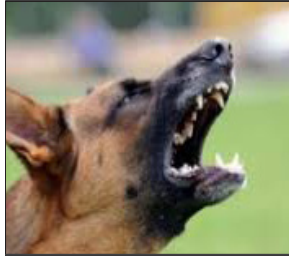


24th year OF PUBLICATION

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P3 CITY

SMHS REPORTS 30,000 DOG BITE CASES IN FIVE YEARS

The authorities have failed to set-up the dog sterilisation centres in Srinagar city even as a sharp increase in the number of dog bite cases. In the last five years, one of the tertiary care....

P6 MEAT OF THE MEET

Following the all-party meeting between New Delhi and J&K's unionist parties on June 24, a flurry of political commentary ensued on the causes and outcome of this historic conference. Broadly, three arguments have been offered: firstly, that the Modi...



P5 STATE

PETROL PUMP SEALED FOR SELLING ADULTERATED FUEL

Authorities Thursday sealed a petrol pump at Gowherpora area of central-Kashmir's Budgam district for selling adulterated fuel. Officials said that the filling station was...



Quote!

I'd rather regret the things I've done than regret the things I haven't done.
— Lucille Ball

NEWS DIGEST

Crorepati Forest Guard Chargesheeted

SRINAGAR: The anti-corruption bureau (ACB) on Thursday filed chargesheet against a forest guard for amassing huge wealth and assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. The ACB produced chargesheet before the Court of Special Judge Anti-Corruption Jammu against forest guard Kewal Krishan Sharma, his wife Raj Kumari, his son Ishant Sharma. **More On P10**

Man Found Dead In Stream

SRINAGAR: A middle-aged man was found dead on Thursday in a stream in Beerwah area of central Kashmir's Budgam district. 56-year-old Abdul Rahman Bhat, a sweeper at the Tehsil office Beerwah was found dead in Nallah Sukhnag in the central Kashmir district on Thursday, reports said. Bhat's body according to the reports was spotted by the locals who instantly informed the police. **More On P10**

Man Injured In Bear Attack

SRINAGAR: An elderly man was attacked and injured on Thursday by a black bear in the Lolab area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district. 65-year-old Gulab Awaan was outside his house in Warnow Aafan of Lolab on Thursday evening when a bear appeared there and attacked him, reports said. The elderly man's cries, reports said. **More On P10**

Carpenter Falls Off Rooftop, Dies

SRINAGAR: A carpenter died on Thursday after falling off from a rooftop of a residential house in Bijbehara area of south Kashmir's Anantnag district. Manzoor Ahmad Bhat was working on the rooftop of a residential house in Kanelwan area of Bijbehara on Thursday afternoon when he lost control and fell on the ground, reports said. Bhat, who received serious injuries in **More On P10**

Girl Injured In Lightning Strike

SRINAGAR: A teenage girl suffered critical injuries after being struck by lightning in Buffliaz in Surankote of Poonch district on Thursday. 17-year-old Shoba Kouser, daughter of Abdul Hamid was at her home in Marha sector of Buffliaz at the time of occurrence of the incident on Thursday evening, reports said. The girl was immediately removed to SDH Surankote for treatment. However the teen's **More On P10**

Kargil Leaders Want 370 Back, Statehood For Ladakh

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: A delegation of leaders from Ladakh's Kargil region, on Thursday, urged the Centre to grant full statehood to the newly created Union territory (UT) as well as restore special status granted under Article 370 of the Constitution.

The Centre, on August 5, 2019, had abrogated Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and bifurcated the erstwhile state into Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

While Jammu and Kashmir is a UT with a legislature, Ladakh was created without a legislature.

The leaders from Kargil held a discussion with Union Minister of State for Home



G. Kishan Reddy. The meeting comes a week after Prime Minister Narendra Modi met 14 political leaders from Jammu and Kashmir.

During the June 24 meeting, the central leadership came up with a roadmap for Jammu and Kashmir delimitation, elections and then restoration of statehood.

Leader of the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) Asgar Ali Karbalai said that

they apprised Reddy about the need for restoration of Article 370 and Article 35A, and full-fledged statehood for Ladakh.

He said they had a two-and-a-half-hour-long meeting with the Union minister and were hopeful that more meetings would take place in the future on their demands.

Another leader, Qamar Ali Akhoun, said that they were against creation of the UT of Ladakh and **More On P10**



Sajad Lone Delinks Polls From Statehood

The political leadership of Jammu and Kashmir has to create an enabling environment to ensure the Centre delivers on its promises, Peoples Conference chairman Sajad Gani Lone said on Thursday as he expressed hope that the recent all-party meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi would start "a phase of reconciliation". **More On P10**

Assam Riflemen Deployed In J&K

Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR: Army men in Kashmir have now got vital support in conducting security-related operations with women soldiers from the Assam Rifles assisting the troops in maintaining peace in the Valley.

The Assam Riflemen have been deployed in some areas of Kashmir where they help the male **More On P10**

Court Rejects Shabir Shah's Bail In Funding Case

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court on Thursday dismissed the bail application of Freedom Party leader Shabbir Shah in a money laundering case related to alleged militant funding in Kashmir, saying the prosecution cannot be blamed for delay on account of Covid-19.

Special Judge Dharmender Rana, **More On P10**

J&K Situation Improved After LoC Truce: Army Chief

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: There has been no infiltration along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir after India and Pakistan agreed to observe a ceasefire in February and it has resulted in a significant drop in all parameters of violence, Army Chief General MM Naravane said on Thursday.

In an interactive session at a think-tank, Gen. Naravane also said there will always be elements who will try to sabotage the process of peace and development and the security forces will have to be mindful



of this challenge.

In a sudden and significant move aimed at reducing tensions, the Indian and Pakistani armies announced on February 25 that they would cease firing

across the LoC, while committing themselves to a 2003 ceasefire agreement.

The Chief of Army Staff said following the February ceasefire, the security **More On P10**

'Developing Capabilities To Deal With Drone Threats'

Easy availability of drones has increased the complexity of security challenges and the Indian military is developing capabilities to effectively deal with the threats, be it from state-sponsored elements or by states themselves, Army Chief Gen M M Naravane said on Thursday. In an address at a think-tank, Gen Naravane said the security establishment is well **More On P10**



IAF Drone Attack Police Asks Wedding Photographers To Submit Details

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: In the aftermath of the recent bombing on IAF station here, dozens of wedding photographers using drones are worried about the future of their business for which they have invested a handsome amount owing to a trend which was picking up among the couples planning their

weddings and making the event memorable.

Amid heightened security across Jammu and Kashmir after armed drones were used to drop two bombs on IAF Jammu station in the early hours of Sunday, authorities in the border district of Rajouri on Wednesday ordered a ban on the storage, sale or **More On P10**

J&K Sees More Recoveries Than Infections

Firdaus Ali

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday witnessed more recoveries of coronavirus infected people, while 298 fresh cases and four more Covid-19 related deaths were reported across the Union Territory during the last 24 hours.

According to officials,

573 more Covid-19 patients have recovered in the last 24 hours—110 from Jammu division and 463 from Kashmir, while during the same time 298 fresh cases of virus have been detected across J&K, taking the total number of people infected since the outbreak of pandemic last year to 315960. Out of fresh **More On P10**

Mughal, Sinthan Roads To Open From July 5

SRINAGAR: Keeping in mind the interests of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, today has taken two significant decisions to open the Mughal Road and Sinthan Road for the general public from 5th July.

The Lt Governor remarked that these decisions have been taken for the convenience of the common people of the UT. He said that the reopening of these roads for general public will facilitate the smooth movement of public, reducing the distance and travel time and boosting the overall economy of the region.

In the past few days, several delegations from Rajouri, Poonch, Doda and Kishtwar had met me and **More On P10**

Govt Allots Land For 15 Projects In Jammu

Projects Worth Rs 20000 Cr Employing 84000 Persons Awaiting Nod

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Thursday approved allotment of land for 15 projects in Jammu division with a projected investment of Rs 1548 crore and potential of generating employment for 5000 people.

The decision in this regard was taken in the first meeting of high level land allotment committee J&K to approve allotment of land for establishing Projects having proposed investment from Rs. 50 crore to Rs. 200

crore under the provisions of J&K Industrial Land Allotment Policy, an official spokesperson said. The meeting was held here today under the chairmanship of Principal Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Ranjan P Thakur.

According to the official spokesperson, the panel took up 23 cases for allotment of land in various Industrial Estates of Jammu Division with a projected investment of Rs 2447 Crore.

"After deliberations on case to case basis the committee approved 15 cases of land allotment with a projected investment of Rs. 1548 Cr having employment potential of 5000. The process of land allotment, for the first **More On P10**

LG Pitches For Human Touch In Officials Working 'Behind Every File, Every Single Note, There Are People'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Emphasizing on having elements of human touch in the working of the officials, the Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Thursday that behind every file, every single note, there are people.

Speaking at the two-day Regional Conference on "Replication of Good Governance Practices" at SKICC, Srinagar here on Thursday, in presence of Union MoS, PMO, Ministry of DONER, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh, the LG underlined the significance of creating a common platform



by bringing National, State level organizations, experts for sharing experiences in formulation & implementation of best practices in Citizen-Centric governance, Administrative Innovations, Welfare Programs, Digital Governance, Personnel

Administration and Capacity Building for effective administration, an official spokesperson said.

About 750 officers/officials from 10 States/UTs through semi-virtual mode are participating in one of the biggest ever conferences **More On P10**

Petition Seeks FIR Against Mehbooba For Treason

Press Trust Of India

BIHAR: A petition was filed in a court in this north Bihar town on Thursday praying that former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti be booked for treason following her recent comments backing restoration of Article 370 and resumption of dialogue with Pakistan.

A local social activist Chandra Kishore Parashar filed the petition before the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate claiming that Mufti's remarks "before and after her recent meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi" caused him "extreme distress".

Modi had recently met leaders of the Gupkar Alliance to discuss prospects of holding assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. **More On P10**



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at NISER (Bhubaneswar) and UM-DAE CEBS (Mumbai)
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The new date of examination for NEST 2021 is : 14th of August, 2021
Candidates can continue to apply online till : 15th of July, 2021
For online application and all other details please visit: www.nestexam.in

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: AYAZ AHMAD DAR
S/O: MOHD YOUSF DAR
R/O: BRAKPORA ANANTNAG
RNA

از نیابت قلم اباد

مضمون کاغذات درخواست منجانب ممتز رالطاف ولد محمد الطاف

SRO 294 ساکنہ لچہ بمرا د عطا گی بیکوارڈ ایراسرٹیکٹ تحت

اشتہار بمرا د آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

محالہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست مکمل دفتر ہذا میں زیر روٹی ہے اس سلسلے میں پتواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ مکمل موقع لچہ میں رہائش پذیر ہے سرٹیکٹ اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ پانچ روز یا اعتراض ساتھ یہ اندر دفتر ہذا میں پیش کر کے معیار کرنے بعد کوئی بھی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

تائب تحصیلدار sult

Distt. Anantnag Department of AYUSH Indian Systems of Medicine & Homeopathic Anantnag.
AYUSH Immune Booster Medicine Distributed at village Satri Maidan Gopalpora Anantnag from ISM Dispy. H.Turoo Anantnag



On 01/07/2021 The Directions of Director Indian Systems of Medicine (AYUSH) J & K & ADMO ISM Anantnag/ DNO ISM AYUSH Anantnag . FREE AYUSH Immune Booster Medicines were distributed at Village Satri Maidan Gopalpora Anantnag and also importance of COVID SoPs and vaccination was explained in detail From Govt. ISM H.Turoo 438 beneficiaries received immunity boosting drugs .
mja

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my Driving License bearing DL No: JK1320060020856 somewhere. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the ARTO Pulwama within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Showkat Ahmad Salroo
S/O Gh Nabi Salroo
R/O Bongam Shopian
tas

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 8th pass certificate somewhere. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Hanfaya Modal School Herdaboura Aboura within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Furkan Ahmad Ganie
S/O Farooq Ahmad Ganie
R/o Aboura Tehsil Kharhuma
BMG

از نیابت قلم اباد

مضمون کاغذات درخواست منجانب طاہر امین بٹ وحیف امین بٹ

SRO 294 اولادان محمد امین بٹ ساکنہ قلم اباد بمرا د عطا گی بیکوارڈ ایراسرٹیکٹ تحت

اشتہار بمرا د آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

محالہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست مکمل دفتر ہذا میں زیر روٹی ہے اس سلسلے میں پتواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ مکمل موقع قلم اباد میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کبہ بذیل فرد پر مشتمل ہے سرٹیکٹ اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ پانچ روز یا اعتراض ساتھ یہ اندر دفتر ہذا میں پیش کر کے معیار کرنے بعد کوئی بھی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

تائب تحصیلدار sult

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
R&B SUB-DIVISION MAGAM
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
Fresh NIT No: - 31/ R&B of 2021-22 DATED: - 30/06/2021.

For and on behalf of the President of India e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rs.)	Earnest money	Time of Completion (In days)	Time & Date of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor	Major Head of Account
1	Construction of Lane & drain from house of Gh. Ahmad Mir to NTR at Astanpora Ward No. 6 under IDMT MC Magam	1.82	200/-	3% of quoted cost within 03 days after opening of financial bid	15	07-07-2021	DEE	IDMT
2	Construction of Lane road by way of filling GSB filling from House of Mohd. Yousf Ganie to H/O Mohd. Maqbool Mir at Yagipora-C Ward No. 3 under IDMT MC Magam	2.64	200/-	--do--	20	07-07-2021	DEE	IDMT

Position of AAA/TS : Accorded
Position of funds: Available

1. The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-
1.2. The cost of tender documents should be collected by introducing e-challan or simple uploading a copy of necessary Treasury challan / receipt (M.H 0059) only as per enclosed format.
1.3 Actual Treasury challan / receipt be submitted to the concerned authority as per the order principal secretary to Govt. Finance Department No. A/24 (2017) / 651 Dated: 07-06-2018 duly endorsed by Superintending Engineer (R&B) Circle Baramulla / Kupwara vide his No. SE (R&B)/3741-46 Dated: 25-06-2018.
1.4 All bidders has to submit bid security declaration form instead of earnest money deposit (EMD) as per the circular of finance department (Bid security form is as per Annexure "A" below).
1.5 The 1st lowest bidder has to produce an amount of equal to 3% of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR within 02 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work.
1.6 The Successful bidders have to start the work within 07 days, otherwise action shall be taken as per the norms.

S.No.	Date of issue of tender Notice	
1	Date of issue of Tender Notice	30/06/2021
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 30/06/2021 10.00 A.M to 06/07/2021 4.00 P.M
3	Bid submission start date	30/06/2021 from 10.00 AM
4	Bid submission end date	06/07/2021 upto 4.00 P.M
5	Date & time of opening of bids (online)	07/07/2021 at 11.00 AM in the office of the Executive Engineer R&B Sub-Division Magam

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / receipt in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Sub-Division Magam (tender inviting authority).
3. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Sub-Division Magam (tender receiving authority).
4. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids
5. The bidder has to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
5.1. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
5.1. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.
5.2. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get "Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)" as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.
5.3. The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.
5.4. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1 on any other convene day
5.5. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid. Besides, original / photocopies of documents related to the bid be submitted physically / by registered post / through courier before the date specified in Para-1.
5.6 Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents tender document fee in terms of soft copies with the technical bid and submit the Hard Copies of all the uploaded documents duly attested under the hand and seal of the tenderer. No document(s) which has / have not been uploaded shall be entertained in the form of hardcopy. However, in case of any clarification, the bidders shall have to produce original documents in support of Soft copies if need arises.
17. The Departmental material if any to be lifted from Divisional store premises shall be deducted as per the stock rates issued separately and from time to time.
18. Retention Money:- 10% shall be deducted from each running bill of the successful contractor which shall be released after virtual completion of work in all respects for Civil works only.
19. The bidders should record their contact numbers in the Divisional Office.
20. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form).
21. In case any new circular / instructions / order is issued by the competent authorities during the current financial year, the same shall be implemented / treated in force on all the tenders floated from time to time.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
R&B Sub-Division Magam
DIPK-3859/21
No:-R&B/Divn./M/1668-88
Dated: 30-06-2021

Government of Jammu and Kashmir
Mission Directorate, Jal Jeevan Mission, J&K
(Department of Jal Shakti, J&K)
NIT No.: 02 of 2021
Dated: 29 / 06 / 2021

Subject: Notice inviting tenders for engagement of 'Project Development and Management Consultancy (PDMC) for Implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in the Kashmir Province of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

Mission Directorate, Jal Jeevan Mission J&K (hereinafter called "Client"), invites online proposals from registered and reputed consultancy firms in three cover system for providing "Project Development and Management Consultancy Services, (hereinafter called "Services"), to prepare (i) Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) & Bid Documents and (ii) Construction Supervision & Contract Management of Water Supply Schemes under the jurisdiction of Jal Shakti Department (PHED), Kashmir (J&K), under Jal Jeevan Mission programme launched by Government of India to provide Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) to every Rural household (i.e., Har Ghar Nal Se Jal).

The Water Supply Schemes proposed under Jal Jeevan Mission programme are either to be as new schemes or retrofitting of existing water supply schemes. The key objectives of this programme is to provide qualitative piped water supply to the rural population within the agreed time frame, through active participation of Gram Panchayats/ Panchayat Pani Samitis constituted for the purpose. Keeping in view the volume of the work and limited time frame available, it is proposed to engage a Consultancy Firm for the following Work, to technically support the Jal Shakti Department (PHED), Kashmir Province, in formulating and executing these schemes.

S. No	Name of Work	Cost of Tender Document (INR)	EMD (INR Lakh)	Time Duration (Year)
1.	Engagement of Project Development and Management Consultancy Firm for Implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in the Kashmir Province of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, India.	10000.00	32.00	18 Months, extendable by one year.

The scope of to-be engaged Firm would be spread over Five (05) districts of Kashmir Province of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir as abstracted here under:

S. No.	Name of the District	Tentative No. of Schemes	Tentative Cost of Schemes (INR Cr.)
1	Anantnag	150	432.53
2	Kulgam	67	300.95
3	Budgam	123	480.00
4	Baramulla	163	678.48
5	Kupwara	74	436.73
Grand Total		577	2328.69

The number of projects/ schemes and cost are subject to change and will be contingent on actual implementation status of projects. Interested and eligible Firms may submit their complete proposals, both technical and financial, as prescribed in the Tender Document, online on <https://jktenders.gov.in> along with receipt of requisite Tender Document Cost and the requisite Earnest Money Deposit. The Cost of Tender Document is non-refundable and is to be paid through online mode via NEFT/RTGS in favour of Accounts Officer, Mission Directorate Jal Jeevan Mission J&K to the bank account (0110010200000985, IFSC: JAKA00MOVING). The Earnest Money Deposit shall be submitted in the form of Demand Draft, Fixed Deposit Receipt, Bank Guarantee or online payment, favouring Accounts Officer, Mission Directorate Jal Jeevan Mission, J&K payable at Jammu/ Srinagar.

The firms registered as MSME specifically for providing of 'Consultancy Services to Infrastructural Development Projects' shall be provided tender document free of cost and shall also be exempted from payment of Earnest Money, subject to furnishing of relevant valid certificate for claiming such exemption.

The RFP document containing all the details regarding bidding process, Terms of Reference (TOR) and formats of proposal (Technical as well Financial) shall be available on e-procurement portal of J&K Govt. i.e. <https://jktenders.gov.in> with the schedule of critical dates as below:

S. No.	Particulars	Schedule Date & Time
1	Date of issue of NIT/ RFP	29/06/2021.
2	Document download start Date & Time	30/06/2021, 10:00 AM
3	Last Date for receipt of requests for clarifications.	04/07/2021, 05:00 PM
4	Last Date for booking of pre-bid meeting (VC)	05/07/2021, 05:00 PM
5	Pre-Bid meeting Date & Time	07/07/2021, 03:00 PM
6	Bid Submission Start Date & Time	08/07/2021, 10:00 AM
7	Bid Submission End Date & Time	28/07/2021, 05:00 PM
8	Last Date for receipt of hard copies of proposals (submitted online)	02/08/2021, 05:00 PM
9	Technical Bid Opening (online) Date & Time	29/07/2021, 03:00 PM
10	Financial Bid Opening Date & Time	To be intimated separately.

Terms & Conditions:

1. The firm will be selected under Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) procedure described in the RFP.
2. Right to revise or amend this notice and / or the RFP Document, fully or partially, prior to the last date notified for submission of offers or on any subsequent date is reserved by the Mission Director, Jal Jeevan Mission J&K.
3. Mission Directorate Jal Jeevan Mission J&K will not be responsible for any delay in submission of bid due to any reason.
4. Mission Directorate Jal Jeevan Mission J&K reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, cancel the bidding process, at any time prior to the award of contract, without assigning any reason there for and thereby assumes no responsibility of incurring any liability to the affected applicants.
5. For any queries related to bid submission, please contact on tak.jjmjk@jk.gov.in / tok.jjmjk@jk.gov.in.

Sd/-
Technical Advisor (K),
Mission Directorate, JJM J&K.
No. SMD/JJM-J&K/13/2020-21/500-503
Dated: 29/ 06/2021.
DIPK-3834/21



A BOY JUMPS INTO THE WATERS OF DAL LAKE to cool off as mercury continues to show an upwards trend in Kashmir Valley. KO Photo Abid Bhat

SMHS Reports 30,000 Dog Bite Cases In Five Years



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The authorities have failed to set-up the dog sterilisation centres in Srinagar city even as a sharp increase in the number of dog bite cases

In the last five years, one of the tertiary care hospitals SMHS hospital has reported 30,000 dog bite

cases, while government proposals to set-up dog sterilisation centres have not moved ahead.

The residents of the city have been complaining about the presence of dogs, especially near garbage bins on roads thereby making it risky for pedestrians to move.

The rising dog menace has com-

pelled the residents to accompany their children every time they venture out. Over the years, the issue of stray dogs has become an increasing concern. What has complicated the issue is the capacity to sterilise the dogs.

In 2013, SMC collaborated with SKUAST Shuhama and set-up a dog sterilisation centre. However, officials say the centre has a maximum capacity to sterilise 20 dogs which is very small given the growing population of dogs.

An official of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) said that the ongoing pandemic has derailed the setting up of more sterilisation facilities in the city.

"The pandemic has derailed the process," he said, adding that the corporation is mulling to add more dog sterilisation centres in the city soon.

Conference On ‘Replication Of Good Governance Practices’ Begins In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Govt To Collaborate For Conducting A National Conference On Governance In J&K

SRINAGAR: Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions inaugurated DARPG's semi-virtual Regional Conference on "Replication of Good Governance Practices" at Srinagar. The Regional Conference is being attended by 750 officers from 10 States.

In his inaugural address Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the objective of the Regional Conference was to familiarise officers with best governance practices. He said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, India adopted the "Minimum Government Maximum Governance" paradigm which is being cited and commended all over the world with civil servants from across the world visiting India to pursue internships. The relevance of Regional Conference emanated from the view that the Government should go out of Vigyan Bhavan to reach out to administrators in various States.

Dr Singh complimented the officers of DARPG for conducting the 2-day Regional Conference in Srinagar against all odds in continuation of the 3 previous conferences held in Jammu. This Regional Confer-



ence coming one week after the all-party meet chaired by Prime Minister with the objective of promoting grass roots democracy and provide impetus to development has considerable significance with the adoption of the conference resolution titled "Behtar Nizam e-Hukumat" that will seek to ensure justice for all persons and regions of Jammu & Kashmir.

He said that the administration must reach out to the last man in the queue. He complimented the Government of Jammu & Kashmir for efficient COVID management and congratulated the Awaam of Jammu & Kashmir for community management of COVID-19 pandemic. In his address Dr. Jitendra Singh cited several governance initiatives undertaken by the Government for Jammu & Kashmir including the long pending cadre review, establishment of CAT benches and conduct of the common eligibility test through the National Recruitment Agency at every district headquarter in Jammu & Kashmir.

“BEHTAR NIZAM E-HUKUMAT” THAT will seek to ensure justice for all persons and regions of Jammu & Kashmir.

Journalists Boycott Sikh Leaders’ Presser In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Journalists in Srinagar Thursday boycotted the press conference of a Sikh leader after he allegedly manhandled and abused the journalists.

According to reports, a Sikh leader had invited media personnel to cover a presser at Gurudwara Shaheed Bunga Sahib, Baghat Barzulla at 11 AM.

The invitation was extended by Santpal Singh, President Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee Budgam.

"As the presser was about to begin, some Sikh leaders accused the media of biased reporting into an incident of al-

leged ‘forced conversion’. The leaders also alleged that four Sikh girls are still missing, and the media is not reporting," a news gathering agency reported.

Although senior journalists present at the venue tried to calm the leaders and told them that media was reporting the facts by covering all sides of the story, but some leaders starting abusing and manhandling them.

"They not only abused us but also tried to manhandle us. We were left with no option but to boycott the presser and will never participate in the said leaders' press conference again," one of the journalists said.



NIT Srinagar Signs MoU With ESSCI On Skill Development Program

Observer News Service



SRINAGAR: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Electronics Sector Skills Council of India (ESSCI) on collaborating for skill development programs in the electronic sector.

This MoU aims to set out the framework for the working relationship between ESSCI and NIT Srinagar.

Director, NIT Srinagar Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Sehgal said it is indeed a matter of great pleasure as two technological institutions are coming together to sign a historic MoU. "We need to introduce courses that are more relevant to our students and relevant to industries, and explore different options," he said.

Prof. Sehgal said MoU will also help the students to connect to the various electronic industries in the nation and

the students would get benefited with their internships and placements programs.

On the occasion ESSCI Officiating Head, Piyush Chakraborty said they are confident that this partnership will help us produce industry-ready graduates who are prepared to contribute towards the fast-growing global society. The MoU between NIT Srinagar and ESSCI will benefit both the institutes, he said.

Chakraborty said ESSCI and NIT Srinagar will jointly work for mapping Skills requirements of the industry demand and student requirements. We will also extend our support in the development of the training eco-System for imparting skill-based training in electronics and will create awareness about the skills program for students and the teaching community of NIT Srinagar, he said.

Registrar NIT Srinagar, Prof. Kaiser Bukhari said NIT Srinagar will explore the opportunity of setting up Centre of Excellence (CoE) in consultation with industries & ESSCI support for imparting state-of-the-art training to students.

"It is a good beginning between the two intuitions and in the future we will also explore more possibilities," Prof. Bukhari said.

‘Covid Hospital’ JLNM Starts Functioning Normally



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: On the directions of Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department, Atal Dulloo JLNM Hospital Srinagar and District

Hospital Pulwama which were both Covid hospitals have started functioning normally.

A spokesperson of Directorate of Health Services Kashmir said both the hospitals were Covid-19 dedicated hospitals and

both have started normally.

He said however, separate facilities for Covid-19 patients have been kept in place in both the hospitals.

Director Health Services Kashmir, Dr Mushtaq Ahmed Rather also visited the JLNM hospital Srinagar in connection with DNB accreditation.

At the hospital the director formally inaugurated the first of its kind NBE accredited department of medicine after being allocated NBEMS accreditation and DNB seats by the national board of examinations.

Similarly, at the DH hospital Pulwama, maternity services which were running in a private nursing home, have been started at the hospital following decrease in positive cases.

Lake View Environmental Golf Training Park Opens With Tee Off Function

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Lake View Environmental Golf Training Park also known as Police Golf Course was thrown open this evening with the Tee Off function. DGP J&K Shri Dilbag Singh was Chief Guest on this occasion.

The DGP J&K was received by ADGP Armed S.J.M. Gillani and other senior police officers. A ceremonial guard of honour was presented by the Brass Band contingent of J&K Police.

The DGP formally threw open the Golf Course by playing the ball from a Tee. Later the DGP interacted with the senior officers and also with the support staff of the golf course on the occasion. The DGP was presented a memento by the ADGP Armed J&K S.J.M. Gillani on the occasion.

Malla Bagh Residents Rue Poor Public Transportation Service

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The residents of Malla Bagh and adjoining area Thursday complained of difficulties in commuting to other parts of the city due to absence of proper public transportation facilities.

A group of residents said that they were facing numerous problems as the area lacks proper public transportation facilities.

They said that the area spread from Ila-hi Bagh to Malla Bagh comprises government and private sector employees, businessmen and students, who face a lot of difficulties in reaching their workplaces due to lack of public transportation.

DG CISF, DGP J&K Discuss Security Situation At PHQ



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: DG Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Sudhir Kumar Saxena and DGP J&K Dilbag Singh Thursday discussed the security scenario of the Union Territory, particularly about the vital installations.

Saxena called on Singh at Police Headquarters in Srinagar. A police spokesperson said that the DGP during the interaction with Saxena said that Jammu and Kashmir Police was doing multifarious duties. He said in close coordination with security forces including CISF the J&K Police is providing security to people and vital installations in Jammu and Kashmir. The DGP said that Police enjoyed excellent synergy with security forces including the CISF.

The DGP said that Police is working shoulder to shoulder with other security forces to

uproot militancy and its network from J&K. He said that quick action against the terror groups' intelligence grid has been strengthened.

The DGP said that within the last few years tremendous changes have taken place in the Jammu and Kashmir Police in the shape of weaponry, training skills and technology. He said that latest technology driven gadgets have been introduced for confronting different challenges.

The DG CISF complemented the DGP and his entire team of all ranks of Jammu Kashmir Police for the outstanding work being done for peace in Jammu and Kashmir. He said that J&K Police has a huge role in the maintenance of peace in the Union Territory. He further added that both the forces will continue to work hand in hand in providing security to vital installations in the Union Territory.

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
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

This Day in History

- 1298 - Battle on Hasenbuhl (Gollheim) between German kings Adolf and Albrecht I
- 1582 - Battle of Yamazaki: Toyotomi Hideyoshi defeats Akechi Mitsuhide
- 1600 - Battle at Newport: Earl Mauritius van Nassau beats Spanish Army
- 168 - 7 King James II disbands English parliament
- 1698 - Thomas Savery patents the first steam engine
- 1794 - Second Battle of Seneffe: France-Austria
- 1823 - Bahia Independence Day: the end of Portuguese rule in Brazil, with the final defeat of the Portuguese crown loyalists in the province of Bahia
- 1839 - Slaves aboard a Spanish schooner La Amistad revolt to secure their freedom while being transported from one Cuban port to another
- 1916 - Lenin says Imperialism is caused by capitalism
- 1916 - Russian offensive in Armenia
- 1921 - Warren G. Harding signs a joint congressional resolution declaring the official end of war with Germany
- 1940 - Indian independence leader Subhas Chandra Bose is arrested and detained in Calcutta
- 1947 - Military coup discovered in France
- 1949 - The State of Vietnam is internationally recognised, governing the southern half of Vietnam, with Bao Dai as chief of state
- 1971 - USSR performs underground nuclear test
- 1972 - India and Pakistan sign Simla Agreement peace accord
- 1982 - Soyuz T-6 returns to Earth
- 1985 - Andrei Gromyko appointed president of USSR
- 1985 - European Space Agency launches Giotto (Halley's Comet Flyby)
- 2001 - Bush Administration announce that it will seek to let oil companies drill on about 1,500,000 acres of the Gulf of Mexico
- 2001 - UN Security Council, facing an almost certain Russian veto, agrees to postpone indefinitely a vote on the US-led "smart sanctions" package for Iraq
- 2006 - Sri Lanka's Sanath Jayasuriya (152) and Upul Tharanga (109) compile world record cricket ODI opening stand of 286 vs England at Headingley
- 2010 - Oil tanker truck explosion in South Kivu, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, kills at least 230 people
- 2014 - Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy is criminally charged with corruption by French prosecutors
- 2015 - 62 people are killed after the Kim Nirvana ferry capsizes off the coast of the Philippines
- 2016 - Large lorry bomb in Baghdad kills at least 125 people and wounds 150, Islamic State claims responsibility
- 2017 - World Health Organization declares Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo over (4 deaths)
- 2018 - British divers discover 12 boys and their coach alive in Tham Luang Nang Non cave, Thailand after being trapped for 9 days by monsoon flooding

From KO Archives

Valley Rivers Swell As Glaciers Melt

Pulwama Areas Under Laar Waters

Observer News service

SRINAGAR- Rivers and streams in the valley have registered an alarming increase in water levels due to the intense spell of heal gripping the region.

Several government departments have been put on alert to deal with an imminent threat of floods, even as over two hundred households have been displaced in Pulwama due to waters from the swollen Laar nullah entering inhabited areas.

Glaciers melting under the abnormally high temperatures have raised levels in the Jhelum and other rivers and streams of the valley. In Pulwama a sudden surge in the Laar stream has inundated a large area in Jora village, displacing 250 of its six hundred households, a KNS re-ort said.

Scores of houses have come under water and hundreds of kanals of land have been submerged, the report said. People have fled their homes seeking higher ground for safety.

The Aribal area, located on the banks of the Laar too has been inundated. Water has entered dozens of residential houses the report said.

A delegation from the affected areas has met the additional deputy commissioner Pulwama to apprise him of the situation.

The ADC has directed the tahsildar concerned to dispatch a team to review the situation and organise relief for the flood-hit population

Water has entered paddy fields in several places in the utile) because of rivers over-flowing their banks.

Experts fear that a flood situation is imminent if the heat spell persists with its present intensity, the govt has ordered the departments concerned at the district level to be on alert to deal with any eventuality.

The metrological department says that although the maximum temperature is 5 degrees Celsius above normal and the minimum temperature 7 degrees Celsius above normal, the present situation cannot be characterised as an intense or extraordinary heat wave

The rest of the Country is experiencing normal monsoons and rainfall can be expected in the valley within the next two to three days, a spokesman of the metrological department said.

(Kashmir Observer, 02 July, 2005)

Anyone Trying To Bully Us "Will Face Bloodshed": Xi's Tough Talk



Agence France-Presse

BEIJING, CHINA: President Xi Jinping hailed China's "irreversible" course from colonial humiliation to great-power status at the centenary celebrations for the Chinese Communist Party on Thursday, in a speech reaching deep into history to remind patriots at home and rivals abroad of his nation's -- and his own -- ascendancy. Speaking above the giant portrait of Mao Zedong which dominates Tiananmen Square, from the podium where the famous chairman proclaimed the People's Republic of China in 1949, Xi said the "era of China being bullied is gone forever", praising the party for raising incomes and restoring national pride. Drawing a line from the subjugation of the Opium Wars to the struggle to establish a socialist revolution in China, Xi said the party had brought about "national rejuvenation" lifting tens of millions from poverty and "altered the landscape of world development".

Xi, wearing a Mao-style jacket, added that the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation has entered an irreversible historical course" and vowed to continue to build a "world-class" military to defend national interests.

"The Chinese people will never allow any foreign forces to bully, oppress, or enslave us," Xi said in his speech, to great applause.

"Whoever wants to do so will face bloodshed in front of a Great Wall of steel built by more than 1.4 billion Chinese people."

On the self-ruled island of Taiwan -- which Beijing views as part of its territory -- Xi was unflinching as he called for the "complete reunification of the motherland".

"All sons and daughters of China, including compatriots on both sides of the strait, must work together and move forward in solidarity, and resolutely crush any 'Taiwan independence' plots," he said.

In the summer of 1921 Mao and a clutch of Marxist-Leninist thinkers in Shanghai founded the Communist Party, which has since morphed into one of the world's most powerful political organisations.

It now counts around 95 million members, garnered over a century of war, famine and turmoil, and more recently a surge to superpower status butting up against Western rivals, led by the United States.

In a ceremony of pomp and patriotism, thousands of singers, backed by a marching band, belted out stirring choruses including "Without the Communist Party there would be no New China" as maskless invitees cheered and waved flags in a packed Tiananmen Square.

A fly-by of helicopters in formation spelling '100' -- a giant hammer and sickle flag trailing -- and a 100-gun salute followed, while young communists in unison pledged allegiance to the party.

Power, popularity and purges Xi has presented a defiant face to overseas rivals, revving up nationalist sentiment. He has batted back criticism of his government's actions in Hong Kong, attitude towards Taiwan and treatment of the Uyghurs Muslims.

He has purged rivals and crushed dissent -- from the Uyghurs and on-line critics to pro-democracy protests on Hong Kong's streets.

The president, whose speech braided the economic miracle of China with the longevity of the party, has cemented his eight-year rule through a personality cult, ending presidential term limits and declining to anoint a successor.

Pakistan Accepts China's Version On Treatment Of Uighurs In Xinjiang: Imran Khan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday said that his country accepted China's version regarding the treatment of Uighurs in Xinjiang province courtesy Islamabad's "extreme proximity and relationship" with Beijing.

He added that China's version was completely different from what was being reported in the western media.

"Because of our extreme proximity and relationship with China, we actually accept the Chinese version," he said.

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday said that his country accepted China's version regarding the treatment of Uighurs in Xinjiang province courtesy Islamabad's "extreme proximity and relationship" with Beijing.

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"Because of our extreme proximity and relationship with China, we actually accept the Chinese version," he said.

The Prime Minister, who was interacting with the Chinese journalists as Beijing marked the centenary

of the ruling Communist Party, said it was hypocritical that attention was not being given to the human rights violations in "occupied Kashmir", while the Uighur situation and Hong Kong was being highlighted.

"It is hypocritical. There are much worse human rights violations taking place in other parts of the world such as in occupied Kashmir. But Western media hardly comments on this," The Dawn quoted Khan as saying.

Lauding the Communist Party of China (CPC) for its unique model, the Pakistan Prime Minister said: "Until now, we had been told that the best way for societies to improve was through Western democracy."

Khan added the "CPC has introduced an alternative model and they have beaten all Western democracies in the way they have highlighted merit in society".

Asserting that a society only succeeds when it has systems in place for holding the ruling elite accountable and ensuring meritocracy, Khan said: "Until now, the feeling was that electoral democracy is the best way to bring leaders on merit and hold them accountable."



Delta Variant To Become Dominant Strain Of COVID-19 In Coming Months: WHO



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations: The World Health Organisation has said the Delta variant of COVID-19 is now present in nearly 100 countries as per conservative estimates, and warned that in the coming months the highly transmissible strain will become the dominant variant of the coronavirus globally.

In its COVID-19 Weekly Epidemiological Update, the WHO said as of June 29, 2021, "96 countries have reported cases of the Delta variant, though this is likely an underestimate as sequencing capacities needed to identify variants are limited. A number of these countries are attributing surges in infections and hospitalisations to this variant."

Given the increase in transmissibility, the WHO warned that the Delta variant is "expected to rapidly outcompete other variants and become the dominant variant over the coming months."

The world body noted that the tools that exist today to combat the coronavirus individual, community level-public health and social measures, infection prevention and control measures that have been used since the beginning of the pandemic remain effective against current variants of concern (VOCs), including the Delta variant.

"Although the increased transmissibility of VOCs (Variants of Concern) means that measures may need to be maintained for longer periods of time, particularly in a con-

text of low vaccination coverage, these measures must be targeted, time-bound, reinforced and supported by member states," it added.

Last week, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the Delta variant is the most transmissible of the variants identified so far... spreading rapidly among unvaccinated populations.

"I know that globally there is currently a lot of concern about the Delta variant, and WHO is concerned about it too. Delta is the most transmissible of the variants identified so far... spreading rapidly among unvaccinated populations," Mr Ghebreyesus had said.

He had noted that as some countries eased public health and social restrictions, there was a corresponding increase in transmission around the world.

As per latest figures, cases of the Alpha variant have been reported in 172 countries, territories or areas, Beta in 120 countries (one new country), Gamma in 72 countries (one new country) and Delta in 96 countries (11 new countries).

For the first time in several weeks, the highest numbers of new COVID-19 cases were not reported from India.

The update noted that at 521,298, the highest numbers of new cases were reported from Brazil during the June 21-27 week, followed by India (351,218 new cases, a 12 per cent increase over the previous week), Colombia (204,132 new cases, 5 per cent increase), Russia (134,465 new cases, 24

per cent increase) and Argentina (131,824 new cases, 11 per cent decrease).

The South-East Asia Region reported over 573,000 new cases and over 13,000 new deaths, a 5 per cent and a 33 per cent decrease respectively compared to the previous week.

"There is a slight overall decrease in the number of cases reported this week, mostly due to the decrease in the number of cases reported in India," the update said, adding that a number of countries, including Myanmar (112 per cent increase), Indonesia (60 per cent increase) and Bangladesh (48 per cent increase), reported large increases in the number of newly reported cases for this week.

In the region, the highest numbers of new cases were reported from India (351,218 new cases; 25.5 new cases per 100,000; a 21 per cent decrease), Indonesia (125,395 new cases; 45.8 new cases per 100,000; a 60 per cent increase), and Bangladesh (36,738 new cases; 22.3 new cases per 100,000; a 48 per cent increase).

The highest numbers of new deaths were reported from India (9038 new deaths; 0.7 new deaths per 100,000; a 45 per cent decrease over the previous week), Indonesia (2476 new deaths; 0.9 new deaths per 100,000; a 39 per cent increase), and Bangladesh (624 new deaths; 0.4 new deaths per 100,000; a 45 per cent increase).

"Well into the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the global situation remains highly fragile. While at the global level, trends in cases and deaths have been declining in recent weeks, there is significant variation by region, by country and within countries, the update said.

It said in all WHO regions, there are countries reporting sharp increases in cases and hospitalisations.

There are a number of factors contributing to this, including the emergence and circulation of more transmissible variants of SARS-CoV-2, increased social mixing and mobility, uneven and inequitable vaccination; and considerable pressure to lift public health and social measures, the WHO said.

WELL INTO THE SECOND YEAR OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, the global situation remains highly fragile. While at the global level, trends in cases and deaths have been declining in recent weeks, there is significant variation by region, by country and within countries, the update said.

Covid Cases In Europe Up Again After 10 Weeks Of Decline

Agence France-Presse

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK: The World Health Organization on Thursday said over two months of declining Covid cases in Europe had come to an end, warning a new wave would come "unless we remain disciplined."

"Last week, the number of cases rose by 10 per cent, driven by increased mixing, travel, gatherings and easing of social restrictions," WHO's regional director for Europe Hans Kluge told a press conference.



Western Forces Pack Up To End Their War, Afghans 'Manage The Consequences'

Agencies

Afghan scrap dealers are picking over the detritus of the two-decade US military intervention in Afghanistan, collecting whatever they can of value from heaps of broken military hardware, scrapped machines and old furniture.

While the scrap men search through junk outside the main US base in Afghanistan, the Afghan government, and the country as a whole, are having to face up to the end of an international mission that promised so much but failed to bring peace.

"There's just so much waste," said scrap dealer Abdul Ahmad, outside the Bagram Airfield, about 50 kilometres north of the capital, Kabul, as he surveyed the pickings.

"They didn't do anything for us since they came and now they're leaving us with an uncertain future and so much destruction."

Over Afghanistan's decades of war, the Bagram air base has been a grand prize for whoever holds the upper hand in the fight.

Now US forces will hand it over to Afghan government forces as they face a surging war with the Taliban and questions swirl about their prospects.

Guards in body armour still control the heavily fortified entrance to Bagram -- a favourite target for suicide bombers over the years -- and helicopters clatter overhead and an occasional truck comes and goes.

But few people remain in the expanse of prefab facilities that grew up alongside the giant runway in the months and years after international forces arrived in late 2001, as the defeated Taliban fled from US bombers to mountains on the Pakistani border.

Two US security officials said this week the majority of US military personnel would most likely be gone by July 4, with a residual force remaining to protect the embassy.

Many Afghans, like Ahmad, feel abandoned.

Last month, US President Joe Biden told his Afghan counterpart, Ashraf Ghani, that "Afghans are going to have to decide their future, what they want".

Ghani said his job was now to



"manage the consequences" of the US withdrawal.

This week, General Austin Miller, the top US commander in Afghanistan, acknowledged the rapid loss of several districts to the Taliban was worrisome. Only "a political settlement" could establish peace among the warring Afghan sides, he said.

'Trail of destruction'

America's allies, most of them Nato members, who have been supporting its efforts in Afghanistan are also packing up and getting out at the end of a mission that at its height was hailed as a worthy example of Nato unity and cooperation, and as a model for its operations.

The German military this week concluded its withdrawal, finishing Germany's deadliest military mission since World War Two.

In northern Afghanistan, Camp Marmal was the biggest German armed forces base outside their homeland. Its once bustling cafes, gyms, salon, handicraft shops, hospital and entertainment zones are all shut.

German forces shipped home the equivalent of about 800 containers of equipment including armoured vehicles, helicopters, weapons and ammunition. Even a 27-tonne war memorial was shipped to the German armed forces' joint operations command in Potsdam.

The base has been handed over to Afghan forces.

Brigadier General Ansgar Meyer, the commander of German forces in Afghanistan, told Reuters in an interview before the German's withdrawal that the hospitality of the Afghan people under the most difficult circumstances was something everyone could learn from.

Europe Court Refuses To Hear Case On Yasser Arafat's Death

The European Court of Human Rights on Thursday dismissed a case brought by the widow and daughter of Yasser Arafat, who have claimed the iconic Palestinian leader's death was the result of poisoning.

Suha El Kodwa Arafat and Zahwa El Kodwa Arafat, who are French citizens, filed their case with the Strasbourg-based European court in 2017 after French courts dismissed their claims.

Arafat died at the Percy military hospital near Paris aged 75 in November 2004 after developing stomach pains while at his headquarters in the West Bank city of Ramallah. Many Palestinians accuse Israel of poisoning Arafat, a charge flatly denied by the Jewish state.

But in 2012 his widow, Suha El Kodwa Arafat, said traces of the radioactive isotope polonium 210 had been found on his clothes, prompting a French lawsuit alleging his murder.

After a series of analyses and wit-

ness interviews, a court in Nanterre, west of Paris, dismissed the case, a ruling upheld on appeal.

Lawyers for Arafat's widow said the investigation had been "fundamentally biased" and accused the judges of closing the probe too quickly.

Arafat's wife and daughter turned to the European court in 2017, saying they had been refused their right to a fair hearing, in particular a refusal of their request for an additional expert report on his death.

In a unanimous decision, three judges said that after reviewing the case, "at all stages of the proceedings the applicants, assisted by their lawyers, had been able to exercise their rights effectively".

"Judges did not appear to have reached arbitrary conclusions based on the facts before them and their interpretation of the evidence in the file or the applicable law had not been unreasonable," they added.



NEWS MAKERS

Bill Cosby Home From Prison After Court Reverses Sexual Assault Conviction

Agencies

Bill Cosby was freed from prison and returned home on Wednesday, less than two hours after Pennsylvania's highest court overturned his sexual assault conviction, saying he never should have faced charges after striking a non-prosecution deal with a previous district attorney more than 15 years ago.

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court issued its split decision after Cosby had served more than two years of a three- to 10-year sentence following his 2018 conviction, prompting outrage from sexual assault victims and their advocates.

The 83-year-old actor and comedian was released from a state prison in Pennsylvania just before

2:30pm (1830 GMT), a corrections department spokesperson said.

Around an hour later, he arrived at his stately stone mansion in Elkins Park, a Philadelphia suburb, before making a brief appearance alongside his lawyers in front of a gaggle of cameras late in the afternoon.

A frail looking Cosby smiled and nodded when asked if he was happy to be home but did not speak as reporters shouted questions. Later, Cosby posted a statement to his Twitter account, thanking his supporters and saying, "I have never changed my stance nor my story. I have always maintained my innocence."

Cosby is best known for his role as the lovable husband and father in the 1980s television comedy series The Cosby Show, earning him the nickname "America's Dad."



But his family-friendly reputation was shattered after more than 50 women accused him of multiple sexual assaults over nearly five decades. His conviction was seen as a watershed moment in the #MeToo movement that brought forth an array of allegations against powerful men in Hollywood and beyond.

Cosby was found guilty of drugging and molesting Andrea Con-

stand, an employee at his alma mater Temple University, in his home in 2004. Constand's allegations were the only ones against Cosby that were not too old to allow for criminal charges.

The court's decision expressly barred prosecutors from retrying Cosby.

In a statement, Constand and her attorneys said they were not only disappointed in the ruling but concerned it could dissuade other victims from seeking justice.

"Once again, we remain grateful to those women who came forward to tell their stories," they said.

Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin Steele, who charged Cosby in 2015, noted a jury found Cosby guilty and that Wednesday's decision was not based on the facts of the case.

Donald Rumsfeld, Cocksure Architect Of Iraq War, Dead At 88

Agence France-Presse

WASHINGTON: Donald Rumsfeld, the cocksure and unrepentant defense secretary who led the United States into war in Iraq and Afghanistan, has died, his family announced Wednesday. He was 88.

In charge of the US military for most of George W. Bush's presidency, Rumsfeld was stubborn and brash, famously dismissing widespread looting after US troops captured Baghdad by quipping, "Stuff happens."

For millions who took to the streets to denounce the war in Iraq, Rumsfeld and vice president Dick Cheney were emblematic of what

was seen as excesses in Bush's "war on terror," including the indefinite detention of suspects in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and the abuse of Iraqis



by US jailers at Abu Ghraib prison.

The former congressman's brand of hawkish politics eventually fell from favor as politicians from both sides turned on "forever wars," and the troops he first sent to Afghanistan after the September 11, 2001 attacks will make their final withdrawal weeks after his death.

His family said that Rumsfeld -- who after resigning in 2006 not only spent years defending his legacy but also dabbling in software and even releasing a solitary app

-- died in Taos, New Mexico, and described "the integrity he brought to a life dedicated to the country."

Bush called his defense secretary, whom he defiantly kept in his cabinet until rival Democrats won control of Congress in 2006, "an exemplary public servant and a very good man."

"He was a faithful steward of our armed forces, and the United States of America is safer and better off for his service," Bush said, without directly mentioning the decision to invade Iraq.

- 'Known unknowns' -

Rumsfeld had clamored to remove Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, pushing soon after the fall of Afghanistan's Taliban to move into Iraq, where he suggested there were weapons of mass destruction and perhaps links to terrorist groups.

Court Directs Police To Release Geelani's Aide, Quashes His Detention Order



SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir High Court has quashed the detention of Hurriyat activist and close aide of Syed Ali Geelani, Syed Imtiyaz Haider for the second time and directed police to get him released from Haryana jail.

Hyder, a resident of Gojra village of Central Kashmir's Budgam district was arrested in a nocturnal raid in March 2019. Hyder was booked under Public Safety Act and shifted to Kot Balwal Jail, Jammu.

Since his arrest, Hyder has been lodged in different jails and recently he was shifted from Amphala Jail to Haryana jail.

The detention of Hyder was challenged by his family through his Counsel Advocate Bashir Ahmed Tak. The court had quashed his first detention order on 12 July 2019 but he was not released.

Tak said that Hyder instead of getting freedom was again detained on the same grounds. "He had been arrested on charges of provoking youth for stone-pelting, besides he was accused of running an election boycott campaign. In his second detention, police booked him on the same grounds," Tak said.

He said the detention of Hyder was challenged on the same ground while the Court of Justice Rajesh Oswal termed the repeated charges against him frivolous. The court maintained that a man can't be repeatedly booked for same charges.

The court after quashing the detention of Hyder under Public Safety Act directed police to release him from the jail. (Agencies)

Nomad Killed During Scuffle In Bandipora

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: A Nomad was allegedly killed during a scuffle over erection of a tent in a forest area of North Kashmir's Bandipora district.

Relatives of the deceased identified the slain as Mohammad Iqbal Kalas, 55, a resident of Anderwat Rajouri.

A police statement said that at Kachi Behak (meadow) a scuffle started when a family of nomad who were establishing their tent for night were opposed by some persons of Panar village who attacked the nomads resulting in injuries to Mohammad Iqbal Kalas, son of Mohammad Ali, of Rajouri, Ranja Pokda son

of Methu aged about 70 years and Rohi Akther daughter of Showket Khatana, all residents of Anderwat Rajouri.

The statement said that although all the injured were shifted to District hospital Bandipora for treatment, however, on the way one injured Mohammad Iqbal Kalas succumbed to his injuries and his dead body is lying in District Hospital Bandipora.

Meanwhile other two injured have been admitted in the said hospital.

Police has taken cognisance of the matter and registered a case against accused persons and the body of the deceased will be handed over to his legal heirs after fulfilment of medico-legal formalities.

Div Com Felicitates Doctors, Healthcare Workers On 'National Doctors Day'



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole Thursday felicitated various doctors and Health Care Workers (HCWs) during a function organised on eve of National Doctors' Day at Covid-19 Divisional Control Room Kashmir (DCCRK), here.

The Doctors and health workers were felicitated for their outstanding work and tireless service rendered particularly during the pandemic.

Hailing all the doctors and HCWs of Kashmir division on showing tremendous zeal and

dedication in their work at all levels of healthcare delivery system in this ongoing war against Covid 19 pandemic, Div Com said that the "fight against the virus cannot be won by administration alone unless we have people like you on our forefront."

He however, cautioned not to be complacent and instructed to work more hard and be prepared to fight the third wave of covid more efficiently.

He advised all the officers and officials of the division to work on how to bring a behavioural change at all levels of primary health care delivery system.

Union Ministers To Visit J&K To Review Development Activities

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A team of four Union ministers will soon start visiting Jammu and Kashmir every week to review development activities in Jammu and Kashmir, and carry feedback of the public as well as the administration for the consideration of the central government, Union minister Jitendra Singh said on Thursday.

He said the team will comprise two ministers each for the Jammu and Kashmir regions.

We are very soon going to start the touring of the central ministers in the UT. We did that experiment in the month of January when we had about 35 central ministers travelling here within one week or month. They also got back with a good experience, it was great exposure for the people of the UT as well as the officers, Singh, the minister of state in the Prime Minister's Office, said.

He was addressing a two-day regional conference on replication of good governance practices at SKICC here.

Singh said Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha had proposed that instead of sending 35 ministers together, two ministers should visit the UT every week.

So, we have decided two ministers for Jammu division, two for Kashmir and we are also going to do this for Ladakh. We are already working it out with the chief secretary. They (ministers)



will be evaluating their own departmental projects, also carrying back the feedback of the public as well as the administration for the consideration of the central government, he said.

The minister said there would be a common eligibility test (CET) for recruitment very soon and the very important initiative is going to start from this year which has been possible only because of a visionary Prime Minister like Narendra Modi.

We are sure because this is a part of the UT, so we will have it here also. We are going to have a common eligibility test for recruitment. We are trying our best, we had given ourselves a timeline of September but got late because of COVID, he said.

Singh said what happened before was that there was a selection test of railways one day, banking the other day and there was a clash of dates and centres.

Also everybody cannot afford it. We have taken a revolutionary decision that there will be only one test and the centre will be available in each of the districts, at least one centre, he said.

Singh said there would be at least one centre in each of

Survey Of Migratory Tribal Population Begins In Three Kashmir Districts

Observer News Service

KULGAM: The enumeration survey of Migratory tribal Population was launched in Kulgam, Kupwara and Bandipora districts. In Kulgam, the DDC highlighted the significance of this overall enumeration survey process of Migratory tribal population and impressed upon all the officers/officials for completion of the task in a set timeline with collection of accurate databases.

In Bandipora, DC said the purpose of the counting is to identify the tribal populations with details so as to compile a database and identify the socio-economic condition of the tribal population so that focused steps are taken to bridge the gaps and uplift the community.

He urged the people of the tribal community to participate in the process by providing true details so that a true data is available with the government for devising plans for their upliftment.

In Kupwara, the DC said that the Jammu and Kashmir Government has begun the first-ever survey and enumeration of the migratory Tribal Population for extending the benefits of various welfare schemes to them.

He further said that the first



survey of the nomadic tribal population has been undertaken by the J & K Tribal Affairs Department with the aim to chalk out plans for socio economic development of different tribes.

The DC said that the comprehensive survey of both the nomadic population and various underdeveloped tribal pockets in the Union Territory is being conducted in collaboration with the District administration and District Planning and Statistics organization.

Giving details about the main objectives of survey, it was informed that the survey aims at to collect the real time data regarding migratory population so that various problems faced by them are identified; to know the socio-economic status of migratory/nomadic population; to enable the government to extend the

benefits of various developmental, welfare, and livelihood oriented programmes to such nomadic/migratory who otherwise are feeling the sense of exclusion and to initiate the measures for strengthening migratory schools, the establishment of hostels, new residential schools etc.

The survey also aims at to expanding access of health facilities and development of health infrastructure for such tribes by reducing distance (through providing services closer to the poor), targeted health promotion, and building of mobile health care units, bedsides, promote higher standards for animal health, husbandry, including hygienic and welfare processing practices.

On the occasion a month-long implementation schedule has been released.

Road Accident Kills Two, Injures Seven In Kathua

Observer News Service

KATHUA: Two persons died while seven others were injured in a road accident on Thursday afternoon at Logate Morh in Kathua district.

Officials said that a vehicle hit a highway divider at Logate Morh, resulting in injuries to nine passengers in which two residents of Uttar Pradesh succumbed to injuries.

While divulging the details about the accident, a senior official said that among the nine passengers, one was declared dead on

arrival at a local hospital, while another succumbed to injuries, later.

He said that the seven other passengers were administered first aid at Kathua GMC, while four among them were later referred to GMC Jammu for advanced treatment.

The deceased have been identified as Idresh (61) son of Mohammad Sharif and Shaad, son of Mohamad Sarfaraz, both residents of Uttar Pradesh.

Meanwhile, Police have taken cognisance and started investigation to ascertain the cause of the accident.

DC Anantnag Issues New Measures To Prevent Damage To Pahalgam Ecosystem



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: In a bid to prevent possible COVID-19 resurgence and damage to the ecosystem of Pahalgam due to heavy tourist influx off late, Deputy Commissioner Anantnag Wednesday issued a slew of measures and restrictions.

An order issued to this effect by the DM bars day picnickers from visiting the tourist resort on Saturdays and Sundays besides allowing visitors with

confirmed hotel bookings only, on these days.

The order also fixed a fine of Rs 1000 for violators of COVID-19 SOPs including mask wearing.

SDPOs Srigufwara and Aishmuqam have been asked to establish checkpoints at Aishmuqam, Langanbal, Nunwan and Srigufwara to ensure only bonafide tourists having advance hotel bookings are allowed an entry.

Further, SSP has been asked to work out ways to reduce the influx of visitors to the site while traffic authorities will ensure smooth movement of vehicles especially at congestion points.

The order also prohibited haphazard pitching of tents and cooking at random places and directed concerned officials to designate particular areas for the tents.

Covid Scenario Significantly Improving In Shopian: DC

Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Sachin Kumar Vaishya Thursday said that the overall COVID scenario has significantly improved over the last few weeks with only a few number of Covid positive cases reported in the district.

Referring to the continuous declining trend of COVID positive cases as good preparatory time for speeding up Vaccination efforts in the district, the DC said that health teams with the active participation of the stakeholders are reaching out at the door steps to the remote areas to cover the vaccination process and to make it a great success in the district.

Understanding the importance of Vaccination and terming it as a potent tool in the fight against Covid-19, the DC appealed to the people to cooperate with the



District Administration and also visit nearest Vaccination centres and get vaccinated in the shortest possible time.

The DC in his address also laid thrust on maintaining COVID Appropriate Behavior by all citizens. He informed that Enforcement teams are doing rounds in the markets to ensure compliance of Covid-19 protocols and guidelines issued by the Administration from time to time.

Septuagenarian Commits Suicide In Ganderbal

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: An septuagenarian woman allegedly committed suicide on Thursday after consuming some poisonous substance at her home in Ganderbal.

Officials said that the woman was rushed to SMHS hospital in Srinagar for treatment, where doctors declared her brought dead.

Meanwhile, a police said that the police has taken cognisance of the incident and started investigation into the matter.

Five J&K Doctors Felicitated On 'National Doctors Day'

Observer News Service



SRINAGAR: On Doctors Day being celebrated on 1st July every year, the Indian Medical Association national felicitated five J&K doctors as COVID Warrior doctors. The doctors include Prof. (Dr.) A. G. Ahangar, Director SKIMS, Srinagar, Prof. (Dr.) Samia Rashid, Principal/ Dean, Government Medical College Srinagar, Prof. (Dr.) Vijay Kundal, Professor and HOD, General Medicine, Government Medical College, Jammu, Prof. Dr. S. Mohammad Saleem Khan, Professor and HOD Community Medicine/ Nodal Officer COVID-19, Government Medical College, Srinagar and Dr. Shafa Deva, Medical Superintendent, SKIMS Medical College, Bemina, Srinagar.

These awards were conferred on the recommendations of J&K state president Prof. GM Malik, Secretary General Prof. Mir Nazir Ahmad and CWC.

Jammu and Kashmir IMA in a statement congratulated all five life members of IMA J-K for getting these awards on national doctors day function addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaker of parliament, Dr. Ketan Desai, ex president world medical association, national IMA president and secretary general.

Non Local Sets Self On Fire, Hospitalised

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: A 32-year-old non-local lady allegedly attempted to end her life by setting herself ablaze at her home on Thursday in Hafroo area of Chadoora in Central Kashmir's Budgam district.

Officials said that a lady (name withheld) a resident of Punjab married into a family at Hufroo village tried to end her life after sprinkling some inflammable liquid over her body.

The lady was shifted to a Srinagar hospital after suffering critical burn injuries.

Police has registered a case and started investigations.

Petrol Pump Sealed For Selling Adulterated Fuel

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Authorities Thursday sealed a petrol pump at Gowherpora area of central-Kashmir's Budgam district for selling adulterated fuel.

Officials said that the filling station was shut after locals in the area blocked the main-road leading to Pulwama at Gowherpora, Chadoora.

"Bhat Filling Station is mixing water and kerosene oil with the petrol," the anguished protestors told a local news gathering agency. A police team led by Naib-Tehsildar Chadoora reached the spot and directed for instant closure of the filling station till further orders.

Recovery Rate Touches 99 Percent In Budgam: DC

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Shahbaz Ahmed Mirza Thursday said that the recovery rate has touched 99 percent in the district while positivity rate has declined to 0.7 percent.

Briefing media, he said out of 14442 positive cases since 1st April, 14227 patients have since recovered fully.

He said there is also good indication that since the last many days, no death due to pandemic has occurred.

Regarding vaccination, DC said that about 89 percent of the population of the age group of 45 and above have been vaccinated and the process is going on steadily and smoothly.

The DC assured that the administration is keeping a close vigil on the situation, adding that aggressive testing is going on to prevent further spread of Covid.

He appealed to the general public to continue adherence to all SOPs, guidelines, and cooperate with Administration in every respect related to containment of Covid-19 pandemic.

Covid Sero-Prevalence Study Begins In Kashmir

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The first sero prevalence study of SARS CoV-2 Infection during 2021 begins in Kashmir.

The study has been conducted on the recommendations of government constituted Committee for Action Plan for tackling possible Third COVID Wave.

In this regard, the training workshop was conducted at Department of Community Medicine Government Medical College Srinagar, the nodal centre for sero prevalence study in Kashmir, with partner institutions including departments of Community Medicine at SKIMS, SKIMS Medical College Bemina, Government Medical Colleges Anantnag Baramullah along with Chief Medical Officers or their representatives and epidemiologists of all districts of Kashmir Division.

The survey is monitored by additional chief secretary, Health and Medical Education Department, J&K Atal Dulloo and is being supported by JK National Health Mission and facilitated by directorate of health services Kashmir and J&K.

During this survey, children from seven years and above, adult population, pregnant women, health care providers and police personnel would be sampled with support from respective Deputy Commissioners and Chief Medical Officers staff and shall be monitored by five medical colleges/ institutions with each covering two districts.

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K O V I E W

Faltering engagement

Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan has once again made it clear that diplomatic relations will not be restored with India until the latter rescinds the "illegal steps of 5th August 2019." Addressing the Pakistan's national Assembly, Khan said that "entire Pakistan stands by their Kashmiri brothers and sisters".

Khan's statement has come amid the signs that the "back-channel" between the two countries may have stalled, dampening the hope generated by the signing of the ceasefire agreement in February. Ever since, no further movement has been reported to normalise the ties. We are once again at a point where either the two neighbours could build upon the hard-won thaw or go back to square one.

Pakistan had downgraded ties with India and suspended trade after the Indian government revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019. Pakistan saw India's withdrawal of Kashmir's special status enshrined in Article 370 as a dilution of what it sees as the disputed status of the region. But New Delhi sees the changes to the constitutional position of J&K as its internal matter. Two positions look all but irreconcilable. But for a durable peace in the region, the two countries have to find a way to get along. This requires statesmanship on both sides. And this will only be possible if there's willingness on the part of the neighbors to resolve their issues. But if nothing is done, the situation looks set to go further downhill from hereon. That is, if the leadership of the two countries doesn't step back and seek to put their relationship back on rails.

In recent past there have been some very significant developments that reflect the changing geopolitics in South Asia. The war in Afghanistan is certainly the top priority for the neighbouring countries including the US. The US, as the president Joe Biden has also affirmed, is on its way out of Afghanistan. This is likely to pave way for Taliban to regain power in Kabul, a development of profound import for the region. India-Pakistan detente assumes some significance in this context. A normal relationship between the neighbours would go a long way to usher in the regional peace. A sustained, meaningful dialogue between the two countries has the potential to lead to a positive outcome. So, the neighbours should restore it sooner than later.

Also, given the prevailing situation, it will be interesting to see whether the new US administration will play any role in improving the India-Pakistan ties. The two countries need some serious prodding by the world's only super power to re-engage and sort out their differences. Things, however, will be clear in the weeks and months ahead.

O T H E R O P I N O N

A Bigger Basket

The national drug regulator's Emergency Use Approval to Moderna for its Covid vaccine is a significant development. The two sides are not on the same page on the indemnity clause and there is no clarity on the number of shots to be imported by Moderna's India partner, Cipla. Nevertheless, the Drugs Controller General's waiver of bridge trials, required of foreign vaccine manufacturers, meets one of Moderna's major demands and opens the possibility of reinforcing the country's vaccine basket in the near future — according to the government's affidavit in the Supreme Court last week, negotiations with the company "are at an advanced stage". The country's negotiators must now work towards removing the other stumbling blocks in the introduction of the mRNA technology-based vaccine without compromising on safety yardsticks.

An average of nearly 60 lakh jabs administered in the past 10 days indicates that India's vaccination drive has picked up momentum. This, unfortunately, is still far short of the pace required to attain the Centre's target of inoculating the country's entire adult population by the end of the year. The government's affidavit to the apex court notes that the vaccination drive will acquire further speed after August with the projected acquisition of 135 crore shots. Indigenous manufacturers, Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech, will continue to be the mainstay of the endeavour with the latter's share estimated to go up three times. Both companies will need to ramp up production, introducing an element of uncertainty that the country can ill afford at a critical stage of its vaccination drive. Fallback options such as supplies from Moderna would place the project on a more assured footing. That's why the outcome of negotiations with the company and other pharma giants such as Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson — as well as Indian companies such as Biological E and Zydus Cadila — will be crucial to the country's battle against the pandemic.

The Indian Express



Meat of the Meet

J&K leader's all-party meet with PM Modi has started a debate about the motivations behind it but the matter seems to favour only one stakeholder - the one in power

Mohammad Tahir Firaz

Following the all-party meeting between New Delhi and J&K's unionist parties on June 24, a flurry of political commentary ensued on the causes and outcome of this historic conference. Broadly, three arguments have been offered: firstly, that the Modi government took a U-turn on its hardline Kashmir policy after facing external pressure; secondly, that the BJP decided this new move on Kashmir to get the J&K parties (particularly the Gupkar Alliance) endorse the delimitation process and in view of the upcoming assembly elections in some important states of India; and, thirdly, that the central government through this meeting sought to get the Kashmir-centric parties accept the new order of politics in Kashmir.

Writing in Deccan Herald (26 June), Sushant Singh, a Senior Fellow at New Delhi-based think tank The Centre for Policy Research, argues that three things have converged to force the Modi government's U-turn on Kashmir: the pressure from China in the Ladakh region has created prospects of a two-front war for India, the withdrawal of the western forces from Afghanistan has made Taliban seizure of power imminent, and the covid pandemic lockdown has badly affected the economic growth and thus weakened the government.

The exit of the US and NATO troops from Afghanistan is likely to catapult the Afghan Taliban into a commanding position; and the armed group may eventually take over Kabul. Pakistan is believed to have influence over the Taliban, so Pakistan's clout in Afghanistan is going to rise with the Taliban takeover. For its post-withdrawal operations against the anti-US armed groups within Afghanistan, the US needs military bases in Pakistan, so there is a possibility of renewed military cooperation between the US and Pakistan. According to Singh, such a scenario is "bound to further complicate matters for India, especially on Kashmir."

So, one argument is that we must see the all-party meeting of 24th June in this geopolitical context. This is a plausible argument. By engaging in the backchannel talks with Pakistan (facilitated by the UAE) and agreeing to a ceasefire agreement in February 2021 the situation at the LOC has been stabilized, allowing India to, temporarily, pull itself out of the security nightmare of a two-front military engagement across the treacherous northern and western de-facto borders which had overstretched and overstressed Indian troops. The India-Pakistan ceasefire agreement was preceded by the China-India disengagement plans to deescalate the situation along the 3,488 km poorly demarcated Line of Actual Control (LAC) that divides Chinese and Indian controlled territories in the Ladakh region.

However, Nirupama Subramanian in her article "Limits of Naya Kashmir" (Indian Express: 28 June 2021) sees the geopolitical angle as an over reading and rather views the all-party meeting as a continuation of BJP's ideological and electoral projects. Subramanian reminds us that the current BJP government "has hardly tailored its ideological projects to the demands of diplomacy or global geopolitics." Citing the tweets and statements by the Modi-Shah duo after the all-party meeting, she argues that the PM and HM's emphasis on delimitation in J&K "certainly suggested a focus narrower than the shifting sands of regional geopolitics, which demand grand gestures of reconciliation, people-friendly confidence-building measures, and big promises. There were none of those in the meeting, and there is no indication that

BJP needs such an arrangement where Kashmir-centric parties have only limited space to operate and minimal powers to challenge the policies. A bureaucratic structure fine-tuned since June 2018 and the veto power vested with the LG will make sure that Kashmir-centric parties are stopped in their tracks if they try veer off course

such gestures are in the pipeline."

Subramanian thinks that behind the all-party meeting lies BJP's sole focus on ensuring its electoral victory in the upcoming elections "vital to its prospects for a third term in 2024."

But, Subramanian fails to convincingly show how exactly can BJP cash in its new Kashmir move during the upcoming elections (in 2022) in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Goa and Manipur? By engaging with the people it had projected as the "Gupkar Gang" and the looters of Kashmir, isn't the Modi government jeopardising its own image of a tough administration that has appealed to the masses?

A more plausible argument is offered by Happyman Jacob, New Delhi-based academic and commentator, who sees the all-party meeting as "a politically cleaver and tactfully sound half-measure." Jacob argues that New Delhi has set the rules of politics in Kashmir and now seeks to get the unionist parties (particularly the Gupkar Alliance) accept the new political arrangement by forcing a trade-off between returning the statehood and tacitly accepting the removal of Article 370. According to Jacob, "Statehood Vs Article 370 was a carefully thought-out artificial choice made by the BJP government to gain advantage during future negotiations."

Pakistan had made return of statehood as a precondition for talks with India. BJP engaged with Pakistan in backchannel talks but hasn't

made any real concessions on Kashmir. In fact, by shifting the goalpost from the special status to returning of statehood, BJP has won a "tactical victory over Pakistan". In the all-party meeting, New Delhi has promised the J&K parties to return statehood at an 'appropriate time'. But the unionists desperately need statehood for their political survival. As the negotiations between the unionists and the centre prolong, the demand for Article 370 will eventually peter out.

So, contrary to the perception among a section of commentariat, BJP seems to be triumphing in its ideological agenda in Kashmir. Abrogation of Article 370 has been one of its core ideological pillars (apart from the construction of a grand Ram Mandir at Ayodhya and the implementation of Uniform Civil Code across India) and that has been achieved in August

2019. Amit Shah has promised return of statehood, but the chronology will be delimitation, election and then statehood. That means after the delimitation process is completed, Jammu will get up to seven more seats in the J&K Legislative Assembly, thus increasing the region's share of power in the future J&K government. BJP has its core constituency in Jammu and has consolidated its seat share in the region in the last two elections, winning 25 out of 37 seats in the 2014 assembly elections.

BJP can bear influence on the future J&K government with the aid of its proxies and allies (like Apni Party) within the Kashmir Valley, where BJP is unlikely to win assembly seats. To carry forward its long term ideological agenda in Kashmir and sustain the policies it has initiated since the fall of the PDP-BJP coalition government in June 2018, BJP needs such an arrangement where Kashmir-centric parties have only limited space to operate and minimal powers to challenge the policies. A bureaucratic structure fine-tuned since June 2018 and the veto power vested with the LG will make sure that Kashmir-centric parties are stopped in their tracks if they try veer off course.

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

The author is an independent scholar



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Suicides and Society

On June 26, two suicidal deaths were reported in the valley. A day earlier, on June 25, a 17-year-old boy, hailing from Kupwara, ended his life by committing suicide in Srinagar. In recent months, Kashmir has witnessed a worrying trend of an increase in suicide cases, and there seems to be no end to this menace. In essence, several interplaying factors have led to an increase in suicidal attempts, such as the political situation of Kashmir, the lack of mental health infrastructure, and the norms of Kashmir's society.

The ongoing conflict has put tremendous mental pressure on the population of Kashmir, and a large proportion of the population now suffers from stress-related diseases. As per the survey conducted by Doctors Without Borders in 2015, 1.8 million

people in the valley suffer from depression-related diseases. These diseases could easily lead up to suicides if proper counselling is not offered to the victims, and therefore concrete efforts are required to help the mental health patients of Kashmir. Nonetheless, a lack of mental health infrastructure persists in the valley, and only one hospital, Govt. Psychiatric Diseases Hospital, Srinagar, caters to the demands of 1.8 million people. The location of this hospital in Srinagar further means that patients from poor backgrounds and far-flung areas do not have access to it. Thus, setting up effective mental health facilities in every district of Kashmir and raising awareness about mental health issues may reduce suicidal attempts and deaths.

Additionally, other than upgrading mental health infrastructure,

it is important to identify those sections of the society in which suicides are prevalent. Off late, in Kashmir, suicides are on a rise among women and the youth. In women, the most common cause of suicide is domestic violence. Partly, domestic violence can be attributed to the patriarchal nature of Kashmir's society, where women are often subordinated and lack agency in marital affairs. Consequently, when women become subjects of domestic violence, they attempt suicide as a last recourse. Therefore, making collective efforts towards ending domestic violence may result in a decrease in the number of suicides among women.

When it comes to the youth of Kashmir, several factors, such as betrayal in relations, lack of choice in choosing their career paths, forced marriages, drug abuse, etc., can be

potential causes of suicide. Two steps could help to reduce suicides among the youth: (1) the administration needs to set up more de-addiction centres and provide psychological help to drug addicts and (2) Communitarian efforts to enlighten the youth about the after-effects of suicide are required. Moreover, parents have to give much more agency to their children in matters concerning their career or marriage. More agency means that the youth will not be forced to make decisions that can potentially lead to suicides in future.

While the causes and suggestions cited above are not exhaustive, they can provide a framework to understand and address rising suicides in Kashmir.

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MINDFUL FRIDAYS

Mental Health First Aid

How to Help Someone Feeling Suicidal

Wasim Rashid Kakroo

The act of taking one's own life is referred to as suicide. It is a situation in which someone plots or acts on self-destructive ideas and sentiments, frequently when under intense stress. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), over one million individuals die by suicide each year. It's tough for individuals who aren't suffering from suicidal de-

pression and despair to grasp what causes so many people to commit suicide. A suicidal individual, on the other hand, usually has exhausted all the means of making sense of his or her life and is in so much anguish that he/she sees no other way out. Suicide is a desperate attempt to end pain that has grown unbearable. Suicidal people are blinded by feelings of self-loathing, hopelessness, and loneliness, and they see no other way out but death. Despite their wish to end their suffering, most suicidal persons are extremely

torn about taking their own lives. They wish there was an alternative to suicide, but they can't find one. Suicide can be avoided. The majority of suicidal persons do not wish to die. They just do not want to be in agony. Talking openly about suicide thoughts and feelings can save a life. So, a common man should not underestimate his/her ability to assist a suicidal individual, or perhaps to save a life.

How can I know if someone is suicidal?

It is critical to understand the warning signs and reasons for suicide, as well as the risk factors why someone would consider suicide. Signs a person may be suicidal are:

- Threatening to injure or kill oneself
- searching for methods to kill themselves: looking for drugs, weapons, or other means
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide
- Hopelessness
- Rage, fury, seeking vengeance
- Acting carelessly or participating in dangerous behaviours seemingly without thinking
- Feeling imprisoned, as if there is no way out
- Increasing alcohol and drug usage
- Withdrawing from friends, family, or society
- Anxiety, restlessness, inability to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Dramatic mood swings
- No reason for living, no sense of purpose in life

Reasons why a person might have thoughts about suicide:

The most common reasons given for attempted suicide are: A desire to escape or alleviate uncontrollable feelings and thoughts. The individual seeks escape from terrible emotional anguish, believes their position is hopeless, believes they are worthless, and believes that other people would be better off without them. A desire to speak with or influence another person The individual want to express their feelings to others, influence how others treat them, or obtain assistance.

Factors linked to a higher risk of suicide:
People are more likely to commit suicide if they have:

- A mental illness such as severe depression, anxiety, borderline personality disorder, substance abuse disorder etc.
- Poor physical health and disabilities
- Have attempted suicide or harmed themselves in the past
- Have had bad things happen recently, particularly with relationships or their health
- Have had adverse childhood experiences such as experienced childhood emotional neglect, abandonment and/or has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused as a child

How can a common individual save a person who is suicidal?

If you are concerned that the individual may be suicidal, you should contact them and discuss your worries. Getting ready to approach the individual: Be conscious of your personal views around suicide and the influence they have on your capacity to help others (e.g. beliefs that suicide is wrong or that it is a rational option). If the individual comes from a different cultural or religious background than yours, bear in mind that they may have different views and attitudes regarding suicide than you do. It is more vital to have a genuine desire to assist than to have the same age, gender, or cultural background as the person. If you don't feel comfortable asking the individual about suicide thoughts, find someone who can.

Developing the strategy
If you suspect someone is contemplating suicide, act quickly. Even if you simply have a passing hunch that the individual is suicidal, you should contact them. Tell the individual you care and want to assist them. Tell them about your fears about them, outlining the behaviours that have caused you to consider suicide. Understand, though, that the person may not wish to speak to you. In this case, you should offer to assist them in finding someone else with whom they can talk. Also, if you are unable to connect with the individual, assist them in finding someone else to chat to.

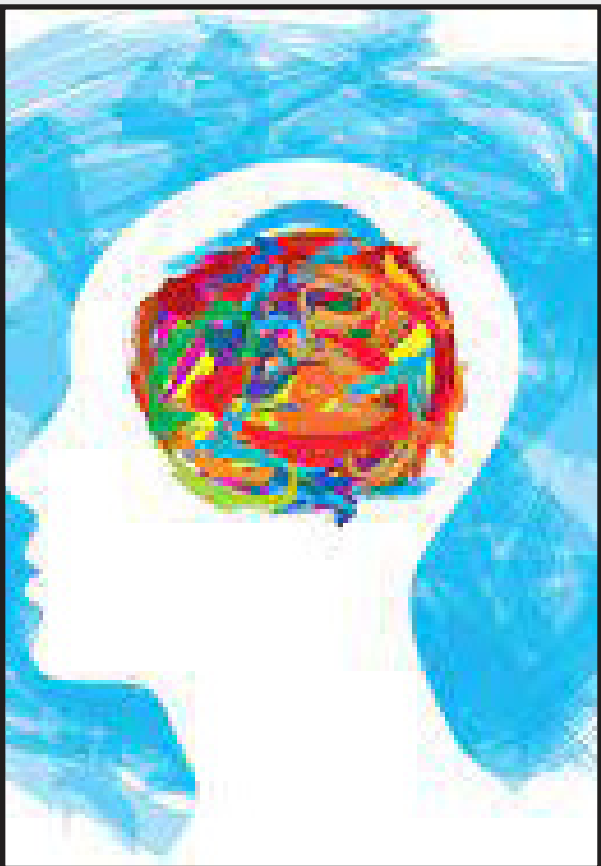
Inquiring about suicidal ideations
Suicidal ideation can strike anyone at any time. If you suspect someone is suicidal, you should approach that individual immediately. Unless they tell you, the only way to find out whether they are considering suicide is to ask.

For example, you may inquire:
• "Are you contemplating suicide?"
or • "Are you thinking of taking your own life?"

While it is more essential to address the question directly than to be concerned with the exact phrase, you should not inquire about suicide in a leading or judgemental manner (e.g., "You're not thinking of doing something dumb, are you?"). People are sometimes hesitant to ask openly about suicide because they fear they may implant the concept in the person's mind. This is not correct. Similarly, if a person is suicidal, inquiring about suicidal ideas will not enhance the likelihood that they would act on them. Instead, asking the person about suicide thoughts will provide them the opportunity to talk about their problems and demonstrate that they are not alone. Although it is natural to feel worry or astonishment when someone shares suicidal intentions, it is critical to avoid voicing negative responses. Make every effort to look cool, confident, and compassionate in the face of the suicide crisis, since this may have a reassuring effect for the suicidal individual.

How should I talk with someone who is suicidal?

It is more essential to care than to say "all the correct things." Be cooperative and empathetic of the suicidal individual, and pay close attention to them. Suicidal thoughts are frequently a cry for aid as well as a desperate attempt to escape issues and distressing feelings. Inquire about the suicidal person's thoughts and feelings. Assure them that you are interested in hearing what they have to say. Allow them to express their thoughts and feelings, as well as their reasons for wanting to die, and acknowledge them. Tell the suicidal individual that it is appropriate to talk about things that are hurtful, even if it is difficult. Allow them to express their emotions (for example, allow them to cry, express anger, or scream). Suicidal people may feel relieved to be allowed to do so. Remember to praise the suicidal person for expressing their thoughts with you and acknowledge their courage that was required to do so.



How can I assess how critical the situation is?

Take all suicidal ideas seriously and take action. Do not disregard the person's ideas as an attempt for "attention seeking." Based on the detection of suicide warning signals, determine the urgency of taking action. Inquire with the suicidal individual about problems affecting their immediate safety such as:

- Whether they have a suicide plot.
- How they mean to commit suicide, i.e., direct inquiries regarding how and where they want to commit suicide.
- Whether they have chosen when to carry out their strategy.
- Whether they have previously made measures to get the means to end their life.
- Whether they have used drugs or alcohol. Intoxication can enhance the likelihood of a person acting on their suicidal urges.
- Whether they had previously attempted or planned suicide.

If the suicidal individual claims to be hearing voices, inquire as to what the voices are saying. This is significant if the voices are related to their present suicidal thoughts. It is also beneficial to learn about the person's accessible supports:

- Whether they have expressed their feelings to anybody.
- Any changes in their work, social life, or family life.
- Whether they have had therapy for mental health issues or are currently taking medication.

Be aware that people who have a detailed suicide plan, the means to carry out the plan, a time set for executing it, and the will to do it are those who are most likely to act on their suicidal ideas in the near future. However, the absence of a suicide plan is insufficient to assure safety.

How can I ensure the individual's safety?

Once you've determined that a suicide risk exists, you must take action to keep the person safe. Suicidal individuals should not be left alone. Even if you are hesitant, intervene immediately if you believe the individual is in immediate danger of acting on suicide intentions. Rather than acting alone to prevent suicide, work jointly with the suicidal individual to secure their safety. Remind the suicidal individual that suicidal ideas do not have to be followed through on. Assure the suicidal individual that there are other options for dealing with issues or coping than suicide. When speaking with a suicidal individual, focus on the things that will keep them safe for the time being rather than the things that will put them in danger. Create a safety plan with the suicidal individual to help keep them safe. Involve the suicidal individual as much as possible in decision-making regarding a safety plan. However, do not presume that a safety plan will suffice to keep the suicidal person safe. Although you can give assistance, you are not accountable for someone else's actions or behaviours, and you have no influence over what they do.

What if the individual asks me to promise not to inform anybody else?

You must never agree to keep a suicide plan or danger of suicide hidden. If the individual does not want you to inform anybody about their suicidal thoughts, do not agree but explain why (for example, "I care about you too much to keep a secret like this. You need help, and I am here to assist you in obtaining it"). Respect the individual and include them in decisions regarding who else knows about the suicidal crisis. Keep in mind that having the individual upset at you for disclosing their suicidal thoughts without their consent in order to get treatment is preferable than losing the person to suicide.

What should I do if the individual has taken action based on suicide thoughts?
If the suicidal individual has already injured themselves, provide first aid and contact suicide helpline for an ambulance. Remember that, despite our best efforts, we may not be able to prevent suicide.

The individual I'm attempting to assist has hurt themselves, yet they say they are not suicidal. What am I supposed to do?
Other than suicide, some individuals hurt themselves using sharp objects such as blade. This might be to alleviate extreme pain, stop feeling numb, or for other causes. This might be upsetting to witness. Such cases call for professional assistance for non-suicidal self-injury that individuals do when they are under huge stress such as due to depression or borderline personality disorder.

Take good care of yourself:
After assisting someone who is suicidal, ensure that you take proper self-care measures. It is exhausting to provide support and help to a suicidal individual, therefore it is critical to take care of yourself especially emotional care and seek professional assistance if you are not able to handle your stress post the event.

What is the role of mental health professionals?

Encourage the individual to seek appropriate professional assistance as soon as feasible. Learn about the resources and services available to someone who is thinking about suicide, including local services that can help individuals who are suicidal, such as district mental health programme units (DMHP units) available at various general district hospitals, state psychiatric diseases hospital, mental health clinics, mobile outreach crisis teams, suicide prevention helplines, and local emergency services. Give this information to the suicidal individual and talk about your choices for getting assistance with them. If they don't want to talk to someone in person, encourage them to call a suicide hotline. Don't presume that the individual will get well on their own or that they will seek treatment on their own. People who are suicidal often do not seek treatment for a variety of reasons, including stigma, humiliation, and the idea that their situation is hopeless and that nothing they or somebody else do can help. If the suicidal person is hesitant to seek assistance, continue to encourage them to see a mental health professional and to call a suicide prevention hotline for advice on how to assist them. If the suicidal individual rejects professional treatment, contact a mental health centre or a crisis hotline for assistance. A more direct approach may be required if the suicidal individual is a teenager. If a teenager is hesitant to seek help, make certain that someone close to them is aware of the problem (i.e. a close friend or family member). If the adolescent refuses professional treatment, seek support from a mental health expert as well. If at all feasible, the health practitioner called to assist should be someone the suicidal person knows and trusts. If the individual has a detailed suicide plan, or if they have the tools to carry out their suicide plan, contact a mental health centre or a crisis hotline and ask for advice on the situation. Contact the police if the suicidal individual has a weapon to commit suicide. When contacting the authorities, make it clear that the person is suicidal in order for them to respond appropriately. Make certain that you are not putting yourself in risk when providing help to the suicidal individual. Be prepared for the suicidal individual to show anger and feel deceived if you try to prevent their suicide or assist them in seeking professional treatment. Try not to take the suicidal person's harsh acts or words personally.

The author is a mental health professional at Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences Kashmir (IMHANS-K) and can be reached at wasimkakroo21@gmail.com

Social change can be promoted by actively addressing inequalities

Agencies

In a new study researchers tried to find what does it take for people to commit to taking action to promote social equality? And how might this differ for people from advantaged and disadvantaged groups?

An international team, including Linda Tropp at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and researchers in 23 countries, finds more mutual support for social change among advantaged and disadvantaged groups when inequality is actively addressed and the psychological needs of each group are met. The new research, led by the University of Zurich (UZH), was published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.

"What this research is showing is that people on both sides really need to acknowledge that they have different motivations and concerns when they interact with each other," says co-author Tropp, the lead researcher in the U.S. who has examined how members of different groups experience intergroup contact for more than 20 years.

Prior research has shown that advantaged groups prefer to discuss commonalities among groups rather than differences between groups, at the same time as they desire to feel accepted and not be labeled as biased. But if members of socially disadvantaged groups simply have pleasant, positive exchanges with people who are not themselves targets of discrimination, they may emerge from those

contact experiences even less committed to fighting for social justice and improving their own group's social position.

As first author, Tebea Hassler of UZH says, "They get the deceptive impression that their own group no longer suffers so much discrimination... It is therefore important that social inequalities and discrimination between different social groups are actively addressed and named." This helps to



meet the needs of disadvantaged group members, such as racial minorities and LGBTQ+ individuals, who are motivated to have a voice and feel empowered in their relations with advantaged groups.

Each group's psychological needs are therefore an important part of the equation. "If contact situations are structured where members of disadvantaged groups or minority groups feel empowered, that they have a voice and are being listened to and heard, that's the time when contact with members of advantaged groups may support their interest in collective action

to challenge the status quo," says Tropp, professor of social psychology at UMass Amherst.

Similarly, when members of majority groups "feel welcome as allies in that cause and not presumed to be racist, then that can bolster their willingness to use some of their time and energy to try to promote social equality," she says.

To gather their data, 43 researchers around the world conducted a survey with more than 11,000 individuals from a range of identity groups, including heterosexual individuals and members of sexual or gender minorities, migrants and members of their respective host societies, as well as indigenous groups and religious minorities.

"Overall, our findings suggest that contact across group boundaries fosters social change when it meets the targeted needs of disadvantaged and advantaged groups," says Johannes Ullrich, professor of social psychology at UZH.

Tropp says one next step is to help prepare members of advantaged groups to engage in difficult conversations about power relations and discrimination.

"To the extent that the advantaged engage in those conversations with disadvantaged groups, talking about the structural inequalities that do exist and need to be addressed, then it's likely that both members of disadvantaged groups, as well as advantaged groups, will be more prepared to engage in efforts to challenge the inequalities that we have in our society," she says.

ٹھیکہ داری کارڈ نکالنا مطلوب ہے

ہر خاص و عام کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ منظر کوئی خاص ٹھیکہ داری کارڈ نکالنا مطلوب ہے۔ اس بارے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض آراہنڈی ڈویژن واپس لے کر پیش کرے۔

ناگ کے دفتر میں پیش کریں۔ معیار گذرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
محترمہ ہرودولہ غلام حسن بہرود
ساکہ بڑاک پورہ انت ناگ

RNA

از نیابت دیگام با اجلاس جاوید احکیم صاحب مضمون درخواست منجانب: محمد اقبال تاج ولد غلام محمد تاج صاحب کے قریب پورہ ضلع انت ناگ۔ براد عطاء RBA برقیٹک معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست بغرض بحال وارڈر بائرنر فلیٹ دفتر بند میں پیش کیا ہے۔ اس بارے میں عملیاتی طور پر پورٹ طلب کیا گیا جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ساکن کا کتبہ دھجڑا میں گزشتہ پندرہ سالوں سے رہائش پذیر ہے اور ساکن کا کتبہ بذیل ہے۔				
نمبر شمار	نام افراد کتبہ	عمر	پیشہ	آمدنی
01	غلام محمد تاج ولد علی محمد تاج	65 سال	ریٹائر مازم	5000/=
02	فاطمہ بانو زوجہ غلام محمد تاج	60 سال	گھر بیٹاکام	
03	عقرا محمد تاج ولد غلام محمد تاج	30 سال	زیر تعلیم	
04	محمد اقبال تاج ولد غلام محمد تاج	28 سال	تعلیم	
اسٹورکٹ 04 افراد پر مشتمل ہے۔ اور کتبہ کی سالانہ آمدنی تقریباً 60000 روپیہ تک ہے لہذا زیر بحث سر فلیٹ اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض معروضات پیش کرے۔ معیار گذرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔				
RNA				
نائب تحصیلدار				

اطلاع عام

راقم کو فرٹ لائیزر لائن نکالنی مطلوب ہے۔ اس ضمن میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر ہفتہ ایکٹر لکچر ایئر انت ناگ کے دفتر میں پیش کریں بعد از معاد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

منجانب: عیاز احمد ڈار ولد محمد یوسف ڈار
ساکہ بڑاک پورہ انت ناگ

RNA

از نیابت دیگام با اجلاس جاوید احکیم صاحب درخواست منجانب: محمد اقبال تاج ولد غلام محمد تاج صاحب کے قریب پورہ ضلع انت ناگ۔ بغرض حصول SC/سوشل کاسٹ سر فلیٹ۔ اشہار براد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام۔ معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول SC سر فلیٹ دفتر بند پیش کیا ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے۔ پٹواری حلقہ سے پورٹ طلب کی گئی جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ساکن کا کتبہ بذیل افراد ہیں۔				
نمبر شمار	نام افراد خانہ	عمر	پیشہ	آمدنی
01	غلام محمد تاج ولد علی محمد تاج	65 سال	ریٹائر مازم	5000/=
02	فاطمہ بانو زوجہ غلام محمد تاج	60 سال	گھر بیٹاکام	
03	عقرا محمد تاج ولد غلام محمد تاج	30 سال	زیر تعلیم	
04	محمد اقبال تاج ولد غلام محمد تاج	28 سال	زیر تعلیم	
اسٹورکٹ 04 افراد پر مشتمل ہے۔ اور کتبہ کی سالانہ آمدنی تقریباً 60000 روپیہ تک ہے لہذا زیر بحث سر فلیٹ اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض معروضات پیش کرے۔ معیار گذرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔				
RNA				
نائب تحصیلدار				

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER GULMARG DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, TANGMARG NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

NIT No 31/GDA OF 2021-2022				DATED: 30-06-2021			
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For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT, e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible contractors of J&K UT J&K UT/ Central Govt. Registered for the following works.

S. No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs.)	Time of Completion/(period)	Time & Date of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor	Major Head of Account
1.	2	3	4	6	7	8	9
1.	Construction of canopy at the entrance of No PC Block at Gulmarg	2.38	200	10 days	09/07/2021	DEE	Non-Plan

Position of AAA/ TS	Accorded
Position of Funds	Available (Budget 2021-22)

1. The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

1.2. The cost of tenders should be collected by introducing e-challan or simple uploading a copy of necessary Treasury challan / receipt (M/Head 1452-TSM) only (As per Chief Engineer PW (R&B) Kashmir's No. CE/RBK/WS/4852-85 Dated 03-07-2020. The tenders are also available on GDA Website for information and vide publicity. However tenders can only be downloaded and submitted on the JK tenders website.

1.3. All bidders has to submit bid security declaration form instead of earnest money deposit (EMD) as per the circular of finance department (Bid security form is as per Annexure "A" below) pledged to Executive Engineer GDA Tangmarg.

1.4. The 1st lowest bidder has to produce an amount of equal to 3% of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR within 02 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work.

S. No.	Date of issue of tender Notice	
1.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	01-07-2021
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 01-07-2021 A.M to 08-07-2021 4.00 P.M
3.	Bid submission start date	01-07-2021 from 10.00 AM
4.	Bid submission end date	08-07-2021 upto 4.00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of bids (online)	09/07/2021 at 11.00 AM in the office of the Executive Engineer GDA Tangmarg

General conditions :

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / receipt in favour of Executive Engineer GDA (tender inviting authority). The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer GDA Tangmarg (tender receiving authority).

3. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids

4. The bidder has to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.

5. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

6. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.

7. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.

8. The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.

9. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1 on any other convene day

10. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid. Besides, original / photocopies of documents related to the bid be submitted physically / by registered post / through courier before the date specified in Para-1.

11. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents tender document fee in terms of soft copies with the technical bid and submit the Hard Copies of all the uploaded documents duly attested under the hand and seal of the tenderer. No document(s) which has / have not been uploaded shall be entertained in the form of hardcopy. However, in case of any clarification, the bidders shall have to produce original documents in support of Soft copies if need arises.

12. All other terms and conditions are as per NIT 1st of GDA 2021-22.

13. In case of any new circular/instructions/ order is issued by the competent authorities during the current financial year the same shall be implemented / treaded in force on all the tenders floated from time to time.

14. All other terms and conditions are as per PWD form 25(double agreement form)

No:-GDA/Divn./701-707
Dated: 30 /06/2021

DIPK-NB-1506/21

Sd/= Executive Engineer
Gulmarg Development Authority,
Tangmarg

UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR Office Of The Executive Engineer, Construction Division

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

For and on behalf of the University of Kashmir, e-tenders ((In Single cover system) are invited on **item rate basis** from approved and eligible Civil and Sanitary Contractors registered with Govt. of J&K/ other union territories and CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc in shape of E-Challan (In Rs.)	Time of completion	Time and Date for Submission of E-Tender.	Date & Time of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	5	6	7	9	10
1.	Sanitary and Plumbing Work of 02 storeyed Building for Health Centre at North Campus.	29.74	1100/-	04-Months	01-07-2021 To 10-07-2021 (6.00 PM)	12-07-2021 (11.30AM)	"AAY" & "BEE"

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the web site www.kashmiruniversity.net / www.jktenders.gov.in.

NIT No - F (E.Tend) (UCD) KU/18/21
DATED: -30-06-2021.

DIPK-NB-1505/21

Executive Engineer

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR, Office Of The Principal/Dean, Government Medical College, Srinagar (ACADEMIC SECTION)

0-Karan Nagar, Srinagar Kashmir, 190010
PHONE NO. 0194-2504114, FAX 0194-250311

Subject: Selection list of the Candidates for undergoing M.Phil Clinical Psychology Course In the Department of Psychiatry, Government Medical College, Srinagar.

ORDER no: 169-RA(SS) of 2021
dated: 24-06-2021

On the recommendations of the Selection Committee and pursuant to the communication received from the Assistant Registrar (Research), University of Kashmir Vide No. 1(M.Phil C/P) Res/KU/21 Dated: June 21,2021 following candidates having qualified Entrance test and Vivo- Voce, are provisionally selected on their own risk and responsibility for admission to M.Phil programme in Clinical Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry, Government Medical College, Srinagar. The HOD shall get their certificates verified from the competent authority and inform this office for making their selection absolute.

S.No.	Name of the candidate	Entrance Roll No.	Total Score out of 100
01	Zarafshan Yousuf Khan	998030	88.4
02	Faiza Yousuf	998092	87.3
03	Naziya Fayaz Baba	998005	87
04	Rumesa Afzal	998036	86.7
05	Iqra Amin	998116	86.4
06	Kaiser Hayath	998012	85.1
07	Iqra Farooq Woni	998031	84.2
08	Ansub Sodiya	998032	83.3

The admission of the Selected candidates shall be further subject to the following terms and conditions:-

- Submission of an affidavit as per prescribed format (Para A)
- Deposition of lee as per following schedule in university and college account.

1st year	2nd year
I. Registration fee	Rs.3000.00/-
II. Admission/ Tuition fee	Rs. 5000.00/-
III. Institution Security (Refundable.)	Rs. 2500.00/-
IV. Supervision Fee -	Rs.15500.00/-
V. Examination Fee-	Rs. 3000.00/-
VI. Caution Money Fee-	Rs.1000.00 P/A
VII. College fee-	Rs.14500/-College Account-0349040100028894
Total	Rs.30,000/-

a. Admission/Tuition Fee -	Rs. 6000.0	
b. Institution Security (Ref.) -	Rs.3000.00	University chest
c. College Fee	Rs.6000.00	
College Account-0349040100028894		

The candidates shall also be required to deposit other fee as prescribed for M.Phil /Ph.D course programme in other disciplines excluding bench fee. Further, the selected students are directed to submit an affidavit duly attested by Judicial Magistrate stating that:

- (Para A)
- I shall be abided by University of Kashmir statutes & Govt. Medical College, Srinagar Rules and Regulations.
 - I shall not claim for any kind of stipend during my M.Phil programme.
 - Any candidate who shall not join along the original certificates with the stipulated time shall forfeit his/her admission
 - I shall be admitted provisionally on my own risk and responsibility till the verification of my documents
 - My provisional admission shall become absolute only after verification of my certificates from the concerned quarters
 - I shall remain disciplined during the whole term of the M.Phil programme. Any sort of misconduct from myself shall make me liable for termination.
 - I shall not participate in any kind of strike during the period of the M.Phil programme. If found indulged in any kind of strike, my selection shall be terminated.

(Prof Samia Rashid)
Dean Allied Medical Science

No:GMCS/Acad/SS/608-II
Dated24-06-2021

DIPK-3846/21

Government Medical College, Srinagar

10-Karan Nagar, Srinagar Kashmir, 190010
Phone No. 0914-2504114 Fax No 0194-2503115

Subject: Engagement of candidates for the post of Registrars/Demonstrator (non-PSC) in the various Departments of Government Medical College, Srinagar.

OFFICE ORDER NO: 175-RA Of 2021.
DATED: 30-06-2021.

In anticipation of selection Committee, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the following (non-PSC) doctors are engaged as Registrar/ Demonstrator in the Department shown against each initially for a period of one year which is extendable upto (03) years for MD/ MS candidates and (02) years for Diploma holder candidate on the basis of good performance to be certified by the concerned HOD:-

S. NO.	Name of Candidate	Qualification	Discipline
1.	Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad Wani	MS	Surgery
2.	Dr. Ashiq Hussain Raina	MS	
3.	Dr. Tazeen Zahoor Malik	MD	SPM

The tenure appointment of above NPSC doctors is on academic arrangement basis and will be governed by the rules and regulations as envisaged in SO. 364 of 2020 Dated. 27-11-2020. r

The appointment of the above doctors is further subject to the following terms and conditions:-

Before joining the Department, the selectee shall submit an affidavit duly attested by the Judicial Magistrate/first class Magistrate to the effect that:-

- he/she is non-PSC, the information if found wrong the selectee shall be punished under Rules which includes confiscation of the Registration of the Doctor.
- he/she will not participate in any kind of strike during the period of his/her tenure engagement. In the event he/she proceeded on strike, his/her tenure engagement shall be terminated without any notice as this service is covered under ESMA Act.
- he/she shall remain disciplined during the tenure period, any kind of misconduct make him/her liable for termination without any prior notice.
- he/she is not involved in any criminal activity or there is no FIR pending or registered in any criminal department or police station against him/her.
- he/she is leaving the job in midway shall not be entitled for any experience certificate.
- he/she will not indulge himself/herself in any private practice. In case he/she is found doing private practice his/her appointment shall be terminated without any notice.

No: RA-MC/Selc/r/d595-605 Dated: 30-06-2021

Principal /Dean
Govt Medical College
Srinagar

DIPK-3896/21

Police Golf Course Inaugurated With DGP's Tee Off



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Lake View Environmental Golf Training Park also known as Police Golf Course was thrown open with a Tee Off function. DGP J&K Dilbag Singh was Chief Guest on this occasion.

The DGP J&K was received by ADGP Armed S.J.M. Gillani and other senior police officers. A ceremonial guard of honour was presented by the Brass Band contingent of J&K Police.

The DGP formally threw open the Golf Course by playing the ball from a Tee. Later the DGP interacted with the senior officers and also with the support staff of

the golf course on the occasion.

The DGP was presented a memento by the ADGP Armed J&K S.J.M. Gillani on the occasion.

The function was attended by Spl. DG Crime J&K A. K. Choudhary, Managing Director Police Housing Corporation A.G. Mir, ADGP Headquarters PHQ, M. K. Sinha, IGP Headquarter PHQ Garib Dass, IGP Kashmir/AP/IR Vijay Kumar, IGP CIV PHQ Alok Kumar, Director ACB Anand Jain, DIG CKR/AP/IRP Amit Kumar, DIG SKR Abdul Jabbar, SSP APCR Sheikh Junaidd, SSP PCR Zubair Khan, SSP Srinagar Sandeep Choudhary, all Kashmir based Commandants of Armed/IR Police Battalions and other gazetted officers.

Manchester United Agree \$100m Deal To Sign Jadon Sancho From Dortmund



Agencies

LONDON: Jadon Sancho appears finally headed to Manchester United from Borussia Dortmund after a long-running pursuit of the winger.

United has agreed to a deal in principle to sign Sancho for 85 million euros (\$100 million) from Dortmund, a person with knowledge of the deal said Wednesday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss a transfer yet to be completed.

The 21-year-old Sancho is currently with the England squad

involved in the European Championship as the team prepares for its quarterfinal with Ukraine on Saturday. Despite Sancho commanding a big fee after impressing in the Bundesliga, he is yet to start for England at the tournament.

Sancho started his career at Manchester City but rejected a deal to stay and joined Dortmund in 2017. He has scored 38 times in his 104 Bundesliga appearances.

Now he is set for City's fierce local rival to help United's bid to dethrone its neighbor as Premier League champion. The new season starts for United on August 14 against Leeds.

JKCA Vaccinates Cricketers In Srinagar, To Hold Similar Drive In Jammu

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu & Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA) on Thursday conducted a day-long COVID-19 vaccination drive at Srinagar's Sher-i-Kashmir Cricket Stadium.

Professional cricketers including Abid Nabi, Obaid Haroon, Javid Jadu and Waseem Kachru were vaccinated on the occasion along with other budding and experienced cricket players of the Valley. The event took place at JKCA's Srinagar headquarters which also serves as JKCA's Srinagar Incharge, Majid Dar's office.

The drive comes after a BCCI directive that made it mandatory for all 18+ cricketers (men and women) to get vaccinated. Earlier, JKCA had issued a notice saying only vaccinated cricketers and staff members will be permitted to enter



its facilities.

Meanwhile, JKCA's Jammu wing released a statement on Thursday saying a similar COVID-19 vaccination drive will be conducted in Jammu on July 3.

"With active participation of DC Jammu and the Health Department, JKCA will conduct a special vaccination drive for 18+ cricketers, employees and their family members on July 3 at JKCA office near Science College Stadium from 10.30 am onwards," the statement said.

JKCA sub-committee member, Brigadier Anil Gupta appealed to all budding cricketers to avail the opportunity so that cricketing activities can resume in UT without violating any COVID protocol.

WITH ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF DC JAMMU and the Health Department, JKCA will conduct a special vaccination drive for 18+ cricketers, employees and their family members on July 3 at JKCA office near Science College Stadium from 10.30 am onwards."

Afridi's Captaincy Ambitions Led To 2009 Revolt Against Me, Says Younis Khan

Press Trust of India

KARACHI: Former Pakistan skipper Younis Khan has claimed that the 2009 players revolt against him had its roots in captaincy ambitions of seniors like Shahid Afridi.

Younis claimed that the revolt was not carried out because the players were unhappy with his captaincy style or strong attitude.

"If the players had problems with me they could have spoken to me. They claimed that they didn't want me removed as captain but just wanted the cricket board to speak to me to change my attitude," Younis told a TV channel.

"Then how is it that when the player (s) met with the then PCB Chairman, Ejaz Butt one senior player, apparently Afridi demanded the captain be changed. To me it was about captaincy ambitions," said highest Test run getter for Pakistan.

Younis also confirmed that a player (said to be Umar Akmal) had come to his room to ask for the Holy Quran and took it saying he wanted it because some players wanted to recite some Sarah's before an important match.

The former captain said later the same Holy Quran was used to ask



the players to take oath on it that they would not reveal anything that was discussed at the revolting players meeting in South Africa during the Champions Trophy.

Ironically, after Younis resigned in late 2009, it was Misbah-ul-Haq and Afridi who captained Pakistan in red and white ball cricket.

Younis said he had spent the last four years of his career with Pakistan remaining in his room all the time and just focusing on his cricket.

He was also asked about the infamous incident when in 2016 he abruptly announced his retirement from ODIs on the day before a match against England.

"It was not abrupt at all. I had made a decision beforehand I would retire from ODIs as I was not selected in the ODI eleven for the last two years.

"On the night before the match chief selector, Haroon Rasheed called me and I told him I was thinking about retirement from ODIs and he turned around and told me rudely that it was up to me but he had got me selected for the series against England and I (Younis) should just listen to the team management and play as they wanted."

"I was very upset with his tone and that is why I announced my retirement the next morning."

ICC Bans UAE Players Hayat, Ahmed For Accepting Bribe From Indian Bookie

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: The ICC on Thursday banned two UAE players Amir Hayat and Ashfaq Ahmed for eight years after they were found guilty of trying to fix T20 World Cup qualifying round matches in their country, colluding with an Indian bookie.

While the ICC's Anti-Corruption Tribunal had charged both the Pakistan-born cricketers back on September 13, 2020, the backdated quantum of sentence was passed on the day.

"The bans are backdated to 13 September 2020, when they were provisionally suspended for corrupt conduct in relation to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Qualifier 2019 in the UAE," the ICC release stated.

Both cricketers had taken 15,000 AED (United Arab Emirates Dirham totalling USD 4083 approx) from an Indian bookie, identified as Mr 'Y' in the ICC charge-sheet for fixing the qualifying round games. Hayat is a medium pacer while Ahmed is a batsman.

As per ICC's anti-corruption code, the duo has been charged on five counts which includes failure to disclose a corrupt approach, trying to improperly influence the outcome of a match, and accepting gifts worth more than USD 750.

"In October 2019, the ICC ACU commenced an investigation into allegations that members of the UAE senior international team may have had dealings with a known corruption network controlled by an Indian man named [Mr Y]," the detailed ICC judgement stated.

"Steven Richardson, the ICC ACU's Coordinator Investigations, testified that the ACU had known of [Mr Y] for some time because he had been reported as having approached a number of players

(either directly or via a third party) to get them involved in corruption in cricket.

"The ACU was also aware that [Mr Y] had been involved in unsanctioned cricket tournaments which had corruption and betting links," it further stated.

The judgement also mentioned that both Hayat and Ahmed had attended four and three anti-corruption education sessions organised by the ICC.

It also mentioned that there were WhatsApp messages that were shared between the two players and the Indian corruptor but the meeting that was scheduled on a specific date didn't take place.

"The UAE was due to participate in the ICC World T20 Qualifiers in the UAE in October 2019 and it is alleged that the Players understood that this payment of the AED 15,000 anticipated their engagement in corrupt conduct during the Qualifiers, with precisely what would be expected of them to be provided at a later date," the ICC stated.

"WhatsApp messages between the Players suggest that the Players and [Mr Y] were trying to arrange a meeting on 7 September 2019, at which, it is to be inferred, details of what they would be asked to do in the Qualifiers would be given to them. The Players say that this meeting did not in fact take place."

Alex Marshall, ICC General Manager Integrity Unit, said: "Both Amir and Ashfaq had played cricket at the highest level for long enough to understand the threat from match fixers.

"The two UAE players, attended several ICC anti-corruption education sessions, and knew how to avoid becoming involved in any corrupt activity. Their lengthy ban should serve as a warning to others."

Belgium Takes On Italy For Place In Euro 2020 Semifinals

Press Trust of India

MUNICH: Belgium's leading scorer at the European Championship is no stranger to Italy's veteran defenders.

They all play in Serie A. Romelu Lukaku will likely be the main attacking threat when Belgium takes on Italy in Munich on Friday in the Euro 2020 quarterfinals. The Inter Milan forward has scored three goals in his team's four victories so far.

And with Kevin De Bruyne and Eden Hazard both doubtful for the game, Italy captain Giorgio Chiellini and teammate Leonardo Bonucci both defenders at Juventus will know just who to focus on.

"It's a quarterfinal. It will be decided on small details," Belgium midfielder Youri Tielemans said.

"I think one phase can turn the game in our favour, or against us. We have to be concentrated from the first minute and finish strongly. It's going to be very, very tough, very, very physical."

Belgium, which is trying to win its first major soccer tournament three years after a third-place finish at the World Cup, hasn't lost in 13 games and is the top-ranked team in the world. The Italians haven't been beaten in a national team record 31 matches, though they were taken to extra time by Austria in the round of 16.

"It's a nice challenge to beat them after a run of 31 unbeaten games. I estimate the odds 50-50," said Belgium midfielder Thorgan Hazard, Eden's younger brother and the scorer of the only goal in the

team's 1-0 victory over Portugal in the last round.

"It's an advantage that we didn't have to play extra time."

Both teams won all three of their group matches, and with France, Portugal, the Netherlands and Germany all eliminated from Euro 2020, the winner in Munich will certainly be among the favourites for the title.

"We must continue to believe in ourselves," Italy midfielder Jorginho said.

"The most serious mistake would be to think that we've already done something great."

Neither De Bruyne nor Eden Hazard's injury worries are new. De Bruyne fractured his nose and eye socket in a collision with Chelsea defender Antonio Riger while playing for Manchester City in the Champions League final, but the latest problem is a bruised left ankle sustained after a tackle from Portugal midfielder Joao Palhinha in the round of 16.

"I don't know if De Bruyne will play in the game, but he's definitely a player who makes the difference, with a higher-than-average football intelligence," said Jorginho, a Chelsea midfielder who plays against De Bruyne in the Premier League.

The injury-prone Hazard was also taken off early against Portugal with a hamstring issue. Belgium coach Roberto Mart nez said Monday that both Hazard and De Bruyne were "50-50" for Friday's game.

Belgium has only beaten Italy once before in a competitive game in the 1972 European Championship quarterfinals.

Pedri Indispensable As Spain Bids To Make Semis At Euro 2020

Agencies

ST. PETERSBURG: Spain is on the charge at a major soccer tournament with a creative and technically gifted Barcelona player calling the shots from central midfield.

Sound familiar? Only 18 and already seemingly indispensable for the national team, Pedri Gonzalez has been given the keys to a midfield that was once the domain of two modern-day greats in Xavi Hernandez and Andres Iniesta.

The comparisons are inevitable and maybe justified and will only become more widespread if Pedri leads Spain to the European Championship title in the coming days, just as Xavi and Iniesta did in 2008 and 2012 amid a golden era for the country.

Certainly Switzerland needs to be on top of Spanish soccer's new midfield conductor in the first quarterfinal match at Euro 2020 in St. Petersburg on Friday.

That's easier said than done. Pedri, who plays on the left side of

Spain's ball-hogging central-midfield three, is playing in his first major tournament he only made his senior international debut in March and is tied for first place for most chances created (10) and has more passes in the opposition half (233) than any other player.

The youngest Spaniard to play at a European Championship, Pedri also became the youngest ever player in a knockout-stage game at the tournament at 18 years, 215 days against Croatia in the round of 16.

Perhaps most impressively, he is one of only two outfield players in Spain's squad to have played every minute of their team's games at Euro 2020.

"Pedri is a unique player," Spain coach Luis Enrique said understatedly. Another European Championship record he holds comes with less distinction. After 20 minutes of the 5-3 extra-time win over Croatia, Pedri sent a back-pass from near the halfway line to Spain goalkeeper Unai Simon, who failed to control the ball and only succeeded in deflecting it into the goal.



MESSI'S CONTRACT Held Up By Barcelona's Finances, Says Club President Laporta

Agencies

BARCELONA: Barcelona's poor finances have become the stumbling block to getting Lionel Messi to sign another contract, according to club president Joan Laporta.

Messi was officially no longer a Barcelona player on Thursday, following the expiration of his contract. That came 16 years after the forward signed his first profession contract with the club that he joined at age 13.

Laporta has continued to mark a cautiously optimistic tone when asked if he was close to convincing Messi to stay put. Laporta was club president when a teenage Messi had his breakout. He returned to run the club in March after winning an election with the promise he would use his good relationship with Messi to get him to stay. Late on Wednesday, Laporta told a popular sports talk radio show that the deal was being held up only because of the Spanish league's strict financial fair play rules.

"We want him to stay and Leo wants to stay, it is all going well," Laporta told Onda Cero radio. "We still have to deal with the issue of financial fair play. We are in the process of finding the best solution for both parties."

Barcelona's all-time leading scorer is in Brazil leading Argentina at the Copa America, far from the hubbub at Camp Nou.

Barcelona's finances suffered a huge blow last season, when

the questionable management by the prior club board was exacerbated by a drop in revenues provoked by the pandemic.

When Laporta returned to power, he inherited a club saddled with debt of 1.2 billion euros (\$1.4 billion) and massive contracts that former club president Josep Bartomeu gave players, including Messi. Messi's previous contract, signed in 2017, earned him an eye-popping 138 million euros (\$164 million) per season. Laporta has said that Messi is willing to take a significant pay cut, but even so, the club is apparently struggling to make the numbers work.

Laporta recently said Barcelona's finances "were worse than I had imagined." He said the payroll plus other payments tallied 650 million euros (\$771 million).

The Spanish league slashed the salary cap for Barcelona down from a league-high 671 million euros (\$796 million) for the 2019-20 season to just 383 million euros (\$454 million) for last campaign. A new salary cap is expected to be announced in the coming weeks, but with Barcelona's finances still a mess it is expected to be much more generous. The salary cap is proportional to 70% of a club's revenue.

While the 34-year-old Messi is still the team's best player, other players the club has spent big on in recent years have produced mixed results. Their high salaries now make them difficult to transfer to other clubs. As Laporta recently told La Vanguardia newspaper, "the salaries for Barcelona's players are not comparable to those of other clubs."

Last season, the club practically gave Luis Suarez away to Atletico Madrid to shed his salary. The Uruguayan striker went on to lead Atletico to the league title.

Neymar & Sanchez Return As Brazil Take On Chile In Copa America Knockouts



Agencies

RIO DE JANEIRO: Defending champion Brazil and Chile will have their star players back in action when they meet in the Copa America quarterfinals on Friday. Neymar will return for Brazil and Alexis Sanchez has recovered from a calf muscle injury ahead of the encounter at the Nilton Santos Stadium in Rio de Janeiro.

The Selecao spared a group of regular starters in the 1-1 draw with Ecuador on Sunday, resting Neymar, defender Thiago Silva and striker Gabriel Jesus. Others, including Casemiro, entered as substitutes in that game. Brazil, with three wins in four Copa America matches, is the clear favorite to win. Chile's only win in the group stage was against Bolivia and it is lacking the kind of form that inspired its back-to-back championship wins in 2015 and '16.

The last memorable match between Brazil and Chile was in the Round of 16 at the 2014 World Cup. Regular time ended 1-1, with goals by David Luiz and Sanchez. The Chileans almost beat the hosts in extra time, with a strike by Mauricio Pinilla hitting the bar in the last minute. But Brazil won on penalties, 3-2 — Pinilla also missed his from the spot. Thiago Silva, who could start on Friday, was marked by that match for his tears of tension during the shootout.

"I didn't programme myself to get emotional. It just happened," Silva told a news conference Wednesday.

"I was labelled negatively for that moment against Chile. It was very sad for me for a long time, but it was also a learning experience so I could prepare myself for other objectives, decisive matches."

Sanchez missed Chile's group-stage matches and his absence affected the team's production; La Roja only tallied three goals, with Eduardo Vargas scoring twice and Ben Brereton once. Coach Martin Lasarte will decide after Thursday's practice whether 32-year-old Sanchez will start against Brazil or come off the bench.

"To play against the host is always difficult, but Brazil is also the team that is possibly in best shape," Lasarte said.

"We have to play our best match so far. That is always possible. We will try to annul their virtues and explore their flaws."

Also on Friday, 2019 Copa America runner-up Peru will take on Paraguay at the Olimpico Stadium in Goiania. The winner will face Brazil or Chile in the semifinals in Rio.

Kargil Leaders

sought statehood for Ladakh.
“We also discussed development issues,” he said.

Home ministry sources said the minister gave a patient hearing to the Kargil leaders.

The delegation's members were mostly from the Kargil area.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit have been maintaining that they would grant statehood to Jammu and Kashmir at an appropriate time. There has been no such commitment yet with regards to UT of Ladakh.

Sajad Lone Delinks

Addressing a press conference here, Lone said every leader spoke in favour of the people in the meeting, the first such exercise after the Centre abrogated Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370 and bifurcated it into union territories in August 2019.

“Everyone spoke well and I will give equal marks to all. As on date, there are no winners and losers. It is a long process. We have to ensure that Delhi delivers and we have to make an enabling environment for them to deliver and that cannot be done by rhetoric, he said.

He said his party will strive to create an enabling environment to facilitate delivery mechanisms by New Delhi.

We have to learn that by rabble rousing, by rhetorical statements, maybe we are able to address our constituents, but then you see what difficulties the people have passed through over the last two years. So I would have thought as one of the parties who was there, we will strive to create an enabling environment to facilitate delivery mechanisms by Delhi, he said.

The people of J&K would be the only losers if the delivery of the promises becomes difficult or if it is delayed, Lone said. “India is a land of elections. There is an election every six months. Let us not by our rhetoric create an environment where the delivery becomes difficult and if the delivery becomes difficult or if it is delayed, there is only one loser and that is we the people of the state of J&K, he added.

The PC chief said as the engagement with New Delhi was an ongoing process, propriety demands that they not divulge in details about what transpired in the meeting.

All we can say is that we welcome the meeting. It was held after more than two years of upheaval. The leadership demands we look towards the future for a bright tomorrow rather than something in the recent past which we don't agree with. We hope it starts a phase of reconciliation between Delhi and Srinagar, he said.

Asked what are the issues he raised, Lone said, There is some propriety of such a meeting. There was the honourable PM, the honourable HM, they sent out three tweets and ended it. Unfortunately, we have diarrhoea of words that we continue to speak. We have to keep quiet sometimes.”

“I, as a Kashmiri and not as a political leader, felt proud of all the leaders there. They spoke for the people of J&K. They reflected their pain in a befitting manner, he said.

To a question about the timeline for restoring the statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, Lone said while he cannot recall such a timeline being shared in the meeting. “Left to me, I would say statehood should be delivered now, not as a matter of charity, but as a matter of right,” he added.

I saw the tweet (of the Union Home minister Amit Shah) and that is his opinion. But when we were in the meeting, I do not recall that timeline. I would not link elections and statehood, he said.

After the meeting in Delhi on June 24, Shah tweeted, “We are committed to ensure all round development of J&K. The future of Jammu and Kashmir was discussed and the delimitation exercise and peaceful elections are important milestones in restoring statehood as promised in Parliament.”

The PC chairman said some were calling for boycott of elections, but the people of J&K should understand that it can be a trap to scare away the good people.

Those saying boycott, to be very honest, we boycotted for 15-20 years. What if it is a trap to scare away all the good people and get their own people? Look at the other point of view also. People are ours and we seek votes from them.

Now, if the opponents create conditions for you not to enter the fray, think of it for a moment that it can be a trap. That is all I can say. I am not saying it is a trap under any circumstances. But, the leadership has to look at both the sides...not give a knee-jerk reaction, he said.

Apparently referring to PDP president Mehbooba Mufti's announcement that she will not contest the elections till Article 370 was restored even as her party will, Lone said if his party contests, then he too will as he was not superior to other leaders in his party.

If we (party) contest, then I will also. It is not like that I am important than anyone else that I will not contest but others will. We all are alike. I am not more moral than them. I am not superior to them. If something is ‘haram’ (forbidden) for me it is ‘haram’ for them too, he said.

To another question about the participation in the proceedings of the Delimitation Commission, Lone said his party will participate in the exercise if it is invited.

But the process has to be fair, he added.

Over 800 Central

Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) was to familiarise officers with best governance practices.

Singh said under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India adopted the minimum government maximum governance paradigm which is being cited and commended all over the world

with civil servants from across the world visiting India to pursue internships.

This regional conference coming one week after the all-party meet chaired by Prime Minister with the objective of promoting grassroots democracy and provide impetus to development has considerable significance with the adoption of the conference resolution titled Behtar Nizam e-Hukumat’ that will seek to ensure justice for all persons and regions of Jammu and Kashmir, he said.

Singh announced the development of a district-level good governance index on the lines of the national good governance index, capacity building of 2,000 civil servants in collaboration between NCGG and IMPARD and a national conference to be conducted on governance in Jammu & Kashmir in the year.

He also released the DARPG's e-magazine titled Minimum Government, Maximum Governance (MGMG), comprising write-ups on administrative innovations during the inaugural session.

The minister also witnessed the exchange of an MOU between NCGG and IMPARD for capacity building of 2,000 civil servants, the statement said.

The regional conference was also addressed by Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir; Sanjay Singh, Secretary DARPG; Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary J&K and V Srinivas, Additional Secretary DARPG, it said.

Militants Shot

Meanwhile, additional reinforcements have rushed to the spot and started a search operation to nab the attackers.

Assam Rifewomen

soldiers in frisking women and children at motor-vehicle checkpoints, officials said.

They also help in house to house searches during cordon and search operations, they said.

But more than their primary role, these rifewomen are happy shattering the myths around Kashmir and inspiring local girls to dream bigger and aim higher in life.

Rifewoman Rekha Kumari, who hails from Vardhman District of West Bengal, has served in Manipur and Nagaland before arriving in the valley a month ago.

“There are apprehensions and fears about coming to Kashmir but then we are here in the service of the nation. Also, there is too much myth around Kashmir. People here are nice and we feel good while interacting with them,” Kumari said.

She said while being part of the search operations, the rifewomen present the soft side of the armed personnel to the local populace.

“We are women and have to deal with womenfolk. So we start from that common ground. We have to be humane so that the local women repose their trust in us...We are here to serve them,” Kumari said.

Rifewoman Rupali Dhangar, a native of Maharashtra, is more into tough soldiering.

“We do all the duties that male soldiers do. We guard the gate, we man the bunkers, we go into cordon and search operations. There is no fear. This is part of our duty,” she said.

Both rifewomen are happy that local girls look up to them for inspiration.

“Many girls want to be like us. It is not necessary they also become soldiers, let them follow their dreams, let them aim higher than the highest they thought they could go,” Dhangar said.

The Assam Rifles women were initially deployed in Kupwara district to check the rising drug trafficking. The army men were finding it difficult to frisk the women suspects moving close to areas along the Line of control, a senior official said here.

The induction of rifewomen has helped the security forces to check the smuggling of drugs from across the LoC, he added.

Court Rejects

meanwhile, directed the Enforcement Directorate to expedite the trial.

The trial would have been swiftly concluded by now but because of the pandemic Covid-19 and the suspended functioning of the courts, the trial is taking some time.

However, prosecution cannot be blamed for delay on account of such a catastrophe. ‘Ultra posse nemo obligatur’, i.e. No one is obligated beyond what he is able to do, the judge said.

According to the prosecution, in the August 2005 case, the special cell of Delhi police had arrested one Ahmed Wani, an alleged hawala dealer, claiming that Rs 63 lakh were recovered from Wani, of which Rs 52 lakh were allegedly to be delivered to Shah.

According to the prosecution, Wani had claimed that he had given Rs 2.25 crore to Shah.

The ED had later registered a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against Shah and Wani in 2007.

J&K Situation

situation in Jammu and Kashmir has seen a “marked improvement”.

“Since there is a ceasefire, there is no longer any infiltration. As there is no infiltration, the number of militants in the valley is lesser and as the number of militants is lesser, the number of militancy-related incidents has also seen a drop,” Gen. Naravane said.

“But there will always be elements who will try to sabotage the process of peace and development. We will have to cater for that. We have a strong counter-militancy and counter-infiltration grid in Jammu and Kashmir and our operations to that end to ensure peace and tranquillity will continue,” he added.

The Army Chief said there were certain incidents of violence like firing at some state forces’ picket or gunning down of some person.

“These kinds of incidents do continue. But overall, the sharp drop in all

parameters of violence clearly indicates that the general population in Kashmir is all for peace and development,” he said.

Going forward, the Army Chief said there is a need to focus more on creating conditions that are conducive to peace and development.

Asked about the possible impact on India of the US troops withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban increasing its influence in that country, Gen. Naravane declined to give a direct reply, saying the American drawdown is still underway.

“So in that front, we will have to wait and watch to see how it unfolds and how it impacts us,” he said.

Asked about the recent drone attack on the Jammu Air Force station, he said, “I am sure that there would be some inimical elements who would not like peace to prevail in the Valley.”

“Post the ceasefire, all the parameters of violence have dropped. So there was definitely a linkage between the support that the militants got from across the border and the levels of violence in the Kashmir valley,” the Army Chief added.

Pakistan has been making concerted efforts to internationalise the Kashmir issue. The neighbouring country stepped up an anti-India campaign after New Delhi announced in August 2019 its decision to withdraw the special powers of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcated the state into Union territories.

India has told Pakistan that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Islamabad in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence. The country has said the onus is on Pakistan to create such an environment.

‘Developing Capabilities

aware of the challenges and certain measures have already been put in place to deal with them. “We are developing capabilities to deal with the threats whether they are state-sponsored or by states themselves. We are developing capabilities to deal with drone threats both in the kinetic and non-kinetic realm,” he said.

Gen Naravane was asked about the recent drone attack on Jammu Force Station.

On the situation along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, the Army chief said there has been no infiltration along the LoC after a ceasefire understanding was reached between Indian and Pakistani militaries in February.

Since there is no infiltration, the number of militants in Kashmir is lesser and so the number of militancy-related incidents also came down, he said.

“There will always be elements who will try to sabotage the process of peace and development; we have to cater for that,” he said without elaborating.

“We have a strong counter-militancy and counter-infiltration grid in Jammu and Kashmir and our operation to ensure peace and tranquillity will continue,” he said. (PTI)

Police Asks

possession and use and transport of the flying machines.

An order issued by District Magistrate, Rajouri, Rajesh Kumar Shavan also directed those having drones or like objects in their possession to deposit the same with the local police station.

We received a call from the police administration asking to submit the complete list of our members who are operating drones to cover wedding functions, General Secretary of Photographers’ Union, Jammu, Pradeep Kumar told PTI.

He said they have provided the list to the officer concerned and assured full cooperation of their Union to the administration.

He said the camera-fitted drones have become an essential part of the wedding planners ever since the government allowed their commercial use in December 2018.

The trend of using drones to take memorable aerial wedding shots was picking up with each passing day but the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March last year played a spoilsport and marred the wedding seasons, Kumar said.

He said they have suffered huge losses due to the pandemic which forced lockdowns and also restricted the number of guests at the weddings to a limited number ranging between 25 and 100. Many weddings were also cancelled.

Kumar said though they are worried about their business, they are also concerned over the misuse of drones by Pakistan-based militants.

We are worried about our business but we cannot compromise on national security. The attack on the IAF station posed a major challenge to the security of the country and we are ready to make any sacrifice even if it means a complete ban on the use of drones in weddings, he said.

He said 39 members of the union have invested lakhs of rupees in procuring high-definition cameras along with drones.

Supporting Kumar, president of the Photographers’ Union Kapil Kapoor said If our country is safe, we are safe and can do our business.

However, he said they are hopeful that the government would take a decision which would be beneficial for both, the national security as well as the photographers who have suffered huge losses over the past couple of years.

We mostly shoot the wedding ceremonies through drones at banquet halls. We will follow the decision of the government religiously, Kapoor said.

In December 2018, the Civil Aviation Ministry allowed commercial use of drones in accordance with a new policy and, subsequently, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) released a set of regulations and do's and don'ts for flying any type of drones in the country, including those for wedding photography.

Nano drone, which does not weigh more than 250 grams, were exempted from obtaining a Unique Identification Number (UIN) and Unmanned Aircraft

Operator Permit (UAOP) but the owners of such drones were directed to follow certain rules like flying the machine only within 50 feet above the ground level, not flying in a controlled airspace (where Air Traffic control or ATC services are provided) and no other manned or unmanned aircraft is flying nearby.

Almost all the drones available with our members are Nano drones. We are eagerly waiting for the government to take a call and will ensure full cooperation, Kumar said.

J&K Sees More

cases, officials said, 196 were reported from Kashmir Valley and remaining 102 from Jammu division.

Giving district-wise details, the officials said that Srinagar reported 60, Baramulla 19, Budgam 20, Pulwama 9, Kupwara 17, Anantnag 30, Bandipora 4, Ganderbal 13, Kulgam 24, Jammu 7, Udhampur 7, Rajouri 7, Doda 9, Kathua 2, Samba 23, Kishtwar 16, Poonch 14, Ramban 8 and Reasi 9 new cases of Covid-19.

Shopian district in south Kashmir reported no case of Covid-19 on Thursday.

Regarding the fatalities, officials said, two deaths each were reported from Kashmir and Jammu, taking the overall fatality count to 4327.

Mughal, Sinthan

today, we have decided that from the coming Monday i.e. 5th July, Mughal Road and Sinthan Road, will be opened for common public. The opening of these two roads will not only increase the convenience of people, but will also provide a thrust to the overall economy of Jammu and Kashmir, added the Lt Governor.

We have issued necessary instructions to provide succor to the people facing difficulties in this regard. People of Rajouri and Poonch will now be able to travel to Srinagar conveniently. Similarly, people of Doda and Kishtwar will be able to come to Kashmir Division through the Sinthan top route, the Lt Governor maintained.

We had decided this long ago, but in view of the corona pandemic, the decision had to be postponed for a few days. Necessary instructions have been issued to the administration. Requisite arrangements will be made for checking the vehicles at various places. I hope the common citizens will take advantage of this new development and I also appeal to them to cooperate in ensuring the safety, besides moving conveniently, said the Lt Governor.

Govt Allots

time adopted a strategy of ranking on the basis of different parameters of the Project Report and presentations,” he said.

“The Committee decided to keep 8 projects pending on the basis of huge requirement of power for operation with less employment potential and also due to restriction on setting up of Red category units in Industrial Area Ghatti, Kathua,” he said.

The meeting, he said, was also informed that proposals with a projected investment of Rs 10,000 crore and employment potential of approximately 34,000 persons in Jammu and about Rs 10,000 crore and employment potential of approximately 50,000 persons in Kashmir are under the process of being approved.

“Therefore, Projects worth 20,000 Cr employing 84,000 (Approx.) persons in J&K are in the process of being approved,” he said.

The official spokesperson further said that the Principal Secretary termed it a historical moment in the industrial development of Jammu and Kashmir. Thakur, he said, highlighted that the process of land allotment has been streamlined and is transparent.

The applications are received round the clock on the Single Window Portal www.investj.in making it an ongoing process.

Earlier, he said, Anoo Malhotra, Director Industries and Commerce Jammu (Member Secretary, High Level Land Allotment Committee) presented the cases before the Committee and expressed optimism that the decisions in the meeting usher in new era of growth, industrialisation and employment generation in J&K besides promoting a culture of entrepreneurship.

B M Sharma, Member Secretary, J&K PCC, Dr. Tahir Firdous, Additional Secretary, PDD, Ved Prakash, Joint Director, I&C Department, Rattan Dogra Chairman, F&I and other officers of Industries & Commerce Department, SIDCO and SICOP attended the meeting.

LG Pitches

in the country.

“I firmly believe that speed of decision making is critical and therefore, our efforts should be to reduce delays in the implementation process, moving effectively towards building an egalitarian society. Difference will be made only with responsive, morally correct and action-oriented policies,” Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

The LG, he said, emphasized on having elements of human touch in the working of the officials and said that we all need to remember that behind every file, every single note, there are people.

“Your process cannot be mechanical; whatever you do or decide not to do in that particular moment impacts a large section of the public,” the LG said, as per official spokesperson.

“Forget about failure; let's start counting how many attempts we are making, which is completely aligned with the vision of administration. It is high time we moved away from process-based administration to performance-based administration, bringing in more efficiency in the system,” he added.

He further said that the LG congratulated JK-IMPARD and National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) for signing an MoU on the capacity building programme, giving an opportunity to 2,000 officers of J&K Administration through mid-career training program on various aspects of

good governance, on the training pattern of IAS officers.

“Team of J&K Administration is working in a participatory, responsive and transparent manner with moral values which is the foundation of good governance. Government institutions, schemes, various programmes, activities of social welfare, all these efforts can have their rightful impact only when the last person standing in the queue is being reached to with the benefits according to his need,” Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

He added that the LG laid special emphasis on taking accountable good governance to the people and said that everything has been put in public domain under JK BEAMS, EMPOWERMENT initiative, thus making J&K one of the leading States/UTs to bring such transparency in the governance process.

“Good governance powered by digital intervention should aim at making government services available online, digital literacy mission reaching every village, enabling disbursement of all subsidies directly into beneficiaries’ accounts. Today, we can proudly say that a person sitting in any Panchayat of the UT can see how much the money is allocated and utilized under the plan finalized with the participation of public representatives for the development of his village,” the LG said, as per official spokesperson.

“e-Office is one of the reformative steps taken by the Government to put an end to the Darbar Move practice in J&K, thus saving crores of rupees spent on transporting files in hundreds of trucks from Jammu to Srinagar and from vice-versa,” he added.

According to the official spokesperson, the LG congratulated the Chief Secretary of J&K and his team for implementing the rule of transparent accountability in Jammu and Kashmir. He also stressed on the need to lay a solid mechanism for reward for good work and punishment for laxity by the government officials.

The LG, he said, remarked that the Prime Minister has brought a new era in governance process through his mantra of – “Minimum Government, Maximum Governance”. On the basis of broad framework he laid for all of us and by working in different areas, we have moved forward in the direction of ‘Ek Bharat- Shreshtha Bharat’.

“From the ramparts of Red Fort in 2016, Prime Minister had said that the country is moving from self-governance to good governance. It's his model of Good Governance that we are able to save our economy, setting new milestones of progress, and reaching to the people with benefits of social welfare despite of Covid-19 challenges,” the official spokesperson quoted LG as saying.

He further said that the LG also spoke about Sardar Patel's vision and his firm belief in fairness, transparency and accountability in governance for social and economic development and nation-building.

As per the official spokesperson, the LG highlighted various innovative programmes initiated by the UT Government and said that a strong foundation has been laid through programmes like Back to Village for strengthening the concept of Jan-Bhagidari by ensuring efficiency, transparency and credibility in the governmental process.

“All 54 schemes of social welfare of the Central Government are being delivered at the doorsteps of the people. Responsibilities have been fixed for the officers, which is showing visible results on the ground,” Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

“We are putting our dedicated efforts into making all services face-less and paper-less, besides connecting every gram panchayat with high-speed broadband, enabling financial inclusion through JAM (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile) and ensuring mobile-based identity,” he added.

The LG, he said, also maintained that due to better policy and its implementation in the Sustainable Development Goals, J&K has performed well as per the SDG Index report which came out last month.

“Continuous efforts are being made in all the districts to make 100% electronic delivery of government services so that corruption can be curbed further. Citizens can send their complaints through JK-IGRAMS from any corner of the UT. Proper arrangements have been made for the redressal of these grievances. In this direction, LG Mulaqaat is another unique initiative, through which I directly communicate with the common people and try to resolve their grievances in the shortest possible time,” the LG said.

Terming the establishment of three-tier Panchayati Raj system as a cornerstone of participatory governance in J&K, the LG, as per official spokesperson said Funds, Functions and Functionaries have made available to the ULBs and PRIs for the grass-root development.

“Historic Rs. 12,600 crore District Capex Budget has been announced, keeping in mind the needs of the common people, which is more than double the last year's Budget of Rs 5134 crores,” Sinha said.

The LG, according to the official spokesperson noted the various key aspects of good governance practices are being touched during the two-day conference, and said it is important that the participants should be acquainted with the success stories of many reformative initiatives taken by the government. One of them is the launch of India Post Payments Bank which provided banking facilities to the villages.

He said Sinha also spoke about the two Districts, included amongst the 115 others from the country under Aspirational District programme.

While speaking on the occasion, the official spokesperson said that Union MoS, PMO Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the Union Government is committed to transparency and justice for all, and the people

friendly reforms taken in the last seven years have benefitted the entire country including people of Jammu and Kashmir.

“Dr. Jitendra Singh brought forth the transformational changes pursued by Government through the Mission Karmayogi, wherein capacity building of 2000 civil servants in collaboration between NCGG and IMPARD will be undertaken,” he said.

“The Union MoS complimented the government of J&K for efficient COVID management and congratulated the people of the UT for community management of the pandemic. He also announced the collaboration of DARPG with J&K Government for developing District Governance Index patterned on National Good Governance Index,” he added.

The official spokesperson further said that Sanjay Kumar Singh, Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), in his address, underscored the importance of providing all relevant information and services to the people through Digital Governance and Artificial Intelligence.

“Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K, while speaking on the occasion, highlighted the significance of maintaining sustainability in innovation and termed it critically important for delivering good governance to the people,” he added.

Meanwhile, an e-Book titled ‘Minimum Government, Maximum Governance’ (MGMG), comprising of write-ups on select Administrative Innovations was also released by the dignitaries to mark the occasion.

The Conference is being organized by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions in collaboration with the Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary, Health & Medical Education Department; RK Chhibber, Chairman, J&K Bank, Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lt Governor; Administrative Secretaries; Divisional Commissioners; Deputy Commissioners; renowned experts from different States/UTs and senior officers from Government of India and J&K Government attended the inaugural ceremony, in person and through virtual mode.

Petition Seeks

Parashar also alleged that the comments of Mufti, who heads the People's Democratic Party, could lead to a fresh spurt in militancy sponsored from across the border.

The petitioner has invoked IPC Sections 109, 110 and 111 (abetment of an offence), 120 (B) (criminal conspiracy), 124 (waging war against Government of India), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt) and 504 (insult with intent to provoke breach of peace).

He has also claimed that “mental disturbance” upon perusing reports of Mufti's comments in newspapers and on news channels had compelled him to seek “medical treatment”.

The petition is expected to be taken up for hearing in due course.

Crorepati Forest

of village Kachrial in Akhnour, at present Paloura Jammu, and Babu Ram Sharma of Pallanwala, for possessing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income which stand in his name and the name of his close friends & relatives as benami properties, an ACB spokesperson said. The case was listed for next hearing on July 26.

The chargesheet was filed after a case Fir No 32/2015 was lodged at police station vigilance organisation Jammu, now ACB under sections 5 (1) (e) r/w 5 (2) J&K PC Act Svt. 2006 and 120-B RPC against the forest guard and his family and relatives.

Giving details, the ACB spokesperson said, a case was registered on the outcome of verification, which revealed that Sharma by indulging in corrupt and illegal practices has amassed wealth disproportionate to his known sources of income as he was only a Forest Guard by profession.

“During the course of investigation it was established that the accused by indulging in corrupt and illegal practices acquired residential houses and residential flats outside union territory worth over crore of rupees. Besides this, the accused has also purchased a number of luxury vehicles, including Mahindra XUV-500, Thar Jeep, Scorpio, Mahindra Rexton, TATA Safari and commercial Volvo bus, Matador, two JCB's and two Tractors

In 4 Years, GST Has Become Colonial Taxation System: CAIT



Agencies

NEW DELHI:- On completion of four years of GST implementation in India on Thursday, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said much against the declared spirit of GST as Good & Simple Tax, the GST has become a "colonial taxation system" not compatible with the ground realities of business conducted in India and available resources with the traders.

Various amendments and introduction of Rules under GST in the recent past have made the taxation system much complicated and put more compliance burden on the traders.

It is not alone the Central government but largely the State governments are more responsible for distorting GST taxation system and bringing disparities and anomalies in GST making it a more complex system and a big headache for the traders, said CAIT.

CAIT said that even after 4 years of GST implementation in India, the GST portal is still struggling with many challenges.

The rules are amended but the portal fails to update with said amendments timely. So far no National Appellate Tribunal has been constituted. No Central Advance Ruling Authority has been constituted giving a free hand to States to interpret the law in their own way distorting the fundamentals of "One Nation-One Tax".

The GST Authorities are more

interested in GST compliance but never thought that a large chunk of traders in the country are yet to adopt computerization in their existing business format and no step has been taken to equip the traders with computers, etc.

CAIT said that in the recent past, the GST Council has thrown all canons of natural justice by empowering the authorities to cancel GST Registration of any trader without giving him any notice or an opportunity of hearing. Unfettered and arbitrary powers are given to officers without realizing the misuse of such powers which may lead to corruption.

"The GST law has been greatly distorted by the authorities which is evident from the fact that since the date of GST implementation till 31st May, more than thousand notifications have been issued and interestingly the traders have not been allowed to rectify their returns even for once. In such a situation how can we expect traders for timely compliance of the taxation system."

At the 4-year mark, only 45 per cent citizens give thumbs up to the transition to GST, 29 per cent unhappy with it, a survey by Local Circles said.

The survey sought to know how as consumers' would rate the 4 years of GST in India. In response, 15 per cent said "excellent", 30 per cent said "good", and 16 per cent said "average".

Breaking down the poll, 9 per cent of consumers rate the 4 years of GST as "below average", 20 per cent said "poor", and 7 per cent said it made no difference to them, while 3 per cent did not have an opinion. On an aggregate basis, only 45 per cent of consumers gave thumbs up to the transition to GST, while 29 per cent are unhappy with it

'This Decade Will Be India's Techade': Modi Touts Data, Demographic Dividend

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

PPrime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that the data and demographic dividend combined with India's proven tech prowess presents a massive opportunity for the country, and exuded confidence that this decade will be 'India's techade'.

Speaking at a virtual event to mark the completion of six years of Digital India, Modi said India is also conscious of its responsibilities as a data powerhouse and noted that work is under way on all aspects of data protection.

"Data and demographic dividend present a massive opportunity for India... together, we will be successful in making this decade 'India's techade'," Modi said.

Modi also spoke—via video-conference—to beneficiaries of various schemes of Digital India programme, including Diksha,



eNAM, eSanjeevani solution for telemedicine, DigiBunai and PM SVANidhi scheme.

Modi spoke of the critical role that technology had played during the pandemic to ensure continuity of education, access to healthcare and other citizen services.

Digital solutions created by India during COVID-19 pandemic are being acknowledged globally, he said adding that the contact-tracing app, Aarogya Setu, has played a key role in containing the spread of COVID-19 in the country.

Six years of Digital India programme marks rapid strides that the country has taken in adoption of technology, he said.

"GOI Committed To Restore The Pristine Glory Of Saffron"



KO NEWS DESK

PULWAMA:-- Additional Secretary Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare Government of India, Vivek Agrawal started his five days visit to Valley by visiting State of an Art Laboratory Cum e-auction platform for Saffron, at India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre(IKSTC) Dussoo Pampore.

Additional Secretary inspected various facilities at the centre which included Stigma Separation, Cold Storage Unit, Hi-tech Quality Control Lab, Drying Section, Packaging Section and e-auctioning platform. He was briefed by Director Agriculture Kashmir about various facilities for preserving, grading, and marketing of saffron.

During the visit of e-auctioning centre, he was apprised by Director Agriculture that the e-

auctioning provides a sufficient platform to the saffron growers for getting optimum returns of their yield which ultimately boost the economy of the area.

Vivek Agrawal said that IKSTC establishment will play as a game changer in reviewing the traditional saffron sector. He complimented the Department for achieving NABL accreditation and GI for Kashmir Saffron and added that it will go a long way in promoting the saffron trade as buyers will get assurance regarding the quality of produce.

He said that the establishment of IKSTC shows the commitment of Government of India to restore the pristine glory of saffron. He said growers of Valley and buyers across India should utilize the services of this Hi-tech facility to earn more profit of their produce and that too from their door step.

Later Additional Secretary held a detailed interactive session with the progressive saffron growers of the area and assured them that GoI will provide all sorts of assistance and support in uplifting the saffron sector.

On the occasion, Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal gave a detailed overview of the functioning and services provided by IKSTC to the Saffron growers. He also highlighted the importance of ambitious National Saffron Mission. He said that the centre has introduced e-auctioning platform for the saffron growers where they could trade virtually on national as well as international platforms.

During the visit Director General Horticulture, Joint Director Agriculture Extension Kashmir M.Qasim Gani senior officers of the Department were also present on the occasion.

VIVEK AGRAWAL SAID THAT IKSTC ESTABLISHMENT will play as a game changer in reviewing the traditional saffron sector. He complimented the Department for achieving NABL accreditation and GI for Kashmir Saffron and added that it will go a long way in promoting the saffron trade as buyers will get assurance regarding the quality of produce.

Petrol Pump Alleged of Selling Adulterated Fuel Seized in Budgam

Agencies

BUDGAM: A petrol pump in Central Kashmir's Chadura area of Budgam has been found selling adulterated petrol and diesel.

The pump in question, named "Bhat Filling Station", located in Gowharpora area was accused by some drivers of selling petrol mixed with kerosene and water.

This issue created a ruckus inside the petrol pump following which a crowd gathered in front of the filling station, and the police were called in.

Officials from police and civil administration rushed to the spot to pacify the protesters who had blocked the road de-



manding stern action against the owner of the fuel station.

On the insistence of the people, the petrol pump was sealed. SDM Chadura, Prince Hameed told news agency Kashmir News

WE HAD RECEIVED COMPLAINTS THAT WATER WAS BEING mixed in petrol and diesel at the pump. We sent a team to investigate the matter. After collecting samples, the petrol pump has been sealed,"

Nirav Modi's Sister Sends Rs 17.25 Crore From UK Account To Indian Govt: ED

Agencies

NEW DELHI:- The ED on Thursday said fugitive businessman Nirav Modi's sister has "remitted" over Rs 17 crore from a UK bank account to that of the Indian government after she was allowed pardon from criminal proceedings in lieu of extending help in the PNB loan fraud case.

"On June 24, Purvi Modi intimated Enforcement Directorate that she had received the knowledge of one bank account in London, United Kingdom in her name, which was opened at the behest of her brother Nirav Modi and that the funds did not belong to her."

"As Purvi Modi was allowed tender of pardon on conditions of making full and true disclosure, she remitted an amount of USD 2316889.03 from her UK bank account to the bank account of the government of India, Directorate of Enforce-



ment," the central probe agency said in a statement.

With the cooperation of Purvi Modi, it said, the ED has been able to recover about Rs 17.25 crore (USD 2316889.03) from the proceeds of crime, it said.

Nirav Modi is presently lodged in a UK jail and has lost his extradition plea to India in connection with the alleged USD 2 billion loan fraud at the Brady House branch of Punjab National Bank (PNB) in Mumbai.

LPG Cylinders To Be Dearer By Rs 25.50 From Today



Agencies

The price of domestic LPG cylinder with subsidy has been hiked by Rs 25.50 per cylinder with effect from Thursday. As a result, domestic cylinders weighing 14.2 kg will now cost Rs 834.50 in Delhi and Mumbai. In Chennai, the price is now Rs 850.5 for a cylinder. In Kolkata, the rate is Rs 835.5.

The price of a 19-kg cylinder has also been increased by Rs 76 and will cost Rs 1,550 in Delhi.

With the current revision, LPG

cylinder (14.2 kg) prices have risen by Rs 140 in the last six months. The price remained unchanged in June.

In February, LPG prices were revised thrice — Rs 25 hike per cylinder on February 4, a Rs 50 per cylinder hike on February 15 and another hike of Rs 25 on February 25. In March, the price was again hiked by Rs 25 while in April, there was a Rs 125 rise in LPG price. Then a price cut of Rs 10 was announced as international oil prices saw a dip.

The price hike comes as a double whammy for Indian consumers at a time when petrol and diesel prices have breached Rs 100 per litre mark and are at an all-time high.

LPG prices are generally revised at the beginning of every month.

Tour Operators Demand Generalization Of Loan Package Announced By FM

Agencies

SRINAGAR: After the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on 28th June announced the loan package for a section of stakeholders associated with the tourism industry, valley based tour operators welcoming the loan package demanded the package should be generalised for all tour operators and tourist guides.

Manzoor Ahmed Pakthoon a senior member of United Tourism Forum (UTF), an amalgam of valley based tour operators, told news agency, said that though it is a much needed decision taken by the government, "the question is how much the valley based tour operators and tourist guides are going to get the help of it, as the package has been kept for those who are recognized by Ministry of Tourism."

"The package should be gener-

alised for all so that every stakeholder gets benefit out of it. Our industry has been struggling and unless there isn't any assistance the survival of our industry is very difficult," he said.

He further said, "there was a meeting in this regard, and in the coming days, we will approach the top authorities in the administration so that the loan package is generalised for all tour operators and tourist guides."

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on 28th June had announced financial support to more than 11,000 registered tourist guides/travel and tourism stakeholders, under new loan guarantee scheme for COVID affected sectors, under which working capital/personal loans will be provided to people in tourism sector to discharge liabilities and restart businesses impacted due to COVID-19.

HDFC Bank's 'Salaam Dil Sey' Initiative To Pay Tribute To Doctors

MUMBAI: HDFC Bank launched a SalaamDilSey initiative to show gratitude to doctors for their tireless service during the pandemic, to pay tribute to doctors across the country.

Launched on June 23, SalaamDilSey encourages one and all to take a moment to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution of doctors and provides a platform to show their gratitude to doctors, who are bravely fighting the pandemic, at the risk of their own lives.

As part of this initiative, the bank has created a web platform www.salaamdilsey.com wherein general public can logon on to the microsite and share the thank you message for doctors which can be immediately shared via e-mail, social media, and WhatsApp.

As a token of thanks from the bank to all doctors across the country, the bank virtually felicitated Padma Bhushan



THE YEAR GONE BY HAS BEEN tougher for doctors, who have been working tirelessly, round the clock. There's no better time than the National Doctors' Day, to join one and all, and say a big Thank you to all doctors across the length and breadth of the country."

Dr Naresh Trehan, a renowned Cardiovascular and Cardiothoracic surgeon.

On National Doctors' Day, the bank will unveil 'Wall of Dedication' — set up on the façade of HDFC

Bank's Corporate Office in Worli — where a collage of thank you messages for doctors from across the country will be displayed.

On the occasion, the bank also released an anthem — A Musical Tribute — to doctors, featuring bank staff from remotest locations across the country.

"With #SalaamDilSey, we are expressing our profound gratitude to doctors, who have been resolutely leading the fight against the pandemic, at the risk of their own lives," says Ms. Smita Bhagat, Group Head — Government, Institutional Business, BC Partnerships, Inclusive Banking & Start-ups, HDFC Bank. "The year gone by has been tougher for doctors, who have been working tirelessly, round the clock. There's no better time than the National Doctors' Day, to join one and all, and say a big Thank you to all doctors across the length and breadth of the country."

LIC launches LIC's Saral Pension

NEW DELHI:- Life Insurance Corporation of India has introduced LIC's Saral Pension with effect from 1st July, 2021 which is a Non-Linked, Non-Participating, Single Premium, Individual Immediate Annuity Plan.

This is a Standard Immediate Annuity plan as per the guidelines of Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), which offers same terms and conditions across all the life insurers.

The Policyholder has an option to choose type of annuity from two available options on payment of a lump sum amount.

Option 1: Life Annuity with Return of 100% of Purchase Price.

Option 2: Joint Life Last survivor annuity with Return of 100% of Purchase Price on death of the last Survivor.

The Annuity rates are guaranteed at the inception of the policy and annuities are pay-



able throughout the life time of Annuitant(s).

This plan can be purchased offline as well as online directly through website www.licindia.in.

The minimum Annuity is Rs.12,000 per annum. The Minimum Purchase Price shall depend on the Annuity mode, Option chosen and Age of the Annuitant. There is no ceiling

on Maximum Purchase Price.

The modes of Annuity available are yearly, half-yearly, quarterly, and monthly. An Incentive for Purchase price above Rs 5,00,000/- is available by way of increase in the annuity rate. The plan is available for ages from 40 yrs to 85 yrs.

Loan shall be available at any time after six months from the date of commencement of the policy.

Amid Row Over COVID 'Green Pass', 9 EU Nations Clear Covishield

Agenceis

Nine European nations are accepting Covishield vaccines for travel to their countries, sources said on Thursday.

Austria, Germany, Slovenia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland and Spain are among the countries allowing travel by people who have taken Covishield vaccines, the sources said.

They said Switzerland is also accepting Covishield as a Schengen state. Separately, Estonia has confirmed that it will recognise all vaccines authorised by the government of India for the travel of Indians to that country, the sources said.

India has already asked the EU member countries to individually consider allowing Indians who have taken Covishield and Covaxin vaccines and want to travel to Europe.

The European Union's Digital Covid certificate or "Green Pass" is coming into effect on Thursday with an aim to facilitate free movement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under this framework, persons who have taken vaccines authorised by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) will be exempted from travel restrictions within the EU region.

The individual member states have the flexibility to also accept vaccines that have been authorised at the national level or those recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

There have been apprehensions in India that people who took Co-



vishield and Covaxin jabs are unlikely to be eligible to travel to the European Union member states under its 'Green Pass' scheme.

The EU Digital Covid certificate or 'Green Pass' will be mandatory to travel to European countries and the document will serve as proof that a person is vaccinated against COVID-19.

An EU official on Tuesday said individual member states of the European Union will have the option to accept vaccines authorised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) like Covishield for obtaining the bloc's digital Covid certificate.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday took up the issue of inclusion of Covishield in the EU digital Covid certificate scheme during a meeting with Josep Borrell Fontelles, the High Representative of the European Union.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of a G20 meeting in Italy.

Kidnapper Cannot Be Sentenced For Life If Victim Is Treated Well And Not Assaulted: Supreme Court



Agenceis

If an abducted person is not assaulted or threatened to be killed and treated well, then the kidnapper cannot be sentenced to life imprisonment under Section 364A of Indian Penal Code, the Supreme Court has said.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and R Subhash Reddy made the observation while setting aside the conviction of an auto driver in Telangana who had kidnapped a minor and demanded a ransom of Rs 2 lakh from his father.

The top court said that there are three essential ingredients to convict an accused under Section 364A (kidnapping for ransom) which need to be proved by prosecution.

It said the three essential ingredients are -- kidnapping or abduction of any person or keeping him in detention; threatening to cause death or hurt to such person, or the kidnapper's conduct gives rise to a reasonable apprehension that victim may be put to death or hurt in order to compel the Government, foreign State or any Governmental organization or any other person to pay a ransom.

Referring to the punishment of life or death sentence provided for convictions under Section 364A, the top court said, "In addition to the first condition either condition (ii) or (iii) has to be proved, failing which conviction under Section 364A cannot be sustained." The top court was hearing an appeal filed by Telangana resident Shaik Ahmed challenging a high court order.

The high court had dismissed his plea against conviction and sentence of life imprisonment under section 364 A of the IPC.

Ahmed, an auto driver had kidnapped a Class 6 student of St Mary's High School on the pretext of dropping him home.

The child was rescued by police when the child's father went to pay the ransom. The child, who was 13 years old at the time of incident in 2011, and his father had told the lower court that Ahmed never threatened to kill or harm the boy. The top court set aside the conviction under section 364 A of the IPC.

"From the evidence on record regarding kidnapping, it is proved that accused had kidnapped the victim for ransom, demand of ransom was also proved. Even though offence under Section 364A has not been proved beyond reasonable doubt but the offence of kidnapping has been fully established to which effect the learned Sessions Judge has recorded a categorical finding.

"The offence of kidnapping having been proved, the appellant deserves to be convicted under Section 363(Punishment for kidnapping). Section 363 provides for punishment which is imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years and shall also be liable to fine," the bench said.

The apex court said that it is satisfied that the appellant deserves to be sentenced with imprisonment of seven years and also liable to pay fine of Rs 5,000.

Third-Wave May Not Come If Covid Norms Are Followed: AIIMS Director

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NEW DELHI: If people are careful and India is able to vaccinate a large number of population, then the third wave of COVID-19 pandemic may not even come, said All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Director Dr Randeep Guleria on Thursday.

"That depends on how we behave, if we are careful and we have good vaccination coverage, then the third wave may not come, or it will be very little," Dr Guleria told ANI while talking about the third wave of COVID-19.

Sharing his view on the mixing of vaccines, the AIIMS director said, "More data is needed on the mixing of doses. Studies have come which says that it may be effective but with more than usual side effects. We need more data before we can say that this is a policy that



should be tried."

Talking about the active number of COVID-19 cases in the country, Dr Guleria suggested that there are some areas where case positivity is high and needs to be aggressively addressed so as to contain the spread furthermore.

"Cases are reducing but there are some areas where case positivity is still high, we need to address the issue aggressively in those areas. They should not become hotspots, leading to the spread of the virus in other areas," he added.

Centre Ready To Talk To Protesting Farmers, But Not On Repeal Of Three Agri Laws: Tomar

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Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Thursday asserted that the three central agriculture laws would bring revolutionary changes in the lives of farmers, and made it clear that the government was ready to hold talks with the protesting cultivators, except on the demand of the repeal of these laws.

He also claimed that most parts of the country, most of the unions as well as farmers support these laws.

His statement comes a day after BJP workers and anti-farm law protesters clashed in Ghazipur on the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border, in which some people from both sides suffered injuries.

We have told the Kisan Union that we are ready to talk on any of their proposal, barring the repeal (of these laws), Tomar told reporters after inaugurating a hostel at an agriculture university here.

He was replying to question that the agitators were firm on their demand of repealing the three laws.

The farms laws are going to bring in revolutionary changes



in the lives of farmers. They were brought in after a 30-year exercise by agriculture experts, he said.

The state government and the Centre had taken efforts in this direction, and as a result, these farm reforms bills came into existence under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he added.

Most parts of the country, most of the unions, most of the farmers are in support of the bills. The government had held a series of talks with those opposing them, he said.

However, Tomar did not re-

spond to a question over an allegation that BJP workers reached the protest site carrying swords.

Farmers have been camping at Delhi's borders since November 2020 with their demands that the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020 and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020 be rolled back and a new law made to guarantee minimum support price for crops.

Birthday Cake Helps Madhya Pradesh Brothers Escape Leopard

Agenceis

New Delhi: Two brothers pulled off a sweet escape from a leopard in Madhya Pradesh by throwing a birthday cake at the animal as it chased them while they rode a motorbike, officials said Thursday.

"Your first instinct when you sense danger is to do whatever you can to save yourself. That's what they did," a forest official told AFP.

"They had a cake with them and they threw it at the leopard."

According to the Times of India, Firoz and Sabir Mansuri were heading at dusk to a birthday party for Firoz's son in Madhya Pradesh's Burhanpur when the leopard burst out of a sugarcane field.

They accelerated but the big cat gained on them on the muddy path, leaving Sabir, riding pillion, no other option than to lob the box containing the cake at the predator.

Hit by the "weapon of sweet distraction", the flummoxed feline



gave up its chase and darted back into the fields -- and without even trying the cake, the paper said.

"The leopard followed us for over 500 metres (yards). We narrowly escaped death," it quoted Sabir as saying.

Leopard numbers in India grew more than 60 percent between 2014 and 2018 to almost 13,000, according to the government, with the highest numbers in Madhya

Pradesh.

They are less scared than tigers of people and often enter villages and even towns.

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Attacks on adults are rare but children are more at risk. Last month a leopard snatched a four-year-old girl from her garden in Kashmir. Her mutilated body was found the next day.

Muslims Should Know BJP Came To Power Due To Congress: Kumaraswamy

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Former Karnataka Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy | Bhanu Prakash Chandra

Former Karnataka Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Thursday asked Muslims to "re-align" that the BJP came to power in Karnataka due to the Congress.

He claimed that the Congress will never come to power again and "the future is of regional parties", citing the "decline" of national parties in the recently concluded assembly elections in five states including West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.



"If the BJP is in power in Karnataka at present, it's because of the Congress. My Muslim brethren should understand this. If BJP came to power in the state, it is not because of JD(S)," Kumaraswamy, the JD(S) second-in-command, said.

He was speaking at the party office JP Bhavan here at an event to welcome political workers led by a local leader Kadar Sheikh from Hanagal in north Karnataka into his party fold.

Hanagal assembly constituency is vacant following the death of six-time BJP MLA and former minister C M Udas.

The JD(S) leader said, "Congress does not have strength to come to power independently.

Our Muslim brethren in the state should understand this fact, or else you will continue to receive blows throughout."

He claimed that the Congress got majority in 2013 because the BJP split into three -- One was the BJP, the other two were the breakaway groups led by Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa and minister B Sriramulu.

He ridiculed the alleged internal strife in the Congress over who should be the next Chief Minister in the event of the party coming to power.

"There is an internal fight going on in the Congress over who should be the next Chief Minis-

ter when the elections are two years away. They are so desperate to come to power that they can't even wait for two years. They have begun stitching their suits thinking that they have already come to power," Kumaraswamy said.

Welcoming Kadar Sheikh, he said people from Hanagal joining JD(S) is an indication that the constituency will become "our gateway" to victory in north Karnataka in 2023 Assembly elections.

The former Chief Minister underlined that every constituency is important for the JD(S) in Karnataka and his party intended to expand its reach and become a strong regional party by making its presence felt across the state.

UK Opens New Post-Study Work Visa Route For International Students

LONDON: The UK Home Office on Thursday formally opened its new post-study work visa for international students, which would offer overseas graduates from India and other destinations the option to apply for the right to stay on for job experience at the end of their university courses.

The Graduate route visa, announced last year by UK Home Secretary Priti Patel, is now open for applications from this week and is expected to particularly benefit Indian students, who are known to choose their degree courses based on the prospect of work experience.

The Graduate route is designed for international graduates who have been awarded their degree from a recognised UK university to stay on and look for work for at least two years.

"To put it into some context, last year more than 56,000 Indian nationals were granted a student visa, that's a 13 per cent increase on the previous year, and that is almost now a quarter of all student visas issued by the UK," Patel told PTI.

"When you think about those numbers, think about the totality in terms of how this route will benefit India, it's a very, very big move. And, we will continue to work with the various academic institutions on making this route viable," she said.

For the new route, international graduates must have completed an eligible course at a UK higher education provider with a track record of compliance with the government's immigration requirements.

It is unsponsored, meaning applicants do not need a job offer to apply and crucially they can use a two-year period to stay on and look for a job. There are no minimum salary requirements or caps on numbers, allowing graduates on the route to work flexibly, switch jobs and develop their career as required.

"As we build back better, it is vital that the UK continues to be a beacon for talented young people across the globe who want to make a difference. The new Graduate route does just that, giving the best and brightest graduates the opportunity to continue contributing to the UK's prosperity and the freedom to kickstart their careers in the UK," said Patel.

A coronavirus concession on the date by which students must enter the UK to qualify for the route, if they started courses in 2020 and are unable to travel due to the pandemic, was re-

cently extended.

Applicants who began their studies in autumn 2020 or in spring 2021 will need to be in the UK on a student visa by September 27 this year. Students beginning their course later this year or early next year will need to be in the UK by April 6, 2022.

This has been welcomed by Indian student groups in the UK, concerned about India's categorisation under the red list of countries from where travel currently remains banned, making it compulsory for Indian students to quarantine at considerably additional expense.

"Many other countries do not offer that microcosm, foundation of diaspora community, natural heritage, all the cultural links, all the values that we share between our two countries. That puts us in a very strong position, both for Indian students coming here and securing their future opportunities in the workplace," Patel said.

The new route, part of the post-Brexit points-based immigration system, is pegged as part of the UK's Global Britain message of attracting the best talent from around the world and covers all parts of the United Kingdom.

"International students are a vital part of our society, and those who graduate from our world-leading universities should have the opportunity to stay and build meaningful careers here in the UK," said Universities Minister Michelle Donelan.

"That is why we are introducing this new route for international graduates, enabling British businesses to attract and retain some of the brightest, most talented graduates across the globe, and helping this nation build back better from the pandemic," she said.

Anne Marie Graham, Chief Executive of UK Council for International Student Affairs, said: "We know that employability is a priority for international students coming to study in the UK.

"International students who are able to access this route will have the flexibility to apply for work in any sector or role that fits their skills profile, including self-employment without the need for employer sponsorship."

To apply under the new Graduate route, international students must have completed an eligible course at a recognised UK higher education provider at undergraduate or higher level. Students on the route will be able to work or look for work after their studies for a maximum period of two years, or three years for Doctoral PhD students.

NEWS MAKERS

66-Year-Old UP Man To Remarry Wife 27 Years After He 'Turned Up Alive Again'

Azamgarh : Lal Bihari 'Mritak', the man who made headlines when he fought a long battle to prove he was 'alive', after being declared 'dead' in government records, is in news again.

'Mritak' is now planning to remarry his 56-year-old wife Karmi Devi because it has now 27 years since he turned up alive again. He was declared alive on June 30, 1994.

"I was reborn in government records 27 years ago. The marriage ceremony will be held in 2022, when I will turn 28 after my rebirth in government records," Lal Bihari told reporters.

Mritak has three children-two daughters and one son -- all of whom are now married.

Lal Bihari, now 66-years-old,



said that he wanted to remarry his wife and draw the attention of the

people towards the plight of the 'living dead'.

"Though I fought and won my case, not much has actually