



P4 THINK

AT DEATH'S DOOR: AILING HEALTH CARE IN KASHMIR

The weight of delivering health care during a pandemic is heavy—it is even more so when this is happening in a society suffering from a protracted socio-political conflict for the last...

P5 THINK

MUSIC OF KASHMIR

There are three distinct forms of music in Kashmir, namely, Sufiana Musiqi (traditional classical music) handed down to the present generation by old masters: Chhakri, Roef, Wanawon etc., (folk music), and, ghazals, geets and choral songs (modern light music).



P7 STATE

RBI NOD TO J&K GOVT TO ACQUIRE 16.76C SHARES IN J&K BANK

The Reserve Bank has accorded approval to Jammu & Kashmir government to acquire over 16.76 crore shares in J&K Bank on preferential basis...



Widom Quote!

Forget the failures. Keep the lessons.
—Dalai Lama

NEWS DIGEST

J&K Logs 96 Corona Cases

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported on Friday 96 fresh cases of novel coronavirus while 36 more Covid-19 infected people recovered in the Union Territory during the last 24 hours. According to the officials, 70 fresh cases of coronavirus were reported from ● [More On P6](#)

Train Service Remains Suspended

SRINAGAR: Train service remained suspended in the Kashmir valley for the second day on Friday as a precautionary measure. No train will chug on Srinagar-Badgam and Baramulla in north Kashmir for the second day today, official sources said. They said similarly train will also not run on ● [More On P6](#)

Army Foils Infiltration Bid Along LoC

JAMMU: The Army foiled an infiltration bid along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, defence officials said on Friday. This is the second infiltration bid foiled by the Army in the last five days. "There was an infiltration attempt (by terrorists) along LoC in Poonch sector last night," ● [More On P6](#)

No Traffic On Srinagar-Leh Highway

SRINAGAR: Traffic was on Friday suspended on the national highway, the only road link connecting Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh with Kashmir. No vehicle was allowed from either side of the road on Srinagar-Leh national highway for weekly maintenance, a traffic police official said. ● [More On P6](#)

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Internet, Phone Services Restored After 2 Days

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Life remained crippled for the second consecutive day Friday across Kashmir Valley due to security restrictions imposed by the authorities fearing law and order situation following the death of Syed Ali Shah Geelani on Wednesday.

Like Thursday, restrictions remained in place in Srinagar and other major towns of the Valley. CRPF and police in large numbers were deployed around sensitive areas of this capital city to enforce restrictions.

While the roads leading to Geelani's residence in the Hyderpora locality here remained sealed, barricades were put up in other areas to stop the movement of people, eyewitnesses said.

While life remained affected elsewhere some Srinagar areas including Boulevard on Dal Lake was bustling with people and visitors till late on Friday. Mobile phone and



Security personnel patrol deserted Jehangir Chowk in the heart of this capital city on Friday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

internet services snapped on Wednesday night were restored late on Friday. However, internet on mobile services shall remain shutdown till Sunday afternoon," a police spokesperson said.

"In view of the peaceful situation, mobile service (voice call) and broadband of all TSPs shall open tonight at 10 pm. It is

pertinent to mention that mobile service (voice call) and broadband of BSNL were never closed. However, internet on mobile services shall remain shutdown till Sunday afternoon," a police spokesperson said.

Earlier tough restrictions were imposed in Srinagar's Old City in the first half of the day. However, as the ● [More On P6](#)

THE SITUATION IS ABSOLUTELY UNDER CONTROL, not even a single incident occurred in the last two days. People cooperated and security forces are working with great restraint. I congratulate people...for keeping peace everywhere."

Britain Bats For Indo, Pak Talks

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD: UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab on Friday said that Britain supported talks between Pakistan and India to resolve the long standing Kashmir dispute.

"It is not for the UK to impose its solution to the Kashmir crisis," he said, adding that London encouraged both Islamabad and New Delhi to hold concrete dialogue over the issue.

The question was asked in light of Syed Ali Shah Geelani (92), avowedly a pro-Pakistan supporter who spearheaded the separatist movement in Jammu and Kashmir for over three decades, dying at his residence in Srinagar on Wednesday night.

The British foreign secretary arrived in Islamabad on Thursday night for talks on the evolving situation in Afghanistan and bilateral matters.

He said that it is important to engage with the Taliban government ● [More On P6](#)

J&K Govt's Big Push To Rural Tourism

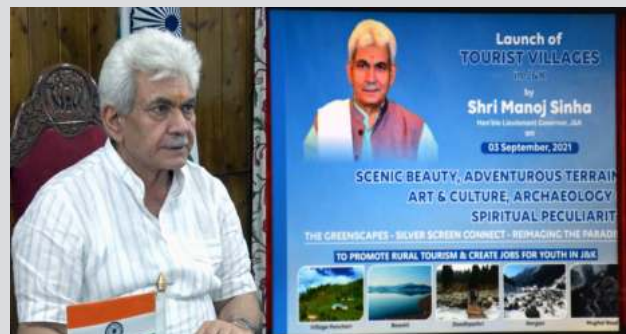
75 Historical, Picturesque Villages To Be Converted Into Tourist Villages

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a bid to promote tourism in rural Kashmir, the Jammu and Kashmir government has decided to transform 75 villages known for historical, picturesque beauty and cultural significance into tourist villages

The Union Territory Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Friday launched J&K Tourist Village Network, an initiative aimed at transforming 75 villages of the Union Territory known for historical, picturesque beauty, and cultural significance into tourist villages.

Speaking on the occasion, the LG, as per an official spokesperson said that the youth-led sustainable tourism initiative will strengthen rural economy & community



entrepreneurship, empowering youth & women by providing direct & indirect employment opportunities.

The LG, he said, highlighted the objective behind the initiative and observed that the UT Government is adopting best practices recognizing the uniqueness of each village and showcasing the landscapes, indigenous knowledge systems, cultural diversity & heritage, local values & traditions, besides encouraging film shooting and offering financial incentives

as well as ensuring a digital platform to all these villages.

He further said that the LG emphasized on harnessing the potential of the younger population and making them self-reliant and reiterated government's commitment to provide maximum and equal opportunities to youth from different backgrounds and enabling their involvement in policies that affect them.

"We are addressing the needs of our youth and responding to the innovative ideas to build a strong future," Sinha said, as ● [More On P6](#)

Covid Cases Spiked In Second Half Of August

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The R-value which reflects how rapidly the coronavirus pandemic is spreading, has sharply risen close to 1.2 over the last fortnight, mainly driven by cases in states like Kerala and Maharashtra, say researchers.

The R-value calculated between August 24-29 stood at 1.17 as against 0.89 between August 14-17, according to the researchers at the Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Chennai.

The rise in the R-value comes after a steady decline in cases in the first half of August in the country.

Up to that date (August 30), the situation looked pretty bad. India's R-value had shot up close to 1.2. Not only is it greater than one, it is much higher than the last time there was a scare of a third wave (it was 1.03 at that time).

This is driven by several states having their R-value go over 1 in the last few days of August -- most notably Kerala and Maharashtra, but also Mizoram and Jammu and Kashmir, Sitabha Sinha, who is leading the team of researchers at the Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Chennai, told PTI.

The R-value of Kerala stood at 1.33, ● [More On P6](#)

Rs 289 Crore J&K Bank Fraud

CBI Books Ambience Group Promoter, 2 Directors



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked the promoter of Ambience Group, Raj Singh Gehlot and 2 directors into a whopping Rs 289 crore Jammu and Kashmir Bank (J&K Bank) loan fraud case.

According to the reports, the Central probe agency booked Aman Hospitality Private Limited (AHPL) and its directors Raj Singh Gehlot, Dayanand Singh and Aman Gehlot for cheating the J&K Bank of Rs 289 crore in connivance with the bank officials.

Gehlot, the promoter of the Ambience group, was arrested in July in a separate money-laundering case linked to an alleged bank loan fraud of Rs 800 crore.

Gehlot's arrest had come over five months after ACB filed a charge sheeted

against two former managers of J&K Bank Rakesh Kumar Kharyal and Kuldeep Gupta and others in the whopping Rs 270 crore J&K Bank loan fraud case.

Gehlot and his company directors are accused of conniving with the bank officials to get the loan account declared a non-performing asset (NPA) to facilitate one-time settlement to the company's advantage.

The case had come to light after ACB had registered a case (FIR No. 15/2019) on 24 July 2019 at police station ACB Srinagar on the basis of an information which was the outcome of a verification conducted into the allegations of financial irregularities in the loans availed by AHPL New Delhi from the Ansal Plaza Branch of the J&K Bank New Delhi.

It was alleged ● [More On P6](#)

THE FIRM HAD APPARENTLY availed Rs 227 crores as term Loan alongwith Bank guarantee of Rs. 15 crores for the construction of a five star hotel in Delhi with a project cost estimated at Rs. 866.89 crores."

J&K Govt To Administer One Lakh Jobs Daily

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday set the target of administering one lakh Covid vaccine doses per day as fear of the third wave of deadly disease looms large over the Union Territory.

The decision regarding it was taken during the weekly meetings chaired by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to review the Covid scenario in J&K, an official spokesperson said Friday.

The LG, he said, asked the DCs and Health department to

effectively utilize the existing available stock of vaccines to meet the set target. He also directed to maintain the buffer stock of vaccines in all the districts.

During the meeting with DCs and SPs, the LG, he said, directed the joint team of police & civil administration to strictly enforce Covid protocol and take administrative actions against violators.

"Conduct aggressive vaccination and testing across the UT with a dedicated focus on areas reporting increase in positive cases," The LG told the officials, as per the ● [More On P6](#)

Internet Lockdown Drives Out Tourists From Kashmir

Augib Javeed

SRINAGAR: A number of tourists who had arrived from different parts of the country fled from Kashmir soon after the death of senior Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Geelani on Wednesday evening, Kashmir hoteliers said on Friday.

Wahid Malik, president Kashmir Hotels and Restaurant Owners Federation (KHAROF) told Kashmir Observer that the tourists were worried about the situation due to snapping of communication lines and many rushed towards the airport for the first flight.



"They were more worried about the communication blockade and maintain that their families will be worried back home since they won't be able to talk to them," Malik said. Malik has also ● [More On P6](#)

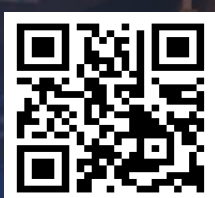
Fear, Anger Among Kashmiris Living Outside

Zaid Bin Shabir

Scores of Kashmiris living outside are reeling under fear, anger and skepticism as they're struggling to get any news from their families in wake of a communication blockade enforced by the authorities after the death of iconic separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani on Wednesday. Ibrahim Sultan, a Kashmiri working in Punjab, told Kashmir Observer that this was "inhumane" on the part of the Kashmir administration to place restrictions on communication. ● [More On P6](#)

FULL CIRCLE

Lamentable State of Academia in Kashmir



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Quality Of Screen Time Rather Than Number Of Hours Spent Has Greater Impact On Teenagers

Agencies

A new UC Berkeley research suggested that there is no need to agonize over the long number of hours teens and tweens spend scrolling through and posting to Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and other social media sharing and messaging platforms. When it comes to screen time, the problem is not so much the number of hours they spend online, but the quality of their online interactions, suggested the study of more than 700 adolescents in Peru during the South American country's most stringent COVID-19 lockdown in spring 2020. These findings were published in the 'Journal of Research on Adolescence'. Overall, teens in the study who found support online -- such as chatting with friends and relatives via WhatsApp or joining multiplayer online video games -- reported less loneliness. "Our findings support our hypothesis that

how you spend your time on screens, and not how much time you spend online, is the best predictor of loneliness and well-being," said study lead author Dr Lucia Magis-Weinberg, a developmental scientist with UC Berkeley's Institute of Human Development. "In light of this, teachers and parents might want to focus more on promoting positive online experiences for youth rather than limiting screen time," she said. Published last as part of a special issue on the impact of COVID-19 on adolescents worldwide, the findings challenge a common assumption that pandemic distancing measures, combined with excessive social media use, are a recipe for a loneliness epidemic. "There has been this negative discourse about screen time causing loneliness and depression. But our findings provide more nuance and show that, when used positively, online interactions are actually associated with less loneliness. This is especially

true when teenagers have no other option but to connect with their friends online," Magis-Weinberg said. The study was launched in April 2020, when Peru entered a strict COVID-19 lockdown that confined tens of millions of residents to their homes. Only one family member at a time could leave for approved errands, and young people were mostly isolated indoors. For six weeks, the researchers surveyed thousands of students between the ages of 11 and 17 to understand their online behaviours and relationships under socially isolated conditions and to assess how these factors related to their moods and their sense of belonging. On a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (frequently), the students rated to what extent they agreed with such statements as, "I feel valued by people in my social media," "People in my social media give me advice," "People in my social media make me feel like I do not belong," and "People in my social media

treat me badly."

They also completed separate questionnaires on which electronic devices they used, their social media preferences, their loneliness levels and their general well-being.

For most of the students, smartphones were the preferred device for connecting to non-educational online activities, followed by laptops and then video game consoles.

For girls, social media, messaging apps and YouTube videos were the most popular online pastimes. For boys, the most popular online activities were playing video games and watching videos.

As for their mental health outlook, the students reported more positive than negative online interactions, especially with regard to discussing problems and getting helpful feedback via WhatsApp, the most popular messaging platform in Peru, among other social media platforms.

Over 60 per cent of people ignore early signs of poor nerve health

Agencies

More than 60 per cent of Indians ignore early signs of poor nerve health, finds an alarming health survey released on Thursday. The survey, by Heal Health and Hansa Research, and supported by Procter and Gamble Health, was conducted among 1,800 respondents across 12 cities to gauge the awareness levels and perceptions about nerve health among Indians, and its findings revealed that people have limited knowledge about this issue.

Over 90 per cent of the respondents believe that healthy nerves are important, but only 38 per cent



know that nerves are different from blood vessels. The health experts explained that the deficiency of B vitamins leads to nerve damage. Dizziness, muscle weakness and feeling of pins in limbs are the top three symptoms experienced by people suffering from nerve health—a fact only understood by 50 per cent of the participants surveyed.

"Besides other factors, people with Vitamin-B deficiencies have a higher probability for nerve impairments. Special nutritional habits or malnutrition can lead to deficiencies in certain essential vitamins, like the neurotropic-B vitamins, which play a very important role in keeping your nerves healthy and protected," said Dr Satish Khadilkar, Dean and HOD Neurology, Bombay Hospital Institute of Medical Sciences, in a statement.

B12 deficiency is extremely common in India—amongst other deficiencies—owing to malnutrition being extremely common and improper diet and lifestyle. The nerve damage caused by a lack of Vitamin B12 may become permanently debilitating, the experts warned.

"Like most vitamins, B12 can't be made by the body. Instead, it must be gotten from food and supplements. Therein lies the problem as while some people don't consume enough vitamin B12 to meet their needs, others can't absorb enough, no matter how much they take in. As a result, vitamin B12 deficiency is found to be relatively common, especially among older people," added Khadilkar.

The national survey results also revealed that 73 per cent of respondents relied upon vegetables and 69 per cent of respondents relied upon fruits for vitamin B12, which are not a source.

"Good nutrition is often the first line of defence to avoid many diseases, including nerve health. The food you eat can improve your nervous system's functioning. Knowing which nutrients nourish your nervous system can help you lead a healthier life and reduce your chances of nerve-related problems," said Dr Mangesh Tiwaskar, Honorary General Secretary, Association of Physicians of India.

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NIET NO: 23 e-Tendering/2021-22 Dated: 31-August-2021

For and on behalf of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation, e-tenders are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors for the following work:-

S.No	Name of work	Est. Cost (In Lacs)	Cost of Tender Document (Non-refundable)	Time of Completion in days/ Weeks	Class of Contract (Civil)	Head of Account/ Approval No.	T.S No.
1.	Up-gradation of surface drain from H/o Mr. MujhadShabir Ahmad to Fayaz Ahmad Bhat and Construction of surface draion from Mr. Zahoor Ahmad Mir, Mohammad Shafi and others at Housing Colony, Channapora, Srinagar	Rs. 3.60/-	Rs. 200/-	7 Days Strictly	DEE	14th FC (2015-2016) No. SMC/ Plg/2020-743-45 Dated:13-08-2021	T.S.No. 166 Dated: 31/08/2021
2.	Renovation of Informatics Lab at Central Office, SMC Karan Nagar, Srinagar	Rs. 2.41/-	Rs. 200/-	7 Days Strictly	DEE	Dev Grant (2021-2022) No. SMC/ Plg/2020-21/834-38 Dated:25-08-2021	T.S.No. 165 Dated: 31/08/2021

1. Other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

	Publish date	31-08-2021 04:00 PM
1	Document download	01-09-2021 10:00 AM To 07-09-2021 04:00 PM
2	Bid submission/uploading date	01-09-2021 10:00 AM To 07-09-2021 04:00 PM
3	Bid Opening date	09-09-2021 11:00 AM
4	Submission of hardcopy for successful bidder	09-09-2021 upto 4.00 PM

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- The successful bidder shall have to produce/deposit performance security 3% of the value of contract in shape of FDR/CDR pledged to Executive Engineer LRWD SMC before issuance of allotment to protect the department against any financial loss in the event of default of the successful bidder/tenderer which the successful bidder should submit / deposit within 05 days from the date of formal intimation is issued in his favour from the corporation.
- The successful bidders/tenders should submit the hard copies of their documents including DD after the opening of tenders.
- In Case of Holidays/office happens to be closed on the date of opening of bids. Bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue
- 3(a). The intending tenderer/bidder should attach sales tax clearance certificate with upto dateValidation without which no tenders/ bids will be entertained.
- The bid shall be opened online in the Office of Executive Engineer LRWD, SMC at Old Funds office Building Karan Nagar near National School Municipal Park on 09-09-2021 11:00 AM.
- Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of Demand Draft pledged in favour of Chief Accounts Officer SMC payable at Srinagar or Bank receipt of tender fee deposit in the Municipal Account No: 0216010200000007 payable at J&K Bank Brach Balgarden. Scanned copy of the same withmentionofNIET No.& Serial no. to be uploaded along with all other documents including Bid Security Declaration with validitynot less than 180 days from the Bid due date.

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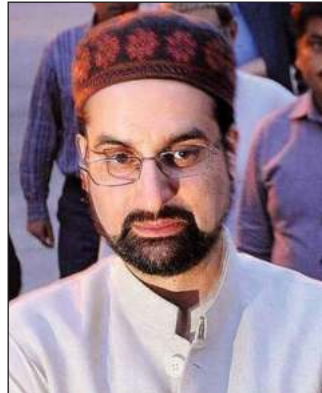
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Mirwaiz Umar Pays Tributes To Syed Ali Geelani

Observer News Service

Srinagar: All Parties Hurriyat Conference on behalf of its chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq Friday expressed grief and sorrow over the demise of veteran leader Syed Ali Geelani who passed away at his home, under house detention, after a prolonged illness.



The APHC in a statement paid tributes to Geelani for his contribution and sacrifices on political and resistance fronts saying the demise of Geelani has not only created a big void in the political corridors of Jammu and Kashmir but also marked the completion of an era.

The statement said that with the inception of All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) in 1992 under the leadership of young Mirwaiz Umar Farooq to represent the "emotions and senti-

ments" of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, Geelani extended every possible and sincere support to the young Mirwaiz to take forward the mission and programmes of the Hurriyat.

The APHC paid homage to the veteran resistance leader for his consistency, steadfastness and courage and enduring time and again imprisonments and tortures in interrogation centres, saying the continuous house imprisonment of Geelani Sahib despite his old age and various ailments became reasons for his ill health which ultimately led to his demise.

The Hurriyat Conference on behalf of its Chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and the entire leadership has expressed heartfelt condolence and solidarity with the bereaved family of Geelani especially his sons Naseem Geelani and Naeem Geelani; and prayed for Jannatul-Firdous to the departed soul.

The APHC termed it unfortunate that its Chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who has spent a long time with Syed Ali Geelani in his political journey, could not participate in the Namaaz-e-Janaazah (funeral prayers) of the deceased leader as he continues to be under house arrest for more than two years now.

Friday Prayers Disallowed In Jamia Masjid, Hazratbal

Agencies

Srinagar: Friday prayers remained suspended for the fourth successive week at historic Jamia Masjid in the downtown, Assar-e-Shareif Hazratbal and others major shrines in Kashmir valley to curtail the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

However, this Friday prayers were also not offered in mosques on main city roads due to restrictions imposed by the authorities as a precautionary measure following the death of separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who breathed his last at his house in Hyderpora in the outskirts of Srinagar on Wednesday night.

Prayers were offered in local mosques, particularly in the interior areas. All gates leading to Jamia Masjid remained closed and people were not allowed to enter the worship place, while security forces were deployed in strength to prevent assembly of people in or around the historic mosque. Jamia market also remained closed.

"No Friday prayers were held for the fourth successive week in the historic Masjid," said Anjuman Aqaf Jamia Masjid (AAJM), headed by moderate Hurriyat Conference (HC) chairman Mirwaiz Moulvi Omar Farooq, who is under house arrest

since August 5, 2019.

Friday prayers were resumed at Jamia Masjid on August 6 after remaining suspended for more than three months to prevent spread of COVID 19. However, after a fresh order asserting that only 25 persons are allowed to attend any function in Jammu and Kashmir,



the mosque was again closed on August 13 for Friday prayers.

Congregational prayers were also not allowed for the fourth successive week at Hazratbal shrine, which houses the Holy Relic of Prophet Muhammad. Similarly, Friday prayers were also not held in other major worship places, including at the shrine of Hazrat Gousul Azam Dastigeer in Khanyar and Hazrat Mehboob-ul-Aalam.

Meanwhile, people alleged that the 'dual policy' adopted

by administration is confusing as on one hand it has closed worship places and are yet to reopen educational institutions while on the other hand, tourist resorts are open and the administration and political parties are holding functions, Sports tournaments and other melas are being held in the valley.

"If the government is concerned that COVID-19 could spread after opening the educational institutes and worship places a, it should also stop holding functions with large gatherings as they too can lead to spread of the virus," alleged Mohammad Amin, a retired teacher.

"If you go to any tourist resort in week days or weekends, you will see most of the people roaming around without adhering to any COVID guidelines," he added.

Health Dept Launches Covid Vaccination Drive In Srinagar Schools

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Health Department on Thursday launched a special Covid-19 vaccination drive for the teachers and staff of all the schools and colleges in Srinagar. Director of Health Services in Kashmir, Dr Mushtaq Ahmad said that this special drive aims to vaccinate all the teachers, staff, students eligible for vaccination and their families.

"Almost 90 per cent of the staff in colleges and about 60-70 per cent of the staff in schools has been vac-

nated. The leftover teachers and staff will be vaccinated through this drive," he stated. Ahmad informed that the Health Department has launched this drive for all the districts of the Union Territory and it will be continued until all the staff members are vaccinated.

He also asserted that the Covid-19 vaccines are completely safe and urged the people to get vaccinated voluntarily and follow the SOPs. The special vaccination drive started from Government Higher Secondary School in Rajbagh.

Meanwhile, the teach-

ers appreciated this special drive launched by the Health Department. "It is a very good initiative. The students will only be safe if all the teachers and staff are vaccinated. I would also like to ask people not to hesitate in taking their vaccine," said a government school teacher who came to receive her second dose of the Covid-19 vaccine.

"I am specially-abled. Being visually impaired, you have to touch things more often to feel them. So it is even more important for us to get vaccinated," she added.

Congress MP Karti Offers 'Prayers' At Hazratbal

KO News Desk

Srinagar: Karti P Chidambaram, son of former Union Minister of Finance, P Chidambaram, shared a picture on social media that showed him offering prayers at the

Hazratbal Shrine, Srinagar.

The visit of Karti P Chidambaram comes shortly after the visit of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to the Shrine.

Karti Chidambaram is Congress MP From Sivagan-

ga, Tamil Nadu and son of former Union Finance Minister P Chidambaram. He is currently facing investigation in a number of cases including money laundering and having undisclosed foreign assets.

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

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
FOR MACADAM WORKS

NIT No. 32 of 2021-22 DATED: 01/09/2021.

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

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	6	7	8
1.	IMPROVEMENT/UPGRADATION OF CHOTIPORA LINK ROADS.	134.60	2600/-	20 Days	F.C Grants	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner

Position of AAA: **Accorded Technical Sanction Granted.**

Position of funds Committed by Municipal Handwara

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	01-09-2021
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	01-09-2021 from 1: PM.
3	Bid submission Start Date	01-09-2021 from 4:00PM
4	Bid Submission End Date	06-09-2021-2021 upto 4.00 PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	07-09-2021-2021 at 11:00AM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Handwara

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Handwara (tender inviting authority) and Bid security Declaration as per format given in SBD. The EMD has to be submitted by the lowest bidder L1 (3% of quoted cost) within the period as specified in SBD.
- 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 PWD(R&B) Division Handwara (tender receiving authority).
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids
- The earnest money shall be forfeited, If:-
 - Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
 - Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
 - Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
- Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
- 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.
- To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.
- The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.
- Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the technical bid.
- The tender / bid is liable to rejection if it does not fulfill the requirements as laid down in NIT and SBD.
- All other terms and conditions shall be strictly as per SBD circulated by this office letter No. CE/RBK/HD/29158-88 dated 10-02-2018

No. 5064-70
Dated: 01-09-2021
DIPK-7715/21

Executive Engineer
R&B Division Handwara



CENTRAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH IN AYURVEDIC SCIENCES
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ADVERTISEMENT - 2021 PANCHKARMA TECHNICIAN COURSE

The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India invites applications for One year, full time and self financed Panchkarma Technician Course conducted by CCRAS, Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India, New Delhi at following Training Centres affiliated to Healthcare Sector Skill Council (HSSC) - National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC):

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- Central Ayurveda Research Institute (CARI)**
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Ph. 011-25229448, E-mail: acri-delhi@gov.in
- National Ayurveda Research Institute for Panchakarma (NARIP)**
Cheruthuruthi, Thrissur Distt., Via Shoranur, Kerala-679531
Ph. 04884-262543, E-mail: nrip-cheruthuruthi@gov.in
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Duration: 1 year (October, 2021 - September, 2022)

Total Seats: 30 Seats at NARIP, Cheruthuruthi, 10 Seats at CARI, New Delhi & 15 seats at RARI, Jammu (50% each for male and female candidates at all three centres)

Eligibility: 12th standard pass candidates from all over India.

Age Limit: Minimum 18 years should be completed on the date of final assessment at the end of training.

Reservation: As per rules of the Government of India, reservation policy is 15% for SC, 7.5% for ST & 27% for OBC (Non Creamy Layer). Horizontal reservation of 4% for PH (only lower locomotive disorders) and 10% for EWS category will be applicable.

Last date for receipt of applications at above centres: On or before 24th September, 2021

Per candidate Fee: Application Fee- Rs.500/- and Course Fee- Total Rs.30,000/- (in 3 instalments).

Mode of application: Duly filled in application form along with all requisite documents and demand draft of Application Fee is to be sent to any one Institute of the choice by registered or speed post. Please visit Council's website www.ccras.nic.in for Information Brochure (details of Training Programme & Submission Process), Syllabus and for downloading Application Form.

Applications received after the last date will not be considered. Application received by one centre will not be transferable for other centre.

DAVP 17216/11/0009/2122

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- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS



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

This Day in History

- 1260 - Battle at Montaperti, Tuscany, between rival factions the Guelphs and Ghibellines
- 1682 - English astronomer Edmond Halley observes the comet named after him
- 1862 - General Lee invades the North with 50,000 Confederate troops during Maryland Campaign (US Civil war)
- 1870 - The Third French Republic proclaimed as French overthrow Emperor Napoleon III (who ironically was the elected president of the Second French Republic) after his defeat by Prussia at Sedan.
- 1904 - Dalai Lama signs treaty allowing British commerce in Tibet
- 1914 - General von Moltke ceases German advance in France
- 1914 - France, Russia, and Britain agree in a Pact of London that none will make a separate peace.
- 1919 - Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who founded the Republic of Turkey, gathers a congress in Sivas to make decisions as to the future of Anatolia and Thrace.
- 1936 - Franco's troops conquer Irun & Talavera de la Reina, Spain
- 1939 - Netherlands & Belgium declare neutrality
- 1940 - Nazi collaborator Mussert puts the fate of Netherlands in Hitler's hands
- 1943 - British 8th Army lands at Taranto, South Italy
- 1944 - Finland breaks diplomatic contact with Nazi Germany
- 1951 - US President Harry Truman addresses opening of Japanese Peace Treaty Conference.
- 1964 - NASA launches its 1st Orbital Geophysical Observatory (OGO-1)
- 1967 - 6.5 earthquake of Kolya Dam India, kills 200
- 1968 - Nigerian troops conquer the city of Aba, Biafra during the Nigerian Civil War
- 1975 - The Sinai Interim Agreement relating to the Arab-Israeli conflict is signed.
- 1976 - Palestinians hijack KLM DC-9 to Cyprus
- 1979 - Sunil Gavaskar scores 221 in India's 8 for 429 chasing 438 in drawn 4th cricket Test v England at The Oval; England win series 1-0
- 1979 - Iran army conquers Baneh
- 1982 - USSR performs underground nuclear test
- 1994 - Kansai International airport officially opens
- 1998 - Google is formally incorporated by Larry Page and Sergey Brin, two students at Stanford University.
- 2000 - England wins 5th cricket Test v West Indies by 158 runs at The Oval for first series win (3-1) over WI since 1969; Windies captain Courtney Walsh's 132nd and final Test.
- 2012 - 25 people are killed at a funeral suicide bombing in Nangarhar, Pakistan
- 2012 - 42 people are killed and 25 injured as a passenger bus falls down a ravine in Morocco
- 2012 - Carpet that can help prevent falls in elderly by warning them after detecting unusual footsteps is developed
- 2014 - Monsoon rains begin and cause flooding over a sustained period that kills over 400 people in India & Pakistan
- 2014 - Archeological remains of a Viking fortress from the 900s CE, the Valløe Borgring, is discovered in Denmark
- 2016 - Mother Teresa canonized by Pope Francis in a ceremony at the Vatican

From KO Archives

Hizb Asks Centre To Clarify Stand On Kashmir

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR - Hizb-ul-Mujahideen today said its talks with the Centre could be resumed only if the government gave up its rigid stand on Kashmir and accepted it as a disputed territory.

Talks between the Centre and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen were neither dependent upon the good wishes of political parties nor the misleading statements of ruling National conference in the state, commander

Masood, spokesman of the outfit, said in a statement here. For resumption of talks it was necessary that the Centre should not stick to its outdated and unrealistic stand. Kashmir is part of and accepts the reality that it was a disputed territory which was imperative for the everlasting solution of Kashmir issue, commander Masood said in the statement released through a local news agency.

Kashmir was an issue involving the right of self-determination of the people of the state. United Nations has given a right to the people to decide their future. UN resolutions... which both India and Pakistan have accepted without opposing them. It is a fact that Kashmiris have not been given a chance to decide their future yet, he said.

He said Pakistan's involvement in the talks was not being insisted under any pressure but due to the fact that it had a role in the state's future.

(Kashmir Observer, September 04, 2000)

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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#K-TWITTER

All it takes is a split second between life and death and because of the communication gag many sick and terminally ill people who have their doctors on call are in perpetual anxiety.

At the mosque today, minutes before juma prayers, a little kid, noticing that I didn't have my head covered, got me a skullcap and said: "Aap ye lenge?"

The heart is full. :)

The only way to get in touch with anyone in Kashmir right now is if you're lucky and they have a BSNL connection. There is no mobile internet. You cant even make a phone call unless you're calling a BSNL number. Imagine the implications of that for a minute

Islamic Studies
Academics Must
Know Arabic

Wassim Hassan

Islamic Studies academics have recently taken to social media to critique certain aspects of their field. One major criticism was that Islamic Studies academics are constantly projecting various theories onto Islam without justifying why they are doing so. Although this assessment was ironically made by an academic that has fallen into the same trap via projecting SchuonianPerennialism onto Islam, the critique stands. The discussion has since taken a turn to focus on theory and its utility, and that is beyond the scope of this piece. Another major criticism was the lack of language skills among many Islamic Studies academics, which drastically limits their engagement with Muslim texts. In response, one Islamic Studies academic took to social media making poorly thought out responses to this, varying from accusations of sexism, racism, classism, to ignorance of the corpus of Muslim texts.

I have taken Islamic Studies courses at more than one university. At the time, I had my own critiques and skepticism of the capabilities of the professors in the Arabic language, but I would never have imagined that it would be considered unproblematic by some to have absolutely no engagement with Arabic. I spent many days in class correcting my professors when they misread or mistranslated an Arabic phrase. I was left in a state of confusion. How is it that these are tenured or tenure-track professors at top universities that are so incompetent in the primary language of the Muslim tradition of which they are purportedly experts?

One particular academic claimed that limiting Islamic Studies to people with knowledge of classical Arabic will make the field more white, male, and wealthy. This statement is loaded with problems and assumptions, but I will highlight just one. Assuming the statement is true, there seems to be an implicit prioritization of diversity over standards and quality. If there is a perceived limitation on access to classical Arabic, then the goal should be to expand the level of access rather than waiving Arabic off as some unnecessary perk. Unsurprisingly, proponents of cancel-culture and identity politics can't seem to get this through their heads. Academia as a whole is characterized by inaccessibility, which is itself the problem. The issue is not a racial or gendered one, but a class one. There's more to be said about this, but other questions arise.

Does the academic who brandished the flag of anti-racism realize that her approach to Islamic Studies is completely reminiscent of standard orientalist white-washing of other fields of study? Coleman Barks' translated' MawlanāJalālud-dīn al-Rūmī's poetry without knowing a lick of Persian. The result was a whitewashing of a Muslim theologian's love for Islam at the hands of Westerners ready to cite Mawlana Rumi to justify beliefs he would have rejected. It is true that there are many works about Mawlana Rumi written in various languages, but the core works are in Persian. Erasing the requirement of Persian to engage with Mawlana Rumi produces something repugnant to anyone who speaks Persian, anyone who values Mawlana Rumi as a Muslim figure, or anyone with a semblance of academic integrity. To suggest a similar route regarding Arabic in the field of Islamic Studies is asking to open the door to things that are an anathema to me, an Arabic-speaking, Muslim student of traditional Islamic Studies.

Even if one were to make the argument that many Muslim texts are in Persian, Urdu, and Turkish (among other languages), this provides no recourse for the problem at hand. The core text that informs all other texts in the Muslim tradition, whether directly or indirectly, is the Qur'an. The Qur'an is in Arabic, and one will never be able to grasp it without having mastered Arabic. Translations are not considered the Qur'an by Muslims. An academic would never consider someone who has never read Shakespeare in his original early English (as opposed to a translation) an authority on Shakespearean literature, so why should anyone pay mind to a proclaimed authority on Islam who has never read the Qur'an, a text that is only in Arabic?

Traversing Tradition



At Death's Door: Ailing
Health Care in Kashmir

The already poor infrastructure coupled with the challenges of the times has led to a retrograde medical infrastructure in Kashmir

Javaid Iqbal and RofudunNisa

The weight of delivering health care during a pandemic is heavy—it is even more so when this is happening in a society suffering from a protracted socio-political conflict for the last seven decades. This is the reality of a valley nestled in the lap of the great Himalayas: Kashmir.

Since early 2020, the human and structural infrastructure in the valley of Kashmir has been under unimaginable stress, yet the frontline healthcare providers have answered the call of duty without fail. According to the Physicians Foundation, doctors, on average, should see 20 patients per day and spend at least 20 mins per patient. This is because spending time with the patient enables the doctor to build rapport and investigate the cause of the disease. In Kashmir, however, doctors usually have to take care of more than 150 patients in an Outpatient Department (OPD) per day. In addition, doctors have to work up the patients admitted for elective surgery and take care of both admitted and emergency patients concurrently.

The ongoing pandemic has exposed the flaws in Kashmir's health-

care system, with deficiencies in both healthcare availability and delivery. A 2016 survey published by Doctors Without Borders (MSF) reported that 45% of the Kashmiri population had experienced some form of mental distress, with only 6.4% of the people with a mental illness ever visiting a psychiatrist.

Since 2019, Kashmir has been under a spate of curfews and lockdowns, first due to the revocation of Article 370 and now due to the Coronavirus. This has adversely affected the mental health of the general population—especially the youth. Nearly all mental health services are clustered in the capital city of Srinagar, which makes them inaccessible to patients in rural areas, with COVID intensifying these challenges. Up to 500 suicide cases have been registered in the last year alone. These trends have not spared the children: between 2016-2019, those treated for mental issues has risen from approximately 17000 to 30000.

Public Health care institutions in Kashmir deliver care to almost 97% of the population even though they are severely understaffed. The doctor-patient ratio is one of the lowest in India. The World Health Organization recommends one doctor for

every thousand patients; Kashmir has a doctor-patient ratio of 1:2000. The valley has 2,459 oxygen-supported beds, only 752 of which could handle high-risk patients. There are only six hospital beds available for every 10,000 patients. This lack of infrastructure is particularly hard on the nomadic Gujjar and Bakerwal communities which constitute 20% of the population.

Patients from rural regions are directed to urban tertiary care facilities, losing valuable time in the commute, and sometimes even resulting in loss of life. Many hospitals, even at the district level, lack basic facilities such as having a blood bank. Due to the severe shortage of facilities in government hospitals, many families must seek healthcare from private hospitals and pay out-of-pocket (OOP). The private hospitals currently in operation are too expensive for the general population. As a result, many middle-class families get bankrupt while trying to keep their loved ones alive.

Multiple women can be seen sharing one bed in Srinagar's main maternal hospital, called Lal Ded. 60% of married women in Jammu and Kashmir have reported at least one reproductive health problem,

which is the highest in the country, with 26% of the pregnant women in a tertiary care hospital suffering from a depressive disorder. Studies at the valley premier hospital, the Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), report that 15.7% of women cannot have children without medical intervention. An additional 14% are incapable of conceiving due to other medical conditions.

There is also a high prevalence of C-section surgery among women in Kashmir. Due to the financial incentive of performing a C-section, many doctors continue to perform it even when not needed. This method of delivering is known to cause several socioeconomic, psychological, and health problems. According to Lancet the use of Caesarean section has risen over the past 30 years around 10–15% in developing countries without significant maternal or perinatal benefits. In addition, the technique is associated with short and long-term health effects and healthcare costs, resulting in severe mortality among women and children. According to the French Research Institute Development (IRD), India documented a yearly excess of 18 lakh cesarean childbirths from 2010 through 2016.

Lack of Respect and mistreatment of women in public hospitals and needless interventional procedures in private facilities, are not surprising. Telangana which had the highest rates of caesarean births in the country, has decided to professionally train midwives to improve maternal and infant care. According to WHO data 83% of pregnancy and childbirth related deaths can be avoided if mid-wives are involved. There is growing evidence that mid-wives are as good as doctors in taking care of pregnant women.

The number of cancer cases has also increased up to 87% since 2011—reportedly due to lifestyle changes. These trends in incidence are particularly worrying for breast cancer: women in Kashmir are mostly diagnosed at an advanced stage, resulting in a poor prognosis. In Jammu & Kashmir, most cancer expenses were met with high out-of-pocket expenses. Health costs also keep people poor and push those just above the poverty line back into poverty.

It is challenging to increase the quality and access to healthcare due to the lack of reliable data in Kashmir. However, the abrupt shift in the profile of diseases in Kashmir makes it urgent for the administration to improve programs that will improve healthcare in Kashmir.

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

The authors Javaid Iqbal is a Health Economist and a Fellow at Harvard Public Health Review and Rofudun Nisa is a Senior Resident at GMC Srinagar

Autumn's shadow on the Arab Spring

Asad Mirza

The onset of Arab Spring had raised expectations in the region of power being transferred to the people ultimately, but the ensuing developments have completely changed the dynamics of the pro-people movements in the region.

While most of the Indian media has been obsessed with developments taking place in Afghanistan, it has nearly missed the country, which was the fountainhead of the so-called 'Arab Spring' about ten years back when people toppled a dictator that had ruled it for 27 years. Arab Spring had nurtured hopes that democracy might be able to get a toe-hold in many Arab countries based on the aspirations of the people.

However, recent events in Tunisia have raised concerns whether the small country which shook the power centres in this vast and strategic region, will it be able to handle its own aspirations as expressed by people ten years back. On 25 July, Tunisian President Kais Saied stunned the world by announcing the suspension of the parliament, the sacking of the cabinet and assuming emergency powers citing an imminent threat to the Tunisian state. These extraordinary measures are supposed to last for 30 days.

For Tunisia watchers the development came as no surprise, as Tunisians have changed ten governments in the last ten years and are moving along the path, which may lead the country towards anarchy.

The events of the last ten years have infused most Tunisians with a sense of hopelessness and a loss of faith in parliament and the country's political parties.

This explains why Mr Saied's draconian measures were met with jubilation on the streets. His supporters were simply fed up with parliament, and yearned for change.

But not everyone in Tunisia was

happy. BBC reports that foremost among them was Ennahda (Renaissance) Party, the Islamist party that has the biggest block in parliament. It denounced Mr Saied's move as a coup. Other parties as well as independent observers concur.

So, now the world will be watching the next move of the four organisations - known as the Quartet for National Dialogue - which in 2013 succeeded in brokering a compromise between Islamists and their secular rivals and averted protracted civil strife.

Some observers believe the fault lies with the constitution that created multiple centres of power: the president, the prime minister and the parliament. In an ideal world that should create a well-balanced political order, with checks and balances that prevent domination by the president. But in an extremely polarised society it was a recipe for paralysis. Even the electoral law contributed to the chaos, giving parliamentary seats to a plethora of small parties and making a fragmented political scene worse. As a result, Tunisia has had 10 governments in 10 years.

For the ruling party, problems accumulated - especially with Covidspiralling out of control - the governance broke down, and the president occasionally blocked parliament and vice versa, each side tweaking the text of the law to suit its own purpose. However, what happens in Tunisia will not stay in Tunisia, as the experience of the past decade has demonstrated.

Most autocrats of the region are harping once again that "Arabs are not fit for democracy" and the democratic forces are clinging to the hope that Tunisia will remain a beacon for the rest of the region.

In fact, Tunisia is the third Arab country after Egypt and Sudan to say that it is fed up with the rule of the Islamists. With the exception of Qatar, most of the Arab countries have long regarded the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist groups as

a major threat to security, stability and peace.

Many pro-west Arab commentators have drawn parallels with what happened in Egypt in 2013, when Abdul Fattah Al Sisi, then minister of defence and now president, intervened to remove the elected Muslim Brotherhood president. Most Arab commentators have accused the Islamists, specifically the Muslim Brotherhood, of spreading chaos and instability in the Arab world.

Khaled Abu Toameh, a journalist based in Jerusalem, writing for Gatestone Institute on the issue says that evidently, many Arabs are pleased that the rule of the Islamists in Tunisia has finally come to an end. The jubilation in the Arab countries over the toppling of the Ennahda Party sends a clear message to the rest of the world against embracing or appeasing the Islamists.

Abdel Aziz Khamis, a Saudi journalist told Sky News Arabia that the reason the Tunisian Islamists failed was because they "failed to believe in democracy in its true meaning, including freedom of the media, the independence of the judiciary and economic and social rights."

Prominent Saudi journalist and writer Abdul Rahman Al-Rashed stated that he was not surprised by the downfall of the Islamists in Tunisia as the ruling party was associated with chaos and assassinations once they were in government. Al-Rashed wrote for Al Arabia newspaper, "... the extraordinary measures the president took came to rescue the country before the collapse. In fact, what he is doing is saving the Tunisian regime, and Tunisia, the country, from the chaos that had begun."

Sawsan Al-Sha'er, one of Bahrain's most influential journalists and intellectuals, expressed relief over the ouster of the Islamists of Tunisia and said that this should serve as a reminder to all Arabs that Islamist parties - Shiite and Sunni

alike - care about nothing else but grabbing power.

Saudi writer and journalist Abdel Aziz Khamis expressed hope that what happened in Tunisia would spread to other Arab countries. Urging Arabs to learn from the failed experience of the Islamists in Tunisia, Khamis listed a number of reasons why the Ennahda party failed: "It failed because it was not able to find real solutions to Tunisia's problems and because it was not concerned with serving the people or improving their living conditions."

Khamis said that the Ennahda Party also failed because it was unable to transform itself into a political party "in the modern sense of the word." The party, he added, "was not able to leave the ranks of the Muslim Brotherhood."

However, if we analyse the reasons behind the failure of Islamist parties in the region, then one fact would emerge that first these parties are not given time to settle-in and start delivering, but are embroiled in various internal and external issues. The puppet master behind most of these interventions are the western countries and in fact these nations are least concerned whether there is a despotic or a democratic government till the time their gains are assured. And that might be one of the reasons why the Arab Spring has failed to deliver what it promised, i.e. power to the people.

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

Asad Mirza is a political commentator based in New Delhi. He was also associated with BBC Urdu Service and Khaleej Times of Dubai. He writes on Muslims, educational, international affairs, interfaith and current affairs. www.asad-mirza.blogspot.com

Music of Kashmir

Fida Muhammed Hassnain



There are three distinct forms of music in Kashmir, namely, Sufiana Musiqi (traditional classical music) handed down to the present generation by old masters: Chhakri, Roef, Wanawon etc., (folk music), and, ghazals, geets and choral songs (modern light music).

Basically melodic in concept like the music of the country, Sufiana is different in its presentation. A Sufiana Ustad, accompanied by at least three months musicians, unfolds the aesthetic structure of a Maqam (melody or raga) on the musical instruments used in Sufiana, known as Shukul (roop or alaap) of the melody to follow. The Ustad and the accompanying musicians are both vocalists and instrumentalists. They sing in unison and harmony the verses known as Baeth an integral part of the whole musical structure of a Maqam. Baeth cannot be equated with the Bol of Hindustani music. Baeth (verses) are mystic and romantic in thought and content generally, but verses about the beauty of nature are not debarred either. Nor are verses in praise of Rishi, Peer (saints and hermits) as also the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him).

Though Sufiana Musiqi has its roots deep in the ancient styles of North India and follows its tune theory it has also been affected and influenced by Central Asian music through the ages. Names of the Maqamas have been drawn from both indigenous and foreign music. Lalit, Multani, Bagesh-wari, Jaijawanti, Bahar, Basant Bihag, and others have been taken from Hindustani Shastriya saangeet whereas Araq, Husaini, Navroz-e-Saba, Rehavi, Isphe-han, Rast-e-Farsi and others are from the Iranian and Central Asian, classical musical systems. Pahari has been baptised as Koshi (liberal translation of the world Pahari). This cultural interaction has resulted in a unique form and an interesting synthesis of the various types of classical music preserved by Kashmir.

Sufiana remained confined to courts, darbars and mehfls associated with Sultans, Amirs, Vazirs and the elite. The masses had no access to it, nor had the Sufiana musicians any inclination to remove the fetters which bound them to the feudal system and free their music for the benefit of the commoner!

Four instruments are required by Sufiana musicians, the Santoor, Sitar, Saz and Dukra, to make the group. With the Santoor the main instrument, made of

seasoned mulberry wood and struck by Qalams are two tiny curved sticks. One of the oldest instruments of the dulcimer pedigree and forerunner of the piano. It came from Armenia with the gypsies and trading tribes centuries ago, it has 96 strings of steel and brass stretched over a board in 4 somes for each note. These rest on two rows of bridges on either side.

Another stringed instrument is the Sitar, perhaps one of the earliest forms of the present Sitar with 3 to 14 strings of steel and brass and plucked with both the index finger and mizrab. Saz, the only bow instrument similar to the Khamacha of Iran, provides the basic notes of a Maqam. For the rhythm-tre Dukra. In effect the tabla of Hindustani music. The bols of Dukra are Dish tun, Dish, Dish, Dishtun in place of Dha Din Dha....

Folk forms have remained the favourites of the masses. Festivals, fairs, marriages, receptions each have a style to suit the occasions.

Wanawun, the marriage songs, have two distinct forms, one reminiscent of Vedic chants used in Hindu marriages, the other, with varying timbre and tone,

of Muslim marriages. Couples/lyrics pertaining to the different stages of marriage, from nuptials to the departure of the bride for her new home on the one hand and Haqeeq Mundan; Khutna (circumcision) also find a place in Wanawun.

Roef, another form of folk music, is also associated with festivities, Eids and marriages. Both Wanawun and Roef have been sung by women through the ages, although men also indulge in its presentation. The Roef used with the Chhakri is an innovation 30 odd years now and performed by men.

Chhakri, another popular form of folk music, is sung to the accompaniment of Sarang, Rabab, Tumbakhnari and Noet by a group of musicians of not less than 4 persons. It was earlier confined to the rural scene, till Rababis of Akingam, Kreer and Kawdara introduced it to the urban areas. Chhakri has had its share of influence too. During the Afghan period a male dancer. Bacha, become associated with it adding Khatak to Chhakri.

Amongst instruments Noet and Tumbakhnari provide the Tabla whereas Sarang and Rabab add melodious flavour

and exuberance. Apart from Chhakri, Noet is used in Wanawun along with Tumbakhnari. The Noet is an earthen pitcher, struck over the open mouth and sides by the singers, who handle the instruments themselves.

The Tumbakhnari is also made of clay with treated animal hide on the top. It is reminiscent of the Tumbak of Iran. The difference between the two being the size and structure. Tumbakhnari is struck by the finger tips to produce the desired harmonious rhythm. The outstanding living virtuoso is Ghulam Mohammad Butt, who handles it with adroit ease.

The Sarang, one of the earliest miniature forms of Hindustani Sarangi is the only bow instrument with 3 to 12 strings. It provides the resonance to Chhakri, where-as the Rabab provides the virility. It is one of the earlier types of instruments which travelled with the bards and minstrels from Afghanistan and joined the folk group of instrument in Kashmir. Kashmir has produced some of the most outstanding Rababis in Sanaullah Butt and Ahmad Kawadiri who have become a legend.

The Sehrai, Nendabaeth and Hukbaeth

are three prominent styles of folk singing related to village life using a plate, a pitcher or bells (rarely) to accompany the singers either in their homes or at picnics. Normally Nendabaeth is sung by groups of men and women in the fields while transplanting paddy saplings and weeding the rice fields. At the end of the harvest, Chhakri, Roef, Hukbaeth and the rest ring through the calm and happy evenings depicting the joyful mood of the tillers!

Light music has had the shortest span of life about 10 years and is the youngest form. One of the earliest HMV discs was one cut by the Kashmiri musicians Ghulam Nabi Dilsoz and Mahmud Shehri and broadcast over AIR Lahore. Later Radio Kashmir opened the gates doing yeoman service to the modern light music of Kashmir.

The Kashmiri ghazal has also undergone tremendous changes as far as its form is concerned. Earlier lyrics had a different rhyming scheme, with the first line forming the refrain after every three hemistiches. Poets started following more and more the Urdu-Persian Ghazal forms. Such ghazals were easy to set to music by singers. Lyrics of the old masters and contemporary poets have since been set to music by either the singers themselves or by specially arranged composers for broadcast over Radio Kashmir.

It would not be inappropriate to conclude with the new forms of musical rendering introduced with the help of some imaginative Kashmiri poets by Radio Kashmir. Notable among these were the duels and operas. It had never been a tradition to render lyrics in two voices-male and female in Kashmiri. Nor was there any opera: both were experiments. The operas have had a tremendous appeal and success.

Dinanath Nadim, aware of the lyrical structure of an opera, has been an outstanding contributor to this art form. Followed by Rehman Rahi, Amin Kamil, Muzaffar Azim and G.R. Santosh. Operas have helped producers, musicians and brought new and talented singers to the microphone and on to the stage.

Asha Kaul, after she was signed for Rahi's opera, shot into prominence as the best find of 1967. With Jalal Geelani, another maestro, she performed excellently well.

Book Review: The Mughals and the Sufis

This book breaks new ground in history by bringing together Mughal politics and Sufi spiritualism

Avik Chanda

The literature on the precepts of Sufism and the chronicles of its saints across various orders has a deep and prodigious lineage: from the great Kashf al-Mahjub of al-Hujwiri and the Risala of al-Qushayri, through Abdul Rahman Jaami's Nufahat-ul-Uns, the wonderfully lucid Sakinat ul Auliya and Safinat ul Auliya, written by the 17th century Mughal Crown Prince Dara Shukoh, to the monumental compendium, A History of Sufism, by Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, in our own times. The examination of the subtle and complicated interplay between religious doctrine, political influence, legitimacy and kingship throughout the Islamic period in India, though, is more recent.

Muzaffar Alam's earlier book, The Languages of Political Islam in India c 1200-1800, published in 2004, was an important contribution to this discourse. It offered a fresh perspective by decoding the political vocabulary of those times to reveal the calibrations in theology, injunction and juridical practice, as Islam gradually became more "Indianised".

In his new book, The Mughals and the Sufis – Islam and Political Imagination in India: 1500–1750, Alam once again breaks new ground, this time by harmonising two major domains of scholarship – Mughal History and Indian Islam – honed with painstaking care over a lifetime of study. What emerges is a highly nuanced and complex examination of the relationship between Mughal political culture and the two dominant strains of Islam's Sufi traditions in South Asia: one centred around orthodoxy, the other focusing on a more inclusive and mystical spirituality.

The Sufi trajectory

The constituent chapters in the book, which can also be studied as stand-alone essays, chart the trajectory of the various Sufi silsilas and their principal actors, from the early, tenuous days of Babur and Humayun, through the 16th and 17th centuries, as the imperial position shifted from the more liberal outlook of Emperor Akbar (r 1556–1605) to the rigid attitudes of his great-grandson, Aurangzeb 'Alamgir (r 1658–1701).

Alam premises his critical study on a large number of contemporary Persian texts, court chronicles, epistolary collections, and biographies of Sufi mystics. Interestingly, the Maktubat-i Khwaja Muhammad Saif al-Din, compiled by Muhammad A'zam, Khwaja Muhammad Nasib Andalib's Nala-i' Andalib, and Muhammad Akram bin Shaikh Muhammad Ali's Sawati'al-Anwar are accorded no less importance than the staple Akbar-nama or Badauni's Muntakhab al-Tawarikh, known to every student of Mughal history.

This particular approach to Alam's programme of study for his latest book serves two functions. First, his focus on relatively lesser-known figures and their writings, as well as many rare manuscripts, automatically inducts these long-underutilised texts into the bibliographical repertoire of mainstream historical research. Second, his own investigations enable Alam to challenge popular notions about the Sufis,

upend unitonal hagiographic narratives of Sufi silsilas, and provide an alternate system of coordinates through which to view our cultural and religious history, in the process, reorienting our understanding of political Islam during the Mughal period.

A fundamental aspect of reappraisal is the relationship of a Sufi leader with the Mughal emperor. The usual perception is that the sole function of a Sufi saint was to be a spiritual pir (preceptor) for his murids (disciples), including those of royal blood. Alam cites numerous instances to the contrary, following a tradition that harked back to the Naqshbandi Sufis of Timurid times.

One of the key figures to emerge in this context is Khwaja 'Ubaid-Allah Ahrar, whose disciples included Timurid rulers and a number of their vassals throughout Central Asia. He and several of his descendants claimed they were not spiritual masters alone, but also the source of strength and assistance in the dispensation of politics as well as power struggles.

Although Khwaja Ahrar had died several years before Babur appeared at the threshold of Hindustan, the latter nevertheless ascribed many of his military achievements to the benediction of the pir. Most famously, at the Battle of Panipat against Ibrahim Lodhi in 1526, Babur, facing an enemy force that vastly outnumbered his own, is said to have meditated upon the image of the Khwaja, who then appeared as a horseman dressed in white, routing the Afghans.

Breaking myths

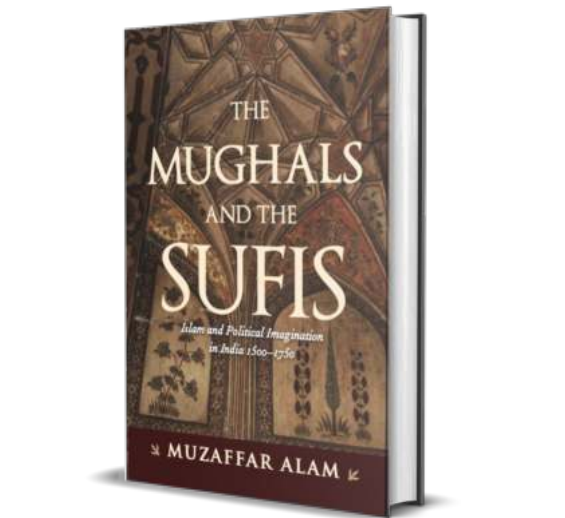
The Mughals and the Sufis also dispels some lingering stereotypes around the positions of the pirs in the Chishti and Naqshbandi orders. For instance, the Chishti pirs didn't necessarily find ready disciples in the early Mughals and winning their allegiance was no trivial matter. A case in point is Shaikh 'Abd al-Quddus Gangohi, a member of the Sabiri branch of the Chishti order.

Khwaja Gangohi was a prominent preceptor of the Afghan elite at the Lodhi court, in fact, very nearly – the official royal pir. But as Babur established his supremacy in northern India through a series of brilliant, swift military campaigns, it took all of the Khwaja's wisdom, tact and diplomacy, to reconcile himself to the rapidly changing realities. For his very vocal support of the Afghans, he had to suffer humiliation at the hands of the Mughals.

A similar stereotype concerns the perception of the non-inclusive, intransigent position of the Naqshbandis throughout their history, as something of a monolith. Alam shows that the fervour of orthodoxy did sustain itself, from the pirs who were contemporaries of Amir Timur, to the Ahraris in the 15th and 16th centuries, through to the strident conservatism of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi and his followers in the 17th century. Aurangzeb's unwavering support of the Naqshbandis ensured that the family of Shaikh Sirhindi enjoyed a favoured position at the imperial court.

Not only did this influence continue well after Alamgir's reign, evidence is sighted of its influence outside the court in Delhi, for instance in literary circles, and beyond the capital, making inroads among sections of the civil society in Awadh, hitherto firmly entrenched in the Chishti-Sabiri tradition.

Through the following two centuries, however,



The Mughals and the Sufis – Islam and Political Imagination in India: 1500–1750, Muzaffar Alam, Permanent Black.

Alam explains how a more muted and inclusive tenor of discourse developed within the Naqshbandi order, their change in position underscored by the triple forces of reformism, revivalism and modernism or Westernisation. Certainly, challenges from the West played a material role in changing the approach of modern Muslim intellectuals to Sufism.

Underlying many of the discussions are themes of influence, rivalry and conflict. Documentary evidence points to Sufis playing a role in informing and modulating imperial policy. Likewise, it is shown how the struggle for supremacy among rival princes (and princesses) was mirrored in the rise and fall of imperial allegiance to various silsilas.

Thus, when Akbar, at the peak of his religious innovations, is confronted by the outraged Naqshbandis, it is the latter who have to recant. And not long after Aurangzeb ascends the throne as the emperor Alamgir, Dara Shukoh's Qadiri pir, Mullah Shah, is summoned to the imperial court and interrogated by the 'ulama. When it comes to a deeply critical and iconoclastic element of the Sufis, such as Sarmad Kashani, nothing less than execution would satisfy the emperor and conservative clergy. Viewed through this prism, the narrative of political Islam appears as a glazed mirror of the vicissitudes of princely wars of succession, and the leanings and idiosyncrasies of successive emperors.

What the women did

One of the criticisms that is often levelled against the academic patriarchy of medieval history is its scant attention to the women of the imperial household, their role and influence in contemporary politics and decisions that morphed and changed the empire. In this regard, the chapter-essay, "Piety, Poetry, and the Contested Loyalties of Mughal Princesses, c 1635–1700", is a welcome inclusion in the present volume.

The legend of Jahanara, as the other-worldly princess who eschewed imperial titles in favour of the sobriquet of al Fakira, is well known. What is less well-

known, though, are her allegiances to specific Sufi pirs and silsilas, and those of her sister, Roshanara, and her niece, Aurangzeb's daughter, Zebunissa. This essay juxtaposes the contrasting religious beliefs and mystical leanings of these three ladies of the imperial household, despite their common upbringing.

Jahanara, even though she was initiated into the Qadiri sect, continued to retain a close spiritual affinity for the Chishti saints, in particular, Nizamuddin Auliya. Her choice is both a continuation of the pluralistic ethos instituted as imperial policy by Akbar, and a reflection of the deeply syncretic views of her favourite brother, Dara Shukoh – views that she wholeheartedly shared with him.

Roshanara played a far less public role than her sister, although she was a shrewd political observer, and increasingly, a key player in the filial strife that led to the War of Succession in 1657, ending with Aurangzeb's ascendancy to the throne. Her close connection with the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order saw her acting as a mediator, during the attempts made by the sect to expand their influence over the entire imperial zenana.

Their sustained efforts to maintain dealings with the princess Zebunissa notwithstanding, the latter was far more inclined towards the practice and patronage of literary pursuits, than to the encouragement of the Mujaddidi brand of Islamic revival.

In a volume that offers much new perspective, the most insightful and striking essay is the penultimate chapter, "In Search of a Sacred King, Dara Shukoh and the Yogavasishtas of Mughal India". In the author's estimate, the Mughal Empire finds its intellectual and spiritual apotheosis not in the figure of Akbar, but Dara Shukoh, who, he boldly asserts, "is a step ahead of his great grandfather, Akbar".

With this, Alam breaks with an unbroken line of rather uncritical adulation as regards Akbar that has stretched across generations of historians. For all his astute matrimonial alliances with Rajput chieftains, within the pecking order of the Hindu caste system, Akbar could only aspire to the status of a Kshatriya, Alam points out. Dara's quest was far loftier – like Visvamitra, he sought to synthesise and embody the dual powers of the Kshatriya Raja and the Brahmin Rishi.

Akbar's interest in Hindu scriptures, mythology and epics such as the Mahabharata reflect his curiosity about India's political culture, but there was no great imperative for him to imbibe Indic norms of governance. In contrast, Dara's project of translating the Yogavasishta goes well beyond intellectual curiosity or the inclination to recognise alternative formulations of spirituality. He becomes deeply immersed in the text, to the point of inhabiting it.

For Dara, the book is not only a philosophical treatise, worthy of study for a syncretic practicing Sufi – but a political manifesto – as the Crown Prince grapples with the eternal conflict between spiritual truth and temporal power. Rama Chandra is not the indigenous god from a hoary past but, in Dara's dream, Lord Rama is a fellow-seeker of Truth, an elder brother.

In his quest for mystical and spiritual learning, Dara had perused the texts of several religious cultures, including his own. But it is only in the Yogavasishta, Alam proposes, that Dara finally found his model for the saint-king, one on which he wished to build the moral foundations of his own reign.

In a refracted light, The Mughals and the Sufis can perhaps be seen as an intellectual self-portrait, painted in the hues of scholarship, investigation and analysis. Now approaching his mid-70s, Alam remains as indefatigable as ever, poring over forgotten texts and rare manuscripts, to reveal the haqaiq wa ma'arif (realities and truths) hidden within them.

Scroll in

Delhi Assembly To Throw Open For Public British-Era Tunnel, Execution Room

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Assembly will throw open for public a British-era tunnel and renovated execution room next year, Speaker Ram Niwas Goel said on Friday. Goel said the tunnel was discovered under the floors of the Delhi Assembly way back. He said the tunnel and the execution room both are British-era architecture. "We will open the renovated

British-era 'Fansi Ghar' (execution room) of revolutionaries and the tunnel for public by January 26 or latest by August 15, 2022. People will be allowed to visit these two places when the Delhi Assembly is not in session," Goel told PTI.

He said the historical significance of the tunnel, discovered in 2016, is yet to be established but it is conjectured that it connects the Legislative Assembly to the Red Fort.

"We are not going to renovate the tunnel or dig it further as it will not be possible because lots of construction activities such as Metro Rail would have blocked its way. We will keep it as it is and allow the public to see it," Goel said.

He said the work on the project of renovation of the execution room had already started.

"Tenders have been floated and the PWD would soon begin its work. The design on which

the execution room will be renovated have also been prepared," Goel said.

The building was built in 1911. The Delhi Assembly was used as Central Legislative Assembly after the capital of the country was shifted to Delhi from Kolkata in 1912.

Goel said that the building was emptied in 1926 as the Central Legislative Assembly was shifted to present day Lok Sabha building.

Later, this Delhi Assembly building was converted into a court by Britishers, he said.

The Delhi Assembly had been a soil and temple of revolutionaries. Those who were imprisoned in the Red Fort used to be brought here through this tunnel and decisions were pronounced here. Revolutionaries who used to be given a death sentence were taken to the execution room located in the Delhi Assembly, he said.

Dengue, Viral Fever Death Toll Climbs To 50 In Firozabad

Agenceis

FIROZABAD/LUCKNOW: The death toll due to dengue and viral fever in Uttar Pradesh's Firozabad district mounted to 50 on Friday, even as a central government team reached here to take stock of the situation, officials said.

Three fresh fatalities were reported in Firozabad as the inflow of patients continued in hospitals of the district in the grip of the epidemic.

Considering the gravity of the problem, a six-member team of the Union health ministry arrived in Firozabad to look

into all aspects of the disease, Additional Director (Health), Agra division A K Singh told PTI.

The central medical team under the leadership of Tushar N Nale from the Department of National Centre for Disease Control visited here to look at the situation, Officiating Superintendent of Firozabad government medical college Alok Kumar Sharma said.

The team is conducting an in-depth investigation into primary samples and other subjects along with collecting letters in the CMO office, Sangeeta Aneja, principal of the medical college said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Internet, Phone

day progressed, curbs were eased and movement of people was allowed.

For the fourth consecutive week, no Friday prayers were offered at Jamia Masjid, Hazratbal shrine and other religious places. The historic Jamia Masjid was placed under siege by a contingent of CRPF personnel and police. However, congregational prayers were offered in the local mosques in other parts of the city.

Meanwhile, police said that the situation in Kashmir after Geelani's death remained peaceful and under control and no untoward incident was reported from anywhere.

"The situation is absolutely under control, not even a single incident occurred in the last two days. People cooperated and security forces are working with great restraint. I congratulate people...for keeping peace everywhere," Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh told reporters in Baramulla on Friday.

Asked whether the situation in Afghanistan would have an impact in Kashmir, DGP Singh said, "There is nothing to worry about, everything is fine."

Asked about the reports of some youths from the valley joining the Taliban, the police chief said, "This is totally wrong and fake news."

Such fake news on social media is a malicious propaganda by Pakistan and pro-Pakistan agents. Everything is fine. The youth are playing cricket, volleyball, rugby. Don't you see those pictures? Every child here wants to secure his future and no one is going that way, he said.

Meanwhile, IGP Kashmir, Vijay Kumar thanked the people for their cooperation with police & security personnel deployed on ground and in maintaining law and order.

"In view of the peaceful situation, mobile service (voice call) and broadband of all TSPs shall open tonight at 10 pm. It is pertinent to mention that mobile service (voice call) and broadband of BSNL were never closed. However, internet on mobile services shall remain shutdown till Sunday afternoon," a police spokesperson said.

He said that people are yet again requested not to pay any heed to the rumours being "maliciously spread by the anti-national elements especially across the border with an objective to disturb the prevalent peaceful atmosphere in the valley".

Covid Cases Spiked

which is the highest number of active cases in the country. Similarly, the R-value of Mizoram was 1.36, Jammu and Kashmir (1.25), Maharashtra (1.06) and Andhra Pradesh (1.09).

The Reproduction number or R refers to how many people an infected person infects, on average. In other words, it tells how 'efficiently' a virus is spreading.

A smaller R indicates the disease is on a decline. Conversely, if R is greater than 1, the number of infected people is increasing in each round -- this is what is called the epidemic phase.

After the devastating second wave that saw hospitals and health infrastructure being overwhelmed by patients infected by SARS-CoV2 coronavirus, the R-value started to decline.

During the March-May period, thousands of people died due to the infection while lakhs were infected.

When the second wave swept through the country between March to May, the R-value was 1.37 (between March 9 to April 21).

From May 15-June 26, the R-value stood at 0.78. However, it slowly started increasing -- it was 0.88 from June 20-July 7, 0.95 from July 3-22, 0.96 from July 24-27.

It breached the value of 1.03 for the first time after the second wave during July 27-31. However, since then it has slowly started to decline.

The R-value was 0.92 from August 6-9, and rose to 0.99 between August 12-14. But it slipped to 0.89 between August 14-17.

With 45,352 people testing positive for coronavirus, India's total tally of COVID-19 cases rose to 3,29,03,289, while active cases registered an increase for the third consecutive day, according to the Union health ministry data updated on Friday.

The active cases increased to 3,99,778, comprising 1.22 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate was recorded at 97.45 per cent, the ministry said.

An increase of 10,195 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

A total of 67.09 crore vaccine doses have been administered so far under the nationwide vaccination drive.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20 lakh-mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5, and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one crore-mark on December 19.

India crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4 this year and three crore on June 23.

CBI Books Ambience

that the officers of J&K Bank Ansal Plaza Branch had given loan worth crores of rupees to this firm and in connivance with the firm the loan amounts so sanctioned were declared as NPA to facilitate the firm to have a One Time Settlement to its advantage.

The firm had apparently availed Rs 227 crores as term Loan alongwith Bank guarantee of Rs. 15 crores for the construction of a five star hotel in Delhi with a project cost estimated at Rs. 866.89 crores, the ACB had said.

"The rest of the loans were availed from other banks by the firm as part of consortium loan for construction of the five-star hotel," ACB had said in a statement.

It added that the firm had pledged mortgaged land including the building of five-star hotel and rentals which would accrue on the commercial area which was proposed to be leased out, hypothecation of all other current assets and personal guarantee of Raj Singh Gehlot who was the Managing Director of M/s AHPL worth Rs. 41 crores favouring a consortium of banks including J&K Bank as the lead bank as part of mortgaged properties, it said.

"However, while looking into the allegations mentioned in the FIR investigation revealed that instead of using the loans sanctioned for the purpose of construction of hotel it was diverted / siphoned out for various other purposes and misappropriated by the borrower Raj Singh Gehlot," the statement had said.

Investigation, the ACB had said, also established that out of the Rs. 100 crores sanctioned as Term Loan in the first phase to M/s AHPL an amount of Rs. 35 crores has been diverted by Raj Singh Gehlot Managing Director of M/s AHPL in connivance with the Bank officials and other co-accused and through fictitious firms which were created for the purpose and also by layering the funds through other banks in a complex maze of transactions.

"In this manner they cheated the J&K Bank Ansal Plaza Branch to the tune of Rs. 35 crores," the ACB had said, adding "Further investigation into the remaining diversions is in progress apart from the allegations of illegally entering into an OTS to the firm advantage by J&K Bank officials."

It had further said that a charge sheet has been filed by the Anti Corruption Bureau in the concerned court in Srinagar u/s 120-B, 409, 420 RPC and section 5(1)(c), 5(1)(d) r/w 5(2) of the JK PC Act against Raj Singh Gehlot Managing Director of M/s AHPL and co-accused Mohan Singh, Sheela Gehlot and Madhu Bakshi (private persons) and public servants Rakesh Kumar Kharyal and Kuldeep Gupta who were the erstwhile Managers of J&K Bank Ansal Plaza Branch, New Delhi besides the firms M/s Ambience limited, NGR Consultant Pvt. Ltd. and Raj Commercial & Agencies.

Britain Bats For

in Afghanistan for a range of reasons, including the safe passage of British citizens, but dismissed talks of recognising it officially as "premature".

Addressing a joint press conference in Islamabad alongside Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Raab, who is Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, said it would not have been possible to evacuate some 15,000 people from Kabul without some degree of cooperation from the Taliban.

"The approach we are taking is that we don't recognise the Taliban as a government [...] but we do see the importance of being able to engage and have a direct line of communication, the reason being that there is a whole range of issues that need to be discussed including the question of safe passage of British nationals and the Afghans who worked for the UK government, he said.

Though he hoped that the Taliban would bring stability and an end to violence in the country, Raab said it was "premature" to talk about recognising the Taliban at the moment.

He noted that the Taliban had made a series of undertakings, "some of them are positive at the level of words" but there was a need to test whether they translated into deeds, which would not be possible if some channel of dialogue was not present.

To a question on the expectations from the Taliban and the dangers of pushing them towards "radical tendencies", Raab said some early tests needed to be set on the Taliban promises and whether they had the sincerity and will to deliver on them.

The Taliban seized control of Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, on August 15. The last of the foreign troops left the country on August 31, bringing an end to 20 years of war amid fears of an economic collapse and widespread hunger.

Following the chaotic departure, Western states have severely restricted their aid payments to Afghanistan. Raab thanked the Pakistani government for safely evacuating British citizens. He said that the UK will continue to provide aid on humanitarian grounds.

"We will continue to help Afghanistan's neighbouring countries, including Pakistan. We want to see a prosperous Afghanistan, he said. The foreign secretary also said that the

UK valued its historic relations with Pakistan. "We want to further strengthen our ties with Pakistan," he said.

Qureshi was asked if Pakistan's relation with the Taliban will be condition-based. Qureshi said Pakistan had certain compulsions like geographical closeness, trade and daily commuting of 20,000- 25,000 people across the border, which makes the country's stance unique.

Some have the choice of getting up and leaving (Afghanistan) but we do not. We are neighbours; we have to coexist. Geography ties us together so our approach has to be somewhat different and realistic, he said.

He said: It is up to the people of Afghanistan to decide their future government and we will accept their choice.

The foreign minister said now there was an opportunity for peace in Afghanistan after 40 years. Qureshi said Pakistan had taken legislative and administrative steps to get out of the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) grey list.

He said the issue of the UK's Red List -- highest restrictions in travel amid the COVID-19 pandemic -- was discussed in the meeting with Raab and the British foreign secretary was told how the people in Pakistan felt about it.

Raab said top officials from the two countries would meet to discuss the technical aspects of the case. "We will be able to take the decision on excluding Pakistan's name from the Red List on technical grounds," he said.

Meanwhile, a press release issued later in the evening by the British High Commission here said Raab has held meetings with Prime Minister Imran Khan, Foreign Minister Qureshi and is scheduled to meet Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

The discussions focused on securing a safe passage for those leaving Afghanistan, combatting terrorism, the humanitarian situation and regional stability, among other issues, it said.

Raab visited the Afghanistan-Pakistan border at Torkham, an important crossing point, to see for himself the situation on the ground. He also met members of the team supporting the current crisis response, the release said.

During the joint press briefing with Qureshi, Raab said the basis for the UK-Pakistan relationship is very strong and the UK has the desire to take it to the next level, it noted.

"We also have a very clear and shared interest in the future of Afghanistan. We will judge the Taliban by their actions, not their words, Raab said.

The Foreign Secretary underlined the UK's commitment to help those fleeing Afghanistan, including by supporting neighbouring countries.

The UK has announced a doubling of aid to Afghanistan to 286 million pounds, and has released the first tranche of 30 million pounds of that to support Afghanistan's regional neighbours, including Pakistan, the release said.

Dr Christian Turner CMG, the UK High Commissioner to Pakistan, said: The Foreign Secretary's visit to Pakistan today underlines just how vital the UK-Pakistan relationship is. We are committed to working closely together to help the people of Afghanistan and promote stability in the region.

Pakistan and the United Kingdom have been closely engaged on the latest developments in Afghanistan. Prime Minister Imran Khan had a comprehensive exchange of views with Prime Minister Boris Johnson telephonically on August 18, while Qureshi and Raab discussed the situation in Afghanistan twice on August 16 and 27.

Earlier, the Foreign Office had said that Raab's Pakistan visit will reinforce the current momentum in high-level exchanges between the two countries and help strengthen bilateral cooperation on a range of issues.

Raab is the third European leader to visit Pakistan this week after German and Dutch foreign ministers visited Islamabad and met top leaders.

J&K Govt's

official spokesperson.

"District administration needs to ensure intensive testing in the vulnerable areas. Contacts of positive cases must be traced at the earliest for home quarantine or treatment, besides effective demarcation of containment zones should be done to control the spread of virus," he added.

According to the official spokesperson, Sinha also directed the DCs and Divisional Commissioners to ensure vaccination of college, university students and specially-abled people through special drives.

"While taking stock of the preparations made to tackle the future health emergencies, the Lt Governor asked the Health department to strengthen health infrastructure with focus on pediatric care units, besides mobilization of Human Resources in the hospitals across the UT," he said.

Internet Lockdown

got reports from Pahalgam, Sonmarg and Gulmarg about the leaving of tourists and

cancellation of booking due to the situation.

"I was expecting a group of 12 people to my hotel, however they canceled the booking on Thursday morning," Malik who is the owner of Hotel New Park at Boulevard, Srinagar said, adding that "they told me that we aren't worried about the situation but since the communication lines have been snapped, they wouldn't be in able to stay in touch with their families,"

But Malik said, they are hopeful that the situation will be normal in a couple of days.

Tourism had suffered back to back setbacks following the lockdowns following abrogation of Article 370 and subsequent COVID-19 in Kashmir.

"As soon as I heard about the death of Geelani Sahab, I told my customers that phones and internet might be snapped in Kashmir," said Mohammad Jehangir, a hotelier from Srinagar.

Jehangir said the hotel, which was occupied with tourists was deserted by Thursday morning.

A number of Shikarawalas could be seen idling, waiting for the customers to come, on the otherwise busy Boulevard road.

"Sab chele gaye kal (Everybody left yesterday)" said Mohammad Yaseen, a Shikarawalla on Ghat no 7.

Phones and internet services were snapped soon after the death of the Hurriyat leader on Wednesday.

Kashmir Police chief Vijay Kumar said the internet was shut down as a precautionary measure to prevent rumours.

Fear, Anger Among

"My grandfather is on his deathbed and unfortunately, I've no idea whether he's alive or dead," he said.

He further added, "This communication blackout in Kashmir has caused an uncertainty that aggravates not just my anxiety but every Kashmiri who's presently living across the country."

On Thursday, hours after Geelani passed away, the J&K government imposed restrictions and snapped internet services and mobile connections in the region fearing a law and order situation. Except BSNL mobile and broadband, the other internet, text messaging and phone services have all been affected, with residents reduced to digging out ways to talk to their loved one's living outside the valley.

The communication blackout has not only triggered chaos and panic among them but also triggered the trauma of the August 2019 communication clampdown.

Another Kashmiri, Ifrah Gulzar from Srinagar whose brother works in a Pune based IT company, HCL Technologies Limited, expressed the same kind of concern for her brother. As per Ifrah, she last spoke to her brother on the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday, before the mobile networks were snapped in the valley.

"As uncertainty prevails over the communication blockade, I'm fretful about my brother's safety with whom I've had no communication for the past 2 days now."

She said "I'm unsure of when my family will be able to speak to my brother."

Given the constant panic and fear instigated due to the communication blockade, a young Kashmiri, Asrar Imtiyaz presently putting up in New Delhi said that Thursday morning was quite dreadful as an unexpected blackout in Kashmir was spiraling into uncertainty.

"Imagine, waking up in the morning, trying to connect to your family and unexpectedly, one gets to know that communications in Kashmir have been snapped," he said. "If everything's normal in Kashmir, then why does mobile communication become the first casualty of an administrative crackdown?"

It is pertinent to mention here that the administration hasn't made public any order on the internet shutdown, which activists say is a violation of the Supreme Court guidelines.

Meanwhile, voice calls on cellphones and fixed broadband services were restored on Friday night by the authorities after reviewing the situation.

J&K Govt's Big

per official spokesperson.

"This scheme can simultaneously address the challenge of global warming and unemployment. Youth will be our brand ambassador for green tourism making the development more sustainable while bringing prosperity to the community," he added.

According to the official spokesperson, Sinha said that under Mission Youth's initiative, registered youth and Self Help Groups are being provided with the opportunity to be a part of the Government's endeavor to transform the villages of J&K.

"Young generation has acquired a position of primary importance in the government's policies. With strategic planning and capacity building for hand holding of youth, the UT administration is working towards building self-confidence in youth to be enterprising," the LG said, as per official spokesperson.

"We are scaling up the sectors important for the youth to ensure that young individuals

willing to start his or her own business gets sufficient financial support and are able to fulfill their dream," he added.

The official spokesperson further said that apart from promoting Eco & Agri-Tourism, Traditional Performing Art, and Adventure Tourism for creating a rural tourism circuit, the LG called upon all stakeholders, government departments, PRIs, and Local communities, to work as a single unit for seamless implementation on the ground.

He said that the LG suggested four broader areas for promotional activities including Farm Stays, Eco-Tourism, Wildlife Tourism, and Tribal Tourism.

"Simultaneously, there is also a need to train the youth in public-private, community partnership models," Sinha said.

The LG, as per official spokesperson also advised for exploring modalities of PPP model, besides promoting value addition and focusing on convergence of schemes for paying a strong foundation for developing sustainable tourism ecosystem. He said that the Deputy Commissioners were directed to put dedicated focus on ensuring that the financial support is being extended to the eligible candidates to meet the objectives of the scheme.

"Today, J&K is at the top position in the country in terms of Tourist Influx. In the month of July, around 10.5 lakh tourists visited J&K and the figure reached 11.22 lakh in August. I hope and believe that soon, villages of the UT will make their way in the list of the top 10 tourist villages of the country," the LG said, as per official spokesperson.

The LG, he said, advised the CEO Mission Youth to work in collaboration with the tourism department for utilizing the resources available under Prime Minister's Reconstruction Plan (PMRP), where 45 villages of Jammu and Kashmir were planned to be developed as tourist villages.

The official spokesperson further said that Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, speaking on the occasion, stressed on the need to create an inclusive ecosystem to bring the villages of J&K to the tourism map.

"Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, CEO Mission Youth gave a detailed overview of the J&K Tourist Village Network program," he said.

Choudhary, he said, informed that special initiatives and subsidies are being offered to encourage film shooting and creating tourism facilities under the scheme.

J&K Logs 96

Kashmir Valley while the remaining 26 were detected in Jammu division, taking the total number of people infected since the outbreak of virus in J&K last year to 3 25714. Budgam, they said, recorded the highest number of fresh cases at 27, followed by 23 in Srinagar district.

Meanwhile, 36 more Covid-19 patients have recovered and discharged from various hospitals including 33 from Jammu Division and 3 from Kashmir Division.

Also, officials said that the death toll due to coronavirus remains at 4409, as no fresh fatality was reported in J&K during the last 24 hours.

The official further said that no new case of Mucormycosis has been reported on Friday, thus the total number of confirmed cases remains 45 in the Union Territory.

Train Service

Badgam-Srinagar-Anantnag-Qazigund in south Kashmir to Banihal in Jammu region.

Train service was suspended yesterday following direction from the administration and police as a precautionary measure.

There was apprehension of law and order problem in the valley after the death of separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani who breathed his last at his Hyderpora residence on Wednesday night.

They said in the past railway property worth crores of rupees was damaged in violence in the valley.

Army Foils

said the PRO defence.

The infiltration bid has been foiled with effective fire by the troops on our side of the LoC, he said.

Further details are awaited, the PRO added. He, however, denied any ceasefire violation along the LoC.

Earlier in the week on Monday, two militants were killed as Army troops foiled a similar infiltration attempt along the LoC in Poonch district.

No Traffic On

He said the UT of Ladakh and UT J&K had agreed to allow Beacon authorities to undertake weekly maintenance at Zojila pass every Friday.

Traffic on the highway will be resumed on Saturday subject to good road condition and fair weather, he said.

The highway remained closed for winter months from January 1st every year to heavy snowfall and avalanches.

Meanwhile, the administration has started sending stocks for winter to different parts of Ladakh.

UPSC's EPFO/AO Exam As Per Schedule: Div Com

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K. Pole Friday said that the EPFO examination (Employee Provident Fund Organization, Enforcement officer/Account Officer) 2021 being conducting by UPSC would be held as per schedule on September 5, 2021.

In a statement issued here, Div Comm Kashmir informed that the EPFO examination will be conducted on 5-9-2021 (Sunday) from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon at all 21 designated centers in Srinagar.

"The candidates are requested to reach the respective venues before 9:00 a.m. The admit cards/examination passes would be treated as movement

passes to ensure hassle free movement of the 6810 candidates appearing in the said examination," the statement said.

It added that moreover, all the candidates appearing in Centre No.18025 sub-centre No.015 (Oak Hill Institute of Education Soiteng Lasjan near Himayat Centre) shall avoid Mahjoor Nagar-Padshahi Bagh route which is under repairs of deep drains, instead should follow Nowgam-Bypass Padshahi Bagh route.

In case of any further query, the all concerned may call control room established in the Divisional Commissioners office on the Nos.9419091042, 9419529123 and 9419367006, it said and added that all Covid SOPs shall be followed by all concerned in letter and spirit.

LG's Adv Directs PDD To Make Elaborative Arrangements For Winters

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan Friday chaired a meeting to review the winter preparedness of power development department in Jammu division at Civil Secretariat here today.



The Advisor besides other matters of the PDD primarily focused on the winter preparedness of PDD including availability of buffer Stock of transformers, Transformer procurement, electric poles, conductors, exigency plans, condition of power transmission lines, power schedules, Branch cutting, measures to bring down transmission losses, duty rosters of officers, establishment of control rooms and deployment of enforcement teams to check power theft, illegal hooking and seizure of illegal electric gadgets to ensure hassle free supply of electricity to the consumers.

The Advisor directed the officers to conduct audit of basic infrastructure and work on the gaps in advance to overcome shortcomings. The Advisor further emphasized on the officers to strictly adhere to the timeline set by the Lieutenant Governor for accomplishing all the tasks needed to be put in place for the forthcoming winters. He stressed on the proactive approach to be adopted by the department and said no stone should be left unturned on the aspect of winter preparedness.

Advisor directed the officers to focus on areas of concern and keep rapid action teams ready and well prepared so as to respond to the damages in emergency situations. The Advisor asked the concerned to keep a clear curtailment schedule in place for the winters and give it wide publicity so that people come to know well in advance. The Advisor also asked to put in place a foolproof mechanism

to ensure that the upper and far-flung areas especially Doda, Kishtwar, Poonch and Rajouri and Ramban which receive heavy snow fall do not face frequent interruptions and outages.

Advisor directed the concerned to ensure the availability of buf-

fer stock of transformers at every Electric Division so that same could be dispatched to the vulnerable areas and upper reaches and time is not wasted to replace the damaged transformers.

The Advisor directed the officers to ensure prompt remedial measures on issues faced by the public, he directed them to get daily feedback from the field functionaries and take prompt action on the issues faced by the people. He laid stress on the robust grievance redressal mechanism. He emphasized on the quick response to the grievances of general public. He further asked the officers to update the portal on daily basis and the directed the Chief Engineer to submit weekly report of the inspections conducted by the executive engineers and AEE's.

While directing the officers to complete the process of branch cutting of tree across the corridors through which the power lines pass within the timelines set for two phases of branch cutting, the Advisor emphasized on the officers to have the action plan, which is already in place, implemented in letter and spirit.

Regarding the power theft and the Transmission and Distribution losses, the Advisor directed the officers to make a list of highest and the lowest loss bearing divisions so that action is taken against the non-performing officers. He said the officers have already been directed in the previous meetings and spot inspections that strict action has to be taken against the consumers who resort to power theft.

Pak President, DG ISI Among Others Offer Funeral Prayers In Absentia For Geelani

KO News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The funeral prayers of veteran Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Geelani were offered in absentia at Faisal Mosque in Pakistan's capital city Islamabad. President Dr. Arif Alvi, federal ministers, parliamentarians and a large number of people from different walks of life offered the prayers, Pakistan media reported. National Security Adviser Dr Moeed Yusuf, Direc-

tor General Inter Services Intelligence Lt Gen Faiz Hameed, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain and other government officials attended.

Syed Ali Geelani passed away Wednesday night at his home in Srinagar, capital of Indian Occupied Kashmir at the age of 92.

He was laid to rest early Thursday morning in Srinagar amidst heavy deployment of security forces.

Work Towards Making J&K A Surplus In Milk Production: Bhatnagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar Friday impressed upon the officers of Animal, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries (ASH&F) departments to increase the production and productivity of the domestic as well milch yielding animals so that the J&K becomes surplus in milk production. He asked the officers for introducing new and high milk producing breeds in J&K so that people associated with animal rearing are benefitted.

He chaired a meeting to review the functioning and performance of Animal, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries (ASH&F) departments at Civil Secretariat. The Advisor delved upon the officers to conduct on ground survey of production so that the actual assessment can be accrued.

Bhatnagar impressed upon the officers for wider permeation of these schemes so that the benefits are perco-

lated to the common man. He asked the officers to raise huge awareness regarding the consumer oriented schemes and programmes of the department among the public.

Highlighting the signifi-



cance of ASH&F departments in generating the employment avenues for the youth, the Advisor stressed upon the officers to provide constant handholding to the existing unit holders besides efforts should be made to attract more youth towards establishing their own units.

While reviewing the infrastructure related to medical care of domestic animals, the Advisor emphasized upon the officers to establish mobile vet-

erinary clinics in areas having difficult terrain and topography besides vaccination camps for poultry birds should also be organised on constant basis. He urged upon the officers to issue advisories regarding preven-

tion of diseases among the domestic animals besides quality and reliable vaccines approved by certified labs should be made available to the public.

While reviewing the performance of fisheries department, Advisor Bhatnagar highlighted that J&K has a huge potential for fish production and efforts should be made to tap that potential. He asked the officers to identify the areas having greater prospect for establishing fish farms.

RBI Nod To J&K Govt To Acquire 16.76C Shares In J&K Bank

Agencies

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank has accorded approval to Jammu & Kashmir government to acquire over 16.76 crore shares in J&K Bank on preferential basis.

"The RBI vide its letter dated September 2, 2021 has accorded approval to Government of Jammu & Kashmir to acquire 16,76,72,702 fully paid-up equity shares on preferential basis, i.e., up to 74.24 per cent of the post issue paid-up voting equity capital of the bank subject to compliance of regulatory requirements," J&K Bank said in a regulatory filing.

In August, the lender had said that Sebi had exempted the Jammu & Kashmir government from complying with its norms on substantial acquisition of shares and takeovers in the proposed acquisition

of 16,76,72,702 equity shares (6.06 per cent) of the bank during 2021-22.

Earlier on April 1, the bank had said the Jammu & Kashmir government, as its promoter



shareholder, has committed to infuse capital of up to Rs 500 crore in the bank.

In a separate filing, the lender said it has extended the issue closing date of J&K Bank Employee Stock Purchase

Scheme, 2021 (JKBESPS 2021) to September 7, 2021 due to "prevailing circumstances".

The issue under the employee stock purchase scheme (ESPS) was to close on Sep-

tember 3. The issue opened on August 27. Under the ESPS, J&K Bank aims to raise up to Rs 150 crore by issuing 7.5 crore equity shares, in one or more tranches, to eligible employees of the bank.

AJKPC Blames Opposition Parties For Failing To Raise Issues Of People In J&K

Agencies

Jammu: Attacking opposition parties for "failing" to raise the issues of the people, the All Jammu and Kashmir Panchayat Conference (AJKPC) on Thursday announced that it will play the role of an effective opposition to become the voice of masses in the Union territory.

The organisation, which is a frontline body of PRI members and elected representatives of urban local bodies, also appealed to the Jammu and Kashmir Home Department to pass an immediate direction to the security wing of police for immediate clearance of files moved by grassroot-level representatives seeking security cover.

"We are concerned over the insensitivity of the government

towards the genuine issues of common masses. Opposition parties have miserably failed to raise their issues," AJKPC president Anil Sharma said.

"The government machinery has turned insensitive towards the genuine and day-to-day issues of common masses who have been suffering badly due to criminal silence of opposition parties," he claimed.

Sharma took a dig at the opposition for its "failure" to raise the issues of the people and said there is a need for every elected representative of rural and urban local bodies to come on the forefront and become the voice of the people.

He said the AJKPC has decided to work with the representatives of urban local bodies to vociferously raise the issues of

the people.

"Till now, our role was confined to the rural pockets of Jammu and Kashmir but it has become imperative for the AJKPC to spread its base in urban areas where the people are facing the same difficulties and hardships that are being faced by the people of rural areas," Sharma said.

He said the elected representatives of urban local bodies have voluntarily come forward to join the banner of the AJKPC in their mission of lessening sufferings of the people.

The AJKPC leader also said that panches, sarpanches and BDCs, in coordination with the representatives of urban local bodies, would launch a decisive battle against the mining mafia in the days to come.

Status Of PMAY-U Reviewed In Jammu Division

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Divisional Commissioner, Dr Raghav Langer Friday chaired a meeting of Deputy Commissioners and officers of Housing and Urban Development department to review the status of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna-Urban (PMAY-U) in districts of the division.

MD J&K Housing Board informed the meeting about the current status and other phase wise progress of PMAY Urban Mission in the districts of Jammu division. He informed that a total of 13140 houses have been approved, of which, 11188 houses have been geo-tagged and 2878 houses have been constructed. He further informed that geo-tagging of remaining houses is in progress.

The Div Com who is also the Chairman of Divisional level committee directed the DCs to complete the verification of PMAY (U) beneficiaries and upload the verified information on the dashboard. Instructions were issued for identification of remaining potential beneficiaries as per the guidelines



KDA/UDA/BDA. He called for 100% saturation of demand in all ULBs & villages of development authorities having approved master plans from the DCs concerned.

While reviewing the loan cases, it was informed that more than 411 cases of Jammu Division stand recommended to the J&K Bank. The Div Com instructed the Deputy Commissioners to monitor and review the sub-scheme with concerned ULBs and Cluster Heads/

Bank Branch heads for monitoring of disbursement of loan to beneficiaries. The Div Com stressed upon the officers to expedite the process, resolve all the minor bottlenecks so that the mission-housing for all could be completed in the districts of division well in time. He directed the concerned officers to work with full dedication and utmost zeal for completion of the mission.

He directed the officers to look into the matters hampering timely payments of installments to the beneficiaries and other issues were also discussed including eligibility for availing first installment, land in name of spouse and other related issues. Responding on the issue of cross-check required for availing first installment, the Div Com directed MD to find out an alternative mechanism of the same so that the beneficiaries do not face any inconvenience.

58 Kanal Encroached Land Retrieved At Ramgarh

Observer News Service

SAMBA: District Administration Samba Friday carried out a massive anti encroachment drive and retrieved 55 Kanal state land and 03 Kanal Khacharai land here in Ramgarh.

Taking cognizance of encroachment, Deputy Commissioner Samba Anuradha Gupta constituted an anti encroachment team reached the spot early morning and pressed multiple JCBs machines to remove

several temporary and permanent structures including pavements, boundary wall, Concrete RCC, sheds, barbed wires, poles, houses and other structures.

Tehsildar Ramgarh Tarseem Lal along with Police officers and field revenue staff conducted the drive vacated State land under Khasra no 316 in village Dabuz Kaka Ramgarh measuring 55 kanal, while another 3 Kanal Khachari land was retrieved in the adjoining area.

IUST To Resume Offline Classwork Soon

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Pursuant to the J&K administrations decision to resume offline classes in the universities, the vice-Chancellor IUST, Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo conveyed a meeting of various Deans of the schools and concerned officers to work out the necessary modalities and safeguards regarding the reopening of the University for formal teaching and learning.

It was resolved that school-specific programs for resumption of the offline teaching shall be prepared by the concerned Deans of the schools adhering to all the COVID guidelines notified by the UT government and UGC.

The practical and project work of the outgoing students of vari-

ous Departments of the school of Engineering and Technology was resumed in batches two weeks back in the university on experimental basis to navigate the challenges associated with the offline teaching under COVID.

The IUST shall organize special vaccination drives next week for vaccinating the remaining students so that the campus is opened up to all the students soon for offline classwork.

Even after 100% vaccination of the staff and students, wearing a mask and social distancing is mandatory for all students and staff members in the campus. In addition to the transport facilities, the University shall ensure provision of hostel facilities to all the deserving students hailing from the far-off places. The university students have been asked to get in touch with the Dean students and concerned heads of the Departments for further information regarding the resumption of the offline classes and COVID protocol.

Tourism Dept Starts Promotional Campaign

Observer News Service

CHENNAI: Fully geared up after successful vaccination campaign of and capacity building among local tourism stakeholders back home, the J&K Department of Tourism has started a vigorous promotional campaign among the potential tourism markets across the country.

Under this promotional initiative, officers of the Department would be travelling to various major cities of the country where they would be holding meetings, interactions, road shows with representatives of travel trade

vid-19, the UT administration prioritised the vaccination of tourism stakeholders including taxi operators, hoteliers, shikarawallas, tourist guides, ponywallas etc. and so far 95 per cent of all tourism stakeholders stand vaccinated.

On the diversified tourism products available in J&K, the officers informed that the Golfing circuit of Jammu & Kashmir comprising the iconic Royal Springs Golf Course, Pahalgam Golf Course, historic courses like the Gulmarg Golf Course and Kashmir Golf Course besides Jammu-Tawi



industry and the media. To begin with the cities targeted include Chennai, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Ahmadabad and Kolkatta.

In this connection, a team of officers comprising Deputy Director, Tourism(Registration/Publicity), Kashmir, Dr. Ahsanul Haq Chishti and Deputy Director, Tourism(Publicity), Jammu, Naresh Kumar are in Chennai where they held back to back meetings with local tour operators, local media fraternity and even some prospective buyers of J&K tourism products.

During the meetings, the officers apprised the representatives of tour travel industry about the preparedness of the Jammu & Kashmir administration and tourism stakeholders in terms of COVID-19 protocol and precautions. They said soon after the outbreak of Co-

Golf Course provides a rich and varied world class experience to visiting golfers which is unparalleled in rest of the country. More than seven golf tournaments of national and international standard are lined up for next two months which includes the prestigious PGTI-Pro tournament which is expected to witness participation of around 126 top golfers of the country and abroad. Currently all major cities in the country have direct air connectivity with Srinagar and Jammu airports.

Similarly this year, the officers informed that, adventure activities like trekking and rafting have picked pace among the adventure loving tourists and the Government has thrown open many more treks for exploration from this year. Niche tourism in Jammu & Kashmir is picking up with religious, heritage, adventure, golf etc. being on the enquiry list of prospective tourists. Many more new destinations are being explored and put on the tourism map of the UT.

Eng vs Ind | England take 99-run first innings lead after finishing on 290



PTI

England got a sizeable 99-run first innings lead after scoring 290 in their first innings in reply to India's first innings total of 191 on the second day of the fourth Test.

Ollie Pope top scored with 81 off 159 balls while Chris Woakes hit a quickfire 50 to bolster the England total.

For India, Umesh Yadav finished with 3 for 76 while Jasprit Bumrah took 2 for 67. Ravindra Jadeja also got a couple of wickets while Shardul Thakur and Mohammed Siraj finished with a wicket apiece.

Tea update

Ollie Pope helped England take the first innings lead against India with a sublime half-century, taking the hosts to 227 for seven at tea on day two of the fourth Test here on Friday. The Indian pacers were unable to sustain the pressure on a pitch that seems to be getting better for batting with each

passing session.

England led India by 36 runs at the break with Pope (74 batting off 143) and Chris Woakes (4 batting off 7) in the middle.

The first wicket in the session came through Mohammad Siraj, who trapped Jonny Bairstow (37) with his stock ball -- the nip backer -- in the fifth over after lunch. That also brought an end to an entertaining 89-run stand between Bairstow and Pope.

Pope then got together with Moeen Ali (35) to give England the upperhand. The two shared a 71-run stand and before a well-set Moeen played a poor shot off Ravindra Jadeja to throw his wicket away. The attempted slog sweep went straight into the hands of the cover fielder.

Jasprit Bumrah could have had Moeen leg before wicket earlier but India did not review the on-field umpire's decision. Pope played some exquisite shots en route to his sixth half-century. The drive on the up, the flick and pull shots were

a treat to the eye.

In the morning session, Umesh Yadav struck twice in the first hour of play before a counter-attacking stand between Bairstow and Pope took England to 139 for five at lunch. England scored 86 runs in the 25-over session.

Umesh, perennially in and out of the playing eleven and featuring in his first Test in nine months, was impressive in his opening spell after taking the prized wicket of Joe Root on Thursday. He got his 150th Test wicket in his first over of the day after nightwatchman Craig Overton slashed one hard only to edge it to Virat Kohli at first slip.

Dawid Malan (31 off 67) once again batted fluently until Umesh, coming from around the wicket, got one to slightly straighten to take the outside edge and Rohit Sharma took a brilliant diving catch at second slip, leaving England at 62 for five.

With Bumrah also applying

pressure from the other end, England managed to score only 25 runs in the first hour in which 12 overs were bowled.

However, the momentum shifted drastically in England's favour after the drinks break as Shardul Thakur conceded four boundaries in his over with three of them coming from Pope's bat.

One was a delightful straight drive and was followed by a flick between the mid-on and mid-wicket arc. With the pitch not offering much help to the pacers, Thakur paid the price for bowling a bit too full.

The next over, Bairstow collected three boundaries off Siraj, who too wasn't at his best.

Pope, playing his first game of the series, too batted with supreme confidence and struck a gorgeous cover drive off Bumrah towards the end of the session.

Jadeja was guilty of bowling two no-balls in his three overs before lunch.

Haider Ali makes history by winning Pakistan's first-ever gold medal at Tokyo Paralympics

Agencies

Athlete Haider Ali made history on Friday by winning a gold medal in the discus throw competition at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics Games, becoming the first Pakistani to do so.

Ali achieved a 55.26 metre throw at his fifth attempt out of a total of six to score the best distance -- almost 3m longer than Ukraine's Mykola Zhabnyak who scored 52.43m to come in second place, according to Radio Pakistan.

Brazilian Joao Victor Teixeira de Souza Silva won bronze with a throw of 51.86m.

The official Paralympics Games accounted posted on Twitter that the attempt was a "personal best" for Ali.

Celebrating his win, the athlete said the gold medal would be "very important" for para-sports in Pakistan since others would be able to see what can be achieved through hard work.

"I hope to be a role model for other people that have a disability [and who] don't compete

in sports to take part in para-sports," he said.

Punjab Sports Minister Rai Taimoor Khan Bhatti said Ali had made the entire nation proud by

Meanwhile, Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry thanked the athlete for his win on Twitter. "We are proud of you," he tweeted.



winning the gold medal. He announced a reward of Rs2.5 million for the Olympian, saying it would be given to him by Chief Minister Usman Buzdar at a ceremony upon his return.

The United States Embassy in Islamabad also congratulated him for the win and said he was "used to creating history".

Ali -- who hails from Gujranwala -- suffers from cerebral palsy. This is not the first time he has won a medal at the Paralympics. However, his previous medals were for long jump.

He won a bronze medal at the Rio Paralympic Games in 2016 and a silver medal at the Beijing Paralympic Games in 2008.

Fernando ton powers Sri Lanka to 300-9 in first ODI

COLOMBO: Opener Avishka Fernando hit a sparkling century to help Sri Lanka post 300 for nine in the first One-day International against South Africa on Thursday.

Fernando, who made 118, put on key partnerships including a 97-run fourth-wicket stand with Charith Asalanka, who scored 72, after the hosts elected to bat at the start of the three-match series at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo.

South African spinner Keshav Maharaj returned figures of 2-30 from his 10 overs to check Sri Lanka's run rate in the middle overs.

Fernando, who put on 79 runs with Dhananjaya de Silva (44) for the third wicket, changed gears after raising his half-century and took the attack to the opposition with the left-handed Asalanka.

The 23-year-old reached his third ODI ton with a single, raising his bat and punching the air amid a standing ovation from the Sri Lankan dressing room.

Fernando finally fell to Tabraiz Shamsi's left-arm wrist-spin, having hit 10 fours and two sixes in his 115-ball knock.

Kagiso Rabada got Asalanka



caught behind after the batsman's second ODI half-century in his sixth match. Rabada took two wickets.

Earlier Sri Lanka were off to a brisk start with Fernando and wicket-keeper Minod Bhanuka getting 57 runs for the opening wicket.

Aiden Markram bowled Bhanuka for 27 with his off spin while Ma-

haraj sent back Bhanuka Rajapaksa for a duck as two wickets fell in the space of five balls.

The limited-overs series, which also includes three Twenty20 matches, is being played behind closed doors due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Scoreboard

THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS (BOPEE)

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Subject:- Tentative Merit List of candidates for admission to B.E/ B. Tech Engineering Courses-2021, inviting of objections, thereof.

Reference: - i). Notification No. 036-BOPEE of 2021 dated 10-03-2021. ii). Notice No. 039-BOPEE of 2021 dated 06-04-2021. iii). Notice No. 041-BOPEE of 2021 dated 16-04-2021. iv). Notice No. 044-BOPEE of 2021 dated 29-04-2021 v). Notice No. 060-BOPEE of 2021 dated 09-08-2021. vi) Notice No. 063-BOPEE of 2021 dated 19-08-2021. vii) Letter No. SC/491-CET/271-74 dated 16-06-2021

Notification No: 081 -BOPEE of 2021 Dated: 01-09-2021.

In pursuance of Notification No. 036-BOPEE of 2021 dated 10-03-2021 read with Notice No. 039-BOPEE of 2021 dated 06-04-2021, Notice No. 041-BOPEE of 2021 dated 16-04-2021, Notice No. 044-BOPEE of 2021 dated 29-04-2021, Notice No. 060-BOPEE of 2021 dated 09-08-2021 & Notice No. 063-BOPEE of 2021 dated 19-08-2021, online Application Forms were invited from the eligible candidates for admission to B.E/ B.Tech Engineering courses-2021 in the Government / Private Institutions of the Union Territories of J&K/Ladakh.

In view of COVID-19 pandemic, the Board vide above referred notifications/notices has given ample time to the candidates for filling up online Application Forms, uploading of marks cards and editing of marks for those candidates whose result was declared after cutoff date fixed by the Board for filling up of online Application Form vide Notice No. 060-BOPEE of 2021 dated 09-08-2021 and Notice No. 063-BOPEE of 2021 dated 19-08-2021.

The Board is now at the final stage of the admission process to the aforesaid courses and a tentative Merit Lists of the eligible candidates has been prepared which is annexed as Annexure 'A' to this Notification, and the same is available on the BOPEE website www.jkbopee.gov.in in only, with an intent to place the same in the public domain to call for objections, if any, in this regard so that the process of admission i.e. filling up of the seats is completed well in time.

1. Keeping in view the prevailing circumstances and the lesser number of competing candidates to pursue the courses, the Board has decided that there will no written test and the tentative merit list of the candidates has been prepared taking into account their marks in the qualifying examination i.e. (10+2) class marks. For the candidates having equal marks/percentage in the qualifying examinations, the tie has been decided to be resolved firstly on the basis of marks obtained by candidates in 12th class, followed by marks obtained in Mathematics, then in Physics and later on in Chemistry subjects and in case of further tie, if any, it has been resolved by taking D.O.B into account followed by first alphabet of candidate's name mentioned in e-information Brochure.
2. The applicants whose result is awaited have been included at end of the tentative Merit Lists; however their actual Merit shall be reflected in the Final/Operative Merit List once the Board receives their qualifying Marks Certificates issued by their respective Boards.
3. The Board has received letter from Secretary, J&K Sports Council in which they have recommended few eligible candidates who have applied for engineering Courses-2021 under Sports Category and their names have been included in Sports Category in the tentative Merit List as per their merit. Further, the other candidates who have applied under sports category but their names have not recommended by Secretary, J&K Sports Council have been converted in to Open Merit (OM) category.
4. The candidates whose category certificates are either expired or shown deficient they have to clear their deficiencies upto 8th September 2021 (as a last chance), failing which, they shall automatically be treated as Open Merit, subject to having such percentage of marks as prescribed for open merit category by the Board.
5. The Board has provisionally approved the forms of candidates who have uploaded D.O.B certificate other than 10th class marks card and have failed to upload Domicile certificate, their names are also included in the tentative Merit List, but with the condition that they shall have to produce D.O.B & Domicile Certificate at the time of Counselling / admission to concerned College/Institute, failing which their candidature shall be rejected.
6. Objections, if any, raised by the candidates, enlisted in the tentative merit list, have to be submitted in person at the Board office Jammu/ Srinagar during working days till 8th of September, 2021 upto 4.00 PM. Failing which no claims shall be entertained by the Board under any circumstances later on.
7. In case no objections are received within the cutoff date fixed by the Board, the tentative merit list shall be deemed to be the final.
8. In case of the candidates whose marks card are deficient, the Board has decided to give final chance to them for submission of their marks cards at BOPEE office Jammu/ Srinagar on all working days upto 08th September 2021 failing which no further claim shall be entertained by the Board and their name shall not be included in the final updated rank wise Merit List 9. However, the tentative merit list shall be Operational only after updating the Marks/Score of the deficient candidates and any other pending deficiency by the candidates (mentioned in this tentative merit list) till the stipulated date/time and accordingly Ranks shall be allotted to the candidates once the Board clarifies the objections, if any, received in this regard.
10. The candidates must remain in touch with the official web site of the Board to remain informed about the Schedule of the counselling which will be notified shortly after resorting the objections, raised by the intending candidates regarding in the tentative merit list available on the official web site of the Board www.jkbopee.gov.in. E&OE

No. BOPEE/Exam-04/2021 Dated: 01-09-2021
DIPK-NB-3084/21

(Dr. Sunil Gupta)
Controller of Examinations, J&K BOPEE

World Cup qualifiers Hungary-England game under FIFA scanner

After England players faced racial abuse in Hungary, FIFA said on Friday it will take "adequate actions" once it has investigated the incidents.

The statement from FIFA stopped short of directly condemning Hungary fans for

effect for the visit of England because the game was under FIFA's jurisdiction.

The racist abuse was also condemned by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

"It is completely unacceptable that England players were racially abused in Hungary last



the abuse, which included monkey chanting, in Thursday's World Cup qualifier at the Puskas Arena in Budapest. England won 4-0.

"FIFA strongly rejects any form of racism and violence and has a very clear zero tolerance stance for such behaviour in football," football's governing body said. "FIFA will take adequate actions as soon as it receives match reports concerning yesterday's Hungary-England game."

Hungary had recently been ordered to play two matches without fans but the sanction from UEFA didn't take

night," Johnson said on Twitter. "I urge (FIFA) to take strong action against those responsible to ensure that this kind of disgraceful behaviour is eradicated from the game for good."

England's players were jeered for taking a knee, pelted with plastic cups after goals and then targeted with alleged racist chants.

Pitch-side reporters for domestic broadcasters ITV and Sky Sports said they heard Hungary supporters behind one of the goals aim monkey chants at Raheem Sterling and Jude Bellingham, who are Black.

US investigating two Kuwaitis in FIFA case

GENEVA: Two senior Olympic officials from Kuwait, one reputed to be the kingmaker of IOC elections and another who is president of swimming's international governing body, have been targeted by the US Department of Justice for suspected racketeering and bribery related to FIFA and international football politics, according to documents obtained by The Associated Press.

and provide insight into the US government's probe of high-level foreign officials as part of the broad FIFA investigation that began more than a decade ago.

The sheikh is an influential powerbroker in Olympic circles who was a key ally behind Thomas Bach's successful run to the IOC presidency in 2013. The long-time IOC member is president of the group of na-



The US embassy in Kuwait made a formal request to local authorities in 2017 for assistance to secure evidence including records of multiple bank accounts held in the Gulf state, according to one document.

The request included a document dated June 7, 2017, titled: 'Request for assistance in the investigation of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, Husain al-Musallam, Reza Charim, Wahid Kardany and others.'

The documents confirm that Sheikh Ahmad is under investi-

tional Olympic bodies known as ANOC and a former member of the FIFA executive committee.

Al-Musallam, a close ally of the sheikh, took over as president of swimming governing body FINA in June and for the last 16 years has been the Olympic Council of Asia's director general. Sheikh Ahmad has been president of the OCA since 1991. The two other men identified in the documents, Kardany and Charim, who are both Iranian, were assistants to al-Musallam at the Kuwait-based OCA.