

C Quote Love is the wisdom of the fool and the folly of the wise.

— Samuel Johnson

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NEWS DIGEST

CRPF Man Dies Of Haemorrhage

SRINAGAR: A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) man, who had suffered brain haemorrhage in south Kashmir's Shopian district, died at SK institute of medical sciences here on Wednesday, reports said. 55-year-old Ramsukh Meena of CRPF 14 battalion died at the Neurology ward of the SKIMS here on Wednesday, local news agency KNO reported. A resident of Rajasthan. Meena was posted at Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian's office and died
More On P10

CASO Conducted In Tral

SRINAGAR: Government forces on Wednesday launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) in Tral town of south Kashmir's Pulwama district. Special operations group (SOG) of police, army's 42 Rashtriya Rifles and the personnel of CRPF 180 Battalion laid a siege around Shaldraman village of Tral and conducted door-todoor searches after receiving inputs about the movement of militants, news agency KNT reported while quoting police sources. During the search operation, the report said that the state forces thoroughly checked the identity
More On P10

Electric Shock Injures PDD Lineman

SRINAGAR: A Power Development Department (PDD) lineman was on Wednesday injured due to electrocution in Kangan area of Ganderbal district. 55-year-old Mehboob Sheikh of Waniyaram Wangath received an electric shock while repairing a line in the locality on Wednesday morning, news agency KNO reported. Sheikh, who sustained injuries due to electrocution, was rushed to Trauma Hospital, Kangan for treatment. Meanwhile, police has taken cognizance in this regard, the report added.

In Kashmir, Doctors Taking First Shot To Allay Vaccine Fears

Marila Latif

PAGE.

mid growing para-Anoia and panic, Mohammad Shafi, a 30-year-old dentist in Govt Dental College, Shireen Bagh Srinagar signed up as the 20th health beneficiary in SMHS hospital for taking the Covid shot. But before being jabbed. he asked a few questions in



hesitation, "Since I'm diabet-ic, is this vaccine safe for me? I also have hypertension, can I really take the vaccine?"

After getting assurance from the doctors, he took the vaccine and joined other par-ticipants — kept under observation for an hour to monitor any Adverse Effects Following Immunization (AEFI). Every vaccine made for any

disease has its side-effects,

Dr Saleem Khan, Head of the Department Community Medicine, Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, told Kashmir Observer.

"And it's very common," Dr Khan said. "It's actually the stimulation of the human body towards a drug like fever, chills, headaches etc, but it's not something to be afraid of."

Wet Spell From

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: As Kashmir con-

tinues to reel under intense

cold wave, the weather de-

partment on Wednesday pre-

According to a meteo-

the places in Jammu and

Kashmir are likely to receive

widespread snowfall be-

tween January 22-January 24

under the influence of a fresh

"All Heads of Departments

and Chief Executives of Public

Sector Undertakings shall

ensure their own participa-

tion and also of the employ-

ees subordinate to them in

the function," it said, adding.

"Failure to attend the function

will be construed as derelic-

tion of duty and
More On P10

rological official, most of

dicted another wet spell

from Friday night

in Jammu and

Kashmir which

might lead to

temporary dis-ruption of sur-

face and air traffic.

Saturday To Break Cold Wave In Kashmir

Dr. Shafi wasn't alone to

take the vaccine shot. His colleague, 29-year-old dentist, Owais Gowher, was following him as the 21st participant. "I feel a slight pain on my

shoulder, nothing else," said Dr Owais.

"We don't know how many more mutated variants are coming - it's better to take the cure beforehand," he said and smiled. But amid public skepticism, only a • More On P10

Centre Okays Rs 5K Cr Investment In 850 MW **Ratle Power Project**

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved an investment proposal of Rs 5,281.94 crore for the 850 MW Ratle hydro power project on river Chenab in Kishtwar district of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, an official statement said.

The project will be constructed by a joint venture company (JVC) to be incorporated between Hydroelectric National

Power Corporation (NHPC) and Jammu & Kashmir State Power Development

Corporation Ltd (JKSPDC) with equity contribution of 51 per cent and
More On P10

LG Terms Centre's Decision 'Historic'



investment for 850 mega-**Slams Previous Regimes** For Giving In To Pak Threats watt (MW) Ratle hydropower project on Chenab **Observer News Service** river, Lieutenant Governor, Manoi Sinha on Wednesday

'Radicalisation Process Is Fourth Generation Warfare' erming the radicalisa-

tion process as "fourth generation warfare". Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday called for comprehensive measures involving de-radicalisation and counter-radicalisation

Biden **Becomes 46th US President**



Agenceis

WASHINGTON: Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. became the 46th U.S. president on Wednesday, completing the most daunting power transfer in recent American history.

Inaugurated in a fortified Washington under the shadow of the coronavirus pandemic, the 78-year-old Democrat took the oath of office at the U.S. Capitol in front of a sparse bipartisan crowd. He enters the White House exactly two weeks after a mob inflamed by his predecessor. Donald Trump, stormed the Capitol, disrupting the transition to Biden's administration and leaving five people dead.

Biden took the oath of office from Supreme Court

More On P10

R-Day: Attend Function Or Face Action, Govt Tells Employees

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The government has asked its workforce to atattend the function as a part of tend the main official January their official duty," reads a cir-26 functions in Iammu and cular issued by the government

warned them that any derelic-

tion will be construed as dis-

obedience of the instructions.

Republic Day-2021 is be-

ing held at the Maulana Azad

Stadium, Jammu, where the

Lieutenant Governor will pre-

side over the function and take

the salute. All Officers/Officials

"The main function of the

of the Government and Public Agenceis Sector Undertakings, Stationed at Jammu, are called upon to

widespread moderate snowfall in hilly areas of Jammu, plains of Kashmir, rain in plains of Jammu ሻጆች and light snowfall at scattered places of Ladakh especially in Kargil district," the official said, adding that the wet spell may lead to temporary disruption of surface and

aircraft traffic.
More On P10

western disturbance of mod-

erate intensity which is most likely to affect J&K and Kargil

district of Ladakh during the

"The main activity will be on January 23-

24. This will cause

night of January 22.

THE MAIN ACTIVITY WILL BE ON JANUARY 23-24. This will cause widespread moderate snowfall in hilly areas of Jammu, plains of Kashmir, rain in plains of Jammu and light snowfall at scattered places of Ladakh especially in Kargil district."

No Covid Death Reported in 24 Hrs

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday recorded 109 new coronavirus cases that raised its

Trucker's Body **Retrieved From Stream**

BANIHAL: The body of a 22-yearold truck driver from Haryana was found in a stream in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district on Wednesday, two days after his vehicle skidded off the road and plunged into a 150-foot-deep gorge along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, officials said. The Jammu-bound truck rolled down into a stream at Sherbibi on Monday, following which one person was rescued in an injured condition, while the driver remained untraced and was believed to
More On P10

Burlgars Strike Tangmarg Shrine, Mosques

SRINAGAR: Unidentified burglars struck a shrine and three mosques in Tangmarg area of Baramulla district and decamped with cash, reports said Wednesday. During the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday, unknown burglars struck a shrine in Ziyarat Nakesh Budipora and three Masiids. including Jamia Masjid Warpora. Masjid Sharief and Masjid Sharief Goiewara Tangmarg where they broke open the donation boxes and decamped with cash.
More On P10 JAMMU: Hailing Prime Minister Narendra Modi for approving Rs 5281.94 crore

slammed previous regimes for "depriving Jammu & Kashmir • More On P10

strategies to address it. He made these remarks while inaugurating a religious leaders'
More On P10

THE FREE POWER TO THE UNION TERRITORY

would be 1 per cent in the first year after commissioning of the project and rise at the rate of 1 per cent per year to 12 per cent in the 12th year

4 Soldiers Injured In Pak Firing On LoC

Press Trust Of India

in

JAMMU: Four soldiers of the Army sustained injuries as Pakistani troops opened fire targeting forward areas along the Line of Control (LoC) Jammu and Kashmir's Akhnoor sector, official sources said on Wednesday.

The ceasefire violation from across the LoC in the Keri Battal area took place on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday, they said. Four soldiers suffered splinter injuries and were

shifted to the military hos-pital in Udhampur for treatment, the sources added. Jammu and Kashmir record-

ed 5.100 instances of ceasefire violations by Pakistan along the Line of Control (LoC) in 2020, the highest in the past 18 years with an average of 14 cases daily, according to official sources.

In these ceasefire violations, 36 people, including 24 security personnel, were killed and over 130 injured, as per data. Security officials said that shelling and • More On P10



Members of a visiting parliamentary delegation pose for photograph at Dargah Hazratbal on Wednesday- KO Photo: Abid Bhat

tally to 1, 23,647, officials said.

They said no fresh death due to the infection took place in the past 24 hours. Of the fresh cases, 45 were reported from the Jammu division and 64 from the Kashmir division of the union territory, the officials said. They said Jammu district

recorded the • More On P10

Second Batch Of **Covishield Arrives**

Agenceis

SRINAGAR: The second consignment of Covishield vaccine manufactured by the Serum Institute of India, Pune, arrived at Srinagar Airport on Wednesday, officials said. The consignment comprising

65,000 doses of the vaccine arrived in 6 boxes weighing 205.33kg at the Srinagar airport from Mumbai airport through Spice jet flight number SG 413, official twitter handle of Srinagar airport said.

The consignment was received by State Immunization

More On P10



Beyond Miffed Tourist's Rant, Kashmir Remains Sightseers' Joy

Swati Joshi

porting shades, scarf and pink coat, a tourist from Mumbai **J**lately became the talk of the town for what she called "ranting" about the "absence of arrangements" in the snowbound Kashmir capital.

As part of a frantic vacationer horde-some of whom had earlier flown in droves for the New Year snow celebrations in the valleyshe was heading home after the classic winter struck the valley.

Amid her jammed journey toward the airport, the miffed Mumbaikar detailed her "harrowing experience" in a video that went viral on social media and created the mixed reaction.

Despite being grounded by the bad weather as others, the tourist went on the map the inadequate facilities in the place that enthralled her till the blizzard triggered a panic flight.

But barring what the snow-hostage holidaymaker lately asserted, Kashmir has always remained the sightseers' delight. Some backpackers are making no bones about it in their travelogues.

Mayuri Singh Sengar

When Mayuri Singh Sengar went on a bike trip from Srinagar to Kupwara, the solo traveler felt a connection with Kashmir.

In her blog Life Beyond Usual, Sengar writes about the "warm hospitality" and the mesmerizing beauty of the valley.

An ex-legal advisor in the electricity sector, Sengar was a little disappointed by the busy highway-like the Mumbai touristbut she felt warmly welcomed in Kashmir.

She spent "a wonderful time" engaging with everyone, from the bike mechanic, the police personnel at the check post, and local people to servers at the restaurant.

Elisha Donkin

In her blog Going Somewhere, hiker Elisha Donkin describes the valley as the most peaceful places he had been to in a long time. She describes her full of hospitality Kashmir trip as heavenly. Despite staying in Srinagar where she saw the
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Money matters to happiness more than previously thought: Study

that contrary to previous influential research, money does influence an individual's happiness. One potential reason leading to this conclusion could be that higher earners feel an increased sense of control over life.

The study which was published in the journal, Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences asked, what's the relationship between money and well-being? "It's one of the most studied questions in my field," says Matthew Killingsworth, a senior fellow at Penn's Wharton School who studies human happiness.

He continues, "I'm very curious about it. Other scientists are curious about it. Laypeople are curious about it. It's something everyone is navigating all the time.

To answer this question, Killingsworth collected 1.7 million data points from more than 33,000 participants who provided in-themoment snapshots of their feelings during daily life. In a paper in the Proceedings of

the National Academy of Sciences, Killingsworth confirms that monev does influence happiness and, contrary to previous influential research on the subject suggesting that this plateaus above \$75,000, there was no dollar value at which it stopped mattering to an individual's well-being.

Killingsworth conducts much of his work using a technique called experience sampling, which asks people to repeatedly fill out short surveys at randomly selected mo-

new research has shown ments during their day. "It tells us what's actually happening in people's real lives as they live them, in millions of moments as they work and chat and eat and watch TV." Most previous studies of the money-happiness link focused on evaluative well-being, which encompasses overall satisfaction with life. But for this study, Killingsworth aimed to capture both evaluative and experienced wellbeing, the latter indicating how people feel in the moment.

Through an app he created called Track Your Happiness, people recorded this a few times each day, with check-in times randomized per participant. To measure experienced well-being, each checkin asked them, "How do you feel right now?" on a scale ranging from "very bad" to "very good." At least once during the process, participants also answered the question, "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?" on a scale of "not at all" to "extremely." This measured evaluative well-being. Secondary measures of experienced well-being included 12 specific feelings, five positive (confident, good, inspired, interested, and proud) and seven negatives (afraid, angry, bad, bored, sad, stressed, and upset). Secondary measures of evaluative well-being included two other measures of life satisfaction collected on an intake survey.

"This process provided repeated snapshots of people's lives, which collectively gives us a composite image, a stop-motion movie of their lives," he says. In total,



33,391 employed, 18- to 65-yearolds in the United States provided 1,725,994 reports of experienced well-being. "Scientists often talk about trying to get a representative sample of the population," he adds. "I was trying to get a repre-sentative sample of the moments of people's lives.'

Killingsworth then calculated the average level of well-being for each person and analyzed its relationship to people's income. In part, he was trying to confirm the findings of a 2010 paper that suggested that as people earn more money their well-being increases, but experienced well-being plateaus once annual household income hits \$75,000.

'It's a compelling possibility, the idea that money stops mattering above that point, at least for how people actually feel moment to moment," he says. "But when I looked across a wide range of income levels, I found that all forms

of well-being continued to rise with income. I don't see any sort of kink in the curve, an inflexion point where money stops mattering. Instead, it keeps increasing." Here, "income" refers to a concept known as log(income); rather than each dollar mattering the same to each person, each dollar starts to matter less the more a person earns. "We would expect two people earning \$25,000 and \$50,000, respectively, to have the same difference in well-being as two people earning \$100,000 and \$200,000, respectively. In other words, proportional differences in income matter the same to everyone.'

Beyond that, Killingsworth's work also provides a deeper understanding of the link between in-

come and happiness. Higher earners are happier, in part, because of an increased sense of control over life, he says. "When you have more money, you have more choices about how to live

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your life. You can likely see this in the pandemic. People living paycheck to paycheck who lose their job might need to take the first available job to stay afloat, even if it's one they dislike. People with a financial cushion can wait for one that's a better fit. Across decisions big and small, having more money gives a person more choices and a greater sense of autonomy." Yet it might be best not to define

success in monetary terms, he says. "Although money might be good for happiness, I found that people who equated money and success were less happy than those who didn't. I also found that people who earned more money worked longer hours and felt more pressed for time.'

Though the study does show that income matters beyond a previously believed threshold, Killingsworth also doesn't want the takeaway to enforce an idea that people should focus more on the money. In fact, he found that, in actuality, income is only a modest determinant of happiness.

"If anything, people probably overemphasize money when they think about how well their life is going," says Killingsworth. "Yes, this is a factor that might matter in a way that we didn't fully realize before, but it's just one of many that people can control and ultimately, it's not one I'm terribly concerned people are undervaluing." Rather, he says he hopes this research can help move forward the conversation in an attempt to find what he calls the "equation for human happiness." -ANI

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PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of Pesticides License for my business unit under title "Lone Pesticides" situated at Mastpora Keller Shopian . If anybody having any objection in this regard may contact Plant Protection Officer Lal Mandi Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

> **Shakeel Ahamd Lone** S/o Mohammad Khalil Lone **R/o Mastpora Keller Shopian**

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Directorate of School Education Kashmir, J&K

Mail: dsek_plg@gmail,com; dse_kash@yahoo.com; Ph.No. 0194 245509; fax: 0194 457694

Mr. Raju Syed Iftikar, Teacher, GMS Sehpora, District Ganderbal No: DSEK/Estt/III/B-Trs M2/58/20/68-71

DATED 18-01-2021

Show Cause Notice

Whereas, you remained un-authorizedly absent from your legitimate duties w.e.f 23/02/2018;

Whereas, un-authorized absence from duties attracts action as warranted in terms of article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume I) of 1956, which reads as under:

'Absence without leave or after the end of leave involves loss of appointment'.

Now, therefore, through the medium of this notice, you are given an opportunity to present yourself before the Directorate along with your statements of defense within Seven days from the date of issuance of this notice, failing which it shall be construed that you have nothing to say in your defense and action as warranted in terms of Article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume I) of 1956 and other

J&K Tourism Development Corporatio Limited TOURIST RECEPTION CENTRE SRINAGAR

For and on behalf of Managing Director, Jammu & Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation Limited, e-Tenders are invited under Two Bid System i.e. Technical Bid and Financial Bid from Registered/ reputed companies/ firms/ individuals/ societies etc. for providing laundry services to city based JKTDC Hotels/Restaurants for a period of one year (extendable to further one year) on the terms and conditions mentioned in the tender document.

E-tender Notice No: IKTDC/GMO/2432-38

E-tender Notice No: JKTDC/0	Dated 15.01.202	21			
Category of laundry	Earnest Money (EMD)	Cost of Tender docu- ments	Class of Service provider	Tender inviting author- itv	
1.Hotel laundry2.Restaurant laundry3.Staff uniform4.Guest laundry			Registered/ reputed com- panies/ firms/ individuals/ societies etc.	General Manager (Operations) K	

The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility, specification, bill of quantities (B.O.Q.)

relevant rules shall be initiated against you without any further notice. Sd/-Director.	Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/download from the website www.jktenders.gov.ir
School Education Kashmir.	as per schedule of dates given below:-
	1 Date of issue of tender notice 15.01.2021 4.00 pm
Government of Jammu & Kashmir	2 Period of downloading of biding documents 16.01.2021 4.30 pm
Directorate of School Education Kashmir, J&K	3 Bid submission Start Date 18.01.2021 10.00 am
•	4 Bid submission End Date 15.02.2021 upto 4.00 pm
Mail: dsek_plg@gmail,com; dse_kash@yahoo.com; Ph.No. 0194 245509; fax: 0194 457694	5 Deadlines for receiving the Hard Copy (Original DD & EMD) with all rel- evant documents (In case of untoward situation/Govt. holiday) the hard copies will be received in next working day
Shri Ravindar pal Singh, Lecturer, Political Science,	6 Opening of Technical Bid /hard copies (In case of untoward situation/ Govt. holiday) the technical bid will be opened in next working day 18.02.2021 1.00 pm
HSS Singhpora, Baramull. No: DSEK/Estt/III/B-Trs M2/43/Bla/73-76 DATED 18-01-2021	Sd/- DIPK-NB-5165/20 General Manager (O)
Show Cause Notice	Kashmi
Whereas, you remained un-authorizedly absent from your legitimate duties w.e.f 01/03/2015; Whereas, you were served notices by the Drawing & Disbursing officer concerned to resume your legitimate duties which you failed to	Government of Jammu and Kashmir
do so; Whereas, un-authorized absence from duties attracts action as warranted in terms of article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume I) of 1956, which reads as under:-	J&K Services Selection Board Hema Complex, Sector-03, ChanniHimmat, Jammu
'Absence without leave or after the end of leave involves loss of appointment'.	(www.jkssb.nic.in)
Now, therefore, through the medium of this notice, you are given an opportunity to present yourself before the Directorate along with your statements of defense within Seven days from the date of issuance of this notice, failing which it shall be construed that you have nothing to say in your defense and action as warranted in terms of Article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume I) of 1956 and other relevant rules shall be initiated against you without any further notice. Sd/-Director, School Education Kashmir	NOTICE Subject: Extension in last date of filling of Online Application Form for UT/Divisional/District Cadre Posts of various categories in different Departments issued vide Notification No.05 of 2020 Dated:24-12-2020. Whereas, the J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB) vide Advertisement Notice No. 05 of 2020 dated 24.12.2020 invited online applications from eligible candidates for participating in the selection process for
Government of Jammu & Kashmir	UT/Divisional/District Cadre Posts of various categories in different Departments; and
Directorate of School Education Kashmir, J&K	Whereas, the last Date for submission of online applications has been fixed as 20-01-2021; and
•	Whereas, the online portal for receipt of applications from the eligible candidates has been activated on 18-
Mail: dsek_plg@gmail,com; dse_kash@yahoo.com; Ph.No. 0194 245509; fax: 0194 457694	01-2021 and the Jammu & Kashmir Services Selection Board has received a lot of representations from the
	candidates for extension in the last date for filling of online application forms; and
Mr.Mohd Rafiq Khan, RRT Zone Hariganwan	Whereas, the matter has been examined by the Board and it has been decided to extend the last
District Ganderbal	date for submission of online application for various post advertised vide aforementioned advertisement notification No.05 of 2020 dated:-24-12-2020.
No:DSEK/Estt/III/B-Trs M2/35/2020/64-67 DATED 18-01-2021 Show Cause Notice	Now, therefore, in the light of above, the last date for submission of online applications for various posts advertised vide Advertisement Notice No. 05 of 2020 dated 24.12.2020 in respect of different Departments
Whereas, you remained un-authorizedly absent from your legitimate duties w.e.f 11/03/2012; Whereas, you were served notices by the Drawing & Disbursing officer concerned to resume your legitimate duties which you failed to	shall now be 10.02.2021 instead of 20.01.2021.
do so; Whereas, un-authorized absence from duties attracts action as warranted in terms of article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume I) of	(Sachin Jamwal) KAS
1956, which reads as under:-'Absence without leave or after the end of leave involves loss of appointment.	DIPK-11970/20 Secretary
Now, therefore, through the medium of this notice, you are given an opportunity to present yourself before the Directorate along with	J&K Services Selection Board
your statements of defense within Seven days from the date of issuance of this notice, failing which it shall be construed that you have nothing to say in your defense and action as warranted in terms of Article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume I) of 1956 and other	Jammu
relevant rules shall be initiated against you without any further notice.	No. 55D / Serv / 2021 / Adv No. // 72 / 07 Dated: 10.01.2021
Sd/-Director, DIPK-11901/20 School Education Kashmir.	No. SSB/Secy/2021/Adv.No/472-487 Dated: -19.01.2021

News



DIAL-EMMA

Illegal Mining: Mineral Checkposts Coming-Up Around Srinagar City

Check Posts To Be Established Within Two Months; Move Aimed At Curbing Illegal **Constructions And Landfills, Protecting Water Bodies: DM Srinagar**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The District Mineral Task Force (DMTF) Srinagar has approved establishment of mineral checkposts to curb illegal mining and transportation, illegal constructions and filling of water bodies in and around the city. The mineral checkposts to be established within two months' time will also have CCTV cameras installed for monitoring centrally.

The DMTF meeting chaired by District Magistrate Srinagar Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary approved allocation of land for establishment of checkposts at Khushipora Shalteng, Mujgund, Bhagwanpura Noorbagh, Lasjan, K P Bagh and Padshahi Bagh, and directed the concerned departments including Revenue, SMC and Planning to issue necessary permissions within a week's time.

The meeting was informed strict vigilance against filling relevant codal formalities have be connected with the Integrat- and other aspects which have tre coming up at Bemina. It was and balance of nature making



that all the mineral checkposts which will be established will ed Command and Control Ceninformed that the checkposts will be constructed at an approved cost of 90 lakh rupees.

District Magistrate emphasised

of water bodies, illegal mining, land-filling, land conversions severely affected the watershed the area prone to water logging, flood and other issues.

He directed the District Min-Speaking on the occasion the eral Officer Srinagar to fasttrack the construction as the

already been completed. DMTF also took note of two check posts completed at Zewan and Daktang areas. Prefabricated fire-resistant check posts will be constructed at all the approved locations to check illegal mining and unauthorised constructions.

During the meeting, the Dis- constructions in the city.

trict Mineral Officer Srinagar and Member Secretary DMTF, Altaf Rasool, presented a resume of activities initiated in the sectors of drinking water, education, social welfare, plantation and others. The DMTF appreciated the efforts of the DMO for various steps taken in management of welfare schemes.

Joint Commissioner SMC Syed Qasim, Joint Director Planning Mohammad Yaseen Lone, Superintendent of Police, General Manager DIC, Assistant Commissioner Development, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers and other members of DMTF attended the meeting.

Meanwhile the Srinagar administration is considering various identified locations around the city for installation of CCT-Vs to curb illegal transportation of material for unauthorised

LG Holds Meet With Experts From **† Power Sector, JKPDC Officers**

Detailed Discussions Held To Take J&K Towards Healthy And Resilient Power Supply System

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor, Yagoob Faroog, MD JKPDCL at-Manoj Sinha today chaired a tended the meeting. High Level meeting with a team well-known experts from power sector was led by Chair-Power sector and senior officials person Board of Directors, IIT the power potential in J&K to the from Jammu and Kashmir Power Bhubaneswar and former Chair- maximum, planning for power

The team of experts from the

cussed various issues pertaining to power supply in J&K.

The Lt Governor observed that the UT government is committed to the overall development of J&K and will leave no stone unturned to meet the development aspirations of the people of the UT. Dedicated efforts are afoot for improving J&K's power supply system, he added.

The Lt Governor directed the concerned officers to concentrate on the immediate needs of power supply in the coming summers by giving attention to the maintenance of transmission and distribution networks across the UT.

Deliberations were held on meeting various challenges in fulfilling energy needs, current power supply system, exploring Development Corporation Lim- man and MD PGCIL, Dr Rajendra generation through integration of renewable sources such as solar, wind and hybrid parks, besides cific to J&K such as Bio Mass. The high level meeting also discussed a phase-wise plan of

NIT Srinagar To Be Implementing Agency For Design Expertise Scheme



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: NIT Srinagar will now act as the implementing agency for the scheme "design expertise to Manufacturing MSME sector " of M/o MSME as an MoU has already been signed between M/o MSME and NIT Srinagar and signed by Additional Secretary(Devel-

help MSME manufacturing industries move up the value chain by switching the production mode from original equipment manufacturing to original design manufacturing and hence original brand manufacturing.

Under this scheme, there is provision of providing finanopment Commissioner) MSME cial assistance to MSMEs for on behalf of M/o MSME and engaging design consultants Srinagar on befor design intervention (Gol

He said that the goal is to



- 1944 447 German bombers attack London
- 1944- 649 British bombers attack Magdeburg 1945 - British troops land on Ramree, near coast of Burma1952 - Jawaharlal Nehru's Congress
- party wins general election in India 1954 - USS Nautilus, the first nuclear-powered submarine, launched on the Thames River in Connecticut

1960 - Little Joe 4 suborbital Mercury test

reaches 16 km

ited to revamp the Power Sup- Prasad Singh. ply System in J&K, here at Raj Bhavan.

Sh. BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief

A detailed PowerPoint presentation was given by Former innovative energy resources spe-Director General, NPTI and ED Secretary; Sh. Arun Kumar Mehta, Power Grid Corporation, Dr. NS Financial Commissioner, Finance Saxena on "Towards Healthy and Department; Sh. Rohit Kansal, Resilient Power Supply system action with various immediate, Principal Secretary, Power Devel- in J&K" which covered mission short-term, mid-term and longopment Department and Infor- and goals for enabling energy term measures to revamp the mation Department and Sh. Raja self sufficiency. The meeting dis- power sector in J&K.

HE LT GOVERNOR DIRECTED THE CONCERNED OFFICERS TO

concentrate on the immediate needs of power supply in the coming summers by giving

attention to the maintenance of transmission and distribution networks across the UT.

Director NIT half of NIT Srinagar. In charge MSME DI Srinagar, 60% for SMEs for the project

Saheel Alaqband said that the range Rs. 15 lakh to Rs. 40 lakh.) and reimbursing 75% of objective of scheme is to bring Indian manufacturing sector expenses incurred subject to and Design expertise/ Design Rs 1.5 lac for final year student project done for MSME s as per fraternity on to a common platform and to provide expert scheme guidelines. advice and cost effective solu-NIT Srinagar already is having an incubation centre untion on real time design prob-

lems, resulting in new product der MSME headed by Dr. Saad development, continuous im- Parvez, The Design Clinic Cenprovement and value addition tre for MSMEs of J&K will furfor existing products including ther strengthen the Industry -academia relationship. new products.

1960 - Rock falls traps 437 at Coalbrook, South Africa; 417 die of methane poisoning

- 1961 Portuguese rebels seize cruise ship Santa Maria
- 1965 Iranian premier Hassan Ali Mansur assassinated by 17-year-old Mohammad Bokharaei, a member of the Fadayan-e Islam 1968 - US B-52 bomber with nuclear bomb on
- board crashes in Greenland
- 1968 The Battle of Khe Sanh one of the most publicized and controversial battles of the Vietnam War - begins at the Khe Sanh Air Base
- 1972 Assam's North East Frontier Agency becomes Arunachal Pradesh territory
- 1972 Belgian government of Eyskens-Cools forms 1972 - Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura become
- separate states of the Indian union 1972 - Mizoram, formerly part of Assam, creates
- an Indian union territory
- 1976 Supersonic Concorde has its 1st commercial flights
- 1977 US President Jimmy Carter pardons almost all Vietnam War draft evaders
- 1983 President Reagan certifies El Salvador human-rights abuses have decreased making country eligible for US military aid
- 1985 Bomb attack on Borobudur temple in Java
- 2004 NASA's MER-A (the Mars Rover Spirit) ceases communication with mission control. The problem lies with Flash Memory management and is fixed remotely from Earth on February 6.
- 2008 Black Monday in worldwide stock markets. FTSE 100 had its biggest ever one-day points fall, European stocks closed with their worst result since 9/11, and Asian stocks drop as much as 15%.
- 2017 More than 2 million people protest worldwide in the 'Women's March' against Donald Trump, with 500,000 marching in Washington D.C.

From KO Archives

JIHAD IN FINAL PHASE: SAEED

NEW DELHI- Lashkar-e-Taiba has said the Jihad in Jammu and Kashmir is in final phase and vowed to carry on their operations. I believe that in Kashmir, Jihad is in the final phase. We will continue with our Jihad, Lashkar-e-Taiba chief Hafiz Muhammad Saeed told a portal.

He said the more the Mujahideen attacks occur, the chances of solving the Kashmir dispute, get brighter, he said. Saeed said India will lose a lot if it did not allow Jammu and Kashmir Jamaat-e-Islami chief Syed Ali Shah Geelani to join the Hurriyat Conference delegation for its proposed visit to Pakistan.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 21 January, 2001)

In 2020, SKIMS-Bemina Pays For 12 Ventilators, Gets 4 Only, Reveals RTI Reply

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Bemina got only four ventilators while the hospital had paid for the procurement of 12 ventilators last year, reveals a reply to the Right to Information query.

The official figures state that the SKIMS Bemina had submitted a payment for procuring manufactured by Meditec Eng-12 ventilators; however from land. March to November 2020, it had received and installed only four.

The news agency–Kashmir News Observer (KNO) has leant that SKIMS Bemina is yet to receive at least eight ventilators of which payment have been submitted five months back.

As of now, SKIMS Bemina has received and installed two units of MRI compatible ventilators from 01-03-2020 to 30-11-2020. (Transport)–Model: Parapac Plus 310 (Smiths Medical) and two units of portable ventila- vember-02-2020 and in month tors-Model:



This information was revealed by the Materials Manager Officer (MMO) of SKIMS Bemina in a reply to Right to Information (RTI) queries.

Meanwhile, the department also said that a total number of 1469 COVID-19 positive patients were admitted and examined and 75 deaths were recorded SKIMS officials also said that it resumed OPD services from No-Meditec 1700 1182 OPD patients were seen.

Masjid-E-Bilalya **Lalbazar Catches Fire**

SRINAGAR: Fire broke out at Masjid-e-Bilaliya at Baghwanpora Lalbazar area of central Srinagar on Wednesday.

An official said that fire broke out at the mosque, adding that firemen and local police helped douse the fire.

Police said it was a minor fire incident due to short-circuit, adding that no major damage was reported.

Handwara Man Found **Dead In Srinagar**

SRINAGAR: A man from Handwara was found dead under mysterious circumstances at his rented accommodation in Habakdal area of capital Srinagar on Wednesday. Official sources said that a la-

bourer identified as Ishfaq Ah-mad son of Gh Hassan Zargar, a resident of Harril area of Handwara in Kupwara district, was found dead under mysterious conditions at his rented room at Zaindar Mohalla Habba Kadal.

Meanwhile, police said that they have taken cognizance of the incident and have registered a case pertaining to the incident adding that investigations have been set into motion.

ازدفتر نائب تخصیلدارمنن ایگزیکیو مجسطریٹ درجداول مثن درخواست منجانب: _راہل احمد وعرفی جان اولا دان عبدالمحید حجام سا کنان کرنگسو تخصیل مٹن ضلع اننت ناگ بغرض اوبی می سر ٹفکیسٹ SRO 294 . اشتهار بمرادآگایی هرخاص وعام معامله مندرجه عنوان الصدر میں سائلان صدر نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول او بی سی س نفکیٹ دفتر باز ہ میں پیش کیا ہے حسب ریورٹ پٹواری حلقہ تفصیل افراد کنبہ بذیل درج ہے :۔ آمداني نام صاحب كنبه معهولديت ۶ يپشهر فبدالمجيد ولدمجر سليم حجام 48 سال فحامت كهريلوكام 46 سال بميده بانوز وجهعبدالمجيد زرلعليم 22 سال مرقى جان دختر ـ ـ ـ ـ 20 سال رابل احمد پسر۔۔۔ ---17 سال اجدمجيد پسر۔۔۔ ---15 بال عابروجان دختر ___ ---ا سکے علاوہ اور کوئی فرد کنبہ میں موجود نہیں ہے سائل کا کنبہ پچچلے پندرہ سالوں سے دیمے ہازہ میں ریائیشیز برے ادر ساکل کی کنبہ کی سالانہ آمدانی=/200000 تک ہے اس حوالے سے اگر کن شخص یا اشخاص کومزکورہ سرٹفکیٹ اجرا کرنے میں کوئی عذر پااعتر اض ہوتو وہ سات دن کےاندراندرا پنااعتر اض دفتر ہازہ میں پیش کریں۔معیاد گزرنے کے بعدلونی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ تح ریالصدر نا بسیح صیلدادمٹن



World

Iran's Rouhani Hails **Departure Of 'Tyrant' Trump**



TEHRAN: Iran's President Hassan Rouhani on Wednesday (Jan 20) hailed the departure of "tyrant" US counterpart Donald Trump, who is due to leave office later in the day making way for President-elect Joe Biden.

A "tyrant's era came to an end and today is the final day of his ominous reign", Rouhani said in televised remarks to his Cabinet.

"Someone for whom all of his four years bore no fruit other than injustice and corruption a Senate confirmation hearing and causing problems for his own people and the world."

During his presidency, Trump led a campaign of "maximum pressure" against Iran, pulling Washington out of a landmark nuclear deal with Tehran in 2018 and reimposing punishing sanctions.

The sanctions targeted Iran's vital oil sales and international banking ties, plunging its economy into a deep recession.

Agreed between major powers and Iran in 2015 when diately return to full compli-Biden was vice president under ance. AFP

Barack Obama, the nuclear deal imposed clear limits on Iran's activities in exchange for relief from international sanctions. Since 2019, Tehran has suspended its compliance with most of the limits set by the agreement in response to Washington's abandonment of sanctions relief and the failure of other parties to the deal to make up for it.

Biden's pick for secretary of state, Anthony Blinken, said at that Trump's policies had made Iran "more dangerous".

Blinken confirmed Biden's desire for Washington to return to the nuclear agreement, but said that was conditional on Tehran's return to strict compliance with its commitments.

Tehran has repeatedly called on Washington to lift sanctions first and respect its own obligations under the agreement.

It has said it will then imme-



Joe Biden also plans to send a bill to Congress to revamp immigration policies. (File)

Biden To End Trump's 'Muslim Travel Ban', Halt Border Wall On Day 1

Agencies

WASHINGTON: US Presidentelect Joe Biden plans to kick off his new administration Wednes- visitors from several majorityday with orders to restore the Muslim countries and halt con-United States to the Paris climate struction of the wall that Trump accord and the World Health Or- ordered on the US-Mexico borganization, aides said.

Biden will sign 17 orders and actions hours after being sworn date on federal properties to in as US leader to break from stem the spread of Covid-19; policies of departing President restore protections of nature re-Donald Trump and set new serves removed by Trump; and paths on immigration, the envi- seek freezes on evictions and

ronment, fighting Covid-19 and the economy, they said.

In first-day moves, he will end Trump's much-assailed ban on der to stem illegal immigration. He will also set a mask man-

protection for millions behind on their mortgages due to the coronavirus pandemic.

He also plans to send a bill to Congress to revamp immigration policies and give millions of undocumented migrants living in the country a path to citizenship that the Trump administration denied. Biden "will take action -- not just to reverse the gravest damages of the Trump administration -- but also to start moving our country forward," the aides said in a statement.

Training Of Pak Military Leaders A Priority: Biden's Defense Secretary Nominee

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The objective of the incoming Joe Biden Administration is to continue elevating the US's defence partnership with India, the defense secretary nominee told lawmakers.

"If confirmed, my overarching objective for our defence relationship with India would be to continue elevating the partnership," retired general Lloyd Austin told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee during his confirmation hearing on Tuesday. Presidentelect Joe Biden had nominated

him as his defense secretary. "I would further operationalise India's 'Major Defense Partner' status and continue

interests," Austin said in re-

Austin said his understand-

"Many factors in addition Austin said he will focus on the security assistance sushe shared interests, which



Kashmir Observer

Thursday | 21-01-2021



Agencies

sraeli tank fire struck a number of sites in the Gaza Strip, L including a residential home, in the second night of attacks on the coastal enclave.

Local Palestinian sources said there were no casualties from the Israeli artillery barrage, but material damage was done to a house located in the Maghazi refugee camp on Tuesday night.

Abu Mazen Abdel-Jawad's family of five were sleeping when Israeli tanks targeted a room built on the roof of their three-storey home. A relative of the family, Tay-

seer Abdel-Jawad, told Palestinian news agency Maan the roof claim responsibility for the rockof the house caved in, but the family survived unscathed.

"The bombing caused great damage inside the house," he said. "The family miraculously escaped certain death." Israeli tanks also targeted ob-

east of Beit Hanoun, Beit Lahia, and Deir Al-Balah.

According to the Israeli army, the tanks fired on Hamas positions after a rocket was fired from the Palestinian enclave towards Israel.

"Late in the evening, a rocket was launched from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory," the army said in a statement on WhatsApp. "In response, Israeli tanks struck Hamas positions" in the south of the Gaza Strip.

An earlier military statement said warning sirens were not activated in built-up areas, indicating the projectile fell on open ground. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Hamas – Gaza's rulers – did not et fire, but Israel holds it responsible for any attacks from Gaza.

Early on Monday, two rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip towards the coastal city of Ashdod with Israeli military sources indicating they dropped into servation points and locations the Mediterranean Sea.

Thousands In Sri Lanka Drink 'Miracle' COVID Potion, **Minister III**

Agencies

self-styled Sri Lankan holy man's supposed Amiracle potion to prevent COVID-19 has turned sour after a minister who publicly drank it was hospitalised with the virus. Thousands defied public gathering restrictions to swamp a village in central Sri Lanka last month to get the syrup made by Dhammika Bandara.

Women and Child Development Minister Piyal Nishantha de Silva was among several politi cians who consumed the concoction, but parliamentary officials dara's village, had also been in- not approved it as a medicine. fected despite taking the syrup.



To Begin Talks With Iran

Qatar Calls For Gulf Nations

ington and has previously me-Agencies diated between the US and Iran **DOHA:** Qatar has called for Gulf suggesting that Sheikh Mohamhold talks med's intervention could with Iran, the foreign minister timed as a signal to the incomsaid in an interview aired Tuesing administration of Presidentcollaborate to address shared day, after Doha reconciled with elect Joe Biden. Biden is due to its neighbours following a rift. take office on Wednesday. Foreign Minister Sheikh Mo-The current occupant of the hammed bin Abdulrahman White House, President Donald deepen and broaden the defence Al-Thani, who has previously Trump, has pursued a policy of called for dialogue with Iran, "maximum pressure" on Iran cooperation between India and told Bloomberg TV he was and pulled the United States the US through the Quad secu-"hopeful that this would hap- out of a multilateral nuclear rity dialogue and other regional pen and we still believe this deal with it in 2018. multilateral engagements. should happen". Tehran's arch-rival Riyadh, the dominant Gulf Arab power, "This is also a desire that's shared by other Gulf Cooperation has not publicly indicated any Council (GCC) countries," he said. willingness to engage with Iran. It comes weeks after GCC Instead Saudi Arabia insisted hawks Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and that this month's rapprochement with Qatar meant the Gulf the UAE re-established ties with Qatar after breaking them off in family would be better able to June 2017 partly over allegations combat "the threats posed by that Qatar was too close to Iran. the Iranian regime's nuclear and ballistic missile programme". Doha denied the accusations. Qatar and Iran share one of "Qatar will facilitate negotiathe world's largest gas fields tions, if asked by stakeholders, and Doha maintains cordial re- and will support whoever is chosen to do so," added Sheikh lations with Tehran. Mohammed.



cooperation,

Doha is a close ally of Wash-

NEWS MAKERS

constructive steps to meet US its territory from being used as process in Afghanistan, Austin requests in support of the Af- a sanctuary for militants and said that if confirmed, he will ghanistan peace process. Pakistan has also taken steps against Continuing to build relation- that garners support from anti-Indian groups, such as ships with Pakistan's military neighbours like Pakistan, while Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and Jaish- will provide openings for the also deterring regional actors e-Mohammed, although this United States and Pakistan to from serving as spoilers to the

the US and Indian militaries can pension may impact Pakistan's clude training future Pakistan including Af- military leaders through the use ghanistan negotiations and the of International Military Educasponse to a question submitted dangerous escalation following before his confirmation hearing. the Pulwama terrorist attack," tion and Training funds. "Pakistan will play an important role He said he would also seek to Austin said. President Donald in any political settlement in Af-Trump had suspended all the ghanistan. We also need to work financial and security aid to with Pakistan to defeat al-Qaeda Pakistan in 2018, citing lack of and the Islamic State Khorasan cooperation from Islamabad in Province (ISIS-K) and to enhance the fight against terrorism. regional stability," he said.

Observing that Pakistan is an If confirmed, Austin said he ing is that Pakistan has taken will press Pakistan to prevent essential partner in any peace violent extremist organisations. encourage a regional approach progress is incomplete, he said. cooperate on key issues, he said. Afghanistan peace process.

MANY FACTORS IN ADDITION TO THE SECURITY assistance suspension may impact Pakistan's cooperation, including Afghanistan negotiations and the dangerous escalation following the Pulwama terrorist attack,"

Pro-government media gave widespread publicity to Bandara who claimed the formula was revealed to him by Kali, a Hindu goddess of death and destruction.

The drink contained honey, herbs and was available for the equivalent of \$13 a bottle.

Herbal remedies are widely at the man's home over four days of sales in December, a local official said.

The holy businessman had also sold his miracle cure to October to 53,750 infections companies as well as temples, and 270 dead now.

whose preparation was approved cial indigenous medicine unit. "Although some parliamentarians took it, the government does

Sri Lanka is in the grip of a coronavirus surge, with the

French Woman, Declared Dead, Fights To Prove She's Alive

SAINT-JOSEPH: A 58-year-old French woman, who was wrongfully declared dead in a long-running dispute with a former employee, goes to court Monday in the city of Lyon to try resurrect her existence. Reports of Jeanne Pouchain's death have been greatly exaggerated as AFP discovered when it met her at her home in the southeastern town of Saint-Joseph, near Lyon, recently.

Pouchain has been trying to prove she's alive ever since a labour court, allegedly acting on information provided by a former employee of Pouchain's cleaning company, noted her down in November 2017 as dead. The ruling, which capped a nearly two-decade-long wrongful dismissal suit, turned Pouchain's life upside down.



Wiped from official records, she lost her ID card, driver's license, bank account and health insurance. She accuses her former employee of fabricating her death to try to win damages from her purported heirs -- her husband and son -- after two failed attempts to sue Pouchain herself.

"It's a crazy story," Pouchain's lawyer Sylvain Cormier told AFP.

"The plaintiff claimed that Mrs Pouchain was dead, without providing any proof, and everyone believed her. No-one checked," he added.

Her former employee was not available for comment.

The woman took a case against Pouchain after losing her job with Pouchain's cleaning company when it lost a big contract in 2000. In 2004, a labour tribunal ordered Pouchain to pay the woman over 14,000 euros (\$17,000) in damages, but because the case had been taken against her company and not Pouchain herself the ruling was never enforced. In 2009, the woman took a case against Pouchain directly, but that case was thrown out, only to return in 2016 before an appeals court, which, believing Pouchain to be dead, ordered her husband and son to pay damages. A lawyer for Pouchain's former employee has accused her of having a hand in her own demise, saying she played dead

to try avoid litigation, by for example refusing to answer correspondence. Pouchain, who is seeking to have the court declaration of her death declared a fake, has denied those accusations. She described her life as being in limbo. "State agencies tell me I am no longer dead, but that I am not yet alive. I'm in the making!," she told AFP.

Vogue To Release New Kamala Harris **Cover After Original Sparks Controversy**

NEW YORK: Vogue will publish a limited edition of its latest issue featuring a different photo of Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris after the original cover image sparked controversy, the magazine said Tuesday. Critics slammed the photo that graced the hard copy of the February issue, saying it was poorly composed and diminished Harris's achievements as the first Black woman to be elected vice president.

Social media users criticised the lighting of the photo -- in which Harris wears a blazer, jeans and sneakers -- and also questioned whether the magazine had lightened her skin. Following the backlash, Vogue announced it would release some copies with a more formal portrait of Harris wearing a light blue Michael Kors pantsuit. That image had been used for the digital cover. "In recognition of the enormous interest in the digital cover, and in celebration of this historic moment, we will be publishing a limited number of special edition inaugural issues," a spokesperson for Vogue said.

2 Sikhs Charged For Street Fight With Swords, Knives In UK

LONDON: Two British Sikh men have been charged following what Scotland Yard described as a large altercation involving swords and knives in Southall, west London. Sukwir Singh, 22, and Lakha Singh, 29, both residents of Southall, appeared at the Willesden Magistrates' Court on Monday charged with affray and threatening a person with a blade/sharply pointed article in a public place. 'Police were called at around 00:20hrs on Sunday, 17 January, to reports of a large group of around 30 men fighting with various weapons, including knives and swords, in the area of King Street," the Metropolitan Police said in a statement.

local media reported.

He had also given a sample on Tuesday said he had since to politicians and ministers. tested positive for coronavirus Health Minister Pavithra Wanand taken to a treatment centre. niarachchi also took the potion, Family members of another according to DPA news agency, politician, who hailed from Ban- although her own ministry had

She was criticised by opposi-

tion legislators for spreading false hope and encouraging people to go to the holy man en masse. The government has scrambled to distance itself from Bandara, nutmeg, coriander and other as a food supplement by the offiavailable in Sri Lanka, and at not endorse it," said Keheliya Ramleast 15,000 people turned up bukwella, minister of mass media.

> number of cases and deaths going from 3,300 and 13 in early

News

Cyber Police Issues Advisory On Morphed Obscene Videos



SRINAGAR: The Cyber wing of "Blackmail the victim and de-Jammu and Kashmir police in mand a huge amount of money.' response to growing concerns related to morphed obscene videos has issued an advisory and directed people not to engage in file", it said. video calls with unknown users and not to get swayed by giving away demanded money.

the victims to approach the clip, and video is recorded or nearest police station with a screenshots are taken simultacompliant or cyber police station in case of any threat from any unknown users demeaning money against morphed pornographic videos.

not to succumb and panic in video chat with strangers. Don't case any unknown WhatsApp or Facebook user threatens and Immediately inform your famdemands money rather report it and assured full confidentiality.

In the advisory cyber police or cyber police. Preserve all evisaid that "Accepting random dence like screenshots for helpfriend requests, video calls on Facebook or WhatsApp from strangers can land you in trouble. Blackmailers have devised a modus operandi to befriend people online and later get their photos and videos through a video call and morph these on pornographic photos and videos.'

It said that then these users in case of anything such.

"These blackmailers lure people by attractive photos in their Facebook and WhatsApp pro-

The cyber police said that "They engage the victim in a video call. During the call, the The cyber police has directed victim is shown a pornographic neously to blackmail the victim." While cautioning the social media users, the cyber police said that "Don't panic. Don't accept any friend requests from Cyber Police advised people strangers. Don't engage in a succumb and never pay money. ily, friends, and relatives about it. Report it to the local police

> ing police," police said. The cyber police Kashmir also assured confidentiality to all the victims and said that "You can be the victim of this. You're not alone. Confidential support is available. You can get through this.'

The cyber police Kashmir has asked the users to contact them

Vaccine Only Way To End **Covid-19 Pandemic: DAK**

SRINAGAR: Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Wednesday We can breathe a collective sigh said the vaccine is the only way of relief," Dr Nisar said. to stop Covid-19 pandemic.

an end to this ongoing public and prevent you from getting health crisis," said DAK Presi- seriously ill even if you do get dent and influenza expert Dr the virus. Getting vaccinated Nisar ul Hassan in a statement.

get vaccinated. The sooner we from Covid-19." get more people vaccinated, the sooner we start reliving our lives."

sual, their kids back in school

"Vaccine would protect you "Vaccinations would bring from getting Covid-19 infection will also protect people around "In order to get back to nor-mal, we need enough people to creased risk of severe illness

"We have the vaccine now.

"We need to build trust in people about the safety, effec-"If people want business as tiveness and importance of the vaccine." he said



JKSSB Receives More Than 2 Lakh Job Applications

JAMMU- The J&K Service Se-lection Board (JKSSB) has received 2,22,285 online applications for various categories of posts advertised under Advertisement notification no. 04 of 2020 while 913 applications have been received for the posts advertised under notice no.05 of 2020, since the commencement of online applica-

Further, the JKSSB informed that after receiving various representations from the candidates regarding extension in the last date of submission of online applications, the Board been made operational. Apart ting application forms, a dedi-

to the filling of online applications including multiple Pay- respectively have been estabment issues are being resolved lished for the convenience of and addressed on a day to day aspirants. In addition, to rebasis for which separate griev- solve the problems reflected by ance cells and help desks have the candidates while submit-

Patiala Stabbing: JKSA Extends Gratitude To Punjab CM

2461335at Srinagar and Jammu

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kash- of them stabbed Danish in the IPC. The matter is being dealt mir Students Association on belly with a scissor injuring as per the law. Wednesday expressed grati- his liver. He is currently under Raveen Thukral for their im- and has undergone two sur- ficials of Puniah Police reached mediate intervention in Patiala geries since admission." stabbing incident. Kashmir teen namely Dan- chief minister of Punjab, and ish Ahmad who worked as a urged him to get the culprits catering boy in Patiala city of arrested at the earliest. Khueattacked by some drunk men." been resolved with the immehis friends left the shop, they the accused has been booked

Khuehami said that, SP Patude to Punjab CM Captain medical supervision in the ICU tiala City, SDM Patiala, Naib Amarinder and his Advisor of Rajendra Hospital in Patiala Teshildar along with other of-

candidates.

Advertisement

of 2020 and 07 of 2020.

ed online applications for 2814

posts of different categories

from eligible candidates for

participating in the selection

process for District /Divisional

/UT Cadre posts of various de-

partments advertised under

Nos. 04 of 2020, 05 of 2020, 06

Notification



Sopore Police Arrests SPO For A 'Sarcastic' Post On Facebook

SRINAGAR: Sopore Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested and registered a case against SPO namely Peer Khalid belt no. 235/SPO for his 'sarcastic' post on a social media platform about a particular community.

Police in a statement said that a written complaint was received from community members regarding 'sarcastic' post by said SPO and for taking legal action.



by Police Station Dangiwacha Station Dangiwacha and further investigation set into motion."

It's pertinent to mention here that the Sopore Police will never Police said "Accordingly a case tolerate such kind of things to FIR No. 12/2021 U/S 295 A/153 A maintain communal harmony IPC has been registered at Police in the society, statement added.

Patient Care Hit At Trauma Hospital Pattan

PATTAN: Patients at Sub Division Hospital Pattan in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Wednesday complained that they are suffering during these cold days after the department attached a Medical officer (Orthopedics) due to which the section has gone defunct.

As, per the reports Dr, Hilal Ahmad Malla MS, ortho is posted at trauma hospital Pattan and unfortunately the said doctor was attached at covid centre Srinagar in April 2020 for 2 months but till date the said doctor has caters to frequent accident cases not been deputed back

Due to this the physiotherapy unit is defunct at trauma hospital Pattan

Locals said that the health department is not serious about trauma hospital Pattan.

cated email address under the domain ssbjkgrievance@gmail. com is operational for ease of she was deputed for Covid duty section remains functional. Pertinently, JKSSB has invit-

TROYE



at Pattan leaving patients suffering due to non availability of ortho doctor and physiotherapist Trauma hospital Pattan is situated at national highway and coming there.

People have appealed to financial commissioner health and medical education Attul Dallu, DC Baramulla Bhupinder Kumar and Director Health Services Dr, Sameer Matoo to detach back Bisma Noor physiotherapist Dr, Hilal Ahmad medical officer was performing her duties be- orthopedics to trauma hospital fore March at here and patients Pattan so that patients do not were satisfied. Unfortunately suffer and also physiotherapy

Home Guards Stage Protest Outside Raj Bhavan In Jammu

protest outside the Raj Bhavan to stage a sit-in here. here in support of their various Supreme Court order.

The protesters, both men and

JAMMU- Hundreds of home their various demands, but no guards on Wednesday staged a action was taken, forcing them

"If our demands are not met, demands including regulariza- we will move to the union capition of their services and fixa- tal to stage a protest outside the tion of their salaries as per the Parliament during the upcoming session," Sharma said.

The association Chairman women, were carrying placards Babu Hussain Malik, who was and chanted slogans during an leading the protest, said the over hour-long sit-in demon- home guards are facing "injusstration during which they in- tice" as they are providing their vited the attention of Lt Gover- services for a meagre amount nor Manoj Sinha and requested which has pushed them into him to address their long pend- poverty with the future of their children at stake

has decided to extend the last from that, the option of registering grievances regarding date for submission of online applications for Advt. No. 04 of multiple payments is also be-2020 and Advt. No. 05 of 2020 ing activated in next few days up to 27-01-2021 and 10-02on the portal which will further 2021 respectively. Furthermore, the JKSSB inenhance ease for applicants. For the convenience of asformed that the grievances pirants, two helpline numfrom the applicants pertaining bers 0194-2435089 and 0191-

tion forms.

and playing sports should roll up their sleeves and get Covid-19 vaccine," DAK President said.

"Covid-19 vaccine is the biggest gift science has provided to humankind," he said.

effective" vaccine in less than a Covid-19 vaccine. year is an extraordinary achievement in the history of science."

Dr Nisar said vaccines are one of the great modern triumphs of public health and are the best tools to prevent disease and death.

We have seen how vaccines have eradicated diseases like smallpox and polio.

lives, and is still raging.

"Thousands of healthcare workers in Kashmir have received the shot and no major adverse effect has been reported." "Authorities need to crack down on those who spread ru-"The discovery of a "safe and mors and misinformation about

> People need to be booked for promoting anti-vaccination propaganda and there is an urgent need to penalize social networking sites for uploading false information regarding the vaccine. Misinformation has the potential to create public skepticism over Covid-19 vaccine

He said Covid-19 has infected which could undermine our millions and claimed so many fight against the coronavirus pandemic," said Dr Nisar.

the hospital last night to probe Khuehami said that he took

a haircut. When Danish and no pressure of any sorts and bourers from Kashmir Valley.

the matter and extend all help According to JKSA spokes- up the matter with Raveen to the family of the injured person Nasir Khuehami, "a Thukral, the advisor to the youth. The patient is off the ventilator now, he disclosed". The intervention from Puniab CM Captain Amarinder Punjab was injured after being hami said that the same has Singh has always been commendable. Chief Ministers' Ad-He said that, "the incident diate intervention of Punjab visor ensured that action will took place when Danish and CM and Police. CMs Advisor be taken against those found his friends went to a salon for has assured me that there is intimidating students or la-JKSA has thanked Advisor Punwere followed by the trio. One and arrested under Sec 307 of jab CM for taking prompt action.

CCORDING TO JKSA SPOKESPERSON NASIR KHUEHAMI, "a Kashmir teen namely Danish Ahmad who worked as a catering boy in Patiala city of Punjab was injured after being attacked by some drunk men."

ing demands

"A home guard is paid Rs ad hoc or contractual work," All J&K Home Guards Welfare Association president Kamla Sharma told reporters.

dering their services to the other service benefits provided government for the last two to their counterparts in other decades and have highlighted states and UTs like Delhi.

A HOME GUARD IS PAID RS 2,700 per

ruling that the principle of 'equal pay for equal work' has to be extended to those engaged in ad hoc or contractual work,"

NEWS MAKERS

GMC Doda Hosts Foundation Course For Maiden MBBS Batch

DODA: The Government Medical College, Doda has started a one month online foundation course for the newly admitted students of the First batch of the MBBS for the session 2020-21.

In this regard, District Development Commissioner, Dr Sagar D Doifode was invited to hold online interaction with the medical students of the First MBBS batch of the Medical College.

Speaking on the occasion, the DDC congratulated the students for being the part of the great institution, 'which has a great importance not for Doda district but for the entire erstwhile district Doda.'

The DDC gave students tips for the overall personalit development and acquitted them with the political, demographic as well as health scenario of the district. Further the DDC through powerpoint presentation informed the and have holistic diagnosis of the pubparticipants about the various national health programs under implementation in the district and the achievements of the district administration in their effective implementation for the ed support for having the best under-



The DDC urged the students not to medical institutions of the J&K as well

confine themselves to their course as of the country," he added. Later, the students asked various questions pertaining to their course, lic issues to suggest best treatment. The DDC assured all the necessary support to the students and the institu-

personality development, stress management, about functioning of the tion. "You will be provided wholeheartdistrict administration etc, which were satisfactorily answered by the DDC.

DC Shopian Pays Surprise Visit To District Hospital

SHOPIAN: - In order to take stock of health care facilities being provided to patients, Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shrikant Balasaab Suse along with Additional Deputy Commissioner Dr. Sheikh Abdul Aziz, Tehsildar Shopian Bilal Ahmad paid a surprise visit to district hospital Shopian.

Apart from inspecting various wards and sections of the hospital including emergency, operation theatre, ECG unit, X-ray, gynae, post operation labs etc. He enquired ward. about the availability of medicines, diagnostics and other fa-

While interacting with the pathe facilities provided to them.

During the visit, DC took a review of all scenario of disquality healthcare, emergency services, critical care, trauma management, intensive care by the district hospital. referrals, sanitation, units, blood bank, non-communica-



ble diseases, power auditing, implementation of Ayushman utmost dedication and sincerity so Bharat and other government sponsored schemes.

Medical superintendent Dr. Mohammad Ismail informed cilities available in the hospital. the DC about the innovative measures taken by the hospital facilities to the people. tients and their attendants, DC en- administration, public grievquired about their wellbeing and ances and redressal system,

color coded bedsheets, code yellow and code blue , biotrict hospital which includes etc. as per guidelines . He also ensure proper heating arrangeapprised the DC regarding the ments in the hospital. best practice models adopted

Deputy Commissioner enjoined

ical staff to serve the patients with that patients be made to feel comfortable while receiving treatment. He also reiterated that district administration is committed to provide requisite quality healthcare He directed the hospital ad-

ministration to maintain complete hygiene in and around the hospital. He impressed upon medical waste management the hospital management to Later DC visited various routes

of the district and took the stock of snow clearance and restoration upon the entire medical, paramed- of essential services. The DC has

been informed by the concerned that all the main roads have been cleared including Shopian-Pulwama, Shopian-Keller, Shopian-Bijbehara, Shopian-Hermein Kulgam by the MED and interior roads connecting large regions were cleared by R&B and municipal committee Shopian teams. With regard to power and water supply in the affected areas of the district, both have been restored. Regarding various essential commodities including rice, LPG, petrol, diesel etc. the concerned informed the DC that all the commodities stocked well in advance in the far flung and remote areas so that people living in such areas may not face any inconvenience.

People appreciated the efforts of the district administration for providing quality healthcare and other facilities to the public and thanked the deputy commissioner for his visit to the hospital.

While briefing he said that we all are available 24x7 for the masses of the district during harsh winters.

"The government must im-2,700 per month which is in mediately implement the Miniviolation of the 2017 Supreme mum Wages Act in the Union Court ruling that the principle of Territory and also chalk out a 'equal pay for equal work' has to strategy to ensure early regularbe extended to those engaged in ization of agitating workers and

casual labourers." he said. The home guards are also demanding fixation of their

salaries in accordance with She said they have been ren- the Supreme Court order and

month which is in violation of the 2017 Supreme Court

OBSERVER

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KO VIEW

Tourists return

hile the heavy snowfall this year has created many hardships for people in the Valley, on tourism front the things have started looking up. In famous health resorts of Gulmarg and Pahalgam, the snow is drawing tourists back. According to tourism department figures, out of a total available 1800 hotel rooms in Gulmarg, almost all of the rooms are booked till the end of February. Another reason for the renewed tourist influx is the continuing ban on international travel which is forcing travellers in the country to look for tourist places within the country. And Kashmir remains a favourite place to visit for all Indians". Similarly, there is positive development on Covid-19 front too. Despite winter, the Covid-19 cases in J&K have witnessed a drastic fall from over 1000 in summer to less than 200 now. Besides the talk of vaccine is also shoring up the public confidence. This will remove the existing restraint associated with the travel. This has created hopes of a good year ahead for tourism.

And Kashmir tourism needs a year of bumper tourist inflow to compensate for the losses of the previous two years. In 2019, the tourist arrivals dropped by a whopping 34 per cent as a consequence of the removal of Article 370 and subsequent lockdown. Similarly, 2020 saw negligible tourism due to Covid-19 pandemic.

The pathetic state of tourism in Kashmir is best illustrated by the steep drop in the arrivals over the past three years. According to official data 8,42,202 tourists visited the valley in 2018, 4,99,582 in 2019, and only 28030 so far in 2020.

But from July 2019 onwards a trickle of tourists tentatively started wending their way back to Kashmir. Tourism department figures reveal a total of 186 tourists arrived in July followed by 284 in August, 848 in September, 2697 in October and 6327 in November, 56 of them foreigners.

The government is trying its best to bring tourists to J&K. The tourism department has roped in renowned Bollywood director Imtiaz Ali "to promote local art and culture". In an interaction with media in Jammu in December, Ali showed interest in making films that reflect local themes, music, art and locales. The tourism department is also organising winter games, which will be hosted at Gulmarg in February 2021 under the Khelo India initiative.

In November, the tour and travel operators from Maharashtra started an 'Unlock Kashmir Tourism Campaign' with support from the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department. Around 70 travel operators along with some writers and journalists from Mumbai visited Kashmir and travelled to many scenic spots. Here's hoping that more and more tourists visit Kashmir. Battered by the two consecutive years of abnormal situation, Kashmir economy desperately needs tourism and the normal business activity to put it back on rails.

Subscription Model: A Solution to News Media's crisis?

ast month, while scrolling through my Twitter feed, I came across a Tweet from an Indian writer. In brief one-liners, the writer fumed at people who do not pay and subscribe for news. "Don't be cheap. It will cost you the price of a cup of coffee at Barista/Starbucks for a monthly subscription." It made me wonder if this is the solution to the crisis that Indian news media is facing.

It was around two centuries ago when the steam-powered press made newspapers cheap and affordable in America. These low-cost newspapers were called the penny press newspapers. They were sold for a penny when most of the newspapers cost six pennies. These newspapers initially relied on printing gossip but later ventured into hardcore journalism. The penny press newspapers revolutionized journalism by making news affordable to middle-class citizens. The reportage also became more diverse as the audience demanded more news relevant to them.

We have entered 2021, and the Internet has taken over the conventional forms of news media in most developed countries. The newspapers and T.V. news channels are focusing more on online platforms like YouTube and Facebook, paying special attention to mobile applications to reach more audiences. In India, however, the conventional news media is booming like always. One of the reasons for this could be that the internet penetration in the country is still very low and newspapers and television news are more readily available to people. Internet accessibility in India is increasing exponentially; however, the ability to pay for content has not

seen the same growth. Newspapers like the New York Times and Washington Post have grown their subscriber base to millions, and they have a significant influence on American politics, but it is foolish to assume that the same could happen here anytime soon. Even in America, only 20% of readers pay for news, while a minuscule 25% are willing to pay for it. According to a research published by the Reuters Institute in 2017, globally, 54% of people were unwilling to pay for news. The number might be even lower in India. Moreover, most of the audience in India is already hooked to



Newspapers like the New York Times and Washington Post have grown their subscriber base to millions, and they have a significant influence on American politics, but it is foolish to assume that the same could happen here anytime soon. Even in America, only 20% of readers pay for news, while a minuscule 25% are willing to pay for it

jingoistic news media, and they have a little understanding of how news is different from entertainment. In such a scenario, the subscription model cannot work as an alternative to advertisement.

If journalism is the fourth pillar of democracy, how can we put it behind a paywall? News is impactful only when it reaches the audience a significant number of people who can make informed decisions by consuming objective news. An exclusionary subscription model risks limiting access to bias-free reporting and creating an informational divide between those who can pay for the news and those who cannot. Journalism's failure to reach the masses will be a crisis for democracy.

News does not come cheap. It takes a lot of resources to gather and disseminate it, so we need an efficient model to fund this profession. The age-old publisher-editor rivalry needs to be reexamined to find a solution to this problem. The advertisement model may have kept news organizations afloat and generated huge profits, but it has also led to a degradation of journalism across the world. News organizations have to adopt a model that can satisfy their financial needs and — at the same time — allow them to report objectively. It is a difficult task to find such a solution and then convince people to adopt it. However, ensuring that news is accessible to people — even those who cannot pay

for it — is indispensable to the cause of journalism.

Penny press revolutionized journalism two centuries ago. It made news available to workers and peasants who could not previously afford it. A subscription model that puts most of the content behind a paywall will reverse the strides this profession has made over these years. Moreover, it will also give corporate-owned media houses a free run in the market. The exclusionary system created by such policies will outweigh any benefits that may or may not accrue from them.

Journalism needs a rescue. News channels in India are competing with reality T.V. shows. It is well established that the noisy prime-time debates are conducted to grab attention of the audience rather than inform them. To that effect, we need to change the way people understand the news and its objectives. The line between entertainment and journalism has blurred and, to redraw that line, it is imperative to reach out to a large number of people.

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

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providing the scraps. perished and cel ebrated for their ingenuity, and are received with money and fame. They move up the ladder - trampling the steps in their ascent. The governments collect their taxes and the elite reap the benefits of the goods and services while the labor which participated, from the production to delivery, is deprived of its own product. The labor is alienated from its own life and civilization, and becomes a commodity which is bought in markets or Facebook posts. The wealth barely trickles down and while, there is a singular mobility of an entrepreneur, the social stratification only intensifies. I am not an economist or a lawver. In all humility, I admit my unawareness about the legal minimum wages - if such thing exists at all in our economic system. My concern here is of human dignity and the lack of respect for an individual's person. My concern is the lack of realization that no man is a means to an end, that no man is a stepping stone that you trample upon in your march towards greatness. In fact, every person is an end in him; every person is a march of his own.

Shehlat Maknoon Wani

If journalism is the fourth pillar of democracy, how can we put it behind a paywall? An exclusionary subscription model risks limiting access to biasfree reporting and creating an informational divide between those who can pay for the news and those who cannot

OTHER OPINON

Cricket, made in India

In hours, days, weeks, months and years to come, the magnificence of India's triumph in Brisbane will only grow grander in time. It would come to define a generation, perhaps an era, perhaps Indian cricket itself. It's epochal and merits its perch at the helm of India's finest hours in cricket and arguably one of the finest Test matches in the history of the game. A victorious chase of 328 on a crack-laden, fourth-innings pitch, where Australia had been invincible since 1988, in itself is an incredible feat, but that's only part of a truly unbelievable, if not fictitious, comeback story. Bowled out for 36 in Adelaide, written off after the departure of their talisman Virat Kohli, then losing one match-winning player after the other as the series unrolled, bruised and bullied by their full-strength Australian contemporaries, taunted racially by spectators in Sydney, India scripted a timeless epic in Brisbane.

The emotional outpouring should not deflect the reality of India's leaping growth in the game. This was no fairytale, Brisbane 2021 was not a coincidence. It was in the works for a while. This is the outcome of sustained planning, systematic development and an ambition to be the global leader in the game. That a largely second or third-rung team could produce this victory is an attestation of the efforts put behind the scenes to ensure the progress sion of cricket and cricketers in the country. A domestic circuit that pays well or the ample opportunities and quick riches that IPL provides has taught millions of Indian cricketers to dream, aspire and inspire. It has widened the talent pool of the country, revved up the competition as well as opportunities, made worldclass facilities accessible even to aspiring cricketers.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India is not without flaws and is not hesitant to wield its clout, of course. But they know their cricket, they support their cricketers, they ensure they get the best of exposure. For example, no other team has featured in as many 'A' games than India. There is no country in the cricketing world they have not travelled in the last five years, they are constantly interacting with world-class coaches, Rahul Dravid, for instance, and getting acquainted with alien conditions at a young age. Similarly, the Under-19 cricketers are carefully groomed and monitored. Selectors and scouts are travelling wider and farther to guarantee that no talent slips out of the system. For all these reasons, Brisbane 2021, should not be considered a coincidence or fluke. It's just a dot in the arc, the triumph of a robust, inscrutable system. It's an example other Indian sports can emulate.

Indian Express

ous. It invents goods and services, brings in innovation, provides employment and creates wealth. With this positive economic impact and other externalities, I have been an admirer too. With information and technology pulsing through our lives, this decade has been the decade of entrepreneurs and start-ups. The deterrents that circumstances have put against Kashmir haven't stopped us from jumping the bandwagon. And consequently, we have had a new class of emerging entrepreneurs - creating wealth - moving up the social ladder. Social Mobility is desirable, sometimes compelling, but my recent experiences have compelled me to think about it all over.

eople celebrate entrepre-

urship for rea

It started with a Facebook post in a group put up to connect people in Srinagar. The post was a job posting which sought a 'Delivery boy' for a new start-up. The requirements for the job were intriguing; a driver's license and a two wheeler. The entrepreneur setting up the business adjudged buying a two-wheeler an unworthy investment and left it to the future delivery boy. The salary was a meager 8000/month with a 'promise' of a raise in 3 months.

Mobility and Alienation

Mir Abu Hurairah

I wanted to report the 'job posting' under the 'fraud posting' category but regrettably, there is no such option in Facebook. It should be easily comprehensible that some poor person was being duped into depreciating his precious vehicle for Rs 260/day. A few days later there was another post seeking a preferably experienced civil engineer for Rs 7000/ month. I assure you the editor did not miss out on a zero. It is, in fact, seven thousand. It did seem intended sarcasm at first, but after checking the comments on the thread, it turned out to be sheer shamelessness on part of the entrepreneur.

I did voice my concern in the comments section. The entrepreneur found me unworthy of a reply, though some random stranger came up with the 'something is better than nothing' rationale. And I know some readers might have the same opinion. But I categorically reject this reasoning as a justification of exploitation of workers. If circumstances compel a person to work for lower than deserving wages, our focus must move beyond the circumstances and focus at the compulsion. And we mustn't shy away from using the right words for working under compulsion – Bonded labor.

In the quest of profit maximization, it appears that we are quickly transitioning into a system of economic relations which is characterized by exploitation. More value is extracted from the poor than is being given back to them. A person who struggles to make his ends meet is manipulated as a means to an end. It's natural that he subsists from the scraps of the 'selfmade' entrepreneur. This exploitation is deemed not just natural, but ethical too – since something is better than nothing. After all, the entrepreneur is

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Whatsapp Privacy Debacle

propos the news item titled "India Asks Whatsapp To Withdraw Changes to Privacy Policy" published in this newspaper on 20 January 2020; it is a much-needed step by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India. Earlier hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) against the new privacy policy of Whatsapp, Delhi High Court's Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva had on Monday told the plaintiffs that "WhatsApp is a private app, if you think it compromises your privacy, then don't join it." While it is true that Whatsapp is a private app and can choose its own privacy policy for the users but it cannot be allowed to violate the rights of its users even if it asks for consent. If going by the logic of Delhi High Court, joining Whatsapp and accepting its privacy policy is voluntary, it is like allowing some scam to run throughout the country and letting people get duped because they joined it voluntarily. Just like it is the duty of the government to protect its citizens from getting duped in scams, it is the duty of the government to protect the

citizens against infringement of their private data.

Earlier when China-based apps like TikTok were banned, it was alleged that the apps pose a threat to the national security because they infringe data rights of Indian citizens, similar action should follow against Whatsapp and all other apps that do not respect the privacy of their users. Since Whatsapp has the largest subscriber base in India that runs into millions it should be monitored strictly by the government. If a private app is accumulating private information of its users, it is highly likely to misuse it. Since Whatsapp belongs to Facebook, it should not be forgotten how the Facebook-Cambridge Analytica data scandal influenced and changed the results of many elections around the world. Therefore, the government in stark contrast with the statement of Delhi High Court has taken the right step in asking Whatsapp to withdraw the new privacy policy.

> Najmu Saqib Najmusaqib@rediffmail



Rafia Zakaria

It is a colonial myth that feminism or women's empowerment struggles were initiated, theorised and maintained by white women in the West. Studying Mughal history is one example that unravels this myth.

The Mughal Feminist

T is the princesses and queens that get top billing. We know about the intelligence of the inimitable Nur Jehan, who assisted her husband in the management of a vast empire. We also know about Mumtaz Mahal, whose tomb is the wonder of the world. Of all the things they did and were known for, the greatest interest lies in their jewellery and their clothes.

Bollywood has done its part, memorialising women like Jodha Bai, wife of Emperor Akbar, in the image of Aishwarya Rai. Fashion designers have not been far behind; the top wedding couturiers in Pakistan (and in India) try every year to recreate the glamour and resplendence of the Mughal court. Lavish weddings — which are now put together by planners and concept designers — rely heavily on these images as their inspiration. Many would-be brides, it appears, want the 'Mughal rani for a night' experience at whatever cost it is available.

The Mughal world, however, was not just jewels and princesses; reducing it to just that is as much an indictment of the hollow history Pakistanis consume as anything else. The ordinary Mughal woman was not a princess but more likely a working woman, who either worked as a domestic servant or as a potter or tailor who assisted her husband in these professions.

According to historian Shireen Moosvi, paintings of Mughal women from the era show them performing hard labour along with their husbands. The potter's wife, for instance, would be saddled with the heavier and harder labour. Similarly, a painting of a construction site from the era shows women doing the arduous work of breaking down limestone rocks for construction purposes. Unlike the popular impression drawn from the undue emphasis on princesses and wealthy women alone, these women were strong and actively involved in the workforce of the time.

Some would argue that calling women of the past 'feminists' is reading the present into the past.

Wealthier women tried to protect their own interests in their own way. Evidence from court records reveals that women were represented in courts by lawyers, often to settle property disputes. The amounts of mehr set during the nikah ceremonies were (unlike the current situation in Pakistan) taken seriously, to be paid either at the time of the marriage or upon demand at any time after the marriage. Given that plural marriage was commonplace among the aristocracy and upper-middle classes, women often went to court to safeguard their inheritance rights. Women who owned property or other items often wrote tamlik namas, or certificates of bestowal, that would allow their property to be transferred in whole or in part to a particular son or daughter, instead of being lost to inheritance disputes following their passing. Then, as now, women who owned and inherited property tended to have more important



positions in society than those who did not.

The sociological and historical research into the everyday lives of Mughal women is continuing. Unsurprisingly, it has taken the emergence of women historians studying the Mughal era to draw attention to particular research on its women. The erasure — or rather, the lack of attention — given to Mughal women in prior decades is a symbol of the colonial and post-colonial patriarchal mores rather than the status of women themselves in that era.

The Mughals themselves did not erase women from the visual or written record. The miniature paintings from the era reveal that women were everywhere and doing all sorts of things. Mughal art depicts women dancing, playing musical instruments, working on construction sites, reciting poetry and all sorts of other activities. Based on this alone, it can be concluded that women of the era were very much present, very much visible, able to strategise and instigate war, able to help construct a building. Unlike orientalist and misogynistic reinterpretations of the time that have followed, they were neither all subjugated nor oppressed nor invisible in society.

Some would argue that calling women of the past 'feminists' is reading the present into the past. This sort of position is heavily influenced by the British colonial mindset that deliberately and actively worked to depict and present the women of the subcontinent as lacking in terms of strength, volitions and respect and regard for their own liberty.

The moral argument for colonialism pre-

sented to the British public — and designed to get their support — was that the women of the subcontinent were in an abject situation and required immediate intervention. It is no surprise that the first 'law' passed by the East India Company was the prohibition on sati or widow immolation. The clever propaganda accompanying this ignored the fact that this practice was not a common one, nor was it pervasive all over India and neither was it associated with Vedic prescriptions. In sum, it was essential for the British to present all the women of the subcontinent as being on the verge of being made to commit sati to justify the occupation of India.

It is a colonial myth that feminism or women's empowerment struggles were initiated, theorised and maintained by white women in the West. Studying Mughal history is one example that unravels this myth. The ways in which Mughal women asserted themselves, protected and advocated for themselves, participated in society and its institutions, is all evidence of this fact.

The values of resilience, of inner strength, of persistence and so much more, are all modelled in the record. The charge for the women of the subcontinent today is to examine these records and reveal that women's efforts to empower themselves have hardly been the sole prerogative of upper middle-class white and Western women who grew tired of domesticity and servitude.

Dawn

Not My Body, Not My Choice



started wearing the khimar (Muslim head covering, commonly known as hijab) when I was ten years old. I was influenced by older friends who practiced hijab and I believed that it was the right time for me to start implementing it as well. More than a decade later, God has blessed me in continuing to progress in my journey to conform internally and externally to the requirements of hijab. This journey to cover and conduct myself in a way I believed would be pleasing to God and honor the fact that my body is not my own, but an amanah (a trust) from God, was and is not easy: a struggle millions of Muslim women echo.

Like other requirements of Islam, hijab experiences the natural highs and lows that every believer endures. However, it increasingly seems that distance from the hijab: whether blatantly refusing to ever don it, wearing it in a way that still displays substantial parts of one's form, or eventually removing it after once practicing it, is being expressed not just in sentiments of nonchalance, but moral righteousness. This is particularly heard from many popular Muslim personalities who have enormous global platforms. What impact does it have on impressionable Muslim girls (who are already starved for role models) to hear that the reason their favorite bloggers took off their hijabs is not because they are struggling with their faith, but that it was important for them to "speak their truth" and "wear what makes them happy"? As Daniel Schwindt writes: "No one acknowledges a truth and at the same time denies the obligation — the duty — it imposes. And so again, in ages of fear, truth, because of its imperious character, is the most despised of things." It is this fear of submitting to the responsibility that comes with recognizing God's Truth that has led many to "speak their own truth." Why and how does one's "truth" supersede God's Truth? Has hijab been appropriated by the liberal system from a declaration of submission to God to a political or fashion statement? Does hijab cease to bring "happiness" when it no longer aligns with our aesthetic? What false and material happiness are these influencers now marketing? Do they realize that they commodify themselves, other Muslim women, and tenets of Islam itself through

their carefully curated feeds?

The problem is not that these public Muslim personalities may be experiencing doubts-dips in faith are natural and acknowledging and resolving them often makes one a more devoted believer than she originally was. The problem is the rhetoric they espouse in justifying their decisions and their absurd refusal to acknowledge that their influence is not limited to beauty products or shoe styles, but public understanding of Islam itself. Influence is an all-encompassing and bilateral exchange-a reality that should be most familiar to those who call themselves influencers. Just as these bloggers influence their followers, so too are they themselves influenced by the media and fashion industries they occupy, which have been for years hostile to expressions of faith, particularly Muslim ones, as Islam refuses to yield to the sexualized, capitalistic narcissism that these industries often require. Moreover, young impressionable Muslim women who may know of no other resources to learn their religion often see such influencers as not only ambassadors for modest fashion, but also as teachers of religion. These personalities frequently market themselves as the "first Muslim xyz" and parade their Muslimness when there are brand endorsements or social capital to be secured, only to hide behind feeble excuses of "we never claimed to be scholars" when probed about how their actions misguide or confuse their followers. Being Muslim comes with internalizing that at all moments we are representatives not only for Islam, but also for God Himself, as He bestowed a trust upon us and made us His vicegerents on Earth.

Fluctuations in taqwa (God-consciousness) or iman (faith) are common and affect our external and internal commitment to God. We must thus recognize that our faith and guidance are not guaranteed. We should proactively protect ourselves by abstaining from or being critical of industries and spaces that may be hostile to our beliefs. Even those who have strong knowledge of and conviction in their faith are not immune to the allure of individualistic sirens who belt through their playlists, featuring tracks like "my body, my choice," "listen to your heart," and "speak your truth." The melodic propaganda of these sirens is superficially beautiful, with songs full of lyrics about personal autonomy and agency that provide transient emotional highs. But these slogans and the philosophical positions embedded within them destine shipwreck by leading us away from tawhid (the Oneness of God) towards taghut (worship of all but God). Tawhid is a requirement of faith, as it is not only conscious recognition of the Oneness of God, but complete submission to it. To be Muslim is to submit one's



To be Muslim is to submit one's personal choices and fleeting desires to the choices God has made for us and to align our will with His. Increasingly we see how Islam, which promises liberation from all but God, has been co-opted in the liberal system to liberation from all including God and His commandments

personal choices and fleeting desires to the choices God has made for us and to align our will with His. Increasingly we see how Islam, which promises liberation from all but God, has been co-opted in the liberal system to liberation from all including God and His commandments.

Religion has become a celebration not of commandments, but of choice, with personal readings of scripture and individual interpretations of faith superseding that which the prophets and the inheritors of the prophets, the 'ulama (scholars), have passed down to us. Post-Enlightenment liberalism and secularism have made Choice a false God. They have divorced us from teleology (a committed orientation towards an Ultimate Reality or greater purpose) and gifted us egoism that centers man and his choices, desires, and "truths." We must resist

the illusion of liberation that this "gift" provides, as it disconnects us from our Creator and enslaves us to this materialist, capitalist world. Many Muslims invoke the Quranic verse that states there is "no compulsion in the religion" (2:256) as justification for their choosing of which Islamic injunctions to honor and which to abandon. This complete misreading of the text is dangerous as it creates a liberty of conscience that allows individuals to construct their own religion and tailor their actions not by Divine authority, but by their own whims. It also ignores the remainder of the verse, which reads: "The right course has become clear from the wrong. So whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it."

Influencers and the hijab are only one part of a greater conversation about how the liberal world order is restructuring how we view Islamic tenets, ourselves, and God Himself, all while many Muslims remain embroiled in juvenile debates or stale rally cries of "only God can judge me." We must accept with urgency the threat liberalism, secularism, and materialism pose to our civilization, as crises of faith inculcated by these 'ism's have become a pandemic in our communities, leading many to abandon Islamic obligations and faith altogether. We must also resist the insidious work they are doing in convincing us that conformity to and representation in the status quo are intrinsically good moral pursuits. Far too many popular Muslim personalities market a lifestyle that has no marked difference from their non-Muslim counterparts, with their view of success centering around material possessions and a prioritization of their own needs and desires over all else, including God. We must follow the Prophetic model of helping such individuals with empathy, not ostracization. Our communities must internalize the gravity of what tawhid requires of us and submit to the reality that our physical bodies are only vessels for His worship. That is where true happiness and liberation lies. Not my body, not my choice.

Disclaimer: This is not to suggest that those who do not practice hijab or who once did and now no longer do so have left God. I make no such claims and have no desire to comment on their commitment to God. I pray that influencers are rewarded for whatever good they have facilitated in motivating girls to start wearing the hijab and making it culturally relevant for our generation. May He guide them and me and bring us all closer to His infinite wisdom and mercy.

Traversing Tradition

LIFE & TIMES

This Is What Causes Stomach Discomfort In Irritable Bowel Syndrome Patients

With these new insights, we provide further evidence that we are dealing with a real disease

Agencies

Researchers have identified the biological mechanism that explains why some people experience abdominal pain when they eat certain

foods. According to the researchers, up to 20 per cent of the world's population suffers from the irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), which causes stomach pain or severe discomfort after eating. The researchers revealed a mechanism that connects

certain foods with activation of the cells that release histamine (called mast cells), and subsequent pain and discomfort. "With these new insights, we provide further evidence that we are dealing with a real disease," said researcher Guy Boeckxstaens, Professor at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Belgium.

In a healthy intestine, the immune system does not react to foods, so the first step was to find out what might cause this tolerance to break down, according to the study published in the journal Nature.

Since people with IBS often report that their symptoms began after a gastrointestinal infection, such as food poisoning, the researchers started with the idea that an infection while a particular food is present in the gut might sensitise the immune system to that food.

They infected mice with a stomach bug, and at the same time fed them ovalbumin, a protein found in egg white that is commonly used in experiments as a model food antigen. An antigen is any molecule that provokes an immune response. Once the infection cleared, the mice were given ovalbumin again, to see if their immune systems had become sensitised to it.

The results were affirmative -the ovalbumin on its own provoked mast cell activation, histamine release, and digestive intolerance with increased abdominal pain. This was not the case in mice that had not been infected with the bug and received ovalbumin.

The researchers then went on to see if people with IBS reacted in the same way.

When food antigens associated with IBS (gluten, wheat, soy and cow milk) were injected into the intestine wall of 12 IBS patients, they produced localised immune reactions similar to that seen in the mice. No reaction was seen in healthy volunteers.

Peer support may be more beneficial to teens with anxiety

Despite reduced carbon emissions, world's oceans continue to warm

Agencies

espite reductions in global carbon emissions due to the Covid-19 ockdown, the world's oceans in 2020 were the warmest in recorded history, according to a new study. Published in the journal Advances in Atmospheric Sciences earlier this week, the study was conducted by 20 scientists from 13 institutes in China, the US and Italy, Xinhua news agency reported on Saturday. Compared with 2019, the upper 2,000 metres of the Earth's oceans have absorbed a greater amount of heat, enough to boil 1.3 billion kettles, each containing 1.5 liters of water.

temperatures, said the study.

Cheng Lijing, lead author of the study and researcher at the Institute of Atmospheric Physics (IAP) under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said ocean heating is a key indicator for quantifying climate change, since more than 90 per cent of global heat ends up in the oceans

fest in the form of more typhoons, hurricanes and extreme rainfall.

In addition to ocean temperatures, researchers involved in the study calculated the salinity of ocean water.

They found that areas of high salinity had increased in salinity, whereas the opposite was true for areas of lower salinity



ne in three parents strongly support schools having mental health programmes like peer support leaders, a new poll suggests.

The poll indicates that an estimated one in five teenagers has symptoms of a mental health disorder such as depression or anxiety and suicide is the second leading cause of death among teens.

But the first person a teen confides in may not always be an adult—they may prefer to talk to another teen.

"Peers may provide valuable support for fellow teens struggling with emotional issues because they can relate to each other," Sarah Clark from the University of Michigan in the US, said in a statement.

"Some teens may worry that their parents will overreact or not understand what they are going through. Teachers and school counsellors may also have limited time to talk with students in the middle of other responsibilities," Clark added. According to the C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health at Michigan Medicine, threequarters of parents in a new national poll think peers better understand teen challenges, compared to teachers or counsellors in the school.

The majority also agree that peer support leaders at school would encourage more teens to talk with someone about their mental health problems.

The poll found that 38 per cent believe if their own teen was struggling with a mental health problem, their teen would likely talk to a peer support leader and 41 per cent of parents say it's possible their teen would take advantage of this option. Another 21 per cent said it's unlikely

their child would seek support from a peer mentor.

The nationally representative poll report included responses from 1,000 parents of teens aged between 13-18 about their views on programmes like peer support leaders.

• Peers may provide valuable support for fellow teens struggling with emotional issues because they can relate to each other

The increase in heat within the oceans is responsible for the increasing trend of record-breaking global ocean

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"However, due to the ocean's delayed response to global warming, the trend of ocean warming will persist for decades at least," said Cheng, explaining that the world's ocean temperatures kept rising last year, despite reports that global carbon emissions fell as people stayed indoors to prevent the virus from spreading.

The study also found that over the past eight decades, the world's oceans have been warmer in each decade than in the previous one.

The effects of ocean warming mani-

Researchers also shared data recorded by China's IAP and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the study.

Cheng called for more global research efforts on the subject of ocean warming.

"Any activities or agreements to address global warming must be coupled with the understanding that the oceans have already absorbed an immense amount of heat and will continue to absorb excess energy in the Earth's system."

Al can beat human brain in chess, but not in memory, reveals study

Agencies

hew research has shown that the brain strategy for storing memories is more efficient than that of Artificial intelligence (AI).

The new study, carried out by SISSA scientists in collaboration with Kavli Institute for Systems Neuroscience & Centre for Neural Computation, Trondheim, Norway, has been published in Physical Review Letters.

In the last decades, Artificial Intelligence has shown to be very good at achieving exceptional goals in several fields. Chess is one of them: in 1996, for the first time, the computer Deep Blue beat a human player, chess champion Garry Kasparov.

Neural networks, real or artificial, learn by tweaking the connections between neurons. Making them stronger or weaker, some neurons become more active, some less, until a pattern of activity emerges. This pattern is what we call "a memory". The AI strategy is to use complex long algorithms, which iteratively tune and op-



timize the connections.

this wisdom is largely based on

The brain does it much simpler: each connection between neurons changes just based on how active the two neurons are at the same time. When compared to the AI algorithm, this had long been thought to permit the storage of fewer memories. But, in terms of memory capacity and retrieval,

analysing networks assuming a fundamental simplification: that neurons can be considered as binary units.

The new research, however, shows otherwise: the fewer number of memories stored using the brain strategy depends on such an unrealistic assumption. When the simple strategy used by the brain to change the connections is combined with biologically plausible models for single neurons response, that strategy performs as well as, or even better, than AI algorithms. How could this be the case?

Paradoxically, the answer is in introducing errors: when memory is effectively retrieved this can be identical to the original input-to-be-memorized or correlated to it. The brain strategy leads to the retrieval of memories which are not identical to the original input, silencing the activity of those neurons that are only barely active in each pattern.

Those silenced neurons, indeed, do not play a crucial role in distinguishing among the different memories stored within the same network. By ignoring them, neural resources can be focused on those neurons that do matter in an input-to-be-memorized and enable a higher capacity.

Overall, this research highlights how biologically plausible self-organized learning procedures can be just as efficient as slow and neurally implausible training algorithms.

Business

Housing Sales In Oct-Dec Up **25 Per Cent Across 7 Cities; Demand Rises 78 Per Cent From September Quarter**



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: Housing sales rose 25 per cent year-on-year during the October-December period at 1,10,811 units across seven cities on pent up units in 2020 from 19,272 units in and festive demand, according to data analytic firm PropEquity.

Housing sales stood at 88,976 units in the year-ago period. Showing signs of recovery, total sales of home units in seven cities increased 78 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2020 to 1,10,811 74,791 units in the previous year. units as against 62,197 units in the third quarter of 2020.

"Housing market has definitely improved, and we are witnessing units in 2020 from 1,07,562 units green shoots of recovery as evident from the latest Q4 report. As India embarks on its COVID vaccination drive, we believe it will further cement strong recoveries in the sector," said Samir Jasuja, Managing Director and Founder, PropEquity.

Residential real estate in India continues to be an end-user driven market as ready to move-in or to near completion properties are being preferred.

Developers with excellent track records in quality and execution in 2020 across seven cities to 1.38 lakh continued to witness substantial sales numbers across projects.

Despite an increase in demand during October-December, residential properties' sales in the 2020 calendar year fell 16 per cent to 2,86,951 units from 3,41,466 units.

As per the full-year data, housing sales in Bengaluru declined 29 per cent to 33,363 units in 2020 from 46,969 in the previous year.

Chennai saw 30 per cent fall in sales to 11,907 units last year from 16,940 units in 2019, while over 44 cities in India.

Hyderabad witnessed 14 per cent decline in demand to 26,716 units from 31,038 units. Housing sales in Kolkata de-

creased 38 per cent to 12,026 the previous year. The Delhi-NCR market saw 34

per cent fall in sales to 29,640 units last year from 44,894 units in 2019, while demand in Pune was 17 per cent lower at 62,043 units in 2020 as compared to However, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) witnessed 3 per cent rise in sales to 1,11,256 in the previous year.

Realtors' apex bodies CREDAI and NAREDCO do not compile new supply and sales of their total 25,000 developer members.

The primary housing market data are being provided by a few property consultants and data analytics firms quarterly, but with considerable variations in sales and launch numbers.

Housing brokerage firm Anarock said that housing sales fell 47 per cent units from 2.61 lakh units in 2019.

PropTiger reported a 47 per cent decline in housing sales across eight top cities to 1,82,639 units in 2020 from 3,47,586 units in the previous year, while Knight Frank India said sales fell 37 per cent to 1,54,534 units in 2020 across eight major cities as compared with 2.45.861 units in the last year.

PropEquity, owned by P E Analytics, covers over 1,18,010 projects of 34,217 developers across



10th Round Of Centre-Farmers Talks: **Govt Offers To Amend Farm Laws; Unions Insist On Repeal, Discussion On MSP**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: The government on Wednesday offered to amend the three contentious farm laws at their 10th round of talks with protesting unions but farmer leaders stuck to their demand for a complete repeal of the Acts and alleged that the Centre was avoiding discussion on a legal guarantee for MSP. Farmer leaders said there was no

breakthrough in the first session as both sides were stuck on their stated positions vis-a-vis the three farm laws and there was little hope of any outcome other than fixing

the date for the 11th round. Farmer leaders also raised the issue of NIA notices being served to some farmers, alleging it was

being done just to harass those supporting the agitation, to which the government representatives said they will look into the matter. As the two sides took a break,

where farmer leaders had langar food, Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) general secretary Yudhvir Singh told PTI, "The stalemate is continuing over the three laws and I don't think any solution will emerge from today's meeting. Both sides are adamant on their position." He said the government is insisting on first discussing the three laws and wants to

port Price) matter later. "We will insist on a discussion on

MSP after the tea break and also try to seek the next date for meeting before January 26," Singh said. Another farmer leader Rakesh Tikait said, "The government is not ready to repeal the three laws and farmers are not ready for amendments. The government doesn't want to discuss MSP." "No solution will emerge from today's meeting. We will meet again on

Tikait also said the union leaders raised the NIA (National Investigation Agency) issue in the meeting, to which the ministers said they will look into it.

The meeting began at around 2.45 pm with the three ministers greeting farmer leaders on the occasion of Gurupurab.

"The government offered to carry out some amendments, but farmer leaders maintained they do not want anything less than a complete repeal of the laws," Tikait said.

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, Railways, Commerce and Food Minister Pivush Goval and Minister of State for Commerce Som Parkash. who is an MP from Punjab, are holding the talks with the representatives of around 40 farmer unions at the Vigyan Bhawan here. Before the meeting, the three

A Surge In Bad Debt Is Set To

ministers also met senior BJP leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The tenth round of talks was initially scheduled on January 19, but later got postponed to Wednesday.

In the last round of talks, the government had asked protesting farmers to prepare a concrete proposal about their objections and suggestions on the three farm laws for further discussion at their next meeting to end the long-running protest. But, unions stuck to their main demand of a complete repeal of the three Acts.

Thousands of farmers, mainly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, are protesting at various border points of Delhi for over a month now against the three laws. Farmer groups have alleged these laws will end the mandi and MSP procurement systems and leave the farmers at the mercy of big corporates, even as the government has rejected these apprehensions as misplaced.

On January 11, the Supreme Court had stayed the implementation of the three laws till further orders and appointed a four-member panel to resolve the impasse.

Bhartiya Kisan Union president Bhupinder Singh Mann had recused himself from the committee appointed by the apex court.

Tarun Gogoi: The Voice Of **Congress In Northeast**

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Thursday | 21-01-2021

Agencies

Tarun Gogoi, the soft-spoken Congress stalwart, was known as the voice of the Congress from northeast much before late P.A. Sangma came to prominence, and after the death of Gopinath Bordoloi, Congress leader and first chief minister of Assam. With his demise, Gogoi leaves behind a rich legacy. Gogoi passed away on Monday

gress saw Gogoi back in prominence.

In 2001, Gogoi was made the Con-

gress chief minister of Assam. Gogoi

proved that he wasn't the wrong

horse to bet on as the party per-

formed well in the elections, and he

His 15 years of being at the helm

of affairs proved to be mixed bag

for Assam. As CM, he managed to

create stability and brought peace

in Assam, but wasn't too success-

ful in bringing in much-needed

Gogoi he did not belong to the

hawkish group of Congress leaders

development to the state.

was the chief minister for 15 years.

at the age of 86. He was being treated at the Gauhati Medical College Hospital for post-COV-ID-19 complications.

In the seventies, Gogoi emerged as a youth leader of the Congress when Indira Gandhi was at the helm of affairs. Even when party seniors like Hiteswar Saikia used to rule the Assam Congress, Indira Gandhi turned to Gogoi for advice on issues regarding northeast.

Gogoi was made the joint national general secretary of the Congress in 1976. Before that, Gandhi brought him to Delhi as a Lok Sabha MP from Jorhat, his hometown, in 1971. In 1985, he was made a general secretary of the Congress, as much like his mother, Rajiv Gandhi too used to place his trust in Gogoi. When the ULFA menace was at its peak in Assam, Gogoi used to be among the top advisers for Rajiv Gandhi. However, in Assam, he used to play

second fiddle to leaders like Saikia. The death of Rajiv Gandhi was a setback for Gogoi, as leaders like P. V. Narasimha Rao, who reposed their faith in Sangma from Meghalaya—who had a good grasp of Assam—and Saikia, sidelined him.

However, Rao was careful not to create any sort of rivalry between the party leaders in northeast. Gogoi was accommodated in his council of ministers. What Rao tried to do was get an impartial voice like Sangma to solve the decades- long crisis in northeast.

who believed in the separation of Assam from India in the name of anti-videshi movement which gripped the northeast since the eighties. It was during his tenure as the chief minister, based on the Supreme Court directive, the process of NRC began. Gogoi was sensible and sensitive, and did not use the foreigners' law harshly to detect the illegal immigrants in the state. In fact, during his time, the NRC process was slow, forcing the apex court to come down heavily on him. This cost him dearly

as BJP's Sarbananda Sonowal and civil organisations like All Assam Students' Union and political organisation, Asom Gana Parishad, used the opportunity to create a massive campaign against him. Gogoi had already things going against him when all of these forces united against him, and in the Sonia Gandhi taking over the Con- 2016 elections, he was defeated.

SBI, ICICI Bank, HDFC **Bank Remain Systemically Important Banks: RBI**

The RBI on Tuesday said state-owned SBI, along with private sector lenders ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank continue to be Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) or instituons which are 'too big to fail' SIBs are subjected to higher levels of supervision so as to prevent disruption in financial services in the event of any failure. The Reserve Bank had issued the framework for dealing with D-SIBs in July 2014. the central to disclose the names



take up the MSP (Minimum Sup-

the next date," he said.

Budget Session Of Parliament

All-Party Meeting Ahead Of

Budget 2021: PM Modi To Chair

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair an all-party meeting on January 30 dur-ing which the government will put forth its legislative agenda for the Budget session of Parliament, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said on Wednesday.

He said the meeting will be held virtually and an invitation has been extended to floor leaders of all parties.

An all-party meeting is a customary procedure before the ment is starting from January 29 beginning of every session of Parliament to ensure its smooth functioning.However, this time it is being held a day after the session starts on January 29.

"The all-party meeting will be held on January 30, where government will put forth its legislative business for the Parliament session and would also listen to meeting of top government offithe opposition's suggestions," Joshi told PTI.

and will be held in two parts. The first part will conclude on February 15 and second part will be held from March 8 to April 8. Parliament will sit in two shifts with Raiva Sabha in the morning and Lok Sabha in the evening. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla

The Budget session of Parlia-

on Tuesday chaired a high-level cials for holding the Budget session amid the pandemic. PTI

Worsen India's Shadow Bank Crisis

Agencies

ndia's troubled shadow banks face mounting challenges to a nascent recovery from the pandemic, with their asset quality set to deteriorate further as flagged recently by the financial regulator. Non-performing assets already swelled in the most recent data

to the highest in at least five years, at 6.3% as of March 2020 even before the worst of the pandemic impact, the Reserve Bank of India said in a report last week. That's up 100 basis points from a year earlier, and the RBI forecasts it's headed higher.

Recent days have brought more reminders of strains, as creditors Housing Finance Corp. voted on a takeover plan. Further financial pain in the industry could threaten a recent rebound driven by



stimulus last year. Ample liquidity helped non-bank lenders' borrowing costs stay near a five-year low in December, according to a measure that's among four indicators compiled by Bloomberg to check on the health of the industry.

Shadow lenders fund a wide range of businesses from small holiday tour operators to property to bankrupt shadow lender Dewan giants. Any setback would not bode well for an economy already heading for its worst annual contraction since the 1950s this financial year. Fitch Ratings this month said rat-

ing outlooks have turned negative for many non-bank financial companies and that asset quality risks loom as support measures may be pared down this year.

The sector, meanwhile, piled on more debt last month, a Bloomberg index measuring outstanding liabilities showed.

Shadow banks were first hit in 2018 when a major infrastructure financier IL&FS Group defaulted. Risks roared back when Dewan Housing and Altico Capital India Ltd. also failed to honor debt repayments the following year.

Non-bank finance companies and housing finance firms are the largest borrowers of funds from the nation's financial system, the RBI said in the report. A substantial part of that funding comes from banks and hence any failure of a shadow lender could act as a solvency shock to their banks.

starting from 2015 and place these lenders in appropriate buckets depending upon their Systemic Importance Scores (SISs).

"SBI, ICICI Bank, and HDFC Bank continue to be identified as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs), under the same bucketing structure as in the 2018 list of D-SIBs," RBI said in a statement.

The additional Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) requirement for D-SIBs was phased-in from April 1. 2016 and became fully effective from April 1, 2019. The additional CET1 requirement will be in addition to the capital conservation buffer, the central bank said.

The D-SIB framework requires ment as a percentage of Risk Weighted Assets (RWAs) in case of banks designated as D-SIBs of the State Bank of India (SBI) is 0.6 per cent, while for the other two banks it is 0.2 per cent.

Based on the bucket in which a D-SIB is placed, an additional common equity requirement has

to be applied to it. In case a foreign bank having branch presence in India is a Global Systemically Important Bank (G-SIB), it has to maintain

additional CET1 capital surcharge in the country as applicable, proportionate to its RWAs.

SIBs are seen as 'too big to fail (TBTF)', creating expectation of government support for them in times of financial distress. These banks also enjoy certain advan-

The additional CET1 require- tages in funding markets. PTI

NEWS MAKERS

J&K Bank Holds DLRC/DCC Meeting In Ganderbal

SRINAGAR: J&K Bank conducted District Level Review Committee (DLRC) and District Consultative Committee (DCC) meetings to review achievements of various banks working in Ganderbal district for the quarters ending June and September 2020 vis-à-vis Annual District Plan 2020-21.

District Development Commissioner Ganderbal Shafqat Iqbal, who is also the chairman of committees, chaired both the meetings in presence of Zonal Head J&K Bank Kashmir (Central II) Syed Shujaat Hussain Andrabi, CPO Ganderbal Irfan Ahmad, Lead District Manager Ganderbal Nissar Ahmad Bhat, DDM NABARD, Director RSETI, Ganderbal, District Coordinators of Banks, and District Officers of Line Departments.

The DDC Ganderbal took stock of progress and achievements made by the banks in the implementation of the various government sponsored schemes.

SEBI Slaps Rs 25 Lakh Fine On Two Individuals For Non-Compliance With Directives

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: Markets regulator SEBI on Wednesday imposed a total penalty of Rs 25 lakh on two individuals for not complying with its directives to disgorge the unlawful gains made by them. The individuals are Mansoor Rafiq Khanda and Firoz Rafiq Khanda (noticees).

According to a SEBI order, he individuals were engaged in providing investment advisory services to investors upon the receipt of requisite fees without obtaining registration from SEBI.

In May 2016, the regulator had directed them to impound a sum of over Rs 5 crore as ill-gotten gains made by them jointly and severally.



market regulator passed an order them to disgorge the unlawful filed an appeal before the Securi-Thereafter, in June 2018, the against the individuals directing gains made by them along with ties Appellate Tribunal (SAT), which

regulator in the impounding order dated May 12, 2016.

OWEVER, the Securities and **Exchange Board of India** (SEBI) noted that the individuals have not paid the disgorgement amount even after almost 11 months have passed subsequent to the order of the SAT in

January 2020.

However, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) noted that the individuals have not paid the disgorgement amount

even after almost 11 months have passed subsequent to the order of the SAT in January 2020.

The regulator also noted that the noticees have completely disregarded the directions of SEBI to disgorge the ill-gotten gains made from their activities as unregistered investment advisers. This shows unwillingness on the part of the noticees to comply with the directions of SEBI and such defaults seriously compromise the regulatory framework, the order said.

For not complying with its directives, the regulator has penalised them.

interest as determined by the was dismissed in January 2020. Further, the noticees had

NEWS

Parliamentary Panel Arrives In Valley

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Parliamentary Committee Standing on Transport, Tourism and Culture arrived here on Wednesday on a three-day visit to Kashmir during which it is scheduled to meet various stakeholders to have an appraisal of the issues pertaining to these sectors, an official spokesman said.

headed The committee, by Rajya Sabha member T G Venkatesh, will hold a meeting with stakeholders concerned on issues related to road, travel and hospitality sectors, he said.

They will also hold a meeting with the officials of the Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways, NHAI, along with representatives of the UT administration, on the 'role of highways in nation-building'

with reference to the status of national and state highways in J-K, the spokesman said. The members of the commit-

tee will also hold a meeting with

the officials of the Department of Culture and Tourism and the Archaeological Survey of India, along with representatives of the UT administration of Jammu and Kashmir, with a focus on promotion and preservation of archaeological sites and artefacts in J-K', he said.

The delegation will have an on the spot assessment of the tourism facilities/amenities available at Gulmarg. They will hold a meeting with the officials of the Ministry of Tourism, along with representatives of the UT administration and the J-K Police, Institute of Hotel Management Srinagar, Indian Institute of Skiing and Mountaineering, Gulmarg, and various stakeholders of the tourism sector, the spokesman said.

The visiting committee members shall hold a meeting with the officials of ministries of Civil Aviation, Home Affairs, Railways, Tourism, Road Transport and Highways and NHAI on safety and connectivity aspects in the respective sectors, he said.

No Leaves For PDD Employees In Winter: KPDCL

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) has barred all the employees of PDD from applying for leaves during winters while extreme medical emergency cases have been exempted.

An issued by KPDCL reads, "No leave of any kind shall be granted in winter spell in favour of the officers/Officials of the DISCOM."

While expressing the worry and anxiety over the the permission in rarest of the rare circumstances on medical order JK Employees Electrical Union (J&KEEU) President grounds shall be granted by Abdul Rashid said that the order is very harsh.

"How is it possible for a lower rung employee of PDD who is posted in far flung area to come to corporate office to get

emergency leave sanctioned on health grounds," he questioned. The circular issued by KPDCL reads, "It is impressed upon all the officers/ officers to maintain their headquarters. Besides, leave of any kind if granted by any controlling officer stands canceled with immediate effect. Further all the controlling officers are hereby directed not to grant

sanction leave of any kind to any

The order further reads that

"Any deviation of circular

instructions shall be viewed

seriously and defaulting officer

shall be liable for disciplinary

action under relevant conduct

Rules", reads the circular.

officer/ official henceforth."

the corporate office only.

here in Srinagar conducted governing body.

Mr. Ghulam Hassan Ganai reports said. The report fursecretary after polls.

CONTD. FROM **FRONT** PAGE

In Kashmir, Doctors

quarter of health beneficiaries invited for immunization showed up during the third phase of the vaccination drive restricted for emergency use against the Covid-19 pandemic in various centers across Jammu and Kashmir.

Veteran doctors were seen taking the lead to dismiss myths and debunking accountability surrounding the vaccine.

Dr. AG Ahanger, Director SKIMS, and Dr Bilqees Shah, Head of JLMN Hospital in Srinagar, volunteered as the first participants.

Atal Dulloo, Health Medical Commissioner, told Kashmir Observer that the administration's target is to vaccinate one lakh sixty thousand health workers first.

"And we have identified 40 centers across J&K for that -20 in each division," Dulloo said.

"Currently," he added, "we are facing few technical issues related to the CovidApp which is scheduling the vaccination drive. Once the application is fixed – we will be able to invite more health workers for the shot.

The vaccination drive started in SHMS on Tuesday with Dr. Altaf Hussain from Dental College Srinagar taking the first shot.

During the first vaccination drive in SMHS Hospital's Block F, the nodal officers administering the drive were calling the health workers from a list given to them in which many were unavailable.

"We have been given an estimation of 100 beneficiaries per day and today out of 100, 25 got vaccinated," Dr Ruqaiya, Nodal officer, GMC Srinagar, told Kashmir Observer.

+ "We refrained to vaccinate two others as they developed contra indications like food, skin and medical allergies," she added.

On January4, the Drug Controller General of India approved the emergency use of two vaccines: Covaxin-locally produced by Bharat Biotech, and Covishield-produced by the Pune-based Serum Institute of India.

The veracity on the authorization of vaccines with little transparency, however, remains highly debatable among the experts and public.

Even the twin vaccine manufacturers-Bharat Biotech and Serum Institute of Indiareleased a fact-sheet on Tuesday, saying that the vaccines cannot be administered on those who are immune compromised, or are on a

Reasi, Budgam, Jammu, Shopain and Kishtwar. "We want to run the drive very smoothly and subsequently, we will execute the social mobilization of health workers without any pressure," Dr Haroon said. "There is no time frame for the process as of now."

Centre Okays

49 per cent, respectively.

the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir by providing grant of Rs 776.44 crore for equity contribution of JKSPDC in the JVC, the statement added.

NHPC shall invest Rs 808.14 crore from its internal resources. The Ratle hydro electric project shall be commissioned within 60 months. The power generated from the project will

help in providing balancing of the grid and improve the power supply position, it added.

To make the project viable, the government of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir will extend exemption from levy of water usage charges for 10 years after commissioning of the project, reimbursement of state's share of GST (SGST) and waiver of free power to the UT in a decremental manner.

That is, the free power to the Union Territory would be 1 per cent in the first year after commissioning of the project and rise at the rate of 1 per cent per year to 12 per cent in the 12th year, it added.

The construction activities of the project will result in direct and indirect employment to around 4,000 persons and will contribute to overall socio-economic development of the Union Territory.

Further, the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will be getting free power worth Rs 5,289 crore and levy of water usage charges worth Rs 9,581 crore during the project life cycle of 40 years

LG Terms Centre's

of this mega project because of Pakistan's threat". Addressing a press conference here, LG termed the approval of power project by the Cabinet as a historical decision for making J&K power surplus Union Territory, an official spokesperson said. The LG, he said, thanked the PM for approving the much awaited 850 MW Ratle Hydroelectric Project in Jammu & Kashmir at an investment of Rs.5282 crores and ensuring the unprecedented development of Jammu & Kashmir. Accusing the earlier governments of lacklustre approach towards the execution of this important Hydroelectric Power Project, the LG, as per the official spokesperson said that Jammu & Kashmir was deprived of this mega project for so long because the previous regimes were scared to move ahead due to Pakistan's threats of going to International court for arbitration, and making representation in the World Bank. "But, today the nation is under the strong and decisive leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is taking bold decisions for the welfare of the people of J&K and has ensured that this project sees the light of the day, besides also providing equity contribution support to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir," Sinha said. "J&K is witnessing unprecedented growth and development in every sector; we are unlocking J&K's potential to be self-reliant in the energy sector within a short span of time." he added.

"This will make UT of J&K self reliant in power; lead to faster growth and development of UT of J&K and create a minimum 12000 jobs directly and indirectly. Such large scale investment has never happened in the past," he

'Radicalisation Process

conference on 'de-radicalisation' at Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust here.

He said modern education and holistic development are the only solution to all problems as he laid special emphasis on adopting an integrated approach for de-radicalisation and counter-radicalisation through seamlessly involving three pillars - civil society including Muftis and community influencers, family and civil administration.

"Closely examining the radicalisation process is the need of the hour, which I believe is fourth generation warfare. We should assess and develop resources, measures and mechanisms, required to counter such elements and extremist ideologies," Sinha said.

He urged community elders and influencers to use technology to identify and monitor mischievous preachers for a broader mapping.

De-radicalisation is the process by which an already radicalised person is brought back into mainstream of the society, while in counterradicalisation, vulnerable persons are prevented from getting radicalised, he said.

"We must check propagation of non-contextual as well selective messages from holy books. If anyone is treading a wrong path, it's our responsibility to show him the right path," the Lt Governor maintained.

"...We must focus on comprehensive measures involving community, family and much required stress on positive messages. introducing books on prominent Muslim figures like A P J Abdul Kalam, Maqbool Sherwani and Salim Ali, besides chapters on peace and harmony in schools and madrassas," he said.

He said this conference and the discussions with eminent scholars will lead to national integration and positivity among the people.

Mentioning the teachings of Sufi saint Mohammad Syed, Sinha said Jammu & Kashmir has been home to values of equality and fraternity, cultural relations, communal harmony and clinched his party's presidential nomination after early stumbles.

Tragedy and compassion Campaigning during the pandemic, Biden

aimed to show a compassion built through tragedy. He often opened up about the deaths of his first wife, Neilia, and young daughter, Naomi, in a 1972 car crash, and his adult son Beau's passing from brain cancer in 2015.

Biden enters office trying to curb the pain wrought by the pandemic. Working with narrow majorities in the House and Senate, he will first try to pass a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package. Other Biden priorities include health care, immigration and climate change - some of which he will start to address with executive orders on his first day in office.

The Democrat throughout his campaign contended he could win Republicans to his cause, especially because of his relationships in the Senate. The next two years will test his sway in a Trump-centric GOP. Democrats will need 10 Republican votes to pass most legislation in the chamber.

The shadow of Trump

Trump's presence loomed over the day's ceremonies. He became the first president since Andrew Johnson in 1869 not to attend his successor's inauguration.

He left the White House for Florida on Thursday morning, hours before Biden took his oath of office. After he gave brief remarks to supporters, Trump lifted off in Air Force One while Biden attended a Catholic mass with masked Democratic and Republican congressional leaders.

Trump's second-in-command, Mike Pence, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., attended the inauguration. So did former Presidents Obama, George Bush and Bill Clinton.

McCarthy, House Minority Whip Steve Scalise, R-La., and Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, were among the lawmakers who voted against counting Biden's win in Congress hours after the Capitol attack and then attended his inauguration.

The inauguration took place with a smaller crowd, faces covered to slow the spread of the virus. The Jan. 6 insurrection, during which some rioters smashed their way into the Capitol and called to "Hang Mike Pence," led to tightened security. Streets around the Capitol were closed Wednesday. More than 25,000 National Guard members patrolled Washington in a show of force.

Estates Employee Union Elects **New Body** Agenceis

> SRINAGAR: The employees of the Estates Department (Estates Employee Union) elections to choose the new

10

≍

was elected as General Secretary while Bilal Ahmed Bhat was chosen as cashier, ther said that Imtiyaz Ahmed was elected as organizer while Muhammad Tariq Ganai was elected publicity

lines in several parts of the valley.

The chances of snowfall are the most frequent and maximum during this period and most areas, especially in the higher reaches, receive heavy snowfall.

While 'Chillai-Kalan' which began on December 21 -- will end on January 31, the cold wave continues even after that in Kashmir with a 20-day-long 'Chillai-Khurd' (small cold) and a 10-day-long 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold). (With PTI inputs)

R-Day: Attend Function

disobedience of the Government instructions." (GNS)

No Covid Death

highest of 38 cases, followed by 36 in Srinagar district.

While four districts -- Ganderbal, Kathua, Kishtwar and Ramban -- did not report any new cases, 14 other districts had fresh cases in single digits, the officials said.

The number of active cases dropped to 1,099 in the union territory, while 1, 20,625 patients have recovered so far, they said.

There was no death due to COVID-19 in the past 24 hours, the officials said, adding the fatality count remained at 1,923.

Second Batch

Officer J&K, Dr Qazi Haroon, it said, adding the movement was completed "rapidly in 3 minutes from H/open and smoothly by 1308 hrs".

The first batch of Covisheild arrived in Srinagar a couple of days back.

4 Soldiers Injured

firing by Pakistani troops was "very heavy" in 2020, virtually making the 2003 India-Pakistan border truce "redundant".

Beyond Miffed Tourist's

army on every street, the solo traveler went to Aru, and thought the lush-green landscape belonged more to "Switzerland than anywhere in India.

Svetlana Bhagawan

Traveling to Kokernag during spring gave Svetlana Bhagawana very precious respite. The solo traveler and an entrepreneur in h

The Government of India is also supporting

added.

medication.

The statement comes after a week of vaccine delivery in J&K.

With a recovery rate of 96.80% and 2,041 active cases, J&K received 1.46 lakh doses of the (Covishield) vaccines on Wednesday, in which 79000 were dispatched to Kashmir and 67500 were given to Jammu.

Concerned officials in the Serum Institute of India told Kashmir Observer that the efficacy rate of the Covishield vaccine is 70% and that it will be-"hopefully"-approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the coming three weeks.

Pfizer, the only vaccine approved by the WHO on 31st December 2020 for emergency use poses a big challenge for its delivery in developing nations like India.

Experts say it needs super-cold temperature-minus 70 degree Celsius-to sustain, and the cold chain shipping would be very difficult to maintain.

"Usually, a vaccine is prepared in 4 years, and the process is executed in three set of trials," Dr. Waseem Ahmad, associate professor and vigilance officer in GMC, Srinagar, told Kashmir Observer.

"In the first trail, scientists check the possibilities of life-threatening elements. In the second trail, complications get tested. And in the third trail, the presence and numbers of antibodies are ensured. It is mandatory to have human participation in the third and final trail."

Dr Saima Rashid, GMC Principal Secretary, told Kashmir Observer that the vaccination drive is in its third phase, "and the trail has been proved effective so far".

However, dragging their feet from the vaccination drive, some doctors feel the vaccine is not trustworthy.

According to Dr Raja Aijaz, a valley-based doctor, many deaths have been reported in foreign countries after being vaccinated with Pfizer and other vaccines.

"Several have developed severe adverse effects after three days of immunization and I personally don't feel like taking it because there are no studies available," Dr. Aijaz said.

Another medico said that he doesn't trust the vaccine "because it's not WHO approved".

"23 people died a day ago in Norway after being vaccinated with Pfizer vaccine. Tell me how can I trust a non- approved vaccine?" he asked.

But, the State Immunization officer, Dr Qazi Haroon told Kashmir Observer that Pulwama in Kashmir and Samba in Jammu are the leading districts getting vaccination in J&K, followed by Rajouri, Udhampur, Poonch, Ramban,

Highlighting the key features of the mega project, Sinha said that apart from making J&K energy sufficient, the project will create 4000 jobs in J&K, directly & indirectly, and will contribute to overall socio-economic development of the UT.

"In addition, the Kwar project (540 MW) has been decided to be taken up. This will result in an investment of Rs.4,264 Crores and create more than 2000 jobs in the UT," he said.

He added that four more projects (Kirthai-II (930MW), Sawalkot (1,856MW), Uri-I (Stage-II) (240MW) and Dulhasti (Stage-II) (258MW) involving an investment of Rs.31,000 Cr have also been decided to be taken up for construction. These projects together with the two ongoing projects of Pakaldul (1000 MW) and Kiru (624MW) on Chenab river and its tributaries will result in an investment of about Rs.52,821 crores and create more than 12000 jobs in the Union Territory.

As per official spokesperson, the LG further said that to train the locals, the Ministry of Power / Ministry of Skill Development propose to set up training centres near the project sites in collaboration with NHPC Ltd, so that they can be employed in the projects.

"Since independence up to the year 2018, projects of only around 3500 MW had been set up in J&K. Against this, our government has taken up projects with capacity of 6300 MW to be set up in the UT in the next five years. This is double the installed capacity set-up since independence," he said.

He further said that different religious leaders have also spread the message of unity, tolerance and community activities. But there are some disgruntled elements also who have sown the seeds of hatred to divide the people.

"I hope that the religious leaders here will show the right path to these elements spreading hate and to the disoriented people," he said.

Biden Becomes

Chief Justice John Roberts, with his left hand on a family Bible. Speaking after he became president, he declared, "Democracy has prevailed.'

"On this hallowed ground where, just a few days ago, violence sought to shake the Capitol's very foundation, we come together as one nation. under God. indivisible, to carry out the peaceful transfer of power as we have for more than two centuries," Biden said.

Biden, the oldest American president, faces swirling crises as he and Vice President Kamala Harris take power. At 56, she became the first woman. first Black American and first South Asian American to become vice president.

Biden will try to streamline the biggest vaccination effort in U.S. history to contain a virus that has claimed more than 400,000 lives nationwide. He will aim to boost an economy in which about 18 million people are receiving unemployment benefits and food banks experience demand unseen in decades.

Biden will try to implement a broad agenda while navigating a country where millions of people, including members of Congress, fed disinformation by Trump question the legitimacy of his victory in the November election. In his inaugural address, the president said the country must "reject the culture where facts themselves are manipulated and even manufactured." Biden called on Americans to "defend the truth and defeat the lies.'

The Democrat Biden won the presidency in November in his third try. His first attempt came during the 1988 presidential cycle, followed by a 2008 primary loss to his future boss Barack Obama.

Biden served two terms as Obama's vice president from 2009 to 2017. He took the job after 36 years in the Senate representing Delaware, a state Biden has said "will be written on [his] heart." Biden joined the Senate when he was 30.

The president ran last year as the person best equipped to defeat Trump. Concerns bubbled within his party that his record on racial justice and the social safety net left him unprepared to confront the country's challenges. Biden pledged to "restore the soul of America," and

The National Guard vetted forces amid concerns about insider threats, removing two people for "inappropriate" comments and 10 more for other reasons.

Wet Spell

However, the official added that the intensity of snowfall will be lesser than the previous spell as there is little or no moisture supply from Arabian Sea.

"Thereafter weather is likely to remain mainly dry for subsequent 4 to 5 days," he added.

Meanwhile, there was little respite from the intense cold wave conditions in Kashmir on Wednesday as the minimum temperature across the valley stayed several degrees below the freezing point, a MET department official said.

Srinagar city recorded a low of minus 6 degrees Celsius, up from minus 7 degrees Celsius the previous night, the official said.

The minimum temperature in the city on Tuesday night was nearly four degrees below normal for this time of the year, he said.

The minimum temperature at the Gulmarg skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district settled at minus 6.5 degrees Celsius on Tuesday night, down from minus 6.3 degrees Celsius the night earlier.

Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir. recorded a low of minus 8.3 degrees Celsius marginally up from the previous night's minus 8.4 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of 8.7 degrees Celsius and was the coldest recorded place in Jammu and Kashmir, the official said. Kupwara in north Kashmir recorded a low of

minus 5.8 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag in south recorded minus 7.9 degrees Celsius.

Several water bodies in the valley have frozen due to the bone chilling cold.

A thick layer of ice settles over several roads in the city and elsewhere in the valley, making it difficult for motorists to drive in the early hours. However, the situation improves as the valley is experiencing unusual winter sunshine.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan' -- the 40-day harshest winter period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies including the famous Dal Lake here as well as the water supply blog Maverickbird writes about spending two nights in Jammu and Kashmir state-run resort without any hassles.

Located in South Kashmir's Anantnag district, Kokernag is famous for trout breeding.

Trouts being non-indigenous to Kashmir were introduced by Norwegian scientists, Svetlana writes, "Till today, the taste of those trout dishes lingers on my taste bud and it is the first sensation that comes at the thought of Kokernag spring.

Sandeepa and Chetan

The couple bloggers visited Thirman village, inhabited by Gujjars, during their valley vacation.

They write about an incident when a Gujjar woman suffering from fever delayed her hospital trip to offer them Nun Chai.

"Such hospitality was the biggest gift of our travels in the Himalaya mountains," mentioned the couple in their Sundeep Chetan's travel blog.

CRPF Man Dies

due to some health aliments.

The report quoting unnamed officials said that the CRPF man died due to brain haemorrhage.

CASO Conducted

cards of the villagers.

The report added that nothing suspicious was found and no arrests were made during the search operation.

Search operations were also launched on Tuesday in Saimoh Tral and Dhobi Mohalla Wahibugh area of Pulwama districts, the report added.

Trucker's Body

have been swept away by the fast current, the officials said.

The body of the missing driver, identified as Monu of Hisar in Haryana, was recovered from the Bishlari Nallah on Wednesday morning, they said.

The officials said the body was handed over to his family members after legal formalities. (PTI)

Burlgars Strike

news agency KNO reported while quoting locals.

According to the report, the locals expressed concern over the incident and demanded stern punishment against the culprits.

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

SPORTS

Tourism Department's First Introductory Ski Course For Non-J&K Boys Begins At Gulmarg

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The first outside J&K boys batch being sponsored by the Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir was Wednesday flagged off from TRC Srinagar towards Gulmarg for a 7-Day introductory Ski Course there.

The 20 member group of boys drawn from various States & UTs including Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, West Bengal, New Delhi and Ladakh was flagged off from TRC, Srinagar by Director, Tourism, Kashmir, Mr Nisar Ahmad Wani. Joint Director, Tourism, Ms Tabassum Kamili and Deputy Director, Tourism Publicity/Recreation, Ideel Saleem were also present

This is the 4th batch this season and the

'Looked Good As A Leader Because Everyone Contributed,' Says Stand-In Captain Rahane

Press Trust of India

BRISBANE: For someone who led India to one of their greatest ever series wins, Ajinkya Rahane was at his modest best at the end of it all, saying he looked good as a leader because everyone else contributed.

Rahane and Virat Kohli are contrasting personalities but the former did remarkably well in galvanising the squad after the regular skipper headed back home on paternity leave following the debacle in the first Test at Adelaide.

"It's an honour to lead the country. It was not about me but about the team. I looked good because everyone contributed. For us it was about having that character on the field, having the fighting spirit, the attitude," said Rahane in the post-match presser when asked about his captaincy stint.

Rahane's calm demeanour helped the team move on from the Adelaide disaster and he made sure the game was not discussed going forward.

He led from the front in Melbourne with a match-winning hundred to level the series.

The going got tougher with each passing game as the injury list grew but Rahane said it was all about fighting on with the resources they were left with.

"It was really tough after the Adelaide Test but it was all about showing character and fighting spirit. We were not thinking too much about the result. We just wanted to play good cricket. Credit to everyone in the squad including the support staff."

Rahane will be back to being Kohli's deputy in the upcoming home series against England next month but for now he just wants to savour this victory.

"We all should enjoy this win, not just us but every Indian should enjoy this. What we did here is historic and we want to enjoy this win tonight and once we land in India we will think about the England series," said Rahane, who too got emotional after Rishabh Pant hit the winning runs.

What stood out for Rahane was the way the youngsters rose to the occasion throughout the series. On Tuesday, Shubman Gill's 91 kept India

in the chase before Pant pulled off one of the greatest wins for his team with a whirlwind 89. "The way Gill batted for the last three Tests was really good. He was really composed, calm under



first outside J&K boys group that will undergo the 7- Day Introductory Ski Course at Gulmarg. The group during the course will be introduced to the basics of Skiing. All the lodging & boarding and the Ski equipment is being provided free of cost by the Tourism Department. A four member Ski Instructors team is imparting Skiing training to these beginners.

The Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir has drawn a weekly calender for imparting skiing training to as many as 6 groups this season. Among these 6 groups, two are meant for outside J&K boys and girls group.

The first three batches including two boys groups and one girls group from J&K completed their Introductory Ski Course on 31 Dec, 2020, 13 Jan and 20th Jan, 2021

respectively. The boys and girls on the successful completion of the 7-Day Ski course thanked the Tourism Department for the unique learning and adventure opportunity provided to them this winter season.

During the course of the Introductory Ski training, three of the best among the trainees in each of the six groups will be selected and sponsored by the Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir for Intermediate & Advance level courses

Apart from the Tourism Department, hundreds of boys and girls are being imparted basic Ski training this season by the Youth Services & Sports Department. The Indian Institute of Skiing & Mountaineering has also started various Ski training courses at Gulmarg.

'J&K To Become A Sporting Power House,' Says LG Manoj Sinha In Jammu

Agencies

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing revolution in the sports sector. The UT Government is taking innovative measures to overhaul the sports ecosystem of J&K, ensuring modern sports infrastructure coupled with world class training for the young sporting talent to make J&K a sporting power house.

Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha made these remarks after declaring open the Premier League in Jammu here at K.K Hakku Stadium.

Speaking on the occasion, the Lt Governor congratulated the sports department, coaches and family members of the sportspersons and said that J&K is perhaps the first to organize 1250 matches across all the districts in four different disciplines - Football, Hockey, Volleyball and Kabaddi.

It is no less than any festival for around 8500 players participating in the games. The talent showcased by the players on the ground is a result of their immense hard work, determination and support from the family, coaches and the officials of the sports department, he added.

The Lt Governor said that the first phase of the premier league was launched in November-December last year in the Kashmir Division and according to initial outlines, it was planned that the matches in all four disciplines would begin simultaneously. But due to the inevitable reasons, it could not be started in Jammu region. Now, with the launch of phase one in the Jammu District, the Premier League has also been started in other districts of Jammu Division.

The Lt Governor observed that this Premier League is an ambitious sporting event for the youth which will enhance the quality of competition, performance of the players ensuring their participation in National and International level.

While underscoring concrete measures taken by the UT Government for the holistic development of the sports sector in J&K, the or observed that for the

months, the Government has been making

untiring efforts for paving a strong founda-

tion for the development of all sports dis-

ciplines, sporting infrastructure and allied

Development Package has been sanctioned

for upgradation of sports infrastructure

and encouragement of budding talent in

the field. Another Rs 30 crores have been

sanctioned by the Government for boosting

sports infrastructure, training facilities and

providing professional coaches to hone the

For promotion of sports at the grass-root

level, elected representatives of Panchayats

have been roped in and all the Panchavats

have been provided with sports kits worth

 $\langle \exists$

is & Cables

Rs 20,000 each during the recently

concluded Back to Village-3

programme as per the local

Last year in November,

requirements, he added.

the Government signed

an MoU with Suresh

Raina Cricket Academy

local talent, the Lt Governor maintained.

Rs 200 Cr under the Prime Minister's

activities in the UT.



to develop budding cricketers of J&K to National & International level with a comprehensive training programme at a professional level. Ace Cricketer Suresh Raina is honing the skills of the talented youth from every nook and corner of the UT.

In December last year, a selection trial was held in Jammu in which 500 youth from Doda, Kishtwar, Reasi, Rajouri and other areas participated, he said.

Global pandemic delayed the development of the sports sector, but in the last few months, the work has taken momentum, and 17 sports projects were completed, while 3 more projects will be completed by March this year.

We are working exhaustively for the development of sports infrastructure and allied activities in the UT. A number of multi-purpose indoor sports halls, playgrounds, stadia and other havel a short span of time, said the Lt Governor.

sportsperson of Jammu and Kashmir of all the requisite facilities so that they can also make the UT proud like Bavleen Kour, Suvidha Saran and Shivani Charak.

The Lt Governor also interacted with the players and asked them for maximum utilization of the opportunity to showcase their talent and wished them a successful sporting career ahead. He said that the District Premier League is just the beginning; the same will be organized at the Divisional level. This is the first and important step towards your aim and dreams, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, Sh. Farooq Khan, Advisor to the Lt Governor said that the J&K Government is embarked on an ambitious mission to achieve holistic development of sports in the UT. To achieve the desired results, innovative measures n taken for the develo sports sector in the UT by ensuring modern sports infrastructure, he added. During his welcome address, Sh. Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary to the Government, Youth Services and Sports Department highlighted the key initiatives taken by the Department for promoting sports activities across the UT. A Hockey exhibition match was played to mark the day. Cultural activities were demonstrated, besides ongoing premier league match pictures were displayed on the occasion. Vote of thanks presented by Dr. Naseem Javaid Chowdhary, Secretary J&K Sports Council. It was informed that similar Premier League in 12 Sports Disciplines shall be organized in the next financial year to provide a platform to the youth of the U.T J&K to showcase their talent. Prominent personalities among others present on the occasion were, Shri Dilbag Singh, DGP, Sh. Bishwajit Kumar Singh, Administrative Secretary, School Education Department, and Officers of J&K Sports Council. The event was also attended by members of various Sports Association as well as Sports personalities from across the UT.



'Forget India, The Whole World Salutes You,' Says Ravi Shastri In A Stirring Speech

Press Trust of India

BRISBANE: Their were smiles, lots of whistles and a round of applause to each other every few seconds as India coach Ravi Shastri got down to com-mending the "courage, resolve and spirit" of his wounded warriors in a stirring dressing room speech after the conquest at Gabba.

It was a little over threeminute speech that Shastri delivered after his injury-ravaged side chased down an imposing

JINX TO **LEAD THE SIDE FROM THE POSITION** where we were and to make them bounce back and control things in the

middle like the way you have done is simply, simply, brilliant.

328 in the fourth and final Test to hand Australia their first loss in 32 years at 'Fortress Gabba' to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in style.

"The courage, the resolve, he spirit, that

joy this moment, don't let it just go away, enjoy as much as you can," advised the young team. Batting mainstay Cheteshwar Pujara, who took blows to his body but stayed firm, match-

"So remember what you guys

have done today. You need to en-

winner Rishabh Pant's extraordinary strokeplay, and young opener Shubman Gill's calm counter-attack drew special appreciation from Shastri.

"It started in Melbourne. Sydney was fantastic, it allowed us to come here even-steven. And to pull off something (like this) today was simply outstanding," said Shastri.

"Shubman great, great. Puji you will be known as the ultimate warrior," said Shastri to whistles, especially from young pacer Mohammed Siraj, and applause from the team.

"And Rishabh, simply outstanding. The way you were batting, you gave heart attacks to a few every moment but what you have done is magnificent," he added as the keeperbatsman looked on with a childlike grin on his face.

The man who continued to be resolutely calm amid the obvious excitement was Rahane and he nodded in acceptance as Shastri acknowledged his leadership.

"linx to lead the side from

"Washington Sundar in his first Test (here in Brisbane), we know about his bowling, but the way he batted in the first innings with Shardul (Thakur) was really good. They have set the bench-mark for themselves and I am sure they will grow from here.'

Chasing 328 at Australia's fortress was a herculean task but Rahane said they were only focussed on playing their normal game.

"This morning we spoke about playing simple cricket. What we did in this tour was fight very hard. Yes, we were looking to play session by session. During tea time, we sent messages to Rishabh but he was always looking to chase the total.

"Credit to him, he took that risk and took on the Aussies. His and Pujara's innings gave the platform to win the game."

Talking about the highly inexperienced bowling attack in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah, R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja in the final Test, Rahane added:" The message was all about bowling in partnerships, especially this Test, we knew Shardul was playing his second, Siraj has played three, Saini played two and Natarjan was playing his first.

"So it was all about bowling in partnership, bowling in the right areas and bowling according to our plans.'

'Likely To Allow 50 Per Cent Crowd Attendance For India-England Tests,' Says BCCI

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The BCCI brass is seriously contemplating allowing 50 percent crowd attendance at both Chepauk and the newly constructed Motera Stadium during India's upcoming four Test matches against England.

The first two Tests will be held in Chennai, beginning on February 5, while the next two will be played at the renovated stadium at Motera in Ahmedabad. The BCCI is believed to be taking a cue from Cricket Australia which had allowed entry of spectators during the India series that concluded on Tuesday.

"As of now, we are likely to allow 50 percent spectators for the four Test matches. The BCCI is in talks with both state cricket associations (TNCA and GCA) and also state health authorities," a senior BCCI source told PTI on

conditions of anonymity. However, the BCCI is also factoring the fluid public health situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and if case load in either Chennai or Ahmedabad increases. then the decision will change accordingly.

"If you allow 50 percent crowd with all necessary precautions, then it will be an indicator if we can also allow spectators during IPL in India," the source said. In Ahmedabad, which can hold over one lakh spectators, spacing of seats to maintain social distancing will not be an issue. Meanwhile, England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) will name the squad for first two Test matches against India on Thursday.

This is the first time that a touring team is not naming a squad for full away series keeping the workload management of its players in mind.

The fact that Chennai and Ahmedabad will have two separate

Last year, in the month of October, Sainik Colony Sports Stadium was inaugurated. Other than this, indoor halls at Kathua, Samba and Rajouri were also inaugurated, he maintained.

The Lt Governor observed that all 20 districts of J&K have been given approval for Khelo India State Centres of Excellence. All Centres will be connected with former Champions of the Union Territory. In the first phase, 40 such Centres of Excellence will be established and later it will be increased to 120. It would ensure that the talented young sports person can take maximum benefit from the experience of former champions of the UT.

The data shows that Jammu and Kashmir has a strong and advanced sports infrastructure than any other state or UT of the Country, he added

ROYALS

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In addition to the new infrastructure, the Lt Governor said that efforts are afoot to bring qualitative change in the existing facilities. The Lt Governor assured the

IPL 2021

Rajasthan Royals Release Steve Smith, Decide Not To Renew His Contract

Press Trust of India

strike rate of 131. This included three half-centuries, but his contribution as a leader came under the scanner after the team's forgettable performance.

"His contract was up in October 2020, not being renewed," a franchise source told PTI.

Ahead of the 2018 IPL, Smith was the only player retained by the Royals for Rs 12.5 crore.

The same year, the Royals returned from a two-year suspension and appointed Smith as the captain.

However, he stepped down from the position in the wake of the ball-tampering scandal in South Africa ahead of the lucrative league.

shown is unreal. Not for once you were down, injuries, 36 all out (in the first Test), you had the self-belief in you," an emotional Shastri said with captain Ajinkya Rahane standing calmly by his side.

"It doesn't come overnight but now that you have this self-belief, you can see where you have taken a game as a team. Today forget India, the whole world will stand up and salute you.

position where we were and to make them bounce back and control things in the middle like the way you have done is simply, simply, brilliant," said the 58-year-old former all-rounder. And finally, Shastri applauded T Natarajan, the net bowler who became a front-liner, and the duo of Washington Sundar

and Shardul Thakur, the men who made as much difference with the bat as with the ball.

Shane Warne Predicts 'Huge Fallout' In Australian Team After Series Loss To India



Press Trust of India

BRISBANE: The legendary Shane Warne believes the embarrassing Test series loss to an under-strength India will result in a "huge fallout" in the Australian team and said a few heads could roll in

the coming days. India recorded one of their most memorable wins on Tuesday when they defeated a full-strength Australia by three wickets in the fourth Test here to pocket the fourmatch series 2-1 and retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. "I think there'll be a huge fallout from this (defeat).

There's not too many times that you lose to the second or third (choice) side," Warne was quoted as saying by Fox Cricket.

"Their (Australia) tactics will come into question, and they have to. Bowlers will come into question, people's spot in the team will come into question. It has to. You can't just deflect it and flick it off and say India were too good for us," he added.

Warne was, however, effusive in his praise for the Indian team which braved injuries to its key players and absence of regular skipper Virat Kohli after the first Test on paternity leave to emerge triumphant.

"That's not taking anything away from those Indian guys that played but their first selection side, there's probably only two or three players in that side who would play."

The spin legend said Australia didn't grab their chances in the series.

ABU DHABI: Rajasthan Royals have decided against renewing the contract of their highprofile captain Steve Smith ahead of the 14th Indian Premier

League this year. Under Smith's captaincy, the inaugural edition champions RR finished last in

the last IPL in the

UAE, where the star

Australian batsman

played all the 14

league matches and

scored 311 runs at a

OUT POST

If Vaccine Is Reliable. Why No Govt **Functionary Took** Shot: Manish Tewari



Agencies

• oon after Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the world's biggest vaccination drive in the country, the Congress launched its attack on the Centre saying vaccines were being allowed to be used without the mandatory trials of Phase 3.

Congress leader and MP from Anandpur Sahib Manish Tewari asked if the vaccine is so reliable then why no important government functionary has taken the shot?

He said that in the every country of the world the head of the government has taken the vaccine, in US, President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris have taken the vaccine shots. In UK, Queen Elizabeth and Prime Minister Boris Johnson have taken it and other countries there respective heads of state have done the same thing."

"In India, why has no responsible functionary of the government taken the vaccine shots first if it is so safe and reliable." Tewari asked.

He said, "As the vaccine has been rolled out there are certain disturbing and obfuscated questions with the government using a soaring rhetoric of the vaccine nationalism. The first question about the efficacy... is that in the absence of a regulatory architecture -- requiring licencing of the drugs and vaccines for the emergency use... It is perplexing that same has been permitted by the Drug Controller.

"While Covishield has not drawn ire of eminent medical experts, the Covaxin has been questioned, and by not allowing people to choose the vaccine that to take it militates the doctrine of informed consent that lies at the heart of medical ethics," he added

Modi earlier launched the vaccination drive aimed at ending the pandemic which so far has killed 1,52,093 people in the country and ravaged the economy.

Addressing the country digitally, the Prime Minister said that India managed to make two 'Made-in-India' vaccines in a very short period which usually takes years.

Modi said that avoid "rumours" as the Drug Controller General of India has approved the vaccines for emergency use.

Lauding the efforts of scientists who are involved in vaccine research, Modi said they deserve special praise for making these vaccines and that "the vaccines will provide us a decisive victory against the deadly pandemic"

The Prime Minister further reminded people to get two doses of the vaccine, explainthat "there should be a gap of almost one

COVID-19 Pandemic Increasing Disparities, Social Fragmentation; Threatening Economy, Geopolitical Stability: WEF study

Agencies

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only claimed millions of lives, it is also increasing disparities and social fragmentation, while it will threaten the economy in the next 3-5 years and will weaken geopolitical stability over the next 5-10 years, a study showed on Tuesday, In its annual Global Risks Report, the World Economic Forum (WEF) also termed 'infectious diseases' as the biggest risk in terms of impact for the next decade, while 'extreme weather' tops the chart for risks in terms of likelihood.

The report, released ahead of the virtual 'Davos Agenda' summit of the WEF from January 25-29 that would be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi among other global leaders, said the world needs to wake up to long-term risks, after witnessing in 2020 the catastrophic effects of ignoring long-term risks such as pandemics, which is now an immediate risk.

The WEF said its Global Risks Report has been warning the world for the last 15 years about the dangers of pandemics.

"In 2020, we saw the effects of ignoring preparation and ignoring long-term risks. The COVID-19 pandemic has not only claimed millions of lives, but it also widened long-standing health, economic and digital disparities," it said.

Billions of caregivers, workers and students -- especially minorities who were disadvantaged before the pandemic -- are



now at risk of missing pathways to the new and fairer societies that the recovery could unlock, the report said.

These developments may further impede the global cooperation needed to address longterm challenges such as environmental degradation, it added. When it comes to technol-

ogy access and digital skills, the gap between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' risks widening and challenging social cohesion. This will particularly affect young people worldwide, as this group faces its second global crisis in a generation and could miss out altogether on opportunities in the next decade, the report said. Among geopolitical risks fac-

ing the world, the report also referred to "increasing tensions between China and India", saying it could weaken regional and global trade and growth with China expanding its regional economic interests through the recently signed Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

The report further said financial, digital and reputational pressures resulting from COVID-19 also threaten to leave behind many companies and their work-

forces in the markets of the future. "While these potential disparities could cause societal fragmentation for states, an increasingly tense and fragile geopolitical outlook will also hinder the global recovery if mid-sized powers lack a seat at the global table," the WEF said.

Besides, environmental risks continue to dominate by impact and likelihood for the next decade, while societal fractures, uncertainty and anxiety will make it more difficult to achieve the coordination needed to address the planet's continued degradation.

For the first time, the report also rates risks according to when respondents perceive they will pose a critical threat to the world. Clear and present dangers (0-2 years) reveal concern about lives and livelihoods - among

them infectious diseases, employment crises, digital inequality and youth disillusionment. In the medium-term (3-5 years), respondents believe the world will be threatened by knock-on economic and technological risks, which may take several years to materialize such as asset bubble bursts, IT infrastructure breakdown, price instability and debt crises. Existential threats (5-10 years)

-- weapons of mass destruction, state collapse, biodiversity loss and adverse technological advances -- dominate long-term concerns, the WEF said.

"In 2020, the risk of a global pandemic became reality, something this report has been highlighting since 2006. We know how difficult it is for governments, businesses and other stakeholders to address such long-term risks, but the lesson here is for all of us to recognize that ignoring them doesn't make them less likely to happen," said Saadia Zahidi, Managing Director at the WEF.

As governments, businesses and societies begin to emerge from the pandemic, they must now urgently shape new economic and social systems that improve our collective resilience and capacity to respond to shocks while reducing inequality, improving health and protecting the planet, she said.

To help meet this challenge, the next week's Davos Agenda summit will mobilise global leaders to shape the principles, policies and partnerships needed in this new context, Zahidi added

Bail Plea Of Former TV Ratings Agency Boss, Accused In Scam, Rejected



Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: A sessions court in Mumbai on Wednesday rejected the bail application of former CEO of ratings agency BARC, Partho Dasgupta, an accused in the alleged fake Television Ratings Point (TRP) case. Dasgupta was arrested by the Mumbai crime branch from Pune district last month.

A magistrate court had earlier rejected his bail plea, observing that he played a vital role in the scam.

Opposing Dasgupta's bail application in the sessions court, special public prosecutor Shishir Hiray submitted that although the charge-sheet in the case has been filed, there still are multiple things which need to be investigated. He argued that Dasgupta is a

key person and holds sizeable control over the entire system, hence his release will amount to tampering with the prosecution witnesses, who work under him.

The special public prosecutor also drew the court's attention towards the purported WhatsApp chat between Dasgupta and Republic TV's Arnab Goswami. 'We have shown to the court

the WhatsApp chat regarding the

The alleged scam came to light last year when the BARC filed a complaint through Hansa Research Group, saying certain television channels were rigging the TRP numbers.

TRPs in which Dasgupta promised

to take down some other channels

and put Arnab's channel on the

Dasgupta's lawyer, on the other

hand, told the court that allega-

tions made against him were

However, finding merit in the

prosecution's submissions, ses-

sions court judge M A Bhosale re-

Dasgupta, in connivance with

another senior official from the

Broadcast Audience Research

Council (BARC) and ARG Outlier

Media Pvt Ltd's owner Arnab

Goswami, manipulated the TRPs

of Republic TV and Republic

claimed that Goswami paid in

lakhs to Dasgupta in return of the

have denied any wrongdoing and

manipulation of the TRP system.

The police have further

Republic TV and other accused

Bharat (Hindi).

manipulation.

that

higher position," he said.

without any evidence.

jected Dasgupta's bail plea

Police have alleged

Man Detained For Throwing Snowballs at Berlin US Consulate



Press trust of India

BERLIN: 26-year-old was detained in Berlin "twice" after throwing snowballs and other projectiles at the American consulate and scuffling with security personnel while yelling slogans against outgoing President Donald Trump, police said Wednesdav.

The man, an Afghan citizen who lived in Berlin whose name wasn't given in line with German privacy laws, first appeared outside the consulate in the southwestern district of Dahlem yelling slogans and throwing snowballs at about 3 p.m. When security officials told him to leave the area, he started throwing snowballs at them too, police said.

a police vehicle, briefly knocking himself out.

He regained consciousness before paramedics arrived and was taken to a hospital for treatment before being released.

Tests indicated he was mildly intoxicated, police said. At about 10:30 p.m., the man reappeared outside the consulate and threw two half-full beverage cans at police officers who were not l They were again able to overpower him and, while he was being held, police allege that he again slammed his own head against a police car. This time he was not injured, but damaged the car, police said. Another breath test indicated his blood alcohol was about double what it had been previously.

Outgoing US President Claims His Administration 'Developed' COVID-19 Vaccines

WASHINGTON: On his way out, President Donald Trump claimed credit for things he didn't do and twisted his record on jobs, taxes, the pandemic and much more. Falsehoods suffused his farewell remarks to the country.

As well, in noting Americans were "horrified" by the storming of the Capitol this month, he brushed past the encouragement he had given to the mob in advance and his praise of the attackers as "very special" people while they were still ransacking the seat of power.

A look at some of his statements Tuesday: COVID-19 Trump: "Another administration would have taken three fou five, maybe even up to 10 years to develop a vaccine. We did in nine months." The facts: Actually, the administration didn't develop any vaccines. Pharmaceutical companies did. And one of the two US companies that have come out with vaccines now in use did not take development money from the government. Trump's contention that a vaccine



Press Trust of India

month between the first and second dose".

"Only two weeks after the second dose, your body will develop the necessary strength against coronavirus," the Prime Minister said. Noting that this kind of vaccination campaign on such a large scale has never been done in history, Modi said: "India is vaccinating three crore people in its first phase of vaccination starting today and the government

ministered to healthcare workers". In the second phase, the Prime Minister said, "We have to take it to 30 crore".

will bear the cost of the vaccination to be ad-

NEWS MAKERS

would have taken years under a different

administration stretches credulity. COVID-19 vaccines were indeed remarkably fast, but other countries have been developing them, too.

A vaccine for the coronavirus is not a singular achievement of the United States. much less the Trump administration.

US drugmaker Pfizer developed its vaccine in partnership with Germany's BioNTech, eschewing federal money for development, though benefitting from an

advance commitment from Washington to buy large quantities if the vaccine succeeded.

A vaccine by Moderna, from the US, is also in widespread use.

But Britain's AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine is being administered in several countries and vaccines from China and Russia are also in limited use.

More than a dozen potential vaccines are in the late stages of testing worldwide.

Authorities handcuffed the man, and allege that he then slammed his own head against

He was released after being brought to a police station and is under investigation for causing property damage and bodily harm.

Lottery Ticket Seller Wins Rs 12 Crore Jackpot



Press Trust of India

Thiruvananthapuram: A 46year old lottery vendor in Kerala's Kollam has won Rs 12 crore jackpot with an unsold ticket in the state government's Christmas-New Year bumper issue.

Sharafudeen A, who hails from Tenkasi in neighbouring Tamil Nadu, learnt that the ticket with him among other unsold ones has bagged the top prize in the lottery.

Living in a small house on government land at Eravidharmapuram near

Aryankavu in Kollam district, bordering Tamil Nadu. it had been a struggle for Sharafudeen, a Gulf returnee, to take care of his six-member joint family, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. "I want to build a house of

my own, clear my debts and start a small business with the prize amount," he told PTI.

Sharafudeen, who returned from Riyadh in 2013 after working there for nine years doing odd jobs, had been selling lottery tickets in and around Aryankavu

Class 8 Student Allegedly Tries To Rape 12-Year-Old Girl In UP: Police

Press Trust of India

Bareilly: A Class 8 student allegedly tried to rape a 12-year- old girl in his neighbourhood in Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly, police said on Wednesday.

scream from inside the house when she returned from work Tuesday afternoon.

As the mother entered the house, she found the boy trying to rape her daughter, according to the complaint.



Station house officer KK Verma said they have registered a case on the complaint of the girl's mother. Three members of the

14-year-old boy's family have also been booked for allegedly issuing life threats. According to the complaint, the girl's mother heard her

On finding the girl's mother inside the room, the boy tried to run away and attacked them with a knife, the police said.

The complainant alleged that three members of the boy's family arrived there soon after and issued life threats. A case has been registered and investigation is on, police added.

4-Day Snow Sculpting Competition Begins At Gulmarg



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In order to provide a platform to the budding artists, the Department of Tourism Kashmir is organising a 4-day Snow Sculpting Competition at Gulmarg from today.

In the competition, over 30 participants drawn from various districts of the Kashmir Valley both amateur and professional sculptures are participating. The department received overwhelming response from the participants who were later shortlisted for the competition.

Director Tourism Kashmir, Nisar Ahmad Wani flagged off the participants at TRC Srinagar in presence of Joint Director Tourism Kashmir Tabassum Kamli, Deputy Director, Tourism Publicity / Recreation, Ideel Saleem and other staff members.

The participants will compete in teams and also as individuals to hand carve unique art works on themes depicting Kashmir culture,

heritage, life and nature. Speaking on the occasion, Director Tourism said the event is being organised to provide a platform to both the budding artist and also professionals to showcase their talent in arts.

He said Kashmir is blessed with a natural and advantageous geographical environment for ice and snow tourism which the department will promote to attract tourists to this snow art during winter months

"The 4-day competition will also provide an opportunity to amateur artists to learn from professionals who are part of this event. We are also planning to develop an ice park and promote this tourism product in a big way," he said.

The department provided all the support including travel, accommodation and food to the participants for the event. The department also kept ice blocks ready for the participants who will only need to carve out the shape as per their chosen themes.