

# Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication



Srinagar • Sunday 24, March 2024 • Vol: 15 • Issue No: 72 • Pages: 08 • Price: ₹ 2/- (Air Surcharge for Delhi, Jammu & Ladakh 50/- Paisa) RNI No. JKENG/2010/36998

Jmu Swelters At 30 Degrees  
**Kashmir Blessed With Rains**  
  
SRINAGAR: As the temperature soared in Jammu, reaching a scorching 30 degrees Celsius, contrasting weather prevailed in the Kashmir division, where rain and snowfall graced many plains from Thursday night through Friday afternoon.  
The Kashmirir • P-06

**J&K Police Establishes 24\*7 Election Helpline**  
SRINAGAR: In view of the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls Jammu and Kashmir police has established helpline to address election related queries.  
In a post on X, Kashmir Zone police said the dedicated 24\*7 election helpline has been setup at PCR Kashmir.  
"To address election-related queries and concerns, J&K Police Kashmir Zone establishes a • P-06

## MHA Directive Allows States To Act Against JKNF



**GMK NEWS NETWORK**  
**NOW, THEREFORE, in the exercise of the powers conferred by section 42 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (37 of 1967) (hereinafter referred to as the said Act),**  
NEW DELHI: Ministry of Home Affairs Saturday authorised states and the Union Territories (UTs) to wield the powers outlined in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, in relation to the proscribed Jammu Kashmir National Front (JKNF), an outfit which was banned for next five years earlier this month.  
As per a notification, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued a directive in which the states and the UTs can use section 7 and section 8 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 against the banned terror outfit JKNF.  
The notification was issued days after the MHA declared the JKNF an unlawful association. "Whereas, in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) and (3) of section 3 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (37 of 1967), the Central Government declared the Jammu Kashmir National Front (JKNF), as an unlawful association vide notification number S.O. 1296(E) dated March 12, 2024, published in the Gazette of India, Extraor-

## 'Will Not Skirt' This Problem Anymore Pakistan Sponsoring Terrorism At 'Industry Level': S Jaishankar



**AGENCIES**  
SINGAPORE: Underlining that Pakistan is sponsoring terrorism almost at an "industry level", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday asserted that the mood in India now is not to overlook terrorists and it "will not skirt this problem anymore".  
Jaishankar, who is on a three-day visit to Singapore, made these remarks during a Q&A round held post his lecture session on his authored book 'Why Bharat Matters' at Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) of National University of Singapore (NUS).  
"Every country wants a stable neighbourhood...if nothing else, you want at least a quiet neighbourhood," he said in response to a question on India's ties with Pakistan.  
However, unfortunately, it is not the same with India, he said.  
Underlining that Pakistan has been sponsoring terrorism against India, Jaishankar asked, "How do you deal with a neighbour who does not hide the fact that they use terrorism as an instrument of statecraft?"  
"It's not a one-off happening...but very sustained, almost at an industry level...so what we have come to conclude is that we have to find a way of addressing (the menace), that dodging the problem gets us nowhere, it only invites more trouble," he said.  
"I don't have a quick

**Dr. S. Jaishankar (Modi Ka Pariwar) @DrSJaishankar**  
*This is very heartening to see. It will help further showcase the beauty of Jammu and Kashmir. India offers great opportunities for motorsports to thrive and Srinagar is right on top of the places where it can happen!*

lem anymore. We are not going to say, 'well, that happened and let's continue our dialogue'... we have a problem and we must be honest enough to face up to that problem, however difficult it is...we should not give the other country a free pass, saying there's nothing they can do about it or it's a very hard problem, or there's so much else at stake that let us overlook," he asserted.  
In India now, Jaishankar said, "the mood is not to overlook • P-06

**I DON'T HAVE A QUICK INSTANTANEOUS FIX (TO THIS ISSUE).** But what I can tell you is that India will not skirt this problem anymore. We are not going to say, 'well, that happened and let's continue our dialogue'

## ECI Notifies Scheme For KMs To Vote During Lok Sabha Polls



**GMK NEWS NETWORK**  
JAMMU: Continuing the past practice of facilitating the Kashmiri Migrant to vote through Postal ballots and Special Polling Stations set at Jammu, Udampur, and New Delhi, the Election Commission of India announced a comprehensive scheme for the Kashmiri Migrants. The scheme is meant for all those electors of 1-Baramul-

la, 2-Srinagar, and 3-Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary Constituency in the Kashmir valley of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir who had migrated because of compelling circumstances and have been temporarily residing in various places outside their place of ordinary residence.  
The Election Commission has issued two notifications categorizing the • P-06

## At UN Hari Singh's Grandson Hails Decision To Abrogate Article 370



**AGENCIES**  
GENEVA: Senior BJP leader MK Ajatshatru Singh in his address to the United Nations hailed the Government of India's bold decision to abrogate Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir.  
Ajatshatru, the grandson of Maharaja Hari Singh who had signed the treaty of accession of the region with India in 1947 expressed his deep concern for the plight of those living under Pakistan occupation and sought UN intervention to ameliorate them.  
In his address at the UN on Friday, the senior BJP leader said, "Since the constitutional reforms in 2019, there has been a significant decline in terrorist incidents in the region. From 2004 to 2014, Jammu and Kashmir experienced a total • P-06

## 1.7 Million Tulips Await Visitors Srinagar's Iconic Tulip Garden Opens To Public



**JAHANGIR SOFI**  
SRINAGAR: Kashmir's Tulip Garden, one of the biggest in Asia, was officially thrown open to the public on Saturday. According to the officials, this year the garden will bloom with 17 lakh flowers of different varieties with a boast of five new flower varieties this year.  
An officer from the floriculture department said that for this year they added five new varieties of flowers and that the visitors will witness 1.7 million tulips in the garden.  
"The moment has come when the tulip garden has been thrown open to the public. Both national and international tourists are • P-06

## Mustard Bloom Emerges As New Tourist Attraction In Kashmir Valley



**MUBASHIR AALAM WANI**  
SRINAGAR: Apart from tulips and almond blossom, mustard bloom is becoming a yet another attraction for tourists thronging the valley during the spring season.  
With the culmination of winter, the spring season in the valley begins with the mustard, almond, cherry and tulip bloom.  
While Badamwari and tulip garden becomes the main attraction during the season, the random mustard fields spread across the valley against the backdrop of majestic snow-capped mountains and verdant greenery equally presents a stunning contrast, painting the landscape with hues of gold.  
Tourists flock to the Kashmir Valley during this time to immerse themselves in the breathtaking scenery of mustard bloom.  
From photographers seeking the perfect shot to nature enthusiasts reveling in the serenity of the surroundings, visitors find solace amidst the mustard fields.  
As per the travel agents, tourists often request them for a trip to the mustard fields of Kashmir. "Mustard bloom is one of the prime attractions in Indonesia during spring season. Kashmir, which is surrounded with mountains, present a brilliant view amidst the mustard bloom. Tourists love this colour of nature," said Umar Ahmad, a travel agent.  
He said the rush of tourists for pre-wedding and fashion bloggers increases during the spring season primarily due to the mustard and almond bloom.  
"We receive lot of couples who visit • P-06

## Tampering With Smart Meters Govt Mulls To Lodge FIR Against 272 Consumers



**RAJA SYED RATHER**  
SRINAGAR: The government has initiated the process of registering FIR against 272 consumers across Srinagar for tampering with the smart meters, officials said on Saturday.  
For the last several months, the Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) has been taking action against illegal hooking and tampering of smart meters across Kashmir. Several videos were uploaded on X by KPDCL wherein it could be seen that many consumers were found tampering with the smart meters.  
The KPDCL has taken a step further and has issued a list of consumers, who were found tampering with the • P-06

**INOX CINEMA SHIVPORA SRINAGAR**  
Sunday 24 March MOVIES Schedule

 MADGAON EXPRESS (HINDI) 12:00PM, 03:10PM, 07:10PM (U/A)	 YODHA (HINDI) 11:15AM, 04:15PM (U/A)	 SHAITAAN (HINDI ATMOS) 02:10PM, 07:20PM (U/A)
 JATT NU CHUDAIL TAKRI (PUNJABI) 01:05PM (U)	 DUNE PART TWO (ENGLISH) WITH ENG SUBTITLES 06:20PM (U/A)	 KUNG FU PANDA 4 (ENG WITH ENG SUBTITLE) 05:05PM (U)

# DEO B'la flags off Vibrant Shikara Rally to promote Voter Awareness

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BARAMULLA:** In an endeavour to raise awareness about various election-related activities as part of SVEEP (Systematic Voter Education Electoral Participation), the District Election Officer, Baramulla, Minga Sherpa in presence of Chief Education Officer, Balbir Singh Raina, flagged off a vibrant Shikara Rally in Jhelum River at Baramulla.

The Shikara rally which started from Dewan Bagh witnessed a diverse participation, notably from energetic young individuals and first-time voters whose enthusiasm showcased a strong desire to actively engage in the democratic process.

The rally culminated at Eco Park Baramulla, and was received by the ARO, Baramulla Constituency, Arshid Ahmad Khan, Nodal officer SVEEP Balbir Singh Raina and Tehsildar



Baramulla Safiya Abdullah where a comprehensive awareness session related to election process was held for the participants of the rally.

The rally is part of a series of impactful events including snow festival

at Ladoo Ladoora, Boat Racing at Watlab, Snow Sporting Event at Tangmarg, organized by the District Administration Baramulla under the SVEEP initiative, aimed at promoting voter awareness about the electoral process

throughout the district.

During the event, the DEO emphasized that the objective of such events is to enhance electoral literacy and raise awareness about the election procedures in order to empower the electorates, especially first time voters to effectively participate in the elections.

Minga Sherpa further highlighted that during these awareness events the electorates, especially young voters are educated by the election officials about various election procedures in place and the guidelines of the ECI they need to adhere to, for exercising their democratic right.

The DEO urged the media representatives present at the event to actively contribute towards spreading awareness regarding the essential role of public participation in elections, emphasizing the importance of an informed and engaged electorate.

'MY VOTE MY PRIDE'

# Amar Singh College organizes Mehendi Art Competition

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Under the flagship programme of Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP), the Electoral Literacy Club (ELC) of Amar Singh College, Srinagar Saturday organized a Mehendi Art Competition themed 'My Vote My Pride' at Tasveer Hall of the college premises.

The event was organized under the guidance and patronage of Principal Amar Singh College, Prof. Sheikh Ajaz Bashir. In his message, he encouraged all students to actively participate in such initiatives and emphasized the importance of exercising their right to vote.

Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Rather, Convener of the Electoral Literacy Club, delivered a comprehensive briefing about the activity, emphasizing the pivotal role of voter awareness in fostering a vibrant democracy. He urged the participants to actively engage in promoting voter education and empowerment, high-



lighting the importance of informed decision-making in the electoral process.

The event, attended by almost 100 students and some faculty members, was aimed at promoting voter awareness among the student community, emphasizing the significance of each individual's vote in shaping the democratic process. Students from various disciplines enthusiastically participated, showcasing their artis-

tic skills while advocating for voter empowerment.

The competition witnessed vibrant displays of creativity, as participants adorned their hands with intricate Mehendi designs incorporating elements symbolizing electoral participation, civic responsibility, and democratic values. The atmosphere was charged with energy and enthusiasm, reflecting the collective commitment towards fostering a culture

of informed and active citizenship.

In the end first position was bagged by Neha, a student of 1st semester Political Science, 2nd position was taken by Mehvish, a 4th semester student and 3rd position was taken by Sahiba of 4th semester.

Prof. Shafiya Mohi ud Din, Prof. Mudasar Roshan and Dr. Zubair Nazeer coordinated the event and acted as jury members in the program.

Lok Sabha Elections

# First randomization of EVMs, VVPATs successfully conducted in Kulgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM:** Randomization of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) & VVPATs for the General Elections to the Lok Sabha 2024 was held in Kulgam on Saturday in accordance with the Election Commission of India guidelines.

The process was conducted in presence of the District Election Officer (DEO), Athar Aamir Khan, AROs and representatives of recognized Political Parties were present during the 1st Randomization process.

The randomisation was done on the EMS Software/Portal of ECI, to the satisfaction of all the Political Parties present in the meeting. All the representatives of politi-



cal parties expressed their satisfaction over the entire randomisation process.

The copies of lists of randomized CUs/BUS and VVPATs were handed over

to the representatives of the political parties present in the meeting during the randomization. Videography of the entire process was done as per guidelines.

# Zonal, Sectoral Magistrates imparted Election training in Shopian

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN:** In view of the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections, Zonal and Sectoral Magistrates were Saturday imparted training under the supervision of District Election Officer, Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb at Mini-Secretariat, here.

The second round of training for Magistrates was aimed to acquaint them with necessary knowledge and skills for effectively carrying out their duties during the electoral process.

Interacting with the participants, the Deputy District Election Officer briefed participants about their role and responsibilities in the fair and free conduct of elections.

The District Election Officer while directing the Zonal and Sectoral Magistrates to visit the poll-



ing stations and ascertain the availability of assured minimum facilities sought their pro-active role in making smooth and accessible elections possible in the district.

The DEO emphasized the importance of maintaining law and order, overseeing polling stations and ensuring the safety and security of voters. He also stressed the significance of impartiality, transparency and strict adherence to the

model code of conduct. On the occasion, training was imparted by Master Trainer, Bilal Ahmed. The training session focused on equipping the Magistrates with the skills to handle any potential issues or challenges that may arise on Election Day.

The training covered a wide range of topics, including election laws, procedures and protocols that needed to be followed during polling.

# DEO Shopian chairs interaction session with media on MCC



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN:** The District Election Officer (DEO) Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb Saturday chaired an interaction session with media persons at Conference Hall of DC Office Complex here in order to acquaint media persons about Model Code of Conduct (MCC) guidelines and various other media matters.

Detailed discussions were held to ensure better coordination between the District Administration and Media agencies to facilitate better connection between administration and media especially during the Lok

Sabha Elections. Speaking on occasion, DEO highlighted the vital role of the media towards the furtherance of fair and free elections.

The media were sensitized on MCC, Media matters including PCI, NBSA and ECI Guidelines and Voluntary Code of Ethics on media engagement and Election coverage.

The meeting was attended by Dy. District Election Officer, Jahanger Ahmad; District Information Officer, Shopian, Showkat Husain Ganie besides media persons representing different print and electronic media organisations.

LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

# Training imparted to Youth, NSS Volunteers in Kupwara



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA:** On the directions of District Election Officer (DEO) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan, the District Nodal Officer SVEEP, Kupwara Saturday organized a comprehensive training session for the Volunteers of NCC, NSS and youth groups at the Town Hall Kupwara.

The primary focus of the training session was to acquaint the Volunteers with detailed knowledge on essential election procedures.

District Level Master Trainers, (DLMTs), while imparting training to the

Volunteers, made them aware about guidelines and norms of election process and their role in assistance for the smooth, free, fair and more inclusive election process.

The DLMTs highlighting the role of the volunteers said that they shall be tasked with assisting specially-abled persons, senior citizens, vulnerable and other special voters, and making their easy access into polling stations so that they can exercise their franchise with ease and comfort.

Officials of SVEEP and volunteers attended the training session.

# Mega Youth Voter Festival organized in Kupwara

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA:** On the directions of District Election Officer (DEO) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan, a mega youth festival under SVEEP campaign was organized Saturday at Government UPS Trehgam by the District Nodal Officer SVEEP Kupwara.

As part of ongoing SVEEP activities, the general public, first time voters, community leaders, local Artists and student achievers, participated in the youth voter festival.

The event started with keynote address by District Nodal Officer SVEEP/ CEO Kupwara, Abdul Majeed Dar, who emphasized that the purpose of the programme was to educate the students and youth regarding electoral litera-



cy besides motivating them to participate effectively in the election process so that no voter is left behind.

Further, the resource persons of the SVEEP motivated the students and youth to enhance their participation in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections for stronger democracy and strengthen the youth partnership for greater electoral participation. They urged the young voters to exercise their franchise

without fail and contribute to the strengthening of democracy.

Speakers also highlighted the significance of active participation of the youth in the electoral process for betterment of the nation.

On the occasion, various activities were conducted which include speeches, student competitions, awareness regarding electoral participation, felicitations and cultural shows.

# Lok Sabha Election: Training imparted to Female Poling staff in Kulgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM:** The District Election Office Kulgam Saturday organised a training session for Female polling staff to be deployed at all-women polling stations in Kulgam in connection with the Lok Sabha elec-

tions at mini-secretariat, here.

The training session included hands-on training on use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs)

The training session was presided over by the

District Election Officer, Athar Aamir Khan.

During the training programme, the District Level Master Trainers presented detailed information regarding the preparation and conduct of the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections.

GENERAL ELECTIONS

# DEO Bandipora chairs meeting of Mobile Service Providers

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA:** In view of the ongoing Lok Sabha Elections 2024, District Election Officer (DEO) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman Saturday chaired a meeting of mobile service providers in his office chamber, here.

The meeting focused on ensuring robust communication infrastructure and uninterrupted mobile services during the electoral process.

The meeting discussed threadbare issues regarding Mobile network problems in some shadow polling stations of Gurez, besides discussions were also held to resolve the issues regarding the installation of mobile towers in Gurez.

The DEO, on the occasion, directed the concerned telecom operators to cover the uncovered areas of Gurez on priority for which NOCs have been issued.

He directed the mobile service providers to ensure uninterrupted internet connectivity during the election period for web-casting as per ECI Guidelines.

The DEO also directed Mobile Service Provid-



ers to fix the connectivity issues faced by toll-free No.1950, which is notified for complaint monitoring during elections.

He underscored the indispensable role of mobile services in facilitating democratic processes and urged all stakeholders to work diligently to uphold the reliability and accessibility of communi-

cation channels throughout the electoral cycle.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Mohammad Ashraf; Deputy District Election Officer, Mohammad Rafeeq Bhat; DySP DAR, Ahmad Shafi; Superintendent ITI and representatives of Mobile Service Providers and other concerned.

# Referral Judges have huge responsibility to make mediation successful: Justice Tashi

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Mediation & Conciliation Committee, High Court of J&K and Ladakh in collaboration with J&K Judicial Academy and J&K Legal Services Authority Saturday organized one day sensitization programme for nominated Referral Judges of Jammu province of Jammu and Kashmir on the topic "Mediation and Role of Referral Judges in the Process of Mediation" at J&K Judicial Academy, Jammu.

Justice Tashi Rabstan, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Chairman, Mediation & Conciliation Committee, High Court of J&K and Ladakh inaugurated the event.

Vinay Kumar Gupta, Former Principal District & Session Judge, a trained Mediator from MCPC, Supreme Court of India, Yash Paul Bourney, Director, J&K Judicial Academy, Rajinder Saproo, Coordinator, Mediation & Conciliation

Committee, Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority and Prem Sagar, Secretary, High Court Legal Services Committee were the Resource Persons for the programme.

While delivering the inaugural address, Justice Tashi highlighted that the mediation embodies principles of cooperation and consensus-building. He said that by prioritizing relationships and collaboration, mediation transcends the limitations of the courtroom and offers a more holistic approach to conflict resolution. He added that mediation empowers individuals to resolve their conflicts swiftly, amicably, and on their own terms. He underlined that the referral judges must possess a thorough understanding of the principles and practices of mediation, as an effective alternative dispute resolution tool in their hands.

Justice Tashi stressed that referral judges play a pivotal



role in promoting the use of mediation as an alternative to traditional litigation and huge responsibility lies on their shoulder to make mediation successful. Referring to the dismal figures of cases referred for mediation by the

District Judiciary in the UT of J&K during the year 2023, Justice Tashi observed that we are lagging far behind than other States.

He strongly urged upon all the participating referral judges as also the trial judges as a whole to embrace the principles of mediation to foster a legal system that is not only efficient and equitable but also conducive in nurturing harmonious relationships and promoting social cohesion.

Yash Paul Bourney, Director, J&K Judicial Academy, in his welcome address, gave an overview of the programme. Quoting Chief Justice of India, Justice Dr. D. Y. Chandrachud, he said that Mediation offers citizens a forum to not only determine the outcome of their disputes, but also to determine the criteria and standards by which those outcomes are evaluated. He highlighted that mediation as an Alternate or Additional Dispute Resolution

mechanism, is not new to India and has been existing as part of dispute resolution mechanism since times immemorial.

He added that mediation in its present form is a much refined and structured concept for effective resolution of disputes with the help of a third neutral person who assists the disputant parties to resolve their differences amicably. He reflected that benefits of mediation are manifold. Firstly, it offers a cost-effective and time-efficient alternative to traditional litigation, sparing parties from protracted court battles and exorbitant legal fees. Secondly, mediation promotes flexibility and autonomy, allowing parties to retain control over the outcome of their dispute rather than surrendering it to a judge and moreover, mediation promotes confidentiality, preserving the privacy of sensitive information and mitigating reputational risks.

Rajinder Saproo, Coordina-

tor, Mediation & Conciliation Committee, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, proposed vote of thanks and also conducted the proceedings of the day-long programme.

The inaugural session was followed by working sessions during which Vinay Kumar Gupta, Former Principal District & Session Judge, Delhi deliberated on the topics of ADR, Code of Civil Procedure 1908, and Mediation Act 2023. The learned resource person also highlighted the role of referral judges and discussed various guidelines for referral judges.

All the sessions were highly interactive during which the participants actively participated and shared their experiences, difficulties and also discussed various aspects of the subject topics. They also raised a number of queries which were answered satisfactorily by the worthy resource person.

## Pulwama engineer develops prayer timing App

JAHANGEER GANAIE

**PULWAMA:** A young software engineer from South Kashmir's Pulwama district has developed the Prayer Timings (JK Meeqat) App for Jammu and Kashmir residents.

Raqib Yousif, a resident of Gudoora village of Pulwama district has developed a prayer timing App that gives accurate prayer timing for all areas of Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh as per the timings of Darul Uloom Raheemiya Bandipora.

In a short span of time, the App has been down-

loaded by over one lakh mobile phone users.

Raqib said that he developed the early version of the App in 2019, which has over 30000 installs.

Later, he added some more features to the App and published it separately for the general public in 2021, which is being used by thousands of users, with over 15000 daily users using the app and taking advantage of it. The app has over 60,000 total downloads.

He said that the App has some more features such as the Quran in audio format and a few Islamic books

including Aurad-e-Fatiha.

"The app is available on the Play Store for Android users and is also available on the App Store for iPhone users," he said.

The developer has also released an app recently with the name of Aasan Kashur Tarjam, which is the first of its kind in Jammu and Kashmir and provides the Quran with Kashmiri translation by Mufti Shafeeq Sahab Shuyiyani.

This App also gained popularity among the people of Jammu and Kashmir very quickly, and in a very short span of time, it had over 10,000

installs.

This App was developed under the banner of Darul Uloom Islamia Pinjooora Shopian.

Raqib said there is a lot to be done to improve these Apps and add more and more features to them.

He is continuously striving to make the apps resourceful so that more and more people can benefit from them while these apps are ad-free and will remain like this.

He added that these apps are developed for the sake of Allah, and there is no plan to make them commercial—(KNO)

## Lok Sabha Elections

### Henna Art Competition held at Women's College

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** As a part of ongoing Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation program (SVEEP) campaign, Henna Art Competitions were Saturday organized at Women's College NawaKadal and Women's College Zakura to encourage the students casting their vote for the first time in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections-2024.

The Competitions were organized on the directions of District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to spread awareness among people, particularly young voters, for participating in the upcoming General Elections with enthusiasm.

Speaking about the initiative of Henna Art Competitions, the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, praised the students for their enthusiastic participation and lauded their creativity and talent displayed during the competitions.

The DEO also commended the efforts of the Principals and Staff of both the Colleges for making events successful and highlighted the importance of Voting in democratic setup.

At Women's College Nawa Kadal, the event was



organized by the Department of Home Science under the supervision of Principal, Prof (Dr) Mohammad Farooq Mir which saw an overwhelming and active participation of Students from different Departments of the College.

The Competition began with the orientation session of the participants wherein they were instructed about rules and regulations to be followed throughout the event.

During the Competition, the participants put a lot of effort in the hopes of generating awareness of voting and wrote slogans like "Hamara Vote Hamari Sarkar" and "Shape tomorrow by voting today".

After the culmination of the competition, valedictor-

ry session was held during which Trophies and merit Certificates were distributed among the First three Position and Participation Certificates were awarded to all other participants.

On the occasion, Principal Women's College Nawa Kadal encouraged students for their active participation and insisted them to partake with the same enthusiasm in future also.

Prof. Iftikhar ul Nisa (Head, Department of Chemistry), Dr. Rifat Aman (Head, Department of Education), Dr. Asmat Ara (Head, Department of Music) and Dr. Nuzhat Qazi (Assistant Professor, Department of Education) acted as Judges for the event.

Similarly, at Women's

College Batpora, Zakura, Henna Art Competition was organized by the National Service Scheme (NSS) and Electoral Literacy Club aimed to promote cultural expression while fostering electoral awareness among new voters particularly the students about the importance of active participation in elections with a special emphasis on the upcoming Lok Sabha Election.

The event commenced with an inaugural address by Principal of the College, Prof (Dr) Tehmina Yousuf. In her address she highlighted the significance of such events in spreading awareness and educating young voters about their duties towards the nation.

The competition was adjudicated by Dr Rubee-na Javeed and Dr Shazia Shafiq. The event was smoothly moderated by Dr Farhat Hassan, NSS Programme Officer, and Dr Safie Muzaffar, Electoral Literacy Club Convenor.

After a display of exceptional talent and creativity, various students emerged as winners.

The Henna Art Competitions under SVEEP in City Colleges were conducted under the overall supervision of Nodal Officer Colleges for SVEEP, Prof (Dr.) Sheikh Aijaz Bashir.

## 23-yr-old Sculptor from Sgr making waves in art world

RAJA SYED RATHER

**SRINAGAR:** A 23-year-old talented sculptor from Gulab Bagh Hazratbal in the summer capital, Srinagar, is making waves in the art world with her unique blend of passion and creativity.

Embracing sculpture as her medium of expression, Sabreena Firdous' journey into the art world began as a quest for self-expression and a desire to shape her surroundings. Drawing inspiration from

her Kashmiri roots, she infuses her creations with themes reflecting her personal experiences and observations of societal issues.

Working primarily with clay, Sabreena breathes life into her sculptures with a distinct touch, showcasing her talent and dedication on various platforms.

Despite facing societal challenges and taunts, Sabreena's resilience has only fuelled her commitment to her craft, pushing



boundaries and paving the way for other aspiring female artists.

Active in the local art scene, Sabreena participates in numerous events and workshops, fostering a sense of community and

empowerment among fellow artists.

With a vision to become a successful female sculptor while staying true to her roots, Sabreena looks forward to upcoming projects with excitement and optimism.

In essence, Sabreena Firdous' identity as a young, female sculptor serves as both her driving force and her message, transcending boundaries and inspiring all who encounter her work—(KNO)

## 8TH CLASS EXAMS

### JKSCERT postpones exam of all papers except for English subject

RIYAZ BHAT

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir State Council of Educational Research and Training (JKSCERT) Saturday postponed examination of all papers of 8th standard except for the English subject.

Joint Director Central for JKSCERT said that the postponement was announced in view of the representations from various quarters for in the UT of J&K.

The official communication in this regard reads, "It is notified for all the concerned that the Middle Standard Examinations scheduled to be held on 24th, 26th and 29th of March in respect of soft zone and 26th and 29th of March in respect of hard zone stand postponed."

JKSCERT said that the fresh dates for conduct of these papers of both Hard Zone shall be notified in

due course of time. Earlier, the council had proposed to conduct examination of regional language paper of 8th standard simultaneously in both soft and hard zones on April-07.

JKSCERT had said that it had not received the questions papers from on time and were not in position to supply the question papers of Kashmiri subjects due to paucity of time.

The Joint Director of JKSCERT of Kashmir division in a communication said that in view of Middle Standard Examination 2024 and furnishing the stock position of question papers and reference, it is submitted that the confidential material of MSE 2023-24 shall be dispatched on 23-03-2024 in respect of Kashmir Division.

"It is here to mention that regional language paper of soft zone already notified to be held on March-24-2024 needs to be

rescheduled as the regional language paper shall not be supplied on the said date due to paucity of time," it reads.

The joint director of the council further said, "Keeping in view the matter, it is requested that the regional language paper scheduled on March-24-2024 in respect of soft zone may kindly be rescheduled and shall be conducted on 7th of April along with Hard zone paper of regional languages."

Meanwhile a complex head in Srinagar said, "Normally we used to get the entire confidential material including the question papers before the commencement of examinations." He said, "This year, the complex heads received the confidential materials at the 11th hour and a portion of it is yet to be received including the question papers of Kashmiri and English subjects."—(KNO)

## 19 DPS buses in B'la blacklisted for incomplete documents: ARTO

WARIS FAYAZ

**BARAMULLA:** Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Baramulla, Muazzam Ali on Saturday issued a stern warning to schools across the district, cautioning them of strict action if they fail to adhere to transportation norms. He urged school authorities to ensure completion of vehicle documents within seven days to avoid repercussions.

The ARTO said that an enforcement drive blacklisted 19 school buses belonging to Delhi Public School Baramulla for non-compliance with transportation regulations. Drivers and transport in-chargers were also sensitised during this initiative, he added.

Setting a clear deadline for school authorities to finalise

the necessary documentation, Ali warned, "Failure to adhere to these directives may lead to severe consequences."

He said the enforcement drive was initiated following directives from higher authorities to conduct a comprehensive road safety audit of school buses. "It was observed that a number of vehicles were operating without the requisite documents," he elaborated.

Highlighting the importance of road safety as a collective responsibility, the ARTO reiterated the department's commitment to stringent action against traffic violators. "Such enforcement drives would continue in the future, and we have a zero-tolerance policy towards violations," he said—(KNO)

## 4-year-old boy crushed to death by speedy vehicle in Doda village

AGENCIES

**DODA:** A 4-year-old boy was crushed to death by a speedy vehicle in Baggar area of Assar sub-division in district Doda this afternoon.

An official said that the boy was hit by a vehicle in Baggar areas, following which he was

taken to Community Health Centre Batote. He said that the boy succumbed to his injuries on way to the hospital. He has been identified as Bhanu Pratap son of Bachan Singh of Ganota area of Assar.

Police have taken the cognizance of the matter and registered a case in this regard—(KNO)

## R&B Dept to launch 200 cr road macadamization project after MCC ends

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

**SRINAGAR:** The Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department in Kashmir said it will launch a comprehensive road macadamization project across the valley after the Model Code of Conduct in view of the Lok Sabha elections comes to an end.

Chief Engineer of the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department, Kashmir, Sajad Ahmad Nageeb, informed that the ambitious project, with an estimated cost of 200 crore rupees, is scheduled to commence in May.

"This initiative aims to cover approximately 630 kilometres of roads spanning the entire Kashmir region," he said.

Nageeb expressed confidence that the implementation of this project would significantly improve road safety standards, ultimately saving lives—(KNO)

## LOK SABHA-2024

### DEO B'pora chairs meeting regarding issuance of rate chart

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA:** In view of Lok Sabha Elections 2024, the District Election Officer (DEO) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman on Saturday convened a meeting to finalize the issuance of the rate chart in order to ensure transparency and efficiency in the electoral process.

The primary agenda of the meeting was to discuss the rate chart, which plays a pivotal role in regulating campaign expenditures and ensuring a level playing field for all candidates.

The DEO emphasized the importance of adherence to

electoral regulations and ethical campaign practices.

The meeting discussed various factors influencing the determination of rates, including advertising costs, venue rentals, transportation expenses, etc.

The DEO urged all stakeholders to uphold the integrity of the electoral process and adhere strictly to the prescribed guidelines.

The meeting was attended by DyDEO Mohammad Rafeeq Bhat, Nodal Officer MCMC/ District Information Officer Dr. Naser Ahmad, Nodal Officer Expenditure Monitoring/ DTO Sheikh Abid Manzoor and other concerned.

## Election Training of employees conducted in Anantnag

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG:** A general election training of employees of District Anantnag was organized in two shifts at seven different venues.

These venues included Government Degree College for Women Anantnag, Dak Bungalow, Government Degree College Kokernag, Government Degree College Bijbehara, Town Hall

Ashmuqam, Town Hall Achabal and Rasool Mir Auditorium Doru.

The training was imparted by Election master trainers headed by Dr Arshad Ahmad Saloo, State Level Master Trainer. The main focus points during the training sessions were related to poll eve duties and poll day responsibilities of Presiding and polling officers. Also, an Electronic Voting Machines demonstration was done.

Good Morning **Kashmir**

EDITORIAL

## Tourism Promoted By Influencers

**T**he tourism across the world is witnessing a revolution. The way to woo tourists has changed. The way to attract quality tourism in huge numbers has undergone a revolutionary change. Providing feasible accommodation to film crews, holding poetry sessions, drama plays, seminars on all themes, advertising on all social media networks, and doing tireless digital marketing. However, the latest trend is soliciting YouTubers and vloggers, providing them free travel and accommodation, and use their huge followership to improve your tourism prospects. The vloggers are flocking to Kashmir and relaying the hospitality they are witnessing firsthand to millions of their followers. All this is costing our resources are free lunches, discount on hotel accommodation and a few hundred smiles and nice treatment. These magicians are better known as influencers. They can change the destiny of a drowning business within no time. These influencers actually influence the buying and selling temperament of people and for tourism promotion, they are just pure goldust.

For the last five or six years Kashmir seems to be lucky in as far as attracting these influencers to Kashmir. The establishment must ensure no one fleeces them, overcharges them, or talks to them rudely because the same would get delayed to the thousands of their followers unadulterated. Kashmir is just waiting for another great year of tourism. Estimates say record tourism is expected this year. And how we wish those estimates hold water!

# Is Meritocracy Necessity For Progress?

SAYIMA WANI

**I**n a recent big decision that struck the sensitive nerves of thousands of unemployed youth and slumped them in deep dejection. The amendment in J&K Reservation Rules, 2005 by the Jammu and Kashmir government approved 10% additional reservations for the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category and slashed the reservations of the general or OM category to a mere 40%. It: The Hindu

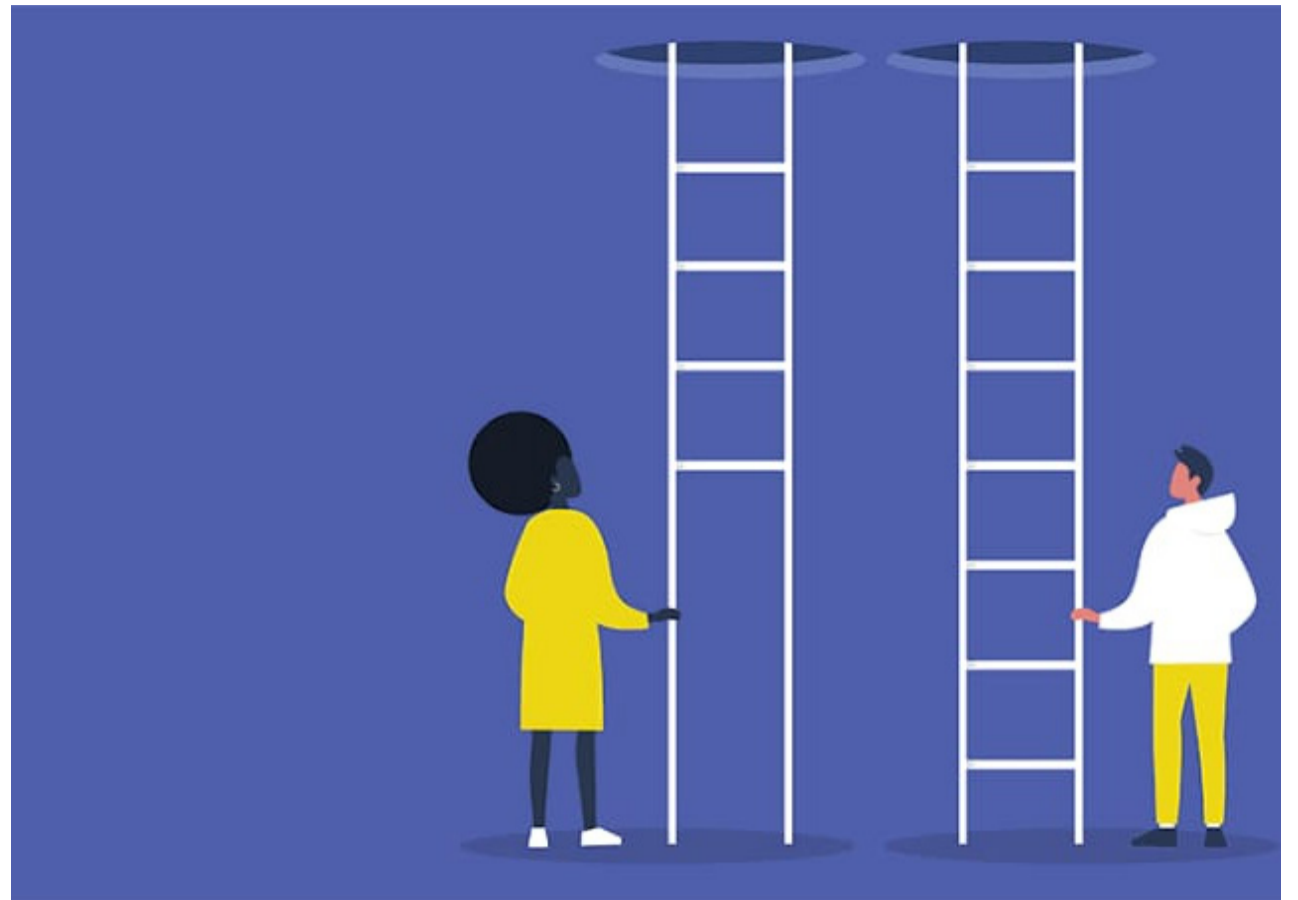
The Jammu & Kashmir Lieutenant Governor's (LG) administration has approved 10% reservation for newly-included tribes, including Paharis, in the Schedule Tribe (ST) and added 15 new castes in the Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

J&K LG Manoj Sinha approved the proposal of the Social Welfare Department to amend the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Rules, 2005.

Amid protests in Jammu, Lok Sabha passes Bill to include Paharis in J&K's ST list

"In light of addition of four new tribes i.e. Pahari Ethnic Group, Paddari Tribe, Kolis and Gadda Brahmins, to the Scheduled Tribes Order as applicable to the J&K by the Parliament, the Administrative Council approved 10% reservation in favour of newly added tribes taking the overall reservation for STs to 20%," a spokesman of the Raj Bhawan said. In order to ensure that both already notified and now newly added tribes get benefits of reservation equally and separately, the Administrative Council, headed by LG Manoj Sinha, approved an equal and separate percentage of reservation for them, which is 10% each. The Council also approved the addition of 15 new castes in OBCs and enhancement of reservation in favour of OBCs to 8%, which will meet the long pending demand of the OBC category in the UT. It also approved change in nomenclature and synonymy of some castes as recommended by the SEBC Commission. With this move, the total reservations in the ST category have now gone up to 20%.

It is crystal clear that about 60% of the seats are reserved for the candidates belonging to SCs, STs, OBCs, EWSs, etc which can be filled only by candidates



from the same categories while 40% of the seats are available for the general category. In the merit seats not only the general category but candidates from reserved categories can also compete. Isn't it sheer injustice with general category candidates?

The main aim of the reservation is to elevate the underprivileged sections of society. In the Ashok Kumar Thakur vs. Union of India case, Justice Ravindran rightly said, "When more people aspire for backwardness rather than forwardness the country itself stagnates". The undeniable truth is that while seeing the success of others multitude of communities are demanding reservations. Nevertheless, myriad people in these communities are much more advanced and are socially and economically sound. They are living a life of luxury.

This reservation system at the same time is jeopardizing the mental health of OM students. It leads to abhorrence. Unreserved meritorious students are subjected to extreme injustice. The administration is advocating caste over merit and talent. Hence, the reservation system is a significant obstacle to meritocracy. Hundreds of affluent families which include high-ranking officials, well-off professionals, and others have been reaping the benefits of reservations for decades in contrast, students from the general category still struggle to secure a job or obtain admission in their desired professions.

The reservation system thwarts the plans of OM students before they even think about flying. There are poor people in the general category as well who don't have access to basic needs of

life. Democracy can only flourish when every individual in society is given equal and fair treatment. The reservation system is not the way to stabilize the financial conditions of impoverished sections of society instead of that administration should look for alternative measures.

Additionally, in cases where reservations are necessary for certain sections of society then it have to be based on the economic status of the people not on their caste or religion. Instead, of assassinating the hope of OM students administration should make sure to promote the fundamental right of equality by providing equal rights to all regardless of their creed, color, and caste.

Author is a student and can be mailed at sayimawani131@gmail.com

## A Modern Challenge

# Growing Concern Of Screen Addiction In Children

UZMA NAZIR

*"You don't even realize how much you need internet, but it really stops you from doing a lot."*

**T**hese days, most of us are in front of our mobile screens around the clock. We scroll our

phones for fun, use our computers for work, and unwind each night in front of the television. Children enjoy playing video games on their parent's smartphones or watching YouTube videos on these devices. The use of screens increased manifold during the COVID-19 pandemic as children used screens for educational purposes as well as for dealing with the boredom of lockdown. Parents also find it easier to manage their children for a long period due to their busy schedules. Now in present times, the phenomenon of screen addiction in children is increasingly prevalent, posing significant challenges to their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Understanding screen addiction: "Screen time is not just TV time," says pediatrician Lolita Mc David, MD, screen time is anything electronic your children can access.

Screen addiction, also known as internet addiction or digital addiction refers to the excessive and compulsive use of digital devices and online activities to the extent that it interferes with daily life responsibilities and activities. From physical eye strain and increased risk for weight gain to mental health consequences and sleep disturbances, time spent with our devices has tangible effects on our well-being.

Causes and Contributing Factors:

Several factors contribute to the development of screen addiction in children, which may be enlisted as follows:

Accessibility: With the proliferation of smartphones and tablets, screens are readily



accessible to children at home, school, and even in social settings at an early age.

Engaging Content: Many apps, games, and online platforms are designed to be highly engaging and addictive capturing children's attention for extended periods.

Social pressure: Peer influence and the desire to fit in can drive children to spend excessive time on social media and online gaming platforms to stay connected with friends.

Parental influence: Parents who excessively use screens themselves or fail to set limits on their children's screen time may inadvertently contribute to the development of screen addiction.

Digitized World: Nowadays, we are living in a digital world. These gadgets have become a necessity for us as every single activity is performed through online mode. Inadvertently, unknowingly everyone is becoming more and more engaged with mobile phones and laptops. Which has also resulted in screen addiction among our youth.

Impact on Children: Physical Health: Excessive screen time is associated with a sedentary lifestyle, leading to an increased risk of obesity,

poor posture, and sleep disturbances. Also, it includes soreness in the neck, spine eyes, and fingers.

Mental Health: It leads to anxiety, depression, and mood swings. Excessive exposure also leads to impaired cognitive development and attention span.

Social Development: Children who spend excessive time in front of screens may struggle with social skills, face-to-face communication, and forming meaningful relationship bonds. Children with screen addiction are usually unsocial and try to remain in loneliness spending most of their time with mobile phones.

Academic performance: Screen-addictive children struggle to focus and pay attention to their studies which results in a decline in interest in their studies. Due to their dependency on technology, they also struggle to memorize the lectures.

Everything readily available on the internet has resulted in a decline in creativity and writing skills among our children. Addressing Screen Addiction: Parents, educators, healthcare professionals, and policymakers can jointly work to prevent and address screen addiction

in children.

Setting Limits: No screen time for babies under 6 months old and establishing consistent screen time limit is essential as parents should model healthy screen habits and rules at home.

Promoting Alternatives: Encouraging children to engage in physical activity, hobbies, and face-to-face interactions can help reduce reliance on screens for entertainment.

Educating Families: Inform parents about the importance of balanced screen time and the signs of screen addiction can empower them to make informed decisions.

Creating Safe Spaces: Schools can create screen-free zones and incorporate digital literacy education into the curriculum to help students develop critical thinking skills and responsible digital citizenship.

Also, it is the responsibility of parents to find out how much time their child spends online and what he/she posts or reads on social media. Some kids

watch R-rated movies, acquire drugs, and excess pornography, and go into sex chat rooms to send images to their friends. Parents should be cautious regarding

these things.

Discourage using electronics at the dining table. The benefits of eating meals together should be appreciated by elders at home. Parents should not allow phone use during bedtime so that children may get a good night's rest. If screen addiction is suspected, seeking support from mental health professionals and counselors can provide children and families with the necessary tools and strategies to address underlying issues and develop healthier screen habits.

Conclusion: Screen addiction among children is a complex and challenging issue that requires collective action and awareness. While technology offers many benefits, it is essential to strike a balance and ensure that children's screen time is moderated and purposeful. By prioritizing healthy screen habits and promoting alternative activities, we can mitigate the negative impacts of screen addiction and support the well-being of our children in the digital age.

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IDEAS, OPINIONS AND VIEWS EXPRESSED IN ARTICLES PUBLISHED ARE WRITERS' OWN AND MAY NOT BE FOUND IN ACCORD WITH THOSE OF GOOD MORNING KASHMIR

Overview

# Human Rights Traditions In Islam

ABDULRAHIM P VIJAPUR

**T**he Islamic concept of human rights contains numerous moral exhortations. Helping orphans, widows, wayfarers and the poor has been greatly stressed by the holy Quran and Sunnah (Prophetic traditions) which not only helps people overcome their economic problems but also inculcates a kind of fellow feeling among them. Its many injunctions have gone a long way in ameliorating human suffering and creating human rights obligations.

Muslim scholars also contend that the concept of human rights can be traced back to Quranic texts and prophetic traditions. Sultan H. Tabandeh, an Iranian Sufi scholar, writes that contemporary human rights doctrines merely give recognition to 1500 years old Islamic principles. In fact, these principles/doctrines existed in a better and more perfect form in Islam than in any document ever enacted by lawgivers. To him "Islam is a summit and nothing excels it". Maulana Mawdudi also argues that "Islam has laid down universal fundamental rights for humanity as a whole which are to be observed and respected under all circumstances... fundamental rights for every man by virtue of his status as a human being". The Sharia embodies the basic concepts and principles of human rights. In this regard, it is pertinent to note a comment made in 1927 by a Western scholar, Count Leon Ostrorog, long before the advent of modern human rights doctrine. In a series of three lectures delivered at the University of London, on the Angora Reform, he observed:

Considered from the point of view of its logical structure, the system (Islamic law) is one of rare perfection, and to this day it commands the admiration of the student. Once... the revelation to the Prophet is admitted as postulate, it is difficult to find a flaw in the long series of deductions; so unimpeachable do they appear from the point of view of Formal Logic and of the rules of Arabic Grammar. If the contents of that logical fabric are examined, some theories command not only admiration but surprise. Those Eastern thinkers of the ninth century laid down, on the basis of their theology, the principle of the rights of Man, in those very terms, comprehending the rights of individual liberty, and of inviolability of person and property; described the supreme power in Islam, or Califate, as based on a contract, implying conditions of capacity and performance, and subject to cancellation if the conditions under the contract were not fulfilled; elaborated a Law of War of which the humane, chivalrous prescriptions would have put to the blush certain belligerents in the Great War; expounded a doctrine of toleration of non-Moslem creeds so liberal that our West had to wait a thousand years before seeing equivalent principles adopted.

However, Orientalists criticize Islam saying that it does not establish complete equality of man and woman in many areas. For instance, the witness of two females is equivalent to one male witness. No doubt regarding testimony, the Quran enjoins (Chapter 2:282) that when one person lends money to another, two male witnesses should be taken but, if only one male witness is available, then two female witnesses should be taken in lieu of a second male witness. While interpreting this verse it may be noted that the real intent of the Quranic command to take two witnesses in the first place is to ensure the return of the loaned money, and that the stipulation of taking two witnesses may have been the best way possible, at that time to ensure the payment of the loan. Some modern Muslim Scholars have argued that the stipulation rests on the empirically verifiable fact that women in pre-Islamic Arabia generally had, relative to men, little experience of financial matters and likely to err in recalling the details of transactions.

**Advanced Concept of Rights**

Islam provides the most rational basis to ensure the primacy of the fundamental right to life, and to guarantee its protection. It prohibits female infanticide, a practice prevalent in Arabia and other parts of the world. By not strictly prescribing the death penalty for the crime of murder, an assassin can be pardoned by the victim's family on receiving blood money (a kind of compensation). Islam introduced the principle of humane treatment of the individual 1500 years ago. This is a marked departure from the then-prevailing Roman law which prescribed "an eye for an eye". It may be recalled that

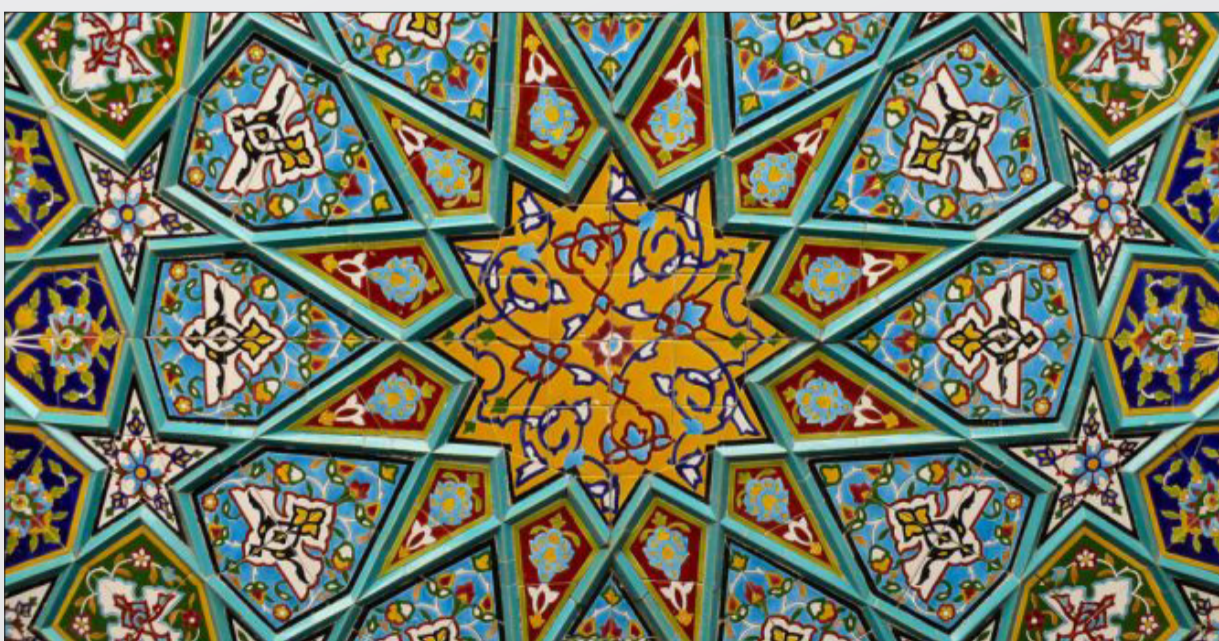


only in the 20th century European nations have enacted laws abolishing the death penalty without any compensation to the family of the victim by the guilty. It may be noted that for many centuries under British and Scottish law, capital punishment was applicable to a variety of crimes, including, horse, sheep and cattle stealing, rape, house-breaking, stealing of letters by the staff of the Post Office, etc. In England, theft of property worth more than a shilling was classified as a felony and like every other felony, was punished with death, up to as late as 1861. In comparison to English law, the Muslim law prescribing cutting the hands of thieves appears less barbaric. Moreover, with the coming up of jails in modern times and the reinterpretation of Islamic penal law most Muslim states have discontinued the practice of cutting off the hands.

The Islamic concept of human rights was very advanced as it included an elaborate set of rights. Three points may be noted: (1) The Islamic concept of human dignity applied to all humans, irrespective of whether they were Muslims or not. Non-Muslim minorities had rights under Islamic law and directives, which no ruling majority could interfere with. (ii) women enjoyed inheritance and other rights much before the West could reform its laws on gender equality; (iii) the principles of universal brotherhood, equality and non-discrimination are significant bases of Islamic concept of rights. The farewell address of the Prophet Muhammad, which he delivered during his last pilgrimage, summarizes the Islamic precept. He said: "O men, truly your God is one God, and your father, too, is one; you are all born of Adam, and Adam is but dust. The noblest of you with Allah is the most dutiful. No man, whether he is an Arab or not and whatever his race and colour, is superior to any other man except in uprightness [Italics added].

**Environment Rights**

Another Islamic ethical norm prohibits the wasteful use of resources.



Prophet Mohammad said that one must not waste water even if one is sitting by a stream, and one must take from the stream only as much water as needed. Islamic environmental law uses a "duty paradigm" in the sphere of the right to a healthy environment, as human beings must not destroy, deplete, or unwisely use natural resources but have an obligation to develop and enhance natural resources. In Islamic environmental law, the human is not the owner of nature, but a mere beneficiary. Islamic environmental safety is based upon the

principle of "use" without "abuse". Environmental protection under the Islamic legal scheme does not differ from any modern environmental legal system.

**Humanitarian Law**

The Islamic laws of war prohibit Muslim armies from cutting down fruit bearing trees in their path, which in fact amounts to a general rule that the beneficial resources of nature must be preserved. During war, the Muslim army is required to preserve natural vegetation, crops and livestock. This prohibition may be seen as an Islamic approach to environmental issues. Furthermore, these laws introduce many exemplary principles for ensuring that non-combatants like women, slaves, the old and sick, are spread as a target in armed conflicts. Moreover, it also introduced the principle of dignity and integrity of persons towards the enemy. There are many sayings by the Prophet forbidding the burning alive of enemy warriors. The Prophet said; "No one is entitled to punish with fire except the one who created it, i.e., Allah". He also prohibited the practice of giving enemy corpses in exchange for money. Giving burial for the bodies of the enemy was also ordered. Prisoners of war (POW) were released either in exchange for Muslim POWs or in exchange for ransom to be paid by the POW, or simply on his agreement that, if he is literate, he will teach some prescribed Muslim. These are some of the Muslim humanitarian laws.

**Gender Justice and Empowerment of Women**

With regard to gender equality Islamic precepts are worth commending. Marriage is made as a contract, which can be dissolved for reasons of incompatibility and other valid reasons and not on flimsy ground. Unlike in some other religions, it is not indissoluble. Women are given inheritance rights; their consent in marriage is essential.

Though there is no specific stipulation for women assuming leader-

**Muslim Contributions to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**

No Muslim member state of the United Nations voted against the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) as in their view human rights were not inconsistent with Sharia. Except Saudi Arabia (which abstained) the other five states (Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan) voted in its favour besides playing a constructive role in its drafting.

A brief comparison of fundamental human rights enshrined in the holy Quran and Sunnah with the rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration will dispel the popularly held view that human rights are of western construct. The European Islamic Council (an NGO composed of eminent Muslim scholars, jurists, and representatives of Islamic movements and thought) adopted the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights on September 19, 1981. The Islamic Declaration has no inconsistency in general with the provisions of the Universal Declaration except on one or two issues related to freedom of religion and freedom of marriage (as Muslims are not allowed to renounce Islam and the Muslim women cannot marry non-Muslim men, although Muslim men are allowed to marry non-Muslim women, especially from People of the Book - Jews, Christians or Hindus without converting them to Islam).

**Rights and Duties in the Quran**

A birds' eye view of the recognition of the responsibilities and rights in the Holy Quran confirms the view that Islam provided an elaborate list of rights (for reasons of space references to Hadith have been omitted). These are as follows:

- **Protection/security of human life (Chapter 5: 32-35; 6:151; 4:30; 17:31; 18:9-10; 17:33; 4:93)**
- **Freedom from slavery or servitude: (humane treatment**

- **of slaves or granting freedom to them (Chapter 4:36 & 92; 2:177, 9:60; 24:33; 47:4).**
- **Right to justice (4:58-59 and 148; 5:42 & 49; 5: 8-9; 4:135; 16:90; 53:38).**
- **Right of fair trial (2:229; 4:7:15).**
- **Right to protection against abuse of power (33:58)**
- **Protection of honour and reputation; respect for the chastity of women (49:11-12; 24: 16-19; 7:32).**
- **Rights concerning emigrants**

- **and refugees (4:98, 101; 16: 42-43; 111; 22:59-60; 59:10; 9:6; 3:97; 2:125 and 22:25).**
- **Freedom of conscience and conviction (Freedom of Religion of religious minorities) (18:29; 10:99-100; 2:256; 109:6; 88:21 & 22; 5:48-59; 29:46).**
- **Equality before law (49:10 & 13; 9:11).**
- **Right and obligation to participate in the conduct and management of public affairs (42:38; 24:55).**
- **Economic rights (41:10; 51:19; 76:8; 2:188; 46:19; 53:39).**
- **Status and dignity of workers (9:105; 46:19).**
- **Liberty of work (67:10).**
- **Protection of property (2:188).**
- **Right to privacy (24:27-28, 58; 33:53).**
- **Right to found a family and related matters (4:1; 2:228; 30:21; 65:7; 17:24).**
- **Rights of married women (2:229 & 237; 2:187; 4:4, 12, 19-21; 24:33; 9:71; 7:189; 30:21; 65:6).**
- **Principle of racial equality (30:22; 49:13).**

Of all the human rights Islam recognizes, religious liberty and tolerance stands out as the most prominent freedom. The Holy Quran pronounces that "there shall be no compulsion in faith", (Quran, 2:257). "Proclaim: 'It is the truth from your Lord': wherefore let him who will, believe, and let him who will disbelieve", (Quran, 18: 30). At another place, it pronounces that: "To each among you we have prescribed law and a path: And if God had enforced his will, he would have made you one nation or people. But his plan is to test you in what he hath given you", (Quran, 5:48-59). "You have your own religion and I have mine", (Quran, 109:6). These Quranic verses reveal two important principles. First, Islam cannot be propagated and preached through force. Second, God has sent messengers or prophets to every people and every nation, thereby firmly believing in religious pluralism.

**The Arab Charter on Human Rights**

It is gratifying to note that the Arab Charter on Human Rights was adopted by the League of Arab States in 1994. However, none of the member states had ratified the Charter. The Charter was later updated and led to the amended version by the Arab summit in Tunis in 2004. The 2004 version of the Charter came as part of an effort to modernize the League of Arab States. The Arab Charter on Human Rights entered into force on 16 March 2008. The treaty body established to supervise its implementation is the Arab Human Rights Committee.

According to its Preamble, the Charter is based on principles established by the Islamic Shari'a and the other divine religions enshrined in brotherhood and equality amongst human beings. It cherishes the humanitarian values and principles which [the Arab Nation] had established throughout its long history, having had a major role in spreading centres of knowledge between East and West, and made it the destination of people from all over the world and of those seeking knowledge, culture and wisdom. And the Arab World aiming to preserving its belief, having faith in its unity, struggling for its freedom, defending the right of nations to self-determination and to preserve their wealth, and believing in the Rule of Law and that mankind's enjoyment of freedom, justice and equal opportunity is the hallmark of the profound essence of any society. It rejects racism and Zionism, both of which constitute a violation of human rights and a threat to world peace. It also recognizes the close link between human rights and world peace. It reaffirms the principles of the UN Charter, the UDHR, the provisions of the two International Covenants on Human Rights, and the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam.

To sum up, human rights in Islam exist only in relation to human obligations. Individuals possess certain obligations toward God, fellow humans and nature - it is a much broader concept of rights indeed! (C-Counter Currents)

*Abdulrahim P. Vijapur is Emeritus Professor of Political Science at the University of Science and Technology Meghalaya. He was previously Professor of Political Science at AMU, Aligarh*

# Try Fennel Seed Water To Achieve These Amazing Health Benefits

**F**ennel seeds water, also known as fennel tea or fennel-infused water, offers several health benefits due to its nutritional composition and bioactive compounds. Incorporating fennel seed water into your diet can contribute to overall health and well-being when consumed as part of a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle. Here are some health benefits of consuming fennel seeds water and how they contribute to boosting health.

**10 Health benefits of consuming fennel seeds water:**  
1. Digestive aid  
Fennel seeds contain volatile oils like anethole, which have been shown to stimulate the production of digestive enzymes. This aids in diges-

tion, reduces bloating, and relieves constipation by promoting smooth bowel movements.

**2. Reduces gas and bloating**  
Fennel seeds possess carminative properties, which help to relax the muscles in the gastrointestinal tract, reducing gas and bloating.

**3. Relieves indigestion and heartburn**

The soothing properties of fennel seed water can help alleviate indigestion and heartburn by calming the digestive system and reducing acidity.

**4. Anti-inflammatory effects**  
Fennel seeds contain anti-inflammatory compounds such as flavonoids and phenolic acids, which can help reduce inflammation in the body, potentially offering



relief from conditions like arthritis or inflammatory bowel diseases.

**5. Antioxidant properties**  
Fennel seeds are rich in antioxidants like polyphenols,

which help neutralise harmful free radicals in the body. This can protect cells from oxida-

tive damage and reduce the risk of chronic diseases like cancer and heart disease.

**6. Regulates blood sugar levels**

Some studies suggest that compounds in fennel seeds may help regulate blood sugar levels by improving insulin sensitivity and reducing blood sugar spikes after meals. This can be beneficial for individuals with diabetes or those at risk of developing the condition.

**7. Supports weight loss**

Fennel seed water can aid in weight loss by suppressing appetite, promoting feelings of fullness, and boosting metabolism. Additionally, its diuretic properties may help reduce water retention and bloating.

**8. Improves eye health**

Fennel seeds are a good

source of vitamin A, which is essential for maintaining healthy vision. Consuming fennel seeds water regularly may help protect against age-related macular degeneration and other eye conditions.

**9. Boosts immune system**  
The vitamins and minerals present in fennel seeds, such as vitamin C and iron, support a healthy immune system. By consuming fennel seeds water, you can strengthen your body's defences against infections and illnesses.

**10. Promotes heart health**  
Fennel seeds contain potassium, which helps regulate blood pressure by counteracting the effects of sodium. The fibre content in fennel seeds can also help lower cholesterol levels, reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke.

## FROM THE FRONT PAGE .....

### MHA Directive Allows

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for a period of five years," it added.  
The Ministry issued a notification pointing out that the JKNF, chaired by Nayeem Ahmad Khan, is indulging in "unlawful activities, which are prejudicial to the integrity, sovereignty, and security of the country."

### Pakistan Sponsoring

terrorists".  
Ties between India and Pakistan strained after a terror attack on the Pathankot Air Force base in 2016 by terror groups based in the neighbouring country.

The relationship nosedived after India's warplanes pounded a Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorist training camp deep inside Pakistan on February 26, 2019, in response to the Pulwama terror attack in which 40 CRPF jawans were killed.

The relations deteriorated further after India announced the withdrawal of the special powers of Jammu and Kashmir and the bifurcation of the state into two union territories in August 2019.

India has repeatedly told Pakistan that it desires normal neighbourly relations with it in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence.

### Kashmir Blessed

division experienced the brunt of the weather shift, with ongoing rainfall observed across various plain areas, while hilly regions such as Gulmarg, Razdan Top, Sadhna Pass, Jedgali, Gurez, Baltal, and the revered Amarnath holy cave witnessed snowfall. Similarly, parts of the Jammu division also experienced rain and snowfall, albeit the rising temperatures indicating a surge in heat.

The Meteorological Center in Srinagar predicts the likelihood of further rain and snowfall between March 27 and 31 in select areas. The plains of Kishtwar received rainfall alongside snowfall in the surrounding hilly areas, while Poonch also experienced precipitation. In Jammu, the day commenced with light cloud cover but eventually cleared up, contributing to the rising temperatures.

The maximum temperature recorded in Jammu reached 29.2 degrees Celsius, with a minimum of 17.7 degrees Celsius. Other areas registered varying temperatures, with Katra at 25.8 degrees Celsius, Banihal at 19.5 degrees Celsius, Batot at 18.8 degrees Celsius, and Bhaderwah at 22.8 degrees Celsius. Meanwhile, in Srinagar, the day temperature stood at 15.2 degrees Celsius, with a minimum of 7.2 degrees Celsius. Notably, Gulmarg recorded a minimum temperature of minus 0.5 degrees Celsius, while Leh experienced a chillier minus 1.2 degrees Celsius—(KNO)

### J&K Police

dedicated 24x7 'Election helpline' number 8899868589 at PCR Kashmir," it said.

### ECI Notifies Scheme

Kashmiri Migrants as the 'specified' and 'notified' elector. The first notification has been issued under the powers vested in the Commission under Article 324 of the Constitution read along with Section 25 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which specifies the migrant electors of Kashmir Valley who are enrolled in any of the Parliamentary Constituencies of 1-Baramulla, 2-Srinagar and 3-Anantnag-Rajouri, but residing outside their place of ordinary residence, (other than those who opt for a postal ballot under clause (c) of Section 60 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951) as the class of persons for whom special polling stations shall be provided

outside the territorial limits of the Parliamentary Constituencies mentioned above during the General Election to the House of the People for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, to be held in 2024.

The other Notification similarly has been issued under Section 60(c) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, notifying the aforesaid migrant electors of Kashmir valley enrolled in any of the Parliamentary Constituencies of 1-Baramulla, 2-Srinagar, and 3-Anantnag-Rajouri, who are residing outside their place of ordinary residence, (other than those who opt to vote in person at special polling stations), as the class of persons to give their votes by postal ballots.

Additionally, the Commission has also notified four Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) to assist the Returning Officers of these three Parliamentary Constituencies in the work concerning the 'Specified' and 'Notified' class of electors. These four AROs are (1) Assistant Commissioner, Relief (Migrant), Jammu, (2) Assistant Commissioner, Panchayat, Udhampur (3) Deputy Director, Horticulture, Planning and Marketing, Delhi and (4) Deputy Secretary, in the office of Resident Commissioner, New Delhi.

Functionally, the Assistant Commissioner, Relief (Migrant), Jammu in the Office of Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner, Jammu is made responsible for the receipt of applications from the electors who wish to vote at the special polling stations at Jammu. He shall also be the ARO responsible for the issuance of a Postal Ballot to all those who opt for the same.

Likewise, the Deputy Director, Horticulture, Planning & Marketing, Delhi and Deputy Secretary, office of Resident Commissioner, New Delhi, are appointed as the ARO for the receipt of applications, conduct of poll, etc., at the special polling station(s) to be provided in Delhi. Collector, Northern Railways, Udhampur is appointed as ARO in respect of the special polling station(s) at Udhampur.

For the General Elections to Lok Sabha - 2024, the Election Commission has advised the migrant voters to send their forms, Form M for voting in person at any of the 'Special Polling Stations' or Form 12 C for using the postal ballot to the concerned Assistant Returning Officers to reach them on or 10 days before the date of poll separately for each phase of the polling.

Kashmiri migrant voters, who are residing at various relief camps in Delhi, Jammu, and Udhampur and who opt to cast their votes in person through Electronic Voting Machines at the forthcoming General Elections to the Lok Sabha, 2024 can do so at any one of the following polling stations: In Women's College, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, Indian Institute of Management, Canal Road, Jammu, Directorate School Education, Muthi, Jammu, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Janipur, Jammu, Migrant School, Purkhoo, Jammu, Agriculture Complex, Talab Tillo, Jammu, Govt. Mixed Higher Secondary School, Muthi, Migrant School, Nagrota, Jammu, Govt. Higher Secondary School, (Migrants) Jagti-A, Jammu, Govt. Higher Secondary School, (Migrants) Jagti-B, Jammu, Anuradha Higher Sec. School, Barnai, Jammu, Agriculture University Complex, Udhaiyala, Jammu, J&K Board of School Education, Rehari, Jammu-A, Govt. Middle School, (Migrants), Jagti, Community Hall Jagti, Govt. Girls Middle School Chak Changerwan Chinore Chowk, Jammu., Govt. Girls Primary School Gangyal, Jammu, Govt. Boys Higher Secondary School Poni Chak, J&K Board of School Education, Rehari, Jammu-B, Govt. High School Sagoon, Miran Sahib, Govt. Higher Secondary School Channi. In Udhampur, Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School, Udhampur

### Hari Singh's Grandson

of 7,217 terrorist incidents. However, thanks to the reforms, terror incidents have decreased by over 70 per cent. This

improvement underscores the effectiveness of the government's actions in restoring peace and stability to the region."

"Moreover, on the socio-economic front, the reduction of poverty in Jammu and Kashmir from 40.45 per cent in 2005-2006 to a mere 2.81 per cent in 2022-2023 is a testament to the optimal utilization of development funds. The recent interim budget for 2024 allocated a substantial USD 14 billion for Jammu and Kashmir, further demonstrating the government's commitment to the region's prosperity," he was quoted as saying by news agency ANI.

Ajatshatru said that over the past nine years, Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a remarkable revolution in infrastructure development, including the establishment of new medical colleges, tunnels, railway lines, and civic infrastructure. These advancements have been achieved while preserving the rich cultural heritage of the region, said the son of Karan Singh, the titular king of undivided Jammu and Kashmir.

However, it is essential to acknowledge that not all parts of Jammu and Kashmir have benefited equally. Recent protests in regions under Pakistani occupation highlight the growing awareness of economic disparities compared to those under Indian administration.

The former minister appealed to the United Nations to take concrete steps in accordance with Security Council resolutions to ameliorate the situation faced by the people of Jammu and Kashmir under Pakistan occupation. It is imperative that the international community addresses their grievances and ensures their fundamental rights are upheld, he concluded.

### Srinagar's Iconic Tulip

visiting the garden the cherish the beauty of tulips," he said.

As locals and tourists jostled to get a glimpse of the iconic garden on its opening day, the officials said that in the coming days the garden will be its full bloom.

The picturesque garden, located on the foothills of the Zabarwan mountain range and banks of majestic Dal Lake - has multiple varieties of red, yellow and pink early blooming and late blooming tulip bulbs.

Notably, ahead of opening of the garden this week, the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri convened a meeting to review the arrangements at Asia's largest Tulip Garden for visitors.

The meeting was attended by Director Floriculture, SSP Traffic Srinagar, Joint Commissioner SMC, officers of Tourism department and Srinagar Smart City Limited.

The meeting held threadbare discussion regarding opening of garden for visitors, traffic management, parking space, sanitation, cleanliness drive, fixing of potholes, online ticketing and other arrangements—(KNO)

### Govt Mulls To

smart meters to the administration for taking legal action against them.

In this regard, a Technical Officer has issued an official communiqué to the Chief Engineer confirming 70 cases of smart meter tampering.

"Your immediate attention is invited towards the above-captioned subject and enclosed reference received from Central Inspection Squad (CIS), KPDC, regarding the tampering of smart meters installed, it reads.

As can be seen from the list, CIS has confirmed 70 cases of smart meter tampering, after which they were confiscated during inspections, it added.

It further added that "in this connection, I have been directed to inform you to direct the concerned SDOs of 11 Subdivisions detailed below to immediately lodge FIR for tampering with Smart Meters in

the Police Stations falling under the jurisdiction of the concerned Subdivision and furnishing of ATR at an earliest."

As per the official communiqué, 3 consumers are from Zakura, 21 from Baghat, 9 from Chanapora, 16 from Watalkadal, 3 from Hawal, 2 from Khunmoh, 9 from Huzuribagh, 3 from Zainakote, 1 from Karan Nagar, 2 from Nawa Kadal and 1 from Raj Bagh.

In another communiqué, the KPDC has mentioned the list framed on the basis of 'meter cover-open' tamper alerts received by the HES (Head End System) of the concerned AMISP.

In the same communiqué, 54 connections from Watalkadal and 148 from Chanapora area have been mentioned.

It has now been directed to officers to direct the concerned SDOs of the following 02 Subdivisions to immediately lodge FIRS for tampering of Smart Meters in the Police Stations falling under the jurisdiction, it read.

Sources said another list is being prepared and action against them will be initiated soon—(KNO)

### Mustard Bloom Emerges

Kashmir for pre-wedding shoots. In addition to it, models and fashion designers too prefer this season to capture their brands amid the golden hues of mustard bloom," he said.

Tourists said the mustard blossom in Kashmir makes the place akin to Switzerland. "We have been to Switzerland and believe me Kashmir is much beautiful. We are here for seven days and hope to see some mustard blossom to capture some videos and pictures," said Sujata Kumar, who has visited Kashmir for the second time to experience spring season.

The mustard crop is sown in October-November. As temperatures rise after winter, the mustard crop blossoms and it is harvested towards the end of May—(KNO)

# RAHI

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# India condemns heinous terror attack, stands with Russia in this hour of grief: PM Modi

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday expressed solidarity with the people of Russia and slammed the terrorist attack in the country that left more than 60 people dead and several others injured.

"We strongly condemn the heinous terrorist attack in Moscow. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims. India stands in solidarity with the government and the people of the Russian Federation in this hour of grief," PM Modi said in a post on X.

Terrorists attacked a concert hall in Moscow on Friday and sprayed the crowd with gunfire, killing more than 60 people, injuring over 100 and setting fire to the venue in a brazen attack.

ISIS has reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack which saw the gunmen storming



the Crocus City Hall in Moscow at around 8 p.m. (local time) just as a concert of famous rock band Piknik was about to begin.

As per the latest information, the attackers, who had not attempted to take hostages or make any statements but shot people indiscriminately, have bar-

ricaded themselves inside the burning building.

The toll is expected to go up, the Investigative Committee of Russia (ICR) was quoted by the media as saying.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said, "The Russian Foreign Ministry is

receiving phone calls with condolences from ordinary citizens from all around the globe following the horrible tragedy at the Crocus City Hall venue in Moscow. They are expressing the strongest condemnation of this bloody terrorist attack, transpiring right before the eyes of the entire world."

# India calls German diplomat's remarks on Delhi CM's arrest 'most unwarranted'



IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Saturday called the German Foreign Office Spokesperson's comments on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's arrest "most unwarranted" and said that it sees them as interfering in the country's judicial process.

Summoning the Deputy Head of Mission of the German Embassy, George Enzweiler, the MEA lodged a strong protest with him regarding comments on India's internal affairs.

"We see such remarks as interfering in our judicial process and undermining

the independence of our judiciary," the MEA said in a statement as it stressed that India is a "vibrant and robust democracy with rule of law".

"As in all legal cases in the country, and elsewhere in the democratic world, law will take its own course in the instant matter. Biased assumptions made on this account are most unwarranted," the statement added.

India's strong reaction came after the German Foreign Office said on Friday that it has "taken note" of Kejriwal's arrest and expects that "standards regarding the independence of the judiciary and basic democratic prin-

ciples" will apply.

The remarks by Sebastian Fischer, a spokesperson for the German foreign ministry, were in response to how the country's government assessed Kejriwal's arrest weeks before the Lok Sabha elections.

"We have taken note of the case. India is a democratic country. We assume and expect that the standards relating to the independence of the judiciary and fundamental democratic principles will also apply in this case," Fischer said in his ministry's website.

"Like anyone facing accusations, Kejriwal is entitled to a fair and impartial trial, this includes he

can make use of all available legal avenues without restrictions. The presumption of innocence is a central element of the rule of law and must apply to him [sic]," the statement said.

The Enforcement Directorate termed the Aam Aadmi Party chief the kingpin of the alleged excise scam in collusion with other ministers of the Delhi government.

It claimed that Kejriwal was involved in the conspiracy of formulation of the Excise Policy 2021-22 to favour certain persons.

A special court on Friday sent Kejriwal to six days of ED custody, till March 28.

# World's largest rescue centre in Taj city celebrates 'World Bear Day'

BRIJ KHANDELWAL

**AGRA:** World's largest sloth bear centre at Soor Sarovar bird sanctuary in Agra has done pioneering work in the rescue and rehabilitation of this wildlife species.

The facility set up by the Wildlife SOS, in 1998, has saved hundreds of sloth bears, from cruelty inflicted by "kalandars" who used to make them dance, for a living.

"Some 30 years ago it was common sight to see flocks of tourists being entertained on the Fatehpur Sikri road, by dancing bears. The kalandars often used to move around the streets with bears to entertain kids," said environmentalist Devashish Bhattacharya.

Over the years, the Wildlife SOS has continued to provide

the rehabilitated sloth bears love and care at the Agra Bear Rescue Facility, the largest sloth bear rescue and rehabilitation centre globally.

The Agra Centre has been dedicated to resolving the cruel and barbaric practice of making sloth bears dance on the streets for tourist entertainment. The indigenous community of 'Kalandars' used to exploit these creatures by poaching bear cubs and subjecting them to cruelty, including piercing their muzzles with red-hot iron pokers and forcing them to perform for monetary gain. This practice was not only inhumane but also illegal under the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972.

In nearly three decades of sustained work, the Wildlife SOS has rescued a stagger-

ing 628 sloth bears from such exploitation, with the last bear rescued from the streets in 2009.

The organisation operates four sloth bear rescue and rehabilitation centres across India, with the Agra Bear Rescue Facility being the largest in the world.

At present, the Agra Bear Rescue Facility is home to nearly 100 rescued sloth bears, providing them with a safe haven to heal from their traumatic past. The bears receive specialised care from dedicated veterinarians and animal care staff, ensuring their physical and psychological well-being.

Kartick Satyanarayan, Co-founder and CEO of Wildlife SOS, said, "Each day at the Agra Bear Rescue Facility begins with a nutritious meal of porridge, followed by sea-

sonal fruits, and another serving of porridge in the evening. To stimulate their bodies and minds, the bears are provided with various enrichments in their forested enclosures, promoting natural behaviours to enhance their quality of life."

Bears still face issues such as loss of their home, encroachment of their habitats, retaliation due to lack of behaviour awareness, to name a few. Baiju Raj M.V., Director, Conservation Projects for Wildlife SOS, said, "In addition to dietary care, the bears are also administered oral multivitamins and liver supplements to support their overall health and vitality. Through these comprehensive efforts, Wildlife SOS aims to give these bears a second chance at life, free from exploitation and suffering."



# Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to celebrate Holi in Siachen with troops



IAN S

**MARCH:** In solidarity with soldiers serving at the world's highest battleground, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will be visiting Siachen glacier to celebrate Holi with troops stationed there.

Siachen glacier is a strategic military outpost and

among the most challenging terrains in the world.

Preparations are currently underway for the Minister's visit.

This is not the first time Minister Rajnath Singh will pay a visit to the military outpost.

In 2019, he had visited Siachen. He interacted with the troops

and gained first-hand insight into their experiences and challenges therein, assuring them of the government's commitment to ensuring welfare and safety of soldiers there.

In the earlier visit, the Union Minister had also announced that the glacier is open for tourism.

# Six Congress rebels in Himachal Pradesh join BJP

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Six former Congress MLAs of the Himachal Pradesh Assembly, who were disqualified for defying a party whip, joined the BJP on Saturday in the national Capital.

Three Independent legislators, who resigned from the House of 68 a day earlier, may also join the saffron party soon.

Already, the Election Commission has announced bypolls in six constituencies vacated by the Congress rebels.

The six disqualified Congress legislators had supported the BJP in the Rajya Sabha election, apart from the three Independent legislators.

The BJP inducted leaders were Rajinder Rana, who represented the Sujampur constituency; Sudhir Sharma (Dharamshala); Inder Dutt Lakhnarpal (Barsar); Devinder Kumar Bhutto (Kutlehar); Ravi Thakur (Lahaul-Spiti) and Chetanya Sharma (Gagret).

They joined the BJP in the presence of Union

Minister, Anurag Thakur, former Himachal Chief Minister, Jai Ram Thakur, and the party's state President Rajeev Bindal.

Welcoming them into the party, Union Minister Anurag Thakur said their presence would strengthen the BJP.

"These leaders supported the BJP in the recent Rajya Sabha elections, reflecting public anger against the Congress," he said.

By-elections to six Assembly seats will be held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha polls on June 1.

## DELHI EXCISE POLICY CASE

# ED raids at premises of BRS leader Kavitha's close relatives

IAN S

**HYDERABAD:** The ED officials on Saturday conducted searches at the premises of close relatives of Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) leader, K Kavitha in a money laundering case related to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam.

The ED officials began the searches early in the morning at the flat of a relative of Kavitha at an apartment building in Madhapur area in the city.

The searches at the premises of some close relatives are reported to be based on the information

given by Kavitha during her questioning in the ED's custody.

The central agency is understood to be probing their role in the case.

The ED officials earlier questioned two personal assistants of the BRS leader and seized their mobile phones.

The agency is looking into their alleged role in deleting data from mobile phones.

Kavitha, daughter of BRS President and former Telangana Chief Minister, KC Rao, was arrested by the ED in Hyderabad on March 15. The same day

she was taken to Delhi and remanded to ED's custody.

Kavitha's ED custody is ending on Saturday (March 23) and she will be produced in the trial court later in the day.

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to grant bail to Kavitha and told her to approach the trial court for the same.

The ED has alleged that Kavitha was a part of the 'South Group' which allegedly paid kickbacks of Rs.100 crore to AAP leaders.

Partners of the 'South Group' were allegedly given 65 per cent stake in Indospirit.

# CBI raid Kolkata residence of Mahua Moitra's father

IAN S

**KOLKATA:** A CBI team is conducting a raid since Saturday morning at the South Kolkata residence of DL Moitra, father of Trinamool Congress leader, Mahua Moitra.

Mahua Moitra was expelled from the Lok Sabha earlier in connection with the alleged cash-for-query scam.

The Trinamool Congress has re-nominated Moitra from the Krishnanagar Lok Sabha constituency in Nadia District, from where she was elected in 2019.

Sources said that CBI sleuths reached a residential flat belonging to busi-



nessman DL Moitra, at a housing complex christened 'Ratnabali' at New Alipore area in South Kolkata.

The CBI team was escorted by Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) personnel. However, the central agency officers were totally tight-lipped about the reason behind the raids.

It is learnt that Mahua Moitra does not stay at the flat and on Saturday morning her father was also not present when the central team reached there.

For the last few days there has been a flurry of raids by the ED and CBI in different pockets of West Bengal.

On Friday, the ED raided the residence of West Bengal Minister of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises and Textiles Department, Chandranath Sinha, in Birbhum District.

Sources said that the ED sleuths recovered cash worth Rs 41 lakh and some incriminating documents from his place.

Although the minister was not arrested by the ED sleuths, sources said he was unable to give satisfactory answers about the source of the cash recovered from his residence.

**Government of Jammu & Kashmir**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL AND HOSPITALS DIVISION SRINAGAR**  
 (Tele-fax No: 019-2496089, e-mail id: xenmhchdk@yahoo.in)  
 Subject: 1. Relocation, installation and activation of 8x8 oxygen cylinder manifold support to new 16 bedded ICU erstwhile Triage at Govt SMHS Hospital Srinagar  
 Ref: 1. This office NIT No: M&HD/TS/2023-24/194/e-tendering Dated 14.03.2024.  
**CANCELLATION**  
 In view of minimum number of Bidders not qualifying for opening of price bid the above referred e-NIT's are hereby cancelled.  
 No: M&HDS/TS/11115-18 Sd/-  
 Dated: 23.03.2024 Executive Engineer,  
 DIPK-18195-23 Mechanical & Hospitals Division,  
 DT: 23/03/2024 Srinagar

**Government of Jammu and Kashmir**  
**STATE COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING**  
 Email: directorscertjkg@gmail.com  
**NOTIFICATION**  
 In view of the representations received from various quarters for postponement of Examination of MSE 2023-24 in the UT of J&K, it is notified for all the concerned that the Middle Standard Examinations scheduled to be held on 24th, 26th & 29th of March, 2024 in respect of soft zone and 26th & 29th of March, 2024 in respect of hard zone notified vide No: SCERT/C/Ass-Cell/2024/869-96 Dated: 02-03-2024 hereby stand postponed.  
 The fresh dates for conduct of these papers of both Soft/Zone and Hard Zone shall be notified in due course of time.  
 No: SCERT/C/Ass-Cell/2024/1029- 1057 Joint Director  
 Dated:23-03-2024 Central  
 DIPK-18191-23  
 DT: 23/03/2024

**RUSSIA TERROR ATTACK**

# Putin vows to punish attackers as he points at Ukraine

IAN S

**MOSCOW:** Urging the international community to stand with Russia, President Vladimir Putin on Saturday pledged to punish the perpetrators of the dastardly attack that killed 143 people and injured several others in a concert hall near Moscow.

In a televised address to the nation, the 71-year-old leader said the four gunmen, directly involved in the attack, were moving towards the country's border with Ukraine.

"We will be investigating this terrorist attack and we already have some results. All four perpetrators, directly involved in gunning people down, have been found and apprehended," the President said.

"They tried to escape... they were moving towards the border with Ukraine and we have data that suggests that they were about to be moved to the territory of Ukraine. Our investigators are working to find the orchestrators of this attack," he added.

So far, the Russian police have 11 suspects in custody, includ-



ing all four gunmen, who were directly involved in carrying out

the heinous attack.

The Islamic State took responsibility for the attack, saying its fighters attacked "a large gathering" on Moscow's outskirts and "retreated to their bases safely".

"We know what terror threat means, this is an attack against Russia, and we expect that other nations that share our pain will cooperate with us."

"We will stand united against this common enemy, no matter where it shows its ugly head. These terrorists have no nationality and there is only one future for them -- retribution," Putin said, who was re-elected Russian President recently, said.

"Our common duty right now is to stand together, to stand united... and I believe, if we stand together, nobody can divide us, nobody can undermine our common strength," Putin said, adding that Russia has faced many challenges in its history but has always come out strongly.

Earlier, the Russian security agency, Federal Security Service (FSB), said the attackers were driving to the border.

"After committing the terrorist attack, the criminals intended to cross the Russian-Ukrainian border, and had appropriate contacts on the Ukrainian side," FSB said.

Kyiv reportedly said it had "nothing to do" with the attack, and called the attack a Russian "provocation", claiming that Moscow special services were behind it.

# KPDCL suspends 15 more employees, initiates disciplinary proceedings

KNO CORRESPONDENT

**SRINAGAR:** The Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL) Saturday suspended its fifteen more employees and initiated disciplinary proceedings against them.

Managing Director KPDCL and its administrative official in this regard has issued 15 suspension orders against its employees.

The suspension and disciplinary proceedings have been initiated against ten Linemen and other meter readers and technicians.

KPDCL in different suspension orders of its



employees said that the disciplinary proceedings under rule-33 of the J&K Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956 are contemplated against them. Accordingly, the officials placed all the 15

employees under suspension with immediate effect.

"The suspended officers shall remain attached with the concerned Executive Engineers till further orders," it reads.

Earlier on March-19, The government suspended twelve of Power Development Department and initiated disciplinary proceedings against them.

The suspension and disciplinary proceedings was initiated against five In-charge Assistant Executive Engineers (AEE's), two Assistant Engineers (AE's) and five Junior Engineers—(KNO)

# India pips countries like Germany, Britain in GDP (PPP) gains: Report

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** As countries like Germany, Japan and the UK continue to drop down in GDP (PPP) rankings over the years, India has achieved significant gains in GDP and the country's share has been significantly increasing, a latest report has revealed.

GDP (PPP) means gross domestic product based on purchasing power parity.

As per the research by Delhi-based non-profit organisation Social Policy Research Foundation (SPRF), as of 2024, the Indian economy, when seen at PPP, is 3.6 times that of the UK, 2.1 times that of Japan and 2.5 times that of Germany.

As of 2022, China emerged as the top-ranking country.

"However, the share of the Indian GDP (PPP) as a percentage of the Global GDP at PPP has been significantly increasing, while that of the US, Japan, Russia and other countries have decreased," the report mentioned.

PPP allows us to understand and make comparisons between two countries about the price of the same goods and services in both countries.

"A high PPP implies that a basic set of essential goods and services is cheaper inside India, for an Indian consumer, than the same basket would be for a consumer in Japan, Germany or the UK," according to the report.

India's economy sprang a surprise with an 8.4 per cent surge in GDP growth during the third quarter (October-December 2023), as a result of which the country's economic growth rate for the financial year 2023-24 is now estimated at a robust 7.6 per cent, according to latest figures by the National Statistics Office.

The high growth rate of 8.4 per cent has been driven by a double-digit growth in the manufacturing sector of 11.6 per cent, followed by a good growth rate of the construction sector (9.5 per cent). "The Indian economy remained resilient with a robust 7.6 per cent growth rate of GDP in FY 2023-24 over and above 7 per cent growth rate in FY 2022-23," the Ministry of Statistics said.

The latest data show that India is keeping up its growth momentum as the world's fastest-growing economy that is seen as a bright spot amid the global slowdown.

According to the RBI's monthly bulletin released earlier this week, the high visibility of structural demand and healthier corporate and bank balance sheets are likely to propel India's growth going forward even as the global economy is losing steam.

In India, real GDP growth was at a six-quarter high in Q3 of 2023-24, powered by strong momentum, robust indirect taxes, and lower subsidies, the RBI bulletin stated.

# BSF DG Reviews Operational Preparedness Along LoC

AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** Special Director General (SDG) of the BSF's Western Command, Yogesh Bahadur Khurania, concluded a five-day visit in the Kashmir valley which was aimed to assess the security situation and operational preparedness of the force along the Line of Control (LoC), an official said here on Saturday.

The SDG of Western Command Chandigarh undertook a significant five-day visit to the Kashmir Frontier from March 18 to 22, a BSF spokesman said.

The spokesman said the visit aimed to assess the security situation and operational preparedness along the LoC, reaffirming the commitment of the BSF to safeguard India's borders.

The visit commenced with a detailed briefing by Inspector General, BSF Kashmir Frontier, Ashok Yadav, on the security situation on the LoC and hinterland, he said.

The spokesman said the visit included an aerial reconnaissance and visits to forward defended localities, as well as to the Sector Headquarters (SHQ) BSF in Kupwara and Srinagar.



At each location, the SDG engaged with the local BSF Commanders and troops gaining firsthand insights into the security scenario and operational readiness along the LoC.

Khurania also called on General Officer Commanding (GoC) 15 Corps, Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai, and discussed the collaborative efforts between the BSF and the Army, and underscored the paramount importance of synergy for achieving peace, prosperity and development in the valley, the spokesman said.

The BSF officer visited the Composite Hospital and STC BSF, Kashmir, where he reviewed ongoing physical and professional skill training of recruits.

He commended the pro-

fessionalism and expertise of the training team at STC BSF, Kashmir, highlighting their role in shaping the future of BSF personnel.

During the visit, Khurania interacted with senior officers, subordinate officers and jawans through a "Praharī Sammelan".

The BSF SDG lauded the high level of professionalism exhibited by the BSF personnel and urged them to maintain high vigil to thwart any attempts to disrupt peace and harmony in the valley.

Khurania's visit to the Kashmir Frontier underscores the BSF's unwavering commitment to safeguard India's borders and ensure the safety and security of its citizens, the spokesman said.

# Terror module busted in Srinagar, 4 JeM associates arrested: Police

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Police along with security forces in Srinagar today busted a terror module linked to proscribed terror outfit JeM by arresting four terrorist associates.

According to a statement, issued, acting on a specific information, a joint Mobile Vehicle Check Post (MVCP) comprising of Srinagar Police, 50 RR, Valley QRT and 29Bn CRPF was established in Kenihama area of Nowgam today.

The statement reads that during checking, a vehicle was intercepted and four terror associates identified as Md Yaseen Bhat, Sheraz Ahmad Rather, Gulam Hassan Khandey—all from Lch-khanda Zafran Colony

and Imtiyaz Ahmad Bhat of Pampore who were onboard the vehicle were apprehended.

"Incriminating materials, arms & ammunition including 01 AK 56 rifle with 3 magazines, 75 rounds of 7.62 x 39 mm, 01 Glock pistol with 2 magazines, 26 rounds of 9 mm and 06 Chinese grenades were recovered from their possession."

It reads that during preliminary investigation, it was found that the individuals were linked with the proscribed terror outfit JeM.

It added that a case FiR No.31/2024 under section 18, 23, 39 UAPA, 7/25 Arms Act and 120b of the IPC has been registered in Police Station Nowgam and further investigation is in progress—(KNO)

# Man Held For Raping Minor In J&K

AGENCIES

**JAMMU:** A man was arrested on Saturday for allegedly abducting and raping a minor here, police said.

The accused — Abdul Majeed — was absconding since October last year when an FIR was lodged against him, police said.

Majeed was booked under Sections 363 (abduction) and 376 (rape) of the Indian Penal Code, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, and Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, police said.

The incident occurred last year when Majeed, a resident of the Gandoh area of Doda, allegedly eloped and married a teenager and then raped her. A charge sheet against Majeed was filed in December, they said.

He was arrested from Srinagar and brought to Doda where he was produced in a court, they said.

# ADC Handwara reviews preparations for Lok Sabha Polls

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA:** Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Handwara, Aziz Ahmad Rather who is also Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) For AC-Handwara Saturday reviewed the preparations for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in a meeting of Sector Magistrates, Supervisors and Police officers at Town Hall Handwara.

At the outset, the ARO called for strict implementation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC), and urged upon all the concerned for strict adherence to all the guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India.

The ARO emphasized on providing a level playing field to all the political parties to ensure free, fair and smooth conduct of elections in the sub division.

The meeting also held a threadbare discussion on various issues including vulnerability mapping, timely reporting on defacement of public and private properties, avail-



ability of Assured Minimum Facilities at all polling booths, deployment of micro observers, resource availability, manpower, logistics, transport, video surveillance, SVEEP training and EVM management.

Instructions for sensitization of subordinate staff regarding strict implementation of Model Code

# Good Morning Kashmir Unveils 'GMK FC' to boost local sports

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** In a momentous occasion this Saturday, Good Morning Kashmir proudly unveiled its latest venture into the world of sports with the introduction of GMK Football Club. The launch event, held amidst a palpable air of excitement and anticipation.

The unveiling ceremony, attended by sports enthusiasts, and media representatives alike, showcased the fusion of passion, determination, and vision that has propelled Good Morning Kashmir to the forefront of innovation in the Jammu and Kashmir UT.

Speaking at the launch, editor-in-chief, Good Morning Kashmir, Javed Shah expressed his enthusiasm



for the new endeavor, emphasizing the club's commitment to nurturing local talent and fostering a culture of sporting excellence. He highlighted the significance of football as a unifying force, capable of transcending boundaries

and bringing communities together.

As the newest addition to the footballing landscape, GMK Football Club aims to carve its niche on both the local and national stage. With a blend of seasoned professionals and emerging talents, the club sets its sights on achieving success both on and off the pitch, embodying the spirit of resilience and determination that defines the Kashmiri spirit.

With the launch of GMK Football Club, Good Morning Kashmir embarks on an exciting journey, poised to make an indelible mark in the annals of sporting history.

# As Tulip Garden opens, Traffic dept issues route plan for commuters

AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** As the Asia's largest Tulip garden was thrown open for public today, the Traffic department on Saturday issued a route plan for the commuters to ensure smooth passage to them.

As per an advisory issued, Traffic officials said, "Asia's largest Tulip Garden has been thrown open to public on 23@ March-2024 and it is expected that a large number of tourists and local populace will throng the Tulip Garden and other gardens in its vicinity."

"Due to the expected rush of people; there are chances of congestion and for the convenience of people and to avoid slow movement, one way traffic especially on Holidays shall be regulated initially w.e.f March 24 (Sunday) till April 10, 2024

People intending to visit Tulip Garden shall adopt Lal Chowk-Dalgate-Boulevard/Gupkar, Road to reach Tulip Garden and on their return they shall adopt Nishat-Foreshore-Habak-Dargah-Khanyar route to reach their

respective destinations.

Likewise, motorists intending to travel from Harwan-Shalimar-Nishat and other adjacent areas towards Lal-Chowk are requested to travel via Foreshore-Hazratul route instead of Nishat-Boulevard road axis to reach their respective destinations.

Motorists intending to travel from Gulab Bagh-Zakoora-Naseembagh-Habbak and adjacent areas shall adopt Habak -Dargah-Khanyar route to reach Lal Chowk instead of Foreshore Road.

Visitors are advised to park their vehicles at designated parking places only and avoid parking their vehicles on roadside. Wrongly, parked vehicles will be towed.

Available parking places include in front of Botanical Garden/ Open land at Karpora/ LCMA Parking at Nishat.

Emergencies shall be allowed to take the shortest route.

One way traffic will be implemented from 0900 hrs till 1900 hrs, the advisory reads—(KNO)