



Maximum : 7.5°
Minimum : -6.0°
Humidity : 92%

SUNSET
Today 05:53 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 07:34 AM



P3 NEWS

ANIL AMBANI LANDS IN SRINAGAR, DRIVES TO GULMARG

Anil Dhirubhai Ambani, a well known business tycoon arrived in Srinagar on Friday and later drove to the ski resort of Gulmarg....

P7 THINK

NATIONAL TRAFFIC SAFETY MONTH

Traffic Police City Srinagar recently inaugurated the National Traffic Month which will be observed for one month from 18th Feb 2021....



P8 LIFE & TIMES

STUDY SAYS CHILDHOOD NEGLECT LEAVES

Early life experiences can have an outsized effect on brain development and neurobiological health...



Widom Quote!

To know you are ignorant is the beginning of wisdom.

— Marion Zimmer Bradley

NEWS DIGEST

KAS Officer Reinstated After Two Years

SRINAGAR: Syed Muriel Hussain Shah, KAS, has been reinstated and posted as Additional Secretary to Government, ARI and Training Department as per an order issued in this regard by Lieutenant Governor-led dispensation on Friday. The order reads that "Syed Muriel Hussain Shah, KAS, the then Deputy Excise Commissioner (Executive), Jammu, who was placed under suspension vide ● More On P10

Scuffle Leaves Sore Man Dead

SRINAGAR: A 55-year-old man was killed during a scuffle with relatives in Tarzoo village of Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, reported a local news agency, Kashmir News Observer (KNO). Mohammad Khaleel was critically injured during the scuffle with his relatives following which he was shifted to Sub District Hospital (SDH) Sopore for treatment. However, the man succumbed to his injuries later at the ● More On P10

CASO Carried Out In Kulgam

SRINAGAR: Government forces on Friday launched a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in south Kashmir district of Kulgam, reports said. On a tip-off about the presence of militants Rashtriya Rifles (RR), Special Operation Group (SOG) of police and CRPF launched a joint search operation at village Braigam Devsar on Friday, news agency UNI reported. Quoting sources, the report said that all the exit ● More On P10

NC Accuses Govt Of 'Witch-Hunt'

SRINAGAR: The National Conference on Friday sought an end to the political witch-hunt in Jammu and Kashmir and called for an immediate release of all political detainees, saying the unjustified and prolonged detentions reek of fear and repression. In a joint statement issued here, the party's Members of Parliament Mohammad Akbar Lone and Hassanain Masoodi said the unwarranted intimidation and

Man Killed In Kulgam Road Accident

SRINAGAR: A man was killed in a road accident in Yaripora area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Friday. Abdul Rehman Bhat was critically injured after being hit by a speedy three-wheeler near Badroo village of Yaripora on Friday afternoon, news agency KNO reported. Bhat, the report said, was immediately rushed to Yaripora hospital for treatment. However, the doctors there declared him dead on arrival. ● More On P10



Fresh Snow Spell In Kashmir From Today

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Kashmir Valley is likely to get relief from the intense cold wave conditions as the weather department predicted another spell of light to moderate snowfall in the valley and the upper reaches of Jammu division from Friday night.

According to a meteorological department official, light to moderate snowfall scattered to widespread,

is expected in Jammu and Kashmir from Friday night. The light snowfall, according to the official will commence from north Kashmir and move towards south eastward towards central and south Kashmir and Jammu region, with main activity on Saturday. The weather, he said, will gradually improve from January 24 forenoon.

"Possibility of heavy snow at isolated places of Kashmir can't ● More On P10

One Way Traffic On Highway Today

After remaining closed for traffic movement on Friday for maintenance on Srinagar-Jammu national highway, traffic authorities have decided to allow traffic from Jammu towards Srinagar on Saturday. "The traffic will ply from Jammu towards ● More On P10

POSSIBILITY OF HEAVY SNOW at isolated places of Kashmir can't be ruled out. This spell is lower in terms of intensity & magnitude than the previous spell of January 4-5"

Govt Approves J&K Industrial Land Allotment Policy Initial Land Lease For 40 Years, Extendable To 99; Allotment In 45 Days

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Lieutenant Governor administration on Friday approved adoption of Jammu & Kashmir Industrial Land Allotment Policy 2021-2030, paving way for investments in health institutions, medi-cities, educational institutions and edu-cities in the Union Territory with land lease to investors to begin for an initial period of 40 years, extendable to 99 years.

The decision about



adoption of J&K Industrial and Allotment Policy 2021-2030 to evolve a highly structured industrial land bank for promoting equitable industrial growth in the UT was taken

during an Administrative Council (AC), meeting here under the chairmanship of LG Manoj Sinha, an official spokesperson said. The new policy ● More On P10

Govt Decides To Open Jammu Schools From Feb 1

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir government has ordered physical opening of all educational institutions including recognized private schools in a staggered manner for academic activities, first time after March last.

As per an order issued by the school education department, the educational institutes in the summer zone areas of Jammu division shall

open for Class 9th to 12th from February 1.

Similarly, in case of elementary classes, the teachers have been asked to attend from February 1 for preparation and students have been asked to attend physically from February 8.

In case of schools in Kashmir Valley and Winter Zone areas of Jammu Division, the orders said that they will open as per their schedule.

Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) ● More On P10

JKBOSE Not To Hold Postponed Class-XI Exams

Agencies

Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education has decided not to conduct examination for the theory papers and external practical of 11th class, postponed in Kashmir valley and Warwan area of Kishtwar district on January 3 and 6 due to snowfall. However, the Board has decided that the marks in leftover Theory ● More On P10

NEP To Help Gen Next To Take Up New Challenges: LG

Observer News Service

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Friday that the New Education Policy (NEP) will ensure that the coming generation is given opportunity to leave the old, fixed path and take up new and innovative challenges to create Aatma Nirbhar Bharat. ● More On P10

PSAJK Moves SC For 4G Internet Restoration

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Private Schools Association of Jammu and Kashmir (PSAJK), which represents the interests of over 3800 schools in the region, has filed a writ petition before the Supreme Court seeking restoration of 4G mobile internet services, reports said Friday.

The Association, as per a statement issued here Friday

Parliamentary Panel Meets Gulmarg Hoteliers

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The 31-member Parliamentary delegation Thursday visited the world famous ski-resort Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district to take stock of the tourism activities and to meet hoteliers, tour operators and the picturesque tourist destination.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee along with the top officials of Tourism Department including the Principal Secretary Tourism Sarmad Hafeez met the Hoteliers in Gulmarg to have an

Covid-19 Claims CRPF Man, 3 Others In J&K

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Four more people, including a CRPF jawan died of coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir, while 88 new cases of infection were detected during the last 24 hours.

A resident of ● More On P10

on the spot assessment of the Tourism facilities, infrastructure and problems being faced by the tour operators.

"We have presented a five-point memorandum to the delegation. We expressed our concerns and put forth demands before the delegation which included the extension of lease agreements to the hotelier whose leases have expired," Secretary General Hoteliers Club Gulmarg, Tariq Gani said.

While raising the issue of Srinagar-Jammu National Highway Hoteliers club Kashmir ● More On P10

Govt Extends 4G Internet Ban In J&K Till Feb 6

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday extended ban on high speed mobile data services across J&K barring twin districts including Ganderbal and Udhampur till February 6.

The internet speed is restricted to 2G only in Jammu and Kashmir except in the districts of Ganderbal and Udhampur.

"Whereas, considering that the Union territory ● More On P10

J&K Govt Lifts Ban on Import Of Poultry

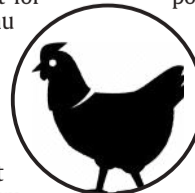
Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The government has lifted the ban on import of live birds including poultry and unprocessed poultry meat for any purpose in Jammu and Kashmir from "non-infected areas and beyond the 10 kilometres radius of Bird Flu infected zone w.e.f 19 January, 2021," reads an order issued earlier this week.

However, the order issued by Navin K. Choudhary, Principal Secretary to Government, makes it mandatory for the ● More On P10

Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India, there will be no ban on import of live birds including poultry and unprocessed poultry meat for any purpose into J&K sourced from non-infected areas and beyond the 10 kilometres radius of Bird Flu infected zone w.e.f 19 January, 2021," reads an order issued earlier this week.

However, the order issued by Navin K. Choudhary, Principal Secretary to Government, makes it mandatory for the ● More On P10



Kashmiri Bird Watcher's Rare Avian Sightings Giving Wings to Passion

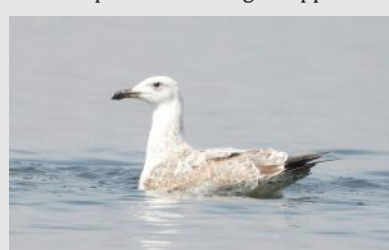
Badar Bashir

As the first Kashmiri snapper to discover White Breasted Water-Hen, Steppe Gull, Rufous Napped Niltawa with photographic evidences, Ansar Ahmad, 28, from Nishat Srinagar, has a poetic introduction about himself: "Mountains are my home, birds are my family and photography is a bond between me and my family."

Three years ago, when a sudden

ruffling of leaves occurred outside his window, a bird watcher took an abrupt birth in Ansar.

That day, he recalls, he tirelessly waited for an avian guest behind the ruffling of leaves. It took him some time to spot a bird eating an apple.



He grabbed his camera, zoomed in, into the bird and pulled his first ever photo of a rose-ringed parakeet.

Next time, as an eager bird-watcher, he was sitting on Srinagar's Foreshore area—in an apparent dubious manner behind the bushes.

He was quietly picturing a white-breasted water hen paddling its way in the serpentine water body.

"I was very excited and called my friend Riyaz," Ansar recalls. "He immediately responded in ● More On P10





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BAZAR
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Saturday|23-01-2021

2

Teachers having to work harder than any other professionals, says study

Agencies

Teachers are working harder than ever before and more than any other occupation, according to a study published in the peer-reviewed journal Oxford Review of Education authored by researchers from UCL. The proportion who say their job demands a very high level of input is nine in ten which represents an increase of two-thirds (90% vs 54%) over 25 years, according to the findings taken in 2017 and based on more than 800 teachers in British schools. This compares with just 44% of people in all other occupations who agree they have to work very hard. Only health and social services managers and legal professionals come close to the levels of work intensity faced by teachers. The data reveals for the first time how this drop in job quality goes beyond just pay and hours. Training, the influence teachers have over their tasks and work-related well-being have also declined.

An increasing percentage of teachers say they often or always come home from work exhausted (72% in 1997 vs 85% in 2017) which again is higher than any other professional over the same period (44% vs 45%). The study author Professor Francis Green from the UCL Institute of Education says the findings suggest a link between declining work well-being and decreased job quality, independent of the long hours teachers work. He says reforms are needed to address the issue which is a possible factor in declining teacher retention rates. "The most striking aspect of job quality is teachers' high work intensity and intensification,". "Compared with other professionals and all other occupations, teachers work more intensively and this has risen to unprecedented levels. "Any improvement in teachers' job quality achieved in a post-COVID-19 environment should be beneficial. Not only for teachers, but also for schools and the pupils who depend so much on the quality of teaching."



Job quality is defined as how people's needs are met by work. Studies to date have focused on pay and hours, but Professor Green analysed work intensity, as well as other additional factors such as the control staff, have over their work and train-

ing. His research was based on Skills and Employment Survey (SES) series data from 1992 to 2017. The SES collects information on what people including school teachers do at work, the skills they use and how

they work in Britain. A total of 857 teachers aged 20 to 60 and working in nursery, primary, secondary and special schools were asked about job quality and overall work satisfaction. The majority were female (72%) and living in

England (86%) with a minority in the private sector (13%). Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, the study not only found teachers are having to work extremely hard physically and mentally, but also increasingly at very high speed (16% in 1992 vs 58% in 2017). Overall, those in Scotland reported the lowest work intensity anywhere in Britain. Private school teachers also said their job demands are lower but were more likely to say training quality was poorer. In addition to work intensity, key findings that illustrate job quality has decreased for teachers include: -The proportion of teachers with a great deal of influence over how they perform tasks fell from just under half (48%) in 2012 to less than a third (31%) in 2017. Those wanting more control over how they did their job rose from 15% to nearly a quarter (24%). -High work strain increased from virtually no reports in 1992 to more than a quarter saying this was an issue (27%) in 2017. Teachers had

double (16% vs 9%) the likelihood of other professionals of experiencing this type of stress. - A high level of involvement in decision-making fell markedly (45% in 2012 vs 10% in 2017). - Participation in training reduced (92% in 2006 vs 86% in 2017), as did the quality with less than a third (31% in 2017) agreeing their skills improved significantly compared with two in five (41% in 2006). - In contrast, teachers reported greater satisfaction levels than other professionals about their promotion chances which have increased notably, and for job security which has remained high. Other positives include the fact job quality has not declined in terms of hours worked, nor has real pay declined over the long-term, apart from between 2006 and 2017. However, the study offers no direct evidence to explain why job quality has declined for teachers. Another limitation is the SES data does not include physical working conditions or social support.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Office Of The Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division Shadipora

Email: midhadipora@gmail.com
Gist of Notice Inviting e-Tender
e-NIT No. 27 of 2020-21

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division, Shadipora, invites tenders by e-tendering mode on item rate basis from established and accredited experienced, reputed mechanical licensed registered contractors/workshop holders for Mechanical work at Lift Irrigation Scheme Scientist D, P4 Basic Seed Farm Manasbal.. The e-tenders will be valid for One hundred and eighty days (180) for executing the following contract:-

S. No	Particulars of the work	Name of Division	Cost of document/tender fee (In Rs.)	Earnest money @	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work
1.	Mechanical Work At Lift Irrigation Scheme Scientist D, P4 Basic Seed Farm Manasbal.	Mechanical Irrigation Division, Shadipora	450	8600.00	180 days	20 Days

The Bidding documents consisting of specifications, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (BOQ) and other details can be seen/downloaded from the official website www.jktenders.gov.in as per the schedule given below:

a.	Date of Publishing of Tender Notice	22/1/2021	1400Hrs
b.	Period of Downloading Tender Documents	7 Days	-----
c.	Document Download End date	29/1/2021	(1400 Hours)
d.	Bid Submission Start Date	22/1/2021	(1400 Hours)
e.	Bid Submission End Date	29/1/2021	(1400 Hours)

Each tender should be accompanied with an Earnest Money in the form of CDR/ FDR/ IBG as detailed above, pledged to the Executive Engineer Mechanical Irrigation Division Shadipora. In absence of Earnest Money, the Tenders shall be rejected out rightly. Any information regarding the tenders can be had from this office on all working days.

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS REGARDING E-TENDERING PROCESS

- The interested bidder can download the NIT/ bidding document from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in>
- To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get (DSC) "Digital Signature Certificate" as per Information Technology Act-2000. This certificate will be required for digitally signing the bid. Bidders can get above mentioned digital certificate from any approved vendors. The Bidders, who already possess valid (DSC) Digital Signature Certificates, need not to procure new Digital Signature Certificate.
- The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with Digital Signature. The bids cannot be uploaded without Digital Signature. No Proposal will be accepted in physical form.
- Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para 3(c).
- Before submission of online bids, bidders must ensure that scanned copies of all the necessary documents have been attached with bid.
- The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission of bids whatsoever reasons may be.
- All the required information for bid must be filled and submitted online
- Bidders should get ready with the scanned copies of cost of documents & EMD as specified in the tender documents.
- The details of cost of documents, EMD specified in the tender documents should be the same, as submitted online (scanned copies) otherwise bid will not be accepted.
- Bidders can contact the undersigned for any guidance for getting DSC or any other relevant details in respect of e-tendering process.
- Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on jktenders.gov.in, e-tendering portal to store important documents like Experience certificate, Balance sheet, Sales Tax Clearance Certificate, IT certificate and other related documents etc., and attach these certificates as Non Statutory documents while submitting their bids.
- Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents or its name. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually. The BOQ downloaded should be used for filling the net item rate inclusive of all taxes and it should be saved with the same as it contains.
- Bidders are advised to scan their documents at 100 DPI (Dots per Inch) resolutions with Black and White, JPEG Scan properly, convert scanned images to PDF
- The guidelines for submission of bid online can be downloaded from the website: jktenders.gov.in.

DIPK-12043/20

Sd/= Executive Engineer
Mech. Irrigation Division Shadipora

Government of Jammu & Kashmir UT

Office Of The Executive Engineer Mechanical Division, Mechanical Engineering Department, Kashmir, Srinagar

Fax No: 0194-2497093 email: xenmds@gmail.com website: www.medkashmir.org

GIST OF E-NIT

NIT No:	MDS/TS /2020-21/ 188 /e-tendering (Tender ID: 2021_PWDJK_114271_1)
Date	21.01.2021

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited on item rate contract basis from authorized dealers/ representatives and registered/reputed suppliers/ firms for the below mentioned work:-

Name of the Work	Cost of Tender Doc. (In Rs)	Estimated cost (In Lakhs)	Time of completion (In days)	Position of funds
1 Annual Rate Contract for Supply of Spares for Snow Clearance Fleet of Mechanical Division Srinagar. (Part II)	1000/-	5.40	03 days	Available

1. Downloading of Bids: The Tender document Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in from 21-01-2021 (04.00 PM)

2. Submission of Bids: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above website from 21-01-2021 (4.00 PM) to 27-01-2021 (12.00 PM) in two covers.

3. Opening of Bids: The bid uploaded on the Web Site up to due date and time will be opened on 27-01-2021 (3.00 PM) in the Office of the Chief Engineer, Mechanical Engineering Department, Kashmir.

DIPK-12018/20

Sd/- (Er. Abdul Rashid Bhat)
Executive Engineer,
Mechanical Division, Srinagar

No. MDS/ TS- /6979-83

Dated: 21-01-2021

The J&K Board Of Professional Entrance Examinations (BOPEE)

Tele/ Fax: 0194-2433590, 2437647 (Srinagar) 0191-2479371, 2470102 (Jammu)

website: <http://www.jkbopee.gov.in/www.jakbopee.org>,

email: helpdeskjakbopee@gmail.com/ coejakbopee@gmail.com

Subject:: Conduct of second round of upgradation/ allotment counselling (physical) of B.Sc. Nursing/ B.Sc Paramedical/ B.Sc. Technology Courses - 2020.

Reference: i) Notification NO.061-BOPEE of 2020 dated 03.12.2020.
ii) Notification No.058-BOPEE of 2020 dated 07.12.2020.
iii) Notification NO.061-BOPEE of 2020 dated 18.12.2020.
v) F.No.I-6(LT)-2020-INC dated 24.12.2020.
vi) Notice NO.006-BOPEE of 2021 dated 08.01.2021.
vii) Order No.I2-BOPEE of 2021 dated 16.01.2021.
viii) Notification No.058-BOPEE of 2020 dated 07.12.2020.
iv) Notice No.OIO-BOPEE of 2021 dated 19.01.2021.

Notice No: 12-BOPEE of 2021

Dated:21.01.2021.

In continuation to Notification NO.058-BOPEE of 2020 dated 07.12.2020 read with Notice No.OIO-BOPEE of 2021 dated 19.01.2020, it is hereby notified that :-

- The candidate(s) who have joined the college allotted to them during first round of counselling shall be eligible for up-gradation/ allotment of another college/ course, if any, available at his/ her turn of counselling and in such circumstances he / she shall loose the earlier seat which shall become part of the seat matrix immediately after he/ she is up graded to another college/ course.
- Further, it is compulsory for such eligible candidates, who have been called for counselling first time after reducing the cut off score to 30 for OM and 25 marks for all Reserved Category shall bring with them the copy of Application Form and other relevant certificates/ documents for check and verification before their participation in the counselling process and shall have to make the payment of 1000/- as counselling charges through POS machines available in the BOPEE office, Jammu/ Srinagar on the day/ date of counselling.

E& OE.

(Dr. Sunil Gupta)
Controller Of Examinations
J&K Bopee
Dated 19-01-2021

No; BOPEE/Exam-35 (iii) / 2020

DIPK-NB-5250/20

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TRANSPORT COMMISSIONER J&K, JAMMU.

Sub:- Renewal of Motor Transport Service License.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Motor Transport Service License have been issued by the Office of Transport Commissioner, J&K, from time to time; Whereas, such licenses are supposed to be renewed every year under Rule 127 of the J&K Motor Vehicle Rules, 1991 by payment of an amount of Rs. 5000/- per year as renewal fees; Whereas, failure to renewal of Motor Transport Service License entails in a fine of Rs. 200/- per day under SRO No. 190 dated 28-04-2010;

Whereas, continuous default in getting the licence renewed can result in cancellation of such license under rule 129 of J&K Motor Vehicle Rules, 1991; Whereas, many license holders have not turned up for renewal of their licenses, resulting in accumulation of renewal of fees and fines;

Whereas, this office has already issued a public notice vide vehicle No. TC/JK/MV/2019/3968-70 dated 09-07-2019 whereby the owners of Motor Transport Service License holders were advised to get their license renewed, failing which their license will be cancelled;

Now, therefore, the owners of Motor Transport Service License holders who have failed to get their license renewed are once again advised through medium of this notice, to get their licenses renewed, failing which their licenses will be cancelled. Please note that apart from Cancellation of license, the owner shall be blacklisted and debarred from all activities which are related to the Goods or Passenger Transport in J&K State. Further, any other license standing on the name of the owner shall also be processed for cancellation.

Sd/- (Pardeep Kumar)KAS,
Transport Commissioner/
Chairman State Transport Authority,
J&K, Jammu.

No. TC/JK/MV/2021/97-99
Dated :19-01-2021

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TRANSPORT COMMISSIONER J&K, JAMMU.

Sub:- Renewal of Agent Goods Booking, Collecting / Forwarding & Distributing Licenses.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, through the medium of public notice issued by this office under endorsement no. TC/Jk/MV/4438-4612 dated 18-08-2017 attention was invited to all such Agent Goods, Booking, Collecting / Forwarding & Distributing Licenses holders who failed to acquire renewal from time to time envisaged under Rule 134 of J&K, Motor Vehicles Rules, 1991;

Whereas, renewal of Agent Goods, Booking Collecting / Forwarding & Distributing Licenses is subject to payment of appropriate fee @ Rs.3750/- annually;

Whereas, failure of acquiring renewal well in time results in a fine @ Rs.500 per 90 days; Whereas, a good number of License holders approached to this office for completion of the prescribed formalities and acquired renewal on payment of appropriate amount of fee;

Whereas, a final opportunity through the medium of this notice is offered to all such defaulters of Agents Goods Licensee with the direction to approach to the Competent Authority and acquire renewal within a period of 30 days from the date of issue of this notice failing which their licenses shall be blacklisted and all their activities related to good will be debarred from the UT of J&K.

Now, therefore, it is impressed upon all such owners of the Agent Goods Booking Collecting / Forwarding & Distributing Licenses who delayed or failed to acquire renewal of license on payment of appropriate fee @ Rs.3750/- annually and late fee @ Rs.500 per 90 days through the medium of this notice to get the needful done within stipulated time period of 30 days from the date of issue of this notice, failing which the licenses are themselves accountable and responsible for cancellation of their license under law.

Sd- (Pardeep Kumar)KAS,
Transport Commissioner/
Chairman State Transport Authority,
J&K, Jammu.

No. TC/Jk/MV/2021/90-92

Dated:-19-01-2021



A FEMALE TOURIST SKIING on the slopes of Apharwat in Gulmarg Valley on Friday. KO Photo Abid Bhat

EJAC Demands Regularization, Release Of Pending Wages In Favour Of CPW Of Edu Deptt

SRINAGAR: Senior Trade Union leader and President Employees Joint Action Committee (EJAC), Fayaz Ahmad Shabnam on Friday demanded regularisation and release of genuine pending wages in favour of Contingent Paid Workers (CPW) of the Education Department, who have been serving the department for years.

In a statement, Fayaz Ahmad Shabnam said that these employees are working tirelessly for safeguarding schools on meager wages with which they are not able to make their two ends meet. He said that these employees



are the frontline warriors in every calamity that has struck J&K and are working on the same parameters and capabilities as that of regular employees.

Shabnam further said that during this pandemic it has become

a more difficult situation for these employees and their families which has put them under starvation. He stated that EJAC fully supports the peaceful protest of these employees till their genuine demands are not met.

Fayaz Ahmad Shabnam also urged the government to take this matter as of grave concern and take some concrete measures in regularizing these employees or at least minimum wages act should be implemented so that these employees who have been suffering since long can have a sigh of relief.

Seminary Partially Guts In Srinagar Fire Incident



SRINAGAR: A seminary was partially gutted in a fire incident here in the uptown area of Kashmir capital Srinagar.

Police sources said that on Thursday late night, fire broke out in Dar-ul-Uloom Jamia Hafsa Al-Quran at Galwanpora Hyderpora. The fire tenders reached on the spot and with the assistance of locals and police put

the fire.

The building was damaged partially, however, no loss of life or injuries were reported. Belongings to various students were damaged in the incident.

A police official said that the cause of fire is being ascertained. He said prima facie, it seems the short circuit was the reason behind the fire.

Anil Ambani Lands In Srinagar, Drives To Gulmarg

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Anil Dhirubhai Ambani, a well known business tycoon arrived in Srinagar on Friday and later drove to the ski resort of Gulmarg.

Reports said that the Chairman of Reliance Group, arrived at Srinagar Airport at around 03:30 PM along with his family.

Unconfirmed reports said that Ambani will be meeting the top officials of the administration at Gulmarg.

Pertinently Ambani arrived in Srinagar a week after three State-run lenders, State Bank of India (SBI), Union Bank of India (UBI) and Indian Overseas Bank (IOB), classified accounts of the Anil Ambani owned Reliance Communication Ltd (RCom) and its two units Reliance Telecom Ltd (RTEL) and Reliance Infratel Ltd (RInfra) as fraudulent.

According to a report from



the Economic Times (ET), with SBI, UBI and IOB declaring RCom, RTEL and RInfra accounts as fraudulent, the bankruptcy resolution process of RCom may hit another hurdle.

Media reports said the total amount that the three firms of Anil Ambani owe to the banks is over Rs 49,000 crore, out of which Reliance Infratel has debt of Rs 12,000 crore and Reliance Telecom owns Rs 24,000 crore.

Drug Peddler Arrested In Srinagar: Police

SRINAGAR: Police on Friday claimed to have arrested a drug peddler in Srinagar and recovered contraband substance and cash from his possession.

Police spokesman in a statement said that officers from Police Station Rainawari at a checkpoint established near Zindshah Masjid Rainawari, intercepted a vehicle bearing registration number JK01L-6924 with one person on board.

He has been identified as Reyaz Ahmad Sheikh of Andurni Kathidarwaza A/P Shungli Pora Srinagar.

"During checking, the officers were able to recover 140 grams of Charas and a cash amount of Rs 13,300 from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to a police station where he remains in custody," police said.

Accordingly, police said that a case under FIR number 03/2021 under relevant sections of law stands registered at Police Station Rainawari and further investigation has been initiated.

Meanwhile, police urged people to come forward with any information regarding drug peddlers in their neighbourhood.

CRPF Officer Dies Of Cardiac Arrest

SRINAGAR: A Para-military officer died of cardiac arrest this evening at SMHS Hospital Srinagar.

Hospital sources said that an Assistant Sub-Inspector affiliated with 49 Battalion CRPF was admitted in the hospital after he developed some health complications.

In the hospital, the said officer died of cardiac arrest. He has been identified as Kajal Kumar, a resident of Azim Gang West Bengal.


CASO Launched In Natipora

SRINAGAR: Joint forces launched a cordon and search operation in the Natipora area of Srinagar outskirts on Friday late afternoon.

A part of Natipora was brought under siege and a door-to-door search operation was launched. The identity cards of locals were thoroughly checked.

"The search operation was sudden and surprising," a local said.

Last month, the security guard of PDP leader Haji Parvez was shot dead by militants in the same area.



National Financial Reporting Authority
7th- 8th Floor, Hindustan Times House, 18-20 K.G. Marg, New Delhi-110001

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DAVP/07122/11/0007/2021

DIAL-EMMA

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

AIRPORTS


SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 

RAILWAYS



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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

This Day in History

- 971 - War elephant corps of the Southern Han defeated at Shao by crossbow fire from Song Dynasty troops; Southern Han state forced to submit to the Song Dynasty. 1st regular war elephant corps in Chinese army
- 1368 - In a coronation ceremony, Zhu Yuanzhang ascends to the throne of China as the Hongwu Emperor, initiating Ming Dynasty rule over China that would last for three centuries.
- 1556 - Shaanxi Earthquake - deadliest ever recorded kills 830,000 in Shensi Province, China
- 1570 - Earl of Moray, regent of Scotland, assassinated; civil war breaks out
- 1579 - Union of Utrecht signed, forming protestant Dutch Republic
- 1631 - France & Sweden sign anti-German Treaty of Barwald
- 1656 - French philosopher and theologian Blaise Pascal publishes the first of his Lettres provinciales
- 1668 - England, Netherlands & Sweden sign Triple Alliance against French
- 1795 - War of the First Coalition: French cavalry captures 14 Dutch ships and 850 guns near the port of Den Helder - rare instance of cavalry capturing a fleet
- 1859- Mauna Loa volcano in Hawaii begins an eruption that lasts 300 days
- 1899 - Emilio Aguinaldo is sworn in as President of the First Philippine Republic
- 1908 - US & Great Britain demand end of abuses in Congo
- 1932 - El Salvador army kills 4,000 protesting farmers
- 1942 - Battle of Rabaul: Japanese attack Australian air base in Rabaul, New Britain
- 1942 - Tank battle at Adzjedabia, Africa Korps vs British 8th army
- 1943 - British 8th army marches into Tripoli
- 1945 - World War II: Karl Dönitz launches Operation Hannibal.
- 1962 - Libya, Morocco, Algeria & Tunisia plan to form United Arab Maghreb.
- 1970 - US launches 2nd generation weather satellite,ITOS 1
- 1972 - Entire population of Istanbul under 24 hour house arrest
- 1973 - Jordan Air crash at Kano, Nigeria kills 176 Muslim pilgrims
- 1973 - US President Richard Nixon announces an accord has been reached to end Vietnam War
- 1973 - Shah of Iran announces that the 1954 operating agreement between a consortium of oil companies and Iran will not be renewed when it expires in 1979
- 1983 - Russian radioactive satellite falls into Indian Ocean
- 1991 - World's largest oil spill, caused by embattled Iraqi forces in Kuwait
- 1993 - Indian Airlines B737 crashes art Aurangabad, 61 die

From KO Archives

US DIPLOMATS HOLD SECRET TALKS WITH APHC

Nusrat Javed

NEW DELHI- US diplomats were holding secret talks with the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) in this charged and security-ridden Indian capital as the Vajpayee government deliberated whether to extend the "unilateral ceasefire" beyond January 26.

Quoting what it said was a very reliable source, The News report said at least one, or maybe more, diplomats working for the US mission here, was wrong overtime, even on Sun-day. The lady diplomat reportedly held a lengthy meeting with two APHC activists, who maintain regular contacts with New Delhi-based diplomats. As this back-door diplomacy continued, the all-important Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met to decide whether the army and other security agencies in Kashmir should continue with the policy of "non-initiation of fire."

Projected as the "unilateral cease-fire," this policy was hailed all over the world, showing to the "international community" as if New' Delhi was seriously looking for a lasting solution of the Kashmir problem. It also spread the impression that at tile peak of his political career, which was mostly spent in pursuing the Hindu extremist causes, Vajpayee wanted to get out of the historic prejudices and rigid constructs, developed during 50 years of acrimony between Pakistan and India. The Indian prime minister strengthened the impression through his "musings" on the New Year eve.

But Vajpayee has opponents in his own party and the government, although many in' New Delhi seriously believe that Vajpayee and Advani have played "good cop-bad cop" by design. Jaswant Singh has also conveyed it to the prime minister's office that permitting the APHC delegation to Pakistan would eventually lead to "tripartite talks" on Kashmir, a possibility the foreign office mandarins of South Block, vehemently resent.

Many Indian journalists, regularly writing on external affairs, have also begun high-lighting and supporting the

South Block's reservations to APHC delegation going to Pakistan. In the latest issue of prestigious "India Today," Tavleen Singh author of a well-received book on the Kashmir entangle, had written a very strong column about it.

She insists that APHC delegation wants to go to Pakistan for it would help "Pakistan's general to establish his belief that the APHC represents the people of Kashmir as distinct from the people of India. This is his way of paving the way for eventual tripartite talks between India, Pakistan and Kashmir. So sitting in distant Islamabad, Pakistan's unelected government has decided who should represent the Kashmiri people."

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 23 January, 2001)

'Revenge Is Inevitable': Iran's Ayatollah Khamenei Issues Chilling Threat To Former US President Donald Trump



Agencies

TEHRAN: Iran's supreme leader's office has posted a photomontage of former US president Donald Trump playing golf under the shadow of a warplane alongside a pledge to avenge a deadly 2020 drone strike he ordered. The post on Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's @khamenei_site Twitter account late Thursday warned there was no escape from payback for the US strike outside Baghdad airport which killed Iran's storied foreign operations chief General Qasem Soleimani and his Iraqi lieutenant. "Revenge is inevitable. Soleimani's killer and the man who

gave the orders must face vengeance," it said. "Revenge can take place at any moment." Trump left office on Wednesday and flew straight to his Mar-a-Lago golf club in Florida, without attending the inauguration of his successor President Joe Biden. Iranian officials have pledged repeatedly that Soleimani will be avenged. Earlier this month, on the first anniversary of his killing, judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi warned that not even Trump was "immune from justice" and that Soleimani's killers would "not be safe anywhere in the world".

Cash For Covid? UK Says No Decision On Reported Plan For Positive Tests



LONDON: Britain's environment minister said on Friday no decision had been taken on plans to give everyone who tested positive for COVID-19 a payment after newspapers reported people could be given 500 pounds (\$683.75) to incentivise them to take tests. Newspapers said the government was considering the plan in England because surveys suggested that some people with symptoms were not taking tests because lower paid workers did not want to self-isolate if they were positive and so be unable to work. Currently, only some people receiving welfare benefits receive a 500 pound payment if they are told to self-isolate, but according to an official policy paper seen by the Guardian newspaper and others, ministers were looking at making this a universal payment to all who tested positive.

This would cost up to 453 million pounds a week, 12 times the cost of the current system, the Guardian said. "I'm not going to comment on this particular paper but we've always kept it under review," said minister George Eustice. "No decisions to be made on this, but this is a dynamic fast moving situation with the pandemic." Surveys have indicated that only a small proportion of people with COVID symptoms were coming forward for tests while many others ignored instructions to self-isolate because of the financial impact of quarantining. Britain saw a surge in cases at the end of last year, fuelled by a new highly-transmissible strain of the virus, which has put the health service under extreme pressure. On Thursday, it recorded 37,892 new cases with 1,290 deaths. Reuters



THE BIDENS ATTEND an inaugural prayer service at the White House.

In First Full Day In Office, Biden Tackles Multiple Crises

Agencies

President Joe Biden raced Thursday to show he was addressing the array of crises awaiting him on his first day in office, issuing executive orders aimed at combating the coronavirus and preparing measures to take on the struggling economy and other problems. Biden and his team found themselves immediately on what the president called a "wartime" footing, describing fighting the coronavirus as "a national emergency." Against an already calamitous backdrop of a pandemic that has left more than 408,000 Americans dead, an additional 900,000 people filed new unemployment claims last week, underlining a devastated job market. In remarks in the White House State Dining Room, Biden outlined a new national strategy for combating the virus, signing 10 executive orders and other documents to streamline the federal government response, move toward reopening schools and businesses, ensure safer travel and increase vaccinations, among other goals. He called on Americans to "mask up" for the next 100 days, saying that doing so could save more than 50,000 lives. Biden's tone was notably sober, contrasting not only with former president Donald Trump's rhetoric, which was often full of su-

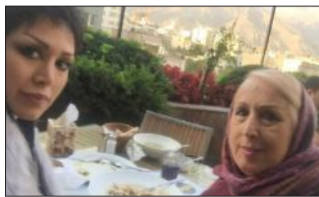
perlatives and grand promises, but also with the tone of other presidents on many occasions. "Let me be very clear: Things are going to continue to get worse before they get better," Biden said, adding that the death toll would likely top 500,000 next month. "And let me be equally clear: We will get through this. We will defeat this pandemic." Biden criticized Trump's vaccine rollout as "a dismal failure" and called his own goal of administering 100 million vaccine doses within 100 days "one of the greatest operational challenges our nation has ever undertaken." But averaging 1 million doses a day appears to be a goal that is already being surpassed. The average number of vaccines administered over the past week was about 936,000, according to a Washington Post tally using data from state reports and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. On Thursday, the number was 1,057,369. Biden bristled on Thursday when asked whether his goal was ambitious enough. "When I announced it, you all said it's not possible," he said. "Come

on, give me a break, man." At the same time, Dr. Anthony Fauci, who is spearheading Biden's covid-19 response, said he felt freer than he had under Trump to provide accurate, science-based information. "The idea that you can get up here and talk about what you know, what the science is, and know that's it - let the science speak - it is somewhat of a liberating feeling," Fauci said. Biden plans to move quickly on other fronts beyond coronavirus as well. On Friday, he will sign executive orders tackling the economy, which continues to struggle, with nearly 16 million people claiming benefits as of Jan. 2, the last week the information was available. And he plans to continue apace in the coming days, outlining a "Buy American" action Monday, followed by a focus on racial equity Tuesday, climate change Wednesday, health care Thursday, and immigration Friday. But the pandemic is arguably the country's starkest problem, given the daily death toll. For nearly a year Biden has criticized Trump for not making full use of his executive powers to ramp up production of coronavirus tests and personal protective equipment. In his actions and remarks on Thursday, he authorized the use of the Defense Production Act to increase efforts to combat the pandemic and increase vaccine distribution.

Still Separated: Covid-19 Order Keeps Families Apart After Biden Lifts 'Muslim Ban'

Agencies

On Tuesday night, on the eve of United States President Joe Biden's inauguration, Mania Darbani's mother called her from Iran. She was ecstatic that Biden would soon repeal the Trump administration's so-called "Muslim ban" that barred people from a number of mostly Muslim-majority nations, including Iran, from coming to the United States. "It means I can get to you very soon," Maryam Taghdissi Jani, who is applying for an immigrant visa, told Darbani, a 36-year-old receptionist who lives with her husband in Los Angeles. Darbani said she could not bring herself to explain that other roadblocks remained in



place before her mother could join her. On top of the original travel ban that kept them apart for years, Trump issued another ban in 2020 that blocked certain immigrant visas because of the coronavirus pandemic. Darbani, a US citizen, petitioned for an immigrant visa for her mother, a 71-year old nurse, in 2019, but the Trump administration stopped issuing almost all new family-based green cards in April 2020, saying the move would protect

American jobs amid the coronavirus pandemic. Biden has not yet said whether he will rescind the proclamation, but until he does, Taghdissi Jani will remain in Iran. "I am very sad right now, I am just waiting for her," Darbani said. "My father passed away and my mom is alone. I need her here." Since December 2017, after a revised version of the original travel ban was upheld by the US Supreme Court, some 40,000 people have been barred from entering the United States under the ban, according to State Department data. But for many families separated by the travel ban, a reunion isn't on the cards anytime soon due to layers of pandemic-related travel and visa restrictions.

Syria Says Four Dead In First Israeli Strike Since Biden Took Office



DAMASCUS/JERUSALEM: Syrian air defences confronted "an Israeli aggression" in the region of Hama on Friday that killed four people from the same family, state media said, in what would be the first such action by Israel since Joe Biden became US president. Israel has carried out hundreds of airstrikes in Syria in recent years against suspected Iranian military deployments or arms transfers to Iranian-backed Lebanese Hezbollah fighters. Regional sources said such attacks had been stepped up during the final weeks of Donald Trump's term as the US president. The new strikes, if confirmed, would be the first since Biden took office on Wednesday. Israel, which enjoyed strong support from Trump, is waiting to gauge whether the new administration will review US policy in the Middle East. "At about four o'clock in the morning today, the Israeli enemy launched an aerial aggression with a barrage of missiles coming from the direction of the Lebanese city of Tripoli,

aiming at some targets in the vicinity of Hama governorate," a military source said, according to Syrian state media. "Our air defences confronted the enemy's missiles and downed most of them," the source said, without detailing the nature of the targets. The Israeli military declined to comment. A father, mother and their two children were killed in the strikes, and four other civilians were wounded, while three houses were destroyed, the Syrian military source said. Israel has previously said its strikes in Syria were necessary to protect its northern front from its enemy Iran. "Israel is conducting a campaign against Iranian entrenchment in Syria," said Amos Yadlin, a former director of Israeli military intelligence, who now runs Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies. "Such actions will not stop merely because Biden has been inaugurated and I do not anticipate American misgivings about them continuing," he said. Reuters

ISIL Takes Responsibility For Deadly Baghdad Suicide Bombings



Agencies

The ISIL (ISIS) group has claimed responsibility for a twin suicide bombing - the deadliest in nearly three years - that ripped through a crowded market in central Baghdad on Thursday, killing 32 people and wounding 110 others. The first attacker drew a crowd at the bustling market in the capital's Tayaran Square by claiming to feel sick, then detonated his explosives belt, the Interior Ministry said. As more people then flocked to the scene to help the victims, a second suicide bomber set off his explosives. The attack is the first twin bombing in Baghdad since January 2018, when 35 people were killed and 90 injured in the same

square that was hit on Thursday. The open-air market, where second-hand clothes are sold at stalls, had been teeming with people after the lifting of nearly a year of COVID-19 restrictions across the Middle East region. An AFP news agency photographer at the scene said security forces had cordoned off the area, where blood-soaked clothes were strewn across the muddy streets and paramedics were rushing to take away the casualties. The Health Ministry said those who lost their lives had died on the scene of the attack, and that most of the wounded had been treated and released from hospital. After midnight, ISIL posted a claim of responsibility for the attack on its online propaganda channels.

NEWS MAKERS

President Biden Removed Trump's 'Diet Coke' Button In Oval Office: Report

WASHINGTON: It appears that US President Joe Biden has removed the "Diet Coke" button installed on the presidential desk by his predecessor Donald Trump, who was devoted to the soda drink.



"Out of nowhere, he'd suddenly press the button," Sims wrote of the former president. He added, "Not sure what to do, guests would look at one another with raised eyebrows. Moments later, a steward would enter the room carrying a glass filled with Diet Coke on a silver platter, and Trump would burst out laughing." Even though Biden may have gotten rid of the soft drink buzzer, he, according to reports, also has "a similar taste in beverages".

The device installed at the Resolute Desk wasn't visible in photos of Biden captured Thursday at the White House. Biden's Oval Office features framed photos of the family behind the Resolute Desk, beside a bust of Cesar Chavez, a Latin American workers rights activist, according to NZ Herald. "President Biden has removed the Diet Coke button. When @ShippersUnbound (Tim Shipman) and I interviewed Donald Trump in 2019, we became fascinated by what the little red button did. Eventually, Trump pressed it, and a butler swiftly brought in a Diet Coke on a silver platter. It's gone now," tweeted journalist Tom Newton Dunn. The Hill reported that Trump, a soda devotee, reportedly had the button put in place on the Resolute Desk in order to "keep the carbonated beverages flowing". When pressed, a staffer would be summoned to provide the drink to the thirsty commander in chief. Trump would regularly consume 12 cans of Diet Coke a day, as per media reports. Ex-White House aide Chris Sims wrote in his 2019 book "Team of Vipers" that Trump would also use the red button as a way of pranking visitors by suggesting it could trigger nuclear capabilities, cited by The Hill.

Fauci says feels liberated to speak on science under Biden

In his first White House briefing as President Joe Biden's top advisor on Covid-19, Anthony Fauci said it was "liberating" that he could focus on science without fear of repercussion now that Donald Trump had left office. The top infectious disease scientist was briefing reporters Thursday on the state of the US outbreak that has claimed more than 408,000 lives. Asked to compare his experience under the previous administration to the new one, the 80-year-old responded a little coyly at first, saying he wasn't sure he could "extrapolate" based on first impressions. "But one of the things that was very clear as recently as about 15 minutes ago, when I was with the president, is that one of the things that we're going to do is to be completely transparent, open and honest. "If things go wrong, not point fingers but to correct them and to make everything we do be based on science and evidence."

Canada Governor General Resigns Over Workplace Harassment Report

OTTAWA, CANADA: Governor General Julie Payette, Queen Elizabeth II's representative in Canada, resigned Thursday ahead of the release of a reportedly scathing report on workplace harassment claims levelled against her office. The independent review had been ordered by the government last July when allegations of a "toxic" climate at Rideau Hall - the official residence of the governor general - first surfaced. Canadian media, citing unnamed sources briefed on its contents, said the review's conclusions were damning. "In respect for the integrity of my viceregal office and for the good of our country and of our democratic institutions, I have come to the conclusion that a new governor general should be appointed," Payette said in a statement.

Preparedness Of KPDC For 2Nd Spell Of Snowfall In Valley Reviewed

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan, today held a review meeting with Kashmir Power Development Corporation regarding preparations being put in place by the Corporation to deal with the second spell of snowfall in the Kashmir Valley.

The meeting was attended by MD, KPDC, Ajaz Assad, Chief Engineer, Power Distribution, Ajaz Ahmad and Chief Engineer, Transmission, Hashmat Qazi besides other concerned.

Advisor Baseer Khan enquired about the available stock of transformers, wires, deployment of enforcement staff and related necessities. He asked the officers to keep a contingency plan ready for restoration of electricity supply within the stipulated time of 24 hours in urban areas and 48 hours in rural areas.

Advisor was informed that the department is fully prepared to tackle any issue including erection and replacement of damaged electric poles besides repairing and maintenance of supply lines and transfers in the wake of possible snowfall

season. He said that the department has successfully restored power supply in stipulated time during the first heavy snowfall span of the season.

Advisor was further informed by the Chief Engineer that sufficient stock of transformers, poles and wires is available to solve any issue of power restoration. Besides, adequate men and machinery is in a standby mode while enforcement staff is executing work on war footing basis.

Regarding the status of augmentation and installation of transformers at Grid Station Delina, Advisor was informed that all the works have been completed barring arrival of transformers. Besides, three transformers are being shifted from GSS Budgam of which one has arrived at the site while two others are in transit.

Advisor was further informed that erection and stringing work on construction of 220KV D/C Wanpoh-Mirbazar Transmission line is under progress and expected to be completed in first week of February 2020.

DAK Urges Doctors To Prescribe Generic Drugs



SRINAGAR: Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Friday urged doctors in Jammu and Kashmir (JK) to prescribe generic drugs instead of branded medicines.

"That would make drugs accessible to poor patients who are not able to buy expensive branded medicines," said DAK President Dr Nisar ul Hassan.

"Generic medicines are copycat versions of branded drugs and are equal to their branded counterparts in terms of strength, quality, efficacy and safety. They cost 80 to 90 percent less than the branded medicines as manufacturers do not have to spend on the development and promotion of the drug," he said.

DAK President said more than 24 lakh people in JK do not have access to medicines due to lack of purchasing power.

"Majority of cancer patients die for want of treatment because they cannot afford expensive branded drugs," he said. "Generic drugs make treatment affordable for cancer patients and, as a result, save lives."

"Research has shown that generic drugs significantly reduce deaths among cancer patients," Dr Nisar said.

"Two studies published in

the Lancet medical journal have found that the use of two inexpensive generic drugs – aromatase inhibitors and Bisphosphonates – significantly improved survival rates in postmenopausal women with breast cancer."

"With the introduction of the generic form of "Gleevec", the drug used for blood cancer, many lives were saved," he said.

"Use of generic drugs in other chronic medical conditions, like diabetes, hypertension and other cardiovascular ailments would result in long term adherence to essential therapies."

"It was because of generic drugs that saved millions of lives with AIDS," he added.

Dr Nisar said while generic drug use has increased over time, in JK doctors continue to dole out expensive branded drugs when equally effective and cheaper versions are available.

"There is a perception generated that because generic drugs are cheaper, they will be less effective.

We need to raise awareness among people that would change their perception towards generic drugs.

More education for both doctors and patients would increase the prescriptions and use of generic drugs," he said.

Kumar Reviews Implementation Of Directions Of Lt Governor

Admin Secretaries, HoDs Asked To Expedite Works To Achieve Set Targets

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor, Nitishwar Kumar today chaired a meeting to review implementation of the directions of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha with regard to achievements in public services delivery through digital platform, besides best practices in Public Administration and execution of three works in each department targeted for 2020-21 fiscal.

The meeting was attended by Administrative Secretaries, various Heads of Departments and other senior officers from their respective departments. Divisional Commissioner Kashmir and all Deputy Commissioners of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory attended the meeting via video conferencing.

The Principal Secretary reviewed department-wise and sector-wise implementation of the directions of Lieutenant Governor with regard to identifying the delivery of public services through digital platform, best practices in public administration, identification and execution of three works in each department in the Financial Year 2020-21, besides registration of beneficiaries under SEHAT and distribution of cards, digitization of land records and Wakf properties and Geo-tagging.



At the outset, the Principal Secretary enquired about the utility and other amenities along Srinagar-Jammu National Highway and the pace of works on the projects to be finished this fiscal.

Regarding the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojna (PMAY), it was given out that certain districts are lagging behind in achieving the set targets.

To this, Principal Secretary Kumar directed Secretary Rural Development Department and concerned Deputy Commissioners to expedite the process of identifying, tracing beneficiaries and subsequent sanctioning process for them.

While reviewing the functioning of the Information Technology Department, he was informed that all the departments have been asked to move to digital platforms by making available all public services online on their websites.

The Principal Secretary asked the IT Department to bring all departmental websites and their services on a common online platform

so that people taking rounds to government offices could be reduced and all services be extended to them through digital platforms.

The Principal Secretary also reviewed the targets of the Forest, Environment and Ecology Department, wherein he was briefed about various schemes and projects taken up by the department for the implementation during the current fiscal.

He enquired about the status of Village Panchayat Plantation Committees, wherein he was informed that the committees have been set-up along with Gram Sabha and officials from forest department for village level needs.

In the Higher Education sector, the Principal Secretary was informed that a common portal for admissions and other services would be made for colleges and universities, besides e-library and best practices on student welfare like University Management Information System and Skill Development courses have been introduced in the UT.

Chopping Down Of Trees: Forest Officer Sonmarg Attached

SONMARG: A day after Kashmir Observer reported that the agency constructing Zojila Tunnel had chopped down over 300 'trees' without seeking permission from the Forest Department, the government attached Forest Officer Sonmarg to DFO's office Ganderbal for not informing the higher-ups on time.

Reports on Friday said that Forest Officer Sonmarg, Abdul Gani was attached to the office of Divisional Forest Officer Ganderbal while additional charge was given to Forest Officer Gund, Habibullah.

As reported earlier Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Ltd which is responsible for the construction of 14.5 kilometer Zojila Tunnel has chopped off 338 trees without seeking necessary permission from the Forest Department.

Sources said that attachment order was issued after the Department felt that the said officer resorted to dilly dally tactics in sending the report to higher-ups.

Sources added that DFO Ganderbal Mir Owais along with Deputy Director Forest Protection Forces visited Nilgathi and Baltal areas to assess the situation. The DFO has already constituted a committee comprising Range Officer Sindh Forest Range and Assistant Director Forest Protection Force to ascertain the facts. They have been asked to submit the report within 3 days.

On Thursday, DFO Ganderbal, Mir Owais had said that he has constituted a committee to ascertain facts. "If some violation has taken place, we will charge a bill from the Agency. I don't think they have cut trees. What I have learnt

Axing Of 340 Trees Near Zojila Tunnel Will Move To NGT If Govt Fails To Act: RTI Movement

SRINAGAR: Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement has demanded that the culprits particularly the construction company and local Govt agencies which have paved way for cutting down of 340 green trees near Zojila Tunnel in Sonmarg area be taken to task as the said act is an open violation of forest and environmental laws.

In a statement Chairman RTI Movement Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat has said that stern action should be taken against the company and Government officials who are involved in this criminal act. He said that RTI Movement will move to National Green Tribunal (NGT) of Govt fails to act against the culprits

"By punishing a lower rung officer of the forest department and attaching him with DFO office Ganderbal is only a mockery. An independent probe should be held in this whole issue and real culprits should be identified. In past of private construction company axed thousands of forest trees in Pir Panjal forests of Shopian, Poonch and Budgam during laying of Sama Amargad transmission line but till date no probe was constituted how many forest trees were actually allowed to be axed and how much amount was realized as compensation from the company " said Dr Raja Muzaffar

He further said that if the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) hasn't given permission to axing 340 trees near Zojila tunnel site, how did the company go ahead with the mass slaughter of so many trees?

"We may be forced to file a complaint before NGT if Govt doesn't act against the culprits " read the statement

is that the Agency has cut some saplings," Mir Owais had said, according to the news agency KNT.

The attached Forest Officer Sonmarg Abdul Gani in his report has already sought action against the Agency under law. He admitted that Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Limited has cut down 338 trees.

Pertinently, Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Ltd got the contract to construct the strategic multi crore Zojila Tunnel after it emerged as the lowest bidder for the project.

Zojila tunnel aims to provide all-year connectivity between Kashmir and Ladakh region. The estimated cost of the project is Rs 4,509 crore. With inputs from KNT

NC Seeks Ordinance For Management Of Hindu Temples

JAMMU: National Conference Friday sought issuance of an ordinance with regard to implementation of the Kashmiri Hindu Shrines and Religious Places (Management and Regulation) Bill, adding that this will be one of the major confidence building measures to pave the way for the honourable and safe return of displaced people back to their homes and hearths.

"We urge the Centre, as also Lieutenant Governor Mr Manoj Sinha to facilitate the implementation of the bill, brought twice by the National Conference in the Legislative Assembly but could not get passage due to inherent contradictions of several political parties", Provincial Vice President Mr Anil Dhar said while addressing a press conference at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhavan here this afternoon.

He was flanked by Provincial Vice President Mr Som Nath Khajuria, Chairman of the NC Minority Cell Mr Bushan Lal Bhat, President Mr. M.K Yogi and Mr Jatin Bhat.

Mr Anil Dhar said that the National Conference piloted the Bill twice, first by Mr Abdul Rahim Rather and later by Mr Saifullah Mir on the directions of Dr Farooq Abdullah and Mr Omar Abdullah with an objective of transparent management of the shrines and temples across the Kashmir Valley besides their protection and safeguard. He regretted that due to politics, these bills could not be passed, which has caused immense concern and dismay among the displaced Kashmiri Hindu population. He said the Ordinance will help in taking care of these properties and the boards should be established on the pattern of Gurdwara Prabandhak Board and Wakf Board.

Mr Dhar sought earnest measures for upkeep and maintenance of the dilapidated Hindu temples, shrines and allied properties with special measures to

remove encroachments forthwith. In reply to a question, NC leader Mr Som Nath Khajuria also supported the demand, saying similar boards should be constituted for transparent and fair management of shrines and temples in the Jammu region.

"Giving management of these shrines and temples to the Boards will help in transparent superintendence of the managements, which is imperative for raising facilities and ensuring adequate upkeep of the places of worship that are thronged by large numbers of devotees", Mr Khajuria added.

Addressing the media, Mr Bushan Lal Bhat extended full support to the organisations of Kashmiri Hindus who were spearheading a sincere campaign with regard to establishment of Shrines and Temples Board of Kashmiri Hindus.

Mr Bhat said that the cause is common and all should work towards achieving the objective in terms of the issuance of Ordinance by the government.

Mr. M.K Yogi said that the proposed Board will go a long way in preserving the valuable religious treasure of Kashmiri Pandits which stands testimony to the glorious and pluralistic ethos of Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr Jatin Bhat also spoke to the media and sought earnest measures for ensuring the issuance of Ordinance in this regard to satiate the urges and aspirations of the displaced Kashmiri Hindus.

Prominent among those present on the occasion included Pyare Lal Thursoo, Tej Krishan Dhar, Shadi Lal Tickoo, S. L Pandita, Mohan Lal Comrade, Shubhan Ji Raina, Manmohan Koul, Naveen Gosami, Sanjay Raina, Mohan Lal Pandita, T.K Koul, Sohan Lal Pandita, Dr. T.K Bhat, Varinder Tickoo, Tej Krishan koul, Roshan Lal, Krishan Ji Koul, Sundri Pal Pandita, Bansi Lal Raina and Bansi Lal Bhat, Ashok Sahib and B.L Raina.

Trade Leader Yaseen Khan Meets Advisor Baseer Khan



SRINAGAR: Scores of deputations and individuals today called on Advisor Baseer Khan to apprise him of their grievances and demands at the Civil Secretariat here.

President, KMTE, Mohammad Yaseen Khan, apprised the Advisor regarding construction work of shops at Tral Bus Stand. In this regard, Additional Deputy Commissioner Pulwama informed that the DPR of the said work has been submitted to the concerned authorities for approval.

A deputation of Srinagar Municipal Corporation Corporators apprised the Advisor about status of various development works in their respective wards.

Similarly, a delegation from Zakura Hazratbal demanded installation of an additional power transformer in their locality as the capacity of existing trans-

former is insufficient to bear the load of entire locality.

Meanwhile, Block Development Council member from Ganderbal demanded filling up of post of Executive Engineer, Rural Development Department which is lying vacant since long.

Advisor was also apprised by couple of contractors regarding release of payment of completed work held in the Rural Development Department.

Several other individuals apprised Advisor Khan regarding different issues including electricity and water supplies, construction of roads, retaining walls etc.

Advisor Baseer Khan assured the deputations that all the grievances and issues raised by them would be addressed at the earliest. He issued on spot directions to the concerned officers for redressal of raised issues.

NEWS MAKERS

Bandipora Duo Held For Murder of ATM Guard in Jammu

JAMMU: A day after the 'murder' of an ATM guard in Nanak Nagar area of Jammu, locals today staged a protest and blocked the road seeking justice for the family.

Pertinently, the ATM guard identified as Raju Sharma, son of Gullu Ram, a resident of New Plot area of Jammu, was found dead inside the guard chamber of the bank ATM at Sector 13 in Nanak Nagar on Thursday late evening.

Locals had found his body in a pool of blood while police formally registered a murder case against unknown persons.

On Friday morning, family members, relatives and locals from the native area of the victim, blocked the road in New Plot area of Jammu. They demanded thorough investigation into the murder, financial assistance to the poor family and a job in the bank for one of the family members.

"The victim was the sole bread earner and lone brother among seven sisters. This is a tragedy for the family and they deserve justice," said a protester Ram Kumar adding that besides feeding his seven sisters, the victim had two little children and a spouse. Civil and police official rushed to the spot informing them that those responsible for the murder have been arrested. Later SSP Jammu Sridhar Patil addressed a press conference divulging information about the said murder. He said that police have rounded up two youth from Bandipora north Kashmir for the murder. "The duo had gone to the ATM with the intention to loot cash, but faced stiff resistance from the ATM Guard. They assaulted him, choked him with a blanket inside rest room of the ATM," he said and identified the accused as Muhammad Kaif Lone and Waqas Bashir Lone.

He said both the accused had been living in Nanak Nagar area in a rented house.

The SSP said that further investigation was underway. (KNT)

DGP Sanctions Rs. 14.49 Lakh Scholarship For Police Wards

JAMMU: Encouraging and appreciating the hard work of the wards of Police personnel who have excelled in 10th & 12th annual examination during the academic session 2019-2020, the Director General of Police, J&K Shri Dilbag Singh has sanctioned meritorious scholarships of over rupees 14.49 lakh in favour of 252 wards of serving, retired police personnel/SPOs under different orders.

The DGP has sanctioned over rupees 8.89 lakh for 139 meritorious wards of serving Police personnel who have secured 80% and above marks in the Annual Examination of Class 12th during the academic session 2019-20. Among these rupees 7200 each have been sanctioned in favour of forty-six meritorious wards who secured 90% and above marks and rupees 6000 each

have been sanctioned in favour of ninety-three meritorious wards who have secured 80% and above marks.

The DGP has also sanctioned a meritorious scholarship of rupees 4.82 lakh in favour of 96 wards of serving Police personnel who have secured 80% and above marks in the Annual Examination of class 10th during the academic session 2019-20. Among these rupees 6000 each has been sanctioned in favour of forty-nine meritorious wards who have secured 90% and above marks and rupees 4000 each have been sanctioned in favour of forty-seven meritorious wards who have secured 80% and above marks in the annual examination of class 10th.

Vide order No. 165 of PHQ, the DGP J&K has sanctioned rupees 6000 each in favour of eight wards and rupees 4000

each in favour of three wards of serving SPOs of class 10th and 12th who have secured 80% and above marks during the academic session 2019-20.

Besides the DGP has sanctioned scholarship of rupees 3000 each in favour of six wards of retired Police personnel who have secured 75% and above marks in the annual examination of Class 10th and 12th during the academic session 2019-2020.

The amount has been sanctioned out of Central Police Welfare Fund/J&K Retired Policemen Welfare Fund and Police Pariwar Fund. Police Headquarters has been sanctioning scholarships, rewards, welfare loan/ relief for police personnel, wards of martyred and serving/retired Police personnel under different schemes to boost their morale

6Food Crises In Srinagar ANC Leader Seeks LG's Intervention

SRINAGAR: Awami National Conference Senior Vice President Muzaffar Shah has sought intervention of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to resolve food crises in Srinagar.

"The Director Food and Supplies should come clean and state the correct position in front of the people of Srinagar City whether they are supposed to get five kg rice per person or 3.5 kg's per person. Why are the residents of Srinagar city being informed publicly of the Government's decision to provide rice at 5kg's per person whereas the DC food has instructed the Store keepers and the ST Shop owners to provide only 3.5 kg's rice per person against their ration card?" He said that a delegation of residents of downtown and ST Owners met him at ANC party headquarters today.

He appealed to the LG Manoj Sinha that he should intervene in this very sensitive and serious issue confronting the people of Srinagar city during the harsh winter conditions with 1.5 lakh people without Aadhar Card in Srinagar city alone, a prerequisite for distribution of Rice. The policy of the current director Food and Supplies of announcing 5kg per person through media and instructions to store keepers and ST shops to only issue 2.5kg's per person can lead to a major law and order situation throughout Srinagar city endangering the lives and safety of hundreds of concerned Store keepers and ST shop owners, he said.

Shah further stated that "we should not forget that these very store keepers and the ST shop owners played a heroic role during the turmoil of 2010, the unprecedented floods of 2014 when they provided food supplies to the residents of Srinagar City under most abnormal conditions risking their lives and ensuring food Supplies to the residents of Srinagar. The same heroic deeds were repeated by these people during the Covid Pandemic period by ensuring home delivery of rice and other essentials to the people in large."

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NO HOLDS BARRED



“The DDCs have almost become mini-assemblies. As a result, a DDC chairperson and the members will be in a position to build a vaunted support base for their respective parties. This is where the conflict arises among the parties.”

Future of PAGD

Less than six months since its formation, the PAGD seems about to come loose

RIYAZ WANI

“As for the future, it will be interesting to see how the remaining parties in the PAGD will conduct themselves. With the NC and the PDP still together, the alliance can be a force to reckon with and certain to be a major player in the government formation in future”

When the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration was formed in April last year, few people in Kashmir expected it to last. But no one expected it to fall apart so soon. With the exit of the People's Conference, the alliance has been left reeling and if nothing is done to give it a fresh sense of purpose, the remaining constituents may too go their separate ways.

The reason for the PC chief Sajad Gani Lone to leave the PAGD is the fielding of proxy candidates against one another by the constituent parties in the recent District Development Council polls. Lone has termed it "a breach of trust" and rightly so. After the PAGD nominated candidates to contest the DDC election, the constituent parties also fielded their own candidates. So, the PAGD candidates not only had to contend with the candidates from the BJP and the parties like Apni Party but also with the candidates from the PAGD constituents. This resulted in the defeat of many of them. The independent candidates, many of them from the PAGD constituents, ended up winning a whopping 49 seats. If there were no independents running on behalf of the PAGD parties, the grouping's tally would be far higher than the 110 seats it garnered. And this, in turn, would have established more forcefully the demand for the restoration of J&K autonomy, the *raison d'être* of the PAGD.

But why was this not done? The answer to this question is not far to seek. In the new grassroots governance scheme at the district level, a DDC chairperson or a DDC member will wield a huge political clout. They will be more or less exclusively charged with the development of the district. The DDCs have almost become mini-assemblies. As a result, a DDC chairperson and the members will be in a position to build a vaunted support base for their respective parties. This is where the conflict arises among the parties. More so, when the parties would not only want to preserve their traditional support base but also expand it. So, while politically, the parties may have a common cause and seek to fight an election jointly, the arrangement works against their respective electoral interests. The National Conference thus wouldn't want to dilute its standing as the dominant political party, so wouldn't the PDP, now the second major political outfit. And the People's Conference, being still a marginal political player would want to outgrow its Kupwara confines which as a part of the PAGD it couldn't hope to do.

Could the parties have resolved these contradictions in pursuit of their larger political cause? They certainly could have. India has had durable political groupings like the National Democratic Alliance and the United



Progressive Alliance. There have been alliances in the states too. Mahagathbandhan defeated the BJP in 2015 Bihar Assembly polls and came close to repeating the feat again in the last election, this time without the JDU of Nitish Kumar. This, despite the fact that these coalitions have been primarily about the pursuit of power. But when the PAGD was formed it had a larger cause, one that also had a moral resonance. And the alliance too had stressed this point saying there can be, "nothing about us, without us".

"We want to assure the people that all our political activities will be subservient to the sacred goal of reverting to the status of J-K as it existed on 4th August 2019," the Gupkar Declaration issued in August had stated adding that the constituents would be "bound, wholly, by the contents of the Gupkar Declaration and will unwaveringly adhere to it".

But less than six months on, the PAGD seems about to come loose. It may still be a group of five parties, two of them the NC and the PDP, but the PC's exit seems to have taken the sting out of the alliance. It suddenly appears vulnerable and shorn of its promise. And all this over an apparent conflict that could have easily been resolved had the leaders deemed it worth their while to sit together and talk. But this apparently was not done,

nor sought by the parties. Why? There is no easy answer. It looks intriguing why exiting the alliance should have been the first option for the PC unless the party had been despaired of the redressal.

As for the future, it will be interesting to see how the remaining parties in the PAGD will conduct themselves. With the NC and the PDP still together, the alliance can be a force to reckon with and certain to be a major player in the government formation in future. As for pressing the demand for restoration of Article 370, all that the parties seem capable of doing as of now is to stick together. There has been no attempt to even symbolically register displeasure about what was done to J&K. And for obvious reasons. Centre has disproportionately raised costs for any show of even a symbolic defiance and this includes forming an alliance too. It remains to be seen how the remaining parties in the PAGD will respond to the costs of staying together.

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

Will Biden “Make American Great” Again?

Biden needs a grand strategy to clean up Trump’s mess and restore America’s leadership in the world.

MARWAN BISHARA

The way forward for the new Biden administration cannot be the way back. Harking back to the Obama era and stacking his administration with “Obamians” will not suffice to restore America’s credibility and leadership. As president of the United States, Joe Biden has to look further, aim higher, and act bigger.

It is important for Biden to reverse much of Donald Trump’s policies, but that will not erase his legacy or undo the damage to America’s soul. Certainly not when the bitter and vengeful former president and his allies continue to lurk around in the shadows.

Trump’s authoritarian attempts to restore white supremacy have thankfully failed miserably, mainly because America has moved on. But he did succeed in causing so much damage to the fabric of American society and democracy that it will take years to clean up.

That is why Biden will have to tread carefully, addressing the social and economic grievances of the Republican base without alienating his own Democratic base.

Democrats have long run and won elections on the promise of cleaning up a Republican mess.

From Franklin D Roosevelt’s (FDR) 1933 victory amid the Great Depression and John F Kennedy’s 1961 ascendance following the late 1950s economic recession, to Barack Obama’s historic triumph following the Iraq war and the 2008 financial meltdown, Democratic presidents have repeatedly faced the challenge of restoring US prosperity and leadership. And somewhat succeeded.

Such selective reading of the past century may be all too self-righteous, but never have Democrats and liberals, including liberal Republicans, shown as much enthusiasm for turning the page on a Republican presidency as they do today.

Biden’s cabinet picks show a great deal of cultural and gender diversity, albeit from within the establishment. If policy is indeed shaped by official appointments, the new administration shows some promise.

Of course, many Democrats would have liked to see the likes of Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders in the new administration, but my guess is, Biden hopes to work with traditional and liberal Republicans in order to end the Trumpist mindset that divided the country.

This would prove controversial and even alienate many progressive Democrats, but it could potentially widen the rift within the Republican Party and improve the Democrats’ position come midterm elections. Biden already committed to reverse a plethora of Trump’s executive orders on his first day in office, including lifting the “Muslim Ban” and rejoining the Paris climate accord.

He will also try to move rapidly to fix Trump’s shameful and deadly pandemic record by issuing new directives to combat the coronavirus.

These are important steps that signal his seriousness to turn the page on the Trump era, but not enough to reckon with his legacy and tackle America’s social and racial injustices that elevated him to the presidency.

That is why Biden needs to go beyond what Obama did after the calamitous years of the Bush presidency. He must design a new American covenant along



“Biden will have to work harder than his predecessors to regain their trust. He will also need to accept more equitable transatlantic and transpacific relationships based on mutual respect and mutual interest.”

the lines of FDR’s New Deal and Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society.

He could start by embracing and

implementing a wide-ranging national revival programme that follows FDR’s three Rs: relief for the many unemployed through direct government support; recovery through greater infrastructural investments and market subsidies; and reform of the economy through regulations and welfare programmes.

Addressing poverty and inequality is indispensable for tackling the deeper more contentious issues of racial and societal tensions that are dividing and paralyzing America.

Needless to say, a struggling, divided and unstable America is an America that is unfit to lead the world. Its attraction, as the cliché goes, comes not only from the example of its power, but the power of its example, as a stable, democratic and prosperous superpower.

So once Biden restores what he calls the “soul of American” – its democratic civility, economic vitality and political liberality – he will be able to proceed with restoring its credibility.

Reinstating American leadership will require rebuilding alliances, strengthening global institutions and upholding international agreements, which Trump abandoned.

Unfortunately, many among America’s allies, like its European and South Asian partners, have already moved on. They have begun to shape their own autonomous security structures and some have even signed new trade deals with China.

Although they are pleased with the changes in Washington and with America reengaging with the world in a responsible diplomatic fashion, America’s closest allies will not rush to embrace US leadership as in the past and will not be swayed by mere sweet talk or hollow assurances.

Biden will have to work harder than his predecessors to regain their trust. He will also need to accept more equitable transatlantic and transpacific relationships based on mutual respect and mutual interest.

These alliances are indispensable for America to deal with, not to say stand up to, a rising China and emboldened Russia, its two greatest challenges in the decades to come.

When it comes to great power politics, Biden will have to restore that which distinguished America from its rivals, albeit at times selectively and cynically, i.e. its emphasis on and promotion of human rights and democratic values.

And nowhere is this as urgent as it is in the Middle East, where the Trump administration has abandoned all that is politically legal, decent and humane.

Biden must put human rights at the centre of America’s regional policy. This begins by pressuring America’s clients, Saudi Arabia and Israel, to end the war in Yemen and the occupation of Palestine, respectively.

Returning to the Iran nuclear deal is commendable and necessary, but it must go hand-in-hand with ensuring Iranian respect for human rights and legal norms. As the region’s self-appointed guardian superpower, America shares responsibility for the civil wars in Syria and Libya, which Obama enabled and Trump left to fester.

Biden says America is shaped by a constant battle between its better angels and darkest impulses. This is also true for foreign policy.

It is high time for its better angels to prevail in America and beyond.

Al Jazeera

National Traffic Safety Month

Technology in Smart Traffic Management



KHALID MUSTAFA

“We can’t always put the blame for every mishap on the authorities. We need to do our bit as well. We can live safe but we, from our own end, choose the worse by ignoring the obvious and essential

Traffic Police City Srinagar recently inaugurated the National Traffic Month which will be observed for one month from 18th Feb 2021. This is the first time that it will be observed. Every year we witness thousands of deaths due to road accidents and challan for not obeying traffic rules and regulations. However, is the month enough to educate people regarding traffic measures?

Traffic police and various NGOs always remain on the front foot to launch various educational events for traffic management but now it’s our turn to take this in a positive manner and implement it in our daily routine.

As digital strides are taking over the world, traffic management must incorporate new technology to better handle traffic safety.

Surveillance cameras are good but we should think beyond these and must take the aid of Artificial intelligence, road sensors, remotely accessible traffic lights to manage traffic mess. Google has already provided us with free Google Maps software and other web applications which can be used by drivers to look for available routes to travel and get instant knowledge about congestion in traffic and can avoid such routes.

In recent times, HSRP (High Security Registration Plates) were introduced in vehicles and they are executable only when we use proper technological measures like roadside speed limit sensors, Artificial intelligence road traffic load graphs, online Challan executions, over speed alarm systems etc.

A small portion of the amount which we utilize on road developments, road encroachment can be used to form smart traffic management which will ease the burden off of both the public and our traffic officials. Implementation of such smart traffic systems will overcome various other issues and also offer safe and punctual public transportation. This can be done by speed sensors to warn commuters for over speed violation, GPS Systems for any medical and accidental emergency, tracing overloading of vehicles and much more.

Some of the smart traffic monitoring has already been incorporated in apps like mParihavan to provide real time validity and information of ve-



hicles in which the drivers can keep digital form of documentations of their vehicles. FASTag’s is another achievement in technology to provide commuters ease of paying toll taxes online; online DL issuance, Registrations are already being enforced. But a lot more needs to be done.

Even as progress and improvement takes time, our traffic police department is leading by example. A way to acknowledge their work would be by following traffic norms. Recently Traffic Police J&K came up with various awareness programmes like Ahtiyat (Sadak Surakhsha), A Walkathon etc to make people much more aware about the rules and regulations of traffic. Laws are never against us, they are created to make us live freely and comfortably in society and the world. We should obey these laws for ourselves and should leave no stone unturned as we’re being constantly educated and

enlightened about traffic rules and norms.

We can’t always put the blame for every mishap on the authorities. We need to do our bit as well. Instead of encouraging minor driving, overloading – we should encourage carpooling, avoid unnecessarily driving inside congested public areas, encourage wearing seat belts, helmets, report rash and drunk driving to the nearest police station and on emergency helplines. We can live safe but we from our own end choose the worse by ignoring the obvious and essential. Life is precious, return home to your families.

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The last few days, any follower of cricket must have been fed on a generous dose of praise heaped on the new India and their heroics to win back-to-back Test series in Australia — one of the toughest frontiers to conquer in the game. It’s been a series which, to put it in a nutshell, renewed our romance with the game at a time whose supply has outweighed demand in recent years.

What exactly has been this ‘new India’? I would urge you to go back to a visual of members of Indian team doing their victory lap after breaching the Australian fortress at the Gabba last Tuesday. Holding the giant tricolor is Shardul Thakur, who had been not even a regular member of India’s white ball plans; Mohammed Siraz, three Tests old; Washington Sunder, essentially a member of the national T20 squad; Navdeep Saini and T. Natarajan — who would not have been a part of the Test squad if India had not sent a jumbo squad in the first place as a backup for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Men like Rohit Sharma or Ravi Ashwin, the established stars, kept themselves away from the frame while captain Ajinkya Rahane is famous for taking the back seat in such moments. This very much summed up the ethos of the side which scripted one of the most intriguing comebacks in the history of Test cricket — not to speak of the Gabba win which would rate among India’s top three best-ever Test wins either at home or away.

The Indian cricket fan with a sense of history would urge not to forget India’s historic chase of 403 against the West Indies at Port of Spain in 1975-’76, masterminded by twin centuries by Sunil Gavaskar, Gundappa Vishwanath or the Marathon Act of VVS Laxman-Rahul Dravid in the 2001 Test at The Eden against Steve Waugh’s Australians. However, those were the legends of Indian cricket who pulled off the Houdini Acts — not the Everyman cricketer who punched above their weight for three Tests in a row — first staging a miraculous turnaround at the Boxing Day Test barely 10 days after being 36 all out in Melbourne, then fought with their backs to the wall at the Sydney Test to keep the series and finally turn the tables at the Gabba.

What made this miracle happen? There could be the argument that since winning their first Test series Down Under barely two years back to end a hoodoo of 70 years, men like new ‘Wall’ Cheteshwar Pujara, Rahane, Rohit Sharma, Mayank Agarwal, Jasprit Bumrah or Ravi Ashwin were no strangers to looking the Aussies in the eye and going for the kill if the situation was ripe for one. And yes, Head Coach Ravi Shastri also made a pertinent point when he said Virat Kohli — the captain in absentia — also deserves a bit of credit for instilling the self belief in the team.

Newsmaker: The young Indian cricket team

The extraordinary performance Down Under owes a lot to BCCI’s planning and IPL

GAUTAM BHATTACHARYYA



A lot of credit has been attributed over the past few days to the Indian Premier League (IPL), where rubbing shoulders with the Who’s Who of world cricket — a substantial number of whom are Australians — have certainly helped the likes of a Shardul Thakur or T. Natarajan get over any form of performance anxiety in facing a Pat Cummins or bowling to a David Warner. The latter, who captained ‘Nattu’ at Sunrisers Hyderabad in the recent edition of IPL in the UAE, had expressed his delight when the yorker man from Tamil Nadu made the cut for the Australian tour.

“For all the flak the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) faces, it’s process of developing the Under-19 reserves of talent and India A team programme — under the able guidance of Rahul Dravid — has yielded rich results

It would, however, be an oversimplification to lay the credit only on IPL’s door. For all the flak the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) faces, it’s process of developing the Under-19 reserves of talent and India A team programme — under the able guidance of Rahul Dravid — has yielded rich results. Be it the Young Turks of the Under-19 team like Shubman Gill, Prithvi Shaw or the India A products like a Agarwal, Thakur or Siraj — the amount of overseas cricket they have played have played it’s part in dishing out the fearless cricket that they are being applauded for today.

A quick look at some of the unlikely heroes of the Gabba miracle:

Mohammed Siraj: It has been a dream journey for Mohammed Siraj over the last four months — who from being the fall guy who leaked runs for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the 2019 IPL season — ended as India’s highest wicket-taker in Australia series with 13 wickets.

Despite grieving his father who died just before the series, the 26-year-old emerged as one of India’s new stars. Siraj’s father, an autorickshaw driver from the southern city of Hyderabad, always dreamt of seeing his son play for India but he passed away on November 20.

Siraj stayed in Australia and missed his father’s last rites despite the team management’s offer to fly back home. The image of Siraj welling up when India’s national anthem was played in Sydney went absolutely viral. “The boy has become a man on this tour. Siraj, leader of the attack in his first Test series and he has led from the front,” said former India opener Virender Sehwag.

Washington Sundar: Australia were in the driver’s seat after they ran through India’s top-order on third day of the Brisbane Test. In walked Sundar, a 21-year-old Test debutant who hit a defiant half-century and also took three wickets, including the key scalp of Steve Smith. Who would have bargained for the lanky white ball all-rounder making the cut if Ashwin was not injured?

Shardul Thakur: Playing his first Test of the tour, Thakur made the difference when he steadied India with a valuable 123-run first-innings stand with Sundar and also top-scored with 67. Growing up in a village in Maharashtra, Thakur, no rookie at 29, had to once commute in crowded local trains for two-and-a-half hours every day to chase his cricketing dreams.

This is commonplace for any struggling cricketer in the cut-throat environment of Mumbai, but had surely toughened up the young man.

Shubman Gill: He may be only 21 years old, but the shy smile masks the steel in his temperament and technique. Coming in as a replacement for an off-form Prithvi Shaw, Gill grabbed the opportunity with both hands and his counter-attacking 91 on the final day set the tone for India’s stunning win. It could still be early days, but the Punjab youngster and the leading batsman of Kolkata Knight Riders is already being touted as the next big thing of Indian cricket.

The challenge before India, with the return of Kohli the skipper, will be to be on guard against any sort of dip against England at home after such a high.

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Gulf News

Study Says Childhood Neglect Leaves Generational Imprint

Agencies

Early life experiences can have an outsized effect on brain development and neurobiological health. New research is showing that those effects can be passed down to subsequent generations, reporting that the infant children of mothers who had experienced childhood emotional neglect displayed altered brain circuitry involved in fear responses and anxiety.

The study appears in Biological Psychiatry: Cognitive Neuroscience and Neuroimaging, published by Elsevier.

"These results show that our brain development is not only shaped by what happens in our own life, but is also impacted by things that happened to our parents before we were even conceived," said lead author of the study, Cassandra Hendrix, PhD, Department of Psychology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA.

Dr. Hendrix and her colleagues studied 48 Black mother-infant pairs starting in the first trimester of pregnancy. Mothers

were given a questionnaire to assess childhood trauma (experiences of early abuse or neglect). The mothers were also evaluated for current, prenatal stress levels, and for anxiety and depression. One month after birth, infants underwent a brain scan using resting-state functional magnetic resonance imaging, a non-invasive technology that could be used while the babies slept naturally.

"These remarkable results leverage our ability to image the brain and its functioning very early in life," said Cameron Carter, MD, Editor of Biological Psychiatry: Cognitive Neuroscience and Neuroimaging.

The researchers focused on brain connections between the amygdala, which is central to processing fearful emotions, and two other brain regions: the prefrontal cortex and the anterior cingulate cortex. Both areas play a key role in regulating emotions. Babies whose mothers experienced childhood emotional neglect had stronger functional connections between the amygdala and the cortical regions.

After controlling for mothers'



current stress levels, the researchers found that the more emotional neglect a mother had experienced during her own childhood, the more strongly her baby's amygdala was connected to the frontal cortical regions. Physical abuse or neglect of the mother was not correlated with the stronger connectivity. The findings suggest that childhood emotional neglect has intergenerational effects on brain structure and function.

The significance of the stronger connection remains unclear, said Dr. Hendrix.

"The neural signature we observed in the 1-month-old infants of emotionally neglected mothers may be a mechanism that leads to increased risk for anxiety, or it could be a compensatory mechanism that promotes resilience in case the infant has less supportive caregivers."

Dr Hendrix added, "In either case, emotional neglect from a mother's own childhood seems to leave behind a neural signature in her baby that may predispose the infant to more readily detect threat in the environment almost from birth. Our findings highlight the importance of emotional support early in life, even for subsequent generations."

"The findings add to evidence of the intergenerational consequences of early life adversity, such as maternal neglect," added Dr. Carter.

"Future studies that follow children longitudinally will help us understand the functional significance of these changes in brain function in terms of the emotional and social development of children of mothers who experienced early neglect."

Humans used chopping tools half million years ago: Study



Agencies

Israeli and Italian researchers have discovered that early humans about half a million years ago used stone chopping tools to break animal bones and consume the bone marrow, Tel Aviv University (TAU) in central Israel have said.

In their study, published in the journal PLOS ONE, researchers from TAU and the University of Rome, in collaboration with the University of Tübingen, Germany, found that the tools were used to break open bones of cattle, fallow deer and gazelles, and extract the nutritious high-calorie bone marrow, the Xinhua news agency reported.

Applying advanced scientific methods, the

team unraveled the function of 53 tools found at the prehistoric site of Revadim in southern Israel.

These tools are flint pebbles with one flaked, sharp and massive edge, probably used by the late Homo Erectus species.

The team detected substantial edge damage on many pebbles, as a result of chopping hard materials, and some also showed residues of animal bones.

Use of replicas, made from pebbles collected in the area, on the bones of dead animals, led to the same results as in the original pebbles.

Such tools, invented in Africa about 2.6 million years ago and used for over 2 million years, were also found in Europe and Asia, with the current research revealing their use.

Office Of The Executive Engineer Construction Division Kashmir, J & K Sports Council, Srinagar

NOTICEINVITINGTENDERS

Tender Notice:E-NIT No:66of 2020-21

DA T E D: 19.01.2021.

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor, UT of Jammu & Kashmir, e-tenders are invited on percentage basis from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Government for the following work:-

S. No	Name of work	Adv cost (Rs. in lacs)	Class of Contract	Cost of TD	Technical Sanction No. & date	Administrative Approval No. & date	Time of Completion
1	Construction of Lavatory Block and rectification to existing chain link fencing at Pulwama Stadium.	35.00	AAY / BEE	Rs.1100/-	21/Esstt 2020-21 dt: 12/2020	Sports Council Order No: 38 of 2021 dt: 15.01.2021	30 days

Position of AAA

Position of funds

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Accorded

Under Capex 2020-21

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

Critical Dates	Table
1. Date of issue of Tender Notice.	19.01.2021
2. Period of downloading of bidding documents.	19.01.2021 from 6.00 PM to 30.01.2021 up to 4.00 PM.
3. Bid Submission Start Date.	20.01.2021 from 10.00 AM
4. Bid Submission End Date.	30.01.2021 up to 04.00 PM
5. Date & Time of opening of Bids (online)	01.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M. in the office of Ex. Engineer, Const. Division Kashmir, J&K Sports Council at Administrative Block, Bakshi Stadium, Srinagar.

2. The Cost of the tender documents shall be deposited into the bank account by the bidder for which the following information can be used by the bidder. (No Demand Draft shall be entertained).

1) Name of Bank

2) Account Title

3) Account No

4) Branch

5) IFSC Code

= J&K Bank Ltd.

= Executive Engineer, Construction Div. Kmr, JKSC

= CDG-0365010200000842

= Lal Mandi

= JAKA05BOARD

The bidders must upload the scanned copy of bank payment acknowledgment slip. Hard Copy shall be obtained only from the bidder who is declared as Lowest Bidder (L1) after opening of Financial Bids.

DIPK-NB-5235/20

Sd/-

Ex. Engineer, CDK

J&K Sports Council Srinagar

SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

SEALING ORDER

Subject:- Sealing of structure under clause 2.1.2 (b) and 2.2.6 of Srinagar Municipal Corporation Building Bye-Laws 2011 at Tengpora Bypass Sgr.

Whereas, the Competent Authority of Srinagar Municipal Corporation has granted a building permission in favour of 1. Farooq Ahmad Sheikh 2. Mushtaq Ahmad Sheikh S's/o Ali Mohammad Sheikh R/o, S/A Tengpora Bypass Sgr vide order No. 32 of 2019, dated:- 22-05-2019 for construction of double storeyed with attic residential house and erection of compound walling.

Whereas, the Ward Officer, Ward No. 32 SMC vide his No. W-32/267, dated:- 26-06-2019 reported that the permittee/ offender has violated the said building permission and recommended to take action under section 253 (1) of J&K Municipal Corporation Act 2000 against the above mentioned offender/ permittee.

Whereas, accordingly action under the provisions of J&K Municipal Corporation Act 2000 has been initiated against the offender by way of issuing show cause and demolition notice.

Whereas, the offender has assailed the demolition order before the Hon'ble J&K Special Tribunal Sgr and the Hon'ble Tribunal has passed an order in announced on 24.07.2019 wherein parties have been directed to maintain status quo on spot.

Whereas, the Ward Officer, Ward No. 32B SMC vide his No. W-32B/630-33, dated:- 20-05-2020 submitted another report wherein reported that a complaint application has been submitted by the inhabitants of Tengpora Bypass Sgr wherein they have complained that commercial activities are carried out in the residential house of Farooq Ahmad Sheikh, Mushtaq Ahmad Sheikh S's/o Ali Mohammad Sheikh by way of running poultry form which causes lot of problems to the locals as well as pedestrians of the area and are facing odour from the poultry form.

Whereas, a show cause notice has been issued to of 1. Farooq Ahmad Sheikh 2. Mushtaq Ahmad Sheikh S's/o Ali Mohammad Sheikh R/o, S/A Tengpora Bypass wherein they were advised to shift the said poultry unit from the residential area.

Whereas, as reported by Ward Officer vide his No. W-32B/SMC/650, dated:- 15-06-2020 that the said offenders have failed to shift the said poultry form from the residential house.

Whereas, a fresh report has been received from Ward Officer vide his No. W-32B/655, dated:- 22-06-2020 wherein he has reported that the offenders have converted the residential house into commercial and are running a poultry form in the said structure which causes nuisance and lot of problems to the inhabitants of the said area. The Ward Officer in the said report recommended to seal the said structure.

Whereas, a show cause notice for sealing under section 2.1.2 (b) of J&K Municipal Corporation Building Byelaws 2011 has been served upon the offender vide No. SMC/Enf/479-84, dated:- 28-05-2020 asking him to shift the said poultry unit from the residential area.

Whereas, the offender did not bother to reply the show cause notice which clearly shows that he has nothing to say in his defence.

Whereas, the above mentioned offenders have violated the sanctioned building permission which renders the structure as un-authorised as also Master Plan Norms which entails an action of sealing of the said building/ structure under section 2.1.2 (b) of J&K Municipal Corporation Building Bye-Laws Regulations 2011.

Now, therefore, in view of the above, the structure in question is hereby sealed under Clause 2.1.2 (b) and 2.2.6 of Srinagar Municipal Corporation Building Bye-Laws, 2011 "in terms of unauthorized use of any building or a part of building, without a Building use permit or in a manner that does not conform with it, sanctioned use or after a building use permit has been revoked, shall be deemed to be unauthorised use of building" and put under the Superdari with the Station House Officer Police Station Sherigadi and Ward Officer, Ward No. 32, SMC.

DIPK-NB-5241/20

No. SMC/

Dated:-

Commissioner,

Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER ANANTNAG

No.101/4626/MVD/ANG

Date:- 22/01/2021

NOTICE

Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag

MJA

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Office Of The District Youth Services & Sports Officer Kupwara

Phone/ FAX : 01955-252922, Email: dyssoakupwara@yahoo.in

Short Term Tender Notice

Sealed tenders affixed with Rs.2/= revenue stamp are called from interested dealers / suppliers for the following items of standard size, Specification & quality

S.No	Name of the item	Quality
01	Wushu Gloves (Std. Quality)	Leather & PU separately
02	Chess Guard Wushu (Std. Quality)	Leather & PU Leather & PU
03	Head Guard (Std. Quality)	Leather & PU Leather & PU
04	Gum Jum (Std. Quality)	Leather & PU Leather & PU
05	Wushu Uniform (Std. Quality)	Leather & PU Leather & PU
06	Track Suit (Std. Quality)	Leather & PU Leather & PU
07	Punching Paid (Std. Quality)	Leather & PU
08	Standing Punching Bag (Std. Quality)	Leather & PU Leather & PU
09	Kicking Pads (Std. Quality)	Leather & PU Leather & PU
10	Abdominal Guard (Std. Quality)	Leather & PU Leather & PU
11	Gymnastic Mats (Std. Quality) 2 inch	Leather & PU Leather & PU

Terms and conditions:-

- All quotations should be accompanied with CDR of Rs. 2000/-
- The rates shall include delivery charges upto the departmental go-down at Kupwara.
- The rates offered shall include all taxes as on 12/2020
- Samples have to be produced for ascertaining the specification/ quality.
- Successful bidders shall have to supply the articles within a week's time.
- Supply shall mention complete contact detail including a WhatsApp contact/ Email ID for further communications.
- The time lines finalized for supply of items shall be adhered strictly.

For detailed information the interested tenders holders are requested to contact the u/s during office hours . The tenders should reach this office within 07 days from the date of publication of tender notice. The tenders shall be opened on the same date.

District Youth Services & Sports Officer Kupwara.

DIPK-12057/20

No:- DYSSO./Kup/Estt/

Dated:-18/01/2021

Jammu And Kashmir Public Service Commission

RESHAM GHAR Colony BAKSHI NAGAR, JAMMU - 180001

webiste: <http://jkpsc.nic.in> Jammu: 0191-2566528 (f) 2566530

Email: jkpscsecretary@gmail.com Srinagar: 0194-2312629 (F) 2312631

Subject : Calendar For Departmental Examination, 2021

Notice: PSC/Exam/Calendar/2021/01

Dated 19-01-2021

This is for information of the candidates who have either applied against the notification(s) already issued during the course of 2020 or those who intend to apply in respect of the notification(s) as shall be issued during the course of 2021, that the examination(s) will be conducted as per the following schedule:

S.No	Name of Examination Notification issued during 2020	Date of Notification (Tentative)	Date of Commencement of Examination(s) (Tentative)
a) Calendar for Session I (January to June) 2021.			
1.	IAS (Probationer)	Already issued	08.03.2021
2.	Subordinate Accounts Course/Part-I (SAC-I)	-do-	08.03.2021
3.	Assistant Engineer (Accounts)	-do-	08.03.2021
4.	Executive Engineer (Accounts)	-do-	08.03.2021
5.	Secretariat Assistant Course/Foundation Course.	-do-	22.03.2021
6.	Statistical Assistant Course	-do-	22.03.2021
7.	Revenue Services (Executive)	08.03.2021	17.05.2021
8.	Labour Inspector/Labour Officer	08.03.2021	17.05.2021
9.	Excise & Commercial Taxes Part-I	08.03.2021	17.05.2021
10.	Excise & Commercial Taxes Part-II	08.03.2021	17.05.2021
11.	Excise & Commercial Taxes Part-III	08.03.2021	17.05.2021
12.	Statistical Officer	15.03.2021	07.06.2021
13.	Junior Statistical Assistant	15.03.2021	07.06.2021
14.	Subordinate Accounts Course Part-II	15.03.2021	07.06.2021
15.	Combined Competitive Services (Probationers).	15.03.2021	07.06.2021
16.	Accounts Clerk Course (ACC).	15.03.2021	07.06.2021
b) Calendar for Session II (July to December) 2021.			
1.	IAS (Probationer)	05.07.2021	13.09.2021
2.	Subordinate Accounts Course/Part-I (SAC-I)	05.07.2021	13.09.2021
3.	Assistant Engineer (Accounts)	05.07.2021	13.09.2021
4.	Executive Engineer (Accounts)	05.07.2021	13.09.2021
5.	Secretariat Assistant Course/Foundation Course.	26.07.2021	27. 09.2021
6.	Statistical Assistant Course	26.07.2021	27. 09.2021
7.	Labour Inspector/Labour Officer	26.07.2021	27. 09.2021
8.	Revenue Services (Executive)	16.08.2021	11.10.2021
9.	Excise & Commercial Taxes Part-I	16.08.2021	11.10.2021
10.	Excise & Commercial Taxes Part-II	16.08.2021	11.10.2021
11.	Excise & Commercial Taxes Part-III	16.08.2021	11.10.2021
12.	Statistical Officer	10.09.2021	15.11.2021
13.	Junior Statistical Assistant	10.09.2021	15.11.2021
14.	Subordinate Accounts Course Part-II	10.09.2021	15.11.2021
15.	Combined Competitive Services (Probationers).	10.09.2021	15.11.2021
16.	Accounts Clerk Course (ACC).	10.09.2021	15.11.2021

The dates of notification, commencement and duration of Examinations are liable to alteration, if the circumstances so warrant.

No: PSC/Exam/Calendar/2021

Dated: 19-01-2021

DIPK-12021/20

(Dr Shabir Hussain Keen) KAS

Controller Of Examinations

Google Threatens To Pull Search Engine In Australia



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Google on Friday threatened to make its search engine unavailable in Australia if the government went ahead with plans to make tech giants pay for news content. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison quickly hit back, saying "we don't respond to threats."

"Australia makes our rules for things you can do in Australia," Morrison told reporters in Brisbane. "That's done in our Parliament. It's done by our government. And that's how things work here in Australia."

Morrison's comments came after Mel Silva, the managing director of Google Australia and New Zealand, told a Senate inquiry into the bill that the new rules would be unworkable. "If this version of the code were to become law, it would give us no real choice but to stop making Google search available in Australia," Silva told senators.

"And that would be a bad outcome not only for us, but also for the Australian people, media diversity, and the small businesses who use our products every day." The mandatory code of conduct proposed by the government aims to make Google and Facebook pay Australian media companies fairly for using news content they siphon from news sites.

Silva said it was willing to pay a wide and diverse group

of news publishers for the value they added, but not under the rules as proposed, which included payments for links and snippets.

She said the code's "biased arbitration model" also posed unmanageable financial and operational risks for Google. She suggested a series of tweaks to the bill. "We feel there is a workable path forward," Silva said.

Like in many other countries, Google dominates internet searches in Australia. Silva told senators about 95 per cent of searches in the nation are done through Google.

Asked by one senator how much tax it pays, Silva said last year it paid about 59 million Australian dollars (\$46 million) on revenues of AU\$4.8 billion (\$3.7 billion).

Facebook also opposes the rules and has threatened to remove news stories from its site in Australia. Simon Milner, a Facebook vice president, said the sheer volume of deals it would have to strike would be unworkable.

The Australia Institute, an independent think tank, said lawmakers should stand firm against Google's bullying. "Google's testimony today is part of a pattern of threatening behaviour that is chilling for anyone who values our democracy," said Peter Lewis, the director of the institute's Centre for Responsible Technology.

Power Demand At All-Time High Of 187.3 Gw: Power Minister R K Singh



NEW DELHI: Power demand touched an all-time high of 187.3 GW on Friday, highlighting the growing strength of the economy, Power Minister R K Singh said.

"A fresh record has been created in Power Demand breaching the previous record of 1,85,820 MW which was created on January 20, 2021. Today the power demand touched 1,87,300 MW at 10:28 am. This again underscores the growing strength of our economy," Singh said in a tweet.

On December 30 last year, all-India power demand had touched 182.89 GW. According to data from the power ministry, the peak power demand met (the highest supply in a day) during January last year stood at 170.97 GW.

The rising power demand shows revival in economic activities leading to higher commercial and industrial demand, which was affected due to the pandemic.

The government had imposed a nationwide lockdown on March 25, 2020 to contain the spread of COVID-19. Power demand started declining from April as economic activities were disrupted due to COVID-19.

The pandemic affected power demand for five months in a row from April to August 2020. The demand recovered from September onwards. Peak power demand met grew at 1.7 per cent in September, 3.4 per cent in October, 3.5 per cent in November and 7.3 per cent in December. **PTI**



FARMERS SHOUT SLOGANS during their protest against the new farm laws at Singhu border in New Delhi. (Photo | Shekhar Yadav, EPS)

Farmers' Agitation Has Caused Business Loss Of Rs 50,000 Cr In Delhi-NCR: CAIT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: Traders' body CAIT on Thursday said the ongoing farmers' agitation in Delhi-NCR has caused a business loss of nearly Rs 50,000 crore.

Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) Secretary-General Praveen Khandelwal said the government's fresh proposal to keep farm laws in abeyance for one-and-a-half year and constitute a joint committee with farmer leaders "is quite justified and rea-

sonable which indicates its willingness to resolve the crisis".

Khandelwal said that therefore, now, the farmers should accept this proposal in the larger interest of farming community and those engaged in agriculture trade, and call off their agitation.

If farmers still do not accept the proposal of the government, it will be construed that they are not interested in solution but certain divisive forces are more willing to create problems, he added.

Khandelwal appealed to the government that traders should also be given representation in proposed joint committee.

"If any agreement is achieved without taking the traders into confidence, the farm (law) issue will remain in controversy and all exercise of the government may prove to be futile.

"We look for a comprehensive solution of the contentious issue, and legitimate interest of all stakeholders needs to be protected," he said.

Fuel Prices Rise Again, Reach New Highs On Friday

Agencies

Petrol and diesel prices rose sharply again on Friday reaching new all-time high levels as oil marketing companies decided to break the pause in revision of auto fuel prices to bridge the widening under recovery.

Accordingly, the pump price of petrol increased between 22-25 paise per litre across all major metros on Friday while diesel price increase ranged 23-27 paise per litre.

With this, petrol is now priced at Rs 85.45 a litre in Delhi as against previous days price of Rs 85.20 a litre. Similarly, in Mumbai petrol price increased to Rs 92.04 a litre, a 24 paise increase from previous days price of Rs 91.80 a litre. In Chennai and Kolkata, petrol is now priced at Rs 88.07 and 86.87 a litre respectively, registering an increase of 22 and 24 paise per litre from the previous day.

Diesel on the other hand faced sharper increase, rising by 27 paise a litre in Mumbai from previous days' level of Rs 82.13 a litre to Friday's retail price of Rs 82.40 a litre. In Delhi, diesel rose 25 paise per litre to Rs 75.63 a litre, in Chennai by 23 paise per litre to Rs 80.90 a litre and in Kolkata by 26 paise per litre to Rs 79.23 a litre.

The increase in retail price of auto fuel came on a day when global crude prices showed some signs of softening declining by less than one per cent to close to \$ 55 a barrel. Crude prices have



remained firm for the last couple of weeks in the wake of unilateral production cuts announced by Saudi Arabia and a pick up in the consumption in all major economies globally.

The increase in the petrol and diesel prices is the third such revision this week. The auto fuels had risen sharply by 25 paise per litre each on Monday and Tuesday before the OMCs decided to give relief to the consumers from frequent price rise for the last two days.

With Friday's revision, the pump price of petrol and diesel has now increased by Rs 1.74 and Rs 1.76 per litre respectively in January so far with OMCs' deciding to break an earlier longer period of pause increasing the retail prices for the first time this year on January 6. The price had been raised on six different days since then.

The last few increases in pump prices in petrol and diesel has taken its price to record levels across the country in all major

metro cities and other towns. The last time the retail price of auto fuels were closer to current levels was on October 4, 2018 when crude prices had shot up to \$ 80 a barrel.

The current price rise is largely on account of the steep increase in the central taxes of petrol and diesel and firm crude prices.

Petrol price was very close to breaching the all-time high level of Rs 84 a litre (reached on October 4, 2018) when it touched Rs 83.71 a litre on December 7, 2020. But the march had been halted ever since then with no price revision by the OMCs in the month. The price rise started again only on January 6.

Oil companies' executives said petrol and diesel prices may increase further in coming days as retail prices may have to be balanced in line with the global developments to prevent OMCs from making losses on sale of auto fuels.

AC Approves Adoption Of J&K PWD Engineering Manual 2020



JAMMU: The Administrative Council (AC), which met here under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, approved the adoption of J&K PWD Engineering Manual, 2020 by the Public Works Department (PWD).

The Engineering Manual has standardized the engineering practices with an aim to provide uniform code of practice for bringing more transparency and accountability in the operations of the Public Works Department.

Spanning over 29 chapters, the manual has codified various activi-

ties regarding human resource management, project preparation methodologies, engineering investigation, GIS/IT/RMMS monitoring, bidding documents, contract management, quality control mechanism and asset management among others.

It has introduced uniformity in the documentation of proposals, estimations, bids and record-keeping.

The manual will serve as a guide to keep pace with the contemporary engineering needs in conformity with existing practices and procedures to ensure transparency and engineering perfection.

CS Reviews Credit Flow Of Banks Directs Banks To Improve Lending To Housing And Priority Sectors

JAMMU: Chief Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam Friday commended the banks for their performance under AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, Back to Village Programme and various other initiatives taken by the Central and UT Government. He appreciated the services rendered by the banks to the people during the challenging times and stated that the banks have to be the partners with the Government in the process of economic development of J&K.

The Chief Secretary made these remarks while chairing the 2nd Meeting of J&K Level Bankers' Committee (UTLBC) meeting held on Friday.

The meeting was attended by Financial Commissioner (Finance) Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta (IAS), Principal Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Dheeraj Gupta (IAS), Principal Secretary Animal Husbandry / Agriculture Production, Navin Kumar Chowdhary (IAS), Director, DFS, MoF (GoI) A K Dogra, Regional Director, Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Kamal P. Patnaik, CGM NABARD, R K Srivastava, Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Sanjeev Verma, Deputy Commissioners of Jammu, Kathua and Samba districts. Other senior functionaries of the Government, RBI, NABARD, line departments, Banks, LDMS, Insurance companies, BSNL were also present in the meeting.

On the occasion, Chairman & MD, J&K Bank (Convenor, UTLBC J&K) R K Chibber apprised that the Banks in UT of J&K have disbursed an amount of Rs 22,472.17 Cr to 8,94,866 beneficiaries upto 31st December, 2020, thereby achieving 50.35 pc in financial terms and 58.18 pc in physical terms of the target fixed under Annual Credit Plan 2020-21. Under the major four Government Sponsored Schemes (GSS), viz. NRLM, PMEGP, NULM and SC/ST/OBC Schemes, it was informed that an amount of Rs 376.71 Cr has been disbursed by banks in favour of 13,536 beneficiaries.

Regarding 100% saturation of farmers under KCC Scheme, it was observed that banks in UT of J&K have issued 9.78 lac KCCs to farmers in J&K, which include 8.86 lac issued to Agricultural farmers and 0.92 lac KCCs to the farmers associated with Animal Husbandry and Fisheries activities with a total financial outlay of Rs 5900 Cr. Chief Secretary advised banks to ensure 100% saturation of farmers under KCC Scheme including those associated with allied agricultural

activities, viz. Dairy, Sheep, Poultry, Fisheries, etc. He stressed upon the banks to ensure that all pending KCC applications (both under Agriculture as well as Animal Husbandry/Fisheries) are disposed off by the end of Current Financial Year.

Regarding performance under various sectors, the Chief Secretary J&K advised the banks to lay special focus on Agriculture, MSMEs and Housing Sectors and ensure achievement of allocated target under Annual Credit Plan 2020-21. The Schemes like Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), Stand-up India, where loans upto Rs 1.00 Crore are provided to women & SC/ST entrepreneurs, need to be pushed on a mission mode the Chief Secretary added. He further emphasized the need for wider publicity of PMAY so that people of J&K UT can avail the benefit of interest subsidy.

Chief Secretary instructed banks to cover all eligible cases under PM SVANidhi Yojana (Street Vendors Scheme) - one of the flagship programs of GoI under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, including 6000 more cases expected to be sponsored by the concerned sponsoring agencies, by the end of CFY (2020-21). He also stressed upon the need to substantially increase issuance of indigenous RuPay Debit Cards to fulfill the Government of India vision to take every Indian towards a "less cash" society.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary lauded the role played by J&K Bank during the UT Government's Back to Village Program besides appreciating the efforts of SBI in having improved its performance under lending to Priority Sector. However, it was noted that performance of major new generation Private Sector Banks viz. HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank in lending to Priority Sector and Government Sponsored Schemes has not remained satisfactory. They were advised to scale up their performance in J&K henceforth.

Speaking on the occasion, Financial Commissioner Finance Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta stated that MSMEs Sector being the major driver of growth, banks need to put in strenuous efforts to achieve 100% targets allocated for the Sector under ACP 2020-21. Appreciating the role of banks during the Back-to-Village Programme, he stated that banks have so far sanctioned more than 16000 cases and envisaged an aggregate sanction of 20,000 cases under the programme by the end of Current Financial Year.

NEWS MAKERS

67 SLUs Distributed Among Weavers At Gbl

GANDERBAL: Under National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP) scheme, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shafqat Iqbal today distributed 67 Solar Lighting Units (SLUs) among the beneficiaries of Block Level Cluster, Alasteng, during a function organized by Weavers Service Centre Srinagar, here.

Speaking on the occasion, the DDC appreciated the department for working towards the upliftment of the weaver community and urged them to organize more such camps to make weavers aware about the prevailing welfare schemes being run by the department.

He also urged upon the weavers present there to take benefit from various schemes available with the department besides stressed upon them to adopt new technology and develop new designs so that the quality of products and their earning is improved.

Joint Director Handloom Development Department (HDD) Kashmir, Dr. Nargis Suraya, Assistant Director HDD Ganderbal, Assistant Director Handicrafts Department Ganderbal, Assistant Director Weavers Service Centre Srinagar and other officials of the department were present on the occasion.

Iran's Top Banker Says Some Frozen Funds Released, Expects More Freeing

Agencies

The governor of the Central Bank of Iran says some of Iranian funds locked up in foreign bank accounts have been released and further freeing is in the pipeline.

Several billions of dollars of Iran's money, mostly from oil and gas exports, are held abroad and are difficult to access because of tightening US sanctions on the major oil producer in recent years.

"Some of these resources have been released and we are using them. God willing, another part will also be secured," Abdolnaser Hemmati told reporters after a cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

Around \$2.7 billion deposited by the Seoul branch of Iran's Bank Mellat is held by the Bank of Korea, while



more than \$7 billion worth of Iranian oil money is stuck at the Industrial Bank of Korea and Woori Bank, according to Yonhap news agency.

South Korea's refusal to free them has turned to a diplomatic spat which escalated this month when it sent an anti-piracy unit to the Strait of Hormuz after Iran detained a South Korean-flagged tanker for polluting the waters.

"There is no political will on the

part of South Korean officials to resolve this issue, but this time they have promised to return with a full hand, and this is a promise which the country's deputy foreign minister has made," Hemmati said.

South Korea's First Vice Foreign Minister Choi Jong-kun visited Tehran this month after Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy impounded MT Han-kuik Chemi on January 4 for pol-

luting the Persian Gulf.

He was told by Iranian officials that the detention was a prerogative of the Islamic Republic's judicial system and pressed on Seoul's refusal to release the Iranian assets.

Yonhap on Monday said South Korea moved its naval unit operating near the Strait of Hormuz away from the waterway "to foster a positive mood" ahead of Choi's visit.

But the deployment had already irritated Iran and Iranian Ambassador Saeed Badamchi Shabestari was said to have expressed to Seoul his displeasure over the move.

According to the head of the Central Bank, South Korea has been using the assets, suggesting that Seoul's refusal to repay them is intentional because other countries have found mechanisms to clear their debts under the sanctions.

Essential Items Distributed Among Needy In Shopian

SHOPIAN: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, the Tehsildars of Shopian and Keller, along with teams today visited their respective jurisdictions to take stock of public issues and grievances besides to distribute essential items among the needy.

The Tehsildar Shopian along with the team visited Tachloo, Kumdalan and other villages of Tehsil Shopian to take stock of the problems being faced by the nomadic community. He after taking stock of their grievances distributed various essential items among them. He also offered them to shift to nearby Govt accommodation in view of fresh weather advisory issued by the MET dept.

Similarly the Tehsildar Kellar visited the hilly area and distributed essential items among the needy families

Fresh Snow

be ruled out. This spell is lower in terms of intensity & magnitude than the previous spell of January 4-5," he added.

Meanwhile, the minimum temperatures across the Valley increased marginally on Friday, even as they remained several notches below the freezing point, a MeT department official said here.

Srinagar city recorded a low of minus 6.1 degrees Celsius, nearly four notches below the normal for this time of the year. The city had recorded a minimum temperature of minus 7 degrees Celsius the previous night, the official said.

The minimum temperature in Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district was minus 6 degrees Celsius last night, up from minus 7.8 degrees Celsius the night before.

Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 7 degrees Celsius, up from minus 9.3 degrees Celsius the night before.

Qazigund recorded a minimum temperature of 6.2 degrees Celsius, the official said.

Kupwara in north Kashmir recorded a low of minus 4.8 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag in south recorded a low of minus 6.5 degrees Celsius.

Several water bodies in the Valley have frozen due to the intense cold.

A thick layer of ice on several roads in the city and elsewhere in the Valley makes it difficult for motorists to drive in the early hours. However, the situation improves later in the day as the Valley has been witnessing unusual winter sunshine.

Kashmir is currently in the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan', a 40-day period of harshest winter 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 and the water supply lines.

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

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

One Way Traffic

Srinagar only, and no vehicle from opposite direction will be allowed to move," Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Traffic T Namgyal said Friday.

A communiqué issued by Traffic Police Headquarters J&K, reads: "Tomorrow on 23-01-2021, subject to fair weather and better road condition, only one way traffic shall be allowed from Jammu towards Srinagar including Ramban-Banihal."

Meanwhile, Mughal Road, the alternative road which connects the Valley to Jammu division through the Shopian-Rajouri continued to be closed for traffic due to heavy snowfall. Agencies

Cross-Loc Firing

"The exchange of gunfire is underway at Nachian area," sources said.

The defence sources further said that the exchange of gunfire is still going on in the area. There are no immediate reports about injury or damage from the spot so far, they said.

On Thursday, an Army man was killed when Pakistani troops allegedly violated the ceasefire and resorted to firing on forward positions along the LoC in Poonch district.

Havaladar Nirmal Singh of the 10 JAK Rifles unit of the Army was critically injured in the firing and subsequently succumbed to his injuries, the officials had said.

Singh's killing came barely a day after four soldiers were injured in Pakistani firing along the LoC in Akhnoor sector on Wednesday. All the four soldiers had suffered splinter injuries and were shifted to the military hospital in Udhampur for treatment.

Jammu and Kashmir recorded 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. (With PTI inputs)

Covid-19 Claims

UP, the trooper belonged to 178 battalions CRPF and he died at JMC Jammu, the officials said.

The other victims include a woman from R S Pura Jammu, a 70-year-old man from Budgam and an 80-year-old man from Baghi Mehtab Budgam.

With these deaths, the fatality count due to the virus in Jammu and Kashmir reached 1928—719 in Jammu and 1209 in Kashmir Valley.

Srinagar district with 453 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (370), Baramulla (173), Budgam (117), Kupwara (94), Pulwama (88), Anantnag (84), Doda (64), Bandipora (61), Udhampur (57), Kulgam (54), Rajouri (55), Kathua (51), Ganderbal (46), Shopian (39), Samba (39), Poonch (24), Ramban (21), Kishtwar (22), and Reasi (15).

Meanwhile, eighteen travelers were among 88 fresh cases of Covid-19 reported across J&K during the last 24 hours thus taking the total number of people infected by virus in the UT to 123852. While 42 new cases were reported from Jammu division the remaining 46 were detected from Kashmir Valley.

Giving district-wise break-up, officials said, Srinagar reported 18, Baramulla 4, Budgam 5, Pulwama 4, Kupwara 3, Anantnag 4, Bandipora 2, Ganderbal 4, Kulgam 2, Jammu 32, Udhampur 2, Rajouri 3, Doda 1 and Poonch 4 new cases of coronavirus.

Also, officials said, 97 more Covid-19 patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals— 30 from Jammu Division and 67 from Kashmir Valley. (With GNS inputs)

Govt Approves

, he said, attempts to address various land-related issues impeding industrial development in J&K by laying down a framework to regulate zoning of industrial areas, project appraisal and evaluation, and the subsequent process flow.

He further said that the new policy proposes zoning of industrial areas at block/ municipality level after taking into consideration various factors including the existing level of industrial development, location of the proposed zone, and level of urbanization.

"The Jammu and Kashmir Industrial Land Allotment Policy, 2021-30 will also cover land allotment for health institutions/medi-cities and educational institutions/edu-cities," he added.

The official spokesperson said that the policy provides for constitution of Divisional Level Project Appraisal and Evaluation Committees to scrutinize applications received for allotment of industrial

land within 30 days; Apex Level Land Allotment Committee, High Level Land Allotment Committee and Divisional Level Land Allotment Committee to decide and allot industrial land to the applicant within 45 days in cases of projects worth Rs. 200 crore, Rs. 50-200 crore and up to Rs. 50 crore, respectively.

"Under the policy, land will be allotted to the investors on lease for an initial period of 40 years, extendable to 99 years. The allotted land will be liable to be cancelled in case of failure of the investor to take effective steps within the stipulated time of 2 years, failure of the industrial unit to come into production within 3 years, violation of provisions under the lease deed, and non-cooperation of an enterprise for a period of 5 years," he said.

He added that the policy also provides renting out of 60% of the built-up area of a business enterprise through a tripartite agreement.

"The policy aims at achieving inclusive growth through sustainable industrialization and employment generation, and includes provisions for evolving a fair and transparent mechanism for land allotment for industrial use," the official spokesperson added.

NEP To Help Gen

Sinha made these remarks during his visit to Central University of Jammu at Samba here on Friday, an official spokesperson said. Addressing the gathering, Sinha spoke on the length and breadth of the New Education Policy and new dimensions it will bring in the education system.

"With the New Education Policy, youth can follow their passion and most importantly focus on 'How to think' instead of 'What you think' as envisioned by the Prime Minister," the LG said, as per the official spokesperson.

Making a special mention of the Teaching fraternity, the LG said that Teachers can freely take new initiatives to focus on job-oriented education. Teachers are nurturing the powerhouse of the nation.

"They should encourage students to take up new research, tread new path of innovation which nobody has ever taken to explore," he said, adding "Youth is the agent of change. With transformation of youngsters into knowledge powerhouse, the entire country can be transformed."

As per the official spokesperson, Sinha further said that the new generation is thinking of spending vacation on the moon and the teachers will have to share this dream and create a new tomorrow, a new future and a new vision.

The LG urged the Teaching fraternity to focus on the quality of education so that "we may see the likes of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam coming out of the universities".

Noting with satisfaction that students from as many as 13 States are studying in the Central University of Jammu, the LG, as per the official spokesperson, asked the University Authorities to enrol more students for various courses, affording opportunity to more local students and at the same time, ensuring quality of research.

The LG, he said, narrated how Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya with his lofty ideals, reformative spirit and vision, established Banaras Hindu University, one of the best universities in the world.

"At the time of Independence, we had only five universities, but those few universities produced many great Scientists, Engineers, Doctors and Scholars. Today, we all need to introspect where we stand in terms of quality of education and research," Sinha said.

Terming Teachers' role as most crucial at this juncture, the LG observed that with new generation under the able guidance of teachers, the potential of youth can be developed for bringing in the revolution in every sector.

"On emerging global trends, the LG said that there are always new challenges and opportunities in the globalized world and we are facing completely new competition today. We can be amongst the frontrunners only if we focus on producing something better than others," the official spokesperson said.

He said that the LG also said that the consistent engagement with other centres of excellence in our education system aimed at developing a vast talent pool to bridge the gap between skill sets and modern day industrial requirements.

"He further stressed on incorporating students' feedback system in the education system, which leads to healthy communication and improvement in the institution," he added.

The official spokesperson said that underscoring the initiatives taken by the Government for channelizing the young energies in right direction, the LG said that there is a window of exciting opportunities being open up for our young generation so that they can reap the benefits of the new policies and plans of the UT Government specially envisaged for empowering the youth.

"Citing the challenges being faced by the Universities across the world of providing sufficient resources, primarily due to lack of qualified teachers, the Lt Governor stressed on fully exploiting the human resources available in the educational institutions," he said.

"The Lt Governor laid special emphasis on conducting periodic analysis across the whole gamut of faculty recruitment to identify the gaps and what needs to be done to be on the top. "This strategy, I believe, will turn any kind of crisis into an opportunity," he added.

House Panel

apprised the delegation about the frequent closure of the highway and the toll it is taking on the tourism.

"Frequent closure of Highway leads to the problems for Tourism Industry, as most of the domestic Tourists prefer to come by road, we also demanded the night landing at Srinagar International Airport", Gani said.

"Post Abrogation of Article 370 & 35A and then Covid-19 lockdown hit the Tourism industry badly, we have demanded the relaxation in GST for next five years, financial assistance so that we can review our business which has suffered a lot."

Gani said: "We have also demanded the enhancement in the budget for Tourism promotions along with that we should also be allowed for necessary renovations and repairs for our properties." A presentation was also given by Tourism Department where in they exhibited the potential of Tourism in Gulmarg.

Pertinent to mention the visiting Parliamentary standing committee which is headed by Rajya Sabha MP from Madhya Pradesh T G Venkatesh met with various stakeholders on issues related to Road, Travel, Tourism and Hospitality sectors in valley—(Agencies)

Govt Decides

shall be followed in letter and spirit in addition to suggestions of District Disaster Management Authorities.

The students can sit almost 2 metres apart from each other. In case of non-availability of such space, staggered schedule and Shift Timings and student rotation can be an option, it said.

"All students and Teachers should wear masks," the order, reads, adding, "Hand washing points with proper soap should be made available for the students and teachers. Everybody should wash hands frequently maintaining proper physical distance."

In case of absence of washing stations, it said, hand sanitizers of standard prescribed by Government be used as hand rub (for staff and older)

"Touching of surfaces by the students and teachers in and around the area of the school should be prohibited," it said, adding, "Disinfecting, sanitizing and cleaning the Learning spaces & surfaces in convergence with the concerned department and local volunteers should be a daily affair." (GNS)

JKBOSE Not

papers that were postponed shall be awarded proportionately as the mean of the marks obtained by the candidate in other theory papers in which he/she has appeared, according to an order.

"The marks in the External practical shall be awarded proportionally on the basis of the marks obtained in Internal assessment already conducted by the respective Schools of Kashmir Division and Winter Zone areas of Jammu Division," reads the order by Dr Farooq Ahmed Peer, Director Academics. (GNS)

PSAJK Moves

have already lost two academic years because it is impossible to conduct online classes using video-conferencing tools like Zoom or WebEx at 2G mobile internet speed," the association pleaded in the petition, as per the statement.

Furthermore, the statement said that the severe impact of school closures and the inability to shift to remote learning has been recognised by the Jammu & Kashmir State Board of School Education which had to reduce the syllabus by 40% for annual examinations scheduled in 2020 for students in Class 10, 11 and 12.

"However, no such concessions are available for students from Jammu & Kashmir who are appearing for national level competitive exams where the syllabus remains unchanged and where they must compete with students from other parts of India who have the ability to continue their education through high-speed internet access," it said.

"Due to the internet restrictions, many students have been forced to leave their families and live outside Jammu & Kashmir to prepare for competitive exams. Those without such privilege are left to compete with students from the rest of a country, on an unequal field," the Association added.

The handout further said that the denial of access to education has taken a toll on the mental health of children in Jammu & Kashmir and they are suffering from high levels of stress, anxiety and depression.

"For these reasons, we have once again approached the Supreme Court seeking enforcement of the fundamental right to education guaranteed by the Constitution and we hope the Court will restore 4G mobile internet access to protect the future of our students," the Association said.

Govt Extends

of J&K is battling the menace of (militancy), aided and abetted from across the border, and in view of well-founded apprehensions about the dissemination of inflammatory and seditious propaganda material that has a direct bearing on public order, limited restrictions on high-speed internet mobile services have been placed whilst allowing adequate access to the internet through broadband services over a landline," reads the order issued by home department.

"Whereas, the reports of the law enforcement agencies indicate that these restrictions have helped thwart the nefarious designs of the radical and (militant) organizations operating in the UT of J&K to misguide, provoke and incite the youth in furthering their anti-India agenda since regulation of high-speed mobile internet prevents easy streaming/dissemination/ downloading of such material/videos," it reads.

"Whereas threat perception on the security front in J&K continues to be high and there are credible intelligence inputs about the preparedness of (militants) to infiltrate from across the IB/LoC, as is also borne out from recent infiltration attempts, umpteen number of ceasefire violations and seizure of arms/ ammunition. Reports further suggest that data services that rely on the availability of high-speed internet are extensively utilized for coordinating and facilitating infiltration," reads the order.

"Now, therefore, upon assessment of impact of the directions for regulation of the telecom services on the overall security situation and maintenance of public order, while keeping in view the available alternatives, I, Principal Secretary to the Government, Home Department, being satisfied that it is necessary so to do, in the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the Security of the State and for maintaining public order, in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of section 5 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 and sub-rule (1) of Rule 2 of the Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017, hereby direct that access to internet shall be made available with the following restrictions," it reads.

"The internet speed shall be continued to be restricted to 2G, except in the districts of Ganderbal and Udhampur, where mobile internet connectivity shall be continued to be made available without any speed-related restrictions," the order reads.

"The postpaid SIM cardholders shall be continued to be provided the access to the internet, whereas, these services shall not be provided to the pre-paid SIM cards holders unless verified as per the norms applicable for post-paid connections," it reads. "Fixed-line Internet connectivity: Internet connectivity shall be continued to be made available, with Mac-binding," it added.

"The aforesaid directions shall be effective from January 23, 2021, and remain in force till February 6, 2021, unless modified earlier. The IGSP, Kashmir/ Jammu shall communicate these directions to the service providers forthwith and ensure their implementation in letter and spirit," reads the order.

Kashmiri Bird

disbelief and thought I was joking, but then I sent him the photos and soon we were raving in happiness."

Earlier in his childhood playmate, Sheikh Riyaz, Ansar had found a bird-watching companion. They discuss about birds and get excited over new avian findings.

But Ansar's wanderlust into woods and wilderness for capturing the winged creatures has already made him Kashmir's adept bird-watcher.

"There're 266 bird species in Kashmir, and I've covered 161," he says, adding, "actually, there're 366, but 100 are common between Jammu and Kashmir".

After exploring and clicking every new bird, he takes the help of a field guide, or an e-bird organization—known for its bird-identifying App.

"I upload photo of unknown bird on that App, and then they respond with the name of the bird," Ansar says.

"If they doubt the existence of bird in particular place, they call me or mail me asking where the bird was seen, what the habitat was surrounding them. They check all of it, and then they confirm our sightings."

Ansar lives a quintessential bird-watcher's life. He likes talking about birds and gets excited by rare avian species.

Among all the birds, he informs, Kashmir Flycatcher in particular belongs to Kashmir, "but it migrates out in winters, moreover, it has different breeding places."

In absence of birds, many of his days end without any sighting.

"I once went to capture Himalayan Monal," he says. "I had to wait for 3 hours just to have its flying shot but in the end I had to leave empty-handed. It's not at all an easy job to take photos of birds."

But then, some days do turn out to be a rainbow in the bird-watcher's life.

One such moment came during his recent outing in Dachigam. In a single day, he came across 25 species, including Golden Eagle and Orange Bulfinch, which are rare birds in Kashmir.

Back in 2018, the young bird watcher started his photography after seeing the chirpy guests frequenting his neighborhood orchard. His youthful admiration of birds grew into passion at every avian sight after that.

"I would sit on my window for hours together waiting for birds to come, and they would," Ansar continues. "Sometimes we both would eat the same fruit, far from each other. And I would click their moments."

After capturing more than 35 bird species from his window, the construction of residential houses inside the orchard has now restricted birds from visiting.

"Birds don't like disturbed places," he says while blinking his eyes firmly.

As part of his routine, however, the avian aficionado—who can proclaim the name of the bird from its chirping—silently steps between the trees of Rajaparian Wildlife Sanctuary.

Holding his long lens camera, he eyes around without missing a dust in air and deftly follows the bird. The closer he gets, the distant the bird flies.

"Birding is an art of perseverance and patience," the avid bird watcher continues.

"I observe them and move into them patiently, their natural instinct makes them scrutinize us. They sit on branches to know us. There's doubt about us and they hide and peek. They don't stop reading us. Seconds pass and they rule out any imminent threat. They ease themselves and I establish my passion in their ease."

Though Ansar's passion plays hide and seek behind the trees, he's certain to seek the hiding. The bird-watcher doesn't like to miss a vibrant bird sitting on a withered tree.

"Initially it was difficult for me to get pictures," he recounts his winged journey.

"I used to jump closer, bustling them into unawares. They would be gone in a jiffy, which would hurt me a lot and leave me with questionable expressions. This happened half a dozen times and I learned I can't go close to them. I needed a camera with better zoom, so that I could watch from distance without disturbing them. And I got one Nikon D750 with 150-600mm G2 lens."

Ansar fancies birds in and out, and nature does not disappoint him.

Once in the morning he moved out for work and surprisingly found a bird. Rushing back, he flung the door, and snatched the camera from his wardrobe.

"All the people in my home thought what devil did I see and my mother immediately fixed their thought saying, 'It's the same old birds he is chasing. And in the end I did capture the bird.'"

The same devotion made the grueling lockdown in Kashmir easier for him.

When everyone was looking for ways to pass the hours, Ansar would expend his time in bird-watching.

"One could evidently feel fresh air and better visibility during lockdown," he says. "The photographs were clear and I could easily detect birds and discern the specie."

A government employee in Animal Husbandry Department, he buys his accessories from his salary and moves out to places on holidays to find birds.

As someone whose passion lies in the sky and on the trees, Ansar can't resist birds.

Recently, when his friend informed him about an owl, he immediately scooted to that place, and called the doctor after seeing the bird inactively trying to clip into hiding.

"The owl was ill," he says. "The medico prescribed some medicines and I fed the bird with it over the night."

Next morning the owl seemed livened up.

"He fluttered in happiness," Ansar recalls."I stripped the owl off the restrain and took to the place of his habitat of trees and finally he was there in the sky, rounding the place."

Ansar's frequent bird-watching outings make him feel sorry about the fading green in the valley.

"The trees we cut are habitat to birds," he says, "and when trees are gone, the birds are naturally gone. We aren't only affecting the climate, but also stealing the homes of birds."

But as a bird photographer, Ansar believes that he's playing his part to protect environment.

"I feel like bird photographer is also a conservator, he conserves nature," he says."I trek into the places and pick up the polythene whenever I find one.It's heart-breaking to see wrappers on such pristine places."

Beautiful birds visit beautiful places, he asserts, and when a place becomes littered, it spoils the mood of birds compelling them to find another place for residing.

"It's imperative for people to know the bird diversity we are blessed with. I'm a medium to tell people how many birds we have, how much biodiversity in birdlife we have here, they must know it. I tell them through my photography that we don't only have common mynas and sparrows, we have 266 more bird species."

Ansar equally resents the deplorable condition of water-bodies in Kashmir.

Since a year now, he says, government has not attended to Shalbhough wetland.

"It has become polluted resulting in changes in water birds habitation," he says."The birds that used to come there didn't visit this year."

While as, in another wetland, Hokersar, birds visit in good numbers, because it's protected under wildlife.

"They put all the efforts there, restrict poaching and provide security to the winter visitors," the bird-watcher says.

To create awareness about the birds and give wings to passion, Ansar along with others has floated a group named 'Birds of Kashmir', which runs under the tagline: 'Birds and birders have no boundaries.'

"After we started uploading photos on social networking sites, we got a warm response from people," Ansar says.

"It was exciting for many of our viewers. People from different places and countries contacted us for accompanying them on their bird-watching visits. I'm happy that our tribe is growing in the valley today."

J&K Govt Lifts

importers and suppliers to provide a certificate from District Veterinary Officer/ Chief Animal Husbandry Officer of the concerned district of the sourced State/UT that the source of poultry is not from any infected area/suspected area and also not within 10 kilometers radius of notified Bird Flu infected zone.

"Director Animal Husbandry Kashmir will setup a robust surveillance centre at Lower Munda to list samples from each vehicle carrying poultry for testing and Director Animal Husbandry Jammu will further strengthen the surveillance system including testing of samples from each consignment at Lakhnampur," reads the order, adding, "Further, all Chief Animal Husbandry Officers will make a system to visit poultry importers, poultry farms and sale points on daily basis for surveillance purpose." Government had earlier banned the imports as soon bird flu scare started and has lifted it when six states including neighboring Punjab confirmed avian influenza in poultry.

There has so far not been any confirmed report of bird flu in J&K.

The states which have confirmed bird flu in poultry include Kerala, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Punjab. Across all birds, avian influenza has been reported in 12 states. The government of India has directed all state and UT governments to lift the ban on the imports to prevent loss to the poultry farmers.

KAS Officer

Government Order No. 1795-GAD of 2018 dated 21.12.2018 and attached with the General Administration Department, is hereby reinstated with immediate effect (sic)."

"The period of his suspension shall be decided after conclusion of the criminal proceedings pending against him in the Court of Law", the order reads.

"Consequent upon his reinstatement, Syed Muriad Hussain Shah, KAS is posted as Additional Secretary to the Government, ARI and Training Department", the Order reads further. (GNS)

Scuffle Leaves

hospital. Police officials confirmed the incident and said that a team has rushed to the spot and started the investigation into the matter.

CASO Carried

points were sealed and house-to-house searches were launched.

The operation was still going on when the reports last came in, they said adding so far no contact was established with militants.

Meanwhile, additional forces have been deployed in the adjoining areas to prevent any law and order problem.

NC Accuses Govt

prolonged incarceration of political leaders and workers in Jammu and Kashmir reflects the atmosphere of fear and repression giving a ditch to the claims of the government on bringing normalcy.

Such a policy violates people's basic rights to free speech, association and expression guaranteed under the Constitution of the country. The incessant witch-hunt over the unfounded and motivated allegations has also had a chilling effect on democracy in Kashmir, the statement said.

The leaders said the Orwellian nightmare we are reeling through seems to be inescapable on account of the ruling BJP's aversion to empowering the natives of Jammu and Kashmir politically and economically.

The unjust measures of the ruling BJP are unfortunately ignoring the human cost of such prolonged detentions due to the prevailing pandemic situation, ongoing winter chill. On emotional trepidation, (what) the kith and kin of such detainees are going through is heart-wrenching, they said in the statement.

The NC leaders said in its capacity of being a member of the UNHRC and bursting with global aspirations, the Government of India with BJP in its steering position should welcome calls for accountability and justice in Jammu and Kashmir.

It is high time for New Delhi to allow democratic and legitimate political space in Jammu and Kashmir. Pushing its cronies and stooges down the throats of people of J-K will not help getting the democratic process in Kashmir on track, the statement said.

The MPs said the recent verdict of the people in District Development Council elections was the best antidote to policy paralysis of New Delhi on Jammu and Kashmir.

Far from capitalising the overwhelming support of people of J-K for democratic process, saving yet another generation from the problems of conflict and helping them to find an honourable future within the Constitution of our country, the ruling BJP is busy rubbing their noses in the ground.

It is humiliating to those who stood for the Constitution and the unity of the nation, setting bad precedence which would have grave consequences for J-K and the country in general, the statement quoted them as saying.

Therefore, the ruling BJP in New Delhi should without any further delay restore the rights and dignity of the people of J-K and put it on the high-perch within the union of states considering its history and ever important relevance for the secular and pluralistic visage of the country, the MPs said. (PTI)

Man Killed

"A case has been registered in this regard," a police official said.

'MOHAMMED SIRAJ

The Find Of Australia Tour,' Says Coach Ravi Shastri

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: India head coach Ravi Shastri on Friday described rookie pacer Mohammed Siraj as the find of the Australia tour, hailing him for playing a key role in the historic Test series win despite the personal loss and racial abuse from spectators Down Under.

Siraj could not return to India after his father, who was an auto driver, died barely a week after he landed in Australia with the Indian team in November last year. He also faced racial abuse from a section of the crowd in Sydney during the third Test.

Despite all this, Siraj finished the series with 13 wickets -- the most

by any Indian bowler -- as the team came from behind to script a memorable 2-1 win.

"Find of the tour for shoring up the bowling attack the way he did - Mohd Siraj. He fought through personal loss, racial remarks and channelised them to find home in the team huddle," Shastri tweeted in appreciation of the 26-year-old pacer.

Siraj turned out to be one of the architects of India's success and successfully stepped into the shoes of his senior pace colleagues after making his debut in the series-turning second Test in Melbourne.

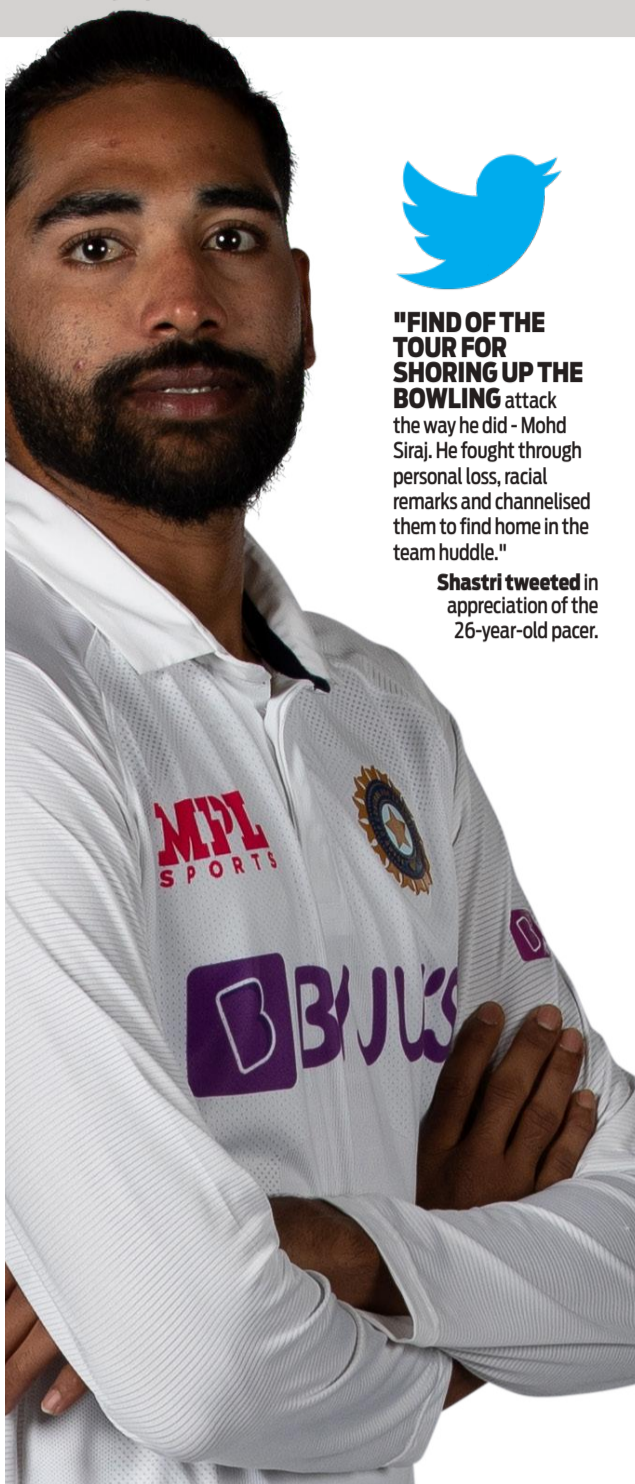
In the fourth Test in Brisbane, Siraj led a young Indian bowling attack, picking up his maiden five-wicket

haul in the longest format of the game.

He returned with match figures of seven for 150 as India beat Australia by three wickets in the series-deciding Test at the Gabba.

On Thursday, Siraj revealed that on-field umpires had offered his team the option of leaving the third Test against Australia midway after he was subjected to racial abuse by the crowd in Sydney, a proposal that was turned down by skipper Ajinkya Rahane.

After his arrival in the country, the youngster had driven straight to his father's grave in Hyderabad to pay his respects. He had dedicated each of his wickets in Australia to the departed soul.



"FIND OF THE TOUR FOR SHORING UP THE BOWLING attack the way he did - Mohd Siraj. He fought through personal loss, racial remarks and channelised them to find home in the team huddle."

Shastri tweeted in appreciation of the 26-year-old pacer.

'Move Away From Ashes Obsession, Try Beating India In India,' Graeme Swann Tells England

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: India seem "virtually unbeatable" after their historic Test triumph in Australia and England would be achieving something bigger than their "obsession" Ashes if the tourists manage to upstage Virat Kohli's men next month, feels former spinner Graeme Swann.

England would be touring India for a four-match Test series, beginning on February 5, followed by five T20 Internationals and three ODIs.

Swann said India, despite captain Kohli not being available after the first match, dominated Australia like very few sides have.

"England always saying 'well the Ashes are coming up'. Australia are not the best team in the world any more. They used to be, by miles.. they're not now, but we're obsessed with this," Swann told tabloid 'The Sun'.

"We have to move away from looking forward to the Ashes series. I think beating India in India is a far higher thing to strive for right now. They're virtually unbeatable in India since we beat them in 2012. Why isn't that the whole thing?" he asked.

He said if England want to be the best in the world, they should move away from the fixation of just trying to beat Australia in away series. The Ashes is scheduled to start in December this year in Australia.

The 41-year-old Swann, who took 255 wickets with his off-spin from 60 Tests between 2008 and 2013, asked the England players to learn from past mistakes and take on spin like Kevin Pietersen did the last time the Three Lions won a series in India back in 2012.

"Why aren't people saying 'right, this is a chance to get this team with good players of spin, use their feet, change the whole way we face spin bowling, and then we can beat India'.

"We're not going to beat India unless spinners are taking wickets and then we've got someone batting like we had with Kevin Pietersen."

Swann feels former captain Pietersen changed the way England played against spin.

"He was ultra-aggressive. Let's face it KP was a brilliant player and he batted unbelievably well there.

"We haven't done it since, we haven't learnt from how Kev batted on that trip and haven't gone on and used that as the blueprint."

Bangladesh Defeats West Indies To Clinch 3-Match Series

Agencies

DHAKA: Off-spinner Mehidy Hasan claimed a career-best 4-25 as Bangladesh clinched the three-match series against the West Indies on Friday with a seven-wicket victory in the second game.

Bangladesh won the first match by six wickets.

Skipper Tamim Iqbal hit 50 to help the side chase the target in 33.2 overs after the West Indies were bowled out for 148 in 43.4 overs.

It was Bangladesh's third straight and fifth overall series victory over the West Indies.

Fast bowler Mustafizur Rahman (2-15) and left-arm spinner Shakib Al Hasan (2-30) took two wickets each to play a key role after the West Indies opted to bat first.

Rovman Powell was the top scorer with 41 off 66, hitting two fours and one six as he led the side past 100.

Mustafizur got the wicket of Sunil Ambris (6) before Mehidy provided the key breakthrough, dismissing debutant Kjorn Ottey on 24.

In the same over, Mehidy removed Joshua Da Silva, after which



Al Hasan ripped through the middle order.

Nkrumah Bonner resisted for a while but pacer Hasam Mahmud got rid of him for 20 as the West Indies slumped to 71-7.

Powell then came to the crease and took the side past 100 alongside Alzarri Joseph by sharing 32 runs for the ninth wicket.

Mustafizur came back in his second spell to break the partnership as he removed Joseph with a short-pitched delivery for 17.

Powell added 28 runs for the last wicket with Akeal Hossain, who

scored 12 not out.

Tamim led the charge from the front, hitting 50 off 76, including three fours and one six.

He and Nazmul Hossain (17) shared 47 runs for the second wicket after opener Liton Das was dismissed for 22.

Raymon Reifer removed Tamim after he reached his 48th fifty but Shakib, who was unbeaten on 43, guided the side home, extending the winning streak to seven against the West Indies.

The third and final ODI is set for Monday in Chattogram.

'No Conflict With Pant, Expect Him To Improve,' Says Wriddhiman Saha

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Rishabh Pant may have redeemed himself with his match-winning innings in the epic Gabba Test win and veteran wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha on Friday said the youngster will also improve his skills behind the stumps, like someone masters "algebra" gradually.

Saha, who is considered India's number one wicketkeeper, said he does not see Pant's heroic show as the end of road for him in the Indian team and he will continue to strive for excellence, leaving the selection headache to the team management.

"You can ask him (Pant), we have a friendly relationship and help each other whoever gets into the XI. Personally, there's no conflict with him," Saha told PTI in an interview after returning home from the historic Test series win in Australia.

"I don't see who is No 1 or 2. Team will give a chance to those who does better. I will continue to do my job. Selection is not in my hands, it's up to the management."

Saha was all praise for the 23-year-old Pant whose 89 not out on the fifth day sealed the match for India at the Gabba to win the series 2-1.

"No one learns algebra in class I. You always go step by step. He is giving his best and will definitely improve. He has always matured and proved himself. In the long run, it augurs well for the Indian team, he said of Pant who was often found wanting behind the stumps.

"The way he has shown his intent after being sidelined from his favourite T20/ODI formats was really exceptional."

Since the Brisbane show, Pant's comparison with the legendary Mahendra Singh Dhoni has only grown but Saha said "Dhoni will remain Dhoni and everyone has his own identity".

Saha scored 9 and 4 in the Day/Night Adelaide Test where India were shot out for a record low of 36 and he did not play in the

remaining three matches.

"Anyone can go through a bad phase. A professional player always accepts the highs and lows, be it with form or criticism," the 36-year-old said.

"I was unable to score runs that's why Pant got the chance. It's as simple as that. I always focused on improving my skills and never gave a thought to my career, even when I started playing cricket. It's the same approach now," he said.

He said the series win was "no less than a World Cup triumph" because of the way the team bounced back from 36 all out in Adelaide and considering the inexperience of many players.

"Even though I did not play (in three matches), I enjoyed every moment of it.

"We faced challenges in putting up XI players, so it was an outstanding feat, an outstanding team effort. Definitely, it will be one of our greatest series wins."

Saha said India may not have known the outstanding depth in their reserve bench had they not faced the crisis situation of several players injuring themselves, apart from captain Virat Kohli leaving after the first Test on paternity leave.

"It was about instilling self-belief and going session by session. The series win last time also played in our minds," Saha said.

Both Pant and Saha have been picked for the first two Tests in the home series against England next month and it remains to be seen whether the team think tank will play the veteran as a specialist wicketkeeper.

Saha feels stand-by captain Ajinkya Rahane's success mantra was staying calm even in the toughest situations.

"He goes about his job with a cool head. Like Virat, he too has full of belief in his players. Unlike Virat, he never shows any excitement.

"Approach is a bit different. Rahane stays calm always, never loses temper. He knows well how to motivate the players. That is his success mantra."

IPL 2021 Auction Likely On February 18: BCCI Official

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The IPL players auction ahead of the 2021 season is likely to be held on February 18, a BCCI official told PTI on Friday.

"The auction will be held on February 18. The venue is yet to be decided," the official said.

The BCCI is also yet to decide whether the IPL will happen in India or not even though Board President Sourav Ganguly has repeatedly asserted that everything possible would be done to keep the glitzy event at its home.

The 2020 edition was held in the UAE in September-November due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A smooth conduct of India's



home series against England from next month should pave the way for the lucrative league to be held at home. The player retention deadline ended on January 20 and the trading window closes on February 4.

Top Australian draws like Steve Smith and Glenn Maxwell were released from Rajasthan Royals and Kings XI Punjab respectively on the last day of the retention deadline.

Liverpool's Unbeaten Run Of 68 Matches Ended By Burnley

Agencies

LONDON: Liverpool's 68-match unbeaten streak at Anfield in the Premier League ended with a 1-0 loss to Burnley in the latest setback of a fading title defense.

Ashley Barnes scored from the penalty spot in the 83rd minute on Thursday after the forward was brought down by goalkeeper Alisson Becker as Burnley became the first team to win in the league at Anfield since April 2017.

It was Burnley's first win at Liverpool since 1974 and it leaves Jurgen Klopp's side six points behind PL leaders Manchester United half-way through its title defense, having not scored in four successive games.

"It obviously didn't work out to-night and that's what we have to admit," Klopp said.

"It's obviously my fault."

Frustrations boiled over at the half-time whistle as Barnes reacted angrily to Fabinho appearing to flick out at him, provoking a small melee, but referee Mike Dean only showed the Brazilian a yellow card. Meanwhile Klopp and Burnley manager Sean Dyche had their own heated exchange as they headed down the tunnel.

"I didn't start it, but it's nothing," Klopp said.

"All good."

While Liverpool is chasing a record equalling 20th English title, Burnley is trying to stay in the league and it moved seven points above the drop zone.



"We knew if we keep believing we will get something," Barnes said. "We were growing into the game. We managed to stick to our jobs, slow everything down, and it worked."

Liverpool was again made to pay for its lack of a cutting edge having left the out-of-form Mohamed Salah and Roberto Firmino on the bench for an hour and the team has now gone 7 hours, 18 minutes without scoring in the league.

The only point taken off Liverpool at home in last season's title charge came in a draw with Burnley.

Dyche's team finished this game with the same amount of possession 29 percent but crucially went

one better.

Burnley employed similar tactics of defending resolutely, competing physically and taking the opportunity when it arose.

The same could not be said for Klopp's side, which had 27 attempts but only six on target.

With captain Jordan Henderson out with a minor groin problem and Salah and Firmino rested, the onus was put on replacements Divock Origi, who has one league goal since December 2019, and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain.

Neither lived up to the billing and were taken off before the hour-mark, with Origi missing the chance

of the night just before half-time.

An uncharacteristic miss-kick from Burnley captain Ben Mee put Origi clean through, but his lack of game time and confidence showed as he blasted a shot past goalkeeper Nick Pope but against the crossbar.

The Belgium striker's only goal this season came in the 7-2 League Cup victory at Lincoln.

Pope arrived at Anfield with five clean sheets in his last 10 league games, but he was not properly tested in the opening 45 minutes.

Sadio Mane had an early header blocked by Dwight McNeil, but there followed a succession of shots from Xherdan Shaqiri, Oxlade-Chamberlain, Origi and Andy Robertson which the England international dealt with comfortably.

Burnley's one real opportunity came when Alisson dropped a cross under pressure from Chris Wood, but he reacted well to block Barnes' shot.

Just over 10 minutes into the second half and with the game drifting, Klopp sent on Salah and Firmino, with the Egyptian straight into the action by forcing Pope into his first decent save low at his near post.

Burnley substitute Johann Berg Gudmundsson blazed wide from close range, but it was not as bad as the Firmino effort which was so off-target that compatriot Alisson, 80 yards away, dropped to his knees, held his head and let out a yell.

After Burnley's goal, Liverpool chased an equalizer but Firmino's close-range shot was deflected wide by Mee.

Amid Reports Of Cancellation, Tokyo Olympics Organizers Say 'Focused On Hosting'

Agencies

TOKYO: President Thomas Bach and local organisers are pushing back against reports that the postponed Tokyo Olympics will be cancelled.

Now set to open July 23, the Tokyo Games were postponed 10 months ago at the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, and now the event appears threatened again.

The Times of London, citing unidentified government sources, reported that the games will have to be cancelled. It quoted an unidentified senior member of the ruling government coalition.

"No one wants to be the first to say so but the consensus is that it's too difficult, the source said.

"Personally, I don't think it's going to happen."

In a statement Friday, the local organising committee did not address directly The Times story, but said the Olympics were going forward and had the support of Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga.

"All our delivery partners including the national government, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee, the IOC and the IPC (International Paralympic Committee) are fully focused on hosting the games this summer," the statement said.

"We hope that daily life can return to normal as soon as possible, and we will continue to make every effort to prepare for a safe and



secure games."

The Times of London said Japan hoped to land the 2032 Olympics. The IOC has already awarded the 2024 Olympics to Paris and the 2028 version to Los Angeles.

The idea of Tokyo waiting a decade seems unlikely, given the cost of maintaining venues, negotiating new leases, and so forth. Tokyo has already spent about USD 25 billion to organise these Olympics, most of which is public money.

Several reports of a cancellation began to surface this month when the Japanese government put Tokyo and other prefectures under a state of emergency order to counter a surge of rising COVID-19 cases.

"We have at this moment, no reason whatsoever to believe that the Olympic Games in Tokyo will not open on the 23rd of July in the Olympic stadium in Tokyo," Bach told the Japanese news agency

Kyodo on Thursday. He also said there is "no Plan B."

Senior International Olympic Committee member Richard Pound said earlier in the week that the Olympics may be held largely without fans, making it a mostly television event.

The Switzerland-based IOC gets 73 percent of its income from selling broadcast rights and has seen its main revenue source stalled by the Olympic postponement. A largely TV-only event would suit the IOC better than a cancellation.

Unlike other sports businesses that offer hundreds of games, the IOC has only two main events to sell the Summer and Winter Olympics.

Bach hinted that radical changes may be needed to pull off the Tokyo Olympics, which involve 11,000 athletes and tens of thousands of coaches, officials, judges, VIPs, media and broadcasters.

Elon Musk Announces \$100 Million Prize To Develop This Technology

Agenceis

Tesla Inc chief and billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk on Thursday took to Twitter to promise a \$100 million prize for development of the "best" technology to capture carbon dioxide emissions.

Capturing planet-warming emissions is becoming a critical part of many plans to keep climate change in check, but very little progress has been made on the technology to date, with efforts focused on cutting emissions rather than taking carbon out of the air.

The International Energy Agency said late last year that a sharp rise in the deployment of carbon capture technology was needed if countries are to meet net-zero emissions targets.

"Am donating \$100M towards a prize for best carbon capture technology," Musk wrote in a tweet, followed by a second tweet that promised "Details next week."

Tesla officials did not immediately respond to a request for additional information.

Musk, co-founded and sold Internet payments company



PayPal Holdings Inc, now leads some of the most futuristic companies in the world.

Besides Tesla, he heads rocket company SpaceX and Neuralink, a startup that is developing ultra-high bandwidth brain-machine interfaces to connect the human brain to computers.

Newly-sworn-in U.S. President Joe Biden has pledged to accelerate the development of carbon capture technology as part of his sweeping plan to tackle climate change. On Thursday, he named Jennifer Wilcox, an expert in carbon removal technologies, as the principal deputy assistant secretary for fossil energy at the U.S. Department of Energy.

Congress Demands JPC Probe Into Purported WhatsApp Chats of Arnab Goswami

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: The Congress on Friday demanded a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) probe into the purported WhatsApp chats of Arnab Goswami for breach of national security and violations of Official Secrets Act and book those involved.

The Congress Working Committee, the highest decision making body of the grand old party, passed a resolution to this effect.

The CWC, chaired by Sonia Gandhi earlier discussed the issue along with that of the farmers' agitation and the COVID-19 vaccination drive and passed three resolutions on each of them.

"The CWC demands a time-bound investigation by a Joint Parliamentary Committee to enquire into the breach of national security, violations of Official Secrets Act and the role of the persons involved. Ultimately, those who are guilty of treacherous behaviour must be brought before the law and punished," the CWC resolution said.

The CWC expresses its grave concern at the revelations "exposing the sordid conversations that have undoubtedly compromised national security", it said.

"It is clear that among those involved are persons in the highest echelons of government and there has been a breach of secrecy concerning vital and sensitive military operations. The revelations also point to inexcusable and deliberate subversion of government structures, scandalous and extraneous influence over government policies, and a vicious attack on the independence of the judiciary," the resolution also said.

It alleged that the "shameful compromise" of the Modi government with non-government players has been exposed.

The CWC also expressed shock that even days after the revelations, the prime minister and central government remained silent on the

issue as though the storm will pass.

"Their silence undermines their collusion, complicity and guilt. The storm will not pass and we will hold the central government accountable for compromising national security and aiding India's adversaries," the resolution said.

Earlier, in her introductory remarks, Sonia Gandhi said there have been "very disturbing reports" on how national security has been "so thoroughly compromised".

Referring to former defence minister AK Antony dubbing the leaking of official secrets of military operations as treason, she said the silence from the government's side on what has been revealed has been deafening.

"Those who give certificates of patriotism and nationalism to others now stand totally exposed," the Congress chief said.

In another resolution, the CWC demanded that the Centre immediately repeals the three 'anti-agri' laws, against which the farmers have launched an agitation for the last over 50 days.

The CWC noted that these three laws impinge upon the constitutional rights of states and constitute the first step in dismantling the three pillars of the edifice of food security built up over the past decades - MSP, public procurement and PDS and also did not pass the test of parliamentary scrutiny as they were bulldozed by muzzling the voice of the opposition.

The resolution further said that the farmers only want repeal of the laws, but the government continues to side-step, malign, deceive and hoodwink the farmers by attempting to tire out, intimidate and divide the farmers.

In another resolution, the CWC said it calls upon the central government to take all necessary steps to overcome the hesitancy among frontline health professionals on COVID-19 vaccination.



Farmers delegation coming out after the meeting with Union Agricultural minister Narendra Singh Tomar at Vigyan bhawan in New Delhi.

Govt-Farmers Talks Hit Roadblock; Unions Threaten To Intensify Agitation

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The government's negotiations with protesting farm unions hit a roadblock on Friday as the farmer leaders stuck to their demands for a complete repeal of three farm laws they find pro-corporate and a legal guarantee for MSP, even as the Centre asked them to reconsider its proposal for putting the Acts on hold for 12-18 months.

Unlike the last 10 rounds of talks, the 11th round could not even reach a decision on the next date for the meeting as the government also hardened its position saying it is ready to meet again once the unions agree to discuss the suspension proposal.

This followed a big climbdown made by the Centre during the last round when they offered to suspend the laws and form a joint committee to find solutions. Farmer leaders said they will intensify their agitation now and alleged that the government's approach was not right during the meeting.

They also said their tractor rally will go ahead as per the plans on January 26 and unions have told the police that it is the government's responsibility to maintain peace. While the meeting lasted for almost five hours, the two sides sat face to face for less than 30 minutes.

In the very beginning, the farmer

leaders informed the government that they have decided to reject the proposal made by the government in the last round of talks on Wednesday. The three central ministers, including Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, urged the union representatives to reconsider their stand, after which the two sides went for a lunch break.

The break, during which the farmer leaders had their langar (community kitchen) food, lasted for more than three hours and also saw the 41 farmer leaders holding consultations among themselves, at times in smaller groups, while the three central ministers waited in a separate room at Vigyan Bhawan.

After the meeting, Bharatiya Kisan Union (Ugrahan) leader Joginder Singh Ugrahan said the discussions have broken down as the unions rejected the government's proposal.

Another farmer leader Rakesh Tikait said the ministers said the suspension period can be increased to up to 2 years, but the unions remained firm on their demand for a complete repeal and a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price mechanism for procurement of crops.

The ministers told the unions that they have been given all possible options and they must discuss internally the proposal of suspending the

laws. Tomar told the farmer leaders that the government would be ready for another meeting if farmers want to discuss the proposal, sources said.

The minister also thanked unions for their cooperation and said while there were no problems with the laws, the government offered to suspend them as respect for the protesting farmers. Coming out of the meeting venue, farmer leader Shiv Kumar Kakka said there was no headway in the discussions and the government asked unions to deliberate on its proposal again.

Kakka was the first to leave the meeting, but said it was for "some personal reasons". In the last round of meetings held on Wednesday, the government had offered to put on hold the three laws and set up a joint committee to find solutions.

However, after internal consultations on Thursday, the farmer unions decided to reject the offer and stick to their two major demands - the repeal of the three laws and a legal guarantee of the minimum support price (MSP).

"We told the government that we will not agree to anything other than the repeal of the laws. But the minister asked us to discuss separately again and rethink the matter and convey the decision," farmer leader Darshan Pal told PTI.

Facebook's 'Supreme Court' To Decide On Trump's Suspension

Agencies

SAN FRANCISCO: Facebook on Thursday said it is asking its independent experts to rule on whether former president Donald Trump's suspension for "fomenting insurrection" should stand.

Facebook and Instagram suspended Trump after his supporters stormed the US Capitol on January 6, an attack on the seat of democracy that led to Trump's second impeachment.

The leading social network is referring the decision to its independent oversight board - known informally as the Facebook "supreme court" - with the authority to make binding rulings even chief executive Mark Zuckerberg must abide by.

"We believe our decision was



necessary and right," Facebook vice president of global affairs Nick Clegg said in a blog post.

"Our decision to suspend then-president Trump's access was taken in extraordinary circumstances: a US president actively fomenting a violent insurrection designed to

thwart the peaceful transition of power; five people killed; legislators fleeing the seat of democracy."

Unprecedented circumstances called for unprecedented action against Trump, reasoned Clegg, a former deputy British prime minister. Facebook's oversight board is

Google Says It Will Shut Search Engine In Australia If Forced To Pay For News

Agenceis

Google said on Friday it will disable its search function in Australia if the government proceeds with a media code that would force it and Facebook Inc to pay local media companies for sharing their content.

Australia is on course to pass laws that would make the Big Tech giants negotiate payments with local publishers and broadcasters for content. If they can't strike a deal, a government-appointed arbitrator will decide the price.

"The code's arbitration model with bias criteria presents unmanageable financial and operational risk for Google," Mel Silva, managing director for Australia and New Zealand, told a senate committee.

"If this version of the code were to become law, it would give us no real choice but to stop making Google Search available in Australia."

Google's comments drew sharp rebuke from Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison who said the country makes its rules for

"things you can do in Australia."

"People who want to work with that in Australia, you're very welcome. But we don't respond to threats," Morrison told reporters.

The United States government this week asked Australia to scrap the proposed laws, which have broad political support, and suggested Australia should pursue a voluntary code instead.

Australia announced the legislation last month after an investigation found Alphabet Inc-owned Google and social media giant Facebook held too much market power in the media industry, a situation it said posed a potential threat to a well-functioning democracy.

Google's threat to limit its services in Australia came just hours after the internet giant reached a content-payment deal with some French news publishers.

Google's testimony "is part of a pattern of threatening behaviour that is chilling for anyone who values our democracy," said Peter Lewis, director of the Australia Institute's Centre for Responsible Technology.

Gogoi Provided 'Z+' VIP Security Cover



Agenceis

NEW DELHI: The Centre has accorded the top category 'Z+' VIP security cover to former Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi, official sources said on Friday.

They said that 66-year-old Gogoi will be protected by armed commandos of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) during his travel all across the country. A Rajya Sabha member now, Gogoi

was earlier being provided with a security cover of the Delhi Police.

He retired in November, 2019 and was later nominated to the upper house of Parliament by the government. Sources said that the CRPF has a VIP security unit and Gogoi is its 63rd protectee. They said an armed mobile team of 8-12 CRPF commandos will be securing the former CJI during travel while his house will be guarded by a similar team.

Kerala Man Wins Over USD 54,000 in Weekly Draw in UAE

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: A UAE-based Indian engineer has won 200,000 dirhams (USD 54,451) at a weekly draw in Dubai, according to a media report.

Shivin Wilson, who is from Kerala, got five of the six winning numbers right during the draw held on January 16.

"I was very excited to be playing for the first time. I actually missed watching the live draw, so I checked the results the following morning and it was only then that I realised I had won. Finding this out was a brilliant feeling and I am very happy," Wilson was quoted as saying by the Gulf News on Thursday.

He said his friends, who are regular Mahzooz players, encouraged him to join in the digital draw that promises a whopping first-tier

prize of 50 million dirhams (USD 13.6 million).

Wilson, who works as an engineer in the construction wing of a petrochemical plant, said he will spend a part of his winning amount to pursue career-related qualifications that will help provide him with greater opportunities in the future.

"Besides using the money for educational purposes, I plan on using it to support my parents," he said.

"Just try it (Mahzooz). If you play, you can also have some luck. I played for the first time and had the fortune of winning. So anything is possible," he added.

Last month, Navaneeth Sajeevan, a 30-year-old unemployed Indian man from Kerala, won USD 1 million in a raffle draw contest in the UAE.

Delhi Airport Evaluating Computer Vision To Ensure Social Distancing

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Airport is evaluating a 'computer vision' technology to track passengers, reduce waiting time and ensure social distancing at its terminals, a top official of the facility's operator said on Tuesday.

Computer vision technology uses images to analyse and understand passenger density at the airport. It has already been installed at the GMR Group's Hyderabad Airport.

Delhi Airport, which is also led by a GMR Group-headed consortium, installed the 'Xovis' passenger tracking system at Terminal 3 last month. It uses sensors to check passenger density.

"We are also evaluating some other technologies. As you might be aware that the Terminal 1 is getting revamped, so while this (Xovis) system is a tried and tested one, there is also something called computer vision technology our Hyderabad Airport has tried. We are also



evaluating that for future uses," Videh Kumar Jaipuria, CEO of Delhi International Airport Limited, said at a press conference.

Since flight operations are currently less than pre-COVID-19 levels, only Terminal 2 and Terminal 3 of the Delhi Airport are handling aircraft movement. In the Xovis passenger tracking system (PTS), passengers are counted and tracked anonymously using

ceiling-mounted sensors.

The Xovis system calculates passenger density and if it goes beyond a particular level, it sends a signal to Delhi Airport operator's team, Jaipuria said.

The PTS receives data streams from the sensors and provides the airport operator with valuable key performance indicators (KPIs) such as waiting times, process times and passenger throughput.

The operator has put PTS

display screens at various points of Terminal 3's check-in hall, arrival pier junction and so forth.

Jaipuria said all other stakeholders like CISF, which provides security at the Delhi Airport, as well as the Bureau of Immigration have also been linked with the Xovis system.

"We have to work with the CISF and the Bureau of Immigration to make sure that the passengers' waiting time keeps coming down. All the stakeholders have responded very positively to this particular technology," he added.

Jaipuria clarified that while the airport operator is using systems like Xovis, markers and volunteers on ground, it does not have the legal power to penalise anyone.

"So, what we bank on is that people would respond to our requests, signage, announcements, and we keep on urging them to maintain social distancing, which is good for them and good for the fight against coronavirus," he noted.



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