



This Election Is About Making India A Big Global Power In Next 5 Years: PM Modi

■ HT News Network

DAMOH (MP), APR 19 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the ongoing Lok Sabha election is about making India a big global power in the next five years and asserted a strong and stable government was needed in view of prevailing situation in the world.

Addressing an election rally at Damoh in Madhya Pradesh, he accused the Congress of weakening the defence sector for decades when in power and alleged the opposition party did not want French made Rafale fighter jets to come to India.

On the other hand, his government is strengthening the



defence sector, said Modi.

"The BJP government is making our defence forces self-reliant; India is exporting weapons to many countries. India is exporting BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines," he said.

In an apparent reference to Pakistan, Modi said a neighbouring country which is supplying 'aatank' (terror) is now struggling for 'aata' (flour).

The PM asserted his government was committed to the welfare of the poor and pointed out that the Centre has extended the free ration scheme for five more years for nearly 80 crore beneficiaries.

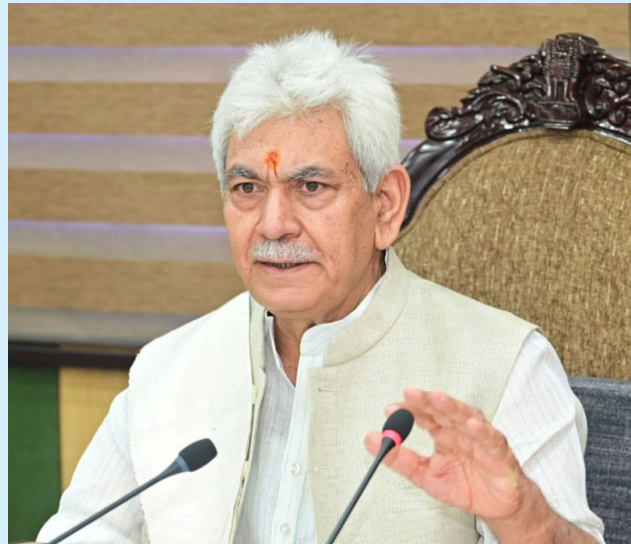
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LG Sinha Calls For An Approach Towards Skill Development

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 19: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday emphasised on the vital need for upskilling and reskilling of youth and labour workforce as per the evolving skill development landscape to meet the requirements of industries.

Chairing a high-level meeting to review skill development, entrepreneurship and labour welfare here, the Lt Governor called for a whole of government approach towards skill development and providing opportunities for budding entrepreneurs, strengthening measures for the protection of workers, including unorganized workers in terms of statutory minimum wage, social security and healthcare of workers.



The Lt Governor directed for streamlining the process for registration of unemployed youth and labourers in the respective departments and to improve employability of

local youth in development projects.

He said Departments should help unorganized workers to register himself

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NEWS BRIEF

Nine Drug Peddlers Arrested In Kashmir: Police

SRINAGAR, APR 19: Jammu and Kashmir Police arrested nine drug peddlers and recovered a huge quantity of contraband substances from them in Anantnag and Baramulla districts, police said on Friday.

Seven drug peddlers were arrested in the jurisdiction of five police stations in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Police arrested two persons identified as Feroz Ahmad Rather and Aijaz Ahmad Mantoo, both residents of Waghama Bijbehara, and recovered about 09 kg of poppy straw from them, while 16.450 kg of cannabis powder was recovered from the possession

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Trench collapse claims two lives in Kulgam

KULGAM, APR 19: Two women including a migrant worker died and the son of a victim sustained injuries after a trench collapsed in South Kashmir's Kulgam district.

The incident occurred in Chakpora village of the district.

Local sources told the news agency Kashmir News Trust that one Muhammad Maqbool Dar known for digging trenches in the district was digging a trench at the house of one Mudasar Ahmed.

They said that Dar had already completed digging a trench and now was busy digging the other one

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ED Files Prosecution Complaint Against 9 Accused In Srinagar Court

SRINAGAR, APR 19: The Enforcement Directorate has filed a prosecution complaint under the provisions of the PMLA, 2002 before the special court Srinagar against 9 accused.

In post on X, ED said that complaint was filed against Mohammad Akbar Bhat, Mrs. Fatima Shah, Altaf Ahmad Bhat, Qazi Yasir, Mohammad Abdullah Shah, Sabzar Ahmad Sheikh, Manzoor Ahmad Shah, Mohammad Iqbal Mir and Syed Khalid Geelani alias Khalid Andrabi.

It added that the court has taken cognizance of the complaint.

Estates Deptt Issues Show-Causes Notices Of Eviction To 42 Politicians

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 19: The Estates Department of Jammu and Kashmir has issued show-causes notices of eviction to 42 political figures.

The department issued these notices on the directions of the Court.

These politicians continued to occupy the Government bungalows, even after being directed by the Estates Department to de-occupy them.

The Estates Department evicted hundreds of people mostly working journalists from their quarters but failed miserably to evict influential politicians both in Kashmir and Jammu.

After the abrogation of Article

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Your Vote Safe, Come Out In Large Numbers To Exercise Franchise: CEC Rajiv Kumar

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APR 19: Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Friday dismissed apprehensions about Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and assured people that their vote was safe and secure.

Kumar asserted that the EVMs



BJP Has Not Fielded Candidate In Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary Seat In Kashmir

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR APR 19: The Bharatiya Janata Party has not fielded any candidate in the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat in Kashmir.

The last date to submit the



nomination papers for the constituency ended on Friday.

The returning officer of the constituency, Syed Fakhruddin, said that 25 candidates have filed their nominations.

"The nomination papers

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RAINY WEATHER TO CONTINUE FOR 2ND DAY IN KASHMIR

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 19: Rainfall in plains and light snow on mountains continued for the second day in Kashmir, with temperatures dropping across the valley on Friday.

The data available with the MeT office said Srinagar received 6.6mm of rainfall, Qazigund 2.7mm, Pahalgam 19.3mm, Kupwara 18.7mm, Kokernag 4.8mm, and Gulmarg 28.2mm of rainfall during the past 24 hours.

It was raining at Srinagar and some other parts of Kashmir Valley, while some upper reaches experienced light snowfall on Friday.

Currently, the weather is generally cloudy, with light to moderate rain or thunderstorms over most parts of Kashmir and light rain or thunderstorms at isolated places in Jammu Division.

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Elderly Woman Dies As Heavy Rains Drench Kashmir

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 19: A woman has lost her life after a mud house collapsed due to the mudslide caused by the incessant rainfall in Kokernag

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Rain Punctuates 1st Phase LS Voting In Kathua-Udhampur

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 19: Voting is underway amid rain in the Kathua-Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency spread across five districts in the first phase of Lok Sabha elections.

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NC, PDP, Congress No Match To BJP In J&K: Kavinder

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 19: Underscoring BJP's unrivaled position in the political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir, senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta on Friday maintained that NC, PDP or Congress are no match to his party as BJP Government in the last ten years have won hearts of lakhs of people.

While addressing a number of public meetings ahead of Lok Sabha polls in

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JK UT Govt Proposes Dearness Allowance Hike: Seeks Election Commission's Approval

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 19: In a proactive move aimed at fortifying the well-being of government employees and pensioners/family pensioners across Jammu and Kashmir, the General Administration Department has initiated a concerted effort by submitting a proposal to the Chief Electoral Officer.

The proposal seeks approval from the Election Commission of India for a significant revision in Dearness Allowance (DA) rates, with the intention of enhancing them from the current 46% to 50% of basic pay/basic pension, effective from January 1, 2024.

This proactive step underscores the government's commitment to addressing

the financial concerns of its workforce and retirees.

News agency KNS reported that the proposal advocates for a revision in the Dearness Allowance (DA) rates, aiming to elevate it from the current 46% to 50% of basic pay/basic pension, effective from January 1, 2024.

This initiative resonates with recent developments in central government policies, wherein Dearness Allowance rates for central government employees have been increased, as indicated by the Office Memorandum issued by the Ministry of Finance.

In light of these developments, the Jammu and Kashmir administration is

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H5N1 Bird Flu Virus Strain Detected In Milk: WHO

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APR 19: The H5N1 bird flu virus strain has been detected in very high concentrations in raw milk from infected animals, the WHO said Friday.

Avian influenza A(H5N1) first



emerged in 1996 but since 2020, an exponential growth has been recorded in the number of outbreaks in birds, while an increasing number of mammals have been affected.

It has led to the deaths of tens of millions of poultry, with wild birds

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

DEO reviews preparations for LS polls in Kupwara

HT News Network

Kupwara, April 19: District Election Officer (DEO) Kupwara, Ms. Ayushi Sudan on Friday convened a meeting of EROs, and other officers to review the preparations for upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

The meeting discussed threadbare various aspects of the preparations which included, the availability of drinking water, electricity, and toilet facilities for camping locations / identified buildings for accommodation of Para-Military Security forces to be deployed

for the LS Polls in Kupwara district.

The DEO on the occasion, directed EXen PDD and EXen PHE to ensure the availability of electricity and water supply for all the camping locations/ buildings as per requirement ,in consultation with concerned AROs.

The DEO fixed a deadline of April 23 for providing electricity and water supply connections and their necessary extension as per requirement to all identified locations.

The pivotal meeting focused on ensuring effective coordination and addressing any concerns regarding the necessary facilities.



The DEO said that the District administration is committed to take all necessary measures for successful conduct of "free,

fair and participative elections."

The meeting was attended by SSP Kupwara, SSP Handwara, ADDC Kupwara, ADC Handwara, AROs, Dy.DEO, ARTO, Officers of Para- Military Security Force and other concerned officers. District Election Officer (DEO) Kupwara, Ms. Ayushi Sudan on Friday convened a meeting of EROs, and other officers to review the preparations for upcoming Lok Sabha elections .The meeting discussed threadbare various aspects of the preparations which included, the availability of drinking water, electricity, and toilet facilities for camping locations / identified buildings for accommodation of Para-Military Security forces to be deployed for the LS Polls in Kupwara district.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost Date of Birth (DOB) certificate of my Son Sheikh Murtaza Mumtaz . Now I am applying for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact Registrar office BB Cantt board office srinagar within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

NAME...SHEIKH MUMTAZ AHMAD
F/O SHEIKH MURTAZA AHMAD
R/O FRASHTAR KREERI.

ازدفترنائب تحصیلدار کریری

مضمون: درخواست منجانب سال غلام احمد تاترے ولد عبد الرشید تاترے ساکنہ ٹھنڈہ تحصیل کریری ضلع بارہمولہ برآمد حصول EWS certificate بحق حارس احمد تاترے

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی

معاملہ مندر بہ عنوان الصدر میں کاغذات درخواست دفتر ذمہ لیں زیر کاروانی ہے اس سلسلے میں رپورٹ پٹواری حلقہ سے طلب کیا گیا ہے جسے عیان ہوتا ہے کہ سال کے کنڈی سالانہ آمدنی 68000 تک ہے سال دھرم گورکا منتقل باشندہ ہے سال کے افراد خانہ مندر چہ ذیل ہے

- 1.... غلام احمد تاترے ولد عبد الرشید تاترے 40 سال مردوری
- 2.... عاشقہ بیگم زوجہ غلام احمد تاترے 45 سال گھر بیلو کام
- 3.... عارکس احمد تاترے ولد غلام احمد تاترے 19 سال زیر تعلیم
- 4.... قمرت لعین دختر غلام احمد تاترے 16 سال زیر تعلیم

اسکے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد میں بتلایا گیا ہے سرٹیفکیٹ زیر پیش اہل کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر دفتر ذمہ لیں پیش کریں معاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار کریری

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI
Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of REHANA FAYAZ D/O FAYAZ AHMAD BHAT R/O BURZWACHAN Tehsil kreeri Dist. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth, as 03/10/2018 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH kreeri for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR PATTAN
(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)
Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (EXECUTIVE OFFICER MUNICIPAL COUNCIL PATTAN./BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER PATTAN has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of ABDUL FAZAL S/O TASADUQ HUSSAIN DAR R/O ARAMPORA PATTAN Tehsil PATTAN Dist. Baramulla with verified the date of Birth, as 27/07/2023 and event has been to be occurred at SDH PATTAN .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of said registration shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS PATTAN

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name in driving Licence has been wrongly written as PARVAIZ AHMAD LONE bearing Licence No JK-05 20120033993 while my correct name is PARVAIZ NABI LONE S/O GHANAB LONE R/O TILGAMPATTAN which needs to be changed..if anybody has any objection in this regard he /she may file his/her objection in the ARTO BARAMULLA within a period of seven days from the date from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

NAME....PARVAIZ NABI LONE
S/O....GH NABI LONE
R/O ...TILGAM PATTAN
DISTT....BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

That I Smt./Sh. Masooda Ruhee W/o Ghulam Nabi Burgee intend to Sell Plot No. plot no 970 Sector xxx in Housing colony, Ompora, Budgam Kashmir to Smt/Sh. Shuaib Burgees o Ghulam Nabi Burgee r/o Green park west Hyderpora Srinagar.

I have applied for NOC for Conveyance Deed for transfer of lease hold rights of above said plot. Objection, if any, may be conveyed to the managing Director, J&K Housing Board, Green Belt Park, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu within a period of 15 days from the date of publication of this Notice.

However, no objection will be entertained after the expiry of the above said period.

NAME: MASOODA RUHEE
W/O GHULAM NABI BURGEE
R/O GREEN PARK WEST HYDERPORA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for my Discharge certificate of Class 10Th session 2003 under roll no 39, admission no 755.If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact Headmaster Govt Girls High School Kreeri within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

NAME..SUMMAI JAN
D/O *GH HASSAN DAR
R/O DOLIPORA *KREERI

ازنائب تحصیلدار چرار شریف

ایگزیکٹو مجسٹریٹ فٹ کلاس چرار شریف بہ اجلاس نائب تحصیلدار چرار شریف محمد شفیع کو یسعونان: درخواست منجانب محمد آسن ڈار ولد علی محمد ڈار ساکنہ ہردو ڈھلون فٹلی پورہ تحصیل چرار شریف بغرض یوم پیدائش سرٹیفکیٹ (D O B) بحق پسر نابالغ آسن

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی

معاملہ مندر بہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سال محمد آسن ڈار دفتر ذمہ لیں زیر کاروانی و تحقیقات ہے۔ رپورٹ چوکیدار علاقہ سے عیان ہے کہ سال کا پسر ارسلان آسن مورثہ 8/05/2011 کو پیدا ہوا ہیں۔ اب سال کو اپنے پسر کی یوم پیدائش سرٹیفکیٹ (D O B) نکالنی مطلوب ہے۔ لہذا اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو اس بارے میں کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر عدالت ذمہ لیں پیش کریں۔ بعد از معیاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

تحریر الصدر نائب تحصیلدار چرار شریف

ازنائب تحصیلدار چرار شریف

ایگزیکٹو مجسٹریٹ فٹ کلاس چرار شریف بہ اجلاس نائب تحصیلدار چرار شریف محمد شفیع کو یسعونان: درخواست منجانب بشیر احمد کھار ولد علی محمد کھار ساکنہ چرار شریف بغرض یوم پیدائش سرٹیفکیٹ (D O B) بحق پسر نابالغ محمد عاقب کھار

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی

معاملہ مندر بہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سال بشیر احمد کھار دفتر ذمہ لیں زیر کاروانی و تحقیقات ہے۔ رپورٹ چوکیدار علاقہ سے عیان ہے کہ سال کا پسر محمد عاقب کھار مورثہ 13/07/2019 کو پیدا ہوا ہیں۔ اب سال کو اپنے پسر کی یوم پیدائش سرٹیفکیٹ (D O B) نکالنی مطلوب ہے۔ لہذا اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو اس بارے میں کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر عدالت ذمہ لیں پیش کریں۔ بعد از معیاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

تحریر الصدر نائب تحصیلدار چرار شریف

ازنائب تحصیلدار چرار شریف

ایگزیکٹو مجسٹریٹ فٹ کلاس چرار شریف بہ اجلاس نائب تحصیلدار چرار شریف محمد شفیع کو یسعونان: درخواست منجانب ریاض احمد گوجرام ولد الٹ الدین گوجرام تمام ساکنہ براڈ سٹریٹ تحصیل چرار شریف بغرض یوم پیدائش سرٹیفکیٹ (D O B) بحق پسر ان عزیز احمد گوجرام و ذریعہ تمام و دختر عربیہ جان

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی

عالم مندر بہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سال ریاض احمد گوجرام دفتر ذمہ لیں زیر کاروانی و تحقیقات ہے۔ رپورٹ چوکیدار علاقہ سے عیان ہے کہ سال کے پسر ان عزیز احمد گوجرام مورثہ 23/03/2017 و ذریعہ تمام و دختر عربیہ جان مورثہ 03/08/2018 کو پیدا ہوئے ہیں اب سال کو اپنے پسر ان و دختر کی یوم پیدائش سرٹیفکیٹ (D O B) نکالنی مطلوب ہے۔ لہذا اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو اس بارے میں کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر عدالت ذمہ لیں پیش کریں۔ بعد از معیاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

تحریر الصدر نائب تحصیلدار چرار شریف

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JU Vice Chancellor Releases Newsletter of Poonch Campus, Says It Showcases Achievements And Initiatives Of The Campus

■ HT News Network

Jammu, April 19: In order to highlight the academic prowess and community engagement of the Poonch Campus of Jammu University, the Vice Chancellor University of Jammu Prof Umesh Rai today released the Newsletter of the campus.

While commending the efforts of Director Poonch Campus, Professor Rakesh Vaid, VCJU said that the Newsletter serves as a comprehensive showcase of the remarkable achievements and initiatives undertaken by the Campus. He also lauded the dedication and hard work of the entire team at Poonch Campus, particularly acknowledging the contributions of Dr. Rubia Bukhari in ensuring the productivity and informativeness of the Newsletter. He congratulated the team for their commitment to excellence and service to the community. On this occasion, Director Poonch Campus, Professor Rakesh Vaid, provided a detailed briefing to the Vice Chancellor about the significant



achievements and ongoing initiatives at the Campus. He highlighted the various awareness programs being organized, specifically tailored to benefit the local community, with a particular focus on the agricultural sector and the welfare of farmers in the area. Those who addressed the audiences included Prof Rahul

Gupta (Registrar), Prof. Meena Sharma (Dean of Planning and Development), Prof Seema Langer (Head of the Department Zoology), Prof Dipankar Sengupta (former Director of Poonch Campus), Dr. Ranjeet Kalra and Teaching faculty MMTCDr. Rubia Bukhari, Campus Officer in her address said, "the release

of the Newsletter marks a pivotal moment in the journey of the Poonch Campus, reflecting its dedication to academic excellence, community empowerment and societal development". Others who were present on this occasion included Irfan Goni (Campus Development Officer), Gurmeet Kour (Assistant Poonch Campus) etc. He also lauded the dedication and hard work of the entire team at Poonch Campus, particularly acknowledging the contributions of Dr. Rubia Bukhari in ensuring the productivity and informativeness of the Newsletter. He congratulated the team for their commitment to excellence and service to the community. On this occasion, Director Poonch Campus, Professor Rakesh Vaid, provided a detailed briefing to the Vice Chancellor about the significant achievements and ongoing initiatives at the Campus. He highlighted the various awareness programs being organized, specifically tailored to benefit the local community, with a particular focus on the agricultural.

LOK SABHA ELECTION 2024 DDC Member Mawar slapped with notice for violating MCC

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA: APRIL 19: Following the instructions of DC Kupwara, Ms. Ayshi Sudan, who is also DEO Kupwara, Additional District Magistrate Kupwara has sought explanation from DDC Member Mawar, Khursheed Ahmad Dar for committing brazen violation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) by inaugurating a public park at Maratgam Handwara today without any authority.

The Additional District Magistrate in a Letter/Order issued vide DEO/K/MCC/2024/19-25 has asked the DDC Member to explain the reasons for violating the MCC norms and submit the expenditure statement incurred on such function within two days, failing which the matter shall be forwarded to Chief Electoral Officer, J&K.

"You are hereby put on notice to respond to the violation of MCC made by you while inaugurating a public park at Maratgam Handwara, Kupwara without proper legal permission from DEO Kupwara as required under rules," reads the notice issued by ADM Kupwara, who is also the Nodal Officer, MCC Kupwara.

IUST faculty bags project sponsored by Indian council of Medical Research.

■ HT News Network



Awantipora, April 19: Miss Asmat Parveen principal SMMCN & MT has been awarded project on "Comparison of Respiratory Health OF Brick kiln worker and Local inhabitants with general population of Kashmir valley" by Indian Council of Medical Research. Congratulating the faculty Vice Chancellor, Prof. Shakil Ahmed Ramshoo, said that as IUST is emerging as a Research Intensive university, faculty should increasingly focus on the areas of societal relevance and contribute towards policy advocacy and bridge the distance between lab and land. He said that the research output of university has seen a significant increase and IUST is exploring collaboration with different national organizations in areas of significant importance. He urged the faculty to respond to the calls for proposals from different funding agencies to further upgrade the research infrastructure. Dean Academic Affairs Prof. A.H. Moon complimented Ms. Asmat and said that IUST under the guidance of Vice Chancellor has devised a policy to reward faculty and researchers for promising research initiative. Dean Research, Prof Shiekh Javid Ahmadd also congratulated the faculty for the project.

BSI Learning, Australia Signs MoU with Aryans Group of Colleges, India to provide Australian Qualifications in Chandigarh

■ HT News Network



Srinagar, 19th April Chandigarh (India), Date: BSI Learning (RTO 21371) and Aryans Group of Colleges proudly announce the signing of an Expression of Interest (EoI) to create opportunities for Indian students to pursue Australian Qualifications in India with the support of Can And Able Advisory. BSI Learning (RTO 21371), is committed to delivering a learning experience that produces beneficial change for both your people and your organization. BSI Learning aims to develop programs that have measurable effects, not only on your people and their performance but on the bottom-line results of the company.

Aryans Group of Colleges stands as premier consortium of eight educational institutions, offering a diverse array of programs ranging from engineering to law, and business to nursing. With a steadfast commitment to high-quality education, Aryans Group has become synonymous with academic excellence and professional readiness. The primary objectives of signing this EoI is to explore a potential collaboration to offer Australian Skillsets and Qualifications in Business, Leadership & Management, Project Management, Retail and Hospitality, and Fitness.

"Australia and India share a strong relationship, and Australian educational institutions are set to leverage this partnership to provide skill training to a massive workforce in emerging domains such as digital healthcare and renewable energy. To achieve this goal, BSI Learning is visiting India to build market literacy and skills partnerships. The collaboration between Aryans Group of Colleges and us aims to create pathways for their students in education, innovation, and economic growth" said Ms. Kala Philip, CEO, BSI Learning.

Police arrests 7 drivers, seizes 7 vehicles for illegal extraction & transportation of minerals in Baramulla

■ HT News Network

Baramulla April 19: Cracking a whip on illegal extraction & transportation of minerals, Police have arrested 7 drivers and seized 7 vehicles in Baramulla.

The Police initiated the action under the supervision of DySP Hqrs Baramulla, SDPO Tangmarg & Kreeri assisted by SHO PS Tangmarg, SHO PS Kunzer, SHO PS Baramulla & IC PP Wagoora. The police parties seized 6 Tipplers, 1 Tractor & arrested 7 drivers at Kunzer, Shrawara Shrai & Khanpora Baramulla for illegal extraction and transportation of minerals. The accused drivers have been identified as namely Bilal Shah son of Akbar Shah resident of Takiya Batpora, Wakeel Malla son of Assadullah resident of Heing Rajpora, Waseem Ahmad Thokar son of Gh Nabi resident of Khaitangan, Farooq Ahmad Reshi son of Ab Rehman resident of Paraswani, Aadil Hussain Beigh son of Ab Rashid resident of Ganibaba Kunzer, Bilal Ahmad Malik son of Mushtaq Ahmad resident of Drangbal, Bashir Ahmad Dar son of Lal Din resident of Kanispora.

Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations and further investigation have been initiated.

People are requested not to indulge in any kind of illegal mining activities from any Nallah/River, as it is the violation of Government rules. Persons found indulging in illegal mining activities shall be dealt as per law.

DC Baramulla visits 9-Uri AC; ensures AMFs at Polling Stations for the Lok Sabha Elections

■ HT News Network

Baramulla April, 19 (KNS): In view of the General Elections to Lok Sabha, the District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, accompanied by ARO 9-Uri Assembly Segment, Javid Ahmad Rather, conducted a comprehensive inspection of various polling stations within the sub-division Uri today.

The purpose of the visit was to ensure that all polling stations have Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) as per the ECI guidelines. The DEO conducted a thorough assessment of infrastructure and amenities at each location to ensure a seamless and efficient voting experience for voters.

During the visit, the DEO inspected several polling stations in the border villages and conducted a



comprehensive assessment of various essential aspects such as availability of ramps, sanitation facilities, provision of drinking water, and electricity supply—all of which fall under the Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs), to be provided to the poll parties as per the ECI guidelines. To foster a conducive environment for conducting free, fair, and transparent elections, the DEO emphasized the

importance of providing adequate facilities to both voters and the polling staff.

Meanwhile, Minga Sherpa praised the dedication and efforts of all the stakeholders involved in the preparations and urged for continued cooperation to guarantee the success of the electoral process. Furthermore, the DEO visited and assessed the arrangements at the Distribution Center in Uri, where from the poll parties

would be distributed to the individual polling stations of the assembly constituency during the Lok Sabha Elections. The DEO conducted a comprehensive assessment of various essential aspects such as availability of ramps, sanitation facilities, provision of drinking water, and electricity supply—all of which fall under the Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs), to be provided to the poll parties as per the ECI guidelines.

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Meanwhile, Minga Sherpa praised the dedication and efforts of all the stakeholders involved.

DDC member Rajpora Javed Raheem Bhat joins PDP

■ HT News Network

Pulwama, April 19 : Political leader and DDC member of Rajpora Constituency Javed Raheem Bhat has joined the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Friday. Addressing a public gathering in Rohmmu village of Pulwama, Javed said that no party except PDP will be able to represent the people of Jammu and Kashmir in Parliament.

He said that PDP is the only party which can become the real spokesperson of the people in



the parliament.

Javed Raheem Bhat while talking to the media on the nomination of Waheed ur Rehman Para by PDP for

the Srinagar parliamentary seat said that he is sure that Waheed ur Rehman will represent the people as well as the youth in the Parliament

with a single voice.

DDC member Javed Ahmed, who joined the PDP along with hundreds of workers, said that the people's representatives who were given the opportunity to speak in the Parliament in the previous elections disappointed the people of Jammu and Kashmir and it is clear that the people here have faced difficulties?

Despite heavy rain, a large number of people participated in the rally organized by DDC member in Rohmmu Pulwama.

Army provides food, shelter to 250 stranded passengers in Gurez

■ HT News Network

Bandipora April 19 (KNS): The Army's exemplary commitment and tireless efforts in the face of adversity have earned widespread praise, as they provided shelter, food, and worked relentlessly overnight to clear debris for 250 stranded passengers in Tulail Valley.

In the wake of the sudden landslide that trapped 25 vehicles and left passengers stranded, the Army sprang into action, deploying Jawans of 3 Assam Rifles to the scene. Demonstrating unwavering dedication, the Army not only provided immediate shelter and food to the stranded individuals but also worked throughout the night

alongside local agencies to clear the debris obstructing the road.

The selfless and round-the-clock efforts of the Army have been instrumental in ensuring the safety, comfort, and well-being of the stranded passengers. Their proactive response and efficient coordination with local authorities have significantly expedited the cleanup process, allowing for the swift restoration of normalcy to the affected region. The successful resolution of the crisis serves as a poignant reminder of the Army's unwavering commitment to serving the community and safeguarding the lives of its citizens, even in the most challenging circumstances.

JK People's Party Chief Sheeban Ashai announces his candidature for Srinagar Lok Sabha.

Renowned youth entrepreneur Musadiq Mehraj joins party.

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, 19th April: Addressing a press briefing in Srinagar today, JK People's Party Chief Sheeban Ashai announced his candidature for Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency for upcoming parliament elections 2024. Stressing on need for a voice of Kashmiris inside parliament; Ashai stated, "When every community and section of society has a voice in Parliament, it is extremely important for Kashmiris to have strong representation at the highest level. Kashmiris have always felt unrepresented in both Houses of Indian parliament where politicians elected from erstwhile state have not failed to echo sentiments and aspirations of common citizens. Ashai expressed that unequivocal, pronounced manifesto of the party which was brought to light in August 2022 is the biggest testament of JK People's Party's politics of virtuousness. We have never had any hidden agendas, our political road map and ideology is transparent and unambivalent. Ashai welcomed renowned youth activist Musadiq Mehraj on the



momentous day of Lok Sabha announcement and encouraged youth to take initiative in becoming part of policy making. Mehraj hailing from an illustrious family of renowned businessmen in Srinagar is a graduate from Kashmir University in Business Management & a prominent face amongst Srinagar youth. Ashai recalled important events of political significance from last ten years of

BJP's direct and proxy rule in erstwhile state, termed it as one of the darkest times in history of Kashmir. He ingeminated that people have to reject fiendish moves of BJP government, send a strong message of disapproval for illegal, unconstitutional abrogation of Article's 370 and 35A in upcoming Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. Any wrong decision on our part would not only send a wrong message to entire world but also in a way support BJP's idea and style of functioning. Ashai reminded people to not forget the testing times when entire Kashmir was turned into an open jail, thousands of people detained, state suffered losses of more than two lakh crores, about two and half lakh people lost their jobs thanks to the undemocratic abrogation of Article's 370 and 35A. Ashai expressed that in about of decade of political struggle many a times People's party and it's leadership faced Himalayan challenges from the BJP. I still vividly remember the time when in 2021 minutes away from our Hyderpora residence an encounter took place and families pleaded for dead bodies of the deceased. We first hand experienced haplessness of our people.

EDITORIAL

HADP leads to revolution in agriculture sector

The Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) has led to a revolution in the agriculture sector. More and more people are taking up the agriculture sector as a viable means of income and as such are contributing towards the household income. Like commercial floriculture commercial agriculture has also taken roots in the Kashmir valley. The agriculture has progressed by leaps and bounds over the past few years with people reaping the benefits.

The silver lining in this whole scenario is that women have taken up agriculture as their profession and more and more female agripreneurs are coming to the fore. Success stories of female agriculturalists are emanating from the different parts of the Kashmir and Jammu regions. Since agriculture has turned into a full-fledged round the year activity vegetables are available to the people in the Kashmir valley.

Not long ago the Kashmir valley would face a scarcity of the vegetables during the winter more so when the Srinagar-Jammu national highway would get closed on account of inclement weather. The things have changed in the recent past with the green houses heralding a new revolution in the agriculture sector. Almost all types of vegetables are available to the people round the year and the people are heaving a sigh of relief.

The availability of green vegetables during the winter season has led to less dependence on dried vegetables and the dried vegetables are considered as delicacies by the people. Since some of the doctors have voiced concern over the usage of dried vegetables it is important that necessary caution is followed while using such vegetables. In such a scenario the availability of green vegetables has come as a welcome relief.

Over the years the Department of Agriculture has taken many innovative measures so as to motivate the existing farmers to adopt the new techniques so that there is an increase in the production. It is due to these measures that the young generation has also been motivated to take up agriculture as a full time means of employment. This is a great step since the younger generation is not running after the government jobs.

It is high time that more and more youngsters take a plunge in the agriculture sector so that they turn out to be successful entrepreneurs. This will ensure that more and more people are willing to set up their own ventures rather than going after the government jobs or menial jobs. This would give a new dimension to the economic progress scenario of the Kashmir valley.

Smartphones

The future remains steady

The biggest challenge for the planet will be e-waste and sustainability issues. Just tinkering with the packing material and plastics used will help, but in a very small way.

■ **Niranjan Gidwani**

There is hardly anyone in the world who would not have the answer.

It's the smartphone. This device has become one of the key segments of the consumer electronics business, contributing in a major way to the entire value chain, and has become so central to our lives that it is almost like an extension of our body.

Smartphones are amazing devices. Which is why the world is so addicted to them and why, in so many places around the globe, most people have one.

Will this craze carry on forever?

Almost everyone believes that the smartphone is something we will continue to carry with us, both literally and metaphorically. The smartphone market may never see the same meteoric rise that it did some years ago, but the all-powerful pocket computer is surely here to stay.

At this point it's hard to function in society without one, and that is not going to change any time soon. A small percentage of the world will get the newest high-end model, many will opt for the mid-to-high range products, and others will use the basic product until it falls apart.

So, what does one see in the foreseeable future?

One thing is certain. The form factor and specifications will really evolve. Right now, the world is comfortable with the candy bar design, and that will stick around for quite some time, but a significant portion of the market will become foldable. Foldable phones can change the way content is consumed. These devices can change to a different size to perform a specific task. When unfolded, they can go from being a small smartphone to a tablet type of device. Smartphones and tablets, therefore, could merge.

And as the smartphone market shifts, people are surely going to be looking to get more utility out of that one device.

One feature that has the potential to become more common in smartphones, in the near future, is improved artificial intelligence and machine learning capabilities. Smartphones are already able to perform a wide range of tasks. However, there is still room for



improvement and further development in this area.

Battery technology is another feature that is also ripe for innovation. Smartphones keep getting major upgrades to cameras and sensors, but interestingly, batteries have not changed much in years. Alternatives to lithium-ion batteries will allow for faster charging and longer battery life. Some technologies even allow batteries not to lose capacity over time.

Imagine that a phone runs out of battery and there is no charger immediately available. That may not be a problem in a few years' time, as it is expected that the next smart devices can be charged wirelessly over the air. There are also devices being planned whose battery could be charged by solar power. This will be a much-needed boost as the global order is shifting to more and faster data consumption and longer hours of usage on the device. However, it will be interesting to see whether brands would improve battery technology soon or prefer the current strategy of selling newer models each year.

The future holds exciting promise. And yet, since 2017, for six years in a row, demand for new phones has been on the decline. China and North America have been the biggest drivers of negative growth, and more so this year. Global inflation and an uncertain environment

are making consumers reluctant to make faster upgrades to their devices. Refurbished and used phones market is creating another big dent in the new phones market.

Premium and ultra-premium growth is still strong among the top two global brands. The important thing to consider is that there are opportunities in markets that are still under-served. Africa is one continent where many of the phones in use are still feature phones, not full-fledged smartphones. There is also immense potential in India's 5G expansion over the coming years.

Many of us can't imagine life before smartphones, and the tech industry has shown an eager interest in keeping customers coming back on a regular basis to purchase the latest and greatest models. Every year brings a slew of new products and brands are constantly raising the bar on what their flagship smartphones can do. In the process, the e-waste problem also keeps getting bigger and more complex.

About 10 years ago, no-one could imagine how much smartphones would evolve in a decade. However, smartphone technology has accelerated so much that the first smartphones now seem like primitive dinosaurs.

Modern smartphones are now the platform of choice when it comes to accessing information. Years ago, we used countless devices to check the

weather, take photos, read emails, or listen to music. However, today we find everything on our smartphone.

Mobile phones have become an extension of ourselves and have changed our lives forever. About 80 per cent of the world's population has a cell phone. We look at our phones an average of over 100 times a day, and some people become extremely anxious if they forget to bring their phone with them.

Although the pace of development seems to have slowed recently, smartphones will continue to evolve. My personal view is that AR and VR will surely create a buzz and pockets of interest but may never come close to the popularity of a smartphone.

The biggest challenge for the planet will be e-waste and sustainability issues. Just tinkering with the packing material and plastics used will help, but in a very small way. And interestingly, very few of the big, organised global players are working on a strategy to tap into the used phones segment which will be almost 25 per cent of value sales by 2026.

Smartphones are not disappearing soon.

The writer is Consultant Director, Board Member, Society of Sustainability & Green Materials, Member UAE Superbrands Council, HBR Advisory Council, Charter Member TIE Dubai

How Mindfulness Practice Reduces Pain

■ **Shana Johnson**

The practice of mindfulness reduces pain levels in a couple of ways. First, it improves awareness of negative emotions and your ability to control them. Two, it reduces the connection between the parts of the brain that process pain and the parts that generate self-awareness. Together, these factors reduce the pain experience.

Negative Emotions Intensify Pain

Chronic pain is a physical and emotional experience. Your emotional state, whether it be sadness, frustration, or happiness, affects how you experience pain. Negative thoughts and emotions increase pain levels.

For example, if you have a headache and are angry about a work conflict, the pain feels worse than if you have the same headache while outside, enjoying the sunshine, feeling content and free.

Chronic pain is a physical and emotional experience. Source: Courtesy of Shana Johnson

Emotions affect the experience of pain because the brain processes the physical and emotional aspects of pain together.

Pain is registered in the brain through multiple inputs.

One set of inputs reports the location and intensity of the pain (physical experience).

Another set of inputs connects to the emotional center of the brain, called the

limbic system, and reports how unpleasant the pain feels (emotional experience).

From here, circuits adjust the pain signal, either increasing or decreasing it. Then, the brain lets you know how it feels.

A negative emotional state increases pain, whereas a positive state lowers pain.

The practice of mindfulness improves your awareness and ability to regulate negative thoughts and emotions—such as sadness, anger, or frustration—thereby reducing the pain experience.

Mindfulness Separates “You” From “Pain”

Research shows mindfulness practice reduces perceived pain levels by up to 30 per cent.

Mindfulness meditation decreases the communication between the parts of the brain responsible for relaying pain information (thalamus) and the parts that generate self-awareness (default mode network).

There is awareness of self, and there is awareness of pain, but they are not mixed into one. Because they aren't working as one, the pain level is lower. Think of this pain communication as if the self is not answering pain's phone calls. The weaker connectivity between the two areas reduces the pain you experience.

Mindfulness fosters a nonreactive sense of self, which includes the experience of pain. The benefits of mindfulness can be gained from a practice of just 20 minutes a day.



Mindfulness Meditation Quick-Start

Here is a simple guide to get started on a mindfulness meditation practice.

Sit in a comfortable position.

Focus on your breath, paying attention to breathing in and out. Don't think or follow any thought streams that pop up.

Say “in” as you breathe in and “out” as you breathe out; this blocks intrusive thoughts.

Start with five minutes a day and work up to 20 minutes a day. Find what works for you.

During meditation, don't think about anything. If a thought pops up, do not follow it; refocus on your breath. Think of your thoughts as clouds. You are watching them and letting them pass. Focus on blue skies. If the sky fills with clouds, refocus on your breath, refocus on the blue sky.

Learn more about chronic pain management in my book *Sunbreak: Healing the Pain No One Can Explain*.

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Shana Johnson, M.D., is a physical medicine and rehabilitation physician, media contributor for medical news, and author of *Sunbreak: Healing the Pain No One Can Explain*.

WITHERING SCIENCE

IT IS SLIGHTLY PARADOXICAL FOR ME, A PUPIL OF JUSTIN ROSENBERG, TO WRITE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

■ **Shubham Sharma**

It is slightly paradoxical for me, a pupil of Justin Rosenberg, to write about the future of political science. In his 2016 research article *International Relations in the Prison of Political Science*, Rosenberg had exhorted the students of *International Relations* to break free from the ‘prison’ i.e., the designation of IR as a sub-field of political science.

He wrote, “for IR should be re-grounded in its own disciplinary problematic: the consequences of (societal) multiplicity.” Rosenberg’s call beckoned to only a few prisoners (myself included). The message barely reached India, or for that matter South Asia. In the United States, I am yet to hear of a department of ‘International Relations’ breaking free from the jail of Political Science. Be that as it may,

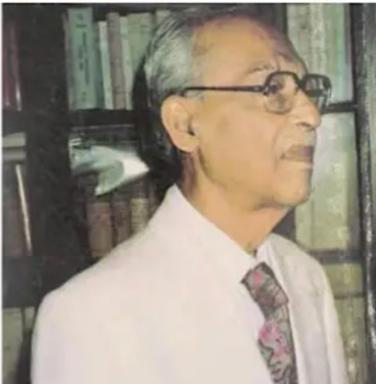
I will try to focus my discussion on the state of Political Science in India, a country that I know best. From within the social sciences, India has had the distinction of producing stellar economists (two of whom, Amartya Sen and Abhijit Banerjee, have also won the Nobel award), historians and sociologists. No such name comes to mind whilst one thinks of political science. The question is baffling.

It has no readymade answers. The first Department of Political Science was established at the University of Lucknow, (Uttar Pradesh) in 1922. The first issue of the still continuing *Indian Journal of Political Science* (IJPS) came out in 1939. Despite all this, political science, intellectually speaking, remains in an impoverished state.

The only political sciences scholar who had received a modicum of international repute was the legendary professor of Delhi University, Randhir Singh. His book *Reason, Revolution and Political Theory* (1967) was touted as the

THE BURNING QUESTIONS OF CASTE AND OTHER FORMS OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION WERE TAKEN CARE BY SOCIOLOGISTS. POLITICAL SCIENTISTS ALSO LOST GROUND TO legal scholars on matters such as human rights, constitutional laws, federalism, and state-civil society. Legal luminaries such as Prof. Upendra Baxi and Durga Das Basu became the household names on such matters. The post-Emergency subaltern studies movement in history further caused a lot of young and bright scholars to gravitate away from political science

best Marxist take down of the conservative political theorist Michael Oakeshott. His last book *Crisis of Socialism: Notes in Defense of a Commitment* (2006) running



over 1,000 pages was considered to be a landmark achievement by most political scientists/theorists on the Left.

His death in 2016 garnered an obituary in the London-based newspaper *Guardian*. After independence, foreign affairs and international relations came under the tutelage of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Big institutions such as the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and the Indian School of International Studies (which was later merged with the Jawaharlal Nehru University) were established by the government.

These attempts were directed to know the world through an Indian lens. Nehru’s participation in the Bandung Conference, his convening of the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi, the inauguration of the Non-Aligned Movement, India’s diplomatic involvement in the Korean War and the decision to chart an ‘independent, postimperial foreign policy’ led to an unintended, yet consequential, focus on international relations and area studies. Political Science, on the

other hand, did not have any immediate national purpose to serve.

The burning questions of caste and other forms of social stratification were taken care by sociologists. Political scientists also lost ground to legal scholars on matters such as human rights, constitutional laws, federalism, and state-civil society. Legal luminaries such as Prof. Upendra Baxi and Durga Das Basu became the household names on such matters. The post-Emergency subaltern studies movement in history further caused a lot of young and bright scholars to gravitate away from political science.

The one area where political scientists tasted both international and national success was the study of secularism. In the aftermath of the Babri Mosque demolition, Prof. Rajeev Bhargava’s book *Secularism and Its Critics*, (OUP, 1998) became the ‘go-to’ reference to understand Indian secularism. Later on, Achin Vanaik’s book *The Furies of Indian Communalism* and its sequel *Hindutva Rising* (Verso and Tulika, India 2017) marked a huge (left-

wing) advance on secularism studies.

Another major problem plaguing Indian political science is a lack of theory and method. IR in India commands a Talmudist-like adherence of Realism and Neo-realism. Political Science lacks such a theoretical spine and therefore fails to stand erect. My own experience of studying political science in one of the most premier institutions of India, St. Xavier’s College, Calcutta revealed that the course was a medley of subjects ranging from IR, Theory, federalism and Comparative Politics without a theoretical anchorage.

Everything was taught to me, yet all seemed to be lost because the syllabi lacked an overarching theoretical coherence. The benefit of hindsight reveals the miasma. Out of 60 students, only two of us have pursued a career in political science. On the question of method: there was no module on research methodology at the undergraduate level. Political Science, like other social sciences, has now become a ticket to a cushy career in the civil services. All the major cities

of India have seen a mushrooming of private and money-mooching civil services examination preparation centers.

Students with a masters or a doctoral degree in political science are attracted towards these abattoirs of knowledge for quick and easy money. Since 2014, big business has also focused on the funding of mostly right-wing foreign policy think-tanks. The Observer Research Foundation (ORF), currently India’s biggest and richest foreign policy think-tank, had its roots in Dhirubhai Ambani’s (father of India’s richest man Mukesh Ambani) attempt to control the mediaspace through his newspaper

The Observer. With annual financial inflows over Rs. 35 crore, ORF has become an epistemic behemoth that pales all university IR departments, not to speak of political science, into insignificance. Far from a critical evaluation of the polity, such centres set-up annual jamborees, such as the Raisina Dialogue, touting India’s ostensible rise.

India’s constant slippage on the Global Hunger Index (107th out of 121), and the Press Freedom Index (160th out of 180) are hardly debated or discussed. ORF’s constant fixation with ‘geo-economic’ and ‘geopolitical’ aims to depoliticize debate reflects the actual state of affairs within India. It seems that the English lexicon has no other suffix compared to ‘geo’ when it comes to political sanitization of debate.

With the current assaults on India’s polity, it must be the duty of young and aspiring political scientists to take up the gauntlet. If this does not happen, both the discipline and the people of India, are doomed.

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Note To Self: Compassion, Not Criticism

■ **Robert H. Woody**

I’ve heard it from music performers of all kinds, from highly trained classical musicians to the regular singers at my small town bar’s karaoke night: “I’m my own worst critic,” they’ll tell me as they ignore a compliment I just paid them on their performance. They may start with a “Thanks, but” before they then express their own dissatisfaction with the performance they just gave and quickly move on to explain (usually somewhat boastfully) that they are their own worst critic.

Being hypercritical of yourself—and then telling others about it—amounts to a very peculiar form of perfectionism crossed with virtue signaling. Seemingly, by using “own worst critic” language, musicians aim to convince those around them that they are, in fact, better performers than their actual performances show. There’s an aspect of perfectionism wrapped up in this, which is, after all, an irrational (and psychologically harmful) perspective to take. And the virtue signaling is seen in the desire to gain credit in the eyes of others for being such a driven and exacting musician, since they cannot be credited for giving a perfect performance.

Of course, many musicians who adopt the “own worst critic” mentality do not do it only to save face with others. They truly believe that even though perfection may not be attainable, by chasing perfection, they propel themselves to excellence. As I have addressed previously on this blog, the field of psychology refutes this notion and instead has identified serious mental health dangers associated with perfectionism.

What, then, is the better alternative to self-criticism for pushing oneself forward in their quest for musical excellence? A growing body of psychological research indicates that self-compassion is a key

trait that high achievers are empowered by. This is a point made wonderfully in a back episode of my favorite podcast *The Happiness Lab* with Dr. Laurie Santos. In the episode “Dump Your Inner Drill Sergeant,” researcher Kristin Neff shares the great power of self-compassion (Dilley, 2021). Especially in a world where so many outcomes in life are not entirely within one’s own control, faulting yourself for not accomplishing enough at any given time does not help if you desire to grow and improve. To our psyche, criticizing ourselves for not accomplishing enough can feel like not being enough. It is not motivating. Self-criticism can be deflating and counterproductive in the long run. As Dr. Neff says pointedly in the podcast, “it inhibits your ability to make productive change.”

Indeed, there are especially compelling findings from research that has looked at people who apply self-compassion after experiencing a failure of some kind. People who use self-compassion after a bad performance are more motivated to try again, to work harder and longer as they go forward into the future, and just generally show more determination and grit. Note this, musicians: all these things are antithetical to feeling stuck, defeated, and wanting to give up. And yes, greater motivation, persistence, and determination are products of self-compassion and not self-criticism.

It is also interesting to note that deciding to boost your self-compassion is a better option than trying to boost your self-esteem (Neff, 2011). Boasting self-esteem is no short-term project. To change how you feel about yourself, you really need to change yourself substantially. Doing that is no quick trick. People who look for an immediate means of feeling better about themselves, often turn to disparaging others (to make themselves look better in



comparison), which can lead to interpersonal strife...or outright bullying. A more productive approach is to decide to boost your self-compassion, which simply means acknowledging that you are human and therefore, you can make mistakes and have setbacks, but also learn from these negative experiences, and grow and improve as a result.

Another great thing about this approach is that compassion is usually something we are already very familiar with, although perhaps not toward ourselves. Most of us intuitively know how to encourage a friend who is down and can help someone in need. Being compassionate may actually be naturally human, even more so than being competitive. Interestingly, Charles Darwin often has been associated with the idea of “survival of the fittest,” a philosophy that many ultra-critical performers seem to enthusiastically adopt. In fact, though, Darwin referred to compassion/sympathy as “the almost ever-present instinct” of the human species (Darwin, 1874, p. 113).

It may be very difficult for some musicians to accept self-compassion as a

performer’s strength rather than a weakness. Unfortunately, the formative years of some musicians included many learning and performance activities that were steeped in constant criticism as a driving force. Those who persisted through such circumstances may actually credit their musicianship to such negative conditions. Now as accomplished musical artists, they may have come to believe that the threat of failure and the stresses of professional expectations are “necessary evils” that produce growth. They may even rest upon folk wisdom/clichés like “diamonds are only formed under extreme pressure” or “if you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.” In reality, however, psychological stressors often produce more generalized anxiety, which, in the case of musicians, make them more susceptible to debilitating stage fright while performing.

Recent research suggests that self-compassion is a promising approach for musicians trying to stave off performance anxiety. In a study of university music majors in the U.S., Farley & Kelley (2023) found a strong inverse relationship between

self-compassion use and the incidence of performance anxiety. From their findings, these researchers concluded that “an intervention focused on positive self-talk to bolster self-kindness may help reduce the negative effects of MPA in musicians” (p. 1283). This study was the first to firmly establish the relationship between music performance anxiety and self-compassion (i.e., the lack thereof), although previous research had pointed to such an association (Kelley & Farley, 2019; Sigurdardottir, 2020).

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"Opposition Got Bonds Too, Is It Extortion?" Amit Shah Rebutts Rahul Gandhi

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Countering the Opposition's charge on the now-scrapped electoral bonds system, Union Home Minister Amit Shah today asked if the Opposition parties would also describe donations they received through bonds as "extortion". Mr Shah's remarks, made in an exclusive interview to NDTV, were a sharp response to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who has said the electoral bonds system was the "world's biggest extortion scheme" and called Prime Minister Narendra Modi as "champion of corruption". Responding to the Opposition parties charge on the issue in the run-up to the Lok Sabha polls, Mr Shah said, "Their parties have also received donations through bonds. Is that extortion as well? Rahul Gandhi must tell the people, yes, we have also extorted. And the donation they have received in proportion to the number of MPs is more than what we got. They don't have an issue, there is no allegation of corruption against us. So they are trying to create confusion. They won't be successful."



In a landmark verdict on February 15, the Supreme Court scrapped the electoral bonds scheme on the grounds that it violates the citizens' right to information. The scheme, Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud said, was unconstitutional and arbitrary and may lead to a quid pro quo arrangement between political parties and donors. The Constitution bench of five judges held that the stated objective of fighting black money and maintaining the confidentiality of donors cannot defend the scheme.

Electoral bonds, the court said, are not the only way to curb black money. Subsequently, in data released by State Bank of India and made public by Election Commission of India, the BJP was found to have received maximum funds through these bonds -- 6,986.5 crore -- since they were introduced in 2018. The BJP was followed by Trinamool Congress at 1,397 crore and Congress at 1,334 crore. Countering the Opposition's charge on the now-scrapped electoral bonds system, Union Home Minister Amit

Shah today asked if the Opposition parties would also describe donations they received through bonds as "extortion". Mr Shah's remarks, made in an exclusive interview to NDTV, were a sharp response to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who has said the electoral bonds system was the "world's biggest extortion scheme" and called Prime Minister Narendra Modi as "champion of corruption". Responding to the Opposition parties charge on the issue in the run-up to the Lok Sabha polls, Mr Shah said, "Their parties have also received donations through bonds. Is that extortion as well? Rahul Gandhi must tell the people, yes, we have also extorted. And the donation they have received in proportion to the number of MPs is more than what we got. They don't have an issue, there is no allegation of corruption against us. So they are trying to create confusion. They won't be successful." In a landmark verdict on February 15, the Supreme Court scrapped the electoral bonds scheme on the grounds that it violates the citizens' right to information. The scheme, Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud said.

After India Delivered BrahMos Missiles To Philippines, PM Modi Said..

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday congratulated countrymen after India delivered the BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines as part of the \$375 million deal between the two sides signed in 2022. Addressing a rally in Domah, PM Modi said, "Now we are also exporting BrahMos missiles. The first batch of this missile is going to the Philippines today. I congratulate all the countrymen on this." India delivered the BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines on Friday, as part of the USD 375 million deal between the two sides signed in 2022. The Indian Air Force sent its American origin C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft with the missiles to the Philippines to deliver the weapon system to the Philippines' Marine Corps, according to defence sources. The export of ground sys-



tems for the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile system along with the missiles started last month itself, they said. The Philippines is taking delivery of the missile systems at a time when tensions between Manila and China have escalated owing to frequent clashes in the South China Sea. The three batteries of the BrahMos missile system would be deployed by the Philippines in their coastal areas to guard against any threat in the region. The deal has been cleared with multiple approvals from partner nations in the programme.

The BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, a joint venture between the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Russian Federation's NPO Mashinostroyeniya, is said to be one of the most successful missile programs in the world. Acknowledged as the foremost and swiftest precision-guided weapon on a global scale, BRAHMOS has played a pivotal role in enhancing India's deterrence capabilities. The Indian Army has integrated multiple BrahMos regiments into its arsenal since 2007.

Supreme Court Orders Medical Exam Of Teen Rape Survivor To Abort 28-Week Pregnancy

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday ordered a medical examination of a 14-year-old alleged rape victim who has sought termination of her 28-week pregnancy. A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice J B Pardiwala assembled at around 4:30 pm to hear the matter urgently, after perusing an e-mail sent on behalf of the rape survivor seeking urgent judicial intervention. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati represented the government in the matter. The court sought a report from Mumbai's Sion hospital about the girl's possible physical and psychological condition if she undergoes medical termination of pregnancy or if she is advised against it. The bench said the medical superintendent of the hospital will constitute a medical board and its report be placed before the court on April 22, the next date of the hearing. The matter will be taken up at 10:30 am on Monday.



The Supreme Court was hearing a petition filed by the girl's mother, challenging an order of the Bombay High Court that had declined to allow the termination of pregnancy. The counsel appearing in the court on behalf of the petitioner said the minor is 28 weeks pregnant and is presently in Mumbai. Under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, the upper limit for termination of pregnancy is 24 weeks for married women as well as for those in special categories, including rape survivors, and other vulnerable women, such as the differently-abled and minors.

Andhra Candidate Delays Campaigning, Conducts C-Section On Woman In Danger

■ HT News Network

Hyderabad: Putting her professional oath ahead of a potentially political one, a candidate for the assembly polls in Andhra Pradesh, who is also a doctor, delayed her campaign to help a woman deliver a baby via a caesarean section. Gottipati Lakshmi, the TDP candidate for the Darsi Assembly constituency in Prakasam district, was about to leave to campaign on Thursday when she was informed about a woman who was losing amniotic fluid - which can lead to a miscarriage and also endanger the mother - and had been referred to a hospital in Guntur. Ms Lakshmi, who is from a political family but is making her electoral debut, went to the private hospital where Venkata Ramana from Abbayai Palem in the Kurichedu Mandal of the district was admitted. "The doctors at the private hospital had referred her to Guntur. I went there



and conducted the surgery to save the mother and child," Ms Lakshmi told NDTV. The mother and child are healthy. "I will build a hospital here once the TDP wins," she said. Voting will be held for all 175 Assembly constituencies and 25 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh on May 13. The YSR Congress Party, led by Jagan Mohan Reddy, had swept 151 Assembly seats and 22 Lok Sabha constituencies in 2019. Chandrababu Naidu's TDP had won 23 and three respectively. : Putting her professional oath ahead of

a potentially political one, a candidate for the assembly polls in Andhra Pradesh, who is also a doctor, delayed her campaign to help a woman deliver a baby via a caesarean section. Gottipati Lakshmi, the TDP candidate for the Darsi Assembly constituency in Prakasam district, was about to leave to campaign on Thursday when she was informed about a woman who was losing amniotic fluid - which can lead to a miscarriage and also endanger the mother - and had been referred to a hospital in Guntur.

Supreme Court Adjourns Ramdev's Plea For Clubbing Of Cases To July

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday adjourned for July the hearing of a plea filed by yoga guru Ramdev to club FIRs lodged against him in different states over his alleged remarks that allopathy cannot cure Covid-19. A bench of Justices MM Sundresh and SVN Bhatti granted two weeks' to the states of Bihar and Chhattisgarh to inform it about the status of the first information reports (FIRs) and the chargesheet filed. It also granted Ramdev's counsel liberty to implead the complainants in the case before the top court and posted the matter to July. Ramdev approached the top court seeking protection in criminal FIRs lodged against him in various states over his alleged remarks on efficacy of allopathy in the treatment of Covid-19. The yoga guru's plea sought clubbing of FIRs and the transfer of cases lodged against him to Delhi. The plea also sought a stay on the proceedings in multiple cases lodged against



him and had also sought protection from coercive actions in FIRs lodged by Indian Medical Associations (IMA) Patna and Raipur branches and transfer the FIRs to Delhi. Ramdev has been booked under Sections 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant), 269 (negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life),

504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace) and other provisions of Disaster Management Act, 2005. In a video, Ramdev in 2021 was allegedly heard saying, "Allopathy is a stupid science and medicines such as Remdesivir, Fabiflu, and other drugs approved by the Drugs Controller General of India have failed to treat Covid-19 patients." His remarks caused massive outrage and the IMA sent over a legal notice to him. Police in Chhattisgarh's Raipur had registered an FIR based on a complaint filed by the Raipur's IMA unit against Ramdev for allegedly spreading "false" information about the medicines being used by the medical fraternity for the treatment of Covid-19. As per the complaint, Ramdev has been allegedly propagating false information and his threatening statements on social media against medicines being used by the medical fraternity, Government of India, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and other frontline organisations in the treatment of Covid-19.

"Bengal Is New Bihar": BJP Leader's Big Remark On 1st Phase Poll Violence

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Amid reports of violence from West Bengal on the first day of polling for Lok Sabha election, BJP leader Agnimitra Paul has said "Bengal has turned into Bihar" and alleged that the Trinamool Congress is trying to silence opponents by "threatening or murdering". Three seats in north Bengal are voting in the first phase -- Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar and Cooch Behar. Sporadic incidents of violence were reported in Cooch Behar, where workers of the BJP and Trinamool clashed. Both sides have filed scores of complaints relating to violence and voter intimidation. A senior polling officer, however, said they have received some complaints, but they got no reports of violence, reported news agency PTI. At 3 pm, eight hours after voting began, the seats had recorded 66.3 turnout. All three Bengal seats polling today are reserved -- Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri for Scheduled Castes and Alipurduar for Scheduled Tribes. Among the high-profile candidates is Union Minister Nisith Pramanik, contesting for BJP in Cooch Behar. In a video statement shared by PTI, Ms Paul said, "A few years back we used to see such things in Bihar, but Bengal has turned into new Bihar, new Kashmir. Booth president is being kidnapped. Booth rigging is being done. Opponents have to be silenced... either by threatening or murdering... this is Mamata Banerjee's politics in West Bengal." Ms Paul, MLA from Asansol South, is contesting the Lok Sabha polls as BJP's candidate in Medinipur. Ms Paul's remark is a part of the political



blame game that has started in the wake of the violence. "The BJP, along with central forces, has unleashed a reign of terror to rig the elections. Our workers are being harassed and beaten," north Bengal Development minister and Trinamool leader Udayan Guha told PTI. The BJP denied the allegations and claimed that they were targeted in many areas. "The TMC, sensing defeat, is trying to intimidate voters. BJP workers have been assaulted in various areas. Whenever Udayan Guha goes, he provokes people to indulge in violence. In many places, even mediapersons have been assaulted," Mr Pramanik told the media. In a social media post, Union Home Minister Amit Shah has urged voters to vote to "prevent infiltration and corruption". "Voting for the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections is ongoing in West Bengal today. I appeal to the people to vote for a government that will ensure poverty alleviation schemes at the grassroots level, prevent infiltration and corruption,

Security Personnel, 28, On Poll Duty In Mizoram Dies Of Cardiac Arrest

■ HT News Network

Aizawl: A 28-year-old security personnel on election duty in Mizoram died due to cardiac arrest on Friday, officials said. Lalrinpuia, who was in the second Indian Reserve Battalion (IRBn), was found dead on Friday morning at Vangchhia polling station in Champhai district when other security personnel tried to wake him up, they said. He died due to cardiac arrest around 4.45 am, the officials said. His body was sent to his native Kawlkulh village in Khawzawl district after an autopsy at Champhai district hospital, they said. Champhai Deputy Commissioner and District Election Officer James Lalrinchhana and Champhai Superintendent of Police (SP) Vineet Kumar were present during the send-off ceremony. James expressed his condolences to the family of the personnel and said that state Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Madhup Vyas was informed about the incident.

IndiGo Plans Delhi-Gurugram Electric Air Taxis By 2026. Travel Time: 7 Mins

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: InterGlobe Enterprises, the parent company of IndiGo, and US-based Archer Aviation will launch an all-electric air taxi service in India in 2026, that will carry passengers from Connaught Place in the national capital to Gurugram in Haryana in just 7 minutes. Archer Aviation will supply 200 electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft that can carry four passengers besides a pilot and operate just like helicopters but with lesser noise and better safety. The 200 planes, each having 12 rotors, will cost around USD 1 billion. Besides Delhi, the joint venture between InterGlobe and Archer Aviation will launch similar services in Mumbai and Bengaluru to start with. The cost of the seven-minute flight operated with the company's five-seater eVTOL (electric vertical takeoff and landing) aircraft.

Tehran signals no retaliation against Israel after drones attack Iran

■ HT News Network

Explosions echoed the Iranian city of Isfahan on Friday in what sources described as an Israeli attack, but Tehran played down the incident and indicated it had no plans for retaliation — a response that appeared gauged towards averting region-wide war.

Israel had previously warned it would hit back after Iran fired hundreds of missiles and drones at Israel almost a week ago, in retaliation for a deadly strike — which Tehran blamed on its foe — that levelled Iran's consular annex at its embassy in Syria.

While most of the Iranian strikes were intercepted, fears of a major regional spillover from Israel's Gaza offensive have since soared.

US media says Israel carried out retaliatory strikes on Iran; Iranian media denies reports country attacked from abroad

Blinken says US not involved in 'any offensive operations' amid reports of Washington being pre-notified of reported strike

Global calls, including from G7, for de-escalation pour in Syria says Israeli army targeted army position in



country's south

The limited scale of the attack and Iran's muted response both appeared to signal a successful effort by worldwide diplomats who have been working round the clock to avert all-out war since the Iranian move last weekend.

Iranian media and officials described a small number of explosions, which they said resulted from Iran's air defences hitting three drones over the city of Isfahan. Notably, they referred to the incident as an attack by "infiltrators", rather than by Israel, obviating the need

for retaliation.

A senior Iranian official told Reuters there were no plans to respond against Israel for the incident.

"The foreign source of the incident has not been confirmed. We have not received any external attack, and the discussion leans more towards infiltration than attack," the official said.

Jonathan Lord, head of the Middle East security program at the Center for a New American Security, a US think tank, said Iran's response "seems to indicate that Iran is seeking to step down off the ledge, minimise the impact of the attack, and perhaps walk back down the escalation ladder from here".

Israel said nothing about the incident. It had said for days it was planning to retaliate against Iran for Saturday's strikes, the first direct attack on Israel by Iran in decades of shadow war waged by proxies which has escalated throughout the Middle East during six months of battle in Gaza.

The two longstanding foes had been heading towards direct confrontation since a presumed Israeli airstrike on April 1 that destroyed a building in Iran's embassy compound in Damascus and killed several Iranian officers including a top general.

Apple Removes WhatsApp, Threads From Its App Store In China

■ HT News Network

Apple has removed the Meta-owned WhatsApp and Threads from its App Store in China following an order from the country's top internet regulator, Bloomberg reported Friday citing the tech giant.

Beijing engages in some of the world's most extensive internet censorship, with web users in mainland China unable to access everything from Google to many foreign apps without using a virtual private network.

"We are obligated to follow the laws in the countries where we operate, even when we disagree," said Apple in a statement, according to Bloomberg.

"The Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) ordered the removal of these apps from the China storefront based on their national security concerns," said Apple, referring to China's internet regulator.

"These apps remain available for download on all other storefronts where they appear."

A Meta spokesperson referred AFP to Apple, which did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The CAC and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology -- another top Chinese internet regulatory body -- also did not immediately respond.

China is a key market for Apple, which last year topped the country's smartphone market for the first time.

But thorny issues of censorship and national security have long hounded the US-based firm's operations in China as Beijing and Washington engage in a fierce battle for technological supremacy.

In January, China said it had cracked Apple's encrypted AirDrop communication service, which had once given protesters a vital channel for sharing information during the major 2019 pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong.

One Mistake Could Lead To The Unthinkable In Middle East: UN Chief

■ HT News Network

United Nations: More than six months of Israel's military offensive in Gaza has turned the Palestinian territory into a "humanitarian hellscape," UN chief Antonio Guterres said Thursday, also warning that one wrong move could see the Middle East devolve into wider war. World powers have been watching nervously since Israel vowed to retaliate against Iran for its unprecedented weekend assault on its arch-enemy, with fears soaring that escalating tit-for-tat attacks could push the region towards broader conflict.

Israel's top ally and military supplier, the United States, and Britain unveiled sweeping sanctions against Iran's military drone programme as governments kept up calls for restraint from all sides. In the latest in a series of threats between the two foes, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian warned that Tehran would make Israel "regret" any attack on the Islamic republic. While the world's attention has been focused on the Iran tensions, Israel has continued carrying out its offensive on besieged Gaza.

The Israeli army said it had bombed dozens of targets in the territory on Thursday, as Qatar said efforts to broker a truce had stalled. "The Middle East is on a precipice," the UN's Guterres said. "One miscalculation, one miscommunication, one mistake, could lead to the unthinkable -- a full-scale regional conflict that would be devastating for all involved." The UN chief again called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, calling for Israel to do more to allow aid into the territory. "In Gaza, six and a half months of Israeli military operations have created a humanitarian hellscape," Guterres told the UN Security Council. His speech came hours before the Security Council is expected to vote on a Palestinian bid for full UN membership. However the bid is expected to fail, as the veto-wielding US has voiced its opposition.

US Aid For Ukraine Won't Change Battlefield Dynamics, Says Kremlin

■ HT News Network

Moscow: Russia said Thursday that fresh US aid for Ukraine will not change the dynamics on the battlefield, as Washington gears up for a crucial weekend vote on long-stalled military funding for Kyiv.

US House Speaker Mike Johnson said Wednesday he would advance a \$61 billion package of funding for Ukraine, stalled since last year amid political infighting in the Republican Party.

Ukraine has struggled on the battlefield for months, outgunned and outnumbered by Russian forces amid a shortage of Western military aid.

The Kremlin said Thursday it was not bothered by the prospect of a fresh injection of Western arms.

"It won't in any way influence the development of the situation on the front," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters Thursday.

"All experts now assert that the situation on the front is very unfavourable for the Ukrainian side. Therefore it will not be able to change anything," he said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said the months-long delay has cost Ukraine lives and territory.

Kyiv is dependent on Western funding to stave off the Russian offensive.

Washington has been Kyiv's most important military backer throughout the conflict, now in its third year.

The lack of fresh funding has become increasingly critical, with Ukrainian leaders urging support on an almost daily basis.

Kenya mourns defence chief killed in helicopter crash

■ HT News Network

Kenya began three days of mourning on Friday after its defence chief and nine other senior officers were killed in a helicopter crash, the latest military accident involving a high-profile figure.

General Francis Omondi Ogolla, the Chief of the Kenya Defence Forces (CDF), was killed when his helicopter went down shortly after takeoff in a remote forested area of northwestern Kenya on Thursday.

"A distinguished four-star general has fallen in the course of duty and service of the country," President William Ruto said as he announced the deaths that evening.

He said the nation would observe three days of mourning from Friday, with the national flag flying at half-mast across the country and at Kenyan missions abroad.

Ogolla's family announced that a funeral would be held on Sunday at his home in Siaya County in the west of the country, followed by a memorial service in a Nairobi suburb on April 26.

"Final salute" was the front-page headline in the leading Daily Nation newspaper, while The Standard wrote: "General's tragic last moments".



The bodies of the victims, draped in Kenyan flags, were returned to a military base in Nairobi on an air force plane late on Thursday.

'Trying to keep Kenya safe'

Ogolla, a trained fighter pilot, had been promoted to the role by Ruto just a year ago and was about to mark 40 years of military service.

He had been visiting troops deployed in Operation Maliza Uhalifu (Operation End Crime in Swahili) in the North Rift region, where insecurity caused by armed bandits and cattle rustlers is rife.

Ruto said the Air Force had dispatched an investigation team to establish the cause of the crash that involved a "Huey" helicopter.

Bombs rain on Rafah as US tries to 'prevent' all-out offensive

■ HT News Network

RAFAH / UNITED NATIONS: Birds sang and planes rumbled overhead as Abdeljabbar al-Arja dug the remains of his dead neighbours from the rubble in Gaza.

An overnight Israeli strike hit the home where a displaced Palestinian family was sheltering in the southern city Rafah, relatives and neighbours told AFP as they scraped at the soil with their hands.

"We retrieved the remains of children and women, finding arms and feet. They were all torn to pieces. This is horrifying, it's not normal," Al-Arja said, adding that at least 10 people were killed in the blast.

Soon after the war began on October 7, Israel told Palestinians living in the north of Gaza to move to "safe zones" in the territory's south like Rafah. Guterres warns against 'full-scale regional conflict'; Washington expected to veto Palestinian bid for UN membership But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has since vowed to invade the city, where around 1.5 million people live in shelters, more than half the territory's population. "How is Rafah a safe place?" said Zeyad Ayyad, a relative of the victims. In a separate strike on a house in Rafah's Al-Salam neighbourhood overnight



on Tuesday, rescue crews recovered the corpses of eight family members including five children and two women, Gaza's civil defence service said. Meanwhile, senior US and Israeli officials held a virtual meeting on Thursday expected to include a discussion of both Israel's plans for the southern Gaza city of Rafah and its consideration of a retaliatory strike against Iran. President Joe Biden has urged Israel not to conduct a large-scale offensive in Rafah to avoid more Palestinian civilian casualties in Gaza, where Palestinian health authorities say more than 33,000 people have been killed in Israel's assault.

'Brink of disaster' At the United Nations, Secretary General Antonio Guterres painted a dark picture of the situation in the Middle East, warning that spiraling

US, Pakistan discuss 'recent events in region'

■ HT News Network

ISLAMABAD / WASHINGTON: The United States on Thursday reached out to Pakistan regarding escalating conflict between Tehran and Tel Aviv, even as Islamabad stayed away from condemning the Iranian attack on Israel. "US Ambassador Donald Blome met today with Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar to discuss recent events in the region," the US Embassy said in a statement.

FM Dar said he discussed "various aspects of Pakistan-US relations and recent global and regional developments" with Amb Blome without clearly saying what message the envoy had conveyed.

This was the first time that the US has publicly contacted Islamabad on the issue, since Israel hit the Iranian consulate in Damascus, killing a number of its senior commanders deployed there, and the subsequent Iranian retaliatory drone and missile strikes against Israel.

The meeting, moreover, comes ahead of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's upcoming three-day visit to Islamabad, due to start from Monday. Interestingly, while Amb Blome was meeting with FM Dar, Iranian envoy Reza Amir-Moghaddam was also at the Foreign Office to discuss the details of President Raisi's upcoming visit.

Tesla Asks Shareholders To Reapprove \$56 Billion Pay Deal For Elon Musk

■ HT News Network

New York: Electric vehicle maker Tesla will ask its shareholders to vote again on a \$56 billion compensation package they had approved in 2018 for CEO Elon Musk before it was squashed by a US court earlier this year.

In a filing with federal regulators on Wednesday, Tesla Chair Robyn Denholm said the board of directors stood by the original package and argued that the company's "entrepreneurial spirit" had always been one of "big risks for the chance of big rewards."

Musk's payout -- worth as much as \$55.8 billion in 2018 -- was voided in January by a Delaware court, rul-



expressed the board's continued opposition to the court ruling, insisting it was not how corporate law "should or does" work.

"Elon has not been paid for any of his work for Tesla for the past six years that has helped to generate significant growth and stockholder value," she wrote.

"That strikes us -- and the many stockholders from whom we already have heard -- as fundamentally unfair, and inconsistent with the will of the stockholders who voted for it."

In a second proposal ahead of the June 13 shareholder meeting, the carmaker asked shareholders to support moving the company's state of incorporation from Delaware to Texas, which "is Tesla's home," Denholm said in the filing.

Dubai continues to reel from storm damages

■ HT News Network

DUBAI: Dubai, a city in the desert proud of its futuristic gloss, was on Thursday busy clearing its waterlogged roads and drying out flooded homes two days after a record storm saw a year's rain fall in a day.

Dubai International Airport, a major travel hub, struggled to clear a backlog of flights and many roads were still flooded in the aftermath of Tuesday's deluge.

The rains were the heaviest experienced by the United Arab Emirates in the 75 years that records have been kept. They brought much of the country to a standstill and caused significant damage.

Flooding trapped residents in traffic, offices and homes. Many reported leaks at their homes, while footage circulated on social media showed malls overrun with water pouring from roofs.

Airport struggles to clear backlog of flights, many roads



still flooded Traffic remained heavily disrupted. A highway through Dubai was reduced to a single lane in one direction, while the main road that connects Dubai with the capital Abu Dhabi was closed in the Abu Dhabi direc-

tion.

"This was like nothing else. It was like an alien invasion," Jonathan Richards, a Dubai resident from Britain, told Reuters.

"I woke up the other morning to people in kayaks with pet dogs, pet cats, suitcases all outside my house."

Another resident, Rinku Makhecha, said the rain swamped her freshly renovated house she moved into two weeks ago. "My entire living room is just like ... all my furniture is floating right now," she said.

In Dubai's streets, some vehicles, including buses, could be seen almost entirely submerged in water. Long queues formed at petrol stations.

Dubai airport had yet to resume normal operation after the storm flooded taxiways, forcing flight diversions, delays and cancellations.

Dubai Airports Chief Operating Officer Majed Al Joker told Al Arabiya TV he expected Dubai International Airport to reach 60-70 per cent capacity by the end of

Mediterranean diet tied to lower hypertension risk, 20 years' worth of data show

Having hypertension (high blood pressure) can lead to a number of health issues.

While diets can reduce the risk of developing hypertension, there is a question of what role specific diets play in the long term.

Researchers from Greece recently published a study evaluating people's adherence to the Mediterranean diet over a 20-year period.

They found that people who consistently followed a Mediterranean diet had a lower risk of hypertension than those who did not.

Many factors can contribute to developing hypertension Trusted Source, including following an unhealthy diet.

Some recommendations the American Heart Association Trusted Source makes for a healthier diet include consuming whole grains, a variety of fruits and vegetables, and incorporating healthy proteins.

Recently, researchers in Greece decided to take a closer look at the cardiovascular benefits of the Mediterranean diet, since many of its features line up with these heart-healthy guidelines.

Looking at data spanning 20 years, the researchers found that people who consistently followed a Mediterranean-style diet had a lower risk of developing hypertension (high blood pressure) than those with the lowest adherence to the diet. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Trusted Source, hypertension affects nearly half of all adults in the United States.

It occurs when someone's blood pressure is 130/80 millimeters of mercury (mm Hg) or higher. When left untreated Trusted Source, hypertension can lead



to heart disease, stroke, and even kidney disease.

Some ways in which people can reduce or manage hypertension include making lifestyle changes, such as adjusting their diets and exercising more. Doctors often prescribe medications such as ACE inhibitors and beta-blockers to treat hypertension.

With dietary changes in mind, some diets — such as the Mediterranean diet — focus on consuming more plant-based foods. The Mediterranean diet promotes eating vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, whole grains, legumes, healthy oils, and moderate amounts of fish and seafood.

While the hallmarks of the diet should lead to a reduction in hypertension, up to now there have been no long-term studies on this subject.

This led researchers from the School of Health Sciences and Education at Haro-

kopio University of Athens, in Greece, to conduct a study that lasted 20 years to see what benefits adhering to the Mediterranean diet can have.

The study began in 2002 and lasted through 2022. The researchers invited 4,056 people living in Greece to participate, and of that group, 3,042 signed up.

The average age of the participants at the beginning of the study was 41 years, with men making up 44% of the group and women making up 56%. One of the requirements for participating was that participants could not be hypertensive at the beginning of the study.

The researchers collected a variety of information on the participants at the beginning of the study. They made sure the participants did not have cardiovascular disease, checked glucose and cholesterol levels, checked their body weight and blood pressure, and conducted an

interview to gauge their dietary and lifestyle habits.

To see how well the participants followed aspects of the Mediterranean diet at the beginning of the study, they assigned them a MedDietScore, scoring positively based on consuming the following food groups:

- fruits
- vegetables
- whole grains
- potatoes
- legumes
- fish
- olive oil.

The participants received points based on these food groups. Higher scores indicated better adherence to the diet. Participants could lose points for consuming “non-Mediterranean” foods or food groups, including full-fat dairy products, poultry, and red meat.

Over the next 20 years, the researchers followed up with the participants to assess their MedDietScore, check their vitals, and look for the development of hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. The researchers included 1,415 participants in their final sample. They found that participants who closely followed the Mediterranean diet had the lowest risk of developing hypertension.

Participants in the group who had the lowest MedDietScore — and therefore did more poorly at adhering to the diet — had hypertension rates of 35.5% at the end of the study. The middle group had a hypertension rate of 22.5%.

NEWS

Health Benefits Of Avoiding Sugar Completely



Avoiding sugar completely can have several health benefits, as excessive sugar intake has been linked to various health issues. In this article, we outline some of the benefits one might achieve from avoiding sugar completely.

1. Weight management

Sugar is high in calories but low in nutrients, leading to excessive calorie intake without providing satiety. By cutting out sugar, you can reduce overall calorie consumption, making it easier to achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

2. Reduced risk of obesity

Excessive sugar consumption is strongly linked to obesity, as it contributes to increased fat storage, particularly visceral fat around organs. Cutting out sugar can help prevent weight gain and reduce the risk of obesity-related health problems.

3. Improved blood sugar control

High sugar intake can lead to spikes and crashes in blood sugar levels, increasing the risk of insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes. Avoiding sugar helps stabilise blood sugar levels, reducing the risk of insulin resistance and promoting better glycemic control.

4. Lower risk of heart disease

Excessive sugar intake has been associated with an increased risk of heart disease, including elevated triglycerides, LDL cholesterol, and blood pressure. By avoiding sugar, you can improve lipid profiles and reduce cardiovascular risk factors.

5. Better dental health

Sugar is a primary contributor to tooth decay and cavities, as it feeds harmful bacteria in the mouth that produce acid. Cutting out sugar reduces the risk of dental caries and promotes better oral hygiene, leading to healthier teeth and gums.

6. Improved skin health

High sugar intake can contribute to skin issues such as acne, inflammation, and premature aging. Sugar consumption triggers inflammation and glycation processes, which can damage collagen and elastin fibres in the skin. Avoiding sugar may help improve skin clarity, reduce inflammation, and slow down aging.

7. Enhanced mental clarity

Sugar consumption has been linked to cognitive impairments, including brain fog, poor concentration, and memory issues. By stabilising blood sugar levels and reducing inflammation in the brain,

Are plant-based meat substitutes really better for the heart than meat options?

As plant-based meat substitutes gain popularity, researchers in Singapore have conducted a study comparing their effects on health to those of traditional meats, with a specific focus on heart health and diabetes risk.

The research, involving 89 adults at risk for type 2 diabetes, found no significant heart health benefits of plant-based meat diets over those including animal meat, challenging the notion that these alternatives offer the same health advantages as whole plant-based diets.

Highlighting the nutritional differences between plant-based meat analogues and animal meats, the findings suggest a need for the food industry to develop nutritionally enhanced and environmentally sustainable plant-based meat substitutes.

In new research, published in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, scientists looked at how diets containing real meat compare to those using plant-based meat alternatives, especially in terms of cardiovascular health and diabetes risk.

Diets rich in plant-based foods have been found



beneficial for heart and metabolic health, thanks to their wide variety of health-promoting components like vitamins, fibres and antioxidants.

However, for those who regularly eat meat, switching to such diets can be challenging due to deep-seated cultural, historical, and social influences on meat consumption, as well as socioeconomic factors.

Plant-based meat analogues (PBMA) are designed

to mimic the taste and texture of real meat using sustainable ingredients and are becoming increasingly popular worldwide.

Health impact of plant-based meat analogues

This new research focused on comparing the effects of diets based on plant-based meat analogues (PBMA) and traditional animal-based meats (ABMs) on the heart health of Singaporeans at a higher risk for type 2 diabetes.

The main question was whether replacing animal meat with PBMA would improve heart health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

In this 8-week study involving 89 participants, half were asked to eat PBMA, and the other half ate animal meats. The researchers looked at levels of bad cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure, among other health indicators.

The findings showed no significant changes in cholesterol profiles for either diet, but both diets were linked to improvements in some blood sugar markers.

There was no clear advantage of one diet over the other in improving heart health.

Seeing Clearly At Every Age: Eye Health Tips For Women In Their 20's 30's, 40's

While many women experience most of their visual acuity in their 20s, this is also a crucial period to start good practices that will protect their eyes over time. Even if eyesight appears great, routine eye exams are necessary because they might identify early indications of disorders like astigmatism, hyperopia, or nearsightedness. In addition, protecting the eyes from damaging UV rays and lowering the chance of cataracts and other UV-related eye issues in later life can be achieved by wearing sunglasses with UV protection outside.

Dr. Avani Sapovadia, Cornea & Refractive consultant at Netrad Deep Maxivision eye hospital, Rajkot shares some eye health tips for every age group women for clear visibility.

Women approaching their 30s may experience mild changes in their vision, such as presbyopia, characterized by difficulties focusing up close. Prescription eyeglasses or contact lenses made especially for close vision tasks can help with this age-related decline in the eye's accommodating capacity. Additionally, keeping appropriate ergonomics and taking regular breaks from screens are two ways that practicing good digital hygiene can help reduce eye strain that comes with using a computer or smartphone for extended periods.

Hormonal changes related to



perimenopause and menopause, which affect many women in their 40s, can affect eye health. Hormone changes during this period increase the prevalence of dry eye syndrome, which causes symptoms like irritation, dryness, and impaired vision. The health of the ocular surface can be preserved and discomfort can be reduced by using artificial tears or lubricating eye drops. Furthermore, as they age, women in their 40s should be especially aware of the importance of getting frequent eye exams to check for symptoms of age-related disorders such as glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Apart from taking age-specific factors into account, women across the board can gain from leading a

healthy lifestyle that promotes general eye health. Maintaining eye health and lowering the risk of diseases like cataracts and AMD can be achieved by eating a balanced diet high in vitamins, antioxidants, and omega-3 fatty acids. Other crucial elements in maintaining good vision and preventing vision loss include abstaining from smoking and excessive alcohol use, controlling chronic health disorders like diabetes and hypertension, and maintaining a healthy weight.

Women may protect their eye health and guarantee healthy vision at any age by taking preventive measures in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. Women can live with the best possible visual acuity and ocular comfort for the duration of their lives.

Heat Stroke In Summer: Symptoms, How To Prevent

With summer in full blast and mercury levels soaring across the country, the dangers of heat stroke continue to rise. As Dr Mukesh Mehra, Director, Internal Medicine, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Patparganj, points out, "Due to prolonged exposure to high temperatures and insufficient hydration, sometimes the body's thermoregulatory mechanisms fail, leading to heat stroke. This critical heat-related illness is marked by a body temperature 104°F (40°C) or higher, and if not addressed promptly, it can lead to health risks which can even turn fatal." The doctor points out that it's essential to understand the complex interplay of causes, identify the symptoms, and then take preventive measures accordingly to lower the chances of heat stroke.

Dr Mukesh Mehra points out some heat stroke symptoms and adds that prompt action is key:

1. When the core body temperature is over 104°F (40°C), it means there's hyperthermia - which means the body is unable to dissipate heat.
2. Heat stroke can cause the central nervous system to malfunction. You can see a changed mental status which can include confusion, delirium, irritation to even coma. These stem from thermal injury to the



brain.

3. One can suffer from hot, flushed, and dry skin. There might be no sweating as evaporative cooling stops.

4. Heat stroke can put a strain on your cardiovascular health. It can lead to rapid heart rate or Tachycardia as the heart works to maintain circulation as metabolic demand increases.

5. Due to central nervous system perturbations, one can experience neurological disturbances like headache, dizziness, and in severe cases, seizures.

6. As the body redirects blood flow from the gastrointestinal tract to vital organs, there can be gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, and diarrhoea.

1. Stay Hydrated: Ensure that there is adequate fluid intake so that there is evaporative cooling. This way, you can prevent dehydration-related thermal strain.

2. Manage Your Environment: Limit exposure to the sun during peak heat hours, seek shade, and opt for cooling aids like fans or air conditioning.

3. Pick The Right Clothes: Wear clothes made of lightweight, breathable fabric that allows heat dissipation and lets you perspire.

4. Acclimatise: Let your body adapt slowly to hot environments through progressive exposure.

5. Take Breaks: Regular breaks are a must especially when you are performing strenuous activities to prevent excessive heat accumulation.

India Need To Make An Effort To Invest In Mayank Yadav

Special Talents Need Additional Resources To Get The Most Out Of Them

NEW DELHI: Everybody agrees that Mayank Yadav is a special talent. It's very rare to have someone who can consistently bowl around 145kph and go up to the mid-150s. Mayank's got something that you can't buy: pace and control.

But he also has an injury history, and in this he is not unique. We have seen a number of Indian fast-bowling talents break down. Rohit Sharma, I remember, had expressed his frustration about bowlers picking up injuries frequently. Mayank's body needs management and it needs great strengthening. How do we ensure his talent gets the chance to blossom fully?

I am a big American sports fan and I particularly follow the NBA, where the top players invest, or have others invest, in themselves to the tune of millions of dollars, in terms of having support staff and systems. Tennis players, too, do the same. I believe it is time for cricket to go that way - for the top franchises and national teams to preserve special talents like Mayank and support their growth.

Pat Cummins is a very good example of someone who came in as a teenager, found that the stresses of the game were too much for his particular technique and his body. He had to come out, rehabilitate, make himself different technically, and come back a few years later. And as we've found out, Cummins has managed to build an exceptional career, where he has developed into one of the best fast bowlers and captains.

It would be a good idea for Mayank at the start of his career to have the inputs Cummins found he required. Whether it's Lucknow Super Giants, Mayank's IPL team, or the BCCI, they can



undertake a project - not an experiment, mind you - to say, "This guy is a diamond. Let us see if we can allocate some sort of funding and see where this goes."

Give him a personal strength-and-conditioning trainer for, say, a year. Attach that person to him, not just have the player fly somewhere every six weeks for those resources. Maybe have another medical person on the panel as well. And perhaps a dietician too. Build him up.

You don't have to tell a guy what to do right. But I can tell a guy what not to do because I have made the same mistake. I can tell him what to do to avoid that. We don't have to leave a lot of these things up to players finding out through trial and error

Mayank will still be playing cricket through this, to be clear; just that this person is attached to him. See how that pans out after a year. You have got the resources for an effort like this.

Whether in the future Mayank plays a lot of red-ball cricket, whether he plays all formats, or whether you keep him as a white-ball option, you will be able to know after a year or two. So it is a worthwhile project, not only for India and LSG, but for the world game. This young kid, who is 21 now, by the time he's 23 or 24, when his body has matured, he can give you almost a decade of excellent fast bowling. That's one thing I'd like to see happen.

Alongside the physical development, it is also imperative that

young fast bowlers like Mayank get to hear the right voices. I came through at a time when the great Malcolm Marshall was around. While I thought Marshall was one of the greatest tactical fast bowlers that I interacted with, I could only talk with him when we were on the field together or when we were in the dressing room together. Had I been able to access his insights more often, and while I was younger, it would have expedited my learning curve. I have no doubt about that.

So I get a little frustrated that icons like, say, Jasprit Bumrah, are not made to interact frequently with young fast men. When we hear Bumrah speak, we know that he understands the game. He's clear in his thinking and he's

a great communicator. For the next generation, the Under-19 guys, and even for those who are playing alongside him, you could organise some formal Zoom meetings and have him share his wisdom with them. Bumrah doesn't have to fly everywhere; just utilise technology.

Let him talk through formal bowling plans, preparation, what he would do in certain situations. Let him talk through variations in pace and lengths, and how he sees the game. Expedite that learning curve. It doesn't have to be something that happens every month - half-yearly or quarter-yearly should work. And I can tell you that won't hurt anyone.

It's like going to university, where you have guys who have been there and have done it before. MS Dhoni is a similar example. Excellent captain. If you want to bring in your next generation of leaders, why not tap into his expertise? I'm not saying that these two gentlemen are the only people to talk to, but you get the drift.

I picked up something always from talking to Wasim Akram when Derbyshire played Lancashire at Old Trafford. I picked up a lot from Marshall, as I said. Michael Holding, when I met him briefly early in my career, gave me something that I had to sift through and that I could hold on to. You can give players a lot of inputs without overloading them with too many different opinions. This is like a university of fast bowling. Why not formalise it?

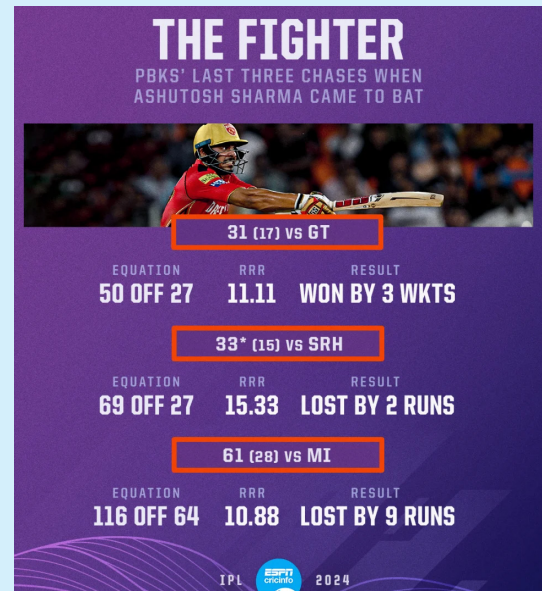
Kartik Tyagi might run into Bumrah after an IPL match and he might stand and talk to him for five minutes. We could do more than that. I thought Tyagi was someone who could have pushed on, but he has had injuries.

Sixy Ashutosh Sharma Is Making Up For Lost Time

MUMBAI: Ashutosh Sharma is a six-hitting machine. In 18 T20 innings, he has clubbed 43 sixes; that's an average of 2.38 sixes per game. He hit seven of these on Thursday to revive Punjab Kings' floundering chase of 193 and put them on the brink of an unlikely win against Mumbai Indians.

But it was that one six off the penultimate ball of the 13th over against Jasprit Bumrah which is likely to linger in his - and the people's - consciousness for a while though his blitz ended in vain.

Sure, it was a free-hit, but this was against Bumrah - the leading wicket-taker in IPL 2024, going at an economy rate of under six this season. Before this, Bumrah had conceded just two sixes in the tournament. But Ashutosh wasn't going to let an opportunity pass. He anticipated the yorker, went low and across his off stump, down on one knee and



swept Bumrah over deep backward square-leg.

No wonder Ashutosh was smiling ear to ear as he walked across to his partner and bumped fists with a little jump and child-like enthusiasm. "That was a dream to sweep Bumrah for a six and it came off today. I have been practising these shots, and I played it against the best bowler in the world," Ashutosh said after the game.

Ashutosh has batted four times in IPL 2024 and each time walked in with Kings in trouble. On debut against Gujarat Titans, he came in with the required rate at 11.11 (50 off 27), and took Kings to an unlikely win with an unbeaten 15-ball 33. In his next game, the required rate was 15.33 (69 off 27) when he arrived. Kings lost by two runs.

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