



P3 NEWS

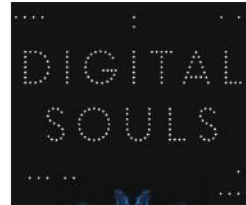
DEVOLUTION OF FUNCTIONS AND PLANNING
HALLMARK OF LOCAL SELF GOVT: DC SRINAGAR

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary Friday dwelled on the steps being taken by the administration to strengthen the three-tier Panchayati Raj system and also...

P7 THINK

AN EMAIL FROM THE
AFTERWORLD

Jack Froese had been a close friend of Hart's since their teens. A few months earlier Froese and Hart had been up in Hart's attic at his home in Dunmore, Pennsylvania. Jack had teased him then...



P11 SPORTS

ROHIT SHARMA TERMS MOTERA
TRACK 'INTERESTING' BUT
'NORMAL INDIAN WICKET'

Intent to score and not just survive was the key to flourish on the Motera pitch, asserted India...

Widom
Quote!

Where there is ruin,
there is hope for a
treasure
— Rumi

NEWS DIGEST

J&K Logs 85 Cases,
One Corona Death

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Friday recorded 85 new positive cases of COVID-19, taking the tally to 1,26,286, even as one fresh death due to the virus was reported in the past 24 hours, officials said. The death toll in the Union territory due to the pandemic is 1,956, they said. Out of the fresh cases, 16 were from Jammu division and 69 from Kashmir division of the Union territory, they further said. ▶ [More On P10](#)

Two OGWs Held In
Bandipora: Police

SRINAGAR: Police on Friday claimed to have arrested two militant associates from Hajin area of Bandipora district. Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Khan and Riyaz Ahmad Bhat, both residents of Hajin were arrested from Bonikhana Mohalla, Hajin in a joint operation launched by police, army's 13 RR and the personnel of CRPF 45 battalion on the basis of specific inputs, a police spokesperson said Friday. ▶ [More On P10](#)

Police Prevent 3 Youth
From Crossing LoC

SRINAGAR: Police on Friday detained three youth from north Kashmir's Kupwara district who were allegedly attempting to cross Line of Control (LoC) for arms training. Mohammad Rameez, a mechanic by profession, Javid Ahmad Rather and Aijaz Ahmad Sofi, all residents of Kupwara were detained by police after receiving specific input that some "misguided" youth were in touch with militants across the fence and were ▶ [More On P10](#)

Court Quashes
Student's PSA Detention

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir High Court has quashed the detention of a north Kashmir youth under the controversial Public Safety Act (PSA). According to the reports, the detention of Omar Akbar Mir of Brat Kalan Sopore, was quashed by the court on Friday, nearly two years after he was arrested on charges of stone pelting in 2019 and simultaneously booked under the PSA. Justice Vinod Chatterji after hearing the arguments of ▶ [More On P10](#)

4 Grenades
Recovered In Poonch

JAMMU: Government forces launched a cordon and search operation in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district and recovered four grenades and ammunition on Friday, officials said. A joint search operation was launched in Mendhar belt based on disclosure of Sher Ali, a coordinator and facilitator of militant activities of various groups who ▶ [More On P10](#)

UN Chief Encouraged
By India, Pak Truce Pact

Hopes This Positive Step Will Provide Opportunity For Further Dialogue



Press Trust Of India

UNITED NATIONS: Top UN leadership has welcomed the announcement by militaries of India and Pakistan to strictly observe all agreements on ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and

Kashmir and other sectors, with UN chief Antonio Guterres expressing hope that this "positive step will provide an opportunity for further dialogue."

In a significant move to ease tension, the militaries of India and Pakistan said on Thursday that they have ▶ [More On P10](#)

Positive Step
Towards 'Greater
Peace, Stability': US

Press Trust Of India

The United States has welcomed the joint statement of India and Pakistan to strictly observe all agreements on ceasefire along the Line of Control and other sectors, saying it is a positive step towards greater peace and stability in South Asia. White House ▶ [More On P10](#)

Border
Residents
Hope For
Peace

The announcement by India and Pakistan to strictly observe all agreements on ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) and other sectors has rekindled hope for a peaceful future among border residents in Jammu and Kashmir who have been living under constant fear of firing and shelling. "We are joyous over the news of a fresh agreement between the two countries to observe complete ceasefire along the borderline. It has rekindled hope among us," ▶ [More On P10](#)

Fresh Snowfall In Gulmarg,
Other Higher Reaches

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Gulmarg and other higher reaches received fresh snowfall while rains lashed parts of Kashmir Valley, weatherman said on Friday.

A meteorological department official said that Gulmarg received 2.5cms of snow in the last 24 hours till 0830 hours. The resort, the venue for the second Khelo India Winter Games beginning today, also recorded a low of minus 0.8 degree Celsius against minus 0.6 degree Celsius earlier night, the official said.

Snowfall on higher reaches was also received from other parts of the Valley.

The Met official said that Srinagar recorded a low of 8.0 degree Celsius against 7.4 degree Celsius on the previous night. The temperature was 6.5 degrees Celsius above the normal for this time of the year in Srinagar where traces of rainfall were recorded during the time, the official said.

Qazigund recorded a low of 5.7 degree Celsius against 6.6 degree Celsius on the previous night while the gateway town of J&K had 1.2mm of rainfall during ▶ [More On P10](#)

Kansal Directs Early
Completion Of Power Projects

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Principal Secretary Power Development Department (PDD), Rohit Kansal on Friday directed the

power corporations of Jammu and Kashmir to minimize the gap between completion of projects and handing over the same to be put for public use at the earliest. ▶ [More On P10](#)

Random Searches
Return To City Centre

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Random and surprise searches and frisking by security forces continued for the past few

days on Friday in Srinagar, where gunmen shot dead two personnel of Jammu and Kashmir police and shot at and injured a dhaba owner's son during the ▶ [More On P10](#)

HC Closes PIL On
Food Adulteration

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Friday closed a Public Interest Litigation regarding menace of food adulteration, hoping and trusting that the authorities will "effectively and efficiently" take action against offenders.

"We are of the opinion that there is no purpose in keeping this petition (PIL) alive. We, as such, direct that this petition be consigned to records with the hope and trust that the authorities will continue to act most effectively and efficiently and would take all measured precautions so that the Food Safety and Standard Act and the Rules thereunder are not violated and the offenders are strictly punished for which purpose regularly checking and sampling is continuously carried out," a bench of Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice Tashi Rabstan said.

The PIL was initiated on ▶ [More On P10](#)

March 1, 2021 (11:00 am)
Venue: SKICC, Srinagar

1st

CONVOCATION

2021

Chief Guest

Professor D. P. Singh
Chairman, UGC

Vice Chancellor

Professor Mushtaq A. Siddiqi

Chancellor

Shri Manoj Sinha
Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor
UT of J&K

'Honouring our Students'

Islamic University of Science and Technology, Kashmir



To place an advertisement
CALL +91-194 2502327
Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)
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Saturday | 27.02.2021

KASHMIR OBSERVER

2

از دفتر نائب تحصیلدار ترہگام با اجلاس سجاد احمد بٹ
عنوان: مضمون درخواست محمد مختار ڈار و ممتاز احمد ڈار و ریسائنہ بانو و عصمت غنی
ڈار اولادان عبدالغنی ڈار سائنہ ترہگام تحصیل ترہگام بمبراد عطا یگی پہاڑی سیکلینگ
سرٹیفکیٹ

اشتہار بمبراد آگاہی بر خاص و عام
معاہلہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر کی نسبت ایک مشل پٹواری حلہ سے موسول ہوئی
مطابق رپورٹ پٹواری حلقہ سائل / اساناکا نے Member Advisory
Board for Development of Pahari Speaking People

ایک سرٹیفکیٹ اس نسبت حاصل کی ہے کہ سائل / اساناکا پہاڑی بولنے والے
طبقے سے تعلق رکھتے ہیں جو کہ بذیل ہیں
محمد مختار ڈار ولد عبدالغنی ڈار PO/FMLC/ADB/PSP-875-21
ممتاز احمد ڈار ولد عبدالغنی ڈار PO/FMLC/ADB/PSP-874-21
ریسائنہ بانو دختر عبدالغنی ڈار PO/FMLC/ADB/PSP-873-21
عصمت بانو دختر عبدالغنی ڈار PO/FMLC/ADB/PSP-872-21

..... مورخہ ----- حاصل کہ ہوئی ہیں جس کے مطابق سائل اساناکا پہاڑی
بولنے والے طبقے سے تعلق رکھتا رہتی ہے۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث ادا کرنے میں
اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ ایم
کے اندر پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں
ہو گا۔

نائب تحصیلدار ترہگام fnt

Public Notice

My name is mentioned wrongly in Expired passport and needs to be corrected as per my matriculation certificate which is IFRAH RIAZ instead of Ifrah Riyaz . Now I am applying for new passport . If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file the same in the concerned office within a period of seven days . after that no objection shall be entertained.

Ifrah Riaz
D/o Riaz Ahamd Jan
r/o Alnoor Colony Illahi Bagh Buchpora mz ko

Office of the Tehsildar Khoie

Subject : In case of Mohd Ramzan Bhat S/o Ab Gaffar Bhat (Gaurdian) of Neelofer D/o Late Nasreena Alias Rubi R/o Tarzoo Tehsil Khoie for issuance of Legal hier Certificate of Late Naseerna W/o Waseem Iqbal Malik R/o Jammu

Publicationo for information to all concerned:-

Regarding the above captioned subject matter case is under process in this office. In this regard report has been obtained from concerned patwari Lambar dar and chowkidar of village tarzoo which reveal that late Mst Naseerna was wedded with Mr Waseem Iqbal Malik R/o Jammu in the year 2006 and one Child namely Neelofer was born in the year 2008. Reportedly Mr. Waseem Iqbal Malik has divorced the deceased. Afterwards, Mst Nasreena was residing in Bali-Charn- Jammu in a rented house where she died on 8-9-2018 and FIR No 168/8 U/S 302/380/207 PRC is lodged in P.S Satwari-Jammu. Presently, daughter of deceased is living with her maternal Grandfather at Tarzoo Teh Khoie in whose favour a guardianship certificate stands issued by the hon'ble Addl and Sessional Judge, Sopore under No: 25/MP Dated 9-3-2020. The legal heirs of deceased namely Nasreena are reported as under

Mohd Ramzan Bhat Father of deceased	65 years	Farmer
Mst Saja Begum Mother of deceased	60	House Wife
Ab Majeed Bhat Brother of deceased	25	Business
Gh Mohi-ud-din Brother of deceased	20	DO
Aabida Ramzan Sister of deceased	19	House wife
Aaqib Ramzan Brother of deceased	18	Student
Neelofer daughter of deceased	13	do

There is no other legal heir of the deceased. In case of any objection regarding issuance o above legal hier certificate the objections will be entertained in this office within 7 days failing which / expiry of date no objection will be entertained

Thesildar Khoie

gms

THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR STATE BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION NEW CAMPUS BEMINA, SGR.

ATTENTION PLEASE

The Candidate whose Photograph is Published in this notice is claiming to have LOST his /her Original D.O.B Certificate (s) of Class 10th issued by BOSE under Registration No.N15400710030 with following particulars:
Name:-SAEIKa GULZAR
Parentage:-GULZAR AHMIR
Residence:-SHEIKHGUND
Date of Birth:- 15/10/2001
Roll No. (s)
1) Class 10th1106257 Year & Session 2016
Now the Candidate has applied for their duplicate. Anybody (if) having any objections in this regard may please file the same before the undersigned within (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. Besides the above referred Date of Birth Certificate Bearing S/No.16ARKAM-1000397 are be treated as cancelled.
No.F (Certs-I-DQC)B/KD/18 Date:-24/02/021



Sd/
Assistant Secretary
Certificates KD
MJA

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for the information of general public that I Nilofar Jan D/O Gh Hassan Khand R/O Shangus Anantnag I have applied for Fertilizer License under name and style M/S Wani Pesticides & Fertilizer. If anybody having any kind of objection in this regard He/ She may object his objection in Chief Agriculture Officer Anantnag, within Seven days from the date of issuance of this notice. After that no objection will entertained.
Nilofar Jan D/O Gh Hassan Khand
R/O Shangus Anantnag MJA

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for the information of general public that I Nilofar Jan D/O Gh Hassan Khand R/O Shangus Anantnag I have applied for Pesticides License under name and style M/S Wani Pesticides & Fertilizers. If anybody having any kind of objection in this regard He/She may object his objection in Plant Protection Officer, Lalmandi Srinagar, within Seven days from the date of issuance of this notice. After that no objection will entertained.

Nilofar Jan D/O Gh Hassan Khand
R/O Shangus Anantnag mja

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applying for renewal of my fertilizer licence no. CAOB/FL/2014-15/1135 under name and style, " Pandith fertilizers" at Botingoo zaingeer Sopore, in this regard if anybody have any Kind of objection may file the same to Chief agriculture officer Baramulla within in the period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

Abdul Khaliq pandith
S/o: Gh. Ahmad pandith
R/o: Botingoo
Dangarpura Sopore gms

NAME CHANGE

In school records I want to change the name of my daughter from Syed Janeeta Jan to Syed Arwaa, in this regard if anybody have any kind of objection may file the same to Principal Unique educational institute Duroo Sopore within in the period of seven days from the date of publication.

Syed Mohd hussain Shah
F/o: Syed Arwaa R/o: Duroo Sopore gms

Public Notic

I am applying for the issuance of Fertilizer License under name and style RJ Fertilizers Wachi Shopian . If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/ her objection in the office of the Chief Agricultural Officer Shopian within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Javeed Ahmad Reshi S/o Mohd Yaqoob Reshi
R/o Wachi Shopian ast

Public Notice

I have installed an Electric Transformer at my Factory at Darnambal Tarzoo Sopore. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Executive Engineer Power Development Department Sopore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohd Maqbool Wani S/o Gh Nabi Wani
R/o Panjipora Cell: 7006588093 ams

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR NOTICE

Whereas an application has been recieved from one. Shri : Nazir Ahmad Bhat S/o: Ghulam Mohammad Bhat R/o: Khanpora Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04F-1097 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S J&K Bank B/U Budgam .

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 officer ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .
No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.2729
Dated 26-02-2021



Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ANANTNAG PWD(R&B) DIVISION KHANABAL

NIT NO 128 OF R&B/Khanabal/2020-21 /E-TENDERING/10620-30 DATED 24-02-2021

For and on behalf of the **It. Governor, Union Territory of J&K** e-tenders are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (in Rs)	Time of completion	Major Head of Account	Class of Contractor
1.	Improvement of Divisional Office at PWD Complex Khanabal.	5.00	200	10 Days	NFB	DEE Class Only

Position of AAA = Accorded
Position of funds = AVAILABLE

1. The NIT 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 departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:

S. No.	Particulars	Dated
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	24-02-2021
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 24-02-2021 (03:00PM) To 02-03-2021 (04:00PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	From 24-02-2021 (03:00PM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	To 02-03-2021 (04:00PM) 02-03-2021 (04:15 PM)
6	Date and time of opening of bid (online)	In the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Khanabal

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt in favour of **Executive Engineer R&B Division Khanabal** (Tender Inviting Authority) (**Name of Work to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt**) (Refer Govt. order No. O.M No. A/24 (2017)-651 Dt 07-06-2018 (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) pledged to **Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Khanabal** (Tender receiving Authority).
- All the Bidders have to submit Bid Security Declaration Form instead of Earnest money as per the Circular of Finance Department (Bid security Declaration Form is as per Annexure "A" below).
- The 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 03 Days before fixation of Contract and shall be released after successful completion of work.
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The **bids of Responsive bidders** shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of **Executive Engineer R&B Division Khanabal**
- The bids for the work shall remain **valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical Bid**
- Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.**
 - Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.
 - To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get "Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)" as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendors.
 - The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No Financial bid will be accepted in physical form.
 - Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.
 - Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid.
 - Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents including tender document fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid.

Note: - **Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.**

- The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.
- Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt in favour of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Khanabal (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Khanabal must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The Original Treasury Challan (Cost of Tender Document) and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of the Contract.
- Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.
- Price escalation and taxes:** The %age quoted by the bidder entirely in **Indian Rupees**, shall be deemed to include **price escalation and all taxes upto** completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.
- Bidders are advised to use **"My Documents"** area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.
- All other terms and conditions are as same as laid in PWD Form 25.

DIPK-13949/20 (Er Qazi Javeed Amin)
Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Khanabal

SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER LEFT RIVER WORKS DIVISION
EOI 02 OF 2020-21
Dated 22/02/2021
Notice inviting Expression of Interest (EOI)

The Executive Engineer, Left River Works Division, Srinagar Municipal Corporation on behalf of Srinagar Municipal Corporation invites online Expression of Interest from the reputed registered consultant/agency/company/architect to submit technical proposal for Preparation of DPR for Developmental Projects/ Works at Shariefabad, Durbal, Bemina Srinagar. Interested Agencies may download the complete Request for Proposal (RFP) document from the website i.e. <http://www.jktenders.gov.in>. from 26/12/2020. The eligible bidders have to submit their bids online at e-tendering portal i.e. <http://www.jktenders.gov.in>.
KEY DATES AND VITAL INFORMATION:

S.No.	Description	Important Information
	Date of online publication	22-02-2021
	Downloading of e-tender documents	24.02.2021 from 10:00 AM.
	Pre-Bid Meeting	01.03.2021 at 02:00 PM
	Last Date of submission of e- tender	08.03.2021- 04:00 PM
	Date of opening of Bids	09.03.2021 at 11:00 AM in the Office of Executive Engineer, LRWD, SMC Or any other date as convenient to opening authority
	Completion Period of the Project	6 Months
	RFP Document Fee	Rs. 1000/- (Rupees One Thousand only) in the shape Demand Draft in favour of Chief Accounts Officer SMC, payable at Srinagar.

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS
The consultants are required to submit and upload scanned copies of DDs, EMD and other documents as mentioned in detailed Expression of Interest online as per above schedule. The Financial Bid (BOQ) has to be uploaded online also. All amendments, time extension, clarifications etc. will be uploaded on the website only and will not be published in newspapers. The bidders should visit regularly the website to keep themselves updated.
The Consultant (s) shall solely responsible for any cost they may incur for site visit, transport, fares, postage and telephones etc. in the process of submission of proposal. The Srinagar Municipal Corporation reserves the right at its absolute discretion to accept or reject any of the EOI without assigning any reason(s).
The Bidder should quote Consultancy Cost for preparing DPRs in percentage of the DPR cost of Rs. 3.71cr for preparing DPR (6 copies) for the work as mentioned in the EOI including Surveying, Design, drawing in respect of Conceptual, Architectural, Structural, electric, Sanitary, plumbing, Landscaping, Facade etc. including all connected services including supervision and monitoring of quality control during execution of works Complete as per detailed Expression of Interest and direction of Engineer In Charge.
If the Bidders require any further information they may contact Executive Engineer, Left River Works Division, Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Left River Works Division
Srinagar Municipal Corporation.
DIPK-NB-5982/20
NO.SMC/EELRWD/5052-5062
DATED:23-02-2021

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Devolution Of Functions And Planning Hallmark Of Local Self Govt: DC Srinagar

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary Friday dwelled on the steps being taken by the administration to strengthen the three-tier Panchayati Raj system and also establishment of newly elected district council. He also called upon the district and sectoral officers to coordinate with the District and Block councils for participatory planning process and redressal of issues locally.

Choudhary was addressing the newly elected members of District Development Councils and Block Development Councils about the delegation of functions and designated functionaries and earmarked funds at the disposal of District and Block level councils apart from Gram Panchayats during

a one day workshop of role and functions of District and Block Development Councils in three tier Panchayati Raj System.

Dr Shahid briefed about the roles and functions District Development Council, Block Development Councils and Gram Panchayats and laid emphasis on special focus for development in areas of education, welfare, infrastructure development, better functioning of field institutions and establishments, revenue generation activities and effective implementation of centrally sponsored schemes. He also discussed about the planning and budgeting process to be adopted while formulation of plans, financial regulations and administrative frameworks. He also discussed about the func-



Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, addressing the newly elected members of District Development Councils and Block Development Councils.

Gram Panchayats, District and Block Development Councils with special focus on various panchayat level committees mandated for specific roles and functions related to education, water supply, ICDS, environment, mining, resource management; as well as functions related to land, infrastructure and functionality of institutions apart from budgetary process.

Superintendent of Police, Superintendent Engineers, Sub-Divisional Magistrates, District and sectoral officers of all departments, Block level officers, banks and financial institutions, project heads and other officers were present in the meeting. Chairman and Vice-Chairman of District Development Council, Srinagar, Chairpersons of Block Development

Councils, Gram Panchayat heads and chairpersons of various committees attended the one day workshop.

Chairperson of District and Block Development Councils while speaking on the occasion hailed the seriousness and efforts of district administration for organising regular interaction with departments and initiative of capacity bundling of PRIs enabling better planning and functioning.

Meanwhile, district administration has also established a dedicated cell to assist the PRIs for planning and budgeting issues as well local developmental plans, functional responsibilities and improving the public service delivery. Establishment of offices has also been notified.



DR SHAHID BRIEFED ABOUT THE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, Block Development Councils and Gram Panchayats and laid emphasis on special focus for development in areas of education, welfare, infrastructure development, better functioning of field institutions and establishments, revenue generation activities and effective implementation of centrally sponsored schemes.

ANC Welcomes Indo-Pak Ceasefire Agreement

SRINAGAR: Awami National Conference Friday welcomed the India-Pakistan agreement to maintain ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC).

ANC President Begum Khalida Shah termed the agreement a "big and welcome development". "Dialogue is the only way forward if both countries want to stop the unending cycle of violence and bloodshed across the borders and in J&K," she said in a statement.

She said the measure would go a long way towards sustainable peace between the two countries. "People of Kashmir have always been a strong votary of India-Pakistan peace. It is the people of J&K that have been facing the brunt of escalating tensions alongside the borders. I hope the agreement is followed in letter and spirit. The development will allow people living alongside the LoC and the International Border to go about their normal lives with minimal disruption and risk," she said.

She said the foot prints of soldiers should be diminished in Kashmir Valley.

J&K Bank CMD Meets Chairman Hinduja Group

SRINAGAR: Prakash P Hinduja, Chairman of Hinduja Group (Europe) - one of leading business conglomerates with a global footprint across 38 countries, held a meeting with Chairman and Managing Director J&K Bank R K Chhibber at Delhi.

Prakash Hinduja was accompanied by his son Ajay P Hinduja, Chairman of GOCL Corp Ltd.

The promoters of Hinduja Group expressed their interest in building a lasting relationship with J&K Bank and UT of J&K for their investment opportunities. The duo remarked that they were highly impressed with the way J&K Bank has progressed in the recent past to establish itself as one of the top old private sector Banks of the country.



Thanking the special guests for their words of appreciation, CMD R K Chhibber said, "It is delightful to hear that Hinduja Group is interested in forging a business relationship with our bank. We have always cherished our associations with reputed business groups and relationship with Hinduja Group will add a feather to our cap."

"This meeting becomes all the

more important, as we are expecting big business groups like yours to invest in J&K, wherein our Bank has always endeavoured to walk an extra mile for the overall economic prosperity of the region", he added.

Chhibber apprised them about the catalytic role J&K Bank has played in the socio-economic progress of J&K and Ladakh UTs.

"We have a proud legacy of over eight decades of financially empowering the people of our home territories, besides focusing on niche lending opportunities in rest of the Country. We see our role assuming further significance in the near future, as the Governments of J&K and Ladakh roll out various developmental projects already in pipeline."

Anjuman Auqaf Demands Release Of Mirwaiz

SRINAGAR: Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid Srinagar Vice President Moula Ahmad Sayeed Naqshbandi Friday expressed concern over the prevailing deteriorating situation in Jammu & Kashmir and demanded immediate release of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq.

He was addressing a Friday congregation at the historic Jamia Masjid.

In his address, Naqshbandi strongly condemned the incarceration of Mirwaiz and "curbs on his religious, social and other activities especially preventing him from delivering Friday sermon at the Valley's largest religious and

spiritual place, Jamia Masjid Srinagar", an Anjuman statement said.

He said usurping the basic rights of "Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir" and the people through "military might" is extremely unfortunate and condemnable, the statement reads.

Naqshbandi said the ongoing Rajab-ul-Murajab is a sacred month in which the Messenger of Allah Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) was bestowed with miracles among which the Me'raj-un-Nabi (SAW) was historic and revolutionary.

He said since it has been a centuries-old tradition of the Mirwaizeen-

e-Kashmir to organise special programmes and Majaalis wherein they would shed light on the importance and significance of Rajab-ul-Murajab and Me'raj-un-Nabi (SAW).

"Naqshbandi while taking a dig at the authorities said there is a limit to everything and the continuous house arrest of Kashmir's topmost religious leader is beyond comprehension in all ways," the statement said.

He demanded immediate release of the Mirwaiz in view of the ongoing sacred month and Me'raj-un-Nabi (SAW) so that he performs all his responsibilities as the Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir.

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

RAILWAYS



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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

This Day in History

- 1860 - Abraham Lincoln makes a speech at Cooper Union in the city of New York that is largely responsible for his election to the Presidency
- 1879 - Constantine Fahlberg discovers saccharin (artificial sweetener)
- 1881 - Battle at Amajuba: South African Boers vs British army under General Colley
- 1900 - Battle at Pietershoogte during the Boer War
- 1908 - Sacrifice fly adopted (repealed in 1931, reinstated 1954)
- 1929 - Turkey signs Litvinov-pact
- 1930 - Bouvet Island declared a Norwegian dependency
- 1938 - Britain & France recognize Franco government in Spain
- 1939 - France recognizes Franco's regime in Spain
- 1942 - J S Hey discovers radio emissions from Sun
- 1949 - Chaim Weizmann becomes 1st President of Israel
- 1950 - General Chiang Kai-shek elected president of Nationalist China
- 1958 - USSR performs nuclear test at Novaya Zemlya USSR
- 1961 - The first congress of the Spanish Trade Union Organisation is inaugurated.
- 1962 - South Vietnam President Ngô inh Di m's palace bombed by dissident air pilots in a failed assassination attempt
- 1967 - Antigua & St Christopher-Nevis become associated states of UK
- 1967 - Dominica gains independence from England
- 1968 - CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite delivers a scathing editorial on America's chances of winning the Vietnam War
- 1969 - General Hafez al-Assad becomes head of Syria via military coup
- 1972 - US President Richard Nixon and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai issue Shanghai Communiqué
- 1976 - Final meeting between Mao Zedong and Richard Nixon
- 1980 - Israel & Egypt exchange ambassadors
- 1987 - Donald Regan resigns as White House chief of staff
- 1987 - NCAA cancels SMU's entire 1987 football schedule for gross violations of NCAA rules regarding athletic corruption
- 1988 - Bonnie Blair (US) wins Olympic 500m speed skating in record 39.1
- 1988 - Gulfstream G-IV goes around the world 36:08:34
- 1989 - German war criminals Aus der Funten and Fischer freed in Holland
- 1995 - Car bomb explodes in Zakho, North-Iraq (54-80 killed)
- 1998 - Apple discontinues development of the Newton computer
- 1998 - Britain's House of Lords agrees to end 1,000 years of male precedence by giving a monarch's first-born daughter the same claim to the throne as any first born son
- 1999 - Korea International School is founded by Soon-Il Chung
- 2004 - A bombing of a Superferry by Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines worst terrorist attack kills 116
- 2007 - The Chinese Correction: the Shanghai Stock Exchange falls 9%, the largest drop in 10 years
- 2009 - Statistics Finland informs that Finland's gross domestic product diminished by 1.3% in the last quarter of 2008 from the previous quarter
- 2012 - Wikileaks begins disclosing 5 million emails from private intelligence company Stratfor



HIJRI
CALENDAR

14

RAJAB-UL-
MURAJJAB

1442

PRAYERS

FAJR

5: 40

ZUHR

12: 44

ASR

4:45

MAGRIB

6:28

ISHA

7:48

Power Shutdown In Srinagar Parts On Feb 27

SRINAGAR: According to the Power Controller, Kashmir province, in order to carry out laying and stringing of panther conductor Habak-Hazratbal line the power supply to the areas fed from the Receiving Stations of Habak Hazratbal, Lal-bazar and Bagwanpora shall remain affected on February 28, from 10.30 am to 4.00 pm.

Fire Guts Three Storey House In Saffa Kadal

SRINAGAR: A pre-dawn mysterious fire on Friday gutted a three storey residential house and reduced it to ashes.

According to eyewitnesses a massive blaze broke out in a residential house at Saffa Kadal area of Srinagar on Friday.

Fire tenders reached the spot to douse the flame but the exact cause of the fire wasn't known, however, a police officer said that the case under the relevant sections of the law has been registered to know the cause of the fire. (CNS)

ZONAL HEADQUARTERS



CRIME BRANCH JAMMU

e-Mail ID: sspcrimejmu@jkpolice.gov.in

Look Out Notice



It is informed to the General Public through Medium of this notice that the accused Arfat Ahmed S/o Mohd. Aslam R/o BulandPur District Assar District Doda is involved in Case FIR No. 59/2016 U/s 420,465,467,468,471,120-B IPC stands registered at P/S Crime Branch, Jammu. This investigating agency requires the arrest of accused for legal proceedings but accused deliberately evading his arrest since the registration of the instant case.

As such, anybody having knowledge/information about his whereabouts may please inform SSP Crime Branch Jammu on E-mail ID sspcrimejmu@jkpolice.gov.in or phone No.0191-2578901/0191-2570060. The photograph of the accused is attached herewith. The identity of informer shall be kept secret.

DIPK-13973/20

No: CBJ/NS/2021/ 6267
Dated 25-02-2021

Sr. Superintendent of Police,
Crime Branch, Jammu.
Sr. Superintendent of Police,
Crime Branch, Jammu.

از نیابت درگولہ با اجلاس ایکذیکٹیو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول

عنوان: مضمون درخواست بلال احمد گوجر دیڈر ولد سراجین گوجر دیڈر ساکنہ موضع درگولہ ہمداد عطا گی ST

اشتہار ہمداد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست ہمداد ST پیش کی ہے۔ جو کہ فتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اس ضمن میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل واتی گوجر دیڈر زات سے تعلق رکھتا ہے اور وہ ہذا میں پچھلے پندرہ سالوں سے مستقل طور رہائش پذیر ہے

سرفیکٹ زیر بحث ادا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ یوم کے اندر پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہو گا۔

نائب تحصیلدار درگولہ sult

از نیابت درگولہ با اجلاس ایکذیکٹیو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول

عنوان: مضمون درخواست عبدال احمد ماگرے ولد غلام احمد ماگرے ساکنہ موضع کیگام ہمداد عطا گی RBA سرفیکٹ بخت رابل احمد ماگرے ولد عبدال احمد ماگرے

اشتہار ہمداد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست ہمداد RBA پیش کی ہے۔ جو کہ فتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اور اجرا کرنے مطلوب ہے کہمہ

بذیل افتراء پر مشتمل ہے
عبدال احمد ماگرے ولد غلام احمد ماگرے مزدوری 39 سال
فریدہ نیگم زوجہ عبدال احمد گھریلو کام 33
راہل احمد ماگرے پسر عبدال احمد زیر تعلیم 15
آمینہ بانو دختر عبدال احمد زیر تعلیم 13
عظمی جان دختر عبدال احمد شیر خوار 3

اسکے علاوہ عمیر کی مہانہ آمدنی زریع و غیر زریع 4000 ہے سرفیکٹ زیر بحث ادا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ یوم کے اندر پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہو گا۔

نائب تحصیلدار sult

From KO Archives

REPLACE GEELANI, APHC TELLS JEL

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR - The All Parties Hurriyat Confer-ence (APHC) is under-stood to have formally asked the Jama'at-e-Islami to replace its firebrand leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, as its member in the multi-party alliance.

According to reliable sources, the APHC has for-warded a communication to the Jama'at Ameer, Ghulam Muhammad Bhat. In this connection, It re-quested Bhat to replace the party's member as his presence was proving be a stumbling block in the Hurriyat's proposed visit to Pakistan, sources said.

However, when con-tacted, Bhat refused to comment on the report. An earlier report had said two Hurriyat leaders had ap-proached him asking for Geelani's replacement ei-ther by himself or some-one else. A formal let tar has been sent now, sources said.

The centre's reserva-tions to issue pass part to Geelani was one of the rea-sons for delaying the pro-posed Hurriyat lead-ers' visit to Pakistan. The gov-ernment of India would, per-haps, have no objec-tion to Bhat accompany-ing the APHC tram, lie al-ready has a passport.

However, the militants in Pakistan controlled Kashmir have insisted on Geelani's inclusion in the proposed Hurriyat team for Pakistan visit.

(Kashmir Observer, 27 February, 2001)

Over 300 Girls Missing After Gunmen Raid Dorm In Nigeria



Agencies

Heavily-armed gunmen have abducted hundreds of schoolchildren in northwestern Nigeria, the second such kidnapping over a span of a week amid a surge in armed militancy in the African country.

The incident took place in Nigeria's Zamfara state in the early hours of Friday, with witnesses saying the armed bandits had raided a school dormitory in the area and abducted over 300 schoolchildren.

"More than 300 girls are unaccounted for after a headcount of remaining students," a teacher at the Government Girls Secondary School Jangebe, who asked to remain anonymous, told AFP.

The teacher said the abduction happened at 1:00 am (midnight GMT) but did not provide further details on the number of students present in the school at the time.

Zailani Bappa, a spokesman for Zamfara's state governor,

confirmed the report and said there had been abductions at the Jangebe school, without further elaboration on the incident.

Nigeria is beset by a dramatic breakdown of security after heavily-armed criminal gangs in the country's northwest and central regions have stepped up attacks in recent years, kidnapping for ransom, raping and pillaging.

Nigerian armed forces have been deployed in the restive regions but attacks and mass kidnappings persist.

In an overnight attack on a boarding school in the north central state of Niger last week, unidentified gunmen killed a student and kidnapped 42 people, including 27 students. The hostages are yet to be released.

In December last year, more than 300 boys were kidnapped from a school in Kankara, President Muhammadu Buhari's home state of Katsina, while he was visiting the region.

The boys were later released but the incident sparked outrage and revived memories of the kidnappings of schoolgirls by Takfiri terrorists in Dapchi and Chibok that shocked the world.

Members of the Boko Haram terrorist group abducted 276 schoolgirls from the town of Chibok in Borno state in April 2014. They were eventually rescued by security forces or escaped.

Pak Offers \$50 Mn New Credit Line To Sri Lanka To Boost Defense Cooperation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cash-strapped Pakistan has offered a \$50 million new credit line to Sri Lanka to boost cooperation in defence and security sectors.

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan announced the new credit line during his two-day visit to the island nation that concluded on Wednesday, according to a joint communique issued by the foreign ministries of the two countries.

"Both sides expressed satisfaction at the existing bilateral cooperation in the field of defence and noted that the elevation of staff-level talks to Defence Dialogue has further provided an opportunity to expand security sector relations. Prime Minister Imran Khan announced a new USD 50 million defence credit line facility," the communique said.

The two sides stressed the need for stronger partnership for supporting and coordinating with each other in dealing with matters related to security, terrorism, organised crime and drug and narcotic trafficking as well as intelligence-sharing, it said.

Khan, who is the first head of state to visit Sri Lanka since the COVID-19 pandemic, met his Sri Lankan counterpart Mahinda Rajapaksa and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa during his visit in which they discussed areas of common interest like tourism, agriculture and trade ties.

"Thank you Prime Minister @PresRajapaksa and the people of Sri Lanka for a warm welcome and gracious hospitality. Sri Lanka is a special friend and strong partner. I agree that the cooperative ties between our two nations are poised to grow and strengthen," Khan said in a tweet.



en," Khan said in a tweet.

Prime Minister Khan also reiterated Pakistan's support for the socio-economic development of Sri Lanka in line with the vision of a peaceful neighbourhood, Colombo Page reported.

The two countries reached a broad consensus on ways and means to further strengthen cooperation in a comprehensive manner and agreed to hold frequent meetings, promote high-level and delegation-level exchanges, and enhance the process of consultations, cooperation and coordination between their respective institutions, the report said.

Pakistan also announced to provide Rs 52 million for the promotion of sports in Sri Lanka, according to the communique.

Pakistan also announced 100 scholarships in the field of medicines (MBBS and BDS) as part of the Pakistan-Sri Lanka Higher Education Cooperation Programme, the Dawn reported.

Cash-strapped Pakistan's economic woes have worsened due to the coronavirus pandemic and Khan's government is arranging finances from world bodies, including the International Monetary Fund, to tide over the crisis.

US Attacks 'Iranian-Backed Military Infrastructure' In Syria

At Least 17 Pro-Iran Fighters Reported Killed In Strikes, Which Pentagon Says Was In Response To Recent Attacks On Us Troops In Iraq.



BAGHDAD: The United States military Friday said it carried out attacks on facilities in eastern Syria used by Iran-backed forces. The Iran backed forces are deployed in Syria to counter Daesh threat to sacred Islamic shrines, many of which were targeted and desecrated by the shadowy group over the years.

"At President Biden's direction, US military forces earlier this evening conducted airstrikes against infrastructure utilized by Iranian-backed militant groups in eastern Syria," Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said in a statement.

"These strikes were authorised in response to recent attacks against American and Coalition personnel in Iraq, and to ongoing threats to those personnel," he said.

According to the Pentagon, US fighter jets dropped seven 500-lb Joint Direct Attack Munition-guided precision bombs, hitting seven targets,

which includes a crossing used by the armed groups to move weapons across the border.

Kirby said the strikes destroyed multiple facilities at a border control point used by Hashd al-Sha'abi fighters, including members of Kata'ib Hezbollah (KH) and Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada groups.

Reports said that strike targeted Imam Ali airbase near Bukamal, a border area near Iraq.

An Iraqi militia official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said at least one fighter had been killed and four others were wounded.

A medical source at a hospital in the area and several local sources told Reuters 17 people had been killed. That toll could not be independently confirmed.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights told AFP at least 22 fighters were killed when the strike hit three trucks loaded with munitions coming from Iraq near the Syrian border.

AT PRESIDENT BIDEN'S DIRECTION, US MILITARY forces earlier this evening conducted airstrikes against infrastructure utilized by Iranian-backed militant groups in eastern Syria,"

First US Military Action Under Biden Draws Criticism

Agencies

US President Joe Biden's authorisation of military air raids in eastern Syria on Thursday has drawn criticism in the Middle East.

The United States military said it carried out measured attacks on facilities in eastern Syria used by Iran-backed militias, in response to rocket attacks against US targets in Iraq.

The air raids were "deliberate" and aimed to "de-escalate the overall situation in both eastern Syria and Iraq," Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said in a statement.

"Same as Trump" Some commentators said there was a clear effort to draw a distinction between Biden and his predecessor Donald Trump, who in response to attacks on coalition forces in Iraq used "the most disproportionate force by killing the Iranian general (Qassem) Soleimani," said Al Jazeera's Shihab Rattansi in Washington, DC.

Seyyed Mohammad Marandi, a professor of English literature and orientalism at the University of Tehran said the move showed how



Biden and Trump are the same.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif spoke to his Syrian counterpart on Friday hours after US air raids.

"The two sides stressed the need of the West to adhere to UN Security Council resolutions regarding Syria," the Iranian government website Dolat.ir said.

US journalist Ayman Moyeldin drew a timeline to show similarities between Biden's move and several former US presidents.

The US has long been criticised for military intervention in several Muslim-majority countries such as Iraq and Libya and imposing regime change leading to political chaos and instability.

'Not de-escalatory' In the US, the move was also

met with condemnation.

Hillary Mann Leverett, CEO of the political risk consultancy Stratega, said while the air raids sent a message about the Biden administration's loyalties in the region, they would not diffuse the situation in the Middle East.

"The Biden administration is trying to portray this first military attack as measured in consultation with allies. But this won't de-escalate anything.

"In fact, it signals very strongly a message to Iran that ... the Biden administration is in fact trying to increase its pressure and leverage against Iran."

The rocket attacks on US positions in Iraq were carried out as Washington and Tehran are looking for a way to return to the 2015 nuclear deal abandoned by former US President Trump.

It was not clear how, or whether, the raid might affect US efforts to coax Iran back into a negotiation about both sides resuming compliance with the agreement.

Mary Ellen O'Connell, a professor at Notre Dame Law School, criticised the US attack as a violation of international law.

Saudi Crown Prince Implicated In Khashoggi Murder, US Finds: Report

Agencies

A U.S. intelligence report expected to be declassified as soon as Friday implicates Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in approving the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, according to a person familiar with the findings.

The report builds on classified intelligence from the CIA and other intelligence agencies after Khashoggi's murder in October 2018 inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, according to the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the report hasn't yet been released. It wasn't immediately clear how much detail the declassified version of the report will provide about Prince Mohammed's role in the killing.

The decision to release the report, compiled by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, reflects the Biden administration's determination to recalibrate relations with Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, amid tensions over its human rights record.

In advance of the report's publication, President Joe Biden held a call Thursday with Saudi Arabia's King Salman. Biden discussed regional security and the renewed U.S. and United Nations effort to end the war in Yemen, and he "affirmed the importance the United States places on universal human rights and the rule of law," the White House said in a statement.

Prince Mohammed has denied



any involvement in the killing, while saying he accepts symbolic responsibility for it as the country's de facto ruler. Saudi officials have said the murder was carried out by rogue agents who have since been prosecuted.

Who Was Jamal Khashoggi and Why Was He Killed?: QuickTake

State Department spokesman Ned Price declined to comment when asked about the report Thursday but suggested that the U.S. was looking at other ways to hold the perpetrators of the killing responsible for their actions. Among the options may be cutting back arms sales to Saudi Arabia and imposing sanctions.

"I expect that we will be in a position before long to speak to steps to promote accountability going forward for this horrific crime," Price told reporters in Washington. "Transparency, as it often is, is an element of accountability. I wouldn't expect the accountability to stop there, however."

The decision to release the report, which was withheld by the Trump administration, reflects the difference in attitudes toward Saudi Arabia, and human rights issues, under Biden.

Facebook Signs Pay Deals With 3 Australian News Publishers



CANBERRA: Facebook announced on Friday preliminary agreements with three Australian publishers, a day after the Parliament passed a law that would make the digital giants pay for news.

Facebook said letters of intent had been signed with independent news organisations Private Media, Schwartz Media and Solstice Media.

The commercial agreements were subject to the signing of full agreements within the next 60 days, a Facebook statement said.

"These agreements will bring a new slate of premium journalism, including some previously paywalled content, to Facebook," the statement said.

Schwartz Media chief executive Rebecca Costello said the deal would help her company continue to produce independent journalism.

"It's never been more important than it is now to have a plurality of voices in the Australian press," Costello said in the Facebook statement.

Private Media chief executive Will Hayward said the new deal was built on an existing Facebook partnership.

Australia's Parliament on Thursday had passed the final

amendments to the so-called News Media Bargaining Code.

In return for the changes, Facebook agreed to lift a six-day-old ban on Australians accessing and sharing news. Access to Australian news sites did not appear to be fully restored until Friday.

Google, the only other digital giant targeted by the legislation, has already struck content licensing deals, or is close to deals, with some of Australia's biggest news publishers including Rupert Murdoch's News Corp and Seven West Media.

Facebook vice president of Global Affairs Nick Clegg on Wednesday took a veiled swipe at News Corp in a social media post criticising Australia's law, which is aimed at setting a fair price for the Australian journalism that the digital platforms display.

"It is ironic that some of the biggest publishers that have long advocated for free markets and voluntary commercial undertakings now appear to be in favour of state-sponsored price setting," the former British deputy prime minister wrote.

News Corp Australia executive chairman Michael Miller said last week that his company had paid negotiations with Facebook.

"Having been someone who's dealt with Facebook over the past months, we have some weeks where we're getting good engagement and think we're progressing but then you get silence. I think the door is still open," Miller told a Senate inquiry into Australian media diversity. **AP**

NEWS MAKERS

Self-Made South Korean Billionaires Promise To Give Half Away

Agencies

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA: Two self-made South Korean billionaires have pledged in as many weeks to give away half their fortunes -- a rarity in a country where business is dominated by family-controlled conglomerates and charity often begins and ends at home.

Kim Beom-su, the founder of South Korea's biggest messaging app KakaoTalk, announced this month he will donate more than half his estimated \$9.6 billion assets to try to "solve social issues".

Shortly afterwards, Kim Bong-jin of food-delivery app Woowa Brothers and his wife, Bonni Sul, became the first South Koreans to sign the Giving Pledge. The philanthropic initiative was set up by Bill and Melinda Gates, alongside Warren Buffett, for billionaires to give away at least half their wealth.



Both Kims contrast with most of South Korea's ultra-wealthy, who are largely descendants of the founders of the chaebol, the sprawling, usually family-run conglomerates that powered the country's post-war boom and still dominate the economy.

Unlike the chaebol heirs who inherited their wealth, power and connections, the two Kims were born to working-class families.

In his Giving Pledge statement,

Kim of Woowa Brothers described his "humble beginning" on a small island. His parents ran a small restaurant, where he slept at night, and as a teenager he gave up his dream of attending an art high school, enrolling instead in a cheaper vocational school.

Wealth, he said, had value when it was used for "the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society".

Rather than keeping the entirety of their fortune, Kim and his wife said in their statement: "We are certain that this pledge is the greatest inheritance that we could provide for our children."

Neither of the billionaire Kims has so far provided a precise timeline for their pledged donations, or detailed the recipient organisations.

Tech industry

More than 200 super-wealthy from around the world have signed the Giving Pledge, according to its website.

But it has previously been criticised for not being legally binding, and it acknowledges it is only a "moral commitment".

It has struggled to make headway in East Asia, listing only a handful of donors from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and none from Japan.

Like many East Asian societies, South Korea remains largely family-oriented, with financial ties extending well into adulthood as parents help finance higher education and housing, and little sense of obligation to give to non-relatives.

South Korea ranks 57th in the Charities Aid Foundation's most recent World Giving Index -- with Japan at 107 and China at 126.

Public philanthropy has a limited history among super-wealthy South Koreans, while the chaebols' founding families often maintain their grip through complex webs of cross-holdings between subsidiaries.

Coinbase: Finding Bitcoin Inventor Satoshi Nakamoto Could Harm The Cryptocurrency

Agencies

Bitcoin and Ethereum markets could seriously deteriorate if the identity of Bitcoin's anonymous inventor -- Satoshi Nakamoto -- is revealed, cryptocurrency exchange Coinbase warned in its initial public offering (IPO) filings. The San Francisco, California-based company also noted in the documents presented to the US Security Exchange Commission that the identification of the mysterious inventor could also adversely affect its business and significantly drop the prices of Bitcoin and Ethereum in the cryptocurrency market. Although there is no public information about the creator of Bitcoin, the name Satoshi Nakamoto



was pseudonymously used for the person, or group of persons, who developed the cryptocurrency first, in the Bitcoin whitepaper that was released back in 2010.

Coinbase said in its stock exchange filing that the identification of Satoshi Nakamoto will directly impact Bitcoin and Ethereum. The company also foresees that apart from the revelation of its identity,

the investor's transfer of Bitcoins may hit the cryptocurrency market.

The reason is that Nakamoto is believed to own around a million Bitcoins -- out of total 21 million in the world. This could be worth \$40 billion (roughly Rs. 2,96,700 crores), with Bitcoin hitting the benchmark of \$1 trillion (roughly Rs. 74,16,320 crores) in January. However, the identity of the creator is still a mystery.

The anonymity of Nakamoto helped make Bitcoin and Ethereum decentralised currencies in the worldwide economy. It is, thus, speculated that his identification could impact the by nature of the cryptocurrencies and bring them under the custody of a single entity. This could lead to discouragement among investors.

On Duty BDO Dies Of Heart Attack In Gurez, DC Expresses Shock

BANDIPORA: A Block Development Officer posted in Tulail area of Gurez in northern Kashmir's Bandipora district died of a massive cardiac arrest Friday afternoon.

An official said that the Block Development Officer was on duty. "The BDO was immediately shifted to a nearby hospital where doctors declared him brought dead."

The deceased official was identified as Abdul Saleem Darzi, a resident of southern Kashmir's Anantnag.

Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr Owais Ahmad expressed shock over the sudden demise of Block Development Officer Tulail, Abdul Saleem Darzi while on duty.

A condolence meeting was

held at DC Office Bandipora under the chairmanship of DC Bandipora and was attended by all district officers.

Dr Owais expressed heartfelt condolences over the sad demise of the officer and recalled him as an upright and dedicated officer who performed his duties religiously even in remotest hamlet of the district.

"We express our heartfelt condolences to the family of our esteemed colleague who passed away in line of duty. His sudden death has come as shock to all of us," he said.

He said the district administration is making arrangements for airlifting the body of the deceased officers through a special air sortie as and when the weather permits.

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Agri Dept Sanctions Four Hiring Centres, Two Machinery Banks In Kupwara

KUPWARA: The Agriculture Department Kupwara Friday organised a draw of lots function for Custom Hiring Centres and Machinery Banks at DC Office here.

The function was presided over by District Development Commissioner (DDC), Kupwara, Imam Din.

As many as 6 beneficiaries were selected through draw of lots for sanctioning of Custom Hiring Centres/Machinery Banks.

On the occasion, it was informed that 4 beneficiaries shall be provided the Hiring Centres one each from Trehgam, Handwara, Sogam and Tangdar agriculture sub divisions. While as, two Machinery Banks were also sanctioned one each for Trehgam and Handwara sub division. It was further informed that financial assistance of Rs. 31 lakh

shall be provided to the beneficiaries under the Centrally Sponsored Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) scheme.

Speaking on the occasion, the DDC said that these innovative schemes have been introduced in the Agriculture Department to facilitate the farmer community for increasing their income. He said that District Administration is always on forefront to support the Agriculture and allied departments as the Agriculture is the backbone of the rural economy.

He directed the concerned officers to further extend such facilities in all blocks of the district. ADC Kupwara, Nazir Ahmad Lone, ACR, Bashir Ahmad Bhat, Chief Agriculture Officer, officers of Agriculture department and beneficiaries attended the function.

Newly Elected DDC Members Eyes And Ears Of Admin: DDC Pulwama

District Admin Pulwama holds interaction with newly elected DDC members



PULWAMA: To acquaint the newly elected DDC members with the functioning of the Government, the district administration Pulwama Friday held an interactive session with the public representatives.

The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Pulwama, Dr. Raghav Langer on the occasion said that the motive behind the interaction is to build an interface so that the public representatives and officers work in synergy besides minimising the gaps in governance.

He said that the recent elections have been a watershed in the realm of democratic decentralisation, and newly elected members are the eyes and ears of the Administration.

Meanwhile officers of different departments particularly of Rural development had one on one interaction with the DDC members who were thoroughly acquainted with various government flagship programmes, welfare schemes besides schemes of rural development and public works.

The DDC members also brought several issues of public importance into the notice of officers Viz road connectivity, basic public amenities, health care etc.

During the interaction Additional District Development Commissioner Pulwama, Superintendent of Police, Pulwama, Assistant Commissioner Pulwama, Block Development Officers and other officers participated in the interaction.

Govt Mulling Multiple Activities For Promotion Of Tourism

Tourism Dept To Organise Houseboat, Tulip, Badamwari Festivals

SRINAGAR: Department of Tourism is set to organise Houseboat, Tulip and Badamwari festival in the coming weeks to promote tourism in Kashmir.

Director Tourism Kashmir Dr G N Itoo said the government has been making all efforts to promote tourism in Kashmir.

"Tourism started picking up in November last year when the department started mobilisation. There has been an overwhelming response from tourists. Besides, Gulmarg and Sonamarg, there are other winter destinations like Sonamarg and Doodhpathri where tourists can enjoy," Director Tourism Kashmir said.

The Tourism Department recently organised a tourism festival at Pahalgam and Sonamarg. "In coming days, we are organising Badamwari, Tulip and Houseboat festivals to promote tourism. For the Houseboat festival on Dal Lake, we have

talked to Houseboat owners and other stakeholders. This will be a mega-festival and will be a new experience for tourists," he added.

Meanwhile, a senior official said in the backdrop of the directions passed by the Lt Governor with regard to the revival of the tourism industry, a series of activities have been convened to ensure that tourism-related activities are conducted to promote local tourism.

"LG is very particular in exploring other tourist destinations in the whole of Jammu and Kashmir with an aim to make it a tourist hub and boost the economy of the UT. Tourism has a positive impact on the economy of Kashmir as it gives impetus to various allied sectors like handicrafts, handlooms and horticulture," the official said.

On Thursday, Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan inaugurated a one-day Sonamarg winter

festival that witnessed the participation of hundreds of locals and tourists. During the festival, various colourful activities and cultural programmes were performed.

The event also witnessed various colourful cultural items presented by the renowned artists of the valley and scintillating performances by famous singers who enthralled the audience with various traditional folk and cultural shows.

Baseer Khan, Advisor to the Lt. Governor, while speaking on the occasion complimented all stake holders for making it possible to open Sonamarg destination in the month of February which usually opens in the month of April. He said that with the increase in tourist footfall in the Valley, decision was taken to reopen Sonamarg so that tourists get to see one more winter destination which is as beautiful as Gulmarg and Pahalgam. (KINS)

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NCS Scheme Will Bring Radical Transformation In Existing Industrial Ecosystem: Dir I&C



JAMMU: The Director of Industries and Commerce Anoo Malhotra Friday reiterated that the New Central Sector Scheme has the potential to bring about a radical transformation in the existing industrial ecosystem of J&K with emphasis on job creation, skill development and sustainable development by attracting new investment and nurturing the existing ones.

He said the scheme will enable J&K to compete nationally with other leading industrially developed States/UTs of the country and onus now lies on the Industries and Commerce Department to make sure that the scheme translates its objectives into success on ground.

He was addressing a workshop for the officers of the department on the scheme on Friday.

Joint Director (M&P), Trishala Kumari; Joint Director (Dev), Ved Parkash, besides General Managers of DICs attended the meeting along with Functional Managers and Project Managers.

The Director, Industries and Commerce Jammu welcomed the participants and exhorted them to ensure the scheme is implemented in letter and spirit for holistic and equitable development of Industries in J&K.

Pawan Goswami, Functional Manager, Shahzada Noor-ul-Ain, Functional Manager along with Knowledge Partners from E&Y guided officers regarding operation of new Central Sector Scheme.

It was explained that the Present scheme aims to take industrial development to the block level in UT of J&K, which is first time in any Industrial Incentive Scheme of the Government of India. The financial outlay of the proposed scheme is

Rs.28400 crore for the scheme period 2021-22 to 2036-37.

It was further stated that with GST linked Incentive upto 300% of investment in Plant & Machinery are available to the Unit holders, the scheme aims to Incentivise to New Units.

The scheme is made attractive for both smaller and larger units. JKDFC is the nodal agency for release of Incentives under various components of the scheme

The officers outlined key features including Zoning of blocks for the purpose of availing incentives to bolster Industrialisation in relatively underdeveloped regions of Jammu and Kashmir and different fiscal incentives available under the scheme-the Capital Investment Incentive, Capital Interest subvention, Goods & Service Tax Linked Incentives, Working Capital Interest Linked Incentive.

On Capital Investment Incentive, the officers stated that both new and existing units are Eligible for the incentive with maximum investment of Rs 50 crore in fixed assets including P&M & construction of Building and Capital Incentive provided at a rate of 30% in Zone A and 50% in Zone B on the investment made in Plant & Machinery (in manufacturing) or construction of the building & installation of other durable fixed assets (Service sector) limiting to Rs 5 crore & Rs 7.5 crore for Zone A and Zone B.

Existing unit can get incentive for expansion once during the tenure of the scheme and New units under the scheme will not be eligible to avail benefit under substantial expansion.

In Capital Interest subvention, both new and existing units are eligible for loan availed on P&M, construction of Building and other fixed assets (Service Sector unit with investment more than 1 crore).

Eligible units can avail of incentive at an annual rate of 6% for a maximum of 7 years on loan amount disbursed up to Rs. 500 crore for investment in plant and machinery (in manufacturing) or construction of the building

Eligible unit liable to pay a minimum amount of interest at the annual rate of 2%. Incentive is applicable on the loans availed from a Scheduled Commercial Banks or Financial Institutions registered by Reserve Bank of India.

As far as Goods & Service Tax Linked Incentive is concerned, It was explained that Incentive is available upto 100% of the Gross payment of GST for 10 years from date of commencement of operations or the validity of scheme whichever is earlier with a carry-over facility limited to 10 years if not claimed and Incentive paid in one financial year will not exceed one-tenth of the total amount of eligible incentive as per GST return filed for same period. It was stated that two separate units cannot have same GST no's to avail the benefit.

The Officers elaborated that in Working Capital Interest Linked Incentive all existing units both in zone A and zone B having GST registration are eligible for the incentive and Eligible units can avail interest subvention of 5% on working capital loan for a maximum of 5 consecutive years from the date of grant of registration under this scheme.

The new scheme while encouraging new investment, also nurtures the existing industries in J&K by providing them working capital support at the rate of 5% for 5 years.

Tourism Directorate Hosts Weekend Musical Evening At Bahu Gandola Station



JAMMU: To promote Tourism in general and recently opened 1st Phase of Cable Car in particular, Department of Tourism today organized weekend Musical evening here at Bahu, Ropeway Station.

The series of musical evenings will continue in coming weeks till March 31st, 2021. During the function, a large number of public gathered at Bahu Ropeway Station and were mesmerized with the folklore performances of Jammu Division.

The cultural programs were performed by the artists of Jammu

and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages. Tourists from various states enjoyed the Cable Car ride and got acquainted with the local Dogra, culture.

With each passing day the popularity of Cable Car and nearby pilgrim spots are catching attention of visitors.

The function was attended by Umesh Shan, ADT, NHW Batote and Rahul Mahajan, Accounts Officer, Directorate of Tourism Jammu among other officers and officials of Tourism Department, Cultural Academy and Cable Car Corporation.

One Dead In Poonch Road Accident

POONCH: One person died while another suffered injuries after a tractor on which they were travelling met an accident in Poonch district on Friday.

Officials said that the tractor slipped off the road and fell into a gorge at Behrooti village in Balakote leading to the death of Shoaib Ahmed son of Mohammad Azam a resident of Potha Surankote and injuries to Mohammad Murtaza son of Faiz Mohammad, a resident of Panjni area of Poonch. The injured was shifted to GMC Rajouri for treatment.

Injured Bandipora Resident Succumbs

BANDIPORA: A person who was critically injured in a road accident five days ago in Bandipora district of north Kashmir died at a hospital in Srinagar on Friday morning.

Officials said that the person was injured in a road accident on February 21 in Kot Payen area of Bandipora and succumbed to his injuries at a Srinagar hospital on Friday morning. The deceased has been identified as Irshad Ahmad. (CNS)

High Court Stays 'Controversial' Larnoo DDC Seat

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Friday stayed the 'controversial' Larnoo District Development Council (DDC) seat in South Kashmir's Anantnag district and restrained the recently declared winner through a recount from holding the office till the next date of hearing.

Justice Sanjay Dhar while hearing a petition of PDP's candidate Khalida Bibi through ZA Shah challenging the previous re-counting of votes of 8-Larnoo Anantnag DDC constituency, ordered recently declared successful candidate through re-count Sajida Begum, to refrain from holding the office of member of DDC Anantnag.

Pertinently, the Larnoo DDC seat remained in headlines for its 'controversy' as the authorities had first

declared the PDP candidate Khalida Bibi as winner by a margin of seven votes against her nearest rival Sajida Begum, who was contesting the election as an independent candidate.

After that Sajida Begum had approached the Additional Commissioner Kashmir with an appeal to recount all polled votes in the constituency following which Appellate authority, Additional Commissioner Kashmir, Bilal Ahmad Bhat had passed the instructions to DEO Anantnag to hold recount of votes in the said DDC seat.

Following the directives from AC Kashmir, DEO Anantnag on February 5th held a recount of votes in the constituency and had declared Sajida Begum as winner against Khalida Bibi by a margin of sixty one votes. (KDC)

Seminar Organised To Mark Birth Anniversary Of Hazrat Ali (A.S)

Aijaz Ali

SRINAGAR: Idara Islamic Library Imam Khamenei (M.Z) Yakmanpora Singpora organised a seminar on Friday to celebrate birthday of first infallible Imam Ali ibn abi talib (A.S).

The program titled as "Jashni Mouloode Kaba" witnessed participation of students, youths, elders and women of Yakmanpora and other adjoining villages. Among the prominent speakers included Professor Aga Syed Afzal Madni and KAS officer Imtiyaz Husain Anjum, who enlightened the participants about the life and achievements of Hazrat Imam Ali (A.S). On this occasion, the speakers threw light on the theme and highlighted various aspects associated



with the life and teaching of Hazrat Ali (A.S). They also urged youth, parents, religious clerics and other stakeholders of the society to work against social evils and seditions keeping in consideration the very path and efforts of Hazrat Ali (A.S). At the conclusion of the seminar, the organisers extended their gratitude towards the participants.

NEWS MAKERS

Two-Day Awareness Programme On HIV-AIDS Begins In Srinagar



SRINAGAR: Two days awareness program Friday began at Hotel Shafat Plaza Shalimar Srinagar. The event is being organized by Al-Habib Foundation in collaboration with J&K AIDS Control Society. The theme for the program is "Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility on HIV/AIDS".



Inaugural address was by made by Tasleema Shah chairperson of Al Habib Foundation. People from Shalimar, Nishat, Harwan and its adjacent areas participated in the awareness programme. They were made aware of medical, psychological, and social inferences of HIV/AIDS and Drug Abuse by various experts.

Dr Syed Arif Hussain talked about medical aspects of the disease and its relation to Drug Abuse.

Sonwbar, a Social Activist, focused on the abusers' emotional and psychological health.

The event was presented by Heena Bashir, a member of Al-Habib Foundation and was advocated and organized by Tasleema Shah, Chairperson of Al-Habib Foundation.

Er.Malik Asif Noor General Secretary of Al Habib Foundation duly thanked J&K Aids control society, Javid Ahmad, experts and doctors who spoke on the occasion and the volunteers for rightly cooperating on hosting and conducting the event successfully.

DDC Shopian Exhorts Officers To Ensure Effective Implementation Of Schemes

SHOPIAN: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Shopian, Sachin Kumar Vaishya Friday held a detailed review of various schemes and programmes being implemented in the district by Social Welfare Department.

PO ICDS Bilquees Jan, DSWO Mohammad Shafait, CDPO Shopian-Keller Nazir Ahmad, Chairperson CWC Musharaf Gaffar, Women Welfare Officer Mohsina Mukhtar, members Juvenile Justice Board, members Child Welfare Committees, PO NIC Shazia Idrees, District Coordinators MSK and other field officials of the department were present in the meeting.

Giving details through Pow-



erPoint presentation, DSWO informed that 9084 beneficiaries are being provided monthly pension of Rs. 1000 under Integrated Social Security Scheme (ISSS) and 2155 under National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) in the district. 360 new cases have been sanctioned against equal number of weed out cases during 2020-21 and

only 29 cases are pending for sanction.

Regarding aadhaar seeding of bank accounts of beneficiaries, he said that his office is endeavouring to ensure cent percent aadhaar seeding which is presently 65% under all pension schemes. He also apprised that under State Marriage Assistance Scheme 1662 beneficiaries have

received payment at rates of Rs. 40000 per beneficiary.

The DDC directed to achieve cent percent aadhaar seeding of bank accounts of beneficiaries for eliminating duplications. He emphasised upon importance of weeding out process in ensuring that benefits entailed under pension schemes reach to genuine beneficiaries.

Regarding various scholarships schemes the DDC directed for holding zone wise camps in collaboration with education department to aware students about these schemes and procedure for applying, as many applications were rejected/made defective due to procedural deficiencies.

The Dilemma Of India's One-China Policy

ANURAAG KHAUND AND
HARIS RASHID

The recent Sino-Indian tensions along the LAC including the aggressive stalemate of 15-16 June 2020 resulting in casualties of 20 Indian soldiers have led to increasing debates about re-evaluation and possible altering of India's One China Policy. Regarding the One-China Policy, the focus has invariably been on the two regions which have traditionally aroused Chinese ire in any form of discussion on the latter- Taiwan and Tibet. The present article is an attempt at understanding the feasibility of possible alteration to India's One China Policy in connection to Tibet and Taiwan.

The question of Tibet has been casting a shadow on Sino-Indian ties since the Anglo-Tibetan convention of 1904 involving British India, Tibet and Qing dynasty and post-1947 between the newly formed nations of India and the People's Republic of China (PRC). Although Indian leaders and statesmen including Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Dr Rajendra Prasad and Dr BR Ambedkar had expressed concerns on the Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet in 1950 as being morally wrong and proving detrimental to India's security of the Himalayan border states, yet the issue was resolved by the Panchsheel Agreement of 1954 which saw India (Nehruvian regime) acquiesce to the claim of Tibet being an integral part of China. Even though the Chinese war efforts in 1962 were launched from the Tibetan plateau, the issue of possible Tibetan independence was not pursued by subsequent Indian governments. To the contrary, the Panchsheel position on Tibet was further reinforced by subsequent border agreements signed between India and China in 1993 by the Narasimha Rao government and in 2003 during the Vajpayee era. Coming to the current era, the recent debacle in Galwan Valley has again brought to the fore the issue of Tibet and especially the notion that an independent Tibet is integral to Indian security and stability in the Himalayas. To that end, this has intensified popular demands both from Indians as well as the Tibetan exile community for scrapping India's long-standing hesitation to openly support the Tibetan independence movement and raise the issue vehemently in forums such as the UN. In other words, the domestic Indian population are demanding the usage of the possible 'Tibet Card' to discipline Chinese behaviour.

Regarding Taiwan, India was among the first countries to adhere to the One China principle when in December 1949, the Government declared the ambassador of the so-called Republic of China (Taiwan) to India as persona non-grata, derecognizing Taiwan and asked its envoy to leave the country while proceeding to offer its recognition to the PRC. Since then, India never had formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan but



associations such as the India Taipei Association (ITA) and India Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre (TECC) offered consular and passport services and promoted trade and business links and people-to-people interactions between the two countries. Direct flights between New Delhi and Taipei were also initiated in 2003 and various other significant initiatives were taken to improve bilateral relations. Despite such improvement, India has been finding it challenging to balance the political implications of fostering closer ties with Taiwan alongside its own interests involving mainland China. In 2018, Air India acquiesced to Chinese demand by renaming Taiwan as Chinese Taipei on their website. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs justified this as being in line with "international norms and (its own) position on Taiwan since 1949." Earlier in May 2016, India had reversed its course on a prior commitment to send two Members of Parliament to Taiwan president Tsai Ing-wen's inauguration. However, the second swearing-in ceremony of Tsai last year was attended by two BJP MPs amidst the LAC skirmishes and attracted strong protest from China.

Given the recent LAC skirmishes, there have been growing calls for India to play Taiwan card, but is it possible to do so? In its 2018 report, the Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs raised concerns over the fact that India is "overly cautious about China's sensitivities while dealing with Taiwan and Tibet" but "China does not exhibit the same deference while dealing with India's sovereignty concerns." It expressed its discontent over India continuing with its "conventionally deferential foreign policy towards China" and recommended that the government "contemplate using all options includ-

India's geographical proximity to China would ensure that the immediate costs and implications of any alteration to One-China policy would have to be borne by India than the US. Such costs can include a hardening of Chinese attitudes towards India and a no-holds barred approach from the PLA on the LAC

ing its relations with Taiwan" as part of a new approach." Such sentiments were in sync with the stance of anti-One China Policy advocates who wanted to use the 'Taiwan Card' for accruing reciprocal Chinese recognition of 'One-India' regarding Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh. However, the committee also noted that "it does not want to upend this (One China) policy...in deference to China's sensitivity on the matter."

Similarly, keeping aside popular sentiments and moral obligations, many prominent scholars and former diplomats have expressed reservations about the possibility of India playing the Tibet Card. Prominent among their arguments is the fact that the agreements of 1993 and 2003 have further reinforced the Indian acceptance of Chinese sovereignty in Tibet as mentioned in the Panchsheel. Besides, the attitude of the Indian government towards the Tibetan movement can be said to have been mixed or ambiguous and dependent on the vagaries of the nature of Sino-Indian relationship. This was evident during the 2018 official circular preventing gov-

ernment officials from taking part in Tibetan celebrations marking the 60th anniversary of the 14th Dalai Lama's escape into India. Again, the Mamallapuram Summit of 2019 also witnessed the arrest of Tibetan protesters to prevent and contain any possible diplomatic fallout during the summit. Although during the Galwan clashes, actions such as the overt recognition of the Tibetan-staffed Special Frontier Force (SFF) through the public honouring of martyr SFF Company Leader Nyima Tenzin and announcement by the BJP Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Pema Khandu for renaming of the Sino-Indian border as the 'Indo-Tibetan' border were interpreted as signs of impending Indian recognition of Tibetan sovereignty, yet Tibet hardly appeared in the diplomatic exchanges between India and China whether in the Moscow Summit or the commander-level talks held to find a resolution to the stalemate.

As seen in the preceding paragraphs, what prevents India from altering its One-China Policy or playing the 'Tibet and Taiwan Cards' against China despite a considerable domestic demand to do so? As per the authors, there can be three possible reasons. Firstly, as both the armies have gradually begun the process of disengagement at the banks of Pangong Tso Lake, any change in India's One China Policy regarding Tibet and Taiwan has the potential of breaking down the hard achieved fragile peace in the LAC by flaring up Chinese sentiment. The possibility of attracting Chinese ire has been increased by the fact that Beijing has recently revealed the names of 4 Chinese soldiers who had lost their lives in the 15 June 2020 clash to bolster feelings of nationalism among the domestic Chinese population; hence any Indian action regarding Tibet and

Taiwan at this point is bound to negatively affect the perceptions of China on the recently agreed de-escalation process.

Secondly, one cannot be sure whether such a radical step taken by India would receive the backing of one of its major allies at this point of time -the US. Although there were calls for the Indian government to change its policy towards Tibet and adopt a more unequivocal stance in line with the actions of the previous Trump administration who had passed legislations such as the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act 2018 and the Tibet Policy and Support Act (TPSA) 2020, yet it is unclear whether the current Biden administration would equally be vociferous on the issues of Tibet and Taiwan. This is more so as President Joe Biden explicitly stated his aim of undoing the damages done to American foreign policy by the preceding administration including mending ties with China. Even as Trump had moved closer to Taiwan, the Biden administration reiterated its support for One China policy as recent as that of 3 February 2021. Hence, in such a scenario despite the growing strategic closeness between USA and India on account of China, the Biden administration is unlikely to support the Indian unilateral action of alteration in One China Policy.

Finally, India's geographical proximity to China would ensure that the immediate costs and implications of any alteration to One-China policy would have to be borne by India than the US. Such costs can include a hardening of Chinese attitudes towards India and a no-holds barred approach from the PLA on the LAC. Besides, other areas such as trade which remained relatively unaffected throughout the Galwan crisis might witness negative repercussions because of possible heightened military conflict. Also, such a radical step by India might be interpreted by China as the breaking of the final straw and further affirm the traditional Chinese stereotype of India being a 'Western (US) lackey' (similar perceptions had prevailed before 1962) thus ending possible avenues of goodwill and cooperation.

As noted by former Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran, it would prove costly for India to bend foreign policy issues for serving domestic political ends. Hence, the Indian government is most likely to adopt the pragmatic approach of not bowing to the sway of popular domestic opinions at the risk of incurring heavy and fateful costs in the context of already strained Indo-China ties.

Views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

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A Call For Global Vaccine Justice

Only a truly global vaccination strategy can ensure equal value is placed on the lives of the rich and the poor.

PARSA ERFANI
EUGENE RICHARDSON
JASON HICKEL

The global COVID-19 vaccine roll-out is creating a "vaccine apartheid". As of February 24, approximately 216 million people have been vaccinated against COVID-19 globally. Only 8.4 percent of these are in low and lower-middle-income countries, which are home to nearly half of the world's population.

If this trend continues, young and healthy individuals in wealthy countries will be vaccinated while older and vulnerable people in poorer countries continue to die, needlessly.

Wealthy countries have focused almost exclusively on securing vaccines for their own populations instead of investing in cooperative initiatives – such as the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) (and its vaccine pillar COVAX) – that would fairly distribute vaccines to high-risk people in every country across the globe. In the process, they are hoarding limited supplies (with Canada, for example, securing nearly 10 doses per capita), raising vaccine prices, and squeezing lower-income countries out of the vaccination race. South Africa paid double what the European Union did for the AstraZeneca vaccine.

Most wealthy countries will fully vaccinate their population this year, while lower-income countries

may not achieve mass immunisation until 2024. If this vaccine nationalism continues, the poorest in the world will be pushed into more disease, poverty and death.

Vaccine nationalism is also self-defeating. As wealthy countries roll out domestic vaccination plans, emerging COVID-19 variants threaten their success: recent data suggest that several vaccines currently in use may provide reduced efficacy against new variants.

As long as SARS-CoV-2 continues to circulate in poorer countries, wealthy countries are vulnerable, even with their vaccination shields. Their economies are also at risk. The International Chamber of Commerce predicts that if poorer countries are not given equitable access to vaccines, the global economy may lose as much as \$9.2 trillion, approximately half of which would fall on advanced economies. By comparison, funding the ACT accelerator requires only \$22.9bn.

A global vaccination strategy is both cheaper and safer. It is also a moral imperative – only a truly global vaccination strategy can ensure equal value is placed on the lives of the rich and the poor.

Towards this end, we must take three urgent steps:

First, high-income countries should support transfers of relevant technologies and intellectual property (IP) to enable other countries to scale up vaccine production.

In 2020, South Africa and India submitted a pro-

posals to the World Trade Organization (WTO) to temporarily waive certain provisions of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement (TRIPS) for COVID-19-related technologies.

The waiver was supported by nearly 100 countries, but was nonetheless spiked by the European Union, United States, United Kingdom, Japan and several other countries that host large pharmaceutical industries. Policymakers in wealthy countries argue that IP is not a true barrier to vaccine access and that existing TRIPS flexibilities are sufficient.

But IP has already become a barrier: South Africa faced challenges in accessing reagents for COVID-19 testing due to IP rules. What is more, the US, EU, and Switzerland have historically undermined the use of TRIPS flexibilities in order to protect pharma profits.

IP waivers and technology transfers will not lead to immediate inoculation in lower-income countries, but they will facilitate international collaboration and remove real barriers to local vaccine production. The TRIPS waiver will be reconsidered by the WTO in March, and wealthy countries should support it.

Second, high-income countries should deploy a proportion (eg 10 percent or more) of their vaccine supply for global allocation directly through COVAX (they currently hold about 56 percent of the world's COVID-19 vaccine supply but make up only 16 percent of the global population).

Although sending doses abroad may delay their domestic vaccine roll-out, doing so will contribute to global herd immunity, which is in everyone's inter-

est. Norway committed to such a path last month. As wealthy nations begin to scale vaccine production, an incrementally larger fraction of their vaccines should be deployed to poorer countries.

Third, high-income countries should cover the entire \$22.9bn funding gap of the ACT accelerator. This funding is necessary for COVAX to achieve its intended population coverage in the coming years. Some lower-income countries will utilise doses from COVAX as they secure purchases from vaccine manufacturers. Others may rely entirely on COVAX to achieve herd immunity.

COVAX is important, and it needs full support, but even at its most ambitious it will be too slow (it aims to vaccinate 20 percent of the population of lower-income countries by the end of the year), and it does not address the underlying structural problems that give rise to vaccine apartheid. We should not be distracted from the more important objective of establishing that all people have equal rights to public health medicines – not just for this crisis, but permanently. This is not a matter of charity, it is a matter of justice.

The COVID-19 pandemic will likely define how countries operate in global health for the coming decades. Vaccine apartheid is merely the latest manifestation of a colonial logic of othering and oppression that began centuries ago. Reparative justice demands undoing these legacies – and a commitment to vaccine equality can mark the start.

Al Jazeera

An Email From The Afterworld

PATRICK STOKES

Tim Hart was sitting on his couch one evening in November 2011 when he got an email with the subject line: “I’m watching”. The message that followed was short and to the point ... *Did you hear me? I’m at your house. Clean your fucking attic!!! — Jack Froese*

Jack Froese had been a close friend of Hart’s since their teens. A few months earlier Froese and Hart had been up in Hart’s attic at his home in Dunmore, Pennsylvania. Jack had teased him then about how messy it was; now, it seemed, he was doing it again.

Except Jack was dead.

That June, Froese had died suddenly of a heart arrhythmia, at the obscenely young age of 32. Months later, he started emailing people. Those who replied to these emails never got a response, and the messages stopped as abruptly as they began.

Not long after Froese’s death, a group of philosophers gathered in a seminar room on the other side of the Atlantic to hear David Oderberg, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Reading, offer a curious thought experiment: what if you received an anonymous email, containing information that you and you alone were privy to?

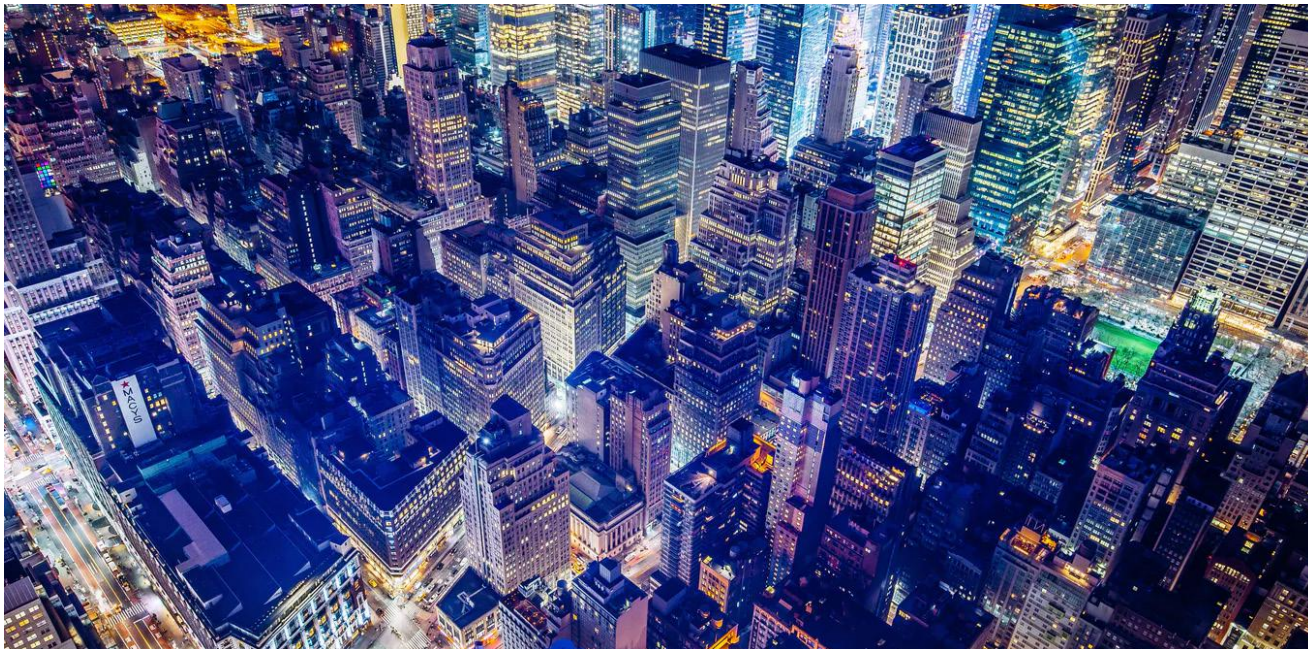
In Oderberg’s example, the email might say, “I know you felt like killing Mr Watson for failing you on your A-level English exam,” — something you’d never told anyone at all — “but you deserved to fail”.

Who could this message come from: God? Your future self? A spam-bot whose random message just happened, by mind-boggling coincidence, to describe your early life? The late Mr Watson, now posthumously aware of how you felt that day and eager to set the record straight?

For the specific purpose of the interaction, says Oderberg, it doesn’t really matter, just as when a soldier receives an order on the battlefield it doesn’t matter whether the order comes from the colonel or the general.

Both options have what Oderberg dubs “telic possibility”. Something is telically possible if it might as well have been true. The purpose of the order is to command an action. It might as well have come from the colonel as from the general: an order’s an order.

Not infrequently, according to Oderberg, electronic communication is just like this. If all you want is to know how to drive to the nearest supermarket, GPS navigation with synthesised speech is just as effective as a human sitting next to you with a roadmap.



Someone under the misapprehension there is a flesh-and-blood person on the other end of the SatNav reading out driving instructions to them in real time will get to their destination just as quickly as someone who understands they’re listening to a computer. The voice might as well be a person as a piece of software.

Planned or spammed?

There are other plausible, earthly explanations for Jack’s emails, though not all of them check out. You can send an email after you die, if you’ve done a bit of planning. There are online services specifically designed to send pre-prepared messages on your behalf after your death.

Some rely on a next of kin contacting the service to let them know the user has died. Others require the user to log in at set intervals or reply to periodic emails, and will assume the user has died if they don’t respond. (So if you’re keen to use such a service to tell people how much you secretly hated, cheated on, or lusted after them, just make sure you don’t fall into a long coma and then wake up. Things could get awkward.)

That would be a very neat explanation for Froese’s emails — except that an email his cousin received mentions an injury that happened long after Froese had died.

But what’s really interesting here is not how the emails came about, but the responses of the people who got them. Hart’s attitude was that, even if someone other than Jack wrote the emails, it ultimately didn’t matter:

... *we spoke to his mother, and she told us, you know, ‘Think what you want about it, or just accept it as a gift’.*

In other words, to use Oderberg’s language, Froese’s friends and family treated it as telically possible that the emails were from Jack. For the purpose of the communication, it didn’t really matter. They had the emails, and felt comforted by a sense of Jack’s persistence, whatever their origin.

Ghosts in the machines

The dead persist everywhere and nowhere, from the solidity of corpses to wispy traces in dreams, writing, building, and even in the faces of their descendants.

From the ancestor mask processions of the Romans through to the death masks of the royal and famous that began to be produced during the late Middle Ages, from the earliest portraiture to photography and video, humans have found ways to preserve the phenomenality of the dead, the distinctive way they appear and sound.

New technologies allow the dead to persist among us in enhanced ways, yet risk turning the dead into mere fodder for the living. Danger lies in the very thing that makes electronic communication so powerful: the transparency of the medium, the frictionless ease with which others appear to us, unburdened by distance and delay.

As the internet folds itself into the sinews of our everyday existence, as our flesh becomes increasingly digitised, the gap between electronic and face-to-face communication is closing. That makes it far easier for the dead to remain among the living. But it can also change our relationship to the dead in ethically troubling ways.

With every day that passes, the internet fills up more and more with dead

people, while our ability to reanimate them becomes ever more powerful.

The dead are both more robust and more vulnerable — and we’re not ready for any of this. We need, urgently, to understand what the internet era means for our relationship to the dead, and what new demands this makes of us.

Talking to Edison

It’s easy to lose sight of the fact that electric communication is now in its third century, reckoning from Francis Ronalds’ first working telegraph of 1816, two decades before Samuel Morse. What’s perhaps even more remarkable is that, as the cultural historian Jeffrey Sconce demonstrates in his book *Haunted Media*, the idea of communicating with the dead became conceptually entangled with electric communication right from the start.

Commercial telegraph services began to appear at roughly the same moment as the table-turning craze, which began with the rapping “spirits” that plagued the Fox Sisters in Hydesville, New York in 1848. The uncanny new technology of communication-at-a-distance provided a helpful structuring metaphor: the electric telegraph allowed the living to speak to each other across vast distances, while the “spiritual telegraph” of the séance room bridged the gulf between the living and the dead.

That association of the dead with electric communication, as Sconce notes, lingered right throughout the 20th century. Near the end of his life, Thomas Edison was speculating to reporters about the possibility of building a machine so sensitive it could communicate with the dead. Both Edison and

Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, experimented with telepathy by winding wires around people’s heads. (It didn’t work.)

Many people found the telephone unsettling and even creepy the first time they heard it, reminiscent of the mysterious disembodied voices of the séance room. In particular, the entirely new phenomenon of white noise unnerved early telephone users; some came to interpret sounds within the phone line static as somehow connected to or even communications from the afterlife.

Electronic media collapses time and space, removes the tyranny of distance and absence; understandable, then, that overcoming the ultimate distance and the final absence, the chasm that separates us from the dead, would come to figure in the cultural imagination of the first generations of humans to live with this new technology.

But the dead do not just appear to us in terrifying visions or mysterious ciphers, but in the very real material and mental traces they leave behind.

Haunting is an everyday event, not an anomalous one. And with the digital age, the dead have found new ways to haunt us more comprehensively than ever before.

Digital grief

Ancient questions about the metaphysical and ethical status of the dead collide with new ones about our relationship to our information and our ownership of digital property.

Anxieties about whether public grief is “real” and who has the right to grieve are amplified when mourning is instantaneous and global. Crucially, this is not just an academic concern, but an urgent practical one. How are we to meet the conceptual and ethical challenges of the world that is coming into view? Can people really survive death online? Should we let them?

In 2017, Australian journalist Mark Colvin died, aged 65. A universally admired broadcaster and author, Colvin was also an avid and highly responsive Twitter user. The news broke around 11:40am, and Twitter was immediately flooded with tributes. Then, at 1:18pm, Colvin’s account posted a single tweet:

It’s all been bloody marvellous.

Had it been sent by a family member on his behalf? Had he, knowing the end was near, scheduled the tweet? Was the ghost of Mark Colvin somehow using his iPhone?

Nobody, it seemed, felt like asking. They all just wanted to say goodbye and explain what Colvin meant to them. It was what it was. “Think what you want about it, or just accept it as a gift”.

*By arrangemetns with
The Conversation*

Why Mars Matters

The successful landing of NASA’s Perseverance rover on Mars is about far more than scientific curiosity or national prestige. For the sake of humanity’s long-term survival, it is imperative that we embrace our technological know-how to establish life beyond planet Earth.

CHRISTOPHER E. MASON

“We need humans to be able to live on Mars sustainably, responsibly, and safely not so that we can abandon Earth, but because the best way to ensure our species’ survival is to make it possible to live elsewhere. Mars is not Plan B: it is Plan A, and always has been

NEW YORK – The Perseverance rover, which landed on Mars this month, marks a new leap toward answering fundamental questions about our solar system, including where else we might find DNA. The rover will roam the surface of Mars looking for signs of life, make its own oxygen, launch a helicopter, and collect soil and rocks for a follow-up mission in 2028. If all goes as planned, NASA, with the help of European Space Agency (ESA) spacecraft, will return soil samples in the spring of 2032 – the first Martian material to visit Earth.

Finding DNA on Mars would not be a complete surprise. Though Perseverance was constructed in the Spacecraft Assembly Facility (SAF) clean room at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), even that setting cannot be made 100% free of background microbial or human DNA. We have known about “microbial hitchhikers” since the very first interplanetary missions in the 1960s, when scientists such as Carl Sagan highlighted the problem. It is a persistent, unavoidable risk of space science. Because scientists must build the spacecraft one layer at a time, shedding skin and droplets of saliva over years of construction, it is almost certain that a little bit of California DNA just landed on Mars.

As such, when the samples arrive on Earth in 2032, they will need to go through a “planetary-scale genetic filter” to rule out any DNA that might have been present in the SAF during the rover’s construction from 2015-20, as well as any other fragment of DNA observed on Earth up until the launch of the spacecraft in July 2020. This is an ongoing project between our laboratory at Weill Cornell



Medicine and JPL. By sequencing the DNA found in, around, and on the SAF during the construction of robots, we will draw up a genetic map to avoid or minimize any forward or backward contamination (where we send genetic material somewhere else, or genetic material from somewhere else lands here).

Ever since the first two Soviet probes landed on Mars’s surface in 1971, followed by the US Viking 1 landing in 1976, some fragments of microbial and possibly human DNA are likely to have ended up on the red planet. And given the planet’s global dust storms, this DNA is almost certainly located in various places across the surface.

Fortunately, we are living in an extraordinary era for genetics. The low cost of DNA sequencing allows us to build an ever-growing genetic catalog of life on Earth, genetic maps of SAF clean rooms, and the first-ever planetary-scale genome maps (MetaSUB and the Earth Microbiome Project). Moreover, in a 2016 mission with astronaut Kate Rubins, we showed that we can sequence DNA in space

and match it to profiles of novel organisms on Earth. Anything that can survive in space, on spacecraft, or in extreme conditions on Earth is a decent candidate for life that can survive on Mars. Eventually, instead of sending DNA to Mars by accident, we will do it deliberately, for a purpose.

After all, manned missions to Mars are technologically achievable. They can bring out the best in humanity, and we already have the physical, pharmacological, and biological means to pursue them. In my new book, *The Next 500 Years: Engineering Life to Reach New Worlds*, I highlight studies that we performed on dozens of astronauts, including the twins Scott and (US Senator) Mark Kelly, following Scott’s one-year mission in space. Based on our findings, we are now confident that humans can travel to Mars, and with some additional innovation and technology, stay there.

We need humans to be able to live on Mars sustainably, responsibly, and safely not so that we can abandon Earth, but because the best way to ensure our species’ survival is to

make it possible to live elsewhere. Mars is not Plan B: it is Plan A, and always has been.

We have an ethical duty to prevent our own species’ extinction as well as that of all others on Earth. No other species (that we know of) possesses such awareness of its potential future, nor the ability to preserve life. Only we can perform this function; and in the long term, doing so requires that we make our way to other planets. Settling Mars is the necessary first rung on the ladder of long-term survival (not least because Venus is too hot).

To meet this imperative, however, we will need to bring NASA’s budget back to 1960s levels, when it was 4.4% of the federal budget (compared to 0.48% today). We will need more international cooperation (including with China) as well. To that end, my colleagues and I recently published a series of papers and launched an international collaboration on aerospace medicine that includes representatives from NASA, ESA, ROSCOSMOS (Russia), and JAXA (Japan). The United Arab Emirates and others have also started studying space biology, and more space agencies are working with commercial platforms such as SpaceX and Blue Origin.

Some duties we choose for ourselves. But the duty to preserve life is inextricably bound up with the awareness of our own mortality and the possibility of extinction. Humanity’s stewardship of life is both a selfish imperative and an innate, unique obligation. By doing what it takes to preserve life as we know it, we may yet find new life in the universe.

Project Syndicate



Happy childhood gives no guarantee for good mental health

Agencies

While it's widely known that a difficult childhood could increase the likelihood of mental illness, a new suggested that a happy and secure childhood does not always protect a child from developing a mental illness later in life. The findings of the study were published in the journal titled 'Current Psychology'. Conducted in partnership with the University of Canberra, the study examined how early childhood experiences relate to different developmental pathways, and how these might be associated with poor mental health. Given that both positive and negative childhood experiences were found to manifest as anxiety or other mental health disorders into adulthood, researchers believed that it is our ability to adapt - or rather not adapt - to unexpected scenarios that might be influencing mental health.

In Australia, almost 50 per cent of the population will experience mental illness at some point in their lives, with an estimated 314,000 children aged 4-11 (almost 14 per cent) experiencing a mental disorder. The national recurrent expenditure on mental health-related services is estimated at USD 9.9 billion or about USD 400 per person. While the study reaffirmed that people who had adverse and unpredictable early life experiences had elevated symptoms of poor mental health (including depression and paranoia), it also found that children who grew up in stable and supportive environments were also at risk of experiencing symptoms of anxiety in adulthood. Lead researcher, and PhD candidate, UniSA's Bianca Kahl, said the study highlighted the indiscriminate nature of mental illness and revealed key insights about potential risk factors for all children.

As the prevalence of mental health conditions expands, it's imperative that we also extend our knowledge of this very complex and varied condition

"As the prevalence of mental health conditions expands, it's imperative that we also extend our knowledge of this very

complex and varied condition," Kahl said. Kahl added, "This research shows that mental health conditions are not solely determined by early life events and that a child who is raised in a happy home, could still grow up to have a mental health disorder." Kahl noted that there are certainly some missing factors in understanding how our childhood environment and early life experiences might translate into mental health outcomes in adulthood. Kahl further said, "We suspect that it's our expectations about our environments and our ability to adapt to scenarios when our expectations are not being met, that may be influencing our experiences of distress." "If, as children, we learn how to adapt to change, and we learn how to cope when things do not go our way, we may be in a better position to respond to stress and other risk factors for poor mental health," Kahl concluded.

Jammu And Kashmir Public Service Commission

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NOTICE
DATED: 25.02.2021

It is for information of all the eligible candidates of Assistant Engineer (Accounts) Departmental Examination, 2020 which is scheduled to be held w.e.f. 08.03.2021 to 10.03.2021, to download the Admit Cards from 01.03.2021 on the Commission's website www.jkpsc.nic.in. Further, the candidates are required to submit an Undertaking regarding COVID-19 symptoms, if any, the format for which shall be downloaded alongwith the Admit Card. However, for the facility of candidates the details with regard to Roll No. & Venue of examination are given as under: -

ROLL NO	NAME OF THE CANDIDATE	PARENTAGE	CENTER
1	AIJAZ AHMAD KAMBAY	ABDUL RASHID KAMBAY	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
2	SHAHNAWAZ MAQSOOD	MAQSOOD ANWAR QALANDAR	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
3	IRSHAD AHMED BHAT	AB GAFAR BHAT	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
4	FIDAH HUSSAIN MIR	ABDUL QAYOOM MIR	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
5	ARVINDPROCH	NEKRAMSHARMA	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
6	MUIZ BASHIR SHAH	BASHIR AHMED SHAH	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
7	GH NABI MALIK	ALI MOHD MALIK	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
8	ARFAT NABI	GHULAM NABI TIBET BAKAL	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
9	IQRA AMIN	MOHAMMAD AMIN BHAT	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
10	LUNDUP JAMYANG	TSERING NORBOO	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
11	SHEIKH SAJID YASEEN	SHEIKH MOHAMMAD YASEEN	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
12	BABAR ASHRAF BHAT	MOHD ASHRAF BHAT	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.

*13	ZAKAR HUSSAIN MIR	IRSHAD AHMED MIR	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
14	MOHD KHALID	MOHD SHARIEF	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
15	AMJAD IQBAL	LAL UD DIN	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
16	PRABHJOT SINGH GANDHI	PURAN BHARAT GANDHI	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
17	ABID BASHIR	BASHIR AHMAD WANI	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
18	VINOD MEHRA	MOHAN LAL	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
19	JANAK KUMAR	BHUSHAN KUMAR	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
20	SUHAIL AHMAD MIR	ABDUL WAHID MIR	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
21	ABHAY SINGH	INDERJEET SINGH	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
22	REYAZ AHMAD PADDER	MOHAMMAD RAMZAN PADDER	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
23	SYED IRFAN AHMAD QADRI	SYED MAQBOOL HUSSAIN QADRI	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
24	ZUBAIR AHMAD LONE	MOHD JABAR LONE	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
25	VIKAS CHANDER SHARMA	DHANI RAM SHARMA	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
26	MUZAMIL JAN	NOOR MOHD BHAT	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
27	KHALID NISSAR PANDIT	NISSAR AHMAD PANDIT	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
28	NIRMAL SINGH	DULA SINGH	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
29	ADNAN MUSHTAQ	MUSHTAQ AHMED KHAN	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
30	FAHEEM AHMAD ANSARI	FAYAZ AHMAD ANSARI	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
31	MAHESH VISHAL	MAHESH CHANDER	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
32	VIKRAM SHARMA	RAM KUMAR SHARMA	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
33	MANISH KUMAR VERMA	SURAJ PARKASH	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
34	ROUF UL REHMAN KUMAR	GH MOHD KUMAR	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
35	UMER BASHIR DAR	BASHIR AHMED DAR	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
36	ER GHULAM QADIR	ABDUL AZIZ	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
*37	ABDUL ROUF	BASHIR AHMED	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
38	INHA MANZOOR	MANZOOR AHMAD NISAR	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
39	RAMEEZ AMIN WANI	MOHD AMIN WANI	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
40	KHURSHID AHMAD SHEIKH	KHAZIR MOHD SHEIKH	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
41	ROHIT WEDHARA	SURINDER BUSHAN	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
42	SHABIR AHMAD TAK	AB AHAD TAK	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
43	SAMIULLAH BEIGH	GHULAM MOHAMMAD BEIGH	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
44	SUNILA FAYAZ QURESHI	FAYAZ AHMAD	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
45	FERDOUS AHAD BHAT	AB AHAD BHAT	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
46	MOHD YASEEN MALIK	MOHD AKRAM MALIK	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
47	ZAMIR AHMAD RAINA	GULL MOHD RAINA	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
48	ROHIT GUPTA	SURINDER MOHAN GUPTA	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
49	NEERAJ VAID	AMAR NATH	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.
50	MOHD HUSSAIN	MOHD SULTAN MIR	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Solina, Srinagar.
51	VINOD RAINA	MAKHAN LAL RAINA	J&K PSC Examination Hall, Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu.

DIPK-13967/20

(Vinay Samotra) KAS
Deputy Controller of Examinations,
J&K Public Service Commission.

No: PSC/Exam/AE (Accounts)/2020/03

Dated: 25.02.2021

THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL (BOPEE) ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

Tel/Fax: 0194-2433590 - 2437647 (srinagar) : 0191-2479371, 2470102 (jammu)
website: <http://www.jakbopee.org>, email: ceojakbopee@gmail.com

Subject: Provisional select list of Mop-up round of up-gradation/ allotment counselling (physical) of eligible candidates for admission to B.Sc Nursing / B.Sc Paramedical / B.Sc Technology Courses-2020.

Reference: i) Notification No.018-BOPEE of 2020 dated 07.02.2021.
ii) Notice No.022-BOPEE of 2021 dated 13.02.2021.
iii) Notice No.23-BOPEE of 2021 dated 19.02.2021.

Notification No: 28-BOPEE of 2021
Dated: 25.02.2021.

Consequent upon the completion of Mop-up Physical round of up-gradation/ allotment counselling held from 22.02.2021 to 25.02.2021 at BOPEE Office, Srinagar/ Jammu simultaneously for filling-up of unfilled seats for B.Sc Nursing/ B.Sc Paramedical/ B.Sc Technology Courses-2020 and the seats received as shortfall from the Government / Private Colleges/ Institutions, the provisional select list of eligible candidates so selected/ upgraded is annexed herewith as Annexure "A" to this notification which, however, shall be available on BOPEE website <http://www.jakbopee.org> only.

The candidates so provisionally upgraded under mop-up round shall report to the respective allotted colleges by or before 28th of Feb.2021 (3.PM) along-with all requisite documents/ certificates. The Heads of the Colleges / Institutions are advised to furnish the list of candidates who have joined against allotted colleges on 28.02.2021 upto 5.00 PM through e-mail helpdesk@jakbopee.com / ceojakbopee@gmail.com.

In accordance with Nursing Council of India schedule, the admissions will come to a close on 28th of Feb.2021 (4.00 PM) and no admission shall be made after the cut off date under any circumstances. The admission process shall be deemed to be closed accordingly for these courses.

- Note:**
- The Board after conduct of counselling of all eligible Reserved Category candidates converted all these seats which remained unfilled during this round of counselling into open merit and allotted to the eligible open merit/reserved category candidates strictly on the basis of merit cum preference.
 - One seat under Persons with Disability (PwD) Category has been reserved under open merit category and allotted to the eligible candidate at Govt. College of Nursing, Shreenagar, Srinagar subject to the condition that the College shall verify his eligibility of PwD along-with the authentication of PwD on its own. The Heads of the Colleges/ Institutions are advised to admit the candidates who have been upgraded from one college/institute to other without pressing for submission of documents/ certificates as all such candidates have already deposited their documents/ certificates in the colleges earlier allotted to them and shall be allowed to submit the same within one week from the cut-off date (28.02.2021).
 - The Heads of Colleges/ Institutions are requested to refund the fee deposited by the upgraded candidates immediately to enable them to complete their admission formalities without any difficulty before the cut-off date (28.02.2021) in the upgraded Institutions.
 - The Heads of the Colleges/ Institutions are also requested to keep their admission counters open even on holidays/ off days to enable the candidates to complete the admission process. However, the candidates should in their own interest avoid waiting for the last day to complete admission formalities as such delay has the potential of causing hardships to the candidates only.
 - The admission of candidates is purely provisional and shall be cancelled in case any information furnished by any candidate proves to be false / fabricated, and action as warranted under law shall be initiated against such candidates.
 - In case the Indian Nursing Council extends the cut-off date beyond 28.02.2021, the Board shall notify the same separately.
 - The other terms and conditions shall remain the same as notified in e.Information Brochure/ Notifications/ Notices issued by the Board from time to time in this regard. E&OE.

DIPK-NB-5979/20

No:BOPEE/Exam-35(iii)/2020

Dated:25.02.2021.

(Dr. Sunil Gupta)
Controller of Examinations
J&K BOPEE

آر سی۔ کی گمشدگی

میری موٹر سائیکل (Pulsar) JK04C زیر نمبر 8270 کی آر سی (R-C) کہیں گم ہوگئی ہے۔ بہت ڈھونڈنے پر نہیں ملی۔ بصورت دیگر اسکی ڈپلیکیٹ نکالنی مطلوب ہے۔ اس بارے میں اگر کسی کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر ARTO بڈ گام کے دفتر میں پیش کریں۔ بعد از میعاد کوئی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

مظفر احمد بٹ ولد غلام محمد بٹ ساکن آباد پورہ بڈ گام۔

mja

آر سی۔ کی گمشدگی

میری گاڑی (Maruti Swift) زیر نمبر JK04D 8364 کی آر سی (R-C) کہیں گم ہوگئی ہے۔ بہت ڈھونڈنے پر نہیں ملی۔ بصورت دیگر اسکی ڈپلیکیٹ نکالنی مطلوب ہے۔ اس بارے میں اگر کسی کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر ARTO بڈ گام کے دفتر میں پیش کریں۔ بعد از میعاد کوئی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

مظفر علی خان ولد حاجی محمد عبداللہ خان ساکن گجرہ بڈ گام۔

mja

آر سی۔ کی گمشدگی

میری موٹر سائیکل (Pulsar 150) رنگ کالا زیر نمبر (JK04E 7040) نجار محلہ بڈ گام میں 24-12-2020 کو چوری ہوگئی ہے۔ بہت ڈھونڈنے پر نہیں ملی۔ اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی کلیت ہو تو وہ برائے انسانیت نیچے دئے ہوئے پتہ یا پولیس سٹیشن بڈ گام پر رابطہ کریں۔

محمد الطاف دانی ولد محمد جمال دانی ساکن جہانم بڈ گام۔

فون 7889477763 mja

Twitter Considers Charging Users For Special Content, In Revenue Push



Agencies

SAN FRANCISCO: Twitter said Thursday it plans to offer a subscription service in which users would pay for special content from high-profile accounts, part of an economic model to diversify its revenue.

The globally popular social media platform announced the potential new Super Follows service at its annual investor meeting, as it searches for new revenue streams beyond targeted advertising.

"Exploring audience funding opportunities like Super Follows will allow creators and publishers to be directly supported by their audience and will incentivize them to continue creating content that their audience loves," a Twitter spokesperson told AFP.

Top Twitter executives discussed Super Follows while outlining goals and plans for the near future during the streamed presentation.

"We are examining and rethinking the incentives of our service -- the behaviors that our product features encourage and discourage as people participate in conversation on Twitter," the spokesperson said.

Super Follows was described during the presentation as a way for Twitter audiences to financially support creators and receive newsletters, exclusive content and even virtual badges in exchange.

Twitter, which currently makes money from ads and promoted posts, might be able to add additional revenue via the Super Follows transactions.

Creative Strategies analyst Carolina Milanesi was not convinced people will be inclined to pay for special content on Twitter.

Such a model makes sense for content on platforms like YouTube, where hours of craftsmanship might be devoted to producing entertaining videos,

but it is debatable whether the same could be said for tweets on Twitter, she said.

No timeline was given for when Super Follows might become a feature, but it is expected that the tech giant will make further announcements in the coming months.

Building communities

Twitter is also considering allowing users to join communities devoted to topics via a feature seemingly similar to Facebook's "groups."

Twitter aims to reach a milestone of 315 million "monetizable" users in 2023, a steep increase from the 192 million it had at the end of last year, according to a filing with US financial markets regulators at the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The San Francisco-based firm defined monetizable users as people who log in daily and can be shown ads.

Twitter, like Google and Facebook, makes most of its money from digital advertising.

The company said it is aiming for \$7.5 billion in revenue in 2023, more than double the \$3.7 billion it took in last year.

Twitter also plans to double "development velocity," meaning the number of new features it releases per employee to get people to engage more with the service.

Apple bite

Twitter revenue product lead Bruce Falck told analysts that the tech company was mindful of a potential crimp in revenue that could be caused by new privacy labels Apple is mandating for apps on its mobile devices.

App makers are concerned that the labels will discourage users from allowing collection of data used to more effectively target ads.

"It's still too early to tell exactly how this will impact the industry, but it will be felt by the entire industry," Falck said, adding that Twitter was innovating to soften the blow.

Twitter's plan to boost revenue also includes getting more involved in online commerce.

"Imagine easily discovering and quickly purchasing a new skincare product, or trendy sneaker from a brand new follow with only a few clicks," a Twitter executive told analysts.

WE ARE EXAMINING AND rethinking the incentives of our service -- the behaviors that our product features encourage and discourage as people participate in conversation on Twitter,"

Reliance Jio Continues To March Ahead Of Vodafone, Airtel In Revenue Market Share



Agencies

NEW DELHI: Bharti Airtel has been reversing the trend as far as subscriber numbers are concerned over these past few months, beating its rivals more often than not, but data from sector regulator TRAI shows that Reliance Jio continues to gain revenue market share even as both Airtel and Vodafone saw this metric fall in the October-December quarter.

TRAI data shows that Jio increased its share of the revenue market to 39.3 per cent during the quarter, against 38.3 per cent recorded in the previous quarter. In contrast, rival Airtel saw its revenue market fall to 31.3 per cent from 31.6 per cent seen in the previous quarter.

Vi's market share contracted to 20.8 per cent from 20.9 per cent during the same period. For Vi, Emkay Securities says that the RMS contraction "does not paint a healthy picture". The increased competition for RMS may also play a role in the timing of the long-expected tariff hike.

In terms of the entire market, TRAI data showed that net mobile revenues grew 4.5 per cent quarter on quarter to an annualised \$25 billion. "This is in line with the peak levels seen before Jio's entry. Recovery in sector revenues weakens the case for floor tariffs since revenue pressure was the key reason cited for introducing floor tariffs," said a report from Jefferies.

The quarter also saw a reversal of the recent trend of traffic being driven by rural subscribers. In the quarter ended December, TRAI data shows that revenue growth was driven by urban-centric markets with metros and A-Circles reporting a 10 per cent and 5 per cent QoQ increase respectively.

Rural centric B-Circle and C-Circles reported a slower 3-4 per cent QoQ growth respectively. "We see Jio and Bharti Airtel as well-placed to benefit from sector growth; the latter has 4G penetration at 54 per cent of its total mobile subscribers and ARPU 10-24 per cent ahead of peers," CLSA said in a note.

Adv Khan Asks Handloom Dept To Formulate Plan For Revival Of Carpet Industry



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR:- Describing the Carpet (Kaleen), the identity of Kashmir, the Advisor to LG, Baseer Ahmad Khan has asked the authorities of Handicrafts Handloom Department and Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT) to come up with a comprehensive plan for revival and promotion of this industry envisaging therein the interests of the weavers to keep this profession preserved for our posterity. He said formulation of incentive based policy is need of the hour in order to retain the people (weavers) associated with this job besides motivating others to take up this as income generating profession.

This was stated by the Advisor while visiting Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT) Bagh-i-Ali Mardan Khan here today. Director Handicrafts and Handloom, Mr Mehmoos Ahmad Shah, Director IICT besides other senior officers of the department accompanied him.

Earlier, the Advisor visited the Industrial Estates (IE), Bagh i Ali Mardan Khan and inspected several Units established there in private sector. Director Industries and Commerce, Mr Nazim Zai, General Manager, DIC Srinagar Mrs. Tazayun Mukhtar Kawoos and other senior officers of the department were present on the occasion.

While interacting with the trainees at IICT, the Advisor said that Government has initiated several measures for promotion of Industrial sector and assured them that all possible assistance will be extended

to those, who are willing to establish their own income generating units by way of giving financial assistance and providing direct marketing facilities to dispel the role of middleman. He said formation of societies will be encouraged at all level so that more people are roped in for making this industry a big source of income to the people living in rural and far off areas of the Valley.

Mr Baseer directed both the Directors to take care of the health and family of the trainees and trained ones by introducing health insurance schemes for them and their families besides extending education incentives to their children.

The Advisor said that weavers are the backbone of this industry and asked the concerned authorities to conduct a thorough survey so that proper attention is given for establishment of cluster Units.

The Advisor said that Government has taken several initiatives for promotion of Handicrafts and Handloom sectors and asked the trainees to establish self help groups (SHG) in their respective areas to ensure better price for their products in the market. He said e-commerce trend is becoming popular worldwide and asked the trainees to take advantage of these markets once they establish their own income generating Units.

Termining designing as an important factor of this trade, Mr Baseer Khan asked the concerned authorities to keep developing new designs meeting the market demands at international level and asked the IICT authority to preserve all designs developed in the Institute

and go for developing new attractive and innovative ones.

Referring to the functioning of dyeing unit of the IICT, Advisor said that it needs to be augmented once the Unit is matching international standard.

Mr. Mehmoos while briefing the Advisor about the functioning of the department said that manufacturers should brand their products "machine made or handmade" so that customer cannot commit any mistake while making the purchase of such products. He said GI tagging has become necessary for checking of deceit being carried out by some selfish traders and cheaters.

While inspecting the Industrial Units at Industrial Estates, the Advisor was briefed by the Director Industries and Commerce about functioning and status of business units established there. He was informed that several units have turn sick due to varied reasons especially Covid 19 pandemic. He asked the authorities of Industries Department to examine all the Units individually and come up with a concrete proposal how these Units could be revived and made viable. He said Industry is known as the backbone of the economy and directed the concerned authorities to take necessary steps for protection of this sector.

The Advisor said that the Estates needs to be developed on modern lines and instructed the authorities to devise a development plan having all facilities, like Common Facility Centre, Medical aid, recreation facilities, developed roads, drinking water facility, proper drainage, parks and other allied facilities.

While interacting with the Unit holders, the Advisor said that Government is committed to find and provide better marketing facilities to the manufacturers, adding that the possibility would be explored for allotting space to manufacturing units during Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2021. He asked the unit holders to be honest in their business and sell all the items as per brand whether machine made or handmade. "Quality of the products should be bench mark of your business", he advised the unit holders.

“MACHINE MADE OR HANDMADE” SO THAT CUSTOMER cannot commit any mistake while making the purchase of such products. He said GI tagging has become necessary for checking of deceit being carried out by some selfish traders and cheaters.

Adv Khan For Strict Adherence To Quality Standard Of Fertilisers

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Khan, today inspected Quality Control Laboratory at Agriculture Complex Lalmandi, Srinagar.

Advisor visited various units of the laboratory including Fertilizer Quality Control Lab, Pesticide Quality Control Lab and Organic/Bio-Fertilizer Quality Control Lab.

Director Agriculture, Kashmir, Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal, accompanied the Director.

During the inspection, Advisor exhorted upon the concerned officers and officials to strictly adhere to the quality standards of pesticides and fertilizers to facilitate the farming community boost their agriculture and horticulture cultivation. He



asked for exploring possibilities to further increase the capacity of the laboratory with latest equipments besides strengthening other parts of this vital facility.

Advisor was informed that the Quality Control Laboratory has been augmented and its infrastructure

has been upgraded after September 2014 deluge to provide quality products to the farmers and orchardists. He was further apprised that highly qualified staff and resource persons have been deployed in the Laboratory for attaining effective results. Besides, the Lab is now working in double shift and due to strengthening of the manpower the number of testing has increased by two times.

Agriculture Chemist, Tabasum Naz, who is also the incharge of the quality control laboratories, reiterated that the samples of fertilizers and pesticides, organic and bio-fertilizers and other related products are being received by the Laboratory through Enforcement Agency of the department and the products are tested with immense precision and accuracy.

Hotels Incur Rs 1.43 Lakh Crore Revenue Loss In Pandemic Year



Agencies

BENGALURU: India's hotel industry saw a sharp fall in revenue, by about 60 per cent, in 2020 with the occupancy plummeting to seven per cent when the pandemic struck, a sector analysis by Motilal Oswal showed. The key players in the sector have estimated the loss of the industry to the tune of Rs 1.43 lakh crore.

The report added that although the aggregate revenue rate (ARR) improved on a quarterly basis in Q3 FY21, all the key players reported an operating loss during the quarter which narrowed down as the occupancy rate increased. Aggregate operating loss for hotel players reduced to Rs 13.1 crore in Q3 compared to loss of Rs 244.3 crore in Q2. On a quarterly basis, the total expenditure grew 33 per cent, with a revenue growth of 105 per cent which helped hoteliers reduce operating loss, showed the analysis.

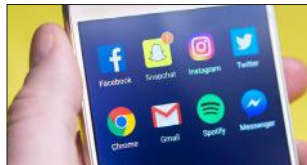
The key players predict the occupancy rates to improve as corporate travel picks up

in Q1 FY22, leading to some recovery for the sector. The industry has witnessed demand revival in leisure travel. However, revival in corporate demand would remain a key metric to watch out going forward. The return of demand would drive up occupancy, with ARR growth following suit, the brokerage firm said in its report.

While FY21 earnings are estimated to remain weak, a sharp recovery is expected on a low base in FY22, led by improvement in ARR as normalcy returns, improved occupancy, positivity in cost rationalisation efforts and an increase in F&B income as banqueting/conferences resume, it noted.

Meanwhile, hoteliers say that cost-cutting measures would continue beyond Covid-19 and throughout FY22 in employee, power and food and beverage expenses. With uncertainty looming large over the hospitality industry, some players have converted their hotels into commercial centres and a few luxury hotels are now on sale.

New Rules For Social Media, OTT Require Right Implementation: Nasscom



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: IT industry body Nasscom on Friday said the new rules for social media, OTT and digital media players aim to address concerns like grievance redressal, fake news and online safety, but will require the right implementation to ensure they don't become onerous for the platforms.

The industry association noted that technology is becoming all pervasive and it is important that there is responsible use and building of technology for all stakeholders government, industry, startups and citizens.

It also highlighted it is imperative that there is a balance between regulation and innovation as the world is in a phase of accelerated technology shifts.

"Code aims to address many of the concern areas of grievance redressal, fake news, online safety and parity with existing laws. From a user perspective the option of voluntary self-verification of user accounts and the right to receive an explanatory notification on removal or disablement of access and to seek remedy against the action being taken by the intermediaries

should be helpful," Nasscom said. It further said: "This will require the right implementation and should not become onerous for the social media platforms".

The government on Thursday announced new rules to curb misuse of social media platforms, as it mandated firms to appoint grievance officer, disclose the first originator of the mischievous information and remove, within 24 hours, content depicting nudity or morphed pictures of women. Any contentious content flagged by the government or legal order has to be taken down within 36 hours.

The government had said the code was needed to make social media and OTT companies accountable for "misuse and abuse". Nasscom pointed out that it has been working with its members to share feedback on the intermediary guidelines with the government and some of these recommendations have been accepted in the new rules announced by the government.

The government has emphasised that the new rules will not curb creativity and freedom of speech and expression of the citizens and Nasscom would urge the government to ensure that this is the design principle as these guidelines are implemented, it added.

"The call for responsible freedom and ensuring that no information or data is misleading is key for a diverse democracy like India to curb the widespread issue of fake news," it further stated.

NEWS MAKERS

Cooking Oil Gets Dearer As Covid-19 Disturbs Demand-Supply Equilibrium



Edible oil prices have been constantly rising in India over the past 10 months and have registered an average 60 per cent difference since April 2020. Oil companies anticipate a further increase of up to 30 in the next two to three months. While the rise in the prices is generally attributed to the huge dependency on imports resulting in demand-supply gap and the government's reluctance to take a view on the prices, another major reason that has been observed is the shift of the consumer from palm oil to sunflower oil during the COVID-19 period. There was an 80 per cent fall in demand for palm oil and a large part of it shifted to sunflower, according to observations made by the edible oil industry. Edible oils are categorised into three — seasoning, shallow frying and deep frying. Palm oil is well suited for deep frying and is mostly used in hotel industry. "Generally the hotel industry uses the oil that is less costly and useful for deep frying. During the lockdown period, hotels and other eateries were shut. Hence the consumers increased the usage of sunflower oil. In the unlock era, the usage, however, began to balance", P Chandrasekhar Reddy, vice-president of Gemini Edible Oils told The Federal. An increase in demand for 5 million tons — two million palm oil, one million sunflower and two million soya bean seeds — has caused a shortage in the supplies from Malaysia, Indonesia and the other exporting countries. This triggered the rise in the prices. Palm oil rates too soared because the production suffered a slash during the peak of COVID-19 on account of shortage of human power. Workers moved to their hometowns for long durations and returned late.

75% Kirana Shops Looking To Go Digital In Metro Cities: Report



Today, we literally have at least one mobile app for everything, or even two or three. And kirana stores in our neighbourhood, selling day-to-day groceries and other essentials, are not far behind in this race to digitalise their operations. A nothing short of a digital revolution was witnessed during the pandemic as a majority of businesses went online. This included several kirana shops which made use of the boon of internet for making payments, fulfilling orders and managing their inventories, according to a report by SnapBizz, which helps traditional kiranas go digital. SnapBizz, after analysing over two million consumer bills across 10 cities including Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata, and Hyderabad, has found that 75 per cent of stores are working towards going digital. Already, numerous kiranas have created an web or app-based system to help retail sale, in a close competition with the ever-threatening e-commerce players, according to the report. SnapBizz founder-CEO Prem Kumar said over a million kiranas went digital in recent months and started accepting payments, ordering supplies, and managing inventory online. "The technology cover enables them to leverage their strengths like proximity, personal touch, and flexibility further to acquire new customers effortlessly," Livemint quoted him as saying. The sudden digital push came amid lockdown that necessitated minimal stepping out and contactless shopping. Home deliveries increased last year. More than 80 per cent kiranas saw a rise in customers and banks too found them actively engaged in kirana ecosystem.

SMC Councillor, Five Others Arrested For Illegally Terminating Pregnancy of Minor

SRINAGAR: A female Councillor of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has been arrested on the charges of forced abortion. She along five others including a doctor were arrested for compelling a rape victim to go for pre-mature delivery.

The case surfaced when a thirteen year unmarried girl of Central Kashmir's Ganderbal was forced to abort in her seventh month of pregnancy. Police took the cognisance of the offence and registered case under relevant sections of law. Well placed sources said that during investigation it surfaced that one female Councillor of SMC had administered drugs to the victim girl and killed the foetus against a payment of Rs 75,000. The husband of the Councillor is reportedly in medical department posted in Beerwah area of Central Kashmir's Budgam.

Police have already issued a statement about this gory incident saying that a doctor and five of his "associates" were arrested for illegal termination of pregnancy of a minor girl. The accused have been identified as Dr. Ghulam Nabi Bhat son of Muhammad Sultan Bhat of New Colony Sopore, Altaf Khan Son of Mehboob

Khan, Ulfat Wife of Altaf Khan, Haseena Begum Wife of Abdul Gani Khan Resident of Dedrambagh, Ganderbal, Bashir Ahmad Kumar son of Ali Mohd Kumar, a resident of Baghi Mehtab and Mst Afrooza Wife of Ghaznafar Ali Hajam resident of Alamgari Bazar.

Police in a statement had said, "In a prompt action, on a report from victim Liaisoning Officer, deputed with a minor rape victim in a previous case FIR No.14/2021 under section 376 IPC that the girl (name with held) has been subjected to compulsive delivery of baby by some unknown doctor and that the infant may have been killed during such illegal procedure, Ganderbal Police filed a fresh case FIR No.24 of 2021 U/S 326, 312 IPC at Police Station Ganderbal and initiated investigation into the case."

"SSP Ganderbal Khalil Ahmad Poswal constituted a team under the supervision of DySP Head Quarters Ganderbal Dr Abdul Majid including SHO Ganderbal Khurshid Ahmad Awan to nab the accused," the official said, adding, "the victim girl revealed that her family members took her to accused Doctor's clinic in Sopore where she was subjected to illegal termination of pregnancy." (KNT)

Forest Dept To Expand Plantation Work In J&K

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Chief Secretary, BVR Subrahmanyam Friday chaired the 19th meeting of the Steering Committee of the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) to consider the Annual Plan of Operations (APOs) for the year 2021-22.

At the outset, the PCCF apprised the Committee about the steps taken by the Forest Department to make the Annual Plan of Operations (APOs) under CAMPA more systematic, cost-effective and result-oriented. He also informed about the initiatives taken to protect forest areas through the digitisation of boundaries, undertaking fire vulnerability mapping and using IT tools in forest damage reporting by field functionaries.

The Chief Secretary stressed the use of IT tools in the preparation of thematic digital maps like GIS, GPS, ICT equipment, and use of drones

and mobile apps for real-time surveillance. "These interventions can potentially increase the qualitative output of Department's efforts towards forest conservation, protection, and regeneration", he added.

Reviewing the implementation of special projects, the Chief Secretary directed the Department to focus on catchment area treatment of the Wular Lake, rehabilitation of the Tosamaidan, and stabilization of slip areas on the NH-44 especially in the Ramban Banihal section.

He also asked the department to take up peripheral plantation in pockets of land around industrial estates, roads, and public buildings including schools, besides, developing city forests in both the divisions.

It was informed that the Department has picked up pace in work execution which was subdued due to the COVID-19 Pandemic related restrictions, and has so far treated 8458 hectares of area, installed 30.80

lakh rft fencing, planted 42.10 lakh saplings, and produced 24.58 plants in nurseries. The Social Forestry Department has constituted 3500 Village Panchayat Committees to promote public participation in plantation and maintenance drives.

Further, it was informed that the Department has put in place an effective monitoring mechanism to closely monitor the execution of CAMPA works. This includes field-level inspections, Departmental Monitoring Committees, hosting of GPS coordinates/polygons on the departmental website, third party evaluation of CAMPA works and involvement of Village Panchayat Committees. J&K CAMPA is also in the process of creating a dedicated CAMPA Portal to monitor progress on a real-time basis.

The Forest Department is also undertaking path-breaking low-cost innovations in forest regeneration through the use of seed balls. The seed balls which can be

made with the assistance of various Self Help Groups (SHGs) can be scattered in difficult areas such as mountains, remote areas and muck dumping sites, and do not require special care, soil work, and fencing to promote plant growth.

After detailed deliberations, the Committee approved the Annual Plan of Operations (APOs) for the Year 2021-22 with an outlay of Rs.233 crore for J&K Forest and allied departments. The approved APOs envisage afforestation of 13,926 ha area with the planting of 74.47 lakh plants. The interventions will include natural and artificial regeneration, plant production, beating up of casualties, forest fire-prevention & control, fodder production & augmentation of pastures, enrichment of economically important and medicinal plants, protection of forest lands, soil & moisture conservation works, social forestry, infrastructure, and capacity building related activities.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

UN Chief Encouraged

agreed to strictly observe all agreements on the ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) and other sectors.

The Secretary-General is encouraged by the joint statement issued by the militaries of India and Pakistan on their agreement to observing the ceasefire at the Line of Control in Kashmir and engaging through established mechanisms," Stephane Dujarric, Spokesman for the UN chief, said at the daily press briefing Thursday.

"He hopes that this positive step will provide an opportunity for further dialogue, Dujarric said.

President of the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly Volkan Bozkir tweeted that he wholeheartedly welcomes the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan.

Their stated commitment to achieve sustainable peace through addressing each other's core issues and concerns sets an example for other countries and demonstrates #UNGA values, he said in the tweet.

In response to a question on whether the Secretary-General plans to talk to the leaders of India and Pakistan, Dujarric said, there's no plan that I'm aware of, but the Secretary-General is always available for his good offices in any... between any Member States who would request it."

The decision on the ceasefire, effective since Wednesday midnight, was taken at a meeting between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan.

The DGMOs held discussions over the established mechanism of hotline contact and reviewed the situation along the Line of Control and all other sectors in a "free, frank and cordial atmosphere", a joint statement issued by the two countries said on Thursday.

Positive Step

Press Secretary Jen Psaki also said at her daily news conference on Thursday that the Biden administration remains closely engaged with a range of leaders and officials in the region, including those in Pakistan.

"The United States welcomes the joint statement between India and Pakistan that the two countries have agreed to maintain strict observance of a ceasefire along the Line of Control starting on February 25th," Psaki said.

"This is a positive step towards greater peace and stability in South Asia which is in our shared interest and we encourage both countries to keep building upon this progress," she said when asked about the joint statement that announced India and Pakistan have agreed to strictly observe all agreements on ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir and other sectors.

Asked if Islamabad is doing enough in the fight against militancy, she said, "But in terms of an assessment of that I would point you to the State Department or the Intelligence Department."

At a separate news conference, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said the administration had called on the parties to reduce tensions along the LoC by returning to the 2003 ceasefire agreement.

"We have been very clear that we condemn the (militants) who seek to infiltrate across the Line of Control," he said.

"When it comes to the US' role, we continue to support direct dialogue between India and Pakistan on Kashmir and other issues of concern, and we certainly welcome the arrangement that was announced that will go into effect I should say on February 25," Price said.

He said Pakistan is an important partner with whom the US shares many interests.

"We, have been clearer in terms of this issue. Obviously, Pakistan has an important role to play when it comes to Afghanistan and what takes place across its other border. So clearly, we will be paying close attention, and we urge the Pakistanis to play a constructive role in all of these areas of mutual interests including in Afghanistan, including with Kashmir including with our other shared interest," Price said.

The joint statement issued in Islamabad and New Delhi said the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of the two countries held discussions over the established mechanism of hotline contact and reviewed the situation along the LoC and all other sectors in a "free, frank and cordial" atmosphere.

"In the interest of achieving mutually beneficial and sustainable peace along the borders, the two DGMOs agreed to address each other's core issues and concerns which have propensity to disturb peace and lead to violence.

"Both sides agreed for strict observance of all agreements, understandings and cease firing along the Line of Control and all other sectors with effect from midnight of February 24/25," the joint statement said.

The two sides also reiterated that existing mechanisms of hotline contact and border flag

meetings will be utilised to resolve any unforeseen situation or misunderstanding, it added.

Border Residents

Kalal-resident Mohammad Isaaq said, Isaaq hoped that Pakistan would keep its promise of complete observance of the ceasefire agreement.

"We hope Pakistan keeps the promise of not firing on us. We do not feel that they will religiously observe ceasefire. They have made such promises in the past as well, only to violate them," he said.

For the past few years, Pakistan has engaged in shelling and firing along the LoC and the International Border (IB) resulting in casualties, damage to houses, schools, health centres and religious places.

"We have suffered a lot to due Pakistani firing and shelling.... Education of kids was affected. Houses were damaged. There were casualties. The fresh agreement of maintaining complete ceasefire is a happy news for us. Hope it stays," Sarpanch Bhawani in Rajouri district Sunil Kumar said.

Subash Chander, a Panch, said although they are very happy over the news, but it is difficult to trust Pakistan.

Similar apprehension was raised by Kerniresident Mohammad Ashraf who welcomed the fresh agreement but raised question over the intention of Pakistan.

Kiran Kumar, a Kathua District Development Council (DDC) member, says that it is a happy news for border residents. "We thank the central government for this decision. We want Pakistan to behave as a good neighbour by ensuring zero firing from their side. Farmers will fearlessly cultivate their lands on border. Life will be better," he said.

India and Pakistan on Thursday announced that they have agreed to strictly observe all agreements on ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir and other sectors.

A joint statement issued in Islamabad and New Delhi said the Director Generals of Military Operations of the two countries held discussions over the established mechanism of hotline contact and reviewed the situation along the LoC and all other sectors in a "free, frank and cordial" atmosphere.

India and Pakistan signed a ceasefire agreement in 2003, but it has hardly been followed in letter and spirit over past several years with more violations than observance of the pact.

In written response to a question in Lok Sabha earlier this month, Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy said a total of 10,752 cases of ceasefire violations have taken place along India's border with Pakistan in the last three years, in which 72 security personnel and 70 civilians were killed.

He said 364 security personnel and 341 civilians were injured in cross-border firings along the International Border and the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

India shares a 3,323-km border with Pakistan, of which 221 km of the IB and 740 km

of the LoC fall in Jammu and Kashmir.

Major Relief

relieving Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah (IAS) of the additional charge of the post.

Rahul Pandey (IAS), awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Additional Secretary in the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat. "He shall also hold the charge of Director, Information, J&K, in addition to his own duties, till further orders," reads the order.

Krittika Jyotsna (IAS), awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Chief Executive Officer, Jammu and Kashmir Energy Development Agency (JAKEDA), relieving Bipul Pathak (IAS) Principal Secretary to the Government, Science and Technology Department of the additional charge of the post.

"She shall also hold the additional charge of Secretary, J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, relieving Munirul-Islam, KAS, Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums, J&K of the additional charge of the post."

Athar Aamir UI Shafi Khan (IAS), awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

Akshay Labroo (IAS), awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Srinagar (West), vice Ms. Hamida Akhter (KAS), who has been asked to report in the office of Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir.

Gazanffer Ali (KAS), Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, has been transferred and posted as Additional Inspector General of Registration, Kashmir.

Gulzar Ahmad Dar (KAS), Additional Inspector General of Registration, Kashmir, has been transferred and posted as Additional District Development Commissioner, Srinagar, against an available vacancy.

Girls Outshine

Ibtisaam Naseer Tahir, Rounaq Dilshad, Tabasum Gulzar, Seerat Bashir, Jazib Javeed, Umer Manzoor, Tabiya Fayaz, Sadaf Rashid, Khujasta Younis, Anas Amin Mir, Suhaib Ahmad Reshi and Aatiq Javed Khan.

Officials said that 73 students shared second position with 498 marks while 13 shared the third position with 497 marks.

Toiba Showkat, a resident of Sarnal, Anantnag, a student of Radiant Public School who secured 500 out of 500 said that she was expecting above 490 marks but she never expected 500 out of 500.

"I was studying for just few hours on daily basis but never during night," she said while thanking her teachers and parents for their support. "I want to become a doctor as it is the dream of my parents and I want to fulfill the dream of my parents. Marks doesn't matter, what matters ultimately is how you serve the society."

Tabasum Gulzar, a student of high School Watar Lar in Ganderbal district who also secured 500 out of 500 said that she worked very hard for the examination but slow internet speed created lot of problems for her.

She requested all students that never every try to put yourself in pressure, keep every challenge as simple as "you can and you will succeed only through your hard work and consistency."

"The aim of my life is to become a doctor and through this profession I want to make my parents proud by serving to our society in a unique way," she said.

Rutba Javaid, another topper from Fateh Kadal, Srinagar who is student of Kashmir Havard, Habak said that Schools become first victims in Kashmir whenever there is anything untoward.

"Amid Covid-19 pandemic she studied at her home with a little support of her tuition teacher," she said. "It was a really a bad experience if we talk about 2G internet as it would take one full day to download videos sent by teachers."

Anas Amin, another topper from Khanyar here said that he faced various problems due to 2G internet services and it were his teachers who used to call him and other students to teach them.

"Self-studying is very must and studying only during exam time won't work. We must study every day, he said adding that "I want to become a cardiologist and serve my society in a better way for which there is lot of support of my parents and other relatives." - (With KNO inputs)

Specially-Abled

from Shangus ,Nowgam area of Anantnag, was born with a disability and her both legs were crippled. Initially, she was not able to walk properly. However, she decided not to let her health condition hamper her dreams.

Although her family was supportive at every stage, she had to fight 'taboo' and 'prejudices' prevailing in the society.

Speaking in a sign language explained by her mother Muneera Akhtar, Tabia said: "I am deaf and dumb and have not attended any school since last seven years because I am suffering from arthritic condition and I am on wheel chair."

Tabia while giving a message to the young generation of Kashmir, particularly those from South Kashmir, said that "Everyone must chase their dreams with positive intentions in their mind, which will help them a lot literally."

Her father Peer Mohammad Iqbal said, she never attended school since class 3rd and since then a teacher was coming at her residence to teach her, adding that for the treatment of girl "we shifted her in many hospitals but all goes in vain."

He thanked Principal of the local private school namely Fayaz Ahmad for helping his daughter in studies.

Fresh Snowfall

the time. The mercury settled at 3.0 degree Celsius at Pahalgam against 3.2 degree Celsius on the earlier night while the famous health resort had 3.5mm of rainfall during the time.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a low of 5.2 degree Celsius against 5.5 degree Celsius on the previous night and had a rainfall of 0.8mm.

The minimum temperature settled at 4.4 degree Celsius in Kupwara against 5.2 degree Celsius on the previous night even as the northern Kashmir district recorded rainfall of 14.6mm, highest anywhere during the time, he said.

Sonom Lotus, Director Meteorological

Department here, said widespread light to moderate rain with thunderstorm (hail in Jammu region) and snow on higher reaches is expected on February 26.

"On February 27, there is possibility of light rain/snow on higher reaches at scattered places of J&K while there is possibility of isolated light rain or snow on February 28, " he said, adding, "Places like Gulmarg, Sonmarg, Zojila,Banihal Top may receive half foot of snow." (GNS)

Kansal Directs

Chairing a meeting here to review the financial and physical progress on the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) of Power department in Jammu and Kashmir, Kansal asked Chief Engineers of Jammu Power Development Corporation Limited (JPDCL) and Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited to ensure all compliances including proper maintenance of accounts, timely audits and submission of UCs, an official spokesperson said Friday.

Kansal, he said, also emphasized that third party monitoring and addressing of all issues that emerged as a result of the monitoring were essential elements of the compliance process and should be studiously adhered to.

"He also directed the concerned chief engineers of both the corporations (JPDCL, KPDC) to minimize the gap between completion of projects and handing over the same to be put for public use at the earliest," he said.

"The Principal Secretary assured all possible support and assistance to PIAs and PMAs from the side of the government and asked them to gear-up the men and machinery to achieve the set targets within the given time limits," he added.

Earlier, the Principal Secretary, he said, reviewed district-wise and circle-wise status of financial and physical status of the ongoing works under different CSS being executed by different agencies in various districts and circles of the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Managing Director JPDCL, Chief Engineer Distribution Kashmir/Jammu, Chief Engineer Transmission Kashmir/Jammu, Chief Engineer Projects Kashmir/Jammu, Chief Engineer Planning/Procurement Jammu, Director Finance PDD, Heads of Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) and Project management Agencies (PMAs), SES, EXENs and other concerned.

At the outset, the official spokesperson said, a detailed power-point presentation was given over the targets and achievements under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana, (DDUGY), PMDP, RAPDRP, RGGVY, IPDS and other schemes undertaken in PDD sector of the districts.

"The Principal Secretary was informed that the projects for Jammu division being executed in circle-wise and district-wise under PMDP-Urban Scheme, out of Rs 537.32 crore sanctioned amount of center share, Rs 212.04 crore has already been spent. Similarly, under the PMDP-Rural scheme, out of a sanctioned amount of Rs 464.40 crore, an amount of Rs 126.76 crore has been spent on the projects," he said.

While reviewing physical and financial progress on CSS, the official spokesperson said that Kansal directed the concerned officers to remove all the bottlenecks and RoW issues so as to speed up the execution of the projects.

"He also asked the concerned engineers to prioritise works and formulate definite time-lines for early completion of these projects. He also asked the concerned officers to devise a system to continuously monitor and redress all pending issues including delays in payments besides removing all bottlenecks like forest clearances and land-related issues," he said.

"Also, detailed discussions were held on various issues including status of projects sanctioned with current execution level time-line for completion, augmentation, Feeder Segregation, Sub-Station Augmentation Transformer, Status of 33KV and 11KV Lines and other issues involved in various PDD projects," he added.

Random Searches

past fortnight.

Pedestrian, customers and shopkeepers were taken by surprise when security forces immediately sealed the busy Hari Singh High Street (HSHS) in the heart of the city today.

Though women and children were allowed to go, men of all ages were asked to stand in a queue. Later, their identity cards were properly checked and bags and other articles searched before allowing them to go.

Vehicles, including private cars, two wheelers and three wheelers were also properly checked by the security forces. The identity cards of those driving the vehicles and passengers were also checked.

However, normalcy returned in one of the

crowded markets in the city.

Government forces conducted similar operations in other parts of the city as intelligence inputs suggest that militants are trying to smuggle in arms and ammunition and sneak into the city from the outskirts to cause disturbance . (UNI)

HC Closes PIL

the suo moto action of the Court on 23 March 2016 on the basis of newspaper reports regarding unhygienic and adulterated food being sold in open market, causing health hazard to the citizens.

The Court issued directions from time to time and the government filed several compliance reports.

"The last report is by the Deputy Commissioner, Food Safety, Kashmir, in the form of a supplementary affidavit dated 05.02.2021. The report/affidavit gives the district-wise work done in the month of January, 2021 of Kashmir Division as well as of Jammu Division, clearly showing the number of food samples collected from all the districts for testing," the court observed.

It also states that in District Srinagar, the food business operators have been directed to register themselves under the Prime Minister SUV Nidhi Scheme so as to ensure that they are carrying their business under property sanitary conditions, the court observed.

"Advisory has also been issued to food business operators who re-use used oil for frying various food items. Under the Revised Cooking Oil Scheme (RUCO), all used cooking oil is collected by a notified agency and then is used scientifically for manufacturing of bio-diesel so as to avoid re-use of the same as a medium of cooking. This apart, the District Advisory Committee holds meeting wherein implementation of the food safety and standards are duly monitored and reviewed," the court said, adding, "sanitization programmes have been initiated to check the menace of bird flu and chicken sellers have been directed to use protective gears and to maintain highest standard of hygiene."

All food business operators are being educated and made aware of these programmes through print and electronic media, the court said.

"In view of the report/affidavit, we find that the respondents (officials) are taking adequate steps to control the menace of food adulteration and unhygienic conditions in which food articles are being sold in open risking the health of all." (GNS)

J&K Logs 85

The officials said Srinagar district recorded the highest with 47 cases followed by 12 in Jammu district.

While seven districts did not report any fresh cases, 11 districts had cases in single digits.

The number of active cases has dropped to 803 in the UT, while 1,23,527 patients have recovered so far, the officials said. (PTI)

Two OGWs Held

During the preliminary investigation, he said, it was revealed that both the arrested militant associates were providing shelter, logistics and other material support to active militants of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Sumbal and Hajin areas of the district.

"Arms and ammunition including 2 grenades and 8 live rounds of AK-47 have been recovered from their possession. Accordingly, a case vide FIR No.16/2021 under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Hajin and further investigation has been taken up," the police spokesperson added.

Police Prevent

planning to cross LoC for arms training, news agency CNS reported while quoting an unnamed police official.

"They had established a contact with a militant commander in Pakistan and were on their way to cross the LoC via Kupwara to meet him," the official said.

Meanwhile, Police have registered a case FIR no 48/2021 at police station Kupwara under relevant sections of law against the trio.

Court Quashes

Advocate Bashir Ahmed Tak, who represented Omar quashed his detention under PSA and directed authorities to release him from Baderwah Jail.

Last year in September, the Court had allowed the detainee to appear in the examination under police custody. (KNT)

4 Grenades

was arrested from Jammu airport earlier this month, they said.

During the operation, four grenades, 15 pistol bullets and 10 rounds of AK 47 were recovered, the officials said. (PTI)

English Media Blames Team For Motera Debacle, Other Section Point Fingers At Pitch

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The British media lambasted its cricket team's abject surrender to India in the pink-ball Test, holding the much-debated rotation policy and technical failures of its batsmen responsible for the humiliation even as the Motera pitch also drew some flak.

England on Thursday suffered an embarrassing 10-wicket defeat in the third Test against India on a spin-friendly Motera track to go down 1-2 in the four-match series.

The match ended under two days with the pitch drawing flak from some former players like Michael Vaughan, who called it "not ideal" for Test cricket. But 'The Guardian' newspaper focused on England's own shoddy display.

"Inquest into England's two-day thrashing will yield no easy answers," read the headline of its report.

"It is hard to work out what to blame for the disastrous third Test defeat against India when so many things went wrong.

The newspaper went on to pin the blame on the rotation policy, which led to resting of key players during the series, the failure to read the conditions, and "the hangover from the heavy defeat in Chennai last week."

"Then the batsmen's inability to press their advantage when they were 74 for two in the first innings, the systematic lack of exposure to spin bowling caused by the skewed priorities of the ECB, the pink ball, the extreme nature of the pitch and the plain fact that they were up against a better team," the article further read.

"The Sun" called England "inept" and criticised the visitors' selection policy.

"Inept England humiliated in India on an Ahmedabad bunsen-burner with one spinner and four No.11 batsmen," the paper wrote

in a column by Dave Kidd.

"Wisden" summed up the defeat saying: "Never in the history of Test matches in this country has English cricket been made to look quite so poor."

But there were a few newspapers and experts, who squarely blamed the Motera pitch for turning the Test into a two-day contest.

Andy Bunn in his column in 'The Mirror' wrote: "India close to crossing boundaries of sportsmanship with pitch - it was NOT Test cricket."

"Making the most of home advantage is fair enough but this was not a pitch fit for a blue riband, five-day match after England lost to India in the shortest Test match for nearly 90 years."

According to renowned cricket writer Syld Berry of 'The Telegraph': "This unfit pitch was no advert for Test cricket - India should be docked World Championship points."

Berry called on the ICC to ban the newly-built Narendra Modi cricket stadium for producing, what according to him, was a sub-standard wicket.

But he fears that world body would not be brave enough to do so as the ground has been re-named after India's Prime Minister.

"By that ICC rule-book, after bureaucracy has run its course, the pitch at the Narendra Modi Stadium should be suspended from international cricket for a period between 12 to 14 months," Berry wrote.

"...why the Narendra Modi stadium will not be banned lies in the name. The ground has just been re-named after India's Prime Minister, who set the project in motion when he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat," he claimed.

"Owing to Covid, the match referee and the umpires are Indians, and it would be naive to expect that they will be dobbing India's most powerful man in it."

Umar Akmal To Resume Competitive Cricket After CAS Reduces Ban To 12 Months

Press Trust of India

KARACHI: Pakistan batsman Umar Akmal will be able to resume his cricket career after the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS) reduced his suspension to 12 months and imposed a fine of 42.50 lakh Pakistani Rupees on him for breaching the Anti-Corruption Code.

The CAS announced its decision in a consolidated order on the appeals filed by Umar and the Pakistan Cricket Board. Umar was initially suspended from all cricket activities on February 20 last year for not reporting approaches made to him for spot-fixing in the Pakistan Super League.

On Friday, the PCB said that Umar will now be eligible to re-integrate into competitive cricket subject to deposits of fine, which

adds up to Rs 19.62 lakh in Indian currency, and undergoing the program of rehabilitation under the PCB Anti-Corruption Code.

Umar was banned for three years by PCB's Anti-Corruption Tribunal in April last year but he appealed the decision and an Independent Adjudicator, Justice (read) Fakhir Muhammad Khokar reduced the ban in late July to 18 months.

It was despite PCB's contention that the batsman had shown no remorse over his actions of not reporting a corruption approach.

The PCB then went to the CAS saying it was not satisfied with the length of the ban and it should remain three years or more while Umar also lodged an appeal with the CAS against the ban and fine asking it to be dismissed.

PM Modi Inaugurates Khelo India Winter Games, Says Will Make J&K Winter Sports Hub

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday inaugurated the second Khelo India Winter Games in Gulmarg and said that the event is a step towards making Jammu and Kashmir a hub of winter sports.

Athletes from 27 states and Union Territories are competing in the Games which will conclude on March 2.

"This is a step towards making India's presence felt in the international winter games arena and also make Jammu and Kashmir a hub of winter sports," he said in a virtual address.

"These games in Gulmarg show that Jammu and Kashmir is eager to reach new heights of peace and development. These Games will strengthen the resolve for 'Ek Bharat, Shreshth Bharat'."

"I am told the participation has doubled this year and it is a reflection of the inclination towards winter sports in the country," he added.

The disciplines to be competed the Games include alpine skiing, Nordic ski, snowboarding, ski mountaineering, ice hockey, and ice skating among others.

"When you show your talent in Khelo India-Winter Games, remember that you are not just a part of a sport, but you are also the brand ambassador of a self-reliant India," the PM said addressing the 1200 participants who have converged at the picturesque Gulmarg.

"The world evaluates India through what you do on the



field," he added.

The Games are being organized by the sports ministry and the Winter Games Association of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The two Khelo India center of excellence in Jammu and Srinagar and Khelo India centers in 20 districts are great facilities for the young players. Such centers are being opened all over the world," the PM stated.

Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju, who was present in Gulmarg for the inauguration, reiterated his resolve to make India a sporting powerhouse.

"Sports joins states and communities. When a woman from north-east Mary Kom wins a medal, the entire country celebrates. Sports and culture are soft powers of a country," he said in his address.

"Last time we had announced 100 small Khelo India centers here. We have already approved 40 of them and the rest will be approved in the coming financial year," he revealed.

"We have also decided to give Mata Vaishno Devi Sport Complex a Khelo India Academy accreditation," he added.

India Move To Top Spot While England Crash Out Of WTC Final Contention

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: India knocked England out of contention from the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) final in June with their 10-wicket triumph in the day-night third Test, which propelled the hosts to the top of the standings.

India now have to either win or draw the final game here starting March 4 to claim the right to take on New Zealand at the Lord's. The Black Caps have already qualified and are placed second in the latest list.

"England have dropped to 64.1 percentage points on the points table, which is now led by India with 71 percentage points," the ICC stated.

"England are out of the race for a place in the final of the ICC World Test Championship after



losing the third Test against India in Ahmedabad," it added.

England, who are now 2-1 down in the four-match series, needed to win the four-match series 3-1 to play the June 18-22 final. New Zealand are assured of a place in the fi-

nally with 70 percentage points.

If India lose the final Test then Australia, who are in third place with 69.2 percentage points, will sneak in to make the final. Before the thumping win here inside two days, India were second in the table.

Man United, Arsenal, Milan Through In Europa League, Next Rounds Draw Released

Agencies

BERLIN: Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored late to steer Arsenal into the last 16 of the Europa League with a 3-2 win over Benfica on Thursday, while Napoli and both German teams were knocked out.

Arsenal had to come from behind to advance 4-3 on aggregate, while Napoli is out despite beating Granada 2-1 in the second leg. The modest Spanish club surprisingly advanced 3-2 on aggregate.

"The dream continues!" Granada midfielder Luis Milla said on Twitter. Bayer Leverkusen and Hoffenheim went out with 2-0 losses at home to Swiss side Young Boys and Norwegian minnow Molde, respectively.

"A huge disappointment," Leverkusen coach Peter Bosz said after losing 6-3 on aggregate.

Manchester United drew 0-0 with Real Sociedad for a 4-0 aggregate win, and Milan progressed on away goals, 3-3 on aggregate, after drawing 1-1 at home with Red Star Belgrade.

Goals from Lukas Provod and Abdallah Sima in the second half gave Slavia Prague a 2-0 win at Leicester to progress after their goalless first leg.

Roma had little difficulty getting past Sporting Braga with a 3-1 win at home for 5-1 over two legs.

AUBAMEYANG'S LATE DECIDER

Aubameyang scored twice for Arsenal, including the decisive 87th-minute winner just as the Gunners were poised to go out on the away goals rule despite playing



both games abroad due to coronavirus-related travel restrictions.

The teams played the second leg in Athens while the first leg ended 1-1 in Rome after Benfica's home game was relocated from Portugal.

Aubameyang opened the scoring in the 21st, finishing clinically after Bukayo Saka played him through. Diogo Goncalves equalized with a perfectly placed free kick inside the top left corner in the 43rd.

A mistake from Dani Ceballos gifted Benfica its second goal after an Arsenal corner in the 61st. Benfica goalkeeper Helton Leite produced a long kick out that Ceballos tried heading back to his own goalkeeper, but only inadvertently laid it off for Rafa Silva, who rounded Bernd Leno before finishing into the empty net.

It was just the Portuguese team's second effort on target on the night.

But left back Kieran Tierney

replied with a strike inside the far post in the 67th after showing good composure to elude a Benfica defender, and Aubameyang completed the turnaround with a close-range header to the 19-year-old Saka's cross.

"We never seem to do it the easy way," Tierney said.

UNITED YOUNGSTER MAKES BOW

Shola Shoretire came on as a substitute to become Manchester United's youngest player in European competition. Aged 17 years, 23 days, Shoretire replaced previous record holder Norman Whiteside.

Sociedad captain Mikel Oyarzabal missed a good chance to start an unlikely comeback when he sent a penalty high and wide in the 13th minute, and United did enough thereafter to keep the visitors from getting into the game.

United defender Axel Tuan-

zebe thought he scored his first senior goal midway through the second half, but it was disallowed as teammate Victor Lindelof had crashed with his knee into Jon Bautista's head while jumping for the ball. The Swedish defender was booked after a VAR review.

TRIBUTE FOR TA BI

Milan forward Franck Kessie paid tribute to Atalanta youth player Willy Ta Bi after scoring his penalty early against Red Star Belgrade. The 21-year-old Ta Bi died of cancer on Tuesday. Kessie held up a shirt with the text "To God, champion."

Mirko Ivanic played a brilliant pass for forward Ben to equalize in the 24th, two minutes after he hit the crossbar with a free kick.

Belgrade defender Marko Golubelj, who had conceded the penalty early on, was sent off with his second yellow card in the 70th as his team was chasing the goal it needed to get through.

EINDHOVEN OUT, AJAX THROUGH

Egyptian forward Kouka scored late for Olympiakos to knock PSV Eindhoven out despite a 2-1 defeat. The Greek team won 5-4 on aggregate.

Ajax progressed with a 2-1 win over Lille (4-2 on aggregate), Rangers cruised through with a 5-2 win over Belgian team Antwerp (9-5), Shakhtar Donetsk beat Maccabi Tel Aviv 1-0 (3-0), Villarreal defeated Salzburg 2-1 (4-1), Dinamo Zagreb beat Krasnodar 1-0 (4-2), and Dynamo Kyiv won 1-0 at Club Brugge to progress 2-1 on aggregate.

Rohit Sharma Terms Motera Track 'Interesting' But 'Normal Indian Wicket'



Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: Intent to score and not just survive was the key to flourish on the Motera pitch, asserted India opener Rohit Sharma who batted effortlessly on the "interesting but normal" pitch that was declared difficult and challenging by visiting England batsmen.

Rohit attributed his sublime first innings half-century to the positive intent that he displayed during the day-night third Test in which England got thrashed by 10 wickets inside two days on the spin-friendly pitch.

"When you are playing on a pitch like that, you need to have an intent and look to score runs as well. You can't just keep blocking," Rohit said during the virtual conference after the match on Thursday.

England captain Joe Root and Zak Crawley had earlier described the track as challenging.

The senior opener scored India's only half-century of the game with the home side spinners accounting for 19 wickets. England batsmen were deceived by left-armers Axar Patel's straighter deliveries that skidded straight instead of turning.

Rohit felt that during his innings of 66, he was a step or two ahead of England bowlers.

"You just need to be slightly ahead at times and try and find ways to score runs. My intent was not just to survive but try and score runs as well, while respecting the good balls. That's all I tried to do. The pitch was an interesting one and odd ball was just coming in and some were taking turns. On a track like this, you need to have a clear mindset, which I think I did until I played that sweep shot," Rohit said.

He felt that Patel's strategy of attacking the stumps paid off well. The spinner ended the game with 11 wickets in his kitty.

"Axar was simply brilliant," Rohit said, lauding the bowler who had big shoes to fill, replacing an injured Ravindra Jadeja.

"Coming out from nowhere and performing is never easy. He was out injured, slightly down, came back and bowled very well in Chennai. He understands conditions well and how to vary the pace and what lines to bowl," he added.

Coming wider off the crease was also another effective ploy used by Patel.

"He made the batter play most balls which is important as you never know which one is going to turn. He bowls little wider off the crease and his slightly sling-ing action makes it very difficult for batsman to either leave or play," said Rohit.

For Mumbai, the second Test track at the Chepauk was way more challenging.

"If you look at the second Test, it was turning hell of a lot than what it did here, to be honest. But then a lot of batters got runs there in the second Test," he said.

"Like I said in this Test match, we have got to accept that we didn't bat well but in Chennai where the pitch had a lot more to offer, we batted well on that track. Ashwin got a hundred, Virat got 60-odd, so if you applied yourself, you could still score runs," said Rohit, who himself got 161 in that game.

He admitted that tackling spinners in pink ball games is an area that would need some work.

"We need to get back to drawing board and decide what we need to do when the ball is not spinning. Most batters got out to straight balls," Rohit said.

Asked about the difference between the pink and the red SG ball, Rohit felt that the former travelled faster.

"I think it (pink) came to the bat a little faster than the normal red ball. I guess it has a lot to do with the conditions in the evening. The temperature goes down and plus dew factor. Whenever we play pink ball in India, it's going to behave like that, lot more grass on the pitch," he added.

'It's All About Confidence,' Axar Opens Up About Phenomenal Test Performance

Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: It was a long wait for Axar Patel and it didn't help that everyone around him had just one question for the past three years—"Why aren't you in the Indian team?"

But Patel was unfazed as he knew, his time would come.

"I think it's all about confidence," said the 27-year-old from Anand in Gujarat who wanted to be a mechanical engineer growing up but was prodded into trying his hand at cricket by a school friend.

With his record 11 wickets in the day-night third Test against England, the left-arm spinner finally found his big moment in international cricket, seven years after he made his India debut in an ODI against Bangladesh.

Since that day, he has been in and out of the team with the spin all-rounder's spot firmly with Ravindra Jadeja.

In this series too, he made it because Jadeja was out injured. He hadn't been in the national team since 2018 and made his Test debut in the second game against England last week in Chennai.

"I have been out of the team for three years and at that time, I used to think about the areas of my game which need to be worked upon. So, I was working on my bowling and batting," he told Hardik Pandya in a bcci.tv interview, thoroughly enjoying his good time.

"When you are out of the team, many people, friends keep asking you 'why aren't you in the team despite doing well?' These things keep coming in the mind," said the bowler who has 152 wickets in 41 first-class game at an impressive



average of 25.25.

"So, I told myself 'just wait for the right time and whenever I get an opportunity I will give my 100 per cent.'"

Patel's foray into cricket as a 15-year-old on the persuasion of a school friend had a solid backer in his grandmother, who wanted to see him play for India but passed away before he made it.

The lanky cricketer does not forget to acknowledge the role his family has played even though a spelling mistake by his father Rajeshbhai Patel at school had led to his name becoming Axar from Akshar.

"I give all credit to my family, friends and teammates who supported me in tough times," he said.

Asked by Pandya if he finds Test cricket easy, Axar replied: "Every-

body asked me that question. When it goes your way then you think it's easy but when you miss a full toss, you actually realise how easy it is."

Patel said he would aim to continue in the same manner in front of his home crowd in the fourth and final Test against England, starting here on March 4.

"(The day-night Test) was my second Test and first in Motera. It's a special feeling to play and perform before the home crowd. My efforts would be to do the same," Patel said.

Towards the end of the light-hearted interview, India skipper Virat Kohli also made an appearance and appreciated Patel's performance in Gujarat.

"Ae Bapu taari bowling kamaal chhe! (Bapu, your bowling is wonderful!)," Kohli said.

No Vaccinations This Weekend As Software Is Upgraded



Agenceis

The Central government said on Friday it will let people choose their coronavirus vaccination centres when the campaign expands next week, effectively letting beneficiaries pick either a home-grown shot or the AstraZeneca one, unlike now.

The country will halt vaccinations this weekend to upgrade software used to coordinate its campaign, as it prepares to widen coverage beyond the 11.5 million health and front-line workers immunised since January 16. But the inoculation campaign has progressed slower than expected due to a reluctance of health and front-line workers to take the home-grown COVAXIN shot that was approved without late-stage efficacy data.

Only 11% of vaccinated people have opted for the product developed by Bharat Biotech and the Indian Council of Medical Research. With the world's highest tally of infections after the United States, the country wants to vaccinate 300 million of its 1.35 billion people by August.

The decision to give people a choice of vaccines could now speed up the roll-out, officials believe.

"The fundamental shift in this phase is that citizens in the identified age groups, as also those healthcare workers and frontline who have been missed out or left

out of the present phase of vaccination, can select vaccination centres of their choice," the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said in a statement.

From Monday, the government will start covering people aged 60 and those over 45 with medical conditions.

They can register through the government's Co-Win 2.0 portal or walk into vaccination centres; states will also actively mobilise people.

Bharat Biotech has said efficacy data from a late-stage trial on nearly 26,000 volunteers who took COVAXIN shot will be out soon.

The company, along with the country's drug regulator, says COVAXIN is safe and effective, based on early and intermediate studies. More vaccines are likely to be approved for use in the world's second most populous country in coming months, including Russia's Sputnik-V and Cadila Healthcare's ZyCoV-D. Apart from vaccine hesitancy, initial glitches in Co-Win had also slowed the immunisation drive, forcing many states offline.

The software forms part of a government contact-tracing app "Aarogya Setu", or Health Bridge, downloaded so far by nearly 170 million people.

The country's infections rose 16,577 in the past 24 hours to stand at 11.06 million, health ministry data show, while the death count rose 120 to reach 156,825.

Indian Coast Guard Rescues 81 Rohingya On Drifting Boat; 8 Dead, One Missing

NEW DELHI: India's coast guard found 81 survivors and eight dead on a boat crammed with Rohingya refugees adrift in the Andaman Sea, External Affairs Ministry spokesman Anurag Srivastava said on Friday, adding that the survivors would not be allowed to enter Indian territory.

Another refugee was missing, Srivastava said on Thursday, giving news of the rescue.

The United Nations refugee agency had raised the alarm earlier this week over the missing boat, which had set off on February 11 from Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, where refugee camps have been established for hundreds of thou-

sands of Rohingya who have fled neighboring Myanmar.

"After four days at sea the boat's engine failed, and the Rohingya had run out of food and water and many were ill and suffering from extreme dehydration by the time they were rescued," Srivastava said.

Two Indian coast guard ships were sent to help the refugees, 23 of whom were children, and the Indian government was in discussions with Bangladesh to ensure their safe return, he said.

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya fled to Bangladesh after a deadly crackdown by security forces in Myanmar in 2017.

5 Assembly Polls To Begin Mar 27, WB To Have 8 Phases, Counting On May 2

Voting for five assembly elections will begin on March 27, with West Bengal conducting the maximum eight phases continuing till April 29, and votes for the polls in the four states and one union territory will be counted on May 2, the Election Commission said on Friday.

As many as 18.68 crore voters will be eligible to cast their votes at 2.7 lakh polling stations for 824 assembly seats across Assam, West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

The elections for the five assemblies are expected to witness a determined attempt by the BJP to put a strong show, including in Assam where it is already in power, as well as in West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry where the saffron party has been pushing hard in recent years.

Elections in Assam will be conducted in three phases on March 27, April 1 and April 6, while polling in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry will take place in a single phase on April 6.

Elections for the West Bengal assembly will be held in eight phases, up from seven last time, beginning with polling for 30 seats on March 27, Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora said while announcing the poll schedule.

The second phase of West Bengal's assembly elections has been scheduled for April 1 and will cover 30 constituencies, followed by the third phase on April 6 for 31 seats, the fourth on April 10 for 44 constituencies, the fifth on April 17 for 45 seats, sixth for 43 seats on April 22, seventh phase on April 26 for 36 seats and last and eighth phase on April 29 for



35 seats, Arora said.

The Election Commission will appoint two special observers for West Bengal and a third can also be sent if required, Arora said in response to queries on whether enough arrangements are in place for the polls in the state, where many have been raising questions about political violence. Arora also said everyone on election duty for the upcoming polls will be vaccinated against COVID-19 before polling day.

Voting will take place for 126 seats in Assam, 234 in Tamil Nadu, 294 in West Bengal, 140 in Kerala and 30 in Puducherry. Arrangements will be put in place for candidates to file their nominations online. Voting will be allowed for an additional hour, keeping in mind COVID-19 safety guidelines, he said.

Also, webcasting arrangements will be in place at polling stations in critical and vulnerable areas, while adequate CAPF (Central

Armed Police Forces) deployment will be ensured, Arora said. All critical and vulnerable areas have been identified and advance teams have been already deployed across the four states and one union territory, he added. He said door-to-door campaigning will be restricted to five persons, including the candidate, while roadshows will be allowed with a maximum of five vehicles.

According to Arora, the nationwide vaccination drive has made the situation more conducive for conducting elections and the Health Ministry has declared everyone on poll duty as frontline workers for vaccination purposes. All poll officials will be vaccinated before the elections, Arora said.

Arora, who will demit office on April 13, also said all must be congratulated for the successful conduct of elections in Bihar last year despite the COVID-19 challenges and he is confident of success once again.

141 Farmers Died By Suicide In Chhattisgarh In 10 Months: Government

Press Trust of India

RAIPUR: As many as 141 farmers have committed suicide in Chhattisgarh in the last 10 months, the state government informed the legislative Assembly on Friday.

The issue of farmer suicides rocked the Assembly, with the opposition BJP demanding a probe into these cases and seeking compensation for the kin of deceased farmers.

The issue was raised by Leader of Opposition Dharamlal Kaushik during the Question Hour, when he sought to know how many farmers had committed suicide between April 2020 and February 1, 2021 in the state and the

reasons for these deaths.

He also enquired about the action taken in these cases and compensation given to families of the victims.

In response, state Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey said 141 farmers had committed suicide during the period.

In one such case in Kondgaon district, a lower-level revenue officer was suspended for allegedly making a mistake in crop girdawari and (land) record documentation, Mr Choubey said.

Hitting out at the government, Kaushik said an investigation should be conducted in all such cases of suicides and compensation should be given to kin of the deceased farmers

after probe.

To this, the minister said this was not a matter of politics, but unfortunately, the BJP was trying to politicise farmer suicides.

Suicides had taken place earlier (during the BJP rule) as well, but did they consider giving compensation at the time, Mr Choubey said.

Congress MLAs then pointed out incidents of farmer suicides during the previous government's rule and claimed that no compensation was given to the kin of deceased farmers.

This led to a pandemonium in the House, and BJP MLAs staged a walkout from the Assembly, expressing dissatisfaction over the government's reply.

Mayonnaise Helps Save Sea Turtles Rescued From Oil Spill

Mayonnaise that makes a perfect sandwich is saving tar-coated turtles that have washed ashore after oil spills, the Associated Press reported.

The oil spill that has occurred about 50 km off-shore, estimated to be in early February, has coated most of Israel's 195 kilometers of Mediterranean coastline with sticky tar.

The hundreds of tons of oil from an oil tanker pose a particularly serious threat to sea turtles, since they breathe and eat at the water's surface and their trachea is fully blotted with tar.

National Sea Turtle Rescue Center, run by Israel's Nature and Parks Authority, was able to transport 11 endangered green sea turtles (Chelonia mydas) to Michmoret, north of Tel Aviv, for medical treatment, the AP reported.

The rescued turtles are fed with mayonnaise as a medicine since it is found to be safe, non-toxic effective method in clearing the guts of tar-laden turtles.

How it works

Mayonnaise-type emulsion is a mixture of two liquids that normally do not combine in normal circumstances. It is made by combining lemon juice or vinegar with egg yolks. When one ingredient to slowly added to another and mixing rapidly, it disperses and suspends tiny droplets of oil between droplets of water, creating a uniform sauce.

"We continue to feed them substances like mayonnaise, which practically clean the system and break down the tar," Guy Ivgy, a medical assistant at the Sea Turtle Rescue Center in Michmoret, north of Tel Aviv, told Times of Israel.

However, the recovery process is slow that is expected to take a couple of weeks, after which the turtles would be sent back to their natural habitat.

Thousands of cleaning workers and volunteers are engaged in removing tar from Israel's beaches, which may take several months.

The Environmental Protection Ministry has already begun looking into the cause of the oil spill.

According to AP, an Israeli court barred publication of all details of the investigation, including the name of the suspected ship believed to have spilled the oil, its route and ports of call. An Israeli journalists' association have moved the court to have the order lifted.

PUBG New State: Will The Game Launch In India?



Agenceis

In 2020, the aftermath of the Galwan Valley clash and the subsequent souring of relations with China left a very tangible impact: PUBG Mobile, a game installed over 175 million times in India, was banned, as it had been developed for mobile by Chinese developer Tencent Gaming. Chinese apps and games had been banned en masse as they were deemed "prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state and public order".

In 2021, with both India and China having withdrawn from these stand-off positions near the Pangong Tso lake, and signs of economic ties returning, fans of the battle royale title would not be amiss in hoping for their favourite game to return.

Now, PUBG Studios, the game's original non-Chinese makers, have announced their next title: PUBG: New State.

Set in 2051, the title looks like it will take the familiar gameplay of PUBG and apply it to

futuristic combat set in 2021. Drones are set to make an entry, akin to the battle royale mode in CS:GO Blacksite, and combat shields will also be introduced. Other than that, the trailer looks like it will be the same PUBG experience with more futuristic weapons and vehicles.

Due to its non-Chinese roots, expectations are high that the game would become available in India. However, in the accompanying press release, the company said it would be available as a global release "excluding China, Vietnam and India", IGN India reported.

In addition, while the game has been listed on the Google Play Store for pre-registration, Indian users are unable to do so.

In September last year, PUBG announced it was ending its ties with Tencent Holdings for the PUBG Mobile franchise in India, taking on all publishing responsibilities within the country. The move suggests the company takes the Indian market seriously, but what could be preventing them from release New State in India is unknown at present.

Suv With Explosives Found Near Ambani's House Turns Out To Be Stolen

MUMBAI: The vehicle with explosives, which was found near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's residence here in south Mumbai on Thursday, had been stolen last week and its owner had even lodged a complaint about it, police said on Friday.

The vehicle with gelatin sticks and apparently a fake number plate was found parked on Carmichael Road near 'Antilia', the multi-storey residence of Ambani, the chairman of Reliance Industries, on Thursday evening. "The owner of the vehicle, Hiren Mansukh, visited the police commissioner office in south Mumbai this afternoon after he saw visuals of the SUV found near Ambani's house, which was similar to his vehicle," an official said.

"His statement will be recorded by the Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) of the Mumbai crime branch," he said.

get my car, it could not be found at the spot. After a search of about four hours, I realised that it had been stolen, following which I lodged a complaint at Vikhroli police station and an offence was registered in that connection," he said.

Earlier in the day, the police said that an FIR has been registered in connection with the seizure of the vehicle at the Gamdevi police station against unidentified persons.

Police have registered the case under Indian Penal Code sections 286 (negligent conduct with respect to explosive substance), 465 (punishment for forgery), 473 (making or possessing counterfeit seal), 506(2) (criminal intimidation, if threat be to cause death or grievous hurt), 120(B) (criminal conspiracy), the spokesperson said. Section four of the Explosive



Mansukh, who is a resident of Thane, later told reporters that he had parked his SUV near Airoli Mulund bridge on February 17 after its steering got jammed while he was on his way to attend a family function.

"The next day, when I went to

Substances Act, 1908, (punishment for attempt to cause explosion, or for making or keeping explosive with intent to endanger life or property) has also been included in the FIR, the official said, adding that the vehicle has been seized.

Man Connives With Doctor To Slay Wife For Insurance

MEERUT: A man connived with a doctor to eliminate his wife, a government school teacher, in an attempt to claim an insurance amount of Rs 50 lakh.

They gave the wife sleeping pills, smothered her with a pillow and stored the body in a freezer for a day.

An image of the doctor choking his wife with a pillow has now sent the duo behind the bars. The image was apparently clicked by the man himself.

According to the police, the incident took place on February 20 in Meerut where Sanjay Luthra, 42, a businessman, had hatched a plot to eliminate his wife Chanda, 40, and connived with a doctor named Rajat Bhardwaj who owed Rs 1.35 lakh to Luthra.

Luthra allegedly agreed to waive off the debt if Bhardwaj killed his wife.

Inspector Ram Sanjeevan of crime branch, whose team was investigating the case, said, "Though

he was given a clean chit by the local Nauchandi Thana, we continued the probe and took custody of Sanjay Luthra's mobile phone and recovered a few deleted pictures -- one of which showed a woman being smothered with a pillow." During questioning, it came to light that Luthra had actually shot the photograph of Bhardwaj and deleted it when the doctor confronted him.

Meanwhile, Chanda's family had sensed foul play since the beginning.

Her mother Sunita Devi said, "Sanjay was trying to get rid of Chanda for some time and had even taken the divorce route. But Chanda did not agree to the divorce. She had visited a relative at 11 p.m. on Saturday and was killed on the same night. We tried to convince police at Nauchandi, but they failed to take any action."

The post mortem report of the victim was "inconclusive".

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