



Maximum : 10°
Minum : -2°
Humidity : 86%

SUNSET
Today 05:22 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 07:14 AM



P6 LIFE & TIMES

Diabetic eye disease associated with five-fold risk of COVID-19: Study

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Political Representation of Persons with Disabilities



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Tributes pour in after death of Islamic scholar Kalbe Sadiq



NEWS DIGEST

Landline To Mobile Calls Get Zero Prefix

NEW DELHI: Callers will soon be required to add '0' prefix for making calls from landlines to mobile phones in the country, with the telecom department asking telcos to make necessary arrangements by January 1 to implement the new system.

The department has accepted sectoral regulator Trai's recommendation for having the '0' prefix for such calls, a move that will create sufficient numbering space for telecom services.

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ACB Charges 2 Officials In Graft Case

JAMMU: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Wednesday filed a charge sheet against two government officials in a case related to alleged misappropriation of cement and steel worth over Rs 11.63 lakh in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, officials said.

The case was registered in 2012 after verifying the allegations of misappropriation of cement and steel issued under various schemes in Barnoti block from 2004 to 2007, a spokesperson of the ACB said.

During investigation, he said it was found that the then Block Development Officer (BDO), Barnoti, Bharat Bhushan Barnoti attested and authenticated fake entries of cement and steel in the stock registers without checking the corresponding challans.

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Forces Face Human Shield Allegations In Pulwama

SRINAGAR: The government forces on Wednesday allegedly thrashed several youths and used them as human shield, during a cordon and search operation (CASO) in Narwa village of South Kashmir's Pulwama district, reports said Wednesday.

In the wee hours on Wednesday, the government forces launched a search operation in Narwa of the district following specific inputs about the presence of militants in the village, news agency KDC reported. During the search operation, the report said that the forces barged into many residential houses and conducted door-to-door searches as well.

"During the operation, the forces allegedly thrashed several youths in the village

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NIA Arrests PDP Youth President In Davinder Case

PDP Leader Accused Of Seeking Hizb Help In 2019 Polls

NEW DELHI: PDP youth wing president Waheed ur Rehman Para was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday for allegedly conspiring with Hizbul Mujahideen militants in securing their support during the 2019 parliamentary elections, officials said here.

The officials alleged that Para, who recently filed his nomination for district Development Council (DDC) elections from Pulwama in South Kashmir, was arrested for his alleged "close links" with Irfan Shafi Mir, arrested along with Hizbul Mujahideen militant Naveed Babu and suspended Deputy Superintendent of Police Davinder Singh.

According to officials, during investigation into Singh's association with Hizbul Mujahideen militants, the NIA came across the phone records of Mir which showed that he was in close touch with Para.

The spokesperson of the NIA only gave a brief statement saying "today NIA arrested Waheed Ur Rehman Para, the youth wing leader of People's Democratic Party, in connection with the Naveed Babu-Davinder Singh case for supporting Hizbul Mujahideen in conspiracy with the other accused persons."

During questioning, Mir had claimed that Para had actively sought his support during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections for party candidate Mehbooba Mufti, who is also the

president of PDP, the officials said. Officials said that Para, who was being interrogated for the last two days at the NIA headquarters, was not cooperating during the ques-

Mehbooba Alleges 'Blackmail, Intimidation'

SRINAGAR: PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday claimed that the charges against her party's youth wing leader Waheed Para, who was arrested by the NIA in a militancy case, were baseless.

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tioning prompting the agency to place him under arrest.

Mir was acting as a front man for Naveed Babu and indulging in political support against monetary and other gains, the officials said.

Mir, who has emerged as a "double agent", was arrested along with Singh and Syed Naveed Mushtaq alias Naveed Babu and accomplice Rafi Ahmad Rather.

Mir was sitting in the car driven by Singh on January 11 along with Naveed and Rather when their car was intercepted by Jammu and Kashmir Police near Qazigund on

the highway connecting the Valley with the rest of the country.

A search of the vehicle led to the recovery of an AK-47 rifle, three pistols and a cache of ammunition and explosives. The NIA took over the case on January 17. The NIA filed the charge sheet under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and various sections of the Indian Penal Code against Mir, Singh, Naveed, his brother Syed Irfan Ahmad, Rather and businessman Tanveer Ahmad Wani, former president of the Line of Control Traders Association.

According to the NIA, the accused were part of a deep-rooted conspiracy hatched by the Pakistan-based Hizbul Mujahideen and Pakistani State agencies "to commit violent acts and to wage war against the Union of India".

During his extensive questioning, the NIA said Mir told them he had met Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salauddin, his deputy Amir Khan, the operational chief Khurshed Alam and the militant group's financial head Nazir Mehmood where the broad concept of "Bleeding Heart" was discussed.

Later during his stay in Pakistan, Mir had a meeting with ISI officers like Umar Cheema, Ashhan Chaudhary and Sohail Abbas who also tasked him to work on a new "Hawala (non-banking) channel" for transfer of money for sustaining militant activities in the Kashmir valley. (PTI)

Snowfall, Rains In Kashmir Valley For Third Day

SRINAGAR: Intermittent snowfall and rains continued at most places in Kashmir for the third day on Wednesday, officials said.

The weather office has forecast mainly dry weather from Thursday till next week.

Officials said most places in the valley experienced rains/light snowfall which continued when last reports came in.

Avalanche Warning Sounded In 11 Districts

SRINAGAR: An avalanche warning was issued in 11 districts of Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday in view of heavy snowfall in the higher reaches of the Union Territory (UT) in the last three days, officials said here.

A 'medium danger' avalanche warning has been issued for the higher reaches of Kishtwar, Kupwara and Bandipora districts, they said.

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The famous ski-resort of Gulmarg, in north Kashmir, recorded four inches of fresh snowfall during the night, while Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir, recorded around one inch of snow.

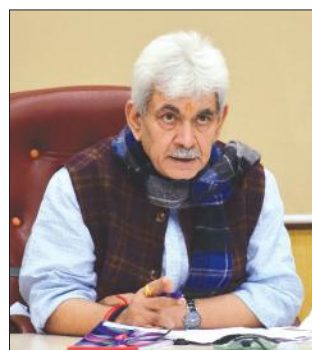
There are reports of snowfall in other areas in the higher reaches, including the Sonamarg-Zojila axis on the Srinagar-Leh road which connects the valley with Ladakh, they said.

The road was closed for traffic on Monday.

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LG Calls For Free And Fair Elections

Directs Officers To Ensure Free Movement Of Candidates Of All Parties



OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Wednesday directed the officials in the Union Territory to maintain neutrality and ensure free and fair District Development Council (DDC) election and by-elections for Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies (ULB) besides allowing free movement of candidates of all the parties.

Chairing a high-level meeting with Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, and Superintendents of Police through video-conferencing, here at Civil Secretariat, Sinha directed the officers to take all the requisite measures to maintain neutrality and ensure free and fair election, an official spokesperson said Wednesday.

The LG, he said, directed the officials to take all the preemptive measures for the smooth and peaceful conduct of the elections, besides availability of basic facilities to be ensured for the government forces

and polling staff.

"DCs and SPs to meticulously ensure free movement of candidates of all parties, security arrangements and other preparatory measures for the ensuing elections," LG, as per official spokesperson said in the meeting.

"Ensure all the facilities for people in far-flung areas so that everyone can exercise their right to vote irrespective of caste, creed, religion, or gender," he added. According to the official spokesperson, Divisional Commissioners of Jammu and Kashmir briefed the LG about the status of preparedness regarding the elections particularly the logistical issues in view of the snowfall in remote hilly regions across the Union Territory.

"He asked the officers to ensure that all the COVID related SOPs and advisories shall be followed during elections also," he added.

Meanwhile, during the review of COVID-19 management and control efforts in J&K, the LG also took the first-hand appraisal of the preparations regarding the Covid vaccine delivery in the backdrop of Prime Minister's Video-Conference on Tuesday.

As per the official spokesperson, the LG asked the Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education Department, Atal Dilloo, to plan in advance and prioritize the delivery of the vaccine.

"Later, the LG also took stock of the winter preparedness and logistic arrangements being made by the various departments across the UT. He asked the concerned officers to ensure

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Dr Farooq's Sister, Hotelier Chaya Named In Second List

ROSHNI SCAM

JAMMU: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah's sister, an influential mahant and two prominent hoteliers including a Congress leader figure in the second list of 269 people who have availed land under the now-scrapped Roshni Act.

The Jammu administration also released another list of seven persons who have allegedly encroached upon state land and it included a PDP leader, a retired inspector general of police and a senior superintendent of police.

According to the fresh list uploaded on the website of Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, majority of the 131 beneficiaries including a former bureaucrat and his wife legalised their residential places under the Roshni scheme, while there are also names of dozens of businessmen

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NC Warns Legal Recourse

SRINAGAR: The National Conference on Wednesday rejected claims of the Jammu and Kashmir administration that its party leaders Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah had encroached on land in Jammu and said it is mulling legal recourse to challenge the "unfounded and unwarranted allegations" being levelled against them.

In a statement, a party spokesperson said the allegations of the administration has reached "an obnoxious level" and pointed out that the party vice president Omar Abdullah never owned land or a house either in Jammu or Srinagar and stayed with his father.

"The malicious nature of the allegations are laid bare by the fact that even though Mr. Omar Abdullah does not own the land but actually lives with his father in Jammu as he

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New Land Law Will Check Roshni-Like Scams: Jitendra Singh

NEW DELHI: Union minister Jitendra Singh on Wednesday said the new land law will check Jammu and Kashmir's Roshni-like scams and illegal land grabbing

He said the law is also against mafia members of the politician-administration nexus who have been for over half a century constructing huge mansions, bungalows and commercial complexes on unauthorised land.

It is precisely for this reason that all these habitual law breakers have ganged up to spread a disinformation campaign against the land law which has been implemented as per the provisions of the Constitution

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12 More Corona Deaths In J&K, Toll 1663

33 Travelers Among 489 New Cases

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported on Wednesday 489 fresh cases of novel coronavirus, including thirty-three travelers, taking the total number of people infected by the virus in Union Territory to 107819.

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OBSERVER MONITORING DESK

SRINAGAR: Twelve more people succumbed to coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, taking the total number of fatalities since the outbreak of pandemic in the Union Territory to 1663.

While Kashmir Valley reported six more deaths due to the virus on Wednesday, the deadly infection claimed six more lives in Jammu division, officials said.

Among the victims from the Valley, officials said, five were residents of Srinagar, including a 60-year-old woman and a 66-year-old man from Lal Bazaar, a 60-year-old woman from HMT, an 80-year-old from Natipora and a 60-year-old from Mehjoor Nagar.

The sixth victim from valley was a 57-year-old woman from Langate in Kupwara district.

Regarding Jammu, they said, three victims were from Udhampur, two from Samba and one from Kathua.

With these deaths, the total fatality count in the Valley has reached 1091 and 572 in the Jammu region. Srinagar district with 413 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (292), Baramulla (160), Budgam (99), Pulwama (86), Kupwara (82), Anantnag (77), Doda (53), Bandipora (50), Kulgam (50), Rajouri (49), Udhampur (46), Ganderbal (37), Shopian (37), Kathua (36), Samba (29), Poonch (22), Ramban (18), Kishtwar (16), and Reasi (9). —With GNS inputs

Cong-BJP Backed Mattu Wrests Mayor's Chair Amid High Drama Poll

SRINAGAR: A high voltage drama unfolded at the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) office here on Wednesday during the Mayoral elections, as Junaid Azim Mattu was yet again elected to the chair with the support of BJP and Congress councillors.

According to reports, unruly scenes were witnessed at the SMC office as the Deputy Mayor Parvez Qadri objected to the conduct of polls, saying that the Municipal Act 2,000 was being violated while conducting the election for the top post of the city's civic body. However, despite his opposition, the voting continued amid a high

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"It Is Yet Another Low"

The National Conference termed the Mayoral election as a "farce play that bulldozed established democratic and constitutional norms setting a lowest benchmark in the country for immoral politics".

In a statement issued here, a party spokesperson said "It neatly fits the Anti Kashmir agenda of BJP,

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UMER AHMAD

PAHALGAM: 35-year-old Abdul Aziz watched in sheer disbelief as different departments recently arrived with muscle and machines to demolish his ancestral dwelling.

The administration called it an anti-encroachment drive in south Kashmir's Pahalgam highland pastures.

In Ladhroo, Aziz said, 12 out of 15 dokas—huts—were razed to ground, without any eviction notice.

"It was constructed by my great-grandfather," anguished Aziz talked about his demolished mud-wood



Aziz with his homeless family taking a shelter in his tribe member's hut.

Distress After Demolition: Homeless Tribals Fear For Future

hut. "I don't understand how it suddenly became an encroachment, which was erased on a war-footing." Aziz is now homeless and is living in a neighbour's hut along with his 4 children and a wife.

"Since the demolition of my hut, my children are very much scared. They keep asking me how we are going to survive this harsh winter," the nomad said. "Becoming homeless overnight is the worst nightmare we've ever faced."

Aziz ferries tourists on his horse for living, but since August 2019, he has hardly earned anything. He now relies on the forest

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Landline To Mobile ...

The Department of Telecom (DoT) in a circular on 'modification of dialling pattern from fixed line numbers to cellular mobile numbers' said in order to ensure adequate numbering resources for fixed line and mobile services, Trai's recommendations dated May 29, 2020 have been accepted by the Department.

"Following may be implemented...Fixed-to-mobile calls shall be dialled with prefix '0'. Suitable announcement may be fed in the fixed line switches to apprise the fixed line subscribers about the requirement of dialling the prefix '0' for all fixed-to-mobile calls," DoT said in a circular dated November 20.

This announcement should be played whenever a subscriber dials a fixed-to-mobile call without prefixing '0', it said.

"All the fixed line subscribers should be provided with '0' dialling facility, that is, STD dialling facility," said the circular posted on DoT's website.

DoT said that time till January 1 is allowed to all the telecom service providers to implement this new system.

"Compliance of the same may be intimated," DoT said.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) in May this year had recommended dialling prefix '0' for a call from fixed line number to mobile number.

The regulator had, however, stated that the introduction of a dialling prefix for a particular type of call is not akin to increasing the number of digits in the telephone number.

Trai had then also stated that this change in dialling pattern will generate 2,544 million additional numbering resources for mobile services to cater to the future requirements.

ACB Charges ...

The then storekeeper Mohinder Singh also fabricated records, the spokesperson said.

"Under a conspiracy, the accused BDO and storekeeper caused a loss of Rs 11,63,421 to the state exchequer on account of misappropriation of the material under different (government) schemes," he said.

Earlier, on the basis of departmental assessment made by the then Assistant Commissioner Development, Kathua, a recovery of Rs 3,27,918 was made in March, 2006 from the accused storekeeper on detection of shortage in the stores, he said.

He said the ACB, after a thorough investigation, submitted the chargesheet against the two accused in the court of Additional Judge Anti-Corruption Kathua which has fixed the next date of hearing on December 8.

Forces Face ...

and used them as human shields during the operation," the report says.

It adds that no arrests were made as the operation was called off in the evening.

The report also quoted PRO Defence Col. Rajesh Kalia of denying the allegations about thrashing of civilians and using them as human shield during the CASO and terming it as baseless. —Agencies

Mehbooba Alleges ..

Taking to Twitter, the PDP chief said it was not a coincidence that Para received the NIA summons a day after he filed his nomination for DDC polls.

She also said that Waheed has no connection whatsoever with Singh and "is being falsely charged. All just to blackmail and intimidate PDP and other mainstream political parties in JK".

"BJP milks illegal scrapping of Article 370 in every nook and corner of the country. But when it comes to Kashmiris questioning its abrogation they are locked up and punished. Everyone knows at whose behest Devinder Singh worked for. Irony that they have the gall (sic) to blame others."

Mehbooba said she can personally vouch for Para's integrity, honesty and character, and it was now up to the judiciary to dispense justice and ensure he is released at the earliest .

Para, who recently filed his nomination for the District Development Council (DDC) elections from Pulwama in South Kashmir, was arrested today by NIA for his alleged involvement with the Hizbul Mujahideen militant group.

Meanwhile, a PDP spokesperson in a statement issued here accused NIA of meddling into the electoral process and influencing it in favor of the "cronies" of New Delhi.

"PDP Leadership outrightly condemns New Delhi's latest ruthless action against its youth leader who was a beacon of change in the society and always upheld the values and principles of nonviolence and democratic engagement," the statement said.

"Waheed's arrest signals the level of depravity to which the BJP and RSS can go in targeting and damaging its political opponents. These actions of New Delhi will not deter the PDP. Our actions and our voices will become louder," it added.

Taking a dig at the BJP government, the PDP spokesperson said that being a part of PAGD, the party has also come across how leaders from the alliance were stopped from campaigning and now the leaders who have filed their nominations are being targeted for trying to democratically steer the needs of their people forward.

"Installing puppets and criminalizing genuine efforts towards democratic functioning in Kashmir is how the BJP greatly undermines the spirit of democracy," the PDP spokesperson said.

"Not only in Kashmir but everywhere across India, criminalising dissent has become the order of the day for the BJP regime. After dislodging the space for mainstream politics, caging Kashmiris in

jails and in homes, BJP government has now resorted to arm twisting the mainstream politicians into obedience through covert threats and intimidation," he added..

Avalanche Warning ...

The officials added that a 'low danger' warning was issued for the higher reaches of Poonch, Rajouri, Ramban, Doda, Anantnag, Kulgam, Baramulla, Ganderbal Districts of the UT. The authorities have asked people to remain cautious and not venture out in avalanche-prone areas.

Snowfall, Rains In ...

Many areas in the plains, including Srinagar, were lashed by rains.

The officials said there is a gradual decrease in the precipitation since Wednesday morning and significant improvement in weather is expected from the afternoon.

The weather is most likely to remain dry till December 3 but isolated light rain or snow cannot be ruled out, they said.

They added people, especially those living in snow-bound areas, to be cautious against any possible avalanches.

Cong-BJP Backed ...

voltage drama, with his supporters raising slogans against the polling process.

Authorities had to call in police to ensure smooth conduct of polls, which concluded with the election of Junaid Mattu again as the Mayor of SMC.

There are a total number of 74 corporators in the corporation, out of which only 51 voted. Junaid Mattoo defeated his opponent Sheikh Imran, the former Deputy Mayor with a margin of 37 votes.

Mattoo got 44 votes, while Sheikh Imran bagged only 07 votes.

Mattu, who was last associated with the People's Conference led by Sajad Lone, was removed from the mayor's post in June in a no-confidence motion.

Imran, who was also in the People's Conference at that time, was seen as the prime mover behind Mattu's removal.

Mattu's ascent to the mayoral post in 2018 was surrounded by controversy as the then governor of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, S P Malik, had predicted that he would be the next mayor of the city, weeks before the first vote was cast.

The governor's remarks had raised question marks about the election as the names of all the candidates were kept secret even from their electorate in view of security threat perceptions.

Meanwhile both sides accused each other of highhandedness against each other.

Qadri accused Commissioner and Secretary SMC of violating Municipal Act 2,000 to elect a mayor of their choice.

"I was not issued any notice for the conduct of the elections, which is obligatory according to the Act," he said

"When we objected to the violation, police were brought in to attack us and I and five other corporators were forcibly dragged out of the polling hall," he added.

The newly elected Mayor Junaid Mattu, on the other hand while thanking the corporators for electing him again, accused the opponents for hooliganism and vandalizing the public property.

"Authorities must book those who tried to hijack the poll process and vandalize the public property and action should be taken against them," he said.

LG Calls For ...

uninterrupted drinking water and power supply, availability of public utilities like firewood, ration, medicines and other basic amenities and essential supplies, during the harsh winter days, especially in remote and difficult terrain areas," the official spokesperson said.

"He also laid special emphasis on ensuring uninterrupted road connectivity and proper Traffic management for smooth vehicular movement," he added.

Atal Dulloo, Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education Department; Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the LG; Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Superintendents of Police, and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

33 Travelers ...

While Kashmir Valley reported 225 new cases of Covid-19, the remaining 264 were confirmed by the officials from Jammu division. Giving district-wise details, officials said, Srinagar reported 85, Baramulla 39, Budgam 33, Pulwama 5, Kupwara 24, Anantnag 5, Bandipora 17, Ganderbal 12, Kulgam 0, Shopian 5, Jammu 126, Rajouri 5, Udhampur 46, Doda 27, Kathua 10, Poonch 3, Samba 12, Kishtwar 22, Ramban 5 and Reasi 8. Moreover, they said 570 more patients have recovered and discharged from various hospitals—186 from Jammu Division and 384 from Kashmir Valley.

Now 4 Shopian Youth

...

Jamia Masjid area of New Delhi on Tuesday. They also have requested authorities to act swiftly and help them in locating their loved ones at an earliest.

A Police official told news agency KNO that that they have taken cognizance of the issue and efforts were on to trace the missing persons.

The four youth went missing days after two siblings from Kulgam disappeared but were traced and later handed over to families. —Agencies

It is yet another ...

RSS its ilk to have dysfunctional institutions in Kashmir, the farce Mayoral Election to SMC has become a newest causality of the opportunistic politics played by BJP and its ilk which has undermined and played with all existing constitutional norms, and political propriety, the due process demanded."

"It is yet another low and indisputably a blot on democracy. The entire process was nothing near to being an election, it was a selection. All the established democratic norms were played with and fine tuned to ensure that BJP's own man gets elected to the coveted position. The person who has been denigrating NC candidates for cobbling up with BJP to attain the coveted mayor post, contrarily it is he who has been hobnobbing with BJP, the 3-line party whip letter of BJP asking its elected corporators and affiliates to vote for him says it all," he added.

While condemning the alleged beating of NC corporators by the BJP and its affiliate corporators at SMC during the voting process, the NC spokesperson said the unruly behavior of BJP, and its ilk as usual goes unattended on account of their immediacy with the power circles.

"Amidst all this it is the due democratic process that has been at the relieving end. The SMC it goes without saying has become an arena of everyday cockfights, foul political shenanigans and bickering. The entire process, however seamlessly BJP thinks it has carried it out, stands unraveled before people," he said.

"The aversion of ruling BJP towards democratic process makes it clear that it is up to some mischief in the forthcoming DDC elections and By-elections to SMC," he added. (Agencies)

NC Warns ...

does in Srinagar. "Yet in order to hype up a frenzy, his name has been added to the list and released by the government. The fact that DDC and ULB elections are underway, answers the timing and motive aspect of the allegations and nothing much needs to be added on that score," the spokesperson said.

He clarified that all claims with respect to any encroachments in building a house in Jammu by its party president "are unequivocally denied" and the land of Farooq Abdullah has nothing to do with the Roshni Act.

The statement comes a day after the Division Commissioner of Jammu made public a list of people who had allegedly encroached on the forest land. The administration claimed that the house in Jammu, belonging to Farooq Abdullah and his son, was encroached.

However, it made it clear that it had nothing to do with the Roshni Act, which was scrapped by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court.

The spokesperson said that all questions pertaining to the land in question would be fittingly answered as and when they are called upon to do so by the authorities concerned.

With respect to the office premises of the party at Srinagar and Jammu, it is stated that the same were in possession of the party under lease and on the promulgation of the Roshni Act, the National Conference had also availed the benefit of the scheme, the spokesperson said.

Without affording the opportunity of hearing to any of the beneficiaries (including the party), the Act was declared to be unconstitutional by the high court thereby leaving "thousands of our citizens, who had bonafidely sought benefit of the scheme, are now virtually deprived of their home and hearth for no fault of theirs".

The party expressed surprise that the administration, instead of challenging the decision of the high court, "abdicated its duty and in a manner of unusual promptitude sought the implementation of the judgment".

"It is surprising that while similar acts of conversion of leasehold property into freehold property on similar conversion charges is in vogue in other parts of the country including Delhi, Gujarat and Maharashtra, yet the same legislative exercise in JK was declared unconstitutional and the administration chose to do nothing about it," it said.

The spokesperson said the party has sought necessary legal advice and is in the process of taking appropriate legal steps to safeguard its interests.

Dr Farooq's Sister ...

who have got the ownership rights of their commercial buildings.

This is the second list of beneficiaries issued by the divisional administration in accordance with the October 9 directive of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court which has declared Roshni Act "illegal, unconstitutional and unsustainable" and ordered a CBI probe into the allotment of the land under this law.

The administration uploaded a list of 35 beneficiaries which included former finance minister Haseeb Drabu, some of his relatives and top hoteliers and a former bureaucrat earlier.

The second list included names of Congress leader K K Amla and Mushtaq Ahmad Chaya, both prominent businessmen and hoteliers besides former bureaucrat Mohammad Shafi Pandit and his wife.

Suriya Abdullah, sister of Farooq Abdullah, was also named among the beneficiaries who got ownership of an over three kanal plot under residential use.

According to the list, the land had been approved by the authorities but she was yet to pay Rs 1 crore fees. No notice has been issued to her since the time of approving the land in her name.

In Jammu, the divisional commissioner separately released another list of 138 beneficiaries falling in Jammu south tehsil, mostly belonging to the majority community, who are in possession of over 107 acres of land which was vested to them under Roshni Act.

Though majority of them are agriculturalists and farmers, there are also some influential people including the trustee of Digiana Ashram, Mahant Manjeet Singh who owns seven kanals of land.

In a separate list under encroached state land (Physically Encroached but not shown in Revenue Record) other than Roshni, it identified seven persons who are in possession of over five acres of land.

The list included PDP leader Talib Choudhary (two kanals), PDP office having three kanals of land at Bahu-Sunjwan tehsil, retired IGP Nisar Ali (three kanals), retired SSP Mirza Rasheed (three kanals) and prominent businessman Haji Sultan Ali, who owns the major chunk of 30 kanals of land.

The Jammu divisional administration had on Tuesday released separate lists of 541 people, almost all belonging to the majority community, in different tehsils who have availed land under the Roshni Act besides two lists of nine persons who have allegedly encroached upon the state land other than the Roshni Act, which included Farooq Abdullah and his son Omar Abdullah.

In addition, it had also released two more lists of 1,237 alleged encroachers falling in two tehsils, almost all from the majority community.

On November 1, the Union territory administration cancelled all land transfers that took place under the JK State Land (Vesting of Ownership to the Occupants) Act, 2001 - also known as the Roshni Act - under which 2.5 lakh acres of land was to be transferred to the existing occupants.

The principal secretary and revenue department have been asked to work out a plan to retrieve large tracts of state land vested under the Act. According to the high court order, a total of 6,04,602 kanals (75,575 acres) of state land had been regularised and transferred to the occupants. This included 5,71,210 kanals (71,401 acres) in Jammu and 33,392 kanals (4174 acres) in the Kashmir province.

"Principal Secretary to Government, Revenue Department shall also work out the modalities and plan to evict encroachers from such State Land and retrieve the State land within a period of six months. Principal Secretary to Government, Revenue Department shall work out modalities for handling the money received for these lands after annulment," the JK government had said in a statement.

According to the order, complete identities of influential persons, including ministers, legislators, bureaucrats, government officials, police officers and businessmen, their relatives or persons holding benami for them, who have derived benefit under the Roshni Act, will be made public within a period of one month.

The Roshni Act was enacted in 2001 with the twin objective of generating resources for financing power projects and conferment of proprietary rights to the occupants of the state land. It initially envisaged conferment of proprietary rights of around 20.55 lakh kanals (102750 hectares) to the occupants of which only 15.85 per cent land was approved for vesting of ownership rights.

The scheme was finally repealed by the then governor Satya Pal Malik on November 28, 2018.

Amid reports about its widespread misuse, the entire legislation was challenged before the high court which stayed the proceedings under the Act and also directed that neither the occupants having been conferred upon the ownership rights shall sell these lands nor can raise constructions on such lands. In 2014, however, the Comptroller and Auditor General had estimated that only Rs 76 crore had been raised from the transfer of encroached land between 2007 and 2013. (PTI)

Distress After ...

produce like wild vegetables and on his livestock. "Only poor people having no voice lost their huts in the recent demolition drive," alleged Aziz.

"There's a hotel owned by a retired government official in Ladhroo. It was not even touched."

A Viral 'Violation'

Recently, a video went viral on social media platforms in which officials of Forest, Wildlife, Pahalgam Development Authority and Revenue Departments can be seen demolishing Gujjar and Bakerwal huts.

Apart from drawing backlash from netizens and activists, former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Mehbooba Mufti, visited the families, to condemn the action.

"The Gujjars have been using log and mud sheds in pasture lands since times immemorial during the grazing season. They are part of the forest and our environment," Mehbooba said. "Sadly, a drive has been launched to demolish these structures which they use as temporary shelters during summers."

Tribal families, she said, have been harassed, using strong arm methods where in desperation they wanted to resist their main support to their livelihood. "Does this mean that these nomadic tribes can no longer go to pastures?" she asked. "Is that the Part 2 of this displacement scheme? Who do they intend to sell the forest land to?"

'Unjustified Action'

Zahid Chowdhary, a Gujjar activist, termed the recent demolition drive as unjustified and blamed the government departments for violating the Forest Rights Act 2006.

"These Kothas were old and meant for

the migration purpose only," Chowdhary told Kashmir Observer.

"The tribals move to pastoral lands during summers for grazing purposes and leave them vacant when they move to Jammu during winters as part of their ancestral practice."

But now, he said, a false narrative is being created by the forest department that tribals are encroaching the forest land.

"We've been living in these forests for ages and we belong to these forests," the tribal activist said.

"We can't imagine living outside of them. We rear livestock here and for that, we need temporary shelter to spend the summertime. How are we going to survive next season when we return to these lands?"

Chowdhary said his tribe is planning to file FIR against all the departments involved in the recent Pahalgam demolition drive.

"Without serving any legal eviction notice, demolition of Kothas is totally condemnable and illegal," he said.

"This government is targeting only poor people."

'Not an Anti-Tribal Drive'

Mushtaq Simnnani, however, said that the drive was carried to clear encroachments eating up forests.

The chief executive officer, Pahalgam Development Authority, termed the reports of rendering Gujjars and Bakarwals homeless as grossly false.

"Not a single inhabited Kotha was demolished during the recent anti-encroachment drive," Simnnani told Kashmir Observer. "We just demolished illegal vacant structures. Three families living in three separate Kothas were not even touched."

During the recent demolition drive, he said, the government retrieved "1035 kanals of encroached land in Pahalgam".

"Only in Aru," the CEO said, "700 kanals of state land was retrieved from the local Kashmiri farmers only. So, this claim that the drive was against the tribals is totally false."

However, he added, huts of tribals, now living in concrete houses, have been demolished. The action, he said, was also taken against those who've constructed huts within 50-60 meters of distance "just to grab more forest land".

"We'll continue to evict the land that had been illegally occupied, no matter what," Simnnani said.

A Growing Panic

In Haknar area of Ganderbal district, Haji Mohammad Yaqoob was lately served a legal notice by the forest officer Sindh division in which he has been told to "leave the land he had occupied" within 10 days.

The eviction notice accessed by Kashmir Observer reads: "you are being informed that you've illegally occupied the forest land in compartment number Sindh/36 range Sindh. Under Indian Forest act 1927, section27, 79(A) you are being informed to remove all the structures you have constructed in the forest land. In case if you have any papers for the land you should produce them in the forests office within the stipulated time period or else Forest department will take all the control of your property and legal action will be taken against you."

Ever since this notice was served to Yaqoob, some 150 tribal families in Haknaar have grown anxiously alert.

"We've been living here for last 120 years and now they're suddenly serving us these eviction notices," Iqram Bajran, Vice President, Gujjar and Bakarwal Youth Welfare Conference, Ganderbal, told Kashmir Observer.

"I don't understand how we've become encroachers all of a sudden. All the tribal families are coming here seasonally merely for grazing purposes."

Even after the implementation of Indian Forest Rights Act, he said, tribals are not being given any rights on these forests.

"Why are we being harassed like this," Bajran, the young tribal, asked.

"It has been happening to us in Jammu and now the government has started destroying our houses in Kashmir too."

New Land Law ...

of India, the Minister of State for Personnel said. He accused the Roshni scamsters and land grabbers of opposing the land law of Jammu and Kashmir.

On November 1, the Union Territory administration had cancelled all land transfers that took place under the JK State Land (Vesting of Ownership to the Occupants) Act, 2001 - also known as the Roshni Act - under which 2.5 lakh acres of land was to be transferred to the existing occupants.

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has declared Roshni Act as "illegal, unconstitutional and unsustainable" and

ordered a CBI probe into the allotment of the land under this law.

The new land law will check Roshni-like scams and illegal land grabbing in future, Singh told PTI.

The Centre has recently allowed people from across the country to buy land in Jammu and Kashmir by amending several laws.

He said most of the cases of illegal occupation of land and illegal constructions were carried out during the National Conference-Congress and PDP-Congress governments, and its beneficiaries include high profile ministers and bureaucrats from Kashmir as well as some of the then ministers from the Jammu region.

All the injustice to Jammu was done when the Congress and National Conference ministers from Jammu were part of the governments and if they are now saying that Jammu did not get its due, they are actually raising question mark on their own role as ministers at that time, the minister said.

Addressing meetings during the district development council election campaign in Chennai area of Jammu and Kashmir, Singh said it is interesting to see that some of these former ministers had always been demanding CBI inquiries for insignificant cases, but now objecting to the investigation into the land grabbing case.

The Roshni Act was enacted in 2001 with the twin objectives of generating resources for financing power projects and conferment of proprietary rights to the occupants of the state land.

It initially envisaged conferment of proprietary rights of around 20.55 lakh kanals (1,02,750 hectares) to the occupants of which only 15.85 per cent land was approved for vesting of ownership rights.

Amid reports about its widespread misuse, the entire legislation was challenged before the high court which in October stayed the proceedings under the Act and also directed that neither the occupants having been conferred upon the ownership rights shall sell these lands nor can raise constructions on such lands.

The Union minister also hit out at the false propaganda regarding MGNREGA payments having been stopped. He said the payments have only been stopped for those agents who were acting as middlemen and taking away all the funds.

8 Drug Peddlers Held In Qazigund: Police

SRINAGAR: Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested eight drug peddlers in Qazigund area of Kulgam district of south Kashmir and recovered contraband substance from their possession.

During the intervening night of 24 and 25 November, officers at a check point established at Dalwach crossing in Qazigund area of Kulgam intercepted two vehicles with eight persons on board, a police spokesman said on Wednesday.

"The search of the two vehicles led to recovery of 39 kg of charas in raw form and 70 grams in solid form from their possession," the spokesman said.

All the eight persons were arrested and shifted to a local police station, he said.

The spokesman said the arrested persons have been identified as Saqib Ali Zargar, Waseem Mohammad Trag, Abdul Mujeeb Khanday (residents of Kishtwar), Abdul Ahad Malik, Abdul Rashid Malik, Danish Fayaz Makhdooni, Tawheed Fayaz Makhdooni and Nazir Ahmad Dar (residents of Kulgam district).

The vehicles used in the commission of crime have also been seized, he added.

Gupta Named Principal Secretary To CJ

SRINAGAR: The J&K High Court appointed Rajeev Gupta, Director, Jammu and Kashmir Judicial Academy as Principal Secretary to the Chief Justice.

Further, till posting of a regular incumbent in his place, he shall hold additional charge of Director, Jammu and Kashmir Judicial Academy, according to an order issued by the court's Registrar General, Jawad Ahmad.

"The officer shall, however, continue to be responsible for management & completion of the Internship programme which is underway," the order added.



LG expresses grief over the demise of Ahmed Patel, Maulana Kalbe Sadiq

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has expressed grief over the passing away of the Member Parliament, Rajya Sabha, Ahmed Patel and Maulana Kalbe Sadiq, Vice President, All India Muslim Personal Law Board(AIMPLB). “Saddened to learn about the passing away of Maulana Kalbe Sadiq. He was an eminent Islamic scholar, noted educationist, preacher and harbinger of communal unity & progressive thinking”, said the Lt Governor.

In a separate condolence message the Lt Governor described Patel as a veteran political leader who made important contributions in Indian Politics and worked tirelessly for the welfare of the public.

PM Reviews Progress on Pakal Dul Hydro Electric Project in J&K

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 25: Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, today chaired his 33rd interaction through PRAGATI with Union Secretaries of various Ministries and Chief Secretaries of States/UTs.

Chief Secretary, B V R Subrahmanyam also participated in the video conference.

Reviewing the operationalization of agricultural reforms in the country, Prime Minister said that the reforms are aimed at transforming the nation and it is only through excellent performances that the States/ UTs can utilize their potential of capturing global markets.

Construction of the 1000MW



Pakal Dul Hydro Electric Project (HEP), coming up at Kishtwar, J&K also came up for discussion. The Prime Minister was informed that all the outstanding issues which had stalled the project have been resolved

and work is progressing at good speed now. The civil works on the HEP will be completed by January, 2025 and the project will be commissioned by then.

Prime Minister said that through the initiative of the

Ministry of Commerce to develop districts as export hubs, India can tap the potential of becoming a member of the Global Export Chain. He impressed upon the States/UTs to develop a suitable mechanism so as to encourage districts to proactively encourage export of region-specific items, thereby, transforming the commerce landscape of not only the concerned state but of the nation.

Prime Minister desired that long-delayed projects should be expedited by the respective state governments. He directed that regular reports on the progress of such projects be sent to the PMO.

Mechanism in place to ensure transparent, peaceful elections in JK: SEC Sharma

Polls to ensure decentralization of democratic system in the UT

SRINAGAR - State Election Commissioner, Jammu and Kashmir, K.K Sharma, today said that fool proof mechanism has been put in place to ensure peaceful, transparent and secure conduct of first time District Development Council elections and panchayat by elections in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir which would go a long way in ensuring decentralization of powers to the grass root level.

State Election Commissioner was interacting with All Deputy Commissioners of Jammu Division through Video conferencing while chairing a meeting held to review law and order situation and security arrangements for ensuing smooth and successful conduct of polls being held between November-28 to December-19.

The meeting among others was attended by Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Sanjeev Verma and IGP Jammu Mukesh Singh besides other concerned.

‘Arrangements are being put in place to ensure conduct of polls in a free and fair manner

across the UT”, the SEC maintained saying that we have to ensure safe elections are held in the UT.

While obtaining necessary feedback from the concerned Deputy Commissioners of different districts, the SEC was informed that adequate security arrangements shall be provided to all participating candidates whether party based or independent including star campaigners besides all other facilities to ensure comfortable campaigning in their respective areas.

Terming these elections as historic and watershed in the history of Jammu and Kashmir, SEC said the DDC polls which are being held for the first time in the UT are important and shall ensure district level leadership to the people besides accelerating the development activities of every area and village.

Besides discussing law and order and security arrangements, Heli services to far flung areas of Jammu division and other districts were also discussed during the meeting.

The SEC directed the Divi-

sional Commissioner Jammu to ensure that snow clearance is done in the areas which are snowbound or are likely to get the snow fall in ensuing days. He said that an effective mechanism should be put in place so that the voters do not suffer and areas do not remain cut off from the district headquarters.

While reviewing the special arrangements of postal ballots for various categories of people including senior citizens and COVID- 19 positive in isolation and Migrant voters as well, the SEC said that they should ensure everyone who can't turn up to the polling booth is given the opportunity to exercise his/ her right to franchise.

SEC asked the officers to ensure that necessary awareness is also created among people to follow all Covid related SOPs including use of face masks and hand sanitizers while participating in the election process. He also asked concerned officers and officials to ensure availability of face masks and hand sanitizers at all polling booths during the voting process to ensure containment of the spread of Covid-19.

LG’s Mulaqaat-Live LG interacts with public

Jammu : Moving towards institutionalizing swift disposal of grievances and making it part & parcel of the effective governance structure in the Union Territory, Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha held interaction with the public through virtual mode during the ‘LG’s Mulaqaat-Live Public Grievance Hearing’ to seek feedback regarding the status of their grievances and assessment of the overall functioning of the Jammu and Kashmir Integrated Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (JK-IGRAMS).

Today’s interaction was the second round of the “LG’s Mulaqaat-Live Public Grievance Hearing” interactions in which the Lt Governor interacted with a total of 20 randomly selected applicants from across the UT and sought details of the status of their grievances in the presence of all Administrative Secretaries, DCs, SPs, and other senior officers of the various government departments and agencies, who in turn briefed the Lt Governor in response to the issues raised by the applicants.

The Lt Governor also assessed the implementation of directions passed during the first run of the programme and

expressed satisfaction over the increase in the overall rate of disposal since then.

During the program, grievances were heard in the presence of concerned officers by the Lt Governor.

In one case, an applicant projected that an issue that his and neighboring households' drinking water supply got disrupted due to washing away of water pipes in July 2020. The water supply is yet to be restored causing innumerable sufferings to around 30 households.

Similarly, an applicant put forth the issue of illegal encroachment on a nallah causing severe inconvenience to residents in the form of abrupt floods during the rainy season. In both the cases specific timelines were fixed by the Lt Governor for the officers to redress them.

In another case, an applicant raised his grievance of being charged with a fee of Rs 350 thrice while submitting his JKSSB form for the post of Panchayat Assistant and claimed refund for the same. The Lt Governor gave on spot direction to the concerned and it was informed that the pending dues of the applicant and all other similar cases will be processed in two days.

DIAL-EMMA



- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS

- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BUBHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153



HIGHWAY STATUS



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



HIJRI
CALENDAR
10 Rabi-us-Sani
1442

PRAYERS

FAJR	5: 45
ZUHR	12: 16
ASR	3:46
Magrib	5:26
ISHA	6:50

This Day In History

- 1865 - "Alice in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll is published in America
- 1865 - Battle of Papudo: The Spanish navy engages a combined Peruvian-Chilean fleet north of Valparaiso, Chile
- 1901 - Italy and Britain sign an agreement fixing the frontier between their colonies of Eritrea and Sudan in East Africa
- 1924 -- Mongolian People's Republic proclaimed
- 1925 - Netherlands & Germany sign trade agreement
- 1940 - Nazi Germany began walling off the Jewish Ghetto in Warsaw
- 1941 - Japanese naval carrier force left its base & moves east toward Pearl Harbor
- 1942 - Anti-fascist Council for National Liberation (AVNOJ) forms
- 1948 - 1st polaroid camera sold for \$89.75 in Boston at the Jordan Marsh department store. The Land Camera model 95 becomes prototype for all Polaroid Land cameras for next 15 years
- 1949 - The Constituent Assembly of India formally adopts a new constitution
- 1956 - USSR single sculls winner Vyacheslav Ivanov wins Olympic gold medal in his excitement he jumps for joy, & loses his medal, it sinks
- 1963 - Explorer 18 spacecraft launched by NASA
- 1965 - France launches 1st satellite, 92 lb (42 kg) A1-capsule (Asterix), named after the popular French comic character
- 1984 - US & Iraq re-establish diplomatic relations
- 1985 - 23rd Space Shuttle Mission (61-B)-Atlantis 2-is launched
- 1985 - France performs nuclear test at Mururoa atoll
- 1989 - India's Congress Party led by then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi loses the general election to an opposition front led by V.P. Singh
- 1990 - Mikhail Gorbachev tells Iraq to get out of Kuwait
- 1998 - Tony Blair becomes the first Prime Minister of the United Kingdom to address the Republic of Ireland's parliament.
- 2003 - India accepts Pakistan's offer of a ceasefire in Kashmir
- 2003 - Supersonic airplane the Concorde makes its last ever flight, returning to Bristol, England.
- 2011 - NATO forces in Afghanistan attack a Pakistani checkpoint in a friendly fire incident, killing 24 soldiers and wounding 13 others
- 2017 - British Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton finishes 2nd in season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix at Yas Marina Circuit to claim his 4th F1 World Drivers Championship; wins title by 46 points from Sebastian Vettel
- 2018 - NASA's InSight mission lands on Mars after a 7 month voyage
- 2018 - Ukraine declares martial law in areas bordering Russia after Russia seizes three of its naval vessels
- 2018 - Chinese scientist He Jiankui claims to have made the first genetically edited baby
- 2018 - General Motors announces it will close five factories in North America, cutting 14,000 jobs
- 2018 - First multidrug randomized control trial to treat Ebola started in Democratic Republic of Congo announced by the WHO
- 2018 - Third of a species begin dying (23,000) over a two day period, the spectacled flying foxes , unable to survive heatwave of 28 degrees in northern Queensland, Australia

From KO Archives

Guns fail to fall silent

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Hours after the Ramadhan ceasefire an-nounced by the prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, came into effect, reports of escalated violence have come in from various areas shattering the prospects of unilateral truce. Eighteen people, including six security person-nel, were killed and 23 others were injured in separate in-cidents across the state since early morning today.

In a major incident, four security personnel were killed and 14 others were injured when a powerful explo-sion ripped apart the vehicle they were travelling in at Nowpora-Dooru, 74 km from here on Srinagar-Verinag road in the south Kashmir district of Anantnag this afternoon, official sources said. Condition of most of the wounded sol-diers were reported to be critical. The incident took place around 2 p.m.

Officials said militants detonated the improvised explo-sive device (1 E D) immediately after the army vehicle car-rying jawans of 36 Rashtriya Rifles (RR) passed over it. The explosion was possibly triggered by using a remote control device .The vehicle was blown up killing four jawans and injuring 14 others. All the wounded soldiers were rushed to the base hospital here.

Soon after the incident, the security forces laid scige to the entire area after which fear gripped the people. But no searches had been carried out till the reports last came in.

No Jet up in Begaar, frisking

Hizb-ul-Mujahideen has claimed responsibility for the incident and said they would intensify the attacks during the month of Ramadhan. Hizb spokesman, Salim Hashmi, telephoned reporters in Srinagar to claim the responsibility for the blast.

“The unilateral ceasefire announced by the Indian government is not a serious effort, but an attempt to ward off international pressure on it to resolve the Kashmir issue,” he alleged.

A NAFA report said a foreign militant identified as Tan-zeel-ur-Rahman alias Abu Zareen, belonging to Lashkar-e-Taiba was killed in an encounter with the troops of 28 RR at Atri Naribal in Rafiabdd area of Bammulla district today.

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04. Amir Suhail	B. Tech
05. Iqbal ahmad Bhat	Msc.
06. Nayeema Akhter	B.A.
07. Zubair Ahmad Mir	M.A. Bed.
08. Bilkisa Akhter	M.A. B.ed
09. Muskaan Akhter	B.A

Contact No. 9906958975, 60054006962.
MCB

PUBLIC NOTICE
I want to change the name on Electricity Bill bearing Consumer ID No: 0201010008998, Installation No: UP679/A. from ARSHID AHMAD BHAT S/O GH. NABI BHAT R/O SHIV PORA (SGR) TO ALTAF AHMAD BHAT S/O GH AHMAD BHAT R/O SHIV PORA. If An body having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/ her objection in the PDD Office Basant Bagh Sub Division Sheikh Bagh Lal Chowk within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this Notice from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
ALTAF AHMAD BHAT
S/O GH AHMAD BHAT R/O SHIV PORA
F-KO

((Government of Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir))
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B CONSTR. DIV. NO. 1ST SGR
e-NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
NIT No.103/e-tendering /CD-Ist/ 9939-56DATED.23-11-2020

For and on behalf of the President of Indiae-tenders (Single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K UT Govt. CPWD, Railways and other States /UTs/Central Government Departments for the following works: -

S. No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (In rupees)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Time	Time &Date of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor	Major Head of Account
1.	2	3	4.	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Construction of gate from Police station side of Govt, Dental College / Hospital, Srinagar Phase 2nd.	4,21,500/-	200/-	8430/-	30 days	04-12-2020	DEE	4210- Med
2.	Shifting of Prefabricated structure for outsourced Security personals to main gate at Govt, Dental College / Hospital at Bemina Srinagar.	2,53,600/-	200/-	5072/-	25 days	04-12-2020	DEE	4210- med
3.	Various Renovation works in main store at Govt, Dental College / Hospital at Bemina Srinagar	1,0,2900/-	200/-	2058/-	20 days	04-12-2020	DEE	4210- Med
4.	Rectification of blockage of 3 wash basins / drains in OPD of department of periodontics , removal of rubbles / construction material laying on back side of Operative Department , repair / re-placement of doors of building having sump situated on the back of the operative department , providing and fixing of window glass panes in minor operation theater of Block III.	56,000/-	200/-	1120/-	15 days	04-12-2020	DEE	4210- Med

1. Position of AAA/TS:-Accorded

2. Position of Funds:- Available.

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 25.11.2020 10:00 A.M to 03.12.2020 4.00 P.M.
3.	Bid submission Start Date	25.11.2020 from 10:30A.M
4.	Bid Submission End Date	03.12.2020 upto 4.00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	04.12.2020 at 11:00AM in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar.

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:-
Note :-The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploaded softcopy any short fall found in the soft copy the tender shall be rejected.
Note: As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir CivilSecteriat Finance department vide No.OM No.A/24(2017)-651 dtd.07-06-2018 which reads as under:-
a) Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensedwith. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared 1stLowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.
b) The Cost of tenders should be collected by introducing E-challan/ or simply uploading a copy of necessary Treasury Challan/Receipt.
c) Similarly, instead of insisting on actual Call Deposit Receipt , a copy of same duly pledged to the concerned department should be uploaded by the tenderers. However before allocating the work or issuing the supply order , the original CDR should be obtained and kept on record.
Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/ in favour of Executive Engineer (R&B) Construction Division No.1st Srinagar (tender inviting authority) and earnest money /Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR/ pledged to Executive Engineer (R&B) Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar (tender receiving authority) .
1. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division, Construction Division No.1st Srinagar (tender receiving authority).
1. The earnest money in favour of unsuccessful bidder shall be released only after submission of Treasury Challan.
2. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.
3. The earnest money shall be forfeited, If:-
a. 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.
b. Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
c. Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
d. The Additional performance security shall be released only after successful completion of work and also certified by the Engineer incharge that no defects has been caused during DLP.
2. 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 form with digital Signature.
No bid will be accepted in physical form.
5.4. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.
5.5. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid.
Note:- Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.
6. The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.
7. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of E-Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar and Earnest Money / Bid Security in shape of CDR/ FDR / if applicable pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division, Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar must be uploaded with the documents of the bid.
8. Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.
9. Price escalation and Taxes:-The unit rates and prices shall be quoted by the bidder entirely in Indian Rupees and the rates quoted shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of the work, unless otherwise specified. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.
10. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.
In case of CRF and any other specified project, the relevant guidelines / standard bidding document shall be followed.

DIPK-9555/20

Sd/ Executive Engineer,
R&B Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar

No.103/e-tendering/CD-Ist/9939-56 DATED, 23-11-2020

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Legal Counsel: **Tasaduq Khwaja**
Switchboard: (0194) 2106304
Editorial: (0194) 2502327
Email editorial: **editor@kashmirobserver.net**

That said, it's important that the scheme and the investigation is not politicized. And also that it is not seen as a part of the attempt to execute the ideological agenda of the ruling party. Unfortunately, the invalidation of Roshni scheme and the investigation into it is inviting both the accusations. And it is incumbent on the government to dispel these doubts by making investigation as impartial as possible.

The Palestinians continue to resist because they are denied basic human rights and dignity.

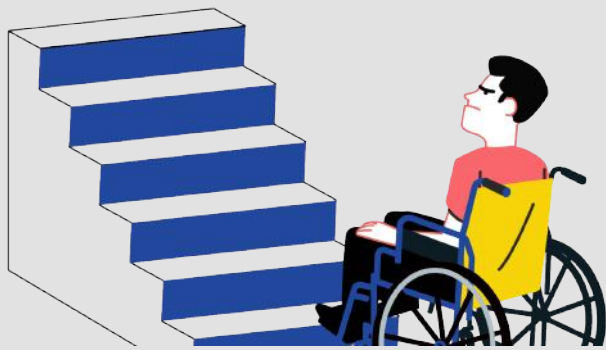
A black and white photograph capturing a group of young men and boys at a protest. They are holding various signs with messages such as "TRAINING'S TO DEAF", "WE ARE DISABLE BUT PLEASE APPERATE US FROM HANDICAPED", "WE DON'T LISTEN/TALK BUT YOU CAN FEEL OUR SUFFERING'S", "ALLOW US TO PERFORM FOR THE BETTERING OF THE SOCIETY", "AVOID DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DEAF", "SUPPORT FOR THE DEAF", and "INSTRUCTION OF DEAF". In the background, a building with a sign that says "ESCAPE" and a Pepsi advertisement are visible.

The author is a Visually Impaired student with a B.A (Honors) in Political Science from Aligarh Muslim University and can be reached at mirauyoub67@gmail.com

P.O.Box # 337, GPO, Srinagar-190 001
email: editpage.ko@gmail.com

Saddam Shami
Saddamshami01k@rediffmail.com

The unfortunate death of 15 year old Suhaib Ahmad, a person with disability, due to the insensitivity of some is a reminder that we are still far from being disability aware, sensitive or friendly. Through these articles we intend to start a meaningful conversation in that direction.



FAHID FAYAZ DARANGAY

Physical Disability and Depression

The common definitions of physical disability available easily on the internet is that it is a substantial and long-term condition affecting a part of a person's body that impairs and limits their physical functioning, mobility, stamina or dexterity. Observing minutely this definition, it seems that only physical functioning, mobility, stamina or dexterity is assumed to be affected.

However, this definition eliminates the presence of other challenges that are as much of an outcome of being a person with disability. This dominantly ignores the correlation between physical disability and mental health. Many researches have explored the causality between physical disability and mental health especially depression.

My personal experience has made it obvious that traditionally, our society looks down upon people with disability. I myself am a Person With Disability (PWD). These three alphabets should only describe my physique but not my emotions, my mental strength, my creative ability, my ability to earn (both money and respect) or my caliber to absorb pressure. However, there are times when the assumptions of society make me question my own self-image. But when others are preferred over me for no fault of mine, I seek inspiration through people like Robert Collis, Christy Brown, Helen Adams Keller and Stephen William Hawking. I seek my inspiration not from people who consider me less than them but from people who've done far better even as they had physical disabilities.

In a study conducted by James D. Leeper, Lee W. Badger, and Tamar Milo, it was argued that persons claiming physical disability who were evaluated at a primary care health center in a small southern city were administered the Diagnostic Interview Schedule. Fifty-six per cent of the 43 patients were found to have one or more psychiatric disorders.

Forty-three consecutive disability determination patients were the subjects for this pilot study. There were 23 males, 15 of them White; the 20 females were equally divided between Black and White. Sixty per cent (N = 9) of the White males were between ages 50 and 59 whereas the Black males were represented approximately equally in the 10-year intervals between ages 30 and 69. Black females were younger (50 per cent were less than

39 years old) than White females (70% were over 50 years old). Fifty-six per cent of the patients were found to have one or more current psychiatric disorders according to the DIS. Ten patients had one disorder, seven had two disorders, two had three disorders, two had four disorders, and three had

five disorders. The most common DIS diagnoses were phobia, anxiety, and panic. Other diagnoses were alcoholism, depression, somatization, organic brain syndrome, schizophrenia, and barbiturate dependence. Two-thirds of Blacks and 48 per cent of Whites had one or more diagnosis. Proportionately

more males than females had one or more diagnosis. An equal percentage of those under age 50 and those age 50 or older had one or more diagnosis. Married patients had a slightly lower prevalence of disorder than those unmarried. None of these relationships was statistically significant.

Albert Schweitzer, a French-German theologian once said, "The purpose of human life is to serve, and to show compassion and the will to help others". This approach is the need of the hour in our society. We need awareness as much as compassion. Ableism

I seek my inspiration not from people who consider me less than them but from people who've done far better even as they had physical disabilities.

and Ableist language should be discouraged in our society. Meaningful interventions should be made to ensure that people with disability have better access to resources and opportunities. We need to normalize as well as sensitize people towards physical disability. This will be only possible if we change conventional attitudes. People with disability only need others to treat them with dignity as well as compassion, so they do not find such hindrances on their way to achieve things and contribute, both, economically as well as socially.

P.S: I am a proud Person with Disability

The Author is currently pursuing Masters in Financial Economics from Madras School of Economics, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

‘Disabled person’ or ‘Person with a disability’?

The Human Rights Commission says that almost 60 per cent of all claims cite disability as the basis for discrimination. People with disabilities are routinely denied the rights we all know they are entitled to. A poll commissioned by the Rick Hansen Foundation, found that 90 per cent of Canadians agree that accessibility for people with physical disabilities is a right, not a privilege, but there is still a clear prejudice in how disabled people are treated.

Disability is a sensitive topic. Fear of saying the wrong thing prevents people from saying anything at all, and makes us avoid having important conversations about disability. This avoidance in turn creates the kind of toxic environment that leads to situations such as the one described above.

In our research at the Canadian Disability Policy Alliance, we worked with disability advocacy groups to assemble some guidelines to help readers gain confidence in their ability to participate in positive ways in the dialogue with people with disabilities. Here, we share those guidelines:

Listen to how people talk about themselves

The Canadian government has advocated "people-first" language which emphasizes putting the person first and the disability second: for example, saying a person with a spinal cord injury, or a person with a history of depression. Many disabled people, however, say the disability is not inside of them: they are not a "person with a disability." Rather they are a "disabled person" — someone who is disabled by a world that is not equipped to allow them to participate and flourish. But they are a person either way. Avoid objectifying people by referring to them as "the disabled." Our advice is to listen to how people talk about their disability themselves, and take your cue from them.

Avoid euphemistic language

Language like "differently-abled" or "diverse-ability" suggests there is something wrong with talking honestly and candidly about disability. It might even suggest to some people that there is something shameful about disability; or that we can't talk about it directly unless we make it cute or pretty or funny.

Avoid unnecessary emotional tone

Disability is a fact of life for almost one-quarter of Canadians. Having a disability doesn't make someone a hero, a saint, a victim, a burden or a soldier. This type of hyperbole gets in the way of having authentic relationships with people with disabilities. These words



suggest one-dimensional characters. Instead, think: complex, interesting people, just like everyone else.

Avoid 'handicap'

The word handicap or handicapped is viewed as having a negative connotation — an implication that people with disabilities are disadvantaged in society. That social disadvantage is something we should fight against, rather than merely accept and enshrine in language.

Avoid calling a disabled person a 'patient'

A patient is a passive individual who has turned over responsibility for important decisions to a health professional. People with disabilities for the most part live independent lives in the community. They are no more patients than anyone else getting on with their lives in the community.

Avoid calling non-disabled people 'normal'

If non-disabled people are normal, then that means that disabled people are abnormal. Yet disability is the norm for some people. It is alienating and marginalizing to classify someone as "abnormal."

Refer to a person's disability?

Is the disability a pertinent issue in the conversation you are having or the introduction you are making? We don't specify a person's gender, ethnicity, occupation or many other personal details when introducing them. Disability is a condition of life, like those others. It will be salient in some conversations and not in others.

Here are some 'dos'

Do look people with disabilities in the eyes and address them courteously, as you would anyone else.

Do ask if you can help, and how you can help.

Do assume that people with disabilities have something to say, and be prepared to hear it.

The more we talk about it, the easier it gets to have the important conversations we need to have with disabled people, and to ensure that the rights we promise to all Canadians are extended to them.

.....
By arrangement with
The Conversation

MARY ANN MCCOLL

Disability is a sensitive topic. Fear of saying the wrong thing prevents people from saying anything at all, and makes us avoid having important conversations about disability.



DIABETIC EYE DISEASE

Associated With Five-Fold Risk Of Severe COVID-19: Study

People with diabetic eye disease have a five-fold increased risk of requiring intubation when hospitalised with COVID-19, according to a new study which calls for better clinical monitoring of patients with this complication.



This is the first time that retinopathy has been linked to severe COVID-19 in people with diabetes"

The study, published in the journal Diabetes Research and Clinical Practice on Tuesday, identified for the first time the risk associated with diabetic retinopathy and COVID-19.

This eye disease is a common complication of diabetes and is caused by damage to the small blood vessels in the eye, the researchers, including those from King's College London in the UK, explained.

In the study, the scientists investigated 187 people with diabetes hospitalised with COVID-19 between March and April 2020.

They found that 67 patients had diabetic retinopathy, a majority with background eye

damage. Of the 187 patients hospitalised with severe COVID-19, the scientists said 26 per cent were intubated, and 45 per cent of these patients had retinopathy.

According to the study, retinopathy was associated with a five-fold increased risk for intubation with no association observed between this condition and mortality.

"This is the first time that retinopathy has been linked to severe COVID-19 in people with diabetes," said study co-author Antonella Corcillo from King's College London. "Retinopathy is a marker of damage to the blood vessels, and our results suggest that such pre-existing damage to blood vessels may result in a more severe COVID-19 infection requiring intensive care treatment," Corcillo added.

According to the researchers, people with diabetes are at high risk of vascular complications affecting the large and small blood vessels.

"We hypothesise that the presence of diabetes related vascular disease such as retinopathy may result in greater vulnerability and susceptibility to respiratory failure in severe COVID-19," Corcillo said.

The scientists believe looking for presence or history of retinopathy or other vascular complications of diabetes may help health care professionals identify patients at high risk of severe COVID-19.

Citing the limitations of the study, the researchers said it included a relatively small sample size and was unable to identify a causal relationship between retinopathy and severe COVID-19 outcomes.

"Further studies are required to investigate the possible mechanisms that explain the links between markers and manifestations of diabetic vascular disease such as retinopathy and severe COVID-19," Corcillo added.

Study finds memories of past events retain remarkable fidelity even as we age

Scientists studying the complex relationship between ageing and memory have found that in a controlled experiment, people can remember the details about past events with a surprising 94 per cent accuracy, even accounting for age.

These results, published in the journal Psychological Science, suggest that the stories we tell about past events are accurate, although details tend to fade with time.

"These results are surprising to many, given the general pessimism about memory accuracy among scientists and the prevalent idea that memory for one-time events is not to be trusted," said Nicholas Diamond, the study's lead researcher, a former graduate student at Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute (RRI), and currently a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Pennsylvania.

About 400 academics, including memory scientists, surveyed as part of this study estimated memory accuracy to be around 40% at best, expecting this score to be even lower for older participants or when greater amounts of time had elapsed since the events.

"This study shows us that memory accuracy is actually quite good under normal circumstances, and it remains stable as we age," said Brian Levine, a senior scientist at RRI and a professor of psychology and neurology at the University of Toronto and co-author on the study. "These results will be helpful for understanding memory in healthy ageing."

For their study, the researchers created an immersive, scientifically controlled event for their participants: a 30-minute audio-guided tour of art and other items displayed at Baycrest. Two days later, participants were asked to tell the researcher

everything they could remember about the tour. The responses were recorded and then verified against the facts.

The researchers also tested Baycrest employees on their recall of a standardized, scripted procedure that they had experienced one month to three years prior. This allowed the researchers to examine the effect of delay between the event and memory recall, while the standardized nature of the procedure made it possible to verify accuracy.



Using standardized, verifiable events to test memory is an innovative approach, the researchers said, as scientists typically use artificial laboratory stimuli, such as random word lists, rather than real-life experiences, or they test participants' memory for personal past experiences, which cannot be verified.

"This pessimism originates from earlier studies showing that memory can be manipulated using certain testing methods,"

said Levine. "While those studies were important in showing the ways in which memory can fail, we wanted to know what happens when people freely recall events without such manipulation. We found that they are overwhelmingly accurate."

The results showed that participants' accuracy was high in both cases, though, as expected, the number of details they remembered decreased with age and time. At best, they recalled about 25% of their experience. "This suggests that we forget the majority of details from everyday events, but the details we do recall correspond to the reality of the past," Diamond said.

In a related study also published in Psychological Science, Diamond and Levine examined the degree to which people's memories matched the true order of events. In this case, younger adults tended to perform better than older adults, suggesting that while the accuracy of details remains high with age, older adults are less likely to correctly remember the true sequence of past events. That is, the order of our memories becomes disorganized as we age.

"The results of these studies can contribute to identifying differences in memory among those who develop dementia," said Dr Levine. This work was made possible with support from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).

Future research will compare memory for another immersive, real-world experience in healthy adults and those with mild cognitive impairment with various amounts of time elapsed.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir

e-mail: ddtreg123@gmail.com

Subject: -Issuance of Duplicate Houseboat license in the name of M/s "Young Baktoo Palace" category Deluxe moored in Nigeen Lake.

Public Notice

Whereas, Mr. Noor Mohammed Baktoo S/o Lala Baktoo R/o Nigeen Lake, Srinagar has approached to this office for issuance of duplicate License of Houseboat under the name and Style of "Young Baktoo Palace" category Deluxe moored in Nigeen Lake, Srinagar as the same got misplaced on 03/03/2020.

Whereas, the Houseboat is registered with this Department in the name of Mr. Noor Mohammed Baktoo S/o Lala Baktoo R/o Nigeen Lake, Srinagar and is renewed up to 31/03/2009, under the provisions of J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas, the applicant has submitted Form X, Press cutting, FIR copy, Affidavit, Photograph of the Houseboat and other related documents.

Now therefore, before the request of the applicant for issuance of duplicate certificate of said unit is considered the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/Financial Institutions/Banks/Organizations, etc. that incase of any objection, the same should reach to this office within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice. No objection beyond period of 7 days will be entertained and duplicate license will be issued under rules after submission of all documents/Formalities.

No:Reg./Dlx/92/1872/DTK
Dated: - 12 /11/2020

Sd/-
Deputy Director Tourism
Registration Kashmir

DIPK-9569/20

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir

e-mail: ddtreg123@gmail.com

Subject: - Change of Location of the Travel unit running under the name & style M/s Al-Aziz Tour & Travels.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, proprietor of the Travel unit namely "M/s Al-Aziz Tour & Travels" situated at Beehama, Ganderbal, Kashmir has approached this office for change of location of his Travel Unit from Beehama, Ganderbal to Dursuma, Manigam, Lar, Ganderbal under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas the unit is registered with this office vide Registration No.:- Reg/T/642/61/DT/L-06/P-96 dated 26-04-2010 and is renewed upto 31-03-2021.

Whereas, the applicant along with his application has submitted Original Registration Certificate, NOC from the bank, Rent Deed (Sub-Registrar) of new location in support of his claim.

Now therefore, in exercise of powers conferred on me under section 10 of Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before the request of the applicant is considered for change of location of the unit, the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/ Financial Institutions/Bank/Organization, etc for objection if any. The same should reach this office within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in the local newspaper. No objections beyond period of 7 days will be entertained and request of the applicant will be considered as per rules.

DIPK-9550/20
No: Reg/T/612/1853/DTK
Dated: 24/11/2020.

Sd/-
Deputy Director Tourism,
Registration (Kashmir)

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir

e-mail: ddtreg123@gmail.com

Subject: - Grant of Registration of the Proposed Travel unit under the name & style "M/s Happy Travel Makers".

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Mr. Ajaz Ahmad Wani S/o Mr. Ghulam Mohammad Wani R/o Rajbagh, Srinagar, Kashmir has applied in this office for Registration of his proposed Travel Unit under the name and style "M/s Happy Travel Makers" situated at Fruit Mandi, Parimpora, Srinagar under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas, the applicants have submitted State Subject, Site Plan, Affidavit, Bank statement and Original Rent Deed (Sub-Registrar) Character certificate and other related documents.

Now therefore, in exercise of powers conferred on me under section 10 of Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before the request of the applicant is considered for registration of the unit, the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/ Financial Institutions/Bank/Organization, etc for objection if any. The same should reach this office with necessary objections within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in the local newspaper. No objections beyond period of 7 days will be entertained and request of the applicant will be considered as per rules.

No: Reg/T/UP/1852/DTK
Dated: 24.11.2020

Deputy Director Tourism,
Registration (Kashmir)

DIPK-9557/20

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER O&M CIRCLE-2nd, SRINAGAR

Email: se2mrekmr@yahoo.com-Tel/Fax-0194-2471994.

CANCELLATION NOTICE.

Due to some necessary modifications in technical specifications for the work Supply, Installation, testing and commissioning of LT Switching including cabling etc for Distribution Transformers of various capacities on pilot feeders under the jurisdiction of O&M Circle-II, KPDCCL, Srinagar, the below mentioned e-NITs are hereby cancelled and will be retendered as fresh:

- SE-II/O&M/03 of 2020-21 dated: 28/10/2020 and Tender ID No. 2020_PDD_108309_1.
- SE-II/O&M/04 of 2020-21 dated: 28/10/2020 and Tender ID No. 2020_PDD_108317_1.
- SE-II/O&M/05 of 2020-21 dated: 4/11/2020 and Tender ID No. 2020_PDD_108486_1.

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer,
O & M, Circle -II KPDCCL, Srinagar

No: SE-II/O&M/7432-37
Dated:- 24.11.2020

DIPK-NB-4152/20

Office of the Estates Officer Srinagar Municipal Corporation

AUCTION NOTICE

Subject: Notice inviting offers/bids for allotment of contract for running of Municipal Car Parking Lot at Karan Nagar.

Sealed tenders/offers are invited from the interested parties for the allotment of contract for running of Municipal Car Parking Lot at Karan Nagar. The last date for the submission of tender applications is 17-12-2020 Upto 2:30 p.m. and the same shall be opened by the Tender Opening Committee on the same date at 3:00 p.m. in presence of the parties who may wish to remain available for this purpose. The other terms & conditions shall be as under:-

- The bidder is required to submit the Call Deposit Receipt of Rs. 50,000/- for the site pledged to the Chief Accounts Officer, Srinagar Municipal Corporation along with the tender application without which no tender shall be accepted or entertained.
- The minimum reserve value fixed of the bid is 1,80,000/-
- The successful bidder shall have to deposit the bid amount in one go after which he will be allowed to run the Car Parking site.
- The term of the contract shall be for 01 (one) year only.
- The contractor shall have to collect the car parking fee from the general public as per the following schedule;

S.No	Name of the vehicle	Fee per vehicle/per trip/per day.
1.	Tourist Bus big size	Rs. 100/-
2.	Tourist Bus normal size	Rs. 75/-
3.	School Bus/Mini Bus/Tempo Traveler	Rs. 50/-
4.	Light Vehicle/Four Wheeler	Rs. 20/-
5.	Scooter/Motor Bike/Auto Rickshaw	Rs. 10/-
6.	Bicycle	Rs. 05/-

- The orders of the Government issued from time to time shall have to be complied with by the contractor.
- The Competent Authority of the Corporation shall be having the right to accept or reject the bid/bids without assigning any reasons thereof.
- In case there is no response from the general public, the Corporation would be competent to allot the lot/site to the interested party on negotiation basis.
- No extension shall be granted in the term of contract after its expiry.
- The Corporation shall not be responsible for any shutdown, bandh or any disturbance during the contract period.
- The Car parking lot/site shall be run under the close supervision of Ward Officer concerned of the Corporation.
- For any theft or damage of any vehicle, Corporation shall not be held or be responsible.

DIPK-NB-4160/20

Sd/-
Chief Revenue Officer
Srinagar Municipal Corporation

No.SMC/Est/947
Dated: 23-11-2020

UAE halts new visas to citizens of 13 mostly Muslim states

Agencies

Abu Dhabi: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has stopped issuing new visas to citizens of 13 mostly Muslim-majority countries, including Iran, Turkey, Syria and Somalia, according to a document issued by a state-owned business park.

The document, which was sent to companies operating in the park and was seen by the Reuters news agency, cited an immigration circular that came into effect on November 18.

It said applications for new employment and visit visas were suspended until further notice for nationals outside the UAE from countries including Afghanistan, Libya, and Yemen.

The visa ban also applies to citizens of Algeria, Kenya, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan and Tunisia, the document said.

It was not clear if there were any exceptions to the ban.

The UAE's Federal Author-

ity for Identity and Citizenship had no immediate comment.

Security concerns

A source briefed on the matter said the UAE had temporarily stopped issuing visas to Afghans, Pakistanis, and citizens of several other countries over security concerns.

The source did not say what those concerns were but said the visa ban was expected to last for a short period.

Last week, Pakistan's foreign ministry said the UAE had stopped processing new visas for its citizens and those of some other countries.

Islamabad said it was seeking information from the UAE on the reason for the suspension but that it thought it was related to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Pakistani ministry and the source said those holding valid visas were not affected by the new restrictions and could enter the UAE

Syrian Army Says Israel Hits Southern Damascus In Second Strike In Week



Agencies

Amman: The Syrian army said early Wednesday that Israel launched air strikes on an area in the southern outskirts of Damascus, where military defectors believe has a strong Iranian military presence in the second such attack within a week.

The Israeli aerial strike on a strategic area that Israel had hit in the past came from the occupied Golan Heights and caused only material damages, the army statement said.

Military defectors said the strike targeted a military base in Jabal Mane Heights near the town of Kiswa, where Iranian Revolutionary Guards have long been entrenched in a rugged area almost 15 km (9.3 miles) south of the center of Damascus.

Strikes that occurred in July also hit towns near Kiswa, where Lebanese pro-Iranian Hezbollah militia are deployed with other pro-Tehran militias in strength, according to a senior army defector.

The area has anti-aircraft missiles that are stationed to defend the Syrian Golan Heights along the border with Israel, the military sources said.

"We don't comment on these kind of news reports," an Israeli military spokesman told Reuters.

The aerial strikes hit a territory, which is situated in

a zone that extends from the southern countryside of Damascus to the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights where the growing Iranian presence is viewed as a strategic threat by Israel.

The Syrian army statement said the Israeli aerial strike came from the occupied Golan Heights and caused only material damages.

Israel launched air raids against what it called a wide range of Syrian and Iranian targets in Syria last Wednesday, sending a signal that it will pursue its policy of striking across the border despite U.S. President Donald Trump's election defeat.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government has never publicly acknowledged that there are Iranian forces operating on his behalf in Syria's civil war, saying Tehran only has military advisers on the ground.

Western intelligence sources say Israel's stepped-up strikes on Syria in the last few months are a part of a shadow war, approved by Washington and part of the anti-Iran policy that has undermined in the last two years Iran's extensive military power without triggering a major increase in hostilities.

Israeli defense officials have said in recent months that Israel would step up its campaign against Iran in Syria, where Tehran has expanded its presence with the help of its proxy militias. Reuters



Mutations Not Making Coronavirus Able To Spread More Rapidly'

AGENCIES

London: The COVID-19-causing coronavirus is mutating as it spreads around the world in the pandemic, but none of the mutations currently documented appears to be making it able to spread more rapidly, scientists said on Wednesday.

In a study using a global dataset of virus genomes from 46,723 people with COVID-19 from 99 countries, researchers identified more than 12,700 mutations, or changes, in the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

"Fortunately, we found that none of these mutations are making COVID-19 spread more rapidly," said Lucy van Dorp, a professor at University College London's Genetics Institute and one of the co-lead researchers on the study.

She added, however: "We need to remain vigilant and continue monitoring new mutations, particularly as vaccines get rolled out."

Viruses are known to mutate all the time, and some - such as flu viruses - change more frequently than others.

Most mutations are neutral,

but some can be either advantageous or detrimental to the virus, and some can make vaccines against them less effective. When viruses change like this, vaccines against them have to be adapted regularly to ensure they are hitting the right target.

With the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the first vaccines to show efficacy against the disease it causes could get regulatory approval and begin to be used to immunise people before the end of the year.

Francois Balloux, a UCL professor who also worked on the study, said that its findings, for now, posed no threat to COVID-19 vaccine efficacy, but cautioned that the imminent introduction of vaccines could exert new selective pressures on the virus to mutate to try to evade the human immune system.

"The news on the vaccine front looks great," he said. "The virus may well acquire vaccine-escape mutations in the future, but we're confident we'll be able to flag them up promptly, which would allow updating the vaccines in time if required."

The mutation study, preliminary findings of which were originally made public in May as a pre-print before being reviewed by other scientists, was published in full on Wednesday in the peer-reviewed journal Nature Communications.

The research team from Britain's UCL and Oxford University, and from France's Cirad and Université de la Réunion, analysed virus genomes from 46,723 people with COVID-19 from 99 countries, collected up until the end of July 2020.

Among more than 12,706 mutations identified, some 398 appeared to have occurred repeatedly and independently, the researchers said.

Of those, the scientists focused in on 185 mutations which they found had occurred at least three times independently during the course of the pandemic.

The researchers found no evidence that any of the common mutations are increasing the virus's transmissibility. Instead, they said, most common mutations are neutral for the virus.—Reuters

When And How Will COVID-19 Vaccines Become Available Around The World

Agencies

New York: Pfizer Inc with partner BioNTech SE and Moderna Inc have released trial data showing their COVID-19 vaccines to be about 95 per cent effective at preventing the illness, while AstraZeneca Plc this week said its vaccine could be up to 90 per cent effective.

If regulators approve any of the vaccines in coming weeks, the companies have said distribution could begin almost immediately with governments around the world to decide who gets them and in what order. The following is an outline of the process:

When will companies roll out a vaccine?

Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca have already started manufacturing their vaccines. This year, Pfizer said it will have enough to inoculate 25 million people, Moderna will have enough for 10 million people and AstraZeneca will have enough for more than 100 million people.

The US Department of Defense and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will manage distribution in the United States, likely starting in mid-December with an initial release of

6.4 million doses nationwide.

UK health authorities plan to roll out an approved vaccine as quickly as possible, also expected in December.

In the European Union, it is up to each country in the 27-member bloc to start distributing vaccines to their populations.

Who would get an approved vaccine and when in the United States?

Upon authorization from the US Food and Drug Administration, the CDC has said first in line for vaccinations would be about 21 million healthcare workers and 3 million residents in long-term care facilities.

Essential workers, a group of 87 million people who do crucial work in jobs that cannot be done from home, are the likely next group. This includes firefighters, police, school employees, transportation workers, food and agriculture workers and food service employees.

Around 100 million adults with high-risk medical conditions and 53 million adults over the age of 65, also considered at higher risk of severe disease, are the next priority.

US public health officials said vaccines will be generally available to most Americans in phar-

macies, clinics and doctors' offices starting in April so that anyone who wants a shot can have one by the end of June.

It is unclear when a vaccine will be available for children. Pfizer and BioNTech have started testing their vaccine in volunteers as young as 12.

When will a vaccine be available in other countries?

The European Union, the United Kingdom, Japan, Canada and Australia are all running rapid vaccine regulatory processes.

Many of AstraZeneca's doses this year are expected to go to the United Kingdom, where health officials have said that if approved they could begin vaccinating people in December. At the top of their list is people living and working in care homes.

In Europe, the EU drugs regulator has said it could rule on the safety of a COVID-19 vaccine in December.

Most countries have said the first vaccines will go to the elderly and vulnerable and frontline workers like doctors.

Countries say they are buying vaccines via the European Commission's joint procurement scheme, which has deals for six different vaccines and nearly 2 billion doses.

India's low-caste women raped to 'keep them in their place'

Agencies

New Delhi: Lower-caste Dalit women in northern India are targeted for rape by upper-caste men who usually escape justice as survivors bow to pressure to drop their cases, researchers found in a study released on Wednesday.

Only 10 per cent of 40 rape cases involving Dalit women and girls in Haryana state ended with the conviction of all those charged, and these involved murder or victims under the age of six, found two rights groups, Equality Now and the Swabhiman Society.

In almost 60pc of cases, the survivor withdrew her case

Manisha Mashaal, founder of the Dalit rights group, Swabhiman Society, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"To access justice, survivors have to put their lives at risk and endanger their families as well."

Haryana's director general of police Manoj Yadava said that he was unaware of the report, adding that they had a "zero tolerance" policy to crimes against women in the state.

Sexual violence as a weapon

The rights groups said men from dominant castes frequently use sexual violence as a weapon to reinforce caste and gender hierarchies, which



and accepted a "compromise" settlement outside the legal system, usually after unofficial village councils, or Khap Panchayats, coerced the women to abandon their quest for justice, it said.

"Survivors are threatened, face violence, their families are ostracised and there is extreme pressure to stay silent,"

place India's 200 million Dalits on the lowest rung of an ancient caste hierarchy.

The report highlights the challenges Dalits face in getting justice, despite tougher anti-rape laws introduced after a fatal gang rape in 2012, and nationwide protests last month over the alleged gang rape of a Dalit teen who later died.

Pak to form new national intel body to coordinate spy agencies under ISI chief

Press Trust Of India

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has approved the setting up of the National Intelligence Coordination Committee, a mechanism to coordinate over two dozen intelligence organisations in the country, to be headed by the ISI chief, according to a media report on Tuesday.

Although there have been discussions about the establish-

ment of the coordination forum, its terms of reference and modus operandi would be decided once it formally takes shape, Dawn newspaper quoted a senior security source as saying.

The new body would be led by the director general of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), who would function as its chairman, it said. The intelligence agencies have had at least two rounds of discussions on the issue after which the proposal was submitted to the prime minister for approval. It is expected that the first meeting of the co-ordination body could be held as early as next week.



The NICC would serve as a

mechanism to coordinate the over two dozen intelligence organisations in the country. National Counter Terrorism Authority would also be part of the new structure. The move is part of the long-awaited reform of the intelligence apparatus, which aims at clarifying the role of respective agencies, improving their coordination and optimising their capabilities, the report said.

One of the lessons learnt by the country during the fight against terrorism was that effective intelligence coordination was the weakest link in the entire effort. It importantly resulted in the loss of critical time and in some cases, the agencies even could not piece together the information available to them. It was, moreover, a major hurdle to collective strategising, the report said.

A leaked version of the Abbottabad Commission's report had revealed that the commission, while noting the absence of civil-military intelligence co-ordination mechanism, too had proposed establishment of an agency on the lines of the US Department of Homeland Security to synergise the working of main spy agencies in the country.

The Abbottabad Commission was set up to investigate the circumstances surrounding the killing of elusive Al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden in a US raid on a compound in the garrison city of Abbottabad in 2011.

NEWS MAKERS

Bangladesh man held for plans to join Kashmir militancy

Singapore: A Bangladeshi man, who was plotting attacks against Hindus in his own country and planning to fight in Kashmir, has been arrested by Singapore's security agencies. The agencies investigated the suspicious activities of 37 people as part of the heightened security measures following recent terror strikes in Europe, the government said on Tuesday.

Of the 37 people, 14 are Singaporeans and 23 foreigners, mostly Bangladeshis. A Bangladeshi, Ahmed Faysal (26), has been arrested under the Internal Security Act



(ISA) following investigations into terrorism-related activities, the home ministry said.

Faysal had been working as a construction worker in Singapore since early 2017, and became radicalised in

2018 after "imbibing online propaganda on ISIS", the statement said. He was arrested on November 2, the government said. — PTI

Faysal had been working as a construction worker in Singapore since early 2017, and became radicalised in 2018 after "imbibing online propaganda on ISIS"

Scotland Becomes First Country To Provide Free Period Products For All

Edinburgh, United Kingdom: Scotland on Tuesday voted to offer free universal access to period products, becoming the first country in the world to do so. The Scottish Parliament voted unanimously in favour of the Period Products Bill, which makes it a legal right to have free access to sanitary products in public buildings.

"We all agree that no one should have to worry where their next tampon pads or reusable is coming from," Monica Lennon, the MSP who introduced the bill, said before the Edinburgh vote.

"Scotland will not be the



last country to consign period poverty to history but we have the chance to be the first.

"This has been a long time coming."

Sanitary products are free for pupils and students in Scotland, but the bill now places a legal duty on ministers to set

up a country-wide scheme to ensure anyone can get access to them.

Schools, colleges and universities must also make a range of period products available for free in their toilets.

Lennon said that while the legislation was "world-lead-

ing", schools should also offer education to pupils to end the stigma of periods.

Aileen Campbell, Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government, said the bill sent an "important message about the kind of country we want Scotland to be."

"That is a gender-equal Scotland, where no one has to go through the indignity of using unsuitable materials to mask their periods or stretch household budgets further to buy products for their children, or miss out on education - a Scotland where no one has to hide a tampon up their sleeve," she said.

India Inducts US Predator Drones On Lease, Can Be Flown In Ladakh: Report

The American-origin drones have been inducted by the Navy under the emergency procurement powers granted by the Defence Ministry in view of the India-China border conflict



NEW DELHI: In a sign of growing closeness between India and the United States amid conflict with China, the Indian Navy has inducted two Predator drones from an American firm on lease for carrying out surveillance in the Indian Ocean Region and which can also be deployed along the Line of Actual Control in Eastern Ladakh.

The American-origin drones have been inducted by the Navy under the emergency procurement powers granted by the Defence Ministry in view of the India-China border conflict.

"The drones arrived in India in the second week of November and were inducted into flying operations on November 21 at Indian Navy base at INS Rajali," top government sources told ANI.

The drones have already started flying operations and with an endurance capability of being in the air for over 30 hours, they are proving to be a big asset for the maritime force, they said. An American crew from the vendor is also accompanying the equipment and would help the Navy to operate the machines, the sources said. The drones are flying in Indian

The drones arrived in India in the second week of November and were inducted into flying operations on November 21 at Indian Navy base at INS Rajali"

colours and would be on lease with India for one year even as the three services are preparing the case for acquiring 18 more such drones from the US, the sources said. India and America have been working very closely during the ongoing conflict against Chinese aggression in Eastern Ladakh including help in surveillance and information sharing in all domains, the sources said.

Sources said the option of leasing weapon systems has been provisioned under

the Defence Acquisition Procedure-2020 and the Defence Procurement Manual -2009 and helps in saving funds and the responsibility of maintenance also lies with the vendor, the sources said. Under the lease agreement, the American support staff will only help in the maintenance and technical issues whereas the sortie planning and the joystick control would be with the Indian Navy personnel, the sources said.

The data gathered by the drones during the flight would also be the exclusive property of the Indian Navy, the sources said.

The Indian armed forces have been showing faith in American systems in the last few years for their surveillance requirements as Indian Navy already has 9 P-8I long-range surveillance planes and would get another nine in next few years. For helicopters also, it is buying 24 MH-60 Romeo for giving it a multirole capability. India and America have also signed the basic foundation agreements for co-operation in defence and national security domain.

India: Tributes pour in after death of Shia scholar Kalbe Sadiq

Sadiq, who advocated for Shia-Sunni unity, has died of prolonged illness at the age of 83, prompting an outpouring of tributes

NEW DELHI: Prominent Indian Shia scholar, Maulana Kalbe Sadiq, who advocated for Shia-Sunni unity, has died of prolonged illness, prompting an outpouring of tributes from his followers and politicians. He was 83.

Sadiq died at about 10pm local time in a private hospital in Lucknow, the capital of the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, his son told Al Jazeera.

"My father breathed his last [breath] at 10pm on Tuesday," his son Kalbe Sibtain Noori said. "He was very unwell and his condition deteriorated over the past few days."

Sadiq was an international Muslim scholar, reformer, educationist and preacher and also vice president of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) – a powerful NGO that oversees the personal rights of Muslims.

AIMPLB said Sadiq's loss is a "big tragedy". "With his demise, the country has lost a great personality, and the board has lost one of its main and true servants. His educational, and social services will always be remembered," it said in a statement on Wednesday. He was born in Lucknow to a Shia family on June 22, 1939.

Sadiq had been undergoing treatment at the Era Medical College where he was admitted on November 17. Doctors said he was suffering from colorectal cancer with severe pneumonia and urinary tract infection.

As the news of Sadiq's death broke, condolences poured in from various people, including the chief minister of the Uttar Pradesh state, Yogi Adityanath.

Former Chief Minister of the state Akhilesh Yadav tweeted: "Extremely sad to hear that Janab Kalbe Sadiq Sb has passed away ... My sincere condolences to the family and all his well wishers."



"This is a huge loss to not only the Shia community but to humanity," writer and historian Rana Safvi wrote on Twitter. "We are bereaved today."

Despite his illness, Maulana [Muslim scholar] Sadiq earlier in January visited the Clock Tower in Lucknow and extended his support to the women who were peacefully protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register for Citizens (NRC). He addressed the gathering from a wheelchair.

The Shia leader advocated for religious harmony and called on Muslims to respect the Supreme Court verdict on the Babri Mosque-Ram temple case. Last year, the top court gave the land where a medieval-era mosque once stood to Hindu petitioners.

Maulana Sadiq was the founder of the Tauheedul Muslimeen Trust, which worked for the educational uplift of poor students.

"Since 1984, the organisations and trusts set up by Maulana Sadiq has helped thousands of students irrespective of their religion," said Dr Faiz Abbas Abidi, a close associate of Maulana Sadiq.

"Every year in Lucknow he would participate in Eid-ul-Adha prayers with Sunni Muslims to promote Shia-Sunni unity and would visit even Hindu temples to promote communal harmony," Dr Abbas said.

WORKED FOR COMMUNAL HARMONY

He worked tirelessly for the unity between Shia and Sunni Muslims and also between Hindus and Muslims in India amid rising sectarianism and religious polarisation.

"Maulana Sadiq worked tirelessly not only for the Shai-Sunni unity but also for Hindu-Muslim unity as well. He worked for communal harmony across the country. He made it his mission," Maulana Khalid Rashid Firangi Mahali of the Islamic Center India told Al Jazeera. "It's a huge loss to the Indian Muslims."

"His contribution in the field of education is immense," he said. Zaheer Abbas Rizvi, senior vice president of the All India Shia Personal Law Board, said Sadiq's death is a huge loss to the entire nation.

"His death is indeed a loss to Shias and Sunnis but to the entire nation because his mission was to educate people, minimise the differences between religions and was always trying to bridge the gap between people."

"His life was for humanity. His death is a loss not only to Shia or Muslims but to the humanity. He never spoke any controversial thing which created any differences between Hindus and Muslims or any other religious group."

Hiring recovers in India to climb 30% in Sept: LinkedIn

Hiring in India recovered by 18 per cent to climb 30 per cent (on-year) in September

NEW DELHI: Hiring in India recovered by 18 per cent to climb 30 per cent (on-year) in September, as businesses and companies continue to reopen, global professional services platform LinkedIn said on Tuesday.

Earlier in the year, hiring declines reached a low of below -50 per cent year-on-year in April, before starting to slowly recover. In late July, it crossed the 0 per cent mark and continued increasing, reaching 12 per cent in August and 30 per cent at the end of September. "Competition for jobs is lower compared to several months ago, but still 30 per cent higher compared to a year ago," the report mentioned.

However, after nearly doubling in the middle of 2020, the applications per job dropped down 1.3 times in August and stayed at a similar level in September.

Compared to pre-COVID, LinkedIn still sees that job seekers who are currently in the badly affected sectors (such as recreation and travel) are 4.2 times more likely to look for jobs in a different sector, compared to pre-COVID.

"But this stress has abated from June 2020, where the likelihood was as high as 6.8 times. Similarly, the stress for the Retail sector has reduced from 2.4 times to 1.1 times. There is not much change in the other sectors," the company mentioned.

Recovery was also faster for disruptive digital talent, but in recent months, this gap has started to narrow from over 20 percentage points difference in April and May to 2 percentage points difference in September.

"This possibly reflects the recovery of non-tech sectors," LinkedIn said. —IANS

India Derides Pakistan's "Dossier Of Lies" To UN Chief

India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador TS Tirumurti on Tuesday tweeted that the dossier of lies presented by Pakistan enjoys zero credibility.

UNITED NATIONS: India has reminded Pakistan, the host to the world's largest number of UN proscribed terrorists and entities, of Abbottabad, the garrison city where Al Qaeda terrorist Osama bin Laden hid for years and was killed, in a hard-hitting response as Islamabad's UN envoy gave a dossier of lies to Secretary General Antonio Guterres.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador TS Tirumurti on Tuesday tweeted that the dossier of lies presented by Pakistan enjoys zero credibility.

Concocting documents and peddling false narratives is not new to Pakistan, host to the world's largest number of UN proscribed terrorists and entities. Remember Abbottabad! he said. The Indian Ambassador's tweet was in response to Islamabad's UN envoy Munir Akram meeting Antonio Guterres to hand over the dossier from the Pakistan government that alleged India was "promoting terrorism". In his stinging tweet, Mr Tirumurti made a reference to the Pakistani garrison city of Abbottabad, where Osama bin Laden was hiding for years and was killed in an operation by the US Navy Seals in May, 2011.

Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan



Shringla on Monday briefed top envoys of key nations, including the US, Russia, France and Japan on the planned terror attack by Pakistan-based terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) in Nagrota in Jammu which was foiled by security forces on November 19.

The heads of missions were provided with a comprehensive "information docket" giving the details of the incident, and also a list of items and ammunition recovered from terrorists, clearly indicating their Pakistani origins.

The envoys were sensitised about India's concerns regarding Pakistan's

sustained efforts to "destabilise" the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and to "subvert" upcoming local elections and democracy in the union territory, sources told news agency Press Trust of India.

Four suspected JeM terrorists, who were hiding in a truck, were killed by security forces near Nagrota in an encounter last week after which the government asserted that a major terror attack was foiled by the Indian security forces.

India is all set to join the powerful UN Security Council as a non-permanent member for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2021.

Delhi's air quality slips to 'severe' due to slow winds

Stubble burning accounted for two per cent of Delhi's PM2.5 pollution on Wednesday

NEW DELHI: After 10 days, Delhi's air quality deteriorated to the "severe" category on Wednesday due to slow winds, government agencies said.

Stubble burning accounted for two per cent of Delhi's PM2.5 pollution on Wednesday.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) mobile app, SAMEER, the city's air quality index (AQI) was recorded at 401 on Wednesday morning and deteriorated to 415 in the evening. It was 388 on Tuesday.

It was 302 on Monday, 274 on Sunday, 251 on Saturday, 296 on Friday and 283 on Thursday.

The capital's AQI was in the "severe" category on November 15, a day after Diwali, but later improved and remained in either "poor" or "moderate" category until November 22.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

According to Ministry of Earth Sciences' monitoring system

SAFAR, stubble fire counts were quite low at 63 on Tuesday with its share in PM2.5 in Delhi's air at two per cent on Wednesday.

"Effective stubble fire counts with sufficient potential as estimated from SAFAR-multi-satellite products are low (around 63). Hence, the stubble burning share in PM2.5 in Delhi's air is estimated as two per cent for today," it said.

It forecasted winds to pick up and improve the ventilation condition by Thursday.

"The AQI is forecasted to improve towards 'very poor' category by tomorrow and likely stay in the lower end of Very Poor on November 27 and 28," SAFAR said.

Stubble burning accounted for five per cent of Delhi's PM2.5 pollution on Tuesday, six per cent on Monday and 12 per cent on Sunday. It was 13 per cent on Saturday, 15 per cent on Friday and 20 per cent on Thursday. The maximum and minimum temperatures in the city on Wednesday settled at 24.4 degrees Celsius and 10.4 degrees Celsius with cloudy sky. — PTI

'Delhi Chalo' march: Farmers from Punjab assembling near Haryana border

BKU (Ekta-Ugrahan) claimed over 2 lakh farmers will enter via Khanauri, Dabwali

Farmers from Punjab have started assembling near Haryana's borders with tractor-trailers for their proposed march to Delhi against the Centre's three recent farm laws.

The Haryana authorities have deployed security personnel on the roads leading to Punjab to thwart their protest.

Barricades have been put up on roads connecting Punjab by the Haryana Police to check the entry of farmers, officials said, adding that the traffic will also be diverted.

On Tuesday, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar had said the state borders with Punjab will remain sealed on Thursday and Friday.

The call for the Delhi Chalo march on Thursday and Friday was given by the All-India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee, Rashtriya Kisan Mahasangh and factions of the Bharatiya Kisan Union.

The farmers' bodies said they will hold a dharna wherever they are stopped from moving towards the national capital.



We are ready for the battle, which may last long"

Bharatiya Kisan Union (Ekta-Ugrahan) general secretary Sukhdev Singh Kokrikalan on Wednesday said they are ready for their march to Delhi on November 26.

"Some of our members with tractor-trailers have already reached Khanauri village near the Haryana border," he said, adding that they are making arrangements for meals and other essentials for farmers who will be reaching there to participate in the protest.

The BKU (Ekta-Ugrahan) has claimed that over 2 lakh farmers associated with it will enter Haryana through Khanauri and Dabwali.

Farmers have brought ration, vegetables, wood and other essentials for their march. In view of cold weather

conditions, they have stocked quilts and blankets and covered their trolleys with tarpaulin.

"We are ready for the battle, which may last long," said Kokrikalan.

Farmers having association with 30 organisations from Moga, Fazilka, Bathinda and other areas are reaching Mehlan Chowk in Sangrur.

Kokrikalan said they are also getting supplies of milk, vegetables and other essential items from Haryana villages bordering Punjab.

"Even if it takes a month or so, we are not worried. We will not return till these laws are scrapped," a farmer said at Khanauri village in Sangrur.

Farmers have said their march will be a historic agitation with the participation of women, elders and youth in large numbers.

Meanwhile, Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to address concerns of farmers.

In a tweet, he said the Central government's confrontation with farmers is pushing Punjab and the country towards chaos.

Badal urged the prime minister to redress their grievances and not throw Punjab into jaws of crises.

Congress Lost Its Chanakya In Ahmed Patel, We, Our Guiding Light: Uddhav Thackeray



MUMBAI: Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and NCP president Sharad Pawar today condoled the demise of senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel, lauding him as a "guiding light" and hailing his contribution towards the Congress.

Mr Thackeray said Ahmed Patel played a prominent role in the formation of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), comprising the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress, which came to power in Maharashtra last year.

Ahmed Patel, who served as the Congress's backroom strategist for years, died at a Gurugram hospital in the early hours of Wednesday. He was suffering from complications related to COVID-19.

Mr Thackeray in a statement said, "The Congress party has lost its Chanakya in Patel's demise, while the MVA government has lost a guiding light."

"I got help from his experience and guidance when the MVA government was formed," the Chief Minister said.

Ahmed Patel was active not only on the political front but was also involved in several social activities, he added.

Sharad Pawar said he was deeply saddened to know about the demise of veteran Congress leader Ahmed Patel.

"His contributions to the Congress party will always be remembered. My sincere condolences to the members of his family," he said.

Union minister and senior BJP leader Nitin Gadkari also expressed grief on Patel's demise.

"Saddened to hear about the demise of veteran Congress leader Ahmed Patel Ji. My sincere condolences to the departed soul. I pray for strength to his family members and supporters in this moment of grief. Om Shanti," Mr Gadkari tweeted.

Maharashtra Congress president Balasaheb Thorat and senior party leader Ashok Chavan also paid tributes to Patel, saying the party had lost an experienced, committed and loyal leader as well as a skilled organiser.