



P3 CITY

RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED AROUND WATER BODIES TO PREVENT LITTERING

The District Magistrate Srinagar Wednesday ordered imposition of section 144 around newly restored water-bodies of Srinagar district to prevent garbage throwing

P6 DERAILED DIALOGUE

Raising some fresh hope for an engagement between India and Pakistan, Pakistan National Security Advisor Moeed Yusuf has in yet another interview with noted anchor Karan Thapar indicated that the door could still be open for a bilateral dialogue.



P12 OUTPOST

EARTH'S 'VITAL SIGNS' WORSENING AS HUMANITY'S IMPACT DEEPENS

Thousands of scientists have repeated calls for urgent action to tackle the climate emergency, warning that several tipping points are now imminent.



China Weighs Heavy

Blinken Sets Humble Tone In New Delhi

Agencies

NEW DELHI: On his first official visit to India, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken sought common ground with New Delhi in their disputes with China and warned of "rising global threats to democracy," but told reporters "when we discuss these issues, I certainly do it from a starting point of humility."

Blinken earlier had issued a veiled warning about Indian democracy backsliding. [More On P10](#)

Mehbooba Likens BJP With East India Company

Says Whatever Was Taken Away On 5Th Aug 2019 Must Be Restored

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday termed decision of 5 August 2019 and beyond by the government of India as "illegal and unconstitutional", saying such actions have only added to the complexities of J&K issue and those with full faith in the country's democratic and constitutional. [More On P10](#)

Flash Floods Wreak Havoc In J&K

7 People Dead In Kishtwar Cloudburst, 17 Injured; MeT Predicts More Downpour



Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Flash floods triggered by heavy rains and cloudburst wreaked havoc in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday leaving at least seven people dead and 17 others injured besides causing widespread

damages to property.

A cloudburst hit a remote village in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district early Wednesday, leaving seven people, including three women dead and 17 others injured, officials said. The victims have been identified as

Saja Begum, Rakila Begum, Ghulam Nabi, Abdul Majid, Zaytoona Begum, Touseef Iqbal and Ghulam Mohi-Ud-Din.

Six houses and a ration depot situated on the banks of a stream besides a bridge were damaged in the cloudburst which triggered. [More On P10](#)

LG Announces Rs 5L Ex-Gratia For Victims Kin

Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Wednesday announced an ex-gratia of Rs 5 lakh each for the next of kin of those who lost their lives in the cloudburst in Kishtwar. The grievously injured would be given Rs 50,000 each and Rs 12,700 under SDRF shall also be disbursed, an official spokesperson said. He said relief under SDRF for loss of houses. [More On P10](#)

Cloudburst Near Amarnath Shrine, No Loss Of Life

A cloudburst occurred near the holy cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir Himalayas on Wednesday, but there was no loss of life in the incident, officials said. The incident took place in the afternoon, leading to shooting stones which caused damage to some tents, the officials said. However, there was no loss of life in the incident, they said. The officials said two teams of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF). [More On P10](#)

Cloudburst Prediction Difficult: Experts

With Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh being hit by cloudbursts, experts on Wednesday said predicting this disaster is difficult as it is mostly a localised event and occurs in the hilly areas. If 10 centimetres of rainfall is received at a station in one hour, the rain event is termed as cloudburst. This sudden discharge of a large amount of water not only leads to human casualties

but also loss of property. India Meteorological Department (IMD) Director General Mrunujay Mohapatra said cloudburst is a very small-scale event and mostly occurs over hilly areas in the Himalayas or in the western ghats. He said when warm monsoon winds interact with cold winds it leads to formation of huge clouds, which is also due to the topography or orographic factors. [More On P10](#)

J&K To Get Statehood After Normalcy Is Restored: GoI



File Photo: Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Jammu and Kashmir would be granted statehood at an "appropriate

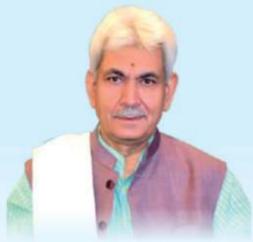
time after normalcy is restored there, the government told Parliament on Wednesday. Minister of State for Home Affairs. [More On P10](#)

Militancy On Decline In Last Two Years

The number of incidents of militant violence has come down in Jammu and Kashmir in the last two years, the government informed Parliament on Wednesday. In a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said, "The number of terrorist incidents has reduced during 2020 by 59 per cent as compared to 2019 and 32 per cent. [More On P10](#)

'KPs Feeling More Secure, Many Have Returned To Valley'

Kashmiri Pandits have been feeling "more secure" and over 3,800 youngsters from the community have moved back to. [More On P10](#)



Shri Manoj Sinha
Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor

TRANSFORMING FISHERIES SECTOR Supporting Livelihoods



ENHANCEMENT OF FISH PRODUCTION & PRODUCTIVITY

Capital Assistance/Subsidy upto ₹ 20 Lakhs for Establishment of Fish Seed Hatcheries (Pvt. Sector) (For Cluster Units)
Capital Assistance/Subsidy 4.96/ha for Establishment of Carp Fish Ponds & other ponds including input cost



TECHNOLOGY INFUSION & ADAPTATION

Capital Assistance/Subsidy upto ₹ 3 Lakh for Installation of Biofloc Aquaculture System (07 tanks of 4mtrs dia & 1.5 mtrs ht.)



FISH FEED MILL

Capital Assistance/Subsidy upto ₹ 12 Lakh for Establishment of Mini Feed Mills of Production capacity of 2 ton/Day (for Cluster Units)



ESTABLISHMENT OF TROUT UNIT

Capital Assistance/Subsidy upto ₹ 2.2 Lakh for Establishment of Trout Unit

DEVELOPMENT OF ORNAMENTAL & RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

Capital Assistance/Subsidy upto ₹ 10 Lakh for Integrated Ornamental Fish Unit (Breeding and Rearing for fresh Water)



MARKETING INFRASTRUCTURE & SUPPORT BY WAY

Capital Assistance/Subsidy upto ₹ 12 Lakh for Opening of kiosks (for minimal processing preservation grading/storage of Fish)
Capital Assistance/Subsidy Upto ₹ 7.5 Lakh for Packing material unit support on Plant and Machinery



DIPK-5437/21

HC Quashes Three PSA Detention Orders

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The High Court on Wednesday quashed detention orders under Public Safety Act against three detainees and ordered their release from the preventive custody forthwith, provided they are required in any other case.

A bench of Justice Tashi Rabstan quashed District Magistrate Shopian's order (no.33/ DMS / PSA/2019; dated 10.08.2019) under PSA against one Abid Ahmad Shah son of Mehrj-ud-din Shah of Bala Nowpora and ordered his release from the preventive detention.

"Respondents, including Jail Superintendent concerned, are directed to release the (detainee) forthwith, provided he is not required in any other case," the court said.

A bench of Justice Sanjeev Kuma quashed the detention order against Sheeraz Ahmad Sheikh of Batamuran Wanpora, Shopian passed by the District Magistrate of the south Kashmir district on 8 August 2019.

"Lack of awareness on part of the Detaining Authority and failure to consider the relevant material i.e. bail granted to the (detainee) in FIR No.25/2019 by the competent Court of jurisdiction has vitiated the subjective satisfaction allegedly derived by the Detaining Authority for putting the detainee under preventive detention," the court said as per GNS, adding, "Had the relevant material in the shape of bail order and report of Forensic Science Laboratory been brought to the notice of the Detaining Authority, there was every possibility of the Detaining Authority taking a different view in the matter."

Subsequently the court quashed the detention order and directed the officials to release the detainee from preventive custody forthwith if not required in any other case.

The court also quashed detention order (42/DMP/ PSA/ 20) passed by District Magistrate Pulwama on 24 November 2020 against Umar Yousaf Bhat of Pulwama.



Non-local tourists walk along the famous Boulevard Road in Srinagar on Wednesday as rains lashed the capital city bringing down the temperature. KO Poto Abid Bhat

Restrictions Imposed Around Water Bodies To Prevent Littering

Srinagar: The District Magistrate Srinagar Wednesday ordered imposition of section 144 around newly restored waterbodies of Srinagar district to prevent garbage throwing and pollution of rivers and streams.

The places where section 144 has been imposed include Nigeen Lake, Khushalsar, Gilsar and Nalah-e-Amir Khan.

An order issued by the District Magistrate Srinagar Mohammad Aijaz reads: "Whereas, rejuvenation of water bodies of District Srinagar viz Nigeen Lake, Khushalsar, Gilsar and Nalah-e-Amir Khan is in progress, the restoration of glory of these water bodies calls for putting in place immediate measures like banning the dumping of garbage into these water bodies."

Officials in the Srinagar administration said that section 144 has been imposed around newly restored water bodies to stop throwing of garbage, and the move has been taken after the district administration Srinagar got complaints about people throwing the garbage into these water bodies.

Whereas, it has come to the notice of undersigned that pedestrians / general public often throw litter and garbage in and around these water bodies thus resulting in pollution. Whereas, after strenuous efforts and massive dredging exercise, the aquatic life in the above water bodies has been restored after decades

litter and garbage in and around these water bodies thus resulting in pollution. Whereas, after strenuous efforts and massive dredging exercise, the aquatic life in the above water bodies has been restored after decades. "Whereas, any deterioration in the quality of water of these water bodies may have resultant adverse impact not only on aquatic life but also on the livelihood of the community dependent upon the products like fishing, Nadru etc. Whereas, Nallah Amir Khan has been restored and further work restoration of pristine nature of the water body is in progress. Whereas, there is evidence that the constant flow of effluents / pollutants into these water bodies is affecting aquatic life and its sustenance, thus calling for immediate remedial measures, Whereas, immediate remedy is required to prevent dumping of solid waste and influx of liquid waste into these water bodies and to save the newly formed aquatic life by way of imposition of ban on littering / dumping of garbage / waste into these bodies."

"There is an urgency to save the aquatic life", the order reads.

It further reads that during the inspection of rejuvenation works it has been noticed that litter / garbage is being dumped from adjoining residential areas on the banks and into the water bodies.

"Whereas, it has come to the notice of undersigned that pedestrians / general public often throw

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for the renewal of my old Passport No. H1052456. As per the passport my name is mentioned as "Syed Mohammad Mujtaba". However as per my 10th class certificate my name is mentioned as "SYED MOHD MUJTABA NASIR". I would like to get the same name updated on the new passport as well in accordance with passport renewal regulations.



If anyone has any objections please raise within 2 days of publication of this notice. SYED MOHD MUJTABA NASIR S/O: DR SYED NASIR SHAH RIZVI R/O: NAWABAGH, BAGHWANPORA, LALBAZAR, SRINAGAR 190011. DOB: 18/06/1988.

mnko

Congratulation to Sabreena Yaqoob



It is really a moment of pride & joy for all of us that you have been awarded with the gold medal in the 19th Convocation of University of Kashmir in the faculty of Linguistics. It is undoubtedly the recognition of your dedication and hardwork. You really deserve an appreciation on this special occasion that has swelled our chests with pride and contentment.

Your scintillating success has established a benchmark for all of us. We really feel delighted by your achievement. It has raised the bar of expectations for us about you. And together we pray for you to achieve many more milestones for all times to come. Once again we congratulate you on this remarkable success and pray for the happening of many more such moments in future.

From All Nears & Dears

Office of the Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag

NOTICE

Whereas joint application has been received by this office from Javid Ahmad Mir S/O Abdul Rehman Mir R/o Bulbul Nowgam Ang (Party No 1st) as Transferor, (seller) owner of the Vehicle -- Bearing Regd JK03E-1325 (Commercial/non-commercial) covering under R/P No. 5038/MC and Mubark Ahamd Malik S/O Mohd Akbar Malik R/O Hangal Pahoo Pahalgam Angt (Party No. 2nd) as Transferee (purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted vehicle from Party NO. 1st and 2nd & HP cancellation with J&K Bank Bulbul Nowgam AND Endorsement Sudeshan Hire Purchase LTD Transport Nagar Jammu .

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

No: 101/8300/MVD ANG Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag RNA dated: 28-7-2021

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION KULGAM

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER FOR MACADAM WORKS

NIT No. 43/2021-22/RnB/Kul /e-tendering/ 3394-3414 dated 27-07-2021

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

S.No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs in lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (in Rs)	Time of completion	Major Head of Account	Class of Contractor
1.	Improvement of road by way of P/L 25mm thick semidense with 6mm thick seal coat in patches/ stretches on existing pavement mechanically with paver on Frisal Awneera incld: Friscal chingam road	7.75	300	05 days	3054 M&R	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner

Position of AAA: Accorded vide S.E's order No: SE/R&B/Ang-Kul/AAA/6 of 2021-22 dated 05-05-2021

Technical Sanction: under process

Position of funds: 50% available

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	27-07-2021
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	27-07-2021 from 1.00 PM to 02-08-2021 upto 4.00 PM
3	Bid submission Start Date	27-07-2021 from 1.00 PM
4	Bid Submission End Date	02-08-2021 upto 4.00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	02-08-2021 at 4.30 PM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kulgam

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kulgam (Major Head 0059-Rev:Misc) [Tender Inviting Authority] (Name of Work to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt) (Refer Govt. order No. O.M.No. A/24 (2017)-651 Dt 07-06-2018 (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Kulgam (Tender receiving Authority).

3. All the Bidders have to submit Bid Security Declaration Form instead of Earnest money as per the Circular of Finance Department (Bid security Declaration Form is as per Annexure "A" below).

4. The 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 03 Days before fixation of Contract and shall be released after successful completion of work.

5. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kulgam

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

7. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

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

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

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

d. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.

e. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid.

f. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents including tender document fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid.

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

8. The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.

9. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt in favour of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Kulgam (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Kulgam must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The Original Treasury Challan (Cost of Tender Document) and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of the Contract.

10. Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.

11. Price escalation and taxes: The %age quoted by the bidder entirely in Indian Rupees, shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.

12. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.

13. All other terms and conditions are as same as laid in PWD Form 25.

No 3415-17 Dtd 27-07-2021

DIPK-5422/21

Sd/ Executive Engineer, R&B Division Kulgam

DIAL-EMMA

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200



AIRPORTS

SHIEKH 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
18 Zil Haj
1442

PRAYERS

FAJR 4: 00
ZUHR 12:37
ASR 5:33
Magrib 7:40
ISHA 9:14

This Day In History

- 1693- War of the Grand Alliance: Battle of Landen/ Neerwinden - France wins
- Pyrrhic victory over Allied forces in the Netherlands.
- 1696- Louis XIV. King of France, & Victor Amadeus II, Duke of Savoy, sign Peace of Turin,
- a turning point in the War of the League of Augsburg
- 1783- Skaptar Volcano on Iceland erupts killing about 9,000
- 1786- 1st newspaper published west of Alleghenies, Pitts Gazette
- 1858- Treaty of Amity and Commerce/Harris Treaty signed between US & Japan opening Japanese ports to trade
- 1899 -The First Hague Convention is signed.
- 1913- Albania becomes sovereignty under prince Wilhelm von Wied
- 1914- Russia mobilize troops along Austrian boundary
- 1914- In response to Austria's declaration of war on Serbia, Russian diplomats and general
- urge general mobilization, but the Tsar calls for partial mobilization
- 1921- Adolf Hitler becomes leader of the National Socialist German Workers Party
- 1922- Greek troops defeat Turkish forces and are on their way to Constantinople, but the
- Allies forbid them taking the city
- 1927- 1st iron lung installed (Bellevue hospital, NY)
- 1932- Great Depression: in Washington, D.C., U.S. troops disperse the last of the "Bonus Army" of World War I veterans.
- 1944- Allied air force bomb Germany for 6 hours
- 1949- Moscow ends the blockade of West Berlin
- 1949- BBC radio begins broadcasting
- 1952- 1st nonstop transpacific flight by a jet
- 1965- Gemini 5 returned after 12d 7h 11m 53s
- 1969- Mariner 6 begins transmitting far-encounter photos of Mars
- 1978- Pioneer 11 transmits images of Saturn & its rings
- 2013- 300 prisoners are freed after a Taliban attack in Dera Ismail Khan, Pakistan
- 2014- France contributes 8 million Euros in aid to Gaza
- 2014- 100 Gazans killed overnight by Israeli strikes
- 2015- Over 3,500 immigrants over 2 days attempt to enter the Channel Tunnel at Calais, to cross into Britain
- 2015- Mohammed Omar, mullah and Taliban leader is confirmed dead (killed 2013) by the Afghan government

From KO Archives

Tunnel Beneath Kohi Sulaiman

Govt exploring feasibility to ease traffic

Observer News Service

Srinagar - Jammu and Kashmir government would explore feasibility of constructing a tunnel across the Shankaracharya (Kohi Sulaiman) hill to address the acute traffic congestion on the Boulevard and Dalgate.

"We will explore the possibility of constructing a tunnel in the Shankaracharya hill to connect the Gupak road with the Boulevard," Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed said here this morning at a function organised to name the road from Jehangir Chowk to Batmala as Mohammad Yusuf Rathar Avenue. He unveiled a black marble plaque to announce the new name of the road.

Rathar a brilliant-engineer who headed the R&B department in Kashmir lost his life in a grenade blast in the south Kashmir village of Kapran on July 19, 2004.

The Chief Minister said traffic congestion in the Srinagar City is assuming alarming proportions and movement of vehicles on busy routes has become a real problem. He cited the instance of Dalgate and the Boulevard and said his government, apart from planning a flyover near the J&K Bank Corporate Office, is also contemplating construction of a tunnel in the Shankaracharya hill so that some of the traffic is diverted through it. This would ease the traffic congestion at the busy junction of the city. He said technical and environmental feasibility of the tunnel would be explored.

The Chief Minister said he has asked the R&B department to repair on priority the city roads which have been damaged due to heavy snowfall last winter. He said the city is the heart of the valley and its roads should present a beautiful picture. He alluded to the efforts made by his government in the beautification of the city and said the various development measures taken during the last about 3 years would soon transform Srinagar into a city of international reckoning.

Mufti Sayeed paid rich tributes to late Engineer Mohammad Yusuf Rathar and said he was an honest, dedicated and upright officer. He said he had excelled himself as an able and efficient officer. He said the rechristening of the Jahangir-Batamala Road after his name is a tribute to this son of the soil. He also remembered other victims of the Kapran blast including Abdur Rashid, Special Assistant to Minister for Power and paid tributes to them.

(Kashmir Observer, 29 July, 2005)

Saudi's 3-Year Travel Ban For Citizens Visiting 'Red List' Nations Including India: Report



Agenceis

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia has announced a three-year travel ban and hefty penalties on citizens who visit countries on the kingdom's COVID-19 red list, including India.

"Travelling to the banned countries is an obvious violation of COVID-19 related travel restrictions and the Kingdom's updated instructions," the Gulf News on Tuesday quoted a report by the state-run Saudi Press Agency (SPA) as saying.

The SPA report said an official at the Saudi Ministry of Interior has warned Saudi citizens against travelling to countries that have been put on the no-travel list recently as these nations are currently witnessing a surge in cases of COVID-19 and its variants.

The red-list countries include the UAE, Libya, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Iran, Turkey, Armenia, Ethiopia, Somalia, Congo, Afghanistan, Venezuela, Belarus, India and Vietnam.

According to news agency Press Trust of India, the source, quoted by the SPA, said there are

reports about citizens travelling to the banned countries in violation of the instructions issued by official authorities.

According to news agency PTI, those who violate the travel ban will be held accountable and slapped with heavy penalties, the source said, adding that those who are found to have violated the instructions would be banned from travelling abroad for three years.

The ministry called on citizens against travelling directly or indirectly to the red-list countries where the pandemic has not yet been controlled and there is a surge in cases of mutated strains of coronavirus. It also urged citizens to exercise caution and stay away from areas where instability prevails or the virus is spreading, and take all precautionary measures regardless of their destination.

PromotedListen to the latest songs, only on JioSaavn.com

As on Tuesday, the kingdom's coronavirus tally stands at 520,774, including 11,136 active cases, while the total number of deaths was at 8,189.

Hajj Pilgrims Face Growing Heat Stroke Risks With Global Warming

Agenceis

The risk of pilgrims suffering life-threatening heat stroke could rise five-fold with global warming of 1.5°C above preindustrial times

As thousands of devout Muslims flock to Islam's holiest sites in Saudi Arabia for the annual Hajj pilgrimage this week, scientists warn the sacred rite is under threat due to deadly rising heat.

The risk of pilgrims suffering life-threatening heat stroke could rise five-fold with global warming of 1.5°C above preindustrial times, found the study in the journal Environmental Research Letters.

With an increase of 2°C - the less ambitious goal of the 2015 Paris Agreement - the probability becomes 10 times higher, said Climate Analytics, a Berlin-based think-tank.

"The region is already susceptible to dangerous heat levels. We found that even in the best-case scenario, where temperatures only go up by 1.5°C, pilgrims would still be under threat," said Fahad Saeed, lead author of the study.

"It will compromise the very essence of this religion," Saeed, regional lead scientist for Climate Analytics, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The world has already heated up by about 1.2°C and is currently on track for warming of about 3°C this century as emissions continue to rise.

The Hajj, a once-in-a-lifetime duty for every able-bodied Muslim who can afford it, involves several outdoor activities, including praying outside and walking from one religious site to another during the day.

The risk of heat stroke stems not just from rising temperatures, but from more humidity - which prevents sweat from evaporating as quickly, making it harder to cool down.

To guard against the coronavi-

rus, only 60,000 pilgrims are visiting the main sites from July 17 to 22 this year, in temperatures of about 36°C to 43°C.

Climate Analytics found that July, August, September and October will have the deadliest combination of heat and humidity.

This decade, the Hajj - whose dates are earlier each year, following the Islamic lunar calendar - falls fully or partially in July between 2020 and 2023.

The Saudi General Authority of Meteorology and Environmental Protection did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Saudi authorities are tackling the heat threat, with a 2016 National Hajj Extreme Heat Strategy pledging air conditioning and fans in all indoor places and adequate water, as heat illnesses made up 24% of hospital admissions during 2015's Hajj.

After allowing only 1,000 pilgrims to attend last year, the Hajj has expanded this year but only to citizens and residents, aged 18 to 65, who have been fully vaccinated or have recovered from the virus and who do not suffer from chronic diseases. The ministry of health announced it had provided misting fans across religious sites and a nearby hospital would be equipped with a 24-hour heat ex-haustion unit.

Limiting numbers to decrease the risk of spreading Covid-19 has also barred those most at risk of heat stroke, while fewer pilgrims mean cooling units can work more effectively.

"There are lower numbers this year but in normal years the Hajj brings 2 million people to a confined place. The risk would be higher," said Saeed.

The study's authors said Muslim countries should consider more actively working to curb climate-changing emissions under the Paris Agreement "in order to avoid profound risks for one of the central elements of their faith."

China Wants Taliban To Crack Down On Turkestan Islamic Movement



Agenceis

China told a visiting Taliban delegation on Wednesday it expected the insurgent group to play an important role in ending Afghanistan's war and rebuilding the country, the Chinese foreign ministry said.

Nine Taliban representatives met Foreign Minister Wang Yi in the northern Chinese city of Tianjin on a two-day visit during which the peace process and security issues were discussed, a Taliban spokesperson said.

Wang said the Taliban are expected to "play an important role in the process of peaceful reconciliation and reconstruction in Afghanistan", according to a readout of the meeting from the foreign ministry.

He also said that he hoped the Taliban would crack down on the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) as it was a "direct threat to China's national security", according to the readout, referring to a group China says is active in the Xinjiang region in China's far west.

Beijing has regularly blamed

ETIM, a separatist group largely comprising members of ethnic Uighur descent, for attacks as it justifies its measures in Xinjiang, where rights groups say that one million or more Uighurs or other Turkic-speaking, mostly Muslim people are incarcerated in camps.

But scholars say that China has produced little evidence that ETIM is an organised group or that it is to blame for attacks in Xinjiang, which separatists call East Turkestan.

Last November, the United States had removed ETIM from its list of terror groups, citing a lack of evidence regarding its existence.

The Taliban visit to China was likely to further cement the insurgent group's recognition on the international stage at a sensitive time even as violence increases in Afghanistan. The militants have a political office in Qatar where peace talks are taking place and this month sent representatives to Iran where they had meetings with an Afghan government delegation.

"Politics, economy and issues related to the security of both countries and the current situation of Afghani-

stan and the peace process were discussed in the meetings," Taliban spokesperson Mohammed Naem tweeted about the China visit.

Naem added that the group, led by Taliban negotiator and deputy leader Mullah Baradar Akhund, was also meeting China's special envoy for Afghanistan and that the trip took place after an invitation from Chinese authorities.

Security in Afghanistan, with which China shares a border, has been deteriorating fast as the United States withdraws its troops by September.

The Taliban have launched a flurry of offensives, taking districts and border crossings around the country, while peace talks in Qatar's capital have not made substantive progress.

"[The] delegation assured China that they will not allow anyone to use Afghan soil against China," Naem said.

"China also reiterated its commitment of continuation of their assistance with Afghans and said they will not interfere in Afghanistan's issues but will help to solve the problems and restoration of peace in the country."

US 'Really Messed It Up' In Afghanistan, Says Pakistan PM Imran Khan

Agenceis

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that the US "really messed it up" in Afghanistan, as he questioned the American motive for the 2001 invasion of the country in the first place and then their subsequent attempts of seeking a political solution with the Taliban from a position of weakness.

Khan also said that the only good solution to Afghanistan's situation is through a political settlement that is "inclusive" an involves all factions, including the Taliban.

"I think the US has really messed it up in Afghanistan," Khan said during an interview with Judy Woodruff on PBS NewsHour, an American news programme, aired on Tuesday night, Dawn newspaper reported.

Under a deal with the Taliban, the US and its NATO allies agreed to withdraw all troops in return for a commitment by the militants that they would prevent extremist groups from operating in areas they control. US President Joe Biden has announced that American troops will be out of the country by August 31.

The Taliban ruled Afghanistan by brute force from 1996 to 2001 when the US invasion toppled their government.

The US invaded Afghanistan in October, 2001 after the Taliban refused to hand over al-Qaeda's leader Osama bin Laden, who was behind the September 11, 2001, terror attacks in America.

Khan criticised the US for trying to "look for a military solution in Afghanistan, when there never was one".

"And people like me who kept



saying that there's no military solution, who know the history of Afghanistan, we were called - people like me were called anti-American. I was called Taliban Khan," Khan said.

He lamented that by the time the US realised that there was no military solution in Afghanistan, "unfortunately, the bargaining power of the Americans or the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation forces) had gone".

The prime minister said the US should have opted for a political settlement much earlier, when there were as many as 150,000 NATO troops in Afghanistan.

"But once they had reduced the troops to barely 10,000, and then, when they gave an exit date, the Taliban thought they had won. And so, therefore, it was very difficult for now to get them to compromise," he said.

When the interviewer asked whether he thought the Taliban resurgence was a positive development for Afghanistan, the prime minister reiterated that the only

good outcome would be a political settlement, "which is inclusive".

"Obviously, Taliban (will be) part of that government," he added.

Khan described the "worst-case scenario" as being one where Afghanistan descends into a civil war. "From Pakistan's point of view, that is the worst-case scenario, because we then ... we face two scenarios, one (of them being) a refugee problem," he said.

"Already, Pakistan is hosting over three million Afghan refugees. And what we fear is that a protracted civil war would [bring] more refugees. And our economic situation is not such that we can have another influx," he said.

Elaborating on the second problem, he expressed concerns that the fallout of a potential civil war across the border could "flow into Pakistan".

Prime Minister Khan explained that the Taliban were ethnic Pashtuns and "if this (civil war and violence in Afghanistan) goes on, the Pashtuns on our side will be drawn into it." "That ... is the last thing we want," he said.

Second Covid Shot Safe After Allergic Reactions To First Dose: Study



Agenceis

NEW YORK: An allergic reaction after the first mRNA Covid-19 vaccine dose scares people from taking the next shot. However, a new study has shown that the second shot is safe and does not present any complications.

A team of researchers, led by allergists at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in the US, stressed that a first dose reaction to Covid-19 vaccination should not keep people from getting a second dose.

Allergic reactions after mRNA Covid-19 vaccinations have reported to be as high as 2 per cent. Anaphylaxis—a life-threatening whole-body allergic reaction—occurs in up to 2.5 per 10,000 people.

In the study, published in JAMA Internal Medicine, 32 patients (17 per cent) among 189, experienced anaphylaxis after their first dose of mRNA Covid-19 vaccine. A total of 159 patients (84 per cent) went on to receive a second dose.

All 159 patients, including 19 individuals who had experienced anaphylaxis following the first dose, tolerated the second dose.

Thirty two patients (20 per

cent) reported immediate and potentially allergic symptoms associated with the second dose that were self-limited, mild, and/or resolved with antihistamines alone.

"These reactions could include symptoms such as itching or hives or flushing. The patients included were all advised by allergy specialists after their dose one reaction," said Matthew S Krantz, MD, of Vanderbilt University Medical Centre.

These immediate onset mRNA vaccine reactions may not be mechanistically caused by classic allergy, called immediate hypersensitivity or Ig-E-mediated hypersensitivity, the researchers explained.

For classic allergy, re-exposure to the allergen causes the same or even worse symptoms, they added.

The findings suggest that it's safe for most individuals to receive a second dose of the mRNA Covid-19 vaccine, said Aleena Banerji, MD, clinical director of the Allergy and Clinical Immunology Unit at MGH.

"After first dose reactions, allergy specialists may be useful to help guide risk/benefit assessments and assist with completion of safe vaccination," she said. — IANS

Ecuador Revokes Wikileaks Founder Julian Assange's Citizenship



Agenceis

A court has revoked WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange's Ecuadorian citizenship.

Ecuador's justice system formally notified the Australian that his naturalisation had been nullified after Ecuadorian authorities said the supporting letter had multiple inconsistencies, different signatures, the possible alteration of documents and unpaid fees, among other issues.

Carlos Poveda, Assange's lawyer, told The Associated Press news agency the decision was made without due process and Assange was not allowed to appear in the case.

"On the date [Assange] was cited, he was deprived of his liberty and with a health crisis inside the deprivation of liberty centre where he was being held," Poveda said, adding he would file an appeal.

Assange remains imprisoned in London's high-security Belmarsh prison as the United States seeks his extradition. A UK court ruled in January that Assange should not be extradited to the US, saying the move would be "oppressive".

He has been accused of conspiring with former US military intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning to leak a trove of classified mate-

rial in 2010. His supporters and press freedom groups view him as an investigative reporter who has brought war crimes to light.

The secret documents relating to the military engagement of Allied forces in Afghanistan were released on WikiLeaks while Assange also collaborated with journalists at prominent news outlets.

A total of 18 charges relating to "Assange's alleged role in one of the largest compromises of classified information in the history of the United States" have been lodged by Washington, laid out in a statement by the US Department of Justice. US officials argue Assange put the lives of US informants at risk.

If found guilty, Assange could be jailed in the US for 175 years.

Assange fled to Ecuador's embassy in London in 2012 to avoid extradition. He was granted asylum there and later gained citizenship. At the time, Ecuador's government planned to grant Assange diplomatic status, which would allow him to safely leave the embassy.

However, tensions later flared between Quito and Assange.

The Ecuadorian government revoked his asylum status in 2019 and Assange was subsequently jailed by British police for violating bail conditions.

'Our Lives Are In Danger': Afghans Queue Up To Get Passports

Agenceis

Like thousands of his compatriots, Abdel Khalid Nabyar waited outside Afghanistan's main passport office to apply for the precious travel document that would allow him to leave the war-torn nation.

With the Taliban making huge advances in the countryside as foreign forces wind up their withdrawal, many Afghans - those with the means, at least - are looking for a way out.

"If the situation worsens, we might have to leave," said Nabyar, 52, who feels particularly vulnerable because he once ran a shop on a NATO military base.

Not everyone will make an immediate exit but most want the safety net - knowing they can leave at short notice.

"People want to be prepared in advance in case things go wrong," added Nabyar.

zens begin lining up at the passport office in Kabul before dawn most days, and by eight in the morning the queue already stretches for a good hundred metres.

Applicants slowly shuffle forward, clutching clear plastic folders containing their documents. Occasionally a police officer is needed to rein in the queue-jumpers trying



their luck. One official appeared irritated by the interest shown by the journalists at the throng.

"Getting a passport is a normal request for any Afghan," she said. But in recent weeks the numbers apply-

ing have been anything but usual.

"We are getting about 10,000 people a day against 2,000 normally," said one police officer. Khalilullah, a 36-year-old engineer, arrived at 5am with his wife and three children.

"There were already 300 people in line," he told the AFP news agency, more than three hours after joining the queue.

Applicants need to have their picture taken, eyes biometrically recorded and fingerprints taken as part of the process, with a thorough security frisk thrown in for good measure. Zeenat Bahar Nazari had been waiting for hours when she spoke to AFP.

"When we were children, our families said that the Taliban ... killed people, made them disappear," said the 23-year-old computer science student. "They were violent towards women, did not allow them to be educated and deprived them of their basic rights."

While Nazari is too young to remember the Taliban's first term, from 1996 to 2001, she knows what they have done since.

"The only thing I know is the Taliban has the face of terror - fighting, suicide bombings and bloodbaths," she said.

"When you go to school or university you hope for a bright future but

if the Taliban take power that hope for a bright future will disappear."

Many of those in line had no idea where they would go if given the chance - or if any other country would even have them. Most nations require Afghans to jump through hoops for a visa, with enormous quantities of documentation required along with proof of financial stability that few possess.

Still, everyone wants to be ready.

"Our lives are in danger; we have no choice," said Sardar, 52, who declined to be further identified because he fears for his life after working as a translator for a British civil society group.

Key Conspirator Involved In Parihar Brothers' Killing Arrested: NIA

Srinagar: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Wednesday said that it has arrested a key conspirator in the Parihar brothers' killing case of Kishtwar.

In a statement, a NIA spokesman said that yesterday (27.7.2021), NIA arrested accused Malik Noor Mohd. Fayaz (aged 51 years) son of Late Abdul Razaq Malik, a resident of Phagsoo, PS Thathri, district Doda, UT of J&K, in NIA case no. RC-36/2018/NIA/DLI. "The case was initially registered as FIR no. 290/2018 dated 01.11.2018 at PS Kishtwar, District Kishtwar, J&K relating to the killing of Anil Kumar Parihar and his brother Ajit Kumar Parihar r/o Main Bazar Kishtwar by unknown criminals who fired upon them while they were returning home around 20:40 pm," the statement said, adding that "NIA had re-registered the case as RC-36/2018/NIA/DLI dated 28.11.2018 and taken over the investigation."

The NIA spokesman said that they had earlier chargesheeted seven (07) accused persons including three (three) killed militants of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen namely Osama-bin-Javid, Haroon Ab-

bas Wani, Zahid Hussain and four (04) arrested accused persons namely Nisar Ahmed Sheikh, Nishad Ahmed Butt, Azad Hussain Bagwan and Rustam Ali, all residents of Kishtwar (J&K), in NIA Special Court, Jammu on 15.5.2020.

"Further investigation in the case to unearth the larger conspiracy hatched by the militants of HM and over ground workers (OGW) who were reviving the militancy in the region of Chenab valley i.e. Doda, Kishtwar & Ramban led to the identification of arrested accused Malik Noor Mohd. Fayyaz. Investigation has revealed that he was the co-conspirator for reviving the terrorism in Chenab valley," the spokesman said adding that "he had also visited Assam and Nagaland along with slain HM militant Osama-bin-Javid for procurement of the weapons for the said purpose. He was instrumental in motivating and recruiting gullible Muslim youths to join the cadres of HM. Arrested accused Malik Noor Mohd. Fayyaz was produced in NIA Special Court, Jammu on today and taken in NIA custody for 03 days."

J&K Records 160 Fresh Covid Cases

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 160 fresh coronavirus cases on Wednesday, taking the infection tally to 3,21,066 while the death toll rose to 4,376 as one more fatality was reported in the last 24 hours, officials said.

Out of the fresh cases, 60 were from Jammu and 100 from Kashmir, they said.

Srinagar recorded the highest of 42 cases, followed by 20 in Baramulla district.

The number of active cases again rose slightly to 1,139 in the Union Territory, while 3,15,511 patients have recovered so far, the officials said.

The death toll due to the pandemic was 4,376 as one new fatality was reported in the past 24 hours.

Meanwhile, the officials said there were 35 confirmed cases of Mucormycosis (black fungus) in the Union Territory as no fresh case was reported since last evening.

Govt Forms Panel To Clear New Construction Proposals

Observer Monitoring Desk

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Thursday constituted a committee for clearing fresh construction proposals before they are placed before the competent authorities for administrative approval.

The committee comprises of Principal Secretary to the Government, Housing & Urban Development Department; Principal Secretary to the Government, Power Development Department; Principal Secretary to the Government, Public Works(R&B) Department; Commissioner/Secretary to

the Government, Jal Shakti Department; Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Estates

Department; Administrative Secretary, Planning, Development & Monitoring Department and Director General, Planning in the Planning, Development & Monitoring Department to be nominated by Administrative Secretary as Member Secretary.

"The Committee shall scrutinize the requirement of the proposed projects having regard to the existing un-utilized infrastructure in the Union territory so as to ensure optimum utilization of existing Government infrastructure," reads an order.



Caption: Rains lashed parts of Kashmir valley on Wednesday bringing the much needed respite from the scorching heat. KO Photo Abid Bhat

Mission Youth Rolls Out Scheme For Competitive Examinations' Coaching

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Mission Youth, Jammu and Kashmir, has launched a scheme to support coaching of students for various competitive examinations including Civil Services Examination.

The scheme, announced by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha recently, will benefit 3000 meritorious and competitive students for coaching facilities, educational support and other requirements.

CEO Mission Youth and Secretary, Tribal Affairs Department, Dr Shahid Iqbal informed that the draft guidelines proposed by Mission Youth have been approved by the Finance department and the scheme is now being formally launched. This will cover various competitive examinations being conducted by the Union Public Service Commission, J&K Public Service Commission, Service Selection Board, Staff Selection Commission and various other recruitment authorities.

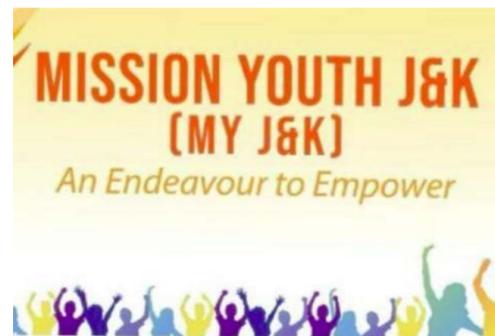
Dr Shahid added that notification is being issued for empanelment of coaching institutes of national repute and outstanding local institutes having proven track record and required facilities as well as infrastructure for best coaching facilities to be offered to students.

The desired students will have to register on the designated portal and selection will be made through an elaborate screening process or qualifying test based on the pattern of competitive examinations and prescribed syllabus. The selection will be done on a quarterly basis to ensure that all examinations are covered and students appearing for next year are provided required support.

The eligibility criteria for students would be that the candidates must be domicile of Jammu and Kashmir, family income not exceeding Rs 8.00 Lakh and having secured requisite percentage of marks in the qualifying examination prescribed for applying in a particular competitive examination or recruitment. In order to ensure gender balance and focus on girl child educa-

Mission Youth providing specific details and uploading supporting documents. The candidates have been advised to keep their documents upto date for uploading on the portal.

The scheme will cover tuition expenses of coaching and the students selected through screening process shall be eligible to choose the institution of their choice from the list of



tion as well as providing platform to women students a total of 30% seats are reserved for girl students/ candidates. Besides, ten percent additional weightage shall be given to the candidates who have already qualified preliminary level of a particular examination.

The students appearing for competitive examinations like Civil Services Examination including IAS, IPS, IFS, IRS, IFOs, IRS-Customs of UPSC and JKAS, JKPCS, Accounts services etc conducted by J&K PSC, national level examinations of Staff Selection Commission, UT level examinations of J&K Service Selection Board and other similar recruitment authorities / commissions at central level eligible for these examinations will have to register on the designated portal of

empaneled coaching institutions of repute.

A comprehensive selection cum screening process has also been finalised for empanelment of coaching institutions in a transparent manner including periodic reviews and concurrent evaluation. The selected students will have to meet the requirement of minimum attendance to be maintained.

Deputy Director Mission Youth, Dr Maqbool and OSD Tabish Saleem have been designated as nodal officers for implementation of scheme while as an inter-departmental committee with members from departments of finance, school education and higher education as members apart from representatives of registered associations has also been constituted.

Govt, JSW Foundation Ink Pact To Restore Mughal Gardens We're Making Continuous Efforts To Restore Glory Of Heritage Places: LG

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Wednesday inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Jindal South-West (JSW) Foundation for restoration and conservation of two major Mughal Gardens Shalimar and Nishat in this capital city.

The MoU was signed by Sheikh Fayaz Ahmad, Commissioner/Secretary, Floriculture, gardens and parks, and Sangita Jindal, Chairperson, JSW Foundation in presence of Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha at the Civil Secretariat here on Wednesday, an official spokesperson said.

As part of this commitment, he said, JSW Foundation led by its Chairperson will assist and support J&K government, both financially and technically in preserving the two heritage gardens under CSR.

The project will be taken up in two phases. The estimated cost of the conservation/restoration project of Nishat garden is Rs 7 crores. A similar project is envisaged for the Shalimar garden also.

Speaking on the occasion, the LG termed the signing of MoU as a new beginning in the conservation of the historic sites which are the hallmarks of J&K's rich cultural heritage legacy.

"We are making continuous efforts to restore the ancient glory of UT's heritage places and propose them for inclusion in World Heritage sites," Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

The LG, he said, noted that the preservation of ecology and cultural heritage, along with growth in the industrial sector are key components of sustainable development.

"The government is giving much-needed impetus to integrate the promotion of cultural heritage in UT's development plan in order to connect the people from across the world with the glorious history of J&K," the official spokesperson quoted LG as saying.

He further said that the LG advised the concerned ex-

ecutive agencies to work in close coordination with all stakeholders and have an in-depth understanding of the historic facts and cultural significance while restoring the pristine glory of these heritage gardens.

With its technical expertise, the support of the JSW foundation will provide a determined push to the conservation work of the heritage gardens.

According to the official spokesperson, the LG also underscored the major interventions made by the Government to promote and preserve cultural heritage of Jammu division with an aim to increase the tourist inflow in the region.

"We are working on developing prominent pilgrimage shrines like Shiv Khori, besides a Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams is also coming up in Jammu, which will give a major push to tourism sector and at the same time, boost the economy of the region," Sinha said, as per the official spokesperson.

JSW Foundation has already conducted a study for conservation and restoration of Shiv Khori heritage site in Reasi, it was informed.

The official spokesperson further said that the LG directed the Floriculture Department to work out a plan to organize a mega-tulip festival in Jammu division also to attract potential tourists from across the globe. The LG, he said, also directed the officials of the Floriculture department to work in coordination with the forest department for development and preservation of Chaar Chinar in world-famous Dal lake.

Sangita Jindal, Chairperson, JSW Foundation also shared the action plan for the execution of the restoration project.

As per the official spokesperson it was informed that the project for restoration and conservation of Shalimar and Nishat gardens will be monitored by the project monitoring committee, headed by the Commissioner/Secretary to Government, Department of Floriculture Gardens and Parks.

DGP Prisons Authorized To Extend Prisoners Parole

Observer Monitoring Desk

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir government has authorized Director General of Police (Prisons) to extend special parole of the categories of convict prisoners for a further period of at least 90 days in view of the covid-19 situation.

"In exercise of the powers conferred under sub-section (5) of section 432 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, the Government hereby authorizes the Director General of Police (Prisons), J&K be-

ing the Competent Authority, under the Jammu and Kashmir Suspension of Sentence Rules, 2020, to grant/extend Special Parole, in respect of categories of convict prisoners, mentioned in Government order No. 100- Home of 2020 dated 02.04.2020, for a further period of 90 days, extendable for another one month, if the Covid-19 pandemic situation in the UT of J&K doesn't improve or further worsens, subject to the conditions laid down in the order ibid," an order by J&K's Home department.

**JAMMU & KASHMIR PROJECTS
CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LIMITED**
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER JKPCCLTD SRINAGAR UNIT.

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS
NIT No: 09 /e-Tendering/DGM/SGR-UNIT/JKPCCLTD OF 2021-22 DATED: 19.07.2021

For and on behalf of the Managing Director, JKPCCLTD, e-tenders (In Double cover system) are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K union territory Govt. CPWD, Railways and other States/UT. and Central Governments for the following works.

S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Amount In Lacs)	Cost of Tender Document (in Rupees)	Time of completion	Class of Contract
1.	Macdamization, Development of lawn/ park and allied works at Funds office (Hostel) at Haft Chinar Sgr.	Rs.8.58	Rs.1000.00	30 DAYS	(D/ C) - Class Contractors having authorization from registered Hot Mix Plant Holder

Position of AA A :-Accorded
TS:- Under process

Position of funds:-Available.
Project Authority: J&K Accounts & Treasuries Deptt.

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

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	19.07.2021
2.	Date of publishing of NIT Online	19.07.2021 at 4:00 PM
3.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 19.07.2021 4:00PM to 09.08.2021 upto 4:00PM
4.	Bid submission Start Date (Online)	19.07.2021 from 4:00 PM
5.	Bid Submission End Date	09-08.2021 upto 4:00 PM
6.	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	10-08.2021, after 11:00 AM in the Office of the Deputy General Manager, J&KPCCLTD Srinagar.
7.	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.

Deputy General Manager
JKPCCLTD. Srinagar Unit.

No:-e-Tendering/DGM/SGR-UNIT/JKPCCLTD/ Dated: 19.07.2021
DIPK-NB-2076/21

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 "Udaan" located at Zero Bridge, Rajbagh, Srinagar.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Mr. Parvaiz Ahmad Dar Mr. Abdul Wahid Dar and Mr. Hilal Ahmad Dar Ss/o Late Sonaullah Dar R/o Zero Bridge, Rajbagh, Srinagar have approached this office for transfer of registration certificate of Guest House under the name and style "Udaan" located at Zero Bridge, Rajbagh, Srinagar; Whereas, the Guest House is presently registered in the names of Mr. Parvaiz Ahmad Dar, Mr. Abdul Wahid Dar and Mr. Hilal Ahmad Dar Ss/o Late Sonaullah Dar R/o Zero Bridge, Rajbagh, Srinagar with this Department since 09.07.2004 vide Registration No. Reg/205/3199-02/DT/28/L-1 dated 09.07.2004 with 19 rooms and the registration certificate is renewed upto 31.03.2024;

Whereas, the registration certificate holders has requested for transfer of registration certificate in the names of the following for purpose of running operation management of the guest house:-

- Mrs. Muzamil Wahid W/o Mr. Abdul Wahid Dar R/o Chinar Avenue, Zakura, Srinagar.
- Mrs. Hanifa Hilal W/o Mr. Hilal Ahmad Dar R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar.
- Mrs. Shahnaz Akhter W/o Mr. Parveez Ahmad Dar R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar.

Whereas, the applicants have submitted all the requisite documents including Affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Srinagar, Registration Certificate in Original, Land Ownership Documents, Character Certificates of new incumbents, PAN Cards, Aadhar Cards, Domicile Certificates and general 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. Parvaiz Ahmad Dar Mr. Abdul Wahid Dar and Mr. Hilal Ahmad Dar Ss/o Late Sonaullah Dar R/o Zero Bridge, Rajbagh, Srinagar to the names of Mrs. Muzamil Wahid W/o Mr. Abdul Wahid Dar R/o Chinar Avenue, Zakura, Srinagar, Mrs. Hanifa Hilal W/o Mr. Hilal Ahmad Dar R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar and Mrs. Shahnaz Akhter W/o Mr. Parveez Ahmad 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 applicants will be considered under rules, after submission of requisite documents and norms.

Deputy Director Tourism,
Registration

DIPK-5359/21
No: Reg/GH/105/234/DTK Dated: 27.07.2021

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of the Kashmir Observer LLP
Published from: # 5- Boulevard, Srinagar-190001
Printed at: KT Press Pvt. Ltd, Rangreth Ind Area, Srinagar.
RNI Registration No: 69503/98
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16
Editor-in-Chief : Sajjad Haider
Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja
Switchboard: (0194) 2106304
Editorial: (0194) 2502327
Email editorial: editor@kashmiobserver.net

K O V I E W

As pandemic wanes

In a sign that the second Covid-19 wave is winding down, the union health ministry has said that India's total recoveries have risen to 3.06 crore. The active cases are now 27 percent of total caseload. On Wednesday, India reported a single day rise of 43,654 Covid cases and 640 deaths pushing the country's total tally to 3.15 crore. The progressively decreasing trend of infections, with some exceptions, is proof that the devastating second wave is on its way out.

That said, the pandemic is not over yet. India could still see the much-feared third wave of the pandemic sooner than later. According to a report by the State Bank of India early in July, the third wave may rear its head from the middle of August, coming around while the country is still fighting the second wave.

But for now we can take heart from the fact that the infections are decreasing. The drop has come amid the easing of the curbs on movement and hence is all the more welcome. But while the second wave is easing, the vaccination is not picking up commensurately leaving India vulnerable to a third wave. India has already increased the gap between two vaccine doses to 12 to 16 weeks from six to eight weeks. This was mainly done to compensate for the shortfall of the vaccines and to inoculate more people with the first dose.

There is a large number of the population above 65 years of age that has not received its second dose. Being in the high-risk and vulnerable group, the gap in their case needs to be urgently reduced. The government should make an exception for them.

At the same time, now that the government has got a grip on the second wave, care needs to be taken to pre-empt the third wave. While loosening the curbs to reopen the economy, the government has to strictly enforce the Standard Operating Procedure in public life. This should be done while simultaneously speeding up the vaccination in the country. This can only happen if more vaccines become available and the gap between the two doses is reduced.

Going forward, the government has to ensure that a Covid-appropriate behaviour is followed. The decreasing trend of the infections is a good news. The government should now build upon it by scaling up the production of vaccines. Much is at stake in India. The economy that was battered last year can't afford one more year of disruption. Already lakhs of people are jobless or have had their incomes truncated. There's no other option but to vaccinate a critical mass of people to get a handle on the pandemic.

OTHER OPINION

Clothes of a woman

Women all want to feel good in our skin," said German gymnast Sarah Voss, as she explained her decision to wear a full body suit at the European Artistic Gymnastics Championship in April this year. On Sunday, she was joined by her teammates who wore unitards that covered their arms and legs for the Tokyo Olympics' qualifying round, making a statement against what they described as the "sexualisation" of women in sports. "We wanted to show that every woman, everybody, should decide what to wear," said German gymnast Elisabeth Seitz.

Women athletes everywhere are protesting rules and conventions that expect them to wear outfits which have less to do with function and more to do with glamour and "sex appeal". Most sporting bodies remain conformist and sexist in their approach to athletic outfits. Take what happened with the Norwegian women's beach handball team in the recent European Beach Handball Championship: After their repeated complaints against the mandated bikini bottoms were ignored, they played wearing shorts. The European Handball Federation imposed a fine of 150 euros per player, although after outrage from other teams and the general public, it promised to do something to change the uniform rules.

It's been nearly half a century since John Berger observed, "Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at." The tyranny of the "male gaze" is strongest in fields like cinema and sports. For women athletes, it cuts both ways: They're forced to wear clothes that make them self-conscious, and they're also criticised if they embrace glamour and femininity, as happened with Florence Griffith Joyner. Finally, athletes themselves are starting to be heard: The Norwegian Handball Federation supported its players and offered to pay the fine on their behalf. Others need to follow its example.

The Indian Express

Derailed Dialogue

New Delhi is unlikely to reverse any of its actions in Kashmir to meet Pakistan's condition for re-engagement



Riyaz Wani

“Pakistan is no longer bolstered by the strategic depth of Afghanistan or leveraged by an all-encompassing militant struggle in Kashmir. This has brought in a considerable inequality between the parties which no amount of rhetoric in Kashmir and Islamabad could hide

Raising some fresh hope for an engagement between India and Pakistan, Pakistan National Security Advisor Moeed Yusuf has in yet another interview with noted anchor Karan Thapar indicated that the door could still be open for a bilateral dialogue. And this time he has explained in some detail what Islamabad wanted from India to get to a point where the dialogue could begin: Pakistan, he clarified, wasn't interested in the nomenclature of the revoked Article 370 but what the constitutional provision guaranteed to Kashmiris. He wanted New Delhi to promise a permanent halt to any demographic change in Kashmir, restore the rights of Kashmiris and give these concessions whatever name it wanted.

But would New Delhi make these concessions in the first place? Very unlikely, as this would effectively mean restoration of Article 370 or something close to it. And this should normally rule out a fresh engagement between the two countries. But if that were the case, the two neighbors wouldn't have established a contact early this year and agreed to re-instate the 2003 ceasefire along the Line of Control. The agreement took people on both sides of the border by surprise. Pakistan, at the time, seemed to play down the revocation of Article 370. And by agreeing to the LoC ceasefire, New Delhi agreed to respect the sanctity of the LoC, which during all of last year it had threatened to breach to take back Pakistan Administered Kashmir.

There are several geopolitical factors at play. One is the unfolding geopolitics of the region. Over the last year, India has been engaged in a tense stand-off with China along the Line of Actual Control. In April last year, China staged incursions at four points - forcing India to mass its troops along the border to deter further ingress by the PLA. Similarly, India has also been at daggers drawn with Pakistan. According to the information revealed early this year to the parliament by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh,

there were a total of 4,649 ceasefire violations on the LoC in 2020. This resulted in the loss of lives on both sides besides causing untold misery to the people living alongside the border. But this perennial state of conflict along the LAC and LoC has stretched New Delhi and this state of affairs seems unsustainable in the long term.

Then there is war in Afghanistan. The unfolding situation in Kabul, where the Taliban are now being considered as a part of the political solution, has suddenly reduced India's capacity to influence the outcome in the war-scarred country. Accordingly, Pakistan is suddenly in a greater position of leverage. At the same time, Pakistan would benefit from a friendly India to ensure continued stability on its eastern flank.

The LoC agreement is also traced to the US nudging the two countries from behind the scenes. The US involvement in the relationship between India and Pakistan is a fairly complex affair. New Delhi wants the US to intervene to sort out the terror problem in Pakistan, but it brooks no meddling in Kashmir. Similarly, Islamabad wants US intervention on Kashmir but wouldn't like Washington to speak on behalf of India on terror. More so, at a time when the US is seen as partial towards India. This contradiction hardly makes the US an ideal mediator between the two countries. The starkness of this reality leaves India and Pakistan no choice but to engage and confront their problems themselves. And confront they must.

But here again, the two countries have exhibited a singular inability to talk sustainably. The suspension of the dialogue over the last decade is enlightening on this score. Following the attack on Mumbai that killed 166 people, the two nations have struggled to get back to a durable engagement.

Today, old equations between New Delhi and Islamabad and also between Kashmiri separatists and New Delhi no longer apply. Following the withdrawal of Article

370, Hurriyat has been obliterated from the scene. Pakistan is no longer bolstered by the strategic depth of Afghanistan or leveraged by an all-encompassing militant struggle in Kashmir. This has brought in a considerable inequality between the parties which no amount of rhetoric in Kashmir and Islamabad could hide. And this inequality - accentuated further by a stronger India - is likely to leave a deep imprint on the content of a future dialogue. And of course, on the outcome of it too, if it is sustainably held. It would be an outcome that might not be completely satisfying of the expectations of the weaker parties. Or else, the logjam that has persisted for the past seven decades would linger on.

Former Pakistan president Musharraf was the first to recognize new realities. His four-point proposals on Kashmir envisaged a solution that would be a drastic climbdown from Islamabad's traditional stand on J&K. This solution was about some minor political and administrative adjustments in Kashmir. With moderate Hurriyat playing along, these proposals almost got the two countries to agree to a radical new solution for Kashmir. If the lawyers' agitation in Pakistan hadn't forced the sudden exit of Musharraf, this solution would potentially have resolved Kashmir.

There's a possibility that the two countries could return to the formula. And the fresh effort has to be guided by the realization that ultimately India and Pakistan would have to resolve their problems themselves for a peaceful sub-continent. Only such a dialogue could be hoped to lead us towards a positive outcome. At the end of the day, the sub-continent needs the two countries to resolve their issues to usher in a true era of peace.

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

The author is the Political Editor of Kashmir Observer



OBSERVER
MAIL

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

MAIL YOUR LETTERS

P.O. Box # 337, GPO, Srinagar-190001
email: editpage.ko@gmail.com

Environment and Education

World Nature Conservation Day acknowledges that a healthy environment is the foundation for a stable and healthy human society. It is celebrated on July 28 annually. The main purpose of celebrating World Nature Conservation Day is to conserve the animals and trees that are on the verge of going extinct from the natural environment of the Earth. This day also recognizes that a healthy environment is the foundation for a stable and productive society and to ensure the well-being of present and future generations, we all must participate to protect, conserve, and sustainably manage our natural resources. Conservation of resources has an important role in protecting our mother Earth. The balance in the natural beauty of the earth can be maintained by preserv-

ing various components of nature - water, air, soil, energy, vegetation, minerals, fauna, etc.

The world is facing many challenges related to environment. On one hand, the world is developing at an alarming rate while on the other hand the destruction of natural resources is going on. Today, the human society is facing severe environmental problems like climate change, greenhouse effect, energy crisis, depletion of natural resources, biodiversity loss, pollution of air, water, soil, etc. The scope of the problems is from local level to global level. The ever increasing population and changing lifestyles are increasing the severity of the environmental problems. The time has come to protect the natural environment through precise efforts.

Education is one of the key solutions for this situation. The best

way to spread awareness regarding the Conservation of World nature is through education. A carefully designed learning system through which youngsters are exposed to various aspects of environmental conservation would help them develop a deep understanding of it. Children shall become aware of the threats of environmental degradation and encouraged to act responsibly. Education does not only teach the name of a flower but also its importance for the ecosystem.

A well designed environmental education system gives both theoretical as well as practical exposure to environmental conservation. A child would think a thousand times before plucking a flower if he knows its importance in balancing the ecosystem. Schools can have cleanliness drives on campus where children make sure

that everything is kept clean and litter free. From classes to school playgrounds - they should be made to feel responsible for keeping all areas spotlessly clean. They should also be encouraged to participate in cleanliness drives in their communities.

Schools can also make sure children start learning about environmental preservation from an early age. If children are being taught about water as an EVS (environmental studies) topic then teachers can cover local water bodies like lakes and rivers. They can apprise the children about water scarcity and ask them to creatively think of ways to conserve water by water harvesting, innovate means to keep water bodies clean and so on.

M Ahmad
abhedanandahome78@gmail.com

Uniform Discontent

How Women Athletes Are Taking Control Of Their Sporting Outfits

Rachael Jefferson-Buchanan

The decision to cover their entire body was a premeditated one. It received full support from the German federation (DTB), which advised that female athletes should always feel comfortable in their apparel

Women's dress codes in sport are determined by "traditions" that are both outdated and gendered. Their outfits have long tried to reconcile notions of "femininity" with those of "athleticism", but this process has turned women into objects to be admired rather than being valued for their sporting skills.

However, there is recent rebellion in the ranks. Slowly, female athletes are pushing back on outdated uniform regulations and demanding that athleticism be prioritised over aesthetics.

A long history of discomfort

Where now the emphasis seems to be on revealing women's bodies, the opposite was once the case. In the 19th century, when upper-middle-class women were eventually permitted to engage in games such as lawn tennis, their attire was suitably "feminine", modest and designed to attract a potential husband rather than enhance their athleticism. Without doubt, their corsets and full-length dresses would have severely restricted their capacity to lunge and leap across the court in the way that today's female tennis players do.

By the turn of the 20th century, physical education began to contribute to the reform of female clothing for physical activities. The gymslip and tunic released the body from restraining garments such as corsets and bodices.

While this might seem progressive, the barrel shape of the new uniform carefully concealed young women's bodies. Any signs of developing sexuality were effectively camouflaged, preserving their modesty for future maternal roles in society.

Women still battling conventions

Sportswomen of today are still navigating dress code conventions, but they are beginning to openly oppose them. Just this month, the Norwegian women's beach handball team was fined for "improper clothing" during the European Championships in Bulgaria. This was because they were playing in shorts, as opposed to the required skimpy bikini bottoms, which should be "a close fit and cut on an upward angle toward the top of the leg" and have a maximum side width of 10cm, according to the 2014 International Handball Federation regulations.

The men's beach handball teams have always been permitted to wear shorts. After unsuccessfully petitioning to replace the bikini bottoms with shorts, the Norwegian women's team took matters into their own hands when they reached the bronze medal game against Spain. Despite being threatened with a fine or disqualification by the European Handball Federation, they opted to make a statement and wear thigh-length elastic shorts.



This resulted in a team fine of 1,500 euros (A\$2,393). The Norwegian federation has agreed to pay the fine on behalf of the players in a show of support.

There were similar dress code protests by female athletes at the European Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Switzerland this year. German gymnasts decided to take a stand against their sexualisation, donning full-body suits. It all began with Sarah Voss's performance, which was promptly followed by two of her teammates.

The decision to cover their entire body was a premeditated one. It received full support from the German federation (DTB), which advised that female athletes should always feel comfortable in their apparel.

The full-body suit, although rarely seen in women's competitive gymnastics (unless there are religious reasons for wearing it), actually complies with the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) rules. Competitors are allowed to wear a "unitard (one-piece leotard with full-length legs - hip to ankle)", as long as it is "of elegant design".

Flexibility is therefore apparent in some female sporting dress codes, but certainly not in all. Voss and her team embraced the opportunity

to compete as elite athletes in a uniform that best complemented their physical prowess.

Their right to choose what they wore no doubt helped them feel more at ease when performing. It should be noted that gymnastics has been a sport riddled with abuse scandals.

Changing the focus to sporting prowess

Both the handball and gymnastics examples highlight how women, as insiders within the institution of sport, are beginning to challenge how their bodies are presented and policed by sport federations.

This paves the way for more sportswomen to oppose dress codes that are based on archaic ideas of what women should look like, often through the eyes of men.

Although women's sporting performances have been historically hampered and sexualised, sportswomen are finally calling the shots in terms of how their bodies are regulated through what they wear.

Perhaps now we can focus on their athleticism and contribution to sport.

By Arrangements With The Conversation

When I was viciously trolled on Twitter, I resorted to the judicious response of no response, following the popular memo, "don't feed the troll". So, a collision course was cautiously averted.

Yet, I got a snapshot of the darkness within social media. The mass provocation feels like organised crime or some brazen form of online guerrilla warfare. They emerge like a swarm of locusts from nowhere and target one individual at a time. As a group they thrive on a deep sense of belonging, acting upon group norms. Perhaps deep down, we never really evolved from our hunter-gatherer days. We still hunt in packs.

"Where do you live?" asks a troll. No matter how brave you are, you pause momentarily to think about the broader implications of this more-than-veiled threat. Then you remember that this is how women have been targeted on social media. Nothing extraordinary about it. You move on to yet another tweet.

With the volume of social media activity, the diversity of chatter, and the constant ebb and flow of what's trending, it is hard to unscramble the noise. We wonder if the tweets and posts make us truly happy. Whether the one who posts is happier than the one who passively scrolls. Researchers have often cautioned that mindless scrolling on social media could make us unhappy. However, a recent longitudinal study advanced a contrarian view. Spread over nine years, the study found no correlation between the well-being of adolescents in Germany and their social media usage. Another three-week study on adolescents aged 13-15 found that browsing may result in positive, negative, or no effects among individuals, based on a range of dispositional, developmental, social, and situational factors. In short, it depends.

It goes without saying that our use of Instagram or Facebook cannot merely be an exercise in self-inflicted pain. It must offer some joy, however fleeting it might be, like that piece of chocolate you relished so much knowing that you may regret it later. How else could we explain the more than 2 hours of aver-

In pursuit of happiness on social media

I got a snapshot of the darkness within social media. The mass provocation feels like organised crime or some brazen form of online guerrilla warfare.

Shalini Verma

age daily usage of social media.

The notion of happiness is more than just a basic human emotion. Psychologists, sociologists, economists and now governments are preoccupied with the idea of happiness. In the UAE, improving happiness has been the driving force behind citizen services. Happiness has become central to governance and how we gauge progress. By that count, social media has implications on our overall happiness given that it is so embedded in our daily life. Despite numerous studies, experts are divided on whether social media makes us happy in the long run.

However, there is consensus that social media is a place for demonstrating our happiness. The UN World Happiness report had ranked Finland as the happiest country for three years in a row. A recent research report named '#Happy: Constructing and Sharing Everyday Understandings of Happiness on Instagram' investigated what amounts to happiness on Instagram for users from Finland. Researchers found that happiness on Instagram is associated with the seven dominant themes of social relationships, material possessions, free time, nature, physical appearance, pets, and success. The study was careful to describe this everyday happiness as one that is 'constructed' on Instagram. Social media posts allow us to tune into socially accepted notions of happiness. My posts about a rooster I meet during my morning runs always elicit a happy reaction.

Social representation theories suggest the inseparability of the individual



Post Covid-19, our general focus has gone beyond happiness to a desire for well-being, which is a broader perception that life is going well. There is a sense of purpose and balance in work and life. Yet a constant state of well-being does not occur to the best of us. We try, nonetheless

from the social, so that people are passively mirroring shared group values. For example, amidst the distraught appeals for help during the second Covid-19 wave in India, fun posts were rarely seen. Earlier in the year, when British celebrities posted their destination photos, their followers back home who were still under lockdown, were not impressed.

The Instagram study showed that our carefully curated happiness on social media is caught between the three dichotomies of social-individual, relaxing-pursuing and immaterial-material. A sense of pride is associated with 'self-orientation', while gratitude is associated with 'other-orientation'. Our own wall is largely a collection of happy timestamps when a reunion, an

anniversary, a travel, or a meal was memorable. Because happiness is stage-managed online, it is hard to tell if social media stimulates happiness.

Post Covid-19, our general focus has gone beyond happiness to a desire for well-being, which is a broader perception that life is going well. There is a sense of purpose and balance in work and life. Yet a constant state of well-being does not occur to the best of us. We try, nonetheless.

Our persistent endeavour for well-being can be hit-and-miss because social media is essentially an echo chamber of our own emotional predisposition, even when we are scavenging for updates. There is also a compliant algorithm that is prodding us.

When we are using social media in a constructive manner, connecting with friends, giving advice, providing support and being empathetic, we tend to have a greater degree of well-being. It has also become our coping mechanism during the pandemic. Users have had a nuanced response to social support on social media platforms during quarantine. A study of French users showed that social support provided on Instagram and Twitter had a positive correlation with satisfaction with life. Surprisingly, social support provided on Facebook was quite the opposite. It is believed that support on Facebook possibly reactivates emotional trauma. This explains why some people exit Facebook or become inactive when they suffer a loss in the family.

Overall social media tends to mirror the mental state we go in with. The duality of social media is what makes it such an alluring place. Despite widespread trolling, we are constantly going from post to post, looking for life-affirming stories and happy endings. It is sometimes hard to rationalise the rabid exchange of barbs with the joyous likes and shares. Yet in all these years, social media has come to reflect life in all its colours. In the end, Twitter or Facebook balances out the good with the bad.

Khaleej Times

2-Days Workshop On 'Packaging Of Handicraft/ Handloom Products' Concludes



KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: The two days workshop on 'Packaging of Handicrafts and Handloom products' organized by Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom Kashmir in collaboration with Indian Institute of Packaging (IIP) Mumbai concluded on Wednesday in the Conference Hall of Kashmir Haat here.

On the occasion, Director Handicrafts and Handloom Kashmir, Mahmood Ahmad Shah, threw light on importance of adopting new packaging strategies for the products and assured the participants, especially Artisan/Weavers community, that the department is committed to provide them the requisite platforms for their progress and prosperity.

During the course of workshop, besides hands on training and demonstration on packaging designs, the issues based discussions, importance of packaging, Design and improvement of current packaging practices were shared in the Handicrafts/ Handloom Sector of J&K among participants.

The session was delivered by Tanveer Alam Director IIP Mumbai, Dr. Gaurav Madhu Joint Director & Regional Head IIP and Rahul B Tirpude Deputy Director IIP through various power point presentations by sharing the successful stories related to bringing in sales increase by adopting the appealing packaging strategies on products.

Various prototypes were un-

veiled which include the prototypes for Paper Machie, carpet, Pashmina, silk, walnut etc. Apart from attractive designing of packaging materials, information related to craft and artisan were also displayed on these prototypes. In addition, the information on QR coded packaging material that helps in the marking of genuine products and dissemination of information pertaining to artisan and crafts was also shared.

The workshop participants included the Cardboard Unit Holders, Artisans, Cooperative Societies, producer companies, officials of Handicrafts & Handloom Development Corporation, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Indian Institute of Carpet Technology, Craft Development Institute and official of the Handicrafts & Handloom Department from all districts.

The aim of the workshop was to aware the participants about product based packaging which is the demand in this contemporary market competition.

While applauding the role of the department for arranging such a wonderful workshop, the participants particularly artisans / weavers said that they have gained and enriched a lot through two days programme and will adopt the techniques learnt in packaging of their products and have also demanded that a center of packaging be established in summer capital of JK so that lakhs of artisans may reap the benefit.

JKSDM initiates Youth Aspiration Survey and Skill Gap Survey

Skill Policy Aimed At Enhancing Employability Of Youth: Dr Shahid



KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Skill Development Mission has initiated the process for much required "Youth Aspiration Survey" and "Skill Gap Survey" which will enable the Government and stakeholder departments and organizations to re-orient the skill initiatives as per youth aspirations and market requirements.

In order to provide impetus to the efforts of the UT Government in providing skilling opportunities to the youth, J&K Skill Development Mission (JKSDM) has started the process of empanelment of reputed consultancy organization to formulate Skill Policy for J&K. The process shall include conducting job market and skill gap survey, youth aspirational survey which will lead to the development of the UT level Skill Policy.

Secretary, Tribal Affairs Department and Managing Director J&K Skill Development Mission, Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary informed that, Government intends to take all skill development stakeholders on board and conduct a grassroots

level study to gain in-depth understanding of the existing skill ecosystem and analyze the demand and supply dynamics of the skilled labour market, youth aspirations and industry requirements. The skill gap survey and youth aspiration survey will serve as a precursor to setting J&K's first Youth Placement Cell which is envisaged under Mission Youth, J&K in coordination with various stakeholders in government and private sector.

The skill gap study will estimate demand and supply of skills at ground level and convert the gap in supply into a UT and district level action plan. It will also prioritize the sectors for skilling in J&K that can provide employment to the local youth, categorize job roles that are in high demand in these priority sectors and classify skills that are required by the industry/ employers for these job roles.

The youth aspiration surveys through focus group discussions shall be conducted in each district to understand the skilling and learning aspirations of the region's youth, their preference for various types of jobs and location, employ-

ment in J&K and outside. The surveys shall also capture the willingness of youth to migrate outside the district, UT and country and identify top industrial and employment hubs preferred by the youth of J&K.

"The skill policy shall include best global practices and provide skill roadmap on enhancing the overall skill landscape of J&K. It will guide us in formulating future strategies to improve the employability prospects of the youth, and simultaneously create self/wage employment opportunities for the youth," added Dr. Shahid.

Through various interventions, the Mission is trying to bridge the skill gaps and create conducive environment for creating employment and engagement opportunities of the youth.

In yet another initiative, last week, the Mission also undertook the process of creation of UT level MIS (Management Information System) which will contain all the relevant information about the programs being implemented by various skill implementing departments and will highlight the skill development initiatives being taken by the Government.

JKRLM Assists Bandipora Women SHGs To Save More Than Rs 4 Crore



SRINAGAR: Mission Director, Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), Dr. Syed Sehrish Asgar on Wednesday chaired a meeting to review the blockwise progress of rural livelihood mission in district Bandipora and took stock of physical and financial achievements of Mission in the district.

It was given out in the meeting that the women SHGs under the mission have been credit linked with the banks for capital infusion enabling them the internal saving of Rs 4.36 crores.

On the occasion Dr Sehrish stressed upon the officers to focus on strengthening the systems at all levels besides social inclusion of all the eligible beneficiaries. She encouraged for making concerted efforts towards attaining the sustainability of the community institutions.

Dr Sehrish impressed upon the officers for deepening livelihood interventions, fostering regular coordination with various line departments towards collective realisation of the aspirational goals.

The MD directed the BPMs to complete the Aadhar seeding process in due course of time and enroll all SHG members under social security schemes including PMSBY, PMJJBY.

The MD further directed the BPMs to identify the SHG members who can be engaged as DIGI Pay Sakhi's so that they can provide door to door banking as well as non-banking facilities to the SHG members in the district.

While informing the meeting about progress made in blocks, the officials apprised that so far 16546 Rural women have been federated into 1769 SHGs in the district and an amount of Rs 5.23 crores have been provided to the SHGs as capitalization from the Mission.

It was given out that in addition, the SHGs have been credit linked with the Banks to the tune of Rs 17.22 crores and the internal saving of Rs 4.36 crores to the SHG members.

Further the BPMs apprised the chair about various activities being undertaken by the SHG members in the District who have invested the amount in different livelihoods like walnut processing, Mushroom cultivation, Handicrafts, Handlooms, Carpet weaving.

The meeting was attended by Additional Mission Director, Kashmir Sajid Yahaya Naqash, District Programme Mangers, Block Programme Mangers, MIS Assistants of District Bandipora and other officials of the Mission.

DG Horticulture conducts Extensive Tour of North Kashmir

KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: The Director General (DG), Horticulture Kashmir, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat today conducted an extensive tour of North Kashmir to take stock of different activities, works.

During the tour, the DG visited Canning Centre at Sopore, where he instructed Chief Horticulture Officer, Baramulla to ensure timely completion of renovation works being carried out at the Centre. Besides, he stressed on imparting training on preservation of fruit and vegetables to the youth on priority basis, in order to enable them to create employment opportunities for themselves and others.

The DG also visited the Departmental Nursery at Zangam Pattan and newly established Soil Testing Laboratory & Horticulture Development Office at Kreeri, where he took stock of

different activities, and stressed for completion of developmental works within a prescribed time period.

He advised the Chief Horticulture Officer that awareness about different Departmental Schemes should be created among the general public, particularly with regards to the recently launched 'Modified High Density Plantation Scheme'. He further instructed the officers to make frequent visits to the field and provide the growers with latest technical knowhow.

Later, Bhat interacted with the Cold Storage owners and advised them to create a grower friendly atmosphere and urged them to provide quality services to the public in general and growers in particular.

The DG during the visit was accompanied by Chief Horticulture Officer, Baramulla and other concerned officers and officials.

Samoon Reviews Skill Development Projects Under CAPEX plan 2021-22

KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: Principal Secretary, Skill Development Department, Dr Asgar Hasan Samoon, on Wednesday chaired a meeting to review the physical and financial progress on projects of Skill Development Department being executed under CAPEX budget 2021-22.

The meeting reviewed in detail the physical and financial achievements under CAPEX budget 2021-22 in reference to identified Government Polytechnics and Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs).

While reviewing the physical progress on these works, Principal Secretary directed the concerned executing agencies to complete the ongoing projects in stipulated timeframe. He took strong note of the delay in the completion of the works and directed the officers to take responsibility and work in a coordinated manner so that all the works are completed. He further said that any officer lacking in action will be taken to task.



He also directed the officers that amount should not be withheld in case of the completed works. He also directed the officers to hold periodical review of the various ongoing works besides inspecting the progress of works.

Principal Secretary also said that the budget has increased over the years and there is a need to show corresponding results on ground. He said that the Skill Development Department has a pivotal role to play in providing skill development to overcome

the problem of unemployment in the UT. He directed the concerned officers to work with utmost dedication to ensure empowerment of youth by way of imparting requisite proficiency.

Director Skill Development Department informed the meeting about the present status of various ongoing projects, besides providing a component wise breakup of the funds under CAPEX.

The meeting was attended by senior officers of Skill Development Department.

DDC Srinagar Approves 03 MEUs Under 'One District-One Product' Scheme



KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: In order to encourage and provide infrastructural support to potential groups and cooperatives to formalize their Micro Enterprises, the District Development Commissioner (DDC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad today approved 03 Micro Enterprise Units (MEUs) for Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PM-FME scheme) under "One District-One Product" (ODOP) scheme under Atam Nirbhar Bharat.

"Under One District One Product" (ODOP) scheme, the Srinagar district has been assigned "Packed Bakery Products" under which 10 applications were received online

through PM-FME portal by the District Resource persons and after proper physical verification out of 10 applications, 07 were taken up in DLC meeting wherein 03 Units qualified for availing 35 percent subsidy on maximum loan upto 10 lakh per beneficiary as per the scheme.

Pertinent to mention that Srinagar district has received encouraging response under Atma Nirbhar Bharat wherein 50 more applications are in the pipeline at various stages of verification.

Chief Horticulture Officer/ Resource Person, C L Sharma, District Informatics Officer and other officers of allied departments were present on the occasion.

Union Cabinet Clears Limited Liability Partnership Amendment Bill

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday cleared the Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) Amendment Bill to accelerate the "Ease Of Doing Business" campaign of the Government.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman while briefing the media after the Cabinet meeting, said that the changes are being made in Companies Act, decriminalising many sections and improving the 'Ease Of Doing Business' for companies.

"A similar treatment had to be given for LLPs," she said.

Accordingly, a total of 12 offences are to be decriminalised for LLPs, and three sections will be omitted.

These amendments, she said will bring the LLPs on an equal footing, compared to large companies which come



under the Companies Act.

The definition of LLP is also being changed and accordingly individual contribution level of partners is being raised from 25 lakh to 5 crore and turnover from 40 lakh to 50 crore, the minister informed further.

Google Search, YouTube Sales Soar To Record High In Pandemic

Riding on Search and YouTube advertising growth amid the pandemic, Alphabet has posted a record \$61.88 billion in revenue for its June quarter. Google Search reached a record \$35.8 billion in revenue (up 68 per cent) while YouTube advertising revenue nearly doubled to \$7 billion compared to \$3.8 billion from the same quarter last year, the company said late on Tuesday.

"In Q2, there was a rising tide of online activity in many parts of the world, and we're proud that our services helped so many consumers and businesses. Our long-term investments in AI and Google Cloud are helping us drive significant improvements in everyone's digital experience," said Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google and Alphabet.

Google Cloud revenue was \$4.63 bil-

lion, up from \$3.01 billion a year ago. The Google Cloud business witnessed operating losses of \$591 million, a solid improvement from \$1.43 billion loss last year.

"Our strong second quarter revenues of \$61.9 billion reflect elevated consumer online activity and broad-based strength in advertiser spend. Again, we benefited from excellent execution across the board by our teams," said Ruth Porat, CFO of Google and Alphabet.

Other revenues were \$6.6 billion, up 29 per cent, primarily driven by growth in YouTube non-advertising revenues, followed by Hardware, "which benefited from the addition of Fitbit revenues and finally Google Play which lapped the increased level of user engagement that started in Q1 last year due to the pandemic," Porat added.

Gulberg Collections

ME & MY HOME

AN ONLINE STORE

**PAINTINGS,
HOME DECOR,
COMFORT &
GIFT ITEMS,
WOMEN &
KIDS WARE**



SELECT ONLINE &
PAY AT YOUR DOORSTEP



**Gulberg
Collections**
ME & MY HOME

gulberg@gulberg.net
Cell: 7006034174

www.gulberg.net

Parliament Passes Amendment Bill To Strengthen Juvenile Justice Law

NEW DELHI: Parliament passed the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill, which seeks to increase the role of district magistrates and additional district magistrates in matters concerning child care and adoption.

Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani moved the Bill in Rajya Sabha on Wednesday and it was passed amid a ruckus as the Opposition parties kept up their protests over Pegasus snooping row, farm laws and price rise.

The Bill was passed by Lok Sabha in March 2021.

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill, 2021, which seeks to amend the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, proposes to increase the role of district magistrates and additional district magistrates in matters concerning child care and adoption, she said.

"The children of our country deserve a united house to support the amendments proposed. The amendments empower the

district magistrates, enhance CWC (child welfare committee) and enhance accountability. Hence I believe that this House irrespective of its political differences stand together in service of our children," Irani said amid protests.

According to the amendments, background and educational qualification checks will be included in the process of selection of a member of a child welfare committee.

"If an individual has a record of violation of human rights, that individual can never be appointed as a member of the child welfare committee. If an individual is convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude and has not been granted pardon, that individual cannot serve as a member of the child welfare committee. If an individual has ever abused a child, employed a child labour or indulged in immoral acts, that individual cannot serve in the child welfare committee," Irani said.

"To ensure that there is absolutely no conflict of interest,

those individuals who run child care institutions or other NGOs that profit from the government, who are from the management part of child care institutions, they cannot be a part of child welfare committees," she said.

The Bill also seeks to categorise offences wherein the maximum sentence is more than seven years' imprisonment but no minimum sentence or a minimum sentence of less than seven years has been provided as "serious offences" under the Juvenile Justice Act, and to remove difficulties in interpretation of the Act. "Serious offences" include those for which the punishment under the Indian Penal Code or any other law for the time being is imprisonment between three and seven years.

The Bill intends to ensure that the district magistrate is suitably placed to ensure effective coordination among the stakeholders for facilitation of necessary services for children's rehabilitation or re-integration. By further empowering district

magistrates to deal with child protection and adoption processes, it aims to facilitate a co-ordinated and effective response of the administration to various issues pertaining to children, including adoption, the Bill said.

On the child welfare committee, the Bill said no person shall be appointed as a member unless he or she has been actively involved in health, education or welfare activities pertaining to children for at least seven years or is a practising professional with a degree in child psychology or psychiatry or law or social work or sociology or human development.

The Bill further proposes that the appointment of any member of the committee shall be terminated by the state government, after making an inquiry, if they fail to attend the proceedings of the committee consecutively for three months without any valid reason or if they fail to attend less than three-fourths of the sittings in a year.

The Bill makes the district magistrate the grievance

redressal authority for the child welfare committee, and anyone connected with a child may file a petition before the official, who shall consider and pass appropriate orders.

Union minister Prahlad Joshi said, in a tweet, that the Bill paves the way for strengthening provisions for protection and adoption of children. Shiv Sena MP Priyanka Chaturvedi said the Bill was passed in Rajya Sabha without hearing the views of members of the Opposition.

"The way bills are being passed without getting the House in order shows arrogance of the government," she said in a video posted on Twitter.

She further said she had several questions over the Bill which were not answered.

"Single-handed power has been given to the district magistrate, then what will happen to accountability. These children who are responsibility of the state have been cheated through this Bill. The WCD minister must respond," she said.

32,000 Applicants Register On DU Admission Portal; 4,462 Apply For MPhil, PhD

NEW DELHI: Over 32,000 applicants have registered on the Delhi University's admission portal for postgraduate courses, while over 4,400 aspirants registered for MPhil and PhD courses.

The registration process commenced on July 26 and will end on August 21. According to the data on the university portal, 32,700 applicants had registered till 5 pm on Wednesday, while 4,462 had registered for MPhil and PhD courses.

The varsity held its second virtual open day on Wednesday where the Delhi University (DU) officials asked the aspirants to fill the registration forms properly as there are many things in the forms that cannot be edited after submission.

Meanwhile, students sought to know whether they would be eligible for merit-based or entrance-based admissions.

"Some of the courses have both the options--50 per cent entrance-based seats and remaining merit-based seats. If you are a graduate from DU in an Honours course, you are eligible for those merit-based

seats. If you are not from DU, you can only apply for the entrance-based process.

Even if you are a graduate from DU and have completed your graduation from a non-Honours course, you are not eligible for merit-based process," the officials explained.

The varsity has announced entrance test dates which will commence from September 26 and will go on till October 1. The exam will be conducted by the National Testing Agency. The officials also said that students have to be extremely careful while choosing their test centre.

"The students have to fill in three preferences and if they choose NCR, they can be allotted a test centre either in Faridabad, Gurgaon, Ghaziabad or Noida. This is very important and you have to think twice before finalising the test centres, they said.

This time, the students also have to fill in details of their COVID-19 vaccination status, whether they are vaccinated or not, if they are, have they been inoculated with the first dose or both, officials added.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Flash Floods

flash floods in the area around 4:30 am.

A search and rescue operation by police, Army and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) is underway to locate over 14 people who are still missing from the scene of the cloudburst at village Honzar in Dacchan tehsil, the officials said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the Centre is closely monitoring the situation in Kishtwar.

All possible assistance is being provided to the affected areas, he said, wishing for everyone's safety and well-being.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and DGP Dillbagh Singh and took stock of the situation arising due to the cloudburst.

"Seven bodies were recovered from the cloudburst-hit village, while 17 others were rescued in an injured condition so far, a police official told PTI.

He said efforts are on to locate 14 missing people.

Condition of five of the rescued persons was reported to be critical, the official said. Earlier, District Development Commissioner, Kishtwar, Ashok Kumar Sharma said a massive rescue operation is underway as a number of persons are still missing.

Director General of Police-cum-Commandant General Home Guard, Civil Defence and SDRF, V K Singh, said two women are among the seven people killed in the cloudburst.

One of our SDRF teams from Kishtwar reached the affected village and two more teams are on their way from Doda and Udhampur districts. Two more SDRF teams are waiting for the weather to improve to get airlifted from Jammu and Srinagar to the scene and join the rescue mission. Singh said, adding a NDRF team from Ludhiana in Punjab is also on the way to Kishtwar.

Inclement weather is hampering the rescue operation as our teams are waiting at the airports. The village is a three-hour journey on foot from the last road connectivity, he said.

The officials said floods have also been reported from Machail, Paddar and Bunjwah in the district.

The district development commissioner, Kishtwar, said two cloudbursts struck remote Lambard area overnight but there was no report of any loss of life.

There is some damage to infrastructure but exact details are awaited, Sharma said.

He said 60 families were evacuated to safety from the Paddar area in view of incessant rains which posed a threat to their homes.

A defence spokesman said two columns of the Army were mobilised to assist the civil administration in rescue operation.

"First Army column mobilised early morning and joined civil administration in rescue operation while a second column is reaching the scene shortly," the spokesman said.

He said one SDRF column is ready to be airlifted from the Jammu Air Force Station subject to weather clearance.

Union minister Jitendra Singh and J-K Lt Governor Sinha said they are monitoring the situation arising out of the natural calamity.

The Union minister, in a tweet, said he spoke to district magistrate Kishtwar and air force authorities were contacted for lifting the injured as and when required.

Keeping close track of the situation. Every kind of further help will be provided as per requirement. Singh, who is a member of parliament from Udhampur constituency which also covers Kishtwar, said.

In a tweet on the handle of Office of LG J-K, Sinha said, Satisfied over loss of precious lives due to flash floods caused by cloudburst in Dacchan, Kishtwar. My thoughts are with bereaved families.

Spoke to senior authorities and district administration. Army and SDRF team working on war footing to rescue people and trace the missing persons. I am continuously monitoring the situation, the Lt Governor wrote.

Senior PDP leader and former legislator Firdous Tak also expressed shock over the unfortunate incident and called for intensification of the rescue operation to save precious lives.

Flash floods triggered by incessant rain also washed away culvert on Harni - Kasote road in Mendhar sub-division of this district, snapping

key link to about half a dozen villages. Also, water supply line to the area has been damaged.

In north Kashmir's Bandipora district, a mosque and a house suffered partial damage in flash floods in Alooosa, officials said. They said while the structures suffered damage in Chichinar area of Alooosa, there was no loss of life or injury reported in the incident triggered by incessant rains lashing the area.

In Ladakh, two cloudbursts hit different areas of Kargil, causing damage to a mini power project, nearly a dozen residential houses and standing crops, the officials said, adding that no loss of life was reported in the cloudbursts, which struck Sangra and Khangral on Tuesday evening.

Most parts of Jammu region have been receiving heavy rains for the past few days. With the prediction of more rains till July-end, authorities in Kishtwar have already asked people living along water bodies and slide-prone areas to remain vigilant.

"The meteorological department has predicted heavy rains during the coming days and water levels in rivers and drains are expected to rise, which can pose a threat to the inhabitants residing near rivers, drains, water bodies and slide-prone areas," the district administration said in an advisory issued late on Tuesday night.

A MET spokesperson said widespread intermittent rain is most likely to continue across Jammu and Kashmir till July 30.

Heavy to very heavy rain is possible at some places and may lead to flash floods, mudslide, landslide and water logging (in low lying areas). People are advised to remain alert as water level has risen in all rivers (owing to incessant rains), the spokesperson said, also asking people not to venture on hilly, landslide and mudslide prone areas.

Cloudburst Prediction

Mahesh Palawat, Vice President (Meteorology and Climate Change) with Skymet Weather, said such clouds are called cumulonimbus and can stretch to even 13-14 kilometers in height.

If they are trapped over a region or there is a no air movement for them to disperse, they discharge over a specific area.

According to an explainer by the IMD on its website, "It is very difficult to predict cloudbursts due to its very small scale in space and time. To monitor or nowcast (forecasting a few hours lead time) the cloudburst, we need to have a dense radar network over the cloudburst-prone areas or one needs to have very high resolution weather forecasting models to resolve the scale of the cloudburst."

"Cloudbursts do occur at plains, however, mountainous regions are more prone to cloudbursts due to orography."

This month, cloudbursts were recorded in Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh ---- all hilly areas.

Mohapatra said, "Cloudbursts cannot be predicted. But we do give alerts of very heavy rainfall. In case of Himachal Pradesh, we had given a red (colour-coded alert)."

M Rajeevan, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, said the incidents of cloudburst seem to be rising.

Although it is difficult to forecast cloudbursts, doppler radars can be very helpful in predicting them. Nowcasts can be given three hours prior to the event, he pointed out.

But not every place may have a radar, especially the Himalayan region.

According to a written response by Earth Sciences minister, Jitendra Singh in Lok Sabha on July 23, the Himalayan region has seven doppler radars --- two in Jammu and Kashmir (Sonmarg and Srinagar), one each in Uttarakhand (Kufri), Mukteshwar (Uttarakhand), Mohanbari (Assam), Meghalaya (Sohri) and Tripura (Agartala).

LG Announces Rs 5L

utensils, clothing, household goods, cattle, cattle shed, loss of agricultural land etc. shall also be provided by the Deputy Commissioner, Kishtwar.

"The J&K government will do everything possible to support and protect the affected families. In such trying times, it is our duty to care for those who have been unfortunately affected by these natural calamities," Sinha said,

as per official spokesperson.

Cloudburst Near

are already deployed at the holy cave while an additional team has been deputed from Ganderbal district.

According to an official spokesperson, Home Minister Amit Shah also spoke to Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha who briefed him about the present situation and efforts made by the joint team of officials, Police and Army.

"The situation is under control and the flow of water in the nallah is normal. A team of SDRF is camping at Baltal and on stand-by to meet future challenges. An NDRF team is also on stand-by in Srinagar to tackle natural calamities due to incessant rain in the region. The SASB and the administration are closely monitoring the situation," LG said, as per the official spokesperson.

J&K To Get

Nityanand Rai stated this in a written reply to Rajya Sabha.

He was replying to a question on whether the government had any proposal to "reinstate" the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir and whether some efforts have been made to end the year-long ban on different means of communication.

"Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir would be granted at an appropriate time after normalcy is restored in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

"In view of the constitutional changes and bifurcation of the erstwhile state of the Jammu and Kashmir into Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Union territory of Ladakh, in national interest and also in the interest of security of J&K, temporary restrictions on various communication channels like internet and mobile services were resorted to in Jammu and Kashmir," the minister stated.

Subsequently, the matter "was reviewed from time to time and restrictions imposed were gradually eased out in a phased manner and 4G internet data services were restored in the entire Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir from February 5, he said.

The Centre had revoked the special status of the erstwhile state that was provided to it under Article 370 and bifurcated it into union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in 2019.

Militancy On Decline

up to June, 2021 in comparison with the corresponding period up to June, 2020."

The question was put to the home ministry seeking details of the law-and-order situation in Jammu and Kashmir and the steps taken by it to improve the scenario.

"Shops and business establishments, public transport, government offices, educational and health institutions etc. are functioning normally in UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The government has adopted a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism and has taken various measures such as strengthening of security apparatus, strict enforcement of law against anti-national elements, intensified cordon-and-search operations to effectively deal with the challenges posed by the terrorist organisations," the minister stated in his reply.

He added that security forces also keep a close watch on those who attempt to provide support to militants and initiate action against them.

"The government has also continuously encouraged policies to mainstream the youth, including providing employment opportunities, to wean them away from militancy. Adequate strength of forces are deployed in Jammu and Kashmir for augmenting the counter-insurgency grid, strengthening internal security and maintaining law and order," Rai said.

'KPs Feeling

Kashmir recently to take up jobs provided as part of the prime minister's rehabilitation package, the government informed Parliament on Wednesday.

Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said this in a written reply to a question put to his ministry in the Rajya Sabha.

He was asked a clutch of questions on Kashmiri Pandits such as whether the government is aware that many of them have become "insecure" in the last few years, the number of

Kashmiri Pandit and Dogra Hindu families currently staying in the Kashmir valley and their demands from the government.

"As per the report of the Relief Office set up in 1990 by the government of Jammu and Kashmir, 44,167 Kashmiri migrant families are registered, who had to move from the valley since 1990 due to security concerns.

"Out of these, the count of registered Hindu migrant families is 39,782," the minister stated.

"Kashmiri Pandits have felt more secure in the recent past, as evident from the fact that 3,841 Kashmiri migrants youth have moved back to Kashmir and have taken up jobs in various districts of Kashmir under the Prime Minister's rehabilitation package," he said.

Rai added that another 1,997 candidates were selected for jobs under the same package in April and they will be moving to Kashmir soon.

"It is also pertinent to mention that as many as 26,684 Kashmiri migrant youth showed interest in going back to the valley by applying for the above referred 1,997 posts, which were advertised by the Jammu and Kashmir's recruitment board in December, 2020.

"The government has also prepared a comprehensive policy to provide residential accommodation to these Kashmiri migrants who have moved back to Kashmir," Rai said.

He said 6,000 residential units are being constructed for them at an "accelerated pace" and 1,000 residential units are already being used by these employees.

The minister also gave the number of these families based in the valley.

"Approximately 900 such families, including Kashmiri Pandit and Dogra Hindu families, are residing in Kashmir.

"As regards those who never migrated from Kashmir, the government allowed their inclusion in the jobs package for Kashmiri migrants," he said.

Besides, they are getting all the benefits of government schemes along with others in Kashmir, Rai added.

The government has taken "necessary steps" to protect the life and property of people and these include proactive operations against terrorists, identification and arrest of overground workers or supporters of terrorism, action against members of banned organisations, intensified night patrolling checking at nakas, security arrangements through appropriate deployment, coordination meetings amongst intelligence agencies and maintaining a high level of alertness, he stated.

Blinken Sets

in his first official visit to New Delhi.

Blinken told civil society groups -- his first appointment before meeting Foreign Minister S Jaishankar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi -- that the United States and India are "connected by shared values" such as rule of law and freedom of religion.

But he added: "Both of our democracies are works in progress... As I said before, sometimes that process is painful. Sometimes it's ugly. But the strength of democracy is to embrace it."

"At a time of rising global threats to democracy and international freedoms -- we talk about a democratic recession -- it's vital that we two world-leading democracies continue to stand together in support of these ideals."

Blinken's language shows the difficult balancing act President Biden faces when it comes to taking on China over values. It is seeking to rally friendly nations against an increasingly assertive Beijing, while grappling with the aftermath of the January 6 insurrection at home and the questions about the human rights records of key allies, including India.

Taliban, China

In the talks proper, Indian officials were expected to express alarm over Taliban gains in Afghanistan and to press Blinken for more support in New Delhi's border standoff with China.

US-India relations have historically been prickly but China's growing assertiveness pushed them closer, particularly since deadly clashes last year on the disputed Indo-Chinese Himalayan frontier.

India is part of the Quad alliance with the United States, Japan and Australia, seen as a bulwark against China.

But according to Brahma Chellaney, strategic affairs expert at India's Centre for Policy Research, US backing has "slipped a notch"

since Joe Biden took over from Donald Trump as president.

"India is locked in a military standoff with China but unlike top Trump administration officials who publicly condemned China's aggression and backed India, no one in Team Biden has so far lent open support to India," Chellaney told AFP.

Biden has further riled New Delhi with Washington's "rushed and poorly planned exit from Afghanistan," Chellaney added.

India is worried that a possible takeover by the Taliban, which it sees as backed by its arch-rival Pakistan, will turn the country into a base for militants to attack India.

The Taliban welcomed virulently anti-Indian extremists when they ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001.

A hijacked Indian airliner was flown to the Taliban bastion of Kandahar in 1999.

India, a firm backer of the Afghan government with billions of dollars in development aid, recently evacuated 50 staff from its Kandahar consulate due to the worsening security situation.

The talks in a monsoon-soaked New Delhi were also set to cover joint efforts on making Covid-19 vaccines and climate change.

India, on course to become the planet's populous country, is the world's third-biggest carbon emitter and is on the front line of the

ravages of global warming.

Mehbooba Likens

mechanism feel "betrayed".

"Illegal and unconstitutional actions of August 5 and beyond have only added to the complexities of J&K issue whereby those with full faith in the democratic and constitutional mechanism of our country have been deeply hurt and they feel betrayed," she said addressing the main commemoration event on the 22nd foundation day of the party headquarters in Srinagar.

"While we have taken it upon ourselves to struggle for our identity and rights by all peaceful and constitutional means, we are also not losing the sight of the bigger picture and would continue to advocate the resolution through dialogue and reconciliation to bring about lasting peace not only in Jammu and Kashmir but the entire subcontinent," Mehbooba said in her address.

On the day, the party leadership underlined the relevance of the guiding principles and ethos of PDP "which is to advocate and facilitate resolution through dialogue and reconciliation, peace with dignity and equitable development."

"Our unflinching and uncompromising stand visavis our identity and rights aside, the changing geo-political scenario is proving the agenda and roadmap of PDP more relevant today than ever before," she claimed, adding, "It is our belief that peace in South Asian region and the prosperity of people is subservient to sustainable peace in J&K and the only way to achieve it would be to follow up on what Mufi sahib had envisioned and even executed when at the helm of affairs from 2002-2005.

Advocating for change in the current approach of the government towards the people of Jammu and Kashmir Mehbooba emphasized the need for a shift from security centric approach to J&K.

"It is high time that the idea to look at J&K through the security prism alone be given up. Such an approach has miserably failed to achieve the desired results. J&K has to be looked at as a political & human problem. It is an issue of people desirous of peace with dignity and identity," she added.

Reaching out to the people of the country, Mehbooba said that J&K had not acceded with a political party but the democratic and secular people of the great nation and that "they must not remain mute spectators while the people of J&K are being demeaned and muzzled."

Castigating BJP for bulldozing the democratic ethos and institutions of the country, Mehbooba equated the present day style of functioning of BJP government with the erstwhile East India Company "which only bothered about land and resources and not the people and their aspirations."

"For BJP like East India Company every citizen of the country is a suspect and guilty until proven innocent," she said

Debutant Boxer Pooja Rani Enters Quarters Of Olympics



Press Trust of India

TOKYO: Two-time Asian champion Indian boxer Pooja Rani (75kg) out-punched Algeria's Ichrak Chaib in her opening bout to enter the quarterfinals of her maiden Olympic Games here on Wednesday.

The 30-year-old Indian clinched it 5-0, thoroughly dominating a rival 10 years her junior. The Haryana-boxer was in command with her right straights and also benefitted immensely from Chaib's lack of balance in the ring. All three rounds were a story of Rani's domination as Chaib, also appearing in her maiden Olympics, just could not figure a way to connect cleanly.

All Rani had to do throughout the bout was counter-attack as Chaib failed spectacularly in trying to hit powerfully, her wild swings mostly missing the target area.

Next up for Rani is Olympic bronze-medallist, two-time Asian champion, and former world gold-medallist Li Qian of China.

The two will square off on July 31. The 31-year-old has an impressive record against the Indian, having beaten her in the semifinals of the 2014 Asian Games as well as last year's Asian Olympic qualifiers in Jordan.

Rani's Olympic journey has been about many struggles at several junctures. She battled a

career-threatening shoulder injury (2017), a burnt hand (2016) and lack of financial support before making it this far.

Her police officer father did not want her to pursue the sport as he felt boxing was a sport meant for aggressive people.

"Maar lag jaegi (you will get hurt). That's what my father said. He insisted that the sport was not meant for me because in his mind, boxing was pursued by aggressive people," she had recalled in an interview to PTI detailing her journey.

On Thursday, six-time world champion MC Mary Kom (51kg) will fight her pre-quarterfinal bout against Colombia's Ingrid Valencia, a boxer she has defeated both times the two have faced off.

Mary Kom is chasing her second Olympic medal, having won a bronze in the 2012 London edition.

In the men's competition, debutant Satish Kumar, two-time Olympic cut from India, will open his campaign in the pre-quarterfinal stage against Jamaica's Ricardo Brown.

Satish is a former Asian Games bronze-medallist and a Commonwealth Games silver-medallist.

So far, Manish Kaushik (63kg), Vikas Krishan (69kg) and Ashish Chaudhary (75kg) have bowed out with opening-round losses from among the nine-strong squad that qualified for the Games.

JKFA Professional League 2021 Red Cards Galore As J&K Bank XI, Kashmir Avengers FC Win Matches



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In the ongoing JKFA Professional League 2021 two matches were played on Wednesday at the Synthetic Turf TRC in Srinagar.

J&K Bank XI faced off with Shaheen FC, Jammu in the first match of the day. Billed to be a close contest, the match lived up to the expectations. J&K Bank started the game with a display of offensive football but Shaheen FC countered all attacks and did not allow Bank's forward line anywhere near the goal. The evenly balanced match was turned upside down when J&K Bank succeeded in scoring a goal through Akif in the 20th minute.

As more space opened up for the Bank XI forwards to exploit, the trailing team gave away a penalty kick in the 35th minute. Deemed a deliberate handball by the referee, Bank XI star player Akif made no mistake from the spot and doubled his team's lead. The first half ended 2:0 in Bank's favour and with Shaheen FC down to 9 men after two

red cards were shown to Arun Nagiyal & Ashish.

Shaheen FC boys tried their best to half the deficit in the second half and started to dominate possession and create chances. They succeeded in the 60th minute to pull one goal back. But the two red cards severely dented any hopes of a comeback by the Shaheen FC players. Bank XI scored their third in the dying moments of the match through Gautam. The match ended 3:1 in favour of J&K Bank XI. Akif was named man of the match.

The second match of the day was played between I-League aspirants, Kashmir Avengers FC and Hyderya Sports FC.

A crucial match for both teams, the game was expected to be a high voltage match. Both the clubs tried hard to take the lead in the beginning but it was Kashmir Avengers who succeeded in finding the net through Kelvin. Hyderya Sports FC made certain beautiful moves and their efforts were applauded by the spectators. The first half ended 1:0

in favour of the Avengers.

Hyderya Sports came out flying from the start of the second, missing a guilt-edge chance to level the match. Hyderya players however persisted and managed to equalise the score through Kamran in the 60th minute.

Both teams tried to take the lead and missed many chances in the process. But in the 80th minute, Kelvin scored again to effectively hand Kashmir Avengers the tie. Kelvin then also managed to get himself sent off, with the referee deeming his rude behaviour as the reason. Avengers' coach was also shown a red card by the referee. The match ended 2:1 in favour of Kashmir Avengers FC. Burhan of the Avengers was awarded man of the match.

Two matches of the Professional League will be played on Thursday, July 29. The first match will be played between Real Kashmir FC and Downtown Heroes FC at 3:00 pm while in the second match, Lonstar Kashmir FC will take on J&K Bank XI at 5:00 pm.

India-NZ Final Most Watched Across All WTC Series: ICC



Press Trust of India

DUBAI: The India-New Zealand final in Southampton last month was the most watched across all series that were part of the inaugural World Test Championship (WTC), with a total global audience of 177 million, the ICC said on Wednesday.

The live viewership of the Test played between June 18 and 23 had touched 130.6 million across 89 territories.

India contributed most of the audience with Star Sports and national broadcaster Doordarshan accounting for a whopping 94.6 per cent consumption of the intensely contested match that saw New Zealand complete an eight-wicket win on the reserve day.

In addition to the English-language world feed, Star had produced local language feeds in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Kannada.

ICC Chief Commercial Officer Anurag Dahiya said, "The viewership data for broadcast and digital coverage of the ICC World Test Championship Final presents a really heartening picture, showing strong consumption across territories and languages as well as formats."

"The ICC always strives to give the best possible viewership experience and will continue to invest in resources that enhance the viewing pleasure and engagement of our fans," he was quoted as saying in an ICC release.

The viewership was also impressive in New Zealand, considering its small population and the

inconvenient time of broadcast, with over 200,000 people staying up all night or waking up very early in the mornings to watch their team win the battle of attrition and lift the coveted Test Mace on Sky Sport.

In the United Kingdom, Sky Sports recorded the highest-rated match in the 2019-2021 WTC cycle for a match not involving hosts England and the Reserve Day was also the most watched day of a non-England Test match since 2015.

The launch of ICC's OTT platform ICCtv resulted in an additional 665,100 live views from over 145 territories outside of the key broadcast markets, totalling 14 million viewing minutes.

ICC digital platforms witnessed total views of over 500 million across all video content watched during the match window. Facebook provided most of the consumption across ICC digital assets with 423 million views and 368 million minutes consumed on the ICC Page.

The Reserve Day saw the most views ever recorded across the ICC Facebook page on a single day, with 65.7 million individual views across the 24-hour period, surpassing the 64.3 million enjoyed during the final of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020.

Instagram added a further 70 million individual views across the final. Further contributions from the ICC website and mobile app, as well as ICC's channels on Twitter and YouTube, took the total video views to 515 million.

Tokyo Olympics Report 16 New COVID-19 Cases

Press Trust of India

TOKYO: The Olympic Games organisers announced 16 new COVID-19 cases associated with the event on Wednesday but none of them were athletes.

The fresh additions took the total number of Games-related cases to 169.

It is for the first time in four days that no COVID-19 cases were reported among Olympic athletes.

Out of the 16, four are Games-concerned personnel, two from the media, nine contractors and one volunteer. But, none of the 16 were staying at the Olympic Village.

According to reports, two cases previously reported proved to be negative and were removed from the cumulative total.

The figures were released a day after Tokyo reported a record 2,848 daily coronavirus infections.

The total number cases in the Games village currently stands at 194. The organisers said 38,484



people from abroad had entered Japan for the Games as of Monday.

Dutch tennis player Jean-Julien Rojer was the last to withdraw from his event after testing positive for the virus.

Rojer and his doubles partner Wesley Koolhof, who were scheduled to play Marcus Daniell and Michael Venus of New Zealand, pulled out of their second-round match on Monday following Rojer's positive test result.

The contingents that have been hit by COVID-19 after landing in Tokyo include Czech republic, the USA, Chile, South Africa and the Netherlands among others.

JKSC Holds 'Cheer4India' Event To Support India At Olympics

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council on Wednesday organised '#Cheer4India' events in Srinagar and Jammu in order to show support to the Indian contingent participating in Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.

In Srinagar, a function was held at Indoor Sports Complex, Polo Ground where Olympic t-shirts were distributed among prominent players, coaches and officials by Nuzhat Farooq, Divisional Sports Officer, Kashmir.

In Jammu, the JKSC hosted a similar function at MA Stadium. Secretary, JKSC, Nuzhat Gul, presided over the function as Chief Guest. She expressed her best wishes to athletes representing India at the Olympic Games.

She appreciated the role of officers and officials of J&K Sports Council Jammu who also attended



the function to extend their support to Indian athletes and prayed for their best performance.

Nuzhat Gul also congratulated Chanu Saikhom Mirabai for winning the Silver Medal.

In Srinagar, the participants also paid glowing tributes to the silver

medallist Mirabai Chanu by giving a standing ovation. Muhammad Iqbal, Sheikh Irfan and Adil Haqani from CDK, J&K Sports Council besides coaches of various games and many officials including staff members of the J&K Sports Council were present on the occasion.

Pakistan Climber Becomes World's Youngest Mountaineer To Scale K2



Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD: A 19-year old Pakistani climber has become the youngest person in the world to reach the summit of K2, the second-highest peak in the world.

Shehroz Kashif from Lahore achieved the feat of scaling the 8,611-metre high peak with the aid of bottled oxygen.

"Good News! Received the confirmation from K2 Base Camp that Shehroz Kashif has summited K2 8611-M. It's a new world record!!!!!!!!!!!! Youngest in the world to stand on top of K2 8611-M at the

age of 19 years. Congratulations!!" Karrar Haidri, Secretary Alpine Club of Pakistan, said in a statement.

Before Kashif, Sajid Sadpara, the son of the legendary climber Muhammad Ali Sadpara, was the youngest person to have climbed K2 at the age of 20. Kashif also scaled the world's 12th-highest mountain, the 8,047-metre Broad Peak, at the age of 17. In May this year, he became the youngest Pakistani to scale Mount Everest.

His mother, Nadia Kashif, in a message to the media said Kashif is a strong and passionate climber. "I told his father not to be wor-

ried, and that he never disappoints," she said.

"I was talking to him (Kashif) the other day and I asked him if he misses his home and he replied, 'I am at home'. How could you stop someone who believes that his home is where the mountains are?" she said.

Prime Minister Imran Khan congratulated the young mountaineer.

"Congratulations Pakistan!! Pakistani mountaineer Shehroz Kashif (@shehrozkashif2) has become the youngest mountaineer in the world to summit K2 - the world's second highest peak," Khan tweeted.

The US embassy also congratulated him.

"Congratulations Pakistan! @Shehrozkashif2 has set the record for being the youngest Pakistani to reach the K2 summit! What an amazing accomplishment! Congratulations Shehroz Kashif!" it tweeted.

Haidri also said that a separate group of four other Pakistani climbers from Hushe Valley reached the top of K2, also known as the Savage Mountain.

Pakistan, Nepal and China are home to the 14 highest peaks in the world, also known as the 8,000ers. Five 8,000-metre peaks, including K2 and Nanga Parbat are in Pakistan.

Nanga Parbat and K2 are considered as the most difficult and challenging by the climbers.

Man United To Sign Raphael Varane From Real Madrid



Agencies

MANCHESTER: Manchester United has announced an agreement to sign center-back Raphael Varane from Real Madrid.

The 28-year-old French international's pending arrival follows United's signing of winger Jadon Sancho from Borussia Dortmund last week.

United said in a brief statement Tuesday that it was "delighted to announce the club has reached agreement with Real Madrid for the transfer of French international defender and World Cup winner, Raphaël Varane, subject to a medical and to player terms being finalized."

The Spanish team also confirmed the transfer agreement. Financial details were not disclosed. "Our club thanks the player for his professionalism and exemplary conduct throughout his 10 seasons representing our colors, during which time he has won 18 titles," Real Madrid

said in a statement.

Among the trophies were four Champions League titles. Varane also was a key member of the France team that won the 2018 World Cup.

He joined Real Madrid in 2011 from French club Lens.

David Alaba tests positive for COVID-19. Real Madrid defender David Alaba has tested positive for the coronavirus, the club said Wednesday.

Madrid did not immediately release details about the player's condition. The announcement came a week after Alaba was officially introduced by the Spanish club after joining from Bayern Munich.

The addition of Alaba will help make up for the departures of Raphael Varane and Sergio Ramos. Varane is joining Manchester United and Ramos signed with Paris Saint-Germain.

Madrid striker Karim Benzema tested positive for COVID-19 last week.

Richarlison's Goals Give Brazil A 3-1 Win Over Saudi Arabia

Agencies

SAITAMA: Richarlison scored a pair of goals and Brazil advanced to the quarterfinals of the men's Olympic soccer tournament with a 3-1 victory over Saudi Arabia on Wednesday.

Brazil started the day at the top of the standings in Group D, which includes Germany and Ivory Coast, but needed a win or draw to advance.

Matheus Cunha gave Brazil the lead in the 14th minute, but Abdullelah Almari equalized in the 27th with a goal that was confirmed by video review.

Richarlison, who plays for Everton, scored a header in the 76th, and then added his second in stoppage time. He now has five goals at the Tokyo Games.

The Brazilians are playing without Neymar, who helped the team win gold five years ago at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games but was with the senior team that competed in the recent Copa America. Brazil's roster for the Tokyo Olympics includes Dani Alves as one of its older exceptions.

Saudi Arabia has been eliminated. Ivory Coast advances after eliminating Germany. Germany's bid for a first men's Olympic soccer title is over. Ivory Coast's is still on track.

The Germans won silver at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games but were eliminated from this year's tournament after a 1-1 draw with Ivory Coast on Wednesday.

Benjamin Henrichs scored an own-goal in the 67th minute to give the Ivorians the lead. Eduard Löwen equalized six minutes later from a free kick. Ivory Coast also reached the quarterfinals at its previous Olympic appearance in 2008.

The men's Olympic soccer tournament is for under-24 teams, with three exceptions.

14 Parties Attend Opposition Meet, AAP Also Joins In



Agenceis

Fourteen opposition parties met on Wednesday to devise a strategy to corner the Centre on issues like the Pegasus snooping row and Assam-Mizoram discord. Among the 14 parties was the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) which has so far not been part of any joint opposition strategy.

The meeting was, however, not attended by the Trinamool Congress as the MPs were meeting Mamata Banerjee at the same time.

The parties which attended the meeting included the Congress, DMK, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), Shiv Sena, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Samajwadi Party, CPI-M, CPI, National Conference (NC), AAP, IUML, RSP, KCM and the VCK. The opposition leaders on

Wednesday met in the chamber of Rajya Sabha Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge in the Lok Sabha where Rahul Gandhi was also present. They decided that the opposition parties will press the government to order probe in the Pegasus snooping row.

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi will move adjournment motion in the Lok Sabha on the Pegasus issue demanding a probe in the alleged snooping row. In the Rajya Sabha suspension notices have been served on the Pegasus scandal and Assam-Mizoram discord.

Several other opposition MPs have also given adjournment motions in the Lok Sabha on the Pegasus scandal. Ripun Bora of the Congress has moved a suspension notice on the Assam-Mizoram discord in the Rajya Sabha.

Mizoram Seeks Centre's Help For Lifting "Economic Blockade" After Border Clash

Agenceis

The Mizoram government on Wednesday sought the Centre's intervention for the lifting of an "economic blockade" staged by the people of Barak Valley in Assam after a recent bloody clash along the inter-state border.

Seven people, including six Assam Police personnel, have been killed and over 50 people, including an SP, injured in a clash along the inter-state border on Monday.

In a letter addressed to Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla, Mizoram Home Secretary Lalbiak-sangi said that National Highway 306, the state's lifeline that connects it with the rest of the country, has been blocked in Assam since July 26.

"The blockade is adversely affecting the livelihood of the people of Mizoram. Movement of vehicles along other routes connecting Mizoram and Assam has also been blocked inside Assam.

"It has also been reported that unknown miscreants from Assam have destroyed and removed railway tracks at Mohammedpur and Ramnathpur railway stations in Assam's Hailakandi district, the only railway line connecting Bairabi railway station in Mizoram's Kolasib district," the letter read.

Stating that national highways and railway lines are owned and managed by the central government, the letter stated that no state agency or entity or general public has the right to block them and restrict the movement of people and goods passing through national highways and railroads.

"In this regard, it is requested that the Government of India may kindly intervene and instruct the



Government of Assam to take necessary action for the immediate removal of the blockade so as to ensure resumption of the movement of goods and passengers along the national highway and railway line," the letter said.

It mentioned that a "state-sponsored" economic blockade was earlier imposed by the people of Assam for nearly a month from October 17 to November 11 last year in the wake of a border standoff, which had seriously and adversely affected the livelihood of the people of Mizoram, resulting in various hardships.

"It is reported with serious concern that Assam has been indulging in the practice of imposing economic blockade merely because of the fact that the main supply routes i.e. the national highways and railway lines are passing through the state. Incidents like this have occurred numerous times in the past in connection with other incidents," it said.

A 12-hour bandh called to protest the deaths of seven people has affected normal life in the Barak Valley districts of Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj.

Earth's 'Vital Signs' Worsening as Humanity's Impact Deepens

Thousands of scientists warn climate tipping points 'imminent'



Agenceis

Thousands of scientists have repeated calls for urgent action to tackle the climate emergency, warning that several tipping points are now imminent.

The researchers, part of a group of more than 14,000 scientists who have signed on to an initiative declaring a worldwide climate emergency, said in an article published in the journal *BioScience* on Wednesday that governments had consistently failed to address "the overexploitation of the Earth", which they described as the root cause of the crisis.

Since a similar assessment in 2019, they noted an "unprecedented surge" in climate-related disasters, including flooding in South America and Southeast Asia, record-shattering heatwaves and wildfires in Australia and the US, and devastating cyclones in Africa and South Asia.

For the study, scientists relied on "vital signs" to measure the health of the planet, including deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions, glacier thickness and sea-ice extent and deforestation. Out of 31 signs, they found that 18 hit record highs or lows.

For example, despite a dip in pollution linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, levels of atmospheric CO2 and methane hit all-time highs in 2021.

Greenland and Antarctica recently showed all-time low levels of ice mass and glaciers are melting 31-percent faster than they did just 15 years ago, the authors said.

Ocean heat and global sea levels set new records since 2019, and

the annual loss rate of the Brazilian Amazon reached a 12-year high in 2020. Echoing previous research, the researchers said forest degradation linked to fire, drought and logging was causing parts of the Brazilian Amazon to now act as a source of carbon, rather than absorb the gas from the atmosphere.

Livestock such as cows and sheep are now at record levels, numbering more than four billion and with a mass exceeding that of all humans and wild land mammals combined, they said.

"Address the root cause"

Tim Lenton, the director of the University of Exeter's Global Systems Institute and study co-author, said the recent record-breaking heat waves in western United States and Canada showed that the climate had already begun to "behave in shocking, unexpected ways".

"We need to respond to the evidence that we are hitting climate tipping points with equally urgent action to decarbonise the global economy and start restoring instead of destroying nature," he said.

The researchers said there was "mounting evidence that we are nearing or have already crossed" a number of climate tipping points.

These include melting of the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets, which may now be irreversible on a centuries-long time scale, regardless of how or if the human race slashes its emissions.

They said increasing ocean deoxygenation and warming waters were threatening warm-water coral reefs, upon which half a billion people rely for food, income and storm protec-

tion.

"Given these alarming developments, we need short, frequent, and easily accessible updates on the climate emergency," said the study.

The authors repeated previous calls for transformative change in six areas: eliminating fossil fuels, slashing pollutants, restoring ecosystems, switching to plant-based diets, moving away from indefinite growth models and stabilising the human population.

They also called for climate-change education to be included in school core curriculums globally in order to raise awareness of the issue.

In the immediate term, they proposed a trio of emergency responses to the climate emergency.

These consisted of "a significant carbon price", a global phase-out and ban of fossil fuels, and the development of strategic climate reserves such as restoring and maintaining carbon sinks and biodiversity hot spots.

"We need to stop treating the climate emergency as a stand-alone issue - global heating is not the sole symptom of our stressed Earth system," said William Ripple, a distinguished professor of ecology at Oregon State University's College of Forestry.

"Policies to combat the climate crisis or any other symptoms should address their root cause: human overexploitation of the planet," Ripple said.

He added: "We need to quickly change how we're doing things, and new climate policies should be part of COVID-19 recovery plans wherever possible."

WE NEED TO RESPOND TO THE EVIDENCE that we are hitting climate tipping points with equally urgent action to decarbonise the global economy and start restoring instead of destroying nature."

Mamata Calls On Sonia, Discusses Pegasus Issue, Opposition Unity



Agenceis

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee met Congress president Sonia Gandhi at her residence on Wednesday as part of her series of outreach meetings in the national capital.

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi was also present at the meeting at 10, Janpath, the residence of Sonia Gandhi. Describing the meeting as "positive", Banerjee said she discussed the political situation in the country as well as opposition unity with the Gandhis.

"It was a very good meeting," the Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo told reporters after the deliberations that lasted for around 45 minutes, adding that she is expecting positive results in the future.

"Soniaji had invited me for a cup of tea. We discussed the political situation in the country. We also discussed the issue of opposition unity," she said.

"To defeat the BJP, all of us have to come together and work together," Banerjee said on opposition unity.

She said she also discussed the Pegasus spyware issue with the Congress chief.

However, Banerjee's party was not present at a meeting of opposition leaders, which was attended by Rahul Gandhi. Later, at a briefing by the opposition leaders at Vijay Chowk, the representatives of the TMC were not present.

Taking on the government over the Pegasus snooping controversy, Banerjee said, "Why is the government not replying on the Pegasus issue? If there is no discussion in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha (on Pegasus), where will this discussion be held? Discussions are held in Parliament, not at tea stalls."

The TMC supremo has been reaching out to various opposition leaders in a bid to bring together the non-BJP forces ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Guidelines For Ex-Gratia Payment To Kin Of Covid Victims Under Consultation: Govt



Agenceis

New Delhi: Preparation of guidelines for providing ex-gratia assistance to the family members of Covid-19 victims is "under consultation" with all the stakeholders, the government informed Parliament on Wednesday.

"The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide its judgment dated 30th June, 2021 in Writ Petition (Civil) No.539 of 2021 titled as Gaurav Kumar Bansal vs Union of India inter alia directed National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to recommend guidelines for ex-gratia assistance on account of loss of life to the family members of the persons who died due to Covid-19.

"Pursuant to the said judgment, the matter is under consultation with all the stakeholders," Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha.

The apex court, on June 30, directed the NDMA to issue guidelines in six weeks for ex-gratia compensation to the families of Covid victims. The court also said the NDMA has failed to perform its statutory duty.

The top court ordered for steps to simplify the guidelines for issuance and correction of death certificates or official documents stating the exact cause of death, that is "death due to Covid-19", for enabling the dependents to get benefits of welfare schemes. PTI

Wood Works

PERFECT PRODUCTS
BUILT TO LAST LONG...!

DEALS IN ALL KINDS OF FURNITURE BEDS, SOFA, CHAIRS, TABLES, DAY BEDS, WARDROBE AND MUCH MORE...

FURNITURE COUCHES BED

+91 9149606969 woodworksfurnituresrinagar wood_works

Why Public Service Guarantee Act Is In Deep Freezer In

People are deprived of on time services inspite of legislation guaranteeing time bound public services. Much of this has to do with the frozen status of Public

Watch to know more in this episode of **Inkishaf** on **KASHMIR OBSERVER**