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P3 CITY

NOORBAGH-QAMARWARI BRIDGE TO BE OPERATIONAL BY YEAR-END

After missing several deadlines in the past nearly one decade, the much-awaited Noorbagh-Qamarwari Bridge is all set to be completed by the end of this year...

THINK

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP THEIR CHILDREN WITH MANAGING ANXIETY DISORDERS?

When a child does not outgrow the fears and worries that are typical in young age, or when there are so many fears and worries that they interfere with school,



P5 STATE

PARLIAMENTARY PANEL WARNS AGAINST USE OF DYNAMITES FOR INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS IN J&K, LADAKH

Stating that there is a need to learn lesson from the recent glacial outburst at Chamoli in Uttarakhand...



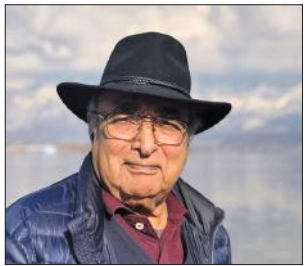
Quote!

Every generation needs a new revolution.

—Thomas Jefferson

NEWS DIGEST

Ex CE Shuja Hussain Passes Away



SRINAGAR: Former Chief Engineer Syed Shuja Hussain Shah passed away here on Thursday after a brief spell of illness. Shuja Hussain was laid to rest at Al Noor Graveyard Rajbagh. ● More On P10

Tulip Garden Opens for Public

SRINAGAR: Asia's largest tulip garden overlooking the Dal Lake in Srinagar was thrown open to the public on Thursday, marking the beginning of the new tourism season in the valley. Formerly known as Siraj Bagh, the Tulip Garden was opened in 2008 by then chief minister of erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state Ghulam Nabi Azad. The idea of the garden, spread over 30 hectares in the foothills of snow-clad Zabarwan range, was conceived to ● More On P10

Asiatic Society Honours KU VC

SRINAGAR: Vice-Chancellor of University of Kashmir Prof Talat Ahmad has been honoured with the 'G.S.I. Sesquicentennial Commemorative Medal' for the year 2020 by the Council of the Asiatic Society Kolkata. A communication to Prof Talat from General Secretary of the Society—an Institute of National Importance declared by an Act of Parliament under Ministry of Culture, Government of India—reads: "It gives me immense pleasure to inform you that the Council of the Asiatic Society, ● More On P10

Exp/Cash Management In Last FY Week

JAMMU: In order to avoid rush of last minute expenditure at Treasuries, the J&K government has issued certain instructions for the Drawing & Disbursing Officers / Treasury Officers. As per a circular issued by the Finance Department, cutoff date and time for receipt of bills at Treasuries in the whole of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will be up to 01.00 PM on 30.03.2021. Treasury Officers will not entertain any bill/claim for payment after 01.00 PM on 30.03.2021 and all the Drawing & Disbursing Officers ● More On P10

2 CRPF Men Killed in Lawaypora Militant Attack

Four Militants Fired On The MBV of CRPF



KO Photo: Abid Bhat

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a broad day light strike on the busy Srinagar-Uri highway, militants on Thursday killed two paramilitary CRPF personnel and injured two others, one of them critically.

The hit and run militant attack took place at Lawaypora in Srinagar outskirts.

Speaking to reporters at the site of incident, Deputy Inspector General of CRPF Srinagar sector, Kishore

Panday said that at least four heavily armed militants fired on the Mobile Bunker Vehicle (MBV) of CRPF that was part of the Road Opening Party (RoP) at Lawaypora. "Two CRPF men were killed in the attack, third one is critical and fourth one is stable," Panday said.

He said that joint teams of CRPF and police sealed the area and launched searches to nab the attackers.

The slain CRPF men have been identified as Sub Inspector/GD ● More On P10

LADAKH STANDOFF

China Silent On Further Troop Pullout

Agencies

NEW DELHI: The Chinese military on Thursday said the situation at eastern Ladakh has "eased distinctly" thanks to the joint efforts with India on the disengagement of troops from the Pangong Lake area but gave no indication about when the pull out will take place from the remaining areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two countries had completed withdrawal of troops and weapons from the North and South banks of Pangong Lake last month in line with an agreement on disengagement.

But the disengagement is yet to take place in remaining areas along the LAC. The Indian Army has been pitching for a faster disengagement process in areas like Hot Springs, Gogra and Depsang to bring down tension in the mountainous region.

At present, China and India have disengaged front-line troops in the Pangong Lake area and both countries have positively commented on the current moves, ● More On P10

...MONEY LAUNDERING CASE

ED Grills Mehbooba Mufti For 5 Hours

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Enforcement Department (ED) on Thursday questioned the former chief minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti for five hours in Srinagar in a case related to money laundering.

Notably, Mehbooba had last evening confirmed that she will appear before the ED at its Srinagar office at 11:00 AM in the morning.

According to reports, Mehbooba reached the ED office



at Rajbagh at around 11:00 AM where she was questioned for nearly five hours and was let go only at around 04:35 PM.

Pertinently, ED ● More On P10

'Dissent Criminalized', Says Mehbooba After Questioning

Agencies

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Thursday likened her questioning by Enforcement Directorate in alleged money laundering case with "criminalizing ● More On P10

JK Police Opposes Passport for Mehbooba

The Jammu and Kashmir Police has opposed giving passport to former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti citing "adverse report" against her, officials said on Thursday. A report has been submitted to the Jammu and Kashmir High Court which is hearing a petition filed by Mehbooba over the delay in clearing ● More On P10

Mountains In J&K Fragile, Glaciers Need To Be Monitored: Panel

Agencies

SRINAGAR: In view of Uttarakhand tragedy, a Parliamentary Committee has recommended conducting study and monitoring of glaciers to ensure such incidents do not take place in Jammu and Kashmir.

In the first week of February,

a glacier broke in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district leading to massive flooding and around 80 people died and over 120 people are missing.

This has triggered worries in Jammu and Kashmir, which has a large presence of glaciers.

A Standing Committee on Home Affairs which comprises

members from both Houses of the Parliament has said in its report that mountains in Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh are fragile. "There is a need to establish and install state of the art infrastructure along with modern equipment of proven efficiency that would play a very crucial role ● More On P10

J&K Reports 172 Fresh Covid-19 Cases

Over 100 Infections Reported For 9th Connective Day

SRINAGAR: Covid-19 cases continued to show worrying upward trend as 172 more people were confirmed to have been infected with the virus, taking the total case tally to 129203 in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Thursday. It was for the ninth consecutive day that more than a hundred cases were recorded in the J&K.

The officials said that among the 172 new cases including 46 travelers, 41 were from Jammu Division and 131 from Kashmir Valley.

Giving the district-wise details, the officials said that Srinagar reported 65 cases including 25 travelers, Baramulla 30, Budgam 16, Pulwama 5, Kupwara 2, Anantnag 8, Bandipora 3, Ganderbal 0, Kulgam 0, Shopian 2, Jammu 34(5 travelers), Udhampur 0, Rajouri 0, Doda 2, Kathua 3, Samba 2, Kishtwar 0, Poonch 0, Ramban 0, and Reasi 0.

A number of these cases were confirmed at diagnostic laboratories of SKIMS Soura, CD hospital and GMC Anantnag. The SKIMS ● More On P10

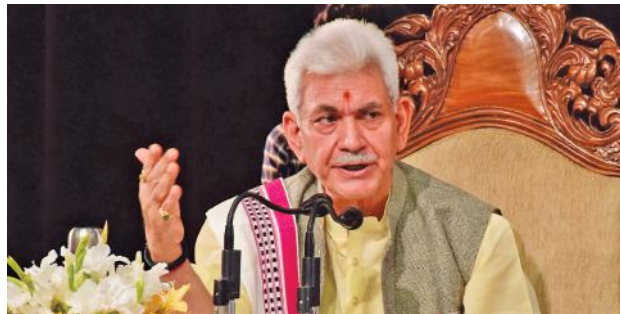
Historic Budget Aims to Rebuild Economy, Create Jobs: LG

- Quantum Jump For All Sectors; Money Will Be Utilized For Welfare Of The People Without Discrimination
- Financial Support Extended To 25,000 Youth Under Various Schemes, Target Set For Doubling The Numbers This Year

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha today held a press conference to highlight the significance of Budget-2021-22 for Jammu and Kashmir, besides the set targets & road-map being laid down by the J&K Government for the development of the UT and welfare of its people.

Addressing the media persons, the Lt Governor termed the Rs 1,08,621 cr Budget



approved by the Central Government as historic.

"This is a budget to rebuild the economy, ● More On P10

'Rehabilitation of KP Migrants on Cards'

Hinting that a proper rehabilitation plan for migrant Kashmiri Pandits may be in the pipeline, Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said a lot has been thought about the community and soon "something is going to happen which you have not even imagined". He also said 8,000 underground ● More On P10

Sun Shines After 4 Days Of Rains, Snowfall In Kashmir

SRINAGAR: Following four days of incessant rains in plains and snowfall in upper reaches, the minimum temperature has increased in Kashmir Valley barring Pahalgam, Gulmarg and Kupwara, officials said on Thursday.

A meteorological department official said that the mercury settled at 4.7°C against previous night's 4.6°C in Srinagar. The summer capital of the J&K received 2.0mm of rainfall in the last 24 hours

till 0830 a.m. today, he said. In the last four days Srinagar received 72.3mm of rainfall.

Qazigund, the gateway town of Kashmir, recorded a low of 5.7°C against 4.0°C on the previous night while it received 1.8mm of the rain during the time, he said.

Mercury settled at minus 1.5°C against 0.3°C on the earlier night at Pahalgam, the famous resort in south

Kashmir which also received 2.0mm of rain during the ● More On P10

Govt Plans Largest Ever Amarnath Yatra This Year

Elaborate Arrangements In Place On Civil, Admin Front: SSP Srinagar

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Ajaz Asad on Thursday said the annual Amarnath pilgrimage 2021 would be the largest religious pilgrimage in Kashmir, scheduled to begin from June 28 this year.

"This year's annual Amarnath pilgrimage would

certainly be the largest religious pilgrimage. We will ensure that pilgrims would not face any difficulty so far as accommodation is concerned," DC Srinagar told reporters during his visit to Panthachowk to review the yatra arrangements. He said that Amarnath pilgrims would be accommodated at Panthachowk while arrangements in this direction have almost completed.

Flanked by SSP Srinagar, Sandeep Chaudhary, DC Srinagar also ● More On P10



KASHMIR In Capital: 'Shahnama' Of Legacy Shawl

Romaan Arora

When the Shaw Brothers split into separate entities during the "Quit Kashmir" era, it was more devastating for the group that had to leave the glorious name behind. However, rather than falling despair, they chose to make their way through the mountains and now sits comfortably in a marvelous shop at one of New Delhi's commercial hubs.

Sounding like a sage, Syed Masood Ahmad Shah is trying to secure a commercial call that since decades has created his cult in Delhi's shawl syndicate.

Along with his son, Mohsin Shah, Masood is the face behind

the popular showroom—Shah Arts Emporium—that stands tall in the Adchini business locality of New Delhi.

"It's not the same anymore," says Masood while handing over his loyal clients to his son Mohsin. "I get tired too early now, and find it hard to work in this scorching heat of March."

Masood is the third generation Shaw scion and a man who frequented the Indian capital from 1962 to 1984 just to master the art of business. He got immense yet tiring success in establishing a powerful foundation in the name of his "blessed forefathers" for the next 20 years.

Now, at 81, Masood, a native



of Ishber Nishat area of Srinagar, hopes to carry forward the Shah legacy in his own exquisite style. "It's majorly his work now," says the octogenarian in an impressive

yet pale voice while signalling towards his son. "I've done my part."

Masood traces his trade evolution from the classic cashmere split of 1944, when the seven brothers of the Shah clan divided into a group of four and three.

While the three carried the legacy of the Shaw Brothers, the group of four, including Masood's father, formed Shah & Company.

In 1979, however, the brand was renamed to its present form and hasn't seen any change since then.

It was hard initially, Masood says, as the four brothers lacked the legacy name. Nonetheless, they managed to take the flight, and became successful in their own enterprises. ● More On P10

FEATURE



To place an advertisement
CALL +91-194 2502327
Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)
No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

Friday | 26.03.2021

KASHMIR OBSERVER

2

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applying for renewal of my fertilizer licence no. CAOB/ FL/2017-18/106 under name and style, "Mir Fertilizer" at Zethan Rafiabad 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.

Tariq Ahmad Mir
S/o: Ab Rehman Mir
R/o: Zethan Rafiabad

gms

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applying for renewal of my fertilizer licence no. CAOB/ FL/2014-15/1165 under name and style, "Showkat Ahmad chaga" at Dangarpura road Arampora 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.

Showkat Ahmad Chaga
S/o: Ghulam Ahmad Chaga
R/o: Arampora Sopore

gms

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR NOTICE



Whereas, a joint application has been received from Shri Tariq Ahmad Mir S/o Gh Ahmad Mir R/o Lasjan Nowgam (Transferor) and Shri Latief Ahmad Bhat S/o Mohammad



Abdullah Bhat R/o Ghat Delina Bla (Transferee) for transfer of Maxi Cab carrying route Permit No 12557/KPCovering Vehicle JK01R- 1058

Now, therefore, it is notified for general information that objections, if any to the proposed transfer of the said route permit / vehicle shall be filled in writing in the office of the Regional Transport Officer, Kashmir.

Within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily News Paper Kashmir Observer. Seller and purchaser identified by the authorized representatives of M/S Bagh Hussain Namely STNCO

NO: JK/RTOK /8049
Dated: 25/03/2021
fko

Sd/-
Regional Transport Office,
Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR NOTICE



Where as an application for transfer of ownership has been received from Mushtaq Ahmad Shah S/o Ghulam Qadir Shah R/o Duderhama Ganderbal (Transferor) of Maruti 800 CAD bearing registration No. JK16-2285 chasis No: 2850717 Engine No: 4483314 Model 2012 in favour of Ghulam Nabi Bhat S/o Ghulam Mohammad Bhat R/o Fatahpura Gnaderbal (Transferee).



Now, therefore, it is notified for the information of the general, public that representation/ Objection, if any in connection with proposed transfer will be received within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer to the address of undersigned.

No, representation/ objection shall be considered unless it is made writing it is made in the aforesaid period.

NOJK-RTOK 484
Dated: 25/03/2021
fko

Sd/-
Regional Transport Office,
Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR NOTICE



Whereas, a joint application has been received from Shri Iqbal Hussain Dar S/o Ghulam-Mustafa Dar R/o Gund Hasi Bhat Lawaypora Parimpura Srinagar (Transferor) and Shri Parveez ur Rehman S/O Ghulam Rasool Najar R/O Kak



Sahib Sangam Parimpura Ghat (Transferee) for transfer of Maxi Cab carrying route Permit No 7796/MC Covering Vehicle JK01S-4657

Now, therefore, it is notified for general information that objections, if any to the proposed transfer of the said route permit / vehicle shall be filled in writing in the office of the Regional Transport Officer, Kashmir.

Within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily News Paper Kashmir Observer. Seller and purchaser identified by the authorized representatives of M/S Arsalan Road Namely Showkat Ahmad

NO: JK/RTOK /8091
Dated: 25/03/2021
fko

Sd/-
Regional Transport Office,
Kashmir

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my DOB certificate issued by somewhere. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Govt Boys High School Jalababad Sopore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.



Aadil Manzoor Sheikh
S/o Manzoor Ahmad Sheikh
R/o Jalalabad Sopore

ams

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my DOB certificate issued by somewhere. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Govt Boys High School Jalababad Sopore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.



Nayeem Nazir Sheikh
S/o Nazir Ahmad Sheikh
R/o Jalalabad Sopore

AMS

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change the name on Electricity Bill bearing Consumer ID no: 0213010011099 from Parvaiz Ahmad Najar R/o Batpora Sopore To DN Clinic and Diagnostic centre . If any body having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the concerned PDD office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Parvaiz Ahmad Prop: of DN Clinic and Diagonistic centre

ams

PUBLIC NOTICE

The DOB of my daughter, Afreen Ali D/O Gulam Mohammad Mir has been wrongly written in Municipal Records as 10-12-2008 While her correct DOB is 10-07-2011 which needs immediate correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Executive Officer Municipal Committee Magam Budgam within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Gulam Mohammad Mir
F/o Afreen Ali
R/O Yaripora (B) Magam

bmj

از دفتر نائب تحصیلدار کرمیری

مضمون کاغذات درخواست آفرین ریاض دختر ریاض احمد ارسا کنہ دولت پورہ بمراو عطا بیٹی ایٹل ہیرسٹکلیف

اشتہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ مضمونان الصددر میں درخواست ساکن دفتر حذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اس ضمن میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ریاض احمد ارسا کنہ دولت پورہ کا دروازہ ارسا کنہ (CONSTABLE) کام کرتا تھا متواتر ریاض احمد ارسا کنہ مورخہ 12-06-2000 کو فوت ہو چکا تھا رقبہ بذیل افراد پیشکش ہے۔

| نام سربراہ کنہ و تفصیل افراد کنہ | پیشہ | عمر |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------|
| کمپوٹ بیلیمز وید متوتی | گرمیو کام | 45 سال |
| آفرین ریاض | زیر تعلیم | 21 سال |
| غلام قادر وار | ریاض کار نامہ | 65 |
| ایلیٹیکم | گرمیو کام | 60 |
| بلاال احمد وار | زیر تعلیم | 30 |
| میراج الدین وار | زیر تعلیم | 28 |
| حیدر بیگم | گرمیو کام | 40 |
| موسیٰ اختر | زیر تعلیم | 23 |
| سمندر اختر | زیر تعلیم | 23 |

اس کے علاوہ کوئی افراد کہہ نہیں ہے اور سرٹکلیف زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ ہو تو وہ دفتر حذا میں اندر سات یوم پیش کریں بعد معیا و گڈ رکوئی اعتراض وغیرہ قبول نہ ہوگا۔

ajj نائب تحصیلدار

Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir NOTICE



Where a application for transfer of ownership has been recieved from one. Shri : Gulzar Ahmad Wani S/o: Bashir Ahmad Wani R/o: Ompora Budgam (Transferor) of LMV alto 800. Vehicle bearing registration number JK04E - 8628. Chasis number 77979 Engine no. 134592 Model 2019. in favour of Shri.. Ish-faq Ali Arifat S/o. Ali Mohammad Wani R/o Ranger Chadoora Budgam (Tranferee)



Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.3167
Dated 24/03/2021

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

mja

Jammu &Kashmir Small Scale Industries Development Corporation Limited (SICOP)

(AJ&K Government Undertaking)

2nd floor, Sanat Ghar building Bemina Srinagar

e-Mail: gmmksicop@gmail.com

Dated: 23-03-2021

CORRIGENDUM

e-NIT No.: 46a-SICOP(GMM) of 2020 Dated 05-03-2021

Work Name: - Fixing of G.I. chain link fencing and angle iron runners/ diagonals excluding vertical posts at newly established Industrial Estates in Kashmir valley.

Due to poor response to the tender, the above mentioned e-NIT is retendered.

DIPK-NB-6630/20

Sd/-
General Manager (M&A)
SICOP Kashmir

Jammu &Kashmir Small Scale Industries Development Corporation Limited (SICOP)

(AJ&K Government Undertaking)

2nd floor, Sanat Ghar building Bemina Srinagar

e-Mail: rijazksicop@gmail.com

Dated: 23-03-2021

CORRIGENDUM

e-NIT No.: 03-PM(E) of 2020-21 Dated: 15.03.2021

Work Name: - PROVIDING OF 30 MBPS INTERNET CONNECTIVITY LEASED LINE CONNECTION FOR SANAT GHAR OFFICE BUILDING AT BEMINA SRINAGAR.

- Please read
1. 1 STM instead of 30 MBPS in NIT, SBD & BoQ.
 2. In clause 7.1 read class A/B/C instead of A/B.

DIPK-NB-6629/20

Sd/-
Project Manager (E)
SICOP Kashmir

Government of Jammu and Kashmir Department of Fisheries, Jammu

Ph. 0191-2582235 | 0191-2584248

Email. jkfdjmu@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

E-tender Notice NO. of 2021 Dated: -03-2021

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor J&K Union Territory, e-tenders affixed with revenue stamp worth Rs. 5/- are invited from original manufacturers or their authorized /distributors/dealers, having valid drug license for supply of below mentioned Drugs/ Feed Supplements/Additives on annual rate contract basis (Required for manufacturing of Pelleted Trout Fish Feed Ingredients) for the year 2021-22.

| S.No | Name of the items. | S.No | Name of the items. |
|------|--------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Choline Chloride | 13 | Iodophore |
| 2 | Mineral Mixture (For Fish) | 14 | Cod Liver Oil |
| 3 | Sodium Alginate | 15 | Xanthene Red |
| 4 | D.L.Methionine | 16 | Formalin |
| 5 | Vitamin B (complex) | 17 | Malachite Green (Zinc free) |
| 6 | Vitamin AB2 D3K | 18 | Potassium permagnate |
| 7 | Vitamin C | 19 | Benzocame |
| 8 | Vitamin E | 20 | Amoxcilline |
| 9 | Biotin Mix | 21 | Terramycin-200 |
| 10 | TM-200 | 22 | Florfenicol |
| 11 | Oxytetra cycline (OTC) (Egg Formula) | 23 | Yeast |
| 12 | Benzyl Konium Chloride | 24 | Acirflavine |

The tender document containing detailed specification/size, terms & conditions and other details can be obtained/downloaded against tender document fee of Rs.1500/- only in shape of DD in the name of Accounts officer Fisheries Department from the official Government website www.jktenders.gov.in. from:-

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Download date start | 29-03-2021 |
| 2 | Bid Submission date start | 30-03-2021 |
| 3 | Bid submission date ends | 19-04-2021 |
| 4 | Submission of Hard copies | 20-04-2021 |
| 5 | Bid opening Date | 22-04-2021 |

The hard copy of the tender shall be addressed to Director Fisheries, J&K Nowabad Canal Road Jammu-180016 accompanied with the Bid security declaration pledged to Accounts officer Member Secretary U.T. Level Purchase Committee without which tender shall not be accepted. The tenders shall be opened on 22-04-2021 at 11.AM or any other date convenient to tender opening authority in presence of tenderers who may like to be present. The other specification/terms and conditions are mentioned in detailed tender document.

Member Secretary
U.T. Level Purchase Committee,
Department of Fisheries

No:- Accnts/CJ/NIT/2020-21/

Dated: -03-2021.

DIPK-15590/20

Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Baramulla.

Short Term Tender Notice No:-

162 of 2020-21

For & on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K UT, the Executive Engineer R&B Division Baramulla invites sealed tenders affixed with two Revenue stamps from the approved PWD contractors of the classes shown on Annexure "A". The tenders should be addressed to the Executive Engineer R&B Division Baramulla by registered post or by hand and should reach in his Office on or before 27.03.2021 up to 2:00 P.M. In case the opening date being declared as Holiday/ Hartal, the tenders shall be received on next working day.

The tenders should be sealed in proper cover with name of work, name of the contractor, reference to CDR No. and date without which tender shall be rejected without assigning any reason thereof.

The tender document can be had from the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Baramulla against cash payment on any working day upto 27.03.2021 up to 1:30 P.M only after receipt of the Valid GST No. & PAN No. along with latest GST Clearance Certificate.

That the Taxes on prescribed rates shall be deducted from the work done claims on total value of work which includes departmental stores. The rates quoted/ allotted shall include all taxes.

The material like Cement, CGI sheets, iron of sorts, asphalt, timber etc. required for the work will be supplied departmentally to the contractor on the stock issue rates fixed vide this office No: No: 435-45 dated: 25.04.2019 & cost thereof will be deducted from their bill. (In case of non availability of stocks in Divisional Stores the contractor my purchase the required material of quality & specifications prescribed to be certified by Engineer incharge after getting non-availability certificate from Executive Engineer & shall not be entitled for any type of excessive rates on this account All other terms conditions are as per FWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form) & this office NIT No: 01 of 2020-21.

No: 13537-46

Dated: 23.03.2021

Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Baramulla

Annexure "A"
This Office NIT No: 162 of 2020-21 issued under endorsement No: 13537-46 dated: 23.03.2021

| S. No | Name of the work | Adv. Cost | Earnest money | Class of contract | Time of completion | Cost of tender document | Head of account |
|-------|---|--------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Clearance of slips/ slides on Sheeri Heewan Malpora Road & Heewan Galibal Road | Rs 0.90 lacs | Bid Declaration form | DEE | 02days | 200/- | MH-3054-M&R |
| 2. | Clearance of Slips/ Slides on Heewan Galibal Road (Km 8 th & 9 th), Kawhar Bala/ Payeen & Kawhar Payeen to Reshenwali Road | Rs 0.75 lacs | Bid Declaration form | DEE | 02days | 200/- | MH-3054-M&R |

Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Baramulla.

DIPK-15536/20

Tulip Garden Opens For Public LG To Inaugurate Six-days Tulip Festival On April 3

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Khan on Thursday declared Tulip Garden open for all public.

Speaking on the occasion, Khan said, "Today, We officially opened Tulip Garden for visitors". While praising the beauty of the place, he said that Jammu and Kashmir is endowed with beautiful natural landscapes which have huge potential for tourism.

He said earlier tourists were visiting other world famous gardens and places of Kashmir, but now tulip Garden has become iconic destination and attraction for them.

On the occasion, the

Advisor informed that Lieutenant Governor will inaugurate six days Tulip Festival on April 03 when Garden will be in full bloom. He added that during the festival, display of rich tradition, culture, cuisines and crafts on the stalls will be set by concerned departments so that tourists will become familiar with our rich culture and values.

While strolling in the garden, Khan interacted with the visitors and tourists from outside who were mesmerised by the beauty of the garden. The Advisor asked them to promote the garden outside Jammu and Kashmir and also be an ambassador for promotion of other tourist places of J&K.

Noorbagh-Qamarwari Bridge To Be Operational By Year-End

Observer News Service

Srinagar: After missing several deadlines in the past nearly one decade, the much-awaited Noorbagh-Qamarwari Bridge is all set to be completed by the end of this year.

Noorbagh-Qamarwari Bridge popularly known as the "Cement Bridge" has historical importance in the Valley as it was the first bridge over the river Jhelum, which was constructed in concrete.

However, the present bridge at the place, as per the commuters has been giving tough times to them as the bridge is almost completely damaged. "The pivotal bridge has developed huge potholes, thus simultaneously

not only affect the passage of the vehicular movement but also damaging the vehicles as well," the commuters said.

Notably, the bridge is an important link as it connects the Old City, Soura and other areas with North Kashmir.

The construction of the new bridge was started in the year 2011, but in the last nearly one decade, it missed several deadlines, sources said, adding that most of the time, the construction was stopped as there were several reasons behind the stoppage of the work and that took long to remove the bottlenecks.

Initially, the bridge was scheduled to be completed in the year 2014. Later, the deadline was

extended upto March 2017 and then upto December 2018.

Chief Engineer, Roads and Building department, Er Showkat Jeelani Pandith said it is expected that the bridge is completed by the end of this year (2021).

"There were several issues, which took long to be rectified," he said, adding that the land issue was among the main bottlenecks that halted the work for a longer period.

"Many structures are to be removed and we are already on it," he said.

Pertinently, the area where the bridge is being constructed is a congested place, thus simultaneously witness frequent traffic mess—(KNO)

DC Srinagar Reviews Amarnath Yatra Arrangements Elaborate arrangements in place: SSP

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Ajaz Asad on Thursday said the annual Amarnath pilgrimage 2021 would be the largest religious pilgrimage, scheduled to begin from June 28 this year.

"This year's annual Amarnath pilgrimage would certainly be the largest religious pilgrimage. We will ensure that pilgrims would not face any difficulty so far as accommodation is concerned," DC Srinagar told reporters during his visit to Panthachowk to review the yatra arrangements.

He said that Amarnath

pilgrims would be accommodated at Panthchowk while arrangements in this direction have almost completed.

Flanked by SSP Srinagar, Sandeep Chaudhary, DC Srinagar also said there is need for capacity enhancement at Panthchowk and the administration is looking for additional land to accommodate more Amarnath yatrists.

"We have sufficient space but there is a need for capacity enhancement at Panthachowk, we are also looking for additional land so as to ensure yatrists does not face any difficulty," Asad added.

The Jammu and Kashmir government cancelled annual Amarnath yatra last year amid COVID-19 outbreak. The pilgrimage was already cut short by 15 days.

Meanwhile SSP Srinagar, Sandeep Chaudhary said elaborate arrangements have been put in place to ensure smooth pilgrimage.

"DC Srinagar and I visited Panthachowk to review Amarnath yatra arrangements, elaborate arrangements have been put in place. There would be adequate arrangements for yatrists on both civil and security front," SSP told reporters—(KNO)

In Srinagar Covid Vaccination For Above 45 To Begin From April 1

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Mohammad Aijaz Asad Thursday reviewed the preparedness for roll-out of Covid-19 vaccination for above 45 age group scheduled to commence from 1st April 2021. The review meeting was attended by ADCs, CMO, State Surveillance Officer, I/C COVID-19 Control Room Srinagar, Dy CMO and other concerned officers.

A comprehensive strategy to ensure the success of the vaccination drive was discussed and instructions were issued to concerned officers including Dy CMO, District Immunisation Officer and Zonal Medical Officers for optimisation of vac-

cination sites, increased IEC activities including print and social media and announcements by mobile vans and also involvement of religious leaders and influencers in local areas with structured messages on benefits of vaccination. CMO Srinagar and other concerned officers were also directed to coordinate with SMC and District Panchayat officer for achieving vaccination targets in Srinagar.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar fixed a target for 2000 RT-PCR plus Rapid Testing and 12000 Vaccinations per day. Besides instructions were also issued for awareness programmes at Panchayat and Tehsil levels and strict adherence to SOPs like wearing of masks and social distancing. (KNS)

THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

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

Subject:- **Conduct of second round of counselling (physical) for upgradation/allotment of seats for admission to 12th Based Paramedical Courses, 2020.**

Reference:- (i) Notification No. 030-BOPEE of 2020 dated 19-09-2020.
(ii) Notice No. 56-BOPEE of 2020 dated 07-10-2020.
(iii) Notice No. 59-BOPEE of 2020 dated 13-10-2020.
(iv) Notification No. 013-BOPEE of 2021 dated 28-01-2021
(v) Notification No. 030-BOPEE of 2021 dated 27-02-2021.
(vi) Notification No. 032-BOPEE of 2021 dated 06-03-2021.

**Notification No. 45-BOPEE of 2021
Dated: 24-03-2021**

Consequent upon receipt of shortfall in respect of Notification No. 032-BOPEE of 2021 dated 06-03-2021 and the seats, which have remained unfilled after conclusion of first round of counselling held from 03-03-2021 to 06-03-2021, it is hereby notified that the Board has decided to conduct second round of counselling (physical) for upgradation/allotment of seats to the eligible candidates for admission to 12th Based Paramedical Courses, 2020, on **30-03-2021 and 31-03-2021** as per the following schedule:-

| Date | Rank | Name of the Course | Remarks |
|------------|------------|---|---|
| 30-03-2021 | 001 to 400 | 12 th Based Paramedical Courses, 2020 (D. Pharma, ISM, Medical Assistant, Lab. Assistant etc.) | All candidates including reserved category. |
| 31-03-2021 | 401 to 815 | 12 th Based Paramedical Courses, 2020 (D. Pharma, ISM, Medical Assistant, Lab. Assistant etc.) | All candidates including reserved category. |

The candidates are advised to report at BOPEE Office, Srinagar/Jammu on their respective date of counselling as per the above schedule (i.e. 30th and 31st March, 2021 at **9.00 a.m. to 10.00 a.m.** for registration and subsequent counselling.

The following shall be eligible to participate in this round of counselling:-

- The candidates, who have been allotted a seat in first round of counselling and have joined the same.**
- The candidates, who could not participate in first round of counselling for one or the other reason.**

The following shall not be eligible to participate in this round of counselling:-

The candidates, who have been allotted seat(s) in the first round of counselling but failed to join the same within the prescribed time limit fixed by the Board.

The Other terms and conditions shall remain same as mentioned in the Notification/ Notices issued by the Board from time to time.

DIPK-NB-6655/20

(Dr Sunil Gupta)

Controller Of Examinations

J&K BOPEE

No. BOPEE/Exam-35(vi)/2019 Dated: 24-03-2021

PUBLIC NOTICE

I had lost municipal DOB Certificate of my daughter vide DOB 24/06/2015, now I am applying for its duplicate in this regard if anybody have any kind of objection may file the same to executive officer municipal council Sopore with in the period of Seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

Mohammad Ayub Hajam
F/o: Aisha Ayub
R/o: Gulabad Arampora Sopore

gms

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 10 pass discharge certificate. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Govt Boys High School Rathsoor within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Abid Farooq Dar
S/O Farooq Ahamd Dar R/o Rathsoor

bmj

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
- BUBHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153



HIGHWAY STATUS

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



**HIJRI
CALENDAR**
11 SHABAN
1442

PRAYERS

| | |
|--------|--------|
| FAJR | 5: 05 |
| ZUHR | 12: 40 |
| ASR | 5:00 |
| Magrib | 6:48 |
| ISHA | 8:09 |

This Day In History

- 1027 - Pope John XIX crowns Conrad II Holy Roman Emperor, founder of the Salian dynasty
- 1147 - Jewish community in Cologne fasts to commemorate anti-Jewish violence
- 1484 - William Caxton prints his translation of Aesop's Fables
- 1526 - King Francois I returns Spanish captivity to France
- 1534 - Lübeck accepts free Dutch ships into East Sea
- 1552 - Guru Amar Das becomes the Third Sikh Guru
- 1636 - University of Utrecht opening ceremony
- 1668 - England takes control of Bombay, India
- 1812 - Earthquake measuring 7.7 on the Richter scale destroys 90% of Caracas, Venezuela and kills an estimated 15,000–20,000 people
- 1845 - Patent awarded for adhesive medicated plaster, precursor of band-aid
- 1913 - Bulgaria captures Adrianople, ending the 1st Balkan War
- 1917 - British win a battle against Turks at Gaza
- 1931 - Iraq & Trans-Jordan sign peace treaty
- 1945 - Allies led by US Marine Corps secure island of Iwo Jima from Imperial Japanese Army, after 18,000 Japanese & 6,000 Americans killed
- 1958 - US Army launched America's third successful satellite, "Explorer III"
- 1960 - Iraq executes 30 after attack on President Kassem
- 1969 - Nuclear reactor Dodegaard Neth goes into use
- 1969 - Soviet weather satellite Meteor 1 launched
- 1971 - Bangladesh (East Pakistan) under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declares its independence from Pakistan
- 1975 - The Biological Weapons Convention enters into force.
- 1979 - Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat sign the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty in Washington, D.C.
- 1979 - OPEC makes full 14.5% oil price increase for 1979 effective on April 1
- 1981 - Police & Albanian demonstrators battle in Kosovo, Yugoslavia
- 1981 - Soyuz T-4 lands
- 1987 - NASA launches Fittsatcom-6, it fails to reach orbit
- 1996 - Last day of 1st-class cricket for Allan Border (Qld v Vic)
- 1996 - The International Monetary Fund approves a \$10.2 billion loan for Russia
- 2001 - Kazakhstan's Prime Minister opens an oil pipeline from the giant Tengiz Field to the Russian port of Novorossiysk on Monday, giving the Central Asian producer its first direct link to international markets
- 2005 - The Taiwanese government calls on 1 million Taiwanese to demonstrate in Taipei, in opposition to the Anti-Secession Law of the People's Republic of China. Around 200,000 to 300,000 attend the walk.
- 2006 - Burma's military junta officially names Naypyidaw, a new city in Mandalay Division, the new capital (Yangon previous capital)

From KO Archives

Snow Furry Aftermath

Homeless Take Over School

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR A village hard by last month's heavy snowfall and avalanches in south Kashmir is facing another problem - classes in the local school have stopped as it is being used as a makeshift camp for the homeless.

The bad weather and resultant avalanches claimed some 350 lives across the state, including hundreds killed in the Watalgo area in south Kashmir February 19.

Families who lost their homes in the massive avalanches are currently living in the government-run school building at Yari Khushipora village of Anantnag district. 73 km from here, occupying all its classrooms and laboratories.

Thish resulted in a piquant situation. Teachers posted at the school come simply to mark their attendance in the morning and without biking classes - simply because there is no available space for classes.

"We can only start classes after the homeless people are shifted," said a teacher.

The school building in Yar Khushipora also housed a private school that has now begun conducting classes in the open air.

The suffering of the survivors of the avalanches is now spilling over into the lives of hundreds of others whose children have been unable to attend school.

"The government must immediately arrange the permanent rehabilitation of these survivors as their stay in the school building is threatening the careers of our children," said a parent in Yar Khushipora.

The homeless too are embarrassed because of the tension their continued presence in the school building has been creating in the village.

"We are unfortunate victims of a natural disaster but this should not create undeserved hardships for other people in the village," said Bashir Ahmad., a homeless man living in the school.

(Kashmir Observer, 26 March, 2005)

ازعدالت ایگزیکٹیو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول (نائب تحصیلدار است ناگ)
با اجلاس زیر احمد شیخ صاحب۔
 درخواست منجانب: - الطاف حسین ماگرے ولد عبدالرحمان ماگرے ساکنہ
 ماگرے پورہ است ناگ بغرض اجرائی تاریخ پیدائش سرٹیفیکٹ بنام
 احسان الطاف ماگرے پسر و ایمان الطاف دختر الطاف حسین
 ماگرے۔(Twins)
استہار بمراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام۔
 معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن /سانلد مذکورہ بالانے عدالت ہذا میں
 ایک درخواست حلفی بیان پیش کیا ہے سانلد کے پسر و دختر کا تاریخ
 پیدائش 30/07/2019 ہے اس ضمن میں سرٹیفیکٹ پیدائش نکالنے کا خواہ
 ہے لہذا سرٹیفیکٹ مذکورہ کو اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی بھی عذر یا
 اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر دوران دفتری اوقات میں پیش
 کرے بصورت دیگر کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
 ایگزیکٹیو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول
 mja

ازعدالت ایگزیکٹیو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول (نائب تحصیلدار است ناگ)
با اجلاس زیر احمد شیخ صاحب۔
 درخواست منجانب: - امتیاز احمد شاہ ولد غلام محمد شاہ ساکنہ نیو قاضی باغ
 است ناگ بغرض اجرائی تاریخ پیدائش سرٹیفیکٹ بنام محمد نبیل شاہ ولد
 امتیاز احمد شاہ۔
استہار بمراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام۔
 معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن /سانلد مذکورہ بالانے عدالت ہذا میں
 ایک درخواست حلفی بیان پیش کیا ہے سانلد کے پسر کا تاریخ
 پیدائش 01/06/2017 ہے اس ضمن میں سرٹیفیکٹ پیدائش نکالنے کا خواہ
 ہے لہذا سرٹیفیکٹ مذکورہ کو اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی بھی عذر یا
 اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر دوران دفتری اوقات میں پیش
 کرے بصورت دیگر کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
 ایگزیکٹیو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول
 mja

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 F/o: Aisha Ayub
 R/o: Gulabad Arampora Sopore
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Abid Farooq Dar
 S/O Farooq Ahamd Dar R/o Rathsoor
 bmj

China Says It Will Safeguard Iran Nuclear Deal

Agenceis

China will make efforts to safeguard the Iran nuclear deal and defend the legitimate interests of Sino-Iranian relations, the commerce ministry said on Thursday.

Ministry spokesman Gao Feng told a news briefing in response to a question from the media that China has not received notices of sanctions on Iranian oil from the Biden administration.

China's comments came after Reuters reported that Iran has "indirectly" moved record volumes

Tehran insists be lifted before negotiations resume.

The United States and the other Western powers that signed up to the 2015 deal appear to be at odds with Tehran over which side should return to the accord first, making it unlikely that U.S. sanctions which have crippled Iran's economy can be quickly removed.

However, the OPEC member's oil exports climbed in January after a boost in the fourth quarter, despite US sanctions, in a sign that the end of Donald Trump's term as US president may be changing buyer behaviour.



of oil into China in recent months, marked as supplies from Oman, the UAE and Malaysia, even as China customs data showed that no Iranian oil was imported in the first two months this year.

The increase in Iranian supplies has partly contributed to a drop in Brent crude prices from \$70 a barrel in mid-March.

US President Joe Biden has sought to revive talks with Iran on a nuclear deal abandoned by former President Donald Trump in 2018, although harsh economic measures remain in place that

Iranian crude oil exports remain at elevated levels in March compared to last year, tanker tracker Petro-Logistics said on Tuesday, adding to signs of a recovery in the shipments.

The sanctions caused a precipitous drop in Iranian exports to China, India, Japan and South Korea since late 2018. Those measures, and output cuts by fellow OPEC+ producers, have led to tight supplies of Middle East sour crude in Asia, the top global oil market. Asia imports more than half of its crude from the Middle East.

Sri Lanka Navy Arrests 54 Indian Fishermen, Seize 5 Trawlers

Agenceis

The Sri Lankan Navy has arrested about 54 Indian fishermen and seized five trawlers for allegedly poaching in the country's territorial waters, an official statement said on Thursday. The Navy arrested the fishermen on Wednesday off the coast of northern and northeastern areas.

Having considered the impact of foreign fishermen poaching in Sri Lanka waters on the local fishing community and the sustainability of fishery resources of Sri Lanka, the Navy is conducting regular patrols to curb illegal fishing activities in Sri Lanka waters, the Navy said in the statement.

The Navy nabbed a large Indian fishing vessel with 14 personnel on board, about 3 nautical miles off the coast of Kovilan in Jaffna.

Two more Indian fishing vessels with 20 personnel for engaging in trawling were arrested about 7 nautical miles off Pesalai, Mannar and 5 nautical miles off the Irana-

tivu Island, the statement said.

Two more Indian fishing vessels with 20 personnel were arrested about 7.5 and 8.5 nautical miles off Mullaitivu. The two vessels had trespassed into Sri Lanka waters about 62 nautical miles, crossing the International Boundary Line (IMBL) when the apprehension was made, the Navy said in a statement.

The Navy said it had previously informed the Indian authorities when similar incidents of trawling by Indian fishermen were reported. The illegal entry of foreign fishermen into Sri Lanka waters and the use of prohibited fishing methods like bottom trawling to catch even very small fish has seriously threatened the marine ecosystem and endanger the livelihood of fishermen in the northern part of the island.

In January, the Sri Lankan Navy arrested nine Indian fishermen and seized one mechanised boat for allegedly fishing in that country's waters.

IMF Approves \$500 Million Disbursement To Pakistan

Agenceis

WASHINGTON: The International Monetary Fund said on Wednesday it approved a \$500 million disbursement to Pakistan for budget support after the IMF Executive Board completed delayed reviews of Pakistan's \$6 billion loan programme.

The IMF said in a statement that the latest payment brought total disbursements under the Extended Fund Facility to \$2 billion since the programme was first approved in July 2019.

"The Pakistani authorities have continued to make satisfactory progress under the Fund-supported program, which has been an important policy anchor during an unprecedented period," IMF Deputy Managing Director Antoinette Sayeh said in a statement.

"While the Covid-19 pandemic continues to pose challenges, the authorities' policies have



been critical in supporting the economy and saving lives and livelihoods," she said.

The disbursement was made after Pakistan cleared up an issue with data on government guarantees dating back to the 2016 fiscal year that had been reported inaccurately and put the government in non-compliance with the program.

The IMF said Pakistani authorities had taken strong corrective actions to address institutional shortcomings, including a lack of interagency coordination, to correct the issue.



Members of the Uighur minority, such as these in Istanbul, are urging the international community to get tough on China's alleged human rights abuses against their community.

Chinese Hackers Used Facebook To Spy On Uighurs Abroad

Agenceis

Facebook Inc says it has blocked a group of hackers in China who used the platform to fool Uighurs living abroad into clicking on links to malware that would infect their devices and enable surveillance.

The social media company said on Wednesday that the hackers, known as Earth Empusa or Evil Eye in the security industry, sought out activists, journalists and dissidents who were predominantly Uighurs, a largely Muslim ethnic group facing persecution in China.

Facebook said there were fewer than 500 individuals, who were largely from the Xinjiang region but primarily living abroad in countries including Turkey, Kazakhstan, the United States, Syria, Australia and Canada.

It said the majority of the hackers' activity occurred away from Facebook and that they used the site to share links to malicious websites rather than directly sharing the malware on the platform.

"This activity had the hallmarks of a well-resourced and persistent

operation, while obfuscating who's behind it," Facebook cybersecurity investigators said in a blog post.

Facebook said the hacking group used fake Facebook accounts to pose as fictitious journalists, students, human rights advocates or members of the Uighur community to build trust with their targets and trick them into clicking malicious links that would install spying software on their devices.

Lookalike sites

It said hackers set up malicious websites using look-alike domains for popular Uighur and Turkish news sites and compromised legitimate websites visited by the Uighurs concerned. Facebook also found websites created by the group to mimic third-party Android app stores with Uighur-themed apps, like prayer and dictionary apps, containing malware.

Facebook said its investigation found two Chinese companies, Beijing Best United Technology Co Ltd (Best Lh) and Dalian 9Rush Technology Co Ltd (9Rush) had developed the Android tooling deployed

by the group.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington did not immediately return a message seeking comment on Facebook's report. Beijing routinely denies allegations of cyber-espionage.

The Reuters news agency was not immediately able to locate contact information for Dalian 9Rush Technology Co Ltd. A man who answered the number listed for Beijing Best United Technology Co Ltd hung up. Western governments want to hold Beijing accountable for mass detentions of Muslim Uighurs in northwestern China, where the US says China is committing genocide.

China denies all accusations of abuse and says its camps provide vocational training and are needed to fight extremism.

The United Nations estimates that up to one million people, mainly Uighurs, have been detained in the Xinjiang camps.

Facebook said it had removed the group's accounts, which numbered less than 100 and had blocked the sharing of the malicious domains and was notifying people it believed were at risk.

Forests, Soil May Not Keep Pace With CO2 Emissions

The world is counting too heavily on soil and plants to soak up planet-ravaging carbon pollution, researchers cautioned on Wednesday.

Climate projections mistakenly assume that land and what grows on it are able to absorb the CO2 humanity loads into the atmosphere, they reported in the journal Nature.

In reality, there's a trade-off. "Either soil or plants, but not both, will absorb more CO2 as carbon levels rise," lead author Cesar Terrier, a researcher at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, told AFP.

It is tempting, he said, to hang hopes on supercharged plant growth and massive tree-planting campaigns to reduce CO2 produced by burning fossil fuels, agriculture and destroying forests. But researchers said that when elevated carbon dioxide levels boost forest and grassland growth, the accumulation of CO2 in soil slows down.

"Soils store more carbon worldwide than is contained in all plant biomass," said senior author Rob Jackson, a professor at Stanford's School of Earth, Energy and Environmental Sciences.

So far, Earth's terrestrial ecosystems have kept pace with rapidly



increasing CO2 emissions, consistently absorbing some 30% even as those emissions have more than doubled over the last 50 years.

Oceans have also syphoned off a steady 20% of CO2 pollution during the same period. Without these natural sponges, the amount of CO2 in the atmosphere today might be double preindustrial levels, enough to heat up the planet's surface by 4-6°C, according to a new generation of climate models.

With only 1.1°C of warming so far, the planet has seen a crescendo of deadly heatwaves, flooding and other extreme weather.

The new study adds to growing evidence that the terrestrial carbon

sink is weaker than once thought.

Terror and colleagues analysed data from more than 100 published experiments on soil carbon levels, plant growth and CO2 concentrations, which have risen by half since pre-industrial times.

Put the bar higher

They were surprised by the results.

"It proved much harder than expected to increase both plant growth and carbon soil," said Jackson. Researchers found that soils only accumulated more carbon in experiments where plant growth remained fairly steady, despite high levels of CO2 in the air.

Hamas Calls On Saudi Arabia To Release Senior Figure Over His Worsening Health Condition



Agenceis

The Palestinian Hamas resistance movement has called on Saudi authorities to immediately release its high-ranking official Muhammad al-Khudari, whose health has been deteriorating over the nearly three years he has been in prison in the kingdom.

Moussa Mohammed Abu Marzouk, a member of Hamas political bureau, in a post published on his Twitter page on Wednesday, expressed serious concerns over further deterioration in the health of the 83-year-old Palestinian.

He asked Saudi officials to urgently free Khudari and his son, Hani, along with all other Palestinians being incarcerated in Saudi jails.

Moreover, Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem said Khudari "suffers from serious health problems while being kept in detention in Saudi Arabia."

He told the Arabic service of Turkey's official Anadolu news agency that the high-ranking Hamas official is being detained without "any charge and irrespective of the fact that he has

not committed any offense."

The Hamas spokesman called on Saudi authorities to "immediately release Khudari and all other [Palestinian] detainees."

Dr. Khudari and his son Hani were arbitrarily arrested on April 4, 2019 and remained in detention without charge until March 8 last year. Both men were forcibly disappeared for one month after their arrest, and held incommunicado and in solitary confinement for the next two months of their detention.

A month into the senior Hamas official's detention, his wife received a phone call from authorities in the maximum-security Dhahban Prison near the Red Sea port city of Jeddah requesting his medical records. Two weeks prior to his arrest, Dr. Khudari had undergone surgery.

Dr. Khudari is currently being held in al-Hai'r Prison in Riyadh, while his son is detained in Dhahban Prison.

Khudari has been living in Saudi Arabia for over 30 years, and represented Hamas between mid-1990s and 2003 in Saudi Arabia.

His son is a university professor and has no political affiliation.

China Attacks Foreign Clothing, Shoe Brands Over Xinjiang

Agenceis

China's ruling Communist Party is lashing out at H&M and other clothing and footwear brands as it retaliates for Western sanctions imposed on Chinese officials accused of human rights abuses in the northwestern region of Xinjiang.

The attacks began when the party's Youth League on Wednesday called attention on its social media account to an H&M statement in March 2020 that it would stop buying cotton grown in Xinjiang. The Swedish retailer said it was "deeply concerned" about reports of forced labour there.

On Thursday, a party newspaper, the Global Times, cited Burberry, Adidas, Nike and New Balance as having made "cutting remarks" about Xinjiang cotton as early as two years ago. Celebrities including Wang Yibo, a popular singer and actor, announced they were breaking endorsement contracts with H&M and Nike. Beijing often attacks foreign clothing, auto, travel and other brands for actions by their governments or to pressure companies to conform to its official positions on Taiwan, Tibet and other sensitive issues.

Companies usually apologise and change websites or advertising to maintain access to China's populous market. But Xinjiang is an unusually thorny issue. Western brands face pressure at home to distance themselves from possible abuses.

More than 1 million people in Xinjiang, most of them from predominantly Muslim ethnic groups, have been confined to work camps, according to foreign researchers and governments. Beijing denies mistreating them and says it is trying to promote economic development and

stamp out radicalism.

On Monday, the 27-nation European Union, the United States, Britain and Canada jointly announced travel and financial sanctions on four senior Chinese officials blamed for abuses in Xinjiang.

Beijing retaliated by saying it would impose unspecified penalties against European legislators and a German researchers who has publicized information about the detention camps.

H&M's statement last March cited a decision by the Better Cotton Initiative, an industry group that promotes environmental and labor standards, to stop licensing Xinjiang cotton because it was "increasingly difficult" to trace how it was produced. In September, H&M announced it would stop working with a Chinese manufacturer that was accused of using forced labour in a unit unrelated to the Swedish brand.

In January, Washington imposed a ban in January on cotton from Xinjiang, a major supplier to clothing producers for Western markets.

China's official outrage has so far focused on Europe, possibly because relations with the EU were relatively amicable amid rancor with Washington over trade disputes and accusations of spying and technology theft.

Official criticism of H&M reflected that tone of grievance at being hurt by a friend.

"How can H&M eat Chinese rice and then smash China's pot?" state television said in a commentary on Wednesday.

On Thursday, internet users pointed to clothing brands Uniqlo of Japan and The Gap of the United States as other possible offenders. It was unclear how many of those accounts were members of

NEWS MAKERS

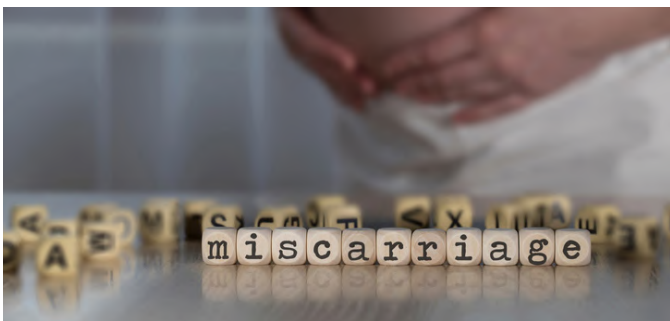
New Zealand Passes Miscarriages Bereavement Leave Law

Agenceis

WELLINGTON: New Zealand's parliament has passed legislation giving mothers and their partners the right to paid leave following a miscarriage or still birth, becoming only the second country in the world to do so.

The bereavement allowance, passed unanimously in parliament late on Wednesday, gives employees three days leave when a pregnancy ends with a stillbirth without having to tap into sick leave.

"The passing of this bill shows that once again New Zealand is leading the way for progressive and



compassionate legislation, becoming only the second country in the world to provide leave for miscarriage and stillbirth," said Labour

Party MP Ginny Andersen, who initiated the bill.

"The bill will give women and their partners time to come to

terms with their loss without having to tap into sick leave.

"Because their grief is not a sickness, it is a loss. And loss takes time."

The leave provisions apply to mothers, their partners as well as parents planning to have a child through adoption or surrogacy, she said.

One in four New Zealand women have had a miscarriage, Andersen said in her statement.

India is the only other country with similar legislation, media said.

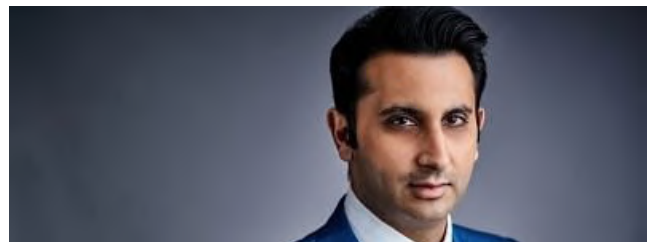
New Zealand was the first country in the world to give voting rights to women and has been an pioneer on issues around woman's rights.

Poonawalla Rents UK Mansion for Almost Rs 50 Lakh a Week: Report

Agenceis

Aadar Poonawalla, the head of Serum Institute of India (SII), the world's largest vaccine manufacturer, will reportedly rent a property in London's Mayfair for 50,000 pounds per week, reported Bloomberg, quoting sources.

Poonawalla will be paying approximately Rs 49,50,000 per week to live in the neighborhood, which is considered one of the exclusive areas of London.



In a 2016 interview, Poonawalla, said that Britain is "definitely a place I would want a second home in," he told Bloomberg News.

He is part of one of the world's richest families, with a \$15 billion fortune – with vaccine manufacturing being the family's primary income.

15 Years On, Vital Dogripora-Awantipora Bridge Awaits Completion

Work To Start In A Week: DGM JKPC



Agenceis

Awantipora: Even after 15 years, a vital bridge on river Jehlum at Dogripora in Awantipora area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district is awaiting completion.

Locals said that the foundation of the bridge was laid in the year 2006 during the PDP-Congress regime, however, 15 years have passed but not even 40 per cent of the construction work has been completed yet.

Shahid Ahmad, a resident of Dogripora village, said that over the years, many people have drowned while crossing Jehlum through a boat in absence of the bridge.

"Such accidents wouldn't have happened had this bridge been completed on time," he said, adding that this bridge would connect dozens of villages with the highway at Pujteng Sethar and over 50 villages with railway station Panz-

gam Pulwama.

Shahid said that the project is under JKPC and every year they hardly work for 15 to 20 days and left it halfway, "due to which we are facing a lot of problems".

Locals said that they have knocked the doors of every authority in this regard but on the ground nothing happened.

"We have met Governors and their advisors as well, who assured that work will start soon, however, their promises like officials also proved hoax on the ground," they said.

Deputy Managing Director JKPC Er Masood Ahmad said the bridge was kept in languishing projects and got administrative approval and technical sanction recently.

"The material is being brought by the contractor from outside valley and in coming days the work will start on the bridge," he said. "The project will be completed up to March 2022."—(KNO)

Police Arrest Bootlegger, Drug Peddler

Observer News Service

The Jammu and Kashmir Police Thursday said that it arrested a bootlegger and recovered 22 bottles of illicit liquor from his possession in Sopore. A police spokesperson said that officers from Police Station Tarzoo at a checkpoint intercepted a vehicle driven by Farooq Ahmad Ganie, a resident of Langate Handwara. During checking, officers were able to recover 22 bottles of illicit liquor from the vehicle. The accused has been arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody. He said a case vide FIR No. 20/2021 under relevant sections of law has been registered and further investigation initiated.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson said that Police arrested a drug peddler in Pampore and recovered contraband substance from his possession. He said officers from Police Station Pampore at a checkpoint intercepted one person identified Mohammad Ayoub Akhoo, a resident of Tulbagh. During checking, officers were able to recover 55 grams of charas from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody.

A case vide FIR number 37/2021 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Pampore and further investigation initiated.

VC KU Awarded Commemorative Medal-2020

Observer News Service

Vice-Chancellor University of Kashmir Prof Talat Ahmad has been honoured with the 'G.S.I. Sesquicentennial Commemorative Medal' for the year 2020 by the Council of the Asiatic Society Kolkata.

A communication to Prof Talat from General Secretary of the Society—an Institute of National Importance declared by an Act of Parliament under Ministry of Culture, Government of India—reads: "It gives me immense pleasure to inform you that the Council of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata, has been pleased to confer the award 'G.S.I. Sesquicentennial Commemorative Medal' of the Asiatic Society for the year 2020 for your significant contribution in the field of Earth Science."

"On behalf of the Council of the Asiatic society, Kolkata as well as on behalf of the members and staff members we warmly congratulate you for your nomination to the said award," the communication reads.

Prof Talat is a recipient of several prestigious awards, including the National Mineral Award (1994) from Government of India, and has the distinction of being a Fellow of all the three prestigious Science Academies in the country, including Indian National Science Academy New Delhi, Indian Academy of Sciences Bangalore and National Academy of Sciences Allahabad. He is also a recipient of J C Bose National Fellowship from DST, New Delhi, S M Naqvi Gold Medal 2013 from Geological Society of India and Indian Geophysical Union – Prince Mukarram Jah Endowment Lecture Award and Gold Medal for the year 2015.

Parliamentary Panel Warns Against Use Of Dynamites For Infrastructural Projects in J&K, Ladakh

- Uncontrolled Cutting Of Trees Will Lead To Disasters
- Recommends Expeditious Glaciological Studies

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Stating that there is a need to learn lesson from the recent glacial outburst at Chamoli in Uttarakhand, Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs has recommended expeditious conduct of glaciological studies in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh for better planning.

The Parliamentary Panel has held excessive cutting of trees and use of dynamites for infrastructural projects responsible for the weakening of hills and mountains and warned that this uncontrolled exercise may cause disasters in the coming years.

The Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee comprising 10 Members of Rajya Sabha and 21 Members of Lok Sabha, which tabled its report in both Houses of the Parliament on March 15, has observed that the Himalayan region of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir are young, fragile and sensitive mountains as such there is a need to establish and install state-of-the-art infrastructure along with modern equipment of proven efficacy and reach that would play a very crucial role in monitoring the movement of glaciers in Himalayan region.

It has recommended that the Ministry of Home Affairs should emphatically put before the Ministry of Finance its specific requirements for the purpose and seek appropriate budgetary allocation.

In view of the recent severe glacial outburst at Chamoli in Uttarakhand, the Committee has strongly recommended that for ensuring safety of

the people of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh, a network of meteorological and hydrological stations, monitoring stations and weather stations be set up at the earliest.

Moreover, the Committee has recommended that an urgent assessment needs to be made and organisations like Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, Dehradun may also be tasked to conduct glaciological studies and prepare glacial lake inventory for Himalayan region using remote sensing and Geographical Information System (GIS).

"The concerned UTs and States should be sensitised by the MHA to place adequate early warning mechanism in every district so that vulnerable communities can be alerted on the wake of any disaster in future", the Parliamentary Panel has further recommended.

The Committee has noted that monitoring of Glacial Lake Outbursts Flows (GLOFs) requires a network of meteorological and hydrological stations, early warning system comprising remote Automatic Water Level Recorder (AWLR) or Monitoring Stations and Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) with the ability to communicate and transmit data from remote stations to the control room etc for operation and monitoring in real-time data on air temperature, precipitation and river discharge through telemetry (V-SAT).

The Parliamentary Panel has observed that excessive cutting of trees and use of dynamites on hills/ mountains of the Himalayan region for roads, tunnels, dams and other

developmental/infrastructural projects is significantly weakening the surrounding hills and may cause avalanche, landslides, flash floods and other catastrophes in future.

"The Committee understands that the Himalayas are fragile mountains and geologically and environmentally sensitive. Therefore, the developmental projects taking place in the region should be considered from the environmental and ecological point of view", the report said.

Accordingly, the Committee has recommended that Ministry of Home Affairs may coordinate with the concerned agencies including National Disaster Management Authority and Ministry of Road, Transport & Highways to immediately ban the use of dynamites for developmental projects in the Himalayan region and make judicious use of technology particularly in high altitude Himalayan region to minimize the damage to ecology and environment.

The Committee has further recommended exploring technological solutions including use of cutting-edge technology and best practices followed by the other countries for cutting of hills/mountains for various developmental projects in J&K and Ladakh Union Territories.

All these recommendations have been made by the Parliamentary Panel despite the Ministry of Home Affairs submitted that Government of India has a good system of monitoring avalanche movement etc and various agencies are working in avalanche forecasting, artificial triggering and structural controls in snow-bound mountainous areas. (KINS)

Law Secy Stresses On Importance Of Litigation Reforms

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Secretary, Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, Achal Sethi Thursday took a meeting of all the Law Officers posted in the Civil Secretariat along with the legal team of different Organisations / Officers and Corporations regarding Litigation reforms and effective monitoring of Litigation in Jammu and Kashmir.

Recently, the Administrative Council has approved the proposal of the Department of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs for introducing litigation reforms in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Law Secretary apprised the officers that in deference of the decision to the Administrative Council, Law Department has issued various orders which are available on the web site of the department, wherein roles and responsibilities of the Law Officers posted in different departments, Advocates (Government Counsels, Director Litigation Jammu/Kashmir and also

appointment of officer in charge (Litigation) in every department have elaborately been prescribed for handling government Litigations. The Government orders were circulated to all the law officers for strict compliance.

Law Secretary addressed the importance of Litigation reforms and suggested various measures which can contribute to the improvement of litigation monitoring system.

The Law Secretary also apprised the officers about introduction of web based platform, which has been floated by the department for effective monitoring of cases at different stages.

In his concluding remarks Law Secretary appreciated the efforts put by the law Officers in safeguarding the interest of government in pending Litigation and beseeched upon them to further contribute to the effective management of litigation in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, so that cases are defended properly and decided in time bound manner.

Notorious Criminal Arrested In Jammu

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir police on Thursday claimed to have arrested a notorious criminal and recovered a sharp edged weapons from his possession in Gharota area of Jammu.

In a statement issued a spokesperson said that a police team of police station Gharota led by SHO Khyatimaan Khajuria while on naka duty at Kanger Talab rounded up a suspect namely Farman Ali son of Sher Mohammad, a resident of Keran Nala area of Jammu who was coming from Jammu on motor cycle.

"On being searched, a spring actuated knife (sharp edged weapon) was recovered from his illegal possession", the statement reads.

It reads that a case FIR No. 20/2021 U/S 4/25 Arms Act was registered at police station Gharota and the accused was arrested. "It is pertinent to mention here that the accused was earlier also booked in case FIR no. 17/2017 U/S 307/323/34 RPC of P/S Gharota and also in case FIR No. 388/17 u/s 341/323/ RPC 4/25 Arms Act of P/S Domana," it reads. The statement reads that further investigation of the case was going on.

DIPR Organizes Cultural Programme



Observer News Service

JAMMU: As part of the celebration of Azaadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav (India@75), the Cultural Wing, Department of Information & Public Relations (DIPR), Jammu Thursday organised a Cultural Programme cum Nukad Natak based on Progress of India, Post Independence here in the premises of Government College for Women Parade.

Principal of the host college, Dr. S.P Saraswat was the chief guest on the occasion.

The Chief Guest lauded the efforts of the Cultural Wing DIPR Jammu for organising the event of great importance in his institution. He urged for holding more such programmes in the institutions in near future.

On the occasion, a scintillating

theme based cultural programme was presented by artists of Cultural Wing DIPR, Jammu besides a theme based Nukad Natak was also presented by the artists of Dilshad Ahmed Group Jammu.

The students of the host college also presented a cultural programme on the theme depicting rich folk culture, which was highly applauded by the audience.

The proceeding of the programme was conducted by senior artist of the cultural wing DIPR, Suresh Kumar. Among others, Drama Instructor, Vijay Anand, staff members of the college, senior artists of the Cultural Wing DIPR, including Kamal Kumar, Surjeet Singh, Mohinder Kumar, Balbir Singh, Rakesh Kumar, budding poets and a large number of local people were also present on the occasion.

Indian Evidence Act Applicable In J&K: Law and Justice Ministry

SRINAGAR: The Ministry of Law and Justice informed the Rajya Sabha that after the reorganisation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 was made applicable in the UT of Ladakh and J&K.

The information was shared in Rajya Sabha in response to the questions that include the IE Act 1872 details and whether India has been defined as the territory of India excluding the UT of J&K.

In a written reply filed to the Rajya Sabha Minister for Law and Justice, Ravi Shankar Prasad said that the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 defines the whole of India and has been made applicable in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

The minister said that the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 extends to the whole of India. "After the reorganisation of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, The Indian Evidence Act, 1872 was also made applicable in the newly constituted UT of Jammu and Kashmir and UT of Ladakh with effect from the notified appointed date i.e. 31st October 2019 as per Table 1(SI. No. 44) of the Fifth Schedule of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019", the Minister said in the reply.

The reply said that subsequently, on March 18th, 2020, the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Adaptation of Central Laws) Order, 2020 was published.

Prasad to a question maintained that India has not been defined as territory of India excluding the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

Chauhan Stresses On Obtaining Feedback From Youth

Agenceis

JAMMU: Commissioner Secretary, Labour and Employment (L&E), Sarita Chauhan Thursday chaired a meeting to review the functioning of Employment department at Civil Secretariat here.

The meeting was attended by Director Employment, J&K, Joint Director Employment, Jammu while as other officers of the department participated in the meeting through video conferencing.

Speaking during the meeting, Commissioner Secretary impressed upon the officers to work with dedication and re-orient themselves to change with time and technology in order to bring outcomes.

While reviewing the registration of unemployed youth with the department, Sarita Chauhan directed all the district officers to play a proactive role in collecting the information from the government agencies like drop out students from education department. She also asked them to work in tandem with different local insti-

tutions including rural and urban local bodies for registration and counseling of youth population.

The Commissioner Secretary asked the officers to act as facilitators to provide a platform for the job seekers and job providers to enable employment access.

She further asked them to analyse job seekers and job providers in terms of skills, geographical location.

While reviewing the counseling being done by the department, Commissioner Secretary issued directions to involve resource persons from different areas of expertise in order to provide quality inputs to the unemployed youth regarding different employment avenues.

Commissioner Secretary also laid stress on obtaining feedback during counselling sessions from the youth. She lauded the department for providing libraries and computer lab facilities to the unemployed youths and suggested them to keep available employment newspapers in the libraries.

Schools Meant To Impart Education, Not Make Profits: FFRC

Censures DPS Management For 'Disallowing' Student In Online Classes

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Committee for Fixation and Regulation of Fee of Private Schools (FFRC) Thursday said that schools are meant for imparting education to children and not for making profits.

The FFRC's remarks came after prestigious Delhi Public School barred a students from attending the Online Classes owing to some fee issues.

Taking note of a complaint received by parents regarding disallowance of their ward in online classes, Committee for Fixation and Regulation of Fee of Private Schools (FFRC) censured the 'Delhi Public School', underlining that "...child cannot be made to suffer."

The order issued by Committee's Administrative Officer, Nazir-ul-Hassan Shah said that the office received a complaint that a student was barred from participating in the ongoing online classes.



The Committee officer while directing the School Principal to file response, if any, within one week's time asked the latter alongside Chairperson to ensure the child is put on online classes. "Any dispute about fee will be settled, but child cannot be made to suffer", the order remarks.

Meanwhile, the father of child has claimed that despite the express orders from the authority, the school manage-

ment is yet to restore the classes of the ward.

"My daughter is currently admitted at Athwajan branch of the school in class second and I have paid the fee from time to time," the aggrieved parent said adding, "However the management has been insisting for Transportation and Annual charges, to which I have objected."

He said he paid fifty-six thousand instead of fifty-five

thousand for twenty-months and that is what was due, however the arrogance of not letting my ward to participate in classes is uncalled for and is taking a heavy toll on her career, he said.

"I fail to understand as to why the child has been disallowed even after express orders by the Committee concerned", the aggrieved parent said further. (GNS)

KASHMIR OBSERVER

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KO VIEW

Walking the talk

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi's letter to his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan on the occasion of Pakistan's Republic Day, calling for "cordial relations" between the two neighbors has pushed the renewed bilateral engagement a bit further. The PM called for creation of an environment "devoid of terror and hostility". Earlier, the PM had wished Khan a speedy recovery from the Covid-19 infection. These messages have added to the credibility of the ongoing attempts to institute a fresh dialogue between the two countries. After the re-affirmation of the 2003 ceasefire agreement, the two neighbours have restored sporting ties and also held talks on sharing of waters. Now there's talk of holding a cricket tournament and planning a SAARC summit in Pakistan. That will be a major boost for the ties between the two countries. A summit will also give a chance to the PM Modi and Khan to meet on the sidelines and take the dialogue forward.

There are huge expectations on both sides of the border about the talks. At the same time, there is a huge constituency that is not happy with the engagement. There's also a significant population that is cynical about the prospect of dialogue leading to some positive outcome. There's a reason for this: India and Pakistan have so often engaged and so invariably failed to take the talks to their logical outcome that it seems improbable that they can do it this time. More so, when the differences and the bitterness run deeper than they ever did before. Following New Delhi's revocation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019, the relations between India and Pakistan have fallen to their lowest. But as the reiteration of the ceasefire along the Line of Control has shown, the two countries have shown a capacity for returning to engagement sooner than later. Between 2003 to 2007, the neighbours had engaged sustainably and nearly worked out a framework agreement to resolve the issue of Kashmir. This framework for solution came to be known as the Four Point formula. But the Mumbai attack in 2008 and the exit of the then Pakistan president General Pervez Musharraf aborted the dialogue. Could the two countries go back to this framework agreement this time around? There's very certainly a possibility for this. But for that to happen the two neighbours will need to build confidence and safeguard the engagement from the spoilers. And this is very much possible if there's political will and honesty on both sides.

OTHER OPINION

No to Lockdown

The first 'anniversary' of the lockdown should be an occasion of sombre reflection. It is now generally agreed that the hastily planned lockdown imposed in March last year had crippled the economy. Job losses, the loss of demand, disruptions in supply chains, unprecedented sufferings of migrant workers, the limited reach of India's social welfare mechanism — the lockdown bared many a wart. It is to be hoped that if a lockdown — national or local — were to be imposed again, these mistakes would be rectified. The lockdown, in spite of its debilitating impact, was deemed necessary to break the chain of infection. It was not conceived as a cure; merely a precaution. India then went on to unlock itself in phases, and near-normalcy was restored.

Worryingly, there is some apprehension that the country could be locked up again. This speculation can be attributed to the anxiety over the rising number of Covid-19 infections — apparently, the second wave is here. India added nearly 50,000 new cases on Tuesday. This spike is the sharpest since November. Worryingly, contagious strains have been found. A significant number of the samples tested in Punjab were of the UK strain; poll-bound Bengal, too, has discovered some cases with the UK and South African variants. As many as 24 states and Union territories have witnessed a surge in cases with Maharashtra, once again, shouldering a disproportionately high burden. A national lockdown, unless absolutely necessary, must be avoided. The economic cost and the consequent social unrest would cripple the nation. Some essential steps must be taken to keep India away from another lockdown. The vaccination drive must be expedited with vulnerable constituencies prioritized on a war footing. The decision to permit all citizens above 45 to receive vaccination from April 1 is a welcome step. But India should not lose sight of other, relevant challenges. There has been some concern with vaccine wastage, with even the prime minister cautioning the states. India's healthcare network must be prepared to meet a rush of not only patients but also a far greater number of citizens seeking the jab. The paucity of trained health workers — the number of active health workers, a study now says, could be half of the government's estimate — is another concern. But the most formidable of challenges remains growing public apathy towards safety measures. A concerted drive must be launched by administrators to penalize those refusing to wear masks or maintaining social distance. The government must show the way by discouraging mass gatherings for social, religious and even political functions.

Telegraph India



India-Pakistan Peace: Will the deal prevail?

Ceasefire is a great opportunity to open a more serious, sustained Indo-Pak dialogue

SHABIR HUSSAIN

So intertwined are China's interests with Pakistan that it can't afford to allow India an upper hand over its 'iron brother', which in its own right isn't a walkover either as many in India want to believe

In a rare joint press release on February 24, the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOS) of India and Pakistan said that the two sides had agreed to observe a ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC). The two armies exchanged heavy artillery fire in recent months that led to casualties on both sides.

"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," said the joint statement.

The abrupt ceasefire statement came two weeks after People's Liberation Army of China (PLA) and the Indian Army began disengagement in eastern Ladakh after many months of eyeball to eyeball build-up that turned bloody at least once when the two armies confronted each other with clubs and rocks in Galwan Vally which led to the death of twenty Indian soldiers including a colonel. Indian media claimed heavy casualties on the Chinese side as well.

A battle of unequals?

The massive power gap between India and China is unbridgeable till foreseeable future. So, at the very outset, the LAC flare-up was seen as a battle of unequals.

In the latter part of 2020, India was keen on watering down its rhetoric and send out reconciliatory signals to China. Highly placed sources revealed that the Trump administration warned India not to show any signs of rapprochement. But with Biden coming into office, it was easier for India to seek disengagement along LAC.

"I'm not going to do it the way Trump did. We're going to focus on international rules of the road," Biden said in a CBS interview while talking about US' engagement with China. He said that "we need not have a conflict."

Media, think tankers and observers in India generally find it

hard to wrap their heads around Sino-Pak interoperability. You can't be friends with China and hostile to Pakistan at the same time.

Regional geostrategic equation

That's how the regional geostrategic equation has panned out over the last decade or so. But if the LAC disengagement and the LoC ceasefire are an indication that India has started waking up to the reality, it must be seen as a welcome development.

which in its own right isn't a walkover either as many in India want to believe.

Despite its myriad problems, Pakistan remains a military might that doesn't hesitate in flexing its muscles as and when needed. While the ceasefire is no guarantee that peace will prevail, it could be a great opportunity to open a serious, sustained dialogue.

There are speculations that the two countries might upgrade

There are speculations that the two countries might upgrade diplomatic ties and bring back high commissioners in New Delhi and Islamabad. It's said that India wants Pakistan to take the initiative since it was the latter that downgraded diplomatic ties in response to what happened on August 5, 2019

Also, China is keener than ever on Kashmir after India struck down Articles 370 and 35-A and downgraded the state of J&K to two union territories on August 5, 2019.

Within days of the revocation of Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution, Chinese government's media organ Global Times wrote in an editorial: "Reckless India's unilateral decision on Kashmir is a geopolitical trickery that may have actual consequences that India can't control."

A few months later LAC happened. Those who know China know that its territorial claims are sacrosanct to it and not just a bargaining chip.

According to sources, in one of the initial meetings during the LAC standoff between the commanders of the two sides, PLA made it clear that China wasn't at all amused by India's August 5 move.

So intertwined are China's interests with Pakistan that it can't afford to allow India an upper hand over its 'iron brother',

diplomatic ties and bring back high commissioners in New Delhi and Islamabad. It's said that India wants Pakistan to take the initiative since it was the latter that downgraded diplomatic ties in response to what happened on August 5, 2019.

If Pakistan agrees to it, it might have to face a lot of opposition at home and from Kashmir's resistance leadership.

Pakistani leadership, including Prime Minister Imran Khan, had to give strong assurances that there was no compromise on Kashmir.

So it's unlikely that any CBM between the two sides is going to succeed without bringing Kashmir to the table at some point. Unless the Kashmir issue is addressed, peace will remain elusive.

Not just between India and Pakistan, but between India and China as well.

Shabir Hussain is a senior journalist based in India

Gulf News



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All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, space and accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

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Horrors in the Way of Women Commuters in Kashmir

I'm writing this with profound grief, but it was very important to put this issue in public domain, again. The most common issue "Sexual Harassment".

Not that we are not aware of this already but we have normalized this issue like it doesn't exist.

I am a local transport commuter and to be honest I experience a lot of sexual harassment in its diverse forms, just like all other girls do. But today when I left for the office in the

morning, I was waiting at the stop for the transport when a very traumatic incident happened.

While standing there, other than unnecessary honking and gazing that were making me uncomfortable. I saw an altogether different side of that man who initially honked to an extent where he made it noticeable for me to look up at him. The guy had the audacity to stop his car in front of my feet, rub off his fogged window and invite me into his car while

smirking at my miserable startled self. I got numb, couldn't even move my body to run, or even confront the man for his sheer shamelessness. Somehow I mugged up my courage and went past him. It was only after I boarded a vehicle that I could understand what had happened and an unmatchable anger rushed in my blood. But all I could do was convert every ounce of that anger into a tear.

People might say that my crying showed my cowardliness or weak-

ness but the truth is that I didn't cry for only this incident but for all other such incidents I experience on an everyday basis or other girls do, irrespective of their age, religion, clothing etc.

Being a girl was not made difficult by the Creator, but we humans have constructed a society where it becomes difficult for her to exist.

Samina Rehman

Mindful Fridays

How Parents Can Help Their Children with Managing Anxiety Disorders?

ISHA MALIK

When a child does not outgrow the fears and worries that are typical in young age, or when there are so many fears and worries that they interfere with school, home, or play activities, the child may be diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. Different types of anxiety disorders include separation anxiety, social phobia, specific phobia, generalized anxiety, panic disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder etc.

The following are different tips on how parents can help their child to overcome anxiety:

- Encourage regular sleep routine, healthy eating and regular exercising.
- Try not to become overprotective or anxious yourself. Model healthy ways of coping with anxiety. as children learn the most via observational learning.
- Sit with them and offer physical reassurance/support. Feeling you nearby, holding your hand or having a cuddle can make them feel calm and secure.
- Reassure them that the anxiety will pass, and they will be okay soon. Spend quality time with your child as a family. This will help divert their attention from all their worries.
- Discuss about your child's worries and scary thoughts and how to deal with them. Ask them how it feels inside their mind and body. It is very important to empathize with their experience, accept and validate their feelings.
- Help your child learn about signs of anxiety so that they can recognize when they are feeling anxious. This way they will know when to ask for help or help themselves. Knowing this beforehand can make the experience less overwhelming/ frightening.
- You can explain about anxiety to your child through story telling- example: The Story of the Caveman
- This story is useful to help your children understand where anxiety comes from and it can be adapted depending on the age of the child. Back in the distant past, when we were still cavemen walking around in furs, we came across many dangers, like dinosaurs and sabre tooth tigers. Our bodies (naturally wanting to protect us from danger) designed a special alarm inside us that was set to go off whenever danger was present. This alarm gave us the ability to fight the danger, or run away by increasing our heart rate, and supplies of blood to our muscles- making us breathe faster. It also made us think more quickly, and be on the alert for dangerous situations. It worked brilliantly! However, as we don't have dinosaurs or sabre tooth tigers on the planet anymore, we don't need the special alarm as much. Unfortunately we can't turn it off, and some peoples' alarm system gets stuck in 'on' mode, which causes them to feel ready for danger at all times. This is what anxiety is.
- Teach easy relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, rainbow breathing. Breathe slowly and deeply together. Ask them to think of a safe/relaxing place. It could be their grandfather's bedroom, their last holiday destination, a nearby park. Sometimes holding a memento (e.g., shell, pebble etc.), souvenir, or photograph of a relaxing place can help. Making them draw and name their safe place is also helpful.
- **Rainbow breathing:**

Have your child gently close her eyes and imagine that she is lying under a rainbow. Tell her that you are going to practice breathing the colours in out while thinking certain thoughts. Encourage her to allow her/his body to relax and let go of any tension in her/his body.

You can give your child instructions.
Breathe in the colour green and think, "I am feeling fresh"
Breathe out the colour yellow and think, "I am feeling happy"
Breathe in the colour blue and think, "I am feeling calm"
Breathe out the colour orange and think, "I am creative"
Breathe in the colour purple and think, "I am wise"
Breathe out the colour red and think, "I am safe"
Repeat this several times. As he/she is lying there breathing, imagining the colours gently flowing in and out, you can speak these thoughts out loud as he/she practices breathing.

- **5-4-3-2-1 Grounding technique** Try using all five senses together. Connecting with what they can see, touch, hear, smell and taste can bring them closer to the present moment and reduce the intensity of their anxiety symptoms. You can together identify five things they can see, four things they can touch, three things they can hear, two things they can smell and one thing they can taste.
- Encourage your child to do any activity they enjoy and which makes them feel happy. For e.g., gardening, sketching, painting, watching favourite animated movies or reading a short story.
- Make a Worry Box with your child:

A worry box basically helps symbolise the idea that feelings of anxiety are simply thoughts that we can distance ourselves from. It's a great way for

young kids to start understanding and identifying their emotions, and dealing with them in a purposeful and productive way. Create and decorate a small box, such as a tissue box or a small cardboard box. Then, perhaps each night before bed, write down the child's worries onto a piece of paper. or if your child can write then it's better to make the child write down or draw his/her worries.

Have them fold the piece of paper and put it in the box. The next day – take the notes out of the box and ask your child if they still have those worries. If they do, place them back in the box; if they don't, have them rip up the paper and throw it in the dustbin." The worry box serves the important purpose of 'externalising' your child's anxieties. It's more helpful for them to have something age appropriate they can actively do to process their anxieties. So instead of reassuring our children about their anxieties, we should rather be helping them to process them in age-appropriate ways. The worry box is particularly

from the family (and school if appropriate). You can assess when a child or young person's anxiety drops by getting them to rate it on a scale of 1-10. When that number drops below 2 in the situation, you will be ready to move on to the next step.

Social Phobias (in other words, being afraid of social situations or being watched by others)

- At home, do role plays and practice how to interact with others.
- Practice situations such as asking questions in class, ordering food in a restaurant, buying a pack of chips from the departmental store, answering a phone call, talking to a friend/neighbor, etc.
- Arrange frequent, short play dates for young children. For older children, ask them to carry out at least two social activities. Example- calling a friend, visiting a nearby neighbor, review-

• **Becoming comfortable with some uncertainty**

Because children with GAD feel anxious whenever things are uncertain, a good way to fight back worries is to help your child become more comfortable with uncertainty. Do this by deliberately taking action when they are not sure what will happen. Like any tool that involves facing a fear, it is important to start small. The following are some exercises your child can do:

- Completing homework without asking family whether it was done correctly (or only asking once).
- Calling a friend spontaneously and asking him or her to come over to play without making plans in advance.
- Deliberately making a small mistake on homework so that it isn't perfect (crossing something out; making it a little messy).



Each step should be decided in agreement with the child and the parent, and plenty of praise / rewards should be used as the child or young person moves through the ladder. If the child or young person becomes distressed or does not feel they can manage the next step, then make the step smaller. It may take a considerable length of time for them to get to their goal, and everyone is different so patience, time and support are required in bucketloads from the family (and school if appropriate). You can assess when a child or young person's anxiety drops by getting them to rate it on a scale of 1-10. When that number drops below 2 in the situation, you will be ready to move on to the next step.

beneficial for young children, because it helps them to understand their thoughts and feelings, and give them control over them. The symbolic nature of the worry box helps to show kids that their thoughts are just – thoughts – and negative ones won't have an impact on their future. The act of decorating and creating the box shows the child that they can have ownership and control over their thoughts and feelings.

The ritual of writing the worries down helps them to acknowledge and address those feelings. And the disposing of the worries helps to symbolise their release of those problematic emotions. The worry box is an easy and helpful solution for trying at home.

More suggestions for parents on how to help their children deal with specific kinds of anxiety disorders:

SPECIFIC PHOBIAS (in other words, fear of certain situations, places or things)

- Practice graded exposure at home- Exposure/ fear ladders. For example, if the child is extremely fearful of dogs, one can follow the steps explained below.

First teach the child any easy relaxation technique and explain to them that they will jointly work on getting rid of his fear of dogs. Any time during the process if the child gets emotionally overwhelmed then he/she should be instructed to use the relaxation technique.

- Start with showing the child a drawing of a dog.
- Then make him/her look at the picture of dogs in magazines/books.
- Watch funny dog movies (animated)
- Watch videos of people petting dogs.
- Go to a pet store to watch puppies/dogs from a distance.
- Visit a friend/relative who has a pet dog and watch them playing.
- Pet your friend's dog and make your child do the same for some seconds.

Each step should be decided in agreement with the child and the parent, and plenty of praise / rewards should be used as the child or young person moves through the ladder. If the child or young person becomes distressed or does not feel they can manage the next step, then make the step smaller. It may take a considerable length of time for them to get to their goal, and everyone is different so patience, time and support are required in bucketloads

- ing homework with a friend.
- Practice assertiveness skills. These include: speaking up for oneself, asking others for help, saying no to something they are not comfortable with, expressing one's opinions.

Separation Anxiety (in other words, severe distress about being away from home or apart from people who are important to them)

- Make sure that the child sleeps in his/her own bed. Use rewards and praises to reinforce this desirable behavior.
- Make the child often spend a short duration of time away from parents. For example, a mother can go for an evening walk everyday while the child stays at home with his grandparents.
- Gradually increase the length of time they are apart and use different situations.
- Help a child to cope with stress in uncomfortable situations like school, camps, staying overnight at a friend's place or at some relative's house.

Panic Disorder (in other words, severe and unexpected attacks of fear that also cause physical symptoms)

- Panic disorder can cause physical symptoms like increased heart rate, feeling dizzy and stomach aches, breathlessness etc.
- Parents can make sure that a child understands that panic attacks are safe, painless, and private (nobody else can see them), and they only last a few minutes.
- Different relaxation/ mindfulness/ grounding techniques need to be practised.

Generalised Anxiety Disorder (in other words, frequent, intense worry about many things, such as school, the safety of their family, or world events)

- Explain to the child or teen that worry is not useful. What works better is to try to solve the problem. For example, ask what he or she could do to make sure that the scary situation doesn't happen. Remember not to encourage their reassurance seeking repeatedly. Encourage your child to ask you fewer questions like 'What's going to happen?' If you've already answered the question, encourage your child to think about the situation, come up with the answers, and rely on her own judgment.

- Coming to school a few minutes late.
- Talking to someone in school without planning the conversation.
- Saying "I don't know" when the teacher asks a question.
- Looking out the window for a few seconds when the teacher is talking.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD): (in other words, thoughts, images, ideas or impulses that are not welcome and that interfere with their lives.)

- Children with OCD usually need the help of a trained therapist.
- However, parents can support the treatment in a number of ways:
- Help the child or teen deal with the worries or obsessions that they fear by rating the levels of distress associated with each fear. Examples of worries are : contamination by dirt or germs and anxiety about whether something is turned off.
- Once the worries are organized they can be put into 'fear ladders' that arrange the worries from those that are feared the least to those that are feared the most.
- Coach the child through exposure to the feared situations or events. When you do this, make sure the child or teen cannot reduce the anxiety this causes by using OCD behaviours such as rituals of washing, checking or 'fixing'. If this behaviour is allowed it will undo any gains that have been made. Parents should make sure not to involve in their child's compulsive rituals.
- Exposure should happen every day and should be practiced. Start with low-level exposure and gradually build up.
- Give rewards to help motivate the child or to progress.
- Reassure the child that they are not "freaks/ abnormal/crazy". Tell them that one out of every 50 kids in their school has OCD. To get a concrete number, ask them about how many kids are in their school and then work out how many may have OCD. This will help normalize the experience.

Views expressed in the article are the author's responsibility and are not a substitute for medical advice. These are for educational purposes only

The author is a clinical psychologist

Overhearing negative claims about social groups may influence development of bias in children: Study

Agencies

A study led by researchers at the Society for Research in Child Development revealed that overhearing a stranger's negative claims about a social group, even in a brief comment, can have a lasting influence on children's attitudes towards the group.

The findings were published in a Child Development article, written by researchers at Vanderbilt University.

"Findings from our work suggest that overhearing a negative conversation about an unfamiliar social group may influence intergroup biases among older children," says Emily Conder, the study's lead author and doctoral candidate at Vanderbilt University.

"Caregivers should consider what is said around children and regulate the media they consume, as what children overhear about groups of people can influence their attitudes and behaviours."

The study included 121 children from primarily White, middle-class families in Nashville, Tennessee, 48 percent of who were female, and who were recruited from local charter schools or through Tennessee state birth records.

Consent forms were required for participation and were completed by a diverse group of parents who self-reported identifying as: White (67 percent), Black (19 percent), Asian (3 percent), or as multiple races or ethnicities (11 percent). Demographic data were not collected from or about child participants.

Participating children met individually with a female experimenter. With parental consent, the sessions were recorded with a camera hidden either in decorative plants or a pencil box. The procedure included the following:

Children played an unrelated game while they overheard an experimenter receive a pre-recorded Skype video call from either a child or adult caller.

During the pre-recorded video conversation, the researcher mentioned one of two novel groups, "Flurps" or "Gearoos."

Each participant was randomly assigned to a message condition (negative-message vs. no message) and a caller condition (adult vs. child). In the negative-message condition, the caller briefly provided negative information about the new group, such as "The Flurps are bad people. They eat disgusting food and they wear such weird clothes."



Children's attitudes about the group were measured immediately after the call, and their attitudes were measured again two weeks later, by a different researcher.

At the conclusion of the 2-week study, children were debriefed by a researcher and were told that "Gearoos" and "Flurps," "were not real groups of people, but if they were real, they would probably be very nice people."

Later, researchers analyzed the following measures of children's attitudes about the novel group:

1. Goodness evaluations: children's evaluation of the group's "goodness"
2. Cultural engagement: children's willingness to engage with elements of the group's culture (for example, to eat their food or wear their clothing).

3. Friendship decisions: children's willingness to be friends with someone from the group

4. Social distance: children were asked to draw themselves and a "Flurp" or "Gearoo" person while the experimenter pretended to check her email on a laptop to limit influence. Larger distances between drawings were interpreted as indicating stronger, negative attitudes toward the group.

5. Resource allocation: children's willingness to share stickers with the group.

Older children (7-9 years) who overheard the negative messages drew themselves further from the new group member, were less willing to be friends with someone from the group, rated the group as being less good, and were willing to try fewer elements of the group's culture than children who heard no claims about the group.

These effects lasted for at least 2 weeks after children heard the messages. The messages had little to no effect on younger children (4-5 years), perhaps indicating that younger children find this type of social information less interesting or relevant. Contrary to the researchers' predictions, the age of the video caller (whether they were a child or an adult) did not have an impact on children's attitudes.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

Subject: Provisional shortlisting of Candidates for the Posts of Accounts Assistant (Panchayati) under PwD Category- Constitution of Special Medical Board thereof.

Reference: Government Order No.147-SW of 2014 dated 17.06.2014

All such candidates who were provisionally shortlisted for the District Cadre Posts of Accounts Assistant (Panchayati) in the Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Advertisment Vide Advertisement Notice No 02 of 2020 dated 06-07-2020 under category of Persons with Disabilities (with Blindness, Deaf & Hard of hearing and Locomotor disability) and figuring in the ANNEXURE "A" to this Notification are directed to appear before the Special Medical Board on the venues and dates shown against each in order to ascertain the genuineness/correctness of the Disability Certificates.

No. SSB/Secy/Sel/2021/2903-10 Controller of Examinations, J&K Services Selection Board Jammu

List of Candidates provisionally shortlisted for the District Cadre Posts of Accounts Assistant (Panchayati) in Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Advertisment Vide Advertisement Notice No 02 of 2020 dated 06-07-2020.

| S. No. | Sl. No. | Roll No. | Candidate's Name | Father's Name | Address | Category | Date of Birth | Permanent Address | Pass | Temp. of the Candidate to Medical Board | Date |
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Climate Change May Hurt Indian Manufacturing Sector Due To Heat Stress On Workers

Agenceis

One-degree Celsius rise in annual temperatures may lead to two per cent drop in productivity levels of industrial units and climate change may hurt the Indian manufacturing sector owing to heat stress on workers, a new study has said.

The study by the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chi-

cago used several high-frequency micro-data sets of worker output

and a nationally representative dataset of more than 58,000 factories across India. The researchers found that there is around two per cent drop of productivity for every one-degree rise in annual temperature. "The greatest declines occurred in labour-intensive plants," the study said.



This multi-year study indicates that climate control in the workplace removes productivity declines but not absenteeism, presumably because workers remain exposed to high temperatures at home and outside. And the fact that climate-control is expensive, makes its use limited, it said.

"The effect of high temperatures on lower crop yields has been previously established. This paper shows that rising temperatures can also hurt economic output in other sectors by reducing

the productivity of human labour. "The damage is greatest when already warm days become hotter. If India wishes to succeed in becoming a manufacturing powerhouse using cheap labour, we need to think hard about how we can adapt to a hotter world," said Dr Anant Sudarshan, South Asia Director of the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago.

Dr Sudarshan co-authored this study with researchers E Somanathan of the Indian Statistical Institute, Delhi, Rohini Somanathan of the Delhi School of Economics, and Meenu Tewari of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Talking about how the future look like, Somanathan said it is entirely possible that the industrial sector might respond to high temperatures by increasing automation and shifting away from labour-intensive sectors in hot parts of the world.

"These adaptive responses may negatively influence wage inequality," Somanathan added.

Echoing a similar concern, Sudarshan added, "The trends that we see in our data makes us think that warm countries in the developing world may face a pervasive and 'heat tax' that could damage the competitiveness of their manufacturing sectors and further hurt the wages of poor workers.

AI Could Play Key Role In India's Growth In Agriculture: Report

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: Artificial Intelligence (AI) is likely to play a key role in relieving India's agriculture sector from its stressful input conditions, catalysing a shift towards data-driven farming, said a new Nasscom-EY report on Thursday.

With increased government support, growing agritech providers, burgeoning start-up ecosystem, and rising AI adoption among the rural farming population, a strong transformation impetus is underway, said the report titled "Leveraging AI to maximise India's agriculture output."

Data consolidation (both at macro and real-time farm-level), lack of infrastructure awareness in data processing, and its availability have been some of the key challenges faced by the sector today.

In addition to this, lack of awareness on agricultural inputs specific to the produce, access to quality seeds, lack of adequate mechanisation and irrigation infrastructure, scarcity of farmer capital, frequent disease outbreak, and inadequate storage facilities are the other value chain challenges faced by the sector.

"The Indian agriculture sector can utilise the potential of AI's transformative capabilities through effective data practices," Debjani Ghosh, President, Nasscom, said in a statement.



"The Netherlands is a stellar example of effective AI adoption in agriculture. With just a small arable land, the country has become the world's 2nd largest exporter of agricultural products by value leveraging technology and AI.

"For India to realise the full potential of AI, a coalition of government, industries, and start-ups in providing necessary infrastructure and policy support, enabling AI innovation across sectors, and mentoring and providing financial support to start-ups is imperative," she said.

Leveraging macro as well as farm-level data collected through sensors could help maximise yields and optimise the use of available resources, said the report.

Several AI-led use cases, such as precision agriculture and farm management, agricultural robots, automated weeding, crop quality and readiness identification, pest prediction and prevention, livestock monitoring and management, crop yield estimation, etc. can solve improving farm productivity.



Advisor Khan Meets Fruit Growers, Other Public Delegations At Sopore

Agenceis

BARAMULLA: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Khan today visited Fruit Mandi Sopore where he met various fruit growers and other stakeholders who apprised him about their issues and demands.

The Advisor was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Bhupinder Kumar; Director Horticulture, Aijaz Ahmad Bhat; MD JKHPM, Shafat Sultan; ADC Sopore, SP Sopore, heads of various concerned departments, district and sectoral officers among other concerned functionaries.

On the occasion, President of Fruit Growers Association Sopore, Fayaz Ahmad Malik apprised the Advisor about issues of the area viz drinking water facility in the fruit mandi; completion of Bagh-e-Sundri Road; mechanism to protect local farmers as fruits especially from Iran are entering the Indian markets without proper tariff etc.

The President of the Association also demanded proper accommodation for fruit growers at mandi, testing lab for controlling spurious pesticides, land acquisition for the expansion of fruit mandi, establishment

of cold storage, crop insurance among other demands of vital significance.

While reiterating that farmers' welfare is among the top priority of the present government, the Advisor said that every possible initiative is being taken to protect the interest of farmers.

He assured that all the genuine demands would be taken for their timely redressal, adding that a proper mechanism would be formulated wherein effective grading and packaging system of fruits shall be introduced in order to control erratic price fluctuation of horticultural produce.

The Advisor maintained that the government is working on the up gradation of basic infrastructure in fruit mandis so as to make them at par with standards of international fruit markets.

Advisor Khan directed for inspection of pesticide dealers to be followed by strict legal action if anyone found involved in the sale of sub-standard pesticides and fertilizers.

Meanwhile, several other delegations called on the Advisor and put forth their issues and demands before the Advisor.

The visiting delegations who called on the Advisor included

Traders Federation Sopore, Civil Society Sopore, Civil Societies of Watergam and Dangiwaacha among other prominent stakeholders of the civil society.

The delegations demanded Indoor Sports Stadium for Sopore, establishment of University Campus at Sopore, placement of officers in government offices wherein positions have been left vacant, completion of CHC Dangiwaacha, establishment of mother and child care hospital in the area, uninterrupted power supply besides other issues of public importance.

The Advisor gave a patient hearing to all the visiting deputations and assured that necessary action would be taken for their timely redressal.

Earlier, the Advisor accompanied by the concerned officers inspected a government-run Apple Juice Plant situated at Mazbug area of Sopore where he took first hand review of its functioning.

The Advisor inspected various aspects associated with the Juice Plant wherein he directed to strengthen employment oriented activities in the Plant so that more and more unemployed youth are motivated to take up entrepreneurship as a career option.

"Comprehensive Survey On To Explore New Tourist Destinations In J&K"

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor's Advisor Baseer Khan Thursday said that the UT administration is carrying out a comprehensive survey to explore the new tourist destinations so that tourist go beyond Gulmarg and Pahalgam while visiting the Valley. He also said that the government has started a new project to add to the beauty of the 35 acre sprawling Tulip garden located in the Zabarwan foothills in Srinagar at the cost of Rs 10 Crore to offer more to the visitors.

Talking to reporters after throwing the world famous Asia's largest Tulip garden open for tourists and locals, he said the government is working on a "comprehensive policy" to explore hidden and new tourist destinations. "Like we have Dodhpathri in Budgam, Basoli, Bhaderwah in Jammu areas. Tourists will have more places soon to visit beyond Gulmarg and Pahalgam," he said.

Advisor Khan said that the

garden spread over 35 acres of land presents a breathtaking view for tourists and other visitors. "J&K UT is famous for its beauty across the globe. Tulip garden adds to the beauty of Kashmir. Earlier, tourists visiting Kashmir were confined to Mughal Gardens only, but now Tulip garden is their first preference. You can see on the very first day of opening of Tulip garden, there are a lot of domestic and foreign tourists present," he said.

He said that the garden has been officially thrown open for the visitors and tourists from today onwards. "On April 3, LG Mano Sinha sir will officially inaugurate the Tulip festival wherein we will showcase Kashmir's rich culture, cuisine, art, and handicrafts etc. That will help attract more tourists and also help promote J&K UT's rich traditions and culture," Advisor Khan said.

He said at present there is only 25 per cent Tulip bloom and till April 3, the garden will be in full bloom. "There will be cultural programs also. That way, we will

be presenting a bouquet of love, art and culture to the people visiting the garden besides the tulip bloom," Advisor Khan said.

He said the J&K administration has undertaken a new project at the cost of Rs 10 Crore in the backside of the garden to add more beauty to it. "That's the phase-2 of the Tulip garden. There will be a cherry garden and other attractive trees and flowers in the backside of the garden that will be an added attraction," Advisor Khan said and urged visitors to follow the Dos and Don'ts displayed outside the garden for following the SoPs in spirit. "While enjoying the beauty of the garden, every visitor must follow the Covid-SoPs religiously," Advisor Khan said.

About Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Tweet about Kashmir's hospitality, Advisor Khan said: "Valley people are hospitable and their hospitality is famous across the globe. We urge tourists to come and enjoy the hospitality of Kashmiri people while exploring the beauty of Kashmir," Advisor Khan said.

Petrol, Diesel Prices Fall For 2Nd Consecutive Day

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: Consumers can heave a sign of relief as oil marketing companies (OMCs) have finally relented and started reducing the retail price of petrol and diesel after keeping them steady for 24 days in March.

This is the second reduction in petrol and diesel prices in as many days in 2021.

Petrol price fell by 21 paise per litre and diesel by 20 paise per litre in Delhi on Thursday. This has brought down the retail price of petrol to Rs 90.78 and diesel to Rs 81.10 a litre respectively in the national capital.

Across the country as well the petrol and diesel prices fell with the quantum varying depending on the level of local levies in respective states.

In Mumbai and Kolkata, the retail price of petrol fell by 21 and 20 paise per litre respectively and in Chennai by 18 paise per litre on Thursday. For diesel, the prices fell by 19 paise, 20 paise and 22 paise per litre respectively in Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai.

In Mumbai, petrol is now priced at Rs 97.19 a litre from previous days' price of Rs 97.40 and diesel in the city is now priced at Rs 88.20 a litre from previous price of Rs 88.42 a litre. Premium petrol, however, continues to remain over Rs 100 a litre in the city as is the case with several cities across the country.

The latest price cuts on auto fuel have come after OMCs kept oil prices steady for the last 24 days. Petrol and diesel prices were last revised upwards on February 27 and ever since

then retail prices remained unchanged even though during the period crude jumped to over \$70 a barrel only to start falling and is now slightly up at \$63.5 a barrel.

Sources said that oil companies took time to revise petrol and diesel prices downwards as they were covering up for losses incurred on its sale when crude was high and retail prices remained static. Some indications suggest that there was a loss of Rs 4 and Rs 2 per litre on the sale of diesel and petrol respectively earlier that had now been more or less covered.

The current reduction in retail prices has not helped in bringing down fuel prices that have crossed Rs 100 per litre (petrol) mark in several parts of the country and continues to remain above the levels even now.

Since the beginning of February crude has gained more than \$7 per barrel that pushed OMCs to increase fuel prices on 14 occasions raising the prices by Rs 4.22 per litre for petrol and by Rs 4.34 a litre for diesel in Delhi.

Crude has now slipped around 9 per cent in the last eight days and is now sitting at a tab lower around \$63.5 a barrel on the back of rising US inventory and concerns on demand squeeze over the new wave of the pandemic.

The petrol and diesel prices have increased 26 times in 2021 with the two auto fuels increasing by Rs 7.46 and Rs 7.60 per litre respectively so far this year.

Officials in public sector oil companies said that retail prices may rise again if crude and product prices pick up but for now it will fall over the needy few days.

'Work From Home Jobs' Searches In 2020 Surged 140% In India



Agenceis

NEW DELHI: With remote working becoming a norm during the initial phase of the Covid-19 pandemic, there was 140 per cent growth in "work from home jobs" searches from across India in 2020 over 2019, new data from a Google report showed on Thursday.

With health becoming a foremost concern, Indians adopted a new willingness to try new things online with "online doctor consultations" searches growing at 300 per cent growth in the last one year led by Manipur, Bihar and Karnataka, said the Google's annual "Year in Search" report for the past year.

The combination of the uncertainty of 2020 and the accelerated digital adoption in the year saw Indians leverage their time spent online for the determined pursuit of progress. The Search data in the report, titled "India's determined progress", also confirms the geographical expansion of new digital users in tier 2/3/4 locations and rural India.

This has led to an increase in the importance of the 3Vs -- voice, video and vernacular -- a trend that was first established in 2017, for a wider variety of uses, underpinned by a preference for the mother tongue.

One of the clear shifts in user behaviour is demonstrated in a never-before upsurge in queries

for "learn", up more than 30 per cent year-on-year, said the report.

This, "Learning anything, anywhere", is one amongst the three major changes in user behaviour that have emerged based on search trends spanning Search and YouTube in 2020, Google said.

The searches for learning went beyond academics, and focused on learning for career progression, upskilling, entrepreneurship, and supplementary income, with four in five people coming to YouTube to learn something new, Google said.

"It has also been a catalyst for massive changes, both in consumer behaviours online and in how businesses have pivoted to digital," Sanjay Gupta, Country Head and Vice President, Google India, said in a statement.

"The momentum has now been set for expanding and deepening this transformation, and to rethink our business models, approach, solutions, marketing, and distribution to keep pace with India's fast growing digital users."

The second big theme "Local first" highlights the increase in the demand and consumption of both local language content and local information.

Consequently, the year saw Google Translate being used over 17 billion times to translate web pages into Indic languages, said the report.

NEWSMAKERS

Majority Of Smokers Don't Support Proposal To Ban Sale Of Loose Cigarettes, Smoking Areas: Survey

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: An overwhelming majority of smokers do not support the proposal to ban the sale of loose cigarettes and designated smoking areas under the amendments in the law on cigarettes and other tobacco products, according to a study.

A survey conducted across 14 cities, including Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Guwahati and Vadodara, interviewing 1,986 people by non-commercial entity PRAHAR also found that 78 per cent of respondents do not support an increase in age for tobacco consumption from 18 years to 21 years.

"The survey found that 87 per cent of the participants do not support the proposal to ban the sale of loose cigarettes. They be-

lieve that this decision to reduce tobacco consumption may instead force smokers to buy full packs which will make cigarettes readily available in their hands leading to an increase in consumption of tobacco," PRAHAR (Public Response Against Helplessness and Action for Redressal) said in a statement.

Further, 57 per cent of consumers buy loose cigarettes "as it helps them to smoke less", while only 19 per cent go for it because it is cheaper.

"Only 7 per cent of respondents felt that a ban on the sale of loose cigarettes will make them smokeless," it said adding 82 per cent of respondents did not support the ban of designated smoking areas.

On disallowing branding of tobacco products at the point of sale, 76 per cent of respondents said they do not support this proposal, with 55

per cent of the opinion that it would "limit their fundamental right to make an informed decision as branding is a reinforcement of the legality of the product they are buying".

"This is particularly relevant because the market is flooded with illegal and smuggled products. 25 per cent of the consumers feel that the move will encourage unscrupulous retailers to promote products that give them more margin," PRAHAR said.

When it comes to increasing the age for tobacco consumption from the current 18 years to 21 years, 78 per cent of respondents said that they do not support the move and 37 per cent believed that it is their fundamental right to decide whether to consume tobacco or not.

"Around 8 per cent also felt that this ban will make younger people below 21 years buy illegal products

from underground sources," it added.

Commenting on the findings of the survey, PRAHAR President and National Convenor Abhay Raj Mishra said, "Consumers believe that the proposed provisions significantly curtail their fundamental rights and freedom to make informed choices and in certain cases will even cause harassment and subject consumers to mental cruelty."

He further said, "COTPA (Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act) 2020 proposed amendments are self-defeating as instead of serving tobacco reduction goals, they will distort the market structures and lead to an increase in the growth of illegal and inferior products. What we need is a sustained awareness programme to achieve the goals of tobacco control instead of coercive policy measures."

Renewed Surge In Covid Cases Matter Of Concern, But We Have Additional Insurances This Time To Tackle That: RBI governor

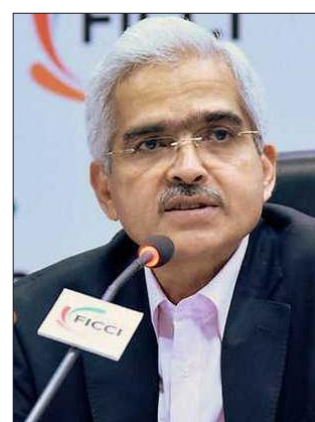
Agenceis

MUMBAI: Underlining the need for innovation in the financial sector for effective service delivery, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Thursday called for effective regulation that should help innovation in the fintech space and not suffocate it.

Effective regulation is a priority for the Reserve Bank, and regulation should not constrain innovation in the fintech space, the governor said at an event organised here.

The governor said that maintaining banking sector health with strong capital base and ethics-driven governance remains a policy priority.

Underlining the huge role that technology and innovation played in serving the consumers better



and faster, Das said the RBI processed 274 crore digital transactions to provide direct benefit transfer to people, most of which happened during the pandemic.

"Since RTGS, which along with NEFT has been made round the clock now, has multi-currency capabilities, there is scope taking it beyond our shores," the governor said.

Despite its official opposition to the private crypto currencies, Das said the central bank is assessing financial stability concerns as it works on way ahead for central bank digital currency.

The central bank chief also said that the RBI is committed to using all policy tools to support the economic recovery while preserving price stability and financial stability.

Admitting that the spike in new pandemic infections is a matter of concern, Das, however, said the nation is equipped with additional insurances this time to tackle the afflictions. PTI

2 CRPF Men

Manga Deb Barma and Constable Driver Ashok Kumar. The injured have been identified as Constable Jagan Nath Roy and Constable Nazim Ali. "Injured constable Jagan Nath Roy has sustained head injuries and is critical," according to one CRPF official. The slain and the injured CRPF men belonged to 73 Bn E-Coy.

Meanwhile, CRPF spokesman in Srinagar Om Prakash Pandey ruled out the reports that militants decamped with an Ak-47 rifle, stating that "I had no such information." Witnesses said that soon after the attack, a massive search operation was launched in the area.

According to news agency GNS, militants decamped with an Ak-47 rifle from the CRPF men during the attack.

Police in a tweet said that Inspector General of Police Kashmir Zone, Vijay Kumar and all ranks of police pay tributes to the duo and stand with their families at "this critical juncture".

Meanwhile the entire area was cordoned off immediately to nab the fleeing militants, officials said. When this report was filed, no arrests were made, they added.

China Silent

Senior Colonel Ren Guoqiang, a spokesperson for China's Ministry of National Defence said at an online media briefing.

"Thanks to the joint efforts made by China and India, the situation in the border area has been eased distinctly," he said.

Both sides have agreed to maintain communication through military and diplomatic channels to promote the settlement of other issues in the west section of the China-India boundary, Ren was quoted as saying by the Chinese military-run China Military Online portal.

Ren was responding to a question on reports quoting the External Affairs Ministry spokesman asking China to complete its military withdrawal at the remaining friction points along the LAC.

China hopes the two sides can value the hard-won results, follow the important consensus reached by the leaders of both countries, maintain dialogue and communication and stabilise the situation against relapse, gradually coming to solutions that can be accepted by the two countries to jointly maintain peace in the border area, he said.

The border standoff between the Indian and Chinese armies erupted on May 5 last year following a violent clash in the Pangong Lake area and both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry. PTI

ED Grills Mehbooba

had issued summons to Mehbooba Mufti on March 5 this year, asking her to appear before the agency for questioning in a money laundering case in New Delhi on March 15.

ED later asked her to appear at its headquarters in New Delhi for questioning on March 22 after Delhi High Court on March 19 refused to stay summons issued to her by the central agency

Talking to reporters, Must when asked about the questions put forth to her by the ED, the PDP chief said she was asked about the sale of her ancestral land in Bijbehara area of Anantnag district and the use of the chief minister's discretionary funds.

"Questions were asked regarding the sale of our ancestral land in Bijbehara and use of the chief minister's discretionary fund. I was asked from where would come the list of widows who were receiving help from the CM's secret funds," Mufti said, adding that she had nothing to fear as her hands were clean.

The former chief minister said her party will continue to pursue the agenda for resolution of Jammu and Kashmir's problem and restoration of its special status as it existed before August 5, 2019.

Mufti did not appear before the agency in Delhi on Monday, citing that she had prior commitments which could not be cancelled.

The PDP president requested ED officials to question her in Srinagar and not in Delhi, and her request was accepted.

'Dissent Criminalized',

of dissent by the government." Talking to media persons outside the ED office here where she was questioned for nearly five hours, the former chief minister of PDP-BJP coalition in erstwhile J&K, Mehbooba Mufti also accused the government of working through ED, CBI or NIA. "There were two issues, one was about selling of the property in our name in Bijbehara with question revolving round as to who purchased it, against what amount it was purchased as well as about funds meant for engagement of youths and others," she said, adding, "It needs not rocket science to understand that dissent has been criminalized in this country.

This country is ruled by either ED, CBI or NIA."

She further said that either there is a case of sedition or under money laundering against people who try to speak up. "The country at present is not being run under the Constitution of India but as per the agenda of a particular party wherein one cannot talk or is allowed to open mouth. These things will keep on going," she said.

Mehbooba said that she has "nothing to hide and have with clean hands."

"This perhaps is the reason that it took them two years for them to find out anything and now they question about the land for graveyard of my father and secret funds meant for widows and who were the beneficiaries," he said as per news agency, adding, "I myself and my party, the PDP, will continue work on our agenda and will continue to seek resolution of the Kashmir issued."

Mehbooba, who was released last year after more than a year in detention following the scrapping of Jammu and Kashmir's special status, was served a notice to appear at the ED headquarters in New Delhi.

On March 19, the Delhi High Court had refused to stay summons issued to her after she moved the court seeking quashing of the summons in the case.

Earlier, 61-year-old appeared before the ED here in connection with a money laundering case and reached the ED office in Rajbagh at 11 a.m. in connection with the case.

Mehbooba did not appear before the ED in

Delhi on Monday, citing she had prior commitments that could not be cancelled.Later, her request to ED officials that she be questioned in Srinagar instead of Delhi was accepted.

The ED, which had earlier summoned her on March 15, did not insist on her personal appearance at that time.

JK Police Opposes

her passport application. Mehbooba had applied for a fresh passport in December last year after the previous one expired on May 31, but the application has not been cleared till date in the absence of a police verification report.

The officials said that "an adverse report" has been filed against her by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), but refused to elaborate saying the matter would be taken up before the high court.

Hearing the petition on March 23, Additional Solicitor General T M Shamsi, representing the Ministry of External Affairs and the Regional Passport office, sought a short adjournment after the counsel representing the Jammu and Kashmir CID informed Justice Ali Mohammed Magrey that the verification report on her passport application had been submitted on March 18.

However, Shamsi informed the court that he had received a communication from the Passport Officer in Srinagar on March 22 and the contents "reveal that the verification of the petitioner is under process and as soon as verification process is completed, the requisite report will be submitted immediately for further course of action".

"Communication further reveals that CID verification report in respect of the petitioner is still awaited from the JK CID. Copy of communication so produced by Shamsi...is taken on record," Justice Magrey said while posting the matter for further hearing on March 29.

The counsel for Mehbooba had submitted that the stand taken by the Regional Passport Officer, Srinagar with reference to non-availability of report from the JK CID, has delayed issuance of passport in favour of the petitioner.

In the petition, Mehbooba said her passport expired on May 31 last year and accordingly she applied for issuance of a fresh passport before the authorities concerned on December 11, 2020.

Mehbooba's counsel submitted that according to instructions issued by the Ministry of External Affairs, the passport of an individual is to be issued within 30 days but in the instant case, despite lapse of three months, passport has not been issued to the petitioner due to the pending police verification.

The 61-year-old politician was put under preventive custody on August 5, 2019, the day the central government revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 and bifurcated the erstwhile state into union territories.

She was released in October last year after the Union Territory administration revoked the charges under the Public Safety Act against her.

Mountains In J&K

in monitoring the movement of glaciers," the report reads.

It has also recommended installation of a network of meteorological and hydrological stations and monitoring stations. The committee has also recommended monitoring of Glacial Lake Outbursts Flows (GLOFs)

It has been seen that Glacial Lake Outburst Flooding (GLOF) is one of the major causes of flash floods in the Himalayas.

Lt Governor Manoj Sinha recently also said that climate change has reduced the size of glaciers leading to fast depletion of water resources in many districts of J&K.

The Lt Governor has said: "Out of 208 hydrograph stations which were monitored, the water level in 171 water wells has been decreasing which is a cause of concern and we need to work on their preservation."

He said there are only 37 such wells in which the water level has increased in Jammu division.

In many areas of Jammu, Kathua, Samba and Udhampur districts of Jammu region, he said, the water level has come down and "we have to work to increase the water level in such areas".

The melting of Himalayan glaciers has started at a significant rate since the beginning of the 21st century due to global warming, leading to weakening of glaciers and increasing the water level in various water bodies.

If the boundaries of water bodies in upper reaches are breached, it can lead to large amounts of water rushing down to nearby streams and rivers and creating flash floods.

In May 2015, the flash flood triggered by the bursting of the 15-kilometre-long lake in Zaskar area of Ladakh, damaged several bridges and buildings while more than 3000 people were shifted to safer places.

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cases include female (26) from Dalwan Budgam, males (55, 56) from 161Bn CRPF K K Hotel Sgr, female (65) from Safakadal, male (47) from Safakadal, female (45) from Upper Soura, female (25) from Upper Soura, female (34) from Ahmed Nagar, female (45) from Badamwari, female (27) from Zoonimar, female (27) from Ahmed Nagar, male (38) from Lalbazar, male (52) from Buchpora, female (70) from Nowpora Baramulla, female (54) (NA) from Tangmarg, female (46) (NA) from Baramulla, female (80) from Sehpora Ganderbal, female (55) from Tangmarg, female (48) from Qamarwari, female (30) from Khumber and female (70) from Bemina.

The CD cases include female (20) from Alahibagh, male (45) from Buchpora, male (23) from Nowshera, female (19) from Tangpora, male (21) from Haft Chinar, female (81) from Pulwama, male (38) from Awantipora, female (47) from Lalbazar, two females (17, 38) and male (42) from Indranagar, female (60) from Dalgate, female (23) from Pulwama, female (35) from Kakapora, female (45) from Tangmarg, male (70) from Rainawari, female (32) from Soura, male (63) from Shalteng and male (48) from Lalbazar.

The GMC Anantnag cases include female (58) from Bijbehara, female (25) from Kokernag, male (70) from Iqbalabad, male (58) from Trenz, female (25) from Trahpoo.

Moreover, they said, 92 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and were discharged

from various hospitals—14 from Jammu Division and 78 from Kashmir Division.

So far, 125627persons have recovered—51429 in Jammu and 74198 in Kashmir. There are 1593 active cases—384 in Jammu division and 1209 in the Valley while 1983 people have died, 732 in Jammu division and 1251 in the Valley.

Historic Budget

create jobs and secure the future of the people of Jammu & Kashmir", said the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor observed that the quantum jump in the allocation of Budget in all sectors itself speaks about the strong resolve of the Hon'ble Prime Minister towards the development of J&K.

J&K has been getting a larger per capita budget than other states even in the past. It will be ensured that the work is being done on ground and the money is utilized for the welfare of the people without discrimination, besides tapping the potential of the sectors which are less explored, said the Lt Governor.

The enhanced budget will go a long way in making J&K self-sufficient, thus contributing towards Prime Minister's goal of Atmna Nirbhar Bharat, added the Lt Governor.

Giving a comparative analysis of the Budget for the year 2021-22 vis-a-vis the previous Budget, the Lt Governor made a sector-wise comparison.

Speaking on the budget allocation for Jal Shakti Department, the Lt Governor remarked that with the quantum jump of Rs 5102 cr, taking the total to Rs 6346 cr, the Government is eyeing to achieve the target under Prime Minister's ambitious 'Har Ghar Nal se Jal' programme within the timeframe.

100 % saturation under 'Har Ghar Nal se Jal' in 13 districts of the UT will be completed this year, announced the Lt Governor.

Working in this direction, Village Action Plan and 4048 Paani Samitis have already been established, he added.

He informed that the provision of Rs 2008 cr has been kept for Agriculture & Horticulture sectors, which is Rs 695 cr more than the previous Budget's allocation. For Rural Development, Rs 4817 cr is allocated, which is Rs 342 cr more. Tourism sector witnessed a hike of Rs 509 cr , taking the budget allocation to Rs 786 cr.

Speaking on the Health & Medical Education sector, the Lt Governor observed that this sector witnessed major transformation in the last two years. And, for the year 2021-22, the sector has an allocation of Rs 1456 cr , around Rs 190 cr more than the previous one.

Rs 120 cr increase for the Power sector takes its total allocation to Rs 2728 cr. However, approved projects worth Rs 54,000 crore to generate 3500 Megawatt in three to four years to make J&K power surplus is a separate entity, said the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor observed the allocation of Rs 2710 cr for Housing & Urban Development sector, a steep hike of Rs 1432 cr from the previous Budget, will give a determined push for the development of the Jammu and Srinagar into model cities, besides the development of other municipalities as well.

Road & Bridges Sector gets Rs 4089 crore, an increase of Rs 467 crore, Social Security Sector receives Rs 174 crore, which is a hike of Rs 59 crore, Education sector has been allocated Rs 1873 crore, an increase of Rs 523 crore.

Similarly, the total allocation of Rs 648 cr for Industries and Commerce sector, which is Rs 291 crore more than the previous, will generate more employability and bring more investment. An amount of Rs 200 cr has been kept for Youth empowerment, added the Lt Governor.

The provision of the Budget for Relief & Rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits has also increased. For the welfare of Kashmiri Pandit community, the work on 6000 jobs for them has been accelerated, the Lt Governor maintained.

After establishing grass-root democracy, with the highest ever budget envisaged for Jammu and Kashmir, the Government is focusing on grass-root development in the UT, observed the Lt Governor.

For empowerment of District Development Councils (DDCs) and Block Development Councils (BDCs), a provision of Rs 200 crore for 20 DDCs (Rs 10 cr for each DDC) of Jammu and Kashmir, besides Rs 25 lakhs has been kept for each BDC. Further, Rs 30 crore has been earmarked for establishment of DDC/BDC offices. A hefty amount of Rs 1313 crore has been allocated for Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)/ Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), he added.

Maintaining transparency in the working of the administration is the focus area of the Government. Efforts are afoot to ensure effective monitoring and timely execution of works. Budget Estimation and Allocation Monitoring System (B.E.A.M.S) has made the system more transparent and has eliminated the scope of corruption, observed the Lt Governor.

Underscoring the targets set by the Government aimed at creating more livelihood opportunities and accelerating the development process, the Lt Governor said that as many as 25,000 youth of the UT have been provided with financial support under various schemes to start their own businesses and this year, we aim to double the opportunities for the youth.

Government is also aiming to strengthen the road network across the UT. The targets of completion of 4500 km length of road under PMGSY, providing road connectivity to 150 unconnected villages, blacktopping of 8000 km road length, developing pot-hole free roads connecting District Headquarters, Tehsils, & Blocks in Jammu & Srinagar are being set for this year, besides dedicated focus will be laid on prominent tourist places, the Lt Governor maintained.

The Lt Governor also spoke on the Power generation, distribution and transmission. He said that the government is making untiring efforts to provide 24x7 quality electricity to the people of J&K in the coming years. The Government is reaching out to the unconnected habitations to provide electricity through the grid, he added.

On growth and promotion of the sports sector, the Lt Governor announced that a comprehensive mechanism is being laid down for engaging 15 lakhs boys & girls in different sports activities in adherence to all the COVID related SoPs.

Rehabilitation of KP

bunkers have been completed along the Line of Control (LOC) and the International Border (IB) for the safety of border residents and 1,200 more such structures will be constructed during the next financial year."We are also talking about 6,000 jobs and an equal number of residential accommodation for migrant Kashmiri Pandits in the valley. This is a minute part of rehabilitation of the community in the valley," Sinha told reporters here.

Responding to a question about linking the prime minister's employment package with the overall rehabilitation of Pandits living in exile in the valley, he said rehabilitation is a different thing altogether.

"These 6,000 jobs for the community were notified earlier but the (recruitment) process got delayed due to various reasons. This is a minute part of the rehabilitation of the community. Our first priority was to complete the process as soon as possible and it has now reached the final stage," he said.

Sinha said it is not the final package for the community and the government is doing more for them in the near future. "A lot has been thought about the rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits which I do not want to make public today. Shortly, you will get information that something is going to happen which you have not even imagined," he said.

Asked about a clause in the contract of Pandit employees that they have to leave their residential quarters on retirement, he said, "I have taken note of it and this will be looked into."

On the welfare measures proposed for border residents who have suffered immensely due to Pakistani shelling over the years, the Lt Governor said 8,000 underground bunkers have been constructed so far for their safety, while 1,200 more such structures are being built during the next financial year.

"There is a provision in the budget for them as well. And if there is a need, more will be done for them," he said.

Fortunately, he said, the shelling by Pakistan has stopped (PTI)

Banks To Remain

will remain closed on gazetted holidays all over the country. Bank holidays are not observed by some states and hence may vary as per a specific region or state.

KASHMIR In Capital

Back then, to make his son self-sustainable and enterprising, Masood's father asked him to start a separate business to gain personal experience.

Young Masood soon came to Delhi to explore possibilities for himself. Two decades later, in 1984, he decided to settle in the capital to run his own shawl store.

"But a house was more important for us than a shop initially," Masood, recalling his transition, says.

"So I first bought a home for my family in 1984, and then a shop in 1987 at Hauz Khas."

But before coming of age, Masood had slogged to create his own mark in Delhi.

It was backbreaking in the beginning, he recalls, as he used to put counters in Connaught Place, followed by door-to-door campaigning.

"When I had no shop, my clients treated me better than a shopkeeper," he recalls. "And, to repay the gesture, I never compromised in the quality I deliver. Alhamdulillah, we're maintaining the momentum ever since."

While he worked diligently for the next two big decades, his son Mohsin added scores of academic qualifications to his name.

"The degrees before my name are a result of his backbreaking and ceaseless efforts," says Mohsin, attributing all his success to his father. "I'm nothing without my father!"

Insert Pic 4 here

Over the years, the father-son duo has experienced a clear difference between the retreating valley and the developed desert of Delhi.

"Kashmir as a workplace is more relaxed," says Mohsin while serving me an authentic Kashmiri Kehwa. "There, we can go anywhere anytime. But, everything is metered here."

Without forming a professional identity, you can't even dream of working in the capital, Mohsin adds.

"The exposure, the pace, the variety of clients, everything here needs masterfulness."

Insert Pic 5 here

But once an export powerhouse, the Shah Arts Emporium now mainly caters to domestic market. It's facing a tough time due to the competition from the Chinese machine-made goods.

"With the advent of machine-made goods, the authentic Kashmiri handicraft suffered to an extreme end," Mohsin says. "Kashmir also lost a huge portion of its craft masters."

However, Mohsin, unlike his father, is quite hopeful for a power pack comeback.

"By heart I'm Kashmiri," he says with a firm belief. "And that's enough to keep me hopeful for a better tomorrow."

Sun Shines After

time, he said.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a low of 4.1°C against previous night's 2.8°C while it received 0.4mm of rain during the time, the official said.

The minimum temperature settled at 0.7°C in Kupwara against 1.6°C on the previous night, the official said. The north Kashmir district received rainfall of 13.0mm during the time, he said.

Gulmarg received 11 cms of fresh snowfall in the 24 hours while the famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district recorded a minimum temperature of minus 3.5°C against minus 2.5°C on the previous night.

The meteorological department has forecast mainly dry from till March 31.

"There is no forecast of any major rainfall activity till ending March," the official added.

Govt Plans Larch

said there is need for capacity enhancement at Panthachowk and the administration is looking for additional land to accommodate more Amarnath yatris.

"We have sufficient space but there is a need for capacity enhancement at Panthachowk, we are also looking for additional land so as to ensure yatris does not face any difficulty," Asad added.

The Jammu and Kashmir government

cancelled the annual Amarnath yatra last year amid COVID-19 outbreak. The pilgrimage was already cut short by 15 days.

Meanwhile SSP Srinagar, Sandeep Chaudhary said elaborate arrangements have been put in place to ensure smooth pilgrimage.

"DC Srinagar and I visited Panthachowk to review Amarnath yatra arrangements, elaborate arrangements have been put in place. There would be adequate arrangements for yatris on both the civil and security front," SSP told reporters.

Ex CE Shuja

A large number of people participated in his funeral prayers. Shuja Hussain is survived by daughter Yasmeen Hussain and son Zulfikar Hussain.

Meanwhile Apni Party president Syed Altaf Bukhari on Thursday expressed deep shock and grief over the demise of renowned engineer and respectable citizen Shuja Hussain.

In a condolence message issued here, Bukhari prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul. "I express my heartfelt condolences on the demise of Er. Shuja Hussain who was a long time family friend. His demise has created a big void not only in his family but among his vast social circles, wherein he was known for his humility and philanthropic nature," Bukhari remarked.

He prayed for the courage to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss. Meanwhile, the leadership of the Apni Party has also mourned the demise of Er. Shuja Hussain and has extended solidarity with the bereaved family.

Tulip Garden

advance the tourism season in the valley by two months.

Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Khan, declared open the mesmerising tulip garden for all visitors.

While praising the beauty of the place, Khan said that Jammu and Kashmir is endowed with beautiful natural landscapes, which have huge potential for tourism.

He said earlier tourists were visiting other world famous gardens and places of Kashmir, but now the tulip garden has become an iconic destination and attraction for them.

On the occasion, the advisor informed that Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will inaugurate the six days Tulip Festival on April 3 when the garden will be in full bloom.

He said that during the festival, displays of rich tradition, culture, cuisines and crafts on the stalls will be set by concerned departments so that tourists will become familiar with rich culture and values here.

Khan stressed on the visitors to follow COVID-19 standard operating procedures strictly to avoid any chance of the spread of the virus.

He said the district administration has put various measures to contain the spread of the virus and also issued guidelines on the same.

Khan elaborated that ornamental plantation has been carried out at the backside of the garden towards the mountain foothills and added that the government has undertaken Rs 10 crore project for the stage-2 of the tulip garden and the work is in progress.

While sharing the break-up of today's foot-fall at the garden, Deputy Director Floriculture Ikhlas Shaiyiq said: "3200 tourists were from the domestic circuit while three were foreigners and the rest were the locals from various parts of valley."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday set the tone for the tourism season of Kashmir as he tweeted about the opening of the garden.

"Tomorrow, 25th March is special for Jammu and Kashmir. A majestic tulip garden on the foothills of the Zabarwan Mountains will open for visitors. The Garden will see over 15 lakh flowers of more than 64 varieties in bloom," Modi tweeted.

He appealed to the people to visit Jammu and Kashmir to experience the Tulip Garden and the warm hospitality of the people of the union territory.

"Whenever you get the opportunity, do visit Jammu and Kashmir and witness the scenic Tulip Festival. In addition to the tulips, you will experience the warm hospitality of the people of Jammu and Kashmir," Modi said in another tweet.

Asiatic Society

Kolkata, has been pleased to confer the award 'G.S.I. Sesquicentennial Commemorative Medal' of the Asiatic Society for the year 2020 for your significant contribution in the field of Earth Science."

"On behalf of the Council of the Asiatic society, Kolkata as well as on behalf of the members and staff members we warmly congratulate you for your nomination to the said award," the communication reads.

Prof Talat is a recipient of several prestigious awards, including the National Mineral Award (1994) from Government of India, and has the distinction of being a Fellow of all the three prestigious Science Academies in the country, including Indian National Science Academy New Delhi, Indian Academy of Sciences Bangalore and National Academy of Sciences Allahabad. He is also a recipient of J C Bose National Fellowship from DST, New Delhi, S M Naqvi Gold Medal 2013 from Geological Society of India and Indian Geophysical Union – Prince Mukarram Jah Endowment Lecture Award and Gold Medal for the year 2015.

Professor Talat has remained Vice-Chancellor thrice including the VC of the Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. During his current tenure at the University of Kashmir, where Prof Talat is serving his second stint, the varsity was accredited 'A-Plus' grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), while it secured 48th rank among 950 universities in the country in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) of the MHRD, Government of India.

Exp/Cash Management

are advised to plan their bill presentation accordingly at respective Treasuries. However, revenue receipts shall continue as in usual business.

The Drawing & Disbursing Officers/Treasury Officers have been asked to strictly follow the instructions.

'Can't Plan So Far Ahead, I Take It One Series At A Time,' Misbah On Contract Extension



Press Trust of India

KARACHI: Pakistan head coach Misbah-ul-Haq on Thursday made it clear he doesn't want to look too far ahead and is taking one series at a time, saying the decision to give him an extension lies solely with the PCB.

Misbah's three-year coaching contract will expire just before the T20 World Cup in India later in the year.

"I always say that one can't plan so ahead as far as my coaching is concerned. I take it one series at a time, saying the time comes it is time for the PCB to decide what is best for Pakistan cricket," he said in a virtual press conference.

Misbah said the selectors and team management are on the same page on selection matters, making it clear that he doesn't want to dwell on tainted T20 opener Sharjeel Khan's selection.

"I had to say this is a Pakistan team because such things appear in the media and an impression is created that there is discord among team management and selectors over selection matters. But I say everything is done collectively," he said.

"I don't know why Muhammad Asif or Salman Butt were not selected after completing their bans but what I know is that until there is a law that bars us from selecting a player after he has served any ban we can't keep anyone out."

The Pakistan coach said Sharjeel has been selected because of his form and he has been told

that he has time before the T20 series in South Africa to achieve his fitness.

"... he has to work hard and meet the required fitness standards of the team. He has to reach a certain level where there are no compromises," Misbah said.

"We will see how he progresses and improves his fitness without damaging his skill levels."

Chief selector Muhammad Wasim had recently said that fitness benchmark was being brought down to occupy more skilful players.

Misbah said: "We have had a detailed discussion on the fitness issue and we are trying to simplify the process for players by introducing parameters for players on which there will be no compromise."

"But also relate it to performances on the ground by the players. We are giving targets to players depending on their requirements."

"We are not reducing the fitness benchmarks of the team. We are trying to relate it to match and ground fitness. It is not that we will reduce the benchmark of Yoyo tests from 18 to 15 marks."

Pakistan will leave for the twin tours of South Africa and Zimbabwe on Friday after all the 22 members of the squad and 13 officials tested negative for COVID-19 on Thursday.

Pakistan will play four T20Is and three ODIs in South Africa starting next month and Misbah said it would be challenging going and playing the ODI series without any practice games.

IND VS ENG, 2ND ODI PREVIEW

Focus On Suryakumar Yadav As India Look To Seal Series Against England

Press Trust of India

PUNE: The immensely talented Suryakumar Yadav is likely to get a chance to showcase his '360 degree' hitting skills when a rampaging Indian team takes on a rather clueless England, aiming to seal off another series victory in the second ODI in Pune on Friday.

Shreyas Iyer's dislocated shoulder has once again brought Yadav in focus and his ODI debut, after a blockbuster T20 first outing, looks imminent after an all-round show by the hosts ensured an easy victory in the first game.

Iyer has been one of India's most prolific 50-over batsman before the COVID-19 enforced lockdown but such is the team's strength that a debutant looks more formidable for a world champion opposition, who are no less menacing but seem utterly confused at this point.

Being spoilt for choices is always a good headache to have for the think-tank and skipper Virat Kohli will be more pleased than anyone else.

Kohli has not had Ravindra Jadeja's services for close to three months but neither Axar Patel in Tests, and now Krunal Pandya in the ODIs, have let the team miss their maverick from Rajkot.

Prasidh Krishna, already a household name due to IPL, looked completely at home on his ODI debut, hurrying batsmen for pace in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami.

And come to think of it, once Jadeja and Bumrah are back, a Krunal or Krishna will either cool their heels in the dug-out or even worse, not find a place in the squad, which is a testimony to India's unimaginable depth of talent pool.

The biggest positive during the opening game was Shikhar Dhawan's return to form with a match-winning 98. He was under pressure after being benched for a large part of the T20 series.

The elegant southpaw would be raring to go one more time.



Rohit Sharma had sustained a blow to his elbow during the first match but is expected to be fit in time for the second game.

In case India want to give Rohit a short break, then Shubman Gill can open alongside Dhawan with KL Rahul coming in at his usual middle order slot.

However, as per sources, Rohit is keen to get cracking as it's not very serious.

It is expected that Pant would play purely as a batsman and Rahul would continue to keep wickets.

Chinaman bowler Kuldeep Yadav leaked 68 runs in nine overs and could be replaced by leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal.

The pace trio of experienced Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Prasidh Krishna and the ever-improving Shardul Thakur took nine of the 10 wickets and would be keen to rock the England batting line-up again.

The best part was how they came back after first 15 overs of mayhem by Jason Roy and Jonny Bairstow.

Shardul has been continuously playing and it won't be a bad option to try out T Natarajan or Mohammed Siraj for a bit of variation.

"One of our sweetest victories in recent past. We haven't won many good games in ODIs. I am, really a proud man right now," skipper Kohli had said after the first match as he sounded pleased with the team's effort. Meanwhile, England

will look to level the series and stay alive in the contest.

England have a lot to ponder on and injuries to skipper Eoin Morgan and batsman Sam Billings, while fielding, in the lung-opener have only added to their woes. Both appear doubtful for the second game. Bairstow was among the runs as he blazed to 94 off 64 balls as was his partner Roy (46).

The two would be looking to put up another fine show and carry forward the aggressive brand of cricket, which was the cornerstone of the 2019 World Cup triumph.

However, their middle order hasn't performed up to its potential and the likes of all-rounder Ben Stokes, Jos Buttler and Moeen Ali faltered with the bat.

If England have to put a big total or chase a score, the trio needs to fire in unison.

Their key spinners Adil Rashid and Moeen Ali haven't been able to trouble the Indian batters and both went wicket-less in the opening game.

They will have to step up and deliver and along with Tom Curran, who will need to compliment his brother Sam and pace spearhead Mark Wood, who troubled the batters with his speed.

Come Friday, it remains to be seen whether India are able to add "another sweetest victory" or if the visitors spoil their party.

Injured Shreyas Iyer Exits Bio-Bubble, Says Will Come Back Stronger



Press Trust of India

PUNE: Injured India batsman Shreyas Iyer has left the bio-secure bubble here after he was ruled out of the ongoing ODI series against England as well as the entire IPL starting next month even as he vowed to come back even stronger.

Iyer dislocated his left shoulder while fielding during the first ODI against England on Tuesday and he is set to undergo surgery, which will rule him out of action for a minimum four months.

"Shreyas Iyer has exited the bio-bubble," the BCCI said on Thursday ahead of the second ODI here.

Earlier in the day, Iyer vowed to come back from the injury even stronger.

"You know what they say, the greater the setback, the stronger the comeback. I shall be back soon," Iyer tweeted.

"I've been reading your messages and have been overwhelmed by all the outpouring of love and support. Thank you

from the bottom of my heart to everyone."

The 26-year-old Iyer is also unlikely to play for English county side Lancashire in their one-day tournament.

Lancashire had on Monday announced the signing of Iyer for the tournament starting on July 23.

Iyer suffered the injury in the eighth over of the England innings when he dived on a drive hit by Jonny Bairstow off pacer Shardul Thakur.

He looked in tremendous pain as he left the field clutching his shoulder.

On Tuesday, the BCCI had stated, "Shreyas Iyer subluxated (partially dislocated) his left shoulder in the 8th over while fielding. He has been taken for further scans."

Iyer had led Delhi Capitals to the final in the previous edition of the IPL.

In his absence, the DC captaincy could be handed to either Rishabh Pant, Australian Steve Smith or senior off-spinner R Ashwin.

Ishan, Suryakumar Deserve To Be Part Of India's T20 World Cup Squad: Laxman

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: Newcomers Ishan Kishan and Suryakumar Yadav have capitalised on the opportunities to deserve a place in India's T20 World Cup squad later this year, said former India batsman VVS Laxman.

The 22-year-old Ishan and Suryakumar, 30, made dream starts to their international careers with the former smashing a 32-ball 56 on debut and the latter scoring 57 off 31 balls and a 17-ball 32 in the fourth and fifth T20Is against England in the recently-concluding series.

"Well, it's a very tough question because what we have seen in this series is that lot of youngsters have capitalised on their opportunities," Laxman said on Star Sports show 'Cricket Connected'.

"But the way Ishan Kishan played in his debut innings and then also the way Suryakumar

Yadav played, I think both of them will definitely be in my squad of 15.

"It's a tough choice, but I think both of them deserve to play in the Indian squad come the World Cup."

Former India batting coach Sanjay Bangar said there is still a lot of time before the T20 World Cup and lot of players can make it to the squad with some good performances in the upcoming IPL.

"There is a lot of time remaining from now to the start of the World Cup. In between, there is an IPL tournament as well. So, taking into account on how the decisions have been made, I believe that there are still a lot of spots that are up for grabs," he said.

"Players who were being sidelined have still had a big season lined up between the World Cup selection. So, I would not like to count anybody out of the World Cup contention as yet."

Press Trust of India

PUNE: Animated and aggressive body language might work well for Virat Kohli and his Indian team but that doesn't have a bearing on England's modus operandi, said their premier all-rounder Ben Stokes.

The question was in reference to India captain Kohli's aggressive in your face demeanour while fielding or celebrating a fall of wicket.

"Every team and every player has a certain way of operating in the field, which makes them successful. As a team over the last four-five years, that's not the way that works for us," Stokes said on the eve of their must-win second ODI against India here.

"We stick to what we do best and what we make is to build a better side. Each team is entitled to their own way of operations. India have there and we have ours," the dashing all-rounder said.

Asked whether he preferred a "nice or spiky" Virat, Stokes gave



a smart reply: "Personally, I prefer Virat doesn't get runs, because that's not good for us."

After their 66-run loss in the first ODI, England risk of being usurped for their No 1 ranking but Stokes said it's not their driving force.

"We deserve to be No 1 because of our results and how we played our cricket and we won't go away from that. Being No 1 is obviously a fantas-

tic thing to have next to your name as a team, but it's not our driving force.

"Our driving force is the way that we go about it and our attitude towards playing the game. And that's what's made us be successful, and the more successful we are, obviously the more chance and the more opportunity we've got to be at No 1."

In absence of Joe Root, the England all-rounder was promoted

to No 3 spot from being a finisher. Stokes revealed that he's not changing his mindset for the new role on suggestion of the designated England No 3.

"I did actually message Root just asking about his mindset at No 3. He was pretty clear to me and just said 'play the way that you play', just because he plays a certain way doesn't mean that I need to try and play like."

"At No 3, potentially, I would be facing 100 balls, compared to maybe 60-70 like I normally do. I haven't looked to change too much, just might be facing a slightly different situation, especially when I'm starting off my innings."

While there would be comparisons with Root, Stokes would ideally prefer to follow the Test captain's mantra.

"There's gonna be talk whoever is going to fill that place with Root not being here. People will keep talking but I'll just go out and do what I've been asked to do."

Stokes is also likely to open for Rajasthan Royals in the IPL but the

all-rounder said it would have no bearing on where he bats for England in The T20 World Cup.

"It's a talking point, and it always seems to pop up, but everyone deserves to be where they are in that batting lineup. Why do we change that?" he asked.

He feels that in the England line-up, each person has got his slot deservingly.

"In our T20 batting line-up, everyone deserves to be where they deserve to play. We've been formidable in the white ball format for over a number of years. Just because we lost the T20 series doesn't mean we need to start changing things around." With twin injury blows to Eoin Morgan (split webbing) and Sam Billings (collar bone), England may hand a debut to Liam Livingstone, four years after he represented the country in T20Is.

Stokes is confident that a "fearless" Livingstone would embrace the opportunity if picked for the second ODI.

Torch Relay For Tokyo Olympics Kicks Off Its 121-Day Long Journey

Agencies

TOKYO: The torch relay for the postponed Tokyo Olympics began its 121-day journey across Japan on Thursday and is headed toward the opening ceremony in Tokyo on July 23.

The relay began in northeastern Fukushima prefecture, the area that was devastated by the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and the meltdown of three nuclear reactors. About 18,000 died in the tragedy.

The first runner with the torch was Azusa Iwashimizu, a key player in the Japan team that won the Women's World Cup in 2011.

Wearing a white track suit, she carried the torch out of the J-Village indoor soccer training center and was surrounded by 14 other members of that 2011 World Cup squad and coach Norio Sasaki at the rear. They were also decked out in white track suits.

The ceremony was closed to the public because of the fear of spreading COVID-19 but was streamed live.

"The torch of Tokyo 2020 will become a bright light for hope for Japanese citizens and citizens in the world and a light at the end of the tunnel," said Seiko Hashimoto, the president of the local organizing committee and

a former Olympian herself.

Homare Sawa, the biggest star on the 2011 team, missed the ceremony. She is being treated for a condition affecting her inner ear and had to withdraw from the event.

Fans were told to social-distance along the roadside as the torch passes, and they were to refrain from loud cheering. Organizers have said they will stop or reroute the relay if crowding becomes a problem during the four-month parade. Spectators cooperated in Naraha Town, just down the road from where the torch started its trip. A few hundred people stood on the roadside and were safely spread out.

"At first I didn't think much of it," said 20-year-old Takumu Kimura. "But when I actually saw it, it felt like: — yes, it's the Olympics."

Setsuko Hashimoto, a 63-year-old local resident, was emotional as the torch passed.

"Ten years ago there was a nuclear accident so (seeing the torch) it felt like I could really look forward to something and live," she said. "When you become my age, this is the last Tokyo Olympics and it's here. It was very touching."

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga chimed in from Tokyo with a statement.



Japanese torchbearer Azusa Iwashimizu, center, a member of Japan women's national football team, arrives at a torch kiss point to pass on the flame during the torch relay grand start outside J-Village National Training Centre in Naraha, Fukushima prefecture, northeastern Japan, on March 25, 2021.

"The Olympic torch relay starting from today is a valuable opportunity for the people to get a real sense of the Olympics and Paralympics that are approaching," Suga told reporters.

Local organizers and the International Olympic Committee hope the relay will turn public opinion in Japan in favour of the Olympics. Sentiments expressed in polls in Japan so far are overwhelmingly negative with about 80% suggesting another delay or cancellation.

The relay and the Olympics both stir fear that the events could spread the virus. There is also opposition to the soaring cost of staging the Olympics, now put officially at \$15.4 billion. Several audits suggest it's twice that much and a University of Oxford study says these are the most expensive Olympics on record.

The relay is a big test for the upcoming Olympics with fear among the public that the event could spread the virus to rural and more isolated parts of the country. Vaccinations have not been rolled out yet in Japan to the general public. About 9,000 deaths in the country have been attributed to COVID-19.

About 10,000 runners are ex-

pected to take part, with the relay touching Japan's 47 prefectures.

After the postponement a year ago, there was early talk of eliminating the relay to save money. However, that idea was quickly dropped with the relay heavily sponsored by Coca-Cola and Toyota.

The relay is a prelude to the difficulties the Olympics and Paralympics will present with 15,400 athletes entering Japan, along with thousands of other officials, judges, VIPs, media, and broadcasters.

Athletes will be kept in a "bubble" like atmosphere in Tokyo and will be limited to the Athletes Village on Tokyo Bay, the competition venues and training areas. Most others will be outside the bubble and will be kept at a distance from the athletes.

Organizers announced a few days ago that fans from abroad will be banned from attending the Olympics and Paralympics. Most volunteers from abroad have also been ruled out.

Organizers are to announce the venue capacities in April. Ticket revenue for the Olympics was to be \$800 million but will be severely reduced by the lack of fans. Japanese government entities will have to make up the shortfall.

WEST BENGAL POLLS

New Political Party Backed By BJP To Eat Into Minority Votes, Says Mamata Banerjee



Agenceis

PATHARPRATIMA (WB): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday accused the BJP of backing a new political party to eat into minority votes during the upcoming assembly polls. Without naming any party or any person, Banerjee also claimed at an election rally in South 24 Parganas district the founder of that outfit receives money from the BJP.

"A new political outfit has been launched in the state at the behest of the BJP to grab a share of the minority votes and help the saffron party. Please don't vote for its candidates," she said.

Banerjee said the CPI(M) and Congress have an understanding with the BJP.

Only the Trinamool Congress can prevent implementation of the CAA and NPR in the state, and ensure amity among different communities, she added.

Kumbh Duration Curtailed To 1 Month For First Time; Pilgrims Must Show 'Negative' COVID Test Report



Press Trust of India

DEHRADUN: The duration of Kumbh Mela in Haridwar has been curtailed to just one month for the first time in its history in view of a recent surge in COVID-19 cases and it has been made mandatory for pilgrims to have a "negative" RT-PCR test report to attend the mega congregation.

According to a notification, the congregation on the banks of the Ganges in Haridwar in Uttarakhand will take place from April 1 to 30, with three "shahi snan" (major bathing) dates on April 12, 14 and 27.

Thousands of devotees take a dip in the holy river during the mela with their number increasing manifold on the days of "shahi snan". Authorities also expect heavy turnouts on the occasions of Chaitra Pratipada on April 13 and Ram Navami on April 21.

Held once in 12 years, the congregation usually lasts around three-and-a-half months. Its last edition was held in Haridwar from January 14 to April 28 in 2010.

According to the notification issued on Wednesday, the Kumbh Kshetra (area) covers Neergarh, Tapovan, Biththal Ashram Marg to Muni-Ki-Reti Road and Rishi-Haridwar bypass in the north, and Narendra Nagar-Rishikesh bypass, the forest checkpoint on Rishikesh-Dehradun Road, Rishikesh-Haridwar bypass, Mansa Devi, Billkeshwar Mandir, Tibri Mohand, BHEL residential buildings, Roorkee-Bahadurabad road and up to 13 km on Haridwar-Delhi road in the west.

In the south, the congrega-

tion area will extend from Bahadurabad-Haridwar bypass to Siddha Sot Setu and from Siddha Sot Setu to Neelkanth Mahadev temple in the east.

A "negative" RT-PCR test report, not older than 72 hours before arrival, has been made mandatory for devotees by the Uttarakhand High Court. Devotees who have taken the COVID-19 vaccination will have to upload their certificate in an official portal and follow the guidelines.

After the Centre called for stringent measures to control the spread of COVID-19 during Kumbh, the Uttarakhand government had asked people to strictly follow COVID-19-appropriate behaviour during the congregation in view of the fresh surge in infections in various parts of the country.

In the light of guidelines issued by both the central and state governments in the past for surveillance, containment and caution, Chief Secretary Om Prakash on Monday asked the district administrations, various state and central government organisations and other stakeholders to take all necessary measures to ensure wearing of face mask, maintaining hand hygiene and social distancing by people.

These measures are also included in the national directives for COVID-19 management which have to be strictly followed throughout the state, he said.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan had recently written to the Uttarakhand Chief Secretary underlining the need for taking strict measures to check the spread of the pandemic, especially during the congregation.

THOUSANDS OF DEVOTES TAKE A DIP in the holy river during the mela with their number increasing manifold on the days of "shahi snan". Authorities also expect heavy turnouts on the occasions of Chaitra Pratipada on April 13 and Ram Navami on April 21.



Asia's largest tulip garden overlooking the famous Dal Lake here in the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir was thrown open to the public on Thursday, marking the beginning of the new tourism season in the valley. Pic Abid Bhat.

Bharat Bandh On Friday; Rail, Road Transport Likely To Be Affected, Markets To Remain Shut

Press Trust of India

Rail and road transportation services are likely to be affected and markets may remain closed in parts of the country on Friday as farmer unions protesting against the three agri laws have called a complete 'Bharat Bandh'. However, the bandh will not be observed in four poll-bound states and Puducherry.

According to the Samkhyukta Kisan Morcha, the nationwide shutdown will start at 6 am and it will be in force up to 6 pm across the country on March 26 which marks four months of the farmer agitation on Delhi's three borders—Singhu, Ghazipur and Tikri.

Senior farmer leader Balbir Singh Rajewal said road and rail transport will be blocked, claiming that markets will also remain closed.

The Morcha, which is an umbrella body of protesting farm unions, said that the 'bandh' will also be observed in the national capital.

Rajewal said trade unions from organised and unorganised sectors, and transport and other associations have extended their support for the 'Bharat Bandh' call of farmer organisations on March 26.

"Farmers will block rail tracks in various places. Markets and transport services will be closed during 'Bharat Bandh'," Rajewal told PTI.

He said however, emergency services like ambulance and fire will be allowed during the nationwide shutdown.

Thousands of farmers, mainly from



Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur demanding a complete repeal of the three farm laws and a legal guarantee for the minimum support price on their crops.

Confederation of All India Traders, which claimed representation of eight crore traders in the country, said markets will remain open on March 26 as it is not participating in the 'Bharat Bandh'. "We are not going to participate in 'Bharat Bandh' tomorrow. Markets will remain open in Delhi and other parts of the country. The ongoing deadlock can be resolved only through dialogue process. There should be discussions on amendments in the farm laws that can make existing farming profitable," CAIT's national general secretary Praveen Khandelwal told PTI.

Farmer leader Abhimanyu Kohar,

who is also senior member of Samkhyukta Kisan Morcha, said the major impact of the 'Bharat Bandh' will be felt in Haryana and Punjab.

Kohar said farmers have appealed to trader associations to close their shops during the nationwide shutdown as the three new agri laws will also affect them indirectly.

The farmer leader said in poll-bound Tamil Nadu, Assam, West Bengal, Kerala and Puducherry, the Samkhyukta Kisan Morcha has appealed to people to not observe 'Bandh' there.

So far, there have been 11 rounds of talks between the protesting unions and government, but deadlock continued as both sides stuck to their stand.

In January, the government had offered to suspend the farm laws for 12-18 months, which was rejected by the farmer unions.

All Eyes On Bengal: Ahead Of Assembly Elections, State Tops In Facebook Political Ad Spend Over Others

Agenceis

KOLKATA: Among the four states and one union territory that are going to polls from March 27, West Bengal emerged as the topper in spending for political advertisements on Facebook this year, according to data available with the social media platform.

Besides West Bengal, assembly elections will be held in three other states Assam, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and in the union territory of Puducherry.

The Facebook ad spend of the Trinamool Congress which seeks to return to power in West Bengal for the third consecutive term, exceeds that of the BJP, the main rival of the Mamata Banerjee-led party, in 90 days till March 22, the data revealed.

During the period, political parties of

West Bengal spent about Rs 3.74 crore on poll-related campaigns which fall under Facebook's advertisement category of 'social issues, election or politics'.

In ad spend under this category, West Bengal is followed by Tamil Nadu (Rs 3.3 crore), Assam (Rs 61.77 lakh), Kerala (Rs 38.86 lakh) and Puducherry (Rs 3.34 lakh) during the period, as per the data.

The Trinamool Congress has spent the maximum amount among parties, around Rs 1.69 crore, of West Bengal during the period on campaigns such as "Banglar Gorbho Mamata" (Bengal's pride Mamata).

It also has constituency level versions such as "Dum Dum-er Garbo Mamata".

The TMC's digital advertisements are handled by the Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) which runs other campaigns also for the party on the social media platform.

During the period under review, another Facebook page run by the name of "Khotikarok Modi" (Harmful Modi), has spent Rs 33.12 lakh in political ads, according to the data.

The state BJP's Facebook ad spend is around Rs 25.31 lakh.

It is advertising campaigns such as Amar Paribar BJP Paribar (My family is BJP family) and Aar Noi Annay (No more injustice). The Facebook page of the TMC has 1.3 million followers while that of the West Bengal BJP has 1.7 million followers. The state Congress spent around Rs 5 lakh in advertisements on Facebook while the amount spent by Left parties is negligible.

According to an analyst, the total spending on digital advertisements of political parties would be more as they do not always pay directly for campaigns.

Vaze's NIA Custody Extended Till April 3; Says He Was Made Scapegoat

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: A special court here on Thursday extended the NIA custody of suspended police officer Sachin Vaze, arrested in connection with the recovery of explosives-laden vehicle near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's house, till April 3.

He had nothing to do with the crime and had been made a scapegoat, he told the special NIA court.

Vaze (49), an assistant police inspector with Mumbai crime branch, was arrested on March 13 by the National Investigation agency. He was produced before the court after his earlier remand expired.

ly change in some plan somewhere. I went to the NIA office on my own and was arrested," the police officer said, adding he had not confessed to anything.

Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh, the NIA lawyer, told court that everybody was shocked to find that a policeman was involved in the crime.

During the probe, the NIA recovered 62 bullets from his house and it needed to probe why they were kept there, Singh said. The police department had issued Vaze 30 bullets of which only five were recovered, and the rest were yet to be found, the ASG added.

The murder of Thane businessman Mansukh Hiran—who had claimed that the SUV found



The NIA, which has invoked the stringent provisions of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) against Vaze, sought his custody for another 15 days.

"I have been made a scapegoat and have nothing to do with the case," Vaze told judge P R Sitre during the hearing.

"I was investigating officer of the case for one and a half days, and did whatever I could in that capacity. But there was sudden-

ly change in some plan somewhere. I went to the NIA office on my own and was arrested," the police officer said, adding he had not confessed to anything.

They need to confront Vaze with the other accused, he added. The NIA has taken over the Hiran case too.

However, the judge extended the custody only till April 3. PTI

Mosques In Shahjahanpur To Be Covered Before Holi Procession To 'Maintain Peace'



Agenceis

Around 40 mosques in the town of Shahjahanpur are being covered with plastic sheets ahead of Holi to prevent miscreants from throwing colour on the structures and disturbing communal harmony, a senior official has said.

Continuing an 18th century tradition, Holi in this Uttar Pradesh town begins with revellers hurling footwear at a 'Laat Saab' procession featuring a buffalo cart and a hapless man personifying a Britisher.

The mosques are located along the route of the procession, the official said, adding that a thick security blanket will be thrown across the town where the law and order machinery will be under the charge of 225 magistrates.

According to Shahjahanpur City Superintendent of Police, Sanjay Kumar, the mosques along the procession route are being covered with plastic sheets from top to bottom to ensure people do not throw colour or any objectionable object at the structures and disturb communal amity.

"The mosques will be covered before Holika Dahan (March 28). Some of them have already been covered," Kumar said.

"The façade of the mosques have been covered with hoardings. Some of the roads, which fall on the route of the procession, have been barricaded and will be closed a day in advance, so that no anti-social element can disturb the procession," he added.

Kumar said preventive action was initiated against 200 people while CCTV cameras have been installed along the route of the procession while drone cameras will also be used to monitor the crowd.

Additional District Magistrate (administration) Ramsevak Dwivedi told PTI that 225 magistrates will be deployed to ensure maintenance of law and order.

District Magistrate Indra Vikram Singh and Superintendent of Police S. Anand on Wednes-

day held a meeting with Muslim religious leaders and sought their cooperation for peaceful conclusion of the programme.

Hundreds of people are expected to gather in Shahjahanpur as preparations have begun for the 'juta maar' Holi on March 29.

Elaborating on the history of the procession of 'Laat Saab', Vikas Khurana, the head of History department of Swami Shukdevanand College, had told PTI, "On the day of Holi, the procession of 'Bade Laat Saab' is taken out on a buffalo cart with Holi revellers hurling jutas (footwear) at him."

The Holi tradition dates back to the early 18th century during the time of Nawab Abdullah Khan, the last emperor of the dynasty that founded Shahjahanpur, who was popular among both Hindus and Muslims.

The tradition of people taking out a procession with the nawab seated on a camel continued till 1857.

However, this event symbolising the Hindu-Muslim unity was not liked by the British, and in 1858, Mardan Ali Khan, the commander of Bareilly's military ruler Khan Bahadur Khan, attacked the revellers, and both Hindus and Muslims were killed in the violence.

In 1859, when the Nawab took out the procession on Holi, footwear were hurled at it on the instigation of the British rulers.

After Independence in 1947, the tradition was revived and the administration changed the name of the procession to 'Laat Saab' to symbolise the oppressive British regime. Since then, it is known by this name.

The celebrations have two parts: The processions of 'Bade Laat Saab' and 'Chhote Laat Saab'.

The procession of 'Bade Laat Saab' begins from Phoolmati Devi Mandir and proceeds towards Baba Vishwanath Mandir.

Similarly, the procession of 'Chhote Laat Saab' begins from Ram Chandra Mission ke Sarai and culminates there itself after a short march.

NEWS MAKERS



Why Rahul Gandhi Will Not Call RSS 'Sangh Parivar' From Now

Agenceis

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday said it is not right to call the RSS and its associated groups as 'Sangh Parivar', as a family has women, respect for elders, compassion and affection, and the organisation has none of these.

Gandhi's remarks come a day after he said the al-

leged harassment of nuns belonging to a Kerala-based congregation in Uttar Pradesh was a result of the Sangh Parivar's "vicious propaganda" to pitch one community against another and trample on minorities.

In a tweet in Hindi on Thursday, he said he will no longer refer to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh as 'Sangh Parivar', united

family.

"I believe it is not right to call the RSS and associated organizations Sangh Parivar—there are women in the family, there is respect for the elderly, a sense of compassion and affection—which is not there in the RSS," he said on Twitter.

"Now I will not call RSS 'Sangh Parivar'" the Congress leader added.