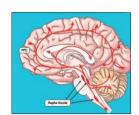


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Scientists reveal regions of the brain where serotonin promotes patience

P5 PANORAMA

Maradona: why the English can't let go of the Hand of God and Latin Americans love it



P8 OBSERVER OUTPOST

Traffic Hit On Key Delhi Roads As 2 Borders Closed **Amid Farmers' Protest** 



# **NEWS DIGEST**

## **Railway Cop Dies Of Heart Attack**

SRINAGAR: A Railway Policeman on Saturday died of heart atttack in Qazigund area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district.

Constable Awtar Singh Chattisinghpora Anantnag suffered a heart attack inside his car in Bonigam, Qazigund on Saturday evening, officials told news agency KNO. He was immediately rushed to a nearby hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

The deceased was presently posted at Railway Station Qazigund, the official said.

## **Electric Shock Kills Driver, Labourer**

SRINAGAR: A tipper driver and a casual labourer from Kashmir **Power Development Corporation** Limited (KPDCL were on Saturday electrocuted to death in two separate incidents in north Kashmir's Bandipora district.

35-year-old Assadullah Parray received an electric shock while repairing a transformer in Markundal area of Sumbal in Bandipora, officials said Saturday. Parray, who was working as a casual labourer in the KPDCL, succumbed to his injuries soon after he was taken to the nearby hospital for treatment.

Meanwhile, in another incident, a tipper driver was also electrocuted to death in Shadipora area of Sumbal on Saturday

22 year-old Sheer Ahmad of Banihal Ramban was electrocuted to death when his vehicle came in contact with high tension (HT) electric wire, officials said. They said investigations are underway to see if there was any negligence on part of the de-

Meanwhile, Sumbal police has registered a case and further investigations were taken un

## **Man Crushed To Death In Sopore**

SRINAGAR: A man was crushed to death by a speedy vehicle in Sopore town of north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Saturday.

40-year-old Nizam-ud-din Krankroo was hit by a car in Amargarh area on Saturday morning causing his on spot death. officials said. The driver, however, managed to escape the spot today, officials said, adding that he was arrested within two hours after the mishap took place.

A police officer said that Krankroo was hit by a speedy vehicle following which he was immediately taken to Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Sopore where he was declared brought dead.

In this regard, a case been has been registered while the driver has been arrested and the vehicle was also seized, officials said, adding that further investigation was taken up—(KNO)

## **Leopard Caught** In Budgam

SRINAGAR: The officials of Wildlife department on Saturday caught a leopard in Chadoora area of central Kashmir's Budgam district

A wildlife official said that the leopard was spotted at the main market in Panzan Chadoora before a week and was captured alive by Wildlife department officials on Saturday evening.

He said that the department has asked its men to remain alert as there was the possibility of the cubs, mother of the cubs, searching for them.

"We have asked the concerned officials to remain alert and vigilant to capture the female leopard who might be roaming in the area with cubs," the official added. He said that they have left the village with the leopard towards Dachigam National Park, where they will the captured leopard will be set free.

# Imprints of Kashmir Polls: 'Welfare, Restoration, Tunnel...'

**AUQIB JAVEED** 

Last time when Riyaz Dar of Shadipora, Sumbal in north Kashmir's Bandipora district fell in line to cast his ballot, the fight, he said, was bigger and crucial.

'The motive was to keep the saffron party's Mission 44 at bay," Dar said. "But now, we are merely voting for our

On icy-cold Saturday morning, 34-year-old Dar was out to vote for "development and peace" in the District Development Council (DDC) polls in



his village polling centre layered by security cover. **A Contrast** 

Despite the likes of Dar snubbinga new alliance in Kashmir promising to fight for the restoration of Article 370. many voters had come out in support of PAGD-People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration—candidates for keeping the "right-wingers away" from the valley. "I cast my vote to a PAGD candidate,"

The road remains cut-off for six months due to snow. It's very important for the people to have a tunnel."



said Firdous Dar, who had turned up at Shilwat Middle School polling centre. "We're sure that most of their candidates will win so that BJP will get a lesson that whatever they did last year

was a political blunder unacceptable to the people of Kashmir." Dar's entire family of over 11 members including his 82-year old grandmother voted for PAGD nominated

candidate, he said. A Triangular Contest

DDC elections are being held in eight phases in Jammu and Kashmir, starting from November 28 till More On P2

# **J&K Records 52 % Turnout In First Phase**



**DDC POLLS** 

SRINAGAR: In the first electoral exercise in Jammu and Kashmir since the abrogation of Article 370, nearly 52 percent voter turnout was recorded on Saturday in the staggered polls to district development councils.

The first round of polling in the eight-phase maiden DDC elections passed off peacefully, except for a minor incident of stone-pelting in Kulgam, officials said.

"A voter percentage of 51.76 was recorded in the first phase -- 64.2 percent in Jammu division and 40.65 percent in Kashmir division, State Election Commissioner K K Sharma told reporters in Jammu. Reasi in Jammu recorded the highest voter turnout of 74.62 percent while militancy-infested → More On P2

# **SEC Bans Exit Polls** Till DDC Elections End

**JAMMU:** The State Election Commission (SEC) in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday imposed last of the eight-phase District Development Council (DDC) election is completed.

An order to this effect was issued by State Election Commissioner K K Sharma here, an official spokesman said. The DDC elections along with panchayat bypolls commenced in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday.







Kashmir Observer Lensman Abid Bhat captures the mood of people on the first phase of DDC polls held in Kashmir on Saturday.

# **Centenarian Treks Steep Mountain Path** To Vote In Doda

BHALESSA: A resident of the remote Kota Top village at over 11,000 feet in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district, 103-year-old Zaitona Bibi on Saturday said she has never missed casting her vote since 1957 and this District Development Council (DDC) election was no different.

Helped by her 24-year-old great-granddaughter Rabia Bano, Zaitona braved cold winds to trek to the Gujjar Basti polling station in Kharangal Panchayat, around a kilometre from her house, to vote in the elections, the first after Jammu and Kashmir was reorganised into a union territory last year.

"My vote was for the development of tribals of this belt who are facing hardships as they are socially, educationally, economically and politically backward," said Zaitona after returning from the polling station at 11,400 feet on the Bhalessa mountain ranges.

Zaitona, who is from the cattle rearing Guijar tribe has 14 grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and 110 members of her family are eligible voters. "We casted our vote in this poll for the development of area," she said. "For the past 63 years, I have never missed a single occasion to vote. Ever since I voted for the first time, I made sure that I do not miss a single chance.



COVID-19

# **SOPs Go For A Toss At Some Polling Stations**

GANDERBAL: COVID guidelines were flouted at some polling stations in the valley and excitement overtook precautions as enthusiastic voters jostled with each other to cast their ballot in the first elections in Jammu and Kashmir after its reorganisation last year.

Authorities had said necessary COVID measures, including the use of masks and social distancing, have More On P2

# **Polling Booths** 'Changed Overnight' **At Some Places: NC**

SRINAGAR: National Conference (NC) General Secretary, Ali Muhammad Sagar Saturday alleged that 'designated' polling booths were 'changed' overnight at many places in Kashmir during the first phase of District Development Council (DDC) elections.

The NC leader said the DDC election would not be a 'referendum' as this election is being fought for local developmental issues and to keep Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at bay. "Since we had already >> More On P2

# **West Pak Refugees. Valmikis Vote For First Time Since 1947**

JAMMU: A bridegroom cast his vote at a polling station in Akhnoor block here as voters' enthusiasm marked the end of first phase of polling in the historic District Development Council (DDC) elections in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday. Clad in his wedding attire with a sword in right hand and money garlands hanging from his neck, 27-year-old Mangat Ram exercised his franchise at Kot Ghari polling station. He said he did not want to miss the chance as it was after 73 years that his community was exercising >> More On P2



# **'Polls Are For Local Issues, Not For Bigger Political Problems'**

**GUND:** Several voters in Jammu and Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Saturday said that the District Development Council (DDC) polls are to elect people who can solve basic problems and "bigger issues" like restoration of special status should be left for assembly and parliamentary

# **4 More Corona Deaths** In J&K, Toll 1680

SRINAGAR: At least four people succumbed to coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, raising the number of virus related fatalities in the Union Territory to 1680.

While two more people lost the battle with the deadly infection in Kashmir Valley, two others died of Covid-19 in Jammu division, officials said Saturday. In Valley, the two victims were a 48-year-old man from Hardu Ichloo village of Baramulla and a 60-year-old man from Darend in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

The victims from Jammu region included one each from the winter capital of the J&K and Doda district, they said. With these deaths, the >> More On P2



Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir reported on Saturday 512 fresh cases of novel coronavirus, including 24 travelers and two pregnant women thus taking the total number of people infected by virus in the Union Territory to 109383. According to the officials, Srinagar reported 97, Baram-

ulla 26, Budgam 25, Pulwama

More On P2

# **Gulmarg Shivers At -5.6 Deg C** JAMMU: Cold weather condi-

tions prevailed in most parts of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday with Gulmarg tourist resort in the Valley being the coldest place at minus 5.6 degrees Celsius, the meteorological department said.

It has predicted dry weather in the union territory till December 4. While the minimum temperature settled several degrees below the normal at most places, the day temperature was almost near to normal, a MeT department official said.

Srinagar recorded a minimum of minus 2.2 degrees Celsius, while Qazigund (Anantnag) and Kupwara experienced a low of minus 1.8 degrees Celsius and minus 1.0 degrees Celsius respectively,

# **Leh Highway** Reopens **After 5 Days**

**Cold Conditions Prevail In Kashmir;** 

Srinagar-Leh Highway was thrown open for Light Motor Vehicles on Saturday after remaining closed for

five days due to snow and slippery road conditions. The highway was thrown open for one way traffic and on Saturday vehicles were allowed to move towards Kargil from

he said. The famous health resort of Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district recorded a low of minus 5.2 degrees Celsius. Jammu region, In the

Bhaderwah belt in Doda district recorded the minimum temperature at 0.8 degrees Celsius, followed by Banihal in Ramban district which recorded a low of at 5.2 degrees Celsius, he said.

Jammu, the winter capital, recorded the minimum temperature of 8.6 degrees Celsius, 1.7 degrees below normal, the official said.

"There will be mainly dry weather till December 4. As of now, a spell of light snow or rainfall is expected between 5-6 December, he said. –PTI

# **India Deploys MARCOS At Pangong Lake**

**NEW DELHI:** Amid the ongoing tensions between India and China, the government has deployed the Marine Commandos (MARCOS) of the Indian Navy in the Pangong lake area in eastern Ladakh.

According to news agency ANI, government sources said that the idea behind the deployment of the MARCOS in Eastern Ladakh where Indian Air Force's Garud operatives and Indian Army's Para Special Forces, which have been there since day one of the conflicts, is to enhance the integration of the three services and provide the naval commandos exposure to extreme cold weather conditions. "The MARCOS have been deployed in the Pangong lake area where the >> More On P2

## FROM **FRONT** PAGE

# Imprints of Kashmir ...

December 19. The counting will take place on December 22. KK Sharma, State Election Commissioner (SEC), told reporters on Saturday evening that over 51.7 percent voting was recorded for the phase one acrossJ&K.

The elections are seen as a triangular contest among the PAGD, the BJP and the Apni Party.

An amalgam of several mainstream political parties, the PAGD has been accusing the Altaf Bukhari-led Apni Party of being the BJP's B-Team, the allegations repeatedly turned down by the merchant who's swelling his ranks with the inclusion of "defectors and turncoats".

Earlier, National Conference patron, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, in a video appeal, urged the people to ensure the victory of the PAGD candidates by huge margins "so that it succeeds in its aim of restoration of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir" which was revoked by New Delhi in August last year.

#### ALTERED LANDSCAPE

However, things have not been easy for unionist politics in J&K. To keep the BJP at bay, they've come together in these polls.

Earlier, the PAGD alleged that the BIP is not allowing its candidates to campaign freely and is trying to hijack the elections.

Just before the polls, PDP's youth wing leader, Waheed Parra was detained by National Investigating Agency (NIA) for allegedly conspiring with Hizbul Mujahideen militants to get their support during the 2019 parliamentary elections. Most of these political leaders along with their workers were behind bars after they opposed the August 5 move.

Many, however, believe this election is different from the earlier ones, as it is not being fought on the previously known political issues.

"But how will DDC elections help the PAGD to restore Article 370," asked Mohammad Nisar from Kalaroos, Kupwara, a first time voter. "I believe everyone knows their fraudulent nature now."

Many voters in Kupwarasaid the PAGD didn't consult people before taking any decision and they are the same people who in power made

"They (PAGD) can't decade our future always," GhulamMohi-ud-din Lone, a resident of Thayen Kalaroos, said."Today we're suffering because of these people. So we have a hope in this DDC election that the candidate will work for our welfare." **VOTE TO BREAK ICE** 

In north Kashmir's Gurez, Abdul Rahim braved a sub-zero temperature to votefor a local candidate who, he believes, could help them to construct an all-weather tunnel from Bandipora to Gurez.

"We're living in a frontier area," Rahim, who voted at the Government Boys School in Dawar, said. "The road remains cut-off for six months due to snow. It's very important for the people to have a tunnel." It's the responsibility of the governmentto address the long pending issue, as people are coming out in large numbers to cast the vote in 3-feet snow, Rahim said.

# J&K Records 52 % ...

Pulwama in south Kashmir witnessed the least voter participation at 6.7 percent.

In Kashmir, Budgam recorded the highest poll percentage of 56.96 percent.

Enthusiasm among the voters was witnessed in all the 43 DDC constituencies which went to polls today including 25 in Kashmir and 18 in Jammu region.

"The men, women and young voters thronged the polling stations, adhering to the COVID-19 protocols, Sharma said.

Barring a minor stor Kulgam district of south Kashmir, the overall polling concluded peacefully with voters showing enthusiasm despite the morning chill, he said.

The election is witnessing a triangular contest among the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), an amalgam of parties that are seeking restoration of Article 370, the BJP and the Apni Party floated by former finance minister Altaf Bukhari.

In the first phase, as many as 1,475 candidates are in the fray, according to officials.

In the Jammu division, Sharma said a turnout of 74.62 percent in Reasi was followed by Rajouri (70.52 percent), Poonch (68.69), Samba (68.61), Doda (64.49), Ramban (64.21), Kathua (62.82), Jammu (61.49), Udhampur (57.13) and Kishtwar (55.16). In Kashmir, Budgam was followed by Kupwara with a turnout of 50.74 percent, Ganderbal (48.62), Bandipora (43.57), Anantnag (43.32), Shopian (42.58), Kulgam (34.35), Srinagar (33.76), Baramulla (32.51) and Pulwama (6.70). Sharma said a total of 3.62 lakh voters including 1.69 women voters, out of around seven lakh, exercised their franchise.

"There was balanced participation which is a good sign for democracy," he said. The security situation was also normal and the credit goes for the successful conclusion of the first phase of the elections to all the voters, political parties and independent candidates contesting the elections, he said

The election is significant as it is the first major democratic exercise since the Centre abrogated Article 370 that gave special status to J-K and bifurcated the state into two union territories in August year.

The voting for the newly-envisaged DDCs also coincided with bypolls to panchayats.

Sharma said the voting percentage with regard to panch and sarpanch seats was being compiled. He said the counting of votes for the DDC constituencies will be taken on December 22.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh said that high voter turnout in the first phase is indicative of the pent up democratic aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

What is important to note, he said, is that the polling in most of the districts in Kashmir valley is manifold higher than the dismal polling witnessed during the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

After the successful conclusion of the first phase, State Election Commissioner K K Sharma said the focus has shifted to the second phase of the DDC polls on December 1. We have also the same number of 43 DDC constituencies in the second phase of polling.

"The total number of candidates in the fray for this phase is 321 125 candidates in 18 seats of Jammu division and 196 candidates in 25

constituencies of Kashmir division, he said. He said that election will also be held for 164 vacant seats of sarpanch and 1,815 vacant seats of panch in the second phase, for which a total of 2,762 polling stations have been set up across Jammu and Kashmir for over seven lakh voters.

Sharma said the polling will be held from 7 am to 2 pm in this phase as well. He said the people started thronging the polling stations immediately after the commencement of the voting at 7 AM on Saturday.

"We know it is chilly weather in November but it is not compulsory for people to rush to polling stations at the start of the polling, he said. Sharma said there are young voters and the idea behind the early start of the polling is to ensure timely completion of the process.

He said there are also panch and sarpanch seats located in remote pockets and the counting of votes takes place at the polling stations after the completion of the exercise on the same day. In response to another question about shifting of some polling stations on Friday evening, he said, We do not usually change the polling stations at the last moment but sometimes, it is needed due to weather conditions. The polling stations were shifted in some areas (where there was snowfall) at the request of the district election officers and the process was done as per the election law. A few polling stations were adjusted for the benefit of the voters, he said.

He also appealed to the voters to follow the COVID-19 guidelines. We have deployed health department officials and there was no complaint of any violation of COVID-related protocols.

"The voting is taking place in seven more phases and, therefore, we appeal to the voters to follow the guidelines so that we have successful polling in all the eight phases, he said.

# **SEC Bans Exit ...**

"In exercise of powers conferred under Section 36 of the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989, the Election Authority (State Election Commission) hereby prohibits the conduct of any exit poll and publishing or publicising/ displaying the result of exit poll by means of the print or electronic media or in any other manner in the ongoing DDC elections, till the hour fixed for conclusion of poll in the last phase of these elections - 2:00 PM on December 19, Sharma said in his order.

# West Pak Refugees ...

their franchise in the local elections.

Ram is a member of West Pakistani refugees who along with Valmikis and Gurkhas have become eligible to vote in local elections, purchase land and apply for jobs in Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 last year.

This is a historic day for us and how could I have missed such an opportunity, the groom told reporters outside the polling station while showing indelible mark on his left hand finger.

He was accompanied by several of his relatives including women and children before he entered the polling station and exercised his newly acquired right to vote.

Our elders died waiting for this historic day over the past seven decades. I am feeling happy to be alive to see this happening finally, Ram

On August 5, 2019, the Centre revoked the special status of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcated it into UTs of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. Since then, the government has introduced several laws, including those related to land and domicile status.

In the first phase of DDC elections, 25 constituencies in the Kashmir division and 18 constituencies in the Jammu division went for polling, registering an encouraging 51.76 percent polling.

As the polling started at 7 am in the morning, long queues of voters were witnessed, eager to cast their votes.

At many places, excitement among youth, particularly first time voters like Rajni Sharma and Akshita Sharma at polling station Parsoti Maira Mandrian, Akhnoor, was visible on their faces as they wanted to shape up their dreams by choosing candidates of their choice.

At many places, women outnumbered men to exercise their franchise.

Age or physical health could not deter voters from exercising their choice. Rolha Ram, 92, cast his vote at Polling Station Mandrian Akhnoor and so did specially-abled Mushtaq Ahmad, 32, in Khri Ramban. At many rural areas, many voters in their traditional attires had come to the polling booths to cast their votes.

In Jammu division, similar scenes were witnessed at most of the polling stations spread over different constituencies.

Here people were seen in long queues at Purmandal, Ramsoo, Mahoo Valley Ramban, Khari, Lathi Marothi, Bani, Lohai Malhar and other areas of the Jammu region.

Interestingly, in Mahoo valley Ramban, voters thronged polling stations in large numbers despite having more than 12 inches of snow. Likewise, the far off areas of Jammu region like Marwah and Warwan also witnessed huge enthusiasm among voters.

The voters expressed satisfaction for the facilities made available at the booths for the smooth conduct of polls.

# **SOPs Go For ...**

been put in place for ensuring safe polls.

From not maintaining adequate distance while standing in queues waiting for their turn to vote, to basking in the lawns, the voters flouted the pandemic guidelines openly with most of them without face-masks or shields.

Health department personnel were deployed at the polling booths to check the temperatures of the voters and others using infrared thermometers, but sanitisers and masks at the entry points of most of these places were not

In Thune area of the district, four booths were clubbed together and housed at a cramped panchayat ghar. While the view outside - of river Sindh and pine-filled and snow-clad mountains in the distance - was beautiful, the sight inside

the polling booth was off-putting.

Voters lined up, back-to-back, leaving no space in between, through a dark alley to a small room where the voting took place, without face masks - throwing social distancing and other guidelines to the wind.

Security personnel occasionally asked the voters present to maintain distance.

Similar scenes were witnessed at Government Higher Secondary School in Hariganiwan area where four polling booths were clubbed, Government Primary School at Haaknaar and Government Middle School at Rayil Gund which housed seven polling booths. All these polling stations saw rush of people.

The pleas of officials and even mediamen present had no impact on the voters and it seemed the pandemic was a thing of the past.

At the Rayil Gund booth, while dozens of the

voters were waiting in line, without maintaining the social distance, several dozens of others were basking in the lawn and without face masks. Police personnel deployed there blamed the agents of candidates for flouting the guidelines

even as they repeatedly asked the people to keep distance and wear face masks. Fayaz Chopan, a local near the booth, said the excitement of voting trumped the need to follow

"We do not have many positive cases here, so people are not taking much precaution. And there is excitement among the voters and they are only concerned about the voting right now," Chopan said.

A stark contrast to other polling stations was Government Higher Secondary School at Gund where the COVID protocols very followed visibly. At the entry point of the polling station - where six booths were clubbed - an official was sprinkling sanitiser on the hands of everyone who entered

inside, while also providing the face masks. The voters were lined up keeping some distance in between and everyone wore masks. Many polling personnel even wore hand gloves. An official said it was necessary to follow the protocols for everyone's safety and the polling

staff had stressed on the need to maintain social

# Centenarian Treks ...

distance and the use of face masks.

I have voted in all the elections since then," said Zaitona, listed as a voter of the Changa reserved

The district administration had made arrangements for the centenarian to help her reach Guijar Basti, but Zaitona, according to 24-year-old Bano, climbed the steep path to the polling station without her walking stick, only occasionally asking for support.

The centenarian along with other elderly voters was asked to stay back home in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, but taking all precautions like wearing a mask she went to Gujjar Basti, her family members said.

Zaitona said that even threats by militants in the past could not deter her from exercising her franchise. "My faith is in democracy," she said. However, she rued, "Nothing much has changed in the past seven decades in our area inhabited by thousands who earn their livelihood through cattle rearing."

Life continues to be difficult for the inhabitants of this mountainous belt, Zaitona said and hoped that strengthening of grassroot democracy brings development.

'We need potable water and good roads here many of our villages still remain unconnected and this creates a lot of problems for us. We need good hospitals," she said. Changa has been declared a reserved schedule tribe DDC seat and most residents of the village said this should help usher development in the area.

Zaitona was eagerly waiting for polling day after she was informed about the elections and the DDC seat being reserved, said Bano.

Miskeen Ali Khatana, a local, said, "Zaitona is an inspiration to all of us. She always motivates us to be part of the democratic process."

Undeterred by the cold weather, people stood in long queues to cast their vote.

# **Polling Booths ...**

expressed our reservations, designated polling booths at few places were changed overnight as BJP did not want PAGD to win these elections. This election is being fought for local developmental issues and its results would not be a referendum," Sagar told reporters here.

He also thanked the people of Jammu and Kashmir for coming out in large numbers to cast their ballot, stating massive participation of people in DDC elections in the aftermath of August 5, 2019 decision of Narendra Modi led government would be a befitting reply to his party.

Sagar said the parties which have aligned with PAGD could not campaign due to the inclement weather and the prevailing situation. He, however, said that leaders held door to door campaigning and organized meetings in town halls.

NC leader and former Minister also said the peoples decision whatsoever, through this election would surely favor their interests. He said people in Jammu and Kashmir faced immense problems in the aftermath of the centre's major decision on Iammu and Kashmir last year.

Sagar said that people want the special constitutional position of Jammu and Kashmir to remain intact so that the erstwhile state does not lose its unique identity.

# **'Polis Are For ...**

The eight-phase DDC polls are the first elections in Jammu and Kashmir since it was reorganised as a union territory last year after the abrogation of its special status, and it is being held along with bypolls to panchayats.

The first phase was held across Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday and over 22 per cent of the seven lakh voters had exercised their franchise till 11 am. Two DDC seats -- Gund-A and Gund-B -- went to polls in the central Kashmir district, which recorded a polling percentage of 23.14 till

"Political issues are for bigger platforms like the assembly or the Parliament. What role do the DDCs or for that matter panches and sarpanches have in framing laws. This is a small platform to address the developmental issues of the people at the local level," 67-year-old Shareef-ud-Din said after voting at a polling booth in the district's Thune area.

Zahida Begum, a voter at the Government Higher Secondary School in Hariganiwan, said she came out to vote to support a local candidate who could address day-to-day issues.

"We have many issues that need attention. I do not know anything about Article 370, but I want the issues of our locality to be resolved,"

The Centre on August 5 last year had announced abrogation of Article 370, which gave the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir special status, and divided it into union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Juma Koswal, another voter, said that "bigger issues are for bigger parties to discuss".

"Yes, our identity has been snatched from us (after abrogation of special status), but this election is not for that," he said, adding that people are voting for candidates who can solve local issues and problems.

Some, including first-time voters, however said that this election was a "small fight" for restoration of special status of the erstwhile

"This election is also important as through this we can keep those parties and people away who took away our special status," Yaseen Ahmad said, adding that though the DDC polls had nothing to do with the issue, but "this would send a message how the people feel about last year's decision".

The eight-phase elections are seen as a triangular contest among the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), the BIP and the Apni Party floated by former finance minister Altaf Bukhari.

The PAGD -- an amalgam of several mainstream political parties, including NC and PDP, seeking the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status which was revoked by the Centre last year -- has been accusing the Bukhari-led party of being a B-Team of the BJP. Of the 1,475 candidates in the fray for 280

according to officials. Many voters in the district also said that the elections should not have started at 7 am in view of the chilly weather. But as the day progressed, several turned up at polling booths to exercise their franchise.

DDC seats, 296 candidates are in the first phase,

# 4 More Corona ...

total fatality count in the Valley has reached 1099 and 581 in the Jammu region.

Srinagar district with 416 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (297), Baramulla (162), Budgam (100), Pulwama (86), Kupwara (82), Anantnag (78), Doda (56), Bandipora (50), Kulgam (50), Rajouri (49), Udhampur (47), Ganderbal (38), Shopian (37), Kathua (36), Samba (29), Poonch (22), Ramban (18), Kishtwar(16), and Reasi (9). —With GNS inputs

# 2 Pregnant Women ...

14, Kupwara 16, Anantnag 7, Bandipora 12, Ganderbal 14, Kulgam 0, Shopian 1, Jammu 129, Rajouri 33, Udhampur 31, Doda 18, Kathua 23, Poonch 1. Samba 20. Kishtwar 26. Ramban 9 and Reasi 10 new cases of Covid-19.

Moreover, officials said, 632 more patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals- 179 from Jammu and 453 from Kashmir Division.

# Leh Highway ...

Sonmarg, an official said. He said only LMV's were being allowed to ply on the road while heavy motor vehicles are still stranded on either side of the Highway.

The official said that due to accumulation of snow on the road, slippery road conditions still persist. He said anti skid chains are being used to gain more grip on the slippery road.

Pertinently, traffic on the highway was suspended on Monday morning after heavy snowfall at Zojila pass, Sonamarg, Zero point, Meenmarg and Drass. (KNT)

# India Deploys Marcos ...

Indian and Chinese forces have been engaged in a conflict situation since April-May timeframe this year. The Navy commandos are also soon going to get new boats for operations in the lake are along with the existing infrastructure for operations in the lake." the sources said.

Indian Army's Special Forces including the Para Special Forces and Cabinet Secretariat's Special Frontier Force have been operating in Eastern Ladakh for carrying out special operations for a long time. The Indian Air Force's Garud Special Forces moved to hilltops on the strategic heights on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) along with their Igla shoulder-fired air defence systems in the early days of the conflict to take care of any fighter or other aircraft of the enemy which may have tried to violate Indian air space.

The special troops belonging to both the Army and Air Force have been there for more than six months now.

On August 29-30 also, the Indian side had used the special forces to occupy strategic heights along the LAC to preempt the Chinese from doing so. The Chinese have also maintained special troops on their side of the LAC.

The Indian Navy has deployed teams of its MARCOS in the Wular lake area of Jammu and Kashmir to tackle militancy there. The Indian Air Force started deploying Garuds in Kashmir valley after the 2016 Pathankot operations to give them the feel of real operations as part of plans of the then Army chief and now Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat.

Soon after their deployment, the Garuds proved their mettle and earned one Ashok Chakra, three Shaurya Chakras, and many other gallantry awards for eliminating a team of militants led by the nephew of 26/11 militant Zaki Ur Rehman Lakhvi.

After that operation, the Air Force has been sending regular Garud teams for forward deployment in Kashmir vallev

# **School Sealed, Slapped Rs 1L Fine For Violating Covid-19 SOPs**

Kashmir's Anantnag district on Saturday ordered closure of the premises of a Commissioner Anantnag. school and imposed Rs 1 lakh government directive amid coronavirus pandemic.

Anantnag said Education Officer while acting on complaint, led a team of officials and inspected Oxford Presentation High School at K P Road Anantnag. It was found that normal class

work was going on in the school

without observing any SOPs of COVID-19 especially in preprimary classes in violation of government orders. "The act of

school administration may have serious ramifications as Covid-19 infection has not been controlled and government has strictly directed that normal school work shall not be resumed as in the order. (GNS)

ANANTNAG: Authorities in the young kids are one of the vulnerable groups," reads an order issued by the Deputy

In order to safeguard fine for keeping the institution the precious lives and as a open in violation of the prophylactic measure, the deputy commissioner said that it was felt necessary to close the The District Magistrate establishment to prevent from the Chief the spread of disease.

"In view of the above, I, K K. Sidha (KAS) District Magistrate Anantnag in exercise of powers vested to me under Section 144 of the Cr.PC, Section 34 of National Disaster Management Act 1897 do hereby order the closure of aforesaid premises till further orders besides imposition of penalty to the tune of Rs. 1 00 Lac only for violating guidelines of government,'

reads the order. "Tehsildar Anantnag and SHO Anantnag shall close the premises immediately and report compliance," the DC said

# **Non-Local Found Dead In Chattabal**

Srinagar: An 80-year-old mentally-challenged man was found dead on Saturday in Chattabal area of Srinagar, officials said. Tahir of Saharanpur Uttar Pradesh was found lifeless near Masjid Ahle Hadees Chattabal on Saturday morning, officials said. The body was shifted to SMHS for conducting post mortem and other medical formalities. Meanwhile, police have initiated proceedings under section 174 CrPc in this regard. (KNO)

# **Div Com Inspects Wular Lake Conservation Works**

**BANDIPORA:** The Divisional removed from the Wular Lake Commissioner (DIV Com) Kashmir P K Pole on Saturday visited Bandipora and inspected Wular lake conservation works by Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA).

was accompanied by Chief Executive Director WUCMA the Wular Action Plan. Faroog Gillani and Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr. Owais Ahmed The Chief Executive Director

The Div Com during the visit

about the progress made in the dredging operations carried out in different sections of the lake during the current year.

area of 3.10 square kilometers of silted area has been taken up and willow removals. under Wular Action Plan. that as on date, 1.10 sq km of has been taken up on a large area has been dredged and the scale after UT administration

and will enhance the water holding capacity of the lake significantly. The CED briefed Div Com

about the nature of catchment conservation works, biodiversity Conservation works and ecotourism development works that have been taken up under The Div Com advised for timely completion of tendered

works and directed WUCMA to

monitor quality and quantity WUCMA briefed the Div Com of works and take special note of the disposal of the dredged slurry in the identified sites only without affecting flood plains. He further directed to set It was informed that the and monitor daily targets to dredging work in critically silted complete the work within portions of the lake is the major allotted time frame and

Meanwhile, the works under It was further informed Wular conservation project balance work will be completed has sanctioned Wular Action by October 2021. After the Plan for Rs 200,00 crores for completion of work 63 lakh conservation and management cubic meters of silt will be of Wular Lake.

**Highway Widening** 

# **Div Com Reviews Progress On Nashri - Banihal Stretch**

component under which an instructed WUCMA officials to

the progress of 4-lanning work of Jammu- Srinagar National Highway-44 here at a meeting of concerned officers.

The meeting was attended by Regional Officer NHAI, Hem Raj, Chief Engineer JKPTCL, Sudhir Gupta besides senior officers of SFC and other concerned officers, while Deputy Commissioner Ramban along with other concerned officers the vital road project. attended the meeting through video conferencing.

The Divisional Commissioner took a detailed review of the progress on land acquisition. removal of structures and the widening of the Nashri to

Ramban apprised the Div Com about the progress made and informed that most of the land acquisition cases have been resolved while those pending for timely completion of road are also at different stages, project.

Divisional It was also informed that Commissioner, Jammu, Sanjeev religious structures coming Verma on Saturday reviewed in the alignment have been shifted. The Div Com sought along Nashri - Banihal stretch details of land acquisition cases, structure removal cases, and disbursement of compensation in the district and shifting of electricity towers.

The Div Com asked the

DC Ramban to follow all the pending cases and complete the process at the earliest for smooth execution of work on While reviewing the progress on shifting of electricity towers,

the concerned officers apprised

that all the 10 towers coming

in the alignment of the stretch have been shifted. The Div Com asked concerned offices to resolve the bottlenecks The Deputy Commissioner which are hampering the work progress. He also directed the NHAI to expedite the pace of work on the stretch where land acquisition has been completed

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CONTACT CIRCULATION INCHARGE IRSHAD AHMAD: 7006276927





# **AC approves J&K Communication and Connectivity Infrastructure Policy**

Aims to fulfil objectives of National Broadband Mission

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 28: The Administrative Council (AC), which met here under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, on Saturday approved the Jammu and Kashmir Communication and Connectivity Infrastructure Policy (JKCCIP).

To further ease the laying of telecom infrastructure in J&K which includes both overhead (mobile towers) and underground (optical fiber) infrastructure, the new policy includes 'Rights of Way' (RoW) provisions which ensure hassle-free approval of RoW permissions in a speedy and time-bound manner through a single-window

Under the new policy, permissions/permits with 2 years validity will be issued to infrastructure providers for laying optical fiber cable (OFC) network/ underground telegraph infrastructure and installing telegraph infrastructure on open land.

To further facilitate the grant of permissions, the policy provides for the development of an online portal by the J&K e-Governance Agency within one year. Once live, the portal will serve the need for online processing of various applications along with their check-lists, besides hosting information on grievances, grievance redressal mechanism, workflow charts, and MIS reports,

The policy also includes provisions of redressal of disputes between infrastructure providers and Government Authorities within 45 days of filing a grievance; through Apex and District Level Committees to be headed by Chief Secretary and concerned Deputy Commissioner, respectively.

Besides improving telecom and internet connectivity, this policy once notified, will significantly aid in achieving the objectives as enshrined in the National Broadband Mission and improve J&K's ranking in the Broadband Readiness

# **AAC Holds Meet, Expresses Condolence With Mirwaiz Family**

Srinagar: Jammu & Kashmir Awami Action Committee (AAC) on Saturday held a condolence meeting at its head office Mirwaiz Manzil Rajouri Kadal which was participated by senior representatives and activists.

During the meeting, the participants expressed deep grief and sorrow over the demise of the uncle of Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Moulvi Muhammad Umar Faroog. The deceased Moulvi Ali Muhammad Jan, resident of Kursoo Raj Bagh, was the elder brother

of Shaheed-e-Millat Mirwaiz Moulana Muhammad Farooq. The participants recollected the versatile personality, pious nature and generous character of Moulvi Ali Muhammad Jan and paid rich tributes to him. An erudite man with an endearing simplicity Moulvi Ali Muhammad Jan was a true representative of the Mirwaiz Family's rich tradition and high values, the meeting observed, adding that his concern for a just social order and welfare of fellow Kashmiris was intrinsic to his personality.

# خاندان سادات رضوی کوصد مه



بی خبر نہایت ہی د کھاورافسوس کے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ خاندان سادات رضوی کے چشم و چراغ آ قاسىيەمحوداحەرضوي ولدآية الله آ قاسىداحەرضوي رحمة الله عليه ساكن نابدى يوره جدى بل طویل علالت کے بعد داعی اجل کولیک کہہ گئے ، اناللہ وانالیہ راجعون۔ خداوند منان سے دعاہے کہ مرحوم کو جنت الفردوس میں اعلی مقام عطا کرے۔ آمین ۔اس سلسلے میں تعزیت برسی ان کے گھروا قع درنابدی پورہ جڈی بل سرینگر میں سوموار تک جاری رہے گی۔

خاندان سادات رضوي

7051892176, 7780917527

# LG Releases Panchayat Newsletter "Parivartan"

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Friday released Panchayat Newsletter "Parivartan"- a first ever publication in five official languages of J&K here at Raj Bhavan.

The Lt Governor appreciated the initiative of the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj for coming out with a publication in all the five official languages of J&K - Dogri, Urdu, Kashmiri, Hindi and English, highlighting the progress being made under Back to Village-3 and 21-day long Jan Abhiyan programmes.

The publication in multiple languages will serve as a great tool to inform the larger population of J&K about the latest Government activities besides, a glimpse into the working of the government, said the Lt Governor.

The Newsletter provides holistic view of the Government's concerted efforts towards empowering grassroots democracy by reaching out to the people through Back

Co-operative Bank ltd B/u Budgam.

No. ARTO/BUDGAM, 1937

Dated 28/11/2020

MCB

low it is therefore notified for gene

Office Of The Assistant Regional

Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir

NOTICE

Where as a joint application has

Shri: Imtiyaz Ahmad Malla S/o: Gh

Rasool Malla R/o: Ichgam Budgam

as Transferor) & Shri. Faroog Ah-

mad Bhat S/o Gh Mohi Ud Din Bhat

R/o S.K Colony QamarWari Sgr. as Transferee) for transfer of

Maxi Cab Carriage route permit No.989/CC/ Budgam vehicle No.

JKO4B 9760 As well as HPA Cancellation with M/S J & K State

tions, if any to the proposed transfer of the said route permit/ve-

hicle shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Region-

al Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 07 days from

the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper.

been recieved from owner.

to Village and Jan Abhiyan programmes, with governance at their doorsteps and implementation of 'on the spot' redressal of their issues and grievances, he maintained.

The Lt Governor observed that the publication brings out a larger picture on the progress being made under various programmes of the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department.

It covers some of the most important features such as strengthening of Panchayati Raj system; National Rural Livelihood Mission; Community capacity building; strengthening Self Help Groups; Himayat programme; Block Diwas; handholding and support to budding entrepreneurs; livelihood under MGNREGA and meaningful activities as per the needs of the local population etc.

The Government of J&K is using the most important local languages for reaching out to the people through some of the unique efforts like

'Parivartan', said the Lt Governor.

It will be the endeavour of the Government in future to produce as many publications and government orders as possible in all the official languages, he added.

Secretary to the Government, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Sheetal Nanda informed that, as an innovative initiative, the department has produced the 2nd Edition of the Newsletter in all the five official languages of J&K, which is titled "Parivartan" in English, Hindi and Dogri and as "Badlav" in Urdu and Kashmiri.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar and Sh. Baseer Khan, Advisors to the Lt Governor; BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary;. Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Sheetal Nanda, Secretary to the Government, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj and other officers were present on the

# Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir

NOTICE



Where as a joint application has been recieved from owner. Shri: Mohammad Amin Mir

S/o: Gh Mohammad Mir R/o: Gund Kaniham Beerwah Bud-

gam as Transferor) & Shri. Nazir Ahmad Hazar Gojree S/o Noor Mohammad Hazar R/o Nawakadal Sgr. as Transferee) for transfer of Maxi Cab Carriage route permit No.1465/CC/ Budgam vehicle No. JKO4C -8665 As well as HPA Cancellation with M/S J & K State Co-operative Bank Itd B/u Beerwah Budgam, and also HPA

endorsement with J & K bank ltd B/U Parimpora Sgr. Now it is therefore notified for general information that objections, if any to the proposed transfer of the said route permit/ vehicle shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Assistant Regional Transport officer

No. ARTO/BUDGAM, 1938 Dated 28/11/2020

MCB MCB

**Budgam Kashmir** 

# Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir



ownership has been recieved from one. Shri: Muzaffar Ahmad Wani

Pora Budgam (Transferor) of LMV Car Vehicle bearing registration number JK04D-5233 Chasis number 198289 Engine no. 7120087 Model

HP concellation with Cholamandlam Inv.and Fin.B/U By Pass Sgr. Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant

Kashmir Observer. No. ARTO/BUDGAM.1935

# Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir

**Budgam Kashmir** 

Assistant Regional Transport officer

# OFFICE OF THE EXECUIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) DIVISION QAZIGUND

NOTICE INVITING TENDER.S

FRESH NIT NO 87 OF R&B/Qazigund/2020-21 /E-TENDERING.5830-45 DATED:28-12-2020

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

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs in lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (in Rs)	Earnest Money (in Rs)	Time of Completion	Major Head of Account	Class of Contractor
1.	Construction of Footpath near H/o Mustafa Ganie, Yaseen Khan and Bita Parray at Muqdampora Ward No. 02 Muqdampora Kurigam Qazigund of M.C. Qazigund	1.21/=	200/=	2420/=	12 Days	14 <sup>™</sup> .FC.	DEE Class Only
2.	Construction of road near H/o Ali Mohd Ganie, Gaffar Ganie, Saleem Ganie and Ab. Hamid Ganie at Ward No. 05	1.04/=	200/=	2080/=	10 Days	14™.FC	DEE Class Only

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

S. No.	Particulars	Dated					
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice		28-11-2020				
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 02-12-20 09-12-2020	020 To	(11:00 AM) (04:00 PM)			
3	Bid submission Start Date		02-12-2020	(11:00 AM)			
4	Bid Submission End Date	To	09-12-2020	(04:00 PM)			
5	Date and time of opening of bid (online)		10-12-2020	11:00 PM)			
		In the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Qazigun					

Note, As per circular issued by Government of Jammu Kashmir Civil Secretariat Finance Department vide O.M.No.A/24(2017)-651 Dated:7-6-2018 which reads as under:a. Furnishing of hard copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the bidder who's declared lst -Lowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.

b. The cost of tenders should be collected by introducing e-challan or simply uploading a copy of necessary treasury challan /receipt.

c. Similarly, instead of insisting on actual Call Deposit Receipt, a copy of same duly pledged to the concerned Department should be uploaded by the tenderers. However, before allotting the work or Issuing the supply order, the original CDR should be obtained and kept on record.

2. During uploading bid must be accompanied with cost of tender document fees in shape of e-Challan/Tresuary Receipt (Non-Refundable) on account of validity of tender receiving authority and no Treasury Receipt/E-Challan before date and after date shall be entrained. The same should be favoring to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division

Qazigund Crediting to MH:0059-PW (Revenue). 3. As per order issued by the Superintending Engineer PWD (R&B) Circle Anantnag/Kulgam HQ:Khanabal vide letter No.3867-70 Dated: 4-8-2018 which reads as under-The intending bidders should write the name of work and Sl.No. of NIT on the

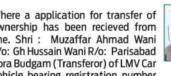
Treasury receipt/E-Challan while uploading their bids.

b) The Treasury Receipt/E-Challan representing the cost of Tender document once

used/uploaded for a particular work/NIT cannot be re-used for any other Nit/Same Fresh NIT. No. 5830-45 DATED:28-12-2020

Er.Reyaz Ahmad Parray **Executive Engineer** PWD(R&B) Division Qazigund DIPK-9742/20

# **NOTICE** Where a application for transfer of



S/o: Gh Hussain Wani R/o: Parisabad

2016, in favour of Shri Umar Faroog Rather S/o, Faroog Ahmad Rather R/o Baghi Sunder Payeen Chattabal (Tranferee) As Well as

Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper

Dated 28/11/2020

# Assistant Regional Transport officer **Budgam Kashmir**

## Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir NOTICE

Office Of The Assistant Regional



Where a application for transfer of ownership has been recieved from one. Shri: Nisar Ahmad Gazi S/o: Gh Mohammad Gazi R/o: Chandapora Budgam (Transferor) of LMV Car Vehicle bearing registration number



JK04E-3566 Chasis number 51843 Engine no. 6008150 Model 2018. in favour of Shri.Gh Mohammad Lone S/o.Mohammad Qasim Lone R/o Near Main Road Warahgam Qumroo Budgam (Tranferee) Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer. No. ARTO/BUDGAM.1934

Assistant Regional Transport officer

MCB

Dated 28/11/2020

# Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir



NOTICE Where a application for transfer

of ownership has been recieved from one. Shri: Basharat Hussain Khanday S/o: Gh Qadir Khanday R/o: Watakaloo Chadoora Bud-

gam (Transferor) of LMV Car Vehicle bearing registration number JK04B-6514 Chasis number 060241 Engine no. 640211 Model 2011. in favour of Shri.Imtiyaz Ahmad Dar S/o. Ab Salam Dar R/o Gandibagh Gondi Bagh Pulwama (Tranferee)

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer.

> Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam Kashmir

No. ARTO/BUDGAM.1936 Dated 28/11/2020

MCB

## **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 BIJBHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132 PATTAN: 01954-293507 QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

## **HIGHWAY STATUS**



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



1442

## **PRAYERS FAJR** 5: 45 **ZUHR** 12:17

**ASR** 3:47 Magrib 5:27 **ISHA** 6:50

# **This Day In History**

- 1581 Doornik (Tournai) surrenders to Duke of Parma
- 1596 King Philip II devalues Spanish currency 1812 - Napoleon's Grand Army crosses Berezina River in retreat from Russia 1850 - The treaty, Punctation of Olmütz, signed in Olomouc means diplomatic capitulation of Prussia to Austrian Empire, taking over the leader
- ship of German Confederation 1864 Battle of Spring Hill, TN (Thomason's Station) 1870 - Compulsory education proclaimed in England
- 1872 Indian Wars: The Modoc War begins with the Battle of Lost River. 1877 US inventor Thomas Edison demonstrates his hand-cranked pho-
- nograph for the first time 1893 Ziqiang Institute, today known as Wuhan University, is founded by Zhang Zhidong, governor of Hubei and Hunan Provinces in late Qing Dynasty of China after his memorial to the throne is approved by the Qing Government.
- 1900 General Horatio Kitchener assumes command of the British forces in South Africa from General Lord Roberts
- 1916 US declares martial law in Dominican Republic 1917 - A Supreme Allied War Council meets at Versailles to define war aims
- 1918 Serbia annexes Montenegro 1933 Japan begins persecution of communists
- 1935 Michael Joseph Savage becomes the first Labour Prime Minister of New Zealand 1935 - Physicist Erwin Schrödinger publishes his famous thought experi-
- ment "Schrödinger's cat", a paradox that illustrates the problem of the Conenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics 1939 - USSR drops diplomatic relations with Finland
- Partisan Tito forms temporary government in Jaice, Bosnia - U-86 sinks in Atlantic Ocean
- 1943 US aircraft carrier Hornet launched - Albania liberated from Nazi control (National Day)
- 1944 The first surgery (on a human) to correct blue baby syndrome is performed by Alfred Blalock and Vivien Thomas.
- 1945 Yugoslavian Socialist Republic proclaimed 1947 UN Gen Assembly partitions Palestine between Arabs & Jews. 1952 - US President-elect Eisenhower visits Korea to assess wa 1962 - Great Britain & France decide to jointly build Concord(e).
- 1963 Trans-Canada Airlines Flight 831: A Douglas DC-8 carrying 118. crashes after taking-off from Dorval Airport near Montreal, Canada. 1967 - British troops withdraw from Aden and South Yemen. 1978 - UN observes "international day of solidarity with Palestinian peo-
- ple," boycotted by US & about 20 other countries. 1989 India Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi resigns 1990 - UN Security Council approves US-sponsored resolution authoriz-
- ing the use of force in the Persian Gulf if Iraq does not withdrawal from Kuwait by Jan. 15, 1991. 1995 - US President Bill Clinton lifts ban on exports of oil from the Alaskan North Slope; the ban was imposed after the oil embargo by Arab oil
- 1997 OPEC agrees to an increase in its production ceiling. OPEC has raised the ceiling to 27.5 million barrels per day for the first half of

1998. 2001 - UN Security Council unanimously approves a resolution extending

# From KO Archives

# APHC leaders at odds on truce

Observer News Service

RINAGAR: Divergence of views, within the all Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) came to the fore when two of its senior leaders, one presently in Pakistan, spoke variously on the conglomerate's esponse to the unilateral Ramadhan ceasefire announced by the

Atal Bihari Vajpayee In an interview in Pakistan, where he recently attended his son's marriage with the daughter of Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front chief, Amanullah Khan, senior Hurriyat leader Abdul Ghani Lone was critical of the disjointed response to India's ceasefire offer from the political and

military wings of the secessionist movement. "We should consult each other before making decisions so that Kashmiris do not appear as a divided house, Lone said. He said the separatist movement is indigenous, although there are Pakistani fighting

He said though his political colleagues are ready to talk to India Islamabad eventually has to be brought to the negotiating table and New Delhi has to move away from the position that Kashmir is

integral part of India.
"Kashmiris would have no option other than to keep the pot boiling, if New Delhi sticks to its stand that Kashmir is integral part of India," he said. Lone said there were Kashmir is eparatist groups waiting to open peace talks with India .There obviously has been b some communication gap between the political leaders of these groups and their mujahideen. while the political wings of these groups have welcomed the Indian Governments offer of ceasefire, more militant elements have op-

posed the same ," Lone said.

We are trying to reach a consensus with mujahideen. They should not act as an independent force, but follow the political leadership," Lone said.

Militant groups represented by United Jehad Council head-quartered in Pakistan have rejected the ceasefire offer and have also vowed to step up their attacks against Indian troops in Kashmir. On the other hand, in a statement issued here today, the Hurrivat Conference expressed its apprehensions about the situation in Kashmin taking a turn for the worse because of the "secret orders issued to the security forces to go to any extent under the cover of the ceasefire," which the conglomerate said, was becoming increasingly evident by the events over the past three days.

Detailing specific incidents, the statement said that the forces' brazen flouting of the ceasefire had exposed the reality of the truce. It said it was quite clear now that India had used ceasefire as a 'political card' to mislead international opinion. "The move is intended to ease the pressure being mounted on India with reference to the Kashmir is

sue, and is aimed at torpedoing the possibility of the world taking serious note of human rights violations being committed by the Indian security forces in Kashmir", the statement added.

Meanwhile, quoting the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front

chairman, Muhammad Yasin Malik, a New Delhi report said the Hurriyat Conference had offered to help start negotiations if the centre was serious about restoration of peace in Jammu and Kashmir.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 29 NOVEMBER, 2000)

# OBSERVER 1

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While Islamabad may try to downplay the GB merger issue but OIC members are not fools to take up an issue that has been technically and legally untenable by the actions of the sponsor member itself.

# he virtual G20 Summit in Riyadh, which was organised under the direct supervision of the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman (MbS), was indeed able to showcase the leadership capability of the Kingdom on the global stage.

As expected, the coronavirus pandemic topped the agenda of the two-day Group of 20 major economies, with countries committing to ensure "affordable and equitable" access to coronavirus vaccines worldwide and to be prepared to deal with future health crises.

## International pandemic treaty

Charles Michel, president of the European Council, proposed an international agreement on the pandemic to prevent future pandemics. "It should be negotiated with all nations, UN organisations and agencies, in particular the WHO. The WHO must remain the cornerstone of global coordination against health emergencies", Michel said.

The G20 leaders pledged over \$21 billion at the outset of the crisis to support funding in global health capacities, according to a statement by G20. Moreover, the members have injected over \$11 trillion so far to shield the economy and protect livelihoods, it said.

International leaders expressed their collective determination to strengthen COVID-19 vaccine production and distribution, extend social protection guarantees to low-income countries, and cement crucial debt-relief extensions.

#### Saudi vision

Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud in his closing remarks at the summit stressed that cooperation is necessary today more than ever to face the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and to build a prosperous future for the people of the world. He also noted that G20 has achieved a lot this year.

"We have adopted important policies that will achieve recovery all the way to an economy that is resilient, sustainable, inclusive, and balanced," he said, adding that these policies will also maintain the momentum to make the global trade system work for all and create the conditions to achieve sustainable growth

Though the Saudis wanted to sell a positive narrative of reform and change in the kingdom and showcase the country's future ambitious projects like the Neom city, the plans were diluted due to the on-going pandemic, yet by conducting the flawless virtual summit they were able to showcase the country's technological advancement to a certain degree.

# Indian response

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Summit virtually and reiterated the importance of reformed multilateralism in order to fight Corona virus effectively across the world.

In his virtual address, PM Modi started his speech by stating, "We are focused on saving citizens and economy from pandemic." and went on to turn everyone's focus toward the changing climatic condition. "Climate change must be fought not in silos but in an integrated, comprehensive and holistic manner", he said. Along with highlighting 'self-reliant' India, he also talked about women's empowerment and how it can be the pillar for overall development of the nation.

# Post-pandemic Economics at G-20 Summit

Asad Mirza



# America's nonchalance

As the timing of the summit and US presidential elections clashed, MbS was not able to rope-in the Saudi ally President Trump in any significant role during the summit. Reports say that Trump made a brief appearance via Zoom to extol his administration's efforts at combating the pandemic and then left to play a round of golf. President-elect Joe Biden had described Saudi Arabia as a "pariah" state in 2019, stating in October that his administration would "reassess our relationship with the Kingdom, end US support for Saudi Arabia's war in Vemen and make sure Amer ica does not check its values at the door to sell arms or buy oil." However, the Saudis hope that that was just electioneering talk. Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, the Saudi foreign minister speaking to Reuters, said: "I'm confident that a Biden administration would continue to pursue policies that are in the interest of regional stability." The foreign minister might be correct in that assessment. But it is far less likely that the Biden White House will buy into the positive narrative of reform and change, which the Saudis are pushing forward.

# Collective Future actions

On the question of navigating the pandemic collectively, the G20 correctly indicated that the "unprecedented" financial and humanitarian costs can be best challenged through an even stronger focus on CO-VID-19 related health, economic, and social exigencies faced by developing countries at present.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said decisions taken at this year's G20 summit would prove decisive in global efforts to curb the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and in meeting the world's expectations from the group.

# Sustaining the economic growth

In his speech, Russian President Vladimir Putin

suggested a further search for common approaches to reforming the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in accordance with modern challenges.

In her remarks at the summit, German Chancellor Angela Merkel also emphasised that the pandemic made governments more conscious that economies must grow sustainably rather than "at the expense of environmental degradation." "There is a desire to learn from the pandemic and make the economy more sustainable," she said.

Other crucial global issues such as the economic recovery, reform of the WTO, taxation of the digital economy and ways to support low-income countries were also discussed at the summit.

Many countries across the globe are facing huge economic stress and as many as 48 countries have already requested debt relief under the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), equalling some \$5.7 billion in critical debt service deferral for this year alone.

The G20 leaders committed to implementing the DSSI including its extension through June 2021. They recalled their support to the WTO reform process in the lead up to the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference. The group agreed to strive to find a consensus-based solution for a globally fair, sustainable, and modern international tax system by mid-2021.

In a welcome move, finance officials from all 20 states will continue to monitor global economic behaviour into the next year, and determine whether further extension of DSSI debt freeze merits consideration. Thus, it can be surmised that G20's demonstrated desire to internationalise economic recovery prospects, instead of confining them within its own territorial bounds, signifies its commitment to equitable global recovery.

The G20's embrace of its newly established Global Innovation Hub for Improving Value in Health is also a step in the right direction. The Hub will serve as a dedicated platform for knowledge sharing and positions itself as a gateway for better Universal Health Coverage across countries. It seeks to accomplish this goal by collecting evidence-informed expertise, and determine which health policies nations should fund, whether these health interventions reflect that country's actual needs, and how financial risks to a given populace are best minimised.

# Action on Climate Change

By taking climate initiative into its own hands, the G20 dispelled the notion that an external stimulus may be necessary to trigger progression on climate-aligned SDG commitments. Instead, the desire to commit to voluntary climate communication is a welcome departure from previous evidence that found G20's climate commitments to be at relative odds with the emissions reductions goals set out under the Paris Accord. Speaking about the climate issue, Merkel said all states except the US made a commitment to follow the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

A resolute G20 alliance, therefore, can thrive on the back of clearly chalked-out priorities. Balancing its resolve with delivery can lead to accelerating the cause of a strong, sustainable, balanced, and inclusive post-COVID-19 era around the globe.

Asad Mirza is a political commentator based in New Delhi.

# Why Isn't Kashmir on OIC Agenda?

Niloofar Qureshi

ver since New Delhi abrogated Article 370 in August last year, Pakistan has been demanding that a special meeting of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Foreign Ministers should be convened to discuss this development. However, even though more than year has gone by, this request hasn't yet been fulfilled. It was assumed that OIC hadn't accepted Islamabad's request for convening an unscheduled meeting of OIC Foreign Ministers due to Covid19 pandemic and it was taken for granted that the Kashmir issue would surely be included in the next OIC Foreign Ministers meet.

However, in the statement issued by Rivadh on OIC Foreign Ministers meet commencing on Friday [November 27] in Niamey [Niger], there is no mention of Kashmir issue being on the agenda. This is surprising since Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi had given indications that Riyadh had accepted Islamabad's request after Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud's visit to Islamabad in December last year. Since this OIC meet is a two-day affair, citing paucity of time as the reason for excluding discussion on the Kashmir issue is not convincing. Moreover, even if this is the case, Riyadh could have easily extended the duration of the meeting to accommodate discussion on Kashmir.

A day after Article 370 was abrogated, Pakistan's Foreign Office (FO) issued a statement saying that the OIC Contact Group on Kashmir had in an emergency meeting "condemned India's recent illegal and unilateral steps, aimed at undermining the demographics and the disputed nature of the Jammu and Kashmir in contraven-

tion of the relevant UN resolutions, which seriously imperil regional peace and security." Thus, non-inclusion of this in the OIC Foreign Minister's meet is clearly a big failure of Pakistan's Kashmir policy arising out of incompetent handling of the situation.

Islamabad even faced embarrassment when it took the Article 370 abrogation issue to UNSC. Just three days after abrogation of Article 370, when asked to comment on Pakistan's letter to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Article 370 abrogation, all that UNSC President Joanna Wronecka said was "No comments."

At that time, even spokesperson of UN Secretary-General Stephane Dujarric said "The Secretary-General also recalls the 1972 Agreement on bilateral relations between India and Pakistan, also known as the Shimla Agreement, which states that the final status of Jammu and Kashmir is to be settled by peaceful means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations." Since the UNSC spokesperson talked about the Shimla agreement and Kashmir being a bilateral issue, it was evident that there was no change in UNSC's stand on this subject.

Next, Islamabad should never have accepted a compromise arrangement of the UNSC discussion on Kashmir being held as a 'closed door' meeting because it belittled the gravity of this serious issue. Moreover, since there was no provision of any resolutions being adopted during this meeting or any press statement on the deliberations being issued, Islamabad is guilty of knowingly allowing the Kashmir issue to be ridiculed in an international forum by accepting the UNSC's casual approach.

This becomes even more serious because the Pakistani establishment was fully aware that the UNSC meet on Kashmir In the statement issued by Riyadh on OIC Foreign Ministers, there is no mention of Kashmir issue being on the agenda. This is surprising since Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi had given indications that Riyadh had accepted Islamabad's request after Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud's visit to Islamabad in December last year

wouldn't achieve anything, as is evident from the fact that even before the meet was held, Foreign Minister Qureshi warned the people of Pakistan not to "live in a fool paradise" because "They (UNSC members) are not waiting for you with garlands in their hands."

The second setback Islamabad received was when it got involved in the power tussle within the OIC between Saudi Arabia and Turkey. In its eagerness to show support for Ankara, Qureshi went on to issue a crude threat to Saudi Arabia by saying, "I am once again respectfully telling OIC that a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers is our expectation. If you cannot convene it, then I'll be compelled to ask Prime Minister Imran Khan to call a meeting of the Islamic countries that are ready to stand with us on the issue of Kashmir and support the oppressed Kashmiris."

The third and most colossal blun-

der committed by Islamabad is granting provincial status to the 'disputed territory' of Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and even though it may not agree, but all stakeholders had warned Government of Pakistan against this move. In its 2014 resolution, Pakistan administered Kashmir (PaK) assembly had mentioned that "Making Gilgit-Baltistan a fifth province will weaken Pakistan's national stand on Jammu and Kashmir at the international level." Hurriyat (G) leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani had said that ,"There are no constitutional as well as moral justification in making any decision over any part of this territory without the consent of its people and it is also clear violation of the UN resolutions on Kashmir."

In his letter to the then Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, JKLF chairman Mohammad Yasin Malik noted that "If Pakistan imposes its sovereign writ over GB, India will then have a political and moral right to integrate Kashmir with it. With one stroke, Pakistan will be helping India to consolidate its writ on Kashmir". And UJC chief and HM supremo Syed Salahuddin also warned that granting provincial status to GB "would impact the Kashmir dispute at the UN and give India a legal and moral pretext to lay claim on Kashmir." He also clarified that "such an act on part of Pakistan will have serious ramifications on Kashmir issue as well as Kashmir centric UN resolutions (as) Pakistan's move will give India justification in taking over parts of Kashmir".

While addressing a Malaysian think tank session on regional peace and security in February this year, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan had complained of how OIC members "have no voice and—there is a total division amongst (us). We

can't even come together as a whole on the OIC summit meeting on Kashmir." Islamabad may come out with various reasons like commercial interests of member states with India that is preventing OIC from isolating New Delhi on the 'K' issue. However, the actuality is that Islamabad's weak and ambiguous stand on Kashmir is one of the main reasons of why this issue has not moved a single inch forward even after more than seven decades.

Hence, while Islamabad may try to downplay the GB merger issue but OIC members are not fools to take up an issue that has been technically and legally untenable by the actions of the sponsor member itself. Khan may claim that the decision of granting provincial status to GB was made "while keeping in mind the UN Security Council resolutions", but if he is right, then going by the same logic apply, how does New Delhi's decision of abrogatingArticle 370 violate UNSC resolutions and amount to "illegal annexation" of J&K?

It was precisely in this context the JKLF chairman had three years ago cautioned that "If Pakistan imposes its sovereign writ over Gilgit and Baltistan India will then have a political and moral right to integrate Kashmir with it" and rightly noted that "With one stroke, Pakistan will be helping India to consolidate its writ on Kashmir"! Thus, why blame OIC when it's actually successive governments in Islamabad which have compromised the 'K' issue!

Views expressed are author's own and do not necessarily represent that of Kashmir Observer The author is a New Delhi based columnist and can be reached at niloofar.qureshi@yahoo.com

# Remembering Maradona

MATTHEW BROWN

For some, even in death, Maradona was still the cheat who could not be forgiven. Yet, it was precisely his refusal to recognise the presumed superiority of the Englishmen flailing before him that gave joy to millions worldwide.

he death of the greatest player in the history of the game of Association Football, Diego Armando Maradona, on November 25 produced an outpouring of grief and nostalgia around the world. He was such an important figure in his native Argentina that the president declared three days of mourning.

In England, though many have praised his skill and achievements, his death has provided the opportunity to dig up the old humbug about the Hand of God goal at the 1986 World Cup, which involved Maradona's fist essentially knocking the ball into England's goal. For some, even in death, Maradona was still the cheat who could not be forgiven. Yet, it was precisely his refusal to recognise the presumed superiority of the Englishmen flailing before him that gave joy to millions worldwide.

The inability of a few in England to move on from that goal speaks to the historical processes that underpin Britain's relationship with Latin America, which in my research I have characterised as a combination of "culture, capital and commerce that formed an informal empire" from the mid-19th to the early 20th century.

#### Football as war

The problem is that "football was created in England, but perfected in South America", as the historian Brenda Elsey has written.

We saw this when Peru's Teófilo Cubillas punctured Scottish dreams in 1978 and in Maradona's performance in 1986. Then there was Brazilian Ronaldinho's lob that left English goalkeeper David Seaman questioning gravity and the universe itself at the 2002 World Cup. Britain's relationships with South America have been defined more by football than by anything else.

The Hand of God goal and "Goal of the Century," which came minutes later in the same game, brought joy and spiritual uplift to so many people in Latin America. It represented a "cosmic" rupture in the universal order of things (to quote the classic commentary on the match by Victor Hugo Morales) which up-ended English assumptions of superiority that had been accepted by some elites across the continent. This was particularly the case in Argentina, where English-speaking communities had reached into the hundreds of thousands by the 1980s.

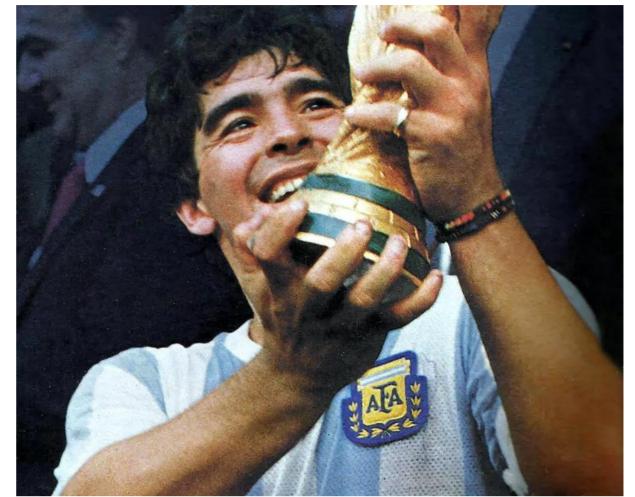
The depth of feeling that accompanies Maradona's death speaks to the abiding sense that he was somehow responsible for a moment that has acquired spiritual meaning for the way it broke historical patterns.

In his autobiography Yo Soy El Diego (I Am The Diego), Maradona reflected on the World Cup victory over England, which happened in the wake of the war over the Falklands/Malvinas.

Somehow we blamed the English players for everything that had happened, for everything that the Argentinian people had suffered. I know that it sounds crazy but that's the way we felt. The feeling was stronger than us: we were defending our flag, the dead kids, the survivors.

Sport, in these terms, had become a surrogate for warfare, an opportunity for the defeated to inflict pain on the victors through whatever means possible. In addition to the Malvinas/Falklands conflict, this sentiment was shaped by the strong British influence on Argentinian economic and cultural life.

Argentinian nationalism was marked in different ways by the British construction of the railways, as well



as the 1890s Baring Bank crisis that nearly bankrupted Argentina and left Britain relatively unscathed. There was also the Harrods luxury shop in Buenos Aires, the polo clubs and the substantial British community in the city and in the pampas (fertile flatlands surrounding Buenos Aires).

In England, the continuing anger that Maradona "got away with it" comes out of the ashes of empire. With historical perspective, we can see the British refusal to relinquish the Falklands/Malvinas in 1982 in its refusal to accept the loss of the match, and subsequently, as part of a reluctance to step back from two centuries of imperial engagement with Latin America.

# Maradona and masculinity

As many have noted since Maradona's death, he left a trail of destruction in his wake. He can be seen as a victim of some of the people who surrounded him, as well as the maker of much of that destruction. The drugs, revolutionary politics, domestic abuse and emotional outbursts, which are the most visible parts of the media narrative, fit snugly into the British stereotype of the combustible Latin American firebrand.

tin American firebrand. Yet as Argentinian scholars like Eduardo Archetti and Pablo Alabarces pointed out, football and masculinity were wrapped up together over a century ago. This combination makes Maradona the stand-out figure of a football culture that gloried in the humiliation of the opponent. It saw defeat as a result of feminine weakness while also marvelling at the artistic beauty of the footballer's body in flight and the perfect arc of the ball as it nestled into the top corner.

As the writer Ayelén Pujol has observed, Maradona's achievements and his rebellions were an inspiration to millions of marginalized citizens; including the women footballers who today strive to transform the football establishment in their own ways.

With the current prohibition of fans in stadiums due to coronavirus, we are ever more anxious for legends and heroes who will unite us. We long for community and public spaces where we can share moments of joy and sadness together. Diego Maradona was central to many of those moments in the past, and his life will remain a key reference point in the history of the world as a result.

By arrangements with The Conversation

# ANTIQUITY

# I ord's, the MCG, Shane Warne's mobile phone: these are cricket's most legendary venues, having played host to some of the game's greatest feats. Their very names evoke images of leather on willow; of balls and

soo. Never heard of them? Didn't think so.

These seven neighbouring villages, nestled high in the mountains of Indianadministered Kashmir, account for a whopping 80 per cent of the world's cricket bats. If you've ever played cricket, chances are the bat you used was made here, fashioned from the willows that cloak the western foothills of the Himalayas. Braving snow, ice and dodgy carpet sellers, I've come to Kashmir in search of the world's best bat - the world's best birthday present

middle stumps. But just as impressive are

the cricketing feats that occur every day at the venues of Sangam, Bijbehara, Hallmul-

laha, Sethar, Pujteng, Mirzapor and Char-

for my hyperactive two-year-old nephew. From Srinagar, summer capital of Indian Kashmir, a local friend drives me south towards the bat villages. It's winter and the gloomy sky matches the grey waters of the Jhelum River, whose winding course we follow. Dead-straight poplars, bereft of their leaves, flank the road, while Indian soldiers armed with AK-47s and humourless expressions man checkpoints every few hundred metres, a stark reminder of the insurgency that has blighted Kashmir since 1989. Despite patches of snow streaking the ground, snotty-nosed boys dressed in woollen shawls brave the cold for a few overs beside the road; there's no such thing as an off-season in cricket-mad India.

Outside the town of Pampore a sign modestly declares: "World's best saffron grows here." Kashmir, along with Iran and Spain, produces the bulk of this valuable spice and although the frozen fields around us are now bare, come mid-October they will be blanketed with purple flowers and thousands of women plucking their precious stigmas.

After half an hour we approach the outskirts of Sangam, the first of the bat villages. Billboards immortalise Ricky Ponting and Sachin Tendulkar, while bats hang from shop roofs like decorations on a Christmas tree. Beside us, the roadside poplars give way to enormous piles of what, at first, I think are forklift pallets;



After half an hour we approach the outskirts of Sangam, the first of the bat villages. Billboards immortalise Ricky Ponting and Sachin Tendulkar, while bats hang from shop roofs like decorations on a Christmas tree.

upon closer inspection, they prove to be hundreds of handle-less cricket bats, neatly stacked on top of each other. For a fanatic like me it's an incredible sight. I feel like I've entered the Long Room at Lord's, though instead of the distinctive yellow and red blazer of the Marylebone Cricket Club, everyone in Sangam is decked out in ankle-length grey cloaks, Muslim prayer caps and thongs.

Abdul Rahman Dar complements this look with a white beard and a pair of piercing jade eyes. A Sangam cricket bat maker with 25 years experience, Dar is happy

to take me on a tour of his workshop, my friend Rauf translating.

"Making bats is what I do best," Dar explains through a near-toothless gob as we follow him into his shed, its dirt floor covered with wood shavings and cricket bats in various states of completion. "On a good day, I can make four bats; if I'm having a bad day, maybe one or two."

The skill of cricket bat making, historically known as "pod shaving", was introduced to Kashmir by the British early last century when it was found that locally grown willow - light, flexible and

fast-growing - would make perfect master blasters. However, it was only after independence that the industry took off, mirroring the soaring popularity of cricket on the subcontinent from the 1950s. Today, as many as 15,000 Kashmiris are involved in the trade, contributing to an average annual output of 500,000 bats - more if the Indian team is performing well (which

sparks greater demand).

The process starts when willows from nearby plantations are felled at the age of 15 years, cut into logs and transported to the bat workshops, where they are left to dry,

sometimes for up to a year. At first, wild trees were used but with illegal logging and lumber smuggling a growing problem in Kashmir, native forests are now protected. Once the logs are dry, they are milled into bat-sized chunks called "clefts", which are then hewn, whittled, sawn and sanded until a bat emerges. Handles and stickers are then added, the bats oiled, packaged and exported around the world.

While most of the world's amateurs use Kashmiri bats, professionals prefer blades made from English willow, which is widely considered superior because of its higher grain density. When I ask Dar about the difference, it's obvious I've touched a raw nerve. "English willow is soft," he says, "like the English! Kashmir bats are No. 1."

National allegiances aside, I'm looking for a present. But throughout Dar's workshop and showroom, where five men put the finishing touches on their masterpieces, I can't find a bat small enough for my nephew. For the next hour we peruse the shops of Sangam and neighbouring Hallmullaha but all to no avail. Then, just as I am about to give up, I see it: a miniature bat hanging from a roadside shop. "Reebick," its sticker says - lucky two-year-olds can't read.

Thus armed, we return to Srinagar, where the next day - my last in India - I head to the post office to send off my gift. After being frisked by a heavily armed soldier at the entrance, I can't wait to be rid of the thing and head to the airport. Not so fast. Despite having carefully wrapped the bat in brown paper, I am told I must first visit the "linen man" at the market to wrap up the bat, then the "wax man" to seal the seams. Running out of time and with no room left in an already overweight snowboard bag, I have an idea.

I spend my last hour in India looking for a street urchin with the stature of a toddler. The perfect candidate is to be found, ironically, looking through a bin near the city's cricket ground. Not quite sure what to make of my offering, he grabs the bat and bolts, grinning from ear to ear. My nephew may still be waiting for a birthday present but at least I've done a good deed for the day. Cricket, after all, is a gentleman's game.

This article is being reproduced from Kashmir Observer's archives often vital for future success, but how patience

is regulated in the brain remains poorly un-

derstood. Now, in a study on mice, scientists

pinpoint specific areas of the brain that indi-

vidually promote patience through the action

Computation Unit at the Okinawa Institute of

Science and Technology Graduate University

(OIST), the authors, Dr. Katsuhiko Miyazaki and Dr. Kayoko Miyazaki, and its findings were

"Serotonin is one of the most famous neu-

romodulators of behaviour, helping to regulate

mood, sleep-wake cycles, and appetite," said Dr. Katsuhiko Miyazaki. "Our research shows

that the release of this chemical messenger

also plays a crucial role in promoting patience,

increasing the time that mice are willing to

Their most recent work draws heavily on

previous research, where the unit used a pow-

- to establish a causal link between serotonin

that expressed a light-sensitive protein. This

meant that the researchers could stimulate

these neurons to release serotonin at precise

times by shining light, using an optical fiber

wait for a food reward."

implanted in the brain.

and patience.

published in the journal Science Advances.

The study was conducted by the Neural

of serotonin.

Scientists reveal regions of the brain

where serotonin promotes patience

Whether we're stuck in traffic at the end of a these neurons while the mice were waiting behaviors when they were damaged - a deep rewarded the mice in 75 percent of trials. In

long day, or eagerly anticipating the release for food increased their waiting time, with the brain structure called the nucleus accumbens, some test conditions, the timing of the reward

**Scholarships** 

**This Week** 

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

# **CBSE Merit Scholarship Scheme** for Single Girl Child 2020

## **Description:**

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) invites applications for CBSE Merit Scholarship Scheme for Single Girl Child 2020 from single girl children who have passed CBSE Class 10 examination in the year 2020. The scholarship aims at supporting meritorious single girl students who are the only child of their parents to continue their further school education of Class 11 and 12.

This scholarship is open for girls who are single girl child of their families. They must have passed CBSE Class 10 examination in 2020 with 60% or more marks. They must be pursuing studies in Class 11 and 12 at any CBSE affiliated school whose tuition fee is not more than INR 1,500 per month.

**Prizes & Rewards:** INR 500 per month Last Date to Apply: 10-12-2020 Online applications only **Application mode:** Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/CMS5

# AICTE PG (GATE/GPAT) Scholarship 2020-21

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) invites applications from GATE/GPAT qualified students for AICTE PG (GATE/GPAT) Scholarship 2020-21. The key objective of the scholarship is to ensure the development of technical education in India.

The candidates who have obtained a valid score in GATE/GPAT examination can apply. They must have taken admission in the 1st year of M.Tech./M.E./M.Pharma/M.Arch. courses at an AICTE recognized institution in the academic year 2020-21.

Prizes & Rewards: INR 12,400 per month 15-12-2020 Last Date to Apply: Online applications only Application modé: Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/BTO5

# **Keep India Smiling Foundational Scholarship Programme**

Colgate-Palmolive (India) Ltd. is giving young students an opportunity to pursue their academic/career aspirations by providing them with scholarships for education. This scholarship program provides financial aid to students pursuing studies at various post-matric and undergraduate levels to continue their education and proceed towards a career of their choice.

Students who have passed Class 10 with at least 75% marks or Class 12 with at least 60% marks in 2019 board exams are eligible to apply for the scholarship program for pursuing their higher secondary, 3-year graduation, 4-year engineering, Diploma programme and 1-year vocational course studies respectively. Annual Family incomé of all applicants must be less than INR 5 Lakhs per annum.

Prizes & Rewards: Selected scholars can avail scholarship award of up to INR 30,000 per year for up to 3 years of

studies depending on their current level of edu-

Last Date to Apply: 28-02-2021 Apply online Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/KISSP01

# press the impulse for instant gratification is ing of the reward was uncertain. **SEROTONIN PATHWAYS** Distribution of serotonin from raphe nuclei through cortext and into the cerebellum.

"In other words, for the serotonin to proerful technique called optogenetics - using that a reward would come but uncertain about

of a new book, film, or album, there are times maximum effect seen when the probability of and two parts of the frontal lobe called the

when we need to be patient. Learning to sup-receiving a reward was high but when the tim-orbitofrontal cortex and the medial prefrontal

light to stimulate specific neurons in the brain when it would arrive," said Dr. Miyazaki. In the previous study, the scientists focused on an area of the brain called the dorsal raphe The scientists bred genetically engineered nucleus - the central hub of serotonin-releasmice that had serotonin-releasing neurons ing neurons. Neurons from the dorsal raphe nucleus reach out into other areas of the forebrain and in their most recent study, the scientists explored specifically which of these other brain areas contributed to regulating patience.

"Impulse behaviours are intrinsically linked mote patience, the mice had to be confident to patience - the more impulsive an individual is, the less patient - so these brain areas were prime candidates," explained Dr. Miyazaki.

Good things come to those who wait (or not...) In the study, the scientists implanted optical fibers into the dorsal raphe nucleus and also one of either the nucleus accumbens, the orbitofrontal cortex, or the medial prefrontal

The researchers trained mice to perform a waiting task where the mice held with their The team focused on three brain areas nose inside a hole, called a "nose poke" un-The researchers found that stimulating that had been shown to increase impulsive til a food pellet was delivered. The scientists said Dr. Miyazaki. -Agencies

underwent proton MR spectroscopy to quantify

bone marrow fat of the lumbar spine.

fects in the latter.

was fixed at six or ten seconds after the mice

started the nose poke and in other test conditions, the timing of the reward varied.

the omission trials, the scientists did not pro-

vide a food reward to the mice. They measured

how long the mice continued performing the

nose poke during omission trials - in other

words, how patient they were - when sero-

tonin-releasing neurons were and were not

When the researchers stimulated serotonin-

releasing neural fibers that reached into the

nucleus accumbens, they found no increase

in waiting time, suggesting that serotonin in

this area of the brain has no role in regulating

But when the scientists stimulated serotonin release in the orbitofrontal cortex and the me-

dial prefrontal cortex while the mice were

holding the nose poke, they found the mice

In the orbitofrontal cortex, the release of se-

rotonin promoted patience as effectively as se-

rotonin activation in the dorsal raphe nucleus;

both when reward timing was fixed and when

reward timing was uncertain, with stronger ef-

But in the medial prefrontal cortex, the sci-

entists only saw an increase in patience when

the timing of the reward was varied, with no

the brain responded to serotonin suggests that each brain area contributes to the overall wait-

ing behavior of the mice in separate ways.'

'The differences seen in how each area of

effect observed when the timing was fixed.

waited longer, with a few crucial differences.

In the remaining 25 per cent of trials, called

One year following surgery, the adolescents who underwent sleeve gastrectomy lost 34 (+/-13) kg, or the controls, sleeve gastrectomy patients had a significant increase in bone marrow fat and a decrease

"Adolescents who underwent sleeve gastrectomy had bone loss and an increase in bone marrow fat, despite the marked loss of body fat," Dr Bredella said. "While weight-loss surgery is successful for weight loss and improving metabolic disorders, it

ing sleeve gastrectomy was expected because greater weight-bearing strengthens bones. In addition to a loss of bone density, other effects of weight-loss surgery include disruption of hormones and nutrients important for bone health.

prevent bone loss in these patients and to make adolescents with obesity more aware of bone health," she said. "Adolescence is the critical time for bone mass accrual, and any process that interferes with responds to changes in nutrition and may serve as bone accrual during this time can have dire consequences later in life." -Agencies

Subject:-

Ref:

# surgery in teenagers weakens bones A common weight loss surgery for adolescents with obesity called sleeve

popular weight-loss

**Researchers find** 

gastrectomy has harmful effects on bones, according to a new study.

Childhood obesity is a major public health issue that has increased over the last 10 years," said lead investigator Miriam A. Bredella, M.D., professor of radiology at Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts, and vice-chair of the Department of Radiology at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. "Sleeve gastrectomy is the most common bariatric surgery procedure performed in children and adults."

n a sleeve gastrectomy, approximately 75% of the stomach is removed to restrict food intake and induce weight loss. It results in a typically round stomach taking on the shape of a tube or sleeve. The number of sleeve gastrectomy procedures performed on adolescents increased 100-fold from 2005 to 2014.

"In adults, bariatric surgery can have long-term effects on bone, leading to higher fracture risk," Dr. Bredella said. "We wanted to determine the effects of sleeve gastrectomy performed on adolescents during the crucial years when bone mass is being

The study examined 52 adolescents with moderate to severe obesity, 26 of whom underwent sleeve gastrectomy. The other 26 were in the control group. Mean age was 17.5 years, and mean body mass index (BMI) was 45. BMI of 30 or above is considered obese. Thirty-eight of study participants were girls. Before and 12 months after sleeve gastrectomy (or no surgery), the patients underwent quantitative CT of the lumbar spine, to quantify volumetric bone mineral density. Quantitative CT is a highly accurate technique for detecting changes in volumetric bone mineral density after extreme weight loss.

Recent studies have shown that bone marrow fat a biomarker for bone quality. Therefore, patients

75 (+/-28) pounds, while there was no significant change in weight in the control group. Compared to

in bone density in the lumbar spine.

has negative effects on bone.'

Dr Bredella said the loss of bone density follow-

"We need to identify mechanisms that will help

# Study says most lungs recover well in 3 months after COVID

verely from Covid-19 shows good recovery in three months in most cases. The study from Radboud University in the Netherlands, published in the journal Clinical Infectious Diseases, included 124 authors wrote. patients who had recovered from acute Covid-19 infections.

Patients were divided into three categoexperienced persisting symptoms that eventually warranted a referral from their

**LONDON:** Researchers have revealed that lung tissue of patients who suffered seties who were referred to the after three months and revealed that the patients who were referred to the after three months and revealed that the patients who were referred to the after three months and revealed that the patients who were referred to the after three months and revealed that the patients who were referred to the after three months and revealed that the patients who were referred to the after three months and revealed that the patients who were referred to the after three months and revealed that the patients who were referred to the after three months and revealed that the patients who were referred to the after three months and revealed that the patients who were referred to the after three months and revealed that the patients who were referred to the after three months are the patients who were referred to the after three months are the patients who were referred to the after three months are the patients who were referred to the after three months are the patients who were referred to the after three months are the patients who were referred to the after three months are the patients who were referred to the after three months are the patients who were referred to the after three months are the patients who were referred to the after three months are three months tercare clinic by their doctors showed the or acute respiratory distress syndrome worst recovery in the following period. "The patients were examined by CT scan, a lung functional test and more," the study

After three months, the researchers took stock, which revealed that the patients' lung tissue is recovering well. Residual ries for the study: a group with patients damage in the lung tissue was generally who were admitted to the ICU, a group of limited and is most often seen in patients

(ARDS), in which fluid accumulates in the lungs," said study author Bram van den Borst. "Recovery from these conditions also generally takes a long time. It is encouraging to see that lung after Covid-19 infections exhibit this level of recovery," Borst added.

What is striking is that the research team barely found any anomalies in the lungs of these patients. "Considering the variety and seriousness of the complaints

Sd/

**Executive Engineer** 

MHCH Division

Selection list of candidates for the post of Junior Assistant (School Education Department), District cadre Anantnag (item No. 041), Budgam (item No. 033), Baramulla (item No. 035), Kulgam (item No. 040) Kupwara (item No. 036), Shopian (item No. 039) & Srinagar (item No. 032) under Hon'ble Prime Minister's Special Package for Kashmiri Migrants.

**Director School Education Kashmir** 

Administrative Department's/DMRRRR/SSRB communication Nos;

i. Edu-l/88/2020 dated 22/07/2020 and even Nos. dated 24/08/2020, dated 29/09/2020, dated 09/09/2020, dated 10/11/2020 ii. DMRRR/MR/Sel/76/2020 dated 29/07/2020 & SSRB's letter No. SSB/Secy/ Sel/M/48/2020/ 2454-547 dated 22/06/2020 iii. DMRRR/MR/Sel/92/2020 dated 17/06/2020 & SSRB's letter No. SSB/Secy/Sel/M/43/2020/2453-55 dated 03/06/2020 iv. DMRRR/MR/Sel/92/2020 dated 31/08/2020 & SSRB's letter No. SSB/Secy/Sel/M/202020/2846-48 dated 28/07/2020 v. DMRRR/MR/Sel/92/2020 dated 13/10/2020 & SSRB's letter No. SSB/Secy/M/43/2020/23209-11 dated 09/09/2020

# **NOTIFICATION**

Whereas this Directorate has received list of forty eight (48) candidates selected by J&K Service Selection Board for the post of "Junior Assistant" under Prime Minister's Special package for Kashmir Migrants forwarded by Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction Civil Secretariat, Jammu and conveyed by Administrative Department vide letter No. Edu-I/88/2020 dated 22/07/2020;

Whereas Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction has desired to verify all the academic/technical and other requisite documents of the selectees before issuing appointment order;

Whereas, vide Notification No. DSEK/NT/Mig/Return/26-31/SF/2020/All/619-21 dated 26/08/2020 35 out of 48 candidates, in whose favour recommendation was released, were directed to submit their testimonials to this

Whereas, recommendation in respect of 05 more candidates, has been released, post issuance of the above notification;

Now therefore, following 05 candidates selected as Junior Assistant in School Education Department and in whose favour recommendation has been released by JKSSRB, subject to verification of documents are hereby informed to deposit their original certificates/testimonials with a set of self attested Xerox copies (in person) in the Directorate of School Education Kashmir within (10) days from the date of publication of this notification;

Sr. No.	SSRB S.No	Name of the Candidate	Father/Husband Name	Address	D.O.B	Cat	Type Speed	Total Wtg. (out of 100)	Name of University / Institute	Year of Passing	Remarks
District Cadre Anantnag (Advt./item No. 04 of 2017/041)											
01	10	POOJA PANDITA	AUDESH KUMAR	Village Batapora Handwara Tehsil Hadwara Kupwara	27/04/1990	ОМ	45	37,75	Grad. from JU & Comp. Diploma from STIC	2011/ 2010	Rec. Is subject to verification of computer course and recognition status of the institute sizes it prescribed qualification by the indenting deptt.
District Cadre Baramulla (Advt./item No. 04 of 2017/035)											
02	04	ARCIJANA TICKOO	RAKESH TICKOO	J-6 Baramulla Pandith Colony Baramulla Veerwan Khanpara Baramulla 193101	26/08/1983	ОМ	53	40.80	Grad. from JU & Dip. From Global Instt. Jmu.	2013/ 2013	Ree, is subject to verification of computer course and recognition status of the institute viz-a-viz prescribed qualification by the indenting deptt.
03	05	Shivani Bhat	Rattan Lal Bhat	193101 Baramulla Mirgund	05/03/1989	ОМ	35	39.75	B.Com from JU & Diploma from PICE	2009/ 2011	Rec, is subject to verification of computer course and recognition status of the institute via-a-via prescribed qualification by the indenting depti.
Distri	ct Cadre	Kulgam (Advt./	item No. 04 of 201	7/040)							
04	04	RAKESH KUMAR	MOHAN LAL DHAR	Devsar 192102 Kulgam	15/03/1986	ОМ	39	36.15	Gmd. from JU & Certificate from GU ITA&R	2007/ 2007	Rec. is subject to verification of computer course and recognition status of the institute viz.a-viz prescribed qualification by the indenting dept.
05	09	HITESH BHAT	KAKA JEE BHAT	H.No. 23 Sec1 Bantalab Ganga Nagar Near Tube Well Jammu	01/08/1994	ОМ	35	31.25	Grad. from JU & Dip. From NICE	2015/ 2017	Ree, is subject to verification of computer course and recognition status of the institute viz-a-viz prescribed qualification by the indenting deptt.

Qualification / Marks certificates of all classes Technical Qualification

Permanent Residence Certificate

Valid Category Certificate (if any).
 No. Loan certificate from DIC, self employme
 Health certificate from CMO concerned.

This notification is issued without prejudice to the Court case/(s), if any pending in the Hon'ble Court or any order which may not be immediately within the knowledge of this Directorate.

No: DSEK/NT/MIG/RETURN/26-31/SF/2020/ALL/892 DATED: 28/11/2020

#### patients who were admitted to a nursing who were treated in the ICU. The most ward in the hospital, and finally a group common complaints after three months with patients who could stay home but are fatigue, shortness of breath and chest and the plausible size of this subgroup, pains. Many people also still experience there is an urgent need for further research limitations in their daily life as well as a into explanations and treatment options," doctors. The study assessed how patients decreased quality of life. "The patterns Borst noted.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir **Mechanical Hospital & Central Heating Division Srinagar** 

**CORRIGENDUM** 

References: This office e- NIT no: MHCHD/TS /2020-21/192/e-tendering Dated 13.11.2020.

The intending bidders may kindly note the following changes in approved makes of annexure B of above referred NIT

Kirloskar / Cummins/Caterpillar (FG Wilson)/Mahindra

**INSTEAD OF** 

Kirloskar / Cummins/Caterpillar/Mahindra All the other terms and conditions will remain the same.

DIPK-9774/20

MHCHD/TS/6377-80Dt:-28-11-2020Srinagar.

**Director School Education Kashmir** DIPK-9724/20

# Iran's Supreme Leader Vows Revenge After Top **Nuclear Scientist Apparently Assassinated**

Tehran, Iran: Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has vowed revenge and to continue the country's "scientific" activities after the killing of the country's chief nuclear scientist, as top Iranian officials pile blame on Israel over the killing.

Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, who became the face of Iran's controversial nuclear program, was killed in a district east of Tehran on Friday, in what Iranian officials are calling an assassination.

"There are two matters that people in charge should put in their to do list: 1- To follow up the atrocity and retaliate against those who were responsible for it. 2- To follow up Martyr Fakhrizadeh's scientific and technical activities in all fields in which he was active," Khamenei wrote Saturday in a tweet from an account often attributed to him, making a veiled reference to the country's nuclear activities.

He added: "Our distinguished nuclear scientist in the defense of our country, Mr Mohsen Fakhrizadeh was killed by the oppressive enemies. This rare scientific mind lost his life for his everlasting great scientific work. He lost his life for God and the supreme leader. God shall reward him greatly."

Iranian Defense Minister Brig. Gen. Amir Hatami said Fakhrizadeh was ambushed by gunmen and



targeted by a Nissan vehicle explosion before a firefight ensued, semiofficial news agency ISNA reported.

At a cabinet meeting Saturday. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani also said the country would retaliate and pointed to Israel for orchestrating the attack. "The think tanks and the enemies of Iran must know that the Iranian nation and the officials in charge in the country are brave and determined to respond to the murder in time." he said.

He added that the killing was

carried out at "the filthy hands of oppressors, in concert with the illegitimate Zionist regime.

Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif's had on Friday called the killing "cowardice -- with serious indications of Israeli role.

Iran has provided no evidence of Israeli involvement. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office declined to comment to CNN on Friday.

In April 2018, Netanyahu mentioned Fakhrizadeh by name when he unveiled a nuclear archive that he said Israeli agents had smuggled out of Iran. He called him the head of a secret nuclear project called Project Amad. "Remember that name, Fakhrizadeh," Netanyahu told reporters.

Fakhrizadeh is also mentioned in multiple reports by the US State Department and the International Atomic Energy Agency as holding deep insight into Iran's nuclear capabilities.

#### Killing 'a big deal,' US official says

Fakhrizadeh was head of the research center of new technology in the elite Revolutionary Guards, and was a leading figure in Iran's nuclear program for many years.

The killing could further fuel tensions between Tehran and Washington in the final weeks of US President Donald Trump's term. US-Iran relations have rapidly deteriorated during Trump's presidency.

# Mohsen Fakhrizadeh: Who was the assassinated Iranian scientist?

rominent Iranian military scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, killed in an attack outside Tehran on Friday, was widely seen by Western intelligence as the mastermind of clandestine Iranian efforts to develop nuclear weapons.

Iran denies Fakhrizadeh was involved in any such undertaking and that it ever tried to weaponise uranium enrichment for nuclear energy.

But he is widely thought to have headed what the United Nations atomic watchdog and United States intelligence services believe was a coordinated nuclear arms programme that was halted in 2003.

#### What is known about him?

Western officials and experts believe Fakhrizadeh played a pivotal role in past Iranian work to devise the means to assemble a nuclear warhead behind the facade of a declared civilian uranium enrichment programme.

Iran denies ever having sought to develop a nuclear weapon. He lived in the shadows under

high security and was never made available to UN nuclear investigators. Fakhrizadeh rarely - if eversurfaced in public and few outside



Iran know with any certainty what he looked like, let alone had met him.

He has the rare distinction of being the only Iranian scientist named in the International Atomic Energy Agency's 2015 "final assessment" of open questions about Iran's nuclear programme and whether it was aimed at developing a bomb.

The UN non-proliferation watchdog's report said he oversaw activities "in support of a possible military dimension to [Iran's] nuclear programme within the so-called AMAD Plan.

A 2011 IAEA report described him as the AMAD Plan's "Executive Officer", a central figure in suspected Iranian work to develop technology and skills needed for atomic bombs, and suggested he may still have a role in such activity.

# US, Germany used second Swiss firm too for spying on govts: report

Agencies

GENEVA: Swiss politicians have voiced outrage and demanded an investigation after revelations that a second Swiss encryption company was allegedly used by the CIA and its German counterpart to spy on governments worldwide.

"How can such a thing happen in a country that claims to be neutral like Switzerland?" the co-head of Switzerland's Socialist Party, Cedric Wermuth, asked in an interview with Swiss public broadcaster SRF late on Thursday.

He called for a parliamentary inquiry after an SRF investigation broadcast on Wednesday found that a second Swiss encryption firm had been part of a spectacular espionage scheme orchestrated by US and German intelligence services.

A first investigation had realed back in February an elaborate, decades-long set-up, in which the CIA and its German counterpart

creamed off the top-secret communications of governments through their hidden control of a Swiss encryption company called Crypto.

Pakistan among 120 states that bought devices from another such Swiss firm SRF's report this week found that a second but smaller Swiss encryption firm, Omnisec, had been used in the same way.

That company, which was split off from Swiss cryptographic equipment maker Gretag in 1987, sold voice, fax and data encryption equipment to governments around the world until it halted operations two years ago.

SRF's investigative programme Rundschau concluded that like Crypto, Omnisec had sold manipulated equipment to foreign governments and armies.

Omnisec, meanwhile, also sold its faulty OC-500 series devices to several federal agencies in Switzerland, including its own intelligence agencies, as well as to Switzerland's largest bank, UBS, and other private

companies in the country, the SRF investigation showed.

## Espionage within Switzerland

The findings unleashed fresh outrage in Switzerland, which is still reeling from the Crypto revelations.

"This shows that the problem is broader than just one company and we still have no answers on the political responsibility aspect," Wermuth said.

Hans-Peter Portman, a parliamentarian with the Liberal Party, agreed, saying he was particularly concerned to learn "Swiss businesses are likely implicated and possibly affected".

'This raises the question of espionage even within the country," he told SRF.

An investigation by the Swiss parliament's Control Delegation into the Crypto case concluded earlier this month that Switzerland's own intelligence service had benefited from the information gathered by its foreign counterparts through the encryption firm

# Office Of The Chief Electoral Officer **Jammu And Kashmir**

"Greater Participation for a Stronger Democracy"

Notification No: CEO/ME/2020/578 Dated 28-11-2020

In exercise of powers conferred under section 9 of the J&K Municipal Corporation Act, 2000, and section 282 of the J&K Municipal Act, 2000, the Chief Electoral Officer, J&K hereby prohibits the conduct of any exit poll and publishing or publicizing/displaying the result of exit poll by means of the print or electronic media or in any other manner in the ongoing Municipal By-Elections, 2020 in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, till the hour fixed for conclusion of poll in the last phase of these elections, i.e. 2:00 PM on 19th December, 2020.

DIPK-NB-4232/20

Sd/-Hirdesh Kumar, IAS Chief Electoral Officer Jammu and Kashmir Dated: 28-11-2020

Sd/=

No. 2173/CEO/ ME/2020/1917-36

# **GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR** Office of the Executive Engineer Quality Control

# & Procurement Division, HMT, Srinagar **TENDER DOCUMENT**

**Short Term** 

e-N.I.T. No: -PHE/QC&PD/25/e-Tender/2020-21 Dated:27-11-2020.

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir (UT), e-tenders in two cover system are invited from registered and experienced Mechanical Contractors/Firms/ dealers for supply of the following Works:

Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Cost of	EMD	Validity of Bids	
		Tender Document	Fee		
Supply of consumable items like Steel Ropes, Clamps, hooks etc. for the operation of Departmental hydraulic cranes for lifting of the dead loads.	52000	200	1000.00	180 days	
_					

The NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of Quantities (BOQ), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be viewed/downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in as per the schedule of dates given below

General		
Client N	lame	Executive Engineer QC&PD PHE Jal Shakti HMT Srinagar
Division		Ouality Control & Procurement Division PHE Jal Shakti Department, HMT Srinagar.
Bidding		Öpen
	t Details	•
Estimat	ted Cost	Rs 52.00 Thousand Approx. (Rupee Fifty-Two Thousand only)
Bid Doc	ument Fee	Rs 200.00 In the shape of treasury Challan/ e-transfer to J&K Bank A/c No:
		0005010100005110 IFSC: JAKAOCHINAR
(Non-Re	efundable)	
		Executive Engineer QC&PD PHE Jal Shakti HMT Srinagar.
	y Challan/ e-transfer under major Head	
	'5-Rev-Misc to:	e-mail. xemmanup@gmail.com
		Rs. 1000/= (Rupee One Thousand only) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG from national-
Lainest	Money Deposit (EMD)	
Farmest	Manay Danasit (EMD) in favour of	ized banks only having a branch in Srinagar.
		Executive Engineer QC&PD PHE Jal Shakti HMT Srinagar
Tender I		27 11 2020 OF 00 DM
Big Doci	ument Downloading Start Date.	27-11-202006.00 PM
	ument Downloading End Date.	07-12-202002.00 PM
	ation Start Date	27-11-202006.00 PM
	ation End Date	07-12-202002.00 PM
	Bid Submission Start Date	27-11-202006.00 PM
	mission End Date	07-12-202003.00 PM
	opening of Cover 1st.	08-12-202002.00 PM
	dity Period	180 days from opening of the Price Bid.
	Inviting Bid	Executive Engineer QC&PD PHE Jal Shakti HMT Srinagar payable at Srinagar.
	ning Authority	Executive Engineer QC&PD PHE Jal Shakti HMT Srinagar
Address	5	Executive Engineer QC&PD PHE Jal Shakti HMT Srinagar
I .	The Cover-1 shall contain:	

Scanned copies of the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG.

Scanned copy of Tender Document fee in the shape of Treasury receipt / e-Challan / e-Receipt (Head 0215 – Revenue & Miscellaneous) Scanned Copy of GST Registration with latest GST Clearance Certificate.

Scanned copies of PAN card. Scanned copy of Registration as required.

Proof of having executed same/similar nature of job to the value of 70% of tendered value or atleast 02 supply orders of 50% each or 03 Supply orders of 40% each or above in Govt. / Semi-Govt. organizations during last three years. Scanned copies of the Annexure "A", "B" duly accepted/signed

B. Cover Second (2nd)
The cover-II shall contain Price bid, as per BOQ uploaded by this department. Financial bid will not be accepted in physical form.

NO: PHE/QCPD/4924-28 Executive Engineer. Jal shakti PHE QCP&Division **HMT** Srinagar DIPK-9764/20

# **SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**

GIST TO NIT e- Tendering No. 47 of 2020-21 Dated:27/11/2020

For and on behalf of Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation e-tenders in two cover system are invited on item wise basis from the authorised Dealers of MICO/BOSCH for the following works:-

	S. No.	Name of work	Total value of	Cost of tender docu-	Earnest money	Validity of	Date and time of
l			the work	ment	(in Rupees)	Rates	opening of bid
l			(Rs. In lacs)	(In Rupees )			
l	1.	Supply of Filters detailed	4.0 lacs	Rs.500/-	2% of the total value	One year	18/12/2020
		mentioned in Annexure "A"			of the contract		

Detailed e-NIT with terms and conditions can be downloaded from the Departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in from 27/11/2020 10am up to 17/12/2020 04 pm

> **EXECUTIVE ENGINEER** MECHANICAL DIVISION SRINAGAR MUNCIPAL CORPORATION

No.SMC/EEM/937-41 Dated: 27/11/2020

DIPK-NB-4236/20

# **State Election Commission UT Of Jammu and Kashmir**

Nirvachan Bhawan, Rail Head Complex, Jammu

Phone No. 0191-2477519 Fax-0191-2477389 Email: ceo-ik@nic.in ORDER NO:SEC/PYT/2020/10

Dated: 28-11-2020

In exercise of powers conferred under Section 36 of the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act 1989, the Election Authority (State Election Commission) hereby prohibits the conduct of any exit poll and publishing or publicizing/displaying the result of exit poll by means of the print or electronic media or in any other manner in the ongoing District development Council Elections in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, till the hour fixed for conclusion of poll in the last phase of these elections, i.e. 2:00 PM on 19th December, 2020.

Sd/-

Sh. K. K. Sharma, IAS (Retd.) State Election Commissioner UT of Jammu and Kashmir Dated: 28/11/2020

DIPK-NB-4233/20

No. 01/SEC/PYT/2020/1593-1612



AN ELDERLY WOMAN raises her arms for prayers during the annual Urs of Sufi saint, Sheikh Syed Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA) at the Dastgeer Sahab shrine in Khanyar on Friday. – KO Photo Abid Bhat

# **Petrol Price Crosses Rs** 82-Mark, **Diesel Above Rs 72 A Litre**

NEW DELHI: Petrol price on Saturday crossed Rs 82-mark in Delhi and diesel surpassed Rs 72 a litre after eighth increase in rates in past nine days.

Petrol price on Saturday was hiked by 24 paise per litre and diesel by 27 paise as hopes of a vaccine development led to a rally in international oil

Petrol price in Delhi rose to Rs 82.13 per litre from Rs 81.89, according to a price notification from oil marketing companies.

Diesel rates went up from Rs 71.86 to Rs 72.13 per litre.

This is the eighth increase in rates since November 20 when oil companies resumed daily price revision after nearly two-week hiatus.

In nine days, petrol price has gone up by Rs 1.07 per litre and diesel rate has risen by Rs 1.67.

Prior to the November 20 hike, petrol prices had been static since September 22 and diesel rates hadn't changed since October 2.

Public sector oil marketing companies - Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd - revise rates of petrol and diesel daily based on benchmark international oil price and foreign exchange rate.

They have, however, resorted to calibrating the rates since the pandemic broke out with a view to avoiding volatility in retail prices.

The 58-day hiatus in petrol price revision and 48-day status quo on diesel rates were preceded by no change in rates between June 30 and August 15 and a 85-day status quo between March 17 and June 6.

In Mumbai, the petrol price on Sunday was raised to Rs 88.81 per litre from Rs 88.58, while diesel rates

went up from Rs 78.38 to Rs 78.66. Rates vary from state to state depending on the incidence of local sales tax or VAT.

# **UP Governor Okays Bill Against Forced Conversions** Amid 'Love Jihad' Row

LUCKNOW, NOV 28: Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel on Saturday gave assent to an ordinance against forcible or fraudulent religious conversions, which provides for imprisonment of up to 10 years and fine of up to Rs 50,000 under different categories.

The promulgation of the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020 comes four days after the Yogi Adityanath government had approved a draft of the ordinance which also curbs religious conversions only for the sake of marriage.

According to the ordinance, a marriage will be declared "null and void" if the conversion of a woman is solely for that purpose and those wishing to change their religion after marriage need to apply to the district magistrate. It also has a provision under which if someone returns to their original religion, it shall not be deemed a conversion. While the onus to prove that the conversion has not been done forcibly will lie on the person accused of the act and the convert, it said.

In case of contravention of the law, the ordinance says that the court shall grant appropriate compensation payable by the accused to the victim of conversion which may extend to a maximum of Rs 5 lakh in addition to the fine.

The ordinance says no person shall convert, either directly or indirectly from one religion to another by use or practice of misrepresentation, force, undue influence, coercion, allurement or by any fraudulent means or by marriage nor shall any person abet, convince or conspire such conversion.

An aggrieved person, his/her parents, brother, sister, or any other person who is related to him/her by blood, marriage or adoption may lodge an FIR about such conversion, according to the ordinance.

In cases of mass religious conversion, the registration of the social organisations will be cancelled, and tion will be initiated against them. If those previously convicted under the ordinance are caught again for the same offence, they shall be subjected to double punishment, it said. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, all the offences under this ordinance shall be cognisable and non bailable and triable by the sessions court, the ordinance said.

In recent weeks, BJP-run states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh have revealed plans to enact laws to counter alleged attempts to convert Hindu women to Islam in the guise of marriage, which Hindu activists refer to as "love jihad". The Uttar Pradesh cabinet's approval to the ordinance followed the announcement by Adityanath that his government would come out with a law to deal with "love jihad". Addressing bypoll rallies in Jaunpur and Deoria last month, Adityanath had used the Hindu funeral chant of 'Ram Naam Satya Hai' to threaten those who do not respect their daughters and sisters. -PTI

# 'Consider All **Hindu Girls** As Sisters': SP Leader's Advice To Muslim Boys

**NEW DELHI:** Reacting to Uttar Pradesh government's order prescribing up to 10 years imprisonment for those found guilty of religious conversions by marriage, coercion, deceit or enticement, Samajwadi Party (SP) MP from Moradabad ST Hasan advised Muslim boys to consider Hindu girls their 'sisters'.

"Consider all Hindu girls as your sisters. Save yourself, do not give in to any temptation," Hasan said, adding that Love Jihad was nothing but a political stunt.

"Love jihad is a political stunt. In our country, people choose their life partners irrespective of religion. Hindus marry Muslims and vice versa. However, the numbers are very low. But if you dig deep into 'love jihad' cases, you would find that girls know that boys are Muslims. But due to societal pressure or internal issues in the family, they lie and it be-

comes a case of Love Jihad," he said. The MP was reacting to Yogi Adityanath cabinet's approval to draft an ordinance outlawing religious conversions by marriage and deceit. The cabinet's approval makes UP the first state to propose a law for regulating interfaith relationships.

The state government's order came on November 24, roughly a month after Yogi vowed to end 'love iihad'. a term used by right-wing activists to describe marital relationships between Muslim men and Hindu women. However, the courts and the Union government do not officially recognise the term.

# **Traffic Hit On Key** Delhi Roads As 2 **Borders Closed Amid** Farmers' Protest

**NEW DELHI: Traffic movement was** affected on key roads in Delhi on Saturday as police kept the Singhu and the Tikri borders closed for

The Delhi Traffic Police tweeted that traffic movement was not allowed from Azadpur and Outer Ring Road towards the Singhu border.

"We appeal to commuters to avoid travelling towards the Singhu and Tikri borders, Mukarba Chowk, NH-44, GT-Karnal Road and Outer Ring Road," Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Meenu Chaudhary said. Saturday being a holiday for most office goers, the traffic situation in other parts is better than Friday, she said.

On Friday, the Delhi Police had curtailed movement at several places, including Dhansa, Jharoda Kalan, Tikri, Gurugram, Singhu and Chilla, to prevent protesting farmers from entering Delhi.

Sections of Outer Ring Road, Mukarba Chowk, GT Karnal Road, NH-44 were also closed.

The restrictions led to chaos and confusion among commuters who were stuck for hours.

Some of the chaos eased out later in the day after police allowed the farmers to enter the national capital.

Farmers, representing over 30 farm bodies, have called a "Delhi Chalo" march through several routes -- Lalru, Shambhu, Patiala-Pehowa, Patran-Khanauri, Moonak-Ratia-Fatehabad and Tohana, Talwandi-Sirsa.

They have been demanding that the central government repeal the new farm laws, which, they say, should be replaced with another set of legislations framed after wider consultation with the stakeholders.

# As Farmers, Police Face Off In Delhi, Haryana Religious **Centre Feeds Cops**

HARYANA: As farmers clashed with Punjab - began marching on Delhi police over their march to Delhi to on Thursday, only to be confronted heart-warming video has emerged langar (community kitchen) of a religious centre served a scrumptious (and free) meal to a large number of policemen.

While it is unclear if the religious centre, which is located along National Highway 1, is connected with the protesting farmers, the video presents a welcome alternative to the chaos that is unfolding around 120 km away and underlines the need for humanity and empathy from all sides.

In the video dozens of policemen dressed in uniform (some with lathis and in what seems to be riot gear) are seated facing each other in two long rows. Volunteers from the langar (all of whom are wearing face masks) can be seen serving them rice, dal, vegetables and other foodstuff.

As the 70-second video plays out, more cops can be seen arriving and settling down to eat, using their riot vests as a sheet on which to sit. Although voices are muffled, at one point in the video someone can be heard saying, "Thank you, thank you, thank you.

All of this takes place along a small bridge over a canal: the video pans to show parked police vans. Farmers from several states - in-

**protest against the farm laws, a** by a Haryana police force instructed to use lathi charges, tear gas and from Haryana's Karnal - where the water cannons - in the middle of winter - in an attempt to beat them

The cops also set up barricades wrapped in barbed wire and sandladen trucks, and dug up roads to act as trenches. Visuals showed scenes that wouldn't look out of place in a war zone. NEWSBEEP

This morning visuals emerged of farmers putting aside their concerns to help move police barricades and allow ambulances through, potentially saving the lives of unknown people.

Thousands of farmers reached the Delhi border on Friday morning, where they were met with more police barriers and tear gas. They came with tractors carrying food and essential supplies, and have said they will not return until the centre has repealed the farm laws.

They are protesting laws the centre says will reform the agricultural sector by removing middlemen and improving farmers' earnings by allowing them to sell produce anywhere in the country.

Farmers and opposition parties allege that the laws will deprive the farmers of guaranteed minimum price for their produce and leave cluding Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and them at the mercy of corporates.

# **EPFO Extends Deadline To Submit Life Certificate For** Pensioners Till February 2021



In order to provide relief amid the COVID-19 pandemic to the elderly, the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has extended the time limit for the submission of the Jeevan Praman Patra or Life Certificate up to 28th February 2021. According to the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the extension of the last date for the submission of Life Certificate (Jeevan Pramaan Patra-JPP) will apply to the pensioners drawing pension under EPS benefit 35 lakh pensioners with EPFO.

1995 and whose life certificate is due in any month till February 28, 2021. At present, a pensioner can submit the Jeevan Pramaan Patra anytime during the year up to November 30, which is valid for a period of one year from the date of the issue.

There are multiple modes for submission of Jeevan Praman Patra available for pensioners.

The Life Certificate can be submitted by the pensioner at any of the 3.65 lakh Common Service Centres (CSCs) Branches of Pension Disbursing Banks, Postal Network of 1.90 lakh Postmen and Grameen Dak Sevaks under the Department of Post 1.36 lakh post offices.

Pensioners can click on the link for locating the nearest common service centres : https://locator.csccloud.in/ The link for placing the online request to the post offices for submitting life certificates by sitting at home is: https://ccc.cept.gov.in/covid/request.aspx

The statement by the Ministry of Labour and Employment also added that during this extended period, pension will not be stopped for those 35 Lakh Pensioners who could not submit the Jeevan Pramaan Patra during November 2020. The extension of deadline is likely to

# Disability rights organization to send sipper to Taloja jail for Stan Swamy

**NEW DELHI:** Tribal activist Stan will have to endure for a sipper Swamy's painful wait for a sipper cannot be tolerated any longer. cannot be tolerated any longer, December 4, when the very same said a prominent disability rights court decides again, is seven days organisation that is planning to away. Stan cannot be refused fluids send the drinking aid to the jailed for such a long period. The NPRD octogenarian, who is suffering from and its affiliating units have there-Parkinson's disease.

The 83-year-old was arrested from his residence in Ranchi on October 8 for his alleged involvement in the Elgar Parishad case and is lodged at the Taloja Jail in Mumbai.

The National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled's(NPRD) reaction came after a special court in Mumbai on Thursday again rejected Swamy's application for a straw and sipper, and sought a response from the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on his request.

The court will hear the matter on December 4.

The agency had earlier this month sought 20 days time to respond to the activist's request for a straw and sipper, and had said it did not take these items from Swamy during his arrest,

as claimed by the activist. "The painful wait that Swamy

**56** Denial of the same constitutes a violation of his basic rights"

fore decided to send sippers to the jailor of Taloja Jail, Maĥarashtra, to be given to Stan Swamy," the NPRD said in a statement.

It also appealed to all disability rights organisations, activists and all those who seek justice for the activist and stand in defence of his rights to join this campaign and send sippers to Swamy.

"It took 20 long days for the NIA to come up with a claim that they

possession. Even if we accept the NIA's contention, the special court should have taken a humanitarian view and ordered that he be provided with an utensil that would assist him in intaking fluids including water. The refusal to do so is atrocious to say the least," the NPRD said.

Swamy is a person living with Parkinson's disease, which is a condition recognised as disabling as per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, it said and expressed outrage at the continued denial of a sipper and straw to the activist.

The NPRD said that "as per various laws and international conventions to which India is a signatory, it is obligatory that Stan Swamv be provided with requisite age and disability appropriate requirements, assistive aids including straws and sippers as also human care assistance".

"Denial of the same constitutes a violation of his basic rights," it said.

Swamy, was arrested for his alleged role inciting mob violence in Koregaon Bhima near Pune in did not seize these items from Stan's Maharashtra on January 1, 2018.

# ED attaches assets worth over Rs 27 cr of former IAS officer

NEW DELHI, NOV 28: Assets worth over Rs 27 crore of Chhattisgarhbased former IAS officer Babulal Agrawal have been attached by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), the central probe agency said on Saturday.

The agency is probing Agrawal, his family members and others in connection with a money laundering case linked to charges of alleged corruption and disproportionate assets.

"The attached assets include plant and machinery, balances in bank accounts and immovable properties of Babulal Agarwal and his family members," the ED said in a statement.

The total value of the attached properties is Rs 27.86 crore, it said. Agrawal, a 1988-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, was arrested by the agency from his residence in state capital Raipur on November 9 and he is in judicial custody till December 5.

He has served as a principal secretary in the Chhattisgarh government and has been arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) also in the past on charges of corruption.

Agrawal was suspended by the family members of Babulal Agrawal, rested him.

It was alleged that Agrawal wanted to "settle" CBI probes against him he was the health secretary in the state government.

When the ED arrested him earlier this month, it said the action was takthe proceeds generated out of criminal offences through shell companies and Rs 39.81 lakh cash and two kgs and integrating the same in the business of his family members."

The ED had said its criminal case filed against Agrawal, his chartered accountant (CA) Sunil Agrawal and others was filed under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after studying a 2010 FIR of the Chhattisgarh anti-corruption bureau and the CBI.

26.16 crore, Rs 20.43 lakh kept in 291 bank accounts, a residential plot worth Rs 39.52 lakh in the name of is an entity owned and operated by to himself."

state government after the CBI ar- and Rs 15 lakh cash recovered during I-T searches are among the provisionally attached assets.

The attached assets also include which were registered in 2010 when Rs 4.75 lakh kept in the bank account of a company called Capstone and a residential plot worth Rs 10.25 lakh in the name of a firm identified as Shri Ram Vihar (both partnership en against Agrawal for "laundering" firms owned and operated by family members of the former IAS officer). gold recovered by the CBI when it

> The alleged corruption and disproportionate assets case against the former bureaucrat first came to light after the Income Tax (I-T) department raided him in February, 2010.

The ED had said it was found in the probe that Babulal Agrawal "played an active role for splitting the tender Plant and machinery worth Rs contracts related to the World Bank aided Malaria control program and awarding them to some non-existing entities and thereby, causing loss to a firm, Xpress Mining Pvt Ltd, which the exchequer and pecuniary benefit



More than 400 bank accounts in the name of gullible villagers of Kharora and its nearby villages and cash to the tune of about Rs 46 crore was deposited."

The ED has also alleged that the former bureaucrat, in connivance with his CA Sunil Agrawal, his brother Ashok Agrawal and Pawan Agrawal, opened "more than 400 bank accounts in the name of gullible villagers of Kharora and its nearby villages and cash to the tune of about Rs 46 crore was deposited."

This cash, the ED alleged, was "laundered" through shell or dummy companies opened by Agrawal's CA and other entities, which was ultimately parked in a company identified as Prime Ispat Ltd, Raipur, as investment in shares.

The ED has earlier attached properties to the tune of Rs 36.09 crore which includes assets of Prime Ispat Ltd, Raipur and the properties of the

Sunil Agrawal was also arrested by the ED in this case earlier. —PTI