed the annual function of SGSD International School at Baba Jitto Auditorium SKUAIST here.

The Minister, who was chief guest on the occasion, in her address reaffirmed the government's special focus on health and education under the leadership of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, ensuring that necessary assistance will be provided to all institutions working for bringing vibrancy in these important areas.

She further highlighted the critical role of schools in preventing drug abuse among the younger generation. She urged the parents and teachers to extend cooperation to the government agencies in curbing this menace collectively.

Acknowledging the talent among the children of J&K, Sakeena appreciated outstanding cultural performances and the talent displayed at the event. She emphasized the importance of schools in shaping the future of young minds, helping them realize their dreams of becoming doctors, administrators, engineers or social workers.

"Constructing a building is not the big thing, what truly matters is how much we con-



tribute to its functioning," she said, adding that the government is committed towards supporting schools like SGSD in their mission.

Minister for Agricultural Production, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election departments, Javed Ahmad Dar, also attended the program.

He lauded SGSD International School for its commitment towards providing quality education and empowering students to excel in academics and sports. He appreciated the school's dedication towards ensuring holistic development of the children enrolled there.

Encouraging the students to keep learning and upgrading their skills in line with modern advancements, the Minister described SGSD International School as a model institution

contributing significantly to the upbringing of responsible and capable citizens.

The Minister assured that the government will extend all possible support to help such schools grow and continue their mission of academic excellence and social development.

During the programme, the students presented various cultural programs showcasing multi-cultural and traditional folk and local dance forms of various states.

The event also included a felicitation ceremony honouring young achievers in academics and sports on the occasion.

Among others, former Minister, Ajay Sadhotra; Principal Anil Pathanya, Administrator Manjit Singh; Chairman Sant Tejwant Singh and Trustee Baldev Singh were also present on the occasion.

Peaceful Lok Sabha, Assembly Polls Testament Of Progress: Prez Murmu



Agencies

NEW DELHI: Describing peaceful conduct of Parliamentary and Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir as a testament of progress, President Droupadi Murmu on Friday said that the Union Territory has seen a positive shift towards development after the scrapping of Article 370.

Addressing a joint sitting of Parliament here, marking the beginning of this year's Budget Session, President Murmu, said "Since the abrogation of Article 370, Jammu and Kashmir has seen a positive shift towards development. The peaceful conduct of both the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections stands as a testament to this progress, and the people of Jammu and Kashmir deserve recognition for their contribution to this achievement."

"There have been significant changes in Jammu and Kashmir

following the abrogation of Article 370," she added.

Referring to Kashmir getting train connectivity, President Murmu said, "I am happy to inform you that the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link project has been completed, and now the country will be connected by railway from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. Under this project, the world's highest rail bridge has been constructed over the Chenab River."

On national security, the President said, "The government has taken historic steps to protect the country's borders and ensure internal security."

She also spoke about progress in the defence sector. "The government has moved from 'Make in India' to 'Make for the World' in the defence sector," President Murmu said.

She said that in the last six months, the government has made record investments in future infrastructure—(KNO)

IICT Offers Unique Packaging Designs To Boost Sale Of Handmade Products



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Stressing upon customized packaging as a major prerequisite to boost overseas exports of exquisite hand-made Kashmir products, the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT) urged the business stakeholders to adopt unique packaging designs created in collaboration with the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Srinagar, to boost sales.

Keeping in view the niche markets Kashmir crafts cater to, IICT & NIFT together have developed innovative packaging in GI registered crafts of papier mache, shawl, tweed, khatamband and carpet.

In a statement issued here today, Director IICT, Zubair Ahmad, described packaging as an inseparable part of the famed Kashmir handicrafts, which facilitates its foray into inter-

national markets in a big way. "Time has come for artistic packaging to create a unique unboxing experience of the famed arts of Kashmir and boost its market value," he stated.

Director IICT called upon business stakeholders associated with Kashmir Arts to carry out firsthand appraisal at its Nowshera campus and adopt various packaging prototypes developed, catering to the market needs. "Kani shawl costing upwards of ₹2.00 lakh deserves aesthetic packaging which works like an icing on the cake," he added, while stressing upon innovative and affordable packaging to compete in international markets.

He further stated that IICT has so far developed 36 box prototypes in 05 crafts with focus on different types of packaging material, list of vendor prototype dimensions and costing details.

3 Drug Peddlers Arrested In Kashmir

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police on Friday said to have arrested three drug peddlers in Budgam & Handwara and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

Police Post Mochwa received information from reliable sources that a person Saqlain Mushtaq son of Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat resident of Batpora Chadoora has concealed contraband substance at his residential house. Following the information, a search warrant was obtained from Hon'ble Court. Subsequently, a police team of Police Post Mochwa raided the house and conducted the search in the presence of the concerned Executive Magistrate, a police spokesman said in a statement.

During search, 545 grams of charas like substance, 230 grams of grinded charas like substance and 33.10 Kg of semi grinded cannabis leaves were recovered from the said location. He was accordingly arrested and a case under relevant sections of law has been registered and investigation has been initiated, police said.

In Handwara, during naka

checking at Baghatpora Crossing, a police team from Police Station Handwara intercepted a suspicious individual carrying a bag. During the search, 8.93 grams of heroin-like substance was recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Ashiq Ahmad Shah son of Mohd Subhan Shah resident of Kachwari Handwara. In another operation at Badkote Handwara, a police team intercepted a person identified as Bilal Ahmad Najjar son of Gh Nabi Najjar resident of Badrehar Handwara. During the search, 63 grams of charas-like substance was recovered from his possession, police said.

Regarding the incidents, police said that cases under relevant sections of law have been registered in Police Station Handwara. Investigations are underway to trace further links in the drug trade.

J&K Police remains resolute in its mission to eliminate drug-related activities in the area and safeguard the community. The general public is requested to remain vigilant and report drug peddling activities to the nearest police station, ensuring collective action against the menace of drug addiction and trafficking, the statement reads.

World Wetlands Day

DoWP J&K To Host Bird Photography Competition

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Department of Wildlife Protection, Jammu & Kashmir, in collaboration with the Wular Conservation & Management Authority, is set to host a bird photography competition in celebration of World Wetlands Day on 2 Feb 2025.

The competition invites nature enthusiasts and photographers to visit designated wetlands across Kashmir and capture stunning avian moments between 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. on 1 Feb 2025.

As per the officials, participants can explore Shallabugh,

Hokersar, Pampore, Hygam, and Wular Wetlands, which are rich in biodiversity and serve as crucial habitats for migratory birds.

Interested individuals can contact wetland authorities for further details and are required to submit their two best photographs via email at wetlands-kashmir@gmail.com.

The officials said that this initiative aligns with the global theme of "Ecosystem Restoration" under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, highlighting the importance of wetland conservation for ecological balance and sustainable futures.

Dy CM Lays Foundation Stone For Sports Block At GDC Nowshera



Observer News Service

NOWSHERA (RAJOURI): Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Friday laid the foundation stone for the much anticipated Sports Block at Government Degree College, Nowshera.

The project, to be established with an estimated cost of ₹208.50 lakh, aims to enhance sports infrastructure and provide better facilities for students and aspiring athletes.

The Deputy Chief Minister was accompanied by Additional District Development Commissioner Rajouri, Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa; Additional Deputy Commissioner Nowshera, Babu Ram Tandon; and other district and sectoral officers.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister emphasised the government's commitment towards promoting sports and physical fitness among the youth. He highlighted that the new Sports Block

would provide modern training facilities and encourage students to actively participate in various sports disciplines.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from faculty members, students, and local residents, who welcomed the government's focus on strengthening sports facilities in educational institutions.

Surinder Choudhary exhorted upon the executing agencies to ensure timely completion of the project while maintaining high standards of construction. He reiterated administration's resolve to develop robust sports infrastructure in the region, fostering a culture of health, fitness and excellence in sports.

The Deputy Chief Minister highlighted the importance of such infrastructure in nurturing talent at the grassroots level. He expressed optimism that the project would significantly contribute towards the overall development of students in the region.

Two Criminals Arrested After Gunfight In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Two alleged criminals were arrested after a brief gunfight in the outskirts of Jammu on Friday, police said.

One of the arrested criminals got shot during the encounter and was admitted in hospital, a police official said.

He said a police team rushed to Miran Sahib after getting information about the movement of two criminals armed

with a pistol.

The police came under fire when they tried to intercept the criminals, prompting retaliation, the official said, adding that one of the criminals was shot in the leg during the exchange of fire and subsequently both were nabbed.

He identified the injured criminal as Paramjit Singh alias "Jungli", a resident of Draptye village of R S Pura who is named in over half-a-dozen cases registered

against him in different police stations since 2011. He was admitted in Government Medical College Hospital for treatment under custody, the official said.

The other arrested gangster was identified as Arjun Kumar alias "Billu", a resident of Akhnoor who is presently living in Armia area, the official said.

He said an FIR has been registered under relevant sections of law and further investigation is on.

Govt Disallows AIP's Hunger Strike

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Authorities on Friday disallowed the Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) from holding a hunger strike in Srinagar, Jammu and Delhi in solidarity with its jailed leader and Member Parliament (MP) Er Rashid, the party here said on Thursday.

The party said they will seek fresh permission to hold a peaceful protest. It, however, condemned the move, calling it an attack on democratic rights.

They said several party leaders and workers, including the jailed MP's son, were detained.

Expressing disappointment over the authorities' refusal to grant permission for their peaceful protest, MLA Langate and senior AIP leader Sheikh Khursheed said they had formally sought permission but were denied to hold a hunger strike in support of their party chief Er Rashid.

MLA criticized the detentions, saying the government's



response was unjustified. "If the authorities had security concerns at Pratap Park, they could have allowed us to conduct the strike at our party office, as we had requested. Instead, our leaders and workers were detained. It is our right to stand with our leader," he said.

Asked whether Er Rashid has begun his hunger strike inside Tihar Jail, Khursheed said they have no direct contact with him. However, he confirmed that through legal counsel, Er Rashid had con-

veyed his decision to begin the hunger strike at 10:30 am.

Meanwhile, AIP vice president, G N Shaheen said they have "called off" the hunger strike protest call, and will discuss the future course of action after applying for fresh permission for the peaceful protest.

Shaheen said the party in no way will hold violent protests, but a peaceful one in solidarity with Er Rashid, who he alleged was denied his political rights. "It will be entirely within the parameters of law," he said.

Bukhari Demands Monthly Allowance For Unemployed Youth

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Apni Party President Altaf Bukhari has demanded that the central government provide a financial package for a monthly allowance to unemployed youth in order to give them some relief until they secure employment.

He said that "there are more than seven lakh jobless youth, mostly graduates and postgraduates, who should be given a monthly allowance of up to Rs 20,000 to ease their financial burden."

He made this and other demands while speaking to reporters after a crucial party meeting in Jammu.

Bukhari also called on the central government to double J&K's grant in light of the prevailing economic conditions and the financial chal-

lenges that the Union Territory (UT) is facing.

He said, "A significant amount of hydropower is being generated using the water resources of Jammu and Kashmir, yet the Union Territory derives only minimal benefits from it. Also, we are grappling with challenging economic conditions and financial hardships. In light of these circumstances, the Union government must take these factors into account and double J&K's grant, which currently stands at Rs 10,000 crore."

Furthermore, Bukhari urged the central government to allocate the funds for the proposed tunnels in Jammu and Kashmir so that reliable road connectivity is established here.

He said, "The Centre should also allocate funds for long-awaited

projects, such as tunnels at Sadhna Top and on the Gurez-Bandipora Road, as well as the proposed Vailoo-Kishtwar tunnel and the Peer Ki Gali tunnel on the historic Mughal Road. The construction of these tunnels would ensure reliable road connectivity between regions and provide all-weather access to remote areas across Jammu and Kashmir."

Responding to questions about the performance of the government, Altaf Bukhari said that "We are not going to judge the performance of this government so soon. However, the fact remains that the government itself admits its inability to perform. That said, I do not agree with the argument that two power centers are hindering the government's performance."

PCB Chief Naqvi Assures Readiness Of Venues For 2025 Champions Trophy

Press Trust of India

LAHORE: PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi on Friday sought to allay concerns about the country's preparedness for the upcoming Champions Trophy, stating that the three venues in Lahore, Karachi, and Rawalpindi are ready to host the ODI showpiece on the scheduled dates.

The Champions Trophy is set to begin on February 19, and there have been concerns about whether Pakistan will be ready in time for the marquee event, which features the world's top eight teams and will be held for the first time since 2017.

While the tournament



venues in Karachi and Rawalpindi are still partially under construction or undergoing renovation, the images emerging from those locations have not painted an entirely positive picture.

However, a confident Naqvi assured that Pakistan

and its venues are prepared to host the ICC event in a fitting manner.

"They were people from across the border and even others who kept on saying it looks like the Champions Trophy would be moved out of Pakistan as stadiums are

not going to be ready on time. But I can announce today we are set to go for the tri-series and Champions Trophy," he told reporters at the new look Gaddafi stadium.

Naqvi explained that while Gaddafi Stadium will be ready when it is inaugurated on February 7 by the Prime Minister, some work on the National Stadium in Karachi and Rawalpindi Stadium would continue after the tournament. However, he assured that all necessary work to ensure a top-class viewing experience for spectators and viewers would be completed by the time the National Stadium is inaugurated on February 11.

Srinagar's Qais Meets Top Tennis Player Rohan Bopanna

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Class 8 student Mohammad Qais, a resident of Srinagar, had the privilege of meeting World No. 1 doubles tennis player Rohan Bopanna, who offered him an opportunity to train at his academy.



Expressing his happiness, Mohammad Qais, while speaking to JKNS, said, "It was my pleasure to meet Rohan Bopanna. He assured me and my father that he will provide every possible help to train me."

"Rohan Sir assured me of every possible help and training and also offered me the opportunity to join his academy," he added.

Qais's father said Bopanna had visited the region to sup-

port underprivileged children aged 8 to 10. "I came to know about his visit, and through the J&K Sports Council, my son got the privilege to meet him," he said.

"Bopanna assured me that he will help my son and offered him a chance to train at his academy outside India,

where he will also be provided with education," he added.

Rohan Machanda Bopanna is a professional tennis player from India who specializes in doubles. He reached the world No. 1 ranking after securing his first Grand Slam doubles title at the 2024 Australian Open alongside Matthew Ebden, making history as the oldest player to achieve the top ranking for the first time at 43. (JKNS)

J&K Dominate Baroda On Day 2 In Ranji Trophy



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: On Day 2 of their Group A Ranji Trophy clash at Vadodara on Friday, J&K took control against Baroda, whom they had displaced from the top of the points table with a win over Mumbai last week.

J&K came up with a fine bowling display to dismiss Baroda for 166 and take an 80-run first-innings lead.

At stumps, J&K's lead had swelled to 205 with opener Shubham Khajuria, who had earlier taken 3/47, reaching 67 not out off 115 balls. Vivrant Sharma was on the other end, making 17 (32 balls) at stumps, with J&K at 125/1. Yawer Hassan Khan was the lone batter back in the pavilion, having

made a gutsy 36 (99 balls).

Earlier, J&K won the toss and decided to bat first, making 246 in their first innings. Wicketkeeper Kanhaiya Wadhwan top scored for the team with 71 (94 balls). Captain Paras Dogra and Vivrant Sharma both made 43 runs.

The J&K squad will now hope to continue their dominance on Day 3 at Reliance Cricket Ground in Gujarat and leave Baroda a mammoth total to chase.

Brief Scores:

Jammu and Kashmir 246 & 125/1 in 41 overs (Shubham Khajuria 67*) vs Baroda 166 in 62.1 overs (Shivlik Sharma 64; Sahil Lotra 4/26, Abid Mushtaq 3/56, Shubham Khajuria 3/47).



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