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PM To Flag-off Train To Kashmir **On February 17**



TUNNELS WITH COMBINED 38 LENGTH OF 119 KM

BRIDGES WITH COMBINED 927 LENGTH 13 KM

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Marking a significant milestone in the completion of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) Minister project, Prime Narendra Modi is all set to inaugurate a train to Kashmir on February 17.

Sources said that the Prime Minister will flag off the spe-cially designed Vande Bharat Express from the Jammu division while the arrangements are being made for the historic inauguration event.

"After years of hard work,

dedication, and engineering marvels, the dream of Kashmir's rail connectivity has finally come true with the Vande Bharat Express set to run on this route," they said.

Railway officials have been directed to make necessary preparations for the grand launch of the rail service on February 17. Authorities have decided that no leave will be sanctioned for the employees in the coming week to ensure the smooth execution of the event. As part of the USBRL project,

Indian Railways conducted multiple successful | More on P10

Modi Govt Committed To Terror-free J&K: Shah

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The central government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to a terror-free Jammu and Kashmir, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Tuesday.

Chairing a high-level meeting here to review the security scenario in J&K, Shah directed the Border Security Force (BSF) to ensure zero infiltration from the international border by adopting a strong vigil, strengthening the border grid and using advanced



technologies for surveillance and border guarding.

He also directed the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to continue with the synergy

with the Indian Army and Jammu and Kashmir Police while carrying out its duties in the Union Territory (UT).

minister

(Prevention) Act, was granted a two-day custody parole.

In his maiden speech in the

Lok Sabha, Er Rashid raised con-

cerns over recent civilian deaths

in J&K, asserting that the "blood

He demanded an impar-

tial probe into the deaths of

Waseem Ahmed Mir, who

was killed in alleged Army fir-

ing during a naka checking in

of Kashmiris is not cheap."

plan of the CRPF and directed the top officials of the force to ensure there are no gaps in area domination and focus on the Jammu region and dominate the heights. Shah said under the lead-

ership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the central government is committed to terror-free J&K, according to an official statement.

He emphasised the role of paramilitary forces in achieving the target of a terror-free J&K.

The home minister also reviewed the | More on P10

Affairs on the topic of 'Cyber Security and Cyber Crime' here Shah said, "To tackle cybercrime, we have adopted four types of strategies, which include convergence, coordination, communication, and capacity. All of these are being implemented with clear

JKP Launches SIM Card Verification Drive

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Police have launched a SIM card verification drive in several districts of Kashmir with the aim of ensuring that mobile phone connections are issued in compliance with the established procedures, officials said here on Tuesday.

"In a proactive effort to curb the rising instances of fraud and misuse of mobile phone SIM cards, police have initiated a comprehensive SIM card verification drive in several districts of Kashmir," the officials said.

They said the drive is aimed at ensuring that all SIM cards are issued in full compliance with established procedures. For this, the police officers visit SIM card vendors in their respective areas of jurisdiction for verification. | More on P10

Cybercrime Cases **MHA's Goal'**

'Zero

Asserting that the Ministry of Home Affairs' goal is to ensure zero cybercrime cases, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday spelled out a multipronged strategy to tackle the fraudsters. Chairing a meeting of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Home

objectives and a strategic | More on P10

THE VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS ALSO INCLUDES EMBEDDED heating elements in the windshield to automatically defrost the driver's front lookout glass, ensuring clear visibility in extreme winter conditions."

30 Sec Maiden Parliament Speech **Er Rashid Calls For Probe Into Civilian Deaths**

Observer News Service

New Delhi: Member of Parliament from Baramulla, Engineer Rashid on Tuesday attended the Lok Sabha proceedings for the first time after his election last year.

He was brought from Tihar Jail under custody parole granted by the Delhi High Court to participate in the ongoing Budget session.

Er Rashid, who has been

Delhi HC To

On Feb 24

Hear Bail Plea

in custody since 2019 in connection with a case un-

Baramulla and Makhan Din, der the Unlawful Activities who died by | More on P10

he Delhi High Court on Tuesday issue of lack of a forum to decide his listed for hearing on February 24 bail plea in a terror funding case. a plea by jailed MP Abdul Rashid Justice Vikas Mahajan deferred the

hearing after he was | More on P10

No Reason To Deny Passport To Militant's Brother: HC

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Tuesday said that there was no reason not to recommend the case of a person for issuance of passport just for the involvement of his brother in militancy activities.

Allowing a petition filed by one Mohammad Malik, a bench of Justice M A Chowdhary directed

Additional Director General of Police, CID to re-submit the report uninfluenced by the conduct or activities of the brother as well as Malik's father to Regional Passport Officer (RPO) within four weeks.

The court asked the RPO to consider case of the Malik, a resident of Ramban, on the report of ADGP CID and pass an appropriate order in Malik's favour within two

Being a diploma holder in Engineering, Malik submitted that he desired to go abroad in search of good job as a career and as such had applied for issuance of a passport | More on P10

weeks thereafter.

ORDINARY PORTLAND CEMENT

www.tcimax.co.in

Sheikh alias Engineer Rashid on the

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KASHMIR OBSERVER® Srinagar | Wednesday | 12-02-2025

What Kind Of Apologies By Chatbots Best For Gaining Customer Trust? IIM Lucknow Carries Out Study

Press Trust Of India

n IIM Lucknow study, examining the kind of apologies chatbots of online travel agencies (OTA) make to customers for service failures, showed that "concrete language" should be used for big failures and "abstract language" for minor issues.

Published in the Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, the study, co-authored by Payal Mehra, Professor at IIM Lucknow and research scholar Rishab Chauhan, examines how language used for apologies impacts customer acceptance and forgiveness.

Mehra said a concrete apology might say, "we apologise for the delay in processing your booking. Your refund of USD 100 will be credited within three business days" while an abstract apology might simply state, "we apologise for the delay. Your refund will be credited soon".

The research investigates which type of apology is more effective in helping customers forgive service failures and under what conditions. The researchers conducted three comprehensive studies to assess customers' responses to different

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general

public that in Adhar card bearing number 769816331422 of my

daughter the name and D-O-B

SOURIYA BASHIR D-O-B is 10-05-2011. Now i want its correction, in

this regard if anybody having any

objection may contact Concern department with in a period of

seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that. BASHIR AHMAD SOFI

R/o HARDA BATA PORA BUDGAM CELL. 6006478025

F/o SOURIYA BASHIR

entered as SURAYA BASHIR D-O-B 11-04-2008 while

actual name and D-O-B is



apology styles.

Participants interacted with chatbots, designed using the "Bot Penguin" platform, that were programmed to offer either abstract or concrete apologies following a simulated service failure. Using advanced research techniques such as confirmatory factor analysis, the researchers ensured the findings were reliable and applicable to realworld situations.

The results showed that concrete language is more effective in gaining customer forgiveness for significant failures, while abstract language is more suitable for minor issues.

"While much research has focused on traditional customer service channels like phone calls or face-to-face interactions, this study is among the first to examine how chatbot language affects customer forgiveness in the context of OTAs," Mehra told PTI.

The study found that customer preferences for the language of the apology were not influenced by the type of service—whether the service was pleasure-oriented or use-oriented.

The research also highlighted that sincerity and empathy are critical in chatbot communication. When customers sense the company genuinely cares about resolving their issues, they are more likely to forgive. A concrete apology, which includes specific details about the resolution, conveys a sense of sincerity, it said.

The findings suggest that using concrete, personalised and clear language in chatbot apologies increases customer forgiveness, enhancing satisfaction and word-of-mouth.

"Chatbots should adopt an abstract apology style for minor issues, avoiding unnecessary details while assuring customers of the company's commitment to their satisfaction. For more significant problems, a concrete apology is more effective, providing details and emphasising the company's efforts to prevent recurrence.

'These findings have implications beyond the OTA sector, extending to industries such as retail, banking, healthcare and telecommunications. The research team suggests that future research could explore the impact of chatbot apology language in different cultures and service sectors and investigate other language styles used in customer service," she said.

Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

Sub. Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth.. PUBLIC NOTICE..

The registar birth EO Pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Faizan Ashraf S/o Muhammad Ashraf Lone R/o Resraypora Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 01/03/2012 occurred at SDH pattan.in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

fko

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

SYED BAHA U DIN MEMORIAL

HIGH SCHOOL KANISPORA BARAMULLA

CONTACT NO.: +91-9469104566/9906585436

infosbmhs@gmail.com

Fee Structure for the Academic Session 2024-2025

Tuition Fee (Rs)

1000/

1000/

1000/

900/

900/

800/

l800/

|750/

750/

650/

6<u>50</u>

Principal

SBMHS Kanispora

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my passport PEERZADA FAYAZ AHMAD S/O NIZAM U DIN PIR bearing passport no 8491857999 while my correct name is FAYAZ AHMAD PIR S/O NIZAM U DIN PIR Which needs to be correct if anybody having objection in this regard he/she may file his her objection in the office PASSPORT OFFICE SRINAGAR within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name: Fayaz Ahmad Pir S/O Nizam U Din Pir R/O Putukha Muqam DISTT. : BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

Ab Rashid Bhat F/o Sheeba Rashid R/o Pirpora Shopian want to correct my daughter's name in Adhaar records which has been wrongly entered as Sheeba Jan instead of Sheeba Rashid also DOB of my daughter is wrongly entered as 13-03-2009 instead of 11-10-2009. Now I have applied for the correction of the same. 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. Ab Rashid Bhat

PUBLIC NOTICE

F/o Sheeba Rashid

R/o Pirpora Shopian

In Adhaar Records my name has been wrongly entered as Mohammad Ashraf Mochi instead of Mohd Ashraf Mochi .Now I have applied for the correction of the same 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. Mohd Ashraf Mochi S/o Abdul Rashid

R/o Woyen Tehsil Barbugh District Shopian

8th 7th 6th

5th

4th

3rd

UKG

LKG

fko

Nursery

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

Subject: - Application of Muneeb Tariq Ganie S/o Tariq Ahmad Ganie R/o Burzawashan Tehsil Kreeri for the issuance Of EWS (Economically Weaker Section)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the Subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of EWS in favour of his -- Namley Muneeb Tariq Ganie S/o Tariq Ahmad Ganie In this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village Burzawashan

The details of the family of the applicant is as follows

	Name Of the Family Member	Relationship with the Family Head	Age	Occupat ion	Annual Income
01	Tariq Ahmad Ganie	Father	45	Labour	
02	Shabnum Amin	Mother	42	Angan- wadi Worker	
03	Muneeb Tariq Ganie	Self	18	Student	
04	Muhaib Tariq Ganie	Brother	14	-	

According to report of patwari concerned, the applicant's family has not more than 5 acres of land and does not have greater than 1000 ft of Residential House. The applicant has not any Residential house or Residential plot in municipal area, the applicants Residential plot is not more than 200 sq ft and the applicant's family income is not more than 8 lacks Per Year Moreover the applicant does not belong to any Backward Area.

Therefore, through this Public Notice Objections are being sought from general public, if any person has any objection, he/ she can submit their objections In the office of the undersigned within 07 days (Seven days) positively from the date the notice has been published No objection shall be entertained alter the stipulated time period.

fko Naib Tehsildar

PUBLIC NOTICE 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 10th,) under Roll No. 117021051 Session Annual Regular Year 2024. Through the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed by the School Oxbridge Valley School Narkara against my Fathers Name as Gulam Ahmad Paul instead of Ghulam Moham-

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, afterthe expiry of said period, no objection will be entertained. This is published for the information of the general public. The Cor-

rect particulars be recorded as under: Name: Zeeshan Gul, Fathers Name: Ghulam Mohammad Paul, Mothers Name, Saleema Bano

Date of Birth: 29-03-2009, Residence:- Narkara Budgam. Cell: 6006694036

Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject Application of Mohd Ashraf Chopan S/o Mohd Ramzan Chopan R/O Authoora Reshipora Tehsil Kreeri for issuance of OBC (Other Backward Classes) in favor of Self

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the Subject cited above the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of OBC In this connection a report of patwai halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant In currently residing In village Authoora Reshipora and belongs to the Chopan Community having annual Income of Rs 476408 (Four Lakh Seventy Six Thousand Four Hundred and Eight Rupees) The details of the family of the applicant are as follows:

No Member ship with the Family Head ship wit	١	S	Name of the family	Relation-	Age	Occupa-	Annual
ily Head 01 Mohd Ashraf Chopan Self 43 Labour 476408. 2 Mohd Ramzan Cho-Father 65 Rtd Emply. pan 03 Taja Begum Mother 62 h/w 4 Rehana Begum Wife 40 5 Sehrish Ashraf Daughter 16 Student 6 Abrar Ashraf Son 15	١	No	Member	ship with		tion	Income
01 Mohd Ashraf Chopan Self 43 Labour 476408. 2 Mohd Ramzan Cho-Father 65 Rtd Emply. pan 03 Taja Begum Mother 62 h/w 4 Rehana Begum Wife 40 5 Sehrish Ashraf Daughter 16 Student 6 Abrar Ashraf Son 15	١			the Fam-			
2 Mohd Ramzan Cho-Father 65 Rtd Emply.	١						
2 Mohd Ramzan Cho-Father 65 Rtd Emply.	١	01	Mohd Ashraf Chopan	Self	43	Labour	476408
03 Taja Begum Mother 62 h/w 4 Rehana Begum Wife 40 5 Sehrish Ashraf Daughter 16 Student 6 Abrar Ashraf Son 15	١	2	Mohd Ramzan Cho-	Father	65	Rtd Emply.	
4 Rehana Begum Wife 40 5 Sehrish Ashraf Daughter 16 Student 6 Abrar Ashraf Son 15	١		pan				
5 Sehrish Ashraf Daughter 16 Student 6 Abrar Ashraf Son 15	١	03	Taja Begum	Mother	62	h/w	
6 Abrar Ashraf Son 15	١			Wife			
	١			Daughter	16	Student	
7 Aleena Ashraf Daughter 5 Infant	١						
	١	7	Aleena Ashraf	Daughter	5	Infant	

Therefore, through this Public Notice Objections are being sought from general public, if any person has any objection, he she can submit their objections In the office of the undersigned within 07 deys (Seven days J positively from the date the notice has been published No objection shall be entertained alter the stipulated time period.

Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Kreeri

Sub: Application of Ali Mohammad Mir S/o Mohammad Shaban R/o Banqdara Reshipora for issuance of iNCOME Dependent certificate.

NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, in this context. As per the death certificate and report submitted by the patwari concerned which reveals that the applicant's family consists of 04 members and the annual income of the applicant family from all sources consists of Rs 10000/-. moreover family stucture of the applicant is as under. C NO MAME OF DEDEN DELATION AGE OCCUDA

S. NU	NAME OF DEPEN-	RELATION	AGE	UCCUPA-
	DENT	WITH DE-		TION
		CEASED		
1	Ali Mohammad Mir	Self	58	Labour
2	Saja Begum	Wife	65	H/w
3	Shaheena Akhter	Daughter	34	h/w
4	Tahir Ahmad Mir	Son	30	Student

It is further submitted that Ali Mohammad Mir S/o Mohammad Shaban Is Labour by profession and is sole earning in the said family. The applicant needs income dependent certificate in favour of Shaheena Akhter for marriage assistance. The applicant has applied for issuance of Dependent certificate . As such the instant matter is published through news paper, if any one is having any kind of objection may approach this office within 7 days (Seven Days of the publication of this notice after passing of stipulated time of 7 days (Seven Days), no objections will be entertained.

The number plate of my bike (registration JK01V 1448) was lost while traveling from Nagbal to

Serch, Ganderbal. I am applying for a duplicate. If anyone has objection, please report at the ARTO Office Srinagar within 7 days. No objections will be entertained after that.

PUBLIC NOTICE MISSING NUMBER PLATE

Mr. Showkat Ahmad Zargar S/O: Haji Ghulam Hassan Zargar

R/O: Narparista Fatehkadal, Srinagar

Ph No: 0194-2478193

tko

0194-2479930 (Tele/fax)

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR INDUSTRIAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

(An ISO 9001:2008 Certified Institute)

CAMPUS 1: Bagh-i-Dilawar Khan, SrinagarCAMPUS 2: Zainakote, Srinagar E.mail: itisrinagar@gmail.com Website: www.itisrinagar.org

ADMISSION NOTIFICATION FOR SKILL TRAINING UNDER PMKVY 4.0 SP(2024-25)

A target of 270 has been assigned to ITI Srinagar under PMKVY 4.0 Scheme in six job roles as defined below. Applications on prescribed Registration forms are invited for admission to below mentioned job oriented short term courses under **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY 4.0) Scheme 2024-25** in Govt. ITI Srinagar. The admission cum registration forms can be obtained from the office of Principal ITI Srinagar free of cost or downloaded from ITI website www.itisrinagar.org w.e.f. 08-02-2025 to 22-02-2025. Eligible Candidates can apply online also through Skill India Digital Hub Portal (SIDH). The application forms completed along with the following self-attested documents should be deposited in the office of ITI Srinagar by or before **22-02-2025**.

- 1. Marks certificate of qualifying exam prescribed for the Job Role (Xerox copy).
- 2. Date of Birth certificate preferably 10th class Marks certificate (Xerox copy).
- 3. Aadhar Card (Xerox Copy).
- 4. Bank pass book (Name of Bank, Address, Branch Name, 16 Digit Account No, IFSC code)
- 5. Passport size photographs (two no's).

Note:

- The training is entirely free of cost .
- Minimum age bar for admission is 14 years and there is no upper age limit.
- All the benefits as envisaged under PMKVY 4.0 will be allowed during and after the training. • For admission to programme, preference will be given to learners living in local community.
- Admission will not be given to students who have taken similar type of training from this Institute or other training centres under the same scheme (PMKVY 4.0).
- Learners should attend theory / practical classes at the time slots allotted to them Students who will successfully complete this PMKVY 4.0 Programme are entitled to get NSDC
- certificate on completion & qualifying of assessment process in accordance with NSDC norms
- Biometric attendance will be mandatory for all the trainees • Candidate with Minimum 70% Attendance can appear in the Examination

Further information and Notice is also available on ITI website www.itisrinagar.org

S.No	Name of the Sector	Name of the Job Role	Minimum Education Qualification and Experience	Target Fixed
1	Green Jobs	Solar PV Installer (Electrical)	12th grade Pass - with Science or Equivalent and NA Experience ,10th grade pass and 3 Years Experience . Renewable energy/power sector experience,10th grade pass - with 2 years of any combination of NTC/NAC/CITS in relevant trade and NA Experience ,Previous relevant Qualification of NSQF Level - 3.5 (Solar PV Site Survey Assistant) and specialized - 1.5 years of Renewable energy/power sector experience, Previous relevant Qualification of NSQF Level-3.0 (Assistant Technician - Solar Panel Installation) and 3 Years Experience - of Renewable energy/power sector experience.	45
2	Management	Office Assistant	10th grade pass, Previous relevant Qualification of NSQF Level - 2.5 and 1-2 Years Experience - 1.5 years of experience	30
3	Automotive	Four Wheeler Service Technician	10th Class - from recognised board and 1-2 Years Experience ,Certificate-NSQF - Four Wheeler Service Assistant Level 3 and 1-2 Years Experience	45
4	IT-ITeS	Software Developer- IT Services	Graduate - Statistics/ Science/Technology/ Mathematics, 12th Class - Math Stream and 3 Years Experience - in IT Job Roles	60
5	Electronics	Field Technician-Air Conditioner	8th grade pass with 2 years of NTC - plus 2 year of NAC/relevant experience,10th grade pass - plus 2 year NTC/NAC/relevant,12th Class, Certificate-NSQF - level 3 in Maintenance Technician and 2 Years Experience	45
6	Plumbing	Water Pump Operator	8th Class - + I.T.I (Plumbing) and 2 Years Experience - relevant,12th Class	45
TOTAL Target				

DIPK-11823/24

(Mohammad Ashraf Wani) Principal (Sr.Scale) Govt.ITI Srinagai

No: ITI /Sgr/2025/1988-93

Educa

Highest Level Qualification

Dated: 10-02-2025

Kushal PMKVY Scheme 4.0 Bharat STUDENTS REGISTRATION FORM Skill Centre Name: Sector Name

		emale / Transgender
her's Name	Mother's	Name
te of Birth	Aadhar Car	d Number:
sidential Address	Tempor	rary Address
te/U.T	District	City
code	Phone Number (With STD	Code)
bile No	E-mail Address	

Addrary Bank Details						
Name as it appears on Aadhar Card						
Aadhar No.						
Bank Name Branch Name						
Bank Account Number IFSC Code						
Annual Family Income (in Rs) Kindly tick whichever is applicable						
1) Below 1 lac 2) Below 2 Lacs 3) 2-3 Lacs 4) 3-4 Lacs 5) Above F	our Lacs					

Educa	tional Qualifi	cation	
2) Below 2 Lacs	3) 2-3 Lacs	4) 3-4 Lacs	5) Above Four L

Year of Passing

tional Level (Tick whichever is applicable):					
8 th Class	2) 10 th Class	3) 12 th Class	4) Graduate (Specify stream)		

Distt Admin Organizes Awareness Workshop On Cyber Security



with observance of Safer Internet Day 2025, District administration Srinagar organized a day long workshop on Cybersecurity Awareness here.

Themed around "Together for a Better Internet" the workshop aimed to promote safe and responsible internet usage, particularly among children and young people, while addressing the growing challenges of cyber security.

Commissioner Deputy Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion, while addressing the participants underscored the importance of digital safety and responsible online behaviour & also highlighted the increasing risks posed by cyber threats.

He emphasized on promoting cyber security awareness to ensure a safer and more responsible digital future for citizens.

While commending NIC

among citizens, the DC reaffirmed the administration's commitment to strengthening cyber security measures and educating the public on responsible internet usage.

He also emphasized the need for regular cyber security awareness initiatives in the future.

On the occasion, Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Syed Ahmad Kataria highlighted the need for proactive cyber security awareness in today's digital landscape.

Cybercrime experts from the Police Department during the programme provided insights into emerging cyber threats, law enforcement strategies, and best practices for online security. Discussions covered key topics such

ants understa The event concluded with a vote of thanks by the District Informatics Officer, NIC Srinagar, Syed Mujadid who acknowledged the contribu-

tions of guest speakers, and

participants.

Shopping Complex Catches Fire At Goni Khan Market



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- A fire broke out in the upper section of a shopping complex at Goni Khan Market in Srinagar on Tuesday morning.
An official said that, fire

broke out in the upper section of a shopping complex at Goni Khan Market on Tuesday morning.

Fire and emergency services rushed to the spot and launched an operation to douse the flames. The cause of the fire and the extent of the damage could not be ascertained

Meanwhile, officials said no casualties were

Soldier Shoots Self To Death

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A soldier, Satyajeet Kandhol, son of Sajjah Singh from Panipat, Haryana, allegedly shot himself with his service rifle at Badami Bagh Cantonment, where he was posted with 20 Rashtriya Rifles (RR) E

Authorities are investigating the incident, and his body has been sent for postmortem.

The reasons behind his action remain unknown. Suicide among security personnel is a growing concern, prompting mental health initiatives. (CNS)

Shameema Firdous Presides Over **One Day Women's Convention**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference State Women's Wing President and MLA Habbakadal Shameema Firdous Tuesday said that the 50 percent turnout of women J. voters in recently held Legislative assembly elections is a significant achievement that will advance the cause of democracy in Jammu and

She made these remarks while addressing a women's convention at the party headquarters Nawa-e-Subha Srinagar. The convention presided over by Shameema Firdous was attended by women's wing district and

block office bearers.

Shameema emphasized the high turnout as a reflection of how women in the region view democracy as a means to change their fate, which has been impacted by successive governments since 2014.

She noted that the Omar Abdullah-led cabinet exemplifies a gender-balanced approach. She said, "We must increase the number of women in politics to create policies that better address women's needs and concerns."

Shameema further emphasised that NC has taken pioneering steps forward for the full participation of women in politics and increasing their stake in nation-building.

History Sheets Of 53 Habitual Drug Peddlers Opened In City: Police

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a significant step wards curbing illegal drug traf-Srinagar Police on Tuesday mally opened 53 gainst habitual lice stations in the district.

This action, sanctioned by the District Police Headquarters, Sri-

He said the individuals identi-

Despite multiple arrests and te gal actions, these offenders have the drug menace continued their illegal operations, statement added

ety and order, the statement offenses, particu- hind bars are also implicated in a rcotic Drugs and range of other criminal activities, ostances (NDPS) including fraud, assault, and organized drug trafficking, underscor-

OF SENGERS have continued their illegato threat to public safety and order, the statem



ment and urges the pu

port these efforts by

Div Com Reviews Physical, Financial Status Of Works Under SMRDA

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri who is also Additional Chief Executive Officer, Srinagar Metropolitan Regional Development Authority, (SMRDA), convened a meeting of concerned officers to review the physical & financial status of the works under SMRDA.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner, SMC; Additional Deputy Commissioners of Srinagar, Kulgam, Budgam & Bandipora; Vice (R&B), senior officers of I&FC, Wullar-Manasbal Development Authority, Town Planning, Soil & Water Conservation, SDM west, Srinagar, Sindh Forest Division, Executive Engineers of R&B.

Div Com reviewed the status of



developmental works at different sites in Srinagar, Kulgam, Bandipora

Addressing the meeting, Div Com directed all the executing agencies to speed up the pace of ongoing works on projects of public importance in-

cluding community halls, parks, pathways, besides upgradation of Parimpora Bus Stand & Transport Nagar.

He also urged departments to process the bills for the release of funds to complete projects within stipulated time.





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

PDD: 0194-2450213 FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES:

2479488,2452222,2452155 CAPD: 18001807011

SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081 Ambulance: Kashmer EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259

ANANTNAG: 01932-228243 BARAMULLA: 0194-102029 BIJBHERA: 01932-228243 PAMPORE: 01933-294132

PATTAN: 01954-293507

QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS



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



PRAYERS FAJR 5:55 **ZUHR** ASR 4:32 Magrib 6:14 ISHA 7:36

Day In History

1502 - Muslims in Granada forced to convert to Catholicism Vasco da Gama sets sail from Lisbon, Portugal on his second voya e to India

of Dordrecht between emperor & ecclesiastical

1700 - The Great Northern War begins in Northern Europe between Denmark-Norway, Saxony and Russia and the Swedish Empire.

1818 - Chile gains independence from Spain.

1832 - Ecuador annexes Galapagos Islands 1861 - State troops seize US munitions in Napoleon,

Arkansas, during the US Civil War 1886 - 2nd British government of Salisbury forms

1912 - The last Qing Emperor of China, Puyi abdicates after

losing the support of the Chinese people and thus the mandate of heaven 1915 - Adolf Hitler receives the relatively common Iron Cross

second class for bravery in World War I 1921 - Winston Churchill becomes British Minister of Colonies

1934 - The four-day February Uprising, sometimes called the Austrian Civil War, begins.

1935 - Great airship, USS Macon, crashes into Pacific Ocean 1953 - USSR breaks relations with Israel

1954 - The UK government establishes an organisation to control atomic energy in the country under The Atomic **Energy Authority Bill** 1955 McGuire Sisters' "Sincerely" single goes #1 & stays #1

for 10 weeks

1955 President Eisenhower sends 1st US advisors to South

vietnam 1955 - Soviets decides space center built in Baikonur,

Kazakhstan 1960 - Chinese army kills 12 Indian soldiers

1964 - Fighting breaks out between Turks and Greeks over dispute islands in Cyprus and 16 are killed; the UN responds the following month by sending a peacekeeping force

1965 - Nuclear test at Pacific Ocean

From KO Archives

Cabinet Gives Nod To Qazigund-Baramulla Rail Project

Observer News Service

EW DELHI: The Centre today decided to take up work on war footing on Qazigund-Baramulla rail project, while the work on Udhampur- Qazigund railway project has been abandoned for the time being for financial reasons.

The decision to this effect was taken at the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) which was chaired by Prime Minister Atal Bihari a Vaipavee

Railway Minister Nitish Kumar, who briefed newsmen after the CCEA, said the prestigious project has been handed over to the IRCON International and is expected to be completed-by the year 2003 year.

However, the government decided to abandon for the time being Udhampur-Qazigund Rail Project due to rough terrain and financial constraints.

He said the funds for the project will be made available by the centre so that the work is executed expeditiously. The Railway Ministry had already allocated Rs 75 crores for the preliminary work of the project. Nitish Kumar said the Jammu and Kashmir government has already completed acquisition of land for laving the track.

Infact work has already begun for the construction of Srinagar Railway Station.

The Project will help in transportation of goods in the Valley and ease pressure on the choked roads of the Kashmir Division. While the IRCON International will be the main contractors for the project, small works will be allocated to local contractors. The Minister said that it was felt that the Udhampur-Oazigund Project would take a long period to complete as it involves huge amount and technical expertise. So the Cabinet was of the view that the work on the Qazigund sector should be taken up immediately. The Minister said funds will not come in the way of the completion of the project.

The much-publicised project, Udhampur-Qazigund-Baramulla, which will cost Rs 2500 crores, was announced by Prime Minister I.K. Guiral in 1997.

Nitish Kumar said that special incentives will be given to employees, who will be deputed for the execution of the project. This include insurance cover for Rs 15 lakhs each and free board-

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 12 February, 1999)

'This is Bharat, Its Primary Language Sanskrit': Birla

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: DMK MP Dayanidhi Maran on Tuesday alleged that taxpayers' money was being wasted by providing simultaneous interpretation of Lok Sabha proceedings in Sanskrit due to RSS ideology, prompting Speaker Om Birla to hit back saying Sanskrit has been the primary language of India



A visibly upset Birla said simultaneous interpretation of House proceedings was not limited to Sanskrit alone but other recognised languages too.

"Simultaneous interpretation will be available in Hindi and Sanskrit." Birla said.

Soon after the Question Hour concluded, Birla said he was happy to announce that six more languages -- Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Manipuri, Sanskrit and Urdu

-- have been included in the list of languages in which simultaneous interpretation was available

He said besides English and Hindi, simultaneous interpretation is available in Assamese, Bangla, Gujarati, Kannada, Malyali, Marathi, Odiya, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu.

When Birla made the announcement, DMK members started raising slogans prompting the Speaker to ask Maran what his "problem" was.

Maran said while he welcomed simultaneous interpretation of official state languages, he had objections to Sanskrit interpretation as it was "not communicable".

He cited the 2011 population survey to claim that Sanskrit was spoken by 73,000 people. "Why should taxpayers' money be wasted because of RSS ideology," he said.

Birla hit back, asking the DMK member which country he was residing in.

"This is Bharat and its primary language has been Sanskrit. I said 22 languages, not Sanskrit alone. Why do you object to Sanskrit. There are 22 recognised languages in Parliament. Simultaneous interpretation will take place in Hindi as well as Sanskrit," he asserted.

Relief To Adani? Trump Pauses Enforcement Of Foreign Bribery Law

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: US President Donald Trump signed an executive order directing the Department of Justice to pause enforcing a nearly half-century-old law that was used to launch a bribery investigation against the Adani Group.

Trump signed an order to pause enforcing of the 1977 Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) that prohibits American companies and foreign firms from bribing officials of foreign governments to obtain or retain business.

The President directed US Attorney General Pam Bondi to pause enforcement of FCPA, which was at the heart of some of the US Department of Justice's most high-profile cases, including an indictment against Indian billionaire and Adani Group head Gautam Adani and his nephew Sagar.

Last year DoJ under President Joe Biden charged Adani for allegedly being part of a scheme to pay over USD 250 million (about Rs 2,100 crore) bribe to Indian officials in exchange of favourable terms for solar power contracts.

This was concealed from the US banks and investors from whom the Adani group raised billions of dollars for the project, the prosecutors had alleged last year citing FCPA that allows pursuing foreign corruption allegations if they involve certain links to American investors or markets.

The pause and the review is being seen as a relief to the Adani Group but it remains to be seen what stand the DoJ takes after the six-month review period.

The order that Trump signed



asked "the Attorney General to review guidelines and policies governing investigations and enforcement actions under the FCPA" in 180 days.

"During the review period, the Attorney General shall cease initiation of any new FCPA investigations or enforcement actions. unless the Attorney General determines that an individual exception should be made," it said.

Also it sought "review in detail all existing FCPA investigations or enforcement actions and take appropriate action with respect to such matters to restore proper bounds on FCPA enforcement and preserve Presidential

foreign policy prerogatives". FCPA investigations and enforcement actions initiated or continued after the revised guidelines or policies are issued "shall be governed by such guidelines or policies; and must be specifically authorized by the Attorney General"

After the revised guidelines or policies are issued, the Attorney General shall determine whether additional actions, including remedial measures with respect to inappropriate past FCPA investigations and enforcement actions, are warranted and shall take any such appropriate actions or, if Presidential action is required, recommend such actions to the President, it added.



Trump's ultimatum to Hamas

'Free Hostages By Saturday Or Let Hell Break Out'

Agencies

Washington: US President Donald Trump said on Monday that Hamas should release all hostages held by the militant group in Gaza by midday Saturday or he would propose canceling the Israel-Hamas ceasefire and "let hell break out.'

Trump cautioned that Israel might want to override him on the issue and said he might speak to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

But in a wide-ranging session with reporters in the Oval Office, Trump expressed frustration with the condition of the last group of hostages freed by Hamas and by the announcement by the militant group that it would halt further releases.

"As far as I'm concerned, if all of the hostages aren't returned by Saturday at 12 o'clock, I think it's an appropriate time. I would say, cancel it and all bets are off and let hell break out. I'd say they ought to

Tehran: Iran's Commission of

National Security and Foreign

tions with any country result in

harm to Iran's sovereignty or eco-

nomic well-being, then pursuing

such talks would be unjustified

Iran's Commission of National

Security and Foreign Policy has

declared that engaging in nego-

tiations with the United States is

not prohibited but is ultimately

detrimental to national interests.

In a statement released on Mon-

day, the parliamentary commis-

sion asserted that past diplomat-

ic engagements with Washington

have seriously damaged Iran and

that any future talks must be

carefully assessed to prevent fur-

The commission noted that Iran's

foreign policy is guided by the

principle of protecting the inter-

ests of the Iranian people, and

Agencies

and irrational.

ther damage.

be returned by 12 o'clock on Saturday," Trump said.

He said he wanted the hostages released en masse, instead of a few at a time. "We want 'em all back.

Trump also said he might withhold aid to Jordan and Egypt if they don't take Palestinian refugees being relocated from Gaza. He is to meet Jordan's King

Abdullah on Tuesday. The comments came on a day of some confusion over Trump's proposal for a US takeover of Gaza once the fighting stops.

He said Palestinians would not have the right of return to the Gaza Strip under his proposal to redevelop the enclave, contradicting his own officials who had suggested Gazans would only be relocated temporarily.

In an excerpt of an interview with Fox News channel's Bret Baier broadcast on Monday, Trump added that he thought he could make a deal with Jordan and Egypt to take the displaced

Talks With Washington Harmful But

Not Forbidden: Iran Parliament

The commission

noted that Iran's foreign

principle of protecting the

people, and all diplomatic

policy is guided by the

interests of the Iranian

efforts must align with

all diplomatic efforts must align

with this objective. It warned that

if negotiations with any country

result in harm to Iran's sover-

eignty or economic well-being,

then pursuing such talks would

The statement further stressed

that dealing with "arrogant pow-

ers that support terrorism, such

as the United States," would have

dangerous consequences for

Iran's national security.

be unjustified and irrational.

this objective

Palestinians, saying the US gives the two countries "billions and billions of dollars a year."

Asked if Palestinians would have the right to return to Gaza. Trump said: "No, they wouldn't because they're going to have much better housing.'

"I'm talking about building a permanent place for them," he said, adding it would take years for Gaza to be habitable again.

In a shock announcement on February 4 after meeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington, Trump proposed resettling Gaza's 2.2 million Palestinians and the US taking control of the seaside enclave, redeveloping it into the "Riviera of the Middle East.'

IGNITE THE REGION

Trump's suggestion of Palestinian displacement has been repeatedly rejected by Gaza residents and Arab states, and labeled by rights advocates and the United Nations as a proposal of ethnic

The commission's stance echoes

recent remarks by Iran's Su-

nreme Leader Sayved Ali Khame-

nei, who stated that part experi-

ence has proven that engaging in

negotiations with "such a govern-

ment [...] is unwise, not intelli-

On February 4, US President

Donald Trump signed an execu-

tive order imposing "maximum

pressure" on Iran, with measures

aimed at eliminating Iranian oil

exports as part of a broader effort

to cripple the country's economy.

In response, Iranian President

Masoud Pezeshkian stated that

Iran would not be intimidated

by these threats, noting that the

country has multiple alterna-

tives to generate revenue and

As diplomatic tensions persist,

Iran's leadership has made clear

that its approach to foreign policy

will prioritize national resilience

over negotiations that could com-

sustain its economy.

promise its sovereignty.

gent, and not honorable.

PM Modi meets Macron, JD Vance at Paris dinner ahead of AI Summit

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi was welcomed with a hug by French President Emmanuel Macron at a welcome dinner ahead of co-chairing the AI Summit in Paris.

"Delighted to meet my friend, President Macron in Paris," Modi posted on X on Monday.

memorable welcome in Paris! The cold weather didn't deter the Indian community from showing their affection this evening. Grateful to our diaspora and proud of them for their accomplishments," he said.

Modi and Macron will also hold discussions in both restricted and delegation formats and address the India-France CEO's Fo-

In his departure statement,



At the dinner, the prime minister also met US Vice President JD Vance, who is also in France to attend the AI Summit.

"PM @narendramodi interacts with President @Emmanuel-Macron and USA @VP @JDVance in Paris," the Prime Minister's Of fice said in a post on X.

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Modi arrived in Paris for the first leg of his two-nation tour that will later take him to the US.

During his three-day visit to France, Modi will co-chair the AI Action Summit with Macron in Paris, hold bilateral talks with him, and address business leaders. He received a grand diaspora welcome as he landed in Paris. "A bilateral segment of his visit will provide an opportunity to review the progress on the 2047 Horizon Roadmap for India-France strategic partnership along with "my friend" President Macron. On Wednesday, the two lead-

the prime minister said that the

ers will visit Mazargues War Cemetery, maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in Marseille, to pay tribute to the sacrifices made by Indian soldiers in World War I.

They will inaugurate the newest Consulate General of India in Marseille.

This is Modi's sixth visit to France, according to officials.

Lottery Distributors Not Liable To Pay Service Tax To Centre: SC

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Lottery distributors are not liable to pay service tax to the Union government, the Supreme Court held on Tuesday while dismissing an appeal of the Centre on the issue.

A bench comprising Justices BV Nagarathna and NK Singh did not agree to the appeal of the Centre against th Sikkim High Court judgement.

"Since there is no agency in the relationship, the respondents (lottery distributors) were not liable to pay service tax. However, the respondents will continue to pay the gambling tax levied by the state under Entry 62, List II of the Constitution," Justice Nagarathna said while pronouncing the verdict.

"Service tax is not leviable on the transactions between the purchaser of the lottery tickets and firm...In view of the aforesaid discussions, we find no merit in the appeals filed by the Union of India and others. Hence, these appeals are dismissed." the bench said.

Upholding the Sikkim High Court verdict, the top court said it is only the state government that can impose taxes on lotteries and



not the Centre

The Centre had contended that it was entitled to impose service tax.

The top court said the high court was right in holding that the lottery comes within the expression "betting and gambling" which is part of Entry 62 of the state list of the Constitution and only the state can impose the tax.

The Centre had moved the top court in 2013. The high court judgement had come on a plea filed by lottery firm Future Gaming Solutions Pvt Ltd.

Mukesh Ambani, family visit Maha Kumbh

eliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani visited Maha Kumbh on Tuesday with his family and participated in a yagya at Parmarth Triveni Pushp in Arail, officials here said. According to a statement issued by Parmarth Niketan, besides Mukesh, Kokilaben Ambani. loka Ambani, Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant visited the Parmarth Triveni Pushp. Swami Chidanand Saraswati, who presided over the ritual, said the Ambani family honoured sanitation workers and boatmen with angvastras, sweets, fruits, hygiene kits and other gifts.

The family participated in the Vishwa Shanti Yagya praying for "global peace and welfare", the release said.

NEET aspirant found hanging in Kota; 7th suicide this year

MAKERS

n 18-year-old NEET aspirant from Swai Madhopur district hanged himself in his PG room early on Tuesday, police said. Ankush Meena did not leave behind

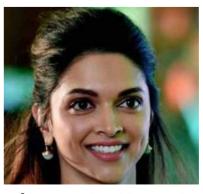
Police, however, surmised that he killed himself over a love affair.

According to police, Ankush had been preparing (for NEET-UG) in Kota for over one and a half years and living in a PG in Pratap Nagar.

He was found hanging from a ceiling fan on Tuesday morning by a cousin of his who lives in the neighbourhood, Circle Inspector at Dadabari police Station Menge Lal Yadav said.

His body was sent for post-mortem, and the matter is under investigation. A case has been lodged under Section 194 of the BNSS Act, he said.

I was weak in maths: Deepika on 'Pariksha Pe Charcha'



ctor Deepika Padukone says she was a naughty child who would jump from one sofa to another and was weak in maths as she went down memory lane during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Pariksha Pe Charcha

The PM shared the clip where Padukone discusses her student days on his

"Among the most common topics #ExamWarriors want to discuss is mental health and wellbeing. Therefore, this year's Pariksha Pe Charcha has an episode specially dedicated to this topic which will play tomorrow, 12th February. And we have @deepikapadukone, who is very passionate about this subject, talking about it," he wrote on the microblogging site.

Padukone, who was diagnosed with clinical depression in 2014, was part of an episode of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha', an annual event in which the prime minister interacts with students appearing for board examinations.

In the brief clip from the episode, which will be telecast on Wednesday at 10 am, Padukone said: "I was a very naughty kid. I would climb and jump on sofas and chairs. Sometimes we stress a lot. I used to be weak

in maths and continue to be.' Padukone also praised the prime minister for advocating expression over suppres sion in his 2018 book 'Exam Warriors'.

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kash-

mir government has directed

that disaster-prone areas on the

twin routes leading to the Am-

arnath cave shrine be marked

before the start of the annual

pilgrimage later this year, an

passed the directions to deputy

commissioners of Anantnag

and Ganderbal at the 14th high

level committee meeting of the

Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board

The meeting was convened

Monday to discuss the arrange-

ments for the yatra which usual-

ly takes place in July and August.

fered their prayers at the shrine,

housing the naturally formed

ice-shivling, last year.

Over 5.12 lakh pilgrims of-

The chief secretary stressed

on marking of the disaster-

prone areas on both the routes

-- traditional 48 km Nunwan-

Pahalgam route in Anantnag

and 14-km shorter but steep

Baltal route in Ganderbal -- so

that no utilities, including tents

management, relief rehabili-

tation and reconstruction de-

SRINAGAR: Police in north

Kashmir's Baramulla district

have arrested eight individu-

als, including a carpenter, for

allegedly inciting and assist-

ing a mentally unstable man in

constructing a replica of a holy structure in Waripora Kunzar.

Officials said that Abdul

Razak, a resident of Waripora

Kunzar believed to be men-

tally unstable, was misled and

encouraged by the accused to

reactions from locals, prompt-

Station led by SDPO Tangmarg

and SHO Kunzar detained eight

suspects and registered formal

cases against them. "Legal pro-

ceedings are underway," a po-

have lauded the police re-

sponse, urging a thorough in-

Meanwhile, the residents

BJP Committed To J&K's

ing swift police intervention.

The incident triggered strong

A team from Kunzar Police

build the structure.

lice official said.

He directed the disaster

8 Arrested For Inciting

Build Holy Structure

Mentally Unstable Man To

are pitched in such areas.

Agencies

(SASB) here, the official said.

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo

official said on Tuesday.

JK Govt Directs Marking Of

Amarnath Route Before Yatra

partment to coordinate with

the district administrations

concerned regarding framing of

SoPs for ensuring safe yatra for

The chief secretary asked

the pilgrims, the officials said.

the deputy commissioners con-

cerned to facilitate all the service

providers so that the facilities

created at each location are ap-

propriate and sufficient for both

departments, including Pub-

lic Works Department, Power

Development Department, Jal

Shakti, Rural Development De-

partment, Housing and Urban

Development Department, Bor-

der Roads Organisation, Tele-

communication, to complete

the necessary tendering and

other contract related processes

The chief secretary also took

stock of the budget require-

ments of all departments to

carry out the necessary works

and procurements to be made

Other issues which came up

for discussion was deployment

of adequate manpower by the

health department for making

the base hospitals functional

besides other health facilities

quiry to prevent similar inci-

Earlier, Police in a statement

said that they apprehended an

individual, Abdul Razak Lone of

Waripora Kunzar, whose video

had gone viral on social media.

The said individual had con-

structed a structure resembling

the Holy Kaaba, which was later

voluntarily demolished by lo-

mentally unsound, police said.

Preliminary inquiry suggests

Police also urged the general

public to refrain from spreading

rumors or misinformation re-

garding this incident on social

media or any other platform and warned of strict action.

maintain peace, communal har-

mony, and cooperate with law en-

forcement agencies. Any concerns

or suspicious activities should be

reported to the police through of-

ficial channels", police statement

issued earlier reads—(KNO)

"We request all citizens to

cals during the night.

hat the individual appe

dents in the future.

enroute, the official said.

for the yatra.

in the upcoming month itself.

The chief secretary asked all

the devotees and facilitators.

Disaster-Prone Areas On

Omar Should Have Raised Kathua, Sopore Deaths With **Amit Shah: Mehbooba**

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Omar Abdullah should have raised the death of two youths in Sopore and Kathua during his meeting with the Union Home Minister Amit Shah, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Tuesday

"There were two deaths recently. A truck driver Waseem was killed in "In such a situation, army firing from we had expected close range, the docthat the chief tors have confirmed minister would it, and the other was raise this issue with 25-year Old Makhan Din who was torthe Home Minister tured by police so during his recent much that he commeeting," Mufti told mitted suicide. reporters here.

"In such a situation, we had expected that the chief minister would raise this issue with the Home Minister during his recent meeting," Mufti told reporters here.

The former chief minister also flagged police brutality in the Union Territory, demanding that they be indicted.

"He should have raised this issue with the Home Minister and told him that the militancy has to be fought against but if an innocent is harmed by an army personnel, that personnel should be identified and punished. We are not saying that the entire army is bad

"There are complaints against

the SHO in Billawar that he is arresting youth and extorting money from them. Those who do not pay, he locks them up in militancy cases. You must have seen the video of Makhan Din. It was terrifying," she said.

Mufti said that while striving for restoration

of statehood was all good, the right to life should be given preference.

"Statehood will be restored -- if not today, tomorrow or sometime later. However, statehood will matter when people have (right to) life. So, I think Omar Sahib should have raised this issue with the Home Minister," she

On being not permitted the vouth's family in Sopore, Mufti said she cannot allow her par-ty to be treated like a militant organisation.

"PDP is an opposition party, we are not a militant organisation. It is our duty and right to stand with the victims of any injustice. On the day of these incidents, I wanted to visit Sopore and Iltija wanted to go to

"However, without any information or reasoning, our gate was locked and we were not allowed to move out. What is

CS Chairs 7th State Broadband Committee Meet



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Tuesday chaired the 7th State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting for smooth implementation of National Broadband Mission (NBM) across Jammu & Kashmir at Civil Secretariat here.

The meeting was attended by Committee members including Commissioner Secretary Forest, Ecology & Environment; Commissioner Secretary Information Technology Department; Commissioner Secretary Housing & Urban Development Department; Secretary Public Works (R&B) Department; Member Convenor, Addl. DGT, J&K LSA, DoT, Jammu; CGM, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd., J&K, representatives of the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) and Digital Infrastructure Providers Association(DIPA).

Principal Secretary Power Development Department; Secretary Rural Development & Panchayat Raj; DCs of Jammu, Samba, Udhampur, Srinagar, Shopian, and Baramulla districts also attended the meeting.

The meeting deliberated at length on action points of 6th SBC meeting decisions; 4G Saturation Project being executed by BSNL; RoW; 5G implementation Plan; Call Before u Dig (CBuD); BharatNet/Amended BharatNet Project and other issues.

While addressing the meeting, the Chief Secretary called for intensifying the saturation of implementation of the National Broadband Mission in Jammu and Kashmir. He maintained that seminal progress has been achieved and enjoined upon officers for greater coordination among departments and agencies to resolve impediments at the earliest to achieve the target

The Chief Secretary directed DCs for conducting DLTC meeting for CBuD and resolution of site allotment issues for erection of towers at district level.

While reviewing the provision of electricity connections to Mobile Towers, the Chief Secretary instructed concerned staff to reflect the actual position on ground and update the entire data.

Meanwhile, the Chief Secretary reviewed the status of RoW applications like received, approved, rejected, withdrawn, in-process and pending cases. Future, he directed for integration of CBuD with GatiShakti portal for management of overall progress and fast-tracking applications—(KNO)

GMC Anantnag Restarts TMT Services

Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: In a significant development, Treadmill test (TMT) services in GMC Anantnag that were at a halt for the last eight months have been restarted on Tuesday.

In addition to restarting the services, one more advanced TMT Machine (Schiller 320) has been added to help the cardiology division of internal medicine to cater to the huge rush of patients, reads a statement issued to Kashmir Observer.

Principal and Dean GMC Anantnag Prof Rukhsana Najeeb, who inaugurated installation of one more TMT machine, played a pivotal role in restarting the much needed services of TMT at the facility, as reported by International cardiologist Dr Syed Magbool.

Dr S Maqbool further said that the addition of a new highend Schiller 320 machine to the already existing one will make it possible to test two persons

simultaneously for the procedure, which is going to happen for the first time in any of the Govt. run medical colleges of Jammu and Kashmir.

International cardiologist Dr Shamim Iqbal said that the TMT is a simple test used to diagnose the most common killer disease of the world. Dr Showkat Hussain Shah, another interventional cardiologist working at GMC Anantang said that anybody with chest pain on exertion and particularly with risk factors needs to undergo a test to determine whether he requires an angiography or not.

The Principal congratulated both the departments for making a new beginning and hoped that other departments will also come forward to help us to make GMC Anantnag one of the best colleges in the whole country. She thanked Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir for supporting GMC Anantnag in upgrading infrastructure and enhancing manpower strength at the facility—(KNO)



CM Visits Sonamarg Fire Site, Assures Support To Affected

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday visited the market in Sonamarg area of Ganderbal district where a fire broke out to assess the situation and assured his full support to the affected.

A massive fire broke out in Sonamarg resort town of Ganderbal district on Saturday, damaging several shops and restaurants.

"Visited Sonamarg today, where a devastating fire caused significant damage to several shops, impacting many livelihoods. Assured the affected shopkeepers of full support, with immediate relief already announced. The government stands with

them and will take all necessary steps to ensure their rehabilitation and recovery," Abdullah wrote on X.

The chief minister was accompanied by his advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, Member of Legislative Assembly Kangan Mian Mehar Ali and Ganderbal Deputy Commissioner Jatin Kishore.

During his visit, he inter-acted with members of the Sonamarg market association, extending his sympathies and assuring them of the government's full support.

Abdullah later chaired a meeting with the Sonamarg market association, attended by several officials, including the DC, SSP, SDM Kangan, CEO Sonamarg Development Authority (SDA) and other officers.

The meeting focused on demands of immediate financial assistance, permission for building reconstruction and the establishment of a fire service station in Sonamarg.

Abdullah emphasized the reconstruction of shops with a well-planned design, developed in consultation with all stakeholders, including the Tourism Department, District Administration, and SDA.

He assured the traders that a permanent fire station would be established in the area.

The National Conference leader also announced that financial assistance under Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) for the affected shops has been approved.



OMAR EMPHASIZED THE RECONSTRUCTION OF SHOPS WITH A **WELL-PLANNED DESIGN,** developed in consultation with all stakeholders, including the Tourism Department, District Administration, and SDA.

2 Soldiers Killed In IED Blast **Near LoC In Jammu**

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Two Army personnel, including a captain, were killed and another was injured when suspected terrorists set off an improvised explosive device (IED) near the Line of Control (LoC) in the Akhnoor sector near here on Tuesday officials said.

This was the third incident of cross-border action by terrorists in the Jammu region in four days. It came a day after the general officer commanding of the Army's Jammubased White Knight Corps unit, Lieutenant General Navin Sachdeva, reviewed "hostile activities" along the LoC in Rajouri district.

The Army confirmed the fatalities in the blast and said "own troops are dominating the area and search operations are underway".

The officials said the troops were on patrolling duty when they were hit by the powerful explosion near a forward post in the Bhattal area of Akhnoor in Jammu district at around 3:50 pm.

The injured personnel were rushed to a hospital where two of them, including the captain, succumbed to their injuries, they said, adding that the other injured soldier is "out of danger'

White Knight Corps, also known as XVI Corps, saluted the supreme sacrifice of the two soldiers.

"Suspected Improvised Explosive Device blast reported in #Laleali in Akhnoor Sector during a fence patrol, resulting in two fatalities. Own troops are dominating the area and search



operations are underway.

"White Knight Corps salutes and pays tribute to the supreme sacrifice of two gallant soldiers," it said in a post on X.

In a post on X, the Northern Command of the Army identified the fallen soldiers as Captain Karamjit Singh Bakshi and Naik Mukesh.

'(General officer Commanding-in-chief, Northern Command) Lt Gen. M V Suchindra Kumar and all ranks of Dhruva Command solemnly salute the supreme sacrifice of bravehearts Capt. Karamjit Singh Bakshi and Naik Mukesh in a suspected IED blast in Akhnoor.

"Dhruva Command stands firm with the bereaved families in this hour of grief," the post read.

On Monday, a soldier was hit by a bullet from across the border while manning a forward post in the Kalal area of the Nowshera sector in Rajouri district, while on February 8, an Army patrol came under terrorist fire from a forest across the LoC in Rajouri's Keri sector. The terrorists were apparently waiting for an opportunity to sneak into the Indian side.

The Indian troops had also

fired a few rounds in retaliation and subsequently, the anti-infiltration grid was strengthened to keep a tight vigil in the area.

GOC White Knight Corps, along with GOC Ace of Spades and GOC Crossed Swords divisions, visited forward areas of the Rajouri sector for an operational update on the prevailing security situation and the hostile activities," the Army had said in a post on X.

The post, shared by White Knight Corps from its official social media handles, said the corps commander complimented all ranks for their vigil and relentless operational

He also urged them to remain prepared for all contingencies, the Army had said.

In the intervening night of February 4 and February 5, a land-mine explosion reportedly resulted in some casualties of terrorists attempting to infiltrate into the Indian side from across the LoC in the Krishna Ghati sector of Poonch district.

However, there was no official word on the possible terrorist casualties in the blast.

Development: Chugh Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh on

Tuesday said that the party remains committed to the and development security of Jammu & Kashmir, stating that abrogation of Article 370 and 35A granted greater rights to the people Speaking to media

persons in Jammu, Chugh said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah have already made commitments regarding statehood restoration.

"When the Prime Minister himself has spoken about statehood in the Lok Sabha, why should we demand it separate-

> ly?" he said. He added that statehood would be restored at the right time and urged political leaders including CM Omar Abdullah to focus on fulfilling their own promises to the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

Chugh said that every BJP worker, whether a legislator or a party member, has the right to express their views in line with the ideology of Shyama Prasad Mukherjee—(KNO)

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the death certificate of my father Gh. Hassan Sofi S/o. Ab. Kabir Sofi R/o Khanagund (Sofigund) Tehsil Aripal, Tral who died on 04.02.2025. 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.

Mukhtar Ahmad sofi S/o Gh Hassan sofi R/o Khanagund (Sofigund) Teh: Aripal, Tral

J&K Records 4–5 Forest Fires Last Month: Officials ecosystem," the official said. inary data suggested that timely

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir witnessed around 4-5 forest fire incidents in the past 30 days, however, the timely alerts and swift action by authorities helped to contain the damage, said officials.

A top officer from the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) said that while the exact number of reported forest fire cases was yet to be compiled, prelimalerts helped minimise damage.

The top officer stated that the two major alerts received in the last month led to quick responses from District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs), Fire and Emergency Services, and other concerned agencies. "Thanks to the alerts, the response time was swift, ensuring that there was no loss of life. However, there has been damage to vegetation and the

He said the alerts were issued through an integrated portal of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), which consolidated inputs from the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), Forest Survey of India (FSI), Geological Survey of India (GSI), and other agencies. The State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) then disseminated this information to

district-level responders.



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🔪 KO VIEW Pitch For Statehood

n his fresh meeting with the Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi, the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has once again pushed for statehood for Jammu and Kashmir. While the Centre has its own roadmap which it has been keeping close to its chest, the CM Omar wants early statehood to implement his election promises.

The CM's problems have mounted with his government being increasingly seen as an extension of an extension of the Lieutenant Governor's administration. He can barely help this. In a union territory, this is how an elected government is expected to operate: It has jurisdiction over development function but as for major administrative decisions, it has to largely be subservient to the LG. But along the way, many issues crop up with the elected government finding it challenging to straddle expectations of the people and the need to follow the LG's orders. This creates a disconnect with people. If people do not feel they have a stake in the system, alienation will only grow.

The killing of a civilian in Sopore and suicide of another in Kathua following alleged police torture are a case in point. The chief minister's point—that militancy cannot be eliminated in a vacuum—rings true. Security forces alone cannot bridge the gap between the administration and the people. That can only happen through dialogue, accountability, and a genuine effort to bring governance closer to

Beyond security, there is the question of development. Omar's discussion on tweaking industrial and tourism policies to attract investment is a necessary step. J&K's natural beauty is unparalleled, but tourism alone cannot sustain its economy. Industry, and entrepreneurship need to be nurtured. Jobs must be created for the youth so they feel invested in the region's future. The government's role should not just be maintaining order but enabling opportunity.

Omar's meeting with Shah is an attempt to find common ground. The Centre holds the cards, but it must recognize that political legitimacy comes from the people. The issue of statehood cannot be pushed indefinitely into the future. People have spoken through the ballot box, and they expect their voices to matter. Engaging with the public, fostering transparency, and ensuring real governance - not just administrative control - are key to J&K's future.

And for that, statehood is important. A hybrid governance may have its benefits but it will always lack the uniformity of purpose and the need for accountability that come with an elected government.



Discipline and Short-Term Strategy for the Kashmir-based Investor

Irshad Mushtag

"nvesting in the stock market is often seen as a long-term endeavor, especially in developing countries like India, where economic growth can drive stock prices upwards over time. While some sectors thrive, others may falter, underscoring the need for a nuanced

It's crucial to understand that indices like the Nifty or Sensex don't rise every single year; market fluctuations are common, with some months or years showing declines. In bullish markets, it's easy to feel like a market expert as stocks steadily rise. However, the dynamics shift dramatically during bear markets, where strategies can often fail. Thus prioritizing risk diversification, asset management, and strategic stock allocation is more important than merely trying to time the market.

Learning to distinguish between bullish and bearish trends is key to making informed investment decisions. Historically, investors like Warren Buffett have achieved significant success, but even for him, returns have typically maxed out at around 19.80% annually. Therefore, aiming for a 20% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) is realistic and ambi tious, as this can grow your investment 40 times over 20 years.

For instance, Rs. 1 crore today could become Rs. 40 crores in two decades by compounding wisely. While investing typically requires much less energy and time compared to traditional business, a strategic and disciplined approach can yield impressive returns over time. Achieving a 20 to 30-times return on investment is feasible with patience and informed decisions. Hence, assembling a strong, diversified portfolio and staying steadfast during market downturns is crucial.

Additionally, increasing your Systematic Investment Planning (SIP) during market dips and considering one-time, lump-sum investments in reliable stocks can be advantageous. Trusted investment advisors and mentorship play vital roles in navigating this complex landscape.

In conclusion, for the Kashmiri investor, combining short-term strat egies with long-term discipline and understanding the economics of market cycles is essential. Equip yourself with knowledge, as it's a powerful investment, and always see market lows as opportunities to consolidate.

Excited to learn from the insights of @Irshad Mushtaq, Writer, Inves tor, Entrepreneur & Founder of M I Securities!Connect at misecurities@ bp.sharekhan.com.

Disclaimer: This article is for information only and doesn't offer investment advice. It's not an endorsement or an offer to buy or sell any financial products. If you decide to act on the information here, you do so at your own risk.

AAP's Lost Citadel

Can Honesty and Politics Coexist?



Feature: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal, outgoing Delhi chief minister Atishi and party MP Raghav Chadha. (ANI)

Ikkz Ikbal



Kejriwal's journey should be a lesson for every Indian. It should teach us that politics is not just about words and promises it is about the brutal realities of power and money. It should teach us that honesty in politics is not impossible, but it is nearly unsustainable

nere was once a man who promised to cleanse Indian politics. Arvind Kejriwal rose to power as a beacon of hope—a symbol of honesty in a system drowning in corruption. He spoke of change, of a political system where power belonged to the people, not to the rich and powerful. Delhi believed him. India watched in admiration. But today, his story stands as a cautionary tale—a tale of how politics in India crushes idealism, and how those who claim to fight the system often become

crores. A candidate for an MLA seat needs at least 5 crores. And running a political party? That costs hundreds of crores. Where does this money come from? It doesn't come from ordi-

nary people donating 10 and 20.

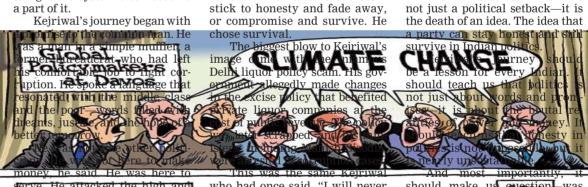
It comes from businesses, lobby-

ists, and funders-many of whom

expect something in return. If you don't have money, you don't win elections. And if you don't have power, you become irrelevant. Kejriwal, like every politician before him, realized this bitter truth. He had two choicesbecame entangled in controversies he once fought against. And worst of all, he stopped answering questions. The man who once demanded accountability from everyone suddenly became silent when his own government was under scrutiny.

It is a painful reality. Many Indians genuinely believed Keiriwal would be different. That he would not compromise. That he would stand by his principles, no matter what. But today, that belief stands shattered.

The AAP's defeat in Delhi is not just a political setback—it is



Stops to the tion of the country of

people that governance could be clean, that elections could be fought without black money, and that a new India was possible.

But as the years passed has words lost their weight His par-

ty, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which started as a movement, began behaving like any other political party. The leader who promised transparency now finds himself surrounded by allegations of corruption, illegal funding, and policy manipulation.

To understand Kejriwal's failure, we need to understand Indian politics. Elections in India are a game of money. A candidate contesting a Lok Sabha seat is estimated to spend around 10

who had once said, "I will never wrongdoing. Now he was defend ing those accused of massive francial irregularities.

This was not just a legal dedream of honest politics in India

came crashing down. Kejriwal's rise to power was built on the idea that politics could be done differently. That a party could win without black money, without muscle power, and without unethical practices. But in the end, he followed the same path as others.

He made alliances with parties he once called corrupt. He accepted donations from sources he once condemned. His government

Or was he just another politician wanted to hear? In the end, the dream of a cor-

ruption-free India remains just de that—a dream. And as for Kejriwfeat—it was an ideological defeat. It was the moment when the

as the man who changed politics, but as the man who proved, once again, that in India, politics and purity cannot go hand in hand.

> Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer The author has a PG in Biotechnology and is Administrator at Maryam Memorial Institute, Pandithpora Qaziabad. He tweets @IkkzIkbal



OBSERVER

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Nallah Ningli's Abysmal Condition Needs Urgent Attention

uring a recent walk near my native village, I was disheartened to find Nallah Ningli, a once-beautiful stream, in a severely degraded state. The vibrant waterway of my childhood, a place of cool breezes, soothing shade, and the delightful sounds of flowing water and birdsong, now resembled a deserted wasteland. Heaps of garbage littered the banks, and a foul stench permeated the air. It was the same stream, but transformed into a pathetic shadow of its former self.

Nallah Ningli, originating in the Affarwat mountains near Gulmarg, flows through numerous villages before joining the Jhelum River near Sopore. This vital tributary provides life-sustaining resources to the region, supporting horticulture, agriculture, and serving as the primary drinking water source for communities including Kandi, Wagoora, Kreeri, Sangrama, Sopore, and surrounding areas.

Unfortunately, the combined negligence of residents and government authorities has turned this precious resource into a cesspool. Domestic waste and garbage are routinely dumped along the banks, posing a significant health risk to the local population. The accumulation of domestic sewage, plastic, and other waste threatens to have disastrous consequences if left unchecked.

Nallah Ningli was once a thriving fish habitat, supporting local fisheries. While fish farms have been established along its banks, continued pollution threatens not only fish production but also the entire ecosystem of the stream. The open dumping of garbage and toxic waste also raises concerns about waterborne diseases, as the stream serves as a source for numerous Jal Shakti department wa-

ter supply schemes. Local residents have expressed their dismay at the stream's deteriorating condition, yet authorities, despite being aware of the problem, have seemingly turned a blind eye.

Adding to the crisis, illegal encroachments along the banks have further destabilized the stream. While protective walls have been erected in some areas following the devastating 2014 floods, many vulnerable stretches remain, posing a continued flood risk. These illegal constructions must be stopped, and reforestation along the banks, coupled with robust protective walls, is crucial for restoring the stream's health

Furthermore, the illegal extraction of materials such as sand, gravel. and boulders must cease.

At a time when the preservation of water bodies is a global priority, Nallah Ningli desperately needs attention. The escalating pollution is the primary cause of its decline. Without immediate intervention, this vital resource faces a silent death. The government's claims about sanitation and cleanliness under the Swachh Bharat

Mission ring hollow in the face of Nallah Ningli's plight.

A coordinated effort involving various government departments, including Health, Rural Development, Irrigation and Flood Control, and Fisheries, along with active community participation, is essential. An immediate large-scale cleanup drive, engaging local residents, is necessary

to remove the accumulated garbage. While government action is vital, community involvement is paramount. Residents must stop using the stream as a dumping ground and adopt responsible waste disposal practices. Public awareness campaigns focused on environmental conservation will also play a key role

in protecting this vital resource. Let us unite and act now to save Nallah Ningli before it is too late.

> Aarif Peerzada aarifpeerzada1@gmail.com.

Misplaced Preferences of our Society

Bilal Ahmad Khanday

Preferences give proper meaning to our lives, and they do the same for society. Once we keep our preferences in the order they should be, we are destined to cherish a life worth living. A society flourishes only when it gives proper preference to different activities, norms, customs, etc. Conversely, when it misplaces its preferences, the social order becomes disturbed, and as a result, its fall is bound to happen sooner or later. Our society is generally a Muslim society that operates primarily on Islamic principles and teachings. Unfortunately, we have failed to maintain a proper balance with regard to preferences. This leads to disorder within society, which ultimately gives rise to many social evils, becoming detrimental to its peace and prosperity.

Let me cite some examples: In every nook and corner of the valley, we have many mosques (Masjids) of all sects in every street (mohallah), which drain a significant portion of our income for lavish constructions and interiors. However, we hardly see well-run institutions of charity (Bait ul Mals). The primary function of Masjids is to unite the Ummah, but unfortunately, they are somehow dividing society on various pretexts, which we are all aware of. Had the money collected for Masjids been properly channeled to and utilized by Bait ul Mals, there would not have been hundreds of thousands of destitute, widows, orphans, and needy individuals in our society without proper financial and medical support.

Recently, a report published in a daily newspaper shockingly revealed that there are more than fifty thousand unmarried girls in one of the districts of the valley who have passed the age for marriage. And these are just official figures. Unofficially, the number would be even higher. If we take this data as a reference, it means there are more than five lakh unmarried girls in ten districts of the valley.

How many orphaned children do we have in every street who are either out of school or unable to get proper schooling due to financial burdens? Aren't there thousands of widows and destitute in our society who can barely make ends meet? Is it not true that there are many old age homes emerging in our society that lack proper fa-



cilities to accommodate our neglected parents and grandparents?

Social media is flooded with news about the poor, destitute, needy, orphaned girls, widows, and deserted parents and grandparents who need financial, medical, and psychological support. Yet, we, as a society, are busy constructing fancy Masjids and religious seminaries, because we have unfortunately been misinformed about the true teachings of religion by so-called religious scholars and preachers. I do not deny the role of religious preachers and scholars, but they must come clean with the public regarding the true and original teachings of the Quran and Sunnah, according to the correct preferences.

If we claim to be a Muslim society, we must be aware of the teachings and preferences Islam advocates. During the Prophetic era, we see that the Masjid al-Nabawi (Mosque of the Prophet) was built with the least available resources, such as mud, stones, and branches of date trees. However, proper care was taken of the poor, orphans, widows, and destitute, who were the primary responsibility of the state and were even given monthly stipends.

There is a narration that during the caliphate of Hazrat Umar (RA), some

of his companions demanded that the kiswa (cover) of the Kaaba (House of Allah) be replaced because it had become old and tattered. They insisted on covering it with a new one, but Hazrat Umar (RA) said that his primary concern, rather his duty, was to feed the needy and the poor, and he would be held accountable for this on the Day of Judgement. So, he gave preference to the needy, the poor, the orphans, and the destitute over the Masjid. The same principle applies to us in letter and spirit, but unfortunately, we are misplacing our preferences, which leads to many social evils within society.

Given this, the need of the hour is to prioritize preferences in a proper and efficient way, channeling our wealth to the institutions that serve us in the best possible way, making our society vibrant, peaceful, and prosperous. We can offer prayers in traditional Masjids, but the hunger and needs of the destitute cannot wait. Let us pledge to make our Bait ul Mals financially strong and administratively vibrant, in order to make our society a better place to live.

The author can be reached at for feedback at: khandaybilal12@gmail.com

Breakup With Black-and-White Approach Towards Creative Writing



Gowher Majeed Bhat

ashmir has long been a land of poets, storytellers, and dreamers. From the timeless works of Rasul Mir to the thought-provoking prose of Akhtar Mohiuddin, creativity has always been woven into the fabric of this valley. Yet, many aspiring writers here, like elsewhere, struggle with a common creative roadblock-black-and-white thinking. The tendency to see writing in rigid, either-or terms often stifles creativity rather than nurturing it. Should I write for passion or profit? Should I focus on one project or multiple? Should I follow strict outlines or write

The truth is, writing is never that simple. The best creative work emerges not from choosing one extreme over the other but from embracing complexity, nuance, and flexibility.

A struggling Kashmiri writer often finds themselves caught in absolutes. If their book doesn't sell, they assume they've failed. If they're not writing every day, they feel like they're not a real writer. If they draw inspiration from others, they fear they're not original enough. This kind of thinking creates unnecessary pressure, often leading to creative blocks or even abandonment of writing dreams altogether. In a place where storytelling has historically been a means of preserving culture and identity, such self-imposed limitations can be especially damaging.

But writing isn't about absolutes. The best authors navigate the middle ground between extremes. They write what they love while also considering their audience. They balance discipline with moments of inspiration. They experiment with structure without losing coherence. Take, for example, the question: Should I write for myself or for the market? A black-and-white approach would say you must pick one. But in reality, great writers find a balance. They tell stories that matter to them while also making sure those stories resonate with readers. This isn't compromise—it's craft.

Take the case of Kashmiri author Mirza Waheed, whose novels such as The Collaborator and The Book of Gold Leaves have gained international recognition. Waheed's work beautifully blends deep personal storytelling with themes that are universally relevant. He writes about Kashmir's realities with an authentic voice, yet his work also appeals to global audiences. His success demonstrates that a writer doesn't have to choose between local and international appeal—both can coexist in a meaningful way.

In Kashmir, where the publishing industry is still developing, many writers struggle with the belief that traditional publishing is the only mark of success. This is another form of black-and-white thinking. While tra-

ditional publishing is valuable, digital platforms, self-publishing, and literary magazines also provide powerful ways to share stories. Many Kashmiri writers are now making their voices heard globally through these alternative paths. The rigid belief that only one route is valid often prevents aspiring authors from exploring new opportunities.

Similarly, the idea that a writer must produce a certain number of words every day to be successful is misleading. While consistency is important, creativity doesn't follow a fixed schedule. Some writers thrive on daily routines; others work best in intense bursts followed by reflective breaks. Writing is not a mechanical process—it's an art.

Overcoming black-and-white thinking requires a shift in perspective. Instead of choosing between two extremes, ask whether a middle ground exists. Instead of asking, "Should I write fiction or nonfiction?" consider whether you can incorporate elements of both. Instead of debating between short stories and a novel, think about how short stories could evolve into a larger work. Instead of asking whether you should write for love or money, ask how you can write what you love in a way that also connects with readers.

Experimentation is key. If you always outline before writing, try writing a few scenes spontaneously. If you usually write in firstperson, experiment with third-person. Breaking out of rigid habits can spark fresh ideas and expand your creative range. Most importantly, embrace the messiness of the process. Writing is not a straight road—it's full of false starts, revisions, and unexpected detours. Some of the most powerful stories emerge from moments of creative exploration rather than rigid planning.

Kashmir's rich literary tradition thrives because its storytellers have never been bound by rigid formulas. Creativity flourishes when we move beyond strict categories and embrace the richness of possibility. Writing isn't about making a single, perfect choice-it's about experimenting, evolving, and finding new ways forward. The next time you feel stuck between two extremes, pause. Look for the shades of gray. Creativity is not about absolutes—it's about discovery.

If we as Kashmiri writers allow ourselves to break free from rigid thinking contribute to a more diverse, dynamic literary culture. Whether through poetry, fiction, or memoir, our stories have the power to resonate across borders while staying rooted in our heritage. The world is waiting for our voices—we just have to embrace the freedom to write without limits.

> The author can be reached for feedback at: gowherbhat866@gmail.com

IN EVERY NOOK AND CORNER OF THE VALLEY. WE HAVE MANY MOSQUES (MASJIDS) OF ALL SECTS in every street

(mohallah), which drain a significant portion of our income for lavish constructions and interiors. However, we hardly see well-run institutions of charity (Bait ul Mals)

How to make a change in your life – and stick to it

Abigail Parrish

s there a change you'd like to make in your life? Perhaps you'd finally like to write the novel you've been thinking about for years. Perhaps you think you should start saving for a holiday or a deposit on a house or flat. May-be you would like to improve your fitness. That's great. But we all know it can be hard

to stick to these kinds of changes. Gym membership figures suggest half of new members quit within six months, and many of us have the evidence of once-loved hobbies scattered around our homes.

To write that book, for instance, you're going to have to find time to do it, and stick with it when the going gets tough and initial enthusiasm has worn off.

First, you should ask yourself why you're doing it.

My research looks at the psychology of making changes through the lens of what is known as self-determination theory, which proposes that there are different forms of motivation. These range from, for instance, being motivated to do something because someone is making you do it, to being motivated because you think it's fun.

Looked at like this, big changes, such as training for a new career, and smaller ones, like joining a weekly fitness class, are all the same. What matters is the reason you have for doing it.

Find the right reason You might have more than one reason for



making a change. Perhaps you want to start something because it's a TikTok trend and everyone else seems to be doing it, or maybe the suggestion is coming from someone in your life. These are external reasons to do something, and this type of motivation is less likely to lead to success.

Focus on the ones that are "internalised" – that come from within yourself. If you can find a reason why the change is important to you and you have your own motivation to make it, you're much more likely to stick with it. It needs to be something that is aligned with your values – something you believe in.

So what you're doing doesn't even have to be something you enjoy, as long as it's something you feel is important to you.

Think of deciding to save money, for example. This isn't an activity that is inherently fun for most people, but the act of saving might be important because of what it represents or leads to – the holiday at the end of it, or the house you could buy with the money you put away. When you start to waver in your goal, thinking of that personal reason will help you keep going.

There are two other important concepts from self-determination theory mixed up in the idea of an action being aligned with personal values. When you do something that comes from your values, you should be acting with autonomy - doing something you want to do, not something other people have made you do.

That's a key construct in the theory, but it can be hard to align with things like work or study. Perhaps your goal is to apply yourself at work or to get a good grade in your studies. But most people have a boss, or a supervisor, and their role is to instruct you on what to do.

If you're a teacher, you have to work to the school's timetable, whether you like it or not. But in the jobs where you are most motivated, you will be able to make some choices for yourself. Teaching is an interesting example of when this doesn't work, because in England this very structured job has become even more so in recent years, coinciding with a recruitment and retention problem in the pro-

Teacher autonomy is widely studied and considered important even outside of selfdetermination theory, and a perceived lack of autonomy is likely to be one of the reasons people might want to quit their job.

Eyes on the goal

The other really important thing is your goal in making the change. The best kind of goal is an autonomous one, relating to something that is intrinsically important to you. This might be competing at a high level in your sport, because it will give you joy and satisfaction to be the best you can be. This means you will put up with hardships and challenges, and you will keep going even after

By contrast, if your goal is an external one, you might find things more difficult. This includes if you're doing something for a reward, rather than because something is personally important to you. So if you want to write a bestselling novel to become famous or rich, you may find that as the going gets tough, your motivation slips and work grinds to a halt.

If you are doing something because other people want you to, even other people who care about you, you will struggle. This may mean that some changes are just not meant to be – or it might mean changing your mindset and how you look at the goals you are aiming for.

Try to get the support of people who care about you and who you care about, whether this be family and friends, or a new community at your sports club, for example. And finally, keep an eye on your goals. Any change which you are engaging in for yourself because you value it and can see the benefits, is likely to be a lasting one.

By arrangements with The Conversation

'Air Pollution, Extreme Weather May **Raise Risk Of Prolonged Pregnancy'**

Press Trust Of India

Exposure to air pollution and extreme temperatures during pregnancy could increase risk of a delay in delivery, according to an analysis of nearly four lakh births in Australia.

A prolonged pregnancy can have serious consequences for both the mother and child, with a need for medical interventions, including inducing labour. It can also increase risk of stillbirth, birth complications, and behavioural problems during early childhood.

While rising heat driven by climate change has been linked with premature births. researchers from Curtin University, Australia, said this is the first study to examine how climate exposure can affect a pregnant woman's health.

"We know that being 'born too soon' -- or preterm birth -- has well-documented health risks, but little attention has been given to the risks associated with being 'born too late'," lead author Sylvester Dodzi Nyadanu, from Curtin University's School of Population Health, said.

The findings, published in the journal Urban Climate, showed that "exposure to air pollution and biothermal stress during pregnancy increases the likelihood of prolonged pregnancies, particularly among mothers over 35 years old, first-time mothers, those living in urban areas, and those with complicated



We know that being 'born too soon' -- or preterm birth -- has well-documented health risks, but little attention has been given to the risks associated with being 'born too late

pregnancies," Nyadanu said. For the study, the re-

searchers analysed data of births in the state of Western Australia. Birth records contained sociodemographic and clinical information of both mother and baby.

Twelve per cent of the births studied were found to have resulted in 'prolonged pregnancies'.

"PM2.5 and extreme biothermal exposures increased the risk of prolonged pregnancy," the authors wrote.

"Our findings provide the first epidemiological evidence of the associations between fine particulate matter air pollution and biothermal

stress on the prolongation of pregnancy to (more than) 41 completed gestational weeks (late to post-term) with sociodemographic vulnerabilities," the authors wrote.

Nyadanu explained that environmental stress factors, such as exposure to climate extremes, have been linked with a stress response in pregnant women, with "subsequent disruptions in endocrine and inflammatory activities, which increase towards the end of pregnancy".

"This can either shorten gestation, leading to preterm birth, or lengthen gestation, resulting in prolonged pregnancy in some cases," the author said.

As extreme weather events occur more often under continued warming, more studies are needed to understand how maternal and child health could be affected.

"Healthcare providers, policymakers and pregnant women -- particularly those in vulnerable groups -- must consider climate-related exposures when assessing pregnancy risks and planning interventions," Nyadanu said.

Targeted policies and measures to prevent climaterelated health risks, including air quality regulations and public health initiatives, are needed, the authors said.

Lancet Report Estimates 5 Bn Globally Lack Access To Medical Oxygen, Poor Nations Most Affected

Press Trust Of India

Five billion people, which is nearly two-thirds of the world's population, lack access to medical oxygen, with the highest inequities in low-and middle-income countries, estimated a new Lancet Commission report.

Medical oxygen is essential in a healthcare system for treating patients, including those with surgery, asthma, trauma and maternal and child care.

It is also critical to a country's pandemic preparedness by helping prevent a repeat of the COVID-19 oxygen shortages and the mass fatalities that resulted, an international team of researchers said.

The report, by the Lancet Global Health Commission on Medical Oxygen Security, is the world's first estimate of how unequally medical oxygen is distributed, the gaps in coverage of patients in need, along with costs required to bridge these gaps.

In this study, the researchers said that 82 per cent of patients worldwide requiring medical oxygen live in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), and nearly 70 per cent are concentrated in South and East Asia, the Pacific, and sub-Saharan Africa.

The patients include those with acute medical and surgical conditions, and long-term oxygen needs due to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

However, less than one in three people needing oxygen for medical or surgical conditions receive the life-saving gas, due to gaps in service contact, readiness, provision, and quality, leaving almost 70 per cent of the patients without coverage.

The gaps are even higher in regions, including Sub-Saharan Africa (91 per cent) and South Asia (78 per



The patients include those with acute medical and surgical conditions, and long-term oxygen needs due to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

cent), the authors said.

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

Public Notice..

The registar birth EO Pattan has submitted a case file pertain-

ing to birth of Mohammad Sehraan Ganaie s/o Shakeel Ahmad

Ganaie R/o Bulgam Tehsil Sopore Distt baramulla with verified

date of birth 01/07/2020 occurred at SDH pattan in this con-

nection if any body having objection for issuance of said certifi-

cate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no

Public Notice..

The name of daughter has been wrongly written in her adhaar card as Nazrana Bano while her correct name is Nazreena Yousf

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.

S/o Ab Aziz Mir

Mohammad Yousuf Mir

R/o Bachoo Tehsil Pattan

SD

fko

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

The commission report also suggested recommendations for how governments, industry, global health agencies, academic institutions, and civil society can work together to strengthen health systems in providing access to medical oxygen.

The authors added that medical oxygen is a highly cost-effective investment to advance global public health that will accelerate the world's progress towards meeting the Sustainable Development Goals for health by 2030, and also help countries prepare for the next pandemic.

'Carbohydrate Cravings May Be Related To Overall Severity Of Depression'

Press Trust Of India

People struggling with depression may crave carbohydrate-rich foods, which could be "related to the overall severity" of their mental condition, according to a study.

Even though patients of depression, marked by a persistent low mood, tend to have less appetite, researchers, including those from the University of Bonn, Germany, said those with severe depression can sometimes develop food cravings.

"These changes can then lead to a change in body weight", corresponding author Nils Kroemer, a professor of medical psychology at the University Hospital Bonn, University of Bonn, said.

For the study, published in the journal Psychological Medicine, a group of 117 participants — 54 with depression and 63 healthy — were asked to complete a 'food cue reactivity task', by rating 60 food and 20 non-food items for whether they wanted' or 'liked' it.

The researchers found that people with depression showed lower levels of 'wanting' food, but not of



Further, "compared to carbohydrate-rich foods, patients with (major depressive disorder) reported lower liking and wanting ratings for high-fat and high-protein foods," the authors wrote.

They also found that such patients also had an increased crav-

ing for foods combining fat and carbohydrates, such as milk chocolate.

While a craving for carb-rich foods is generally related with a higher appetite, the study showed that "carbohydrate cravings are

more related to the overall severity of depression, especially anxiety symptoms," first author Lilly Thurn, currently a postgraduate student at Maastricht University, the Netherlands, said.

Given that these energy-dense foods appeal to the brain's reward system, the findings could help with developing better treatments for depression, the authors said.

"Since carbohydrate-containing foods control the reward response in the brain via different signalling pathways than fat and protein-rich foods, it may be possible to derive better treatment approaches from this," Kroemer said.

Public Notice..

The name of my daughter in her adhaar card as Haifa Sajad while her correct name is Hafsah Jan 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. Hakiem Saiad Hussain

S/o Hakiem Mohmad Sultan R/o Palhallan

FKO

My name and parentage has been wrongly written in adhaar card as Ghulam Mohammad Gouro S/o Mohammad Shuban Gouro while my correct name and parentage is Gula Gujree S/o Subhan Gujree 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. Gula Guiree

S/o Subhan Gujree R/o Khanpeth Tehsil Singhpora

FKO

Public Notice..

My name has been wrongly written in adhaar card as Rafiga Bano while my correct name is Rifat Bano 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.

Rifat Bano D/O Ghulam Uddin Ganaie R/O Palhallan Tehsil Pattan FKO

Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Kreeri

Sub: Application of Ruksana Begum W/o Late Tariq Gani R/o Thindima tehsil Kreeri for issuance of Legal Heir certificate. NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above ,in this context. As per the death certificate and report submitted by the patwari concerned which reveals that Tariq Gani S/o Abdul Gani Wani has passed away on 30/01/2025. The report of the patwari further depicts that the deceased has following Legal Heirs.

S. NO	NAME OF DEPEN-	RELATION	AGE	OCCUPA-
	DENT	WITH DE-		TION
		CEASED		
1	Abdul Gani Wani	Father	70	Rtd Emply
2	Ruksana Begum	Wife	42	H/W
3	Zamin Tariq	Son	12	Student
4	Sidra Tariq	Daughter	11	Student
	-			

The applicant has applied for issuance of Dependent certificate . As such the instant matter is published through news paper, if any one is having any kind of objection may approach this office within 7 days (Seven Days of the publication of this notice after passing of stipulated time of 7 days (Seven Days), no objections will be entertained. Naib Tehsildar

مظهر کو بکلی گفتشن زیر انسنالیشن نمبر R I - R 5 5 5 کنزیومر آئی ڈی نمبر 0203010001318 جومبدل احدث ولد محدث كنام يرورج ب، تبديل كركار نام اندراج كروانا مطلوب ب-اس بارے بيس اگر كسى كوكوئى اعتراض بولة وه أيك تفتر كے الدراسننك المَّزِيكُمُوالْجِيسُرُ الْكِمْرُك سِ وُورِين واتَّل كدل كُوچِيْن كرے بعداز معياد كوئي

اعتراض قابل قبول نبیس ہوگا۔ ڈاکٹر سہیل نظیر گڑھاولد نظیرا حد گڑھا ساکن نشدر کیٹی کالونی (بی)بمنہ سرینگر

ing to birth of Ziyaan Zahoor Wani S/o Zahoor Ahmad Wani R/o Chandakoot Kreeri Tehsil Kreeri Distt baramulla with verified date of birth 29/05/2020 occurred at SDH pattan in this con-

nection if any body having objection for issuance of said certifi-

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

Sub ... issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

Public Notice...

The registar birth EO Pattan has submitted a case file pertain-

cate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth. Public Notice...

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

The registar birth EO Pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Aafiya Irfan D/o Mohd Irfan Bhat R/o Aglar Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 26/07/2022 occurred at SDH pattan.in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be enter-

tained. fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan. Sub... issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

Public Notice..

The registar birth EO Pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Imaad Firdous s/o Firdous Ahmad Chopan R/o Nowlari Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 24/03/2020 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

Public Notice..

The registar birth EO Pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Abu Talha Ganie s/o Akther ul Islam Ganie R/o Seer Jagir Sopore Tehsil Sopore Distt baramulla with verified date of birth 16/06/2021 occurred at SDH pattan .in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

Sub., issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth.. Public Notice...

The registar birth EO Pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Safiya Khan D/o Shafiq Ahmad Khan R/o Wanigam Bala Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 18/12/2014 occurred at SDH pattan.in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained..

fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

Sub .. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth.. Public Notice...

The registar birth EO Pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Mohammad Azmat ul Mehraj Parray s/o Mehraj Ud Din Parray R/o Dargam Pattan tehsil pattan Distt baramulla with verified date of birth 28/04/2020 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days af-

ter that no objection shall be entertained.. Naib Tehsildar Pattan

India, Israel Should Look At Increasing Bilateral Trade 10 Times: Goyal



"We would like to

better understand

challenges, what

they recommend us

to do, and naturally

the next steps would

be to take that... and

foundation," he said.

put some kind of

what are the

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The current bilateral trade between India and Israel is "sub-optimal" and both countries should look at increasing it 10 times in the coming years as huge potential is there, Commerce and Indus-

try Minister Piy-ush Goyal said on Tuesday.

He said there is huge potential to enhance collaboration in areas such as deep tech, fintech, agritech, security, defence, AI, water conservation, and renewable energy.

"Currently the bilateral trade is about USD 6.5 bil-

lion. Both of us feel that it is sub optimal and we do not want to see very low aspirations. We want to aspire to grow into significant high double-digits and take it 10x from the current level through this exchange between businesses and through a focus on working together to make our products, services most cost-effective," Goyal told reporters here.

He was briefing the media after co-chairing India-Israel CEO Forum meet with Israeli Minister of Economy and Industry Nir M Barkat here.

"I think that we can easily look at the 10x growth in our

bilateral trade coupled with investments on both sides happening in the next 12-13 years or so," he said.

The minister also offered to Israeli companies to partner with India to leverage the Anusandhan National Research Foundation fund for research

and development. The bilateral trade between India and Israel decreased to USD 6.53 billion in 2023-24 from USD 10.77 billion in 2022-23.

India received USD 327 million foreign investment (FDI) from that country from April 2000 and September 2024

When asked about the proposed free

trade agreement between the two countries, Barkat said he agreed with the Indian commerce minister that "first let's get the Missions together and learn from them what they

"We would like to better understand what are the challenges, what they recommend us to do, and naturally the next steps would be to take that... and put some kind of foundation," he said. India and Israel held the first round of negotiations for the agreement in May, 2010. Eight rounds have been held since. The eighth round was held in Israel in 2013

'World Can't Live Without Oil, **OPEC Providing Market Stability Needed For Investments'**



NEW DELHI- OPEC on Tuesday said oil market stability is key to investment and global economic development and the producers cartel has been working to provide that stability.

Speaking at the India Energy Week, Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Secretary General Haitham Al-Ghais said energy transition notwithstanding, the world cannot live without oil.

"Oil is paramount to providing energy security to the world. Energy security drives global economic prosperity and growth. Without oil the world will stop. Everything we are doing today is flights, ships, cars, eating, cooking, you name it, petrochemicals, everything will come to a grinding halt," he said.

World oil consumption will continue to rise, thanks to countries like India where demand is growing.

trillion in so-called transitions in the last 25 years. And where are we today -- renewable is only 4-5 per cent (of global energy demand). OPEC is not against renewable energy. But we are all about taking a balanced approach," he said.

Balanced approach means taking a long-term view of the energy mix and not being bracketed in one fuel versus the other, he said, adding that OPEC is acting as the stabiliser.

"Let's imagine the oil markets without OPEC or without OPEC+. Stability factor that you are talking about and what that stability factor really entails in the longer term for the global economy, actually, not just for oil producers or for oil consumers like India, because stability is key for global economic growth and prosperity. Without stability you cannot have investment, you cannot have

CM Omar Engages With Stakeholders For Pre-Budget Deliberations In Srinagar

'Consultations Key To Shape Government's Policies And Allocate Resources Efficiently'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Continuing his engagement with various stakeholders, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday chaired a pre-budget consultation meeting here at the Civil Secretariat.

The session focused on understanding the perspectives of representative bodies from various sectors ahead of the upcoming Budget Session of

the J&K Assembly. Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary Higher Educa-tion Shantamanu, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Finance Santosh D Vaidya, Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce, Commissioner Secretary Youth Services & Sports along with heads of departments and senior officers from various departments, attended the meeting both in

person and virtually.

During the discussions, stakeholders from diverse sectors including industrialists, traders, hoteliers, travel & tour operators, tourism players, educationists, sportspersons, agriculturists, horticulturists, entrepreneurs and representatives of industry & trade bodies like FCIK, KCCI, CII, PHD Chamber shared their inputs and suggestions for the up-coming Jammu and Kashmir Budget 2025-26.

During the deliberations, key demands were projected by stakeholders pertaining to framing of one consolidated industrial policy, upgradation of Industrial estates, connecting IGC Lassipora with National

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- The Federation

Kashmir (FCIK) has warmly

structure and institutional

support for the manufacturing sector, recognizing

its potential to drive em-

ployment and strengthen

the supply chain ecosystem.

Budget 2025-26, presented

by Finance Minister Nirma-

la Sitharaman, the Valley's

leading industrial body em-

phasized the significance of

the initiatives proposed by

the Union government, in-

cluding accomplishing the

vision under the "National

Manufacturing Mission" to

support manufacturing in-

Finance Minister has rec-

ognized MSMEs as the sec-

ond engine for economic

growth and a cornerstone

of the Indian economy, with

specific provisions aimed at

enhancing their scalabil-

"We are pleased that the

dustries of all sizes.

In response to the Union





The Chief Minister patiently listened to all stakeholders, underscoring the importance of these discussions in addressing economic challenges and promoting growth.

Highway, power amnesty to industrial units, crop insurance for horticulture produce, conservation of wetlands, incentivizing cherry, walnut & apricot plantation, PPP model in health sector, preservation of houseboats, free hold rights to industrial units, setting up of multi-disciplinary institutions, higher education clusters, autonomous degree colleges, establishing skill development university, creating parking lots in downtown Srinagar and other towns, decongestion of tourist places, solid

waste management in tourist

Proposals for Industrial Growth

ity, technological up-gradation, and access to capital,"

stated the Advisory Com-

the budget provisions

mittee of FCIK, led by Sha-

The committee noted

that the recognition of

MSMEs, given their 30%

contribution to India's GDP,

nearly 45% of the country's

exports, and employment

of around 80 million people

nationwide, is highly en-

couraging. For the first time

in years, these enterprises

have received a significant

boost, with a series of mea-

sures aimed at supporting

their growth and long-term

it guarantee cover for

MSMEs, now increased

to Rs 10 crore, along with

various credit schemes for

the MSME sector and start-

ups, including a dedicated

Rs 10,000 crore 'Fund of

Funds', will be crucial for

advancing financial inclu-

"The introduction of the

'The enhanced cred-

sustainability.

sion," said FCIK.

hid Kamili, after reviewing rural areas, has the poten-

added.

FCIK Submits Pre-Budget

resorts, maintenance of stadiums & playgrounds, setting up of sports academies and increase in promotion & publicity budget for tourism.

Addressing the participants, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah emphasized that these consultations have become a key part of this government's pre-budget exercise, aimed at gathering insights from multiple sectors to shape effective policies and

allocate resources efficiently. The Chief Minister patiently listened to all stakeholders, underscoring the importance of these discussions in addressing economic challenges and promoting growth. He reiterated the government's commitment to presenting a budget that aligns with public needs and aspirations.

To ensure a people-centric budget, the Chief Minister noted that extensive pre-budget consultations have been conducted. So far, he has engaged with public representatives, including Chairpersons of District Development Councils (DDCs) and Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from ten districts-Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam, Pulwama and Kulgam in Kashmir division and Udhampur, Ramban, Kathua, Reasi and Samba in Jammu division.

MSE Credit Card, designed

to provide easier access to

credit for micro manufac-

turing units, particularly in

If implemented smoothly,

this initiative could sig-

nificantly uplift small and

micro enterprises, ensur-

ing they have the financial

support needed to grow

and innovate," the chamber

abled export financing and

term loans of up to Rs 20

crore for well-managed

will empower businesses to

expand into international

markets, benefiting export

duction of a new scheme

aimed at empowering 5

lakh women, SC/ST first-

time entrepreneurs with

loans up to Rs 2 crore is

a transformative step to-

wards promoting inclusive

"Furthermore, the intro-

tial to be a game-c

Additionally,

export-oriented

houses in I&K as well.

FM Dispels Concern Of Rise In GST Rate, Says There Is Not **Even One Such Item**

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday dispelled concerns over a rise in Goods and Services Tax (GST), saying that there is not even one item on which the rate has been increased after the implementation of GST re-

Intervening during Question Hour in Rajya Sabha, Sitharaman stated that GST rates have been brought down and the average GST rate has come down to 11.3 per cent from 15.8 per cent (at the time of GST imple-

"That is the level of rate of reduction in the GST Council. Therefore I appeal to all the members here, kindly spare some time, meet your respective finance ministers in the states as to what kind of work is going," she said.

She also explained that in the GST Council, finance ministers from state governments sit together and take a call.

"To the credit of every finance minister in the GST Council, I must say that they have gone into detail item by item to see where rate reduction can happen. Every finance minister from every state is doing his best so that GST can

become simpler," she said. She pointed out that if the GST Council has taken a bit longer than what all of us would decide, it is because work is going on there.

The finance ministers of the respective states are fully empowered to speak to the people



in their state as to what is to be taken up by the Council, she

She also pointed out that the GST Council is a constitutional body.

She also said, "I would to take this opportunity to dispel this thought after GST implementation, rates have gone up. Not at all."

She asked that is there an obstruction by the union government members, MOS and myself, to (where we have said) say no no, don't reduce the rate, we want to burden the con-

"Is there be an instance? One such instance," she said.

She also explained in the written reply on the oral question tabled in the House that as per Article 279A (4) of the Constitution of India, the GST Council shall make recommendations to the Union and the States, on rates, including floor rates with bands of goods and service tax.

Thus, the GST rates are notified by the Government based on the recommendations of the GST Council which comprises of representatives of the Union and State/UT Governments, she

Net Direct Tax Kitty Swells 15 Pc To Rs 17.78 Lakh **Crore Till Feb 10**



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Net direct tax collection grew 14.69 per cent to over Rs 17.78 lakh crore so far this fiscal, government data showed on Tuesday.

As per the data released by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), mop up from net non-corporate taxes, which include mainly personal income tax, grew 21 per cent yearon-year to about Rs 9.48 lakh Net corporate tax collection

rose more than 6 per cent to over Rs 7.78 lakh crore between April 1, 2024, and February 10, 2025.

Net collections from securities transaction tax (STT) jumped 65 per cent to Rs 49,201 crore so far this fiscal.

Refunds worth more than Rs 4.10 lakh crore were issued during the period, a 42.63 per cent increase against the yearago period.

Gross direct tax mop up till February 10 grew 19.06 per cent to more than Rs 21.88 lakh

In the revised estimates (RE) for the current fiscal, the government has pegged income tax collections at Rs 12.57 lakh crore, up from the budget estimate of Rs 11.87 lakh crore.

The collection from STT is pegged at Rs 55,000 crore in this fiscal in RE, higher than the budget estimate (BE) of Rs 37.000 crore.

Corporate tax collection target was revised lower at Rs 9.80 lakh crore, down from the budget target of Rs 10.20 lakh

In total, the RE pegs direct tax collections at Rs 22.37 lakh crore, higher from Rs 22.07

Gold Snaps 7-Day Rally, Declines Rs 200 To Rs 88,300/10g In Delhi

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Snapping the sevenday winning run, gold prices declined by Rs 200 to Rs 88,300 per 10 grams in the national capital following selling by stockists amid a bearish trend in global markets.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity also dropped Rs 200 to Rs 87,900 per 10 grams from the previous close of Rs 88,100 per 10 grams. Additionally, silver prices de-

creased Rs 900 to Rs 96,600 per kg from the previous trading close of Rs 97,500 per kg on Monday. Traders said the yellow metal

prices depreciated ahead of Fed Chair Jerome Powell's testimony to Congress, which will be closely watched for insights about the US Federal Reserve's future interest rate-cut path.

The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had surged by 2,430 to hit an all-time high level of Rs 88,500 per 10 grams on Monday, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

In the last seven sessions, gold soared Rs 5,660 or 6.8 per cent. This year, the yellow metal has risen Rs 8,910 or 11.22 per cent.

On the MCX, gold futures for April delivery declined Rs 333 to Rs 85,483 per 10 grams. During the day, the yellow metal futures touched a lifetime high of Rs 86,360 per 10 grams.

"Gold surged in MCX during early morning trade as tariff concerns fuelled panic buying, with central banks continuing their gold accumulation. However, a stronger rupee capped gains in MCX, leading to a reversal toward Rs 85,450 before the evening session, highlighting persistent volatility," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

The upcoming US Consumer Price Index (CPI) data and Powell's testimony will be key events for gold traders, as the dollar index remains around USD 108, Trivedi added.

Silver futures for March delivery slumped Rs 1,030 or 1.08 per cent to Rs 94,265 per kg on the Multi Commodity Exchange

Globally, Comex gold futures for April delivery traded lower at USD 2,933.10 per ounce. In the intraday session, it surged by USD 34 per ounce or 1.16 per cent to hit a record high of USD 2,968.39 per ounce.

Rupee Ends 66 Paise Higher At 86.79 Against US Dollar

entrepreneurship,"

chamber noted.

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- The rupee on Tuesday rallied 66 paise, recording its steepest single-day recovery in nearly two years, to settle at 86.79 against the US dollar, backed by dollar selling by banks.

According to forex traders, Tuesday's sharp gain a day after sliding closer to the 88 level shows a highly volatile currency market amid concerns over the worldwide

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 87.45 against the greenback and touched the intraday high of 86.61 during the session. The unit settled at 86.79 against the dollar, registering a gain of 66 paise from its pre-

The domestic unit had earlier re-

corded its steepest single-day gain on March 3, 2023, when it surged 63

paise from the preceding session. On Monday, the rupee plunged 45 paise to near 88 per US dollar levels in the first half but staged a dramatic rebound in the second half to end with gains at 87.45. Dollar selling by banks possibly on behalf of the RBI helped the rupee recover from all-time lows.

Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan, said the rupee rallied by nearly 1 per cent, marking its biggest intraday gains in about two years on intervention by the Reserve Bank of India.

Choudhary said going further the rupee is expected to trade with negative bias amid weak tone in the domestic markets and sustained FII outflows.

Friday Reserved For Labelling Of Artisan **Products At PTQCC**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- In a facilitative welfare move, the Handicrafts and Handloom Department, Kashmir has exclusively reserved every Friday of the week for labelling of famed Kashmir Handicraft products belonging to the artisan and weaver community in its Pashmina Testing & Quality Certification Centre (PTQCC), here.

PTQCC is one-stop centre in Craft Development Institute (CDI) for branding and QR coding of 06 world-famous GI registered crafts of Kashmir Pashmina, Kani and Sozni embroidery, Khatamband Ceiling, Walnut Wood Carving and Papier Mache.

Giving details, a spokesperson of the Handicrafts and Handloom Department, advised the artisans and weavers to approach PTQCC on Fridays to get their products certified and QR coded in a time-bound manner. "Friday has been specifically chosen as reserve day to facilitate the artisans and weavers who usually take their weekly off that day," he added.

Bill On Liquor Prohibition To Be Tabled In Budget Session

Agencies

Jammu: PDP MLA from Kupwara Fayaz Ahmad Mir has submitted a private member's bill to be tabled during the upcoming budget session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, seeking prohibition of liquor in the Union Territory.

Mir forwarded the threepage bill to the assembly secretariat on Monday, the last date for submitting of the bills by the members before the start of the three-week assembly session in Jammu on March 3.

This will be the first budget of the Omar Abdullah-led National Conference government after assuming power in October last year, ending sixyear-old central rule.

Earlier, the J&K Assembly Secretariat requested the members not to send more than 10 starred and 10 unstarred questions in relaxation of Rule 32 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business and not more than three bills in relaxation of sub-rule (3) of Rule 65 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business by or before February 10.

The PDP leader forwarded the private member's bill to prohibit the advertisement, sale, purchase, consumption and manufacture of alcoholic drinks in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The rise in use of alcoholic drinks is an ascending curve and this is largely due to insensitivity to deal with the issues in a holistic manner... If this trend of using alcohol is not checked at this point of time, it will prove disastrous for the society as such strict law on the subject is inevitable," Mir said in the statement of objectives and reasons for the bill.

The bill demanded strict penalties including both imprisonment and fine against the offenders.

HG, CD & SDRF rebuts news regarding Mal-treatment to its employees

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 11: Rebutting a report published in a local Urdu daily regarding the step motherly treatment with its employees, the Home Guards, Civil Defence and SDRF, J&K, has issued a clarification regarding the voluntary nature of Home Guards.

According to the rebuttal issued here today in this regard, the Jammu and Kashmir Home Guards is a voluntary force constituted under the Jammu and Kashmir Home Guards Act, Svt. 2006, and governed by the Jammu and Kashmir Home Guards Rules, 1962. As per these regulations, individuals enroll as volunteers to serve the community during

emergencies and assist in maintaining public order. The voluntary nature of this service implies that members are not regular government employees but are civilians who offer their services during exigencies.

Given the voluntary status of the Home Guards, members receive an honorarium or duty allowance for the days they are actively engaged. This is a fixed per-day payment and is not equivalent to a regular monthly salary. It's important to note that this honorarium is not intended to serve as a primary source of income but as a token of appreciation for the voluntary services rendered.

J&K Assembly Rules: Major Amendments Proposed

Agencies

Srinagar: The Legislative Assembly's Committee on Rules on Tuesday gave its goahead to the Speaker to carry out bare minimum modifications in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

The House panel comprises legislators of the ruling NC-led alliance and BJP met on Tuesday in the Legislative Assembly complex, Jammu to discuss amendments/ modifications in the Rules governing functioning of the House.

Sources said that there was unanimity among members against major changes in the rules and converged on making bare minimum modifications in the Rules.

Alegislator, who is part of the committee, wishing anonymity, said that all panel members agreed upon replacing Governor, State, both Houses of legislature and Joint Select Committee respectively with Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory, Legislative Assembly and Select Committee.

"The committee gave its goahead to the Speaker to carry out these minimal modifications," he said.

MLA Rajouri and member of the committee Muzaffar Iqbal Khan said there was unanimity among the committee members that there should be no amendments in the existing rules except slight modifications required for transaction of business in the House.

He said the committee has given its go-ahead to the Speaker for carrying out slight modifications in the existing Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the House." The Speaker was already empowered to do so



under the Reorganisation Act-2019," he said, adding that the committee has finalised its

BJP MLA RS Pathania said that certain modifications and adaptations which are necessary and germane to the fruitful working of the Legislative Assembly would be carried out by the Speaker.

"The speaker is empowered to do so after passing of the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act-2019," he said.

It is worthwhile to mention that Peoples Democratic Party had termed the modifications as an endorsement to August 5, 2019 constitutional changes.

"The modified J&K Assembly business rules mark a shift from Article 370, effectively endorsing the constitutional changes of August 5, 2019. A clear acknowledgement of the new status quo," PDP MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman wrote in a post on X.

The committee was established on December 24, 2024, under Rule 363 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of

Business in the J&K Legislative Assembly.

This has been necessitated after downgrading and bifurcation of erstwhile J&K state into two Union Territories on August 5, 2019.

The Speaker serves as the committee's ex-officio chairman.

The committee's first meeting was on January 1, 2025, followed by the second on January 7. During those meetings, members decided to first correct outdated references in the existing rules. While the committee can suggest modifications, only the Lieutenant Governor has the authority to create entirely new rules in consultation with the Speaker.

The committee includes legislators from different parties: former Speaker Mubarak Gul (NC), Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami (CPI-M), Saifullah Mir (NC), Nizam-ud-Din Bhat (Congress), Pawan Kumar Gupta (BJP), Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi (NC), R.S. Pathania (BJP), and Muzaffar Iqbal Khan (Independent).

Crimes Against Women In J&K

6,300 Arrests But Convictions Very Low: Centre

Agencies

Srinagar: The Government of India informed that Jammu and Kashmir has recorded 3,716 cases of crimes against women in 2022, compared to 3,937 in 2021 and 3,405 in 2020.

Replying to a question in Parliament, Minister of State (MoS) Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar said that the 2022 figures show a rise in sexual violence, domestic abuse, and other crimes against women, raising concerns about women's safety in the region.

According to the data I&K

According to the data, J&K recorded 3,716 cases of crimes against women in 2022, compared to 3,937 in 2021 and 3,405 in 2020. "While there was a slight drop in the total number of cases from 2021, the conviction rate remains alarmingly low."

In 2022, only 68 cases led to convictions, while 922 cases ended in acquittals.

Meanwhile, the number of persons arrested under crimes against women stood at 6,309, but only 155 were convicted, it reads.

Ladakh, on the other hand, reported just 15 cases of crime against women in 2022, with one conviction and three acquittals. Although the numbers in Ladakh remain low compared to J&K, experts argue that many incidents in the sparsely populated region go unreported due to social stigma and lack of awareness.

One of the most pressing concerns in J&K is cruelty by husbands or their relatives, which falls under Section 498A of the IPC. Such cases have seen a steady rise, with victims often struggling to get justice due to societal pressures and lengthy legal procedures.

Despite a high number of arrests, the conviction rate for crimes against women remains low in J&K and Ladakh. Out of the 3,716 cases registered in J&K in 2022, only 68 resulted in convictions, while 922 cases ended in acquittals.

Similarly, in Ladakh, where only 15 cases were reported, the conviction rate remains negligible. (KNO)



CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

PM To Flag-off

trial runs, traversing some of the nation's most iconic bridges.

The Anji Khad Bridge, with its 331-meterhigh pylon, stands as a remarkable feat of engineering, while the Chenab Bridge, at 359 meters, holds the distinction of being the world's highest railway bridge—surpassing even the Eiffel Tower. These bridges not only enhance regional connectivity but also showcase India's technological and infrastructural prowess.

"The train has been specially designed to operate efficiently in Jammu and Kashmir's harsh winter conditions on the Katra-Srinagar rail route," an official said, adding, "It features advanced climate-resistant technologies, including heating systems that prevent water and bio-toilet tanks from freezing."

He said that the air-brake system is optimized for smooth operations even in sub-zero temperatures. "The Vande Bharat Express also includes embedded heating elements in the windshield to automatically defrost the driver's front lookout glass, ensuring clear visibility in extreme winter conditions," the official said. "Apart from these specialized adaptations, the train offers all standard Vande Bharat amenities, such as fully air-conditioned coaches, automatic plug doors, mobile charging sockets, and more."

The Railways has completed the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, spanning 272 kilometers. The project, which began in 2005-06, was completed in phases. The 118-km Qazigund-Baramulla stretch in Kashmir was inaugurated in October 2009, followed by the 18-km Banihal-Qazigund and 25-km Udhampur-Katra sections, which were completed in 2013 and 2014, respectively

Modi Govt Committed

intelligence apparatus working in J&K and directed them to increase coverage and penetration to generate quality intelligence. He reiterated the importance of technology in intelligence generation.

Shah said monitoring of terror-financing, tightening grip over narco-terror cases and dismantling the entire terror ecosystem in J-K are the priorities of the Modi government. He said strong steps are being taken for a 'zero terror plan' in the UT.

He also directed focusing on countering the negative propaganda by the anti-national elements to place the correct picture in the public domain. He stressed continuing with the synergy amongst the agencies and guided for adopting technology and increase intelligence.

The home minister directed all security agencies to remain alert and continue work in a synergies mode to eliminate terrorism in J&K and assured that all the resources would be made available in this endeavour.

Tuesday's meeting was in continuation of the high-level meetings with the Indian Army and J&K Police held on February 4 and 5.

Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, Director of Intelligence Bureau Tapan Deka and other senior officers attended the meeting, the statement said.

Zero Cybercrime

approach." Shah said that in recent years, there has been an expansion of digital infrastructure in India, which has naturally led to an increase in the number of cyber attacks.

He said that when we look at cyberspace from a different perspective, it forms a complex network of 'software,' 'services,' and 'users.'

He emphasized that until we consider controlling cyber fraud through 'software,' 'services,' and 'users,' it will be impossible to resolve the issues of cyberspace.

Shah mentioned that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Ministry of Home Affairs has taken several significant steps towards making India a cyber-safe nation.

The Union Home Minister said that cyber

The Union Home Minister said that cybercrime has erased all geographical boundaries. He stated that it is a 'borderless' and 'formless' crime, as it has no limits or fixed form.

He mentioned that India has witnessed a

'digital revolution' in the last decade. Without

understanding the size and scale of the 'digital revolution,' we cannot face the challenges in the cyber domain.

The Union Home Minister said that 1 lakh 43000 FIRs have been registered on the I4C portal (Indian Cybercrime Coordination

Centre) and over 19 crore people have used it to register their complaints.

Pertinently, the 14C portal established by the Ministry of Home Affairs caters to complaints pertaining to cyber crimes only with special

focus on cyber crimes against women and children. "For national security reasons, 805 apps and 3,266 website links have been blocked based

on I4C's recommendations."
He said, "Additionally, 399 banks and financial intermediaries have come on board. Over 6 lakh suspicious data points have been shared, more than 19 lakh mule accounts have been caught, and suspicious transactions worth Rs 2,038 crore have been prevented."

The Union Home Minister said, "Cyber Crime Forensic training labs have been established in 33 States and Union Territories."

He said that on the 'CyTrain' platform, a "Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)" platform, 101,561 police officers have registered, and over 78,000 certificates have been issued.

Shah mentioned that inter-ministerial and inter-departmental coordination within the Ministry of Home Affairs has been strengthened, ensuring seamless communication and smooth flow of information.

The Union Home Minister said that a healthy

tradition of exchange of information between the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Electronics and IT, CERT-IN, I4C, and departments like telecom and banking has led to successfully tackling many cybercrime cases.

He emphasized the importance of raising awareness among the public to prevent cybercrime and requested all the members of the committee to promote the I4C helpline number 1930.

He stated that in light of cyber financial fraud, the '1930' helpline provides a one-point solution offering various services, such as blocking cards.

Shah said that efforts are underway to use Artificial Intelligence for identifying mule accounts, in coordination with the Reserve Bank and all banks, to establish a system for their detection

"We will ensure the closure of mule accounts

before they are even operational," he added. 95% Villages Digitally Connected

Shah stated that the government has also ensured that people are made aware of Prime Minister Modi's mantra 'Stop –Think-Take action' in order to make them more vigilant against cybercrimes.

"Today, 95 per cent villages in the country are digitally connected, and one lakh gram panchayats are equipped with Wi-Fi hotspots. In the past ten years, the number of internet users has increased by 4.5 times," Shah said.

He said that in 2024, a total of 246 trillion transactions worth Rs 17.221 lakh crore were made through UPI. "In 2024, 48 per cent of the global digital transactions took place in India."

He also said that in terms of the startup ecosystem, India has become the third-largest country in the world. In 2023, the contribution of the digital economy to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was around Rs 32 lakh crore, which is 12 per cent, and nearly 15 million jobs were created.

Shah said that today India has become the third-largest country in terms of digital land-scape in the world. The digital economy contributes 20% to the total economy of India.

The committee members gave their suggestions on issues related to 'Cyber Security and Cyber Crime' and appreciated the important steps taken by the government for enhancing cyber security.

The meeting was attended by Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, members of the Committee, the Union Home Secretary, and senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

JKP Launches

Anatnag, Budgam and Pulwama are among the districts were the drive is being carried out, the officials said, adding that it will be extended to other districts of the valley as well.

"This initiative is a part of a broader strategy to prevent the misuse of mobile phone SIM cards in anti-national and unlawful activities. With an increase in cyber frauds and growing security concerns, the drive seeks to address these challenges by verifying the authenticity of documents submitted by subscribers and ensuring that vendors strictly adhere to the guidelines mandated by the Department of Telecommunications," they added.

The officials said the verification process aims to establish that SIM cards are issued only to legitimate individuals and that all necessary documentation is in place.

"By conducting random checks and ensuring thorough compliance, the Police hope to deter fraudulent practices and enhance the overall security framework within the district," they said.

The SIM card verification drive comes in the backdrop of authorities recovering several SIM cards from inmates of some jails in the union territory during recent raids.

Er Rashid Calls For

suicide after he was questioned by Police in Kathua.

"Do our forces need Waseem Mir's blood every day?" Rashid asked, calling for accountability and a fair investigation into both incidents. "Kashmiris have the right to live with dignity

and the government should do justice with them," he added.

"Hamara khoon sasta nahin hain (our blood is not cheap)," he said. Additionally, Baramulla MP highlighted the

hardships faced by residents of remote areas like Karnah, Keran, and Machil in North Kashmir, which become inaccessible in winter months.

He appealed for the construction of a tunnel to improve connectivity and ease their struggles. Pertinently, the Delhi High Court had im-

posed restrictions on Rashid's parole, barring him from using the internet or speaking to the media during his time in the Parliament. The Baramulla lawmaker was taken to the RML Hospital under police security on Tuesday

morning for a routine health check-up, Tihar jail sources said.

Rashid's parole is saddled with certain riders, including not using a cellphone or internet, or addressing the media or any person except

to his limited responsibility as an MP.

The Baramulla MP is facing allegations that
he funded separatists and terror groups in

Jammu and Kashmir. **Delhi HC To Hear**

informed by the counsel for the high court administration that the Supreme Court on Monday clarified that the NIA court dealing with the case could hear the bail plea.

Rashid had moved the high court earlier, alleging he did not have a remedy after the NIA court dealing with his bail application left him in a limbo after his election to the Lok Sabha last year on account of it not being a special MP/MLA court.

As an interim relief, Rashid was on Monday allowed a two-day custody parole to attend the ongoing Parliament session on February 11 and

In view of the development in the top court, Justice Mahajan on Tuesday orally asked Rashid's lawyer to approach the NIA court for

The MP's counsel, however, urged the court to adjourn the matter for a week.

Adjourning the matter, it asked the high court administration's lawyer to place on record the office order which would be passed by the authorities on the issue of designation of the court to hear Rashid's case in view of the Supreme Court's clarification.

The Baramulla MP is facing trial in a terror funding case with the allegations that he funded separatists and terror groups in Jammu and Kashmir.

Rashid, who was elected from the Baramulla constituency in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, has been lodged in Tihar Jail since 2019 after the NIA arrested him under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the 2017 terrorfunding case.

The Delhi High Court registrar general had moved the top court earlier over the issue of jurisdiction of the court which should ideally hear Rashid's bail plea.

The clarification from the Supreme Court was required as a 2016 judgment of the apex court designated a special MP/MLA court to solely try cases involving MP/MLAs.

solely try cases involving MP/MLAs.

In his petition, Rashid urged the high court to either direct the expeditious disposal of his

pending bail plea by the NIA court or decide the matter itself.

On December 24 last year, Additional Sessions Judge Chander Jit Singh, who requested the district judge to transfer the case to a court designated to try lawmakers, dismissed his plea asking for an order on the pending bail

application in the NIA case.
With the matter sent back to him by the district judge, the trial judge said in his decision that he could only decide the miscellaneous application and not the bail plea.

No Reason To Deny

through on line process on 6 September 2021 and was informed that his case would be processed subsequent to CID/Police verification etc. However, passport was not issued to

him as such he approached the court.

The ADGP submitted to the court that passport verification report in respect of character and antecedents of Malik was got verified through field agencies which revealed that his brother remained a militant of Hizbul MUjahideen outfit who was killed during an encounter with security forces 2011 and that his father was enlisted as OGW in the records

"While the protection of personal liberty guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution is available to a person, the said right cannot be claimed as a matter of right by a person who is an anarchist or a person attempting to destabilize the security and integrity of our State," the court said, adding, "It is precisely for those reasons that the provisions of Section 6(2) subsections (a) to (i) have been incorporated in the Passports Act. 1967."

The court said that the authorities would certainly be justified in not recommending Malik's case for issuance of passport had there been any iota of allegation against him or his involvement in any subversive activities which could be deemed to be activities prejudicial to the security, sovereignty and integrity of the State.

"It should have been the activities of the petitioner (Malik) which should have formed the basis either for permitting or rejecting the request for issuance of passport in his favour," the court said, adding, "The basis for not recommending the case of the petitioner (Malik) for issuance of passport does not have any reasonable relation or nexus with the activities of the petitioner (Malik) as the same do not even remotely connect the petitioner (Malik) with any activity which could be termed as prejudicial to the security, sovereignty and integrity of the State or the Country."

The non-recommendation of Malik's case, teh court observed, is based upon material "which can be said to be nothing but in the realm of speculation."

"The petitioner (Malik) cannot be deprived of his right as enshrined under Article 21 of the Constitution on the basis of the alleged misdemeanors of his brother," the court said and directed the Additional Director General of Police, CID to re-submit the report uninfluenced by the conduct or activities of Malik's brother as well as his father to the Regional Passport Officer within four weeks. The RPO, the court said, shall consider Malik's case on the report of the ADGP and pass an appropriate order in Malik's favour within two weeks thereafter.

Ranji QF: J&K Have Edge Against **Kerala After Paras Dogra's Ton**

Press Trust of India

PUNE: Skipper Paras Dogra led by example with a fine century and helped J&K set Kerala a stiff target of 399 on the fourth day of their Ranji Trophy quarterfi-nal here on Tuesday.

After Dogra made 132 to power J&K to 399 for nine in their second innings, Kerala reached 100 for two at stumps with Akshay Chandran and captain Sachin Baby batting on 32 and 19, respectively, at the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium.

Medium pacer Yudhvir Singh (2/31) picked both the wickets in Kerala's second innings.

Rohan Kunnummal made a breezy 36 off 39 balls before getting caught by Kanhaiya Wadhawan for J&K's first breakthrough.

Kunnummal struck seven boundaries during his stay in the middle, but Shoun Roger (6) was dismissed cheaply to leave Kerala at 70 for two.



Chandran, who faced 100 balls for his 32, in the company of Baby then saw off the remaining overs.

Kerala will enter the final day's play requiring 299 runs to pull off a miracle win. J&K will, however, fancy their chances as they have the bowl-

plenty of runs to defend.

Earlier in the day, Dogra, resuming on his overnight 73, went on to score an excellent hundred and found an able ally in ers to put Kerala under pressure on a fifth day pitch and with Wadhawan, who chipped in with an invaluable 64 off 116 balls.

Dogra hit 13 fours and two sixes during his innings, while Wadhawan found the fence five times.

Once the 146-run fourth wicket partnership came to an end, Sahil Lotra made 59 off 77 balls, while Lone Nasir (28) and Yudhvir (27 not out) also made useful contributions to stretch their team's overall lead and compound Kerala's woes. Pacer MD Nidheesh, who

picked up six wickets in the first innings, was again the most successful bowler for Kerala with figures of 4/89 in 26 overs.

There were two wickets apiece for Nedumankuzhy Basil (2/100) and Aditya Sarwate

Brief scores:

J&K: 280 and 399/9 declared in 100.2 overs (Paras Dogra 132, Kanhaiya Wadhawan 64, Sahil Lotra 59; MD Nidheesh 4/89)

Kerala: 281 and 100/2 in 36 overs (Akshay Chandran batting 32; Yudhvir Šingh 2/31).

3rd ODI: Kohli's Form In Focus As India Eye Clean-Sweep

Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: A big knock from Virat Kohli's currently silent bat along with a series clean-sweep over England will be on Team India's wish-list when the two teams square off in the third and final ODI here on Wednesday, marking the end of their Champions

Trophy build-up.
While India hold an unassailable 2-0 lead with identical four-wicket wins in each of the first two ODIs, Rohit Sharma's men will be extra motivated to get a win here at the Narendra Modi Stadium where they had suffered a crushing ODI World Cup final loss in 2023.

Needless to say, having their batting mainstay Kohli among runs and a win would be perfect culmination to the home side's Champions Trophy preparations. The eightteam competition gets underway from February 19 in Karachi with India starting against Bangladesh the next day in Dubai as per a hybrid model of hosting.

The team has already got a shot in the arm by Rohit's return to form. His 90-ball 119 in the second ODI was a source of relief to both the side and to him after a prolonged run of poor scores.

Kohli hasn't looked completely out of touch but hasn't stayed at the crease for long enough to give himself a chance for a big knock either.



The team has already got a shot in the arm by Rohit's return to form. His 90-ball 119 in the second ODI was a source of relief

to both the side and to him after a prolonged run of poor scores. If he manages to click Kohli is in with a chance create another record. He

is 89 runs short of becoming only the third batter in history to score 14,000 runs in the format which arguably has been the runmachine's favourite. The addition of Varun Chakravarthy has given

ammunition additional to their lethal spin attack which will be vital for the Champions Trophy and Mohammed Shami's return after lengthy injury layoff has been seamless too.

successful Shami's comeback has certainly

been assuring given that the Indian team management will spend an anxious day on Tuesday awaiting news on their premier fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah, whose availability for the Champions

Trophy is still under doubt. As per the original timeline, Bumrah was slated for a comeback in the Ahmedabad ODI, but the ace pacer is currently toiling at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru under the watchful eyes of specialists aiming to make the final squad that is set to be unveiled on

Wednesday. Bumrah's guile on varied pitches and conditions is something that no team across the world possesses and India would be desperate to have their trump card back in the mix as they chase another ICC trophy.

Both India and England will enjoy an off day on Tuesday as they have skipped training and other pre-match routines to rest and recuperate.

Match starts at 1:30pm

Pakistan Retain 15-Member Squad For CT After Review



Press Trust of India

KARACHI: Pakistan have decided to stick with their already chosen Champions Trophy squad after the selectors reviewed it following widespread criticism about the inclusion of cer-

tain players. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Nagyi and the selectors reviewed the 15-member squad after the selection of batter

Khushdil Shah and allrounder Faheem Ashraf invited criticism.

But a reliable PCB source said there will not be any last-minute change, even as the deadline by the International Cricket Council (ICC) technical committee for making changes ends on Tuesday.

"The same 15 players will represent Pakistan in the coming (Champions tournament and if there is any injury

problem with any player that will be dealt with according to the ICC tournament rules," he said.

Pakistan's CT squad was strongly criticised by some former players and experts for not having more than one specialist opener and for picking just one specialist spinner -Abrar Ahmed.

Pakistan's defeat to New Zealand in the opening match of the tri-Series only intensified the criticism and Naqvi said last week that the selectors would be reviewing the squad.

"The selectors have reviewed the squad and feel it is the most balanced side for the 50-overs cricket no matter what happens in the tri-series," the source said.

Captain Muhammad Rizwan has also defended the selected squad insisting that Pakistan didn't need more then one specialist spinner in their squad as the emphasis would be on pace bowlers.

The source also added that pacer Haris Rauf who had suffered a muscle cramp during the game against New Zealand would be fine for the tri-series final (if Pakistan qualifies) and for the ICC showpiece.

"He is being rested for tomorrow's game against South Africa to allow him recovery time," he added. Pakistan has suffered

body blow before the CT when in-form opener Saim Ayub was ruled out for 10-weeks after an ankle injury sustained while fielding in the second Test against South Africa in Capetown last month.

Pakistan CT squad: Muhammad (Capt) Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Saud Shakeel, Kamran Ghulam, Tayyab Tahir, Salman Ali Agha, Khushdil Shah, Faheem Ashraf, Abrar Ahmed, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah, Muhammad Hasnain and Haris Rauf.

Agencies

to come.

Short TAKES

Bangladesh's Shohely First Woman Banned For Corruption

Bangladesh's Shohely Akhter on Tuesday became the first woman cricketer to be banned by the ICC for corruption charges after she was found guilty of attempting to fix matches during the 2023 T20 World Cup.

The 36-year-old was banned for five years. Shohely, who bowls off-spin and appeared in two ODIs and 13 T20 Internationals for Bangladesh, admitted breaching five provisions of the ICC Anti-Corruption Code during the tournament in South Africa.

The charges were in relation to corrupt approaches made during the matches of the Women's T20 World Cup. She was, however, not part of the Bangladesh squad for that tournament. Shohely last turned out for Bangladesh in 2022.

The ACU's investigation centred around Shohely's conversation on Facebook Messenger with a cricketer, identified by the ICC as 'Player A', on February 14, 2023. During the investigation, the ACU found that Shohely, prior to the Bangladesh versus Australia match in the Women's T20 World Cup on February 14, contacted her friend and teammate via Facebook

Messenger, in which she tried to persuade her to agree

PCB Inaugurates Renovated National Stadium For CT

to carry out fixes in future Bangladesh matches.

The Pakistan Cricket Board on Tuesday inaugurated the renovated National Stadium, one of the three venues in the country that will host the Champions Trophy, taking the opportunity to reward the 700 workers who toiled day and night to complete the

The stadium will host the inaugural Champions Trophy match between New Zealand and Pakistan on February 19. The stadium will also host the South Africa versus Pakistan tri-series match on Wednesday and the final on February 14.

The stadium, which was under renovation for the last four months, has a brand new state-of-the-art building at the far end of the historical venue. Besides, new LED lights, two screens and better facilities for spectators have also been put in place.

The new building houses dressing rooms, dedicated areas for broadcasters and match officials and hospitality boxes.

The stadium, however, retains its old look and the placement of the bigger screen on the ground will block the view of the people sitting in the enclosure.

Klaasen, Maharaj, De Zorzi, **Bosch Join SA Squad In Pakistan**

South Africa were bolstered by the arrival of key players Heinrich Klassen, Keshav Maharaj, Corbin Bosch and Tony de Zorzi ahead of the crucial tri-series match against Pakistan here on Wednesday.

They were playing in the recently concluded SA20, and SA can look forward to approaching this game with more confidence after going down against New Zealand in the previous match. All four players are also part of SA's Champions Trophy squad.

South Africa played with a depleted squad against the Kiwis handing ODI debuts to four players but Matthew Breetzke smashed a record breaking 150, the highest score by a debut opener in 50-overs cricket. South Africa lost the match despite posting a 300-plus

total and will be hoping that some of the senior players will be able to put up a better show against the hosts. Pakistan also have a do-or-die game like their opponents as both have lost to New Zealand.

FA Cup Giant-Killers Plymouth Draw Man City In 5th Round

FA Cup giant-killers Plymouth Argyle drew Premier League champions Manchester City on Monday as the second tier side's fifth round reward for a shock defeat of Liverpool at the weekend.

Holders Manchester United will host Fulham at Old Trafford in one of at least three all-Premier League clashes, with League Cup finalists Newcastle United at

home to top tier rivals Brighton & Hove Albion. Bournemouth will host Wolverhampton Wanderers in another all top flight encounter.

Struggling Plymouth caused one of the great upsets of the FA Cup on Sunday when they beat a secondstring Liverpool 1-0, ending the Premier League leaders' hopes of a quartet of trophies this season.

Kohli Is World's Best Player Regardless Of Form: Chris Gayle

Press Trust of India

TEW DELHI: Virat Kohli may have been going through a poor run of form but the senior Indian batter remains the "best player in the world," feels former West Indian swashbuckler Chris Gayle. The 36-year-old Kohli

endured yet another poor outing as he was dismissed for just five runs in the second ODI against England in Cuttack on Sunday. But Gayle, who has

played alongside Kohli at the Royal Challengers Bengaluru in IPL, remains unperturbed by the Indian's lean stretch.

"He is still the best player in the world regardless of the form, Virat Kohli is still the best player, the stats prove that, how many centuries across formats he



has scored as well," Gayle said on the sidelines of an event here on Tuesday.

"It's just one of those things that we cricketers go through in patches. I know it is coming at the back end of his career as well, but these things do happen, so he just needs to pick himself up and come back again."

Kohli has been struggling

for runs in international cricket of late, but he was expected to find form in the ODIs, which he has dominated like no other for the longest time. Kohli's return to the format, however, was not a great one as he was caught behind off Adil Rashid in the second match after missing the opening

game due to a sore knee.

Asked if Kohli can break Gayle's record for most number of runs scored in the Champions Trophy, he said, "It is easy for him just to get 200 runs (more to surpass Gayle). I don't know how many games they will be playing but I am sure he can get over 200 runs, and I am sure he will get a century for sure, so it's just a matter of time before he goes on to break that record."

Known for his flamboyance besides his bighitting capabilities, Gayle called Indian captain Rohit Sharma the "new king in town" after the Mumbaikar broke the Jamaican's record for most number of sixes in the ODI format.

"Congratulations Rohit, sports always need a new entertainer and Rohit has been entertaining all these years as well I have done it alongside him. So he is the new king in town now. So congrats to him, and hopefully, he goes on to hit more sixes." Gayle also expressed

disappointment at West Indies' absence in the Champions Trophy. am disappointed,

no West Indies in the Champions Trophy but it is good to have the Champions Trophy back, so I am looking forward to it. "Hopefully, it will be an

said, "I'm going to be going

off just my mind - India,

England, Australia, and

probably New Zealand."

Arabian league. entertaining one. I know it is actually taking place The terms of the offers (from Saudi), that's more of my father's job, who is in Pakistan and Dubai, so hopefully, we will have my agent, and the club. I do some entertaining cricket." not know much about the Asked to pick his semifidetails. I am very grateful nalists for the event startthat there is interest from other clubs," Rodrygo told reporters on Monday. ing February 19, Gayle

'I am really happy here. I have been here for a long time. I always say, playing with this shirt in the

fers from clubs in the Saudi



Champions League is most special."

Rodrygo Wants To Stay At Madrid

After Interest From Clubs

Rodrygo's current deal with Real runs until 2028. Germany (\$295.7 million), Italy (\$223.8 million), France (\$209.7 million) and Saudi Arabia (\$202.1 million) completed the list of the top five countries for their clubs' January spending.

Brazil's Neymar parted ways with Al-Hilal to join Santos and Colombian forward Jhon Duran, who moved from Aston Villa to Saudi Arabian club Al-Nassr for around 77 million euros (\$79.97 million) was the most expensive player signed in the midseason window. Madrid Real

Manchester City away on Tuesday in the first leg of their knockout playoff after both clubs failed to qualify automatically for the last 16 under the Champions League's new format.

65 per cent of Indians use AI, more than double the global average: Microsoft



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A Microsoft study, reflecting the rapid adoption Artificial Intelligence (AI) in India, has found that 65 per cent of surveyed Indians have used AI—more than double the global average.

Microsoft on Tuesday unveiled the Global Online Safety Survey, which studies the growing influence of AI. The survey is based on responses from 15,000 teenagers (13-17) and adults that was conducted in 15 countries between July 19 and August 9, 2024. "65 per cent of respondents have used AI (+26 per

cent from 2023). This is more than double the global

average of 31 per cent in the same time period.

"India is most excited about using AI for translations, answering questions, increasing efficiency at work and helping students with schoolwork," the report said. The report showed that millennials (people aged 25-44) lead adoption, with 84 per cent reporting usage.

Indian parents are more aware of their children's digital challenges, showing increased awareness compared to the previous year, it said. However, India also has some reservations about AI, including concerns about online abuse, deepfakes, scams, and

Al hallucinations, mirroring global trends.
Online abuse was among the top worries regarding Al. "More than 80 per cent of respondents worry about Al usage for children under 18 years," the report noted. Over 80 per cent of Indian teens said they have experienced an online risk.

14 candidates score perfect 100 in engineering entrance



Fourteen candidates from across the country have bagged perfect score in the first edition of engineering entrance exam JEE-Main 2025 with maximum of them being from Rajasthan, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced on Tuesday.

Twelve out of the 14 top scorers are from general category and one each from OBC and SC categories. More than 12.58 lakh candidates had appeare for the first edition of the crucial exam.

Among the candidates who secured an NTA score of 100, five are from Rajasthan, two each from Delhi and Uttar Pradesh and one each from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Telangana and Maharashtra. According to NTA officials, NTA score is not the same as percentage of marks obtained but normalised scores.

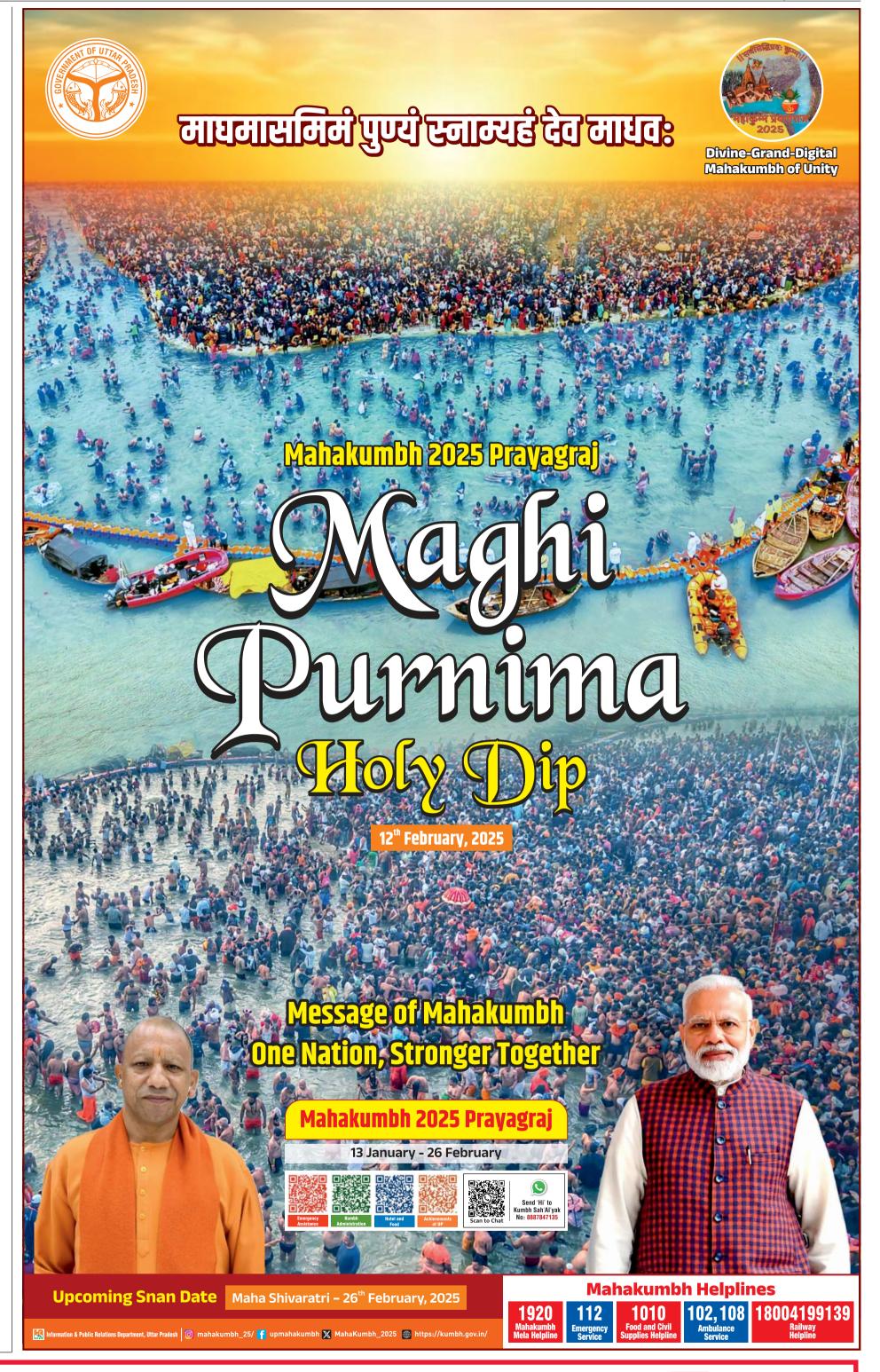
NTA scores are normalised scores across multisession papers and are based on the relative performance of all those who appeared for the examination in one session, a senior official explained.

The marks obtained are converted into a scale ranging from 100 to 0 for each session of examinees, the official added. The examination was held in 13 languages -- Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.

The exam was also conducted in 15 cities outside India -- Manama, Doha, Dubai, Kathmandu, Muscat, Riyadh, Sharjah, Singapore, Kuwait City, Kuala Lumpur, Abu Dhabi, West Java, Washington, Lagos and Munich.

While the first edition of the exam was conducted in January-February, the second edition is scheduled in April. Based on the results of JEE-Mains Paper 1 and Paper 2, the candidates will be shortlisted to appear for the JEE-Advanced exam, which is a one-stop exam to get admission into the

23 premier Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). After both sessions of JEE (Main)-2025 Examination, the ranks of the candidates will be released taking into consideration the best of the two NTA scores in accordance with the policy already made.





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