



P5 STATE

GIRL HANGS SELF IN ANANTNAG

A 24-year-old girl was found hanging at her home in Khanpora area of Utersoo in South Kashmir's Anantnag district on Saturday evening, an official said. An official said that a girl (name withheld) was found hanging on

P6 THINK

PSGA FAILS TO GUARANTEE PUBLIC SERVICES

Jammu & Kashmir Government recently brought eighteen more services of seven departments under the ambit of J&K Public Services Guarantee Act (PSGA). The departments whose services have



P3 CITY

500-BEDDED PAEDIATRIC HOSPITAL TO BE SET-UP AT BEMINA

The Administrative Council (AC) which met under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, gave administrative approval to the construction of a



Quote!

It's not knowing what to do, it's doing what you know.

—Anthony Robbins

NEWS DIGEST

Police Solves Theft Case, 2 Held

SRINAGAR: Police on Saturday claimed to have solved a theft case by arresting two accused persons from south Kashmir's Anantnag district. According to a police spokesperson, Mohammad Jabbar Dar of Guree filed a written complaint with police claiming that some unknown thieves have stolen golden ornaments worth around Rs 2 lakh from his residential house. On the basis of complaint, he said, a case FIR No. 213/2021 under relevant sections of law was registered in Police Station Bijbehara and investigation was initiated. During the course of investigation, ● [More On P10](#)

Rs 7L Fine Recovered From SOP Violators

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Police have recovered a fine of over Rs 7 lakh from nearly 5000 people for violating coronavirus related rules and guidelines across the Kashmir Valley, a police spokesperson said Saturday. Continuing its efforts to curb the outbreak of 2nd wave of Coronavirus, Police, he said, during the last 24 hours have lodged 4 FIRs and also realized fine to the tune of Rs 7,29,300 from 4963 people throughout the Valley for violating the various guidelines and rules regarding Covid-19. "Besides, 37 shops were sealed for violating Covid norms in Kulgam," the police ● [More On P10](#)

Two Absconders Held After 28 Years

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir police Saturday arrested two absconders in Poonch district who were absconding for the last 28 years. SSP Poonch Dr Vinod Kumar said that two persons who were wanted in a case and were absconders were arrested by police. "The arrested duo were wanted for a case and were evading arrest since past 28 years," he said. He identified the accused as Muhammad Mahroof, son of Wazir Hussain, resident of Chak Banola, Mendhar and Muhammad Rafiq, son of Mir Mohammad resident of Chak Banola, Mendhar. ● [More On P10](#)

Minor Girl Slips To Death

SRINAGAR: A minor girl died after slipping into a stream in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said Saturday. A year-old girl Arifa, daughter of Shabir Muhammad slipped into a stream near her house at Gundi Kotranka Tehsil in Rajouri district, they said. "She drowned to death and her body was fished out later," the officials added.

CBI Raids 40 Places In J&K, Delhi In Arms Licence Case

Premises Of IAS Officers Shahid Choudhary, Niraj Kumar Also Searched

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The CBI on Saturday conducted searches at 40 locations in Jammu and Kashmir, and in the national capital in connection with cases related to alleged irregularities in the issuance of over 2.78 lakh arms licences to non-residents on forged documents during 2012-16, officials said. The search operation was spread across Jammu, Srinagar, Udhampur, Rajouri, Anantnag, Baramulla and Delhi at the official and residential premises of public servants, including IAS officers, around 20 gun houses among others in an ongoing investigation of a case related to arms licence racket, a CBI spokesperson said in a statement.

Premises of two IAS officers -- Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, posted as Secretary of Tribal Affairs in the Jammu and Kashmir government, and Niraj Kumar, Additional Resident Commissioner of UT in the national capital -- were searched, the officials said.

"With reference to media reports, I have to confirm that CBI did search my residence



Representation Photo

and found nothing incriminating in ongoing arms licence probe. Media friends may note the probe covers 4 years across all districts. I am fully answerable to CBI for my tenure," Choudhary tweeted.

He said oversight or procedural indiscretion in a few cases cannot be completely ruled out as these pass through several clerical stages.

"Of the 36,000 licences issued in Udhampur between 2012-16, only 1,500 odd (less than 4 per cent) issued under

my tenure," Choudhary said, adding that this number was the lowest among licences issued by all DMs.

He said he has complied with agency queries, and was committed to do so in the future as well. He added that out of 4.49 lakh arms licences issued in Jammu and Kashmir during 2012-16, only 56,000 were issued in the three districts of Reasi, Kathua and Udhampur where he served as the DM.

"This is not disproportionate. Of the ● [More On P10](#)

India Protests Pak Drone Incursions

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: India on Saturday lodged a strong protest over drone activities by Pakistan in the Jammu area during a sector commander-level meeting between the Border Security Force and the Pakistan Rangers, officials said.

"It was the first sector commander-level meeting between the two border guarding forces after the declaration of ceasefire agreement by DGMOs (in February)," a BSF spokesperson said.

The meeting was held at the request of Pakistan Rangers at the International Border (IB) in the Suchetgarh area and it was decided to re-energise instant communication between field commanders, whenever required, to resolve operational matters, the spokesperson said.

Commanders of both the border guarding forces discussed various issues with the main emphasis by the BSF delegation on Pakistani drone activities, militant activities and digging of tunnels from across the border and other issues related to border management, he said. ● [More On P10](#)

NGT Raps J&K Over Dumping Waste Into Wetlands, Wular Lake

Ask Chief Secy To Attend Next Hearing, Seek Action Plan Within One Month

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Taking a strong note of unscientific dumping of waste and encroachment around Wular Lake, Hokersar and Kreetchoo-Chandhara wetlands in Jammu and Kashmir, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has sought action plan from the Union Territory government for each of the wetland within one month for further action in a time bound manner.

In an order passed on July 22, the Principal Bench of NGT, New Delhi slammed the action taken report (ATR) submitted by the joint Committee of Jammu & Kashmir Pollution Control Board (PCB) on January 1, 2021 over the unscientific dumping of waste and encroachment of



Representation Photo

Hokersar Wetland, Wular Lake and Kreetchoo-Chandhara Wetland in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The NGT Court termed the report, which they had sought from PCB, Department of Wildlife Protection and Deputy Commissioners of Budgam, Srinagar and Bandipora, as incomplete saying it does not

serve the required purpose.

The NGT court also noted that the report submitted by the MCB has highlighted the major challenges but has not given status of remedial action for the same.

"Let an action plan in respect of each of the wetlands be prepared within one month for action in ● [More On P10](#)

3 Militants Killed In Bandipora Encounter

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Three unidentified militants were killed while an Army jawan was injured in an encounter in Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, officials said. Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Shokbaba forest in the Sumbar area of Bandipora in north Kashmir following inputs about the presence of militants there, they said. The officials said as the forces were conducting searches in the area, the militants fired upon them. The forces retaliated, ensuing an encounter in which so far three militants have been killed, they added. Srinagar-based PRO Defence Col Emron Musavi said an Army



Representation Photo

personnel suffered injuries in the gunfight. He said the injured jawan has been evacuated and is undergoing treatment.

The officials said the identity and group affiliation of the slain ultras are being ascertained.

The operation is in progress and further details are awaited, they said.

Budgam Girl's Online Anguish Makes A Case For 'Delusional' Love?

Zaid Bin Shabir

KHAN SAHIB, Budgam – Farooq Hajam's bothered body language made his despair evidently clear inside a local police station where he was summoned related to his daughter's case.

A day before sitting sullenly in the cop company, Hajam appeared in a viral video—where he was fighting his apparent anxiety—while his daughter detailed her trysts with the boy shadowing her moves, even to a city hospital where he recently created ruckus.

"Why should I marry him?" Fareeda said in the



video. "He's a loafer, a cheap and an immoral person who knows nothing except harassing women."

Almost a month before the

video surfaced on social media, Hajam's fears grew ugly on June 28—when his daughter faced daylight harassment in a bustling Budgam bazar.

Her harasser was one Imtiyaz Hajam whom she dismissed as a "delusional lover". As per the recorded testimony of the girl, the boy groped her forcefully and tried to outrage her modesty. The minute-long torment ended with some physical and mental bruises.

Based on this horrific incident, Fareeda filed an FIR with Khan Sahib Police Station.

"All this underlines the fact that girls belonging to the underprivileged backgrounds are currently beset with multiple problems in the society," said an elder of the village, who over the years ● [More On P10](#)

Imran Khan's New Election Eve Offer For Kashmir

'You Can Decide To Join Pak Or Be Independent'

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD: Departing from Pakistan's declared policy on Kashmir, Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday said that Islamabad would let the people of Kashmir decide if they want to join Pakistan or become an "independent state".

India has asserted that Jammu and Kashmir "was, is and shall forever" remain an integral part of India.

US Asks India, Pak To Resolve Bilateral Issues

India and Pakistan need to work with each other to resolve their bilateral issues, the United States has said, observing that it had always encouraged the ● [More On P10](#)

Addressing an election rally in Tarar Khla area of Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK) ahead of the polls on July 25, Khan also rejected claims by a leading Opposition leader that his government was working on a plan to make Kashmir a province of Pakistan.

The response came after Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Maryam ● [More On P10](#)

J&K Records 88 New Cases, No Deaths

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 88 fresh COVID-19 cases on Saturday, taking the tally to 3,20,491, while no new death took place in the last 24 hours, officials said.

Out of the fresh cases, 33 were from the Jammu Division and 55 from the Kashmir Division of the union territory, they said.

The officials said Srinagar recorded the highest of 27 Covid cases, followed by 11 in Doda district. The number of active cases dropped to 1,319 in the union territory, while 3,14,798 patients have recovered so far, they said.

The death toll in the union territory due to the pandemic was 4,374 as no fresh death was reported in the past 24 hours.

Meanwhile, the officials said there were ● [More On P10](#)



No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

KASHMIR
OBSERVER 2
Sunday | 25-07-2021

Kashmir Observer in association with Buddy4Study.com presents scholarships available for the meritorious students of Jammu and Kashmir

Students 2020-21: ONGC Scholarship to Meritorious General Category Students 2020-21 is an exclusive scholarship opportunity for students belonging to the marginalized sections of the society who are studying in the first year of Engineering, MBBS, MBA, or Master in Geophysics/Geology programme. The aim of this scholarship is

Prizes & Rewards: INR 48,000 per

Superintending Engineer
Procurement (KPDCL)

(Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone)
Chief Executive Officer
Dodhpathri Dev. Authority

NO:- Est/OS/DDA/296-310 Dated:- 20-07-2021

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

DIPK-5112/21

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Flood Mechanical Division, Baramulla

District Sheep Husbandry Officers

Application form for establishment of shearing unit)

<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Tehsil _____ District _____</p> <p>Mobile No _____</p> <p>Aadhar No _____</p> <p>Whether trained in machine shearing _____ to undertake machine shearing _____</p>													
<p>areas of intended installation</p> <hr/> <p>Targets of sheep shearing/season/ year to be conducted</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 40%;">Equipment details</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Cost</th> <th style="width: 40%;">Name of the authorized supplier with</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>).....</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>I).....</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>II).....</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Total cost as per proforma bill/ bills enclosed: _____</p> <p>16 digit account No _____</p> <p>Branch _____</p> <p>f beneficiary wants to avail Bank Loan (please tick:-) Yes /No _____</p> <p>If yes , name of the Bank : _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>from concerned bank Branch shall be enclosed)</p> <p>Brief business plan, indicating the site of installation etc shall be enclosed.</p>		Equipment details	Cost	Name of the authorized supplier with).....			I).....			II).....		
Equipment details	Cost	Name of the authorized supplier with											
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LG's Adv Visits City Parts To Review Development, Restoration Works

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmed Khan, Saturday visited Dastagir Sahib, Naqshband Sahib shrines and Hariparbat fort in the down-town of Srinagar city and inspected the pace of various development and restoration works undertaken by the Tourism department.

While reviewing the pace of works, the Advisor directed the officers to work in close coordination so that bottlenecks, if any, are removed and works are completed on fast track. He said that the facilities at the shrines at Dastageer Sahab, Naqshband Sahib and the temple in the Hariparbat fort should be enhanced for convenience of the devotees.

During his visit to the Peer Dastageer Sahib shrine, Advisor reviewed the progress of work on different components and directed the authorities to expedite the pace of progress on Wazu Khana.

Advisor said that the parking space at the shrine is of utmost importance and directed the officers to take immediate steps for creating

parking facilities there. He also asked the Tourism Department to explore the possibility of beautification of the shrine from the tourism point of view.

While reviewing the progress of work at Naqshband sahib shrine, Advisor directed for augmentation of facilities. He directed the officers to install high mast lights around the shrine and come up with a plan to improve and beautify the surroundings. He also enquired about the facilities being provided to the devotees like power, water, ablution facilities among other things. He passed on the spot instructions to improve the facilities on modern lines. He also directed the Director Floriculture to come up with a plan for beautification and restoration of the park at the shrine.

Later, the Advisor visited the Hari Parbat Fort and reviewed progress on development and restoration of the fort and the temple located in the fort. He directed the officers to work diligently to restore the original glory of over two centuries old Hari Parbat Fort. He gave on spot directions to complete the two phases of work within the set timelines.

SMC Launches 6R Campaign To eradicate Use Of Polythene

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Srinagar Municipal Corporation Saturday launched 6 R campaign to eradicate use of polythene in Srinagar City.

The six R's include Reduce, Re-use, Recycle, Remove, Refuse and Report. Commissioner SMC Athar Amir flagged off the drive at SK Park Lalchowk.

On this occasion he said to eradicate polythene menace from Srinagar city, SMC has relaunched an anti-polythene campaign under the name 6 R Campaign.

He added that the campaign would be extensive and sustainable with a focus on Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and to Remove polythene from day to day routine, refuse taking or stocking polythene and also to report.

He said that polythene and other single use plastics are extremely harmful to the environment and public health.

In compliance with the SWM Rules, 2016 and PWM Rules 2016 & in pursuance of various orders passed by the High Court of J&K and Ladakh there shall be complete ban on use and sale of single use plastics and polythene (as defined in the prohibited categories in Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016) in Srinagar Municipal Limits.

He said that no one shall bring polythene or single use plastics into

the Srinagar city for personal or commercial use via any of the entry points of the city and no one shall engage in sale of polythene and prohibited single use plastics in the city.

"No one shall sell goods or commodities in polythene or prohibited plastic bags. No one shall stock or hoard prohibited polythene or single use plastics. No one shall use or carry goods in bags made of prohibited polythene or single use plastic products. No restaurant or hotel or eatery or any commercial unit shall use disposable items made of single use plastic or polythene for serving food or tea etc. to the customers. No individual shall use disposable items made of single use plastics or polythene in marriages or other social or religious functions."

All commercial units including shops, hotels, restaurants, street vendors, malls, institutes, offices (government & private), public or private sector companies, schools, colleges, universities etc shall not use prohibited polythene or single use plastics for packaging or sale. There shall be penalties for violation as Rs 500 fine for use of polythene bags / prohibited single use plastics by individuals

Rs 5000 fine for use or for selling goods in polythene bags by commercial establishments/units.

Rs 10,000 fine per kilogram for carrying, stocking or selling or bulk use of polythene or other prohibited plastics.



A boy jumps into Nigeen Lake from Ashai Bagh bridge on Saturday. KO Photo Abid Bhat

500-Bedded Paediatric Hospital To Be Set-up At Bemina

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Administrative Council (AC) which met under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, gave administrative approval to the construction of a 500-bedded paediatric hospital at Bemina, Srinagar.

Once operational, the hospital will strengthen

the paediatric care facilities in Kashmir division, ease the burden of patient load on the existing tertiary level hospital, and ensure quality maternity, neonatal and paediatric care to the patients.

The project will be upgrading vital paediatric facilities on modern grounds and will be completed at an estimated cost of Rs. 114.81

crore. The new hospital will be equipped with all modern equipment for managing the high risk paediatric cases to further reduce the infant mortality rate.

It will also serve as the Centre of Excellence in Paediatric in Kashmir Division and will assist the Union territory in mitigating a possible third wave of COVID-19 pandemic.

Owner Who Donated Land For PHC 17 Years Ago Yet To Be Compensated

Agencies

Srinagar: The land donated for the construction of Public Health Centre seventeen years ago is yet to be compensated and the psoriasis patient owner of the said land is forced to move from pillar to post for getting compensation of his land.

Owner of the land Abdul Satar Bhat, a resident of Mulfaq Hazratbal said that he has donated the

land for sub Health Centre (PHC) Mulfaq Hazratbal seventeen years ago but he is yet to get compensation or employment for the same.

"I have verbally donated it and I am yet to handover legal documents to the health department, but no compensation has been paid till yet," said aggrieved Satar.

He added that the department is forcing him to

sign papers without any compensation.

"Although I am caretaker of sub-centre (PHC) Mulfaq, I am not paid even a penny for it," he said.

In order to get compensation he even met advisor Baseer Khan but nothing has been paid yet.

He appealed LG Manoj Sinha and Director Health Services Kashmir to provide him immediate compensation.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost all documents of my vehicle bearing Regd No: JK01-G- 4212. 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 RTO Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Irfan Ismail Matoo
S/o Mohd Ismail Matoo
R/o Nawa Kadal

FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my passport bearing no SG1064685623620. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in passport office srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Ruqiya khaliq dar
S/o Ab khaliq dar
R/o khankh sapor

SULT

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir

Tel:0194-2315378, Fax 0194-2479548, e-mail: ddtreg123@gmail.com.

Sub:- Application for transfer of registration certificate of Guest House "Al-Kabir Avenue" located at Rajbagh, Srinagar.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Mr. Aqib Dar S/o Mr. Mohammad Sultan Dar R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar has approached this office for transfer of registration certificate of Guest House under the name and style "Al-Kabir Avenue" located at Rajbagh, Srinagar in the registration records of this office;

Whereas, the Guest House has been registered with this Department in the name of Mr. Aqib Dar S/o Mr. Mohammad Sultan Dar R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar on 04.01.2019 vide Registration No. Reg/1228/DT/615/L8/P20 dated 04.01.2019 with 12 rooms and is renewed upto 31.03.2021;

Whereas, the registration certificate holder has requested for transfer of registration certificate in the name of the Mr. Adil Sultan Dar S/o Mr. Mohammad Sultan Dar R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar;

Whereas, "Consent to Operate" issued by the JK PCB for 17 rooms is valid upto 06/2022;

Whereas, the applicant has submitted all the requisite documents including Character Certificate of new incumbent, PAN Card, Aadhar Card, Passport, original registration certificate and affidavit for transfer of registration certificate of the said guest house;

Whereas, transfer of registration certificate for the guest house is purely for purpose of running operation management of the said guest house and does not confer any right of ownership of the guest house upon the transferees;

Now therefore, in exercise of powers conferred on me under section 39 of J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/2012, before changes are made in the registration records of this Department in respect of transfer of registration certificate of the above named guest house from Mr. Aqib Dar S/o Mr. Mohammad Sultan Dar R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar to the name of Mr. Adil Sultan Dar S/o Mr. Mohammad Sultan Dar R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar, the matter is hereby notified for information of General Public/Financial Institutions/ Banks/ Development Authorities/ PHE Department/ Electric Department that in case of any objection/s, the same should reach the office of undersigned within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objections beyond a period of 07 days will be entertained and the request of the applicant will be considered under rules, after submission of requisite documents.

Sd/-

Deputy Director Tourism,
Registration

No:Reg/1228/229/DTK
Dated: 24. 07.2021

DIPK-5172/21

DIAL-EMMA

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200



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)



HIJRI
CALENDAR

14 Zil Haj

1442

PRAYERS

FAJR 3: 58

ZUHR 12:37

ASR 5:33

Magrib 7:41

ISHA 9:16

This Day In History

- 1261 - Constantinople recaptured by Nicean forces under Alexios Strategopoulos for Emperor Michael VIII, re-establishing Byzantine Empire
- 1570 - Battle of Arday-le-Duc, Burgundy: Huguenot victory forces Charles IX of France to agree to a peace treaty that ends the Third War of Religion
- 1652 - Nikita Minin becomes patriarch of Russian Orthodox Church
- 1670 - Austrian Emperor Leopold I expels 4,000 Jews from Vienna
- 1758 - Seven Years' War: the island battery at Fortress Louisbourg in Nova Scotia is silenced and all French warships are destroyed or taken
- 1759 - British capture Fort Niagara from French (7 Years' War)
- 1799 - French-Egyptian forces under Napoleon I beat Turks at Battle of Abukir
- 1835 - Ibrahim Pasha's army attacks Jewish settlers of Hebron Palestine
- 1837 - The first commercial use of an electric telegraph successfully demonstrated by William Cooke and Charles Wheatstone between Euston and Camden Town in London
- 1848 - 1st battle at Custozza: Austrians under Radetzky beat Italian
- 1850 - Gold discovered in Oregon (Rogue River)
- 1854 - Walter Hunt is awarded the first U.S. patent for a paper shirt collar
- 1898 - 1st US troops land & occupy Puerto Rico, at Guanica Bay
- 1907 - Korea becomes a protectorate of Japan
- 1943 - Benito Mussolini dismissed as Italian Premier and arrested on the authority of King Victor Emmanuel III
- 1944 - World War II: Operation Spring - one of Canada's bloodiest days, 18,444 casualties and 5,021 killed.
- 1956 - Jordan attacks UN Palestine force
- 1957 - Monarchy in Tunisia abolished in favor of a republic
- 1981 - Voyager 2 encounters Saturn
- 1987 - USSR launches Kosmos 1870, 15-ton Earth-study satellite
- 1987 - R. Venkataraman becomes the eighth President of India
- 1990 - US Ambassador tells Iraq, US won't take sides in Iraq-Kuwait dispute
- 1994 - Jordan and Israeli end 46 year state of war (Washington, D.C.)
- 1997 - Scientists announce the first human stem cells to be cultured in a laboratory using tissue taken from aborted human embryos
- 2000 - Air France Flight 4590, a Concorde supersonic passenger jet, F-BTSC, crashes just after takeoff from Paris killing all 109 aboard and 4 on the ground.
- 2001 - Faced with declining oil prices, OPEC ministers agree to cut crude oil production quotas by about 4%, or 1 million barrels per day

From KO Archives

Cong unlikely to extend Mufti's tenure

Observer News Service

NEW DELHI - As the date draws nearer for Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed to hand over the baton to a leader from alliance partner Congress, the party today sought to put an end to all speculation by indicating that the PDP leader would not be asked to continue.

Virtually putting at rest speculation that Congress might not be willing to take over the reins of the government after three years in November as per an agreement between the two coalition partners, a senior leader said the party would suffer if it did it.

"It will not go down well in the party," the leader close to J&K affairs said when asked whether the Congress would let Sayeed continue for remaining three years of six year term as has been suggested by some reports.

When the two parties forged post-poll alliance to form government in November 2002, they had agreed that one party would lead the coalition for three years and the other for rest of the term.

Congress, with 20 MLAs in the 87-member Assembly, had then allowed junior partner PDP, with 17 MLAs, to lead the alliance in the first phase. The Deputy Chief Minister was from Congress for the first three years and from PDP for the remaining tenure.

Although some sections in the Congress are believed to be inclined to allow Sayeed to continue, the state unit of the Congress strongly disfavours any reunification move.

The state unit feels it was the much-awaited opportunity for the Congress to have its own Chief Minister and it should not be allowed to fizzle away.

On the question of whether the Congress had an appropriate leader to become Chief Minister, the party leader said there would be no problem on this count. The Congress leader, however dismissed possibility of Mohammad Shafi Qureshi or Saifuddin Soz be given the charge as had been reported in some sections of media.

The disadvantage with Soz's candidature is that he has joined the Congress only three years back after being expelled from National Conference. Qureshi also has been out of the party for a long time.

(Kashmir Observer, 25 July, 2005)

بشیر احمد بابا کی 24 ویں برسی



ہمارے خاندان کے
ہر دلعزیز جوان بشیر احمد بابا ساکنہ
خانیار سرینگر کو مورخہ 25 جولائی
1997 کو نامعلوم اسلحہ برداروں
نے موت کی ابدی نیند سلا دیا۔ اُن
کی یاد ہمارے دلوں میں ابھی بھی
تازہ ہے۔ بشیر احمد بابا کی جدائی
سے ہماری زندگی میں جو خلاء پیدا ہوا ہے اس کی بھری پائی ممکن نہیں ہے۔

ہم اُن کی 24 ویں یوم وفات پر اُنہیں خراج عقیدت پیش کرتے ہیں
اور اللہ تعالیٰ کے حضور دعا گو ہیں کہ وہ مرحوم کو کروٹ کروٹ جنت نصیب
کرے۔۔۔ آمین

المشتر

اہل خانہ و عزیزان و محبان

Afghanistan Imposes Night Curfew To Curb Taliban Advance

Agenceis

Afghanistan's government has imposed a night-time curfew across almost all of the country's 34 provinces to stem surging violence unleashed by a sweeping Taliban offensive that has seen the armed group make rapid territorial gains.

"To curb violence and limit the Taliban movements, a night curfew has been imposed in 31 provinces across the country," except in Kabul, Panjshir and Nangarhar, the interior ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

The measure will be effective between 10pm and 4am local time, Ahmad Zia Zia, deputy interior ministry spokesman, said in a separate audio statement to reporters.

Al Jazeera's James Bays, reporting from the capital, Kabul, said the reason for the curfew was "quite straightforward".

"It's been clear for many years that in contested parts of Afghanistan, the government may control things during the day, but the Taliban, very much, own the night."

"The war has come to their doors".

Fahim Sadat, the head of the international relations department at Kardan University, told Al Jazeera that "the government wants to keep an eye or restrict the movement from one region to another".

"Also, this curfew will send a message to the large population centres in urban Afghanistan that the war has come to their doors, and those segments of the society who see themselves in support of the government needs to wake up and contribute in any way that they can," he said.

Wahida Shahkar, spokeswoman for the Parwan governor's office said that so far people in Parwan have not reacted to the news, but that the policy was going to be enforced in the northern province. "So far, we've been lucky, Parwan is still much better off in terms of security than other places, but we will follow the policy in order to ensure a more secure Afghanistan."

Basir Ahmad Waqef, a journalist in the city of Kunduz, said people dismissed the news in his province as well.

"It's not positive or negative, we all just heard it on the radio and read the statement."

But he said given the security situation in the city, which he described as "surrounded in all four corners", people would likely follow the measure.

"The government is probably going to have to carry out night operations, and one way to ensure people's safety is to make sure they are at home."

The Taliban has swiftly captured territory since early May and seized strategic border crossings, as the last United States and NATO soldiers leave Afghanistan.

The US-NATO withdrawal is more than 95 percent complete and is due to be finished in weeks.

On Wednesday, top US military officer General Mark Milley told a Pentagon news conference the Taliban had "strategic momentum" and was in control of about half the countryside as it drove to cut off population centres from the West-ern-backed government in Kabul.

The group's fighters are threatening a number of the 34 provincial capitals but have yet to wrestle control of any of them.

The US, Germany and other countries have called on the Taliban to terminate the offensive.

Meanwhile, the Taliban insists there will not be peace in the country until there is a new negotiated government in Kabul and President Ashraf Ghani is removed from power.

"I want to make it clear that we do not believe in the monopoly of power because any governments who [sought] to monopolise power in Afghanistan in the past, were not successful governments," Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen told The Associated Press news agency, apparently including the Taliban's own five-year rule in that assessment.

"So we do not want to repeat that same formula," he added.

Ghani has often said he will remain in office until new elections can determine the next government.

On Friday, the White House said US President Joe Biden had authorised up to \$100m from an emergency fund to meet "unexpected urgent" refugee needs stemming from the situation in Afghanistan, including for Afghan special immigration visa applicants.

Biden also approved the release of \$200m in services and articles from the inventories of US government agencies to meet the same needs.

From China To Germany, Floods Expose Climate Vulnerability



Agenceis

Deadly floods that have upended life in both China and Germany have sent a stark reminder that climate change is making weather more extreme across the globe.

At least 56 people in the central Chinese province of Henan died so far, including a dozen trapped in a city subway as waters tore through the regional capital of Zhengzhou after days of torrential rain.

Coming after floods killed at least 180 people in Germany and another 31 in Belgium last week, the disaster has reinforced the message that significant changes will have to be made to prepare for similar events in future.

"Governments should first realize that the infrastructure they have built in the past or even recent ones are vulnerable to these extreme weather events," said Eduardo Araral, associate professor and co-director, Institute of Water Policy, at Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

In Europe, climate change is likely to increase the number of large, slow-moving storms that can linger longer in one area and deliver deluges of the kind seen in Germany and Belgium, according to a study published in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters*.

As the atmosphere warms with climate change, it also holds more

moisture, which means that when rain clouds break, more rain is released. By the end of the century, such storms could be 14 times more frequent, the researchers found in the study using computer simulations.

While the inundation that devastated wide swathes of western and southern Germany occurred thousands of kilometres from the events in Henan, both cases highlighted the vulnerability of heavily populated areas to catastrophic flooding and other natural disasters.

"You need technical measures, bolstering dikes and flood barriers. But we also need to remodel cities," said Fred Hattermann at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. He said there was increasing focus on so-called "green-adaptation" measures, like polders and plains that can be flooded, to stop water running off too fast.

"But when there's really heavy rain, all that may not help, so we have to learn to live with it," he said.

Reinforcing dikes and climate-proofing housing, roads and urban infrastructure will cost billions. But the dramatic mobile phone footage of people struggling through subways submerged in chest-deep water in Zhengzhou or crying in fear as mud and debris swept through medieval German towns made clear the cost of doing nothing.

"It is shocking and I have to say it is scary," said John Butschkowski, a Red Cross driver who was involved

in rescue work in western Germany this week. "It is ghostly, no people anywhere, just rubbish. And it is inconceivable that this is happening in Germany."

One year's rainfall in three days. Koh Tieh-Yong, a weather and climate scientist at Singapore University of Social Sciences, said an overall assessment of rivers and water systems would be needed in areas vulnerable to climate change, including cities and farmlands.

"Floods usually occur due to two factors combined: one, heavier-than-normal rainfall and two, insufficient capacity of rivers to discharge the additional rainwater collected," he said.

In both China and northwestern Europe, the disasters followed a period of unusually heavy rain, equivalent in the Chinese case to a year's rainfall being dumped in just three days, that completely overwhelmed flood defences.

After several severe floods over recent decades, buffers had been strengthened along major German rivers like the Rhine or the Elbe but last week's extreme rainfall also turned minor tributaries like the Ahr or the Swist into fearsome torrents.

In China, built-up urban areas with inadequate water evacuation and large dams that modified the natural discharge of the Yellow River basin may also have contributed to the disaster, scientists said.

Pakistan Seeks UN Probe of India's Use of Pegasus Spyware



Agenceis

According to reports, the Pakistani leader's phone number was on a list of potential surveillance targets for countries that bought the spyware.

Pakistan called on the United Nations on Friday to investigate whether India used Israeli-made Pegasus spyware to spy on public figures including Prime Minister Imran Khan.

The Pakistani leader's phone number was on a list of what an investigation by a group of 17 international media organisations and Amnesty International said were potential surveillance targets for countries that bought the spyware.

Pakistan's foreign office issued a statement accusing India of "state-sponsored, continuing and widespread surveillance and spying operations in clear breach of global norms of responsible state behaviour."

"In view of the gravity of these reports, we call on the relevant UN bodies to thoroughly investigate the matter, bring the facts to light, and hold the Indian perpetrators to account," it said.

India's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the statement.

The Indian government has already faced calls by domestic political opponents to investigate allegations of spying on officials including the main opposition leader, Rahul Gandhi. Delhi has not responded to the allegations.

The investigation published by the media organisations on Sunday said spyware made and licensed by Israeli company NSO had been used in attempted and successful hacks of 37 smartphones belonging to journalists, government officials and human rights activists.

NSO has said its product was intended only for use by vetted government intelligence and law enforcement agencies to fight terrorism and crime.

Arch-rivals and neighbours, Pakistan and India have fought two of their three wars over the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir, which both claim in full. The statement by Pakistan's foreign office said Delhi had long been using such tactics in Indian-administered Kashmir, an accusation to which India did not immediately respond.

Dubai Creates Fake Rain To Deal With Sweltering Heat



Agenceis

Dubai has been experiencing the wrath of blazing sun this summer season, with the temperature crossing 50-degree Celsius mark in the city recently.

To cool things down, UAE's Center of Meteorology has come up with a unique solution -- artificial (or fake) rains. Dubai has now been witnessing heavy downpours on its highways.

The artificial rainfall has been created using cloud seeding, according to UAE's Center of Meteorology. Through the use of innovative technology, electric shocks are given to clouds which causes them to clump together resulting

in a downpour.

The cloud seeding operations are part of an ongoing effort to generate additional rainfall in the Gulf country. Normally, UAE has an average rainfall of just four inches.

UAE had invested \$15 million in nine different rain-making projects in 2017. During cloud seeding operation, drones fire chemicals such as silver iodide into the clouds in order to cause greater rainfall. Another system, which has been trialled in UAE, uses drones to shoot electrical charges into the clouds to cause rainfall, according to The Independent.

The country's Center of Meteorology recently shared the video of artificial rains on Twitter.

Iran Leader Urges Water Protesters Not To Fall Prey To Enemy



Agenceis

TEHRAN: Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei on Friday warned residents of the drought-hit southwest not to give ammunition to the "enemy" after days of protests that have seen at least four killed.

Khuzestan, Iran's main oil-producing region and the wealthiest of the country's 31 provinces, has been gripped by drought since March, with protests erupting in several towns and cities since July 15.

Addressing residents of Khuzestan, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "The people have expressed their discontent, but we can't criticise them for that. The water problem is not a minor one, particularly in Khuzestan's hot climate."

Ayatollah Khamenei stated that he had repeatedly notified officials before about the need to address the water issue in Khuzestan.

"If those recommendations had been taken into account, the current situation would certainly have not arisen. It is painful to see that the loyal people of Khuzestan, in spite of all their facilities, natural potentials and factories in the province, are dissatisfied and upset."

Describing the problem as "one of the really painful worries" Ayatollah Khamenei however urged people to be cautious.

"The enemy will try to use any tool against the revolution, the nation and the people's interests, so we must be careful not to give him any pretext," Ayatollah said. Iranian media and officials have said at least three people have been killed, including a police officer and a protester, accusing "opportunists" and "rioters" of shooting at demonstrators and security forces.

State television said on Friday that a fourth person was killed the previous night and two wounded during

"rioting" in the town of Aligudarz, in the western province of Lorestan.

It said people had taken to the streets "on the pretext of the water problems in Khuzestan".

"Shots were fired by unknown elements," the broadcaster said, adding that the security forces were deployed to tackle the situation.

It was the first time local media had reported protests or casualties outside Khuzestan since the water protests broke out last week.

Farsi-language media based abroad have broadcast videos they said were of protests in several towns and cities in Khuzestan, showing hundreds of people marching and chanting slogans against the authorities while surrounded by anti-riot police.

Authenticity of the videos could not be independently verified.

Global rights watchdogs Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch meanwhile alleged that Iranian security forces have used "unlawful and excessive force" to quell the protests in Khuzestan.

UN rights chief Michelle Bachet on Friday told Iran to address the chronic water shortage in the province instead of cracking down on protesters.

"Shooting and arresting people will simply add to the anger and desperation," she said, adding that the "catastrophic" situation had been building up for many years.

The day before, President Hassan Rouhani said in a televised speech that residents of Khuzestan had "the right to speak, express themselves, protest and even take to the streets, within the framework of the regulations".

Admiral Ali Shamkhani, secretary-general of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said the security forces had been ordered "to immediately release those detained during the recent incidents in Khuzestan who had not committed a criminal act".

"Phenomenal Heat" And Other Climate Mysteries Are Puzzling Scientists

Agenceis

PARIS: What worries one of the world's leading climate scientists the most?

Heatwaves -- and particularly the tendency of current models to underestimate the intensity of these bursts of deadly, searing temperature.

This is one of the "major mysteries" science still has to unravel, climatologist Robert Vautard told AFP, even as researchers are able to pinpoint with increasing accuracy exactly how human fossil fuel pollution is warming the planet and altering the climate.

"Today we have better climate projection models, and longer observations with a much clearer signal of climate change," said Vautard, one of the authors of an upcoming assessment by the United Nations' panel of climate experts.

"It was already clear, but it is even clearer and more indisputable today."

The assessment, the first part of a trio of reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), will be released on August 9 at the end of meetings starting Monday.

It focuses on the science underpinning our understanding of things like temperature increases, rising ocean levels and extreme weather events.

This has progressed considerably since the last assessment in 2014, but so has climate change itself, with effects being felt ever more forcefully across the planet.

'Phenomenal' heat

Scientists now have a greater understanding of the mechanisms behind "extreme phenomena, which now occur almost every week around the world", said Vautard, adding that this helps better quantify how these events will play out in the future.

In almost real time, researchers

can pinpoint the role of climate change in a given disaster, something they were unable to do at all until very recently.

Now, so-called "attribution" science means we can say how probable an extreme weather event would have been had the climate not been changing at all.

For example, within days of the extraordinary "heat dome" that scorched the western United States and Canada at the end of June, scientists from the World Weather Attribution calculated that the heat-wave would have been "almost impossible" without warming.

Despite these advances, Vautard said "major mysteries remain".

Scientists are still unsure what part clouds play "in the energy balance of the planet" and their influence on the climate's sensitivity to greenhouse gases, he said.

But it is "phenomenal temperatures", like those recorded in June in Canada or in Europe in 2019, that preoccupy the climatologist.

Runaway Saudi Princess, Stepmom On Pegasus List

Agenceis

Runaway Saudi Princess Latifa and her stepmother Princess Hayaa bin al-Hussein have been named as targets of the Pegasus software hack after both women tried to flee Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE.

The two women's phone numbers appeared on the list of targets put together by foreign governments who had purchased the software from Israeli firm NSO Group after they both fled the UAE, along with those of heads of state including Emmanuel Macron, the chief of the World Health Organization and the Presidents of South Africa and Pakistan.

According to Amnesty International and a consortium of international media outlets, foreign governments who bought Pegasus from NSO later used it nefariously snoop through the phones of journalists, royals and private individuals, like the two princesses who both tried to

flee the sheikh.

In a report on Wednesday, The Washington Post, one of the outlets in the consortium, reveals that Latifa's phone number appeared on the Pegasus list in 2018, along with others that belonged to her associates, after she fled.

Latifa's father was killed in 2019, after she fled, along with the numbers of several of her associates, following an alleged affair with a British bodyguard and after privately raising concerns about Latifa to her husband. In 2018, Latifa tried to flee her father on board a yacht but was caught and taken back to Saudi Arabia.

In 2019, Haya fled to London after an alleged affair with a bodyguard.

She has refused to return to the UAE and fought Sheikh Mohammed for custody of their children at the High Court in London last year. She won. Amnesty International says both she and Latifa were targeted by hackers after they left the UAE which puts the governments of Saudi Arabia and Dubai firmly in the frame.

Husband Chops Off Nose, Ears Of Wife's Lover In Pakistan

Agenceis

Lahore: A Pakistani man was hospitalised after his nose and ears were chopped off with a knife for allegedly having an affair with a married woman in the country's Punjab province, police said on Friday.

The incident took place on Thursday in the village of Muzfarghar, over 375-kilometre from Lahore.

According to police, Abdul Qayum suspected that Muhammad Akram of his village had an affair with his wife.

"On Thursday, Qayum, along with his other accomplices, intercepted Akram on his way to home and took him to a deserted place where they cut off his nose and ears with a knife and left him in a critical condition," police said.

Akram was shifted to Nishtar Hospital Multan where his condi-



tion is said to be critical.

Police said they have arrested Qayum who has confessed to his crime.

Efforts are underway to arrest

the remaining culprits, they said.

Over 1,000 women and nearly 600 to 800 men are killed in Pakistan in the name of "honour killing" every year.

FCS&CA Dept To Rollout Nomination Policy

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Administrative Council (AC) which met under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, approved the rollout of Nominee Policy for Aadhar enabled Public Distribution System (AePDS) by Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department.

The new policy will enable beneficiaries in old age, bed-ridden or those living with disabilities to nominate a responsible person after due verification to collect the quota of the subsidised ration on their behalf. Moreover,

the nominee will be designated only for single/dual member ration cards where the beneficiary is a senior citizens (above 65 years) / minor (below 15 years) / bedridden / differently abled.

The scheme allows a beneficiary to submit a nomination form either to the Tehsil Supply officer (TSO) or dealer or to the Assistant Director (AD) to add the nominated person to the beneficiary's family as a nominee with zero entitlement. To avail ration, the nominee will have to visit the respective dealer and complete the KYC registration and biometric authentication.

DDC Anantnag Directs Officers To Coordinate For Youth Empowerment

Stresses For Prompt Redressal Of Grievances



ANANTNAG: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Anantnag, Dr. Piyush Singla Saturday directed the concerned officers to make coordinated efforts for engagement and empowerment of youth through various key initiatives of the government.

The DDC said this while taking a comprehensive review of the progress made by the district in Mission Youth, Forest Rights Act, Tribal Survey, District Capex, Back to Village, Languishing and other priority sectors and programmes besides action taken report on the public grievances.

Calling these sectors as top priorities of administration, the DDC impressed upon the officers to expedite the work so that desirable results

are achieved in a time bound manner.

On the occasion, Dr. Singla laid special emphasis on youth oriented initiatives like livelihood generation scheme Mumkin, formation of youth clubs etc which are being taken under Mission Youth Programme. He stressed for development of tourist villages having potential for agriculture, handloom, handicraft etc tourism and the subsequent training and hand holding of the local youth in tourism sector.

Directions were passed to the concerned to compile and forward the claims received under Forest Rights Act besides expediting the pace of migratory/nomadic survey for overall benefit of the tribal population in the district.

Minor Girl Slips To Death In Rajouri Flash Floods

Observer News Service

Rajouri: A minor girl aged one year died after she slipped into a stream while a nine-year-old boy was washed away in flash floods in Rajouri district, officials said Saturday.

Officials said that a year-old girl Arifa daughter of Shabir Muhammad slipped into a stream near her house at Gundi Kotranka Tehsil in Rajouri district. "She

drowned to death and her body was fished out later," the officials said.

In the second incident, a nine-year-old boy was washed away in the flash flood in Jamola village of Rajouri who was identified as Faizan Ali (9) son of Niyamit Ali. "The boy was crossing a small water channel flash flood took him way," the official said, adding that his body was also fished out later.



Workers cleaning weed out of Dal Lake in Srinagar on Saturday. KO Photo Abid Bhat

Admin Mulls Revising Textbook Curriculum In J&K

Agencies

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir administration is mulling to revise the curriculum of different classes by including the stories of local "real heroes" in the textbooks for the new generation.

Official documents state that the administration has said that it will bring out the revision in the syllabi of different classes in schools of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Bring out the revision in the curriculum of the differ-

ent classes with emphasis on including stories of real heroes of Jammu and Kashmir in the textbooks to make the new generation aware about their life history and imbibe the rich value system of these local prominent personalities in their life." it reads.

The documents reveal that the concerned officials of School Education Department and Chairperson of Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) were asked to submit the report by the end of August.

The documents further reveal that the government directed the directors of Schools Education Department of both Jammu and Kashmir regions and project director of Samagra Shiksha to focus on improving the literacy rate and dropout rates among the students.

"Enhanced focus on bridging social and gender gaps in School Education and ensure the equity and inclusion at all levels to improve the literacy rate and decrease the dropout rate," the documents reveal.

AC Approves Proposal To Upgrade Wagoora-Zainakote Transmission Line

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Administrative Council (AC) which met under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, approved the proposal of Power Development Department to upgrade the transformation capacity of Wagoora-Zainakote transmission line by re-conductor-

ing its 220 KV DC line.

Through the project, the Power Development Department will replace the existing 0.4 ACSR by High Temperature Low Sag Conductor (HTLS) of circuit-II of 220 KV (reconductoring of DC 220 KV Line) at an estimated cost of Rs. 24.29 crore.

The project will enable the Power Development De-

partment to meet the additional load demand, lower the T&D losses and ensure reliable power supply to Srinagar, Baramulla and Ganderbal districts.

Additionally, the upgraded Wagoora-Zainakote line will also provide power back up in case of an outage of 220 KV Amaragarh Zainakote DC transmission line.

Youth Must Be Put To Constructive Engagement: DC Shopian

Reviews Rolling Out Of Mission Youth

Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Sachin Kumar Vaishya Saturday reviewed the roll out of Mission Youth in the district during a meeting convened at Mini Secretariat.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that J&K is bestowed with a predominantly young population which is a valuable human resource which must be put to constructive engagement.

Mission Youth is the apex body of the government for youth engagement and outreach in J&K, he added.

He said that the core agenda of Mission Youth is to positively

engage youth for their overall well being within the society by making them stakeholders in the development of the Union Territory.

The DC further said that the programme is conceived with an objective to facilitate the engagement of youth in sustainable socio-economic development of J&K; to help young people to realize their full social, economic and human potential, to foster the social integration of youth within communities and enhance youth employability, contribution to effective delivery of basic services to the people of J&K in the times of distrust, natural calamities, pandemics, to set up micro youth clubs for youth engagement at

Panchayat level.

He said that the role of Volunteer Groups shall be to create awareness among general masses, to combat misinformation and sensitisation of communities regarding important social/ economic/ political matters by interacting with communities and by using innovative means, to provide assistance to departments in data gathering and to assist local administration to identify vulnerable areas for creating better targeted responses, to work for community mobilization and targeted response under various government schemes, initiatives, developmental activities and other government functions etc.

Mohammad Ashraf Bhat Takes Charge As Director YS&S

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Mohammad Ashraf Bhat Saturday took over the charge of Director Youth Services and Sports Department.

Bhat, immediately after joining his new assignment, convened an introductory cum review meeting of the department. He interacted with all the concerned officers and enquired about the functioning of different wings of the department besides assessing the need for further streamlining of this vibrant unit of the government.

He asked for prompt disposal of all official issues and concerns so that effective working of the department is ensured besides extending time bound delivery of sports services to people of the UT. He also emphasised optimum utilisation of manpower and infrastructure with synergised efforts to obtain results on ground.

"Our immediate focus would be to resume sports activities and games throughout the UT amid the global pandemic by following Covid Appropriate behaviour (CAB) strictly", maintained the Director.

Muharram, I-Day Arrangements Reviewed In Ganderbal

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Ganderbal, Muzafar Ahmad Peer Saturday reviewed the ar-

rangements and masjids. He also directed the health authorities to make adequate arrangements and sensitize the general public about the Covid SOPs.

The ADDC appealed to follow all the related SOPs and



rangements to be put in place for smooth celebration of upcoming Muharram.

The ADDC urged upon the concerned that special arrangements shall be made in view of the present circumstances emerged due to COVID-19 outbreak.

The ADDC stressed upon the concerned officers to make adequate arrangements with regard to uninterrupted power and water supply more especially in Shia dominated areas so that the devotees may not face any inconvenience.

The Municipal authorities were directed to ensure sanitation of all the vital locations viz Imam Baras, shrines

guidelines in letter and spirit so that the risk of COVID-19 infection is mitigated.

Ahmad also reviewed the arrangements for Independence Day 2021 celebration.

In view of COVID Pandemic, The ADDC urged upon all the concerned officers that COVID-19 SOPs should be followed in letter and spirit during the function. The ADDC directed the concerned departments to ensure proper arrangements related to security, sanitation, seating, barricading, water, supply, power supply, issuance of invitation cards, transportation and illumination of important buildings etc. on Independence Day.

Girl Hangs Self In Anantnag

Observer News Service

Anantnag: A 24-year-old girl was found hanging at her home in Khanpora area of Utersoo in South Kashmir's Anantnag district on Saturday evening, an official said.

An official said that a girl (name withheld) was found hanging on Saturday afternoon

by her family members inside her house in Khanpora area.

The family rushed her to the Government Medical College (GMC) in Anantnag where she was declared brought dead on arrival, he said.

He said that a case under 174 CrPc has been initiated and further investigations taken up.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Mohd Iqbal Kumar S/O Ab Gaffar Kumar R/O Kehnusa Tehsil Alooosa District Bandipora have lost my wallet containing adhar card ,pan card ,sbi atm card, college identity card, photographs and some cash if anybody has found please contact me on 7780816415, otherwise I have to apply for the duplicate of the same .Anybody having objection may contact the concerned offices within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

AJ

(GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR)

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) ELECTRIC DIVISION SRINAGAR

Tender Notice No.:- 59 of 2021-22/R&B

Dated: 23.07.2021

For and on behalf of The Lt. Governor of Union Territory Jammu and Kashmir sealed tenders affixed with 5/- rupees revenue stamps are invited for the below mentioned works from approved and eligible Electrical contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other state /Central Govt. as per specification and detailed mentioned in the BOQ.

S.No	Name of Work	Approx Cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Class Of Contractor	Time of Completion	Cost of tender document
01	Providing various electric items for Camp Section to Divisional office at Sumbal (Part A)	80,000.00	1600/-	"A" Class Electrical	03 days	200
02	Providing various electric items for Drawing Branch to Divisional office at Sumbal (Part B)	80,000/-	1600/-	"A" Class Electrical	03 days	200
03	Providing various electric items for Camp Section to Divisional office at Bandipora (Part A)	80,000/-	1600/-	"A" Class Electrical	03 days	200
04	Providing various electric items for Drawing Branch to Divisional office at Bandipora (Part B)	80,000/-	1600/-	"A" Class Electrical	03 days	200

Position of Funds: - Demanded

1. The tender should be addressed to the Executive Engineer (R&B) Electric Division Srinagar and should reach in the office by or before 28.07.2021 upto 4.00 PM. The tenders /bids will be opened on the same day or any other day convenient to tender opening authority in presence of the contractors who may like to be present. In case the last date of receipt of tenders happens to be a holiday /Hartal /curfew day the tenders will be received on next working day.

2. The tender document shall be issued by this office from 23.07.2021 upto 28.07.2021 against receipt of treasury challan received from the eligible Electrical contractor and should enclose following documents Viz: valid registration with latest renewal certificate, Pan Card, valid GST registration with latest GST clearance certificate, valid contact No/E-Mail ID in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Electric Division Srinagar. (Tender inviting authority).

3. The bidders shall be a liberty to send their bids either in person or through registered post but shall super scribe the following in front of the envelopes.

4. i.) Name of work ii) cost of work iii) Full name of contractor with contact No iv) Ref. to CDR No & Date v) Date of receipt of tenders vi) Ref. to NIT No.

5. The bidder Should enclose CDR/FDR

6. The bidder should sign each page of tender document enclosed with their bid.

7. All other Terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in PWD form 25.

DIPK-5156/21

NO:- ERB/1214-1221

Dated: 23.07.2021

Sd/-

Executive Engineer

(R&B) Electric Division

Srinagar

J&K LAKES AND WATERWAYS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, SRINAGAR.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

LAKE DIVISION NO. 1ST.MISKEEN BAGH KHANYAR

Email:xenlakediv1st@gmail.com

Gist of NIT No.LD-II/ 27 of 2021-22 Dated: 20:07:2021

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, e- bids on double cover system are invited from interested resourceful/ experienced person/s;

S.No.	Name of the structure	Period of outsourcing	Minimum reserve bid amount (Rs. In Lacs)	Bid Security	Tender Fee (Rs.)
01.	Outsourcing of Kahwakhana park near Settling Basin NFR across Dal Lake.	02 Years	7.50	Rs.30000.00	Rs.1500/-
03.	Outsourcing of Food Court /Kiosks/Jetties at Brari Nambal Lagoon.	02 Years	15.00	Rs.36000.00	Rs.1500/-

The complete bidding shall be held on time as per following schedule:-

01.	Date of issue of tender Notice.	20.07.2021.
02.	Start date for downloading of bidding documents.	22.07.2021 (10.00AM)
03.	Bid submission start date	23.07.2021 (10.00 A.M)
04.	Bid submission end date	12.08.2021 (04.00 P.M)
05.	Date and time of opening of bids (Technical & Financial) on line.	13.08.2021 (2.00 P.M)
06.	Tender inviting authority.	
07.	Tender opening/receiving authority.	Executive Engineer Lake Division No: 1st J&K LDA Miskeen Bagh Srinagar.
09.	Tender fee to be drawn in favour of.	Tender fee to be deposited into account No. CDG/01850102 00 00 0004, JK Bank Upper Sathu through E-challan / treasury receipt/Pay in Slip. Note: NIT No. and S.No. of the work/job shall be mentioned on paying slip while depositing the fee. The fee must be deposited between publishing date of NIT and bid submission end date. No before or afterwards shall be entertained.

General Term and conditions:

The tenders must be addressed to the Executive Engineer Lake Division No.1st, J&K Lakes and Waterways Development Authority, Miskeen Bagh Khanyar Srinagar.

- The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in upto said bidding schedule.
- The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in upto said bidding schedule.
- The complete bidding process will be on line.

Sd/-

Executive Engineer,

Lake Division No.1st

Lakes and Waterways Dev. Authority

Srinagar

No.LD-1/2609-2626

Dated: 20.07.2021

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The situation took an ugly turn post article 370 abrogation when this law was almost sent into deep freezer. The law is intact but not operationalized on the ground. I am unable to understand why more and more services are brought under PSGA when people don't get the public service within a stipulated time?

PSGA fails to guarantee Public Services

Bringing more services under this law is absolute mockery

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

Jammu & Kashmir Government recently brought eighteen more services of seven departments under the ambit of J&K Public Services Guarantee Act (PSGA). The departments whose services have been brought under the ambit of this act include School Education Department, Health and Medical Education Department, Home Department, Public Works (R&B) Department, Co-operative Department, Revenue Department and Housing and Urban development department (HUDD).

The new order has brought several services of the school education department under PSGA. This includes approval for setting up and operating a play school, registration of schools under Right to Education Act (RTE) and obtaining a no objection certificate (NOC) for setting up of CBSE School.

Services of health and medical education department like registration of clinical establishment under Clinical Establishments (Registration & Regulation) Act, 2010 and its renewal, registration under PC & PNDT Act has been brought under PSGA.

The NOC required for setting up of explosives manufacturing, storage, sale and its transport have been declared as new services to be provided by the home department within a stipulated time. The NOC required for setting up of petroleum, diesel and Naphtha storage, sale, transport, license for sale of crackers and cinematograph license and license for screening films has also been brought under the purview of this act.

The services of the public works department (PWD) include road cutting permission and registration of contractors for works and services, while services of the Revenue department include encumbrance certificate and measurement, demarcation of land. The services of the co-operative department brought under PSGA include registration of co-operative societies.

In the past as well, many services were brought under the ambit of PSGA. In 2017, Government made it mandatory for the police to complete the verification of a passport applicant within 30 days under the PSGA. Earlier, the period for completion of verification for both the services, which were brought under the ambit of the law in 2012, was 60 days. In 2016, the ministry of external affairs had revealed that only one percent of police verification (PV) requests, initiated by the Regional Passport Office Srinagar, were completed within the 21-day deadline—the MEA timeframe for completion of such verifications. The average time taken for police verification in Kashmir was 109 days in 2015-16, the ministry had disclosed. Under the PSGA, an applicant has the right to appeal before the desig-

nated authorities if the government departments fail to provide notified services within the stipulated time-frame.

Around 2017, fifteen more services including property certificates, revenue formalities relating to bank loans were brought under the PSGA. As per a notification issued by the GAD some years back, the property certificates have to be provided by concerned tehsildars (upto Rs 20 lakh) and deputy commissioners (beyond Rs 20 lakh) within 21 days. The tehsildars, under the SRO, have to complete revenue formalities for bank loans within 21 days.

As many as nine services of the Horticulture department were also brought under the ambit of law. These include grant of license for registration/renewal of fruit nurseries (35 days), advisory service on plant nutrition through leaf analysis (20 days), issuance of horticulture passbooks (15 days), soil sample analysis and issue of health card (35 days),

Service (RPS) Commission as well. RTI Movement had been demanding a similar commission in J&K under PSGA when the law was enacted in 2011. Govt of India did not repeal PSGA after abrogation of article 370. Like many other laws this erstwhile J&K state law also got a legal protection under J&K Reorganization Act 2019.

What is PSGA ?

Under J&K Public Services Guarantee Act 2011 (PSGA), any citizen of J&K has the right to public service within a specified time. If the service is not provided the officer is liable for punishment. More than 200 services come under the ambit of PSGA. When it comes to implementation of this law, the situation is pitiful. People continue to suffer due to inefficient public services. Corruption is rampant in Govt offices. Citizens are looted during issuance of economically weaker sections certificates, caste

officials on implementing PSGA .The officials at helm always avoided responding. Early this year, I sought information under RTI Act 2005 from the office of Deputy Commissioner Budgam about training workshops held for designated officers to implement RTI & PSGA. The Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) who is also the designated Public Information Officer (PIO) in DC office Budgam told me that information was not available in the repository of his office.

GAD denies info

More than 2 years back, this author sought details from the General Administration Department (GAD) under RTI Act about PSGA implementation and workshops conducted for Govt officers. The designated PIO instead of providing information, forwarded my application to all the Administrative Departments in Civil Secretariat by misusing the provision of section 6 (3) of JK RTI Act 2009 (now repealed). GAD is the custodian of this information and the PIO concerned should have provided the same to me.

Pertinently, RTI Act 2005 clearly states that the information which can't be denied to a Member of Parliament or State legislature cannot be denied to a citizen.

The reality is that the General Administration Department (GAD) and other Administrative Departments as well as the DC offices have nothing to share vis a vis PSGA. Since the last 3 years, they haven't even conducted three training sessions for Govt officials on PSGA. Not even 5 % designated Govt officers who have to implement PSGA have been trained. Adding new services to PSGA serves no purpose, as majority of the Govt officers don't know how to dispose off a petition filed under PSGA .The Designated Officers (DOs) , First Appellate Authorities (FAAs) and Second Appellate Authorities (SAA) are ignorant about the basic provisions of this law.How can citizens get justice from them ? On the other hand citizens also hardly use PSGA as they too are ignorant about this beautiful legislation. Mere enacting laws or giving some erstwhile state laws legal protection post article 370 abrogation is not sufficient , authorities should also make these laws workable for public good.

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

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The reality is that the General Administration Department (GAD) and other Administrative Departments as well as the DC offices have nothing to share vis a vis PSGA. Since the last 3 years, they haven't even conducted three training sessions for Govt officials on PSGA

grant of license to fruit growers and dealers in fruit markets of the state (21 days), state permission for construction of shop sites and issuance of the site plan (30 days), transfer of lease-hold rights (legal heir)/sale (45 days), issuance of lease deed/conveyance deed (30 days) and issuance of NOC (15 days).

Now the question arises if people do get benefits under PSGA or not? Do people use PSGA? How many awareness programmes have been held to sensitize the designated officers under PSGA?

Background of PSGA

After enacting a progressive access to information law i.e J&K RTI Act 2009 (now repealed post 370 abrogation), Omar Abdullah led National Conference -Congress coalition Government in 2011, had come up with one more pro-people legislation namely J&K Public Services Guarantee Act (PSGA-2011). After J&K enacted this law in 2011 , the Governments of Assam , Bihar , Orissa , West Bengal , Maharashtra and many other states too enacted state level Right to Public Service laws. The provincial Government of Khyber Pakhtookhwa (KP) in Pakistan also enacted a law on the pattern of J&K PSGA 2011 in 2014 known as Haq e Ha-sool e Khidmaat ka Qanoon. The Govt of KP went a step ahead by creating a separate Right to Public

certificates, ration cards etc. The Government's own machinery (officers and supporting staff) who are supposed to implement PSGA are themselves not well versed with this law. Not a single training workshop has been held in the last 3 years.

Even a few years before the article 370 abrogation, I hardly heard about a sensitization programme being held for the designated officers in implementing PSGA. The situation took an ugly turn post article 370 abrogation when this law was almost sent into deep freezer. The law is intact but not operationalized on the ground. I am unable to understand why more and more services are brought under PSGA when people don't get the public service within a stipulated time ?

People don't know who are the designated officers or first or second appellate authorities under PSGA. Their details are not available on official websites. The lack of awareness among officials at helm and citizens is making PSGA redundant. We have hardly heard about a government officer who has been penalized for non-implementation of this law post article 370 abrogation. As per my information, not even a single virtual workshop was held in the last 3 years for designated officers on PSGA in J&K. I sought information from the Government several times about workshops held to train

NEW YORK – The International Economic Association's triennial World Congress has long been one of the most important global gatherings of economists, owing to its success in bringing together researchers and policymakers from the poorest to the wealthiest corners of the world. The 19th edition of the event earlier this month, albeit held via Zoom instead of in person, was no exception.

One recurring theme of this year's Congress was that the global economy and capitalism are at a crossroads. While the COVID-19 crisis was the immediate impetus for this view, other major shifts – from climate change and the rise of digital technology to the changing nature of labor markets – have been increasingly salient. The pandemic has merely accelerated these shifts or thrown them into sharper relief.

COVID-19 has forced us into one kind of “learning by doing,” an idea that the Nobel laureate economist Kenneth J. Arrow, who emphasized that much learning “is the product of experience,” developed in the abstract a long time ago. We have learned to give lectures and hold conferences by Zoom, and to make complex decisions in meetings conducted via Webex. People have suddenly realized that they had been spending more time than necessary in the office, and that they can do much of their work from home. And we

have learned to shop at home, too, via digital platforms.

As a result, demand for office and retail space will fall, even after the pandemic. And because more people will have the freedom to work remotely, property prices will gradually rise where they were previously low and fall where they were high, leading to greater leveling.

On the other hand, salary disparities will increase, because the labor market will tend to be more of a common pool with heightened competition for talent. Most important, globalization, after some initial stumbles, will accelerate, with rapid growth in cross-country outsourcing. This is likely to have a significant effect on labor markets, national politics, and the nature of conflict.

Understanding this new world will require major breakthroughs in economic thinking. Economics normally proceeds by contesting the explicit assumptions and axioms on which theory is built. But all scientific disciplines also have hidden assumptions that are so deeply embedded that we do not state them explicitly and often forget they exist. In their celebrated

research in the 1950s that provided a formal structure for understanding Adam Smith's idea of the “invisible hand,” for example, Arrow and fellow Nobel laureate Gérard Debreu showed the many assumptions that were needed for Smith's conjecture to be valid.

There were other assumptions that were taken for granted – simply part of the worldview of economics – including the symmetry of knowledge among buyers and sellers. One of the biggest breakthroughs of modern economics was the insight that knowledge is often asymmetric, and that this asymmetry can shatter the invisible hand. This breakthrough earned Joseph E. Stiglitz, George Akerlof, and Michael Spence the 2001 Nobel prize in economics, and led to new forms of regulation that made the modern economy possible. We owe many of our regulations concerning quality control and product standards to this breakthrough, which showed definitively that the market's invisible hand cannot ensure standards when information is asymmetric.

It remains to be seen what form the economics profession's new intellectual

discoveries will take and what regulations we will need to apply them. What is clear is that the strain humanity has imposed on the environment means growth as we currently know it cannot be sustained. But that does not mean we have to learn to live with lower growth. In fact, I believe future growth will be faster than we have seen thus far.

The lower-growth camp's mistake stems from a common misunderstanding of GDP or national income. A higher GDP is often taken to indicate more wasteful consumption and consumerism of the kind we are indulging in now. But that need not – and now must not – be the case.

The consumption of more art, music, and learning, as well as better health and greater longevity, are all components of GDP, and are, or can be, environmentally friendly. Reforming our regulatory system can foster rapid GDP growth – but with the content of GDP changing dramatically, and with a disproportionate amount of human labor directed to creative activities. The nature of reform for the new world is a big topic, but policymakers will need to focus on curricula

that nurture creativity, because routine work will increasingly be automated; shift consumption away from environmentally wasteful goods; and redistribute wealth radically to lessen inequalities.

My recent research on group morality, however, highlights a caveat that we must address. When discussing matters like climate change and current global inequities, we urge people to be other-regarding. In other words, they should not be concerned solely about their own well-being but also consider the welfare of the current poor and future generations who will be affected by our decisions.

But as moral philosophers have long known, group morality is a problematic concept. I have recently tried to address the “Samaritan's Curse,” whereby a future generation can end up being hurt when all individuals today take its well-being into consideration. This problem, like the prisoner's dilemma but in the moral domain, can potentially defeat our best intentions.

So, the road ahead will not be easy. Economists and society as a whole must confront profound intellectual and moral challenges in order to come to grips with the changing world. But humans have done it before. One can only hope that our intelligence and resolve enable us to do it again.

Project Syndicate

The Changing Map of Economics

KAUSHIK BASU

Disability and Human Rights

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

M Ahmad

It takes to a new height the movement from viewing persons with disabilities as “objects” of charity, towards viewing them as “subjects” with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society. It clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made or where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced

Worldwide one billion individuals have a disability. Many people with disabilities experience a range of barriers to education, health care and other basic services. In many countries, they are subjected to violence and discrimination. People with disabilities are also often deprived of their right to live independently.

To protect the Rights of People with Disabilities, The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The purpose of the Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. The Convention follows decades of work by the United Nations to change attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities. It takes to a new height the movement from viewing persons with disabilities as “objects” of charity, towards viewing them as “subjects” with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society. It clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made or where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced.

The United Nations Charter affirms the essentiality of “a universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction...” Persons with disabilities are entitled to exercise their civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights on an equal basis with others under all the international treaties. The full participation of persons with disabilities benefits society as their individual contributions and enrich all spheres of life.

The guiding principles of the the Convention are:-

1. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons with disabilities.
2. Non-discrimination with persons with disabilities.
3. Full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the so-



- ciety.
4. Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity.
5. Equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities.
6. Accessibility facilities for persons with disability.
7. Equality between men and women with disabilities
8. Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities
9. Recognising and enforcing the right of disabled people to live independently, be included in the community, and choose where they live and who they live with.
10. Ensuring that social security policies protect the income of disabled people and their families, allowing for the extra costs that come with disability.
11. Removing barriers to ensure that disabled people can access decent work and equal pay.

12. Taking action to combat any negative or discriminatory stereotypes or prejudice against disabled people in public and the media
13. Ensuring disabled people have equal rights to justice by providing appropriate legal advice and support.
14. Involving disabled people and disabled people's organisations in planning and implementing all laws and policies affecting disabled people.
15. Incorporating CRPD into domestic law to ensure that people can take legal action if their rights have been breached.

The purpose of the CRPD is Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ‘to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity’

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The race for developing effective COVID-19 vaccines has put the pharmaceutical industry in the spotlight.

Over the past few months, the world has witnessed rapid clinical trials and approvals of several highly effective vaccines like Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca. This unprecedented achievement has been made possible by close intra-industry, state industry and international collaborations.

Big Pharma's proactive approach to vaccine development has also brought an unexpected consequence: its reputation has been notably enhanced since early 2020. A survey conducted in February 2021 found that almost two-thirds of Americans now give the pharmaceutical industry high marks.

But reputation risks loom even as pharma companies are being celebrated as pandemic heroes.

The controversy over the Astra-Zeneca vaccine's potential serious side-effects is a prime example. The English company has experienced a public backlash due to a lack of a crisis response plan and conflicting messages delivered by different stakeholders.

Will the reputation boost enable the pharmaceutical industry to fundamentally rebuild its negative public image? As someone who researches public relations, I believe that only by prioritizing socially responsible practices can Big Pharma achieve true reputation redemption.

Big Pharma's damaged reputation

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pharmaceutical industry had been battling reputational damage for years. Notably, it sank to the bottom of Gallup's August 2019 United States industry favourability poll, with a total positive score of only 27 per cent. According to Gallup's analysis, high drug costs, massive advertising and lobbying spending and the opioid crisis have all tarnished the industry's public image.

This is consistent with public relations research conducted in Europe. In a qualitative analysis published by Public Relations Inquiry, a team of Ghent University researchers analyzed how Belgian pharma companies responded to the pervasive “Bad Pharma” public image.

Their analysis revealed that Bad Pharma perceptions reflected larger societal issues, including widening income and health gaps. The public ex-



pects the pharmaceutical industry to save and improve lives by developing innovative, affordable and effective medicines. Accordingly, the industry loses trust when the public believes its actions and motives are at odds with those expectations. Such a decline in public trust can't be easily fixed by corporate responsibility reports or public relations campaigns.

The pharmaceutical industry's reputational challenges also correlate to how the media covers it. A 2020 analysis of Big Pharma-related coverage found that the majority of stories were neutral and involved reporting on topics like finances, stocks, profits, mergers, acquisitions and restructuring. Coverage is more negative when it delves, less often, into more sentimental topics.

In other words, the media mostly reports on Big Pharma from a business perspective instead of from a social and public health perspective. This lack of media attention to the industry's social responsibilities contributes to growing public distrust of it in recent years.

Risks underlie vaccine-led reputation boost

Considering the above factors, it's unsurprising that the pharmaceutical industry's all-hands-on-deck efforts on COVID-19 vaccines, in combination with extensive media coverage, has resulted in a substantial improvement in public sentiment. According to a survey conducted by think tank Data for Progress in March 2021, 56 per cent of respondents had a favourable view of pharmaceutical companies, double

the rating of Gallup's 2019 poll.

Nonetheless, a closer look at the data reveals two caveats.

First, drug costs remain the top concern for the public. The Data for Progress survey suggests that 72 per cent of American voters support policy measures that would lower the cost of prescription drugs. The pharma industry, meantime, insists that the discounted prices it's currently offering for COVID-19 vaccines will not last very long.

Vaccine prices to rise?

In February, Pfizer CFO Frank D'Amelio said in a call with Wall Street analysts that after the pandemic, Pfizer is “going to get more on price” and hinted there would be a substantial price increase for its CO-

VID-19 vaccine.

The company currently charges US\$19.50 per dose for its vaccine, but the typical price is \$150 to \$175 per dose for other vaccines it sells. If implemented, this aggressive pricing policy would undoubtedly result in public criticism, especially from developing countries that have already been neglected during the first round of global vaccine allocation.

Second, the remarkable speed of research and innovation achieved during COVID-19 vaccine development is mainly due to intensive government funding support and concerted collaborations across multiple sectors. It's uncertain whether these special measures herald the arrival of a new model in which governments have better regulation over Big Pharma issues

In other words, the media mostly reports on Big Pharma from a business perspective instead of from a social and public health perspective. This lack of media attention to the industry's social responsibilities contributes to growing public distrust of it in recent years

like patent control, advertising, clinical data transparency and spending on lobbying.

If the pharmaceutical industry wants to achieve the ultimate image makeover, it must capitalize on the current goodwill by prioritizing socially responsible practices. That begins with fairer drug pricing and a genuine commitment to resolving public health disparities.

By arrangements with the The Conversation

‘Young workers now value respect more than ‘fun’ perks at work’

Agencies

A new study has found that today's young workers, ages 21-34, place more value on having respectful communication in the workplace over trendy and fun work perks.

Millennials, often referred to as the "job-hopping generation," represent a group of young workers who once grabbed the spotlight with their publicised demands for "fun" work perks, such as happy hours.

However, researchers at the Novak Leadership Institute at the University of Missouri and Kansas State University discovered today's young workers represent a life-stage shift toward placing more value on having respectful communication in the workplace over fun perks.

The findings of the study were published in the International Journal of Business Communication.

"Millennials have been called the 'entitled generation,' and they kind of give young workers a bad rap because their often-publicized interests began with wanting to have fun in the workplace, but today's young workers have shifted toward interests in doing valuable work and finding meaning in their day-to-day job functions," said Danielle LaGree, an assistant professor of strategic communication at Kansas State University, who earned her doctorate at the Missouri School of Journalism.

"Leaders and managers are the ones who have the power to help foster that connection of meaningful work, determine what employee well-being means and how to communicate that meaning in a respectful way to their employees," added LaGree.

The team of researchers, which includes experts from the Novak Leadership Institute



and the MU Department of Communication, were able to identify this shift in workplace values for young workers after surveying more than 1,000 full-time workers, ages 21-34, who represent 18 different career areas, including the service industry.

The team analysed how participants

rated, on a 1 to 5 scale, how each of the following workplace culture aspects were representative of their current place of employment -- respectful engagement, autonomous respect, occupational resilience, job satisfaction, employee loyalty and retention, and job engagement.

While previous studies have reported leaders and managers spend 70-90 per cent of their time communicating, LaGree believes this study shows more emphasis needs to be placed on training leaders and managers on how to be effective communicators and convey respectful communica-

tion with their employees.

She believes that even though the study was completed before the COVID-19 pandemic began, their results continue to be relevant in today's workplaces, which may have adjusted to more of a hybrid workplace split between work and home offices, or gone entirely remote.

LaGree acknowledged the extent to which leaders and managers can foster supportive cultures and outcomes is still unclear, yet she believes their study strongly contributes to the concept that workplaces are intensely social experiences.

"As we see here with our research, actively recognizing employees for the value they bring to their organization will help equip them to bounce back after adversity, to perform better in their jobs and be more committed to their organizations in the long term," LaGree said.

"I think that's especially relevant today, even though this study was conducted before the coronavirus pandemic," LaGree added.

Margaret Duffy, executive director of the Novak Leadership Institute and a professor of strategic communication in the Missouri School of Journalism, believes employers risk losing younger employees if they don't make an effort to use respectful communication in the workplace.

"There's a giant risk for employers if they don't help employees have a sense of purpose and a sense of well-being and engagement," Duffy said.

"Coming to work may not be joyful every day, but if work is something where I can feel fulfillment, I can feel respected as a human being and most important, that I can feel that I have earned the respect and recognition that I'm given by my boss and by my co-workers," Duffy concluded.

Tackling income inequality could boost low-income children's vocabulary, new study suggests

Agencies

While parenting deficiencies have long been blamed for the word gap, new research from the University of California, Berkeley, implicates the economic context in which parenting takes place- in other words, the wealth gap.

The findings, published this month in the journal Developmental Science, provide the first evidence that parents may talk less to their kids when experiencing financial scarcity.

"We were interested in what happens when parents think about or experience financial scarcity and found evidence that such strain could suppress their speech to their children," said study senior author Mahesh Srinivasan, a professor of psychology at UC Berkeley.

"Our results suggest that parenting training may not be sufficient to close the academic achievement gap without addressing the broader issue of income inequality," Srinivasan added.

The study's preliminary results lend credence to the developmental and educational benefits of such poverty-cutting government programs as the federal American Rescue Plan's Child Tax Credit and other supplemental cash payments for needy families.

"Existing interventions toward eliminating the word gap have often focused on improving parenting skills," Srinivasan said. "But our findings suggest that relieving parents of their financial burdens, such as through direct cash transfers, could also substantially change the ways they engage with their kids."

In the first experiment, researchers sought to observe how parents would interact with their children (in this case, 3-year-olds) after the parents were asked to describe times in which they had recently experienced scarcity. A control group of parents were instead asked to describe other recent activities.

Of the 84 parents in the study, those in the experimental group who described their experiences of financial scarcity spoke less to their 3-year-olds during laboratory observations than parents who reflected on other forms of scarcity (like not having enough fruit), or parents who had not been asked to recollect experiences of resource insecurity.

The second experiment used existing data collected via LENA technology, tiny "talk pedometer" devices worn by children that record their conversations and count the words they hear and say.

As the researchers predicted, analyses revealed that parents engaged in fewer conversational turns with their children at the month's end, a time that typically coincides with money being tight as parents await paychecks or other sources of income.

"Because we had recordings from the same parents at different times of the month, we could essentially use parents as their own controls," said study lead author Monica Ellwood-Lowe, a Ph.D. student in psychology at UC Berkeley.



many times, prompting calls for approaches to narrow the disparity. Enter Srinivasan and his research team:

"It struck us that what was missing from the conversation about the word gap was the possibility that poverty, and the many difficult experiences associated with it, could itself affect parents' speech," Srinivasan said.

Preliminary findings support the researchers' hypothesis but also call for a deeper dive into the relationship between money worries and parents' verbal engagement with their children, he said.

"This research doesn't mean that children whose parents are struggling financially are doomed to have smaller vocabularies," Ellwood-Lowe said. "The takeaway here is really just the importance of making sure parents have the resources they need to parent."

"If you are worried about putting food on the table tonight, or scraping together money for that medical bill, or figuring out where to enrol your child in school now that you have been evicted from your neighbourhood, you may be less likely to narrate the colour of the sky to your child as you ride together on the bus," the study concludes.

Psychological interventions can reduce engine idling and improve air quality

Press Trust Of India

New research by the University of Kent has found that using low-cost psychological interventions can reduce vehicle engine idling and in turn improve air quality, especially when there is increased traffic volume at railway level crossings.

A team of psychologists led by Professor Dominic Abrams, Dr Tim Hopthorpe and Dr Fanny Lalot at the University's School of Psychology, found that using carefully worded road signage can decrease the number of drivers leaving engines idling during queues at crossing barriers.

The research, which was funded by Canterbury City Council following a successful grant bid to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), observed 6,049 drivers' engine idling at the St Dunstan's and St Stephen's

level crossings in Canterbury, Kent. The researchers tested the effects of three intervention signs fixed to lampposts, which amplified existing signs to request drivers to switch off their engines. These were:

'Join other responsible drivers in Canterbury. Turn off your engine when the barriers are down' (Social norm messaging).

'Turn off your engine when the barriers are down. You will improve air quality in the area' (Outcome efficacy messaging).

'Think about your actions. When the barriers are down please turn off your engine' (Self-regulation messaging).

The social norm and outcome efficacy messages successfully increased the proportion of drivers who turned off their engines, by 42% and 25%, respectively. This reduction in vehicle idling significantly reduced concentrations of atmo-

spheric particulate matter (PM2.5) two metres above ground level.

The presence of larger numbers of other drivers boosted the impact of the social norm road signage. These findings demonstrate that drivers may feel a stronger urge to conform to the norm of turning their engines off when those ahead of them in traffic do too. This reduces harmful emissions when it is most urgent to do so.

This research, published by the Journal of Environmental Psychology, is the first of its kind to show that behavioural change induced by persuasive messages translates into observable changes in air quality and pollutant concentration levels.

As a result of the research, Canterbury City Council has installed permanent road signage at the St Dunstan's, St Stephen's and Sturry railway level crossings.



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► DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES AT AFFILIATED / RECOGNIZED INSTITUTIONS (Course fees shall be as prescribed by the respective institution)

► APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- Application form is to be submitted online through the University website www.pondiuni.edu.in by following the instructions given therein.

► MODE OF EXAM

- Online based Entrance Exam at designated centres.

✓ SCHOLARSHIPS

- All the full time scholars admitted to the Ph.D. of the University Departments will be eligible for a monthly fellowship of Rs.8,000/- with contingency. All students of the M.Sc. Marine Biology and Disaster Management (Port Blair) will get scholarship. Merit Scholarships & Merit cum Means Scholarships are available to deserving students of PG Degree programmes, M.Sc/M.A Five Year Integrated Programmes.
- M.Tech. Computational Biology and M.Sc. Biotechnology students admitted through GAT-B score are eligible for DBT Fellowship.

✓ Fully free education for all differently abled students

Date: 19.07.2021

► APPLICATION FEE

Name of the Course	Application fee (per Course) in Rupees		
	SC* /ST*	PH**/ Transgender**	Others
P.G.	300	NIL	600
Ph.D.	500	NIL	1000
M.B.A	500	NIL	1000

* Subject to submission of relevant certificate.
** Subject to submission of relevant certificate from Govt. Medical Officer.

The application fee for NRI and Overseas Candidates is US\$100 (i.e Rs. 7,500/- in equivalent Indian currency) and for SAARC country candidates is US\$50 (i.e Rs. 3,750/- in equivalent Indian currency). Use separate application for each programme. Payment of Application fee can be made only through online mode.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Online Registration Starts on	19 th July 2021
Last Date for Online Registration	14 th August 2021
Dates of Entrance Examination	02 nd , 03 rd & 04 th September 2021

All dates given above may change subject to position of COVID-19

For further details including course offered, eligibility, reservation policy and scholarship, please refer to the Prospectus 2021-22 hosted in the University website www.pondiuni.edu.in

REGISTRAR (i/c.)

www.pondiuni.edu.in

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7-Day Relief: No Revision In Fuel Prices In A Week



Agenceis

NEW DELHI: Oil marketing companies (OMC) continued to pause fuel price revision for seven consecutive days, the longest period in weeks, as the global development on oil production and rising US inventories softened crude and product rates.

However, they stopped short of reducing the retail price of petrol and diesel as more time will be required to study oil price movement before any downward revision.

Already, crude has firmed a bit for last few days and this could prevent price cut by the OMCs.

With no change in prices on Saturday, in the national capital petrol continues to be sold for Rs 101.84 per litre, while diesel remains at the unchanged price of Rs 89.87 a litre.

The pump price of fuel has been static since Sunday. It last increased on July 17 with petrol being revised upwards by 30 paise per litre, while diesel prices remained unchanged.

One of the main reasons for pause in fuel price rise is an over 10 per cent fall seen in global oil prices with benchmark crude

sliding to \$69 a barrel from a high of over \$77 barrel just a few weeks ago.

It had again risen to over \$74 a barrel on strong demand projections. With OPEC reaching an agreement to raise crude production, oil prices are expected to remain soft. This could make way for fuel prices in India to actually fall after a long interval.

In Mumbai, where petrol prices crossed Rs 100 mark for the first time ever on May 29, the fuel price is at Rs 107.83 per litre. Diesel prices in the city is also at Rs 97.45, the highest among metros.

Petrol prices in all metros have now crossed the Rs 100 per litre mark. The week-long price pause comes after fuel prices increased on 41 days and remained unchanged on 44 days since May 1.

The spikes took up petrol prices by Rs 11.44 per litre in Delhi, while diesel increased by Rs 9.14 per litre. Since April 2020, petrol prices have increased by Rs 32.25 per litre from Rs 69.59 a litre to Rs 101.84 a litre now in Delhi.

Similarly, diesel prices during the period has increased by Rs 27.58 per litre from Rs 62.29 to Rs 89.87 a litre in the national capital.

J&K LG Inaugurates Night Flight Operations At Jammu Airport



Agenceis

In a historic move, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday inaugurated the night flight operations at the Jammu Airport.

The Lt. Governor virtually flagged off the first late-night flight of Go Air from Jammu to Delhi to mark the occasion.

He acknowledged the support of the Central Government and different agencies for coordination and ensuring the fulfilment of various procedural and on-ground facilities imperative for the start of night operations.

The Lt. Governor observed that the much-awaited facility will give relief to the passengers and in turn, will have a long term positive impact on the economy of the region.

"The commencement of the

night flight operations will give impetus to the local economy, investment by enhancing the aerial connectivity and increasing tourism footfall in the region. It will also provide much-needed flexibility for residents of the Jammu division to travel to the national capital and beyond," he added.

Pertinently, the move will also benefit the farmers of the region as the Union Territory government has recently inked an MoU with Go Air for subsidised air transportation of vegetables and fruits from Jammu and Kashmir, with the first consignment of Srinagar cherry and Jammu litchi being dispatched to Dubai and Mumbai, respectively. The formal inauguration of the cargo facility is expected soon.

As per the airport authorities, the re-carpeting work of the runway has been completed and the

runway approach lighting system, which includes a series of light bars with strobe lights have already been installed and put in operation.

Accordingly, night operations have been started with all others facilities like Instrument Landing System, CAT-1 lights, precision approach path indicator – PAPI, etc. as they are already installed and commissioned at the Jammu airport.

It was also informed that the extended runway of 1300 ft. length has merged with the existing one, and all allied works shall also be completed by August 31.

Even though the Jammu airport had extended its operational timings in early 2019, the night flights facility in Jammu had remained a distant dream due to unwarranted delays in runway expansion work and other allied procedures that have gathered speed in the past year.

We Can Make Next 30 Years The Best In India's History: Mukesh Ambani

Agenceis

"I am supremely hopeful and confident about the Rise of New India. I can see that the spirit of India is more resurgent than ever before", Mukesh Ambani, Chairman, Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) wrote in Times of India.

Ambani said India and the world changed dramatically at the beginning of the 1990s. Communist Soviet Union collapsed. The cold war ended. And India embarked on a bold new path of economic reforms. "Thirty years later, the global order is changing fundamentally yet again. The speed, scale and substance of this change are unprecedented, even unpredictable. Yet, one thing is absolutely predictable: India's time has come", Ambani said.

"Destiny and Drive is making the 21st century's favourite nation ready for a great leap forward. India stands at the doorstep of prosperity that is both significant and inclusive, and of delivering all-round human development through the democratic route. With faith in our potential, confidence in our collective capabilities, and unity in action, we can exceed the world's expectations", Ambani wrote.

"My source of optimism is our recent past. In 1991, India showed foresight and courage in changing both the direction and determinants of its economy. These reforms liberated India's entrepreneurial energy and inaugurate an era of fast-paced growth", Ambani said.

Ambani said the results are for all to see. India's GDP of \$266 billion in 1991 has grown by over ten times. India's economy has become the fifth largest in the world. Poverty rates have halved despite population rising from 880 million to 1.38 billion. Key infrastructure has improved beyond recognition. Our expressways, airports and ports are now world-class, and so are many of our industries and services. "No young Indian today would believe that people had to wait for years to get a telephone or a gas connection, or that businesses had to seek government's permission to buy a computer", Ambani said.

"India transformed from an economy of scarcity in 1991 into an economy of sufficiency in 2021. Now, India has to transform itself into an economy of sustainable abundance and equitable prosperity for all by 2051. In India, equity will be at the heart of our collective prosperity", Ambani said.

"With our accomplishments over the past three decades, we have earned the right to dream big. What can be a greater dream than to be able to celebrate the centenary of our independence in 2047 by making India one of the world's three wealthiest nations, on par with America and China? Is it too tall an ambition to pursue? No. My visionary father Dhirubhai Ambani, who was one of the earliest advocates of economic liberalisation in the 1980s, used to tell me - To think small is unbecom-



ing of an Indian", Ambani said. How can we realise this ambition? By following our own unique Indian and atmanirbhar model of wealth creation, while cooperating with, and learning all the right lessons from, the rest of the world. Ambani has presented five broad ideas.

First. So far economic reforms have benefited Indians unevenly. The disparity is neither acceptable nor sustainable. Therefore, the Indian model of development should focus on creating wealth for the people at the bottom of the economic pyramid. Our greatest advantage lies in India's continent-sized domestic market, which is still largely untapped. Our economy will begin to witness miraculous growth when we create a middle class of one billion people with rising incomes. In demographic terms, this will amount to adding all of USA and Europe combined to the current size of the Indian market. When so many people are enabled to fulfil their aspirations for a better life, they will set in motion a virtuous cycle of consumption and production. This will cause an exponential rise in young entrepreneurs, including women entrepreneurs. Investors and businesses from around the world will want to participate in this humungous India Opportunity. To achieve this might have seemed impossible in the past. Not so now.

Hence, my second idea. This is the age of technological disruption and acceleration. The world will witness more changes over the next 30 years than seen in the previous 300 years. After losing out in the first two Industrial Revolutions, and catching up on the third, India now has an opportunity to lead the Fourth Industrial Revolution. By speedily deploying its technologies, our entrepreneurs can achieve quantum increases in productivity and efficiency. This will transform not only our large industries and services, but also agriculture, MSMEs, construction, renewable energy, arts and crafts, etc. These are precisely the areas with the highest potential to create large-scale employment, which is India's most pressing need. These technologies can help us achieve quality, affordability and equity in education, healthcare and housing at scale - a dire necessity since our population is expected to rise to 1.64 billion by 2050. They also have the power to reverse degradation of the environment and make it safe for all.

Snapchat Reaches 293 Million Daily Users

Agenceis

SAN FRANCISCO: Snapchat has announced that it now has 293 million daily active users in the second quarter this year, an increase of 55 million year-over-year.

Snap, the parent company of Snapchat, said that its revenue increased 116 per cent to \$982 million in Q2 2021 compared to the prior year. The company said that its net loss improved 53 per cent to \$152 million in Q2 2021, compared to the prior year.

"Our second quarter results reflect the broad-based strength of our business, as we grew both revenue and daily active users at the highest rates we have achieved in the past four years," said Evan Spiegel, CEO.

"We are pleased by the progress our team is making with the development of our augmented reality platform, and we are energized by the many opportunities to grow our community and business around the world," he added. The DAUs increased sequentially



and year-over-year in each of North America, Europe and rest of the world.

"DAUs increased sequentially and year-over-year on both iOS and Android platforms. We invested and innovated in our camera and augmented reality platforms, the company informed.

The company launched a record 177 new international Discover Channels, including 36 in the UK and 24 in India, one of which is a partnership with Sony Pictures Network to launch five Shows.

"We improved several try-on capabilities with Lens Studio 4.0, including multi-person 3D body mesh, advanced cloth simulation, and a new visual effects editor for more realistic Lenses," it added.

Mudgal Chairs Board Meeting Of Jammu Central Co-op Bank Ltd



Sanctions Rs 100 cr Loan for JKIDFC

Agenceis

SRINAGAR: Secretary, Cooperatives Department, Yasha Mudgal, today chaired board meeting of Jammu Central Cooperatives Bank Limited here at Civil Secretariat.

Deputy Commissioner, Jammu, Anshul Garg; Managing Director, Jammu Central Cooperative Bank, Nishi Kant Sharma; Director, Accounts and Treasuries Jammu, Neeraj Gupta Bakshi; Director, Agriculture Jammu, Dr K K Sharma; Advocate, Seema Khajuria Shekhar and Former President, J&K Bank

Limited, S K Bhat attended the meeting as members of the Board via video conferencing.

Nishi Kant apprised the meeting about present status of physical and financial achievements of the bank. He highlighted various issues pertaining to disbursement of loans of agriculture, horticulture and cooperative sectors.

On the occasion, board members gave their valuable suggestions regarding further improvement in working of the bank. They also agreed with the Chairman for sanctioning of Rs 100 crore loan to JKIDFC Limited considering it a good business opportunity backed by irrevocable and unconditional guarantee by the government of

Jammu and Kashmir.

The board unanimously decided that bank should sanction and release the said term loan in favour of JKIDFC subject to compliances of observations raised by the Directors during the deliberations.

Secretary directed the MD to follow guidelines of RBI, and NABARD. "With sanctioning of the said term loan of Rs. 100 crore, the CD ratio of the bank will improve substantially and NPA ratio will come down. This will also lead to an increase in the interest income of the bank with good returns. The bank will be immensely benefitted with this regular income which will result in its operating income going up and losses getting reduced", she maintained.

India Improves In UN's Survey On Digital & Sustainable Trade Facilitation

Agenceis

India has scored 90.32 percent in the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific's (UNESCAP) latest Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation.

A Finance Ministry statement said this was a remarkable jump from 78.49 percent in 2019.

After the evaluation of 143 economies, the 2021 survey has highlighted India's significant improvement in the scores on all 5 key indicators. In terms of transparency, India scored 100 percent in 2021 and 95.83 percent in terms of formalities.

Regarding institutional arrangement and cooperation, India scored 88.89 percent and in the parameter of paperless trade the score was 96.3 percent. The score for cross-border paperless trade was 66.67 percent in 2021.

The survey notes that India is the best-performing country when compared to South and South West Asia region (63.12 percent) and Asia Pacific region (65.85 percent).

The overall score of India has also been found to be greater than many OECD countries including France, the UK, Canada, Norway, Finland, and the overall score is greater than the average score of the European Union.

In terms of "women in trade", India scored 66 percent.

The Ministry statement noted that CBIC, has been at forefront of path-breaking reforms under the umbrella of "Turant" Customs to



usher in a Faceless, Paperless and Contactless Customs by way of a series of reforms.

This has had a direct impact in terms of the improvement in the UNESCAP rankings on digital and sustainable trade facilitation.

Further, during the Covid-19 pandemic, Customs formations have made all efforts to expedite Covid related imports such as Oxygen-related equipment, life-saving medicines, vaccines among others.

A dedicated single window Covid-19 24/7 helpdesk for EXIM trade was created on the CBIC website to facilitate quick resolution of issues

faced by importers.

The Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation is conducted every two years by UN-ESCAP. The 2021 Survey includes an assessment of 58 trade facilitation measures covered by the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement.

The survey is keenly awaited globally as it evidences whether or not the trade facilitation measures being taken have the desired impact and helps draw comparison amongst countries.

A higher score for a country also helps businesses in their investment decisions.

DG Horticulture Visits Ganderbal Takes Stock Of Activities Carried Out In Dept. Nurseries

KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: The Director General (DG) Horticulture Kashmir, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, today conducted an extensive tour of District Ganderbal to take stock of the activities being carried out in Departmental Nurseries at Kralbagh, Wusen Tehsilbagh.

On the occasion, the DG impressed upon the Chief Horticulture Officer (CHO) Ganderbal to make all out efforts in to aware the general public about the modified High Density programme, so that more and more growers come forward for adoption of the scheme, thus enhancing their income.

He advised CHO to ensure the speedy multiplication of the root stock of various fruit crops, so that the local growers will not feel any difficulty during plantation season.

The DG expressed his satisfaction over the work being carried out in the Departmental Nurseries and stressed for further improvement in the work culture of the employees, to serve the public at the expected lines. He also appreciated the employees for the efforts put in by them towards the development of Departmental Nurseries.



During the visit, Director General had a detailed interaction with the growers of the area. He advised them to adopt modern technical instrument for carrying out farming activities, in order to save the labour and input cost.

The Private Nursery growers were advised for plantation and multiplication of more and more of the Apple and other High Density rootstock locally, so that the cost of fruit plants is reduced and are made available to the growers easily and at cheaper rates.

The DG during the visit was accompanied by Chief Horticulture Officer, Ganderbal and other officers/officials of the Department.

FCS&CA Deptt To Rollout Nomination Policy Under PDS



KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: The Administrative Council (AC) which met here today under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, approved the rollout of Nominee Policy for Aadhar enabled Public Distribution System (AePDS) by Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department.

The decision aims to ensure assured regular supply of food grains to all beneficiaries as per the entitlement under National Food Security Act in a smooth and hassle-free manner.

The new policy will enable beneficiaries in old age, bed-ridden or those living with disabilities to nominate a responsible person after due verification to collect the quota of the subsidized ration on their behalf. Moreover, the nominee will be designated only for single/dual member ration cards where the beneficiary is a senior citizens (above 65 years) / minor (below 15 years) / bedridden / differently abled.

The scheme allows a benefi-

ciary to submit a nomination form either to the Tehsil Supply officer (TSO) or dealer or to the Assistant Director (AD) to add the nominated person to the beneficiary's family as a nominee with zero entitlement. To avail ration, the nominee will have to visit the respective dealer and complete the KYC registration and biometric authentication.

In case of unavailability of a nominee, respective Tehsil Supply Officer will be designated as a nominee to beneficiaries requiring special assistance for delivering the requisite ration. However, the nominees will not be allowed to draw ration on behalf of other beneficiaries through the portability feature under 'One Nation One Ration Card' scheme.

Over the past few months, the Department has undertaken a series of reform measures to ensure food security to the residents of Jammu and Kashmir by timely and efficient distribution of food grains at highly subsidized and affordable prices through a network of 6738 outlets.

37.8% 10-year-olds have FB accounts, 24.3% Instagram accounts in contravention of rules: NCPCR study

NEW DELHI: About 37.8 per cent children aged 10 years have Facebook accounts, while 24.3 per cent in the same age group are on Instagram, which is seemingly in contravention to the guidelines laid down by various social networking platforms, the apex child rights body NCPCR found in a new study. The age barrier for creating an account on Facebook and Instagram happens to be 13 years.

In the study by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) on the Effects (Physical, Behavioural and Psycho-social) of using Mobile Phones and other Devices with Internet Accessibility by Children', it was found that a large proportion of 10-year-olds have social media accounts.

According to the study, 37.8 per cent of 10-year-olds and 24.3 per cent of the same age group have Facebook and Instagram accounts, respectively.

This is seemingly in contravention to the guidelines laid down by various social networking platforms, it noted.

"Social media platforms contain and disperse such a variety of content, a lot of which is neither appropriate nor conducive

for children. They can be anything from violent or vulgar content to instances of online abuse and bullying of children. Hence, in this regard, proper oversight and stricter enforcement is required," it said.

Among the children who have accounts on the major social networking apps/sites, Facebook (used by 36.8 per cent) and Instagram (used by 45.50 per cent) are the most popular. For the study, responses from a total of 5,811 participants, consisting of 3,491 school going children, 1,534 parents and 786 teachers from 60 schools, across six states in the country, were collected. The data also showed that the most prominent means to access smartphones and the internet for the children is through their parents' mobile phones—62.6 per cent of respondents.

"It is also interesting to note that 30.2 per cent of the children of age groups (8 to 18 years) possess their own smartphones and use them for all purposes," the study said.

The major activity for which children use smartphones/internet devices is online learning and classes , 94.8 per cent of the

respondents were of this opinion, the study found.

The other major purposes of use include messaging applications (40 per cent), referring study materials (31 per cent), music (31.30 per cent) and games (20.80 per cent).

When asked about the features that children like to enjoy on smartphones/internet devices, 52.9 per cent answered as chatting. Only 10.1 per cent of children like to use smartphones for online learning and education.

According to the data collected, 78.90 per cent of children said that they spend between 0-2 hours on their smartphones for using the internet, playing games, listening to music, chatting, among others, which is quite less compared to popular perception.

While 15.80 per cent of the children spend 2-4 hours on the smartphones, 5.30 per cent spend more than 4 hours on the same.

The study found that about 76.20 per cent children use smartphones before going to sleep.

According to the available literature, the use of smartphones/smart devices which have vibrant screens and motion pictures at a minimum of 36

frames per second, before going to sleep, has many negative and detrimental effects on the state of mind and health of humans, especially children. It can lead to adverse impact on them like sleep disorders, sleeplessness, anxiety, tiredness, among others, the study flagged.

The study also revealed that 23.80 per cent of children use smartphones while they are in bed, before going to sleep, which is quite a substantial proportion and a cause for concern. The data also indicated that use of a smartphone in bed increases with the increase in age of children.

"About 13 per cent children 'always' use smartphones while studying, 23.30 per cent 'frequently' use them, 30.10 per cent 'seldom' use them and only 32.7 per cent of children 'never' check their smartphones while studying'.

"Approximately, 37.15 per cent of children, always or frequently, experience reduced levels of concentration due to smartphone use," the study said.

The NCPCR study also found that a majority of children believe that using the internet has 'very much' or 'partially'

increased their creativity, which is 31.5 per cent and 40.5 per cent, respectively.

While 29.7 per cent of the children feel that the COVID-19 pandemic has very much 'had a negative impact, 43.7 per cent think it has had 'partial' negative impact on their education.

"Hence, it could be concluded that the education of the majority of school children was negatively impacted due to the pandemic and its subsequent consequences," the study said.

Most of the teachers (54.1 per cent) who participated in the study believed the use of smartphones in the classroom is immensely or somewhat distracting.

"Around 72.70 per cent of teachers had no prior experience of using smartphones/internet devices. Therefore, there is a need to equip the teachers with the digital knowhow and give them access to sufficient educational resources and teaching aids," the study said.

The biggest challenge that teachers face in allowing the use of smartphones is that they find it hard to monitor" what students are doing—36.1 per cent were of this opinion.

Probing 'unaccounted transactions' of Rs 200 cr, says CBDT after raids on Bharat Samachar and linked businesses

Agenceis

New Delhi: The CBDT on Saturday claimed to have seized documents and digital records that indicate "unaccounted" transactions of about Rs 200 crore after it raided Lucknow-based Hindi news channel Bharat Samachar and its linked businesses early this week.

The searches were carried out on July 22 at Lucknow, Basti, Varanasi, Jaunpur and Kolkata and at the residential premises of Bharat Samachar Editor-in-chief Brajesh Misra, state head Virendra Singh, BJP MLA from Uttar Pradesh's Harraiya (Basti district) assembly seat Ajay Singh and some others.

The CBDT did not identify the group in the statement and said that apart from news media, the group deals in mining, hospitality, liquor and real estate.

Officials identified it to be the case linked to the raids carried out against Bharat Samachar.

"Cash of more than Rs 3 crore has been seized and 16 lockers have been placed under restraint."

"Documents including incriminating digital evidence indicating nearly Rs 200 crore of unaccounted transactions have been seized," the CBDT claimed, adding the probe in

the case is continuing.

After the raids, Misra said on his official Twitter handle that they are tax-compliant citizens and that they have been paying due taxes for the last two decades. He added that they have been fighting for the public through their journalistic work and the channel had become "the voice of the poor" when the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country this year.

The statement claimed that evidence found during searches "establishes" that the business group has been earning huge outside-the-books income through mining, processing and sales in liquor, flour business, real estate, etc.

"Unaccounted income emanating out of these transactions has been found exceeding Rs 90 crore as per preliminary estimates."

"This income has been brought back into the books through a network of shell companies and other bogus entities without paying any taxes, thereby creating a chadade that the money has been accounted for," it alleged.

During the searches, more than 15 companies incorporated at Kolkata and other places were found to be "non-existent."

CONTD. FROM PAGE 3

CBI Raids 40

56,000 licences issued in three districts -Reasi, Kathua and Udhampur - between 2012-16, only 1,720 were issued in my tenure which is three per cent of all licences issued in three districts in four years or during the period under investigation and 0.38 per cent of all such licences issued in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

The residence of retired officer of Kashmir Administrative Service, Shabir Ahmad Bhat, who has served as DM of Rajouri, was also searched, the officials said.

Besides this, premises of six additional DMs who had served in Poonch, Kupwara, Bandipora, Baramulla and Ramban during 2012-16 were also searched by the CBI, they said.

The agency had registered two separate FIRs into the alleged irregularities on October 16, 2018.

The CBI had in December 2019 carried out searches at over a dozen locations in Srinagar, Jammu, Gurgaon and Noida on the premises of the then district collectors and magistrates of Kupwara, Baramulla, Udhampur, Kishtwar, Shopian, Rajouri, Doda, Pulwama, and several other places.

The searches were carried out in connection with a probe into two cases pertaining to alleged issuance of around two lakh arms licences from different districts of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir by their collectors and magistrates. It is alleged that arms licences were issued in lieu of illegal gratification.

"During investigation and scrutiny of documents, the role of certain gun dealers was found who in connivance with the public servants i.e. the then DM and ADM of concerned district had allegedly issued such illegal arms licences to the ineligible persons. It was also alleged that the persons who got these licences were not residents of the places from where the said arms licenses were issued," CBI spokesperson R C Joshi said in a statement.

It is alleged in the FIR that then public servants in cahoots with other accused issued arms licences to non-residents of state in violation of rules and received illegal gratification.

The CBI spokesperson said it is alleged that more than 2.78 lakh arms licences were issued to the non-entitled persons during 2012-16.

"The CBI also collected documents pertaining to the issuance of said armed licences allegedly spread over 22 districts of J-K," Joshi said.

The Rajasthan ATS had unearthed the scandal in 2017 and had arrested over 50 people for their alleged involvement in the illegal issuance of arms licences. According to the ATS, over 3,000 permits were granted allegedly in the name of Army personnel.

Based on ATS findings, then Jammu and Kashmir Governor N N Vohra had handed over the matter to the CBI.

Soldier Dies

from Ghumarwin village in Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur district. He is survived by mother Vanita Devi, the spokesman said.

"Sepoy Kamal Dev Vaidya was a brave, highly motivated and sincere soldier. The nation will always remain indebted to him for the supreme sacrifice and devotion to duty," he said.

Govt Committed

development of villages, forest dwellers, and farming communities

can only be achieved by protecting forest resources and integrating forest products into the new investment policy."

"J-K is blessed with immense forest wealth which needs to be protected. Our scientists, senior officials, youth, and other stakeholders must engage themselves in rejuvenation of agro-forest resources, he said.

Sinha asked officials to ensure that action is taken against those who have occupied large plots of forest land rather than targeting only the poor.

The interest of the poor people who have been living in the forests for generations must be safeguarded, he added.

The LG said the progressive and future-oriented approach of the government has brought about visible changes in the agro-forestry situation in J-K, leading to improved productivity, profitability and employability in the sector.

He appreciated the collective efforts put in by the vice chancellor, SKUAST-K, and his team for producing human resources in agriculture and allied disciplines, developing technologies for solving farmer's problems in agriculture and allied sciences, besides taking the lab innovations to the field in a bid to substantially increase farmers' income.

The LG also underlined a host of innovative measures taken by the UT government for branding, marketing, and transportation of local agro-forestry products.

The central government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is giving focused attention towards the development and progress of agriculture and allied sectors in the UT, he said.

India Protests

A very strong protest was lodged by BSF delegates regarding drone activities by Pakistan authorities in the Jammu area, the officials said.

At the same time, both sides expressed their commitment to maintaining peace and harmony at the IB, they said.

"The meeting was held in a cordial, positive and constructive atmosphere and both sides agreed on an expeditious implementation of the decisions taken in the earlier DG-level talks and committed to each other to maintain peace and harmony at the IB," the spokesperson said.

The BSF delegation was led by DIG Surjit Singh and the Pakistan Rangers delegation was headed by Brigadier Murad Hussain, sector commander of Sialkot.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Friday shot down a drone carrying improvised explosive device (IED) material weighing five kilograms in the border belt of Jammu district.

Additional Director General of police (ADGP) Mukesh Singh had said terrorist outfits across the border such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) were using drones for attacks and sending weapons to their operatives on the Indian side of the border.

Drones were used on June 27 to drop explosives at the Indian Air Force (IAF) station in Jammu airport, causing minor injuries to its two personnel. Following the militant attack, several border districts have banned or put restrictions on the use of drones. PTI

NGT Raps J&K

a time bound manner, with budgetary support and identified accountable persons. The plan may include among others remedial action against weed infestation, sewage discharges, solid waste disposal, encroachments etc," reads the order passed by the NGT court.

The plan, the Court said may be overseen by the Chief Secretary, J&K in view of the significance of the matter and continued violation of orders of the Honourable Supreme Court.

The Court also asked the Chief Secretary, J&K to remain present in person on the next date, by video conferencing, with compliance status as on October 31, 2021.

The NGT court was hearing the petition filed by prominent RTI activist Dr Raja Muzaffar regarding dumping of Municipal solid waste in Wular Lake and Hokersar wetland, besides illegal encroachment of wetland at Kreentchoo-Chandhara.

The land mafia was eying to grab the Kreentchoo-Chandhara wetland and sell it in the shape of plots. They had even built a Kaccha road to achieve their designs. However, when I moved NGT, the attempt to grab wetland by land mafia stopped," Muzaffar told Kashmir Observer.

Speaking about Asia's largest freshwater lake Wular, Muzaffar said that the Municipal Council Bandipora was dumping solid waste in the Zalwan village situation along the banks of the lake. He said the practice of dumping solid waste had been going on for nearly a decade.

"Zalwan village is a part of Wular Lake. Municipal Council Bandipora bluntly lied to NGT and told them no solid waste was being dumped in Zalwan village. They also submitted an affidavit about their false claim," Muzaffar said.

As a result of their "lies", Muzaffar said, the Jammu & Kashmir Pollution Control Board (PCB) slapped a penalty (environmental compensation) of Rs 64 lacs upon the Municipal Council Bandipora.

Under pressure, he said, the Municipal Council Bandipora identified another place, a part of Wular catchment area, to dump the waste.

"But what the Municipal solid waste rules 2016 say like, segregation of waste, plastic waste management, processing, recycling etc, is not being done at all by the Municipal Council Bandipora. They are relocating the waste, they are not treating it," he said.

The prominent RTI activist further said that the Municipal Council Bandipora was not alone dumping the waste near the Wular Lake. He said Municipal Council Sopore too was dumping solid waste along the banks of Wular Lake in Ningli village of Sopore.

"This too is a Wular catchment area. The villagers woke up to the rising degradation of the Lake and filed a petition. I too filed another petition. Both these petitions were clubbed," Muzaffar said, adding a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was also filed by villagers before the J&K High Court.

"It is in the first time of judicial history of J&K that Chief Justice of J&K High Court went to the spot in Ningli Sopore and ordered immediate end to the dumping of solid waste there," he said.

However, the Municipal Council Sopore, he said, did not stop there. He

said that another place, barely a kilometre from Ningli was identified by the MC Sopore to dump solid waste.

"They left wetland and identified a demarcated forest area in Ningli. They also occupied five kanals of Panchayat land even without informing the Panchayat. He said a Gram Sabha also passed a resolution asking MC Sopore to stop dumping waste in the Panchayat Land," he said.

"Solid waste is also being dumped into Wular Lake from the southern shore near Gandbal village by the Municipal Council Hajin," he said.

About Hokersar, he said, the locals and the traders of Parimpora Mandi would dump waste in the wetland split between Srinagar and Budgam districts of central Kashmir.

"The dumping of waste and illegal encroachment of Hokersar wetland continues till date. There's no ward and watch staff to check these acts," he added.

You Can Decide

Nawaz addressing an election gathering in PCK on July 18 said that a decision had been taken to change the status of Kashmir and make it a province.

"I do not know where all this talk (about province) has sprung from," Khan said, while dismissing any such idea.

Instead, the prime minister said that a day would come when Kashmiris would be allowed to decide their future as per the UN resolutions and expressed the confidence that the people of Kashmir on that day would decide to join Pakistan.

He added that following the UN mandated referendum, his government will hold another referendum to give the people of Kashmir a choice to either live with Pakistan or become an independent state.

As per Pakistan's declared policy on Kashmir, the issue should be resolved as per the UN resolution through a referendum allowing Kashmiris to choose either Pakistan or India.

Prime Minister Khan departed from the policy by talking about the third option. There is no third option of independence in the UN resolution.

India has previously made it clear that the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral and inalienable part of India. New Delhi has also told Islamabad that issues related to Jammu and Kashmir are its internal matter and the country is capable of solving its own problems.

Friday was the last day of campaigning for elections in PCK on July 25.

Responding to PML-N's allegations of election rigging, Khan questioned how his party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) could rig the upcoming polls when the PML-N was still in power in PCK and even the election commission officials were appointed during the PML-N's government.

Khan said his party had been asking the Opposition for a year to come to discuss electronic voting machines.

This technology helps you get the results of polls in no time and there will not be any need for manual counting of votes and moving of the polling bags from one place to another, which is a tiring exercise," he said.

But the Opposition is not willing to listen to us, he rued.

US Asks India

two neighbours to build a more stable relationship going forward.

"With regard to India-Pakistan, I would just note that we strongly believe that India and Pakistan's issues are ones for them to work out between themselves," Acting Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Dean Thompson told reporters during a conference call here on Friday.

"We are pleased to see that the ceasefire that went into place earlier this year is - has remained intact, and we certainly always encourage them to continue their efforts to find ways to build a more stable relationship going forward," Thompson said in response to a question.

Relations between India and Pakistan nose-dived after New Delhi abrogated the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 on August 5, 2019 and bifurcated it into two Union territories. The two neighbours earlier in the year signed a ceasefire agreement.

On a question on Afghanistan, the Acting Assistant Secretary said that the US expects all the countries in the region to have a shared interest in a stable and secure Afghanistan going forward.

Secretary of State Tony Blinken is slated to visit India next week during which Afghanistan would be a major topic of discussion.

We will certainly be looking at talking with our Indian partners about how we can work together to realise that goal, to find ways to bring the parties together, and continue to pursue a negotiated settlement to end the longstanding war," Thompson said.

Budgam Girl's

witnessed an organised targeting of poor women in the wake of muscle and money power. "Such cases would've made much noise elsewhere, but here the victim is forced to live with mental trauma."

Following the FIR, Imtiyaz was lodged in the Khan Sahib Police Station for over a fortnight before a district court granted him bail. "Was he granted bail to continue his monstrosity on our daughter?" the girl's relative told Kashmir Observer.

After being bailed out, Imtiyaz—as per the girl's family—threatened them with severe consequences, for lodging a police complaint against him.

However, a day after the viral video, this reporter visited Khan Sahib to understand the method behind the madness that evoked sharp and widespread condemnation online. While Imtiyaz was unavailable for comments, Rafeeq Ahmed Shah, Station Head Officer of Khan Sahib Police Station, shared the official version of the case with Kashmir Observer.

"Based on Farooq Hajam's allegations against Imtiyaz Ahmed, we have restarted an investigation into the case," SHO Shah made it curt. "We summoned all the involved people to the police station to verify the credibility of the allegations that the girl and her father had raised in a video."

Before sharing her ordeal on social media, the simmering "one-sided love" story was turning out to be a pestering affair for the girl.

An educated person, Fareeda wasn't ready for the relationship. But that hardly kept the boy at bay. Fareeda recalled how he would relentlessly buzz her cellphone number only to face her wrath. Yet, Imtiyaz, a native of Khan Sahib, kept behaving like a jilted lover.

With fear still gripping their residence, Fareeda recalled how two years back the boy had come to their house with a marriage proposal which her father had politely refused and asked Imtiyaz to leave.

"For the next few months, Imtiyaz's absence had been a relief for me," she said. "But after five months, he restarted harassing me by following me everywhere. The person was using every trick in a book to emotionally blackmail me, but I was never interested in him. But he never respected my decision."

With time, she said, Imtiyaz's unrelenting advances would end with the sudden storming of her home—where he would warn her father of "kidnapping Fareeda from her in-laws", if she was married to someone else.

"He even chased me all the way to a Srinagar hospital lately," the girl said. "Despite being told to go away, Imtiyaz harassed me and my mother before beating both of us in the crowded hospital."

At times, she said, he would vent his anger around the Khan Sahib area, going to every household that had sent a marriage proposal to her family. "He was passing only one thing to them: 'I'll kill you if you try to marry Fareeda'," she said.

Surviving in such an abusive and hostile setup has only augmented the fear of the family facing the constant threats and abuse from the bailed-out 'desperado'.

J&K Records 88

35 confirmed cases of mucormycosis or black fungus) in the union territory as no fresh case was reported since last evening.

Police Solves

the police spokesperson said that the officers led by SHO Bijbehara using all available means, zeroed in on one suspect identified as Shahid Afreedi Dar of Guree Hanjipora Anantnag.

"When officers spoke to him, they learnt about his involvement in the commission of crime," he said.

The police spokesperson added that during further questioning, Dar also confessed that he has sold the stolen ornaments to Adil Ahmad Dar, a resident of Guree, who runs a jewellery shop at Pomposh Mohalla Anantnag.

"Subsequently, the stolen property was recovered from the said jewellery shop. Both the accused persons have been arrested and shifted to police station where they remain in custody. Further investigation of the case is in progress," he added.

Rs 7L Fine Recovered

spokesperson said.

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

Two Absconders

"Both the accused were booked in a case 117/1993 under sections 382, 337, 325, 147 RPC but were evading their arrest for the last twenty eight years," the officer said.

He said that the duo have been arrested now by a team of police from Mendhar police station and further legal proceedings have been initiated—(KNO)

JKCA Sub-Committee Visits Ladakh, Ensures Boost To Cricket Activities



Agencies

JAMMU: In order to ensure better cricket activities in the future, BCCI-appointed three-member committee of Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA) on Saturday visited Union Territory of Ladakh and met various cricket stakeholders. An official communique said that the three member Sub-Committee of JKCA paid a two-day visit to Leh.

Pertinent to mention that the Jammu and Kashmir High Court in its judgement had desired that JKCA should extend its reach to Ladakh and ensure that cricketing facilities and infrastructure are made available to the youth of this remote area as well.

The Sub-Committee comprising Brig Anil Gupta (ret'd), Senior Advocate Sunil Sethi and International Cricketer Mithun Manhas apart from interacting with the various stakeholders also physically visited the existing facilities and the proposed cricket stadium at Leh.

During its meeting with the representatives of Leh District Cricket Association led by their President Padma Tamcho it emerged that despite the constraints of height and weather, Cricket was the most popular game among the youth.

On enquiry by Brig Anil Gupta, if the local girls also played cricket, it emerged the game was popular among them as well. Mr Sethi

asked the association representatives to forward to JKCA the names of talented cricketers both boys and girls so that their skills can further be honed.

Mr Manhas recommended that local level tournaments must be conducted by the Association to keep the interest of the youth alive. Association members presented a memorandum in which it was requested to organise tournaments for various age groups and construct one proper cricket ground at Leh, the handout read.

The Sub-Committee also met Advocate Tashi Gyalson, CEC LA-HDC, Leh who also projected the requirement of constructing an exclusive cricket stadium at Leh.

Accompanied by the CEC, the Sub-Committee later visited the proposed site of the stadium where it also interacted with Shrikant Balasabeh Suse, DC Leh, Secretary Sports and other officials of Sports Department.

Mr Manhas provided useful tips about development of the pitch and the ground while Mr Sethi suggested of creating adequate parking facilities as well.

Brig Gupta asked the officials to prepare a proper draft project report along with sketch of the ground for vetting before final decision to submit the same to BCCI is taken.

The Sub-Committee will soon be visiting Kargil also, it read.

JKFA Professional League 2021 Resumes With Two Matches Played



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The JKFA Professional League 2021 resumed after Eid-ul-Adha holidays with two matches played on Saturday at the Synthetic Turf Ground, TRC in Srinagar. The first match of the day, a 3:00 pm kick off, was played between J&K Bank XI & Downtown Heroes FC.

"Both the teams entered the field with high hopes and were aggressive from the very start, trying to find the net. They exhibited quality play and got appreciation from the crowd. The first half was full of attacks and counter attacks but neither team was able to score and the first half ended goalless," the JKFA said in a statement.

"The second half again started on a brisk note with both teams trying their best to take the lead. Man to man marking, perfect ball control were the main features of the match. The high voltage

match saw many ups and downs and both the teams tried to make full use of the opportunities they got to score but could not succeed in finding the net. However in the J&K Bank in the 88th minute made a drastic move and scored a brilliant goal courtesy Prem Kumar. The spectators cherished every moment of the game as J&K Bank XI defeated Downtown Heroes FC by a solitary goal," the JKFA statement said.

Bank's Prem Kumar was declared Man of the Match. The second match was played between Sports Council Football Academy (SCFA) XI and Kashmir Avengers FC. "The SCFA boys presented a good show in the beginning but could not withstand the pressure exerted by the Avengers. It was in the 20th minute Kashmir Avengers scored a goal via a mistake by the SCFA goalkeeper. In the 22nd minute the Avengers doubled their

lead through Kelvin. In 35th minute Pathan tripled the Avengers' lead," the JKFA statement added.

"After the break, Amir and Ishfaq scored two more goals in the 65th and 70th minute of the match. The match ended in favour of Kashmir Avengers as they defeated SCFA XI by 5 goals to nil," the statement said.

Ishfaq Ahmad of Kashmir Avengers FC was declared as Man of the Match.

Dr. Aijaz Ashai, a renowned physiotherapist of Kashmir Valley was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Two matches will be played on Monday, 26th July. The first match will be played between Shaheen FC Jammu & SCFA XI at 3:00 pm while the second match will see Kashmir Avengers FC and Real Kashmir FC go head to head at 5:00 pm.

The Tournament is organized by J&K Football Association in collaboration with J&K Sports Council.

Silver Linings For India As Mirabai Chanu Opens Medal Account At Tokyo Olympics

Press Trust of India

TOKYO: A confident smile never leaving her face, Mirabai Chanu ended India's over two-decade long wait for a weightlifting medal at the Olympics, clinching the 49kg category silver medal five years after leaving the same platform in tears following a disastrous debut.

With her historic triumph, she ensured that India was second on the medals tally for a brief while, a feat that has never been achieved before by the country. It was also the first time that India managed to win a medal on the opening day competitions. The diminutive iron lady from Manipur lifted a total of 202kg (87kg+115kg) to better Karnam Malleswari's bronze in the 2000 Sydney Olympics. With this, she exorcised the ghosts of the 2016 Games where she had failed to log a single legitimate lift, leaving her shattered.

"I am very happy. I have been dreaming of this for the past five years. I am very proud of myself right now. I did try for gold but even silver is a great achievement for me," Chanu told reporters after her career-defining triumph for which she had been training in the US for past few months.

The 2016 experience was a watershed in her career and Chanu had spoken about how confused she had felt during her debut at the biggest stage. There was none of those nerves to be seen on Saturday, just a very composed and focussed athlete who knew she was destined for the podium.



"I am very happy to win the first medal for India at these Games. I don't just belong to Manipur, I belong to the whole country," she said in response to a query on what it meant for her as a Manipuri.

"I would like to thank my coach Vijay Sharma and the support staff for their continuous hard work, motivation and training," she added.

Her smile shone the brightest during the entire performance on Saturday but also hard to miss were the Olympic rings' shaped earrings that she was sporting, which were a gift from her mother.

"I would like to thank my family, especially my mother for a lot of sacrifices and believing in me," she said.

The gold went to China's Hou Zhihui with an effort of 210kg (94kg+116kg), who created Olympic records in all three categories (snatch, clean and jerk and Total).

"I've tried many times to beat her. I failed one attempt (on clean & jerk) but I was trying very hard

to beat her," Chanu said.

Aisah Windy Cantika of Indonesia took home the bronze with an effort of 194kg (84kg+110kg).

Considered her weakness in the run up to the marquee event, Chanu attempted 84kg in her first snatch attempt. The Manipuri took her time and cleanly heaved the barbell.

She lifted 87kg in her next attempt and raised the weight to 89kg, which was 1kg more than her personal best of 88kg that she had lifted at the national championship last year. However, she was unable to better her personal best and settled for 87kg in the snatch event only behind leader Zhihui, who created a new Olympic record with an effort of 94kg.

The Chinese lifter also holds the world mark (96kg) in the category. In the clean and jerk, world record holder Chanu lifted 110kg and 115kg in the first two attempts.

However, she was unable to raise 117kg in her final attempt, which would have been an Olympic record but it was enough to fetch her a medal and open India's account.

The diminutive Mannipuri broke down after realising that she has secured a medal and hugged head coach Vijay Sharma in jubilation.

She later broke into a punjabi bhangra too to celebrate the historic podium finish. Delighted by her achievement, not even a face mask could hide Chanu's smile that spread ear to ear at the medal ceremony, where there was a bit of confusion among the winners.

As per COVID-19 protocols laid

President Kovind, PM Modi Lead India In Hailing Olympic Silver Medallist Mirabai



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the country in congratulating Mirabai Chanu, who on Saturday ended India's 21-year wait for a weightlifting medal at the Olympics by clinching a silver in the 49kg category at the Tokyo Games.

The 26-year-old lifted a total of 202kg (87kg+115kg) to better Karnam Malleswari's bronze in the 2000 Sydney Olympics and open India's account in Tokyo.

With this, she exorcised the ghosts of the 2016 Games where she had failed to log a single legitimate lift. The gold went to China's Hou Zhihui for an effort of 210kg (94kg+116kg), while Aisah Windy Cantika of Indonesia took home the bronze with an effort of 194kg (84kg+110kg).

President Kovind congratulated Chanu on her historic feat. "Heartiest congratulations to Mirabai Chanu for starting the medal tally for India in the Tokyo Olympics 2020 by winning silver medal in weightlifting," Kovind tweeted.

Wishing Mirabai on her success, PM Modi said her feat will inspire the future generations.

"Could not have asked for a happier start to @Tokyo2020! India is elated by @mirabai_chanu's stupendous performance. Congratulations to her for winning the Silver medal in weightlifting. Her success motivates every Indian. #Cheer4India #Tokyo2020," Modi tweeted.

Sports Minister Anurag Thakur and his predecessor Kiren Rijiju too congratulated the weightlifter for bagging a medal for India on the first day of the competitions here.

"India's 1st medal on day 1! @mirabai_chanu wins SILVER in women's 49kg weightlifting! India is so proud of you Mira!," Thakur wrote on his twitter handle.

Rijiju added: "India strikes first medal at Olympic #Tokyo2020! Mirabai Chanu wins silver Medal in 49 kg Women's Weightlifting and made India proud Congratulations @mirabai_chanu! #Cheer4India."

India's lone Olympic gold medalist and former shooter Abhinav Bindra too took to the social networking platform to wish Mirabai.

"Many many Congratulations to @mirabai_chanu on winning India's first medal at #Tokyo2020. Such An inspiring performance that will be remembered for a long time to come and will inspire generations. Well done."

Varun Chakravarthy Set For Debut As India Start Favourites Versus Lanka In T20I Series

Press Trust of India

COLOMBO: Mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy could well be in line for international debut as a formidable India, with a galaxy of powerhouse IPL performers, start as overwhelming favourites against Sri Lanka in the opening T20 International here on Sunday.

Having lost a game in the ODI series, Shikhar Dhawan's men would look to go one better against Sri Lanka with a team that is ahead in almost all departments.

Coach Rahul Dravid will, however, want to check out Chakravarthy, who can bowl off-breaks, carrom ball and also take the deliveries away from right-handers, having proved his prowess in the Indian Premier League.

Having missed out on an away series in Australia and home series versus England due to poor fitness and injury related issues, the 29-year-old Chakravarthy will like his fairytale story to continue even as the Indian team is looking at one spinner for the T20 World Cup in the UAE.

Chakravarthy, a qualified architect, was more of a tennis ball player, who took to serious cricket much later in his life and earned his stripes through some great showing in the competitive Tamil Nadu Premier League (TNPL), which got him his maiden IPL contract.

His is a beautiful story and if he could make it to the World T20 squad, it will be nothing short of spectacular, given the fact that he

is not a product of a structured cricket system.

The other debut could be one among Devdutt Padikkal and Ruturaj Gaikwad, both of whom had been proven IPL performers. With Prithvi Shaw and Suryakumar Yadav set to leave for England, the team management might not risk playing both the players.

Padikkal's elegance is much anticipated in the international arena and he will get a good guide in skipper Dhawan, who has picked up his T20 game in the last two editions of IPL.

It is expected that both Ishan Kishan and Sanju Samson will be included in the playing XI from which Manish Pandey, after an indifferent T20 series, is set to be dropped. The Pandya brothers — Hardik and Krunal — are automatic choices in this format.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Deepak Chahar, after a much well-earned rest, will be back in the mix and Yuzvendra Chahal is likely to join Krunal and Chakravarthy in the slow-bowling department.

For Sri Lanka, the first win against India in an ODI on home soil after nine years could be just the turnaround that the country's cricketing ecosystem needs after being in shambles for years.

Dasun Shanaka is a young captain but is trying to be instinctive on the field but with some quality players like Bhanuka Rajapaksa, Chamika Karunaratne and Avishka Fernando in their ranks, they would try to pose quality challenge for the Indians.

PSL 2022 To Be Played In January-February To Avoid Clash With IPL

Agenceis

The seventh edition of the PSL will be played in Pakistan in a window in January-February next year, the PCB has confirmed after consulting the six franchises. The tournament is expected to start in early January and continue till the third week of February. The scheduled has been drawn up despite a dates' clash with the BBL in Australia. Lahore and Karachi will host 17 matches each, with the final to be played at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore.

The regular PSL window, since 2016, has been in February-March, but in 2022, Pakistan is hoping to host Australia. That forced PCB to work a window either before the series against Australia or after, and neither window was without its share of clashes. April-May clashes with the IPL, and that affects the broadcasting and commercial arrangements. It is also likely to affect player availability. That window will also overlap with the month of Ramadan.

The January-February period isn't free either, because the BBL takes place then, and a number of premier T20 players are expected to be occupied there. There is also the issue of the weather in the Punjab province of Pakistan, which tends to be foggy

in winter. To deal with the weather, the PCB has decided to start the PSL in Karachi, which is in the Sind province, in January, and then travel to Lahore, in Punjab, in February, when it is likely to be more conducive.

The Covid-19 pandemic has hampered the PSL schedule for the past two seasons, as it has the cricket calendar around the world. The fifth and sixth editions of the tournament were both played in two chunks. The 2021 edition started in February in Pakistan but was postponed after 14 matches and completed in June in Abu Dhabi. In 2020, the tournament started on time in February, but though the league stage was completed by March, the playoffs could only be held in November.

The seventh edition of the PSL will also have fresh broadcast and commercial partners after the previous deals concluded this year after a three-year run. The PCB has confirmed that it is presently working at a framework for the evaluation of the rights and their subsequent sale. The PCB is expected to hire an independent consultant to evaluate the value of the brand. In the last cycle, the PCB had secured a 358% rise in the broadcast deal, worth approximately USD 36 million.

earn the bronze medal.

CYCLING MEN'S ROAD RACE

Ecuador won its first cycling medal as Richard Carapaz took gold in the Olympic road race.

Embracing his nickname of "The Locomotive," Carapaz rode away from American breakaway buddy Brandon McNulty as they approached the finish at Fuji International Speedway.

He slapped his handlebars in celebration as he crossed the line, where he was greeted by one of the few crowds allowed at the Olympics.

The chasing group rounded the corner in sight of him at the finish line, then played a game of cat-and-mouse for the other two medals. Belgian star Wout van Aert wound up edging Tour de France champion Tadej Pogacar of Slovenia in a photo finish.

FENCING

WOMEN'S EPEE INDIVIDUAL

Sun Yiwen of China defeated five-time Olympian Ana Maria Popescu of Romania

11-10 in overtime to win gold in the women's epee fencing competition.

Popescu tied the score at 10 with 3 seconds remaining to go to overtime, but Sun soon scored the winning point in the deciding period.

Sun completed her set of Olympic medals after winning individual bronze and team silver at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games. Popescu has yet to win an individual gold medal at any of her five Olympic appearances despite often being among the favorites. She won team gold in 2016.

Katrina Lehis of Estonia took the bronze by beating Russian fencer Aizanat Murtazaeva 15-8.

MEN'S SABRE INDIVIDUAL

Aron Szilagyi of Hungary became the first Olympic fencer to win three individual sabre gold medals after beating Luigi Samele 15-7 in the men's final.

Szilagyi used his fast reflexes to build an early 7-1 lead and held off a brief comeback from his Italian opponent before closing out the win.

Szilagyi won gold at the 2012 London

Games and the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games.

Samele reached the final after a remarkable win in the semifinals. He came back from 12-6 down to beat Kim Jung-hwan of South Korea 15-12.

Kim took bronze with a 15-11 win over Sandro Bazadze of Georgia.

JUDO

WOMEN'S 48-KILOGRAM

Distria Krasniqi of Kosovo beat Funa Tonaki in the women's 48-kilogram Olympic judo final, depriving host Japan of its first gold medal in its home Olympics and winning Kosovo's second-ever Olympic medal. Krasniqi won on a throw with 20 seconds left, scoring a waza-ari and claiming a title that moved her to tears moments later.

Although Krasniqi was the top seed, she was severely challenged by the 4-foot-10 Tonaki, who beat a series of difficult opponents to reach the final.

Tonaki fell agonizingly short of claiming a gold medal in Japan's beloved, home-grown martial art. Her success would have provided a much-needed jolt of positivity for a nation still feeling profoundly ambiva-

lent about these Olympics and discouraged by the scandals and coronavirus setbacks surrounding them.

MEN'S 60-KILOGRAM

Naohisa Takato has won Japan's first gold medal at its home Olympics, beating Taiwan's Yang Yung-wei in the men's 60-kilogram judo final.

Takato won his final three bouts in sudden-death golden score, but took the final a bit anticlimactically after Yang committed too many fouls.

The charismatic Takato's success in Japan's homegrown sport could provide a much-needed jolt of excitement for a nation still feeling profoundly ambivalent about these Olympics and discouraged by the scandals and coronavirus setbacks surrounding them.

SHOOTING

WOMEN'S 10-METER AIR RIFLE

China's Yang Qian won the first gold medal of the Tokyo Olympics in women's 10-meter air rifle.

Yang overtook Anastasiia Galashina

when the Russian missed the center two rings for an 8.9 on her final shot.

Yang had a 9.8 on her final shot and finished with an Olympic record 251.8. Galashina finished at 251.1.

Switzerland's Nina Christen took bronze.

MEN'S 10-METER AIR PISTOL

Javad Foroughi has become the oldest Iranian athlete to win an Olympic medal, earning gold in men's 10-meter air pistol.

Foroughi set an Olympic record with 244.8 points, finishing 6.9 ahead of silver medalist Damir Mikec of Serbia. China's Pang Wei, the 2008 gold medalist, took bronze.

The 41-year-old Foroughi surpasses Iranian weightlifter Mahmoud Namdjou, who was 38 when he took bronze at the 1956 Melbourne Games.

Foroughi, ranked fourth in the world, qualified fifth and immediately jumped to the lead in the finals with a series of shots in the 10-ring. He led Mikec by 4.2 points entering the final two shots and celebrated by waving his towel before kneeling on it to pray.

Round-Up Of Tokyo Olympic Gold Medals From Saturday, July 24

Agencies

TOKYO: Here's a round-up of gold medals from Saturday, July 24 at the Tokyo Games:

ARCHERY MIXED TEAM

An San and teenager Kim Je Deok paired up to lead South Korea to a gold medal in the Olympic debut of archery's mixed team event at the Tokyo Games.

On a sizzling Saturday at the Yumenoshima Park Archery Field, they held off Gabriela Schloesser and Steve Wijler of the Netherlands by a tally of 5-3 to bring home yet another archery gold for South Korea. The country has now captured 14 of 17 gold medals in archery team competitions since the current format was introduced to the Olympics in 1988.

What's more, it was the 24th Olympic gold medal for South Korea's archery program, matching short track speed skating for most by the country in a particular sport.

Alejandra Valencia and Luis Alvarez combined for Mexico and knocked off Yasemin Anagoz and Mete Gazoz of Turkey to

A line of white ambulances is parked on a dirt road. Several medical personnel in blue protective suits and a police officer in khaki are standing near the vehicles. The ambulances have red crosses and blue emergency lights. The background shows a line of trees under a cloudy sky.



<https://youtube.com/c/kobserver>

