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P3 CITY

UNVACCINATED SHOPPERS IN SRINAGAR TO UNDERGO COVID TESTS: DC

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Wednesday said that all unvaccinated persons visiting any Shopping Store/Complex/ Malls will have to undergo Covid-19 testing....

THINK

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE CAN RUIN OUR MUTTON INDUSTRY

To control foot and mouth disease (FMD) & brucellosis in India, Prime Minister Modi launched the National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP) in September, 2019. Government of India aims at vaccinating...



P9 SPORTS

NEW ZEALAND DEFEAT INDIA TO WIN INNAUGURAL WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP

A tenacious New Zealand lifted the inaugural World Test Championship title with a comfortable eight-wicket win over India on the sixth and final day of the marquee final here on...



Quote!

Inspiration does exist, but it must find you working.

—Pablo Picasso

NEWS DIGEST

Pak Smuggler Killed Along IB: BSF

JAMMU: The BSF on Wednesday claimed to have foiled a major narcotics smuggling bid along the International Border in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district and said it had gunned down a Pakistani smuggler during the operation. Officials said 27 kg of heroin worth about Rs 135 crore in the international market was recovered by the Border Security Force (BSF) during a search of the area. Inspector General of Border Security Force, Jammu frontier, N S Jamwal said they • More On P10

Live Shell Destroyed In Poonch

SRINAGAR: Army on Wednesday destroyed a live shell spotted by farmers in a field near Line of Control in Poonch, officials said. A police official said that farmers spotted the live shell while working in their field at Kasaliya Poonch. The locals immediately informed the Army following which a party along with the Bomb Disposal Squad reached the spot and destroyed the shell on the spot without any damage. (GNS)

Cops Fine 5674 Lockdown Violators

SRINAGAR: Police on Wednesday said that 5674 people were penalised for lockdown violation and a fine of Rs 8,49,940/- was recovered from them during the last 24 hours across the Kashmir Valley. In a statement issued here, a police spokesperson said that continuing its efforts to curb the outbreak of 2nd wave of coronavirus, during the last 24 hours police have lodged 2 FIRs and also realized fine to the tune of Rs 8,49,940/- from 5674 people throughout the Kashmir valley for violating the various guidelines, rules regarding Covid-19. "The special drive against the violators of • More On P10

Man Arrested For Minor's Rape

JAMMU: A man was arrested on Wednesday for allegedly raping a 13-year-old girl in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said. The accused, Kamran Najjar, was arrested by a police team from near O M Mehta Road in Kishtwar town, a police spokesman said. He said a man lodged a complaint at Kishtwar police station on June 15, stating that his minor daughter was allegedly raped by Najjar. A case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act was registered and investigation was set into motion, the spokesman said. • More On P10

Shopkeeper Shot Dead In Srinagar

Zaid Bin Shabir

SRINAGAR: Suspected militants on Wednesday shot dead a shopkeeper in Habbā Kadal area here, a day after a police officer was killed in a similar attack in Nowgam area of the city outskirts.

25-year-old Umar Nazir Bhat was standing outside his mobile accessories shop in the congested Habbā Kadal market on Wednesday evening when pistol borne youth opened fire upon him from a close range, a police official said. A resident of adjoining Kalashpora locality, Wani sustained multiple

gunshot injuries in the attack. He was removed to the SMHS hospital for treatment where he succumbed to his injuries.

Medical Superintendent, SHMS Hospital Dr Kawaljeet Singh told Kashmir Observer that the youth died while the doctors were operating upon him for multiple gunshot wounds.

"He had received three bullets. Two in his chest and one in abdomen," Singh said.

According to the locals, Bhat had been running the shop in the busy marketplace for over six months.

A cordon • More On P10

Militants Looking For Soft Targets: DGP

A day after a police officer was shot dead by militants in the city outskirts, the Director General of Police Dilbag Singh on Wednesday directed the police officers to revisit the security arrangements as the militants would continue to look for soft targets. Chairing a crime and security meeting of all range DIsG and District SSSPs including police districts of valley here at the • More On P10

THESE INNOCENT KILLINGS OF CIVILIAN AND LOCAL POLICEMEN ARE BEING committed by local militants of LeT (self claimed as TRF) on the instruction of militant Abbas

Sheikh. They have been indulging in the crimes for money being paid by Pakistani handlers. These criminals are falsely labelling these innocent persons as informers to hide their sin," IGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar.

Hizb Militant Killed In Shopian Encounter: Police



Firdaus Ali

SRINAGAR: A local militant of Hizbul Mujahideen was killed in a gunfight with government forces in south Kashmir's Shopian district, police said Wednesday.

Police, army's 44RR and the

personnel of CRPF 178 battalion launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) in orchards of Shirmal area of the district on Wednesday after receiving specific information about the presence of militants, a police spokesperson said. The militants, he said, • More On P10

...PM'S MEET

Mainstream Leaders Camp In New Delhi



File Photo: Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Most of the 14 J&K politicians, including four former chief ministers, invited for an all-party meeting with Prime

Minister Narendra Modi on June 24 have arrived here by Wednesday evening.

The Thursday's meeting will be the first between the Centre and mainstream Jammu and Kashmir

politicians after the abrogation of Article 370 and the divisions of the erstwhile state into two union territories in 2019.

With no agenda announced for the Thursday meeting, the J&K leaders said • More On P10

WE HAVE NOT BEEN GIVEN AN AGENDA. We will be attending the meeting to know what the Centre is offering," PAGD Spokesperson Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami."

Blast Outside Hafiz Saeed's Home Kills 3

Press Trust Of India

LAHORE: A powerful car bomb exploded outside the house of banned Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed here on Wednesday, killing at least three people and injuring 21 others.

The blast took place at a police picket outside Saeed's residence at the BOR Society in Jauhar Town, resulting in serious injuries to some police officers guarding his house. The windows • More On P10

Deputy EC Pushes Delimitation Exercise In J&K

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: A senior official of the Delimitation Commission on Wednesday held consultations with all deputy commissioners of Jammu and Kashmir on restructuring of the existing assembly constituencies and carving out seven new seats.

Deputy Election Commissioner Chandra Bushan Kumar held virtual meetings with 20 Deputy Commissioners (DCs) of J&K on Wednesday. At a virtual



meet inputs were gathered on how to make the assembly seats more geographically compact, sources aware of the development said. Some assembly seats in Jammu and Kashmir • More On P10

Jammu Reports First Case Of 'Delta Plus Variant'

Agencies

SRINAGAR: As coronavirus cases continue to show a significant decline in the Union Territory, the winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir has reported first confirmed case of "Delta Plus variant"

An official said that sample collected at Katra and sent for genome sequencing to National Central for Disease Control (NCDC) re-turned positive for the

Delta Plus variant.

Principal GMC Jammu, Principal GMC Jammu, Dr Shashi Sudan Sharma said that one sample from Katra has been confirmed to be Delta Plus variant. However she said sample has not gone from GMC.

The development came even as the second wave of the pandemic is waning in J&K and restrictions imposed to prevent the spread of the infection are being eased.

So far around 40 • More On P10

Govt For Better Preparations To Combat Third Wave

Amid fears of the third coronavirus wave hitting the country in a few months, the Jammu and Kashmir administration on Wednesday asked officials to enhance the capacity of oxygen generation and oxygen • More On P10

J&K Logs 444 New Covid-19 Cases, 4 Deaths

Jammu and Kashmir reported 444 new covid-19 cases while four more people succumbed to the virus in the last 24 hours, officials said on Wednesday. They said 138 of fresh cases were reported from Jammu Division and 306 from Kashmir Valley, taking the • More On P10

Farooq Consults Jammu NC Leaders

National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah on Wednesday held consultations with his party leaders from Jammu over the Centre's invite to mainstream political parties. The NC leaders from the Jammu region said they stand for a single Jammu and Kashmir by maintaining its unity and integrity and by respecting the wishes and aspirations of its people. The delegation was led by NC's provincial president for Jammu Devender Singh Rana. Speaking to reporters • More On P10

Ladakh Parties Bat For Legislature, Constitutional Safeguards

Press Trust Of India

A day before the meeting of mainstream parties from J&K with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi, a grouping of socio religious and political parties in Ladakh on Wednesday raised the demand for a legislature in the UT along with safeguards like the Sixth Scheduled of the Constitution. • More On P10

Siddiqui Assumes Charge As JD DIPR

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Inam Ul Haq Siddiqui on Wednesday assumed the charge of Joint Director Information, Kashmir, relieving Haris Ahmad Handoo who was holding the post till now.

Prior to his posting as Joint Director Information, Kashmir, Siddiqui was posted as Chief Executive Officer, Gulmarg Development Authority and has also held various senior positions in the administration, an official spokesperson said Wednesday. After assuming • More On P10

Trains To Chug Off With 50% Capacity From July 1

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Authorities on Wednesday extended till June 30 the suspension of train services from Banihal to Baramulla and vice versa in Kashmir Valley. However, from July 1 onwards, train services from Banihal-Baramulla and vice versa shall be allowed with 50% capacity.

Official sources said that railway authorities have taken the decision on the request by the J&K administration and have subsequently informed the field agencies about it.

On May 10, the authorities suspended the • More On P10

In Kashmir Jungle, This Sociologist Takes Man-Wild Conflict Head-On

Zaid Bin Shabir

It was deep inside the wet forest, the sound of footsteps, embarked on a "coming of age" trip, was fleetingly dying-away on the carpet of leaves.

Few rangers, recruits and a sociologist walked for a few hours through Baramulla's Kazinag National Park in complete silence, never speaking above a whisper.

They had set out from the base camp in the morning, carrying their backpacks stuffed with essentials, and traversed through the forest with every striking step.

As they walked past heavily mounted trees, the scout in front craned his neck towards the leafless crowns and scanned the landscape for signs of smugglers



and poachers in the protected park. Footprints of boots in the moist land and half-smoked

cigarette bits were there.

But that day, they weren't parading against the poachers or

timber smugglers. Except the sociologist, everyone else was clueless about their parade but kept on moving their feet as they had nothing else to do. They detested the trees for moving slowly against their progress. They had been walking for an hour.

As the parade was wearily moving their foot, a sociologist at the Wildlife Trust of India, Sameer Khazir, kept on marching triumphantly through the dusty road and neat-stone fences that were shaded by the bended bodies of the giant trees. He knew what he was doing and where he was heading towards—to the fringes of the sanctuary.

Proximate to the fringes, the arbitrarily placed Bakarwal sheds had started to appear,

stretching a hopeful smile on Sameer's face. The others were still clueless. "I knew that was an appropriate step to conserve Kazinag," recalls Sameer.

The tribesmen from the eight herder families were alerted as soon as the sight of the leading scout was visible. For them, every person in a uniform is marching to boot them out of their ancestral residence. But, things turned calm when one of the elderly shouted, "It's Sameer Sahib".

Unlike the raging reaction of native tribes against the forest officials, Sameer's thoughtful character had saved him from the rage. "He's one of the few who are respected by the tribesmen," says Riyaz Ahmed, the sociologist's colleague • More On P10





To place an advertisement

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No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

**KASHMIR
OBSERVER**

Thursday| 24-06-2021

Deptt. Of Ism (Ayush) District Anantnag. vaccination Drive & Ayush Immune Booster Medicinedistribution Held At Ism Dispy. Gurdraman Anantnag



On the directions of Director Indian Systems of Medicine (AYUSH) J&K & ADMO ISM Anantnag. FREE AYUSH VACCINATION DRIVE & Immune Booster Medicines were distributed at ISM Dispensary Gurdraman Anantnag Door to Door and also importance of COVID SoPs and vaccination was explained.

On 23/06/2021 Following the Protocol of AYUSH Department Ministry of AYUSH Govt. of India and the Orders of Director ISM J&K Dr Mohan Singh just and by the guidelines of ADMO MADAM Dr. Nuzhat Bashir & District Nodal officer Ayush Dr. Mir Javaid Hussain sahib an VACCINATION DRIVE & awareness programme and distribution of immune booster medicines was organized at at Village Gurdraman Anantnag from Govt. AYUSH Dispensary Gurdraman A Anantnag 267 beneficiaries received immunity boosting drugs also were briefed about importance of Ayush immunity boosters in enhancement of human immunity to combat Covid 19 panoramic along other importance preventive measures

mja

COURT OF PRINCIPAL DISTRICT JUDGE ANANTNAG

Present MrNaseer Ahmad Dar

1. ZahidHussainSiraj
2. AsadiqbalSiraj
S/o Ab Gani Siraj
R/o Mehendikadal Anantnag

V/S

Public at large

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas an application for succession certificate has been moved by petitioner (s) in respect of an amount vide no 3589 jk03 name of deceased abganiSiraj S/o AbKhaliqSiraj R/o Mehendikadal Anantnag . Hence Objections if any are invited from all and Sunday to the aforesaid claim, by or before next date of hearing i.e 28/06/21 falling which matter shall be determined on merits . Issued under my hand seal of the court on 23/06/21

Principal District judge
Anantnag

RNA

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is inform to general public that I have applied for pesticides license.In this regard if any person having any objection He/She may contact office of the PPO Lal Mandi Srinagar within the period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Name: NASEER AHMAD BHAT
S/O: ALI MOHD BHAT
R/O: URHANHALL ANANTNAG

RNA

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR NOTICE

Where as an application for transfer of ownership has been received from Mirza Saleem Abbas S/O Mirza Ghulam Rasool R/O Jan Mohalla Lalbazar Sgr (Transferor) of Alto 800 bearing registration No. JK01AF-8303 chasis No: 97891 Engine No: 5954145 Model 2015 in favour of Mohammad Amin Ahangar S/o Mohammad Sidiq Ahangar R/O Ganie Mohalla Manzgam Brein

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.

Sd/-
NOJK-RTOK 2507
Dated: 23/06/2021
Regional Transport Office,
FKO Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR NOTICE

Where as an application for transfer of ownership has been received from Bilal Mohi-ud-din S/O Ghulam Mohi-ud-din R/o Nathan Vihar Ranholah Nangloi New Delhi (Transferor) of Dust bearing registration No. DL8CAF-1905 chasis No: 7029091 Engine No: 028741 Model 2014 in favour of Andleeb Anasari W/O Sajjad Haider Ansari R/o A Darul Ansar Eidgah Hawal Road Sriangar (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.

Sd/-
NOJK-RTOK 2564
Dated: 23/06/2021
Regional Transport Office,
x Kashmir

Office of the Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag

NOTICE

Whereas joint application has been received by this office from Manzoor Ahamd Dar S/ Ab Rashid Dar R/o Kanjigund Anantnag (Party No 1st) as Transferor, (seller) owner of the Vehicle Tavera Bearing Regd No JK03C- 9587 (Commercial/non-commercial) covering under R/P No. 3976/LMM/ ANG and Naveed Ahamd Shah S/O Mohd Abdullah Shah R/o Latroo Airhmuram Ang (Party No. 2nd) as Transferee (purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted vehicle from Party NO. 1st and 2nd & HP cancellation with Suderhan Hire Purchase Jammu .

Before the case is disposed off on its merit, andy body having any objection regarding the proposed transfer any file his objection within seven (7) days from the publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned. No any representation / objection shall be entertained after stipulated period.

No: 101/6980/Ang Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag dated: 23-06-2021

RNA

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR

NOTICE

Whereas, a joint application has been received from Shri Nazir Ahamd Ganie S/O Mohd Sultan Ganie R/O Haripora Harwan (Transferor) and Shri Nazir AHmhad S/O Abdul Gaffar R/O Kachgari Masjid Rafiq

Kocha (Transferee) for transfer of Maxi Cab carriage route Permit No 335/MC Covering Vehicle No JK01G-3128 .

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 STW Co. Namely Bagh Hussain

NO: JK/RTOK /2452 Sd/-
Dated: 22/06/2021 Regional Transport Office,
fko Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR

NOTICE

Whereas, a joint application has been received from Shri Mohd Altaf Zovil S/O Ghulam Mohd R/O Karfali Mohalla Sgr (Transferor) and Shri Swear Mir S/O Nazir Ahmad Mir R/O Lasjan A Srinagar

(Transferee) for transfer of Maxi Cab carriage route Permit No 5940/MC Covering Vehicle No JK01P- 0779 .

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 STW Co. Namely Bagh Hussain

NO: JK/RTOK /2480 Sd/-
Dated: 22/06/2021 Regional Transport Office,
fko Kashmir

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost the Permit of My Vehicle bearing Regd No: JK22A-1233. 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 ARTO Shopian within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall entertained.

Firdousa Akhter
W/O Khurshid Ahamd Gassi
R/o Khanabal Anantnag

AST

COURT OF PRINCIPAL DISTRICT JUDGE ANANTNAG

Present Mr Naseer Ahmad Dar

1. Fatima Banoo
W/o Late Mohd Abass Bakshi
2.Sahil Abass bakshi
S/O Late Mohd Abass Bakshi
R/o GopalporaKalan

V/S

Public at large

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas an application for succession certificate has been moved by petitioner (s) in respect of an amount 1278608 name of deceased Mohd Abass BakshiS/o GhNabiBakshi R/o GopalporaKalan. Hence Objections if any are invited from all and Sunday to the aforesaid claim ,by or before next date of hearing i.e30/06/21 falling which matter shall be determined on merits . Issued under my hand seal of the court on 23/06/21

Principal District judge
Anantnag

RNA

ڈرائنگ لائسنس کی گمبھدیگی۔

میری ڈرائنگ لائسنس نمبر JK0320100001026 کہیں پیگم ہوئی ہے۔ اب اس کی واپسیت نکالنی مطلوب ہے اس بارے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر درج ذیل آری او ایسٹ ناگ کے دفتر میں پیش کرے بصورت دیگر کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

بذریعہ: ناچار احمد ڈال و لد مشتاق احمد ڈال و لد سہتی پورہ ایسٹ ناگ۔

رابطہ نمبر: 9797900767

RNA

از نیابت و ندیلگام با اجلاس منظور احمد خان نائب تحصیلدار

درخواست متناجب: محمد عارف خاتم ولد عبدل احمد خاتم سائیکہ دیوگام ضلع ایسٹ ناگ

بغرض حصول SC سرقلیت۔

استہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام۔

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول SC سرقلیت دفتر بذرا میں پیش کیا ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے۔ پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا کنڈہ بذیل افراد ہیں۔

۱۔ عبدل احمد ولد محمد شعیان خاتم	65 سال	ریٹا پر ملازم
۲۔ شیرلیف زوہید عبدل احمد	55 سال	گھریلو کام
۳۔ جوزی دفتر عبدل احمد	30 سال	گھریلو کام
۴۔ محمد عارف ولد عبدل احمد	29 سال	زیر تعلیم
۵۔ زابد احمد ولد عبدل احمد	25 سال	زیر تعلیم

اسکے علاوہ اور کوئی افراد کنڈہ موجود نہیں ہے۔ کنڈہ کی مہادت آمدنی 27678 روپیہ ہے۔ لہذا سرقلیت اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہوگا وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر دوران دفتری اوقات میں اپنا اعتراض پیش کریں، معیاد گذرنے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

RNA

از نیابت و اندیلگام با اجلاس منظور احمد خان نائب تحصیلدار۔
مضمون درخواست متناجب: امبراد مشتاق ولد محمد خاتم سائیکہ دیوگام تحصیل کوکر ناگ ضلع ایسٹ ناگ

بمراہم حصول RBA سرقلیت

استہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام۔

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول بیک وارڈاریا سرقلیت دفتر بذرا میں پیش کیا ہے اس بارے میں عملہ فیلتہ سے رپورٹ طلب کیا گیا جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا کنڈہ حذا میں کرشتہ پندرہ سالوں سے رہائش پذیر ہے اور کسی بھی فرد نے سکونت پذیر نہیں کی سائل نا کنڈہ بذیل ہے۔

نمبر شمار	نام افراد کنڈہ	عمر	پیشہ	آمدنی
01	مخرج احمد خاتم ولد احمد خاتم			
02	جینہ زوہید مخرج احمد			
03	امبراد احمد ولد مخرج احمد خاتم			
04	میش مخرج دفتر مخرج احمد			
05	میش مخرج دفتر مخرج احمد			
06	مخرج مخرج دفتر مخرج احمد			

اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی افراد کنڈہ موجود نہیں ہے۔ کنڈہ کی سالانہ آمدنی ایک لاکھ سے اوپر ہے۔ لہذا ازیر بحث سرقلیت اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض مدعو ہو جات پیش کرے۔ معیاد گذرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

RNA

از نیابت و ندیلگام با اجلاس منظور احمد خان نائب تحصیلدار
درخواست متناجب: مشتاق احمد خاتم ولد غلام نبی خاتم سائیکہ ضلع ایسٹ ناگ

بغرض حصول SC سرقلیت۔

استہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام۔

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول SC سرقلیت دفتر بذرا میں پیش کیا ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے۔ پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا کنڈہ بذیل افراد ہیں۔

۱۔ غلام نبی ولد غلام محمد خاتم	75 سال	ریٹا پر ملازم
۲۔ خوشی بیگم زوہید غلام نبی	60 سال	گھریلو کام
۳۔ مشتاق احمد ولد غلام نبی	32 سال	تعلیم

اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی افراد کنڈہ موجود نہیں ہے۔ کنڈہ کی مہادت آمدنی 26169 روپیہ ہے۔ لہذا سرقلیت اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہوگا وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر دوران دفتری اوقات میں اپنا اعتراض پیش کریں، معیاد گذرنے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

RNA

نائب تحصیلدار۔

از نیابت و ندیلگام با اجلاس منظور احمد خان نائب تحصیلدار
درخواست متناجب: افکار رسول ولد غلام رسول خاتم سائیکہ دیوگام ضلع ایسٹ ناگ

بغرض حصول OBC سرقلیت۔

استہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام۔

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول OBC سرقلیت دفتر بذرا میں پیش کیا ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے۔ پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا کنڈہ بذیل افراد ہیں۔

۱۔ غلام رسول ولد غلام محمد خاتم	60 سال	ملازم
۲۔ حفیہ زوہید غلام رسول	58 سال	گھریلو کام
۳۔ مظفر رسول ولد غلام رسول ج	34 سال	ملازم
۴۔ محمود رسول دفتر غلام رسول	23 سال	تعلیم
۵۔ افکار رسول ولد غلام رسول	20 سال	تعلیم
۶۔ موبہیت رسول ولد غلام رسول	18 سال	تعلیم

اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی افراد کنڈہ موجود نہیں ہے۔ کنڈہ کی کل آمدنی 113838 روپیہ ہے۔ لہذا سرقلیت اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہوگا وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر دوران دفتری اوقات میں اپنا اعتراض پیش کریں، معیاد گذرنے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

RNA

نائب تحصیلدار۔

ٹھیکہ داری کارڈ نکالنا مطلوب ہے

ہر خاص و عام کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ مظہر کوڈی کلاس ٹھیکہ داری کارڈ نکالنا مطلوب ہے۔ اس بارے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دنوں کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض آرا بنڈنی ڈویژن کھڈیل ایسٹ ناگ کے دفتر میں پیش کریں۔ معیاد گذرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

المشتر

وہیم احم شاہ ولد بشیر احمد شاہ سائیکہ لہند جن سہل

RNA

ٹھیکہ داری کارڈ نکالنا مطلوب ہے

ہر خاص و عام کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ مظہر کوڈی کلاس ٹھیکہ داری کارڈ نکالنا مطلوب ہے۔ اس بارے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دنوں کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض آرا بنڈنی ڈویژن کھڈیل ایسٹ ناگ کے دفتر میں پیش کریں۔ معیاد گذرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

المشتر

عارف احمد میر ولد علی محمد میر سائیکہ دیوگام سہل

RNA

اطلاع عام

راقم کو فرٹ لایٹر لائسنس نکالنی مطلوب ہے۔ اس ضمن میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر کھڈیل ایسٹ ناگ کے دفتر میں پیش کریں۔ بعد از معیاد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

متناجب: نصیر احمد بٹ ولد علی محمد بٹ سائیکہ اور بہنال ایسٹ ناگ

RNA

از نیابت و ندیلگام با اجلاس منظور احمد خان نائب تحصیلدار
درخواست متناجب: مظفر رسول، افکار رسول، موبہیت رسول پسران غلام رسول سائیکہ دیوگام ضلع ایسٹ ناگ

بغرض حصول RBA سرقلیت۔

استہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام۔

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول RBA سرقلیت دفتر بذرا میں پیش کیا ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے۔ پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا کنڈہ بذیل افراد ہیں۔

۱۔ غلام رسول ولد غلام محمد خاتم	60 سال	ملازم
۲۔ حفیہ زوہید غلام رسول	58 سال	گھریلو کام
۳۔ مظفر رسول ولد غلام رسول خاتم	34 سال	ملازم
۴۔ محمود رسول دفتر غلام رسول	23 سال	تعلیم
۵۔ افکار رسول ولد غلام رسول	20 سال	تعلیم
۶۔ موبہیت رسول ولد غلام رسول	18 سال	

اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی افراد کنڈہ موجود نہیں ہے۔ کنڈہ کی کل آمدنی 113838 روپیہ ہے۔ لہذا سرقلیت اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہوگا وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر دوران دفتری اوقات میں اپنا اعتراض پیش کریں، معیاد گذرنے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

RNA

نائب تحصیلدار۔

از نیابت گوم احمد پورہ

مضمون کا خذات درخواست: زہرہ بیگم بیوہ غلام رسول صوفی سائیکہ بھون تحصیل پٹن بمبراد عطا سینی ڈیپنڈنٹ سرقلیت

استہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل / سائلہ دفتر خذائیں زیر کاروائی ہے اس سلسلے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاں سائل / سائلہ کا شوہر غلام رسول صوفی مورخہ 08-01-2021 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے اور متوئی پیشہ سے مزدور تھا۔

زہرہ بیگم بیوہ غلام رسول	گھریلو کام	40 سال
اشفاق پسر غلام رسول	مزدوری	26 سال
عرفان علی پسر غلام رسول	مزدوری	25 سال
ساقی علی پسر غلام رسول	زیر تعلیم	22 سال
نرینا اختر دفتر غلام رسول	زیر تعلیم	18 سال

سرقلیت زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ ہو تو وہ دفتر خذائیں اندر سات یوم پیش کریں بعد معیاد گذر کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ قبول نہ ہوگا۔

بم

نائب تحصیلدار

از نیابت گوم احمد پورہ

مضمون کا خذات درخواست: زہنجیہ بیوہ محمد افضل پرہ سائیکہ ملر بھون تحصیل پٹن بمبراد عطا سینی ڈیپنڈنٹ سرقلیت

استہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل / سائلہ دفتر خذائیں زیر کاروائی ہے اس سلسلے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاں سائل / سائلہ کا شوہر محمد افضل مورخہ 06-01-2021 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے اور متوئی پیشہ سے مزدور تھا۔

محمد بیگم	گھریلو کام	40 سال
تحفیدہ افضل دختر	زیر تعلیم	20 سال
عمران علی پرہ پسر	زیر تعلیم	18 سال
کارمان علی پرہ پسر	زیر تعلیم	16 سال

سرقلیت زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ ہو تو وہ دفتر خذائیں اندر سات یوم پیش کریں بعد معیاد گذر کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ قبول نہ ہوگا۔

بم

نائب تحصیلدار

Unvaccinated Shoppers In Srinagar To Undergo Covid Tests: DC



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Wednesday said that all unvaccinated persons visiting any Shopping Store/Complex/ Malls will have to undergo Covid-19 testing.

The DC said this during a media brief adding that the exemption shall be given only in certain specific cases. However, vaccinated persons having certificate copy in hard or soft form shall be given priority entry at all Business estab-

lishments, government offices, etc. He said that this is important in the interest of the larger public so that no Covid-19 infected person puts the lives of other persons at risk.

The DC stressed that no positive person should mix with other people and said necessary action under law will be taken against such cases.

He urged the general public to cooperate with administration in strict adherence to Covid-19 SOPs to save themselves, their family and whole society from infection of deadly coronavirus.

The DC reiterated his statement that Covid Vaccination and Covid Appropriate Behaviour are the weapons with us to defeat Covid-19 pandemic. He urged all left out eligible persons of the district to get vaccinated at an earliest to make Srinagar district a safe place with regard to Covid-19 amid predictions of Third wave by the Medical experts.

DLSA Srinagar To Organise National Lok Adalat On July 10



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar is going to organise National Lok Adalat on 10 July, 2021 within the premises of District Court Complex Moominabad Srinagar.

In this regard, the Parties or their Advocates whose cases are pending before any Court at District Court Complex Moominabad Srinagar or before the Court of Additional Mobile Magistrate TFC Panthachowk and are desirous to settle their cases/ claims /matters

through the Lok Adalat scheduled herein above shall approach the concerned Courts by or before 30 June, 2021.

Besides parties whose cases are not pending (i.e. Pre litigation matters) in any court but desires to settle their disputes can also approach Secretary District Legal Services Authority Srinagar on cell numbers 9797226035, 6005407316 and 8082851723 email id: dlsa.sgr@gmail.com by or before 30-06-2021. So that their cases, claims or matters can be settled amicably during National Lok Adalat.

JKSA Demands Entrance Exam Centre Of Outside Universities In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: J&K Students Association (JKSA) Wednesday urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to establish exam centres of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Jamia Milia Islamia (JMI), Delhi University and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) for Kashmiri students in Srinagar for the entrance examination to be conducted from July.

In a statement, a spokesperson of the association said that hundreds of students from Kashmir Valley are appearing in the entrance examination



for 2021-2022 in JNU, DU, JMI and AMU.

"The problem is that students from Kashmir have their centres in Delhi and Aligarh. The present circumstances of Covid-19 could prove fatal for the aspirants," he said.

"Moreover, many students can't afford air tickets to travel to other

states and appear in exams," he said.

"As the exams will be conducted from next month, many students fear of catching virus during travelling. It is going to be a lot of a hassle for students to travel to Delhi and other places when most of the students are not vaccinated as yet and on top of it the 3rd wave is impending," he said.



A SHOPKEEPER WAITS FOR CUSTOMERS in a floating market in Dal Lake in Srinagar. KO Photo Abid Bhat

EJAC Demands Regularisation Of Daily Wagers, Holds Protests In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Employees Joint Action Committee (EJAC) Wednesday staged a protest at Press Enclave in Srinagar and demanded the regularisation of sixty one thousand (61,000) daily wagers working in different departments across Jammu and Kashmir.

Led by EJAC president Mohammad Rafique Rather scores of EJAC leaders assembled at Press Enclave Srinagar with play cards demanding regularisation of thousand (61,000) daily wagers working in different departments across Jammu and Kashmir and implementation of minimum wages act.

Rather said, "61,000 daily wagers, Adhoc, consolidated, land donors, academic arrangements, contingent paid employees and others are suffering for regularisation and government is not taking this human issue seriously."

Rather said that these hapless and helpless employees have been left to starvation and some of them have lost their life or vital organs in the line of duty. "They are living in a very mis-



erable condition as they are not paid even their meagre wages," he lamented.

He said that such a big chunk of employees who perform their duty round the clock are being ignored and not treated like humans which has put a question mark on the welfare policies of the government adding that the plight of these employees should have been the priority of the government.

He said that they have pinned all the hopes on the LG administration to address the legitimate demands of the daily wagers but lamented that despite many protests their demands weren't fulfilled compelling them to

come on the roads.

On this occasion Sajad Ahmad Parray, President J&K Casual/Daily Wagers Forum who was part of the protest was assured whole hearted support by EJAC president and other leadership till their demands are not fulfilled.

Urging employees to come to the rescue of employees, Rather expressed hope that LG Manoj Sinha and new chief secretary A.K Mehta will take up the genuine, justified demands of daily wagers and other daily rated workers with union government for its one time solution to save the future of 61,000 families dependent on these employees.

از نیابت کریری
مضمون کاغذات درخواست آفرین ریاض دکتر مرحوم ریاض احمد ڈارساکنہ
دولت پورہ برادعطا کی ڈینڈٹ سرٹیفکیٹ
اشتہار بمراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام
محامہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل / سائلہ دفتر خدائیں زیر کاروائی ہے اس سلسلے
میں پیواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاں سائل کا والد ریاض
احمد ڈار مورخہ 22-06-2021 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے سائل / سائلہ کی ماں نے دوسرے شادی
کی ہے مطابق پچھی آمد ز دفتر جناب ڈپٹی کمشنر صاحب بارہمولہ زیر نمبر
02-06-2021 مورخہ DCB/SRO-43/75/77 ریاض احمد ڈار محکمہ پولیس میں
بطورکے تشکیل کام کر باختم افراد کو کمبہ بذیل ہے
آفرین ریاض دکتر ریاض احمد ڈار زیر تعلیم 21 سال
سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ ہو تو وہ دفتر خد
میں اندر رسات یوم پیش کریں بعد معیار گذر کوئی ڈینڈٹ اعتراض وغیرہ قبول نہ ہوگا۔
_ajz_r نائب تحصیلدار

از دفتر نائب تحصیلدار پچھوا مقام
مضمون کاغذات درخواست منیاب الفت نبی دفتر غلام نبی شیخ ساکنہ وراسان
برادعطا کی بیکوارڈ ایراسرٹیفکیٹ تحت SRO 942
اشتہار بمراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام
محامہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر خدائیں زیر کاروائی ہے اس سلسلے میں پیواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ
بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل متبع وراسان میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کبہ بذیل فرد
پیشکش ہے
غلام نبی شیخ
گھیلہ پٹیم
مادر عا احمد
نعمت احمد
زمرہ دہانو
الفت نبی
اس کے علاوہ کوئی افراد کہ نہیں ہے سائل کے کہہ کی باوراء مدتی 11000 ہے سرٹیفکیٹ اجرا کرنے میں اگر
کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا اعتراض ساتھ میں اندر دفتر خدائیں پیش کرے معیار گذر کوئی بھی مضر
یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا
ajz نائب تحصیلدار

PUBLIC NOTICE



My mothers name and DOB in my school records has been wrongly mentioned namely RakiyBano while her correct name is RukiyaBano and DOB is 12/08/2007 while my correct DOB is 12/08/2008. Now I want to apply its change if anybody having any objection He/She may file His/Her objection office of the Head master Govt High School Hapatnar within the period of seven days .After that no objection will be entertained.

**Name: Riffat Shabir
D/o: Shabir Ahmad Khan
R/o: Hapatnar**

RNA

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
- BIJHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPOR: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

This Day in History

- 451 - 10th recorded perihelion passage of Halley's Comet
- 843 - Vikings destroy Nantes
- 972 - Battle of Cedynia, the first documented victory of Polish forces; Mieszko I of Poland decisively defeated Odo I of Lusatia
- 1128 - Afonso I of Portugal defeats army of his mother Theresa
- 1314 - Battle of Bannockburn; Scotland regains independence from England
- 1396 - Crusaders under Earl of Nevers reach Vienna
- 1397 - Sultan Bajezid I releases captured crusaders for ransom
- 1529 - Zürich and Catholic cantons sign Peace of Kappel
- 1658 - French fleet recaptures Duinkerker
- 1662 - Dutch invasion of Macau repulsed (Macau Day)
- 1795 - US & Great Britain sign Jay Treaty, 1st US extradition treaty
- 1812-Napoleon Bonaparte's forces invade Russia crossing the Neman River
- 1866 -Second Battle at Custoza: the Austrian Imperial army, joined by the Venetian Army decisively defeated the Italian army, despite the Italians' strong numerical advantage.
- 1898- American troops drive Spanish forces from La Guasimas, Cuba
- 1917 -Russian Black Sea fleet mutinies at Sebastopol
- 1922 -Adolf Hitler begins a month long prison sentence for paramilitary operations; he rails against the 'Jewish sell-out' of Germany to the Bolsheviks
- 1930- 1st radar detection of planes, Anacostia DC
- 1931- USSR & Afghanistan sign neutrality treaty
- 1932- Coup ends absolute monarchy in Thailand
- 1940- France signs an armistice with Italy during WW II
- 1942- Africa Korps invades Egypt
- 1943- Allies begin 10-day bombing on Hamburg
- 1961-Iraq demands dominion over Kuwait
- 1966 -Period of relative peace following WW II exceeds that following WW I
- 1975- Moon tremor perceived (hit by Taurid meteors)
- 1982- Soyuz T-6 Launch (USSR)
- 1983- 7th Space Shuttle Mission-Challenger 2 lands at Edwards AFB
- 1985-18th Space Shuttle Mission (51-G)- Discovery 5 returns to Earth
- 1997- USAF reports Roswell 'space aliens' were dummies
- 2012 -Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood becomes President of Egypt



HIJRI
CALENDAR

13

ZIQADAT
-UL-
HARAAM

1442

PRAYERS

FAJR
3: 35
ZUHR
12: 33
ASR
5:33
MAGRIB
7:49
ISHA
9:31

From KO Archives

New Delhi Talks Of Kashmir Resolution

Asks Hurriyat To Come Up With Suggestions

DEHRADUN - The Centre today rejected the Hurriyat Conference's demand for inclusion in the Indo-Pak dialogue process hut said the conglomerate could give its suggestions for the resolution of the Kashmir issue.

"There is no question of involving the Hurriyat in the Indo-Pak talks." Union Minister of Stale for Home Sriprakash Jaiswal told reporters here.

However, he said the Centre has opened its doors for the Hurriyat to give its suggestions for the resolution of the Kashmir issue. "Now the onus lies on the Hurriyat Conference as to when they want to come forward in this regard," he said, adding the Government was ready to hold dialogue with any group in Kashmir over the issue.

Chairman of the moderate Hurriyat faction Mirwaiz Umer Farooq who along with eight separatist leaders from Kashmir had visited Pakistan earlier this month, had said that the conglomerate should be included in the Indo-Pak dialogue process to find an amicable solution to the Kashmir problem.

Claiming that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir was better now than at any time during the last 15 years, Jaiswal said the UPA government had taken several steps, including the current round of Indo-Pak dialogue, to bring peace in the State. "Tourist traffic is increasing in Kashmir, which is an indicator for the improvement in the situation here. We have also extended the duration of Amarnath Yatra from 30 to 45 days," he said

He said the improvement was possible due to the economic package provided by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Referring to the northeast, Jaiswal expressed 'satisfaction' over the situation there and said talks were in progress at various levels in that region

On the naxal menace prevalent in different parts of the country, Jaiswal asked the affected States to find a solution themselves. "A solution to end the naxal problem has to come from the States affected by it," he said, lauding the efforts of West Bengal in this regard.

(Kashmir Observer, 24 June, 2005)

Saudis Who Killed Journalist Khashoggi Received Paramilitary Training In US



WASHINGTON: Four Saudis who participated in the 2018 killing of the Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi received paramilitary training in the United States the previous year under a contract approved by the State Department, the New York Times reported on Tuesday.

The training was provided by Tier 1 Group, which is owned by the private equity firm Cerberus Capital Management, and was defensive and devised to protect Saudi leaders, the Times reported.

Cerberus did not immediately respond to a request for comment from Reuters.

In response to the Times report, State Department spokesman Ned Price said under the law the department cannot comment "on any of the licensed defence export licensing activity alleged in media reporting."

Price also said U.S. policy towards Saudi Arabia "will prioritize the rule of law and respect for human rights."

Khashoggi, a U.S. resident who wrote opinion columns for the Washington Post critical of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, was killed and dismembered by a team of operatives linked to the prince in the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul in October 2018. A U.S. intelligence report in February said the crown prince had approved an operation to capture or kill the journalist.

Cerberus senior executive Louis Bremer confirmed his company's role in the training of four members of the Khashoggi kill team last year in written answers to questions from members of Congress as part of his nomination for a senior Pentagon job in former President Donald Trump's administration, according to the Times.

But the lawmakers never received the answers because the Trump administration does not appear to have sent them to Congress before withdrawing Bremer's nomination, according to the Times, which said Bremer provided it with the document.

Bremer said the U.S. State Department and other government agencies are responsible for vetting foreign forces trained on U.S. soil, the Times reported. **REUTERS**

US Seizes Websites Of Press Tv, 32 Other Iran Allied Media Outlets



KO Web Desk

TEHRAN: In an apparent bid to blackout Iranian perspective, American authorities seized a range of web domains of media outlets of Iran and its allies in the region on Tuesday. The move appeared to be a far-reaching crackdown on Iranian media amid heightened tensions between the two countries.

The US Department of Justice has seized Iranian domains before, claiming they were part of a "disinformation campaign," and US-based social media corporations like Twitter and Google have persecuted Iranian news outlets for years, but the wholesale seizure of a major Iranian media outlet's website is new.

American authorities seized the web domains of Iran's international media outlets Press TV and Al-Alam, along with dozens of other channels deemed to be pro-Iran including Yemen's Al Masirah and Gaza based Palestine Today.

The US Justice Department said in a statement on Tuesday night that the seizures were in "response to the Iranian regime targeting the United States' electoral process with brazen attempts to sow discord among the voting populace by spreading disinformation online and executing malign influence operations aimed at misleading U.S. voters."

A statement by the Islamic Republic of Iran News Network said the move appeared to be part of a larger-scale crackdown by the U.S. on news websites linked to what Iran calls the "Axis of Resistance," which includes Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, Iraq and Palestine.

It accused the United States of repressing freedom of expression and joining forces with Israel and Saudi Arabia "to block pro-resistance media outlets exposing the crimes of US allies in the region".

Al-Masirah also issued a statement saying: "This American ban on the Al Masirah Net website and other friendly website reveals, once again, the falsehood of the slogans of freedom of expression and all the other headlines promoted by the United States of America, including its inability to confront the truth."

Visitors to media sites such as Press TV and Al-Alam as the Al-Masirah TV channel were met with single-page statements on Wednesday, declaring the website "has been seized by the United States Government" accompanied by the seals of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the US Commerce Department.

The U.S. government also took over the domain name of the news website Palestine Today, which reflects the view points of Gaza-based groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad, redirecting the site to the same

takedown notice. Independent Lua-lua television network which represents pro-democracy movement in Bahrain and operates from London too has been taken down.

It's not the first time that the U.S. has targeted media outlets from Iran and its allies.

In October 2013, nineteen Iran allied channels, including Press TV, were taken off air in North America by satellite providers under US pressure.

Last October, the Department of Justice announced the takedown of nearly a hundred websites it claimed were linked to Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guard. The U.S. said the sites, operating under the guise of genuine news outlets, were waging a "global disinformation campaign" to influence U.S. policy and push Iranian narrative around the world.

Responsibility for providing name service for the domain name pressstv.com was apparently switched to Amazon name servers on Tuesday at mid-afternoon European time, said internet infrastructure expert Ron Guilmette. That suggests the domain was indeed wrested from its previous owner.

Both Press TV and Al-Alam came back online using Iranian domain addresses Pressstv.ir and Alalam.ir.

Press TV, launched in June 2007, is Iran's English-language international TV channel while Al Alam is beamed to Arab world from Tehran.

Delta To Account For 90% New Covid Cases In Europe By End August: Report

Agence France-Presse

STOCKHOLM: The Delta variant, identified for the first time in India, could account for 90 percent of new Covid cases in the European Union in the coming months, the bloc's disease control agency said Wednesday.

"It is very likely that the Delta variant will circulate extensively during the summer, particularly among younger individuals that are not targeted for vaccination," Andrea Ammon, director of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), said in a statement.

"The Delta variant is more transmissible than other circulating variants and we estimate that by the end of August it will represent 90 percent" of new cases in the EU, she added.

The ECDC estimates that the Delta variant (B.1.617.2), is 40 to 60 percent more contagious than the Alpha variant (B.1.1.7), first discovered in the UK, which is currently the predominant variant of the novel coronavirus circulating in the EU.

The agency said that "70 percent of new SARS-CoV-2 infections are projected to be due to this variant in the EU/EEA by early August and 90 percent of infections by the end of August".

To counter the spread of the variant and mitigate the health impact, the ECDC said "it is very important



to progress with the vaccine rollout at a very high pace".

To date, about 30 percent of the over-80s and some 40 percent of the over-60s in the EU are still not fully vaccinated, according to the ECDC.

"At this stage it becomes crucial that the second vaccination dose is administered within the minimum authorised interval from the first dose, to speed up the rate at which vulnerable individuals become protected," Ammon said.

The ECDC is also urging countries to be cautious about relaxing curbs aimed at limiting the spread.

"Any relaxation over the summer months of the stringency of non-pharmaceutical measures that were in place in the EU/EEA in early June could lead to a fast and significant increase in daily cases in all age groups," the agency said.

This increase could in turn lead to a rise in "hospitalisations, and deaths, potentially reaching the same levels of the autumn of 2020 if no additional measure are taken," it added.

Report: Pandemic Has Increased Trust In Media



Agencies

The pandemic has helped rebuild a little of the confidence lost in the media, and pushed news companies even more towards digital, according to the annual Reuters Institute report published on Wednesday.

The 10th edition of the report on digital news found that confidence in news reporting had risen six points to 44% since the start of the crisis.

The figures were based on a series of opinion polls conducted by YouGov in 46 countries, with more than 92,000 participants in total.

The highest rates of trust remained in Finland (65 percent) while the United States fell to the lowest among the countries covered, at just 29 percent.

France was little better at 30 percent despite an increase of seven points.

"The focus on factual reporting during the Covid-19 crisis may have made the news seem more straightforward, while the story has also had the effect of squeezing out more partisan political news," said lead author Nic Newman.

"This may be a temporary effect, but in almost all countries we see audiences placing a greater premium on accurate and reliable news sources."

Shift to digital

The Reuters Institute, based at Britain's University of Oxford, found increased consumption of mainstream news particularly in countries with "strong and independent public service media."

But it also said printed media remained in steep decline, worsened by the impact on sales and advertising revenue of the pandemic.

This has accelerated the shift towards digital subscriptions, especially in countries where physical sales had stayed relatively high like Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

However, in the roughly 20 countries where newspapers were actively developing their digital sales, only 17 percent of respondents said they paid for news online, up two points on last year's report and five compared to 2016.

The number of people paying for news was highest in wealthier countries with traditions of subscribing to physical newspapers, such as Norway (45%) and Sweden (30%).

The numbers were lower for the US (21%), France (11%), Germany (9%) and Britain (8%).

"Subscriptions are beginning to work for some publishers but it won't work for all publishers and most importantly, it won't work for all consumers," said co-author Rasmus Kleis Nielsen.

"Given abundant access to free news, publishers will need to develop compelling options to bundle publications or more ways of paying a smaller amount for limited access."

Misinformation
Meanwhile, trust in news shared on social media remained very low at 24%.

There has been a gradual increase in concern over misinformation, though it varies greatly between countries, from 82% in Brazil to 37% in Germany.

A large majority still want media to be impartial (74%) and believe opposing views should be given a balanced hearing (72%).

The report also found younger generations had weak links to traditional media, and were more likely to get their news from social media, aggregators and notifications. Facebook has lost ground to its subsidiaries WhatsApp and Instagram as a source of news.

No Scotland Independence Vote Before 2024



Agencies

Scotland will not be given a new referendum on independence before 2024, a senior UK cabinet minister said in an interview published on Wednesday.

Cabinet Office Minister Michael Gove, who heads a UK government strategy unit on policy for the country's four nations, said a vote was unlikely in the immediate future.

"I can't see it," Gove, a Scot, told the Daily Telegraph when asked if Prime Minister Boris Johnson would approve the move before the next scheduled UK general election.

"It's foolish to talk about a referendum now -- we're recovering from Covid," he added.

"It seems to me to be at best reckless, at worst folly, to try to move the conversation on to constitutional division when people expect us to be working together in order to deal with these challenges."

Renewed calls for a vote on Scottish independence are a potential headache for Johnson, despite a 2014 referendum which saw Scots voted by 55% to 45% to remain part of the UK.

After the result, Johnson called the referendum a once-in-a-generation event.

But Scottish National Party leader, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon,

reopened the debate after the 2016 referendum on UK membership of the European Union.

Scots in that vote opted by a majority to stay part of the bloc, with Sturgeon arguing that Scotland was being forced out against its will.

Brexit changed the constitutional relationship of Scotland with the rest of the UK, she said, and has since promised a new referendum on going it alone by late 2023.

She said the strong SNP showing at the last elections for the devolved parliament in Edinburgh in May gives a democratic mandate for a new referendum.

The SNP is backed by the Scottish Greens in support for a referendum.

But Sturgeon has promised to tackle the coronavirus pandemic as a priority.

She dismissed Gove's comments as "sneering, arrogant condescension" and a refusal "to accept Scottish democracy," which she said only bolsters the pro-independence cause.

London, which under the Scotland Act must transfer powers to hold a referendum to Edinburgh, needed to accept the democratic choices made in Scotland last month.

"If that can't even be respected, then the idea that the UK is a partnership of equals just completely disintegrates," she added.

Why A Private Israeli News Channel Is Making A Foray Into The UAE

TRT World

The channel has strong connections to former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and will broadcast its content from the UAE in a bid to reach Arab audiences.

In recent weeks, Gaza has been under constant Israeli bombardment while Palestinian residents of the centuries-old Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in occupied East Jerusalem face evictions from their homes.

But nothing has changed between Israel and the UAE who signed a normalisation deal last year. Now, a private Israeli channel with strong connections with the country's hardliner politician Benjamin Netanyahu announced on Monday that it will open a media office in Dubai.

"In the last year, we have witnessed regional diplomatic changes that enable business ties and opportunities for partnerships," said Frank Melloul, chief



executive of i24News, who is a Swiss-Israeli operator, and a former media adviser to the French government.

Yousef Alhelou, a Palestinian political analyst, sees the move as an act to normalise relations further between the two countries, whose diplomatic relationship has been strengthened with the normalisation deal to almost a level of an alliance.

"Dubai is a very important and strategic city, where Israel wants to have influence and spread information to the Arab world. Dubai is both an international city and a media centre. Having

an office there will make sure Israel has a voice within the Arab world," Alhelou tells TRT World.

Dubai Media Incorporated, a state-owned media organisation, also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Israeli group, signalling that i24news's UAE venture amounts to more than just a business opportunity.

i24news and the Dubai group will cooperate in various fields from media technology to content creation, connecting with each other through an optical line called "Fibre of Peace", which will also allow information sharing between the Gulf and Israel.

Hong Kong's Embattled Apple Daily To Close By June 26

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hong Kong's pro-democracy Apple Daily newspaper will close by this weekend, its parent company said Wednesday, following last week's arrest of five editors and executives and the freezing of \$2.3 million in assets under the city's national security law.

The board of directors of Next Media said in a statement that Apple Daily's print edition and online edition will cease no later than Saturday due to "the current circumstances prevailing in Hong Kong".

The paper's closure comes as authorities crack down on dissent following months of anti-government protests in 2019. The announcement also coincided with the start of the first trial under the national security law, imposed by Beijing



about a year ago.

The widely expected move to close Apple Daily followed last week's arrests of the five editors and executives, who were detained on suspicion of colluding with foreigners to endanger national security. Police cited more than 30 articles published by the paper as evidence of an alleged conspiracy to encourage foreign nations to impose sanctions on Hong Kong and China.

It was the freezing of assets that spelled the paper's demise. The board of directors had earlier this

week written to Hong Kong's security bureau requesting the release of some of its funds so the company could pay wages.

Police earlier Wednesday arrested a 55-year-old man on suspicion of foreign collusion to endanger national security. According to Apple Daily, which cited unidentified sources, the man writes editorials for the newspaper under the pseudonym Li Ping.

The police operation against Apple Daily drew criticism from the US, the EU and Britain, which say Hong Kong and Chinese authorities are targeting the freedoms promised to the city when the former British colony was returned to China in 1997.

Chinese and Hong Kong officials have said the media must abide by the law, and that press freedom cannot be used as a "shield" for illegal activities.

legal activities.

The national security law imposed last year criminalises subversion, secession, terrorism and foreign collusion.

The first person to stand trial under the law, Tong Ying-kit, pleaded not guilty Wednesday to charges of terrorism and inciting secession by driving a motorcycle into police officers during a 2019 rally while carrying a flag with the slogan "Liberate Hong Kong, the revolution of our times." Several officers were knocked over and three sustained injuries.

His trial will set the tone for how Hong Kong handles national security offenses. So far, more than 100 people have been arrested under the security law, including prominent pro-democracy activists such as media tycoon Jimmy Lai, the publisher of Apple Daily.

Bangladeshi Cleric Issues Fatwa On Facebook Emoji 'Haha'

Agencies

Ahmadullah, a prominent Muslim Bangladeshi cleric with a huge online following has issued a fatwa against people using Facebook's "haha" emoji to mock people.

He has more than three million followers on Facebook and YouTube and regularly appears on television shows to discuss religious issues in the Muslim-majority country.

On Saturday he posted a three-minute video in which he discussed the mocking of people on Facebook and issued a fatwa, an Islamic edict, explaining how it is "totally haram (forbidden)" for Muslims.

"Nowadays we use Facebook's haha emojis to mock people," Ah-

madullah said in the video, which has since been viewed more than two million times.

"If we react with haha emojis purely out of fun and the same was intended by the person who posted the content, it's fine."

But if your reaction was intended to mock or ridicule people who posted or made comments on social media, it's totally forbidden in Islam," Ahmadullah added.

"For God's sake I request you to refrain from this act. Do not react with 'haha' to mock someone. If you hurt a Muslim, he may respond with bad language that

would be unexpected."

Thousands of followers reacted to his video, most of them positively, although several hundred made fun of it -- using the "haha" emoji.

Ahmadullah is among Bangladesh's new crop of internet-savvy Islamic preachers who have drawn millions of followers online.

Their commentaries on religious and social issues are hugely popular, drawing millions of views per video.

Some have earned notoriety with bizarre claims on the origin of the coronavirus. A few are accused of preaching hatred, while several have turned into celebrities for their fun-filled videos.

NEWS MAKERS

Shopian To Have Youth Club In Every Panchayat: DC



Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: Laying emphasis on the creation of Youth engagement avenues at the Panchayat level, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Sachin Kumar Vaishya Wednesday directed for establishing Youth Clubs in every Panchayat across the district.

The Youth Clubs shall be established for constructive activities and addressing all the concerns of the young generation and shall act as the nerve centres for all youth programs, community involvement, IEC, Sports & Cultural activities, the DC maintained.

Vaishya said this during the

meeting of Mission Youth at Mini Secretariat, Arhama, and a threadbare discussion was also held on the Youth engagement and Livelihood generation programmes in the district.

Emphasising on effective execution of the programme, the DC directed the concerned officers to focus on effective implementation of youth-oriented schemes on-ground so that the unemployed youth of the district can avail the benefits of various schemes meant for their better future. He further called for convergence and linkages of existing schemes with the proposed ones to yield better results.

Several Teachers Felicitated At Nation Builder Award Ceremony In Baramulla



Observer News Service

BARAMULLA: To recognise the performance of teachers who worked selflessly and with utmost dedication especially during the current circumstances, Rotary Club Wednesday organised Nation Builders Award Ceremony in Baramulla in which several teachers from across the district were felicitated for their remarkable and excellent contribution in the field of education.

Additional District Development Commissioner Baramulla, Aijaz Abdullah Saraaf was the

Chief Guest on the occasion.

On the occasion, the ADDC extended his gratitude to the awardees and complimented the organizers for conducting such a felicitation ceremony. He said that teachers are in reality nation builders whose contribution towards the upliftment of society cannot be overlooked.

He further added that the administration will take several novel measures to compensate for the academic loss incurred due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent closure of educational institutions.

Progress Of PMGSY Roads Reviewed In Bandipora

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: The Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Bandipora Afsar Ali Khan on Wednesday chaired a meeting to review the progress of road construction under PMGSY.

The ADDC reviewed the progress of various works and discussed the bottlenecks that hinder the progress of projects. On-spot directions were passed for resolution of various issues so that the pace of work can be expedited to complete the projects on a fast-track basis.

The ADDC exhorted upon all the

identifying and executing agencies to expedite the pace of work and adhere to the timeline set for the completion of these Roads. He stressed for adopting the target specific approach in the effective completion of works and directed Ex. Engineers set the targets for the same.

He further directed them to work in tandem with the PRIs to monitor the pace and quality of works at grass roots level.

The meeting was attended by Joint Director Planning, Imtiyaz Ahmad, Executive Engineer PMGSY, AEEs and other senior officers of the district.

SEHAT Scheme Game Changer In Healthcare Services: Govt

Rs 86 Cr Spent On 86000 Treatments In First Six Months



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government, undertaking path breaking interventions to holistically address the healthcare issues in Jammu and Kashmir, has provided 86000 free and cashless treatments worth Rs. 86 crore to the beneficiaries under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) SEHAT, since the first six months of launch of this world's largest health insurance scheme fully financed by the government.

A senior government official informed that out of 70000 claims worth Rs. 75 crore submitted by empanelled hospitals, 50000 claims worth Rs. 40 crore have been paid till date under AB-PMJAY and AB-

PMJAY SEHAT schemes.

Chief Executive Office, State Health Agency (SHA) J&K, Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray, while elaborating on progress of the schemes told, "AB-PMJAY and AB PMJAY SEHAT are the most ambitious schemes of government of Jammu and Kashmir. "We are introducing several innovations in the ecosystem of the scheme like implementation of Standard Treatment Guidelines, Establishment of District Implementation Units (DIUs), reforms in functioning of Pradhan Mantri Arogya Mitras, real time-based monitoring system for Insurance Company and Empanelled Hospitals, strengthening of supply side and introduction of smart Ayushman Cards to further streamline these schemes so that residents may

avail free, cashless and hassle free benefits from reputed empanelled hospitals across the country", he maintained.

This being the most prestigious scheme is being monitored regularly by Additional Chief Secretary Health and Medical Education, Atal Dulloo, who in a statement maintained that, "this ambitious health insurance scheme is going to be the game changer as far as provision of healthcare services is concerned. It will on one hand help residents of J&K to avail quality healthcare services and on the other hand will strengthen and streamline the supply-side in the health service delivery paradigm."

Pertinently, Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) SEHAT, launched by the Prime Minister on 26th December 2020, aims to provide Universal Health Insurance Coverage of Rs. 5.00 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization across public and private empanelled hospitals in India on a floater basis. AB PM-JAY SEHAT has the same benefits as available under AB-PMJAY. This scheme covers all residents of Jammu and Kashmir including employees and pensioners of Government of Jammu and Kashmir and their families.

AB-PMJAY AND AB PMJAY SEHAT ARE THE MOST ambitious schemes of government of Jammu and Kashmir.

Mission Youth To Select 2500 Students For Competitive Exams' Coaching

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Mission Youth J&K has initiated process to support more than 2500 students every year for undergoing competitive examination coaching to prepare them for competing at national level in various examinations. Mission will also organise special coaching for NEET and JKPSC examinations.

CEO Mission Youth and Secretary to Government, Tribal Affairs Department, Shahid Iqbal Choudhary informed that under this initiative deserving students will be pro-



vided scholarship assistance for competitive examinations coaching. This will include UPSC Civil Services Examination, J&K PSC Combined Services Competitive Examination, Judicial Service, Engi-

neering Services and other All India level examinations.

Dr Shahid said that aspirants qualifying preliminary competitive examination shall be provided scholarship/ sponsorship for Mains examination coaching in best institutions with proven track record and having best faculty. Likewise all the students qualifying Mains examination shall also be provided coaching for personality test and interviews.

A mechanism of screening test is being finalised for such students who intend to undergo coaching for Preliminary Examination.

Dialysis Services Resume At DH Ganderbal Recovery Rate Increases To 97 Percent In Ganderbal: DC

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Kritika Jyotsna Wednesday informed that the Dialysis unit has been made functional at District Hospital (DH) and people who are in need of dialysis can avail the services.

The DC said that the positivity rate has come down to 5 percent while recovery rate has increased to 97 percent be-



sides the mortality rate is just

0.8 percent in the district. She said currently there are 55 active containment zones in the district and about 55 percent active positive population is from these zones.

The DC appealed to the people residing in these containment zones to provide full cooperation to the authorities who visit these zones for sampling and testing adding that these zones are notified for their safety.

Vaccine Imperative To Defeat Covid: DC Kulgam

Observer News Service

KULGAM: Vaccine is an effective and imperative tool to defeat Covid-19 and people who have not taken the jab shall get themselves vaccinated at an earliest appealed Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to people during a presser at mini-secretariat.

The DC stated that the situation has improved in the district and presently there are only 260 active positive patients in the district and bed occupancy has also reduced with only 09 positive patients admitted in Covid hospital.

He stated that to detect the persons who have contracted covid infection, aggressive testing is being carried out and on a daily basis nearly 2000 tests are being done.



The recovery rate has shown significant improvement and presently the recovery rate stands at 98 percent, added DC.

The DC impressed upon all stakeholders and the general public to adhere to COVID-19 appropriate behavior (CAB) during unlock to prevent any spike in infections.

DC Budgam For Strict Action Against Defaulting Contractors



Observer News Service

BUDGAM: A meeting to review the status of works taken in hand, ongoing, works completed under MGNREGA, IWMP and 14th FC was convened Wednesday under the chairmanship of District Development Commissioner (DDC) Budgam, Shahbaz Ahmed Mirza.

The meeting also reviewed the pace and progress made on the works and projects taken up under the B2V programme across the district in all 296 panchayats.

The DC reiterated that targets shall be completed as soon as possible, keeping in view the overall improvement in Covid-19 situation. He said our focus shall be to use as many resources for conservation of water and its harvesting.

The DC further instructed all BDOs and concerned engineers

to give impetus to developmental scenarios since the funding under District Capex has been increased.

He emphasised that timely payment, Aadhar linking and Geo tagging of assets shall be carried out on war footing basis. There shall be strict action taken against defaulting contractors for not initiating works related to rural development, the DC added.

While giving details, the ACD Budgam, Nuzhat Qureshi said that under MGNREGA programme for the Financial Year 2021-22 about 2100 works have been identified to be taken up. Among these, estimation of 1414 works is completed in different areas. She said an amount of Rs. 42.11 Cr has been allotted under MGNREGA for the financial year of 2021-22. She added that works identified include 552 spill over targets as well.

Ex. Magistrate Gurez Warns Of Strict Action Against Early Harvesting Of Kala Zeera

Observer News Service

GREZ: The Executive Magistrate 1st Class Gurez Wednesday said that very often complaints are being received regarding early harvesting of Kala ZEERA (black Cumin) by locals especially from Nayl, Khopri, Khandiyal, Chorwan, Chuntiwari, Achoora, Dawar, Mastan, Markoot, Badwan Wanpora etc.

The Ex. Magistrate said that early harvesting of Kala Zeera before fruits (seeds) attain maturity has led to a decrease in its productivity in recent times. Kala zeera is precious, the identity, and heritage crop of Gurez & also Kala zeers is Indigenous to Gurez, he added.

Thus public of Gurez in general and public of Nayl, Khopri, Khandiyal, Chorwan, Chuntiwari, Achoora, Dawar, Mastan,



Badwan and Wanpora etc. in particular are informed to restraint from early harvesting of Kala Zeera and failure to do so shall tantamount to wilful negligence and action as warranted under rules shall be initiated against defaulters/ violators.

Abdullah's, Tarigami, Others Condemn Killing Of Police Inspector

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah and Vice President Omar Abdullah on Wednesday condemned the killing of a cop, who was shot near his home in Nowgam.

Dr Farooq in his condolence message said, "I condemn the killing of the cop in unequivocal terms. The killing is a grim reminder of the jinxed fate of our region. There is no place for such acts in today's world. I express my sympathies with the bereaved and pray for peace to departed."

Omar Abdullah said such attacks should be condemned without any reservation. "The terrible news coming from Nowgam

about the killing of a cop is heart wrenching. I mince no words in my condemnation of the outrageous bloodshed. The violence in all its forms and manifestations constitutes the most serious threat to the dignity of human life and universal peace. I express my deepest sympathies with his family and pray for peace to the departed soul," he said.

CPI(M) leader Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami and Apni Party President Altaf Bukhari also condemned the killing of police inspector and said that violence in any form is condemnable.

Tarigami termed the incident as unfortunate and said that there is an urgent need to put an end to these killings.

Bukhari termed the attack as shocking and heart

I CONDEMN THE KILLING OF THE cop in unequivocal terms. The killing is a grim reminder of the jinxed fate of our region. There is no place for such acts in today's world. I express my sympathies with the bereaved and pray for peace to departed."

wrenching while expressing condolences with the bereaved family.

In a statement, J&K Pradesh Congress Committee condemned the killing of Dar and expressed anguish over the loss of precious life.

"Congress Party feels disappointed over this brutal and mindless act and urge the Govt to ensure exemplary punishment to killers of slain JKP Inspector." The Party expressed solidarity with the bereaved family, and conveyed heartfelt condolences to family and friends of slain Pervez Ah-

mad Dar and prayed for his eternal peace.

Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Conference condemned the killing, terming such actions "barbarous and inhuman".

Chairman People's Democratic Front (PDF) Hakeem Yaseen expressed grief over the killing.

In a statement, Yaseen expressed sympathies with the bereaved family. He said violence has no place in a civilised society and such acts have only brought miseries, worries, blood shed and mayhem in Jammu and Kashmir

ARTO Baramulla Suspends Dozens Of Driving Licenses, Route Permits

Observer News Service

BARAMULLA: Assistant Regional Transport officer (ARTO) Baramulla Mubashir Jan has suspended driving licenses of twenty six drivers besides route permits of twenty one vehicles, an official of ARTO Baramulla said Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the team has also imposed fine on hundreds of violators from whom a fine of one lac and twenty Six thousand was also recovered from different checking points at Sopore and Uri areas. Main violators which were booked are two wheelers and passenger vehicles.

He said that the department will continue the drive against violators of Motor Vehicle rules & Act by drivers.

Drug Peddler Arrested In Anantnag

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police Wednesday claimed to have arrested a drug peddler in Anantnag and recovered contraband substance from his possession.

A police spokesperson said that officers from Police Station Kokernag at a checkpoint at Watnard intercepted a vehicle bearing registration number JK03D-3168 driven by Fayaz Ahmad Lone son of Mohd Khalil Lone, a resident of Guri Hanjipora. "During checking, officers were able to recover 550 grams of Charas from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody. Vehicle used in the commission of crime has also been seized."

Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 120/2021 under relevant sections of law stands registered at Police Station



Kokernag and investigation has been taken up.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson said that during the last 24 hours it lodged 2 FIRs and also realised fine of 8,49,940/- from 5674 people throughout the Kashmir valley for violating the various guidelines/rules/SOPs regarding Covid-19.

The special drive against the violators of Covid-19 guidelines/rules continued throughout all the districts of Kashmir Valley to ensure that people adhere to SOPs/guidelines envisaged by government to curb COVID-19 pandemic.

DURING CHECKING, OFFICERS WERE ABLE TO RECOVER 550 grams of Charas from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody. Vehicle used in the commission of crime has also been seized."

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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K O V I E W

Reason for hope

The leaders of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), have decided to participate in meeting called by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on June 24. On Tuesday, the leaders met at the residence of the grouping's chairman and National Conference chief Farooq Abdullah to decide their course of action. Earlier, the parties had held consultations within their own parties on Delhi's outreach. Speaking on behalf of the alliance, Abdullah said that Mehbooba Mufti, Mohammad Yusuf Tarigami and he himself will attend the meeting and present their position to the prime minister.

It will become clear on Thursday what the centre has up its sleeve. The meeting has no agenda. But the people generally expect the statehood, delimitation commission and the elections to be discussed. It seems out of question that the centre will be willing to discuss the reversal of the withdrawal of Article 370 that granted J&K its special status under India's constitution. But for now the return of statehood would be a welcome step in Kashmir. People would certainly want elections to take place and an elected government in power. It is now for over three years that the former state has been under a central rule. So, people would want the elected representatives they could approach to resolve their issues.

As for Article 370, the only remote hope it could be reversed is if the Supreme Court overturns government move. But so far the court has not found time to hear the petitions challenging the revocation of J&K autonomy.

Be that as it may, the centre's decision to call J&K political parties for a meeting is a welcome decision. More so, as it is being chaired by the prime minister himself. The meeting may not immediately find a solution to the current troubles of the union territory but it will certainly set in motion a process that could do so in the weeks and months to come.

Some observers are looking at the development as part of the ongoing back-channel talks between India and Pakistan. It could very well be so. The two countries have reportedly been engaging to sort out their issues since December last year. And both the neighbours have been working on confidence building measures to take the process forward. But whatever the motivations for the current outreach, it is a welcome initiative. Much more so, for Kashmiris who have not only been the victims of the lingering conflict between the two neighbours but have also immensely suffered during the uncertainty of the last two years.

O T H E R O P I N I O N

Table Beckons

The Centre's decision to — at long last — kindle the process of political engagement in Kashmir is welcome. The intent is unmistakable: no less than the prime minister is expected to convene a meeting tomorrow that would be attended by Kashmir's major political stakeholders, including the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration, a coalition of six parties, which has confirmed its participation. The PAGD's response is magnanimous. After monumental disruptions were introduced by the Narendra Modi government in 2019 — Jammu and Kashmir was stripped of statehood and its special provisions, the Valley put under a security blanket, speedy internet services denied to its populations — leaders of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party began discrediting Kashmir's political leadership. Numerous leaders were incarcerated, and their legacies demonized. The BJP's strategy was to first create a vacuum by discrediting Kashmir's political constituency and then try and fill that space through such radical interventions as floating supine outfits or creating an alternative tier of governance through the District Development Council. These objectionable experiments faltered because the political legitimacy of the BJP's adversaries remained intact, forcing Mr Modi and his wise men to eat crow. The present outreach needs to be read in this context. It remains to be seen whether the Centre can reclaim the moral high ground that it willingly ceded almost two years ago.

The PAGD is also confronting its own challenges. There seems to be general consensus among its constituents to press for the restoration of Kashmir's statehood but it is not clear whether its members can achieve similar concurrence on the resurrection of Article 370, which remains a highly emotive issue. Mr Modi would do well not to exploit the gaps, if any, in the alliance because New Delhi needs to negotiate two tricky issues itself: a contentious delimitation exercise and the holding of assembly elections. The Centre must also be mindful of the possibility that success in Kashmir, even if it were to be incremental, could yield diplomatic capital in its future engagements with Islamabad. In fact, a breakthrough in these talks can generate momentum in the dialogue with Pakistan that remains stalled. Given the rapidly changing geostrategic situation in Afghanistan and an inflamed border with China, stability on India's western border is of critical importance. That stability could well be predicated on the outcome of the political dialogue in Kashmir.

Telegraph India

Foot and Mouth Disease Can Ruin Our Mutton Industry

Death & disease depressing farmers and shepherds
. NADCP fails to keep our sheep healthy

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

If there are
20 trained
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To control foot and mouth disease (FMD) & brucellosis in India, Prime Minister Modi launched the National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP) in September, 2019. Government of India aims at vaccinating 100% cattle, buffalo, sheep, goat and pig population for FMD and 100% bovine female calves of 4-8 months of age for brucellosis with the total outlay of Rs.13, 343.00 crore for five years (2019-20 to 2023-24). The aim of the National Animal Disease Control Programme for FMD and Brucellosis (NADCP) is to control FMD by 2025 with vaccination and its eventual eradication by 2030. This will result in increased domestic production and ultimately in increased exports of milk and live-stock products. NADCP is a centrally sponsored scheme wherein 100% funding is provided by the Union Government to the States / UTs. Inspite of 100 % funding, authorities at helm have failed to procure anti FMD vaccines in J&K. There is a huge shortage of these vaccines. The sheep husbandry department officials say that the animal husbandry department is the nodal agency for NADCP implementation and they are supposed to procure the vaccines. The officers in animal husbandry departments claim that because of COVID 19 second wave the procurement got delayed, but this is not a satisfactory answer at all.

Recently, Abdul Rashid who lives in remote Basant Wodder village of Khansahib sub division in Budgam flagged an issue related to some disease, which showed all resemblance to FM disease, affecting the sheep population in Manzem Pather , Shongel Pall and Pal Maidan meadows. These are the designated pasturelands located in Raithan forest range near Doodh-Pathri where Kashmir shepherds halt for a month or so before moving to the upper reaches of Pir Panjaal by June 15th.

The issue was soon amplified online and the Technical Officer in District Sheep husbandry office Budgam, Dr Jan Mohammad responded quickly. In his comment on my facebook post , the officer said:

“We are on it and the whole staff of Budgam organization is working tirelessly round the clock reaching out to sheep farmers. By the timely action initiated by District Organization including strategic ring vaccination and on time symptomatic treatment , the situation is by and large under control with negligible to no mortalities of late”

However, soon, locals flagged the issue of the death of 50-60 sheep in the last two weeks in the Dishkhal area which was confirmed by sheep farmers as well. However, the matter is being underplayed and even dismissed as false.

Ghulam Mohammad Chopan, a shepherd, had called the owner upon the death of a lamb from FMD, only to be told off. He said, “Nobody trusts us. We are being labeled as liars. The owners who live in the villages around this pastureland, do come here to see dead bodies of their sheep but those who hail from far off villages neither come here nor they trust us “

Another shepherd, Bashir Ahmad Chopan from Lanilabb



Mujpathri had requested some officials of the sheep husbandry department to come to his rescue. Instead, they yelled, “I was threatened by some officials who told me that I would be sent behind bars” instead of redressing the matter.

Bashir's elder brother alleged that officials of the sheep department were more concerned about their private practice rather than coming to treat their flock.

Foot and mouth disease also called FMD is a viral disease that affects cloven hoofed animals like cattle, deer, pigs, antelopes, gazelles, goats and sheep. The left hoof, divided hoof or split hoof is a hoof split into two toes. The FMD virus which belongs to the Picornaviridae family of viruses causes high fever which lasts for 2 to 6 days. This is followed by lingual blisters which affect the oral cavity as well. The feet also get affected causing lameness due to their rupture.

According to Dr Imran, Technical Officer to Director Sheep Husbandry Kashmir, FMD was most common in cattle (cows , bulls , buffaloes) but this time there was a sudden surge of this infectious disease in sheep. These complaints were brought to the attention of District sheep husbandry officer Budgam Dr Ashraf Baba.

Additionally, a first aid camp which had to be set up on June 15th in the Diskhal area was non-functional until June 21st (12 noon). Those responsible must be made accountable. Atleast, awareness campaigns should be designed to enlighten shepherds so they can minimise mortality and limit the disease in their sheep.

Every year from May 15th onwards 80 % of the sheep population go to highland meadows with shepherds. The shepherds are paid by sheep farmers @ Rs 350 to 450 per season. The season lasts between 4 to 6 months. If the majority of the sheep are in meadows , the adequate number of vets and para-vets need to be with them. These professionals are highly paid and they have no business sitting in their block or district offices. If there are 20 trained vets working for the sheep husbandry department in a district , at least 15 must be with the shepherds in pasturelands for at least 4 to 5 months on a rational basis. In fact, there is a roaster maintained by the department of sheep husbandry for some professional vets. They are supposed

to be available in meadows for a given period of time two weeks a month, but in some cases these veterinary doctors skip the duties and ask the para-vets like flock assistants , flock supervisors to run the show. On the other hand the officers (qualified vets) draw TA, DA as well from Government treasury. This issue needs to be taken seriously and duty roaster should be maintained for all the vets and para vets so that they are available in the meadows all the time in summer months on a rotational basis.

The FMD cases were seen in Kashmir around April or May for the first time . The Govt should have procured the vaccines around the same time. How could COVID 19 be an impediment in making orders for medicine procurement by the sheep or animal husbandry department ? Even after so many sheep mortalities, there is severe dearth of these vaccines. The Sheep husbandry department has procured some 50,000 to 60,000 vaccines from its own resources which will not suffice even 5 % of sheep population in J&K.

As per 20th livestock census of 2018-19 sheep population was estimated to be around 32 lakhs (3.2 million) in Jammu & Kashmir. Experts say that the population of sheep has been on rise in Kashmir valley for the last 10 years and now we have different varieties of sheep available, which not only produce good quality mutton but also are known for quality wool. Majority of the local sheep available in Kashmir is of Kashmir Marino variety which is the cross breed between Merino Ram and traditional Kashmiri eve. Educated young men and women are opting for sheep farming as they see it as a career in view of local mutton demand. Sheep husbandry department should work in such a way that more youth opt for sheep farming in the next 5 to 10 years. They need to guide the sheep farmers and shepherds constantly and work with full zeal and dedication.

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

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The Only Way is Peaceful Coexistence

It is said that thousands of years back, Kashmir valley was a large water body popularly known as Satisar. Legend has it that one holy man, Kashyap Rishi, by his spiritual power drained out the water and the land gradually became dry. With the passage of time the land became known as Kashmir or kashir. The people who occupied the valley spoke Kashmiri language with Hinduism as their religion.

Due to its geography and strategic position, the land of Kashmir became the gateway to central Asia as well as China and Russia. On account of its

location, it became a hub of political, economic and military activities in the following eras. The valley became the main epicenter and subsequently synonymous with kashmiri identity. Later, Buddhist religion spread in Kashmir and as a result most of kashmiri Hindus changed their religion from Hinduism to Buddhism. After some period the valley was again over powered by Hindu rulers. Most of the people who had adopted Buddhism returned back to their parent religion as Shaivite Hindus.

, in the early 1400 AD some Islamic scholars led by sufi Islamic Scholar

Mir Syed Ali of Hamdan (Iran) visited the valley with the object of spreading Islam. He succeeded in converting a large number of Shaivite Hindus to Islam. For this purpose, he deputed many Islamic scholars and preachers from Iran who imparted Islamic knowledge to these converted Hindus. Thus, the valley became majority Muslim region. Nevertheless, there were still many Hindus. In this period, Kashmir produced great spiritual personalities especially Lal Ishwari (Lal Ded) and Nund Resh (Sheikh Nuruddin wali).

Human nature is colorfully mul-

tifaceted. Trying to straitjacket it is foolish and dangerous. Kashmiri Hindus and kashmiri Muslims belong to the same stock. Therefore, hatred or any religious bickering is unnecessary.

In Kashmir, people should preserve their age old ethos of composite culture. Vested interest and divisive forces need to be identified and isolated.

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Israel-Palestine: The natural order of occupation is coming to an end

David Hearst

The losers of the Gaza war - Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA) - have each responded to the demonstrations that took place in Jerusalem, Ramallah and throughout the occupied West Bank during those 11 days with the use of maximum force. “Calm” has been restored to Palestinian quarters of towns and villages in Israel and the occupied West Bank through mass arrests.

At the last count, Israeli forces had arrested more than 2,100 Palestinians within Israel, 1800 in the occupied West Bank, Jerusalem and inside Israel since last April. In addition the Ramallah-based Lawyers for Justice reports that 20 Palestinians have been arrested by the PA preventative security, mostly for “inciting sectarian strife” and “slander” against the PA.

Police at the Nazareth station created what Adalah, the legal centre for Arab minority rights in Israel, called a “torture room”. Detainees were reportedly led to a room on the left side of the station’s entrance corridor, and forced to sit on the floor handcuffed and to lower their heads towards the floor.

Police officers then “began to beat them on all parts of their bodies, using kicks and clubs, slamming their heads against walls or doors, and more. Officers wounded the detainees, terrorized them, and whomever dared to lift his head upwards risked more beatings by officers. According to affidavits, the floor of the room was covered in blood from the beatings.” Adalah noted.

According to the Palestinian Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners Affairs Authority, the recent arrests across the country “were accompanied by brutal attacks, including insults, beatings, and vandalism of the contents of citizens’ homes and property”.

But neither Israel nor the PA have yet managed to restore order in the way they have traditionally understood the concept. This is because they are finding that there is no “new normal” to return to; something has fundamentally changed.

Two-state myth crumbling

The status quo that for decades served Israel’s expansionist interests and those of its western backers, who nurtured the myth that a two-state solution could be achieved under the right alignment of the stars, is crumbling.

This status quo has consisted of a complete nuclear fuel cycle: Palestinian evictions and Jewish settlements in salami slices; short bombing campaigns to “mow the lawn” of Palestinian armed resistance; and talks that extract cumulative concessions from the Palestinian leadership, laying the groundwork for more settlements, as Palestinian negotiators had already surrendered the point.

Long before Netanyahu’s plan to annex the settlements in occupied East Jerusalem, the late Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat had already offered his Israeli counterpart, Tzipi Livni, “the biggest Yerushalayim [Jerusalem] in history”.

The natural order of occupation is coming to an end. On both the Israeli and Palestinian side alike, the collapse of this order is taking place simultaneously in processes that are linked, but still independent of each other.

After four inconclusive elections, Israel itself is in ferment. The prime minister-designate, Naftali Bennett, and his deputy in Yamina, Ayelet Shaked, have been assigned extra police protection as the head of Shin Bet, Israel’s internal security service, warned that rising incitement on social media could lead to “violent action”.

Parallels are being drawn to the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin - but unlike those days, when Israel was dominated by two main parties, Labor and Likud, the Knesset today is fractured into various small parties. The biggest is Likud,



which won 30 seats in the last election.

Right on right

The incitement is being orchestrated by the clan around the outgoing prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. Hagi Ben-Artzi, the brother of Sara Netanyahu, the prime minister’s wife, said that Bennett’s intention to partner with the centrist Yair Lapid met the biblical definition of “treason”. Netanyahu’s son, Yair, has had his Instagram and Twitter accounts suspended temporarily after he published the home address of Nir Orbach, a Knesset member from the Yamina party.

In echoes of former US President Donald Trump’s refusal to acknowledge defeat, Netanyahu said Israel was witnessing the “greatest election fraud” in history. Netanyahu is treating his imminent ouster as an existential threat to Israel itself, even invoking the story of Moses; those who opposed him were punished by God when the ground opened up and swallowed them.

Similar apocalyptic events await Israel itself. Netanyahu has described the new government led by the far-right Bennett as a “dangerous left-wing government” backed by “terror supporters” who would be incapable of standing up to Israel’s enemies, such as Iran (one of those “terror supporters”, Mansour Abbas, is a Palestinian Knesset member who Netanyahu himself has assiduously cultivated.)

Veteran political analyst and MEE commentator Meron Rapoport said that while Netanyahu built his political base on extreme polarisation, the discourse of hatred is now eating the right-wing itself.

“The incitement is very, very aggressive. But what is interesting is that this discourse of polarisation has entered the right camp itself,” Rapoport said, noting that Netanyahu believes his only way to maintain power is to call Bennett a traitor, while at the same time, his supporters are threatening to kill Knesset members. “Because they hail from the same right-wing camp and were close to each other, the anger and sense of betrayal are even stronger.”

Another MEE commentator, Orly Noy, noted: “Netanyahu broke everything that was considered state-owned, such as the justice system and the police. This means complete chaos in all systems. He broke all the tools that once preserved Jewish statehood. And now we are seeing the fruits of his work.”

According to Rapoport, if Netanyahu succeeds in destroying the coalition government

before it is sworn in, Israel itself will become a failed state. “Half of the Israelis who voted for the change government will think that Netanyahu’s rule is illegitimate in a situation that is close to how the Palestinians see the regime in Israel,” he said. “Israel will approach disintegration, so we are in a dramatic moment. If he tries to prevent the change of government, I think the institutions are strong enough to overlap with Netanyahu, but it is not certain. It is [a] very dramatic time and one of the Knesset members could be harmed.”

Collapse of leadership

The collapse in political leadership is no less significant on the Palestinian side in Ramallah. The PA leadership in general, and President Mahmoud Abbas in particular, is attempting to smother a wave of anger at all levels of Fatah. Most of it is circulating on private WhatsApp groups.

One Fatah loyalist, who at one time held a senior position and spoke on condition of anonymity, told MEE: “The people of Fatah are very angry. What Hamas is doing now is what Fatah did during the First Intifada. Fatah believed in the struggle against occupation, in liberation, in the armed struggle. What Abu Mazen has done is to empty Fatah of any meaning, any purpose, any fight for freedom or liberation.

“The tanzim of Fatah on the ground are not happy with Abu Mazen and his people. The leadership want to keep the status quo because they want the money; they want to preserve their investments in land deals. They want to keep the occupation as it is, because without it, they have no role.”

Most of that frustration is below the surface, but some of it is public. Nasser al-Qudwa, a former member of Fatah’s central committee, Palestinian representative to the UN and foreign minister, was kicked out of Fatah for refusing to run under a list headed by the Palestinian president, but he still regards himself as “Fatah to the bone”. He is late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat’s nephew.

I asked him whether the 85-year-old Abbas was still fit to lead his people after postponing what would have been the first Palestinian elections in 14 years. Qudwa replied: “Well, I wouldn’t like to personalise things, but I think the current situation is untenable. We need to change, and change in my mind means changing persons, personalities; changing policies, as well as changing positions. The continuation of what we have now will lead to only more problems and

more catastrophes for the Palestinian people.”

Had those elections gone ahead, Qudwa has no doubt that his list would have done better than Abbas’s - and that had presidential elections followed and Marwan Barghouti put his name forward from Israeli prison, he would have won.

The failures of Abbas

Another sign of Abbas’s draining authority was a recent letter calling on him to stand down, written by leading Palestinian academics. It has since gotten more than 3,000 signatures. It was, of course, more than just a letter; it was the start of a campaign to rebuild the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Their statement noted that Abbas was the most significant absentee during recent events, including an uprising in Jerusalem over evictions in Sheikh Jarrah and incursions by armed settlers into al-Aqsa Mosque.

“After the battle was over, Abbas added to his political record another failure by failing to show solidarity with the suffering of the Palestinian people,” the letter stated. “He did not bother visiting the families of martyrs in Gaza and the West Bank. It was a national and golden opportunity to visit the Gaza Strip, seizing this moment and considering it the beginning of ending the division, but instead, he revealed the depth of the self-paralysis in which the president placed himself.”

A new generation of Palestinians is powering this change. They were born after Oslo, and are utterly disconnected from Ramallah and its leadership. Even Ramallah, considered the Tel Aviv of the occupied West Bank, saw demonstrations by thousands of Palestinians in a visible affront to its silent and absent president. This stings because it is true, and it is not coming from Hamas.

This generation regards itself as one people from the river to the sea. While Abbas applies to Israel for permission each time he moves with his security detail within the occupied West Bank, this generation does not limit itself to walls and checkpoints imposed by the occupying power. Jerusalemites and Palestinians from 1948 are not under Abbas’s control, let alone that of Fatah or the defunct PLO.

Clear message

Abbas has nothing to say to these Palestinians because he has achieved nothing for them. Three decades of talks after the Palestinian recognition of Israel have achieved nothing except the disintegration of all Palestinian institutions involved in the dialogue: the Palestinian National Council, the PLO and the Central Council.

“We have the right to pause now and ask: what is the result? And what did the president achieve for his people? What rights have I got?” the statement by the Palestinian academics asked.

Abbas should indeed go, if only to preserve Fatah’s legacy as a liberation organisation. US President Joe Biden and his secretary of state, Tony Blinken - two other absentee landlords of the Palestinian conflict - will not save him, nor will all the tax money that Israel gives him and all the patronage that flows from that.

For Biden and Blinken, the message is clear: the days when the leadership of the Palestinian people could be fixed in advance by a candidate agreeable to them and to Israel are gone. The fastest way of ending this conflict is to allow the leadership to renew itself, and to let it represent the Palestinian people.

Abbas and the entire current leadership of the PA can do neither. To keep them in power is to maintain one of the essential ingredients of Israel’s occupation.

Middle East Eye

Delta Plus: Key things to know about new coronavirus variant in India

Delta Plus, the new variant of coronavirus, has come under focus following reports of a number of newly detected cases from various parts of Maharashtra as well as a few other states.

Over 20 cases of Delta Plus infections have been found in Maharashtra, news agency PTI reported quoting state Health minister Rajesh Tope.

The state health authorities had said last week that the newly identified variant could potentially trigger a third wave of Covid.

As for how widespread Delta plus is, enough samples have not been genome-sequenced to know. Only about 200 sequences were detected across the globe and just around 30 in India. Maharashtra is seeking complete information about the people detected with the Delta plus variant, including their travel history, whether they were vaccinated or not, and if they were reinfectd.

Where was Delta Plus first detected?

The variant was first seen in Europe in March this year. In was, however, brought into the public domain only on June 13.

According to scientists, the Delta variant (B.1.617.2) has further mutated to form the Delta Plus (AY.1) variant.

Virologists are looking to find out if this new variant may be able to evade pre-existing immunity better than either Delta or Beta.

What do we know so far?

Based on what is known so far, Delta Plus is considered highly infectious. There is rising concern in some quarters following warnings by experts that Delta Plus may show resistance against monoclonal antibodies cocktail treatments such as the Roche and Cipla ones being marketed in India at steep prices (almost Rs 60,000 per dose).

One potential risk that has sparked unease among the medical community is that the new variant may be able to bypass immunity provided by both vaccine and earlier infection.

However, at the moment, there is no proof that

Based on what is known so far, Delta Plus is considered highly infectious. There is rising concern in some quarters following warnings by experts that Delta Plus may show resistance against monoclonal antibodies cocktail treatments such as the Roche and Cipla ones being marketed in India at steep prices

this variant could be more transmissible than others, says Prof Shahid Jameel, former INSACOG (Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortia) member and one of the premier virologists in the country.

It is a cause for worry but not panic; whether Delta Plus can beat pre-existing immunity better than earlier variants remains to be seen, he adds.

Will Delta Plus be more transmissible?

Delta Plus has the mutation called K417N —

first found in the Beta variant (South Africa). This, coupled with the fact that it also possesses all other features of its predecessor Delta, might make the latest variant a lot more transmissible, some scientists seem to think.

The K417N mutation is within the receptor-binding domain of the spike protein, and this change is noteworthy because this mutation is also found in the B.1.351 or Beta variant of concern, said Prof Jameel.

The combination of features from other, earlier variants could make Delta Plus adapt better to

pull off an immune escape, Prof Jameel told news agency ANI.

Where does India stand?

The prevalence of this new variant is still low in India, data shows. Delta remains the dominant variant in the country as of now.

Apart from Maharashtra, the other states reportedly seeing Delta Plus cases include Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh so far.

Delta Plus is not yet classified as a Variant of Concern (VOC). As of now, it is a Variant of Interest (VoI).

INSACOG is currently studying the potential transmissibility/severity of the new variant. Studies are also on to find out if this variant was prevalent in India during March-April, around the peak of the second wave. A detail report is expected shortly.

What are the odds of Delta Plus sparking a Wave 3?

There is no certainty and the current low number is no indication of any trend. Even the B.1.617, the variant at the heart of India’s devastating second wave, had been found in very low numbers just ahead of the surge, before reaching epic transmissibility levels over the next two and a half months.

How are vaccines likely to fare against Delta Plus? There is no telling. The two Indian vaccines have shown 3 to 8 times less efficacy against Delta and Beta, reports say. Now, “whether this coming together of key mutations would be neutral, additive or more than the sum of both remains to be seen,” says Prof Jameel.

Though Maharashtra has said the new variant may trigger a third wave of the pandemic in the state, it has not been corroborated yet by other experts. According to Dr VK Paul, member (Health), NITI Aayog, the way forward is to watch for its potential presence in the country and make an appropriate public health response.

Economic Times



‘Some
BLOOD PRESSURE
lowering medicines
linked to less
MEMORY DECLINE
in older adults’

“
**Adults taking hypertension
medications that did not cross
the blood-brain barrier had better
attention for up to 3 years of follow-up.**

”

AGENCIES

Washington- Older adults taking blood pressure-lowering medications known to cross the blood-brain barrier had better memory recall over time compared to those taking other types of medicines to treat high blood pressure, according to a new research.

The findings of the study were published in the American Heart Association journal ‘Hypertension’.

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a risk factor for cognitive decline and dementia in older adults. Nearly half of American adults have elevated blood pressure. Treating high blood pressure with blood pressure-lowering medicines reduced the cases of mild cognitive impairment by 19 per cent in one large trial (SPRINT MIND).

ACE inhibitors, angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs), calcium channel blockers and diuretics are different classes of blood pressure-lowering medicines. Each class acts in a different way to reduce blood pressure, and some cross the blood-brain barrier, thereby impacting cognitive function.

“Research has been mixed on which medicines have the most benefit to cognition,” said study author Daniel A. Nation, Ph.D., an associate professor of psychological science in the Institute for Memory Impairments and Neurological Disorders at the University of California, Irvine.

“Studies of angiotensin II receptor blockers and angiotensin-converting-enzyme (ACE) inhibitors have suggested these medicines may confer the greatest benefit to long-term cognition, while other studies have shown the benefits of calcium channel blockers and diuretics on reducing dementia risk,” added A. Nation.

This is the first meta-analysis to compare the potential impact over time of blood pressure lowering medicines that do vs.

those that do not cross the blood-brain barrier. The medicines were evaluated for their effects on several cognitive domains, including attention, language, verbal memory, learning and recall.

“Hypertension occurs decades prior to the onset of dementia symptoms, affecting blood flow not only in the body but also to the brain,” A. Nation said.

The author added, “Treating hypertension is likely to have long-term beneficial effects on brain health and cognitive function later.”

Researchers gathered information from 14 studies of nearly 12,900 adults ages 50 years and older. These included studies done in the United States, Australia, Canada, Germany, Ireland and Japan. The meta-analysis found:

- Older adults taking blood pressure-lowering medicines that cross the blood-brain barrier had better memory recall for up to 3 years of follow-up compared to those taking medicines that do not cross the blood-brain barrier even though they had a higher level of vascular risk.
- Adults taking hypertension medications that did not cross the blood-brain barrier had better attention for up to 3 years of follow-up.

“These findings represent the most powerful evidence to-date linking brain-penetrant ACE-inhibitors and angiotensin receptor blockers to better memory. It suggests that people who are being treated for hypertension may be protected from cognitive decline if they medications that cross the blood-brain barrier,” said study co-author Jean K. Ho, Ph.D., a postdoctoral fellow at the University of California, Irvine.

Blood pressure is considered elevated



“**Studies of
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at 120/80 mm Hg and higher. The current American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology guidelines for treating high blood pressure suggest changes to diet and activity levels to lower blood pressure and adding blood pressure-lowering medication for people with levels of 130/80 mm Hg or higher depending on their risk status. If blood pressure reaches 140/90 mm Hg, blood pressure-lowering medication is recommended.

Limitations of this analysis are that the authors could not account for differences in racial/ethnic background based on the available studies, and there is a higher proportion of men vs. women in the group who took medications that cross the blood-brain barrier.

This is an important area of future research since previous studies have shown that people from various racial/ethnic backgrounds may respond differently to different blood pressure medications.

Two Spectators Ejected For Abusing New Zealand Players At WTC Final



Press Trust of India

SOUTHAMPTON: Two spectators were removed from the Ageas Bowl for abusing some New Zealand players on day five of the ongoing World Test Championship final against India here.

"We received reports of abuse directed at the New Zealand players. Our security team were able to identify the culprits and they were ejected from the ground," the ICC said in a statement.

"We will not tolerate any sort of abusive behaviour in cricket."

According to a report in 'ES-PNcrinfo', the "two fans were in Block M, which is just below the on-site hotel where both teams are staying."

"It is understood that the abuse was both general and racist in na-

ture. The ground security was triggered into action after the ICC was alerted by some fans through social media about the two persons who allegedly carried out the abuse."

It is understood that most of the abuse was directed towards Kiwi batsman Ross Taylor.

However, New Zealand pacer Tim Southee said none of the players are aware of any such incident.

"No, it's the first (time) I've heard of it. The game is always played in a good spirit on the field. We're not sure obviously what's happening off the field," Southee said during the virtual press conference.

In January this year, a group of fans were removed from the Sydney Cricket Ground stands after India pacer Mohammed Siraj was on the receiving end of racial abuse during a Test against Australia.

Peshawar Zalmi Beat Islamabad United, To Face Multan Sultans In PSL Final



Agencies

ABU DHABI: In-form Afghanistan opener Hazratullah Zazai and Jonathan Wells propelled Peshawar Zalmi to its fourth Pakistan Super League final with a thumping eight-wicket victory over Islamabad United in the playoffs.

Left-handed Zazai, dropped on 7, smashed 66 off 44 balls and Wells, playing his first PSL game, made an unbeaten 55 as Peshawar romped to 177-2 with more than three overs to spare.

Islamabad earlier got the momentum back through Hasan Ali's blistering 45 off just 16 balls to post what looked a challenging total of 174-9.

"It was a difficult route we took to the final but it's a great feeling," Peshawar skipper Wahab Riaz said. "We gave away some runs in the last few overs but the way we responded was great to see."

Peshawar will face Multan Sultans in the final on Thursday.

Zazai made a blistering 77 to knock out defending champion Karachi Kings on Monday and continued his rich form with another half century that featured six fours

and four towering sixes.

Ali could have dismissed Zazai in the third over, but wicketkeeper Muhammad Akhlaq dropped a low catch that cost Islamabad dearly in the end.

Zazai added a match-winning 126 off just 81 balls with Wells before Shoaib Malik scored 32 off just 10 balls to finish off the game in 16.5 overs. Malik smashed captain Shadab Khan (0-55) for two fours and a six in one over before raising the victory with three consecutive boundaries against Ali.

Earlier, Islamabad struggled to score after their in-form opener Usman Khawaja was run out in the first over. Colin Munro's (44) straight drive hit the stumps at the non-striker's end after flicking the boot of Malik as Khawaja was left stranded out of the crease.

Riaz (2-35) and Umaid Asif (2-44) picked up wickets with regular intervals as Islamabad reeled at 110-8 in the 16th over.

But Ali smashed Asif for 22 in the 17th over before Riaz went for 18 off his last over as Islamabad scored 64 runs off the last four before the two-time champion crashed out of the tournament.

New Zealand Defeat India To Win Innaugural World Test Championship



Press Trust of India

SOUTHAMPTON: A tenacious New Zealand lifted the inaugural World Test Championship title with a comfortable eight-wicket win over India on the sixth and final day of the marquee final here on Wednesday.

It is first major ICC trophy for the Black Caps, who had ended runners-up at the 2019 ODI World Cup after losing the final to hosts England on boundary count. They had also lost the 2015 World Cup final to Australia.

The seasoned pair of skipper Kane Williamson (52) and Ross Taylor (47) took New Zealand past the finish line with their unbeaten 96-run partnership as they overhauled the 139-run target without much fuss.

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin dismissed openers Tom

Latham (9) and Devon Conway (19) but the Indians did not have any success after that as the fielders dropped two catches.

India resumed the day at 64 for two but none of the batsmen could play a solid innings and they were all out for 170. Rishabh Pant was top-scorer for them with his 41-run knock.

Williamson is probably one of the few captains who have now got the Indian team out for less than 250 in six consecutive innings, a testimony to his brilliant cricketing acumen and near the perfect execution of plans by his bowlers.

Tim Southee (4/48) did the early damage with his swing bowling. Neil Wagner (1/44) bowled those hard "rib cage" overs coming round the stumps and Trent Boult (3/44), with his ability to bring it back into the left-hander, made for a brilliant

few hours of Test cricket.

And then there was India's nemesis Kyle Jamieson (2/30), who got his "bunny" Kohli third time in three Tests and twice in one to put the icing on the cake.

For Kohli, this is the third failure in big ICC events after the 2017 Champions Trophy and the 2019 World Cup.

He might just have one more shot, which is the T20 World Cup this year, and failing to win that could warrant some changes in the team hierarchy.

Brief Scores:

India: 217 and 170 all out in 73 overs. (Rishabh Pant 41, Rohit Sharma 30; Tim Southee 4/48, Trent Boult 3/39, Kyle Jamieson 2/30).

New Zealand: 249 and 140 for 2 in 45.5 overs. (K Williamson 52 not out, R Taylor 47 not out; R Ashwin 2/17)..

Advisor Khan, JKSC Greet Athletes On International Olympic Day

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Khan, on Wednesday extended greetings to all sports persons on the International Olympic Day.

In a message, Farooq Khan said sports has metamorphosed into much more than a physical activity. "Nowadays the fusion of sports, cultural and educational activities is the theme of all the learning process. Based on the three pillars "move", "learn" and "discover", sports is ushering into a new era," he said.

"The goal of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sports without any discrimination based on cast, colour, creed or sex. Olympic spirit advocates for mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play," he added.

Farooq Khan also said that in the upcoming Tokyo Olympic Games, scheduled to be held next month, the entire population of UTof J&K will root for the athletes representing the country.

Nuzhat Gul, Secretary, J&K Sports Council in her message appreciated the tireless efforts of athletes.



"They are contributing in building a better world by bridging not only the geographical barriers but promoting fair play and a spirit of mutual respect and peace," she said.

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also commemorated the Olympic Day by launching an 'Online Olympic Quiz For All' which will run right up to the start of the Tokyo Olympics. The intent behind the Olympics quiz is to create awareness about Indian partici-

pation at the Olympic games.

In a tweet, Modi said, "Today, on Olympic Day, I appreciate all those who have represented India in various Olympics over the years. Our nation is proud of their contributions to sports and their efforts towards motivating other athletes."

Winners of the quiz, which is to run until July 23 will win Indian Team fan jerseys besides few of the lucky winners will also get a chance to meet their favourite Olympian.

ICC Test Rankings: Ravindra Jadeja Displaces Jason Holder As Top All-Rounder

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: India's Ravindra Jadeja on Wednesday dislodged West Indian Jason Holder as the world's top all-rounder in the latest ICC Test rankings.

Jadeja, who is part of India team in the ongoing World Test Championship final against New Zealand, is two points ahead of Holder (384) while England all-rounder Ben Stokes is third with 377 points.

Another Indian, Ravichandran Ashwin, also playing WTC Final 2021, is at fourth with 353 points, followed by Shakib Al Hasan of Bangladesh (338).

Ashwin remained at second spot in the bowlers' rankings on 850 points, below Pat Cummins (908) of Australia. Tim Southee (830) of New Zealand is third.

Among the batsmen, there was



no change in top-five with Indian captain Virat Kohli static at fourth on 814. Steve Smith of Australia continued to be the top batsman on 891 points, followed by Kane Williamson (886) of New Zealand and Marcus Labuschagne (878) of Australia.

England captain Joe Root (797) is at number five, followed by the Indian pair of Rishabh Pant and Rohit Sharma at joint at sixth on 747 points.

Eoin Morgan Insists Old Tweets 'Taken Out Of Context', Says 'Sir' Is A Sign Of Admiration

Press Trust of India

LONDON: Dismissing accusations of racism against him, England's World Cup-winning captain Eoin Morgan said the historical tweets, allegedly mocking Indians, were "taken out of context".

The English cricket system was shaken earlier this month after pacer Ollie Robinson was suspended by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) for his racist and sexist tweets dating back to 2012-13. Soon after, posts, in which Morgan and wicket-keeper batsman Jos Buttler used the word 'sir' to mock the Indians, started doing the rounds on social media.

"I don't really reflect on it a lot," Morgan told reporters ahead of England's white-ball series against Sri Lanka in Cardiff on Wednesday.

"If I call somebody 'sir' on social media, or anywhere around the world, it's a sign of admiration and respect."

"If that's taken out of context there's nothing I can control or do about it. So I haven't actually looked into it," he added.

In light of the events, the ECB had promised "relevant and appropriate action", saying each case will be



considered on an individual basis. Screenshots of a message by Buttler in which he says "I always reply sir not else like me like you like me" had been shared on Twitter.

In another post which was also circulating on social media, Morgan includes Buttler in a message which says, "Sir you're my favourite batsman." They were allegedly joined by KKR head coach Brendon McCullum in this conversation.

Buttler and Morgan both feature in the Indian Premier League (IPL) with the former playing for the Rajasthan Royals and the latter leading the Kolkata Knight Riders.

Sammy Appointed Member Of CWI Board Of Directors

Press Trust of India

ST JOHN'S: Two-time T20 World Cup-winning former West Indies captain Darren Sammy has been appointed as an independent non-member director of the CWI board.

The decision was taken by the Cricket West Indies Board during a meeting held on June 17. Sammy, who led West Indies to two back-to-back T20 titles in 2012 and 2016, is one of the three appointments of Independent Directors approved at last Thursday's meeting to serve for the next two-years.

He joins Trinidadian Attorney Debra Coryat-Patton and Jamaican Surgeon and University

Administrator, Dr. Akshai Mansingh, who were both re-appointed to serve a second term.

"It is an honour to be appointed as a CWI Director; this is another great opportunity for me to give my best to West Indies cricket in a new way, off the field," Sammy said on the Windies Cricket website.

"All my local, regional and international experiences have prepared me to make a significant ongoing impact in West Indies cricket. I am

excited and thankful for the chance to serve and look forward to giving back to the sport and region that I love so much," he added. The 37-year-old, who has represented West Indies in 38 Test, 126 ODIs and 68 T20s, currently serves as the head coach of Pakistan Super League side Peshawar Zalmi and is also a cricket consultant for the St. Lucia Zouks in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL).

Sammy, who last played in the 2020 CPL final, is the first international cricketer from his native Saint Lucia where the national stadium has been named in his honour. He also is the Goodwill Ambassador for St. Lucia.

"I am delighted to welcome Darren Sammy as an independent, non-member Director whose role will be to ensure that all the right questions are being asked while contributing to the shaping of new ideas and solutions," CWI President Ricky Skerritt said. "Darren's fairly recent experience as a two-time World Cup winning captain will bring with him a much needed modern-day cricketer's perspective which should add valuable insights to Board discussions and decision-making."

Haryana To Give Rs 6 Crore To Tokyo Olympics Gold Winner

Press Trust of India

CHANDIGARH: Haryana government on Wednesday announced that sportspersons from the state who win gold medal in the upcoming Tokyo Olympics would be given a cash amount of Rs 6 crore. The state government will give the silver winners Rs 4 crore while the bronze medallists will get Rs 2.50 crore.

The state sports minister Sandeep Singh announced this while interacting with Olympic medallists on the occasion of International Olympic Day here, along with chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar. Sandeep also said that 30 players taking part in the upcoming Tokyo Olympics have been provided Rs 5 lakh each as preparation amount.

The chief minister said medal winners at the international events will be given government jobs to encourage youngsters to take up to sports, a state government statement said.

Khattar said that besides getting government jobs in the Sports Department, international level medal winners would be appointed on



deputation basis in the Education and other departments. He pointed out that the government has formulated a policy to promote sports.

Under this policy, along with 3 percent reservation, government jobs are being provided according to the medals won by the sportspersons, the statement said. Apart from this, the government was enhancing infrastructure along with renovation of stadiums to promote sports activities in the state.

Luka Modric Inspired Croatia Advances At Euro 2020

Agencies

GLASGOW: Luka Modric lurked on the edge of the area, waiting for the ball to come to him before perfectly stroking it into the top corner with the outside of his boot. At 35, this may well be the Croatia captain's last European Championship, and he doesn't want to go home just yet.

Modric's majestic goal in the 62nd minute helped Croatia beat Scotland 3-1 on Tuesday and give the team a spot in the round of 16 at Euro 2020 by finishing second in Group D. Croatia will face the runner-up from Group E on Monday in Copenhagen.

"This goal means a lot to me but our play means more, from the beginning until the end," Modric said. "I am happy that my goal helped, but it's most important that the team won."

Modric, who also picked up an assist on Croatia's third goal, had a quiet first two group matches, with the midfielder forced into deeper positions and Cro-



atia facing criticism for lacking spark in attack. But the playmaker showed his class and why he won the Ballon d'Or in 2018 – the same year he helped his team reach the World Cup final.

He fell to his knees at the final whistle for about a minute before rising to his

feet and pumping his fists in celebration. He then went over with a big smile on his face to hug Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic. "No one is sure how Luka manages it," Dalic said. "We all expect that Luka's levels would go down and he would lose his strength. But he doesn't give up."

"I'm very proud to have such a player and to have him as a part of this team."

Modric is now the youngest and oldest player to score for Croatia at the European Championship.

He scored when he was 22 years, 273 days against Austria in 2008. On Tuesday, he was 35 years, 286 days.

Croatia's two other goals came from winger Nikola Vlasic's low shot from close range in the 17th minute and Ivan Perisic's flicked header in the 77th from a corner taken by Modric.

"When we play like this, we are dangerous to everyone."

Vlasic's took two touches for his goal and fired a low shot past Scotland goalkeeper David Marshall. It was Croatia's first real attack of the match after Scotland dominated the opening stages.

It was poor defending by wingback Stephen O'Donnell, who let Perisic jump above him unchallenged. Scotland sat back on occasions after the goal, inviting Croatia to push forward in dangerous positions.

Shopkeeper Shot Dead

and search operation was launched by police and CRPF to nab the killers of the shopkeeper. Senior police officers also rushed to the spot to assess the situation.

Bhat's killing comes a day after Pervaiz Ahmad Dar, an inspector of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) wing of police was shot dead by militants in Kanipora locality of Nowgam in the city outskirts on Tuesday evening when he was on his way to a local mosque to offer prayers.

Meanwhile, the police have claimed the hand of Lashka-e-Taiba's shadow outfit The Resistance Front into the killing of the shopkeeper.

"These innocent killings of civilian and local policemen are being committed by local militants of LeT (self claimed as TRF) on the instruction of militant Abbas Sheikh. They have been indulging in the crimes for money being paid by Pakistani handlers. These criminals are falsely labelling these innocent persons as informers to hide their sin," IGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar said, as per a police spokesperson.

The police spokesperson further said that the investigation into the matter is in progress and officers continue to work to establish the circumstances which lead to this militant crime.

"Area has been cordoned off and search in the area is going on," he added.

Militants Looking

Police Headquarters, Singh stressed upon the officers to keep an eye on the potential trouble mongers looking to foment trouble, a police spokesperson said.

Singh, he said, asked for analyzing the ground situations on real time basis and added that safety of people should be ensured. The DGP also impressed that the SOPs must be followed in letter & spirit.

"During the meeting threadbare discussion was held on general crime work & UA(P) Act cases registered in 2020-21 backlog cases and their disposal, conviction of all crime cases including cases related to militancy & narcotics. Besides, the overall security scenario of the Kashmir Zone was discussed," the official spokesperson said.

"The DGP said that the leadership of the country is appreciative of the work of J&K Police. He said that the jurisdictional officers must take all the measures to improve investigation and disposal of cases by personally monitoring the cases," he added.

As per the police spokesperson, the DGP also impressed upon the officers that periodic review meetings be held and sensational cases must be investigated under the direct supervision of the DisG along with the district SSsP.

Singh, he said, also stressed upon the officers to speed up the disposal of all pending narcotic cases and directed that quality of investigation and disposal of these cases needs drastic improvement.

"He said that training expertise, adoption of latest techniques and standard practices would bring improvement in investigation of the cases including cyber crimes that in return will bring respite to the general public," the police spokesperson said.

"He directed the officers to ensure that the investigating officers are imparted training and exposure to standard investigation practices and use of technologies and added that investigation of all pending cases should be completed on merits and the culprits brought to justice," he added.

The police spokesperson further said that Singh directed the officers that the Probationer Sub-Inspectors in their respective districts be trained for investigating cases of serious nature by organizing workshops and inviting experts.

"He stressed upon officers to supervise daily routine physical training and weekly parades for officers and personnel to improve their physical fitness. He directed the officers to conduct regular darbars with the personnel under their command to redress their grievances," he added.

The meeting was attended by ADGP Coordination Danesh Rana, IGP Kashmir Zone Vijay Kumar, IGP CIV Alok Kumar, DisG Amit Kumar, Sujit Kumar and Abdul Jabbar and all district SSsP of Kashmir zone. Earlier Power Point Presentation was given by each district SSsP regarding crime and security scenario of their respective jurisdictions.

Before the commencement of meeting, the official spokesperson said that the DGP along with all officers paid homage to Inspector Parvaiz Ahmad Dar who was killed by militants on Tuesday at Nowgam area of Srinagar.

The DGP said that the 2000 batch officer had performed excellently at his places of postings. Two minutes silence was also observed in remembrance of the slain inspector.

Mainstream Leaders

they will go with an open mind.

"We have not been given an agenda. We will be attending the meeting to know what the Centre is offering, said CPM leader Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, who is also a spokesman for the six-party People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD).

Tarigami is among the 14 leaders invited for the all-party meeting convened by Modi. Others invited include four former chief ministers Farooq Abdullah, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti.

The Communist leader said the PAGD will "be out there to protect the interests of the people of Jammu and Kashmir."

This is the first meeting between Jammu and Kashmir mainstream parties and the prime minister after the Centre revoked the erstwhile state's special status and carved two union territories out of it in August 2019.

While the PAGD -- a grouping of the National Conference, PDP, CPM, CPI, Awami National Conference and People's Movement -- has decided to attend the meeting, the constituents will be sending their individual representatives as well, indicating the bloc might be having a difference of opinion over the key issue of restoration of special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

The PAGD was formed with the aim of striving to restore Jammu and Kashmir to its position as it existed before Article 370 was revoked on August 5, 2019.

Farooq Consults

outside Abdullah's residence, Rana said, "Our only stand is a single J&K, to maintain its unity and integrity and respecting the wishes and aspirations of the people of J&K."

He said dialogue and inclusiveness is an important and vital essence of democracy.

"Any dialogue that can take us out of this morass and which will lead to the welfare of the state of J&K and its people, we are all for it," he said.

Fourteen leaders from Jammu and Kashmir, including Abdullah, have been invited to the meeting on Thursday to be chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss the future course of action for the union territory.

The meeting is the first such exercise since the Centre announced the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370 of the Constitution and its bifurcation into union territories on August 5, 2019.

Rana said the party leaders from Jammu have reposed faith in Abdullah as he is not only the president of the NC but also the tallest leader of J&K.

"He (Abdullah) has assured us that he will represent us and the people of J&K with his wisdom and he alone and alone can take this dialogue forward for welfare of the people of J&K and anything that is for the welfare of the people of J&K, he said.

Rana said as far as the pluralistic Jammu is concerned, it has its own aspirations and its own desires.

"We are for singular J&K, have always stood for the unity of J&K and equitable justice to all regions and sub-regions of J&K and we will always hold the aspirations of all the people of J&K as much as for Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, he said.

Asked if the leader from Jammu region want dialogue with Pakistan as was pitched by PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Tuesday, Rana said he will not get into the intricacies.

"Abdullah is going for a dialogue, it is a dialogue with the PM of India and it is an inclusive dialogue and we are very hopeful that it will lead to the betterment of the state of J&K, peace, progress and prosperity of J&K.

"We are for J&K, for the people of J&K. We are not here for any power politics, we are here for the people of J&K and we will always stand for the people of J&K, for their welfare, their growth, their development, he said.

Asked if they expected the PM's meeting will pave the way for holding Assembly elections in the Union Territory, Rana said everything is not about elections.

"Right now, we are at the crossroads of history in J&K and dialogue is the only way forward. There is no reason to sabotage the dialogue. We are going with an open mind. Abdullah is the tallest of the tall leaders of J&K..whether somebody likes it or not, he is the best person suited to represent J&K and represent the aspirations of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, he said.

He added that the NC president has assured them that all three regions will be represented by him equitably and properly.

Rana also said the people want that the aspirations of Jammu and Kashmir as well as Ladakh should be respected.

Asked if he wanted the restoration of statehood with special status, he said, Who does not want the state and of course, our own identity, our job protections and land protections."

Ladakh Parties Bat

The group, an amalgam of almost all Leh-based parties including BJP and Congress, said the decision was taken at a meeting which was among others attended by Ladakh MP Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, veteran politician Thupstan Chhewang told reporters here.

Chhewang, who was flanked by prominent leaders including Namgyal, said the grouping was formed last year to press for safeguards under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution to the union territory and has held two meetings with Union Home Minister Amit Shah in the past.

The Prime Minister has invited Kashmiri leaders for talks and some important decision with regard to J&K is expected. Watching the development, we want the pending issues of Ladakh are also addressed as well to dispel the apprehensions of the people of Ladakh in respect of land ownership, job reservation and environmental protection, cultural preservation and other common interests, Chhewang said.

He said after Ladakh was carved out from Jammu and Kashmir and given the status of union territory without legislature on August 5, 2019, the people are apprehensive about their future without the protections guaranteed under Article 370 and Article 35A.

After the formation of the UT, the work of the local administration was not up to the mark and after deliberations at the meeting of the apex body, we felt the need that we should have our own legislature to have the right to make laws, the former MP said.

He said despite the fulfilment of the long-pending demand of the UT status, the aspirations of the Ladakhi people have remained unfulfilled.

He further said that even if the UT is granted a legislature, there is also a need for safeguards like the Sixth Scheduled of the Constitution in the interest of the people of Ladakh, 95 per cent of whom belong to various scheduled tribes.

Chhewang said the Home Ministry has already started negotiations with the group but it has yet to reach the final stage as the Centre is yet to nominate members to the committee headed by Minister of State for Home G K Reddy.

He said the group decided to reach out to the socio-religious and political groups in Kargil and take them on board before finalising its panel under the leadership of Ladakh MP to hold dialogue with the Home Minister in Delhi next month.

The Kargil representatives will be invited to Leh to elicit their support. Apart from seeking consensus on the two important decisions, a small team of representatives from both the districts will be formed to hold talks with the union home minister, he said.

Blast Outside

and walls of Saeed's house were damaged from the impact of the blast, Pakistani media reported.

Inspector General of Police (Punjab) Inam Ghani said there could have been a "major loss" had there been no police picket outside the house of the high-profile personality, referring

to Saeed.

The 71-year-old radical cleric has been serving a jail sentence at the high-security Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore for his conviction in militancy financing cases.

The blast sparked rumours that Saeed was present in the house.

Ghani said at least three people were killed in the car bomb blast while 21 others were injured.

No group has claimed responsibility for the blast.

"Explosive material was installed in the car. There was a police picket outside the high-value target's house. The car could not cross the police picket," Ghani said, describing it as "a terror" act.

The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) has taken over the blast site and investigating from all aspects, he said.

Ghani also claimed that "hostile" intelligence agencies could be involved in the blast.

According to an initial report prepared by investigative agencies, more than 30 kgs of explosives were used in the blast, Geo TV reported.

The initial report also said that "foreign-made materials" were used in the blast. It said the material had been planted onto a car and the device was detonated remotely, the channel reported, citing sources.

A 3 feet deep and 8 feet wide crater has been formed at the site of the blast, the report said, adding that the blast caused damage within a 100-square feet radius.

Citing witnesses, it said the windows of nearby houses and buildings were shattered in the explosion. The sound of the blast was so loud that it was heard faraway.

A roof of a house caved in because of the impact of the blast, says Rescue 1122. Several cars parked close to the buildings were also damaged.

The injured people have been shifted to the Jinnah Hospital where the condition of six of them is said to be critical.

"The injured also include policemen. The condition of six injured of the 17 admitted to hospital is critical," said Dr Yahya Sultan of Jinnah Hospital.

Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid directed the Punjab chief secretary and IG to submit a report.

"The nature of the blast is being determined," he said, adding that the federal agencies are assisting the Punjab government in the investigation.

Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar instructed that those responsible for the explosion be brought to justice and the best possible medical aid be provided to the injured.

The US Department of the Treasury has designated Saeed as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. He was listed under the UN Security Council Resolution 1267 in December 2008.

Deputy EC Pushes

have to be reserved for the Scheduled Tribe as part of the delimitation exercise, the sources pointed out.

After the delimitation exercise, the number of assembly seats in Jammu and Kashmir will go up from 83 to 90.

Twenty-four seats of the Assembly continue to remain vacant as they fall in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK).

The delimitation panel had recently sought data on the area of existing constituencies, including geography and facilities available, and had asked the deputy commissioners for their suggestions to make them more "geographically compact".

Having received the data and suggestions, the Delimitation Commission decided to hold the virtual meeting with the DCs to take forward the matter.

The development comes amid efforts by the Centre to bolster political processes in Jammu and Kashmir. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to chair a meeting with a select group of political leaders from Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, which is expected to set the road map for holding assembly elections there.

Jammu and Kashmir has been under the Centre's rule since November 2018 and on August 5, 2019, the Centre abrogated its special status and bifurcated it into union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

The Delimitation Commission had asked the DCs whether a constituency is in one district or spread across two. They were also asked about details of tehsils.

Set up in March last year, the Delimitation Commission is mandated to redraw the constituencies of Jammu and Kashmir which at present is under central rule.

This year, the panel headed by Justice Ranjana Desai (ret'd), a former Supreme Court judge, was given one more year to complete its task.

Siddiqui Assumes

charge, he said, the incumbent Joint Director had a brief meeting with the officers. He also inspected different units of the department and interacted with the officials.

"Earlier, he was briefed by the outgoing officer Handoo about the functioning of the department and its allied units including Divisional Newsroom, Field Publicity Unit, Cultural Unit and District Information Centres (DICs)," the official spokesperson said.

"Seeking cooperation from the officers and the staff members working in the different Units of divisional office, the Joint Director asked them to work with full dedication and be punctual in their duties," he added.

The official spokesperson further said that the outgoing officer was seen off by the officers and officials with good respect and honour.

"All the officers and officials equivocally stated that the tenure of Handoo was a golden period in which employees learned a lot from his vast experience, knowledge and guidance," he added.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Assistant Director (PR), Muhammad Aslam Khan; Assistant Director (Advt), Javaid Ahmad; Cultural Officer Srinagar, Tawheed Ahmad; Youth Information Officer, Sachin Bali besides others concerned.

Jammu Reports First

cases of the Delta plus variant, classified as

a variant of concern (VOC), have been detected in India.

According to some reports, the highly infectious Delta variant (B.1.617.2) of COVID-19 that was first found in India is feared to have mutated into Delta Plus variant. (GNS)

Govt For Better

bed facility at all hospitals for better preparations to combat the third wave efficiently.

Chairing a meeting of officers to review Covid-19 related situation in Kashmir, the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole on Wednesday emphasized on making fool-proof preparations to combat predicted 3rd wave of coronavirus efficiently in Kashmir, an official spokesperson said.

"He also said in the course of preparations, a well human resource be kept ready and training of staff be also conducted across Kashmir," he added.

The official spokesperson said that the Div Com further emphasized on bringing behavioural change in the society and all Covid related SOPs particularly of wearing masks are followed as a habit to safeguard Valley people from getting infected during the third wave.

During the meeting, he said, Pole stressed on intensive contact tracing of positive cases and also emphasized on rigorous testing and vaccination is conducted in all districts.

"He said that Covid-19 related SOPs should be followed in letter and spirit and people should not be allowed to move around public places without mask," he added.

At the outset of meeting, the official spokesperson said, Mission Director NHM apprised the chair about the district wise current graph of positive cases, contact tracing, vaccination, declining of positivity rate, management of containment zones and other measures taken to ensure containment of corona virus spread.

Among others the meeting was attended by all Deputy Commissioners and CMOs (through videoconferencing), Director Health, senior doctors, In-charge CCRK and other concerned.

J&K Logs 444

total count to 313028.

Regarding deaths, the officials said that two each were reported from Jammu Division and Kashmir respectively, taking the fatality count 4273.

Providing the district-wide details, the officials said that Srinagar reported 98 cases, Baramulla 34, Budgam 40, Pulwama 40, Kupwara 25, Anantnag 40, Bandipora 17, Ganderbal 19, Kulgam 11, Shopian 3, Jammu 20, Udhampur 9, Rajouri 23, Doda 25, Kathua 6, Samba 3, Kishtwar 9, Poonch 17, Ramban 8 and Reasi 18.

Moreover, they said, 839 more patients have recovered in the last 24 hours—250 from Jammu Division and 589 from Kashmir. 301973 patients have recovered so far, leaving active cases at 6782—2505 in Jammu and 4277 in Kashmir.

One new confirmed case of mucormycosis (black fungus) has been reported today, bringing the cumulative number of confirmed cases to 26 in J&K.

Trains To Chug

services In view of the covid-19 situation in Kashmir Valley and as per the guidelines and SOPs issued by the government. Later it was extended from time to time.

The decision had followed huge rush of passengers at stations amid continuing increase in the number Covid cases.

Hizb Militant Killed

turned down the surrender offer by the joint team and instead opened fire upon them.

"The joint search party retaliated to the fire leading to an encounter.In the ensuing encounter, one militant was killed and his body was retrieved from the site of encounter," the police spokesperson said.

He identified the slain militant as Sajad Ahmad Bhat of Aishmuqam in Anantnag district. Bhat, he said, was associated with Hizb and was active since September last year and was involved in several militant crime cases.

"Arms and ammunition including 1 pistol with magazine, 1 grenade & other incriminating materials were recovered from the encounter site," the police spokesperson said.

"All the recovered materials have been taken into case records for further investigation and to probe his complicity in other crimes. During the search operation one hideout was busted and later on destroyed," he added

The police spokesperson further said that a case has been registered under relevant sections of law and investigation has been initiated in this regard.

"People are requested to cooperate with police till the area is completely sanitized and cleared off of all the explosive materials, if any," he added.

Meanwhile, a group of militants Wednesday hurled a grenade and opened fire on a team of state forces personnel in Pulwama district, but no damage was caused, police said.

The incident happened around 8:50 pm when the militants attacked a police and CRPF naka party near the SBI Rajpura Chowk branch in the south Kashmir district, a police official said.

There was no loss of life or injury in the incident, the official said, adding, the security forces retaliated the firing. (With PTI inputs)

Pak Smuggler Killed

are lodging a strong protest with the Pakistani Army along with full evidence over the incident.

For some time, we were getting inputs about possible attempts (from Pakistan) to smuggle narcotics through Kathua border. Our troops positioned in forward areas noticed movement of three to four persons between 2.30 am and 3 am, he told reporters after inspecting the drugs seizure at Pansar border outpost area.

The officer said the smugglers crossed the zero line and reached near the border fencing when they were challenged by the security troops.

The smugglers ignored the warning and the troops on the ground also heard cocking of a weapon by someone (among the intruders). The troops fired and one of the smugglers was killed, whose body was later recovered along with 27 kg of heroin in the morning during the

search of the area, the IG BSF said.

He said this is the same border outpost (Pansar) where on January 23, the BSF had detected a 150-metre underground tunnel meant to facilitate infiltration of militants from Pakistan for carrying out subversive activities.

On June 20 last year, BSF troops had shot down a Pakistani hexa copter with a payload of five-and-a-half kilograms, including a sophisticated US-made M4 semi-automatic carbine and seven Chinese grenades, in the same area.

Pansar area was kept under constant observation and that is the reason why we got this big success, Jamwal said, adding that the process of identification of the deceased is in progress, but indicators suggest that he is a Pakistani national.

He said the BSF contacted Pakistani Rangers and they are also trying to establish the identity of the slain person at their end.

We are lodging a strong protest note (with Pakistan) along with full evidence. They (Pakistani Rangers) have also visited the ground (scene). There is no doubt that Pakistan can deny it, Jamwal said.

He said the heroin was packed in one kg packets tied together in a cloth, suggesting that the smugglers were planning to push the consignment through a pipe and somebody from the Indian side was supposed to receive it.

Asked if any weapon was recovered, Jamwal said no arms were seized during the operation and it is suspected that the associates of the slain smuggler might have taken away the weapons while fleeing back.

Earlier, a BSF spokesperson said the seized heroin was worth about Rs 135 crore in the international market.

"Narco-militancy angle cannot be ruled out in this case," he said.

Cops Fine 5674

Covid-19 guidelines/rules continued throughout all the districts of Kashmir Valley to ensure that people adhere to SOPs/guidelines envisaged by the government to curb COVID-19 pandemic," he added.

Man Arrested For

Subsequently, a police team arrested the accused.

In Kashmir Jungle

Sameer was conscious of Kazinag's precarity. He had grown up in the vibrant mood of Baramulla town but had spent his youthful days in the forests, witnessing the illegal subdivision of the woods into small plots.

From one ridge inside the park, Sameer could see the disturbances that many of these herder families were bringing to the forest from their grazing activities.

It was about the same time, when he planned a meeting with senior government officials but all were too busy to interfere in the matter. There was nothing much he could have done.

"Kazinag is my home and the tribes living inside it are my family," says Sameer. "I knew I was on my own in this mission of conservation of forests."

In the effort to protect the Kazinag forest, Sameer was collaborating with the local tribesmen—a step that many termed "absurd".

He had come up with a plan that would not only help to save the 250 Markhors of Kazinag National Park but would also help to save the forests.

"The plan was simple," he says. "I requested them [tribesmen] to fill up a government scheme form that guaranteed them free LPG gas cylinders and burners. The same plan not only helped around 800 people of these tribes but also helped in conservation of Markhor, timber and the overall habitation of Kazinag."

For conservationists like Sameer, the biggest challenge after poachers and smugglers was to convince indigenous people that eco-tourism can earn them as much as selling their land, leasing it to commercial farmers, or providing ways for the hunters to target Markhors and other wild animals.

Kazinag's community, where adjudication was still pending, favored a model that Sameer explained.

As per the plan, the tribes would restrict grazing in the "extremely sensitive zone" that are on the two sides of the Kazinag National Park. The high adjacent side of the park caters to the Markhor and the other side is where various wild animals are seen.

"Restricting the movement of these tribesmen in the sensitive zones helped us to lower the incidents of man-animal conflict," says Sameer. "The real owners of these forests are these tribal people but they too have to understand the repercussions of disturbing nature."

It's been half a decade since Sameer took charge of his duty as a Sociologist for Wildlife Trust of India and since then the government-provided hut inside the dense forest has become his home and the giant-trees his confidante.

He believes that anyone who's not building local capacity—training local people, elevating them, getting them into positions of responsibility—is basically deluding themselves.

In fact, at many official meetings, Sameer has been persistently arguing that there're not enough resources devoted to conservation.

"My bottom line on this issue of the apparent divide in conservation is that we cannot really complain if we are not taking action," says Sameer while expressing his anguish over certain government policies.

"We must be the catalysts for the change we want to see. And conservation can only be done when these tribal people who have been the caretakers of jungles for decades are noticed as a stakeholder."

The tribals, Sameer says, were always reluctant in conserving the environment because no government official visited them and discussed the measures that can be taken at an individual level to save the forest and the surrounding wild-life. "And then these officials say that tribals are wreaking havoc on forests."

Even though in the last 5 years Sameer hasn't given up on his dream of creating a better future inside the Kazinag National Park, the recent eviction drive against these forest dwellers has been a disturbing sign for him.

"The people that the government is throwing out from these forests," he says, "are the same people who have been taking care of the wildlife since decades."

Hafeez Kickstarts Capacity Building Programme For Tourism stakeholders



KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: In a unique and innovative way, the Tourism Department organised a Capacity Building Programme for various stakeholders associated with the Tourism sector on the implementation of COVID-19 appropriate protocols while conducting their businesses in the post pandemic environment.

The inaugural programme was presided over by Secretary Tourism Department, Sarmad Hafeez while as Director Tourism Kashmir, GN Itoo, other senior officers and officials of the department besides various tourism stakeholders (Shikarawallas, Houseboat owners, floating market traders of Dal Lake etc.) were present during the programme.

In his remarks on the occasion, Sarmad Hafeez said that the programme has been organised with an aim to make aware different tourism stakeholders about the COVID-19 protocols while carrying out their business activities. He said that through this Capacity Building Programme, training will be provided to all the stakeholders associated with the tourism sector so that the tourists visiting Kashmir during this season can feel safe while visiting here. "All the stakeholders having interface with the tourists will be trained through this Capacity Building Programme on Covid-19 protocols and SOPs", Sarmad Hafeez said. Highlighting the need for such

a programme, the Secretary said the declining number of Covid-19 cases, coverage of more than 80% stakeholders during the vaccination drives has given the Department confidence to train and educate the tourism stakeholders about the post COVID-19 situation and ready them for the same. He said the Department is providing constant hand holding to these stakeholders in these tough times. He added that apart from this programme, a vaccination drive was organised for all those who are either directly or indirectly involved with this sector so that as more people start to visit the Kashmir valley, they may not be at risk or feel unsafe".

On the future initiatives of the Department, Sarmad Hafeez also said that such kind of programmes will be held at all tourist destinations like Pahalgam, Gulmarg, Sonamarg and other places in coming days so that the players involved with Tourism trade like Hoteliers, Ponywallas and other concerned are made aware about the COVID protocols and SOPs to be observed while handling tourists in the coming seasons.

The Secretary on the occasion complimented the Department for organising this programme in such a unique and innovative way in the middle of Dal Lake with a good participation of Houseboat owners, Shikarawallas, Floating market traders and others associated segments of tourism sector.

As a special feature of the programme, several local artists performed skits, local folklores and traditional songs as well as the culturally significant Ladi Shah highlighting the importance of following Covid protocols while dealing with day to day business activities.

Shikaras were lined up in a circular ring and in the middle artists enthralled the audiences with COVID-19 relevant messages and precautions to be observed.

Evolve Strategy To Replace Poppy-Cultivation With Suitable Crops, CS To Officials

Approves Annual Action Plans For NFSM, RKVY, SAME-ATMA



KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: The Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta on Wednesday chaired a meeting to review the achievements of Agriculture, Production & Farmers Welfare Department under National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and Sub-Mission on Agricultural Extension (SMAE-ATMA).

Administrative Secretaries of Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Department, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Department, Forest, Ecology & Environment Department, Jal Shakti Department, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department along with concerned Directors, Vice Chancellor SKUAST-J and representatives of other relevant organisations participated in the meeting.

It was informed that during the financial year 2020-21, the Department achieved 93% targets under the Oil Seeds (OS) and Tree Borne Oil Seeds (TBO) category, and 72% under food grains category. The De-

partment further undertook cluster demonstrations, besides, providing cropping system based training to the stakeholders.

Besides asking the Department to ensure 100% saturation in case of Soil Health Cards (SHCs), the Chief Secretary urged the concerned to generate awareness amongst the farming community to achieve better productivity and enhanced income through proper utilisation of SHCs.

The Chief Secretary impressed upon the officers to adopt convergence strategy by constituting convergence teams of the concerned departments at the Panchayat level. Emphasising the need to ensure fruitful and frequent interactions amongst the field functionaries and farmers, the Chief Secretary directed the department to ensure proper interface between the two, at least twice a month.

The Chief Secretary called on universities to contribute towards knowledge sharing through joint and coordinated efforts with the department at the grass root level.

The State Food Security Mission Executive Committee approved the

annual action plan for financial year 2021-22 amounting to Rs 17.25 Crore. The Committee also approved proposals for undertaking cluster demonstrations, seed distribution, area expansion under olive cultivation, farm mechanisation, besides, providing cropping system based training to the stakeholders.

The Chief Secretary also approved the annual action plan for Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) for the financial year 2020-21 amounting to Rs 9.90 crore.

Later, while reviewing the Submission on Agriculture Extension (SAME- ATMA), the Chief Secretary approved the work plan for this fiscal worth Rs. 23.89 crore. This includes farmer training through exposure visits, research-extension farmer linkages, and farm information dissemination, among others.

The Chief Secretary laid emphasis on proper documentation of farmer exposure visits for subsequent targeted planning. He also stressed enhancing Women Food Security Groups which can provide for a powerful tool to ensure family security.

Clear Backlog Of Cases Pending In Your Respective DICS, Thakur To Officials



KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: Principal Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, Ranjan Prakash Thakur, on Wednesday chaired separate meetings of State Level Committee (SLC) regarding sanctioning of subsidy cases under the Central Package of Incentives (CPI) besides approval of 30 per cent Central Capital Investment Incentive for Access to Credit (CCIAC) under Industrial Development Scheme (IDS-2017).

The SLC sanctioned cases of 100 per cent Insurance Subsidy, 3 per cent Interest Subsidy and 30 per cent CCIAC amounting Rs. 11.38 crore for Jammu & Kashmir.

Director Industries and Commerce, Jammu, Anoo Malhotra and Director Industries and

Commerce, Kashmir, Tazayun Mukhtar presented 33 subsidy cases pertaining to 3 per cent Interest Subsidy, 100 per cent Insurance Subsidy and 30 per cent CCIAC under IDS.

Principal Secretary stressed on all the General Managers to clear the backlog of cases pending in their respective DICS so that maximum number of units are provided incentives during the pandemic COVID period to boost economic activities in the Union Territory.

Director along with officers of Directorate of I&C, Jammu; Director Finance I&C R C Kotwal, Chairman Federation of Industries, Jammu, Rattan Dogra, representatives of JKDFC and Banks, General Managers of DIC Jammu, Kathua, Samba and Udhampur attended the meeting online from Jammu.

Ensure 40% Lending To Priority Sector, Disposal Of Loan Cases In 15 Days, CS Direction Banks

Chairs 3rd UT-Level Bankers' Committee meeting

KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: The Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta today chaired the 3rd UT-Level Bankers' Committee meeting and reviewed achievements of banks and financial institutions operating in Jammu and Kashmir.

In his opening remarks, the Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta said that the Central Government has approved a massive Industrial package of Rs. 28,400 crore which aims at boosting the economy of the Union territory by providing employment opportunities to the youth. This package is in addition to the existing funds provided by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. "The UT Government has announced 14 sector-specific industrial policies for optimal utilization of the said industrial package", Dr. Mehta said.

The Chief Secretary underlined the importance of Mission Youth in providing self-employment to 50,000 young entrepreneurs.

He asked the banks to play proactive role in realizing the objectives of the programme.

Reviewing the performance of banking sector in 2020-21, the Chief Secretary expressed his serious concern in poor lending to the priority sector in general and agriculture sector in particular despite immense potential in these sectors.

He asked the Reserve Bank of India to review the status and reverse the trend so that the credit flow is achieved as per the laid norms of maintaining 60% Credit Deposit Ratio with 40% credit to priority sector which includes agriculture, MSME, export credit, education, housing, social infrastructure and renewable energy.

Emphasizing the importance of horticulture-based industries in generating employment in Kashmir valley, the Chief Secretary asked banks to prioritize sanctioning of cases under PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme to



extend Rs. 100 crore credit over next 5 years towards development of enterprises based on 'One District One Product' model.

Under the PM Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme, the Housing and Urban Development Department was directed to develop 10,000 vending stalls in collaboration

with banks as model kiosks based on common design and outlook in twin cities of Jammu and Srinagar during this financial year.

While reviewing the credit disbursement by banks under various Government sponsored livelihood schemes, the Chief Secretary revised the targets for 2021-22 under National Rural Livelihood Mission,

Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme, National Urban Livelihood Mission and special loan for SC/ST/OBC to 25,000, 20,000, 15,000 and 7,500 respectively which triples the number of beneficiaries under these schemes. During the previous financial year, Rs.788.31 crore in favour of 23,987 beneficiaries was disbursed by banks under these schemes.

The banks were asked to pay special attention to lending to the poorest of the poor under Joint Liability Farming Groups of 'Bhoomi Heen Kissan'. They were further asked to promptly process KCC loan cases without causing unnecessary delays to address the seasonal financial requirements of farmers.

The meeting was informed that the banks operating in Jammu & Kashmir have extended a total credit of Rs.30,688.49 crore in favour of 12,36,419 beneficiaries registering an achievement of 69% in financial terms and 80% in physical terms during 2020-21; against the Annual Credit Plan of Rs.44,630.02 crore for 15,37,993 beneficiaries.

Economic Shock From Covid Second Wave Not As Severe As Last Year's: Moody's



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moody's Investors Service on Wednesday slashed India's growth projection to 9.6 per cent for 2021 calendar year, from its earlier estimate of 13.9 per cent, and said faster vaccination progress will be paramount in restricting economic losses to June quarter. In its report titled "Macroeconomics—India: Economic shocks from second COVID wave will not be as severe as last year's", Moody's said high-frequency economic indicators show that the second wave of COVID-19 infections hit India's economy in April and May. With states now easing restrictions, economic activity in May is likely to signify the trough.

"The virus resurgence adds uncertainty to India's growth forecast for 2021; however, it is likely that the economic damage will remain restricted to the April-June quarter. We currently expect India's real GDP to grow at 9.6 per cent in 2021 and 7 per cent in 2022," Moody's said.

Moody's expects the overall hit to India's economy to be softer than that during the first wave last year. However, the pace of recovery will be determined by access to and delivery of vaccines, and the strength of the recovery in private consumption,

which could be hampered by the deterioration of balance sheets of low- and middle-income households from job, income and wealth losses. Earlier this month, Moody's had projected India to clock a 9.3 per cent growth in the current fiscal ending March 2022, but a severe second COVID wave has increased risks to India's credit profile and rated entities.

The Indian economy contracted by 7.3 per cent in fiscal 2020-21 as the country battled the first wave of COVID, as against a 4 per cent growth in 2019-20.

Stating that stringent lockdowns in economically significant states will mar April-June quarter economic activity, Moody's said the 10 states that have been hardest hit by the second wave collectively account for more than 60 per cent of the pre-pandemic level of India's GDP.

Four states—Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka—contributed the largest shares among all states in financial year 2019-20.

Moody's said faster vaccination progress will be paramount in restricting economic losses to the current quarter. As of the third week in June, only about 16 per cent of the population had received one vaccine dose; of those, only about 3.6 per cent had been fully vaccinated.

"Mobility and economic activity will likely accelerate in the second half of the year as the pace of vaccinations pick up. The government recently announced a strategy to centralise vaccine procurement in order to boost vaccinations, which if successful, will support the economic recovery," it added.

NEWS MAKERS

Indigo Offers Discount For Vaccinated Passengers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

IndiGo will give 10 per cent discount from Wednesday onwards to all passengers who have taken at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, a statement said. The discount would be given on base fare and only "limited inventory" is available under this offer, the airline's statement noted.

"The offer is only available to vaccinated passengers aged 18 years and above, who are located in India at the time of booking and have already received a (at least one dose of) COVID-19 vaccine in the country," it said.

Passengers who have availed the offer at the time of booking will be required to furnish a valid COVID-19 vaccination certificate—issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare—at the airport check-in counter as well as the



boarding gate, it mentioned.

"Alternately, they can display their vaccination status on the Aarogya Setu mobile application at the airport check-in counter/boarding gate," it added.

Sanjay Kumar, Chief Strategy and Revenue Officer, IndiGo said, "Being the largest airline in the country, we feel it is our responsibility to contribute to the national vaccination drive, by encouraging more people towards this common goal." During April and May, India had

been badly hit by the coronavirus infection's second wave, which is receding currently. Several states have been complaining about the COVID-19 vaccine shortage for the last couple of months.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said on Tuesday that more than 2.14 crore COVID-19 vaccine doses are still available with the states and Union territories and over 33,80,590 vaccine doses are in the pipeline and will be received by them within the next three days.

UK High Court Rejects Plea From Nirav Modi To Appeal Against Extradition

Agencies

In a major victory for India, the UK High Court has rejected the plea of fugitive economic offender Nirav Modi to appeal against his extradition order, passed by a magistrate court.

In February, the Westminster Magistrates' Court had ruled that Nirav Modi be extradited to stand trial in India over the charges against him in the Punjab National Bank case, where he is accused of perpetrating fraud amounting of Rs 13,500 crore. In April, UK Home Secretary Priti Patel approved the extradition of Nirav Modi.

The plea was before a High Court judge for a decision "on the papers" submitted to determine if there are any grounds for an appeal against



the home secretary's decision or the Westminster Magistrates Court February ruling in favour of Nirav Modi's extradition to India to face charges of fraud and money laundering.

A High Court official confirmed that the permission to appeal was "rejected on paper" on Tuesday, which leaves the 50-year-old jeweller with a chance to make his case at a brief oral hearing in the High Court with a renewed "leave to appeal" application for a judge to determine if it can proceed to a full appeal hearing.

ED Transfers Assets Of Mallya, Nirav, Choksi Worth Rs 8,441.5 Crore To PSU Banks

Agencies

Even as the government awaits the extradition of economic offenders and fugitives Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi, there is some respite to the public sector banks that suffered losses due to bank frauds.

The Enforcement Directorate pursuing the money laundering cases against the trio has transferred attached assets worth Rs 8,441.5 crore to public sector banks.

The ED is hopeful that Mallya and Modi will be extradited from UK soon after the Westminster court ordered their extradition.

"Since, Mallya has been denied permission to file appeal in the UK Supreme Court, his extradition to India has become final," said the ED officials. However, the Central agency

still has its fingers crossed on Choksi as the fugitive diamondaire has created legal tangles with his mysterious landing in Dominica.

With limited role in bringing the fugitives back to the country where extradition proceedings now depend heavily on how the governments in UK and Antigua and Barbuda respond, the ED is focussing on recovering the funds siphoned off by the fugitives.

Meanwhile, there is increased focus on fast-tracking the matters pending in courts against the trio and transferring the recovered assets and funds to the banks.

The ED had attached and seized assets worth of Rs. 18,170.02 crore of the year as the pace of vaccinations pick up. The government recently announced a strategy to centralise vaccine procurement in order to boost vaccinations, which if successful, will support the economic recovery," it added.

76% Parents Say Not Sending Children To School Till Covid-19 Cases Down To Zero: Study



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: A total of 76 per cent parents are not ready to send their children to school till cases in their district go down to zero or children get vaccinated.

According to a survey by Local Circles, the percentage of parents who will send their children to school has reduced from 69 per cent to 20 per cent in 4 months.

65 per cent parents approve of their children receiving the Covid vaccine if it is made available by September 2021.

According to a survey by Local Circles, the percentage of parents who will send their children to school has reduced from 69 per cent to 20 per cent in 4 months.

65 per cent parents approve of their children receiving the Covid vaccine if it is made available by September 2021.

As per Local Circles, the government in its daily briefing announced this week that opening schools will be difficult till a major chunk of the population is vaccinated.

With the second wave of Covid-19 seeing even children and infants getting infected with the coronavirus, in such a scenario, the resumption of school according to medical experts may lead

to an increase in the number of cases, particularly at the time the imminent threat of the third wave is expected to hit India in less than 2 months.

There is evidence to show that more children were affected in the second wave than the first. 8,000 kids tested positive in May alone in a district in Maharashtra.

Recently, Meghalaya reported 5,000 Covid cases in the age group 0-14. In the first wave, 4 per cent of the infected population were children. This share has increased to about 10 per cent - 20 per cent in the second wave. So far, the mortality rate in children is low.

The concern for the children of the country remains high as the vaccination for them is still in its trial stages. Serum Institute of India is planning to start the trials of Novavax on children in July.

Bharat Biotech has two vaccines that are being tried on children, Covaxin and BBV154, a one-shot nasal vaccine. ZyCoV-D, the Zydus' Covid-19 vaccine has also started trials on children in the age group 12-18 years. The Government of India is considering providing legal indemnity to Pfizer and Moderna to roll out their vaccines in India.

Pfizer has announced that its vaccine is safe for children above 12 years of age.

India, US Kick Off Mega Wargame In Indian Ocean With Eye On China



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: India and the US on Wednesday kicked off a two-day multi-domain wargame in the Indian Ocean involving an array of air defence platforms to further consolidate their operational synergy in the face of China's increasing military presence in the region.

The US has deployed its naval carrier strike group, led by the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan, as well as a fleet of F-18 fighter jets and E-2C Hawkeye all-weather aircraft for the exercise, officials said.

The Indian assets at the exercise included Jaguar and Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jets, IL-78 air-to-air refuelling tanker aircraft, AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) aircraft and warships Kochi and Teg.

The Indian Navy has also deployed a fleet of P8I maritime surveillance aircraft and MiG 29K jets, apart from other platforms.

The US Carrier Strike Group (CSG) is currently deployed in the Indian Ocean region.

A carrier battle group or carrier strike group is a mega naval fleet comprising an aircraft carrier, accompanied by a large number of destroyers, frigates

and other ships.

"The Indian naval warships, along with aircraft from the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force will be engaged in the joint multi-domain operations with the carrier strike group comprising Nimitz-class aircraft carrier Ronald Reagan, Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Halsey and Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Shiloh," Indian Navy's spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said on Tuesday.

He said the two-day exercise aims to strengthen the bilateral relationship and cooperation by demonstrating the ability to integrate and coordinate comprehensively in maritime operations.

Officials said the high-tempo exercise will include advanced air-defence drills, cross-deck helicopter operations and anti-submarine manoeuvres with an aim to hone the war-fighting skills and enhance interoperability between the two sides.

The exercise is being carried out south of Thiruvananthapuram, on the western seaboard.

The officials said the exercise is focussing on multiple areas, including enhancing the aspects of interoperability, nuances of in-

ternational integrated maritime search-and-rescue operations and exchange of best practices in the maritime airpower domain.

The Indo-US defence ties have been on an upswing in the last few years.

In June 2016, the US had designated India as a "Major Defence Partner".

The two countries have also inked key defence and security pacts over the last few years, including the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016 that allows their militaries to use each other's bases for repair and replenishment of supplies as well as provides for deeper cooperation.

The two sides have also signed the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018 that provides for interoperability between the two militaries and the sale of high-end technology from the US to India.

In October last year, India and the US sealed the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) to further boost the bilateral defence ties.

The pact provides for the sharing of high-end military technology, logistics and geospatial maps between the two countries. — PTI

US Experts To Review Heart Problems Among Teens After Covid Shots

Agenceis

WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES: A panel of experts convened by the top US health agency will hold a meeting Wednesday to review data surrounding more than 300 confirmed cases of heart muscle inflammation among adolescents and young adults after receiving mRNA Covid vaccines.

The committee, hosted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), will hear a risk-benefit analysis as researchers explore whether the shots can cause myocarditis, as well as cases of inflammation of the heart lining, pericarditis.

Israel first was the first country to identify a possible link.

"These cases are rare, and the vast majority have fully resolved with rest and supportive care," said CDC director Rochelle Walensky last week ahead of the meeting, which was initially scheduled for last Friday but postponed because of a new public holiday.

The cases that have been confirmed were investigated following initial reports to vaccine safety monitoring systems, and come from more than 20 million adolescents and young adults that have been vaccinated, added Walensky.

While 300 out of 20 million is a small number, it is still likely higher than what would otherwise be expected for the age group.

A previous meeting on the is-

sue convened on June 10 by the Food and Drug Administration heard that most of the cases were among young men and occurred within a week of the second dose.

The new CDC hearing will dive deeper into updated data that has been independently verified, rather than being self-reported.

Mostly mild cases

Lorry Rubin, director of pediatric infectious diseases at Cohen Children's Medical Center told AFP: "I'm concerned, but I'd emphasize that cause and effect has not yet been established."

He said that his own hospital had seen a few cases of adolescent males developing chest pain a day or two after the second dose of an mRNA vaccine.

The Pfizer vaccine is currently the only shot authorized in adolescents aged 12 and up.

"On the other hand, the cases have been relatively mild," added Rubin, with the patients returning to normal within a few days after treatment with medicine like ibuprofen. Myocarditis is known to be seasonal, with higher incidence in summer months potentially linked to enteroviruses, and is estimated to affect one per 100,000 children per year.

Even if a causal link to the vaccines is established, Rubin said it should be weighed against the risks to children from Covid.

While children are less affected than adults, the virus has

still hospitalized more than 3,000 children in the United States over the course of the pandemic, and led to more than 300 deaths, according to official data. Some 2,700 people under-30 have died from Covid.

"We've actually had more kids infected with Covid than we know who have had long term impacts, some of whom have been quite ill with cardiac symptoms in the hospital," stressed Lee Savio Beers, president of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Other experts have adopted a more cautious line.

Monica Gandhi, an infectious diseases and public health expert at the University of California San Francisco, said that the United States had gone beyond some other countries' recommendations on vaccinating teens.

These include Germany and Israel, which only recommend vaccinating adolescents who are at high risk, while Britain is still examining the data and hasn't yet reached a decision.

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"It's a new vaccine, it's been increasingly elevated as a concern, and all other countries except for us have done something that errs on the side of safety," she told AFP, adding she was holding off having her 13-year-old child receive a second dose until she learns more.

Pending JEE-Mains Sessions Likely In August, NEET may be Postponed to September, Sources From MoE Say

Agenceis

The Ministry of Education is contemplating conducting pending editions of engineering entrance exam JEE-Mains in July and August while the medical entrance exam NEET can be shifted to September, according to sources.

However, a final decision in this regard is yet to be taken and the Ministry is in process of reviewing the COVID-19 situation across states and UTs.

"The pending editions of JEE-Mains are likely to be conducted either at the end of July or August with a fortnight's gap between the two tests. NEET is likely to be pushed to September," a source said.

From the current academic session, JEE-Mains is being conducted four times a year to offer flexibility to students and a chance to improve their scores.

The first phase in February was followed by the second phase in March, while the next phases were

scheduled for April and May.

But those were postponed after an exponential rise in the number of COVID-19 cases during the second wave of the pandemic in the country.

The JEE-Advanced exam, which is conducted for admission to the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology and the National Institutes of Technology, was also postponed. The exam was scheduled on July 3.

While no further decision was taken on NEET-UG which is scheduled on August 1, the registration for the exam, which was supposed to commence from May 1, was kept in abeyance.

The ministry is also yet to decide on the fate of the Central University Common Entrance Test (CUCET).

Earlier this month, the CBSE cancelled class 12 board exams in view of the pandemic and has announced a marks tabulation policy.

Following the same route, the CISC and several state boards also cancelled the same exams.

Waseem Rizvi Accused of Rape by Driver's Wife



Agenceis

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Shia Central Waqf Board member and former chairman, Waseem Rizvi, has been accused of rape by his driver's wife.

The woman, who went to Saadatganj police station with several lawyers on Tuesday, has demanded action against Waseem Rizvi.

The woman has accused Rizvi of blackmailing her through obscene videos and photos.

The police said they are investigating on the basis of the complaint given by the woman.

The woman told reporters that Waseem Rizvi used to sexually assault by sending her driver husband out on the pretext of some work or the other.

When the woman protested, Rizvi used to threaten to make her obscene videos and photos viral.

The woman said that when she could not bear it, she narrated the ordeal to her husband. When the

woman's husband tried to talk to Waseem Rizvi, he was also beaten up.

Meanwhile, Waseem Rizvi said that his driver was conniving with his rivals and was passing on his information to them. Rizvi, has recently printed and self-published the first compilation of what he has calls 'The Real Quran'.

Shia clerics in Lucknow have been up in arms against Rizvi ever since demanding FIR against Shia Waqf Board member Waseem Rizvi for hurting religious sentiments of Muslims.

"In view of this and also my safety, I had fired the driver a few days ago. The house that I gave him was also vacated. Now he is tried to malign my image by making such baseless allegations," he said,

Saadatganj police station in-charge, meanwhile, said that further action will be taken after registering a case once preliminary investigations are over.

Poll Strategist Prashant Kishor Meets Sharad Pawar, 3rd Time In A Fortnight

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: Political strategist Prashant Kishor met Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) supremo Sharad Pawar here on Wednesday, a day after leaders of eight opposition parties gathered at Pawar's residence and discussed various issues facing the country.

According to sources, the closed-door discussions between Kishor and Pawar, held at the latter's residence in Delhi, lasted for about an hour.

This was their third meeting within a fortnight.

Kishor, who was instrumental in the thumping victory of the Trinamool Congress in the West Bengal Assembly polls, had met Pawar over lunch at his residence in Mumbai on June 11. He again called on the NCP chief at his residence in Delhi on Monday.

These meetings with Pawar has fuelled speculations about the possibility of opposition parties coming together to form a third front against the BJP.

Pawar on Tuesday hosted a meeting of the leaders of eight opposition parties including the Trinamool Congress, the Samajwadi Party, the Aam Aadmi Party, the Rashtriya Lok Dal and the Left at his residence in Delhi.

However, leaders who took part in that discussions asserted that it was a "non-political" meeting of like-minded individuals by Rashtriya Manch that was floated by former finance minister and TMC vice-president Yashwant Sinha



along with others.

Before the opposition leaders' meeting on Tuesday, Pawar also chaired NCP's national executive meeting the same day and had "a detailed discussion" with his party leaders on its "future policies", its role in the next Lok Sabha polls and current national issues." The opposition party leaders' meet at Pawar's residence was attended by National Conference's leader Omar Abdullah, SP's Ghanshyam Tiwari, RLD president Jayant Chaudhary, Sushil Gupta from the AAP, Binoy Viswam from the CPI, Nilotpal Basu from CPI-M and TMC vice-president Yashwant Sinha among others.

Former Congress leader Sanjay Jha and Janata Dal-United's (JD-U) ex-leader Pavan Verma also participated in the meeting. Besides politicians, several eminent personalities such as Javed Akhtar, former ambassador KC Singh and Justice (retired) A P Shah were also present at Tuesday's meeting. PTI

Police Hunts for Thieves Who Stole Cow Dung in Chhattisgarh

Agenceis

A massive manhunt is underway in central India after a gang of robbers stole nearly a tonne of cow dung from a village, police said.

Villagers in the central state of Chhattisgarh complained to police last week after more than 800 kilogrammes of poo disappeared from their storehouse.

Police said the gang struck at night, breaking into the depository in Korba district's Dhurena village and fleeing with their pungent plunder estimated to be worth some Rs1,600.



"We have questioned some suspects but no arrests

have been made yet," local police officer Harish Tand-

ekar told AFP on Wednesday. He added that it was not

clear how the suspects had been able to transport such a large amount of faeces, or why they had stolen it.

"Investigations are continuing and every effort is being made to find the culprits," Tandekar said.

Chhattisgarh buys bovine dung from dairy farmers at Rs200 per 100 kilogrammes under a state scheme to produce vermicompost.

In recent years, many Indian states have been encouraging farmers to sell cow poo for organic farming.

There has also been an increased demand for cattle waste for eco-friendly products such as earthen

lamps and for religious purposes.

Some Hindus consider cows sacred and use the animals' dung and urine for medicines and other holy practices.

In 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu-nationalist government invested five billion rupees into research into developing medicines and personal-hygiene products from cow dung and urine.

The government is looking to encourage the production of toothpaste, shampoos and mosquito repellents from cow dung and urine.