



Maximum : 12°
Minnum : -3°
Humidity : 86%

SUNSET
Today 05:22 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 07:15 AM



P6 LIFE & TIMES

Isolation Stimulates Brain Activity Similar To Hunger Cravings

P5 PANORAMA

Dying Waters of Shairbagh Anantnag

BY HILAL AH. BHAT



P8 OBSERVER OUTPOST

PM Makes Pitch For Simultaneous Elections, One Voters' List



NEWS DIGEST

CRPF Man Injured In Accidental Fire

SRINAGAR: A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Head Constable on Thursday was injured in an accidental fire in Humhama area of the city outskirts.

S Barali of CRPF 25 Battalion was critically injured on Thursday when his service rifle went off accidentally at the RTC camp, where he was performing his guard duty, officials said, officials said. The CRPF man was shifted to 92 Base Army Hospital in a critical condition, where he is undergoing treatment for a bullet injury in the neck.

Meanwhile, police have registered a case and started further investigations in this regard.

'Poacher' Arrested In Awantipora

SRINAGAR: Police on Thursday arrested a man on the charges of poaching migratory birds in south Kashmir's Awantipora.

Ghulam Haider, a resident of Balhama Panthachowk was arrested by police on the basis of a complaint that he was poaching migratory birds in Meej area of Pampore, a police official said. A 12-bore rifle was also recovered from his possession.

According to the official, the arrest of the poacher was made in coordination with the wildlife authorities. He added that the police will recommend cancellation of license of the arrested person.

Meanwhile, a case FIR number 94 of 2020 under section 51 wildlife protection Act. Has been registered against Haider in Police Station Pampore.

Crime Branch Charges Retired Police Officer

SRINAGAR: The Crime Branch of police on Thursday produced a chargesheet against a retired police officer for mutation in the recorded date of birth in his service book to prolong his service period.

As per the Crime Branch, a case (FIR No. 06/2017 U/S 420,468,471) was filed in connection with the incident in 2017 and charge sheet was produced against retired ASI Kulwant Singh son of Arjun Singh of Fuji Pora Kh Budgam A/P House no 114 model town Digyana Jammu in the court of Passenger Tax and Electricity Srinagar.

"The accused had made insertion / mutation in his recorded date of birth in his service book to prolong his service period," the CBK said in a statement.

Bear Caught In Handwara

SRINAGAR: A bear was caught on Thursday by the officials of Wild Life Department in Kukroosa area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

According to the reports, early Thursday morning, the villagers in Kukroosa spotted a bear roaming in the village.

An official told news agency KDC that as soon as locals spotted the bear on Thursday morning, they informed the Wildlife department later, which later sent a team of experts and caught the bear.

A wildlife official while confirming the incident said that after putting in hectic efforts they were able to catch the wild bear.

Car-Borne Militants Kill 2 Soldiers In Srinagar



KD Photo: Abid Bhat

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Unidentified car-borne militants on Thursday shot dead two soldiers of army's Quick Reaction Team (QRT) in an audacious attack in Srinagar outskirts before fleeing with a service rifle of a fallen army man.

Around 1:10 pm, a group of three militants traveling in a Maruti car fired indiscriminately at army party near Sharifabad HMT resulting in injuries to two soldiers, a police spokesperson said. He said that the injured soldiers Sepoys Ratan and Deshmukh of Territorial Army's 163 and 101 Battalions were removed to the hospital for treatment. However, both of them succumbed to their injuries.

The police spokesperson further said that the militants carried out the broad-day light attack taking

undue advantage of the crowded place. He said the army personnel exercised maximum restraint to avoid any civilian casualties and collateral damage.

Soon after the attack, reinforcements of army and special opera-

several hours, no arrests were made. Meanwhile, Police have registered a case in this regard under relevant sections of law.

"Investigation is in progress and officers continue to work to establish the full circumstances of this

Analysing CCTV Footage To Identify Attackers: IGP

SRINAGAR: Inspector General of Police Kashmir Vijay Kumar said on Thursday that the police was analysing CCTV footage of the HMT shootout to identify the attackers, who killed two soldiers in an ambush. The militants opened fire on the security forces near Sharifabad

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tions group (SOG) of police reached the shootout spot and launched a search operation to nab the attackers, reports said. However, during the search operation that continued for

crime," the police spokesperson said. A local news agency GNS quoted sources as saying that the decamped with a service rifle of a soldier after opening fire upon them.

Cracks In PAGD Over Seat Sharing Agreement

PDP Urges Dr. Farooq To Review Decision

SRINAGAR: Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which is a signatory to People's Alliance of Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) Thursday said that differences within the alliance may grow deeper, incase its head, Dr Farooq Abdullah does not 'review' decisions taken on 'seat sharing'.

Addressing a press conference at PDP head office, party General Secretary, Ghulam Nabi Lone Hanjura appealed PAGD president Dr Farooq Abdullah to review decisions on seat-sharing before the differences between different parties within the amalgam grow deeper.

He said National Conference (NC) has fielded its official candidates in certain areas where PDP candidates contest on PAGD ticket.

He said any party including NC, PDP, PC or ANC should immediately

withdraw candidature of their official candidates from those constituencies where PAGD candidates are contesting DDC elections.

Hanjura alleged that NC without any consultation with alliance members allotted some seats of Congress to its own candidates after the party pulled out from the PAGD. The PDP leader said the crises may grow deeper within PAGD in case the issues on seat sharing are left unresolved.

"There were already issues on seat sharing in the amalgam and I was crestfallen the moment I saw NC has fielded its candidates on 13 out of fourteen seats in Budgam constituency. This is not good for the alliance. I appeal to the alliance head to review decisions on seat sharing before the differences grow deeper," Hanjura added.

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Amusing To See Govt Celebrate Constitution Day: Mehbooba

SRINAGAR: PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti Thursday attacked the Centre on the occasion of Constitution Day, saying she found it "amusing" to see them celebrate the day as they have already replaced the Constitution with the BJP's divisive agenda.

The former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister also said legislations like the Citizenship Amendment Act or the so-called 'love jihad law' were affront to the fundamental rights granted by the Constitution.

The country is celebrating the Constitution Day on Thursday to mark the adoption of the Constitution on this day in 1949.

Amusing to see GOI (Government of India) celebrate 'Constitution Day' since they have already replaced it with BJP's divisive agenda.

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PDP Youth President To Be Produced Before NIA Court Today

NEW DELHI: PDP youth wing president Waheed ur Rehman Para, arrested by the National Investigation Agency for allegedly conspiring with Hizbul Mujahideen militants to get their support during the 2019 parliamentary elections, will be produced before NIA court in Jammu on November 27, officials said here on Thursday.

Para was produced in a Delhi court which gave a transit remand to produce him in Jammu, the officials said.

Para, who recently filed his nomination for District Development

Council (DDC) elections from Pulwama in South Kashmir, was arrested on Wednesday 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. Mir had claimed during questioning that Para had

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J&K Reports 5 More Corona Deaths, Toll 1668

SRINAGAR: At least five more people lost their lives to coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, taking the total number of virus related fatalities across the Union Territory to 1668.

Among the fatalities, three were reported from Kashmir and two from the Jammu region, officials said.

The victims, officials said included a 55-year-old woman from Noorbagh Baramulla besides two persons from Srinagar—a 63-year-old man from Gojwara and a 90-year-old man from Chanapora.

Regarding deaths from Jammu division, they said, one of them was a 40-year-old woman from Bakool and a 72-year-old from Karan Nagar Jammu.

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JCO Killed, Civilian Injured In Pak Firing

OBSERVER MONITORING DESK

SRINAGAR: A junior commissioned officer (JCO) of army on Thursday was killed and a civilian injured in firing and mortar shelling by Pakistan troops along Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Around 1:30 pm Thursday, Pakistan army initiated "unprovoked ceasefire violation" by firing small arms and mortar shells along LoC in Qasba and Kirni sectors in the Poonch, officials said.

Officials said Subedar Swathantra Singh of 16 Garhwal was critically injured in Kirni Qasba sector in Pakistani firing. The 48-year-old was shifted to army hospital, where he succumbed to the injuries.

Army's Jammu based spokesman Lt Col Devinder Anand confirmed the killing of the officer in the "ceasefire violation by the Pakistan army."

"Befitting reply is being given to the violation," he added.

Earlier, a civilian identified as Mohammad Rashid, son of Najab Din was injured in the firing by Pak troops. "He was removed to the hospital for treatment," SHO Poonch, S D Singh told news agency GNS.

J&K Gears Up For First Polls Post Art- 370 Abrogation

SRINAGAR: Preparations are on in full swing for the first elections in Jammu and Kashmir post abrogation of Article 370 and reorganisation of the erstwhile state with political parties making the last last-ditch efforts to woo voters.

The first-ever district development council (DDC) elections will be held in eight phases to elect 280 members in 20 districts from November 28 to December 22. In the absence of an elected government in the union territory, these councils are set to become a new unit of governance in the region.

Along with the DDC polls, eight-phased polling will be held for by-elections to 230 urban local bodies (ULB) and 12000 panchayat seats.

Major regional parties National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which boycotted the panchayat

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Campaigning For First Phase Ends

SRINAGAR: Campaigning for the first phase of the district development council (DDC) polls and by-elections to local bodies in J&K ended on Thursday evening, officials said.

Voting to decide the fate of 1,475 candidates in this phase would take place on Saturday from 7 am to 2 pm. Officials said campaigning took place in a peaceful manner and there was no untoward incident.

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Special Booths For Migrants: SEC

JAMMU: State Election Commissioner (SEC) K K Sharma on Wednesday directed for setting up of special polling booths for Kashmiri migrants in Jammu and Udhampur so that they can effectively exercise their right to vote in the ensuing DDC elections

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CBI Books Ex- Minister Taj Mohiuddin For 'Land Grab'



NEW DELHI: The CBI has booked former Jammu and Kashmir Minister Taj Mohiuddin in connection with alleged illegal regularisation of encroached forest land in his name under the Roshni Act, officials said Thursday.

Along with Mohiuddin, a former Congress minister in the erstwhile state, the agency has also booked Mohammed

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Govt Releases Another List Of 2,500 Beneficiaries

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has released another list of over 2,500 people, including a retired police officer, a PDP leader's son and a prominent businessman,

» More On P2

SLPs Filed In SC Against Scrapping Of Roshni Act

NEW DELHI: A bunch of special leave petitions have been filed in the Supreme Court against a Jammu and Kashmir High Court order scrapping the Roshni Act that gave proprietary rights

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A snow cutting machine clearing Srinagar-Leh Highway near Sonmarg, which remained closed for the fourth straight day Thursday.

—KO Pix Abid Bhat

Govt Extends 4G Ban In J&K Till Dec 11

SRINAGAR: The government on Thursday extended ban on high speed 3G and 4G internet services till December 11 in all but two districts of J&K, citing apprehensions regarding disruptions to "extensive campaigning by the contesting candidates" in ensuing local body polls.

"With the announcement of elections to the District Development Council constituencies and by-elections to fill the vacancies in the Panchayati Raj Institutions/Urban Local Bodies, intense political activity is being witnessed across J&K, with extensive campaigning by the contesting candidates. At the same time, there

have been continued attempts from across the border to disrupt the elections process by vitiating the security environment," reads an order issued by the Principal Secretary Home Shaleen Kabra.

"The law enforcement agencies have well founded apprehensions of enhanced efforts by Pakistan for causing public disaffection, recruitment in the (militant) ranks as well as infiltration attempts, which heavily depend upon high speed internet," reads the order.

"There has also been a surge in (militant) activities, specific instances being that at Ban Toll Plaza, Nagrota, Jammu

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FROM FRONT PAGE

Analysing CCTV ...

HMT, resulting in injuries to two army personnel. The injured soldiers were rushed to a military facility in the nearby Shariefabad camp where they succumbed.

“Three militants travelling in a car fired indiscriminately at the army men, leaving two of them seriously wounded. Both the injured soldiers have succumbed, Kumar told reporters near the site of the incident.

The IGP Kashmir said security forces are now chasing the vehicle which was used in the attack.

It seems the attack was carried out either by Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) or Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) outfit, he said.

There is movement of LeT and Jaish here and we will identify the group behind the attack by evening. Among the three, two could be FTs (foreign militants) from Pakistan and one local. We are analysing the CCTV footage, he said.

J&K Gears Up ...

polls in 2018, have plunged into the electoral battleground under the banner of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD).

The BJP and the Congress are also campaigning in various constituencies of Jammu and Kashmir. While the BJP has deployed union ministers and central leaders as its star campaigners, only local Congress leaders are campaigning.

The state election commission (SEC) and chief electoral officer (CEO) have issued all notifications for the elections to the DDCs, panchayats and ULBs. “The notifications have been issued for the DCC and other elections.

preparations have been made for holding free and fair polls,” a election officer said.

The process of deployment of staff, training and other requirements is almost complete.

Police say elaborate security measures have been done for incident-free polls and more security companies are being brought to Jammu and Kashmir for the poll process.

“We have made elaborate security arrangements for polls and candidates besides the campaigning process,” a senior police officer said, adding security is being reviewed as per requirements.

While campaigning in various constituencies in districts of Jammu division has gathered momentum with roadshows, door-to-door meetings and public rallies being witnessed, in Kashmir, it is a low key affair due to security reasons.

BJP has deployed Union ministers Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Jitendra Singh and Anurag Thakur besides national general secretary Tarun Chug and national spokesperson Shahnawaz Hussain.

Union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi addressed an election meeting in Kupwara on November 19 while BJP national spokesperson Shahnawaz Hussain visited Srinagar on Friday. Union minister Anurag Thakur has been on campaign trail in Jammu and BJP general secretary Tarun Chug has addressed rallies in Samba and Kathua districts during the past few days.

According to the JK BJP, leaders like Smriti Irani, Krishan Pal Gujjar, Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ and Rajya Sabha member Zafar Islam are expected to join the campaign.

The BJP has made the issue of alleged land encroachments by former chief ministers Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah and other leaders of the Gupkar alliance a major poll plank while reaching out to certain communities including Muslims and Gujjars.

The BJP has planned digital rallies and door-to-door campaigning as well as social media campaigns by employing around 800 IT people in most of the districts, a party leader said.

However, the opposition has accused the BJP of forcing them to keep their campaigning a low key affair due to lack of security.

Nasir Aslam Wani, NC provincial president, claimed that PAGD candidates have been “locked up” in hotels and guesthouses in several places and are not allowed to campaign. Head of the Gupkar alliance and former chief minister Farooq Abdullah gave a video call message to people and appealed them to vote for its candidates.

“I want to appeal to you to vote for alliance candidates. If we have to be successful, then we have to vote for the alliance.This alliance has been formed to restore special status - Article 370 and Article 35-A. We have come together to keep this state united,” the NC chief said.

“It is my urgent request to you not to vote for anyone else and come out in large numbers and vote for the alliance candidates,” he said.

PDP president and former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti is campaigning for the alliance candidates in south Kashmir and has addressed some meetings too.

On Wednesday, she visited Shopian district to campaign for her candidate at Zainapora and said “The BJP is feeling unnerved over the PAGD’s decision of joining the DDC poll fray and that was why our candidates are barred from going for campaigning.”

She claimed the PAGD’s Zainapora candidate was not allowed to come out of his home for campaigning for the past 15 days.

The Congress alleged that the security of its former MLA Hajir Rashid of Sopore was withdrawn. “How can he campaign in such a high terror ridden area. It is a deliberate attempt to prevent us from campaigning,” a Congress spokesperson told PTI.

He said that they have brought the matter to election authority but nothing has been done.

“That is why our campaigning is very low key. This is the fate of other opposition parties too,” he said. Officials said over 50 public meetings, door-to-door meetings, road shows and other functions have been held in Jammu and Kashmir during the past one week.

Newly-formed Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) is contesting elections for the first time.

Its President Syed Altaf Bukhari said the youth of Jammu and Kashmir have been always swayed by misleading slogans of political parties, which is why they are unhappy with the present system.

Campaigning For ...

Out of the 1,475 candidates, 296 are contesting in the maiden DDC polls in the union territory, they said, adding 172 are from the Kashmir valley and 124 from Jammu region.

In the first phase of the eight-phased DDC polls,

43 constituencies will go to polls -- 25 in Kashmir and 18 in Jammu, the officials said.

For the by-elections to panchayats, 899 candidates are in the fray for Panch seats and 280 for the sarpanch seats. A total number of 2,644 polling stations have been set up and there are 7,03,620 electors for this phase, the officials said.

They said all arrangements have been put in place for smooth conduct of the polls.

Special Booths ...

We have to ensure that every section of the society is provided an ample opportunity to exercise franchise to participate in these historic elections meant to strengthen democracy at the grassroots level, Sharma said.

He was interacting with officials through video-conferencing. The meeting was attended by Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of Jammu and Kashmir, divisional commissioner of Jammu and Kashmir, deputy commissioners of the Kashmir division, deputy commissioner Udhampur, IGP Jammu, joint director information Jammu, SSPs of Jammu and Udhampur, relief commissioner, ARO migrants in Jammu and Udhampur, an official spokesman said.

All deputy commissioners of the Kashmir division will notify the setting up of polling stations for Kashmiri migrants at Jammu and Udhampur so that these people can participate in the upcoming DDC elections, he said.

It was also discussed in the meeting that those registered in Jammu will vote at the designated polling stations in Jammu and those in Udhampur would be voting at polling stations set up in that district, the spokesman said. The Relief Commissioner has been appointed as a nodal officer for providing necessary infrastructural support for setting up of these polling stations, he said.

The SEC asked the IGP Jammu for making the requisite security arrangements for these polling stations, the spokesman said.

The District Development Council (DDC) polls will be the first major political activity in J&K since the abrogation of Article 370 and will be held in eight phases from November 28 to December 22.

Along with the DDC polls, an eight-phase polling will be held for by-elections to 230 urban local body (ULB) and 12,000 panchayat seats.

CBI Books ...

Ramzan Thakur, former Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Mohammed Yousuf Zargar, the then Additional Deputy Commissioner, Hafizullah Shah, the then Assistant Commissioner Revenue and Ghulam Hassan Rather, the then Tehsildar.

The CBI received a complaint from the Anti-Corruption Bureau of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory which is now part of the FIR, they said.

The then Tehsildar Shopian had processed and placed 190 cases of vesting of ownership rights to the occupants of state land before a committee chaired by Thakur on June 16, 2007.

The committee approved only 17 of them including over 13 kanals of land which was allegedly illegally encroached upon by Mohiuddin.

It is alleged that the land encroached upon by Mohiuddin belonged to the forest department which had raised objections to its regularisation under the Jammu and Kashmir State Lands (Vesting of Ownership to Occupants) Act also known as the Roshni Act.

The objections were allegedly ignored by the committee which had told the forest department that the matter had been disposed of and their objections did not serve any purpose.

The Divisional Forest Officer of the area had again raised objection to regularisation under the Roshni Act and returned the file.

“The concerned public servants of revenue department have by commission of illegal acts processed, prepared and approved the illegal claim of the beneficiary Taj Mohiuddin over the said land which belongs to the forest department thereby paved the way for conferment of undue pecuniary advantage to said beneficiary...,” the complaint said.

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 Jammu and Kashmir 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.

A number of former ministers, several other politicians and a former bureaucrat figured in the list of beneficiaries who have availed land under the now scrapped Roshni Act or encroached state land for residential or commercial purposes.

The lists were made public by the divisional administration, both in Kashmir and Jammu regions, in accordance with the October 9 directive of the high court which had declared Roshni Act “illegal, unconstitutional and unsustainable” and ordered a CBI probe into the allotment of land under this law.

Govt Releases ...

who have either availed land under the Roshni Act or encroached state land.

While 2,195 of them were named in various lists related to Roshni Act and encroached land released by the divisional administration of Jammu concerning different rehils of the district, the lists released in Kashmir named 335 beneficiaries of the Roshi scheme covering eight districts.

Another list covering those who have encroached upon the state land, either recorded or not recorded in revenue records, released by the divisional administration of Jammu included 3,435 names. Most of them belong to the majority community of Jammu, who have usurped thousand of kanals of land in different parts of Jammu district.

Several former ministers, ex-bureaucrats and prominent businessmen have been named among the beneficiaries of the Roshni scheme. Former chief ministers Farooq Abdullah and

Omar Abdullah and several other political leaders affiliated with the PDP and the Congress besides some retired police officers have been accused of land encroachment. The Abdullahs have strongly denied the charges.

In the latest list released in Jammu, retired Deputy Inspector General of Police Khalid Durani is accused of encroaching three kanals of land, while prominent businessman Owais Ahmad is shown as having encroached over two kanals of land.

As many as 1,425 people, mostly farmers, were named in the list of encroachers of state land in Bhalwal tehsil with over 15,653 kanals of land under their occupation.

Similarly, 664 people are shown under occupation of 2,835 kanals of encroached land in Jammu north and another 88 people under occupation of 514 kanals in Jammu West tehsil.

In Kashmir valley, the divisional administration so far released names of 623 beneficiaries of Roshni scheme -- 288 in Srinagar district, 133 in Baramulla, 78 in Bandipora, 44 in Kupwara, 20 each in Ganderbal, Anantnag and Kulgam, 13 in Budgam and seven in Shopian.

Among the 20 beneficiaries in Ganderbal district, Tipoo Sultan, a contractor and son of former PDP minister Qazi Mohammad Afzal, legalised his five kanal and 17 marlas of land by depositing Rs 600 under the Roshni Act, the list claimed.

Most of the agricultural land was legalised by the beneficiaries across Jammu and Kashmir at the rate of Rs 10 or below in accordance with the Act.

The lists were made public by the divisional administration, both in Kashmir and Jammu regions, in accordance with the October 9 directive of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court which declared the Roshni Act “illegal, unconstitutional and unsustainable” and ordered a CBI probe into the allotment of the land under this law.

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The principal secretary and revenue department has 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.

PDP Youth ...

sought his support during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections for their party candidate Mehbooba Mufti, a former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir and also the president of PDP, the officials said.

Para was questioned on Monday and Tuesday before being placed under arrest as he was not cooperating, the officials said.

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, they said.

He was sitting in the car driven by Singh on January 11 along with Naveed and Rather when the vehicle was intercepted by Jammu and Kashmir Police near Qazigund on the national 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 agency 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.

Govt Extends ...

and Parimpora, Srinagar,” the order said, adding, “upon consideration of the available inputs, and taking note of misuse of social media applications in carrying out (militant) activities as also in adversely impacting public order, it is apparent that there is need for continuation of the speed restrictions on mobile internet services.”

According to the Home department ordered continuation on the ban on high speed internet in all but two districts—Ganderbal and Udhampur—till December 11.

“The I&GP, Kashmir/Jammu shall communicate these directions to the service providers forthwith and ensure their implementation in letter and spirit,” the order added. (GNS)

J&K Reports ...

With these deaths, the total fatality count in the Valley has reached 1094 and 574 in the Jammu region. Srinagar district with 415 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (294), Baramulla (161), 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)

SLPs Filed In ...

to occupants of state land, with the petitioners pleading that they never encroached on government land and were never made a party in the case.

The SLPs moved by former bureaucrats, businessmen and retired judges challenged the October 9 order of the high court which declared the Roshni Act “illegal, unconstitutional and unsustainable” and ordered a CBI probe into the allotment of the land under this law.

The petitioners have urged that there is no allegation of illegality against them and they are not encroachers on any public land, and there is no allegation, averment or finding to this effect anywhere.

The 26 petitions have been moved, among others, by former chief conservator forest R K Mattoo, former judge Khaliq-ul-Zaman, former chief secretary Mohammed Shai Pandit, former

power development commissioner Nissar Hussain, businessmen Bharat Malhotra and Vikas Khanna and retired commissioner Bashir Ahmed.

They said they were authorised occupants and the “high court has passed the impugned order on the basis of general sweeping observations sans any basis, without considering that there is presumption of innocence”.

Noting that they are ordinary citizens and bona fide purchasers for value and have no role in the passing of the legislation by a duly elected legislature or its implementation by the executive, the petitioners said the “only overt act of the petitioners as law abiding citizens, who are not encroachers on any state land, is that they made bona fide applications for conversion of their leasehold rights to freehold under a law duly enacted by a competent legislature”.

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 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 pleas said the “sweeping order of the high court” had left them aggrieved as it ordered publication of details of the beneficiaries on the government website, cancellation of all actions taken under the Act since its inception and en masse investigation by the CBI and also for recovery of land “which threatens the residential spaces of the petitioners”.

The SLPs said the high court directions have been issued on the untenable assumption that everyone who has applied under the Roshni Act for conversion of leasehold rights to freehold is an encroacher of state land and has colluded in the purported arbitrary and unfair implementation of the law.

“On the contrary, the petitioners herein, as ‘authorised occupants’ recognised by the Act, had valid and lawful leases and applied for conversion to freehold strictly in terms of the Act. The petitioners cannot be equated with trespassers, and there is gross violation of Article 14 rights’ of the petitioner in being clubbed with any encroachers.

“In fact, since the grievance was essentially of implementation, the high court ought to have considered each case on its own merit rather than striking down the Act under which specific orders were passed...Petitioners have paid hefty sums from their hard earned money which are determined market prices and not throw-away prices,” the pleas said.

The pleas said the petitioners were not parties in the proceedings before the high court and were not heard in the matter at any stage.

“Despite this, as a consequence of the impugned judgment, these persons in lawful possession of state land, having established their home with their families for many years, have been dispossessed and deprived of property vested in them by law without notice and without a hearing.

“The petitioners are, therefore, directly adversely affected by the impugned judgment,” the SLPs said. The petitioners said they are aggrieved by the “roving and fishing expedition in the name of CBI investigation that has been ordered by the high court...”

Cracks In PAGD ...

He said that has always been sincere to PAGD and is ready to offer any sacrifice for the common cause for which the alliance was formed. He said that he walked out from the PAGD meeting when 4 seats in Beerwah, 2 each in Budgam and Chadoora and 1 seat in BK Pora was allotted to NC.

He said despite strong objection by PDP, NC took two seats in Surasyar block while Pakhapora was allotted to PC “I strongly objected and walked out of the meeting. I told them there should be two seats each for the two parties”

Hanjiura also said there was no seat for PDP while NC took Chadoora seat and BK Pora was allotted to JKPM. He said as far as PDP’s stand is concerned DDC and Panchayat elections meant nothing to the party—(KNO)

Amusing To See ...

CAA, NRC or creating laws like love jihad that are an affront to the fundamental rights granted by Indian Constitution & would put Hitler’s regime to shame. Bravo! (sic), Mehbooba said.

In another tweet, the PDP president alleged that Kashmiri leaders were being harassed by Central agencies such as the CBI, NIA and Enforcement Directorate and being hounded for participating in District Development Council (DDC) polls.

Kashmiri leaders are being harassed by GOI’s pet agencies like CBI, NIA & ED. They are being hounded & punished for participating in DDC polls. BJP’s designs of foisting puppets & proxies has been derailed much to their chagrin, she said.

6 Soldiers Among ...

Jammu division 232 more people tested positive for coronavirus infection, officials said.

Giving district wise details of the cases, the officials said that Srinagar reported 110 cases, Baramulla 29, Budgam 27, Pulwama 15, Kupwara 19, Anantnag 5, Bandipora 7, Ganderbal 21, Kulgam 3, Shopian 19, Jammu 111, Rajouri 5, Udhampur 28, Doda 19, Kathua 25, Poonch 1, Samba 12, Kishtwar 15, Ramban 7 and Reasi 9. Moreover, they said, 471 more patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals— 183 from Jammu Division and 288 from Kashmir.

Burglars Loot

6 Shops In Ganderbal

SRINAGAR: Burglars on Wednesday night struck in central Kashmir’s Ganderbal district and decamped with the cash and other items from several shops. According to the reports, unidentified burglars broke into at least six shops in Lar area of Ganderbal during the intervening night of November 25-26 and decamped with cash and other items.

Meanwhile, police have taken cognizance of the incident and started investigations in this regard.

NC, PDP Owe Apology To People For Often Changing Political Goalposts: Bukhari

TANGMARG: Apni Party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Thursday said the National Conference and the PDP owe an apology to the people of Jammu and Kashmir for their age-old gimmicks and frequently changing political goalposts to woo the electorate.

The Jammu and Kashmir Apni party is contesting the first-ever elections in the union territory after its formation last year.

Addressing a party’s District Development Council (DDC) polls’ campaign convention at Tangmarag in Baramulla district, Bukhari said right from the propaganda of ‘raishumari’ (plebiscite), greater autonomy, joint assembly, dual currency, self-rule and now the restoration of special status, the NC and the PDP leadership have never refrained from raising passions for their petty electoral gains .

In the last 72 years, the NC has ditched and befooled people by exploiting the political

sentiments of the people. Similarly, the PDP didn’t lag and raised slogans that were totally misleading. These political parties have disrespected the peoples’ mandate and enjoyed power in the NDA and formed the governments with the BJP, Bukhari said

He said these political parties are now again trying to hoodwink the people by comparing the DDC elections with some sort of referendum. People should understand that DDC elections are purely meant for good governance, developmental projects, infrastructure, quality education, health services and employment opportunities that will certainly bring respite to the people, he said. Senior vice president of Apni Party and former minister Ghulam Hassan Mir the Gupkar alliance’ is another poll plank to befool the people of J-K . Party’s senior leader and former minister Mohammad Dilawar Mir also spoke on the occasion. (PTI)

از نیات نائب تحصیلدار دیالگاجلاس جاوید احمد حکیم
 درخواست از جانب: صادق الحسن ولد غلام حسن و گے ساکن برٹی بد پورہ تحصیل ضلع اہت ناگ برادر
حصول EWS مرتکبیت۔
استھار بمراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام
 مالمندرجہ ذیل عنوان الصدور میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست حصول **EWS** مرتکبیت دفتر بڈا کو پیش کیا ہے درخواست بڈا کے ساتھ رپورٹ بنواری حلقہ شامل ہے رپورٹ فائدہ عملہ سے عیاں ہوتا ہے کہ ساکن پچھلے پندرہ سالوں سے مسلسل طور پر رہائش پذیر ہے اور ساکن نے بھی کبھی ترک سکونت نہیں کی ہے تفصیل افراد کتبہ و نام رپورٹ بڈیل ہے۔

نام صاحب کتبہ عدولیت	عمر	پیشہ	آمدنی
غلام حسن پیر جمو گے	50 سال	مزدوری	
فاطمہ اختر زوجہ غلام حسن و گے	48 سال	گھر بی کام	
صادق الحسن پیر غلام حسن	20 سال	زیر تعلیم، مزدوری	3000
عمران حسن پیر۔۔۔	15 سال	زیر تعلیم	
عزیز خان دختر۔۔۔	12 سال	۔۔۔	

اس طرح ساکن کا کتبہ 5 افراد پر مشتمل ہے اور کتبہ کی کل سالانہ آمدنی مدعترہ سے کم ہے کہ اگر کسی شخص کو مرتکبیت بڈا اجراء کرنے کے نسبت کوئی بڈا اعتراض ہو تو بعد مختصر اخبار سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض یا اعتراض عدالت بڈا کو دفتری اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گڈرنے میا کو کوئی بڈا اعتراض یا قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

تحریر الصدور نائب تحصیلدار دیالگام

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

NOTICE

Whereas an application has been recieved from one. Shri : Naseer Ahmad Alaie S/o: Mohd Abdullah Alaie R/o: Sundipora Shogapora Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04E-8006 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S J&K Bank B/U Khomani Chowk Bemina Budgam.

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.1924
 Dated 26-11-2020

Assistant Regional Transport officer
 Budgam Kashmir

از نیات نائب تحصیلدار دیالگاجلاس جاوید احمد حکیم
 درخواست از جانب: شتادین جان وسانہ جان واداعی منظور اودان منظور حاکم تھرا سرائان لال تحصیل و ضلع اہت ناگ برادر حصول یک وارڈا تیرا برتکبیت۔
استھار بمراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام
 مالمندرجہ ذیل عنوان الصدور میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست حصول یک وارڈا تیرا برتکبیت دفتر بڈا کو پیش کیا ہے درخواست بڈا کے ساتھ رپورٹ بنواری حلقہ شامل ہے رپورٹ فائدہ عملہ سے عیاں ہوتا ہے کہ ساکن پچھلے پندرہ سالوں سے مسلسل طور پر رہائش پذیر ہے اور ساکن نے بھی کبھی ترک سکونت نہیں کی ہے تفصیل افراد کتبہ و نام رپورٹ بڈیل ہے۔

نام صاحب کتبہ عدولیت	عمر	پیشہ	آمدنی
تاجیو غلام حسن راتھر	69 سال	فیکلٹی پیشہ	LPC
منظور احمد ولد غلام حسن	47 سال	ملازم	LPC
روزی جان زوجہ منظور احمد	44 سال	۔۔۔	LPC
سہلا جان دختر منظور احمد	10 سال	زیر تعلیم	
عثمان پیر۔۔۔	08 سال	۔۔۔	
شانی جان دختر۔۔۔	27 سال	۔۔۔	
سانہ جان دختر۔۔۔	25 سال	۔۔۔	
انعام الحق منظور پیر۔۔۔	22 سال	۔۔۔	

اس طرح ساکن کا کتبہ 8 افراد پر مشتمل ہے اور کتبہ کی کل سالانہ آمدنی **840388** تک ہے کہ اگر کسی شخص کو مرتکبیت بڈا اجراء کرنے کے نسبت کوئی بڈا اعتراض ہو تو بعد مختصر اخبار سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض یا اعتراض عدالت بڈا کو دفتری اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گڈرنے میا کو کوئی بڈا اعتراض یا قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

تحریر الصدور نائب تحصیلدار دیالگام

اطلاع عام

ہمیں اپنے نیکل کا نام یا کتا میں تبدیلی کی مطلوب ہے جو کہ اس طرح سے ہیں مرحوم عبدالرزاق لون ولد عبدالحق لون ساکن پھلگام کے بدلے آگے بیٹیاں نامہم یوسف لون و مہرا سحاق لون پیران مرحوم عبدالرزاق لون کے نام پر رجسٹریشن کر کے مطلوب ہے اس بارے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی بھی مزید یا اعتراض ہو تو بعد سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض یا بی ڈی ڈی میں پیش کریں۔ معیا گڈرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی مدعا قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

ID NO:-820902000639, Cell No,7006775224

LG leads Constitution Day celebrations; reads out 'Preamble'

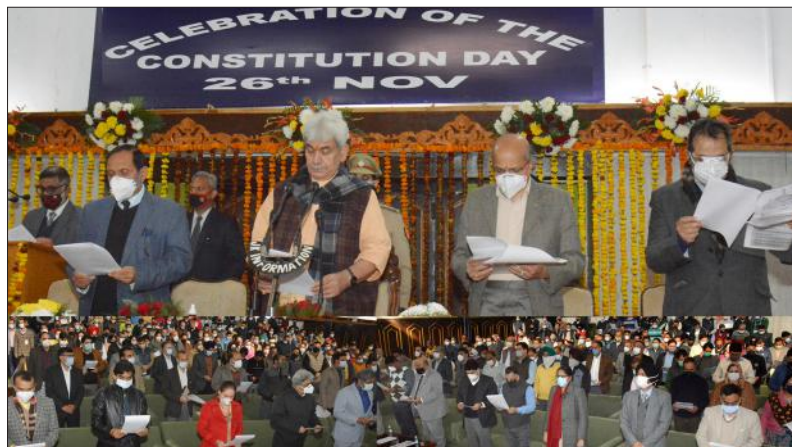
'Let us pledge to further strengthen our resolve to preserve & uphold the sanctity of the Constitution & the values enshrined in it'

JAMMU- Leading the celebrations of the Constitution Day in J&K, Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha read out the 'Preamble' of the Constitution of India in an impressive ceremony at the Civil Secretariat.

Marking the 71st anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution, the Lt Governor administered a pledge to government officials for upholding the sanctity of the Constitution. "Let us pledge to further strengthen our resolve to preserve and uphold the sanctity of the Constitution and the values enshrined in it," remarked the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor observed that the virtues of liberty, equality and fraternity; which were held supreme by Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar during the compilation of the Constitution, are still equally relevant for us today.

71 years ago, the foundation of a sovereign and united modern India was laid, at the heart of which lies our Constitution, said the Lt Governor, adding that, we all must work together to uphold the unity in diversity of India and celebrate the day as a mark of gratitude and respect to the framers of the world's lengthiest written Constitution of the largest democracy.



The Lt Governor urged all the citizens of J&K to follow the path shown by the founding fathers of the Constitution and to perform our

fundamental duties with equal enthusiasm with which we enjoy our fundamental rights.

Advisors to the Lieutenant Governor, Chief Secretary, Financial Commissioners, Administrative Secretaries, and officers & officials of the Civil Secretariat were present in large numbers on the occasion.

Mrs Hakim Ghulam Rasool Passes Away

Srinagar: Wife of late Hakim Ghulam Rasool of Bagwanpora passed away after a prolonged illness on Thursday.

A pious lady stood behind her late husband (Master Ghulam Rasool) during his illustrious struggle for the rights of Kashmiris till his death. She is survived by three sons, Hakim Masood-ul-Hassan, Hakim Mashood and Hakim Shahid and two

daughters.

She was laid to rest late Thursday evening at her ancestral graveyard in Hakim Mohalla Bagwanpora, Srinagar.

Expressing solidarity with the bereaved family a spokesman of Ittehadul Muslimeen paid rich tributes to the departed lady and recalled her contribution as great support behind her husband who was among the founders of the party.

KVFG Union calls on J&K Bank management

Srinagar- A delegation of Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers Cum Dealers Union (KVFG) led by its Chairman Bashir Ahmad Basheer Thursday called on J&K Bank management to discuss various matters related to fruit business at Bank's Corporate Office, Srinagar.

Executive President Arun Gandotra led the J&K Bank's team of top officers including Special Secretary to Chairman and Managing Director Karanjit Singh and Vice-President Manzoor Hussain who participated in the meeting.

The Executive President assured the delegation that J&K Bank will continue to support the fruit growers and dealers' community and reiterated their genuine demands will be addressed within regulatory framework. "Supporting fruit growers

and dealers is J&K Bank's top priority. The fruit growers are a vital and important cog of our economy and J&K Bank will always do its bit to support them at any level. We have a robust mechanism in place with multiple tailor-made schemes for fruit growers aimed at providing them hassle-free credit facilities laced with subsidies from UT and central governments. Many growers across the UT have benefited from these schemes over the years," said the Executive President.

J&K Bank, the EP said, has, over the years, played an instrumental role in extending benefits to the growers under various government sponsored schemes and packages from time to time. He advised the growers to take full advantage of various schemes designed for the horticulture sector.

SAD DEMISE

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the demise of our beloved mother Khatija Begum w/o late Ghulam Mohammad Hakak r/o Iqbal abad Kangan who passed away on 24th November, 2020 (Tuesday). The congregational feteiha khawani will be held on 27th November, 2020 (Friday) at their home Iqbalabad Kangan.

BEREAVED FAMILY
Bashir Ahmad Hakak (son)
Mohammad Ashraf Hakak (son)
Nisar Ahmad Hakak (Son)
Shabir Ahmad Hakak (son)

Note:- Females are requested not to bring any kind of fruits etc

Info

SAD DEMISE

With profound grief and sorrow, it is informed that Gul mohammad ganie R/o arbal rahilone eidgah srinagar left for heavenly abode on Thursday, 26 November, 2020. However, the feteiha khawani of the deceased will be held on Saturday, 28 November, 2020 at 10:30am at Khani Waniyar Noorbagh Srinagar. The visitors are requested to follow the Covid-19 protocols strictly, wear masks and maintain social distancing.



Bereaved: Altaf ahmad Ganie
+91 95955 18687

I-KO

Government of Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Corporation Divisional Geologist (Engg), Geological Division

JKSPDC Bemina, Srinagar

Email: kmrgeologist.jkspdc@gmail.com, Ph: 0194-24905015

Inviting Short Term Tender Notice

Tender No: 01 of 2020 Dated: 24-11-2020

Tenders are invited by Divisional Geologist (I Zngg), Geological Division Srinagar on behalf of Managing Director, JKSPDC for supply of labourers for conducting below-mentioned works falling in District, Kapwara. J&K for the year-2020-2021 from approved and eligible contractors/firms registered with Jammu and Kashmir Govt.

Name of Work	Name of the Scheme/s	Earnest Money
Supply of labourers required for conducting Geological and Geotechnical field investigations falling in hilly terrain for the year 2020-2021 as and when required.	Matchil HEP and others District: Kapwara	Rs 1800.00

Terms and conditions:

- The tenders should be delivered on or before 02.12.2020 before 3:00 PM to the undersigned office.
- The tenders should be attached with an EMD for Rs 1800/- pledged to Geologist, Geological Division, JKSPDC Srinagar.
- Tender received after expiry date shall not be entertained.
- The rates quoted should be per unskilled / skilled labour per day.
- The labourers should be provided as and when required.
- The bidder should produce following documents to the undersigned Office before opening the tender.
 - PAN Card.
 - Registration Card
 - GST No.
- Clarifications if any shall be sought from Office of the undersigned from 15.11.2020 to 28.11.2020
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bid.

DIPK-NB-4174/20

No: GD/PDC/96
Dated: 4-11-2020

(Ravi Ji Pandita)
Divisional Geologist (Engg) Geological
Division JKSPDC Srinagar

High Court Of Jammu And Kashmir

(Office of the Registrar General at Jammu)

NOTIFICATION

No. 288/NG

Dated: 25.11.2020

It is hereby notified that the candidates who have applied for the posts of Junior Assistants pursuant to notification No. 01/2018 dated 18.04.2018; Data Entry Operators pursuant to notification No. 107 dated 13.04.2009 & notification No. 03/2018 dated 10.09.2018 and Computer Operators pursuant to notification No. 554 dated 29.09.2009 & 03/2018 dated 10.09.2018 in the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir that their online computer based test shall be conducted on 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th December, 2020. The candidates are informed that they can download their admit cards from the official website of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir w.e.f 28.11.2020 from 6:00 PM onwards. The syllabus and structure for the online computer based test for the posts of Junior Assistant has already been notified Vide Notification No. 49/NG dated 15.10.2020 and published in two leading newspapers i.e Daily Excelsior and Greater Kashmir on 16.10.2020. The syllabus for the online examination for the posts of Data Entry Operators and Computer Operators also have already been notified Vide Notification No. 851/NG dated 17.10.2020 and published in two leading newspapers i.e Daily Excelsior and Greater Kashmir on 19.10.2020 and 20.10.2020 respectively.

Candidates are further informed that detailed information including the date of test, address of the venue of the examination centre, reporting time, time of examination and general instructions are available on the admit card which the candidate shall download from official website of the High Court (www.jkhighcourt.nic.in). The link for demo test of the on-line examination for the said posts is also available on the official website of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir.

(Jawad Ahmed)
Registrar General

No.: 17398-419/NG dated: 25.11.2020

DIPK-9609/20



PUNJABI UNIVERSITY PATIALA, PUNJAB

(Established Under Punjab Act No.35 of 1961)

(NAAC ACCREDITED GRADE 'A')

RESULT NOTIFICATION DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Abid Ibrahim Para S/O Mohd. Ibrahim Para R/O Agar, Dangerpora, Pattan, Jammu & Kashmir bearing University Registration NO.PU(P)2015-2491 who pursued his Ph.D programme on whole time basis in the Department of Persian, Urdu and Arabic, Punjabi University Patiala and submitted his thesis entitled "Punjab Mein Ahem Farsi Rubai Go Shoara: Ek Tajziati Mutalia" under the supervision of Dr. Zain Ul Eba (Assistant Professor), Nawab Sher Mohammad Khan Institute of Advanced Studies, Malerkotla, Punjab is declared qualified for the award of Ph.D degree in Persian on 07-10-2020 in the faculty of Languages.

NO: Ph.D/1140
Dated: 21/10/2020

F-KO

Controller of Examination
Superintendent of Examination



University Of Kashmir

NAAC ACCREDITED GRADE A+

DATE SHEET FOR

B.P.Ed-II Semester batch 2019-20/ Backlog & B.P.Ed III Semester batch 2018-19/ backlog Session: December, 2020.

Time:- 11.00 A.M

Venue:- Govt. College of Physical
Education, Gadoora Ganderbal, Kashmir.

Date	B.P.Ed II Semester	B.P.Ed III Semester
10-12-2020	*****	Measurement & Evaluation in PE (CC-301)
12-12-2020	*****	Computer Application in Physical Education (CC-302)
14-12-2020	*****	Sports Psychology & Sociology (CC-303)
16-12-2020	*****	Sports Medicine & Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation (CC-304)
23-12-2020	Yoga Education (CC-201)	*****
26-12-2020	Educational Technology & Method of Teaching in Physical Education (CC-202)	*****
28-12-2020	Health Education & Environmental Studies (CC-203)	*****
30-12-2020	Sports Fitness & Wellness (CC-204)	*****

No:F(Date Sheet/B.P.Ed 2nd & 3rd /Ku/2020/Gen-218
Dated:-26 Nov. 2020

**Assistant Controller of Examinations
(Prof. Conduct)**

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**
11 Rabi-us-Sani
1442

PRAYERS

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

This Day In History

- 1912 - Spanish protectorate in Morocco forms
- 1914 - 1st British woman elected political agent (Grantham, Lincolnshire)
- 1919 - Peace of Neuilly-sur-Seine: Allies & Bulgaria
- 1941 - British 13th Army Corps reaches Tobruk
- 1942 - Tito appoints Anti-fascist Liberation board in Yugoslavia
- 1951 - Cease-fire & demarcation zone accord signed in Panmunjon, Korea
- 1971 - Soviet Mars 2 becomes 1st spacecraft to crash land on Mars
- 1973 - US Senate votes 92-3 to confirm Gerald Ford as Vice President
- 1973 - US President Richard Nixon signs the Emergency Petroleum Allocation Act, authorizing petroleum price, production, allocation and marketing controls
- 1979 - 1st day-night one-day cricket international, Australia v WI at SCG
- 1980 - Soyuz T-3 carries 3 cosmonauts to Salyut 6 space station, launched
- 1982 - Yasuhiro Nakasone elected Prime Minister of Japan succeeding Zenko Suzuki
- 1982 - Davis Cup, Grenoble, France: US takes unassailable, 3-0 lead over France as John
- 1983 - Colombian jetliner Boeing 747 crashes in Madrid killing 181
- 1985 - Republic of Ireland gains consultative role in Northern Ireland
- 1989 - Colombian jetliner bombed killing 107
- 1991 - Undertaker beats Hulk Hogan to become new WWF champ
- 1993 - India defeat West Indies in Bengal Jubilee Cricket Final, Kumble 6-12
- 1994 - Julio Maria Sanguinetti elected president of Uruguay
- 1999 - New Zealand's Labour Party defeats the National-led government after 9 years in power, Helen Clark becomes the first elected female Prime Minister in New Zealand's history
- 2001 - A hydrogen atmosphere is discovered on the extrasolar planet Osiris by the Hubble Space Telescope, the first atmosphere detected on an extrasolar planet.
- 2004 - New Zealand's All Blacks thump Six Nations Rugby Union Champions France 45-6 in Paris
- 2005 - First partial human face transplant is completed for Isabelle Dinoire in Amiens, France.
- 2005 - President El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba of Gabon, in power since 1967 and the longest-serving head of state in the world, is re-elected to his third consecutive seven-year term
- 2006 - The Canadian House of Commons endorses Prime Minister Stephen Harper's motion to declare Quebec a nation within a unified Canada.
- 2011 - Roger Federer claims a record 6th ATP World Tour Finals tennis title with a 6-3, 6-7, 6-3 win over Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in the final in London, England
- 2012 - 29 people are killed and 126 are wounded by 8 car bombings across Iraq
- 2013 - Greece becomes the first developed market to be demoted into an emerging market by the MSCI index
- 2014 - Cricketer Phillip Hughes dies two days after being struck on the head by a bouncer
- 2017 - Pope Francis begins a three-day trip to Myanmar, amid the Rohingya refugee crisis
- 2017 - Freight trains kills more than 100 reindeer over three days in Norway
- 2018 - US accuses Nicaragua's Vice-President Rosario Murillo, wife of President Daniel Ortega of human rights abuses and imposes sanctions
- 2018 - Explosion near chemical company in Hebei Province, Northern China kills at least 23, injuring 22

From KO Archives

Mirwaiz's quit notice to India, Pak stirs debate

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will not offer any comment on reports that a senior member of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) had asked India and Pakistan to end the occupation of Kashmir and reunite the disputed territory, a senior Foreign Ministry official said on Monday.

The official was asked to comment on remarks by APHC leader Mirwaiz Omar Farooq whose interview was carried by a foreign news agency on Monday, quoting him as saying that Pakistan's occupation of one-third of Kashmir was also illegal and must be discussed in peace talks. The official said he would not comment on the interview, apparently on the grounds that it might or might not be as accurate as reported. But he seemed to be willing once the situation would be clear.

The official was also cautious because in the past, certain statements attributed to individuals by wire agencies or newspaper staffers on which different government officials had given comments, were contradicted the next day.

Diplomatic circles, however, received the contents of the interview with surprise and while some thought that Omar Farooq might have said what was reported, others disputed it, arguing that he could not possibly have said that.

Some local leaders, belonging to various Kashmiri groups, also chose to wait rather than jump to any conclusions. The Kashmiri leaders are due to resume their unfinished meeting on Wednesday to further discuss India's ceasefire offer. The last meeting had remained inconclusive although the cease-fire offer was described as a positive step.

An Associated Press (AP) report had quoted the Mirwaiz, Maulvi Umar Farooq having said in an interview on Monday "India and Pakistan should both end their forced occupation of Kashmir and reunite the disputed valley."

Mirwaiz Maulvi Umar Farooq, Kashmir's highest Islamic leader and one of the key decision-makers of the APHC, said his group welcomed Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's offer for talks and said it was waiting for New Delhi to formally invite them.

Vajpayee announced on November 19 that the Indian army would cease military action in occupied Kashmir during Ramadan, except in cases of self-defence. Indian officials say they, in turn, are waiting for the separatists to approach them for talks aimed at ending the 11-year violence.

Mirwaiz said that Pakistan's occupation of one-third of Kashmir was also illegal and must be discussed in peace talks. (KASHMIR OBSERVER, 27 NOVEMBER, 2000)

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Stemming renewed Covid surge

Union Government has released a new set of guidelines to be effective until December 31 which call for enforcement of Covid-appropriate behavior. Ministry of Home Affairs has asked states to strictly implement Standard Operating Procedures on various activities and regulate crowds. The states have been asked to impose additional fines and curbs on gatherings but there can't be any lockdown outside containment zones without the permission of the centre. There's also call for stricter enforcement of existing rules like mask-wearing, social distancing. Formal rules are being issued for markets and weekly bazaars too.

However in the demarcated red zones, the containment measures shall be followed. Among these include strict perimeter control to ensure there is no movement of people in or out of these zones, except for medical emergencies and for maintaining supply of essential goods and services.

But outside the containment zones, all activities have been allowed except the large gatherings. For example, in case of social, religious, educational, cultural etc assemblies, crowds only upto a maximum of 50 percent of the hall capacity can be allowed to gather.

Meanwhile, India's Covid-19 caseload has already passed 90 lakh contributed chiefly by a surge in places like New Delhi, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. This has already made India world's second-worst-hit country. The country has now more than 1.34 lakh deaths. However, this is widely seen as under-representing the true scale of infection. Though daily infections have declined to about 45000 from a peak of around one lakh in summer, a renewed winter surge is expected to take the numbers back up.

In summer, one reason for the exponential spread of the contagion in India and also in Kashmir was the badly implemented lockdown and the indifference being exhibited by the people towards safety precautions. Though it seems too late to reverse the tide, the government can still make a redeeming difference by getting people to obey the rules. And which is something that doesn't seem to be happening as aggressively as it should.

The world, meanwhile, is waiting for a vaccine with a bated breath. Though some vaccine candidates are about to hit the market, we are still some time away from their use. So, the governments world-over have no option but to buy time till the vaccines are ready and can be produced on a mass scale. On a positive note, the recoveries in India have been higher than the global average. With hopefully, the vaccine around the corner, things from hereon are only expected to look up. While the union government will need to take measures to steer the nation through this critical period, the onus is also on the ordinary people to exercise the safety precautions to ensure the infection is held in check.

OTHER OPINION

Inducting the 'hijab'

Giant strides are often taken by smaller nations. New Zealand recently announced that it would induct the hijab as part of its police uniform. The nation is led by a feisty woman prime minister who had sent out a refreshing signal of empathy and solidarity towards a besieged Muslim population by donning the hijab after the horrific attack in Christchurch in 2019. The spirit of accommodation has been central to New Zealand's policymaking: the turban made it to the uniform way back in 2008, four years before Britain, the mother of democracies, accepted a turbaned guardsman at Buckingham Palace. The power of such symbolism should not be underestimated. Wellington believes that the police-hijab will encourage greater participation from Muslim women into a force that considers diversity — this must not be ignored either — as one of its core values.

What makes New Zealand's gesture striking is the current global political climate that is afflicted with a potent strain of Islamophobia. With this outreach, New Zealand has given the liberal world much to ponder too. The hijab has a contentious legacy across cultures. It has been banned under the French model of secularism that endorses the principle of neutrality. Jacinda Ardern's country seems to be challenging discrimination not through cold impartiality but by encouraging, as a matter of policy, a warmer, humane co-existence among faiths. The conflation of secularism with the anti-faith rhetoric has been exploited by nationalist political forces. New Zealand, arguably, is experimenting with a new form of secular ethic that seeks to articulate the rightful co-existence of all faiths without condescendingly dismissing public sentiments attached to them and their associated symbols. The resurgence of secularism, an element integral to the edifice of equality, may well begin with this formula.

Telegraph India

A Graveyard of Reputations

Why J&K National Conference Should Introspect to Redeem and Reinvent Itself



Gowhar Geelani

Many key Kashmir watchers are of considered opinion that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah committed "original sin" in the late 1930s when he rechristened the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, region's first political party, as the J&K National Conference.

In their appreciation, the second big political blunder that the Sheikh committed was his unpopular accord with the late Indira Gandhi in the mid-1970s. In his presidential address at the party's sixth annual session on 26 March 1938, the Sheikh had said: "Like us, a majority of Hindus and Sikhs in the state have immensely suffered at the hands of the irresponsible government....The main problem, therefore, now is to organize joint action and a united front against the forces that stand in our way in the achievement of our goal. This will require rechristening our organization as a non-communal political body." ("The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir: Cultural and Political, from the Earliest Times to the Present Day" by Prem Nath Bazaz)

Meanwhile, as the constitutional posts of Wazir-e-Azam (Prime Minister) and Sadr-e-Riyasat (equivalent to President) in Jammu and Kashmir were removed in the 1960s, senior Abdullah ended up accepting the post of Chief Minister after spearheading the Plebiscite Front movement for over two decades. Abdullah's detractors saw this as somersault and surrender. His admirers though would point towards the fall of Dacca in 1971 as reason behind his decision.

Ather Zia and Javid Iqbal Bhat, two Kashmiri academics, in the introduction of the book edited by them titled, A Desolation Called Peace: Voices from Kashmir argue that, "In the 1940s, Sheikh Abdullah was seen as an unrelenting figure of Kashmiri nationalism. He was the founder of the National Conference party, which in 1931 began as the Muslim Conference. He became the first Muslim prime minister of Jammu and Kashmir. His political missions ranged from spearheading the Quit Kashmir movement against the Dogra warlords to forming the Plebiscite Front to demand the right of self-determination for Kashmiris."

one point in time in history, the NC envisaged, "an independent Kashmir as an Asian Switzerland. Its position, however, was weakened by collaboration with the Maharaja's regime in the name of support for the British war effort, and then by an unsuccessful attempt to redeem itself by campaigning for his ouster, which landed Abdullah in jail in 1946." (The Indian Ideology, Perry Anderson, p. 78, 79) Supporters of the NC may argue that it was Sheikh Abdullah who introduced the revolutionary land reforms in the restive region and played a significant role in both economic and political awakening of the people of J&K. But what they must probe and reflect on are these questions: What made the National Conference bury the movement that it had supposedly spearheaded? What made the party describe its political struggle (Mahaz-e-Rai Shumari) as political meandering and wilderness? Why are the people unwilling to place their trust in the oldest political formation at the present moment?

Dispassionate analyses and honest answers to the above questions are important for the NC to stand in front of a mirror for introspection.

For the last three decades or so, the NC has been mocking the other ideological camp active in J&K and accusing it of, "chasing an unrealistic dream." The party has been relentlessly arguing that reversing the clock back to 1953 (regional autonomy or pre-1953 status for J&K when New Delhi had control over only communications, currency, defence and foreign policy) was the ideal solution for Kashmir dispute.

With even the leftovers of that semi-autonomy gone with the winds on August 5 last year, the NC leadership has no option but to look within, introspect, and perhaps put its renewed mission statement in black and white before the people of J&K. The party must explain its political agenda without mincing words, without ambiguity, and with sincerity of purpose and clarity of thought. What does the NC advocate?



With even the leftovers of that semi-autonomy gone with the winds on August 5 last year, the NC leadership has no option but to look within, introspect, and perhaps put its renewed mission statement in black and white before the people of J&K

What solution for J&K does the party believe in? And what is the party going to do about it? All these questions must be answered.

Unfortunately, like other regional unionist parties, the National Conference too has loved and lived lies, taken refuge in flowery rhetoric and public posturing during election times, indulged in doublespeak, and also changed its stance at critical junctures.

After the unparalleled rigging of the 1987 elections in J&K, there were no elections held in the region for nearly a decade. Again, it was the NC which fought the elections in 1996 without getting any commitment from New Delhi in black and white. Farooq Abdullah hankered after power and showed no respect for the dignity of the people that he claimed to represent.

His capitulation in 1996 was similar to the surrender offered by his late father, Sheikh Abdullah, in 1975 after suffering in prison for over two decades in separate stints. The Abdullah family has demonstrated that for petty power it can only lower the bar and never raise it.

Amarjit Singh Dulat, India's former spy-master and chief of the RA&W, in his memoir, Kashmir: The Vajpayee Years notes that Farooq Abdullah had told KM Singh, then the top Intelligence Bureau (IB) man in Srinagar, that he had agreed to contest the 1996 Assembly elections for the government of India wanted him to contest, and at the time, he had made it known to the government in New Delhi that he needed a plank to fight an election.

"Autonomy had been that plank."

The NC supporters may argue that it was their party which passed an autonomy resolution in the J&K Legislative Assembly with two-thirds majority on June 26, 2000. The autonomy resolution was adopted by voice vote after accepting the report and recommendations of the then State Autonomy Committee (SAC). No two opinions about that. But what transpired afterwards is more attention-grabbing. It tells a story.

Indeed, the NC's autonomy resolution had "shocked" the BJP.

LK Advani, former deputy prime minister of India, in his autobiography, My Country My Life, while talking about the NC's autonomy resolution in a chapter entitled "Dealing With The Kashmir Issue" writes: "The nation was shocked on June 26, 2000, during the Vajpayee government's rule in New Delhi, when the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly adopted a report of the State Autonomy Committee (SAC) and asked the Centre to immediately implement it. The SAC recommended return of the constitutional situation in Jammu and Kashmir to its pre-1953 status by restoring to the state all subjects of governance except defence, foreign affairs, currency and communication."

Subsequently, the BJP-led NDA Union cabi-

net, in its meeting on July 4, 2000, rejected the NC's autonomy resolution passed by the J&K Assembly. On the same day, Advani adopted a hawkish stand on the issue and told the media that accepting the autonomy resolution will, "set the clock back".

Advani further writes how Farooq Abdullah had allowed the issue of J&K's autonomy to lapse after, "Atalji (AB Vajpayee) told Dr Abdullah to decide whether to continue in the NDA at the Centre following the Union Cabinet's rejection of the state assembly's autonomy resolution."

Advani minces no words and explains how the NC chewed up its demand, "This was one occasion when both Atalji and I had to be very firm with the state's chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, whose National Conference was in fact a part of the ruling NDA at the Centre. We advised him not to press for the implementation of the SAC report." "To his credit, Dr Abdullah allowed the issue to lapse," Advani notes.

It is precisely because of these flip-flops that a deep-rooted perception exists in the Kashmir Valley that they (the Abdullahs and the Muftis) represent New Delhi in Kashmir, not Kashmir in New Delhi. Both parties want to be on the right side of New Delhi.

The restive region's political space was dominated and occupied by the National Conference in the 1940s and 1950s. And Sheikh Abdullah was the prime minister. But he was unceremoniously removed from his post and sent to prison for 22 years in separate stints. Similarly, in 1984, Farooq Abdullah was the region's chief minister. His government

was toppled and his brother-in-law, G M Shah, installed as replacement. Both Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah were kept under detention in 2019. And both are unwilling to put up a meaningful political resistance. Their decision to contest the District Development Council (DDC) polls demonstrates their desperation and uncontrollable urge to hanker after power.

For several years, the National Conference in some ways represented the Kashmiri nationalism. For many years afterwards, the party got confused about the very purpose of its existence, objectives and mission. Officially, the NC claims that it espouses regional autonomy for Jammu and Kashmir. In practice, however, the party is normalizing the August 5 decision taken by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The National Conference, it appears, refuses to draw any lessons from the past. In a way, the party is digging its own grave. And it is in the process of writing epitaph of the NC's tombstone. Indeed, Kashmir is a graveyard of reputations!

Gowhar Geelani is an author-journalist



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

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Stigma Of Testing Positive for Covid-19

The COVID-19 pandemic is a new global catastrophe that is beyond the scientific postulations of the epidemiological model, philosophical insights and sociological imaginations. Who could possibly have thought that staying healthy would become a greater priority than making money? Well, Here comes the new normal.

The term we ought to use is physical distance, not social. Socially we are trying to get closer than ever. We are on endless WhatsApp chats, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook connections. We have video conferences with

family, friends, relatives, cousins and colleagues; playing games on multiple apps. Man is a social animal. We need human interaction to feel normal. We need to talk, read, reach out and connect in some way or the other.

Physical distancing is important, we do not have to shake hands or hug, but when our smiles are hidden behind the masks let us try to make eye contact, let us wave out to each other, let us wish good evening from balconies. Reach out to people around you to let them know you still want to remain connected.

The accelerating spread of CO-

VID-19 and its upshots has led people to fear, panic, concern, and anxiety, and thus, it constitutes stigma as the socio-psychological disease. Among various significant factors, feelings of existential insecurity and strong aloofness with diffused fear, expectations about the responsibility for the infected, and labelling behavior with a psychiatric diagnosis are the prime reasons for growing social stigma upon the coronavirus patients.

We all need to remove the stigma of COVID-19. The only thing we need to feel is empathy. Please remember if today someone else has come posi-

tive, tomorrow it might be you or someone in your family. What goes around, comes around. Treat anyone you know who is positive with love, empathy and compassion. Reach out with words of encouragement and prayers. Let them know you are their friend even in the worst of times.

Let's remember to remain physically distant but close to each other's hearts. Remove the stigma of being COVID-19 positive. We might be next, make no mistake.

Sheikh Aabid
imabid710@gmail.com

Dying Waters of Shairbagh, Anantnag

A call for the restoration of its lost glory

Hilal Ahmad Bhat

This famous and beautiful place is losing its charm and glory now. If steps are not taken to restore its glory and charm, this famous place will soon become history and we would be forced to mourn in regret.



Shairbagh is one of the important places in the Valley of Kashmir and lies in the heart of Anantnag town in South Kashmir. The name of the town itself depicts that it is a land of many springs. Shairbagh has many gardens and springs inside it. It is known as a place of communal harmony. One can see masjid, temple and guruduwara side by side there. It is a place of tourist destination as well. However, the present condition of shairbagh and springs inside it is abysmal. Once clear, the waters now stink and are unclean. These waters which saw a thriving

aquatic life earlier, hardly have a single fish swimming through it. The gardens of the Shairbagh are also almost always silent, empty and deserted. In the last decade or so, this beautiful place has lost its glory and charm. Though many a times some repairing was done but it was inconsequential and in some ways worsened its condition. The banks and depths of springs were fitted with tiles, while ignoring the nature of water that would flow there. These springs contain sulphur. With the passage of time the sulphur containing water started producing muddy weeds in the depths

of springs because of tiled floors and absence of gaps, thereby constraining and contaminating the flow of water. There should have been sand slit and stones in the depths of waters of these spring as was in the past to keep the flow of water crystal clean. These springs would often invite many youth who would take a dip or two in its clean waters during summer seasons. With the condition of water now, such indulgences seem like a far cry. Not so long ago, one could see crowds of people in the parks of shairbagh. Even tourists from other districts who used to be on a trip to Pahalgam or other Mughal gradens of district

Anantnag used to have stay and a cup of tea in the Shairbagh on their way back home. However, now, the situation is completely different. Neither the tourists nor the locals acknowledge the presence of these desolate gardens. This famous and beautiful place is losing its charm and glory now. If steps are not taken to restore its glory and charm, this famous place will soon become history and we would be forced to mourn in regret. We'd then say, "Once there was a beautiful place called Shairbagh"

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The author is a teacher



Climate Crisis Literature

Ian Lowe

This time there are some really big names: How to Avoid a Climate Disaster by Bill Gates, Climate Crisis and the Global New Deal by Noam Chomsky and Robert Pollin, All We Can Save by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Katharine K. Wilkinson, What Can I Do? The Truth About Climate Change and How to Fix It by Jane Fonda, as well as new efforts from David Attenborough and Tim Flannery. The incoming tide of new books makes me reflect and wonder whether writing still more books about climate change is a waste of precious time. When the UN is calling for governments to act to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, are books just preaching to the converted? My answer is no, but that doesn't mean publishing, buying or reading more books is the answer to our climate emergency right now.

Decades of books

In April, on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the New York Times told readers this might be the year they finally read about climate change. But many already have. The earliest titles date back to 1989: The Greenhouse Effect, Living in a Warmer Australia by Ann Henderson-Sellers and Russell Blong; my own contribution, Living in the Greenhouse, and the first book aimed at the US public, Bill McKibben's The End of Nature. The science was still developing then. We knew human activity was increasing the atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane. Measurable changes to the climate were also clear: more very hot days, fewer very cold nights, changes to rainfall patterns. The 1985 Villach conference had culminated in an agreed statement warning there could be a link, but cautious scientists were saying more research was needed before we could be confident the changes had a human cause. There were credible alternative theories: the energy from the Sun could be changing, there could be changes in the Earth's orbit, there might be natural factors we had not recognised. By the mid-1990s, the debate was essentially over in the scientific community. Today there is barely a handful of credible climate scientists who don't accept the evidence that human activity has caused the changes we are seeing. The agreed statements by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the IPCC, led to the Kyoto Protocol being adopted in 1997.



The urgent priority now is to turn into action the knowledge we have about the accelerating impacts of climate change and economically viable responses

And so — as the urgency being felt by the scientists increased — more books were published. Former US vice president and 2007 Nobel Prize winner Al Gore's book Our Choice: A Plan to Solve the Climate Crisis was first published in 2008 and has since been issued in 20 editions. There have been more than enough books to furnish a list of the top 100 bestselling titles on the topic, recommended by the likes of Elon Musk and esteemed climate scientists and commentators. The ones I have acquired fill an entire bookcase shelf — dozens of titles describing the problem, making dire predictions, calling for action. Deeds not words Does the new batch of books risk spreading more despair? If the previous books didn't change our climate trajectory then what is the point in making readers feel the cause is hopeless and a

bleak future is inevitable? No. Writing more books isn't a waste of time, but they also shouldn't be a high priority at the moment. The point of writing a book is to summarise what we know about the problem and identify credible ways forward. Those were my goals when I wrote Living in the Greenhouse in 1989 and Living in the Hothouse in 2005. The main purpose of the first book was to draw attention to a problem that was largely unrecognised, trying to inform and persuade readers that we needed to take action. By the release of the second book, the aim was to counter the tsunami of misinformation unleashed by the fossil fuel industry, conservative institutions and the Murdoch press. Rupert Murdoch spoke at News Corp's AGM this week, maintaining: "We do not deny climate change, we are not deniers". But there are two reasons why I'm not working on a third book right now.

The first is time. If I started writing today, it would be late next year before the book would be in the shops. We can't afford another year of inaction. More importantly, the inaction of our national government is not a result of a lack of knowledge. On November 9, United Nations chief António Guterres said the world was still falling well short of the leadership required to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050: Our goal is to limit temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Today, we are still headed towards three degrees at least. Some believe the inaction is explained by the corruption of our politics by fossil fuel industry donations. Others see it as a fundamental conflict between the concerted action needed and the dominant ideologies of governing parties. Making decision-makers better informed about the science won't solve

either of these problems. They might be solved, however, by the evidence that a growing majority of voters want to see action to slow climate change. And the COVID-19 pandemic has focused, rather than distracted, the community on the risks of climate change. A recent survey by the Boston Consulting Group of 3,000 people across eight countries found about 70% of respondents are now more aware of the risks of climate change than they were before the pandemic. Three-quarters say slowing climate change is as important as protecting the community from COVID-19. The growing awareness and sense of urgency are backed by another recent study looking at internet search behaviour across 20 European countries. Researchers found signs of growing support for a post-COVID recovery program that emphasises sustainability.

Change is happening, more is needed

Still, preaching to the converted is not necessarily a bad thing. They might need to be reminded why they were persuaded that action is needed, or need help countering the half-truths and barefaced lies being peddled in the public debate. Books can fulfil that mission. So can speaking to community groups, which I do regularly. I tell audiences the urgent priority now is to turn into action the knowledge we have about the accelerating impacts of climate change and economically viable responses. Our states and territories now have the goal of zero-carbon by 2050, so I am giving presentations spelling out how this can be achieved. We urgently need the Commonwealth government to catch up to the community. Climate action protest sign above crowd. Mass protests have called for environmental leadership. Unsplash/Markus Spiske, CC BY Change is happening rapidly. More than 2 million Australian households now have solar panels. Solar and wind provided more than half of the electricity used by South Australia last year and that state achieved a world-first on the morning of October 11: for a brief period, its entire electricity demand was met by solar panels. The urgent task is not to publish more books on the crisis, but to change the political discourse and force our national government to play a positive role.

By Arrangements
With Conversation

New modified wheat variety could help tackle global food shortage

Researchers at the University of York have created a new modified wheat variety that increases grain production by up to 12 per cent.

Wheat is one of the most important food crops in the world, providing 20 per

Most improvements have been made by breeding varieties that produce higher numbers of grain, but it should also be possible to increase yield by producing plants with bigger grains. When this has been achieved, however, it is accompanied by a decrease in grain numbers.

Researchers at the University of York have now resolved this issue by directly modifying the growth of the young developing grain by increasing the amount of a protein that controls growth rates in plants. This resulted in plants that produced grain that are up to

cent of human calories. With ever increasing global food demand, increasing crop yield is critically important.

Wheat breeders work hard to increase yield to meet global demand, but since the 'green revolution' of the 1960s, the rate of yield increase has been slowing and is currently less than one per cent per year.

12 per cent bigger than in the conventional variety. In field experiments conducted by their collaborators in Chile, they found that there was no decrease in grain number, resulting in an increase in yield.

"Experts predict that we need to increase global food production by 50 per cent by 2030 in order to meet demand

from population growth. The negative impacts of climate change on crop yields are making this even more challenging. While researchers are working hard to meet this challenge, there remains a lot to do," Professor Simon McQueen-Mason, from the University of York's Centre for Novel Agricultural Products (CNAP) at the Department of Biology, said.

"Attempts to increase the yield of wheat have been thwarted by the apparent trade-off between grain size and grain number. We decided to side-step this complex control system by giving a boost to the natural growth system that controls the size of plant tissues. We did this by increasing the levels of a protein called expansin, which is a major determinant of growth in plants. We targeted this modification so that it was confined to developing wheat grain, and are delighted by the results," added Mason.

Research partners at the Universidad Austral de Chile conducted field experiments that demonstrated the effectiveness of the plants under agricultural conditions.

The team are now looking at ways to make this research accessible to farmers and the wider industry to help inform their decisions on crop production. —Agencies

Neuroscientists find isolation provokes brain activity similar to that seen during hunger cravings

In a recent study, neuroscientists have found that the longings for social interaction felt during isolation are neurologically very similar to the food cravings people experience when hungry. The researchers found that after one day of total isolation, the sight of people having fun together activates the same brain region that lights up when someone who hasn't eaten all day sees a picture of a plate of cheesy pasta.

"People who are forced to be isolated crave social interactions similarly to the way a hungry person craves food. Our finding fits the intuitive idea that positive social interactions are a basic human need, and acute loneliness is an aversive state that motivates people to repair what is lacking, similar to hunger," says Rebecca Saxe, the John W. Jarve Professor of Brain and Cognitive Sciences at MIT, a member of MIT's McGovern Institute for Brain Research, and the senior author of the study.

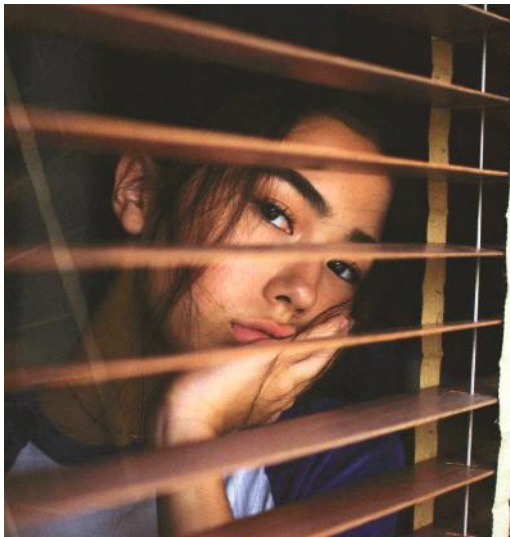
The research team collected the data for this study in 2018 and 2019, long before the coronavirus pandemic and resulting lockdowns. Their new findings, described today in *Nature Neuroscience*, are part of a larger research program focusing on how social stress affects people's behavior and motivation.

Former MIT postdoc Livia Tomova, who is now a research associate at Cambridge University, is the lead author of the paper. Other authors include Kimberly Wang, a McGovern Institute research associate; Todd Thompson, a McGovern Institute scientist; Atsushi Takahashi, assistant director of the Martinos Imaging Center; Gillian Matthews, a research scientist at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies; and Kay Tye, a professor at the Salk Institute.

Social craving The new study was partly inspired by a recent paper from Tye, a former member of MIT's Picower Institute for Learning and Memory. In that 2016 study, she and Matthews, then an MIT postdoc, identified a cluster of neurons in the brains of mice

that represent feelings of loneliness and generate a drive for social interaction following isolation. Studies in humans have shown that being deprived of social contact can lead to emotional distress, but the neurological basis of these feelings is not well-known.

"We wanted to see if we could experimentally induce a certain kind of social stress, where we would have control over what the social stress was," Saxe says. "It's a stronger intervention of social isolation



than anyone had tried before."

To create that isolation environment, the researchers enlisted healthy volunteers, who were mainly college students, and confined them to a windowless room on MIT's campus for 10 hours. They were not allowed to use their phones, but the room did have a computer that they could use to contact the researchers if necessary.

"There were a whole bunch of interventions we used to make sure that it would really feel strange and different and isolated," Saxe says. "They had to let us know when they were going to the bathroom so we could make sure it was empty. We delivered food to the door and then texted them when it was there so they could go get it. They really were not allowed to

see people." After the 10-hour isolation ended, each participant was scanned in an MRI machine. This posed additional challenges, as the researchers wanted to avoid any social contact during the scanning. Before the isolation period began, each subject was trained on how to get into the machine, so that they could do it by themselves, without any help from the researcher.

"Normally, getting somebody into an MRI machine is actually a really social process. We engage in all kinds of social interactions to make sure people understand what we're asking them, that they feel safe, that they know we're there," Saxe says. "In this case, the subjects had to do it all by themselves, while the researcher, who was gownned and masked, just stood silently by and watched."

Each of the 40 participants also underwent 10 hours of fasting, on a different day. After the 10-hour period of isolation or fasting, the participants were scanned while looking at images of food, images of people interacting, and neutral images such as flowers. The researchers focused on a part of the brain called the substantia nigra, a tiny structure located in the midbrain, which has previously been linked with hunger cravings and drug cravings. The substantia nigra is also believed to share evolutionary origins with a brain region in mice called the dorsal raphe nucleus, which is the area that Tye's lab showed was active following social isolation in their 2016 study.

The researchers hypothesized that when socially isolated subjects saw photos of people enjoying social interactions, the "craving signal" in their substantia nigra would be similar to the signal produced when they saw pictures of food after fasting. This was indeed the case. Furthermore, the amount of activation in the substantia nigra was correlated with how strongly the patients rated their feelings of craving either food or social interaction. —Agencies

'AI, ML, 5G, IoT will be most important tech in 2021'

Artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, 5G and Internet of Things (IoT) would be the most important technologies in 2021, according to a new study by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

The technical professional organisation on Monday released the results of a survey of Chief Information Officers (CIO) and Chief Technology Officers (CTO) in the US, the UK, China, India and Brazil.

The survey was on the most important technologies for 2021, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the speed of their technology adoption and the industries expected to be most impacted by technology.

On which would be the most important technologies, nearly one-third of the total respondents (32 per cent) said AI and ML followed by 5G (20 per cent) and IoT (14 per cent), according to an IEEE statement.

Manufacturing (19 per cent), healthcare (18 per cent), financial services (15 per cent) and education (13 per cent) are the industries that most believe would be impacted

by technology, according to the CIOs and CTOs surveyed.

At the same time, more than half (52 per cent) of CIOs and CTOs see their biggest challenge as dealing with aspects of COVID-19 recovery in relation to business operations.

These challenges include a permanent hybrid remote and office work structure (22 per cent), office and facilities reopenings and return (17 per cent), and managing permanent remote working (13 per cent).

However, 11 per cent said the ability to stop and start IT initiatives as this unpredictable environment continues would be their biggest challenge.

Another 11 per cent cited online security threats, including those related to remote workers, as the biggest challenge they see.

CIOs and CTOs surveyed have sped up adopting some technologies due to the pandemic. More than half (55 per cent) of respondents have accelerated adoption of cloud computing, 52 per cent have accelerated 5G adoption and 51 per cent have accelerated AI and ML.

The adoption of IoT (42 per cent), augmented and virtual reality (35 per cent) and video conferencing (35 per cent) technologies have also been accelerated due to the global pandemic.

Compared to a year ago, CIOs and CTOs overwhelmingly (92 per cent) believe their company is better prepared to respond to a potentially catastrophic interruption such as a data breach or natural disaster.

"Whats more, of those who say they are better prepared, 58 per cent strongly agree that COVID-19 accelerated their preparedness," the statement said.

Asked which technologies would have the greatest impact on global COVID-19 recovery, one in four (25 per cent) of those surveyed said AI and ML.

The top two concerns for CIOs and CTOs when it comes to the cybersecurity of their organisation are security issues related to the mobile workforce including employees bringing their own devices to work (37 per cent) and ensuring the IoT is secure (35 per cent). —PTI

Government of Jammu & Kashmir							
Office of the Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.							
TENDER NOTICE							
e-NIT NO:- 03 OF 2020-21 DATED: - 27/11/2020							
For and on behalf of the Hon'ble Lt. Governor Jammu & Kashmir, e-tenders are invited from approved and eligible contractors registered with Union Territory of J&K/Central Govt. Organizations for the following works: -							
S. NO	NAME OF WORK	ADV. COST (Rs. In lacs)	EARNEST MONEY (Rs. In Lacs)	CLASS	Cost of TD	TIME OF COMPLETION	
1	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Shalidar Zakan Comptt. Rb 29-I (District Pulwama). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
2	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Shalidar Zakan Comptt. Rb 29-II (District Pulwama). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
3	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Nasarpora Comptt. Rb-30 (District Pulwama). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
4	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Krishpatri Comptt. Rb-19-I (District Shopian). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
5	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Lad Krishpatri Comptt. Rb-19-II (District Shopian). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
6	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Sarbal Krishpatri Comptt. Rb-23-24 (District Shopian). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
7	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Sonabanjan Kanidaj-an Comptt. Rb-32-a (District Budgam). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
8	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Sonabanjan Kanidaj-an Comptt. Rb-32-b (District Budgam). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
9	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Dampatch Yousmarg Comptt. Rb-31 (District Budgam). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
10	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Shangus Comptt. 67/K-I (District Anantnag). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
11	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Shangus Comptt. 67/K-II (District Anantnag). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
12	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Kokernag Comptt. 63/V-I (District Anantnag). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
13	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Kokernag Comptt. 63/V-II (District Anantnag). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
14	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Hlan Manzang Comptt. 34/V (District Kulgam). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
15	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Nandimarg DH-Pora Comptt. 5/N (District Kulgam). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
16	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Takya Kurshoo Ajas Comptt. 113/R (District Bandipora). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
17	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Kudara Ajas Comptt. 121/K (District Bandipora). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
18	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Malangam Comptt. 21/Kh (District Bandipora). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
19	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Baderhar Comptt. 3-4/b (District Kupwara). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
20	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Khurhama Lolab Comptt. 82/NL (District Kupwara). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
21	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Harwan Comptt. 23/Kandi (District Baramulla). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	2.269	4538	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
22	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Tangchatri Comptt. 10-Sindh (District Ganderbal). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	1.815	3630	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
23	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Akal Comptt. 10-Sindh (District Ganderbal). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	1.815	3630	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
24	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Akal Comptt. 06-Sindh (District Ganderbal). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	1.815	3630	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	30 Calendar days	
25	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Banjar Kadeem Comptt. 37/N (District Kulgam). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	4.538	9076	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	50 Calendar days	
26	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Doniwari Comptt. 21/b-K 6", 7th (District Kupwara). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	3.631	7262	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	35 Calendar days	
27	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Zaloor Comptt. 23/Kandi (District Baramulla). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	3.404	6808	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	35 Calendar days	
28	Providing and fixing of Barbed Wire Fencing in 4 strands with Wooden Fence Posts at Yeberzalwari Comptt. 25/Yambarzalwari (District Baramulla). Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department Srinagar Department Srinagar.	3.404	6808	"C&D"	Rs.200/=	35 Calendar days	

The e-NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bills of quantities, (B.O.Q) set of Terms & Conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental Website:- <https://jktenders.gov.in>.

Position of Funds: Available

Position of AA/TS: Accorded

Receiving/ Opening Authority.: Tender Opening Committee

Publishing Date:-	27-11-2020
Download Start Date:-	28-11-2020
Bid submission Start Date:-	28-11-2020
Bid submission End Date:-	14-12-2020 upto 06.00PM
Date of Opening of Technical Bid through online:	16-12-2020 at 02.00PM (In the office of the Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Department, at Forest Complex, Sheikh Bagh, Srinagar).

- The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website: - <https://jktenders.gov.in>
- The date for opening of Technical & Financial bids online shall be opened as per time schedule mentioned above.
- Bids uploaded must accompany Govt. Treasury Receipt (cost of tender document) in shape of Treasury Challan for the amount shown against the work above to be deposited in Govt. Treasury under Account Head 0406- Forest and earned money in shape of CDR/FDR pledged in favour of Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Complex, at Sheikh Bagh Srinagar. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of bids.
- In case the bid of lowest / successful bidder is found unbalanced then he has to produce additional performance security in the shape of CDR/FDR/Bank Guarantee from scheduled bank valid till completion of work before issuance of contract allotment as per details given below:-
 - Up to and including 15% below rate over advertised cost NIL
 - Greater than 15% up to and including 20% below rate over advertised cost 5% of advertised cost in shape of CDR/FDR/ Bank Guarantee.
 - Greater than 20% upto and including 25% below rate over advertised cost 10% of advertised cost in shape of CDR/FDR/ Bank Guarantee.
 - Greater than 25% upto and including 30% below rate over advertised cost 15% of advertised cost in shape of CDR/FDR/ Bank Guarantee.
 - Greater than 30% below rate over advertised cost 20% in shape of CDR/FDR/ Bank Guarantee.
- Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website jktenders.gov.in
- To participate in bidding process bidders have to get Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) as per Information Technology Act Bidders can get Digital Certificate form approved vendor.
- The bidders have to submit their Technical & financial bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No Technical or financial bid will be accepted in physical/hard form.
- Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents i.e CDR, Valid Registration Card issued by PWD/CPWD duly renewed for the current year 2020-21, PAN, Valid GST Registration, Govt. Treasury receipt/Challan (cost of Tender Document).
- The successful bidder has to produce Valid Labour Registration Certificate issued by Labour Department after issuance of award of contract.
- The Department will not be responsible for any delay in online submission of the bid due to any reason (technical or otherwise).
- The Department shall not be held responsible for selection criteria/policy matter being adopted by the Directorate of Information regarding publishing the NIT, in any of the newspaper under circulation.
- The bidders have to produce hard copies of original CDR/FDR and Govt. Treasury receipt on next day after opening Technical/ Financial bid.
- The tender accepting Authority however reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason therefor.
- If any Tenderer faces any difficulty in uploading the Tender, he can contact the Office of Agrostologist Kashmir Forest Complex, at Sheikh Bagh Srinagar during Office hours as he can be facilitated.
- All other terms and conditions shall remain same as per PWD form 25 (double leaf) and as per the detailed document.

No:- Agros/Kmr/2020/E-Tendering/1139-44
Dated: 27-11-2020

DIPK-9639/20

Agrostologist Kashmir,
Forest Department,
Srinagar.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF ACCOUNTS AND TREASURIES, J&K, JAMMU/SRINAGAR.

Subject:- Extension of date for submission of Life Certificate by pensioners/family pensioners.

CIRCULAR

In pursuance of rules, the pensioners drawing pension through Treasury/Bank are required to produce life certificate once in a calendar year. However, it has been brought to the notice of Finance Department by J&K Bank Ltd. as well as pensioners that most of the pensioners are not in a position to produce their mandatory Life Certificate by the cut-off date viz ending November, 2020 due to ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the vulnerability of elderly population to Corona Virus. The Bank/Treasury is, as such, required to extend the date for submission of Life Certificate to facilitate the pensioners to produce the same before the concerned Bank/ Treasury beyond the cut-off date.

In view of above, to void rush at Bank/Treasury and to facilitate the elderly pensioners to furnish the mandatory Life Certificate to the concerned authority of Bank/Treasury, the date for submission of LCs by the pensioners is hereby extended till 31st December, 2020. All the pensioners shall, therefore, furnish their Life Certificate to the concerned Bank/Treasury by or before 31st of December, 2020, failing which their pension shall not be disbursed.

Sd/- (Mahesh Dass),
Director General,
Accounts & Treasuries,
Finance Department.

DIPK-9618/20

No. DGAT/Comp-Try/DLC/01/208

Dated: 26.11.2020

Turkey jails hundreds for life over 2016 failed coup attempt

Agencies

Ankara: A Turkish court has jailed 337 former pilots and other suspects for life over plot to overthrow President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in a failed coup attempt four years ago, a court document obtained by AFP news agency showed on Thursday.

Nearly 500 defendants were accused of carrying out the attempt to overthrow the government on July 15, 2016, from an airbase near the capital Ankara.

More than 250 people were killed in the attempt as rogue soldiers commandeered warplanes, helicopters and tanks in a bid to take control of key state institutions.

The trial was the highest-profile of dozens of court cases targeting thousands of people accused of involvement in the coup attempt, which Ankara blamed on the supporters of the United States-based Muslim preacher and businessman, Fethullah Gulen.

the night of the coup.

Four ringleaders, dubbed "civilian imams" over ties to Gulen's network, were given 79 aggravated life sentences for charges of attempting to assassinate the president, murder, and seeking to overthrow the constitutional order, Anadolu said.

Al Jazeera's Sinem Koseoglu, reporting from Istanbul, said there were 10 civilians in this trial.

"They were present at Akinci airbase where the F-16 that killed the civilians took off from. Prosecutors said these civilians were civil imams of the Gulen movement. They claim they were taking orders from Gulen and passing the order to the military personnel," she said.

Gulen, 79, who was once an ally of Erdogan and has denied any role in the coup, was one of the six defendants being tried in absentia.

A total of 475 people were on trial, 365 of them in custody.



Anadolu and other agencies said at least 25 F-16 pilots were given aggravated life sentences – the most severe punishment in Turkish courts – meaning there is no possibility of parole.

Former air force commander Akin Ozturk and others at the Akinci airbase near Ankara were accused of directing the coup and bombing government buildings, including Parliament, and attempting to kill Erdogan.

Turkey's then-military chief and now defence minister Hulusi Akar and other commanders were held captive for several hours at the base on

Crackdown

Turkey, a NATO member and candidate for European Union membership, declared a state of emergency after the failed coup and carried out a large-scale crackdown which alarmed Ankara's Western allies.

Some 292,000 people have been detained over alleged links to Gulen, nearly 100,000 of them jailed pending trial, Anadolu cited interior minister Suleyman Soyulu as saying.

Some 150,000 civil servants were sacked or suspended after the coup, with some 20,000 expelled from the military. Courts have handed down more than 2,500 life sentences.

'Australia to dismiss at least 10 soldiers over Afghan killings'

Agencies

Sydney: Australia has issued termination notices to at least 10 special forces soldiers after the release of a report that found credible evidence of unlawful killings in Afghanistan, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) said on Thursday.

An independent report published last week in redacted form said there was evidence that 39 unarmed Afghan prisoners and civilians were killed by 19 Australian soldiers.

None of the 19 soldiers was identified in the report, which was written by a state judge appointed by the inspector-general of defence. The 19 current and former soldiers have been referred for possible prosecution.

Amid the immediate fallout, the ABC said 10 soldiers

had been formally notified that they would be dismissed.

The broadcaster did not identify any of the 10 but said all of them were witnesses or accessories and therefore not among the 19 referred for possible criminal charges.

The Department of Defence did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The ABC said the 10 soldiers would have at least 14 days to respond to the termination notices. It did not say if any of them had legal representation.

Australia's most senior military official apologised to Afghanistan last week after the release of the report.

Australia sent troops to join the US-led forces that tried to defeat the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan in the years after the militants were forced from power in 2001.



Students maintaining social distance and wearing protective face masks attend their grade 12 exams, amid the spread of the coronavirus, in Kathmandu, Nepal. Reuters

Trump Refuses To Accept Biden's Win As Transition Proceeds

Agencies

Washington- President Donald Trump has baselessly claimed anew that he had won the election and uttered repeated falsehoods as he called into an event held by Pennsylvania Republicans to investigate unproven allegations of voter fraud.

"This was an election that we won easily. We won it by a lot," Trump declared to the group gathered at a hotel in Gettysburg on Wednesday.

Trump, in fact, lost to President-elect Joe Biden by about 150,000 votes in the state, and Pennsylvania certified Biden as the winner on Tuesday.

The Pennsylvania event was the latest attempt by Trump and his lawyer Rudy Giuliani, a former New York City mayor, to try to cast doubt on the results of the democratic election, even as the formal transition process has begun and a growing number of Republicans are recognising Biden as president-elect.

Similar events have been scheduled in Arizona and Michigan.

State election officials across the country and international observers have said there is no evidence of widespread voter fraud, and Trump's legal team has lost repeat-



edly in court, in addition to making numerous elementary errors.

Wednesday's event, organised by local Republicans, including Pennsylvania state Sen. Doug Mastriano, an outspoken Trump supporter, came with trappings of an official hearing flags, a gavel, and "witnesses" who "testified" in person and by phone.

Among them was a special guest the president who at one point had been expected to attend in person, but did not after

another member of his legal team announced that he had tested positive for the coronavirus on Wednesday morning.

Trump spoke for about 11 minutes via a phone held up to a microphone by his lawyer Jenna Ellis and insisted again that the election had been "rigged" for Biden.

This election has to be turned around," he stated.

It was yet another stunning declaration from an American president advocating overturning a democratic election and the voters' will because he wants to stay in power.

The hotel where the Senate Majority Policy Committee met is about a mile from the scene of Pickett's Charge, where Union troops repelled a desperate Confederate attack in July 1863. It helped turn the tide of the American Civil War against the slave-owning South.

The Trump campaign on Wednesday asked the U.S. 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals for the chance for Giuliani to give oral arguments in its appeal over the vote count in Pennsylvania. The court has not yet said if it will hear arguments. (AP)

We're At War With The Virus, Not Each Other: Biden In Thanksgiving Address

Press Trust Of India

Washington- US President-elect Joe Biden has reminded Americans that they were at war with the coronavirus and not against each other, as he called for an end to the "grim season of division" in the country.

In a Thanksgiving address ahead of the holiday, he urged fellow Americans to forgo high-risk holiday traditions, as cases of the virus continue to surge in the US, the worst-hit nation with over 262,100 deaths.

"I know the country's grown weary of the fight. But we need to remember, we're at war with the virus, not with one another. Not with each other.

"This is the moment where we need to steel our spines, redouble our efforts and recommit ourselves to the fight," Biden said, speaking from his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware.

"Let's remember: We're all in this together," the 78-year-old Democrat said on Wednesday.

He offered condolences to those who have lost loved ones during the raging pandemic and are struggling around the holidays, and spoke about the pain he has felt after members

of his own family passed away too soon.

The president-elect vowed that the pandemic would be beaten.

"I believe this grim season of



division... is going to give way to a year of light and unity."

He said he knows that this time of year can be especially difficult. "Believe me, I know," Biden said.

"I remember that first Thanksgiving. The empty chair, the silence. Takes your breath away," he said, apparently referring to the personal tragedies in his own life.

Biden's wife and infant daughter were killed in a car accident at Christmas time in 1972, and his son Beau died of brain cancer in 2015.

"It's really hard to care," Biden

said. "It's hard to give thanks. It's hard to even think of looking forward, and it's so hard to hope. I understand. I'll be thinking and praying for each and every one of you at this Thanksgiving."

The Thanksgiving holiday comes as coronavirus cases spike nationwide, bringing the total of deaths in the US up to nearly 260,000 as of Wednesday, and as a fresh wave of public health restrictions have been put in place to control the spread of the virus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended last week that Americans should not travel for Thanksgiving.

The country's top infectious disease doctor, Dr Anthony Fauci has also urged Americans to keep their indoor holiday gatherings as "small as you possibly can."

Biden did not mention President Donald Trump, a Republican, by name in his address, saying only, "In America, we have full, free elections. Then we honour the results."

The former US vice president won the November 3 election over Trump, who is continuing his legal efforts to upend Biden's victory.

Trump has allowed the official start of Biden's transition to power this week but has not yet conceded defeat.

Palestinian man shot dead after alleged car-ramming attack

Agencies

Jerusalem: Israeli forces have shot and killed a Palestinian man at a checkpoint after an alleged car-ramming attack outside of Jerusalem, according to local media and police reports.

Israeli border police on Wednesday opened fire on the driver at the al-Zaeem checkpoint, which separates an illegal Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank from a neighbourhood that lies in occupied East Jerusalem.

The driver, identified by local media as Nour Shuqir, is from the East Jerusalem town of Silwan. A police statement said he attempted to flee an inspection at the checkpoint, hitting and lightly injuring an Israeli border police officer.

"The policeman and security personnel fired at the vehicle," it said, wounding the driver, who was taken to a Jerusalem hospital shortly before he was pronounced dead.

According to local media reports, Shuqir succumbed to his wounds after being shot in the abdomen.

The Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem said in a statement he arrived at the hospital's trauma unit "with no pulse and a severe stomach wound".

Police did not immediately release a video of the incident.

'Executed'

In June, Ahmad Erakat, nephew of Saeb Erakat the veteran Palestinian negotiator who died of coronavirus this month, was shot dead at a West Bank checkpoint after Israeli police said he drove his car at speed towards a policewoman.

His uncle said at the time that Ahmad, 27, was "executed".

He dismissed the police allegation of an attempted car-ramming as "impossible", saying Ahmad had been due to be married later in the week.

The previous month, a Palestinian man was killed in similar circumstances near the West Bank city of Ramallah.

He was shot dead on May 29 after allegedly trying to ram a car into Israeli soldiers, none of whom was injured, police said at the time.

A number of local and international human rights groups have raised concerns that Israeli security forces have used excessive force when confronting Palestinians who carried out attacks or were suspected of doing so.

The Israeli police relaxed its open-fire regulations in December 2015, permitting officers to open fire with live ammunition on those throwing stones or firebombs as an initial option, without having to use non-lethal weapons first.

China's top diplomat touts S-Korea ties amid row with US

Agencies

Seoul- China's top diplomat on Thursday stressed the importance of bilateral relations while meeting senior officials in South Korea, where there's growing concern the country is becoming

Wang, who arrived in Seoul following a visit to Japan where he met Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, was expected to meet South Korean President Moon Jae-in later Thursday.

In Tokyo Wednesday, Wang told Suga that he wants the two Asian powers to have



squeezed between its biggest trading partner and military ally the United States.

After meeting South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told reporters that his visit amid a spreading coronavirus pandemic shows how much Beijing values its relations with Seoul. He called for stronger cooperation over anti-virus efforts, trade and finding a peaceful solution to a nuclear standoff with North Korea.

When asked whether Beijing was pressing Seoul to choose a side amid rising US-China tensions over trade, security and other issues, Wang said America is not the only nation in the world. There are 190 countries and each of them are sovereign nations, he said. They include China and South Korea, which are close neighbours and should visit each other more often like relatives.

good relations and cooperate in fighting the coronavirus and reviving their pandemic-hit economies. But the two sides remain at odds over an island dispute.

South Korea has been eager to repair its relations with China, its biggest trade partner that reacted furiously to Seoul's decision to deploy an advanced US anti-missile system on its soil in 2016 to better cope with North Korean threats.

There's also concern in South Korea over a deepening row between Washington and Beijing over trade, security, human rights and other issues, which could force Seoul into a difficult balancing act.

China, which has claimed that the US anti-missile system in South Korea could be reconfigured to peep into its territory, had been accused by Seoul of retaliating by limiting Chinese tour groups visits to South Korea.

NEWS MAKERS

Argentina's soccer fans weep for superhero Diego Maradona

Buenos Aires- Argentina's stunned soccer fans sought each other out Wednesday to mourn the death of Diego Maradona, gathering by the hundreds in spots linked to the life of the legendary player.

They gathered outside the humble home where he was born and raised in the Villa Fiorito neighbourhood.

They went to the stadium of Argentinos Juniors, where he started as a professional footballer in 1976. They stood at the historic La Bombonera stadium of his beloved Boca Juniors. More were at the headquarters of Gimnasia La Plata, the team he was coaching.

"I am touched. I can't un-



derstand it, I can't see the reality. Diego will never die, today is the birth of the Maradona myth," said Dante Lopez, a physician who went to the Argentinos Juniors stadium, which carries the beloved player's name.

Fans put candles and flowers along the wall around the field.

"Diego was Argentina in the world. He gave us joy and we will never be able to repay him for so much joy," said Argentine President Alberto Fernandez, who issued a decree for

three days of national mourning and offered the presidential palace for the funeral.

Mariano Jeijer sat with his wife and their baby in a small car near the Boca Juniors stadium. He said he didn't want to be sad at home.

Diego is a symbol of being Argentinian. He is someone that made us very happy," Jeijer said.

Jeijer said his devotion to Maradona is justified by the two goals he scored against England in Argentina's 2-1 victory in the quarterfinals of the 1986 World Cup. That game was seen by many Argentine fans as pay back for the Falklands war four years earlier in which Britain defeated Argentina.

Sudan's former PM Sadiq al-Mahdi dies from Covid-19 in UAE

Leading Sudanese politician and former prime minister Sadiq al-Mahdi died from a coronavirus infection three weeks after being hospitalised in the United Arab Emirates, according to family sources and a party statement early on Thursday.

Mahdi, 84, was Sudan's last democratically elected prime minister and was overthrown in 1989 in the military coup that brought former president Omar al-Bashir to power.

The moderate Umma Party was one of the largest opposition parties under Bashir, and Mahdi remained an influential figure even after Bashir was toppled in 1989.

Last month, al-Mahdi's family said he had tested positive for Covid-19, and was transferred to the UAE for treatment a few days later following a brief hospitalisation in Sudan.

In a statement, the Umma Party said Mahdi would be buried on Friday morning in the city of Omdurman in Sudan.

Mahdi had returned to Sudan in December



2018, following a year-long self-exile, just as protests over worsening economic conditions and Bashir's rule gathered steam. His daughter Mariam Sadiq al-Mahdi, deputy leader of the Umma Party, was among those detained during the demonstrations.

While a successor to the party head has not yet been announced, she has been the most visible party leader in political negotiations and the media in recent years.

No International Flights Till Dec 31

MUMBAI, NOV 26: Country's aviation safety regulator DGCA on Thursday extended the suspension of scheduled international commercial passenger flights to December 31.

The restrictions, however, will not apply on international all-cargo operations and flights specifically approved by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), an official circular said.

"In partial modification of circular dated 26.6.2020, the competent authority has further extended the validity of circular issued on the subject cited above regarding scheduled international commercial passenger services to/

from India till 2359 hours (IST) of December 31, 2020," the DGCA said in the circular. International scheduled flights, however, may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on a case-to-case basis, the circular added.

The suspension of international commercial passenger flights from/to India, which has been in place since March 23 in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, was to expire on November 30. In the absence of regular flight service on overseas routes, special international flights are being operated under the Vande Bharat Mission since May and under bilateral "air bubble" arrangements with selected countries since July. (PTI)

Stan Swamy's Wait For Straw And Sipper Gets Longer, Also Seeks Bail

MUMBAI, NOV 26: A court here on Thursday once again sought a reply from the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on 83-year-old tribal rights activist Father Stan Swamy's request that he be provided a straw and sipper in jail.

Swamy, arrested in the alleged Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case, on Thursday also filed a bail plea in the special NIA court, citing health issues including Parkinson's disease. Arrested on October 8, he has been lodged at the Taloja prison near Mumbai.

The court, earlier in the day, rejected his previous application seeking a direction to the NIA to return the straw and sipper allegedly seized from him during his arrest.

He needs a straw and sipper as he has trouble eating and drinking because his hands shake due to Parkinson's disease, he had said.

The NIA had then sought 20 days to file a reply.

On Thursday, the agency denied that it had confiscated his straw and sipper. Swamy's lawyer Sharif Shaikh then filed a fresh

application to obtain these things, besides winter clothing.

Special NIA Judge D E Kothalikar directed the prison authorities to respond to both the applications and posted them for hearing on December 4.

In his bail plea, Swamy said he suffers from several ailments including Parkinson's and hearing loss. He has undergone two hernia operations and still suffers from abdominal pain, he claimed.

He was shifted to the prison hospital soon after his arrest and two other inmates are taking care of him at hospital, he said.

As per the NIA, Swamy was involved in the activities of the banned CPI (Maoist), and had received funds through an associate for furthering Maoist agenda.

He was also the convenor of the Persecuted Prisoners Solidarity Committee (PPSC), a frontal organisation of the CPI(Maoist), the NIA claimed. Swamy in his bail plea denied the allegations and said that the prosecution had failed to bring on record any evidence. —PTI



A GROUP of boys warm themselves while sitting around a bonfire in snow-covered Yusmarg. —KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Delhi's Air Quality 'Very Poor', Improvement Predicted



NEW DELHI, NOV 26: Delhi's air quality was recorded in the very poor category on Thursday and government agencies said it is likely to improve as the wind speed picks up.

The city's air quality index was 374 at 9 am on Thursday. The 24-hour average AQI was 413 on Wednesday, 379 on Tuesday and 295 on Monday, according to the Central Pollution Control Board data.

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".

The central government's Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi said Delhi-NCR's air quality is likely to improve to the lower end of the very poor category on Thursday.

The predominant surface wind direction was northerly and the maximum wind speed is likely to be 10 kmph on Thursday, it said.

The central agency said the AQI is likely to reach the poor category on Friday.

The contribution of stubble burning in neighbouring states to Delhi's PM2.5 levels was just 2 percent on Wednesday, according to the Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality monitor, SAFAR.

The minimum temperature was 10.4 degrees Celsius on Thursday. The maximum temperature is likely to settle around 23 degrees Celsius, the weather department said.

Calm winds and low temperatures trap pollutants close to the ground, while favourable wind speed helps in their dispersion.

Delhi's ventilation index -- a product of mixing depth and average wind speed was around 8,000 m2/s on Thursday and is likely to be 7,000 m2/s on Friday.

Mixing depth is the vertical height in which pollutants are suspended in the air. It reduces on cold days with calm wind speed.

A ventilation index lower than 6,000 sqm/second, with the average wind speed less than 10 kmph, is unfavourable for dispersal of pollutants. —PTI

Delhi Riots: HC Asks Police To File Report On Vigilance Inquiry On Leakage Of Confessional Statement

NEW DELHI, NOV 26: The Delhi High Court Thursday asked the Delhi Police to file report on vigilance inquiry conducted on the allegation of leaking to media confessional statement of a Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) university student, who was arrested in a case related to communal violence in northeast Delhi during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act in February.

Justice Vibhu Bakhu also asked the police to indicate in the status report, further steps which it proposes to take in this regard.



File Photo

The high court was informed by advocate Amit Mahajan, representing the Delhi Police, that the vigilance inquiry with regard to the confessional statement being leaked from the case diaries has been concluded. He sought time to file the status report in this regard.

The high court was hearing a plea by JMI student Asif Iqbal Tanha alleging misconduct by police officials in leaking his disclosure statement, recorded by the probe agency during the investigation, to the media.

Advocate Siddharth Aggarwal, appearing for Tanha, submitted that apart from examining the question as to the steps taken by the police regarding the leak of documents, a cognisable offence has also been committed and it is necessary to take proper action.

He contended that the action of the media houses -- Zee News Media Corporation Ltd and Oplndia -- in placing such documents in the media violated the programme code and sought time to file a written statement in this regard.

The high court, which deleted social media platforms Facebook and YouTube from the list of parties, listed the matter for further hearing on

January 18. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Facebook, submitted that they are only intermediaries and have no role to play since the alleged offending news item is being uploaded by the media houses.

He said if any order is passed to take down the articles, the intermediaries are obliged to do that.

The high court had earlier questioned Zee News over broadcast of the alleged confession statement of Tanha in the riots case, saying such documents cannot be taken out and published.

respond to the plea which also sought direction to take down the sensitive/confidential information leaked to them by the officials of Delhi Police.

The high court had also refused to pass an ex-parte order directing the media houses, Zee News and Oplndia and social networking platforms Facebook and YouTube to remove the content and had said that it will pass necessary orders after hearing all the parties.

Tanha, in his petition, said he was aggrieved by various publications reporting that he has confessed to orchestrating the Delhi riots and alleged that he was coerced to sign certain papers in the effective custody of police.

It said this information does not have any evidentiary value and alleged that the Delhi Police officials, with malafide intention, leaked the statements to the media to prejudice his case. Tanha, who was arrested in May, is currently lodged in judicial custody in the Delhi riots case.

Tanha, a third-year student of BA in Persian language, was earlier arrested in connection with the violence in the Jamia area during a protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in December last year.

The police had said that Tanha, a resident of Abul Fazal Enclave in Shaheen Bagh, was a member of the Students Islamic Organization and was part of the Jamia Coordination Committee which spearheaded protests against the new citizenship law.

"Tanha is a key member of the Jamia Coordination Committee and played an active role in organising protests and riots in Jamia in December 2019. He is a close associate of Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam, Meeran Haider and Safoura Zargar who had been key organisers of anti-CAA protests and subsequent riots," the police had said.

On December 15 last year, protesters had turned violent, torching four public buses and two police vehicles and pelting stones at the police and civilians, near JMI. At least 40 people including students, policemen and firefighters were injured in the incident.

Communal clashes had broken out in northeast Delhi on February 24 after violence between citizenship law supporters and protesters spiralled out of control leaving at least 53 people dead and around 200 injured. —PTI

Delhi Records Over 2,300 COVID Deaths In Less Than A Month

NEW DELHI, NOV 26 : The national capital has witnessed 2,364 deaths due to coronavirus since October 28, when the daily rise in infections breached the mark of 5,000 cases for the first time, according to official data.

Amid a surge in COVID-19 cases and deaths, 99 more fatalities on Wednesday pushed the city's total death toll due to the disease to 8,720. It was after five days that Delhi recorded single-day deaths below 100.

The city reported 98 deaths on November 19, 118 on November 20, 111 on November 21, 121 each on November 22 and 23, and 109 fatalities on November 24, according to official data. While 131 COVID-related deaths were recorded on November 18, the highest till date, Delhi registered its highest single-day spike of 8,593 cases on November 11.

On Thursday, Delhi had recorded 7,546 cases, followed by 6,608 on Friday, 5,879 on Saturday, 6,746 on Sunday, 4,454 on Monday, 6,224 on Tuesday and 5,246 on Wednesday, according to the government data.

The total number of coronavirus cases in Delhi climbed to 5,45,787 on Wednesday, of which 4,98,780 have recovered from the virus, the data shows.

Late hospital admissions

leading to COVID-19 cases turning critical, shortage of ICU beds, unfavourable weather and rising pollution are among the factors experts attribute to the spike in COVID-19 deaths in Delhi, health experts have said.

Going by the epidemiological trend, the severity of the disease is more in this phase of the pandemic compared to the last one and several factors, including weather and pollution, are contributing to it, a health ministry official said on Wednesday.

Amid a spurt in the infection tally in the city, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had Wednesday requested experts to audit COVID-19 death cases and suggest measures to reduce fatalities in the national capital.

Health Minister Satyender Jain on Wednesday claimed the national capital reported the "least fatality per million" population amongst all four metro cities in the country.

The National Centre for Disease Control in a report drafted recently had warned that Delhi needs to be prepared for about 15,000 fresh cases of COVID-19 per day taking into account the upcoming winter season-related respiratory problems, large influx of patients from outside and festive gatherings. — PTI

PM Makes Pitch For Simultaneous Elections, One Voters' List

KEVADIA (GUJ), NOV 26: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday advocated 'One Nation, One Election' system and a single voters' list, saying that elections taking place every few months hinders development.

Addressing the concluding session of the 80th All India Presiding Officers Conference here via video conference, Modi also paid homage to the victims of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, and asserted that India is fighting terrorism now with new policy and new process.

On November 26, 2008, ten Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists from Pakistan killed 166 people, including 18 security personnel, in a 60-hour siege in Mumbai.

Making a strong pitch for simultaneous elections on the Constitution Day, Modi said that 'One Nation, One Election' was not "just an issue of de-liberation, but also the need of the country".

"Elections are held at different places every few months and it hampers the developmental work and all of you know it. Therefore, it is must to have deep study and deliberation on 'One Nation, One Election'," he said.

He also said that having a single voters' list was desirable.

"Only one voters' list should be used for Lok Sabha, Vidhan Sabha and other elections. Why are we wasting time and money on these lists?" he said.

He also emphasized the need for coordination between three wings of the state -- Legislature, Executive and Judiciary -- and said everything from these institutes' roles to their decorum is described in the Constitution.

"In the 1970s, we saw how there was an attempt to breach the dignity of separation of power, but the country got the answer only from the Constitution. After that period of Emergency, the system of checks and balances became stronger and stronger."

"The Legislature, Executive and Judiciary, all three learned a lot from that period and moved forward," the prime minister said.

National interest should form the basis of every decision, Modi said. "We must remember that when

politics take over people and nation-first policies, the nation has to pay adversely in such situations," he added.

He cited the example of delay in the completion of the Sardar Sarovar Dam, saying it kept lingering and was completed after years.

"This could have happened earlier if development was given precedence. Those who stalled it, have no repentance," he said in a clear attack on the Congress.

Underlining that there is no place for politics of untouchability, Modi cited the example of the Statue of Unity built by his government for Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel despite Patel not being from the BJP or the Jana Sangh.

Constitution is our guiding light to take on challenges in the 21st century, Modi said and called for raising awareness about it.

"Our Constitution has many features but one very special feature is the importance given to duties. Mahatma Gandhi was very keen about this. He saw a close link between rights and duties. He felt that once we perform our duties, rights will automatically be safeguarded," Modi said.

He also referred to the practice of KYC (know your customer) in the corporate world and said there should be a similar KYC drive in the form of Know Your Constitution to popularize the Constitution and its different features.

Recalling the Mumbai terror attack, the prime minister said it was the biggest terror attack on the country.

"Today's date is associated with the biggest terror attack on the country. On this date in 2008, terrorists sent from Pakistan had attacked Mumbai," he said.

"Many people died in that terror attack, and people of many nationalities were the victims. I pay my homage to all. I bow down to the security personnel who lost their lives in the attack."

"India can never forget the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack and is now fighting terrorism with 'nai neeti aur reeti' (new policy and new process)," he said. —PTI

Haryana Sets Up 3-Member Drafting Committee To Frame Law On 'Love Jihad'

CHANDIGARH, NOV 26: Haryana's Home Minister Anil Vij on Thursday said the state government has set up a three-member committee to draft a law against love jihad, a term used by BJP leaders to describe religious conversions in the guise of marriage.

The minister's statement comes days after the Uttar Pradesh government cleared a draft ordinance against conversion through force or fraudulent means.



But even before the UP ordinance was cleared, Vij had announced that a committee was being set up in Haryana to frame a new law.

The Haryana committee will also study laws enacted by other states on the issue, Vij said.

He tweeted that the drafting committee formed to frame law on love jihad in Haryana will be made up of state Home Secretary T L Satyaprakash, Additional Director General of Police Navdeep Singh Virk and Additional Advocate General Deepak Manchanda.

Earlier this month, Vij had told the

Haryana Assembly that the state government is considering a law against "love jihad" and has sought information from Himachal Pradesh.

The Himachal Pradesh Assembly had passed a bill last year against conversion by force, inducement or through a marriage solemnised for the "sole purpose" of adopting a new religion. The minister was then replying to a calling attention motion in the House on the murder of a young woman in Ballabhgarh.

"Anyone can marry anyone, anyone can fall in love with anyone. But if there is a conspiracy for changing religion by trapping someone in love, then it is very important to stop that conspiracy. We will take whatever steps are required," he had said.

Recently, he also praised the Yogi Adityanath-led BJP government in Uttar Pradesh for approving a draft ordinance to deal with religious conversion for the sake of marriage, which could land violators in jail for up to 10 years if the woman is a minor.

Vij has also told reporters earlier that with the enactment of the Haryana law, strict action will be taken against anyone indulging in religious conversion through pressure, by luring someone or in the name of love. —PTI

China, India in 'candid, in-depth communication' to disengage troops in eastern Ladakh: Chinese military

BEIJING, NOV 26: China and India have maintained "candid and in-depth communication and coordination" to promote disengagement in areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh after the eighth round of talks to resolve the current standoff, the Chinese military said on Thursday.

The Chinese and Indian militaries held the 8th round of Corps Commander-level meeting on November 6 to resolve the military standoff that erupted in early May. "Since the 8th round of China-India

Corps Commander-level meeting, the situation in the China-India border areas have remained stable on the whole. Senior Colonel Ren Guoqiang, spokesperson for China's Ministry of National Defence told an online media briefing responding to a question on the current situation at the India-China border.

"Following the meeting, China and India have maintained candid and in-depth communication and coordination to promote disengagement in areas along the Line of Actual Control in the western sector of China-India

boundary," Ren was quoted as saying by official website of the Ministry of Defence of China.

Nearly 50,000 troops of the Indian Army are currently deployed in a high state of combat readiness in various mountainous locations in eastern Ladakh in sub-zero conditions as multiple rounds of talks between the two sides have not yielded any concrete outcome yet to resolve the border standoff. China has also deployed an equal number of troops, according to officials. Ren noted that both sides have agreed to earnestly implement

the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries and ensure their frontline troops exercise restraint and avoid misunderstanding and miscalculation.

"China is ready to maintain communication with the Indian side through military and diplomatic channels. We hope that the Indian side will work with China towards the same goal, implement bilateral consensus with a sincere attitude and positive actions, so as to jointly safeguard peace and stability in the border areas," he said. —PTI