

Maximum: 7º Minmum : -6° Humidity:75%

Today 05:27 PM SUNRISE





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P4 WORLD

**ROUHANI: FATE AWAITING TRUMP** NO BETTER THAN SADDAM HUSSEIN'S

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has drawn a parallel between the hostile policies of outgoing US President Donald Trump ...

SRINAGAR: The People's Alliance for

Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) swept

the maiden District Development

Council (DDC) polls by winning 110

seats, while the BJP emerged as the

single largest party by getting 75

seats after securing the largest vote

share in Jammu and Kashmir, offi-

The results of two constituencies -

one each in Bandipora and Kupwara dis-

tricts of north Kashmir - are still awaited

as counting of votes has been deferred

DDC constituencies - 14 each in 20

districts - started on Tuesday morning

after the peaceful culmination of the

eight-phase election from November

28 to December 19. This was the first

democratic exercise in Jammu and

Kashmir post abrogation of Article

370 and bifurcation of the erstwhile

have been declared by the I-K Election

Commission so far, besides the PAGD

and the BJP, Independent candidates

have won 50, Congress 26, Apni Party

12, PDF and the National Panthers Party

Two women from Pakistan-

controlled Kashmir, who are mar-

ried to former militants from the

Valley, are among the contestants

from the Dragmulla constituency in

Kupwara and Haiin-A in Bandipora

and the state Election More On P8

two each and the BSP one.

Out of the 278 seats for which results

state into union territories last year.

The counting of votes for the 280

there till further orders, they said.

cials said on Wednesday.



The Ordinace law in the first place owes its existence to a hypothetical and bogus term of 'Love-Jihad'



P12 OBSERVER OUTPOST REPUBLIC TV CHANNEL FINED

Britain's communications regulator Ofcom imposed a £20,000 (US\$26,720) fine Tuesday on an Indian TV station for a program ...

FOR HATE SPEECH VS PAKISTANIS



**Cold Wave** 

Kashmir

tures on Wednesday.

partment official said.

Christmas Day.

most places.

**Intensifies In** 

SRINAGAR: Cold condition in-

tensified in Kashmir with most parts of the valley witnessing a

dip in their minimum tempera-

The weather has remained dry and cold across Kashmir since it

snowed on December 12, with

the night temperature staying several degrees below the freezing point, a meteorological de-

The weather department has

forecast that the cold and dry

weather would continue till

under sub-zero night tempera-

tures on Wednesday as well.

even though there was a slight

improvement in the mercury at

Srinagar -- the summer capi-

tal of Jammu and Kashmir -- re-

corded a low of minus 5 degrees

Celsius, slightly up from the pre-

vious night's minus 5.2 degrees

The mercury in Pahalgam in

south Kashmir went down from

the previous night's low of mi-

nus 5.8 degrees Celsius to settle

at minus 6.6 degrees Celsius, of-

The Valley continued to reel

Contact: -0194-2502327



motion of heavenly bodies but not the madness of people." — Isaac Newton



#### **PAGD Candidate's Cavalcade Attacked**

SRINAGAR: A female worker of a DDC candidate, who won from Baramulla block constituency, 'sustained injuries' after her cavalcade came under stonepelting in Hudpora locality of Baramulla district on Wednes-

The successful PAGD candidate Qurat-ul-Ain Bashir from PDP was approaching towards her native village along her workers when her cavalcade was pelted with stones near Hudpora area in the district, news agency GNS reported.

In the incident, some vehicles got damaged even as a female worker (name withheld) also sustained injuries. She was removed to hospital for treat-

Meanwhile, police has filed + a case in this regard, the report

#### **MCA Student Goes** Missing In Baramulla

**BARAMULLA:** Family members of a 24-year-old youth, who has gone missing since 20 December, have urged their son to return home and appealed to the government to help them in

Sagib Ashraf from Fatehgarh here, went missing on December 20, while he was returning from Kashmir University, news agency KNO reported. After coming to know that Saqib has not returned home, the report said, his father tried his mobile number. However, his phone was switched off.

Unable to make any contact with their son, an anxious family started searching in the neighborhood.

Sagib's family has also registered a missing report of their son in the police station Sheeri.

#### **Congress Leader Madan Lal Sharma Dies**

**JAMMU:** Veteran Congress leader and former minister Madan Lal Sharma passed away at a private hospital in Katra on Wednesday morning.

He was first elected as MLA in 1983 and again in 1987 from Chhamb consitituency on Congress mandate, a party spokesman said.

He became minister in the NC-Congress coalition government in 1988. He was again elected from Akhnoor in 2002 and became a minister in the PDP-Congress government.

Sharma was twice elected to the Lok Sabha from Jammu-Poonch seat in 2004 and 2009. However, he lost the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

#### **Man Held With** Cannabis In Rajouri

JAMMU: A man was arrested with a consignment of five kilograms of cannabis in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district on Wednesday, police said.

Rajouri Senior Superintendent of Police Chandan Kohli said that a team intercepted a car at Darhali bridge and carried out a thorough search of the car.

They recovered 252 rolls of cannabis weighing around five kilograms. He said that the accused Sharaz Ahmed has been arrested and booked in a case.

# Gupkar Alliance Sweeps DDC Polls, Wins 110 Seats

**BJP Emerges Single Largest Party With 75 Seats** 

## **Independents Emerge As Key Players With 50 Seats**



The supporters of a BJP candidate dance to celebrate his victory in DDC polls in Srinagar outskirts on Tuesday. -KO Photo: Abid Bhat

have emerged as big winners in Jammu and Kashmir's maiden **District Development Council** polls, with 50 of them having been declared elected from 278 seats, putting them ahead of parties like the Congress and the PDP.

is Taranjit Singh defeating BJP's

JAMMU: Independent candidates two-time MLA and former minister Sham Lal Choudhary in Suchetgarh in Jammu region by a slender margin of 11 votes.

Though the BJP maintained its supremacy by emerging as the single largest party with 74 seats and is leading in another seat, the defeat of Among the big Independent wins its stalwarts Choudhary and another former minister Shakti More On P8

## **5 Of 7 Ex- Ministers**

JAMMU: Five out of the seven former ministers who contested the DDC election in Jammu and Kashmir have won, while two belonging to the BJP suffered defeats, according to data issued by the state election authority (SEA).

Senior Congress leader and former minister Taj Mohiuddin, who was in the fray for Parenpillan constituency of Uri tehsil in north Kashmir's Baramulla More On P8

#### This Is A Victory For India: Amit Shah

**NEW DELHI:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Wednesday hailed the recent conclusion of the District Development Council (DDC) elections in Jammu and Kashmir and said that the Modi government was doing everything to restore the grassroots democracy in the union territory.

#### Candiddates from PcK

#### **Counting Suspended** On 2 Seats

IAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir State Election Commissioner K K Sharma on Wednesday said the counting of votes in two DDC constituencies has been kept in abeyance to clear doubts over the citizenship of two of the contesting candidates from north Kashmir's Bandipora and Kupwara districts.

Sharma said the counting in rest of the 278 District Development Council (DDC) seats, which started on Tuesday morning, concluded peacefully Wednesday morning.

The counting of votes was deferred in Drugmulla constituency (Kupwara district) and Hajin-A (Bandipora) in view of a question that has arisen on eligibility of one each contesting candidates from the two seats, Sharma told reporters here. Two persons hailing from Pakistan- More On P8

#### ficials said. It was the coldest recorded place in the Valley. They said Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 6 degrees Celsius, slightly down from More On P8

#### 4 CRPF Men, Cop Injured In **Grenade Blast**

SRINAGAR: Four paramilitary CRPF personnel, a policeman and a BDO ranked Rural Development department official were injured on Wednesday in a grenade blast in central Kashmir's Ganderbal

Suspected militants lobbed a grenade towards a joint party CRPF and police at Taw Chowk area of the district on Wednesday afternoon leaving at least six people injured, news agency GNS reported. The injured identified ASI Nitbal Singh, Constable Anand Mal, Manoj Sipahi and Head Constable RN Manojan, all from CRPF's 115 battalion, besides Mohammad Sulemaan, a police head constable and BDO Wakoora, Syed Nasrullah were removed to the hospital for treatment.

According to the report, the condition of one of the injured CRPF men was said to be serious. Soon after the attack, government forces cordoned More On P8

#### **SPO Goes Missing Along With Rifle**

**SRINAGAR:** A Special Police Officer (SPO) has gone missing in South Kashmir's Kulgam district, officials said on Wednesday.

A police officer while confirming the incident said that the SPO, Zakir Hussain Malik (Belt no.967A) son of Mohammad Skinder Malik of Ahgar Yaripora Kulgam is missing along with an AK-47 rifle from Tuesday (December 22). "We are trying to bring him back," the officer said.

## **Loud And Clear Rejection Of August 5 Move: Omar**

Says PAGD Was Formed In 'Very Difficult' Circumstances



**SRINAGAR:** The Centre should listen to the people's voice against the abrogation of Article 370 since it has itself termed the DDC polls as a victory of democracy, National Conference (NC) vice-president Omar Abdullah said on Wednesday.

Addressing party workers at NC headquarters Nawa-i-Subah, he said the people have made clear their view by supporting the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) in the District Development Council polls.

The NC leader also said he does not foresee assembly elections in the union territory anytime soon because of the poll results.

The seven-party PAGD swept the maiden DDC polls by winning 110 seats out of 276 for which results

were declared, while the BJP emerged as the single largest party by getting 74 seats after securing the biggest vote share in Jammu and Kashmir.

If you really say that democracy has won, then you will have to listen to the voices of the people, and the people of Jammu and Kashmir have said it with a huge majority that they do not accept (the decisions of) August 5, 2019, Abdullah said.

The Centre abrogated Article 370 which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcated the erstwhile state into two union territories on August 5 last year.

We also accept it (that democracy has won). When did we say that we do not trust democracy? It is another thing that you do not trust us. We have been saying this from day

one that we will fight for our rights but not unlawfully or unconstitutionally. We are not for disturbing the atmosphere in this state, but to make it better. Abdullah said.

Omar said the results of the DDC elections have proved that the BJP will not be able to "bury" the NC.

The next elections in I-K are very far because of the defeat of the BIP in this election. I do not think they will have the assembly elections here anytime sooner. If they believed in democracy, they would have sounded the bugle of the assembly elections," he said.

Referring to the alliance with other mainstream parties for seeking the restoration of the special status of the erstwhile state, Abdullah said the PAGD was formed in "very difficult" circumstances and "its aim was not power".

He said the party rendered many sacrifices for the alliance and many of his colleagues were not happy with the seat-sharing arrangement.

We could have many more seats had we not contested in the alliance. But, for achieving a bigger goal, small or big sacrifices have to be made It was our duty to keep aside our differences and to come on a single platform for our identity, he said. (PTI)

#### I'm Sher-e-Kashmir's Son, Won't **Bow Betore Anyone: Faroog**



SRINAGAR: National Conference a day after the results of the DDC (NC) president Faroog Abdullah, who is facing an ED probe in connection with the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA) money-laundering case, asserted on Wednesday that he will not bow before anyone.

bow before them. I will only bow my head before my god and no one else. He is my creator. They are try-Addressing party workers at the NC headquarters, Nawa-i-Subah, ing to induce fear,

#### Mehbooba Accuses BJP **Govt Of 'Witch-Hunting'**

Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday accused the Centre of "weaponising" probe agencies such as the NIA, ED and CBI "for political gains", and said the BJP should stop harassing her friends, family and party colleagues. More On P8

# **Govt Gears Up To Meet New Corona Strain Challenge**

#### **OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE**

SRINAGAR: As United Kingdom and several European countries are battling with the rapidly spreading new coronavirus strain, the authorities in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday ordered immediate screening of travellers who have been to London and Europe in the last two weeks, besides creation of separate quarantine facilities for

the travellers and their contacts, in case they test positive.

Chairman District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Srinagar, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary on Wednesday ordered that all those who have travel history to the UK or any European country in the past two weeks - since December 9 – will have to undergo RT-PCR testing for coronavirus, an official spokesperson said.

#### **J&K Reports** 250 New Cases, **3 Corona Deaths**

SRINAGAR: Three more people died of coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday while 250 fresh cases of Covid-19, including 2 minors were detected in the Union Territory during the last 24 hours.

## **ED Raids Houses Of Mehbooba's** Close Aide, Rs 28L Cash Seized

polls were announced, Abdullah,

in an apparent reference to the BJP,

said the saffron party thinks he

will bow before it, but he will not.

"They think Farooq Abdullah will

**NEW DELHI:** The Enforcement "witch hunt" against her. Directorate on Wednesday seized over Rs 28 lakh cash after it raided the premises of Anjum Fazili, a close aide of PDP president Mehbooba Mufti, in a money laundering case linked to althe national capital, they said. leged financial fraud at the J&K Bank,

official sources said. The searches were conducted at the premises of the former party MLA in Srinagar and Delhi.

Mufti, in her reaction, described the central probe agency's action as a

Cash amounting to Rs 21,38,200 was seized from her residence in Srinagar while another Rs 6,62,500 was recovered from her residence in

The total cash seizure stands at just over Rs 28 lakh, the officials said. The central probe agency also re-

covered a dozen fixed deposit receipts worth Rs 67,29,490 during the search-

es at her Srinagar premise. The raids were conducted to gather

more evidence in connection with an investigation linked to alleged fraud at the J& K Bank, they said.

Fazili's role is under the scanner in the case that is being investigated under criminal provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the officials said.

Reacting to the raids, Mufti told PTI: "This is a witch hunt that has been going on for some time. They have been doing this with anyone and everyone who is close to me".





Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm) No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir BAZAR OBSERVER Thursday 24-12-2020

## COVID-19 may trigger endophthalmitis, a rare eye infection that causes vision loss

from the eye. You must also be alert to swelling of the eyelids and you may experience reduced vision.

The COVID-19 virus has the chilling ability to invade different body organs and cause serious damage that can last for years. It can damage your body organs, affect your skin and even cause neurological problems. The damage it causes to your lungs can be permanent. This virus can also affect your eyes and give you conjunctivitis and sore eyes. Now, it has come to light that the novel coronavirus may trigger inflammation of the eyes that can lead to vision loss. Three COVID-19 patients in the US developed keratitis, an inflammation of the cornea. This is serious because this condition can lead to a sightthreatening infection of the tissues or fluids inside the eyeball called endophthalmitis.

Rare Development But It Cannot Be **Ruled Out** 

According to a new study at the Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York, this is a rare development, but it can happen. Having three cases of endophthalmitis in such a short time is exceedingly rare,



and because they were all tied to COVID-19 infection it needed to be investigated, say researchers. They added that the whole point is to alert people of the association, though they cannot say specifically that COVID causes it. However, it cannot be ruled out.

Of the three patients, one died

from COVID-19, another had to have an eye removed "despite heroic efforts to save the eye," and a third lost all sight, said researchers. All the patients were in their 60s and were treated at Northwell Health's Ophthalmology Department. Also, the three patients had underlying health problems that may have made their COVID-19

worse and made them more susceptible to other associated health conditions. The only other eye condition linked to COVID-19 has been conjunctivitis, also called pink eye, which is a minor infection.

Symptoms To Look Out For Endophthalmitis is very rare, but it can be caused by a virus. Acother cases of endophthalmitis linked to COVID-19 patients have also been reported. One of them is in Boston and another in Australia. Usual symptoms of endophthalmitis includes pain, redness and discharge from the eye. You must also be alert to swelling of the eyelids and you may experience reduced vision. If you notice any of these symptoms, consult a doctor immediately. Early treatment of this associated complication can save

But All Keratitis Cases May Not Progress To Endophthalmitis According to researchers, it is unusual for keratitis to progress to endophthalmitis. A 2012 study says that only 27 of around 10,000 eyes over 15 years developed endophthalmitis because keratitis. One expert thinks that because keratitis progressing to endophthalmitis is so rare, it's not possible from these findings to say that the connection between these conditions is anything but coincidental. According to them, while it is possible that the keratitis was related to COVID-19, there are very few reports to suggest this is at all common. They agree that further research is needed to confirm the findings.

#### Office Of The Assistant **Regional Transport Officer** Budgam Kashmir

#### NOTICE

Whereas an application has been recieved from one. Shri: Mohammad Amin Shah S/o: Habibullah Shah R/o: Khag Budgam owner of vehicle bearing

Registration No: JK04D-0273 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S J&K Bank B/U Poshkar Khag.



Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper No. ARTO/BUDGAM.1988

Dated 23/12/2020

Assistant Regional Transport officer **Budgam Kashmir** 

#### Office Of The Assistant **Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir**

**NOTICE** Where a application for transfer of ownership has been recieved from one. Shri: Mohd Ashraf Khanday S/o: Mohd Abdullah Khanday R/o: Chadoora Budgam (Transferor) of



Maruti car. Vehicle bearing registration number JK04 - 1023. Chasis number 108104 EnginOe no. 64754 Model 1997 in favour of

Shri.. Riyaz Ahmad Bhat S/o. Ali Mohd Bhat R/o Noorani Colony Gopalpora Kralpora (Tranferee) Now therefore it is notified for the information

of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer. No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.1822 Dated 11/11/2020

The Jammu And Kashmir State

**Board Of School Education,** 

Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam Kashmir

#### Land ecosystems becoming less efficient at absorbing CO2: Study

esearchers have identified an unsettling trend - as levels of carbon dioxide (CO2) in the atmosphere increase, 86 per cent of land ecosystems globally are becoming progressively less efficient at absorbing; because CO2 is a main 'ingredient' that plants need to grow, elevated concentrations of it cause an increase in photosynthesis, and consequently, plant growth - a phenomenon aptly referred to as the CO2 fertilization effect, or CFE.

CFE is considered a key factor in the response of vegetation to rising atmospheric CO2 as well as an important mechanism for removing this potent greenhouse gas from our atmosphere - but that may be changing.

For a new study published in the journal Science, researchers analyzed multiple field, satellite-derived and model-based datasets to better understand what effect increasing Their findings have important implications for the role plants can be expected to play in offsetting climate change in the years to come. "In this study, by analysing the long-term data from remote sensing and state-of-the-art land-surface models, we have found that since 1982, the global average CFE has decreased steadily from 21 per cent to 12 per cent per 100 ppm of CO2 in the atmosphere," said study author Ben Poulter from NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. "In other words, terrestrial ecosystems are becoming less reliable as a temporary climate change mitigator," Poulter added. Without this feedback between photosynthesis and elevated atmospheric CO2, the researchers said we would have seen climate change occurring at a much more rapid rate.

But scientists have been concerned about how long the CO2 Fertilization Effect could be sustained before other limitations on plant growth kick in. For instance, while an abundance of CO2 won't limit growth, a lack of water, nutrients, or sunlight the other necessary components of photosynthesis -- will.

To determine why the CFE has been decreasing, the study team took the availability of these other elements into account.

"According to our data, what appears to be happening is that there's both a moisture limitation as well as a nutrient limitation coming into play," Poulter said. "In the tropics, there's often just

not enough nitrogen or phosphorus, to sustain photosynthesis, and in the high-latitude temperate and boreal regions, soil moisture is now more limiting than air temperature because of recent warming," Poulter added. In effect, climate change is weakening plants' ability to mitigate further climate change over large areas of the planet.

## Office Of The Chief Medical Officer Anantnag Kashmir

Mr. Faroog Irfan Hakeem S/o Late Mohmmad Ramzan Hakeem R/o Qazibagh Tehsil and District Anantnag

No:-Est/lll/Gen/ 6908-11

Subject:- Final Notice.

4TH FINAL NOTICE

Dated:-21/12/2020

Whereas, Block Medical Officer Bijebhara has reported that, you were posted as Junior Pharmacist at Sub Centre Panchpora Block Bijebhara and you restored to un-authorized absence from your legitimate duties w.e.f 05.08.2019. Whereas, an explanation was served to you by the BMO concerned vide No: Est/BMO/Bii/619 Dated:-14.08.2019 and no respond

was shown from you and an another explanation was served by the BMO concerned vide his letter No:- Est/BMO/Bij/706-07 Dated:-26.09.2019 both the explanation were served to your residential address. Whereas, BMO Concerned vide his No:- Est/BMO/Bii/924-25 Dated:- 02.12.2019 has served a notice addressed to your home residence

where under two days opportunity was granted to you to attend your legitimate duties, but you have failed to attend your duties and have not responded the Explanations/ Notices served by the BMO Concerned. Whereas, matter was taken up with Director Health Services Kashmir vide this office letter No:-Est/lll/Compt/Gen/6045-46 Dated:-07.12.2019 and No:- Est/Ill/Gen/PF/8321-22 Dated:- 25.02.2020, a detailed report / Service particulars along with Xerox copies of Ser-

vice Book and other documents were furnished to the Director Health Services Kashmir Whereas, Director Health Services Kashmir vide his letter No:- Est-II/PF/Phar/489/300 Dated:- 20.03.2020 has directed to serve a show cause notice upon the concerned Jr. Pharmacist on his residential address and get the same published in one of the prominent Daily news paper of Kashmir valley where under an opportunity be granted for resuming duties back.

Whereas, One more opportunity has been granted and Show cause notice was served to you by the BMO Bijebhara vide No:- Est/BMO/ Bii/190 Dated: - 27.05.2020 and has been published into daily "Srinagar times" and copy of same sent to your home address , where under you have been directed to resume your duties within 07 days but you have again failed to resume your duties. Whereas, Matter has again been taken up with Director Health Services Kashmir vide this office No:-Est/lll/Gen/PF/1248-49 Dated:-02.06.2020, and Director Health Services Srinagar in turn vide his letter No:- Est-ll/PF/Phar/489/860 Dated:- 17.06.2020 has directed

to serve one more show cause notice to you on your home address and publish it in two leading news papers from Kashmir valley

Whereas, Director Health Services Kashmir vide letter No:- Est-Il/PF/Phar/489/1218 Dated:- 22.08.2020 has directed this office that one more opportunity may be given to you the 3rd final notice was accordingly issued to you and registered it to on your residential address and same has also been published into daily news papers Kashmir Images and Srinagar times on 06.11.2020, Whereas, matter has again been taken up with the Director Health Services Kashmir vide this office letter No:- Est/lll/Gen/PF/6035-36 Dated: - 09.11.2020, the Director Health Services Kashmir in turn vide letter No:- Est/ll/PF/Phar/489/1552 Dated: - 09.12.2020 has directed that one more last and final opportunity may be given to the aforementioned absconding Jr. Pharmacist by way of issuance of

final notice to be published in any two leading news papers from Kashmir Valley. Whereas, on backdrop of all above, last and final opportunity is given to resume your duties within 07 days from the date of publication of this Final Notice failing which further action shall be initiated against you as per the standing norms in vogue.

DIPK-10769/20 Chief Medical Officer Anantnag

**Branch Office Sopore** The candidates whose photograph is published in this notice is claiming to have lost the origi-

> nal marks certificate of 10TH & 12th under Below mentioned particulars Name: MOHAMMAD SALEEM RATHER Fathers Name: MOHAMMAD SABIR RATHER

Mothers Name: DILSHADA

Roll No: (10TH) 343589 Session / Year Bi-annual 2005 (12TH) 321553 Session / Year Bi-annual 2008 Now the candidate has applied for Duplicate Marks Card. Any-

body (if) having any objection may file the some before undersigned with (07) Seven days from the date of publication of this notice. Besides, the original marks card is teated as cancelled. Sd/ Assistant Secretary

Sub Office Bandipora

My name has been wrongly spelled in school records as SAMEER AHMADMIR S/O ABDUL MAJID MIR While the correct spelling is SAMEER AHMAD MIR S/O ABDUL MAJEED MIR which needs immediate correction if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Headmasaster Govt Primary School Machipora within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained /

SAMEER AHMAD MIR S/O ABDUL MAJEED MIR R/O RIYAR, BEERU

#### **GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KAHMIR** OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT

**NOTICE FOR QUOTATIONS** Tender No:- 07 of 2020-21 Dated:-22/12/2020 DTC/BUD/580-84

**TUBERCULOSIS OFFICER BUDGAM (191111)** 

Sealed quotations affixed with revenue stamp of Rs.10/- are invited for below mentioned civil work at DTC Budgam for the financial year 2020-21 from reputed dealers/approved suppliers/manufacturers/authorized dealers who are dealing in actually the goods for which the tender is issued.

The sealed quotations are to be submitted properly duly super scribed name of firm/Manufacturers/dealer and should reach to this office within seven (7) days after the publication of the said notice in the newspaper up to 4:00pm. The sealed quotations should be handed over personally in the office of the undersigned at district Tuberculosis Centre Budgam. The quotations received after due date shall not be entertained. The undersigned shall reserve the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason thereof.

S.NO	CIVIL WORK	
01	Wooden Paneling of office room measuring 18x14ft x4 No's	
02	Wooden Paneling of meeting Hall on three walls measuring 20x12ftx 03No's	

The whole information regarding the civil work can be obtained within 3days positively from the office of the undersigned after the publication of this notice Other Terms & Conditions:-

1.Rates Charged shall be FOR Stores (Distt.TB Centre Budgam) inclusive of all charges: 2.The quotations submitted without a prescribed format shall be rejected without any notice;

3The rates should be quoted against each item of the tender without cutting & tampering

4.The quotation shall furnish the photocopies of GST registration Certificate with GSTIN from Competent authority. No quotation shall be entertained without relevant registration certificate;

5. No compromise on quality of Materials will be acceptable.

No:- DTC/BUD/580-84

Dated:- 22/12/2020

DIPK-10789/20

District TB Officer Budgam

#### Government of Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Executive Engineer

## **Mechanical Division Srinagar**

Mechanical Engineering Department, Kashmir

Fax No: 0194-2497093 email: xenmds@gmail.com website: www.medkashmir.org

GIST of e-NIT No: MDS/TS /2020-21/ 151 /e-tendering Dated:22-12-2020

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders are invited on item rate basis from OEM/ Authorized Dealers/Representatives/Registered & Reputed firms for the below mentioned work:

Name of the Work	Cost of _	Earnest	Estimated	Time of	Position of
	Tender Doc.	Money	Cost	completion	Funds
	(In Rupees)		(In Lacs)	(in days)	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Supply, Installation, Testing and Commis-	500/-	14,500/-	7.22	15	Available
sioning of 62.5 KVA capacity (at MSL) Water					
cooled DG set with Standard control Panel for					
Sub District Hospital Pampore					

1. The Tender document Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.

jktenders.gov.in from 23 .12.2020 (10:00 AM). 2. The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above website from 23 .12.2020 ( 10.00 AM) to 07.01.2021 ( 6:55 PM) in two covers.

The bid uploaded on the Web Site up to due date and time will be opened on 08.01.2021 (02.00PM) in the Office of Executive Engineer, Mechanical Division, Srinagar.

> (Er. Abdul Rashid Bhat) **Executive Engineer,** Mechanical Division, Srinagar Dated: 22 -12-2020

No. MDS/TS- /6176-80

DIPK-10809/20

Webinar On 'Media For Disaster Risk Reduction'

## **Govt Officers Should Promptly Share** Info With Media To Avoid Disinformation

**Observer News Service** 

**SRINAGAR:** Director Information and Public Relations Department, Dr. Sved Sehrish Asgar on Wednesday urged the government officers to share relevant information about any incident promptly with the media persons so that they don't have to rely on information which may not be accurate.

Dr Sehrish was speaking at a webinar on "Media for Disaster Risk Reduction" which was jointly organised by National Institute of Disaster Management and Institution of Engineers (India) J&K State Centre, Srinagar in collaboration with Information Deptt, Kashmir Editors Guild, Kashmir Press Club and J&K State Emergency Operation Centre, Srinagar.

Dr Sehrish said media is the most effective link between the Public and the Administration, and Information Department is the link between Government and Media. She said that coordination mechanism with media needs to be further strengthened, in order to ensure that media has timely access to disaster related data, otherwise it can lead to publishing of unverified and speculative reports. She implored the concerned officers that they should share relevant information about each inci- Department has always been forth-



have to rely on information which may not be accurate.

dent promptly, otherwise reporters coming to ensure that media is provided timely updates and mentioned about COVID-19 bulletin. every stage of disaster i.e. Pre, Dur-She said that the Information She appreciated that the media has ing and Post-Disaster. He said that the visibility of a disaster situation,

pre disaster and mitigation initiatives and provided access to informative and specialised training programmes to enhance coping cathe public broadcasters but also with the private media channels.

She said that a mechanism of self-regulation can be evolved by the media-houses to ensure a balance of reality and credibility particularly in issues of sensational, sensitive and strategic news items, in order to curb rumor mongering, which could otherwise have negative effects. She said that print, electronic and social media add value and credence when they carry the public awareness messages that too alongwith entertaintowards the messages. She spoke about the tele-classes and covid awareness programme, Sukoon, started by the Information department. She urged the media to project stories of positivity and hope.

Speaking on the occasion, Er. Aamir Ali, Chairman IEI JKSC and Nodal Officer SEOC said that me-

the mindset of the general public public awareness and dissemifrom post disaster relief, towards nated early warnings, especially for floods, windstorms, avalanche and adverse weather warnings. Media has not only made the public aware of the hazards and risks that they pacities. She said that communica- are vulnerable to, but has also ention has to be ensured not only with hanced their capacities to deal with any disaster situation so that they act promptly on early warnings.

He appreciated that the media has brought about a positive change in the mindset of the general public from post disaster relief, towards pre disaster and mitigation initiatives and provided access to informative and specialised training programmes to enhance coping capacities. He said that there are numerous instances when early warning information provided by print and electronic media has helped save precious lives and there are ment and public is more receptive a few examples where either the warnings were not carried by the media or were ignored by the public, which resulted in heavy losses.

He appreciated Radio Kashmir Srinagar for playing a vital role in connecting people, who had got separated from each other, during the floods of 2014, when there was no other means of communicadia plays a very important role in tion. He said that the media has on many occasions helped increase brought about a positive change in the media has created tremendous which has helped **PAGE 05** 

**DIAL-EMMA** 

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



PDD: 0194-2450213 FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES: 2479488,2452222,2452155

CAPD: 18001807011 SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

#### **AIRPORTS**

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



 BARAMULLA: 0194-102029 BIJBHERA: 01932-228243 • PAMPORE: 01933-294132 • PATTAN: 01954-293507 · QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

#### **HIGHWAY STATUS**

Sgrr-Jammu highway - (Open)



Mughal Road - (Closed) · Srinagar-Leh- (Open)

#### This Day in History

- 1476- 400 Burgundian soldiers freeze to death during siege of Nancy
- 1715- Swedish troops occupy Norway 1798- Russia& Britain sign Second anti-French
- 1814 -Treaty of Ghent signed, ending the War of 1812 between the United States, the United Kingdom and their allies
- 1864 Battle of Gordonsville, Virginia 1877 -Thomas Edison files a patents for the
- 1884- Austria-Hungary admits King Leopold II's Congo Free State 1889- Daniel Stover & William Hance patent
- bicycle with back pedal brake 1900 -Foreign powers present the Chinese Empress
- with their list of 'irrevocable conditions' before their nations will withdraw troops from China 1914 - German plane drops bombs on Dover, England
- 1924 -Albania becomes a republic (ex-premier Ahmed Zogoe's coup)
- 1936- 1st radioactive isotope medicine administered in Berkeley, California
- 1939- World War II: Pope Pius XII makes a Christmas Eve appeal for peace.
- 1942- Red army occupies German airports at Tasjinskaja&Morozowsk
- 1943 US President FDR appoints General Eisenhower Supreme Commander of the Allied forces
- 1946 -French Fourth Republic is founded
- 1948 -Greek government disbands due to state of war, press censorship 1951 -United Kingdom of Libya gains
- independence from Italy via UN 1954 -Laos gains its independence
- 1962 USSR performs nuclear test at Novaya Zemlya USSR 1963- Greek& Turks riot in Cyprus
- 1966 Soviet spacecraft Luna 13 lands on Moon 1966- USAF C144 military charter aircraft crashes
- near Binh Thai, Vietnam, killing 129
- 1967- China performs nuclear test at Lop Nor, PRC 1979- 1st Ariane rocket launched1986 Iran
- offensive against Iraqi islands of Shatt al-Arab 1989 -Charles Taylor enters Liberia to unseat
- President Samuel K Doe 1990- Saddam Hussein says Israel will be iraq<sup>.</sup>s
- 1992 US President George H. W. Bush pardons Caspar Weinberger for Iran-contra affair
- officially lit in Vatican City 1997 -The Sid El-Antri massacre (or SidiLamri)
- in Algeria kills 50-100 people.
- 1997 -The Dominican Republic becomes a member of the Berne Convention copyright treaty
- 2003 -Spanish police thwart an attempt by ETA
- to detonate 50 kg of explosives at 3:55 p.m. inside Madrid's busy Chamartín Station.
- 2012- 11 kindergarten children are killed after a minivan plunges into a roadside pond in Jiangxi,

#### **Public Notice**

I Syed Junaid Javaid Naqash son of Syed Javaid Ahmad, a resident of Degdarhar, Zoonimar Srinagar want to apply for the correction in my name on passport (J6073974) to Syed Junaid Kashani. If anybody has any objection please file the same before the concerned authorities within 7 days from the publication of this notice. Syed Junaid Kashani.

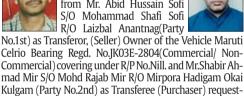
#### **OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL** TRANSPORT OFFICER ANANTNAG

No.101/4291/MVD/ANG

Date:-23/12/2020 **NOTICE** 



Whereas joint application has been received by this office from Mr. Abid Hussain Sofi S/O Mohammad Shafi Sofi



Celrio Bearing Regd. No.JK03E-2804(Commercial/ Non-Commercial) covering under R/P No.Nill. and Mr.Shabir Ahmad Mir S/O Mohd Rajab Mir R/O Mirpora Hadigam Okai Kulgam (Party No.2nd) as Transferee (Purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted Vehicle from party No 1st and 2nd. And Cancellation of hire purchase agreement with JK Bank Mattan Anantnag. Before the case is disposed off on its merit, anybody have any objection re-7) days from the publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned. No any representation / objection shall be entertained after stipulated period. Assistant Regional

Transport Officer Anantnag

#### OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER ANANTNAG

No.101/4289/MVD/ANG

Date:-23/12/2020



NOTICE Whereas joint application

has been received by this office from Mr.Manzoor Ahmad Khatana S/O Gh Noorani Khantana R/O

Wajoora Pahalgam(Party No.1st) as Transferor, (Seller) Owner of the Vehicle Grand I 10 Bearing Regd. No.JK03J-1116(Commercial/ Non-Commercial) covering under R/P No.Nill. and Mr.Imtiyaz Ahmad Mir S/O Bashir Ahmad Mir R/O Poshkeri Srigufwara Anantnag (Party No.2nd) as Transferee (Purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted Vehicle from party No 1st and 2nd. And Cancellation of hire purchase agreement with N/A. Before the case is disposed off on its merit, anybody have any objection regarding the proposed transfer Amy file his objection within (7) days from the publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned. No any representation / objection shall be entertained after stipulated period.

Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag

#### OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER ANANTNAG

No.101/4298/MVD/ANG

Date:-23/12/2020



NOTICE Whereas joint application has

been received by this office from Mr.Shahid Ahmad Khan S/O Taj Mohd Khan R/O Gopal-

pora Kalan Anantnag(Party No.1st) as Transferor, (Seller) Owner of the Vehicle Secoty Bearing Regd. No.JK03J-6209(Commercial/ Non-Commercial) covering under R/P No.Nill. and Mr.Sayar Ahmad Khanday S/O Gh Qadir Khandav R/O Igbal Colony Anchidora Anantnag (Party No.2nd) as Transferee (Purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted Vehicle from party No 1st and 2nd. And Cancellation of hire purchase agreement with Nill. Before the case is disposed off on its merit, anybody have any objection regarding the proposed transfer Amy file his objection within (7) days from the publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned. No any representation / objection shall be entertained after stipulated period.

> Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag

**Largest Party In 2 Districts** 

**PC Emerges As Single** 



North Kashmir.

NIT No: EDB / 73 of 2020-21

emerged as the single

largest party in Kupwara

and Baramulla districts of

neighbouring Baramulla district, PC has won three seats, followed by Congress, Apni Party, National Confer-Observer, the party has ence and PDP two each.

Three independents have also won in the district. PC chairman Sajad Gani Lone and it's General According to figures, PC Secretary Imran Reza Anhas won 5 seats in Kupwara, sari had vigorously camfollowed by National Con- paigned for party candiference 4, Independents 2, dates in the north Kashmir.

## Restoration Of Art 370, **Now Bring It Back: Mattu SRINAGAR:** The city Mayor and

**You Sought Votes For** 

Apni Party leader on Wednesday said that the candidates who emerged victorious after seeking votes for the restoration of special status, should bring it back within a month. "It stands the responsibility

of those people who bagged votes on Article 370 abrogation to bring special status back within one month." Mattu said while addressing a presser at SMC office here.

He said that the DDC elections were meant for the development process, but candidates were found seeking votes on different issues, adding that sentiments of people have been hurt by raising

als as well as distribution substations under Back to village program phase 2nd for Block



different agendas during poll campaigning.

Mattu further said that Apni Party is emerging as alternative for the people, adding that in Srinagar district, the party has bagged three seats while NC and PDP have bagged only one seat each, which is the indication as well.

He added that many of the independent candidates who have won in DDC elections are with the party- Agencies

## **Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL)** OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ELECTRIC DIVISION BUDGAM

E-mail:edbudgam@gmail.comTelNo:01951-255218

**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS** 

Dated:19/12/2020

For and on behalf of the Government of UT of Jammu and Kashmir, e-Tenders, are hereby invited from govt. approved Electrical Contractors for the Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of various Contract for the Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of various Line materials as well as distribution substations under Back to village program phase 2nd for Block Nagam (Part 1) of ED Budgam, KPDCL.. Contract for the Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of various Line materi-Name of work(s)

		Nagam (Part 1) of ED Budgam, K	DUC!
2	Estimated Cost	INR 39.00 Lacs	I DCL.
	Period for completion of work.		Letter of Award
The	tender document is available on	website http://jktenders.gov.in. In	iterested bidders may view or download the e-Bid document ills mentioned in the table below:
Α	e-Bid document Publishing dat	e & time	The e-Bid document to be published on website https://
24	The state of the s	92555 P 9789 - 1 925 P P 97	iktenders.gov.in on 21/12/2020; 03:00 PM
В	e-Bid document download star	t date & time	21/12/2020; 03:00 PM
C	Clarifications start date		21/12/2020: 03:00 PM
D	Clarifications end date		23/12/2020: 03:00 PM
E	e-Bid submission (start) date &	time (Submission of e-tender	23/12/2020; 03:00 PM
(5,38)	fee, EMD and other supporting	documents in PDF/XLS format)	THE CONTRACTOR OF THE CONTRACT
F	e-Bid submission (end) date & ti	me (Submission of e-tender fee,	04/01/2021; 03:00 PM
	EMD and other supporting docur	nents in PDF/XLS format)	And the second s
G	Online Technical e-bid opening		06/01/2021; 03:00 PM
H	Venue of opening of technical 8	k financial e-Bids	Office of Executive Engineer, ED Budgam
	Cost of e-Bid document		INR 1000.00
J	Amount of Earnest Money Dep	osit	INR 78000.00

 Bidders/tenderers are advised to study the Bidding Document carefully. Submission of e-Bid against this SBD shall be deemed to have been done after careful study and examination of the procedures, terms and conditions of the Standard Bidding Document with full understanding of its implications.

2. The bidder/tenderer needs to submit the cost of e-Bid document in the government treasury and upload the challan/receipt as proof of cost of tender document. Any tender uploaded without the scanned copy of the challan/receipt is liable to be rejected. 3. All the e-Bids must be accompanied by the scanned copy of EMD in the form of CDR/FDR from any Schedule Commercial bank only pledged to the Executive Engineer, ED Budgam. No Interest would be payable on Earnest Money deposited with the Department. Copy of original instrument of EMD is required to be submitted by the successful bidder to the office of Executive Engineer, ED Budgam

prior to the issuance of Letter of award only. 5. The technical e-Bids will be electronically opened in the presence of bidder/tenderer's representatives, who choose to attend at the venue, date and time mentioned in the above table or any subsequent day to the convenience of the Tender Opening Committee. Only

those tenders shall be considered for evaluation who have deposited the earnest money and tender cost. 6. The date and time of opening of Financial-Bids of the technically responsive bids shall be notified on Web Site https://iktenders. gov.in. This is conveyed to the technically qualified bidder/tenderers automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. 7. The Department reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-Bids/ the e-Bid process without assigning any reason thereof if any major lapse/deviation is found. The decision of department will be final and binding.

Corrigendum, if any would be published on the website. 9. In no case shall the hard copy of the BOQ submitted with the Techno-Commercial bidder which shall lead to rejection of the bid. Price Bid shall be uploaded only in the BOO format provided online. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents.

DIPK-NB-4748/20

No: EDB/4734-37 Dated: 19/12/2020

**Executive Engineer** Electric Division Budgam.

## From KO Archives

## 12 Bangladeshis Killed Near Jammu

**OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE** 

SRINAGAR: Twelve Bangladesh nationals were killed when Border Security Force (BSF) jawans opened fire at a group of people attempting to sneak into Jammu region from across the border today, official reports here said. The reports said BSF personnel noticed a group of persons attempting to sneak into In-dian territory from Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK) near San-gral village in R.S.Pura sector of Jammu in the wee hours today. They mistook the intruders for militants and opened fire at them when they tried to flee back after being asked to surrender, the re-ports said, adding the deceased were totally unarmed. In the past, a number of Bangladeshi nationals were either arrested or killed while making attempts to sneak into this side. However, a Jammu datelined PTI report, weaving a cock-and-bull story, said; "On being confronted by the BSF jawans and asked to surrender, the intruders started running back, they (official sources) said. "Meanwhile, Pakistani troops resorted to firing from across the border forcing BSF jawans to retaliate. In the exchange of fire, the intruders were killed, the sources said. "Senior BSF and police officers have rushed to the area and the bodies of the intruders are being handed over to police for further investigation', the sources said."

Elsewhere in Kashmir valley, militants shot dead a civilian, in-jured a surrendered militant and a BSF jawan and abducted a vil-lager, while security forces repulsed a militant attack on a police station since last evening, an official spokesman said.

Unidentified gunmen shot dead a farmer Abdul Aziz Dar inside his house at Putshahi-Lalpora in frontier district of Kup-wara early today, he said. Jammu and Kashmir police and CRPF jointly re-pulsed a militant attack on police station Lalpora in frontier district of Kupwara late last night, the spokesman said.

A group of militants opened heavy fire and hurled grenades on the police station. However, the police and CRPF contingent stationed there retaliated and repulsed the attack. No casualty on either side was reported, he added

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 24 DECEMBER, 2000)



**JAMADI** 

-UL-

**AWWAL** 



1442

**PRAYERS FAJR** 6:03

12:28 **ASR** 3:49

**ZUHR** 

**MAGRIB** 5:30 **ISHA** 6:55

India, whose cities top global pollution lists,

as well as human toll from bad air quality

faces a growing economic

## Pandemic Reaches Antarctica, **Last Untouched Continent**

So far no other country with a presence in Antarctica has publicly reported any other cases.

he pandemic has finally reached every continent on Earth. Chilean authorities announced that 58 people that were at two military bases in Antarctica or on a navy ship that went to the continent tested positive for the new coronavirus.

So far no other country with a presence in Antarctica has publicly reported any other cases.

Chile's army announced Monday that 36 people at the Gen Bernardo O'Higgins Riquelme Antarctic base have tested positive, and on Tuesday the health minister for the Biobio region in Chile said there are 21 infections involving people aboard the Chilean navy's Sergeant Aldea supply vessel.

One more case was reported in Las Estrellas' village, where civilian personnel working at the Lieutenant Rodolfo Marsh Martin Air Force Base live, said Eduardo Castillo, regional health secretary for the Magallanes area, which oversee Chilean operations in the Antarctic. The Sargento Aldea ship docked at that village, he added.

The army said the first group of November 27 and December 10. The tourists at USAP stations."

36 people includes 26 members of the military and 10 civilian employees of a maintenance contract in Antarctica, said it was aware of company. It said none so far had shown complications.

The first three people on the Sergeant Aldea vessel tested positive last week and all 208 crewmembers teractions with the Chilean stations are being guarantined aboard that in question or the personnel who ship, according to the navy. It said the vessel had serviced the base on the Trinity Peninsula between exchanging personnel or accepting

the agency overseeing US programs the reports of positive cases in passengers aboard the Sergeant Aldea.

"Personnel at US Antarctic Program stations have had no inreside there," the foundation said. "NSF remains committed to not



Oxic air killed more people in India in 2019 than in 2017, The Lancet said in a report shared by the government on Tuesday, with 1.67 million deaths accounting for 18% of all fatalities.

India, whose cities top global pollution lists, faces a growing economic as well as human toll from bad air quality, which was linked to 1.24 million, or 12.5% of total deaths in the previous such study for 2017. The analysis found pollution led to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, respiratory infections, lung cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, neonatal disorders and cataracts.

Land-locked New Delhi, the world's most

polluted capital whose winter skies are often ob- during the Covid-19 lockdown period, and its upscured by its filthy air, recorded the highest percapita economic hit, the journal said.

The fatalities in 2019 led to a total loss of \$36.8 billion, or 1.36% of India's gross domestic product (GDP), with the poor and populous states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar experiencing the highest economic loss as a percentage of their GDP.

Although the death rate due to household air pollution fell 64.2% from 1990 to 2019, that due to ambient particulate matter pollution more than doubled, The Lancet said.

"The improvements in air quality across India

## **UAE Islamic body OKs** vaccines even

surge again with the easing of restrictions, provide

interesting pointers to the extent of air pollu-

tion reduction that is possible with reduced hu-

man activity," it added. The government said in a

statement that India would need to invest more

in state-specific pollution control programmes if

it were to meet its goal of becoming a \$5 trillion

economy by 2024, from around \$2.9 trillion now.

India's three main cities, New Delhi, Kolkata and

Mumbai, were on the list of the world's 20 worst

polluted cities, Swiss air quality technology com-

pany IQAir reported on Tuesday.



Islam's restrictions not applicable because of the need to 'protect the human body'

The United Arab Emirates' highest Islamic authority, the UAE Fatwa Council, has ruled that coronavirus vaccines are permissible for Muslims even if they contain pork gelatin.

The ruling follows growing alarm that the use of pork gelatin, a common vaccine ingredient, may hamper vaccination among Muslims who consider the consumption of pork products "haram", or forbidden, un-

If there are no alternatives, Council Chairman Abdallah bin Bayyah said that the coronavirus vaccines would not be subject to Islam's restrictions on pork because of the higher need to "protect the human body"

The council added that in this case, the pork gelatin is considered medicine, not food, with multiple vaccines already shown to be effective against a highly contagious virus that "poses a risk to the entire society".

## Israel heads to new elections as government collapses

#### Netanyahu finds himself confronted by a trio of disgruntled former aides

srael's divided government collapsed early Wednesday, triggering the country's fourth election in under two years and bringing an unprecedented threat to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's lengthy grip on power.

Netanyahu, who is used to labeling his opponents as weak leftists, finds himself confronted by a trio of disgruntled former aides who share his hard-line ideology, led by a popular lawmaker who recently broke away from the prime minister's Likud party.

Whether Netanyahu can fend off these challengers or not, the country is almost certain to be led by a right-wing politician opposed to concessions to the Palestinians, complicating hopes of the incoming Biden administration to restart

The prospects of Israel's centerleft bloc appear worse than in previous contests because its leader, Defense Minister Benny Gantz, entered into the ill-fated alliance with Netanyahu. Gantz has lost the support of much of his disappointed base, and the bloc has been left leaderless.

Netanyahu and Gantz formed their coalition last May after battling to a stalemate in three consecutive elections. They said they were putting aside their personal rivalry to form an "emergency" government focused on guiding the country through the health and economic crises caused by the pandemic.

Under the deal. Gantz assumed the new role of "alternate prime" power-sharing deal in hopes of the central issue in the string of reminister" and was assured he

would trade places with Netanyahu trial, which is to kick into high gear next November in a rotation agreement halfway through their term. The immediate cause of the collapse was their failure to pass a budget by the midnight Tuesday deadline. That caused the parliament to automatically dissolve and

set new elections for late March. But the deeper cause was their troubled partnership, which was plagued by mutual hostility and three indictments is dragging mistrust from the outset. For seven the country to a fourth round of months. Gantz has suffered a number of humiliations and been kept out of the loop on key decisions, such as a series of US-brokered diplomatic agreements with Arab

countries. Netanyahu accuses Gantz's Blue and White party of acting as an "opposition within the government." At the heart of this dysfunctional relationship is Netanyahu's corruption trial. Gantz has accused Netanyahu of undermining their his suitability to govern, have been

in February when witnesses begin to take the stand.

He and other critics believe Netanyahu ultimately hopes to form a new government capable of appointing loyalists to sensitive positions who could grant him immunity or dismiss the charges against him.

"A criminal defendant with Tuesday night. "If there wasn't a trial, there would be a budget and there wouldn't be elections.

Netanyahu is charged with fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in a series of scandals in which he is accused of offering favors to powerful media figures in exchange for positive news coverage about him and his family. His legal troubles, and questions about remaining in office throughout his cent elections.

# Rouhani: Fate awaiting Trump no better than Saddam Hussein's

**Pollution deaths in India** 

rose to 1.67m in 2019

"There were two maniacs who waged wars against the Iranian people; one was Saddam who imposed a military war and the other was Trump who started an economic war on us"



ran's President Hassan Rouhani Thanks to the resistance the Iranian has drawn a parallel between the hostile policies of outgoing US President Donald Trump and better than Saddam's.' Irag's Saddam Hussein for waging wars on the Islamic Republic, saying the American leader will even-+ tually not fare much better than

the former Iraqi dictator. "During the [1980s] imposed war, we defeated the enemy owing Action (JCPOA), and enforced the to our unity and alliance, and the day Saddam was hanged was a day of victory for the Iranian people.

Iran has been under a series of

drew Washington from the 2015 so-called maximum pressure campaign to target the Iranian nation.

nation has put up against the US sanctions, Trump's fate will not be

illegal sanctions imposed by the US since 2018, when Trump withnuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Elsewhere in his remarks,

Seyyed Ali Khamenei], what is important is that we prevented the economic war from achieving its objectives. A thriving manufacturing sector and the positive economic growth mean the sanctions

will in fact defeat Zionism, reactionary [states] in the region and

lessening the impact of the economic war on people's livelihoods and the removal of the oppressive sanctions as the important goals pursued by his administration. "By breaking the sanctions, we

the extremists," he said.

have failed," he underlined. The

Iranian chief executive counted

Rouhani said the US economic war

was meant to bring the Iranian

people to their knees and destroy

the Islamic establishment, and

lauded the nation for refusing to

the Islamic Revolution [Ayatollah

As pointed out by Leader of

buckle under pressure.



## **Pakistan-Iran-**Turkey rail link to resume in 2021



Key requirements for the revival of the service have been completed, Karaismailoglu said

The Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad (ITI) train is set to resume operations from next year, Turkish Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Adil Karaismailoglu has said.

The minister made the remark while addressing the 10th meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) in Istanbul, reports the Middle East Monitor.

Key requirements for the revival of the service have been completed, Karaismailoglu said.

The rail route covers a total distance of 6,500km, with 1,990km in Pakistan, 2,600km in Iran and 1,950km in Turkey. Designed primarily for the transport of freight, the rail link will boost economic ties between, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey.

The ITI framework was launched in 2009 as a project under the ECO, and the rail line has only been used for trial runs since.

## You Can't Drive In Peru Or Dance In Lebanon: Global List Of Dos And Don'ts This Christmas

In Peru, you can't drive your car on Christmas. In Lebanon, you can go to a nightclub, but you can't dance. In South Africa, roadblocks instead of beach parties will mark this year's festive season.

## How many people can you share a Christmas meal with?

France recommends no more than six, in Chile it's 15, and in Brazil it's as many as you want. Meanwhile, Italy's mind-boggling, color-coded holiday virus rules will change almost every day for the next two weeks.

Countries around the world are trying to find the right formulas to keep their people safe during Christmas, especially as new virus variants prompt renewed travel bans and fuel resurgent infections, hospitalisations and deaths at the end of an already devastating year. Here's a look at some of the restrictions around the world for the holiday season:

#### **Britain**

It was meant to be a time when families across the UK could enjoy something like a normal Christmas despite the pandemic. Authorities planned to relax restrictions, allowing up to three households to mix in the days around December 25.

However, the emergence of a new, more contagious variant of the coronavirus changed that.

The four nations of the UK - England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – are all under various phases of shutdown and have ditched their Christmas plans. No indoor mixing of households is allowed in London and southeast England.

Instead of Christmas joy, a sense of dread and isolation is looming. Dozens of countries have lim- as public transport, supermarkets and pharma-



are running at record highs. Hospitals across the UK, which has Europe's second-highest virusrelated death toll at over 68,000, are heading towards full capacity at a time of year when other illnesses abound.

#### Brazil

In Brazil, Christmas 2020 will be similar to celebrations conducted previously- even though the country has been among the world's hardesthit by the pandemic and new Covid-19 infections **Lebanon** are now on track to match the peak of the first

Many beaches and restaurants in Rio de Janeiro were jam packed last weekend, despite a city measure--forbidding drivers to park along the shore. No national restrictions have been imposed ahead of Christmas, though the governor of São Paulo ordered that only essential services such ited flights from Britain, and daily new infections cies will remain open during Christmas and New

Year's Eve. Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Salvador have also called off their December 31 firework displays.

#### **South Africa**

South Africa is targeting beaches and booze as it imposes new restrictions for the Christmas season amid resurgent infections.

Alcohol can only be sold Monday through Thursday, and a night curfew is in place. Beaches – major tourist attractions this time of year — will be closed on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New

The government is urging people to avoid crowded Christmas celebrations, but indoor gatherings of up to 100 people are still allowed; while up to 250 people can congregate outdoors. Police are setting up roadblocks to slow a second surge of infections that authorities and scientists say is being fuelled by another variant of the virus, one distinct from the variant affecting England. Some countries are banning flights from South Africa, where the weekly infections and deaths have doubled over the past

Unlike much of the world, Lebanon eased restrictions during the holidays, hoping to inject foreign currency into a tanking economy. Tens of thousands of Lebanese expats have arrived home for the holidays, leading to fears of an inevitable surge in

Last week, the Interior Ministry allowed nightclubs to reopen — but said dancing will be prohibited. That triggered a debate on social media about what constitutes dancing.

## **Celebrations** across Spain after Christmas **lottery draw**

**SPAIN:** In a sweet end to a bitter year, hundreds of lucky people are celebrating big wins from Spain's famous Christmas lottery draw, which handed out around €2.5 billion (\$3 billion) on

The top prize, also known as El Gordo (the fat one), was sold in more than 20 towns and cities across the country.

While individual prizes are not as big as in other lotteries – a winning €20 ticket will bring in €400,000 before taxes – 1,600 tickets with the same number are sold, meaning winnings are widely distributed.

Second, third, fourth and fifth prizes are also substantial. After schoolchildren sang out the big winners, champagne began flowing and smiles shone through even face masks. "It's an enormous reward after a very dif-

ficult year," lottery seller Manuel Rodriguez, who sold winning numbers in O Grove, Galicia, told Spanish daily El Pais in tears.

The pandemic did bring complications to the lottery, which got its start in 1812 when, historians say, it was used to raise funds to fight off the Napoleonic invasion.

"The lottery has always gone on. It went on through the Spanish Civil War, and during the Spanish flu so the pandemic couldn't stop us from celebrating. But we had to do it as safely as possible," Jesus Huerta, head of Spain's lottery agency told Spanish Public Television (TVE).



## **Success Of PAGD Clear Indication Of What People** Of J&K Want: CPI(M)

said that the success of the Peo- true," CPI (M) said. ples' Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) in the maiden District Development Council (DDC) elections is a clear answer as what the people of Jammu and Kashmir want.

'The participation of the people in large numbers in these some places there was a lack of polls is a clear indication that people of J&K want to fight for their snatched constitutional rights in a democratic manner. The verdict is an eye-opener for is a clear indication by the peothe BJP government, who had launched propaganda since last August that people of J&K have accepted its arbitrary and unconstitutional decision of revoking the erstwhile state's special status under Article 370," CPI

(M) said in a statement. attempt is being made to polar-BJP won big in Jammu which is polls results, it clearly shows that the BJP is not all over in Jammu. The PAGD, the Congress, the Panthers Party, BSP and other independents have won a good number of seats ticipation in the polls and asand have a significant vote share. Showing that the man- didates will struggle for their date is polarized between Jam- rights at every forum.

JAMMU: CPI (M) on Wednesday mu and Kashmir regions is not

It added that the PAGD could have won more seats both in Kashmir and Jammu, if it would have got time for preparation for the polls which were announced abruptly by the government. "Also unfortunately at united approach between the PAGD constituents which was avoidable. But nevertheless, the mandate in favour of the PAGD ple of Jammu and Kashmir that they want their rights restored which were snatched away from them last August," it added.

CPI (M) further stated the completion of the DDC polls which by and large remained peaceful is appreciable. "The The statement said that an mandate of the people has to be respected now. It is imperative ize the verdict by showing that that the concerns of the people - whether political or develnot a reality. "If we analyze the opmental – are taken care of. There are common concerns in Kashmir and Jammu for moving

forward together," CPI (M) said. The CPI (M) congratulated Haji Abdul Rasheed Dar's son curing 1412 votes. the people of J&K for their par-Shahjahaan Dar won the DDC seat from Zainageer block. He garnered 1460 votes, and desured that there winning can-Bilal Ahamd Dar, who managed

to secure 642 votes. In Tujjar block Independent Candidate Muzafar Ahmad Bhat

BARAMULLA: Safeena Beigh

wife of former Deputy Chief

Minister Muzzafar Hussain

Beigh, has won Wagoora District

Development Council (DDC)

seat, while Irfan Hafiz Lone won

The Peoples Alliance for Gup-

kar Declaration (PAGD) and Jammu Kashmir Apni Party

(JKAP) and BJP suffered a humiliating defeat as indepen-

dent candidate Irfan Lone won

the seat. Irfan by securing 2404

votes won the seat by 225 votes margin. Lone defeated Apni Party candidate Shoaib Lone

Safeena Beigh, wife of former

Deputy Chief Minister Muzaf-

far Hussain Beigh has won from

Wagoora territorial constituency.

She was contesting independent-

ly. Safeena defeated NC candidate

Shaheena Begum by 1491 votes.

Safeena secured 5210 votes.

and PDP's Suhail Bukhari.

Sangrama constituency.



votes. Bhat secured 1534 votes. In Rafiabad, JKPC candidate Party has polled 3309 votes. He Former MLA of Sopore and Parmeet Kour defeated Tasl-Deputy President for Congress eema Akthar by 96 votes by se-

Safeena Beigh Among

**Independents Who Defeated** 

**Heavy Weights In Baramulla** 

Shabir Ahmad Lone Candidate of National Conference won Rohama seat by defeating feated independent candidate April Party candidate.

Senior Congress leader and former minister Taj Mohiudin won from Parenpillan Uri.

defeated Sajad Ahmad Dar by 82 ritorial Constitution Razia DDC seat—(KNO)

defeated Bisma Nabi Pandit of JKAP by 731 votes. PAGD Candidate (NC) Mohd Ismail Khan has won from Boniyar block. In Pattan constituency Sonaulla Parrey of JKPC won the

Hassan of Peoples Democratic

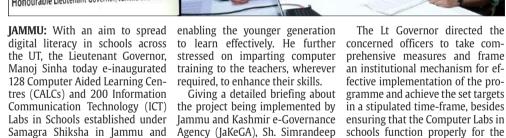
seat. He secured 5694 votes and defeated Farooq Ahmad Ganie by 1615 votes.

In Singapora, Najma Begum In Narwav and Boniyar ter- of People Conference won the

## **LG** e-inaugurates Learning Centres; ICT Labs Across J&K

Digital Learning Effectively Uses Technology To Strengthen A Student's Learning Experience: LG





Kashmir, here at Raj Bhavan. Speaking on the occasion, the Lt Governor observed that digital learning is an instructional practice missioning were completed in 123 that effectively uses technology to strengthen a student's learning experience. The initiative is aimed at making studies more interesting handed over by or before 15th Februand result-oriented, he added.

While addressing the teachers and students from various schools through virtual mode, the Lt Governor urged the teachers to keep tres (CALCs) and 1640 Secondary/Sr. upgrading their teaching-learning Secondary Schools out of 2522 shall skills, especially in digital literacy,

extreme cold situations and has

ness about Disaster Risk Reduc-

propagating best practices and

lessons learnt from across the

Globe and helped in highlight-

equally essential for the media

organisations as well as the pub-

lic. so that achievements are also

redressed and the impediment

the project being implemented by Jammu and Kashmir e-Governance Agency (JaKeGA), Sh. Simrandeep Singh, Administrative Secretary, benefit of students, he maintained. IT Department informed that ICT Equipment Installation and Com-Labs in Jammu Division and 205 Labs in Kashmir Division till date.

The remaining Schools will be fully ary, 2020. After the completion of the project, a total of 1733 Upper Primary Schools out of 7608 shall be covered under Computer Aided Learning Cenbe covered under ICT, he added.

The Lt Governor directed the fective implementation of the pro-Giving a detailed briefing about gramme and achieve the set targets in a stipulated time-frame, besides ensuring that the Computer Labs in schools function properly for the

> Sh. Arun Kumar Manhas, Project Director, Samagra Shiksha informed that the initiative has been taken for providing a computer lab with smart class facilities in all schools in a time bound manner.

Schools falling in educationally backwards blocks and those falling in the habitations of tribal areas have been selected for digital initiatives on priority.

It was further informed that the Ministry of Education, GoI has sanctioned 408 ICT Labs for the vear 2020-21 for I&K.

## **New COVID Variant May Evade Effectiveness Of Vaccine: DAK**



gence of a new mutated version said. of the novel Coronavirus in the United Kingdom and spread-Association Kashmir (DAK) on Wednesday said it is possible vid-19 vaccine.

"While it is anticipated that vaccine efficacy will not be significantly hampered by mutated virus," DAK President and influenza expert Dr Nisar ul Hassan said in a statement, adding that efit of vaccines containing only the new variant might escape the immune response made by the existing vaccines that have Covid-19, it may be necessary been developed against the original strain of Covid-19.

has wreaked havoc in the UK adding "this strategy is routineforcing the country to go into strictest lockdown," he said. "Dubbed VUI-202012/01 (first have included three or four variant under investigation in December 2020), the mutant is more infectious than earlier caused Covid-19 cases to spike strains of the virus," he added.

SRINAGAR: With the emer- the virus a new advantage," he

Dr Nisar said most Covid-19 vaccines produce antiboding to other countries, Doctors ies that disable the virus by gumming up its spike protein. "When the spike protein muthat the changed virus might tates, as it has in the new varievade the effectiveness of Co- ant it could potentially evade antibodies by the vaccine that uses the older version of the spike protein," he said.

"An inability to protect against variant strains may severely limit the strategic benthe original strain." "In order to have long term efficacy against for vaccines to include multiple variants of the spike protein "A mutated coronavirus strain as immunogens," Dr Nisar said ly applied against influenza and all formulations in recent years variant forms.

"The mutated strain has in the UK and the infections DAK President said the vari- with the new strain have alant carries 14 defining muta- ready been reported in several tions including seven in the European countries. It is posspike protein, the protein that sible that this variant could mediates entry of the virus into have already entered many human cells. "This is a signifi- other countries including India cant change in the genetic se- and we have to wait and see if it quence of the virus and offers slowly shows up," he said.

## **DC Reviews SEHAT Scheme Rollout**

this capital city have been enrolled as messages through the print and under the SEHAT scheme which is electronic media," he said. all set to be rolled out here on December 26, an official spokesperson said Wednesday.

which the progress of enrolments man Bharat scheme. made under the SEHAT health insurance scheme of the I&K government was discussed. Choudhary, who is that the district administration aims also Chairman of the District Health Society Srinagar, also reviewed the people in the next three months for arrangements for rollout of the scheme in Srinagar on 26 December. scheme has been solicited.

As per the official spokesperson, the DC said in the meeting that the 115 Common Service Centres or public needs to be made aware of CSCs have been activated in the disthe scheme and asked the concerned departments including the Health & as delivery of printed cards will start Family Welfare, Rural Development, ICDS. Information. Social Welfare rollout of the scheme," he said. among others to launch awareness campaigns about and enrolment drives under the scheme.

"The departments were asked to launch aggressive public aware- private hospitals - which also inness campaigns through hoardings, clude dialysis centres – empanelled

Srinagar: Over 78,000 residents of pamphlets, advertisements as well

During the meeting, he said, it was informed that more than 78,000 residents of Srinagar have The details about it, he said, were been enrolled under the SEHAT shared during a meeting chaired scheme so far adding that this was by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar in addition to 92,000 beneficiaries Dr Shahid Igbal Choudhary here in enrolled earlier under the Ayush-

The official spokesperson further said that the meeting was informed to cover a population of over 10 lakh which public participation under the

"It was informed that more than trict for beneficiary enrolment while from 26 December with the formal

"In Srinagar, enrolled beneficiaries can avail of benefits including free and cashless treatment under the scheme at 24 government and digital messages on VMD screens, under the scheme," he added.

## **Attempt To Break ATM: Case** Solved, Accused Arrested

THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PEOPLE in large numbers in these polls is a clear indication

constitutional rights in a democratic manner. The verdict is

an eye-opener for the BJP government,

that people of J&K want to fight for their snatched

to have solved a case regard-ATM by arresting one accused mission of crime.

ten complaint from Branch Manager Axis Bank Larkipora pora Larkipora," police said. Padgampora stated that during intervening night of December members appreciated the ef-20-21/12/2020, some unknown forts made by the Awantipora burglars attempted to break police. "We assure community open AXIS Bank ATM installed members that police have reat Larkinora Padgamnora

number 192/2020 under rel- activities," police said.

BL-KO

SRINAGAR: Police in Awanti- evant sections of law was regpora on Wednesday claimed istered in Police Station Awantipora and investigation was set ing the attempt to break an into motion. Acting promptly upon this case, police arrested person involved in the com- the accused and during the course of investigation the ac-Spokesman said that on cused person disclosed his in-21-12-2020, Police Station volvement in the commission of Awantipora received a writ- crime. He has been identified as Suhail Ahmad Bhat of Padgam-

Meanwhile, solved to act tough against in-"Accordingly, a case under FIR dividuals involved in criminal

### **Public Notice**

I have lost my Marks Card of class 10th bearing Roll no: 316263, REG no: 08NKF300530, DOB: 07/12/94, Session An-

Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the IKBOSE within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Masrat Maqbool Father's Name:Mohd Magbool Bhat Mothers Name: Mehmooda Begum** 

FROM PAGE 3

## Govt Officers Should Promptly Share Info With Media To Avoid Disinformation

tions for response, as was the case during the Earthquake of 2005.

and electronic media have the of Disaster Management Authormost pivotal role, but said that ities with the print, electronic social media too has emerged and even social media should be as a new information sharing strengthened, in order to ensure platform which has potential to that media has timely access to create an impact on the society disaster related data, otherwise the community. He said that its other form of media and that and suppress a panic situation it can lead to publishing of unand rumors. He urged that jour- verified and speculative reports. nalism ethics should be strictly He hoped that the deliberations followed, especially during disaster reporting, as sometimes, panelists, would open up a new in the desire for TRPs and sensationalizing, basic ethics of journalism are overlooked and in the event of any disaster, the Disaster Risk Reduction Platform survivors and the grief stricken at State, Divisional and District people deserve privacy and media is expected to give humanity precedence, over professional urgency

He suggested that since media the media fraternity. personnel are amongst the first

ternational support in there is a dire need to train them most difficult and trying situaterms of aid and dona- in disaster response and basic tions like disaster events or even life-saving skills, for which the training will start soon. He urged He appreciated that print that coordination mechanisms and experience sharing by the chapter of ensuring effective coordination mechanism, and would also pave way to set-up a Level, which would not only have experts and professions as Members, but should necessarily include representatives from

like post disaster reconstruction work by the administration as well as by non-governmental given due credit.

Qazi Salman, Deputy Director of communication needs to be ensure effective communication.

sometimes even In- emergency situation, therefore ways been proactive even in the gent basis. He stated credibility of news is essential to ensure legitimacy in communication. He highlighted the role of Doorand how early warnings are betion. He said that Media has been ing disseminated by them.

Satish Vimal from All India Radio Srinagar said that Radio has a very important role as its ing and identifying core needs of outreach is far greater than any they have always fulfilled their to highlight the positive stories duties as the link between people and administration at time of disasters or for early warnings. He urged that coordination of agencies is essential in the predisaster stage so that they will be effective at the time of any disaster or emergency situation. (News) Doordarshan said that He suggested that the Governcapacity to communicate has ment should continue to word increased tremendously but ef- hand-in-hand with the Radio fectiveness has decreased. He for proper dissemination of insuggested that ineffectiveness formation to the masses and to

eral, Kashmir Editors Guild said that the media helps in identifyalways helped in creating aware- darshan as a public broadcaster ing the core needs of the community before, during and after any disaster, because its reporters are available at the grass root level for coverage of the events. He spoke about various disasters where the media played a positive role in ensuring that basic needs of the people are highlighted. He stressed on the need that community participation is essential and that media can help ensure last mile connectivity. He stressed on the need to ensure that media is strength-

> positive criticism by the media helps the administration improve its services. Shuja-ul-Haq, President Kashmir Press Club Srinagar Er M. Aaquib Sultana Waheed coordination mechanism be-

ened and stressed on evolving

media credibility. He said that

Irigger National and responders in any disaster or NIDM said that the media has al- need to be addressed on an ur- Deva, Honorary Secretary IEI tween the media and Govern- can be ensured even if disaster IKSC moderated the webinar. Masood Hussain, Secretary Gensaid that the key element is Community Radio Stations. the right information at the right time. He suggested that nalist and Analyst, spoke about it is important to partner with Media for ensuring effective media as a medium of dissemidissemination of information. nation of immediate informa-He appreciated the organisers for initiating a thought provoking process by organising this webinar which would be most suggested that there is need to effective in a post disaster situation if the coordination mechanism is established in advance. Sardar Nasir Ali Khan, from

FM Radio Channels said that since communication gets disrupted during disasters, emphasis should be given on ensuring ways and means for catering to the needs of people in the urban and rural areas, ity. He suggested that mobile van stations should be inductdisseminations

ment, particularly the Disaster strikes. He suggested that there Management Authorities. He is a dire need of establishing

Majid Hyderi, Freelance Jourthe benefits of utilizing social tion to the public and gave examples of how it has been used across the Globe. He however ensure a regulation mechanism for social media to curb chaos and rumor mongering.

Miss Yogita Garbyal, Professional from Bilquees Dar Consultant Disaster Management and Ishfaq Ahmed Dar from IEI JKSC facilitated the webinar. The participants included media fraternity, experts, professionals, Council where there is least connectiv- and Corporate Members of IEI and general public. The webinar was launched on CISCO Webex stressed on strengthening the ed, so that communication and Platform and was also live on

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Editorial:

## DDC poll outcome

he outcome of the District Development Council election has been along predictable lines. The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration has done well in Kashmir Valley and the Muslim majority parts of Jammu while as the BJP has done well in Hindu majority areas of Jammu. Going by the number of seats the PAGD has won, it can take control of around 14 DDCs. The PAGD can now also claim the outcome is a vote for restoration of Article 370. The BJP, on the other hand, claims it has won more votes in its core constituency, so the decision to abrogate Article 370 has public support.

The BJP had deployed its major leaders to the region to campaign - Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Shahnawaz Khan, Smriti Irani, Anurag Thakur traveled far and wide to address election rallies. The home minister Amit Shah also weighed in by framing the election as a battle between nationalist and anti-national forces, the BJP's favourite electoral trope. He called the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) "a gang", a label that is since being reiterated by the BJP leaders.

The eight-phase polls which began from November 28 were announced all of a sudden. But the Gupkar alliance was quick to declare its participation taking many people by surprise as earlier the utterances of its top leaders like Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti had indicated they won't be taking part in the exercise. This seemed to indicate that the PAGD was reluctant to fight polls as some quarters had expressed apprehensions that this would normalise the revocation of Article 370. But the PAGD decision has belied such expectations.

The PAGD rationalised its decision to participate as a bid to reclaim the political space, cautioning that doing otherwise would enable the BJP and its allied parties to fill in the vacuum and control the levers of power. The grouping also argued that strengthening its political presence at the district level will add force to its position that Article 370 was revoked without consulting people of J&K.

Given the powers the DDCs have been given, they have become the kind of mini-assemblies and it has thus become important for Gupkar alliance to control these to enhance its political clout.

These huge stakes make the role of the DDCs profoundly significant. For one, the campaigning and the polling associated with them has brought back the political activity to J&K after a hiatus of sixteen months. This, in turn, also confronts the BJP with its biggest political challenge in the region. The PAGD dominated DDCs are expected to assert. But primarily the DDCs are for the development of the former state and their performance will be judged by how they deliver on the ground.

#### OTHER OPINON

## Must Pakistan be so OIC-oriented?

he ummah comprises world Muslims linked through an unshakable bond of belief and emotions peculiar to Muslims; the OIC consists mostly of unelected governments of 50-plus member states which may or may not share common interests because of differences in geography, ethnography and historical experience. Even the 22 members of the Arab League do not have a common perception of geopolitical issues and are sometimes at loggerheads, as can be seen in their policies on the slaughter in Syria, Yemen and Libya.

One point should, however, be grasped at the outset. The Arab world is the pivot on which the ummah turns. Without the Arabs and their language there is no ummah. This is a harsh geopolitical and historical reality, and if one finds Arab governments indifferent to non-Arab issues — even tragedies like

Kashmir and Rohingya — then one can only pray. There is another bitter observation: the average Arab cannot understand how people — eg those millions of Indonesians, South Asians, Kazakhs or Bosnians — can be Muslim if they do not speak the language of the Holy Quran.

Getting down to brass tacks, it was the UAE which gave two blows to Pakistan last year. In March, it hosted at Abu Dhabi the 46th OIC foreign ministers' conference, which the late Indian foreign minister, Sushma Swaraj, attended as an honoured guest. Later that year, it could have come up with a stronger denunciation of the Indian move to abolish India-held Kashmir's special status and amendment to the nationality law. The entire Arab world was indifferent

Must we be so OIC-oriented? What is this lame-duck organisation good for? It doesn't even have non-political achievements to its credit. No country in the world attaches so much importance to it as Pakistan does for reasons which are visceral and not grounded in geopolitical realities. India, too, watches the OIC carefully and derives sadistic pleasure from Pakistan's discomfiture. (India enjoys observer status at the Arab League.)

... The Arabs are basically a secular people. A native of Damascus or Cairo is first a Syrian or Egyptian, then an Arab and lastly a Muslim. He is impervious to non-Arab overtures on a religious basis. In fact, he is suspicious as to the motive. Islam is in his blood, and unlike us Pakistanis he doesn't flaunt it.

Muhammad Ali Siddiqi in Dawn

## **UP Anti-Conversion Law**

Constitutional courts should strike down UP's Anti-Conversion law



AMJED ASHRAF

The ordinance law in the first place owes its existence to a hypothetical and bogus term of 'Love-Jihad'. As the Government of India, as such, nowhere recognizes the notion of Love-Jihad, bringing a law against such a fictional notion, prima facie reflects the oblivious and dogmatic attitude of the State government

ince the promulgation of the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance 2020 by the Governor of the Statein exercise of the powers conferred on him by the grundnorm of the land-the moral as well as constitutional validity of it has been a huge subject matter of debate. No sooner had it enacted than it kicked up a storm across the legal realms of the country. Although the anti-conversion laws of such a nature already exist in several other states, the UP law is a draconian law of its own kind. The ordinance law in the first place owes its existence to a hypothetical, bogus, and dog whistle term of 'Love-Jihad'. As the Government of India as such nowhere recognizes the notion of Love-Jihad, bringing a law against such a fictional notion, prima facie reflects the oblivious and dogmatic attitude of the State government. Nevertheless, there are numerous provisions in the ordinance, which per se flout the law of the land. In this article, we will try to scrutinize some provisions of it on a legal footing

The Article 213 clause (1) of the Indian constitution empowers the governor of a State, to promulgate ordinances during recess of legislature. The provision explicitly mentions that "if the governor is satisfied that circumstances exist, which render it necessary for him to take immediate action he may promulgate such ordinances The apex court of the country in the case of Krishna Kumar Singh v State of Bihar, 2017 and various other cases has held that the President and Governor's power under Article 123 and Article 213 respectively, is subject to judicial review. It thus implies that the 'satisfaction' and 'immediate action' must have a legal sanctity and the attainment of which ought not to be indeterminate, and vague. However, the procedure involved in the UP Anti-Conversion law stands contrary to such established precedents on the aspect that such circumstances, which could compel the governor to promulgate the ordinance were palpably and outright absent. Thus, the procedure taken to assent the ordinance is challenging to the core.

The ordinance under Section 3 prohibits conversion from one religion to another on the grounds of fraud, misrepresentation, coercion, allurement etc, or by marriage. It also states that no person shall abet, convince or conspire such conversion. Notwithstanding the said law, the conversion due to force, undue influence, has had to be void undoubtedly, but the use of terms like "allurement" and "convince" in the ordinance, are open to interpretation, hence ambiguous. It therefore allows the state to bring any act within the purview of the definition of such terms. Besides, the phrase 'by marriage' in it deems all marriages involving the religion conversion, as illegal, unless proven otherwise, thereby coming in repugnance with a citizen's fundamental rights. It thereby directly infringes the Right to Life and Personal Liberty, and Freedom of Conscience and Propagation of Religion, guaranteed under Article 21 and 25 of the Indian constitution respectively. The ordinance crystal clearly eclipses the apex court's ruling in the case of Shafin Jahan v. Asokan K.M 2018, that "the right to change of faith is part of fundamental right of choice." It also overshadows the Allahabad High Court's recent landmark verdict in the case of Salamat Ansari v. State of U.P, that "Right to live with a person of his/her choice irrespective of religion is intrinsic to right to life and personal liberty." Furthermore, the proviso to Section 3 is as intransigent and inconsistent, as anything is. It deems the reconversion to previous religion not a conversion at all. It means that even if the reconversion is done by means of force, fraud, etc, it is valid under this act. The other legal loophole is that the ordinance while criminalizing the conversion by marriage, explicitly strikes to reverse the administration of criminal justice in the country by placing the burden of proof on the accused rather than the prosecution. It blatantly violates the legal principle of "innocent until proven guilty", which is also an internationally recognized principle. Besides, the ordinance aims to infringe the Right to privacy of a person-which is a human right recognized internationally under instruments like Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) etc, also guaranteed by the constitution of India under Article 21-by giving the instrumentalities of state a free hand to curtail this right vis-àvis marriage. In compliance with the KS Puttaswamy Case, the ordinance fails to conform to the three-fold test laid down therein. The law is also in repugnance with the Special Marriage Act of the Country. Apart from the legal apertures, the UP ordinance law is ostensibly patriarchal in nature. It undermines the dignity and conscience of women at large. Since its inception, it has hastily taken a heavy toll on the rights of minorities particularly the Muslims, which simply reflects the malafide intention on the part of the government.

In view of the same, the constitutional courts must step in and jettison the ordinance law before it can become a statute. Such laws sear into the social and secular fabric of the country and undermine the purpose of constitutionalism. It's the duty of the judiciary to discourage such laws so as to safeguard the tenets of the highest norm of the land.

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

The author is currently pursuing law at Central University of Kashmir and can be reached at amjed.ashraf20@gmail.com



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## Global disturbing disparities

mbassador Volkan Bozkir, the President of United Nations General Assembly has put forth an ambitious agenda during his maiden speech before the world body on September 14, 2020, "It is not only a health crisis, but a social and economic crisis, which has exacerbated existing challenges the UN is seeking to overcome through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)."

Let us try to analyze some of these SDGs set out by the United Nations. It is a fact that while citizens of some African and Asian countries are starving, the rich countries are beset with obesity. Discrepancies of these types are morally disturbing. The United Nations is ideally suited to ending these shocking inequalities because it hosts all the nations of the world and endows each with identical voting power in the General Assembly. The poorest and the weakest are equal to the richest and the strongest.

The most urgent approach to promoting global partnership for sustainable development is the ending of warfare. War,

whether intramural or international, wreaks havoc on the elements necessary for health, housing, education, employment, the rule of law, the environment,

and happiness generally. The second urgent global sustainable development objective should be universal literacy and education. As Socrates explained, the unexamined life is not worth living. Or as philosopher Sam Johnson amplified, there is the same difference between the learned and unlearned as between the living and the dead. And as the Quran says, "Are those who know equal with those who know not?" These observations are made not to deride or degrade the uneducated, but to underscore the criticality of education to making life morally meaningful and fulfilling between ashes to ashes and dust-to-dust.

Third on the global sustainable development agenda should be the elimination of poverty and the securing for every man, woman, and child a right to flourishing health, a clean environment, comfortable housing, and nutritious food. The goal is not a choice but a moral obligation. Thus, rich countries should transfer much of their riches to poor countries.

Next on the list of global sustainable development priorities should be the ending of all racial, ethnic, or class hatreds or enmities. The attainment of equality for women is another pressing yardstick of global sustainable development. Similarly repugnant is

trafficking in children for slave labor. Global sustainable development also requires universal access to the Internet, a technological marvel that brings the excitement of knowledge and the joys of instant communication to every user. The United Nations should play a key role in the universal access quest.

A clean environment is also essential to global sustainable development.

Let me with great humility offer a few closing observations about the entire global sustainable development enterprise. It is characteristic that national or international organizations employ quantitative benchmarks to measure success in meeting enumerated objectives. For instance, a longstanding objective has been for each nation to contribute a specified percentage of its gross domestic product for humanitarian or foreign aid. Companion quantitative benchmarks have been set for literacy, vaccinations, annual income, longevity, smoking, etc.

There is nothing inherently mischievous about these development yardsticks. But they should never distract from our recognition that the highest in sustainable development consists of non-quantifiable characteristics. These would include acts of charity, humility, courage, benevolence, magnanimity, self-restraint, and non-vindictiveness. It would seem to me to turn logic and morality on their heads to award higher sustainable development acclaim to a nation whose citizens were universally economically prosperous, literate, healthy, long-lived, non-polluting, but also mean-spirited, selfish, and egotistical than to a nation whose citizens were impoverished, plagued by disease, but were generous in time, effusive in hospitality, austere in habits. and selfless for the community.

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# **Coronavirus Mutations** and Current Crop of Vaccines

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**If there** are lots of mutations in nonessential regions of a virus' genetic material, it can likely still function. **But mutations in** critical regions can disable a virus, so these don't occur very often

oronavirus" has already established itself as the scary new word of 2020. Add the word "mutant", and you've got an even stronger candidate for the scary new phrase of 2021.

One fear is that critical parts of the coronavirus genome will mutate, making any vaccine obsolete before it's widely rolled out next year.

But how much of an issue is this really? As we'll see, SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, mutates, as do all viruses. But unlike other RNA viruses, it's actually quite stable.

That's largely good news for the first crop of vaccines that are set to be rolled out around the world in 2021.

#### What's a mutation anyway?

In genetic terms, a mutation is just a scary word for a mistake. As cells make new copies of a virus, mistakes happen. These mistakes sometimes result in a stronger virus, sometimes a weaker virus.

But in most cases mutations in the coronavirus are irrelevant anomalies that cause changes to the genetic material (RNA) but not the resulting proteins that make up its composition and structure.

In fact, SARS-CoV-2 seems to have a slower rate of mutation than other RNA viruses. That's because it belongs to a family of viruses with genetic proofreading mechanisms that can identify and remove most mistakes in its RNA when the virus replicates.

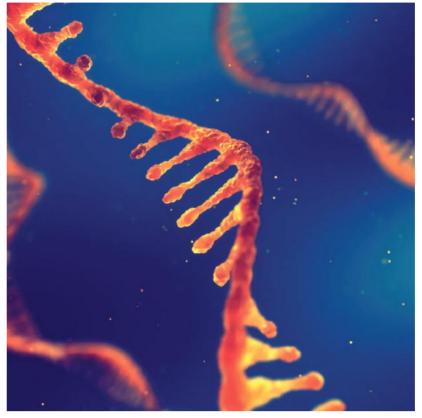
This means SARS-CoV-2 has about half the mutation rate of influenza and a quarter the mutation rate

#### What about mutations and spike pro-

If there are lots of mutations in non-essential regions of a virus' genetic material, it can likely still function. But mutations in critical regions can disable a virus, so these don't occur very often.

This is why vaccines are typically designed against these critical regions — to safeguard against mutations that would make them ineffective.

And it's mutations in one of these critical regions, the COVID-19 spike



protein, that has gained significant attention recently.

This is the protein many CO-VID-19 vaccines use to generate a protective immune response. In fact, the four vaccines Australia has signed agreements for, should they pass clinical trials, all either contain the virus' spike protein or carry the instructions your body needs to make it.

#### What's all this to do with mink?

One mutation that has attracted controversy is the D614G mutation, partly because it leads to a spike protein with a slightly altered shape.

And some scientists were concerned this mutation, plus three others in the spike protein, would help the virus bypass the type of immunity generated following vaccination.

These mutations emerged when the coronavirus jumped from hu-

mans to minks and back again.

To avoid the potentially disastrous implications of this new combination of variants rapidly spreading in humans, millions of minks were culled in Denmark, Spain and the Netherlands.

However, not all scientists are convinced of the potential impact of this combination of mutations. So studies are currently under way to better understand their impact.

#### Syringes at ten paces

Considering what we know about how the virus mutates and the rate of these mutations, the first generation of COVID-19 vaccines look likely to provide some protection against currently circulating SARS-CoV-2 strains.

However, researchers are monitoring the possible emergence of any new mutations in the spike protein

from isolates around the world to ensure ongoing vaccine effectiveness.

We can identify any mutations using a technique called genome sequencing, which allows scientists to read the complete genetic sequence, or genome, of the virus.

Since January, scientists around the world have generated and made publicly available more than 246,000 COVID-19 genomes. Scientists can then compare these with the early COVID-19 genomes sequenced in Wuhan. These early sequences are the templates for the vaccines we are waiting impatiently for.

This surveillance will provide an early warning system for potentially critical mutations. And if researchers find mutations, they need to work out what these mutations actually do, using so-called "functional tests"

Such tests can tell us whether a new mutation influences our immune response to the spike protein, compared to those induced by the original Wuhan strain. We can also investigate if antibodies following vaccination can continue to bind to the spike protein of emerging strains and prevent the virus from infecting human cells.

#### So should we be worried?

Researchers have only been able to study this coronavirus for a very short time. So only time will tell if it mutates at a frequency and at limited positions in the essential regions, as we have come to expect. That's why surveillance is so important.

The current crop of vaccines have been developed using decades of accumulated scientific knowledge and are based on what we know about mutations in this and other coronaviruses. So we shouldn't be too worried when we read scary headlines about a "mutant coronavirus".

This past year has demonstrated the capacity to rapidly produce vaccines, which hopefully can be modified to reflect new mutations and merging strains should they occur.

> By arrangements with The Conversation

## Ventilation to Reduce COVID risk

Mary-Louise McLaws

s many of us return to the office, and congregate indoors over dinner and drinks during the summer holidays, we need to think about ventilation to minimise the indoor spread of COVID-19.

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID, is spread mostly by larger particles called droplets, but also by smaller particles called aerosols, and by touch from contaminated surfaces.

Aerosol particles are lighter than droplet-sized particles, and can be suspended in the air for longer. The suspension and therefore transmission of aerosols is facilitated by poor ventilation.

Increasing ventilation indoors, with fresh outdoor air, is a key method of dispersing viral particles. Ventilation can reduce the risk that just one COVIDpositive person (who might not yet know they're infectious) will infect others.

There are some simple measures you can take, both at home and at work, to improve ventilation over the holiday period and beyond.

#### 1. Open windows and doors

The best strategy at home and at work is simply to open windows and

If you're having friends and family over for a meal, or your office Christmas party, consider moving tables and chairs closer to open windows and open up a door to create a through breeze.

Or, if weather permits, eat outside.

#### 2. Set your air conditioner to pull fresh air from outside

must be on the right setting.

Air conditioners can help, but they

At work or home you don't want to recirculate indoor air, as this just fans the same air around the room (but now colder or warmer).

Instead, always make sure your air conditioner is set to bring in 100% fresh air from outside. There are settings in offices that allow the system to increase air change per hour, meaning it can reduce the time it takes for all the air inside the



room to be completely replaced with outside fresh air.

But the direction of the airflow is also important. For example, airflow from an air conditioner (that was recirculating air rather than pulling it from outside) was implicated in spreading the virus to a number of diners at tables downstream

in a restaurant in China Offices welcoming back staff should prepare their air conditioners by having their engineers service the system to pull in fresh air faster than the pre-COVID setting (which may have been around 40 litres per second per person) at no less than 60 litres per second, per person.

In hospitals, aged-care facilities and hotel quarantine, qualified engineers should be brought in to assess the adequacy of the air conditioner's airflow. This is particularly crucial for any "hot zones" accommodating people who are COVID-positive.

The World Health Organisation recommends hot zones have 12 airflow changes per hour (that's 80 litres per second per person), meaning the air is totally replaced 12 times every 60 minutes. This is the gold standard for ventilation. and can be very hard to achieve in many buildings

Guidelines released last week by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend placing fans near open windows to enhance airflow. The recommendation is to keep fans on at all times when a room is occupied, for example at restaurants.

As with aircons, fans can be dangerous if they push the air directly from one person to another, and one is infectious. You should place the fan so it increases the flow of fresh air into the room, and shouldn't be placed so the air moves from the room towards the open window or

#### 4. Don't bother with HEPA filters at home

High-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters have been marketed as a way to reduce the concentration of SARS-CoV-2 particles in the air.

Their effectiveness is dependent on

Increasing ventilation indoors, with fresh outdoor air, is a key method of dispersing viral particles. . Ventilation can reduce the risk that iust one COVIDpositive person (who might not yet know they're infectious) will infect others.

the airflow capacity of the unit, the configuration of the room, the number of people in the room, and the position of the filter in the room.

But there's no evidence to suggest a portable HEPA filter unit will help in vour home. So don't rush out and buy one for Christmas.

They may be effective in some areas of health care, such as a COVID ward in a hospital or in aged care homes, particularly when used in negative-pressure rooms. The combination of the HEPA filter and negative air pressure reduces the risk of aerosol particles escaping into the corridor.

#### 5. In public transport, taxis and Ubers

COVID outbreaks have been traced back to exposure on public transport. For example, a young man in Hunan Province, China, travelled on two buses and infected multiple people who were sitting in different areas of the buses. A study of this cluster was carried out by Chinese researchers, who put forward one theory regarding air flow:

The closed windows with running ventilation on the buses could have created an ideal environment for aerosol transmission [...] the ventilation inlets were aligned above the windows on both sides, and the exhaust fan was in the front, possibly creating an airflow carrying aerosols containing the viral particles from the rear to the middle and front of the vehicle.

The study's authors recommend all windows be open on public transport to help disperse viral particles. If you're on a tram or a bus, you should open them if you can.

However, on some forms of public transport it might be impossible, like trains. In these instances, you should wear a mask.

Likewise, it's ideal to have the windows down in Ubers and taxis. But if you can't or don't want to, turn on the air conditioner and have it pull fresh air from outside. And still wear a mask!

> By arrangements with The Conversation

#### Cold Wave ...

Tuesday's minus 5.8 degrees Celsius. Qazigund, the gateway town to the Valley, recorded a minimum of minus 4 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara in the north registered a low of minus 4.5 degrees Celsius and Kokernag, in the south, minus 4.0 degrees Celsius, the weather department officials said.

'Chillai-Kalan' -- the 40-day harshest winter period when the chances of snowfall are most frequent and maximum -began in Kashmir on Monday.

Cold wave grips the region during this period and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies including the famous Dal Lake as well as the water supply lines in several parts of the valley.

While 'Chillai-Kalan' will end on January 31, the cold wave continues even after that in Kashmir with a 20-day-long 'Chillai-Khurd' (small cold) and a 10-daylong 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).

The meteorological department has said the weather is likely to remain mainly dry till December 25, but there is a possibility of light snow on higher reaches during December 26 and 27. There is no forecast of any major snowfall activity till the end of this month, it added. (PTI)

#### Counting Suspended ...

controlled Kashmir (PcK), who are married to former militants, are among the contestants from the Dragmulla and Hajin-A constituencies

A final decision in this regard shall be taken after taking all aspects into consideration, the SEC said. He said any person who is contesting the elections has to be a citizen of the country.

The Election Commission acted after a complaint was received and the names of both these candidates were accordingly removed from the electoral rolls because of this doubt The question about their citizenship is there and so we will be hearing from them and will take a decision accordingly, Sharma said.

In response to a question, he said the counting in the two constituencies has not started and the ballot boxes still remain sealed.

India is a democracy and has a tradition for people coming into the country from abroad. PcK is different so we have taken a very considerate decision otherwise there were other options available like stopping of elections or countermanding the polling, he said, adding, We are studying the matter and will act according to the law of the land. I think we have made a good decision.

Sharma said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the single largest party with 75 DDC constituencies followed by J&K National Conference with 67 + seats while the PDP won 27 and Indian National Congress (INC) won 26 seats.

Similarly, the newly formed J&K Apni Party (JKAP) won 12 while JKPC and CPI-M bagged eight and five seats respectively, he added.

He said independents turned out to be major winners during these elections, winning 18 percent of the total seats while registering their win on 50 seats.

Likewise, JKNPP and PDF registered win on two seats each and BSP emerged victorious on one seat from Kathua dis-

The SEC informed that 28,55,509 votes ere counted in total in the 278 DDC constituencies.

Among the political parties BJP got 24.82 percent votes followed by JKNC with 16.46 percent, Congress 13.82 percent, PDP 3.96 percent, JKAP 5.3 percent, IKPC 1.98 percent vote share while rest of the vote share went to others including independent candidates, he said.

Sharma lauded the efforts of all the employees, security forces, police personnel and health officials who remained engaged in the counting of votes till early morning on Wednesday.

The SEC reiterated that despite the cold conditions particularly in the Kashmir valley and some parts of Jammu province, all the counting officials and allied arrangements have put in their great efforts by remaining at their counting stations very early on Tuesday morning, when the counting started, till its conclusion.

He complimented all the district administrations for the arrangements that were put in place for the counting process besides ensuring smooth conduct of the election process despite the challenging situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### 5 Of 7 Ex- Ministers ...

district, won the seat with a margin of 1,596 votes, officials said.

Taj, who held several terms as minister and MLA, polled 9,741 votes against the Peoples Conference (PC) leader Shaukat Ali Khan, who got 4,451 votes in the first-ever District Development Council (DDC) election. Mohiuddin, the 72-yearold Gujjar leader who is facing CBI probe into the Roshi land scam, fought against Khan. Supported by Farooq Abdullah's Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (NC) and Mehbooba Mufti's J&K Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Mohiuddin is the consensus candidate from the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD).

Known as the Congress' 'crown', Taj has represented Uri thrice as MLA.

He has functioned as a cabinet minister in the governments of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, Ghulam Nabi Azad and Omar Abdullah.

Veteran NC leader and former minister Abdul Gani, who contested from Mahore seat in Reasi district, won the election by a margin of 351 votes. He polled 4,833 votes and defeated independent candidate Shafi-ur-Rehman, who got 4,482 votes. Gani has been MLA and a former minister in the Omar Abdullah

government. Jagjeevan Lal, a senior NC leader and former minister, won the Reasi seat by defeating BJP's Chaman Lal by 237 votes. Lal polled 4,507 votes against Lal's 4270.

Former Congress minister and veteran Gujjar leader Ajaz Ahmed Khan, who joined the J&K Apni Party, won the DDC election from Thuroo segment of Reasi district by 1,578 votes, according to the

Ajaz Khan polled 4,904 votes, while Mohmmad Ashraf of the NC polled 3,326 votes. A two-time MLA, Ajaj Khan was a minister in the NC-Congress government.

A veteran Pahari leader and former Congress minister, Shabir Ahmed Khan won the Manjakote seat in Rajouri district with a margin of 3,394 votes as he polled 8,714 votes against Shafat Khan, who got 5,320 votes. Shabir Khan was minister in the NC-Congress government led Omar Abdullah.

Former BJP ministers Sham Lal Choudhary and Shakti Raj Parihar, however, lost their seat from Jammu and Doda districts.

Choudhary lost his election in Suchetgarh constituency of Jammu district by 11 votes, which according to the officials is the "smallest" margin so far in the DDC polls.

Choudhary polled 12,958 votes against independent candidate Taranjit Singh, who polled 12,969 votes.

A cabinet minister in the BJP-PDP coalition government in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, Choudhary had won the assembly election from Suchetgarh constituency in 2008 and 2014 and is considered to be a powerful leader in the border belt of R S Pura.

Another former minister of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Shakti Raj Parihar lost both the seats he contested from Gundna and Marmat segments of Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district.

Parihar lost to NC candidate Asim Hashmi by 1,336 votes. Hashmi polled 7,835 votes, while Parihar 6,499, according to the data. Parihar lost the Marmat seat by 1,330 votes as he polled 7,033 votes against Congress candidate Mushtaq Ahmed, who polled 8,363 votes.

Parihar, who was the vice president of BIP's I&K unit, is considered to be an important player in the region and was a minister in the BJP-PDP government.

Former BJP MLAs Gharu Ram and Bharat Bushan won their seats in Jammu district, while former legislators Kanta Andhotra, Shahnaz Ganai, Shah Mohmmad Tantray and Mumtaz Khan lost their election.

The PAGD swept the maiden DDC polls by winning 110 seats, while the BJP emerged as the single largest party by getting 74 seats after securing the largest vote share in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Wednesday.

The results of four constituencies - one each in Bandipora and Kupwara districts of north Kashmir and Poonch and Rajouri districts in Jammu region - were awaited.

#### Gupkar Alliance ...

Commissioner has directed the returning officers concerned to defer the counting of votes in the two constituencies till further orders, the officials said.

In the Darhal constituency of Rajouri district, BJP's M Iqbal Malik defeated National Conference's Parvez Rashid by 3,748 votes, taking the total number of

The PAGD had won six seats, the Congress and the BJP three each while one seat each had gone to the Apni Party and an independent candidate in the district.

With regard to the Balakote constituency in Poonch district, the seat went into the kitty of independent candidate Massarat Jabin, who won by a margin of 670 votes over her PDP rival Afshan Aftab. She became the eighth independent candidate to register a win from the constituency and overall 50 in the union territory.

Now, Poonch district had the highest number of eight independents, followed by seven in Srinagar. The rest of the six seats in Poonch district were shared by Congress (four) and National Conference

Among the PAGD constituents, the National Conference won the highest number of 67 seats, followed by PDP (27). People's Conference (eight), CPI(M) five and I-K Peoples Movement (three), getting a total share of over 3.94 lakh votes

The BJP, on the other hand, won 75 seats, including three in Kashmir, after getting a total of 4.87 lakh votes. However, it only managed to get a clear majority in five districts - Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Samba and Doda and enjoys an edge in Reasi district - all in the ammu region.

The PAGD managed a good show in Pir Panchal and Chenab valley's Kishtwar and Ramban districts, besides its candidate from the National Conference winning one seat each in Jammu and Samba districts.

The Congress polled a total of over 1.39 votes, while the Independents got 1.71 lakh votes.

Union minister Anurag Thakur, BJP's incharge of the DDC elections in J-K, claimed that voters in the union territory rejected the PAGD and extended wholehearted support to the BJP, which had also won three seats for the first time in Kashmir valley, opening the doors for the

"The DDC elections were held in a free, fair and peaceful atmosphere, for which the election machinery, local administration, police and other security agencies deserve all praises," the Minister of State for Finance told reporters at BJP headquarters here.

Thakur, who camped in Jammu during most of the elections and extensively campaigned for the party candidates throughout the union territory, hailed the public for their participation in the democratic exercise.

"Attempts were made to threaten them, there were talks of militancy and youth picking up guns but people participated enthusiastically in the elections. Hundreds jumped into the fray, while lakhs voted, leading to the successful conclusion of the exercise," he said, adding that it was the "win" for the people and the democracy.

More than 51 per cent polling was recorded in the elections, which was far better than the previous polls.

"Despite various opposition parties coming together under the banner of the Gupkar gang, they failed to give a challenge to the BJP We won 75 seats which is highest by any party and got the vote share of 38.74 per cent, which is more than PAGD that only got 32.96 per cent,"

Asked about his reaction to two BJP former ministers Sham Lal Choudhary and Shakti Raj Parihar losing the elections from different seats in Jammu region, he said the party will deliberate on it.

#### Mehbooba Accuses ...

During a press conference at her Gupkar residence here, the former chief minister said the BJP should should fight her politically and stop using these agencies like its "mistresses".

"The witch-hunt which the Central government had started has reached its peak. For the last two years, they have been looking around for my assets, properties or houses in my name.

"When they could not get anything from there, they resorted to raids on the houses of my family members, relatives, friends and colleagues. The ED is being misused. The NIA and ED are being weaponised," Mufti alleged.

Referring to the arrest of PDP youth leader Waheed Para by the NIA in a militancy case, she said, "You (BJP) have the might of the government, so many MPs. If you have to fight me, do so politically and not through the NIA, ED and CBI."

The NIA arrested PDP youth wing president Parra in connection with a militancy case on November 25.

"As they have nothing to stick to me as far as corruption is concerned, they have tried through Para to connect me to militant-funding. This is injustice and cowardice on their part. If they have to fight a lady, fight politically. They fought (in the

DDC polls) and lost," the PDP chief said. She alleged that Para was kept under NIA custody for about a month "with the sole purpose that he accepts something so that it ultimately is connected to her".

"My colleagues have been taken into custody... I was conveyed a lot of times to think about my future and stop being concerned about Jammu and Kashmir, but I did not accept it," Mufti said.

She said if the government wants to arrest her, it should come straight to her and stop harassing her family members, relatives, friends and party colleagues.

"You are using these agencies like your mistresses. If they do not have courage to fight a woman politically, then, I think, they should wear bangles and sit at home... I do not think they have any moral authority to rule. Whatever act nev bring, neonl come out on roads (to protest). They have destroyed the constitution," Mufti said.

The PDP chief alleged that the government was investigating and auditing the mausoleum of her father and PDP founder Mufti Mohammad Sayeed at Bijbehara in south Kashmir.

"They have stooped to such a low level that they are investigating and auditing the mausoleum of Mufti sahab. The information I have is that they are looking into where the money came from to build that. They do not leave even a dead per-

son," she said. The PDP president expressed happiness over the results of the DDC polls, saying she was pleasantly surprised because the BIP had "bulldozed" her party. About the BJP winning three seats in the Valley, she alleged "the party used money, machinery and manipulation to win

The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) swept the maiden District Development Council (DDC) polls by winning 110 seats, while the BJP emerged as the single largest party by getting 75 seats after securing the largest vote share in Jammu and Kashmir.

"They (BJP) thought people are not with the parties here, but the results have shown that the people are with the NC, PC and PDP," Mufti said. (PTI)

#### This is a victory ...

In a series of tweets, Shah also thanked the people of Jammu and Kashmir for voting the BJP as the single largest party in the maiden DDC polls.

"The Modi government is doing everything possible to restore the grassroots democracy in Jammu & Kashmir. The recently held DDC polls for the first time in the history of J&K is the testimony of the same. The mass participation in these elections reflects people's faith in democracy," he tweeted.

Congratulating the people of Jammu and Kashmir for "such a great turnout" in the DDC elections, the home minister applauded the efforts of the security forces and local administration for successfully conducting these multi-phased elections as this will further boost the morale and trust of people of the UT in democracy.

"I heartily thank our sisters and brothers of J&K for voting BJP as the single largest party in the District Development Council elections. BJP under the

leadership of PM @narendramodi ji will continue to work relentlessly towards the prosperity and development of the I&K region," he said.

Meanwhile, Law Minister and senior party leader Ravi Shankar Prasad also rejected the contention that the District Development Council poll results are a win for People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), noting that the BJP has emerged as the single largest party and that it has got more votes than the total votes of the National Conference. the PDP and the Congress put together.

The PAGD is an amalgamation of parties, including the NC and the PDP, which have been fiercely opposed to the Modi government's measures like abrogation of Article 370 and scrapping of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood.

Addressing a press conference, Prasad noted that the BJP has won 74 seats against the NC's 67, PDP's 27 and the Congress' 26 and claimed that many of 39 independent winners had his party's

support.
The PAGD in total won 110 seats.

While the BJP put up a strong show in the Jammu region, Prasad noted that lotus, a reference to his party's poll symbol, had bloomed in the Valley as well.

The Gupkar alliance was formed because its constituents knew that they could not fight the BJP on their own, he "This is a victory for India, democracy, hope, development and people of Jammu

and Kashmir. This is a victory for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's larger narrative for Jammu and Kashmir," Prasad told reporters. Development work was ushered in

under the central rule in the region. and people in Kashmir have now distinguished between those who rule and those who serve, he said.

"People have seen how democracy can bring them development. Their faith in democracy has been strengthened," the union minister said, noting that many militancy hotbeds like Pulwama, Kulgam, Shopian and Sopore in Kashmir saw much more polling in the DDC polls than the Lok Sabha elections.

He said the PAGD also lost from the area of Burhan Wani, a Hizbul Mujahideen militant whose social media posts and subsequent killing in an encounter in 2016 had gained a lot of publicity.

This is important as Wani's killing was "made an issue of international campaign by these elements" with Pakistan also raising the matter, he said.

Noting that the BJP has won a string of polls across the length and breadth of the country in the last few months, Prasad said the habitual critics of the prime minister should take note of people's faith in him.

#### I'm Sher ...

but they do not know Farooq Abdullah. am the Sher-e-Kashmir's (NC founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah) son," he said. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) attached assets worth Rs 11.86 crore of Abdullah in connection with the JKCA case on Saturday.

The agency said after conducting investigations under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), it found out that between 2005-06 and 2012, the IKCA received funding totalling to Rs 109.78 crore from the Board of Cricket Control in India (BCCI).

visibly emotional turned 83 in October, asked the NC workers not to be afraid of challenges.

"We will face challenges as the god poses challenges before us to test us. Had there been no challenges, I will not have read Quran the way I did while in custody. So do not fear the challenges," he said.

The NC president said the DDC poll results have proven that the steps taken by the party and the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) were in the right direction.

'We did not campaign. We did not go out to do propaganda or raise flags. But we believed in the people and that if our actions are right, then the god will help us. It has been proven that our actions were right. This is the success of the party workers and every citizen of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

The PAGD, an alliance of several mainstream parties, including the NC and the PDP, seeking the restoration of the erstwhile state's special status, which was revoked by the Centre in August last year - contested the maiden DDC polls in Jammu and Kashmir under a seat-sharing arrangement.

Abdullah said forging the alliance was not easy but the decision was taken for the greater good of the people.

We gave many sacrifices. The hearts of my colleagues were broken over seat-sharing. But we had to render those sacrifices for the greater good. People supported us and understood the aim behind the alliance.

"They (BJP) were saying the NC does not exist anymore. Same things were said about us in 1992 after militancy erupted. Then prime minister PV Narasimha Rao had said the NC was nowhere. But then, they came begging to me in London to save them," he said, adding, "Let me tell them that the NC was here, is here and will remain here." (PTI)

#### independents...

Raj Parihar, who lost from two constituencies in Doda district, has come as a shock for it. Choudhary lost to Singh by a razor-thin margin. Singh polled 12,969 votes against Choudhary's 12958, according to the results declared by the J&K Election Commissioner in the early hours of Wednesday.

Choudhary, who originally hailed from Bhimber Tehsil in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir before his family migrated to border village Chakroi in R S Pura sector, had won Suchetgarh assembly seat for the first time in 2008 and repeated the performance for the party in 2014.

Singh expressed gratitude to his voters and said the vote for him was "against the farm laws imposed by the BIP government on the farmers of the country against their will".

'The BJP went for aggressive campaigning bringing union ministers, chief ministers and national leaders to divert the attention of the voters from the real issues facing the public," Singh, who finally prevailed after a neck-to-neck fight with the BJP leader, said.

Incidentally, this was the smallest margin win by any candidate in Jammu region, though an independent candidate won by just three votes against his National Conference rival in the Kashmir Valley, where many winners succeeded by small margins due to the low voter turnout recorded by various constituencies.

The independent candidates have won a total of 49 seats and one more is leading in another seat in Poonch district.

Another major defeat for the BJP was Parihar losing to his NC rival Asim Hashmi from Gundana segment and Congress opponent from Marmat seat Mushtaq Ahmad, both falling in Doda district, as the day-long counting witnessed a see-saw battle between him and his opponents.

Former MLA Shah Mohammad Tantray, who had resigned from the PDP early this year, was defeated by independent candidate Riyaaz Choudhary, who polled 3,829 votes against 2,898 by him in Loran constituency of Poonch district.

Independent candidate Avtar Singh was the luckiest among the contestants as he won by just three votes. Avtar Singh polled 246 votes against 243 by his NC rival Ali Mohammad Bhat to become the winner from Dadsara constituency in Pulwama district of south Kashmir.

From the same district, BJP's Minha Latief won by 14 votes against her PDP rival Ruqaya Bano. Lateef polled 364 votes, while Bano got 350 votes. The BJP has won three seats from the Kashmir Valley for the first time. Among other low margin wins, inde-

pendent candidate Bilqees Jan defeated her nearest rival Gull Iqbal (Independent) by 11 votes from Zainapora constituency in Shopian district. Jan polled 146 votes and Igbal 135.

Khalida Bibi (PDP) won by seven votes, defeating her nearest rival Sajida Begum (Independent) from Larnoo constituency in Anantnag district. Bibi polled 4,580 votes against Begum's 4,573.

Bial Ahmad Deva (Independent) emerged victorious from Vessu constituency, defeating his nearest rival Mudassir Rashid Mir of Peoples Movement by 35 votes after managing a total of 1,779 votes, while Nisar Ahmad Sheikh (Independent) also registered a win over NC's Rayees Ul Hassan by 35 votes after getting a total of 1,945 votes.

The winning margin in Srinagar, from where the highest number of seven independent candidates won the DDC polls, was also very low. J&K Apni Party won three DDC seats from the district followed by one each by the National Conference, BJP and J&K People's Movement.

Independent candidate Mohammad Yaseen Rather got 156 votes and won by 21 votes from Oamarwari constituency, J&K Apni Party candidate Shameema Bano polled 213 votes and won by 36 votes from Khonmoh-I, while Ali Mohammad Rather (Independent) won Harwan-II by 96 votes after getting 314 votes.

For the rest of the winning candidates, there was three-digit margin as Mohammad Shaban Chopan (Independent) won by the highest margin of 521 votes in the district. He polled 609 against his nearest rival Mohammad Altaf Lali (Independent) who got only 88

votes. In Jammu region which recorded a high turnout during the eight-phase DDC election, BJP's Amit Sharma recorded a win by 47 votes from Majalta segment of Udhampur district against his nearest rival Rajesh Kumar of the National Panthers Party (NPP). Sharma polled 4,215 votes and Kumar 4,168 votes.

A majority of the 14 seats in Udhampur district witnessed a neck-to-neck fight mainly between the BIP and the NPP. The BJP finally won 11 seats, the NPP two and Independent one.

Hans Raj of the Congress defeated BJP's Sanjay Kumar by 99 votes in Drabshalla-B constituency in Kishtwar district after securing 2,621 votes, while BJP's Sharda Bhau won from the highest margin of 8,880 votes against Congress rival Anuradha Sharma from Akhnoor constituency of Jammu district. Bhau polled 14,619 votes against 5,739 by Sharma.

#### J&K Reports ...

Two of the victims, officials said, were residents of Kashmir Valley and one from the winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir. Among those who succumbed included— a 76-year-old man from Kupwara, a 55-year-old man from Bandipora besides one from Jammu division—a 70-year-old woman from Akhnoor.

With these deaths, the total fatality count in J&K reached 1853-1171 in the Valley and 682 in the Jammu region.

Srinagar district with 443 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (347), Baramulla (170), Budgam (106), Kupwara (90), Pulwama (88), Anantnag (82), Doda (61). Bandipora (59), Udhampur (57), Kulgam (53), Rajouri (54), Kathua (48), Ganderbal (43), Shopian (37), Samba (37), Poonch (22), Ramban (21), Kishtwar(21), and Reasi (14).

Meanwhile, the Union Territory

reported 250 new cases, including fourteen travellers and two minors, taking the total number of virus infected people to 119053

While 135 fresh cases were reported from Jammu division, the remaining 115 were confirmed by officials from Kashmir Valley.

Giving district wise details, the officials said that Srinagar reported 49 cases, Baramulla 14, Budgam 17, Kupwara Pulwama 13, Anantnag 1, Bandipora 3, Ganderbal 6, Kulgam 2, Shopian 3, Jammu 98, Udhampur 8, Rajouri 10, Doda 5, Kathua 3, Kishtwar 1, Samba 5, Poonch 0, Ramban 5and Reasi 0. These cases take the overall number of people infected with the virus to 119053.

A number of cases were confirmed at SKIMS Soura, CD hospital and GMC Anantnag and include one CRPF, one army soldier besides two minors.

Moreover, they said, 338 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals— 139 from Jammu Division and 199 from Kashmir Valley. (With GNS inputs)

#### Govt Gears ...

Choudhary, who is also District Magistrate Srinagar, he said, ordered for quick establishment of separate quarantine facilities where the travellers and their contacts will be shifted for undergoing the prescribed quarantine period tested positive. He said the motive behind such measures was to prevent spread of the mutated strain.

According to the official spokesperson, the preventive measures have been taken in line with the advisory issued by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MHFW) after several European countries detected the mutated strain of coronavirus first reported from the UK.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Masarat Hashim, who is the nodal officer Covid-19 mitigation operations Srinagar, informed that two separate institutional quarantine facilities have been set up for travellers from UK and Europe having arrived in Srinagar since December 9.

"He informed that the new quarantine facilities are being set up at Lawaypora and Barbarshah areas adding that while the facility at Lawaypora will be unpaid the facility at Barbarshah will be paid," Hashim, as per official spokesperson said.

He said that the ADC also informed that even those testing negative will have to isolate themselves at home for a period of two weeks adding that a designated health team will be in constant contact with them to monitor their condition.

"To ensure all required measures are taken in the wake of this new development surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, a team of medical experts from the Department of Social & Preventive + Medicine will be advising the DDMA," he "Samples collected from travellers

will be sent to the National Institute of Virology (NIV) Pune to detect the new strain which is said to be faster-spreading and more transmissible. Those testing positive for the mutated strain and their contacts will be isolated in separate institutional quarantine facilities to prevent spread," he added. Meanwhile, Choudhary, as per the offi-

cial spokesperson, has urged all residents of Srinagar and all those visiting the district for work or other purposes to keep wearing face masks and observing social distancing in order to be safe and prevent spreading of the virus.

"Dr Shahid said that guidelines surrounding these measures are still in force and that there has to be strict adherence to them as long as there is COVID-19 pandemic," the official spokesperson added.

#### 4 CRPF Men...

off the area and launched searches to nab the attackers. When this report was filed, no arrest was made, the report said, while quoting an unnamed police officer.

Meanwhile, police on Wednesday

claimed to have busted a module of Jaish-

e-Mohammed (JeM) in Pulwama district by arresting six militant associates who were involved in grenade-throwing incidents. A militant-associate network of the IeM involved in grenade-lobbing incidents in the Tral area of Awantipora and

the Sangam area of Anantnag district has

been busted, a police spokesperson said. He said those arrested were identified as Aijaz Ahmad Bhat, Umer Jabar Dar, Sameer Ahmad Lone, Mohammad Amin Khan, Rafiq Ahmad Khan -- all residents of Tral -- and Suhail Ahmad Bhat, a resident of the Awantipora area of the south Kashmir district.



**Contact Circulation Incharge:** Irshad Ahmad: 7006276927

## **Most Indian Companies Now Open To Hiring And Salary Hikes: Report**



office work, cautious-■ly optimistic corporates are now looking to hire more people and provide bet- (Hiring) at TeamLease Services. ter appraisals in the new year, a report said.

tion point for the Indian job panies even declared early apmarket. For the corporates, work-from-home and remote workers became the new normal and for the professionals, online learning and digital skills took centre stage.

their hiring plans a back seat and plans to hire more people amid uncertain economic out- in the first three months of look while industries like travel, hospitality, retail, aviation, real estate, construction and automobile were severely hit.

tious optimism among corporates and it is getting reflected recovery in the job market. in their recruitment plans for the new year, Mint said in its

Yes, the market is showing positive signs of recovery with almost all industries showing

dapting to the new covered smartly from 11% durnormal of remote and ing the lockdown period to 18% for HY (half year) and this number is growing," Deval Singh - Business Head, Mobilization

Pay cuts have been reversed since Diwali in most organisa-The COVID-19 pandemic tions and bonuses were issued emerged as the biggest inflec- in few. Some technology compraisals; the report noted.

The latest ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey, that covered 1,518 employers across the country, showed that corporate India is show-In 2020, most companies gave ing "healthy signs of recovery" 2021 compared to the quarter ending December.

With encouraging results of vaccine efficacies and the Nevertheless, there is a cau- market largely back to how it was, there is a positive sign of

> Experts believe there is no going back to the pre-COV-ID-19 world in its entirety and the digital transformation that changed the very fabric of the Indian workforce in 2020 is



**JAMMU:** An awareness camp Kashmir. cum workshop on 'Technology Business Incubator' for rector CSIR-Indian Institute of start-ups and entrepreneurs Integrative Medicine Jammu, of Union Territory of Jammu in his message, expressed and Kashmir was jointly or- strong need to create an enganized here today by the trepreneurship mind set in Directorate of Industries and the I&K region as this place Commerce, Jammu and Indian has a huge potential for in-Institute of Integrative Medi- dustrial growth and develcine- Technology Business Incubator (IIIM-TBI).

merce, Jammu, Anoo Malhotra, while inaugurating the workshop, asked all the stakeholders to take benefit of the tech-based incubator which definitely bring out the newer has been located in the heart of Jammu.

stakeholders from different fields, Subah Mehta, General Manager, District Industries Centre, Jammu highlighted the benefits of such workshops being conducted by the about the facilities of IIIM-TBI department on regular basis.

Coordinator IIIM-TBI informed the gathering about the state of the art infrastruc- tailed presentation on "Techtural facilities, scientific-intel- nology Business Incubator" in lectual support and business Jammu region was given by ecosystem offered by the IIIM- Dr Saurabh Saran, Er Anil Ku-Technology Business Incuba- mar Katare both senior scientor to the potential budding tists CSIR-IIIM and Er Ankush

Dr. D. Srinivasa Reddy, Diopment. He appreciated the support extended by the Di-Director, Industries & Com- rectorate of Industries & Commerce by collaborating with IIIM- Technology Business Incubator (TBI) as such kind of awareness workshops will ideas and would benefit the start-ups, entrepreneurs and While welcoming all the the public in large.

Meanwhile, startup companies, industrialists and entrepreneurs of Jammu primarily dealing with biotech and life sciences were sensitized and incubation support for new business ideas.

During the programme, a deentrepreneurs of Jammu and Varma Coordinator IIIM-TBI.



## **Businesses With Monthly Turnover Of Over Rs 50 Lakh To** Pay At Least 1% Gst Liability In Cash

lakh will have to mandatorily pay at least 1 per cent of their GST liability in cash, the Finance Ministry said as it moved to curb evasion by fake invoicing.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has introduced Rule 86B in Goods and Services Tax (GST) rules which restricts use of input tax credit (ITC) for discharging GST liability to 99 per cent.

"...The registered person shall not use the amount available in electronic credit ledger to discharge his liability towards output tax in excess of 99 per cent of tax liability, in cases where the value of taxable supply ... in a month exceeds Rs 50 lakh," the CBIC said.

While calculating the turnover threshold, sales from GST exempt goods and zero rates supply would not be included.

However, this restriction will not apply where the managing director or any partner have paid

received a refund amount of more than Rs 1 lakh in the preceding financial year on account of unutilised input tax credit.

EY Tax Partner Abhishek Jain said the government has put restrictions on seamless input credit utilisation with introduction of Rule 89B, which blocks utilisation of ITC beyond 99 per cent of the output liability, for businesses having taxable turnover of more than Rs 50 lakh per month.

With the government providing reasonable exceptions to this rule, the idea remains to prevent misutilisation of credit by businesses taking fake credits, Jain added.

Further, the CBIC has amended GST rules restricting filing of outward supply details in GSTR-1 for business that have not paid tax for the past periods by filing GSTR 3B. So far, until now, non-filing of GSTR 3B resulted in blockage of e-way bill but will now result in

GSTR 1 blockage as well. Jain said the government has now of travel, as against 100 km earlier.

usinesses with monthly more than Rs 1 lakh as income restricted filing of outward supply turnover of over Rs 50 tax or the registered person has details in GSTR 1 return for businesses who have not paid tax for the past periods by filing GSTR 3B.

The government's idea here seems to be to curb input tax credit passing by businesses which have otherwise not paid

AMRG & Associates Senior Partner Rajat Mohan said, These changes indicate that government is grappling with lower tax collections and high tax evasions, burden of which will again be on honest taxpayers.

The CBIC has also notified authentication of Aadhaar number or physical verification of business premises for the purposes

This amendment has likely been introduced to prevent fraud-

Also, the validity of electronic way bill provisions has been amended by the CBIC according to which the e-way bill will be valid for 1 day for every 200 km

# their GST liability, Jain added.

of obtaining GST registration.

ulent registrations, Jain added.

## **RBI Warns Public About Shady Digital Lending Apps**

he Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesagainst the questionable digital money lending entities that promise loans in seconds at exorbitant rates of interest, and then use muscle powers to recover dues.

The Central Bank in a statement said, there have been reports about individuals/small businesses falling prey to growing number of unauthorised digital lending platforms/Mobile Apps on promises of getting loans in quick and hassle-free manner. These reports also refer to excessive rates of interest and additional hidden charges being demanded from borrowers; adoption of unacceptable and high-handed recovery methods; and misuse of agreements to access data on the mobile phones of the borrowers.

"Members of public are hereby cautioned not to fall prev to such unscrupulous activities and verify the antecedents of the company/ firm offering loans online or through mobile apps," RBI said.



never share copies of KYC documents with unidentified perunverified/unauthorised Apps and should report such Apps/Bank Account information associated with the Apps to concerned law enforcement agencies or use Sachet portal (https:// sachet.rbi.org.in) to file an online complaint.

Legitimate public lending activities can be undertaken by Banks,

Moreover, consumers should Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) registered with RBI and other entities who are regulated by the State Governments under statutory provisions, such as the money lending acts of the concerned states, it said.

Reserve Bank has also mandated that digital lending platforms which are used on behalf of Banks and NBFCs should disclose name of the Bank(s) or NBFC(s) upfront to the customers.

## **ED Arrests Three Promoters** Over Rs 6,380-Crore Ponzi **Scheme Fraud**

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate has arrested three promoters of a south India based company on money laundering charges in an over

6,300 crores alleged Ponzi or chit fund fraud case where lakhs of investors hailing from various states were duped, the agency said on Wednesday.

The three persons-- Avva Venkata Rama Rao, Avva Venkata S Narayana Rao and Avva Hema Sundara Vara Prasad-- are the "main accused" and promoters of the Agri Gold group of companies. "They have been arrested

for their involvement in committing the offence of money laundering," the ED said. The three were arrested under

various sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) on Tuesday and a special court in Hyderabad sent them to 14 days judicial custody.

The agency also conducted raids at the premises of the promoters and auditors of the company in Vijayawada and Hyderabad and seized 22 lakh cash, property documents and digital devices, the central probe agency said in a statement.

The ED initiated probe against the accused after going through various rate of return on maturity/prepolice FIRs filed against them in the term," the agency charged.



states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka for allegedly duping about 32 lakh investors after funds worth 6,380 crore were collected from them.

Investors from states like Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Chhattisgarh have also been duped through this ponzi scheme, it said.

"The scam was perpetrated by Avva Venkata Rama Rao through agri gold group of companies. He had earlier worked in the golden forest CIS (collective investment scheme) fraud and having learnt the tricks of the trade in that scheme, he hatched a well planned conspiracy," the agency alleged.

"He along with his seven brothers and associates set up more than 150 companies and started collecting deposits from general public with a promise of providing developed plots/farmlands or withdrawal at a high

## JKB CMD Unveils Calendar 2021 App



**SRINAGAR:** J&K Bank Chairman a digital platform and decided and Managing Director Rajesh to have the Calendar-2021 in Kumar Chhibber unveiled the much awaited mobile Calendar Application for the year 2021 at Bank's Corporate Headquarters here.

Gandotra, Sunil Gupta, and G N office-bearers of J&K Bank Ofand Kashmir regions were also present on the occasion.

The decision to go for an ecalendar instead of decadesold tradition of printed version comes on the back of Finance Ministry's advisory to various ministries, departments including banks and autonomous bodies not to print any calendars or dairies in order to pave way for technological innovations known to be economical, efficient, effective and above all environment friendly.

"We really understand the emotional connection that our customers have with J&K Bank and our calendar has been one of the key markers of this deeper bond. However, envisaging the digital future of vid-19 outbreak, we thought it was the right time to switch to

the form of a digital app," the CMD said.

Having a calendar in digital form, the CMD said, is in line with the maxim 'Future is Executive Presidents Arun Digital", adding, "World is fast switching to digitization of al-Teli, Presidents Rajni Saraf, Chet-most everything, and, J&K Bank an Paljor and Ashraf Ali, Vice- is keen to introduce more tech-Presidents and other officials nology-enabled interventions of the bank were present at the to bring comfort and conveunveiling ceremony. Besides, the nience to its customers. I think e-calendar, unlike the limited ficers' Associations from Jammu stock of traditional calendars, will reach almost anyone with a smartphone as the user-friendly application is easy to download and access," he said.

The bank's Calendar-2021 application is available on leading platforms like Google Play Store and Apple App Store. The application will be updated on a regular basis to bring more and more interactive features into it with the holiday list of the UTs of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh set to be added once issued by the respective governments.

Notably, the application has been customized in such a way that it has holiday lists of five regions across the country-Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Delhi, Karnataka and Mumthe economy coupled with the bai- incorporated in it with the government advisory post Co-people having a user-friendly option to choose and toggle between any of these variants.

NEWS MAKERS

## Sensex Ends 437 Pts Higher, Nifty Breaches 13,600 On Closing

arket logged healthy gains on Wednesday amid mixed global cues. Sensex closed 437 points, or 0.95 per cent, higher at 46,444.18 and Nifty settled 135 points, or 1 per cent, higher at 13,601.10.

Mid and smallcaps outperformed large-caps. BSE Midcap and Smallcap indices rose 2.40 per cent and 2.65 per cent higher, respectively.

IT stocks were back in focus with the Nifty IT index hitting a fresh 52-week high. Hindustan Unilever, Infosys, and Mahindra & Mahindra were the top Sensex gainers.

Only three stocks ended with losses, these were Titan, Power Grid and NTPC. Broader markets outperformed benchmark indi-3.04% while Nifty Midcap 50 index amid concerns over the passage



slipped yet again, dropping 6.83 per cent to end at 20.48.

European shares rose on Wednesday as a report that a Brexit trade deal could be struck cent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng ces. Nifty Midcap 50 index surged later in the day cheered investors closed 0.8 per cent higher.

was up 2.91per cent. Volatility of a much-awaited US pandemic aid bill.

In Asia, Japan's Nikkei ended 0.33 per cent higher while South Korea's Kospi added nearly 1 per

According to Binod Modi, Head-

Strategy at Reliance Securities, domestic equities recovered sharply from early losses mainly on positive global cues and sharp rebound in IT, PSU banks and pharma. "Stimulus bill in the US contin-

ued to offer support to emerging markets including India. However emerging risk pertaining to new coronavirus strain made investors focus back on defensive sectors including IT, Pharma and FMCG,' he noted.

While new imposed economic restrictions in various countries and threat of new coronavirus strain to other nations weigh on investors' sentiments, he said India still appears to be better placed given consistent reduction in new coronavirus cases and improvement in recovery rates.

(with PTI inputs)

## Government of India Department of Telecommmunications

O/o the Controller of Communication Accounts, J&K Telecom Circle, HUDCO Bhawan, Rail Head Complex, Jammu (J&K)-180012 Website:- www.ccajk.gov.in Email:- ccajk@nic.in, Tel.No: 0191-2477283, Fax. No. 0191-2475858

Dated: - 23-12-2020 No.9-24/CCA-JK/2020-21/Pen.Ada./04

#### ALL INDIA TELECOM DIGITAL PENSION ADALAT 1. An All India Telecom Digital Pension Adalat is scheduled to be held through video calling at 11:00

AM on 07/01/2021 for settlement of pending pension related grievances for more than 6 months (excluding legal and policy matters) of all pensioners of Telecom Department/BSNL Jammu & Kashmir Circle. All the pensioners/family pensioners are requested to kindly forward their pending pension grievances if any along with necessary details on email <a href="mailto:ccajk@nic.in">ccajk@nic.in</a> before 03.01.2021. 2. Pensioners / family pensioners can appear in this All India Telecom Digital Pension Adalat through a video call from home at the given time to represent their case. All the pensioners/Family pensioners are requested to kindly provide their e-mail id or e-mail id of any family member (who will be available with pensioner/family pensioner) in their complaint as the Pension Adalat will be held through Google Meet.

3. Link of meeting will be intimated by this office one day before the Telecom Digital Pension Adalat. 4. All future new pension cases will be settled through new pension software 'SAMPANN' of **Department of Telecommunication**. Regarding this, more information can be obtained from website <a href="https://dotpension.gov.in">https://dotpension.gov.in</a>. Mobile App for **SAMPANN** is also available on **'Google Play** Store' and 'ios platform' in the name of 'SAMPANN'.

**5.** Stay healthy and safe at home, we are working to serve you.

Sd/- ACCA O/O CCA J&K Circle Jammu-180012

# What Should You Know About Sum Assured in ULIPs

A ULIP plan is a long-term financial instrument that offers both the features to the policyholders. It is preferable for many policyholders as it reduces the hassle of keeping up with different policies. ULIP plan in India has become a popular choice over the years due to its several such advantages.



#### **Sponsored Feature**

HEN it comes to investment decisions, it is best to have a plan in place. A sound financial plan will chart out the investor's particular objectives that they wish to fulfill over the years. Such a plan looks different for each individual because it depends on several personal factors. Presumably, the broader categories of this plan will involve insurance and investment for most people.

A ULIP plan is a long-term financial instrument that offers both the features to the policyholders. It is preferable for many policyholders as it reduces the hassle of keeping up with different policies. ULIP plan in India has become a popular choice over the years due to its several such advantages.

However, many are not aware of how a ULIP plan works specifically. Let's look at a crucial feature of a ULIP plan that will help you understand it better.

#### What is Sum Assured in ULIP?

To begin with, you must have a fair idea of how a ULIP plan works. Like most types of insurance in India, the policyholder is required to pay a premium to keep the plan in force. However, with a ULIP plan, a

portion of the premium goes into securing life coverage, and the remaining is invested in diverse funds. The policyholder can invest in funds of their choice depending on their income and risk appetite.

It must be noted that the ULIP sum assured does not function in the same way as it does with other insurance products. The basic definition of sum assured is the promised sum of money payable to the nominee. While the sum assured in ULIP does mean that, there are additional elements associated with it.

Since a ULIP plan also includes investments in different funds, the amount payable to the nominee can be the fund value too. The fund value is the total monetary worth of the policyholder's units at a given time. Whether it is the fund value that is payable or the sum assured depends on which amount is higher at the time of claim filing.

#### How is Sum Assured in ULIPs Calculated?

Let's take Aman's example, who has purchased a ULIP plan with a sum assured of Rs. 10 lakhs. The annual premium payable for the ULIP plan of 20 years is Rs. 50,000. If we assume that half the premium that is Rs. 25,000 goes into securing life coverage and a half for investment purposes, then the following scenarios are

applicabl

Case 1 - If an unfortunate incident resulted in Aman's demise within the first five years of the ULIP plan, the nominee would be liable to receive only the sum assured. Simply put, they would receive financial compensation of Rs. 10 lakhs.

Case 2 – In case of Aman's demise between the 5th and 10th year of the ULIP plan, the nominee would receive the sum assured or the fund value, whichever is higher. The fund value is calculated as the product of the Net Asset Value (NAV) of each unit on a particular day and the number of total units.

Case 3 - In case of Aman's demise after ten years of the ULIP plan term, the nominee is liable to receive both the fund value and the sum assured.

Case 4- If Aman were to survive the entire ULIP plan term, he is eligible to receive the full fund value. However, the sum assured is not payable to him.

A noteworthy fact is that the sum assured and the premium amount are directly related. The higher the paid premium amount, the greater will be the sum assured. The IRDAI has specific guidelines for the minimum sum assured, depending on the insured's age at the time of purchasing a III IP plan

the time of purchasing a ULIP plan. How To Choose Sum Assured When Investing in ULIP Plans

While evaluating your decision to invest in a ULIP plan in India, there are few things you should ask yourself.

#### Financial Objective

As the policyholder, you might have a keen interest in either the investment element or the insurance element of a ULIP plan. It is crucial to determine your investment objective as it will dictate the features and benefits you require out of it. Evaluate the duration of the ULIP plan most suitable to you, keeping in mind that the fund value needs stability to grow.

#### Risk-Appetite

There are certain risks associated with marketlinked products. The value of the funds depends on the performance of the market. You need to analyze the level of risks you can take comfortably. Plan the details of your investment in a ULIP plan accordingly.

Investment decisions involve a great deal of thinking, researching, and methodically evaluating. Though, the process can be incredibly rewarding as well. A ULIP plan can yield incredible benefits over the years if you invest wisely in them. Remember to choose a trusted insurance provider for your investments.



JAMMU AND KASHMIR PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
RESHAM GHAR COLONY, BAKSHI NAGAR, JAMMU - 180001
website:http://jkps.nic.in.
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NOTIFICATION NO: PSC/EXAM/2020/46

D A T E D : 2 2 . 1 2 . 2 0 2 0

The result of Statistical Assistants Course Departmental Examination, Session September, 2020 sclared as under:-

Roll Name of Parentage PI PII PIII PIV PV PVI PVII PVIII Total Remarks

Roll No	Name of the Candidate	Parentage	PI	PII	PIII	PIV	PV	PVI	PVII	PVIII	Total	Remarks
1	NIDHI SHARMA	MADAN LAL SHARMA	52	56	56	54	57	38	31	62	406	Passes with 4 grace marks in Paper VII.
2	RANJIT SINGH	NASIB SINGH	62	62	74	66	75	50	64	68	521	Passes.
3	NEHA JAIN	VINAY JAIN	57	55	83	60	81	86	50	61	533	Passes.
4	NARESH KUMAR	SEWA NATH	60	55	59	36	79	63	52	63	467	Passes.
5	DANY GUPTA	RATTAN CHAND	64	60	69	68	90	99	52	68	570	Passes.
6	VIPPAN KUMAR	KAKA RAM	55	55	36	46	60	45	41	63	401	Passes.
7	PARVESH SINGH	KARTAR SINGH	56	63	59	55	68	78	57	65	501	Passes.
8	MONIKA SLATHIA			59	71	80	88	96	42	78	571	Passes.
9	ARUN LAL	RUN LAL CHAMAN 63 62 65 58 77 99		99	61	65	550	Passes.				
10	SHAGUN KHAJURIA	ANAND KISHORE	52	45	55	36	85	96	36	70	475	Passes.
11	NISHA DEVI	BALWAN SINGH	63	62	60	51	85	69	48	70	508	Passes.
12	ASHU CHIB	JAGDISH SINGH	65	58	62	48	67	58	36	72	466	Passes.
13	SHAHIDA PARVEEN	ALIF DIN	62	60	47	44	71	82	38	66	470	Passes.
14	BANDANA SHARMA	MOHAN LAL SHARMA	61	60	57	40	58	78	46	79	479	Passes.
15	ASHISH GUPTA	DES RAJ GUPTA	63	49	68	74	68	70	60	80	532	Passes.
16	ABASS ALI	TALIB ALI										Withheld for want of clarification from Planning & Statistical Deptt.
17	NAYAN BASGOTRA	SHIV KUMAR	44	59	57	48	71	83	38	79	479	Passes.
18	ANJUM ARA	SHARIF HUSSAIN	54	47	40	29	76	60	50	66	422	Passes with 6 grace marks in Paper IV.

19	SUNITA	PYAR SINGH	56	61	54	56	5	10	39*	72	353	Papers I, II, III, IV, VII & VIII. Fails in Papers V & VI.
20	SUMIT SHARMA	JOGINDER PAL										Withheld for want of clarification from Planning & Statistical Deptt.
21	RAMANDEE P KOUR	RAGUBIR SINGH	64	61	60	57	58	55	53	61	469	Passes.
22	SHEETAL BHAGAT	KUNJ LAL BHAGAT	67	62	63	51	43	50	53	81	470	Passes.
23	NIKHIL SHARMA	SH OM PARKASH SHARMA	59	62	51	40	86	96	40	64	498	Passes.
24	TAHIR MEHMOOD	ABDUL MAJEED	23	39*	4	10	0	5	12	63	156	Fails in Papers I, III, IV, V, VI & VII. Passes in Paper II & VIII.
25	VIKAS SINGH	SURINDER SINGH	45	54	47	42	91	96	53	62	490	Passes.
26	SULINDER SINGH	SURAM SINGH	50	55	52	43	73	76	50	81	480	Passes.
27	SURAM SINGH	BALWANT SINGH	57	59	62	45	83	83	62	63	514	Passes.
28	ASHFAQ RASOOL BANDAY	GH RASOOL BANDAY										Withheld for want of clarification from Planning & Statistical Deptt.
29	YOUNIS	ATTA MOHD	63	57	30	38*	20	32	48*	70	358	Passes in Papers I, II, IV, VII & VIII. Fails in Papers III, V & VI.
30	SHAFIQ UL REHMAN	MOHD RAFIQ	48.5	52.5	33	36	67	61	45	75	418	Passes with 2 grace marks in Paper III.
31	NIDHI GUPTA	DHARAM PAUL GUPTA	56	58	53	56	100	91	62	80	556	Passes.
32	ZAHIDA MUZAFAR	MUZAFAR AHMAD CHIKAN	62	51	45	43	75	70	47	90	483	Passes.
33	POONAM JASROTIA	CHHAJU SINGH	50	58	66	41	58	53	45	63	434	Passes.
34	MOHAMMA D SHAFI PUNJABI	MOHAMMA D MAQBOOL PUNJABI	60.5	57	61	60	84	83	61	91	557.5	Passes.
35	JAVID AHMAD SHAH	GHULAM HASSAN SHAH	43.5	42	48	49	84	96	41	79	482.5	Passes.
36	WASEEM AHMAD MIR	AB GANI MIR	40*	61	Ab	Ab	8	Ab	36*	89	234	Passes in Papers I, II, VII & VIII. Fails in Paper V. Absent in Papers III, IV & VI.
37	MUSHTAQ AHMAD BHAT	AB MAJEED BHAT	52	60	55	51	76	99	45	90	528	Passes.

38	SHAH	YAQOOB SHAH	56	66	69	52	80	91	62	88	564	Passes.
39	NISAR AHMAD BADER	MOHD ABDULLAH BADER	51	49*	36*	24	17	o	52	89	318	Passes in Papers I, II, III, VII & VIII. Fails in Papers IV, V & VI.
40	RIYAZ AHMAD RESHI	MOHD SIDIQ RESHI	55	53	64	53	78	96	62	90	551	Passes.
41	BASHIR AHMAD NAMAK	GH NABI NAMAK	35.5*	43*	29	41*	34	25	43*	86	336.5	Passes in Papers I, II, IV, VII & VIII. Fails in Papers III, V & VI.
42	PEERZADA AIJAZ RASOOL	PEERZADA GH RASOOL SOORAKHU AN	46*	44*	DID NOT APPLY	45*	32	DID NOT APPLY	DID NOT APPLY	81	248	Passes in Papers I, II, IV & VIII. Fails in Paper V. Did not apply for Papers III, VI & VII.
13	AB RASHID TRAG	ALI MOHD TRAG	60	57	56	47	56	93	53	84	506	Passes.
44	KULDIP RAJ	AMAR NATH	37	55	40	40	51	63	42	79	407	Passes.
45	RAGHUNAN DAN	AJUDHIA LAL	58	64	57	51	85	56	44	75	490	Passes.
46	MANZOOR AHMAD LONE	MOHD SULTAN LONE	44	41	80	65	66	93	52	80	521	Passes.
47	MASROOF AHMAD	GHULAM RASOOL SHEIKH	52	54	73	46	88	96	61	71	541	Passes.
48	BASHIR AHMED MIR	GH NABI MIR	37*	49*	23	46*	Ab	11	32	83	281	Passes in Papers I, II, IV & VIII. Fails in Papers III, VI & VII. Absent in Paper V.
49	AKHTER HUSSAIN BHAT	GH MOHD BHAT	65	56	69	57	96	96	53	83	575	Passes.
50	FAROOQ AHMAD SHAH	GH MOHD SHAH	17	29	17	40*	16	15	42*	74	250	Fails in Papers I, II, III, V & VI. Passes in Papers IV, VII & VIII.
51	KAMALJEE KOUR	T S HARPAL SINGH	25	34	11	8	0	6	16	71	171	Fails in Papers I, II, III, IV, V, VI & VII. Passes in Paper VIII.
52	MOHD SHAFI LONE	MOHDAMM AD SADIQ LONE	55	58	27	32	34	40*	38*	81	365	Passes in Papers I, II, VI, VII & VIII. Fails in Papers III, IV & V.
53	ARIF AHMAD	LATE SULTAN AHMAD LONE	Ab	Ab	DID NOT APPLY	Ab	Ab	DID NOT APPLY	DID NOT APPLY	76	76	Passes in Paper VIII. Absent in Papers I, II, IV & V. Did not apply for Papers III, VI & VII.

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# Pele's Milestone; Scores 644Th

NAMEETING BETWEEN THE FRONT-RUNNER AND the sensation of the league this season, Atlético put on another dominan

BARCELONA: Lionel Messi broke Pele's all-time as Barcelona excelled in an experimental lineup dynamic forward by applying a suffocating descoring milestone for their clubs by netting his by coach Ronald Koeman. 644th career goal for Barcelona, while Atlético Madrid beat Real Sociedad 2-0 to increase its since he took over Barcelona last summer with lead of the Spanish league.

Messi, who helped Barcelona win 3-0 at Valladolid, had equaled Pelé's all-time scoring tally on Saturday. His 643rd career goal for Barcelona Santos from 1957-74.

the sensation of the league this season, Atlético star signings in recent seasons - and midfield put on another dominant performance to show why it is the early title favourite.

Diego Simeone's team took full advantage of its best scoring opportunities and its defense re- old Pedro "Pedri" González. The scheme also allowed mained airtight from start to finish.

Mario Hermoso headed in a free kick by Yannick Carrasco to put the visitors at San Sebastián ahead four minutes after halftime. Marcos Llorente put the result beyond doubt in the 74th with a powerful strike from the edge of the area.

Atletico moved three points clear of secondplace Real Madrid. Sociedad was left in third place at six points adrift. The Basque Country club had led the league earlier this season but has now gone six rounds without a victory.

Barcelona stayed in fifth place at eight points behind Atletico.

Atletico has one more game to play than both Madrid and Barcelona and three more games to play than Sociedad.

defense of three center backs and kept Antoine the 83rd when he stretched to parry a free kick In a meeting between the front-runner and Griezmann and Philippe Coutinho - the club's by Martín Merquelanz.

Koeman has tried several different lineups

the mission to fix a team that had hit rock bot-

tom in a historic 8-2 loss to Bayern Munich.

leader Sergio Busquets on the bench. That left Martin Braithwaite alone to spear the attack behind two playmakers in Messi and 18-year-Sergiño Dest to attack deeper on the right flank.

Messi lobbed a pass forward for Clement Lenglet to head in for the 21st-minute opener. Messi then played the ball wide to Dest, who squared it low for Braithwaite to tap home in the 35th.

The connection between Pedri and Messi clicked throughout, but it shone in the 65th when the teenager set up the veteran.

After receiving the ball near the edge of the area, Pedri assisted Messi by deftly rolling his boot over the ball to push it behind him to meet the Argentine's run. The slick pass left Messi clear to finally beat goalie Jordi Masip, who had denied with twice.

Messi also hit the post in stoppage time. Atletico was without João Félix due to a throat

fense to nullify Sociedad's normally fluid attack. Sociedad had David Silva back after he recovered from a muscle injury that had sidelined

him for three consecutive matches. Silva's return was not enough, however, to After seeing his side not win away from home break through the visitors' defensive block that in four games, Koeman opted for his most pro- left Jan Oblak with very little work. The Slovesince his 2004 debut matched Pelé's tally for found makeover at Valladolid. He deployed a nian goalkeeper didn't have to make a save until

Oblak has conceded only five goals in 13 league games.

Hermoso had struggled to break into Atlético's starting 11 last season, but he has earned a spot on the left side of the three-man defense Simeone has used at times this campaign. The goal was his second of the season.

After Hermoso's opener, Atlético pushed for a second goal with Carrasco twice threatening with his crosses from the left flank. Another attack down the left led to Luis Suárez receiving the ball deep in the box. His pass intended for Carrasco was deflected by a defender into the path of Llorente, who blasted it home.

Villarreal held onto fourth place despite a 1-1 draw with Athletic Bilbao.

A late strike from long distance by Jesús "Suso" Fernández gave Sevilla a 1-0 win at Valencia.

Osasuna stayed in last place after twice giving up leads in a 2-2 draw at Elche.

Huesca likewise stayed in the relegation zone Messi scored his team's final goal at Valladolid infection. It made up for the absence of its most after a 1-1 draw with Levante.



## Ronaldo, Bonucci **Apologise For Worst Iuventus Of Season**

"Yesterday, with a poor performance and a far from acceptable result we closed our scheduled games for 2020, a special year in many ways," said the five-time Ballon d'Or winner on Instagram. "Empty stadiums, COVID proto-

cols, postponed games, long stoppages and a very tight calendar. "But this is no excuse for anything. We know that we have to give more of ourselves, in order

to play better and to win in a

more consistent way. "We are Juventus! And we simply cannot accept anything less than excellence on the pitch!

"I hope this short stoppage may help us to come back stronger and more united than ever, because the season is still far from over and in the end we believe that we will. once again, celebrate

with our fans. "Believe in us, trust our team as much as we trust you, and we will deliver!

Fino Alla Fine!"

ristiano Ronaldo and

Leonardo Bonucci on

Wednesday apologised

to Juventus fans for the

"worst" performance of the sea-

son as the Italian champions' fell

to their first Serie A defeat this

The 'Bianconeri' played most of

the match a man down after Juan

Cuadrado was sent off after quar-

ter of an hour in their Allianz Sta-

dium, losing 3-0 to the Tuscany

side who are 15th after ending an

part of the season. I apologise to

the fans in my name, first of all.

There is nothing to add," defender

Ronaldo blasted "a far from

acceptable result" as the Por-

tuguese star failed to add to his

Serie A-leading tally of 12 league

Bonucci wrote on Instagram.

goals so far.

"The worst Juventus of this first

eight-match winless run.

term against lowly Fiorentina.

The defeat came hours after the nine-time reigning Serie A champions learned they must play the match against Napoli which was cancelled on October 4 after the southerners decided not to travel to Turin because of coronavirus cases.

Napoli won their appeal to the İtalian Olympic Committee (CONI) after being handed a 3-0

defeat and a one-point deduction. As a result Juventus, who had started the day with 27 points, finished it with 24.

Juventus are fourth in Serie A. equal on points with Napoli and Roma, and seven points adrift of AC Milan, with the three playing their final game before Christ-

mas on Wednesday. Andrea Pirlo's Juventus have won just six of their 13 league games this season, with six draws and one defeat.

They next play at home against Udinese on January 3.

## **Shadab Khan Joins Pakistan's Injury List, Ruled Out Of First Test Due To Thigh Injury**

all-rounder akistan Shadab Khan was on Wednesday ruled out of the opening Test against New Zealand due to a thigh injury, which he sustained during the third T20I in Napier.

Left-arm spinner Zafar Gohar, who was preparing with the Pakistan Shaheens for Sunday's T20 match against the Northern Knights, was named as his replacement in the squad for the first Test, beginning at Mount Maunganui on Saturday.

"Shadab will now undergo MRI scans in Tauranga on Thursday, following which a further update on the exact nature of the injury and time needed to return to competitive cricket will be provided," Pakistan Cricket

Board said in a statement. "As Shadab is not available for, at least, the 26-30 December Test at Mount Maunganui,



Gohar as a reinforcement."

The 25-year-old has so far claimed 144 wickets in 39 firstclass matches, including six fivewicket hauls in an innings and two ten-wicket match hauls.

cricketer to miss the open- Ahmed, Shaheen Afridi, Shan ing Test after Babar Azam and Masood, Sohail Khan, Yasir Shah Imam-ul-Haq were ruled out and Zafar Gohar. (Babar Azam, the team management has in- due to their respective thumb Imam-ul-Haq and Shadab Khan

ing sessions in Queenstown.

Pakistan squad for Tests: Mohammad Rizwan (captain for 1st Test), Abid Ali, Azhar Ali, Faheem Ashraf, Fawad Alam, Haris Sohail, Imran Butt, Mohammad Shadab is the third Pakistani Abbas, Naseem Shah, Sarfaraz cluded left-arm spinner Zafar injuries, sustained during train- not available for the first Test).

## **Rahane Is A Bowler's Captain: Ishant**

🔻 tand-in skipper Ajinkya Rahane is a "bowler's captain" whose calm demeanour and clear communication with players should help him lead the team well in remainder of the Test series against Australia, says India fast bowler Ishant Sharma.

With regular skipper Virat Kohli returning home for the birth of his first child, Rahane will lead India in the remaining three Tests of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Ishant, who missed the Australia tour due to a side strain injury, said Rahane has ability to nicely play the leadership role.

"He's very quiet and confident and I must say he's a bowler's captain," Ishant told 'ESPNcricinfo'.

"Whenever we have played together and Virat has not been not someone who'd say 'do this around on the field, he'd ask me or do that ... He is very clear about 'What kind of field you want? what he wants from his team." When you want to bowl? If you



want to go on (bowling)?

tained the side in absence of Kohli against Australia and Afghanistan. 'You can see what kind of person he is in his captaincy. He is very calm and composed. I can't say he

jokes around with us," Ishant said. "Jinx (Rahane) spreads calm energy in a pressure situation. There won't be any tension, he'd commu-

does not have a sense of humor. He

nicate with the bowlers very well." Talking about Kohli, the 32-year-old pacer said: "If there's a partnership growing and it's a flat phase when fielders are just going through their motions, one player's energy level can change the scenario," he said.

"The kind of energy Virat "He's a bowler's captain. He's brings to the table ... not everyone can match that.'

The second Test is scheduled to be held from Saturday followed by Rahane has led India to victo- games in Sydney and Brisbane.

## Indian Cricket: Pujara Will Be An Enormous Challenge For The Rest Of The Series

**MELBOURNE:** Australia's in-depth we have got a couple more things. planning to subdue Cheteshwar Pujara worked out well in the in we can put into ploy...it i opening Test but spinner Nathan Lyon says it would be a massive challenge to keep the world-class batsman quiet through the remainder of the series.

Lyon said the home team has a couple of more surprises lined up for the Pujara, who is considered crucial in the Indian batting line-up for his dog- tralia won by eight wickets. gedness. The second Test begins on Saturday in Melbourne.

"I can't reveal secrets, to be honest with you. But, obviously Pujara is a world-class batter and he is going to be a big challenge for us for the rest of the series," 33-year-old Lyon said at a virtual press-conference on Wednesday.

"We spoke about him (Pujara) in depth before the series started, plans come off in Adelaide, but to fill Virat's shoes," he said.

"So, hopefully if he does get ways fun challenging yourself against the best players in the world and Pujara is definitely one of those guys," added the senior spinner but refused to elaborate on his plans.

Lyon had dismissed a well-set Pujara for 43 in the first innings of the Adelaide Test, which Aus-

Lyon also said India have got enough players to fill in the "big hole" left by talismanic skipper Virat Kohli, who has returned to India for the birth of his first child.

"...Ajinkya Rahane and (Cheteshwar) Pujara, just to name a couple. But you still got the likes of (KL) Rahul and (Mayank) Agarwal, who have been exceptional as well, so there is it was good to see a couple of (are) enough guys in that squad

## **AGM Of J&K Throwball Association Held**



General Meeting Parveen Singh as vice presiof the J&K Throwball Asso- dent (J), Ahsan Ali as Genciation was held here at The eral Secretary, Zahid Hussain Legends School of Education, as Joint Secretary (K), Mansi Kanitar Sadarbal Srinagar Bhatt as Joint Secretary (J), which was attended by all Zulfkar Ali as Treasurer, the members of the associa- Shayista Akhter as Orgation. Imran Shah (Chairman nizing Secretary, Rizwan, Legends School) was elected Farman Ali, Vilayat Hussain, as Chief Patron, while as Ri- Waseem Beigh & Sikander yaz Wani as President, Rouf Farooq as Executive Mem-Khan as Vice President (K), bers for the year 2021-2022.

## US Congressman Asks India To Provide Security **To Agitating Farmers**

maker on Tuesday urged the Indian government to provide safety to the protesting farmers as he hailed the recent offers of dialogue and a proposal from India's tion," he said in a statement. Supreme Court to set up mediation.

Îndia has called the remarks by foreign leaders and politicians on protests by farmers as "ill-informed" and "unwarranted", asserting that the matter pertains to the internal affairs of a democratic country.

"We have seen some ill-informed comments...relating to farmers in India. Such comments are unwarranted, especially when pertaining to the internal affairs of a democratic country," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said early this month.

"I call on India's government to demonstrate its commitment to democratic norms by guaranteeing protesters' safety and by treating them with respect. Democracy demands this much," Congressman David Trone said.

Trone, who represents the sixth Congressional District of Maryland, also expressed concern over reports ers. He was first elected to the House of Representatives in 2018.

"I further welcome the government's engagement with the protestors, including recent offers of dialogue and a proposal from India's Supreme Court to set up media-

"As we continue to watch the democratic process unfold in India, where stakeholders from all sides are included, I'm hopeful to see a path forward that respects the rights of all Indians," said Trone, who previously was owner of a major American wine retailer.

Thousands of farmers from Punjab, Haryana and several other states have been protesting on various borders of Delhi since November 26, seeking repeal of three farm laws enacted in September. Dubbing these laws as "anti-farmer", these farmers claim that the newly enacted legislations would pave the way for the dismantling of the minimum support price system, leaving them at the "mercy" of big corporations.

However, the government has maintained that the new laws will bring farmers better opportunities and usher in new technologies in agof violence used against the protest-riculture. There have been multiple rounds of talks between representatives of the protestors and the Indian

ues. "The partnership between the United States and India has grown exponentially over the course of the past several years based on shared interest in a variety of areas: from security and trade to climate change and human rights," he said.

"Our relationship with India not only helps anchor US policy in the Indo-Pacific, but it serves to set an example for cooperation that extends far beyond our two countries. As President-elect (Joe) Biden takes office in January, I look forward to working with the new Administration to strengthen this partnership based on the democratic values President-elect Biden has espoused throughout his career," he said.

Trone said India's citizens, like those of the US, have a longstanding tradition of engaging in a civic debate that aims to hold the government accountable to its people.

"We are reminded of this as thousands of Indians have taken to the streets in recent weeks to peacefully protest implementation of new laws. Their demonstration is an exercise of the democratic process, one that grants civic rights and freedom of expression," he said.

## **Key Verdicts By Supreme Court In The Year 2020**

against Covid-19 to alleviate the plight of citizens and keeping the wheels of judiciary turning by delivering several key verdicts, including the one which led to the hanging of four convicts in the sensational Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case, were the key imprints left by the Supreme Court in 2020.

All the odds notwithstanding, the apex court kept delivering verdicts having far-reaching impact, including the orders passed in matters related to anti-Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) protest at Shaheen Bagh, to the latest order on farmers' agitation against new farm laws at Delhi's borders.

Besides, it took a giant leap towards gender justice by granting permanent commission for women officers in the armed forces.

The year also saw the top court face strong criticism on various counts even as it upheld free speech and expression for the citizens.

As the country came to a standstill amid the coronavirus-induced lockdown, the apex court not only swiftly evolved a system and switched to video conferencing and e-filing instead of physical hearings but also showed the way to other courts across India to ensure that citizens continue to have uninterrupted access to justice.

While it held in the Shaheen Bagh case that public spaces cannot be occupied indefinitely and demonstrations have to be in designated places alone, it said that farmers' agitation should be allowed to continue "without impediment" as protest is a fundamental right.

The top court stood firmly with the cherished freedom of speech and expressions for citizens, especially the media, by granting

ide-ranging directions passed in the "world war" Arnab Goswami and Amish Devgan who started returning to their native Arnab Goswami and Amish Devgan and famously observed: "India's freedom will rest safely as long as journalists can speak to power without being chilled by a threat of reprisal. The apex court, which refused to stay the operation of CAA without hearing the Centre, said that a five-judge Constitution bench would decide its validity. Similarly, it has sought response of the Centre on a batch of pleas against the new farm laws.

places from big cities with their families trudging hundreds of miles due to the sudden nationwide lockdown.

It took cognisance of several COVID-19 related issues, including on migrant workers in which it passed a slew of directions to ensure that they reach home safely and are provided with food and shelter, and also on providing treatment as well as dignified handling of dead bodies in hospitals.



The year also witnessed unprecedented controversy when Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy made allegations against Justice N V Ramana, who is in line to become the next Chief Justice of India, in a letter to incumbent CJI S A Bobde.

Later, while speaking at a condolence meet for former top court judge AR Lakshmanan, Justice Ramana said greatest strength of judiciary is the faith of people in it and judges must be "steadfast in holding in their decisions" to withstand all pressures and odds.

rage of criticism over allegations the year but the matter which caught of not acting swiftly towards the the attention was the conviction of

"Due to unprecedented pandemic, everybody in the world is suffering, one way or the other. It is a world war against COVID-19. Therefore, there shall be a government public partnership to avoid world war against COVID-19," the apex court said.

The country's wait for justice in the 2012 Nirbhaya case was over when the four convicts were hanged on March 20 after the apex court, during an unprecedented pre-dawn hearing at 2.30 AM, dismissed the plea filed on to their principles" and "fearless" by one of the convicts challenging the rejection of his second mercy petition by the President. cases in the apex In 2020, the top court faced a bar- court hogged the limelight during

lakhs of migrant workers. activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan for criminal contempt for his two tweets against the judiciary.

In 2020, the top court faced a barrage of criticism over allegations of not

acting swiftly towards the plight of

The apex court, which imposed a "nominal fine" of Re 1 on Bhushan saying he had attempted to "denigrate the reputation of the institution of administration of justice", later in the year issued show-cause notices to stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra and cartoonist Rachita Taneja for their alleged scandalous tweets against the top court.

One of the high-profile matters in the apex court was the alleged suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. It led to a political storm from Maharashtra to Bihar, and the court accorded its approval for a CBI probe into the FIR against actress Rhea Chakraborty in connection with the "unnatural death".

The high-drama over encounter killings of gangster Vikas Dubey and five of his alleged associates, days after eight cops of Uttar Pradesh Police were gunned down by the dreaded criminal, also reached the top court which approved the state's draft notification for appointing former apex court judge Justice (retd) BS Chauhan as chairman of the 3-member inquiry commission.

Similarly, the furore over Hathras gang rape case and late-night cremation of the victim also reached the apex court which said CBI probe into the matter will be monitored by Allahabad High Court and CRPF would provide security to victim's kin and witnesses.

The high-stake corporate battle involving Tata Sons and Cyrus Investments continued through the year in the top court. In January it stayed the NCLAT order restoring Cyrus Mistry as executive chairman of Tata Sons and this month, reserved the verdict on cross-appeals filed by them.

......

# Ayodhya Mosque Illegal Under Shariat Laws AIMPLB's Zafaryabıfilani

thar Hussain, the secretary and other utilities on the plot. of a trust formed to build however, said everyone interprets the Shariat in their own way.

All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) member Zafaryab mosque which is planned to come up in Ayodhya following last year's Action Committee. Supreme Court verdict is against the Waqf Act and "illegal" under

Avodhya, however, said everyone interprets the Shariat in their own way and when the land has been allotted under the directive of the Supreme Court, it cannot be illegal.

The blueprint of the mosque and a hospital to be built on a five-acre land in Ayodhya's Dhannipur village was unveiled on Saturday at the Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation (IICF) office in Lucknow.

The IICF has been formed by the

"According to the Waqf Act. the mosque in Ayodhya, mosques or land of mosques cannot be bartered. The proposed mosque in Ayodhya violates the Act. It violates the Shariat law as the Waqf Act is based on the Jilani said on Wednesday the Shariat," said Jilani, who was also the convenor of the Babri Masjid

Another executive member of AIMPLB SQR Ilyas said, "We have rejected the proposal to ac-Athar Hussain, the secretary of a cept land for the mosque at any other place. We lost the title suit and so we don't need a land for a mosque.'

> He alleged that the Sunni Central Waqf Board was working under the pressure of the government.

"The Muslims have, however, reiected this land at Dhannipur given in compensation. The mosque being built by the trust constituted by the Sunni Central Waqf Board is directed the Centre to allot an aljust a symbolic one.'

The issue was raised by MP MP Uttar Pradesh State Sunni Central Asaduddin Owaisi at a meeting Waqf Board to construct the mosque of the All India Muslim Personal

Law Board's executive committee held on October 13. All the members were of the view that the exchange of land for the mosque was not permissible under the Waqf Act and in turn "illegal" under the

"The power for interpretation of Shariya does not lie in the hands of some limited people. The mosque is the place for offering namaz. So what is wrong if we are building a mosque?" posed Hussain.

The Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masiid disputed structure was demolished in December 1992 by "kar sevaks" who claimed that the mosque in Ayodhya was built by demolishing an ancient Ram temple.

After a protracted legal tussle, the Supreme Court, on November 9 last year, ruled in favour of the construction of a Ram temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya and ternative five-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board for building a new mosque at a "prominent" place in the holy town in Uttar Pradesh.

## **Indian TV channel fined for** hate speech vs Pakistanis

**LONDON:** Britain's communications regulator Ofcom imposed a £20,000 (US\$26,720) fine Tuesday on an Indian TV station for a program that contained "uncontextualized hate speech" against

The fine was imposed on Worldview Media Network Limited, whose service Republic Bharat was found to not be in compliance with Ofcom's broadcasting rules. The offending incident took place on Sept. 6, 2019 in an episode of "Poochta Hai Bharat," a daily current affairs discussion program in Hindi.

In addition to the fine, Ofcom also ruled that the program not be repeated and that they broadcast a statement of Ofcom's findings on a date and in a form to be determined by Ofcom.

India's attempt to land a spacecraft on the moon. but also included a wider discussion on India-Pakistan relations Ofcom's Executive, the report said, "found that

speech and that this content was potentially highly offensive.' The decision found that the program's presenter and some of his guests conveyed the view

this program contained uncontextualized hate

that all Pakistanis were terrorists. These statements included "their scientists, doctors, their leaders, politicians all are terrorists. Even their sports people" and "every child is a terrorist over there. Every child is a terrorist. You are dealing with a terrorist entity." The

presenter, addressing Pakistan and Pakistanis, said: "We make scientists, you make terrorists."

The Ofcom report said: "We considered these statements to be expressions of hatred based on intolerance of Pakistani people based on their nationality alone, and that the broadcast of these statements spread, incited, promoted and justified such intolerance towards Pakistani people among viewers."

Indian General K.K. Sinha was a third guest on the program, and said: "Oh you useless people. Beggars. Oh beggars, oh beggars. We will douse you with 1.25kg, .75kg-, with two inches. PoK [Pakistan-occupied Kashmir], PoK, we are coming to the PoK. We are coming to the Gilgit, Baltistan, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa...We are going to come, The program was originally meant to discuss be ready. People in your country are shivering with fear that the Indian army may come. V will barge inside your home in Baluchistan, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in Karachi, in your area, in Multan, in Rawalpindi and kill you. From Lahore, from Karachi to Gilgit-Balistan when we will have control."

Ofcom said the counter-argument they received to these statements was that they were not mean to have been taken literally, and that "Asian viewers would have understood clearly."

Ofcom said in their decision, however: "We considered however that these statements, made by a retired Major General from the Indian Army, which clearly threatened that the Indian military would attack Pakistani civilians in their homes,

**£20,000** fine issued by Britain's communications regulator over episode of 'Poochta Hai Bharat'

were an expression of hatred and desire to kill by a figure of authority. In our view, the broadcast of these statements also promoted hatred and intolerance towards Pakistani people.'

In addition to the program referring to Pakistanis as "terrorists," "beggars," "thieves" and "backward," as well as comparing them to donkeys, they were also referred to as "Paki." Ofcom said this was "a racist term that is highly offensive and unacceptable to a UK audience.

Ofcom was unconvinced by the counter-argument that the term was not intended to be offensive and would not be interpreted as such in the sub-continent, saying that in their view: "these negative descriptions constituted uncontextual. ized abuse and derogatory treatment of Pakistani people on the ground of their nationality."

"In Ofcom's view, the statements made in the program, examples of which are mentioned above, were expressions of hatred based on intolerance of Pakistani people on the basis of their nationality alone, and promoted hatred and intolerance towards Pakistani people," their decision said.

"We considered it included repeated instances of hate speech and abusive or derogatory treatment. It was therefore our Decision that this content met Ofcom's definition of "hate speech," it said.

## No Interference If An Adult Marries, Converts As Per Her Choice: Calcutta HC



police had produced the woman before a judicial magistrate, before whom she made a statement that she had married of her own will.

Hearing a petition by a father claiming that his daughter has been unduly influenced to marry a man of a different religion, the Calcutta High Court has obif an adult marries as per her choice and

decides to convert. After a 19-year old woman married and decides to convert and not return again on December 24.

n an FIR filed by the father, the a person of her choice, her father petitioned the high court, complaining that his daughter's statement before a magistrate may not have been recorded in an atmosphere where she felt comfortable.

On an FIR filed by the father, the police had produced the woman before a judicial magistrate, before whom she made served that there can be no interference a statement that she had married of her

to her paternal house, there can be no interference in the matter," a division bench comprising justices Sanjib Banerjee and Arijit Banerjee observed on Monday.

Upon the father's complaint, the high court had directed that the woman would meet the senior-most additional district judge in Tehatta and that sufficient care was to be taken so that she was not under any coercion or undue influence.

The bench noted that despite a clear and clean report being furnished by the additional district judge, the father harbours some suspicion.

Susmita Saha Dutta, the lawyer representing the father, claimed before the division bench that the husband was present within the court premises at Tehatta in Nadia district when the woman appeared before the judge.

The bench directed that to allay the father's suspicion, the woman will meet additional public prosecutor Saibal Bapuli in his chamber in Kolkata on December 23.

The bench further directed that at the time the woman meets Bapuli, who is representing the state in the matter. there should be no one else in the room, including her husband.

It directed Bapuli to file a short report "If an adult marries as per her choice when the matter appears for hearing

## \$30 bottles of British air sold to homesick expats

he business will also take on special orders for certain other UK locations, apart from the four UK countries

A British company named My Baggage is currently selling bottles of "authentic" air from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to provide Britons overseas with the scent of home. The 500-millilitre bottle is sold at £25 (around \$33). The bottle comes with a cork stopper, for easy use as the recipient can keep opening it up and can take in the aroma, reports CNN.

The business will also take on special orders for certain other UK locations,



apart from the four UK countries. As they said they have recently fulfilled an order from a Welshman who ordered a sample of air from the Snowdonia mountain range of northwestern Wales. Besides that, exclusive limited-edition bottles are also available with air drawn from the London underground or a Norfolk fish and chip store.

In the UK, a quickly evolving new variant of coronavirus has resulted in bans and prohibitions on travel to the country. Which has prompted Britain's several European neighbours including Canada and Iran to close their doors to travellers from the country. Meaning a significant number of people still overseas will not be able to return any time soon. **SMELL OF HOME** 

My Baggage team, who deals with international removals for relocating British people, says they were encouraged to introduce the bottled air collection after conducting research that linked the human sense of smell to emotional

We wanted to help them [UK residents living abroad] reconnect with home and we know from published research that Chinese cities.



our sense of smell is very evocative when it comes to emotions," a spokesman for the company said.

"By allowing recipients to take a deep breath of the air from their home country we're hoping to ease homesickness and help them settle into their new life, wher-

ever that may be." He further added. The vast number of orders, according to My Baggage, come from people that purchase bottles as presents for friends or relatives living overseas.

Four years ago, a company named Aethear started selling 580ml bottles of British fresh air to buyers from polluted



By allowing recipients to take a deep breath of the air from their home country we're hoping to ease homesickness and help them settle into their new life, wherever that may be"