



SUNSET Today 05:59 PM SUNRISE Maximum : 5.1º Minmum :-5.6° Humidity : 91% Tommrow 07:31 AM



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P3 NEWS

SDA TO RESERVE 25% COMMERCIAL SPACE AT MECHANISED PARKING FOR WOMEN The 79th meeting of the Board of Directors of Srinagar Development Authority (SDA) was...

MINDFUL FRIDAYS WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH Perpetually spoken common statement 'zou aur te jahan aur'

P7

THINK

which is in vogue in our society signifies the importance.



P11 SPORTS **MEET PULWAMA WRESTLER RASHIDA** SIMNANI WHO WANTS TO TEACH **KASHMIR WOMEN SELF-DEFENSE** Born in the rural world of Drabgam, Pulwama, Syed

Rashida Simnani is a 21-year-old Belt Wrestling...

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Cuote Healthy citizens are

the greatest asset any country can have.

— Winston S. Churchill

"

NEWS DIGEST

Jammu Bans Bovine Transportation

JAMMU: The district authorities here on Thursday ordered a ban on transportation of bovine animals from the winter capital city without permission over fears of disturbance of peace and tranquility. District Magistrate Jammu, Sushma Chauhan, has ordered a ban on transportation of bovine animals such as cows, oxen, bulls, calves etc from Jammu to other districts, except with the
More On P10

Cops Recover Stolen Pistol, Arrest Thief

JAMMU: Police on Thursday claimed to have recovered stolen service weapon in Jammu and arrested a burglar involved in the act In a statement issued, a police spokesman said that on January 21, a complaint regarding service weapon theft was lodged in Police Post Sarwal by ASI Ali Muhammad Wani of JKAP 7th Bn presently posted at Manwal (Sangar). The complainant told that he kept his service weapon in
More On P10

CASO Held In South Kashmir Villages

SRINAGAR: Amid severe cold, joint forces launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) in two villages in south Kashmir's Pulwama and Shopian dictricts, reports said Thursday. After receiving inputs about the movement of militants. soldiers of 50 RR cordoned off Mir Mohalla in Pampore of Pulwama district, news agency KNT reported. The report further said that doorto-door searches
More On P10

Intense Cold Wave Grips Kashmir Valley **Gulmarg Shivers** At Minus 13.4 **Degrees Celsius**



Press Trust Of India

low of minus 5.6 degrees Celsius, plunging more than **SRINAGAR:** The mercury three degrees from minus 2 plunged by several degrees degrees Celsius the previacross Kashmir as the valous night, the officials said. ley was gripped by intense Qazigund recorded a minimum of 10.5 degrees cold wave conditions on Thursday, officials said here. Celsius down from minus The extreme subzero temperatures have resulted in

4.4 degrees Celsius the previous night, they said. freezing of water bodies and The minimum temperature drinking water supply lines at the Gulmarg skiing resort, in many areas of the valley. in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.
More On P10 Srinagar city recorded a

Snowfall Declared 'State-Specific Calamity'

he Jammu and Kashmir administration on Thursday declared the heavy snowfall of January 3 as a state-specific natural disaster under the state disaster response fund (SDRF) guidelines to grant relief to the affected families and the departments. "Sanction is hereby accorded to the:-Declaration of the spell of heavy/very heavy snowfall during the period 3rd to 9th Jan-2021. • More On P10

e traffic authorities on Thursday Highway ordered closure of Srinagar-Jammu **Closed** For highway for vehicular traffic on Friday

Budget Session Set **To Be Stormy Press Trust Of India**

NEW DELHI: The Budget session of Parliament beginning Friday is poised to be stormy with the Opposition set to attack the government over the three new farm legislations, amid an ongoing agitation by farmers. The session will begin with the address of the President to the joint sitting of the two Houses

on Friday morning followed by the presentation of the Union Budget on February 1.

A total of 16 Opposition parties have announced a boycott of the President's address in solidarity with the farmers protesting the new farm laws, senior Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad said on Thursday.

The 16 Opposition parties have also
More On P10

14-Days Old **Militant Held In Bandipora: Police**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Police on Thursday claimed to have arrested a Jaish-e-Muhammad militant from Patushahi area of north Kashmir's Bandipora district.

Imtiyaz Ahmad Khan of Panzigam was arrested at checkpoint established by government forces at Patushahi following credible information about the movement of militants from Sopore to Bandipora, a police spokesperson said Thursday

Police Issue Lookout Notices Against Farmer Leaders

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police on Thursday issued lookout notices against farmer leaders named in an FIR in connection with the violence during the farmers" tractor parade on Republic Day and invoked sedition charges in a case of the Red Fort incident as the force intensified its investigation. It also asked the farmer

leaders to submit their response within three days, explaining why legal action should not be taken against them as they did not follow conditions set for the parade.



Sources said that around nine crack teams have been formed to locate all the culprits. even as there was no official

confirmation from the police yet. The move comes a day after Police Commissioner S N Shrivastava said
More On P10

J&K Records

'No Arrests Will Happen, Will Hang Myself'

haratiya Kisan Union (BKU) spokesperson Rakesh Tikait was seen giving a fiery speech as police arrived at the Ghazipur border. "Police will be responsible if something happens here," he said. The police arrived at the Ghazipur protest site after Ghaziabad District Magistrate (DM) gave an ultimatum to the protesting farmers to vacate the Ghazipur border protest site by today evening. While issuing the order, DM also said that free transportation

More On P10

sorted to firing and mortar

shelling in Shahpur sector. The

Indian army, he said, were re-

sponding effectively to the un-

provoked ceasefire violation

by Pak troops.
More On P10

Indo-Pak Troops Trade Fire, Teenager Hurt

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: A teenager on Thursday was injured as India and Pakistani troops exchanged heavy gunfire and mortar shells along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir.

18-year-old Ikhlaq Ahmad of Shahpur village along the LoC was injured on Thursday evening after receiving splinter

Pak Officials Return Poonch Woman

36-year old woman, who had inadvertently crossed over to \Pakistani authorities at the cross-LoC point on Thursday, officials said. Zareena Bi from Chela Dangri had inadvertently
More On P10

63 New Covid-19 Cases injuries in Pakistani shelling, **Press Trust Of India** officials said. The injured teen, they said, was removed to the district hospital for treatment. Kashmir Earlier, the officials said, Pakistani troops violated ceasefire agreement and re-

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Thursday recorded 63 new coronavirus cases raised that its tally to 1,24,297, while one person died due to the infection in the past 24 hours, officials said. The number of active

cases in the union territory fell below the 1,000-mark for the first time in the past eight

Two Teens Injured In Scuffle, One Critical

SRINAGAR: Two teenage boys were injured during a scuffle at Malbagh Ummer Colony in Lal Bazar area of Srinagar, officials said on Thursday. Official sources told the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that two teenage boys were injured during a scuffle late Wednesday evening in Lal Bazar area. "One among them is critical," they said, adding that the duo has been shifted
More On P10

School Building Gutted In Shopian Blaze

SRINAGAR: A Government School building was gutted in a fire mishap at Amarbugh village of Imamsahib in South Kashmir's Shopian district on Thursday evening. Locals said that a massive fire broke out this evening at Government School building Amarbugh following which they called officials and tried to douse off fire. They said that the school building was severely damaged till the fire was doused by fire tenders
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row on 29-01-2021, no vehicular movement Today shall be allowed from
More On P10

He said incriminating materials including arms & ammunition were
More On P10

months, they said. Of the fresh cases, 18 were reported from the • More On P10

Mehbooba Alleges **BJP Hand In** Jan-26 Violence Press Trust Of India

IAMMU: PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti on Thursday demanded immediate withdrawal of the three farm laws saying these were enacted without consulting farmers.

Mehbooba, who arrived in Jammu on Wednesday on a week-long tour of the region to hold threadbare discussions with senior PDP leaders on party affairs and future strategy, made these remarks at Gandhi Nagar here.

"I feel that the government should take back these laws immediately," she told reporters in reply to a question on the violence on Republic Day in New Delhi.

More On P10

Colleges, Universities In Valley To Reopen From February 15

Govt Issues Covid-19 Guidelines To Resume Academic Activities

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Thursday announced reopening of colleges and Universities in Jammu division from February 1 and in Kashmir Valley from February 15 while issuing a set of Covid-19 guidelines for the higher education institutions to resume academic activities.

The higher education institutions in summer zone areas of Jammu division will re-open from February 01, an official spokesperson said here Thursday, adding while as in



Kashmir Valley and winter zone areas of Jammu, the institutions will open on 15th February after winter vacations.

He said that the order issued here by the Higher Education Department has urged the institutions, staff • More On P10

Vested Interests In Admin Harassing KP Employees: APMCC



Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: All Parties Migrants Coordination Committee (APMCC) on Thursday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha here and alleged that there are vested interests in the union territory administration who are creating unnecessary hurdles in the working of migrant employees in the Valley.

It also raised with the Lt Governor other issues being faced by the Prime Minister's Package employees, including harassment, promotion, transfer and accommodation, spokesperson, APMCC, King C Bharati said. "The Kashmiri Migrant PM

Package Employees are working in Kashmir valley on a special package created exclusively for them and are
More On P10



KD Sethi: 'Epitome of Brotherhood' Is No More

As a stalwart of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, Sethi had witnessed many important political events of J&K, be it communal riots during 1947 Indo-Pak partition, Quit Kashmir movement and his trysts with powers of the day. His death was condoled widely and across the borders.

Auqib Javeed

hen partition was bleeding subcontinent in 1947, many **VV** Samaritans were going out of their ways to save people from the mad-frenzy of violence. Among them was a young man from Jammu.

"As a right-minded person, Krishen Dev Sethi saved lives of many Muslims and non-Muslims in Mirpur and Jammu during the 1947 bloodcurdling fall," says Mohammad Sayeed Malik, a veteran journalist.

"Sethi sahib saw the entire madness unfolding in front of his eyes and tried his best to play a fireman among arsonists."

Sethi breathed his last after prolonged illness on January 28, at his home in Jammu's Mohalla Dulpatian at the ripe age of 93. Born in 1927, at Mirpur, now part of

Pakistan-administered Kashmir, Sethi started his political career before 1947. As a 15-year-old political activist, he fought feudalism, landlordism, moneylenders and repression by both British and autocratic rulers of Kashmir.

He eventually became a member of the first constituent assembly in 1951 and a member of the first legislative assembly in 1957. Sethi represented Nowshera assembly constituency twice as MLA.

"Despite our ideological differences we shared a very close bond as friends. He was the man who had deep respect for any human irrespective of caste, religion, race and creed," Malik told Kashmir Observer.

As an active participant in the "Quit Kashmir Movement", Sethi faced twoyear imprisonment during Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad's regime. He remained underground for eight years during the 1960s for propagating peace with China.

"Sethi was a politician of higher stature and played a key role in formation of J&K's own constitution," Malik said. "He was the face of the National Conference in Mirpur and Jammu."

Despite Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah appointing him provincial general secretary of his party, Sethi openly criticised the populist leader's policies.

In 1953–the year Abdullah was arrested in "Kashmir Conspiracy Case"-Sethi joined ultra-left politics and formed Democratic National Conference. His outfit was joined by NC deserters like Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq, Mir Qasim, and DP Dhar.
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Study Sheds Light On How Blood Stem Cells Maintain Their Lifelong Potential For Self-Renewal

team of scientists has discovered that cells in the so-called "stem cell niche" are responsible for the lifelong selfrenewal capacity.

The study on mice stem cells suggested that the blood vessel cells of the niche produce a factor that stimulates blood stem cells and thus maintains their self-renewal capacity. However, during aging, the production of this factor ceases and blood stem cells begin to age.

The study led by scientists at the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) and the Heidelberg Institute for Stem Cell Technology and Experimental Medicine* (HI-STEM) was published in the journal Nature Communications.

Throughout life, blood stem cells in the bone marrow ensure that our body is adequately supplied with mature blood cells. If there is no current need for cell replenishment, the blood stem cells remain in a deep sleep to protect themselves from damage to the genome, which can lead to cancer.

Blood loss, infections, and inflammations act like an alarm clock: immediately, the blood stem cells begin to divide and produce new cells - for example, to provide immune cells to fight viruses or to compensate for a loss of red blood cells or platelets. With each cell division, the stem cells always regenerate themselves as well, so that the stem cell pool is maintained. This is what scientists call self-renewal.

"The dormancy is the prerequisite for this unique ability of stem cells," explained Andreas Trumpp, a stem cell expert at DKFZ and HI-STEM.

"The almost unlimited selfrenewal capacity is considered a key property of the very rare stem cells, which play a central role in the maintenance and repair of tissues and organs. However, cancer cells also possess this ability. They either derive directly from stem cells or acquire this ability through genetic modification. Without self-renewal, there is no cancer," Trumpp summed it up. A team of researchers led by An-

A team of researchers led by Andreas Trumpp now wanted to find out which molecular signals control the self-renewal ability. In their current analyses, they discovered in mice that dormant blood stem cells carry large amounts of the receptor protein neogenin-1 (Neo-1) on their surface.

In contrast, other blood cells do not produce this receptor. Further investigations revealed Neo-1 to be a key molecule for self-renewal: if the researchers genetically switched off the receptor in mice, the stem cells no longer slept, thus losing their ability to self-renew, and the animals' hematopoietic system exhausted prematurely.

Neo-1 is a receptor that enables the stem cell to receive external signals. But where do these important signals, which are essential for the self-renewal ability, come from? The researchers identified the signal molecule netrin-1 as the binding partner and activator of the Neo-1 receptor. Netrin-1 is produced by the endothelial cells that line the fine blood vessels in the bone marrow.

"We genetically knocked out netrin-1 in the stem cell niche of mouse bone marrow. The blood stem cells then lost the ability to self-renew. In contrast, when netrin-1 production was experimentally increased, they slept all the more deeply," said Simon Renders, first author of the study.

Scientists refer to the structures in the immediate vicinity of stem cells as

a stem cell niche. The niche can consist of cellular and non-cellular components and exerts a major influence on the functions and fate of blood stem cells. Netrin-1-bearing cells of blood capillaries are also part of the niche.

"Our results reconfirm the central role of the stem cell niche for stem cell function and thus for the regenerative capacity and health of our body," Trumpp explained.

The age-related depletion of the hematopoietic system could also be traced in the animals: With age, the bone marrow changes its structure, and the tiny blood vessels degenerate. Using older mice, the scientists were able to show that this is accompanied by a loss of netrin-1.

The blood stem cells initially try to compensate for this lack of their important signal generator by increasing the formation of Neo-1. However, with increasing age, this compensation is no longer sufficient, and the hematopoietic system increasingly loses its self-renewal capacity. The result of these changes is an increasingly weaker immune system in old age.

ازعدالت نائب تحصيدار ايكريكيليو مجسرتيك درجه اول نائب تخصيلدار تربهگام		
عنوان: مضمون درخواست منجانب بى بى صليقه دختر پير رحت لله شاه ساكنه تر برگام بمراد عطا يكى		
ۋىيېڭرنىك سرڭىيكىيك		
اشتهار بمراد آگایی هر خاص و عام		
معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بمراد عطالیگی ڈیپنڈنٹ سرتفیکیٹ پیش کی		
ہے۔ جو کہ فتر ہذا میں زریر کاردائی ہے اور اجرا کرنے مطلوب ہے بی بی صلیقہ کے والد میر رحمت نلد شاہ ایک برای مدینہ اور میں مشتر		
الیک سرکاری ملازم تھا۔ جو مورضہ2014-12-22 کو فوت ہو ہے سائل تمبہ بذیل افتراد پر مطنتل ہے ایک سرکاری ملازم تھا۔ جو مفرد شدہ ہے گا ہا ہے۔		
بی بی ظراییہ دختر چیر رحمت للہ شاہ گھریلو کام 56 سال بی بی صلیقہ دختر ۔۔۔ 53		
ې ې سيم در		
بې بې زېيه دخر ـــــــــــــــــــــــــــــــــــ		
بي بي نسيبہ دفتر 42		
اسکے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد نہیں ہتلایا گیا ہے سرکفیکیٹ زریہ بحث ادا کرنے میں اگر کسی		
شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ یوم کے اندر پیش کریں۔		
میعاد <i>گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر</i> یا اعتراض قابلِ قبول نہں ہو گاہ۔ یقہ م		
نائب تخصیلدار تربگام fnt		
ازعدالت نائب تحصيدار ايكريكيد مجسريت درجه اول نائب تحصيلدار تربكام		
عنوان: مضمون درخواست منجانب مشاق احمه میر ولد غلام محمه میر ساکنه تر بهگام بخصیل تر بهگام بمراد عطا یگی		
ۋىيىدىن سركىكى مەكە ئىڭ بېچ بېچ ئەن ئە ئىر دە ئە بىلە ئىر ئە ئە ئەبە بە ئەر ئە ئە بەبە بە بەر ئە ئە يەن ۋىيىدىن سركىكىيى		
پ کر اشتنجار بمراد آگایی هر خاص و عام		
معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بمراد عطائیتگی ڈیپنڈنٹ سر کفیکیٹ پیش کی		
ہے۔ جو کہ فتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اور اجرا کرنے مطلوب ہے سائل کمبہ بذیل افتراد پر مشتل ہے		
سارہ بیگم زوجہ مشتاق احمد میر گھریلو کام 45سال		
شففت مشتاق پسر زیر تعلیم 20 مهجور احمہ پسر زیر تعلیم 18		
مهجور احمد پسر زیریغلیم 18		
شاه خالد بیگم زوجه غلام محمد میر عمر رسیده 72		
اسکے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد نہیں ہتلایا گیا ہے سائل سرٹفیکیٹ زیر بحث ادا کرنے میں		
اگر ^{کسی کھ} خص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ یوم کے اندر پیش		
کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابلِ قبول ^{نہ} ں ہو گاہ۔ یہ		
نائب تحصيلدار تربگام fnt		
از دفتر نائب تخصیلدارا یکزیکید مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول آورہ کپورہ		
عنوان :مضمونُ درخواسيت : ۔ مدترُ رياض ولد رياض احمد خان وقراۃ العين زوجہ مدترُ		
الوان . " ون دروا من مدر ربا ن دلدریا ن مدهان د ۱۶ مین دوجه مدر		
ریاض خان ساکنه گله گاه تحصیل کپواڑہ بمرادعطائی PSP سڑنفکیٹ		
اشتهار بمرادآ گاہی ہرخاص وعام		
معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائلاں بعنوان بالا دفتر هذا میں زیر کا دائی ہے		
-اسبارے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے بیانات بشمول مطلوبہ نفولات ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیاجس		
سے عیان ہوتا ہے کہ سائل موضع گلگا مکاسکونت دار ہے۔کنبہ کی تفصیل یوں ہے۔		
انام المرتخبينا بيشه اليفيت		
بيثر الفريذان بيان الفرياح خلان 22 بالذم و		

تراہ العین زوجہ مدثر یاض خان 30 ملاز مت قرار العین زوجہ مدثر یاض خان 32 گھریلو کام کنبہ کی ماہوار آمدنی مبلغ 1624 روپہ پیخمیناً یائی گئی لہذا زیر بحث سر ٹفکیٹ بحق سائل اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی بھی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہوتو سات دن کے اندرا ندرا پنے عذرات دفتر ھذا میں پیش کرے۔ میعاد گذرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قبول نہ ہوگا۔ تحریر الصدر نائب تحصیلدر

از نیابت ماگام عنوان: مضمون درخواست عرفان الحق پیرزاده ولد غلام قادر پیرزاده ساکنه موضع ماگام بمراد عطایگی بیکوارڈ ایریا سر*شیکیٹ تح*ت SRO294 **اشتهار بمراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام**

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معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر کمیں سائل نے آیک درخواست بمراد بیکوارڈ اریکا سرتفیکیٹ پیش کی ہے۔ جو کہ فتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے مزید کاروئی کرنے سے جمل بذریعہ اشتہار ہر خاص و عام کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ یوم کے اندر پیش کرس۔ میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہں نائب تخصيلدار ماكام fnt

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> Shahzad Ahmad Mir S/o Nazir Ahmad Mir R/o Braripora

fnt

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I have applied for the issuance of Pesticides License for my business unit under name and style Thoker Pesticides Nadigam Shopian. If anybody having any objection may contact Plant Protection Officer Lal Mandi Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Aamir Aziz Thoker S/o Abdul Aziz Thoker as R/o Nadigam Shopian

Public Notice

I have applied for the issuance of Fertilizers License for my business unit under name and style Thoker Fertilizers Nadigam Shopian. If anybody having any objection may contact Chief Agriculture Officer Shopian within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. **Aamir Aziz Thoker S/o Abdul Aziz Thoker** as **R/o Nadigam Shopian**

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(www.jkdat.nic.in)

Subject: Extension of date for submission of Life Certificate by Pensioners/ Family Pensioners.

CIRCULAR

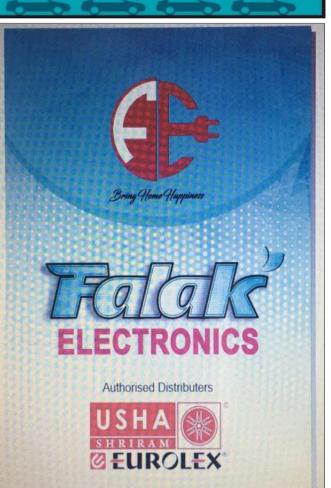
In pursuance of rules, the pensioners drawing pension through Treasury/Bank are required to produce life certificate once in a calendar year i.e, by ending November every year which was extended upto 31.12.2020 vide circular dated 26.11.2020 issued under endorsement No. DGAT/Comp-Try/DLC/01/208 dated 26.11.2020. However, it has been brought to the notice of the Finance Department by J&K Bank Ltd as well as pensioners that most of the pensioners have not produced their mandatory Life Certificate by the extended date due to ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the vulnerability of elderly population to Corona Virus.

Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pension Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare Govt. Of India vide OM dated 23.11.2020 has extended the existing timeline for submission of Life Certificate from 1st November, 2020 onward till 28th February, 2021. During this extended period, the pension will continue to be paid by the Pension Disbursing Authorities (PDAs) uninterrupted.

In view of above, to avoid rush at Bank /Treasury while maintaining social distance and to facilitate the elderly pensioners to furnish the mandatory Life Certificate to the concerned authority of Bank/Treasury, the date for submission of Life Certificate by the pensioners is hereby extended till 28th of February, 2021. All the pensioners shall, therefore, furnish their Life Certificate to the concerned Bank/Treasury by or before 28th of February, 2021, failing which their pension shall not be disbursed.

DIPK-12216/20

No. DGAT/Comp-Try/DLC/01/PS/DDC/05 Dated: 27/01.2021 Sd/-(Mahesh Dass), Director General, Accounts & Treasuries, Finance Department



6006-772636 | 9906-992636 MAGAM (Near Boys Hr. Sec. Degree College Road)

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News





IN ANOTHER BONE-NUMBING day in Kashmir on Thursday, life was caught between shiver and business as usual. KO Photo Abid Bhat

SDA 79th BoD Meeting SDA To Reserve 25% Commercial Space **At Mechanised Parking For Women**

SRINAGAR: The 79th meeting of the Board of Directors of Srinagar Development Authority (SDA) was today chaired by Principal Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department, Dheeraj Gupta at Civil Secretariat here.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Planning Development and Monitoring Department Simrandeep Singh; Vice Chairman Srinagar Development Authority Dr. Bashir Ahmad Lone; Chief Architect J&K; Special Secretary, Forest, Ecology and Environment; Additional Secretary, Finance and Additional Secretary, Revenue represented respective Board members in the meeting.

Divisional Kashmir; Deputy Commissioner, video conferencing. Srinagar; Commissioner, Sri-

Chief Engineer, R&B Kashmir; en entrepreneurs in the commer- the land strip opposite Sang-Chief Town Planner, Kashmir cial complex at mechanised car armal City Centre, availing of

The Board decided to reserve

Webinar On Access To Justice

end the litigations related to In-

The Board gave its nod to issued accordingly.

constitute a sub committee for working out modalities of disposal of SDA land adjacent to Sangarmal City Centre and land at Sambora, Pulwama.

The Board also decided to constitute fresh Establishment Committee and Finance Committee for examining matters related to Human Resource Management and Finance to be headed by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar and Director Finance, Housing and Urban Development Department respectively.

Vice Chairman SDA, presented before the Board an action taken report on the decisions taken in the 78th Board meeting. The Board also held thread-'Vivad say Vishwas' scheme to bare discussions about all the 18 agenda items in which decisions were taken and directions

Roaster About Using Library On Rotational

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 		
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Sgrr-Jammu highway - (Closed)		
 Mughal Road - (Closed) Srinagar- Leh- (Closed) 	-UL-SANI	
This Day in History	1442	
1258 - Mongols defeated by Dai Viet at the battle of Dong Bo Dau 1523 - Sermon of Constanz: Zwingli defends 67 Schlussreden 1574 - Sea battle of Reimerswaal - Admiral Boisot beats Spanish fleet 1587 - Deventer and Zutphen surrender to Spain 1594 - Mathematician John Napier dedicates his "Plaine Discovery of the Whole Revelation of St. John" to King James VI, predicts end of the world in 1688 or 17001595 - William Shakespeare's play "Romeo and Juliet" is thought to have been first		
performed. Officially published early 1597. 1676 - Feodor III succeeds his father and becomes Tsar of Russia 1728 - John Gays' "Beggar's Opera" premieres in London [NS=Feb 9] 1732 - Paris churchyard of Saint-Medard closed after Jansenistic ritual Music release announcement, John Hancock resigns as Governor of Massachusetts, allegedly due to his failing health 1834 - President Jackson orders first use of US troops to suppress a labor dispute Treaty of InterestTreaty of Waitangi 1879 - Custer Battlefield National Monument established in Montana 1905 - Tsar Nicolas II of Russia, unsettled by the rising violence and protest, enacts reforms to improve the conditions of workers; these changes will do little to stop disorder throughout Russia in ensuing months. 1907 - Charles Curtis becomes U.S. Senator from Kansas, first Native American to become a Senator	PRAYERS FAJR 6: 05 ZUHR 12: 43 ASR 4:19 MAGRIB 6:00 ISHA 7:23	
 1908 - Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, at Cornell University, incorporates 1912 - Martial law declared in textile strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts 1913 - Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, at Howard University, incorporates 1916 - 1st bombing of Paris by German Zeppelins takes place 1916 - 1st bombing of Paris by German Zeppelins 		

- 19 takes place
- 1917 British submarine K13 sank in Gaire Loch, Scotland; 32 of her crew died
- 1918 Ukrainian-Soviet War: Battle of Kruty
- 1920 Walt Disney starts work as an artist with KC
- Slide Co for \$40 a week
- 1921 Hurricane hits Washington & Oregon 1922 - Union of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras
- and El Salvador dissolved

Commissioner, attended the meeting through

parking in Lal Chowk, Srinagar under ease of doing business. nagar Municipal Corporation; 25% commercial space for wom-velopment of a leisure zone on

The Board also approved de- come Tax amicably.



KU Joins National-Level

State Resource Centre (SRC) on which was aimed at underlining Thursday participated in the key objectives of the Access to Jusnational-level webinar on Access tice (A2J-NE&JK) project. He said to Justice.

Nisar Ahmad Mir, who is also Di- the society to benefit from it. rector of SRC, joined the webinar 'Access to Justice-Challenges and Khan said that academic institu-Solutions', organised by Depart- tions must take a lead in raising ment of Justice, Ministry of Law awareness about legal remedies and Justice, Government of India. available to the marginalised

Mr N K Gayagi, Joint Secretary, sections of the society to seek ac-Legal Aid to Poor & Access to Jus- cess to justice.

SRINAGAR- Kashmir University's tice, inaugurated the webinar, all the concerned SRCs must en-

Acting Vice-Chancellor Prof sure timely completion of the proj-Neelofar Khan and Registrar Dr ect to enable vulnerable sections of

In her remarks, Prof Neelofar

"Lack of awareness appears to be one of the key impediments in the way of people's access to justice. Our SRC must continue with its sustained focus on this aspect and help raise this awareness at grassroots," she said.

In his remarks, Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir said the SRC is committed to develop innovative ways to address the legal needs of the marginalised and vulnerable sections of the society.

He said the SRC continues to focus on capacity building of common masses to ensure their easy access to rights and entitlements. "Enhancing legal awareness

of the vulnerable populations is very important," he said.

Dr Shailash Srivastava, Director at Department of Justice, Government of India, highlighted key objectives of the A2J-NE&JK project. Pertinently, the SRCs in Assam, Central University of Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya also participated in the important national-level webinar. KU SRC officials including Mohammad Yousuf, Manzoor Ahmad and Shumaila Shamim, also attended the webinar.

Basis Withdrawn



SRINAGAR: Much relief to has been withdrawn. the students particularly Deputy Director Librarthose who are job aspirants, ies and Research, Kashmir Government has withdrawn in a fresh order has said that the current roaster regard- on the directions of higher ing use of the Reading Area authorities and in the interof SPS Library here in Kashest of smooth functioning of the SPS Library, the Roaster mir capital Srinagar.

The Deputy Director Li- regarding the use of the braries and Research. Kash-Reading Area of the Library mir in its earlier order had on rotational basis by the asked the aspirants to use borrowers, has been withthe library on a rotational drawn. basis. This decision had The users will be allowed

come under severe criticism to use the Reading Area of while students were de- the SPS Library strictly on manding free access to the first-cum-first-serve basis as per the universal prac-In a fresh order the roast- tice in vogue for the Public

er based on rotational basis Libraries.

library.

1923 - 1st flight of autogiro (Juan de la Cierva, Madrid Spain)

- 1924 Ice cream cone rolling machine patented by Carl Taylor, Cleveland
- 1924 Swiss team of Denis Vaucher (C), Alfred Aufdenblatten, Antoine Julen & Alfons Julen win the military patrol gold medal at the Chamonix Winter Olympics; first version of the biathlon
- 1925 British Liberal Party chooses David Lloyd George as leader
- 1941 Alexandros Koryzis becomes Prime Minister of Greece
- 1942 German & Italian troops occupy Benghazi, Libya
- 1942 Peru and Ecuador sign Protocol of Rio (boundary determination)
- 1944 USS Missouri, the last battleship commissioned by the US Navy, is launched
- 1944 World War II: The Battle of Cisterna takes place in central Italy.
- 1944 World War II: About 38 men, women, and children die in the Koniuchy massacre in Poland 1948 - Pakistan Socialist Party is founded
- 1949 Great Britain, Belgium, Luxembourg,
- Netherlands, New Zealand and Switzerland recognize Israel
- 1964 Unmanned Apollo 1 Saturn launcher test attains Earth orbit
- 1970 USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalitinsk USSR

From KO Archives

MISSING GARAGES CAR **KEEPS COPS ON TOES**

SRINAGAR - Hijacking of an Ambassador car belonging to State Motor Garages this afternoon has sent a wave of apprehension through police and various security agencies who fear that it might be used in a Fidayeen strike on or before Republic day.

According to a NAFA report unidentified militants in a stolen Ambassador car (JK01 1199) gunned down one Tariq Ahmad, allegedly a police informer hailing from Handwara, in Nowpora locality of the city at noon today The gunmen later abandoned the car at Fateh Kadal and hijacked a State Motor Garages Ambassador (JK02 M 3721) from the area, the report quoting police sources said. The incident prompted police and other security agencies to sound an alert for the vehicle. The police and intelligence agencies the report said remained clueless till late Wednesday despite widespread checking of vehicles.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 29 January, 2001)

Empanelled ReT Aspirants Protest In Press Enclave

SRINAGAR: The empanelled ReT aspi- ment's dilly dally tactics in issuing our rants held a protest demonstration to- appointment orders," he said. day, demanding immediate issuance of their appointment orders.

Enclave Srinagar and raised slogans in low assurances. "We are left with no support of their demand and against option other than to hit the streets as the Government, particularly the Commissioner Secretary and Director Education.

The protest was led by one Mudasir other job," he added. Hasan, who castigated the government The protesters dema of the aspirants, who were empanelled in 2015-16 as Rehbar-e-Taleem teachers.

"Our protest is against the Govern- pointment orders.

He said the High Court has issued clear cut direction in their favour but The protesters assembled in Press the Government was only giving holthere is no other means to earn our livelihood and most of the candidates have crossed the upper age limit to get any

The protesters demanded implementafor halting appointment orders in favour tion of court order and also sought the intervention of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for immediate issuance of their ap-



MAGAM (OPP. ROYAL MARBLES GULMARG ROAD)

World

Don't Rush To Own **Annihilation: Iran Fires Back At Israel Over Military Threat**



Agencies

ranian military officials have fired back at Israel after its top general threatened that attack plans against the Islamic Republic were being revised, saying the regime will only speed up its annihilation if it makes even the slightest mistake.

In a tweet on Wednesday, Hossein Dehqan, a military advisor to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, downplayed the threats that the Tel Aviv regime issues against the Islamic Republic from time to time and said the Israelis "do not even dare to fire a bullet at dear Iran."

The remarks came one day after Israeli Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Aviv Kochavi warned the administration of US President Joe Biden against rejoining the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, adding that he had ordered his forces to step up preparations for possible offensive action against Iran.

"I instructed the army to prepare a number of operational

China Warns Taiwan

Independence 'Means War'

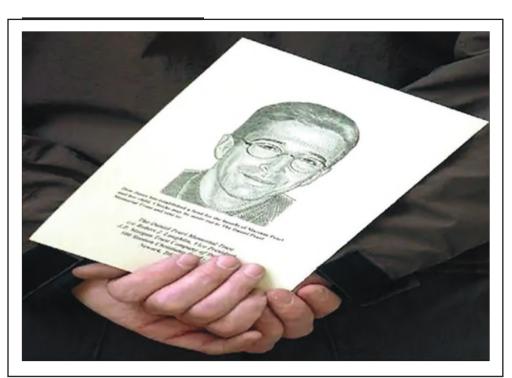
ones," he said. "We are taking care of these plans and will develop them during the coming year. Those who decide on carrying them out, of course, are the political leaders. But these plans have to be on the table." Additionally, the spokesperson

for the Iranian Armed Forces described Kochavi's rhetoric as "nothing more than hallucinations."

He also said the Iranian Armed Forces have been strengthening their defensive capabilities day by day, and that the country is capable of carrying out strategic operations to level the enemy to the ground. "Iran has a message for the countries of the world that the holy establishment of the Islamic Republic is not seeking to build nuclear weapons and will never move in this path – based on Ayatollah Khamenei's fatwa as it considers such a measure forbidden regarding its defense

policies and has nothing to ĥide," Shekarchi said. The Zionists have already tested themselves against the resistance forces, said the Iranian general, describing the regime's

plans in addition to the existing military as "coward and weak."



Pakistan's Supreme Court Upholds Acquittal In Daniel Pearl Murder Case

Agencies

on Thursday dismissed a series of appeals against the acquittal of the Britishterminding the kidnap and murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl, paving the way for his release. "The court has come out to

Mahmood Sheikh, who repakistan's Supreme Court resented Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh. told AFP. The top court's ruling comes

after an international outcry born militant convicted of mas- erupted last year when a lower Islamist militants. court acquitted the 47-year-old of murder and reduced his conviction to a lesser charge of kidnap

-- overturning his death sentence say that there is no offense that and ordering his release after al- to the US consulate.

he has committed in this case," most two decades in prison. Pearl was the South Asia bureau chief for The Wall Street Journal when he was abducted in Karachi in January 2002 while researching a story about

> Nearly a month later, after a string of ransom demands were made, a graphic video showing his decapitation was delivered

Brazil's Covid-19 Response Worst, **New Zealand's Best: Study**

Agencies

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA: Brazil's handling of the coronavirus pandemic has been ranked the world's worst, while New Zealand topped the class, according to research published by a leading Australian think tank on Thursday.

Sydney's Lowy Institute assessed almost 100 countries on six criteria, including confirmed cases, deaths and testing metrics.

'Collectively, these indicators point to how well or poorly countries have managed the pandemic," according to the report by the independent body. Aside from New Zealand -- Covid-19, ridiculed mask-wearwhich has largely kept the virus ing, opposed lockdowns and at bay with border closures and contracted the virus themselves. "go early, go hard" lockdowns and testing regimes -- Viet- emerged -- was not included in nam, Taiwan, Thailand, Cyprus, the rankings because of what the Rwanda, Iceland, Australia, Latvia and Sri Lanka made the top publicly available data on testing. 10 for their responses.



Biden Freezes Giant UAE Jet Package, Saudi Arms For Review

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Friday | 29-01-2021



Agencies

Washington: US President Joe Biden's administration has temporarily frozen for review a massive package of F-35 jets to the United Arab Emirates and arms to Saudi Arabia, officials said Wednesday.

it plans to end support for the Trump saw as a key foreign Saudi-led, UAE-backed offen- policy achievement. sive in Yemen, which is facing a humanitarian catastrophe.

A State Department spokesperson said the administration is "temporarily pausing the implementation" of a number of defense sales "to allow incoming leadership an opportunity to review." "This is a routine administra-

tive action typical to most any transition, and demonstrates the administration's commitment to transparency and good governance," the spokesperson said.

The move is also aimed at "ensuring US arms sales meet our strategic objectives of building stronger, interoperable and more capable security partners." The most high-profile sale is

a \$23 billion package of top-ofthe-line F-35 jets to the United Arab Emirates.

president Donald Former Trump's administration agreed to the sale -- the first of the stealthcapable planes to an Arab nation -- after the United Arab Emirates agreed to recognize Israel.

A potential halt to the sale could raise questions about whether the United Arab Emir-The nearly week-old admin- ates will continue its noristration has already signaled malization with Israel, which

Lawmakers of Biden's Demo-

cratic Party had voiced misgivings over the deal, fearing it would set off an arms race, but failed in the Senate to block the sale while Trump was in office. The package to the United Arab Emirates also included unarmed drones, while the United States has been preparing major sales of munitions to Saudi Arabia.

Trump had explicitly backed arms sales on commercial grounds, saying that the Saudis were creating US jobs by buying from US manufacturers.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said during his confirmation hearing that the Saudi offensive against Yemen's Huthi rebels, who are backed by Iran, has contributed to the dire humanitarian situation in Yemen.

Biden Revokes Trump Rule Ending Work Permit For H-1B Holders' Spouses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Biden has withdrawn a Trumpera rule rescinding work au- ployment authorisation cards. thorisation for H4 visa holders, Indian women.

An H-4 visa is issued by the US tion was not able to complete the "Some countries have manily members (spouse and chilare Indian IT professionals. The H-1B visa is a non-immitise. The technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thoucountries like India and China. The H4 visa is normally is-Information and Regulatory Af-

tion," was being withdrawn. Spouses of Indian profession-Washington: A week after his als on H-1B visas, mostly women, inauguration, US President Joe are the biggest beneficiary of the Obama-era rule that gave em-

Soon after coming to power, who are spouses of those pos- the Trump administration in 2017 sessing H-1B work visas, with announced that it would rescind majority being highly-skilled that rule. However, the Republican Party-led Trump administra-

itizenship and Immigration Ser- process in the four year of its rule vices (USCIS) to immediate fam- During the presidential election, dren under 21 years of age) of the ised to withdraw the Trump ad-H-1B visa holders, most of whom ministration"s move. grant visa that allows US compa- House of Representatives in a nies to employ foreign workers in letter urged Biden, a Democrat, specialty occupations that require to "unilaterally extend" the expitheoretical or technical exper- ration work authorisation docusands of employees each year from the Department of Homeland sued to those who have already ministration that would extend started the process of seeking the validity period of all expired employment-based lawful per- H4 EADs (Employment Authorimanent resident status in the US. sation Document)," the mem-The Office of Management bers of Congress wrote to Biden and Budget (OMB) and Office of in a letter on December 16. fairs (OIRA) on Monday said the Homeland Security (DHS) is-proposed rule titled, "Remov- sued a rule allowing certain H4 ing H-4 Dependent Spouses dependent spouses of H-1B visa from the Class of Aliens Eligible holders to legally seek employfor Employment Authorisa- ment in the US, the letter said.

guage towards Taiwan on Thursday, warning after recent stepped-up military activities near the island that "inde- Liberation Army in the Taiwan pendence means war" and that Strait are necessary actions to their armed forces were taking address the current security action to respond to provocation situation in the Taiwan Strait and foreign interference.

Agencies

Taiwan, claimed by China as its territory, reported multiple Chinese fighter jets and bombers to external interference and entering the island's southwestern air defence identification zone over the weekend, prompting concern in Washington.

China believes that Taiwan's democratically-elected government is moving the island towards a declaration of formal independence, though President Tsai Ing-wen has repeatedly said they are already an independent country called the Republic of China, its formal name.

Asked at a monthly news briefing about the air forces' re- dence' means war," he added.

hina toughened its lan- said Taiwan was an inseparable part of China.

cent activities, Chinese Defence

"The military activities carried out by the Chinese People's and to safeguard national sovereignty and security," he said.

"They are a solemn response provocations by 'Taiwan independence' forces," he added.

The Chinese incursions coincided with a US carrier battle group entering the disputed South China Sea to promote "freedom of the seas"

Wu said a "handful" of people in Taiwan were seeking the island's independence.

"We warn those 'Taiwan independence' elements: those who play with fire will burn themselves, and 'Taiwan indepen-

percent approval.

In bottom place at number 98 was Brazil, closely followed by about its handling of the dis-Mexico. Colombia, Iran and the United States. Brazil has recorded more than

218,000 coronavirus deaths -- a have faltered badly in the crisis. toll second only to that of the United States. For much of the last year, the it came to which political sys-

two most populous nations in tem best handled the pandemic. the Americas have been led by nationalist leaders who have ac- board, the response has been tively downplayed the threat of lacklustre.

aged the pandemic better than others -- but most countries China -- where the virus first outcompeted each other only by degrees of underperformance." the report said. think tank described as a lack of Smaller nations -- with popu-

lations of fewer than 10 million Beijing has aggressively tried people -- did appear to have to manage public perceptions some advantages.

"In general, countries with ease as it tries to show its ausmaller populations, cohesive societies, and capable instituthoritarian system is preferable tions have a comparative adto democracies, many of which vantage in dealing with a global The Lowy Institute said that crisis such as a pandemic," the there was no clear winner when report said.

Overall, cases have now topped 100 million worldwide and some 2.2 million people have died Instead, almost across the from the virus since the outbreak began in December 2019.

COLLECTIVELY, THESE INDICATORS POINT TO HOW WELL or poorly countries have managed the pandemic," according to the report by the independent body.

the Biden campaign had prom-

Soon after his electoral victory, a group of 60 members of the US ments for holders of H4 visas.

"We respectfully request that Security publish a Federal Register notice on day one of your ad-

In 2015, the Department of

NEWS MAKERS

Biden's Approval Rating In First Week Higher Than Trump's Ever Was

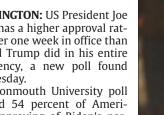
Agencies

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden has a higher approval rating after one week in office than Donald Trump did in his entire presidency, a new poll found Wednesday.

A Monmouth University poll showed 54 percent of Americans approving of Biden's performance and 30 percent disapproving.

Trump spent most of his presidency with ratings in the low 40s, and left office on January 20 with a Gallup poll approval of just 34 percent, a record low.

A Morning Consult tracking poll published Monday gave Biden 56 percent approval and 34 percent disapproval. Another poll released Monday, by Hill-



ization in the United States after Trump's four-year term.

> there seems to be more goodwill for Biden than there was for Trump, but it really breaks down along partisan lines. Right now, more people than Republicans,"

In the Monmouth poll, Biden won 90 percent approval from

Despite the strong showing Democrats but only 47 percent for the Democrat, the results from independents and 15 per-HarrisX, showed Biden with 63 also demonstrate severe polar- cent from Republicans.

"Overall, there seems to be more goodwill for Biden than there was for Trump, but it really breaks down along partisan lines. Right now, more people identify as Democrats than Republicans," said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

According to data from the fivethirtyeight.com site, Trump was the first president in half a century not to enjoy a honeymoon period with substantially better polling in the first six months

Barack Obama had an average of 60 percent approval in his first half year and his predecessor George W. Bush had 53.9 percent.

Trump, by contrast, had an average approval rating of 41.4 percent in his first six months.

Canada Lawmakers Voted To Grant Citizenship To Blogger Badawi

embers of Canada's House of Commons voted to grant citizenship to Saudi blogger Raif Badawi, who has been imprisoned in his home country for nine years and whose wife and three children live in Canada. The motion, which was unanimously voted on Wednesday, asks Immigration Minister Marco Mendicino to use his "discretionary power" to grant Canadian citizenship to Badawi, "in order to remedy a particular situation and unusual distress". Badawi was arrested in 2012 and sentenced to seven years in prison and 600 lashes and then resentenced to 10 years and 1,000 lashes in 2014 for blogging about free speech and "insulting Islam".

He received 50 of those beatings in January 2015, but the rest of the sessions, which were to be carried out weekly, were suspended after a global outcry. Before Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court abolished in late April flogging as a form of physical punishment, Badawi had been the most high-profile instance of flogging in the kingdom.

Bernie Sanders Mitten Meme Raises Big Bucks For Charity A viral photo of United States Senator Bernie Sanders wearing woolly mittens has helped nab \$1.8m for

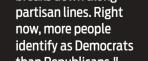
charity in his home state of Vermont.

Sanders announced on Wednesday the money had been raised through merchandise inspired by the image of him sitting cross-legged in a casual jacket, his hands cosy in the brown and beige mittens at the inauguration of President Joe Biden. The image, taken by an AFP photographer, quickly caught the imagination of the internet, with many noting that Sanders looked more like he was running errands on the chilly Wednesday than attending the swearing-in of the 46th president of the US.

Memes dropping the mittened Sanders into iconic art pieces, Ultimate Fighting Championship matches, classic album covers and popular television shows, to name a few, soon abounded on social media.

OVERALL,

identify as Democrats



News

Violations Found In Implementation Of Ujjwala Yojana In Pulwama

DM Orders Registering Of FIR Against Erring LPG Agencies For Diversion Of Subsidy

Observer News Service

PULWAMA:- The District Administration Pulwama has founded discrepancies in implementation of PMUY-Ujjwala Yojana in the District. The preliminary scrutiny & verification for the same which was going on for last few months in the district, concluded by District Magistrate, Dr Raghav Langer today ordering AD Food Civil Supplies Pulwama to lodge FIR against erring 03 LPG agencies.

The tip of this scam caught eye of the administration when last year in the month of April-May-June, 2020 entitlement for 03 free cylinders for Ujjawala Yojana beneficiaries was announced by Govt of India amidst lockdown situation along with extra ration entitlement under PMGKAY.

Following this, the first LPG subsidy amount of Rs 851/- got credited into accounts of Ujjwala Yojana beneficiaries. Many of the naive Ujjwala beneficiaries who had not

entry and some approached their Tehsil Supply Officers (TSO's) & bank branches to know the reason for such receipts.

On further enquiry, similar reports started pouring in from other areas as well as from public representatives that many of their SECC Ujjwala beneficiaries may be receiving LPG cylinder subsidy in their accounts but have not yet received any free connection, including LPG cylinder & gas stove.

As per the initial inputs that have been shared by administration; the modus operandi in this seems to be very well crafted. Ujjawala Yojana connections get online sanctioned to the entitled beneficiaries by the Oil Marketing/ Gas Companies (OMC's) based on recommendation & submission of papers by concerned LPG agencies/dealers. The same requires a filled up gas connection form, bank passbook and aadhar card copies which are arranged by the local agents of these agencies from



cases the Ujjwala beneficiary who monthly receipt under other social is a female, doesn't even know security/pension schemes, PMthat a LPG connection already stands issued in her favour by the LPG agency. Since the Aadhar no & linked bank accounts are correct; ting booked against the Ujjawala the beneficiaries start receiving credit of Rs 95-200 per refill in their account. Most of the times the beneficiary is unable to understand the reason for this receipt, physically received any connec- the entitled families included in as it is simply reflected as a ABPS tion; got surprised with this credit the SECC survey list. In most of the credit entry similar to quarterly/ The huge cost difference between being shown as active since year

Kisan, scholarship schemes, State marriage assistance scheme etc.

Thus the gas refills keep on getconnections and these domestic gas cylinders go to the black market and most commonly are diverted for commercial use in hotels/restaurants/shops/dhabas/

domestic & commercial LPG cylin- 2017/2018/2019 and LPG refills af- property, sec 406 criminal breach diversion. While unsuspecting PMUY-Ujjwala beneficiaries feel happy to receive subsidy in their accounts on each LPG cylinder purchased against their LPG ID, the Govt exchequer loses heavily due to such diversion of domestic cylinders into black market.

Worthwhile to mention that each Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana connection comes with provision of 12 instances the addresses and phone LPG refills per year linked with back ended subsidy @ Rs 1600/year. A new Ujjawala connection consists of a free cylinder and gas stove and is sanctioned in the name of females of the households enlisted in the SECC-2011 survey list. The scheme was launched in the year 2016.

During the first round of verifications in district Pulwama; hundreds of instances were found where the beneficiaries of the district had not till date physically received any Ujjwala connection (LPG cylinder factories/heating purposes etc. plus stove) despite connections

ders is a natural lure for its mass fected against such customer ID's. The same was corroborated by the administration through the Refill registry of the SDMS login accounts common intention; sec 3/7 EC Act (Subscriber Dealer Management System) of concerned LPG agencies, which they were reluctant to provide in the beginning of investigation. Many beneficiaries confirmed receipt of only a free LPG cylinder without the gas stove. Also in several nos of the beneficiaries were found incorrect in the database of the agency/dealer, most probably to make

any verification process difficult. The District Magistrate Pulwama has lauded the efforts of Asstt Director Food Civil Supplies, Pulwama Mr Sheikh Enayatullah KAS for thorough investigation in the tion of sample set of PMUY connec- matter leading to unearthing of the scam and his zeal to streamline the PDS in the district.

Sources confirmed that following sections are likely to be invoked in the FIR that is to be lodged viz; IPC during surprise inspections of varisec 120-B Criminal conspiracy, sec ous LPG godowns carried out in the 403 dishonest misappropriation of district on 20th Jan, 2021.

of trust, sec 417/420/463/464 for forgery & cheating read with sec 34 IPC ie acts done in furtherance of 1955; relevant provisions of Essential Commodities (display of prices & stocks and control of supply & distribution) Order, 1977;LPG (Regulation of supply & distribution) Order, 2000; Gas Cylinders Rules, 2016; The Aadhaar (Targeted delivery of financial & other subsidies, benefits & services) Act, 2016.

Meanwhile the administration will also be writing to the concerned OMC's (Oil Marketing Companies), Office of Dy. Chief Controller of Explosives Chandigarh, Petroleum & Explosives Safety Organisation Faridabad, Fire & Emergency Services Dept J&K, Legal Metrology Dept J&K; for initiating necessary action in view of gross violations, flouting of safety regulations, Weights & Measures Rules and non fulfilment of agreement conditions; found

DDC Reviews Progress Under Languishing Projects In Anantnag

ANANTNAG: District Development ress in all projects. Commissioner Anantnag, Anshul Garg today chaired a meeting of the officers & Engineers of R&B, Health, Sports take up the cases with concerned Council, Education, PDD, Health & Urban Development, Handicrafts and Industries and Commerce departments sues of past contractors for timely to review the progress made by them completion of all the projects while for various works taken up under Languishing Projects Programme approved by Finance Department's High Level Committee for funding through IKIDFC Ltd. at DC Office Anantnag.

DC Garg stressed upon the concerned engineers & officers to expedite the pace of work and complete all the under construction projects within the stipulated time frame. He stressed to utilize all funds in CEO MC Anantnag, CMO, CEO, AD the current financial year and make Planning, and other engineers & ofprompt financial & physical prog- ficers of these departments.

To address the land acquisition issues, he directed the officers to revenue officials. He also directed the concerned to sort out all the isadhering to the guidelines of the programme. He also stressed for meticulous e-tendering and allotment process in timely uploading of bills. The meeting was informed that

out of 83 projects, 40 stand completed, 42 are under construction and 01 project has not been taken up yet. Among others, the meeting was

attended by the SE R&B, SE PDD,

Himayat Inks Mous With Leading Multi-**National Companies For Placement Of Trained Candidates**

Initiative To Create Further Employment Opportunities For JK Youth: Secy RDD

JAMMU: The Himayat Mission Management Unit (HMMU) today signed three Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with as many leading companies at Panchayat Bhawan Jammu for placement and industrial tie-ups.

The MoU between HMMU and Multi-National Companies like Sodexo India Services Pvt Ltd, ISS Facility Services India Pvt Ltd and ISS SDB Security Services Pvt Ltd was signed in presence of Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Sheetal Nanda, Chief Operating Officer (COO), Kapil Sharma, Vice President and Head HR Operations of ISS and Sodexo respectively.

Sodexo is a leading company offering a bouquet of services to Corporates, Health

trained under Himayat. Care Institutions and Universities while ISS is one of the world's leading workplace services companies operating in over 74 countries and is al Services industry in India. Speaking on the occasion, mayat programme. She asked Secretary said, "The objective opportunities of employment Himayat. These two leading career in the private sector.



companies will help the PIAs to Secretary stressed on expeunderstand the requirements diting the mobilization activities, counseling sessions, filland demands of the Corporate sector." She also stated that ing up of the training centre these companies have comby 50 per cent following the mitted to secure placement of social distancing norms. as many as 30000 candidates

Himayat is Skill Developained under Himayat. ment-cum-Placement pro-Earlier, Secretary chaired gramme for unemployed a meeting to review the per- youth especially school and formance of 13 Project Imple- college drop-outs in Jammu menting Agencies (PIAs) of and Kashmir with focus on HMMU. She directed the im- placement of youth in a befita significant player in Facility plementing agencies to speed ting manner commensurate Management and Profession- up the training and placement with the level of education of youth enrolled under Hi- and aspiration of youth

highlighted

Work On National Highway 44 In Full Swing: Govt

Navayuga Tunnel To Be Thrown Open For Public Use In March, 2021

R Subrahmanyam today chaired a review meeting to take stock of work progress on various sections of the National Highway-44 being executed through the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

departments of Revenue, Public

tion, it was informed that 70% inces of Jammu and Kashmir.

JAMMU: The Chief Secretary, BV of physical work on the project has been completed, and the remaining work will be completed by September 2021.

Similarly, the work on the 8.4 km Navayuga Tunnel which will connect Banihal directly to Qazigund is nearing completion and the tunnel is expected to be inaugurated in the month of March 2021.

While reviewing the progress on Ramban-Banihal section of NH-44, it was informed that majority of the issues regarding land acquisition and utility shifting have been resolved and the work is progressing smoothly. The Deputy Commissioner, Ramban was directed to handover the possession of remaining land to the executing agency by 28th February 2021 and provide active support towards timely completion of the project.

Once completed, the project will reduce the travel time between Jammu and Srinagar, besides, providing secure con-

On Udhampur-Ramban sec- nectivity between the two prov-

Administrative Secretaries, of

Works (R&B), Forest, Environment & Ecology, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, Divisional Commissioners of Jammu and Kashmir, Managing Director, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited, Deputy Commissioner, Ramban among others participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, it was informed that works on the 3 sections of the National Highway-44 Udhampur-Ramban, namely Ramban-Banihal, and Banihal-Qazigund including double tube Navayuga tunnel are in full swing and progressing smoothly.



Cases Of Different Departments

DDC Shopian Approves Rent

12 rent cases of different departments were approved.

mittee, held a detailed discussion to pending verification. with officers of different departments that have hired private ac- Chief Planning Officer, Assistant commodation for their offices.

discussion pertaining to differ- Director FCS&CA, CHO, besides ent govt departments function- other District and sectoral Offiing from private buildings in- cers of concerned departments.

SHOPIAN: District Develop- cluding FCS&CA, Social Welfare ment Commissioner, Shopian, Department, ISM, Horticulture, Shrikant Suse today chaired a Animal husbandry, Education meeting of Rent Assessment department, Handicrafts de-Committee (RAC) during which partment, Libraries and research department etc.

After detailed deliberation, On the occasion, DDC Shopian, the Committee approved 12 who is also chairman of the Com- cases and deferred 4 cases due The meeting was attended by

Director Planning, District So-A total of 16 cases came up for cial Welfare Officer, Assistant

NEWS MAKERS

Land Allocation For Newly **Established Degree Colleges**

JAMMU- Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar today chaired a meeting to review the progress on allocation of land for the newly established degree colleges across Jammu and Kashmir at Civil Secretariat here.

The meeting was attended by Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Sanjeev Sharma; Commissioner Secretary Higher Education Department (HED), Talat Parvez Rohella; Vice Chairman JDA, Babila Rakhwal; Director Colleges, Prof. M.Y Peerzada, Principles of newly established colleges and other concerned



officials while as Deputy Commissioners of Jammu, Kathua, Samba. Budgam and Kupwara districts participated in the meeting through video conferencing. Speaking during the meeting, Advisor Bhatnagar directed the officials to devise a proper plan of action for the

newly established degree colleges so that the land can be acquired at the earliest and the required construction activities can be started.

The Advisor also directed the Deputy Commissioners and other officials to resolve all the issues related to land acquisition cases by 10th of February. The Advisor asked the Commissioner Secretary to expedite the process of

building infrastructure of quality level at the newly established degree colleges and directed him to monitor the progress on a regular basis.

Advisor Bhatnagar further asked Director Colleges to personally visit those sites which are facing hurdles in the land acquisition process.

The CO0 the PIAs to devise a strategy achievements of the proof these MoUs is to create more for timely achievement of tar- gramme saying that more gets. She stressed that PIAs than 18000 candidates have for the youth of J&K who are should reach out to youth of been trained while about undergoing training or have J&K for providing them em- 7600 have been provided emcompleted their training under ployment opportunities and ployment in the Corporate sector in various companies.

Migrants Delegation Calls On LG

JAMMU: A delegation of All Parties Migrants Coordination Committee (APMCC) today called on Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha here at Raj Bhavan.

The members of the delegation led by its Chairman, Vinod Pandit comprising K C. Bharati and Adv. Arun Kandroo apprised the Lt Governor about various concerning issues of Kashmiri Migrant employees working under Prime Minister's Special Employment Package and sought Lt Governor's intervention for their early redressal.

IUST To Hold Maiden Convocation On 1St March

AWANTIPORA: A high level Academic Affairs Prof. A. M Shah, meeting, in view of University's Dean Research Prof. H. R Naik. maiden Convocation ceremony Director ITSS and Dean School was chaired by the Vice Chancel- of Engineering and Technology, lor IUST, Prof. Mushtaq A. Siddiqi Prof. A. H Moon, Dean School of at the campus here on Wednes- Humanities and Social Sciences day. The meeting was attended Prof. A. S Bhat, Dean School of by the chairpersons and mem- Sciences Prof. G M Rather, Conbers of several Convocation Com- troller of Examinations Dr. Momittees. Important to note that hammad Amin Bhat and Finance the Convocation is scheduled to Officer Sameer Wazir. be held on 1st March 2021.

During the meeting, several awardees have already been agenda items were discussed. asked to register for the cer-Among those present were Regis- emony and details are available trar IUST, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, Dean on the university website.

The Gold medalists and PHD

DDC Shopian Reviews Performance Of **R&B** Dept

SHOPIAN: District Development Commissioner, Shopian, Shrikant Suse today reviewed the progress of R&B department regarding the execution of developmental works including construction of roads, buildings, bridges and other infrastructure undertaken through CRF, NABARD, State sector and languishing projects. At the outset, SE PWD, presented an

overview of the ongoing developmental projects in the district. He shared details about the status of Central & State Sector Schemes presently being executed by the department.

While reviewing the project wise physical and financial progress, DDC directed concerned officers to gear up men and machinery for effective and timely completion of these developmental projects and utilization of 100 % funds well before the end of financial year 2020-21.



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KASHMIR

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Editor-in-Chief : Sajjad Haider Legal Counsel: Tasadug Khwaja Switchboard: (0194) 2106304 (0194) 2502327 Editorial: Email editorial: editor@kashmirobserver.net

KO VIEW **Reigning in virus**

hairing the 23rd meeting of Group of Ministers (GOM) on COVID-19 on Thursday, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said that 146 districts have reported no new case of the Covid-19 infection in the last seven days. Reviewing the pandemic situation in the country, Vardhan said 146 of India's 718 districts have recorded no new cases for a week, and that fewer than 12,000 cases were reported in the past 24 hours. Similarly, a meagre 0.46 per cent of the 1.73 lakh active COVID-19 cases is on ventilators, 2.20 per cent is in the ICU and 3.02 per cent is on oxygen support. This has prompted the minister to declare that "India has successfully contained the pandemic".

Ever since the virus broke out in March last year, India has come a long way in so far as its upgradation of the health infrastructure to tackle the disease. The current testing capacity is 12 lakh tests per day, and with everyday fresh infections are falling markedly. This has given the government confidence to allow cinema halls and theatres to seat more than 50 percent of capacity and let all types of exhibition halls to operate. This is a huge recovery for a country that has recorded the highest number of cases in the world after the United States.

In Jammu and Kashmir too, the number of fresh infections has drastically reduced. On Wednesday, 77 fresh Covid cases in the union territory took the tally to 1,24,234 while one more fatality pushed the death toll to 1,931. However, Srinagar district recorded the highest number of fresh cases at 23, including 12 travellers, followed by 16 in Jammu district. Eight districts — Bandipora, Rajouri, Doda, Samba, Kishtwar, Poonch, Reasi and Ramban — did not report any fresh cases. Ten others recorded cases in single digits. Now the number of active cases in the former state stands at 1,050 while 1,21,253 patients have recovered. This has led health experts to surmise that the herd immunity might already have set in across parts of India and also in J&K.

The situation is getting further better with India commencing its vaccination drive against novel coronavirus on 16 January. So far 2 million health care workers have been inoculated, with the aim to reach 300 million people by July-August. This will go a long way to rid the country and the world of the pandemic that has wrought havoc with the economy, livelihoods and the lives of people. But alongside the vaccination people will need to continue observing precautions. With new Covid-19 strains emerging from nowhere, it is hardly the time to let the guard down.

Straight Strokes



uite in tune with its 'repuation', Jammu and Kashmir cricket team has failed to qualify for the next Syed Mushtaq Ali trophy round (SMA) in the Indian domestic Twenty20 competition this season as well. That has been the story for long.

Stronger opponents like Punjab and Karnataka thrashed J&K, raising some serious questions about the process of selection of the squad for the shorter version of the game. But who will take the blame for

this debacle?

Lack of accountability in Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA) is an irrefutable fact. There is absence of professionalism in the association and among those who run it on their whims and fancies. Favouritism is the hallmark of the people at the helm. Sadly, their bloated egos make matters worse.

Players are supposed to play on the ground and deliver, and let their bat do all the talking. But some seniors in their prolonged monologues sound self-righteous to avoid scrutiny of any kind. As if no one has the authority to ask them genuine questions about their alleged clout, conflict of interest and dubious role in selecting their favourites based on personal rapport, not merit.

Let's ask some questions: Why a player of Jatin Wadhwan's calibre was unceremoniously dropped from the T20 squad?

Wadhwan, aged 26, averages 35 with a healthy strike rate of 121 in T20s. He has amassed about 600 runs in only 21 T-20 matches in SMA competitions. Laced with five fifties, with unbeaten 70* as his highest score, Wadhwan is known as a T-20 specialist. But he was not part of J&K squad.

Instead, players like Shubham Khajuria, Shubham Pundir and Qamran Iqbal were picked. In all fairness, the trio comprising Khajuria. Pundir and Iqbal has done well in the longer version of the game (First-class). But their brand of cricket is not suited for the shorter version (T-20).

At Ranii level First-class forma is four-day cricket which is played with the red ball while List-A is oneday cricket. T-20 is the shortest version of the game. Qamran Iqbal, for instance, averages 31 in List-A and 27 in Firstclass (which is not great by any stretch of the imagination) but only 18.6 in T20s. To put it politely, his strike rate of 94.91 in T20s is dismal. Same is the case with Shubham Khajuria and Shubham Pundir, both reasonably good players in Firstclass and List-A. Their strike rate (111 and 107 respectively) in T20s is below par. Strike rate below 120 in white ball cricket is unacceptable.

Cricket Nepotism, Prejudice and In Kashmir No Accountability



Previously, J&K cricket has been marred by corruption of scandals, club clout, and petty politics. Now it is all about authoritarianism, nepotism, favouritism and lack of professionalism at all levels

the Kashmir Valley which include Jehangir Lone, Manzoor alias Pandav, Shabir Nengroo alias Shabir Lefty, Omar Alam, Owais Shah, Adil, Mehjoor Ali Sofi etc were also ignored.

In the recent past, careers of many a talented player like Abid Nabi, Adil Reshi, Sameer Ali, Zahoor Sofi etc have been ruined. Many former Ranji cricketers and current players have overtly slammed the selection process for all three formats of the game.

Ahmad Banday is a fine opening batsman for J&K. His game is suited for First-class cricket. Banday is stylish and can occupy the crease for longer periods. Strangely, he is ignored for the longer format and picked for the T20s. The story is very similar in the case of both Pundir and Khajuria. Their game is not suited for T20 cricket.

During the last one decade services of international players including legendary spinner Bishen Singh Bedi, former India players Ajay Jadeja, Sunil Joshi, Irfan Pathan and Suresh Raina, and even Ranji seniors like Mithun Manhas have been hired by the JKCA. The problem however is that the proship of Abdul Qayoom, a former fast bowler and local coach. At the time, J&K had a battery of fast bowlers comprising Samiuallh Beigh, Mudhasir, Ram Dayal etc. Samiullah with his five-fors and important contributions with the bat in the lower middle order was instrumental in team's success alongside some good performances from Parveez Rasool. Batsmen like Bandeep Singh, Hardeep Singh, I D Singh and others had chipped in at the right moment. It was a well-oiled and well-balanced side which had a judicious mix of experience and youth.

Prior to the 2013-14 season, the farthest Jammu & Kashmir had progressed in the Ranji Trophy was the pre-quarterfinal against Odisha way back in 2000-01.

Again, in the last Ranji season (2019-2020), J&K reached quarter finals with a reasonably balanced side comprising Khajuria, Pundir, Suryansh Raina, Parveez Rasool, Abdul Samad, Mujtaba Yousuf and Umar Nazir Mir. However, selection of few blue-eyed boys in the squad had raised many eyebrows.

It was Karnataka that comprensively beat J&K in the third

ously the control freaks want to control cricketing affairs as authoritarians do. They only parrot the line that J&K is now in Elite-A group. Okay, fine. What next?

The word "elite" sounds nice to ears. But the story starts and ends there. The unpalatable truth for the proponents of this "elite narrative" is that Punjab beat J&K by 10 wickets and won the match inside 15 overs. And Karnataka beat J&K by 43 runs.

Is this 'feat' to be celebrated? Whv is J&K's mediocrity being showcased as success?

Consolation wins against Railways and Uttar Pradesh are just fine. But when you beat the weaker opponent like Tripura you do not get complacent. The squad that was selected for SMA trophy was not suited for T20 format. Ram Dayal is past his prime. You need horses for courses.

Previously, J&K cricket has been marred by corruption of scandals. club clout, and petty politics. Now it is all authoritarianism. nepotism, favouritism and lack of professionalism at all levels. No serious competitions are held for three separate formats to ensure fair selection for First-class, List-A and T20, Those at the helm only play to the gallery by making big announcements about district level trials. That is all done with the aim to stifle criticism. The lone Sher-i-Kashmir cricket stadium in Sonwar Srinagar is used more for political rallies and events than for cricket tournaments in various formats. If cricket's pride in J&K has to be salvaged the game should not be treated as an 'encounter'! Remember, it is a gentleman's game!

OTHER OPINON

Widening gulf

he COVID-19 pandemic has led to what has arguably been the most unequal recession in recent history, exacerbating inequalities along several axes. While millions of Indians, especially those in the informal sector, lost their jobs, and had to dip into whatever meagre savings they had to finance their consumption, the richest Indians have continued to prosper. According to a report by Oxfam, the wealth of billionaires in the country increased by 35 per cent during the lockdown. While this is an increase in wealth, not income, to put this in perspective, the increase in the wealth of India's top 100 billionaires would have been enough to give each of the country's 138 million poorest a transfer of Rs 94,045.

The corporate results also bear out this facet of the economic crisis. Firms have protected their bottom lines by drastically slashing expenditure, mainly through a combination of job and salary cuts. This implies that the distribution of income, which was already skewed in favour of capital, will get even more unbalanced. Even more worrying is the fact that despite economic activities largely reverting back to pre-COVID levels, labour market dislocations persist - demand for work under MGNRE-GA continues to outstrip that observed last year by a wide margin, suggesting continuing lack of absorptive capacity in both urban and rural areas. But, worsening labour market inequality is just one part of the larger socio-economic consequences of the pandemic. The pandemic has also impacted access to education, health, and has led to a worsening of gender disparities. As the Oxfam report notes, during the pandemic, as education shifted online, the digital divide widened inequalities. Considering that only 3 per cent of India's poorest 20 per cent households had access to a computer, and 9 per cent had access to the internet, the difficulties faced by the poor and the historically deprivileged in accessing education have worsened. The impact on the female workforce has been equally grim. Not only has the unemployment rate among women worsened, but 83 per cent of those who managed to retain their jobs, saw a salary cut, the report noted.

The full economic impact of the labour market scarring, the worsening of inequalities in access to education and health and the growing gender disparities will be visible over the mediumto-long term. But as evidence mounts of a K-shaped recovery, where the fortunes of those at the top and bottom end of the income distribution diverge, the government must unveil measures that address these issues in the upcoming budget.

Indian Express

So why would you pick Khajuria, Pundir and Igbal, and drop Jatin? Jatin was not the only casualty,

though. Other T-20 specialists from

cess of selecting coaches is as dubious and mysterious as is the selection of the playing squad. Mostly, it is a result of personal rapport with individual players that becomes decisive in selecting coaches and players. Earlier, it used to be the club clout. No transparent process was followed then. No explanation is given now.

To be fair, stints of Bedi and Jadeia did bring some results. Same cannot be said about the rest. Their involvement has mostly been limited to photo ops, melodrama and lofty statements.

In 2013-14 Ranji season (Firstclass) competition, J&K had qualified for the quarter finals for the first time in its cricketing history. This rare feat was achieved under the leader-

quarterfinals in Ranji Trophy in February last year. Though Karnataka was reduced to paltry 206 in their first innings, J&K failed to take advantage and were bundled out for 192 runs. In their second innings, Karnataka posted 316, leaving an improbable target of 331 runs for J&K to chase. The team fell short by 167 runs after being bowled out for 163. In both innings, J&K failed to cross the 200-run mark. What is there to celebrate about?

Despite this, some people in J&K cricket team and JKCA indulge in self-congratulatory chatter. There is this mutual admiration club whose members live in an echo chamber. They do not want to hear any constructive criticism. They do not want to answer any questions. ObviThe views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

> Gowhar Geelani is an author-journalist and a political commentator



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The Holocaust and the killing of PwDs

7th January is The Holocaust Memorial Day

International Holocaust Remembrance Day is an international memorial day on 27 January commemorating the tragedy of the Holocaust that occurred during the Second World War. The word "Holocaust," with Greek roots meaning "destruction of life by fire" victims were people who were targeted bv the government of Nazi Germany for various discriminatory practices due to their ethnicity, religion, political beliefs, or sexual orientation. These institutionalized practices came to be called The Holocaust, and they began with legalized social discrimination against specific groups and physically or mentally challenged persons. According to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum "The Holocaust was the murder of six million Jews and eleven million of others by the Nazis during World War II"

Killing of people with disabilities: According to Hitler, the ability to be active and strong was a prerequisite for achieving value as a human being and those who do not want to fight in this world of eternal struggle, do not deserve to live'. For him, there was a clear line between the strong and the weak. He said that people with congenital disabilities is a threat to the strong nation, which in turn signaled threat to these people. Between 1939 and 1945 the Nazi regime systematically murdered hundreds of thousands of children and adults with disabilities as part of its "euthanasia" programs -T4 programme. These programs were designed to eliminate all persons with disabilities who, according to Nazi ideology, threatened the health and purity of the German race. It begins with a description of the Nazis' Children's Killing Program, in which tens of

thousands of children with mental and physical disabilities were murdered. Six "killing centres" were established to speed up the process. At the Brandenburg centre thousands of disabled people were murdered in a gas chamber described as a shower room, and there were number of such infamous centres. Other disabled people were forcibly sterilized so their "tainted" genes would not affect the "pure" Arvan race. It has been estimated that between 1933 and 1939, 360,000 people were forcibly sterilised to prevent "hereditary disease offspring".

By the year 1940, Hitler, on the advice of Dr. Werner Heyde, suggested that carbon monoxide be used as the preferred means of killing. Experimental gassings were first carried out at Brandenburg Prison in 1939. At Brandenburg Prison, gas chambers were disguised as showers - complete with fake nozzles to deceive victims; prototypes of killing centers' facilities built in occupied Poland later on in the war. In total, between 200,000 and 250,000 mentally and physically disabled people were murdered between 1939 and 1945 under the T-4 and other euthanasia programs

UNISON general secretary Dave Prentis, said "We must never forget that the Holocaust was a state programme designed to destroy particular groups, including disabled people, and we must remember all those affected." The Holocaust Memorial Day explains how it is a day to "work together to create a safer, better future".

MAhmad

Principal (I/C), Abhedanana Home (Higher Secondary Institution for Specially-abled Children) Solina, Rambagh, Srinagar abhome78@gmail.com

Women's Health



erpetually spoken common statement 'zou aur te jahan aur' which is in vogue in our society signifies the importance of health in our life/ world. The World Health Organisation defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Usually we see that the physical ailments are quite often recognised easily and then diagnosed. But mental health issues are very subtle and not easily recognised. They need a more detailed examination and investigation for their diagnosis. Even sometimes these subtle mental health issues remain hidden from the diagnostic eve and have detrimental consequences on the smooth living of the people. Such issues are not necessarily manifested as depression or anxiety but may present as distress, loss of happiness, heaviness of heart, vague pain, headache etc.

Why is studying mental health issues of women important?

Women and men differ not only in their noticeable physical appearances, but also in their psychological makeup. There are actual differences in the way they process information and react to events and stimuli. Women and men differ in the way they communicate, deal in relationships, express their feelings, and react to stress. Thus, the gender differences are based in physical, physiological, and psychological attributes.

For centuries, society has defined and distorted the differences between men and women through a lens of sexism in which men assumed superiority over women and maintained it through domination. This has led to underestimating the role a woman plays in the evolution of human society. In addition to all these social influences, the women are genetically wired in such a way that they are prone to some mental health issues more than men. All these discriminations and natural differences between men and women may quite understandably lead to some mental health issues.

Mindful Fridays Women's Mental Health

higher in females as compared to males. Studies across the world have indicated that women are, on average, 2–3 times, at greater risk to be affected by Common Mental Disorders.

Now the question is what makes females apparently more vulnerable?

It has been hypothesized that hormonal factors related to the monthly cycle may play a role in women's increased vulnerability to depression. Other factors responsible for their vulnerability to various CMDs may be because of the disadvantages related to their gender. These include excessive partner substance use, sexual, and physical violence by the husband, being widowed or separated, having low autonomy in decision making, and having low levels of support from one's family. Furthermore, stressful life events have been seen to be closely associated with the occurrence of depression in vulnerable individuals. During their lifetimes, females are faced with various life stressors including childbirth and maternal roles, caring and nurturing the old and sick of the family. In addition, women are less empowered due to lesser opportunities of education and respectable employment.

Bipolar Affective Disorder

The clinical features of bipolar disorder differ between men and women; women have more frequent episodes of depression, and a seasonal pattern of

Wasim Kakroo

It has been hypothesized that hormonal factors related to the monthly cycle may play a role in women's increased vulnerability to depression. Other factors responsible for their vulnerability to various CMDs may be because of the disadvantages related to their gender. These include excessive partner substance use, sexual, and physical violence by the husband, being widowed or separated, having low autonomy in decision making, and having low levels of support from one's family

scribed dosage, ingesting a recreational or illicit compound in a bid to harm self, and consuming a non-ingestible compound, etc. Overall gender ratio studies about DSH have shown higher rates of DSH in females than in males possibly because of various emotional (biological) and social factors. Borderline Personality Disorder has been found to be one of the causal factors for DSH in women been observed to be associated with the monthly cycle. The symptoms such as irritability, restlessness, anxiety, tension, migraine, sleep disturbances, sadness, dysphoria, and the lack of concentration occur more frequently during the premenstrual and menstrual phase. A premenstrual dysphoric disorder consisting of extremely distressing emotional and behavioral symptoms is closely linked to menstrual cycle.

Mental disturbances frequently occur during late pregnancy and in the postpartum period. Postpartum blues is the most common illness affecting a good proportion of new mothers, whereas postpartum depression constitutes a major depressive episode with an onset within 6 weeks postpartum in a majority of cases. The risk is highest among the most socially and economically disadvantaged women. The other important risk factors include gender-based factors such as the bias against female babies; role restrictions regarding housework and infant care; especially in multi-generational households in which a daughter-inlaw has little independence to take decisions regarding household and other affairs, and gender-based violence. Also, menopause has long been known to be accompanied by depression and other mental disturbances in women who have had genetic and socioeconomic vulnerability.

Reproductive health factors, particularly gynecological complaints such as vaginal discharge and dyspareunia and Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOD) are independently associated with the risk for various Common Mental Disorders. Stigma has been reported to be more toward ill women than men.

What is the way forward?

It is clear from the whole discussion that women's mental health cannot be considered in isolation from social, political, and economic issues. In order to deliver effective help, women's health must incorporate mental and physical health across the life cycle in addiction to reproductive health.

In order to understand the determinants of poor mental health of women, the focus needs to be shifted from individual and "lifestyle" risk factors to the recognition of the broader, social, economic, and legal factors that affect women's lives. It is essential to recognize how the sociocultural, economic, legal, infrastructural, and environmental factors that affect women's mental health are taken care of in the given community setting.

Education, training, and interventions targeting the social and physical environment are crucial for addressing women's mental health. Identification of significant persons in government departments and other relevant groups in the community, to obtain and record data indicating the extent of women's problems and the burden associated with women's mental problems and the development of policies to protect and promote women's mental health are extremely crucial.

The primary care providers including Asha workers, social workers, general physicians working at various primary care centers etc. must be educated about the identification and assessment of major mental health problems affecting women, so that they routinely enquire women about their common mental health problems, provide the most appropriate intervention and support and provide education to the community on issues related to the mental health of women and refer more complex cases to various professionals including psychiatrists and clinical psychologists working in various facilities across state.

It is therefore necessary to understand and discuss the challenges women face, especially with respect to their mental health so that they are helped to deal with them so that our society has a better evolutionary trajectory.

Depression, Anxiety and Somatization in Women

Studies have shown that gender differences affect the occurrence of common mental disorders (CMDs)-depression, anxiety, and somatic complaints wherein women predominate. E.g., Unipolar depression is twice as common in women. Women are more likely to present with atypical symptoms of depression such as increased appetite and weight gain (usually depression leads to weight loss and appetite loss). Furthermore, the lifetime risk of anxiety disorders (e.g., generalized anxiety disorder, GAD) is 2–3 times mood disturbances.

Suicide and Deliberate Self Harm

Studies of suicide and deliberate selfharm have revealed a universally common trend of more female attempters and more male completers of suicide.

Common Mental Disorders, exposure to violence, etc. have been found to be strongest predictors of the attempted suicide cases. It has been found that a large degree of attempts is as a response to failures in life, difficulties in interpersonal relationships, and dowry-related harassment. Some of the precipitants for suicide among women compared to men include Dowry disputes; love affairs; and quarrels with spouse or parents-in-law.

Deliberate self-harm (DSH) can be defined as the intentional injuring of one's body without apparent suicidal intent. These acts are usually nonfatal and not intended to end life. DSH includes but is not restricted to acts such as self-cutting, burning, ingestion of a substance or medication in excess of its therapeutic/pre-

Violence and Abuse

According to one study, around twothird of married women in India were victims of domestic violence. The common forms of violence against Indian women include female feticide, domestic violence, dowry death or harassment, mental and physical torture, sexual trafficking etc. The reproductive roles of women, such as their expected role of bearing children, the consequences of infertility, and the failure to produce a male child have been linked to mental health issues and female suicide.

Common mental health problems reported by abused women include depression, anxiety, post traumatic stress, insomnia, and alcohol use disorders, as well as a range of somatic and psychological complaints. Abused women are much more likely to require psychiatric treatment and are much more likely to attempt suicide.

Reproductive Health

Mood and behavioral changes have

Substance Use

Women who abuse alcohol or drugs are more likely to have been sexually or physically abused than other women, when they were young. Alcoholism and Substance abuse may lead to major depression and anxiety disorders in females. In our valley, substance abuse among the female population is increasing day by day possibly because of untreated mental illnesses (such as Borderline Personality Disorder) among them.

Social Challenges of Women with respect to Mental Health

Women with mental health issues may have to face social consequences such as abandonment by marital families, homelessness, vulnerability to sexual abuse, and exposure to HIV; and other infections which can contribute to the difficulties in the recovery of such women. Criminal justice response to violence against women must be improved in order to get a timely help before any such legal issues leads to the development of any mental health issue.

In summary, combined efforts at social, political, economic, and legal levels can bring change in the lives of women and contribute to the improvement of the mental health of these women.

Views expressed in the articles are the author's own responsibility. The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment and is strictly for educational/ informative purposes only

> The author is a RCI Licensed Clinical Psychologist and can be reached at wasimkakroo@gmail.com

Managing Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Role of Physical and Psychological Interventions

Dr. Shahnaz Hafeez Kawoosa

olycystic Ovary Syndrome is an endocrine disorder characterized by hyperandrogenism, polycystic ovaries and irregular menstruation. Certain metabolic derangements observed in PCOS include insulin resistance and compensatory hyperinsulinemia, which can further increase the risk of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, amenorrhea, oligomenorrhea, hirsutism, acne and prolonged erratic menstrual bleeding are commonly observed in women with PCOS. A woman with a history of PCOS is at higher risk of developing PCOS. PCOS is a chronic disorder and therefore it is essential to consider other suitable fist line interventions such as counselling,

exercise and weight management. Physical and psychological interventions can be helpful as well.

Physical exercise

Physical exercises are known to regulate cardiovascular function, the reproductive system (reproductive hormones and menstruation) and metabolic functions including insulin resistance and glucose metabolism. Physical exercises that target slower weight loss are usually more effective for improving insulin sensitivity and restoring ovulation in infertile obese women with PCOS. Slow weight loss of 2% - 5% of total body weight can be helpful in restoring ovulation and insulin sensitivity as well as decreasing visceral adiposity in obese women having PCOS. Obesity is a crucial factor in pathogenesis of PCOS, weight loss is very essential for managing PCOS.

Homocysteine, a risk factor for heart disease, increases the risk of atherosclerosis in women with PCOS by inducing endothelial dysfunction through limited bioavailability of nitric oxide and altered blood vessel elasticity.

Adherence to physical exercises which are as simple as walking help increase the body's aerobic capacity and production of nitric oxide, which further reduces vascular shear stress. Physical exercises also help to reduce total plasma, homocysteinse concentration in obese women with PCOS.

Psychological Treatment

It has been observed that patients with PCOS carry a psychological burden through their lives. Most women with PCOS fear infertility and loss of femininity and sexuality and lower self-worth which could lead to mental health problems.

Cognitive behavioral training (CBT) including individual sessions focused on comorbidity between physical illness and depression, positive thinking and cognitive restructuring can give effective results in adolescents with PCOS. Physiological comorbidities such as menstrual irregularity, higher percent of fat mass, hypertension and mid region adiposity associated with PCOS can also be reduced with the help of cognitive behavioral therapy.

At times women with PCOS have re-

duced sexual libido due to higher levels of androgenic hormones in the ovaries or adrenal glands as PCOS is a physical, psychological and social syndrome. A patient requires care beyond treating the physical symptoms.

Views expressed in the articles are the author's own responsibility. The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment and is strictly for educational/ informative purposes only.

The author is an Associate professor at Kashmir Tibbia College Hospital and Research Centre and can be reached at nawaz.kawoosa@yahoo.in

LIFE & TIMES

KASHMIR OBSERVER Friday 29-01-2021

1 in 3 adults anxious, depressed due to pandemic: Study

Agencies

ne in every three adults, particularly women, younger adults and those of lower socioeconomic status, are experiencing psychological distress related to Covid-19, a new study suggests.

The study, published in the journal PLOS ONE, indicates that women are more likely to experience psychological distress than men is consistent with other global studies that have shown that anxiety and depression are more common in women.

The lower social status of women and less preferential access to healthcare compared to men could potentially be responsible for the exaggerated adverse psychosocial impact on women," according to the researchers, including Tazeen Jafar from the Duke-NUS in Singapore.

For the study, the team performed a meta-analysis of 68 studies conducted during the pandemic, encompassing 2,88,830 participants from 19 countries, to assess risk factors associated with anxiety and depression among the general population.

They found that, among the people most affected by Covid-19-related anxiety or depression, women, younger adults, individuals of lower socioeconomic status, those living in rural areas and those at high risk of Covid-19 infection were more likely to experience psychological distress

Younger adults, aged 35 and under, were more likely to experience psychological distress than those over the age of 35.

Although the reasons for this are unclear, previous studies have suggested that it might be due to younger people's greater access to

Covid-19 information through the media.

This current study also confirmed that longer media exposure was associated with higher odds of anxiety and depression, the researchers said.

Other factors associated with psychological distress included living in rural areas; lower education, lower income or unemployment; and being at high risk of Covid-19 infection. However, having stronger family and social support and using positive coping strategies were shown to reduce the risk of psychological distress

"Understanding these factors is crucial for designing preventive programmes and mental health resource planning during the rapidly evolving Covid-19 outbreak," Jafar said.

'Asthma can be prevented by consuming omega-3 fatty acids'

Agencies

questionnaires) and incidence of new ases of doctor-diagnosed asthma at

Agencies

he key factor in preventing communicable disea

hind the study, Professor at Panevezys Faculty of Technology and Business, KTU. ding to him, the support of Ac

To ward off cancer, other diseases we need to change lifestyle, by innovation

"In the past, infectious and parasitic diseases were the main causes of death, but in recent decades, NCDs have replaced them. Moreover, with the spreading of western lifestyle in low and

is lifestyle management at the individual level with a focus on such innovations, which can help increase the awareness of risk factors management in society, claim an international team of researchers.

The study was led by scientists from Kaunas University of Technology (KTU), Lithuania. According to them, the management of cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases require many strategies from several perspectives and on different levels.

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), also known as chronic diseases, are medical conditions that are associated with long duration and slow progress. Most NCDs are non-infectious and are the result of several factors, including genetic, physiological, behavioural, and environmental.

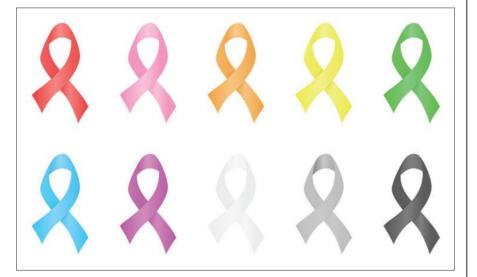
According to the World Health Organization, NCDs are the leading cause of death worldwide, responsible for 71 per cent of the total number of deaths each year. The top four killers among NCDs are cardiovascular diseases (17.9 million deaths annually), cancers (9 million), respiratory diseases (3.9 million), and diabetes (1.6 million).

Although lifestyle factors, such as physical activity, nutrition habits, tobacco and alcohol consumption have been linked to the development of certain medical conditions for a long time, with this study the researchers attempt to draw the attention of policy-makers and medical professionals towards the complex nature of the problem and its possible solutions.

"It is important to combine modern scientific achievements and innovative decisions, concerning the rationality of nutrition and positive effects on human health. Governments and international organisations should make people aware of their health and their environment to make the world a safe and healthy place", states Dr Rimantas research to find new techniques to improve food biotechnology or to develop rapid and sensitive diagnostic platforms to detect NCDs is crucial. The scientists

Kodzius, Head of the research group be-

middle-income countries, due to global population ageing and commercial pressures for unhealthy diets, non-commutable diseases are becoming prevalent



claim that in order to successfully address the growing crisis of non-communicable diseases, the innovation, focusing on the promotion of healthy eating behaviour, lifestyle change and cessation of smoking is crucial.

The management of NCD's requires many strategies from several perspectives on individual and country levels.

According to various data, there are modifiable (i.e. high blood pressure, smoking, physical inactivity, obesity) and non-modifiable (such as age, gender, genetic factors) risk factors that contribute to the development of NCDs.

However, although one cannot change their age or gender, there are modifying factors in the cultural or social environment of every person. Therefore, risk factor management is essential in preventing NCDs', researchers claim.

across all economic contexts", says Dr Aida Budreviciute, the first author of the study

According to researchers, the main factors of illnesses are medications, blood pressure, lipids, glucose, viruses, obesity, stress. Various dietary factors, such as eating meat, sugar-sweetened beverage consumption, and iron-based diets or, on the other hand, using whole grain, natural, high-fibre products have been linked to the development of NCDs.

Moreover, researchers claim that the effects of the global Covid-19 pandemic on the development of NCD's can be devastating as people during lockdown and self-isolation tend to eat more and exercise less. In the future, when the battle with Covid-19 is won, the health system may be overwhelmed with the many occurrences of NCDs, say the team of researchers.

It is important to combine modern scientific achievements and innovative decisions, concerning the rationality of nutrition and positive effects on human health. Governments and international organisations should make people aware of their health and their environment to make the world a safe and healthy place

esearchers during a recent study have found that by higher dietary consumption of long chain omega-3 fatty acids during childhood, the risk of developing subsequent asthma reduces in children carrying a common gene variant.

The study, led by the Queen Mary University of London, is in collaboration with the University of Bristol and the University of Southampton, UK, and Karolinska Institutet, Sweden, In the UK, 1.1 million children (1 in 11) are currently receiving treatment for asthma and most adult asthma begins in childhood. The NHS spends around £1 billion a year treating and caring for people with asthma.

Senior author, Professor Seif Shaheen from the Queen Mary University of Lon-

don, said: "Asthma is the most common chronic condition in childhood and we currently don't know how to prevent it. It is possible that a poor diet may increase the risk of developing asthma, but until now most studies have taken 'snap-shots', measuring diet and asthma over a short period of time. Instead, we measured diet and then followed up children over many years to see who developed asthma and who didn't.

"Whilst we cannot say for certain that eating more fish will prevent asthma in children, based on our findings, it would nevertheless be sensible for children in the UK to consume more

fish, as few currently achieve recommended intake."

Fish is of particular interest because it is a rich source of the long chain omega-3 fatty acids, eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), which have anti-inflammatory properties.

The study, published in the European Respiratory Journal, used data from a large UK birth cohort, Children of the 90s, which recruited mothers who were pregnant in the early 1990s and has been following up their offspring ever since. They analysed the association between intake of EPA and DHA from fish at 7 years of age (estimated by food frequency

years of age.

Long chain omega-3 intake from fish was not associated with asthma in the cohort as a whole (4,543 people). However, the team looked in more detail at children with a particular genetic make-up. More than half of the children carried a common variant in the fatty acid desaturase (FADS) gene which is associated with lower levels of long chain omega-3 fatty acids in the blood. In these children, a higher dietary intake of long chain omega-3 fatty acids was associated with a lower risk of asthma. The risk was 51 per cent lower, comparing those in the top quartile of long chain omega-3 intake with those in the bottom quartile.

Furthermore, this finding was also found in an independent birth cohort



study in Sweden (BAMSE).

As they have only found an observational association, the researchers caution that they cannot say for certain that a higher intake of long chain omega-3 fatty acids in childhood can prevent the subsequent development of asthma. The next step is to see if higher intake is also associated with a lower risk of exacerbations in children who already have asthma

The project was funded by the Rosetrees Trust and The Bloom Foundation. The UK Medical Research Council, Wellcome and the University of Bristol provide core support for Children of the 90s.

Business

Nation In Grip Of Corporates: Rahul Gandhi



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Congress leader and Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi on Thursday alleged that "one or two corporates" are controlling the and youth contest the next country and added that this is not good for democracy.

country have still not got a clear the recent Kerala local body picture on the farm laws and the elections, where the ruling agitation could flare up again.

function in Wayanad.

said that the Congress and UDF ister Oommen Chandy as the would sweep the upcoming chairman of the election su-Assembly polls in Kerala and pervisory committee as well added that several new faces as Lok Sabha MP Shashi Tharwill be contesting the election. oor as member of the election

for the past couple of days had interacted with girl students on Wednesday and had even asked a schoolgirl to translate his speech. He had called upon the girls students to be independent and equal to boys and asked them to be active in all walks of life.

Gandhi was also involved in a series of discussions with senior state Congress leaders and its ally the Indian Union Muslim League regarding the sharing of seats. He is keen that a large number of women election on Congress tickets.

With the Congress and the Gandhi said the farmers of the UDF on the backfoot following LDF had swept the polls, the He was speaking at a public Congress is active with altering of strategies including The former Congress chief bringing in former Chief Min-Gandhi who is in the state manifesto committee.

in production and Exports.

Industry is environment friend-

on Handmade Carpets, he added.

Over the years, the India Carpet Expo has established itself as

globe. It is the endeavour of the

Council to provide an exclusive

business environment to carpet

importers as well as manufactur-

The committee of administra-

nology, and hence, will open the

It was also given out that the

41St India Carpet Expo-**Virtual Edition Takes Off**

Virtual Expo Will Provide Platform To Over 150 Indian Exporters, 300 Buyers Of Over 64 Countries

NEW DELHI: Development Com- jute, cotton and various blends of missioner (Handicrafts), Ministry different yarns, he said and added of Textiles, Government of India, that the industry is having im-Shantmanu has inaugurated fivemense potential for growth both day 41st India Carpet Expo – Virtual Edition.

Ms. Mudita Mishra, Additional ly and does not use scarce & per-Commissioner ishable energy resources which Development (Handicrafts), Sohan Kumar Jha, made the Expo an extremely Sr. Director, Arun Yadav, Director popular destination worldwide were also present on the occasion.

Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Siddh Nath Singh, a great sourcing platform for the Chairman, CEPC, Umesh Kumar Gupta, Members of Committee of carpet buyers from all over the Administration, CEPC, Executive Director, CEPC, CEO, Carpet & Handicrafts Sector Skill Council and other participants also attended the event.

On the occasion, Union Min- ers and exporters. ister for Textiles, Smriti Irani in a video message conveyed best tion is expecting the Virtual-Expo wishes and invited everyone to to be a grand success, which will explore the beautiful world of In- be a gateway to a new era of techdian Handmade Carpets.

Siddh Nath Singh, Chairman, doors to the global market during CEPC in his welcome address Covid-pandemic era. conveyed gratitude to Shri Shantmanu, DC (Handicrafts) for his session informed that Council had support and guidance without also instituted Design Awards and which Council may not be able to __received 65 entries from the par-

Govt Enhances Rate Of Stipend For Handicrafts And Handloom Trainees In J&K

Observer News Service

JAMMU: In a significant and major development, Government of Jammu & Kashmir today enhanced the rate of stipend for trainees undergoing Elementary and Advanced level training courses in various training centres of Handicrafts and Handloom departments. The monthly stipend in Handicrafts sector has been enhanced from Rs. 500/- to Rs. 1000/- for Elementary course and from Rs. 700/- to Rs. 1500/- for Advanced Training Course. Similarly, in respect of Handloom Training Courses, the rate of monthly stipend has been increased from Rs. 500/- to Rs. 1000/- for Ready-Made Garments (RMG) and Weaving Training Courses.

The enhancement in stipend was long overdue after it was found that the meagre stipends in this sector was failing to attract artisans to pursue craft activity as their profession. The enhancement will not only encourage target groups to this vocation but will also encourage the school drop outs to join the training centres in order to learn skills for securing their future.

The move by the Government is seen to infuse a fresh lease of enthusiasm and motivation among the trainees. Close to 13000 artisans and weavers of Jammu and Kashmir in different crafts of Handicrafts and Handloom sector shall be benefited by this enhancepetition among the youth to seek ated with various crafts and would



skill training in training centers of the department and will encourage the traditional artisans and weavers to seek full time capacity building training, thereby helping them to become self reliant. In the long run, the training im-

parted would help artisans and weavers to produce more diversified products and become familiar with new ideas, motifs and designs after getting acquainted with new trends in their trades. The decision of the Government to approve revision of stipend rates has been widely appreciated by the trainees and fulfills their long pending demand. This revision in the stipend has taken place after a long gap of 8 years.

Hailing the decision of the Government, Mr. Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Commissioner/Secretary to the Government Industries and Commerce Department said that the endeavour of this government has all along been to improve the financial and socio-economic conditions ment. It will further increase com- of the artisans and weavers associ-

enable unemployed youth to start their own ventures and become job providers rather than job seekers. Currently there are 369 & 179

Elementary and Advanced Training Centres in the Handicrafts sector and 99 Ready-Made Garments, Weaving and Kani centres in the Handloom sector of Jammu and Kashmir providing training to unemployed youth in different trades/ crafts. The enhancement in the stipend comes days after the Government conferred Padma and State Awards to Ghulam Rasool Khan and Sajad Hussain Dar in recognition of their role played in the promotion of Kashmir Handicrafts.

The enhancement in the stipend has been welcomed and termed as historic by the Apex trade bodies like KCCI, FCIK and PHD Chamber of Commerce. Appreciating the LG Administration, various associations concerned with the Kashmir Craft including TAHAFUZ have expressed their gratitude for taking this momentous decision to improve the lot of artisans.

The enhancement in the stipend has been also welcomed by various Associations of Handicrafts and Handloom of Jammu Division, especially by Jan Shakti Handicrafts Union Jammu & Jammu Province Handloom Cooperative Societies Federation, who have expressed their gratitude towards the momentous decision taken.

This revision in the stipend has taken place after a long gap of 8 years.

Collection Of Regn Fee: Govt Rolls Out JKGRAS

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Inspector General Registration, Dr Pawan Kotwal, today rolled out J&K Government Receipt Accounting System (JK-GRAS) portal in Registration Department for easy payment of registration fee by the citizens for getting registration of documents done at the Sub Registrar offices from anywhere without visiting the treasuries or banks.

Dr Pawan Kotwal, later, convened a meeting cum training Officers to acquaint them with



collection of registration fee, Dr Central Record Keeping agency. Kotwal directed all the Sub Registrars to adopt the new mode of payment of registration fee mandatorily.

wal said that the GRAS is at the

Also, the SHCIL has set up about 400 Authorized Collection Centers (ACCs) including banks and stamp vendors, where the Responding to the queries applicants deposit the stamp session of all the Registration of registration officers, Dr Kot- duty electronically. Till date, Rs, 97.87 crore have been collected

New Policy To Integrate Fishermen With Agri Farmers In J&K

districts and directed the se-

nior officers to identify the

variety of fish best suited to

climatic conditions and water

diligently to deliver benefits

Reiterating the need for de-

veloping better marketing and

export facilities, the Principal

Secretary said that increasing

the fish production two-fold is

no good unless there is good

fish processing, storage, pack-

aging and logistics facilities.

People need to be encouraged

and assisted for starting entre-

preneurial ventures in these

Later, detailed project re-

ports were sought by the

Principal Secretary, in which

he asked the department to

also assured support from the

government's side to assist

private players for venturing

The Principal Secretary also

directed the department to

identify potential fish produc-

tion in certain untapped water

tory. Later, the department's

finances and status of pending

by Director General Budget,

Finance Department; Director

Director Finance, Animal,

Sheep Husbandry & Fisheries

Department; Joint Director,

Resources, Finance Depart-

The meeting was attended

projects was also discussed.

into the sector.

sectors, he maintained.

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Principal Secretary Animal, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries Department, Navin availability of each district. Kumar Choudhary, chaired a He said that the department review meeting of Fisheries and its officers must work Department here today.

The meeting had a detailed of welfare and developmenreview of implementation of tal schemes on ground. Give Pradhan Mantri Matsya Samequal attention and efforts to pada Yojana, PMMSY besides all districts of both the provassessing status of release of inces, he stressed upon the funds by the Finance Departofficers. ment.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana is an initiative launched by the Government of India to establish a comprehensive framework and reduce infrastructural gaps in the fisheries sector. The policy envisages to integrate all the fishermen with agricultural farmers and provide all the facilities available through various farmer welfare schemes to the fishermen.

Choudhary directed the officers to identify potential areas of fish production and pri- furnish relevant details as to oritise setting up of such units how and where such facilities for better growth of the sector could be established in both and welfare of those engaged the provinces of the UT. He in the trade. Assistance to existing units and their expansion should also be another priority, he added saying that with increased production, trade and export of the produce also needs to be exhila-

rated, he added. Emphasis was laid, by the resources of the union terri-Principal Secretary, on generating awareness among the SC-ST people to start fisheries related businesses. The department was directed to utilise different media channels to advertise about the PMMSY Fisheries, Bashir Ahmad Bhat; and various other initiatives of the department, by the Principal Secretary. He also called for involving panchayat and BDC members to better ment; all Joint Directors of deliver the benefits of these Fisheries Department among schemes.

other senior officers. Assis-Choudhary took detailed tant Director, Fisheries from review about fish production all districts also participated works being done in various through virtual mode.

Apiculture And Mushroom Schemes Reviewed

DCTCs Will Be Upgraded During The Current Year To Serve As Model Training Centres : JD Apiculture & Mushrooms

SRINAGAR: Joint Director ers are imparted in this regard. (Agriculture) Apiculture and The chair was informed Faroog Ahmad that necessary steps for mak-Mushrooms. Shah today convened a meet- ing available readymade pasing to review the Mushroom teurized compost and quality spawn have already been taken so that the same is provid-Speaking on the occasion, ed to the mushroom growers at reasonable rates. The respective Apiculture Development officers and Mushroom Development offithese two sectors to new cers were directed to identify and register the beekeepers of new technologies. and mushroom growers so Joint Director Agriculture inthat incentives under different CSS Schemes are provided to these registered growers. Earlier, the District Officers connected with these schemes gave detailed presentations of their respective districts with regard to production and in-He said comprehensive plans come generation. Apart from Mushroom Specialist Zaffar Ahmad Hakeem and Assistant Entomologist all highly remunerative enterprises. the Apiculture Development Officers and Mushroom Development Officers of Kashing calendar so that necessary mir Division participated in training to the interested farm- the meeting.



organize its activities.

Singh informed that ap-Member-Exporters from major Awards on 30th January, 2021. carpet belt of Bhadohi, Mirzapur, Varanasi, Agra, Jaipur, Panipat and Jammu & Kashmir have confirmed their participation.

It was given out that CEPC has also received an overwhelming response from around 300 overseas buyers from over 64 Countries.

dress, Shantmanu mentioned of exhibiting the rich cultural esnity for exhibitors as well as buy-20 lakh weavers and artisans as- managed & organized by the Carsociated with the Carpet Industry directly or indirectly.

pability in adapting to any type of an products and demand of Handdesign, color, quality & size as per made Carpets and floor coverings the provisions of the carpet buy- across the globe in the post paners has made it a household name demic era. It is Asia's Largest Carpet in the International market.

i.e., wool, silk, man made fiber, global carpet industry.

ticipants. The Jury is in the process for selecting the awardees proximately over 150 prominent and the Council will announce the

> It was further informed that Council is the process to make the Bhadohi Carpet Expo Mart fully functional and is organizing a Curtain Raiser Programme on 7th February, 2021 for the Member-Exporters/ trade.

2021 marks the 3rd virtual edi-Speaking on the inaugural ad- tion of the long running tradition that 41st ICE is a great opportu- sence of the handmade Indian Carpets and Rugs for an interers and will be beneficial for the national audience. This event is pet Export Promotion Council.

The India Carpet Expo is an initia-He said that India's unique ca- tive to bridge the gap between Indi-Expo that offers a unique platform "Industry uses diverse raw ma- for the buyers & sellers to synergize terials from various ports of India in order to grow & strengthen the

JKGRAS module. Additional Inspector Gen-

eral Registration, Jammu, Leena Padha, Tehsildar Headquarter, Rafiq Ahmad Jaral and all the Registrars, Sub Registrars of J&K participated through video conferencing.

Technical Director NIC, J&K, Rajesh Kumar gave a detailed presentation on GRAS module. Pertinently, the Government has recently launched the Government Receipt Accounting System (GRAS) portal in the Union Territory.

Dr Kotwal asked the developers to incorporate the features as per requirement of registration department and ought to be linked with NGDRS portal, so that the Sub Registrars can lock the e-registration challan techniques, so that the e-Challan whole of the Union Territory of of payment once used, may not be used again by anyone.

While rolling out GRAS for Limited (SHCIL), which is the the country.

evolutionary stage and lot of changes will be made as per the requirement of departments. He asked the registration officers to provide all the requirements through email at the earliest so that necessary customization

can be made in the system. It is pertinent to mention that

the Department of Registration has adopted the online registration system by using the NGDRS system developed by Software Development Unit of NIC, Pune, since 18th September 2020, in

five districts of Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Udhampur and Srinagar and with effect from 9th November. 2020 in rest of the 15 districts. Till date, 9695 documents have been registered online in 5 districts and 1114 documents in the remaining 15 districts. Furentists to use all the protection cessfully adopted e-stamping in

Holding Corporation of India

through e-stamping since 18th September, 2020. By adopting e-stamping, the government has saved a huge amount of about Rs. 35 crore, which was earlier spent on printing of stamp papers besides plugging the leakage and ensuring efficiency and transparency in the stamp duty collection.

Now, with the introduction of e-Registration fee collection, the revenue collected on account of stamp duty and Registration fee would be foolproof, transparent and easily monitorable besides being citizen friendly reform. This would be one of the major reforms of e-governance in the UT of I&K. The GRAS portal is accessible by logging onto www.jkgrastreasury.gov.in A user can generate e-Challan through this portal smoothly. He also asked the sci- ther, the department has suc- and deposit the registration fee either through internet banking service available 24X7 or over J&K in collaboration with Stock the counter in any branch of the J&K Bank in J&K as well as rest of

and Apiculture Schemes of Kashmir Division.

Farooq Ahmad Shah said that Joint Directorate for Apiculture and Mushroom has been created for development of heights through introduction

formed the participants that all the Demonstration cum Training Centres (DCTCs) will be upgraded during the current year to serve as model training centres for the benefit of farmers associated with these sectors.

have been formulated so that more and more young people are roped-in to adopt these It was emphasized on all the officers to prepare a train-

NEWS MAKERS

Handicrafts Awareness Camp On Jan 30 At Bandipora

BANDIPORA: The District Handicrafts Department, Bandipora is organizing a day-long Awareness Camp for Artisans of the District on 30th January (Saturday).

According to Assistant Director Handicrafts the venue of awareness camp shall be the premises of conference hall, Mini secretariat Bandipora. He informed that apart from providing information to the artisan community about the activities, schemes and developmental programmes of the Handicrafts Department, representatives from various other departments will attend the camp to inform the artisans about schemes in place for the upliftment of the artisans.

The Assistant Director appealed all the artisans of the district to attend the awareness camp.

Industrial Associations Call On Dwivedi

IAMMU: In a series of interactive sessions Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Manoj Kumar Dwivedi today met delegations of J&K Walnut Exporters Association, J&K Plywood Manufacturing Association and PHDCCI- Jammu at Civil Secretariat here.

All the Associations in one voice expressed gratitude to the Government for announcing the revised J&K Industrial Development Scheme 2021. The delegations expressed that the scheme will go a long way in boosting the Industrial Sector of Jammu and Kashmir.

On the occasion the delegates presented memorandum for consideration of the Government which included up-gradation of infrastructure in the Industrial Estates, Skill Development and Labour related incentives, Industrial benefits to hotels, Special Package of revival of Sick units, Rationalization of duty regime on walnut in-shell and Support to Wood based Industry.

HDFC Bank Partners With CSC For EMI Collection

NEW DELHI: HDFC Bank and CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd-a Special Purpose Vehicle (CSC SPV) under the Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) - today jointly announced the EMI Collection Services for CSC-HDFC Bank's Business Correspondents across the country.

This will make payments convenient for customers, who can now visit their nearest CSC, to deposit overdues. The CSC-HDFC Bank Correspondent or Village Level Entrepreneur (VLE) will match the loan account with the customers' registered phone number to cross check the amount payable on the system. The VLE will then provide a receipt for the amount collected and deposit the amount in the prescribed form to the bank.

The announcement was made by Dr. Dinesh Kumar Tyagi, MD, CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd., Mr. Dinesh Luthra, National Head, CSC Channel at HDFC Bank andMr. Debjyoti Datta, Head-Collection Process (Retail Portfolio Management) at HDFC Bank.

Dir Agriculture Holds Interaction With Technocrats

SRINAGAR: Director Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Department, Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal today held an interaction with the Agriculture Technocrats and other officers of the Department.

While interacting with officers, the Director emphasized on the adoption of latest technology and innovations in the science of agriculture so as to reap its benefits at the grass root level of the farming community.

Chowdhary stressed on the workforce that they should focus on imparting glamour to the agriculture activities in the fields. While appreciating the efforts of the officers and officials who were recently awarded by the respective District Administrations during Republic Day celebrations, the Director advised them to work with more zeal and enthusiasm and continue with this endeavor in a much more proactive and synchronized way. Speaking on the occasion Joint Director Apiculture and

Mushrooms, Farooq Ahmad Shah advised the officers and officials to come out of the orthodox means of agriculture and apply the newer technology for upliftment of the farming community.

NEWS

+

Friday | 29.01.2021

Jashn-e-Jamhuria concludes with Akhil Bhartiya Hindi Kavi Sammelan at Jammu University LG felicitates participating poets; encourages young talent of J&K through his words of appreciation

JAMMU: Jashn-e-Jamhuria concluded with Akhil Bhartiya Hindi Kavi Sammelan at Zorawar Singh Auditorium, University of Jammu. Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, who was the Chief Guest, felicitated the participating veteran, renowned and young poets on the occasion.

Veteran and acclaimed poets from across the country including Pratap Somvanshi, Sudeep Bhola, Sunil Jogi, Vishnu Saxena, Hari Narayan Harish, Jagdish Solanki, Bhuvan Mohini, and Irshad Kamil, who were the guest poets for today's event enthralled the audience with their poetry recitation. Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and Principal Secretary to Lt Governor, Nitishwar Kumar reciting pieces of poetry was one of the main highlights of the evening which received a standing ovation from the audience.

While speaking on the occasion, the Lt Governor said that the two-day literary festival is the beginning of a new tradition of bringing together the gems of literary art and giving a platform to the youth of J&K to share the stage with the prominent names in their respective fields.

He welcomed the renowned poets, from across the country, in the UT and



give rise to the poetic talent in the

young found talent of J&K through his words of appreciation and asked the youth to use the powerful tool of poetry to express themselves. To provide the much-needed platform and exposure to the young rising talent, more such events would be conducted in J&K, he added.

Prominent poets from J&K including Sanjiv Bhasin, Satish Vimal, Prof. Chanchal Dogra, Nida Nawaz, Dr. Nirmal Vinod, Kanwar Shakti Singh, besides young talent of J&K- Rohit Verma, Kanchan, Madima, Zahid Mir and Sushant received praises from the audience as well as from the guest poets for their riveting poetry recitation. As a part of the 72nd Republic Day celebrations, JKAACL, in collaboration with Radio Mirchi FM, organized Kul Hind Urdu Mushaira and Akhil Bhartiya Hindi Kavi Sammelan witnessing participation of top poets & lyricist of the country. Ten budding young poets from J&K, 5 each from Urdu and Hindi poetry category showcased their talent during the events. Secretary, JKAACL, Munir-ul-Islam delivered the welcome address. The proceedings were conducted by

CONTD. FROM **FRONT** PAGE

Gulmarg Shivers

settled at minus 13.4 degrees Celsius last night down from last night's minus 12 degrees Celsius.

Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 12.3 degrees Celsius down over five degrees from previous night's minus 7.7 degrees Celsius.

Kupwara recorded a low of minus 2.2 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag, in the south, recorded minus 10.7 degrees Celsius.

The minimum temperatures are expected to remain below freezing point for the next few days as the weatherman has forecast the possibility of a western disturbance hitting the valley on February 2.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan' -- the 40-day harshest winter period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies including the famous Dal Lake here.

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

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

Jan 3 Snowfall

as 'State Specific Calamity' in- terms of para 3 (ii) of State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) guidelines issued by MHA, Gol, vide No. 33-512015-NDM-I dated 30.07.2015; for purposes of providing relief to the affected families and Departments from SDRF," reads the order issued on Thursday by Simrandeep Singh, Secretary to the Government.

Pertinently, Kashmir Valley received heaviest spell of snowfall from January 3, crippling normal life and causing extensive damage to hundreds of houses in the Valley, besides claiming lives of two people, including a paramilitary CRPF man.

Highway Closed

either side on Jammu-Srinagar NHW in view of maintenance/repairing of the road," Traffic Police Headquarters J&K posted on its official Twitter handle.

It also added that the Mughal road continues to remain closed due to snow accumulation.

Budget Session

demanded a probe into the violence on Republic Day in Delhi.

Opposition parties include the Congress, the NCP, Shiv Sena, DMK, Trinamool Congress, CPL ITO from the Ghazipur border, had clashed with the police on January 26. Many of them, driving tractors, reached the Red Fort and entered the monument.

Some protestors even hoisted flags on the domes and placed the flagstaff at the ramparts of the national monument, where the national flag is unfurled by the prime minister on Independence Day.

"The Delhi Police has issued lookout notices against farmer leaders named in an FIR in connection with the violence during the tractor parade," the police commissioner said.

Police have named 37 farmer leaders, including Rakesh Tikait, Yogendra Yadav and Medha Patkar, in the FIR that mentioned charges of attempt to murder, rioting and criminal conspiracy.

Other farmer leaders who have been listed in the FIR are Darshan Pal, Gurnam Singh Chanduni, Kulwant Singh Sandhu, Satnam Singh Pannu, Joginder Singh Ugraha, Surjeet Singh Phool, Jagjeet Singh Dalewal, Balbir Singh Rajewal and Harinder Singh Lakhoval.

Delhi Police has registered a sedition case in connection with the violence at Red Fort during a tractor parade by farmers on Republic Day, officials said on Thursday.

According to a senior police officer, a case under section 124A (sedition) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) has been registered and the incident is being investigated.

Earlier, Delhi Police had named actor Deep Sidhu and gangster-turned-social activist Lakha Sidhana in an FIR lodged in connection with the Red Fort incident.

At the Singhu border point, a "sadbhawana march" was taken out by protesting farmer unions.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday visited a hospital here to enquire about the health of policemen injured in the violence.

"Meeting the injured Delhi Police personnel. We are proud of their courage and bravery," Shah tweeted.

Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla and Delhi Police Commissioner S N Shrivastava accompanied the home minister.

During the visit, Shah interacted with policemen and also took stock of their health progress from doctors. Jammu d vision, the or They sai

In a written message to Delhi Police personnel on Thursday, Shrivastava said that coming days can be more challenging and they will have to be alert.

"You have showed great patience despite the farmers" agitation turning violent...394 of our friends have been injured in the violence during the farmers" agitation," he said in his message. arrest him. Nothing has been done even now. Who was the person who maligned an entire community and organisation?" Rakesh Tikait had said blaming Deep Sidhu.

The Lt Governor also encouraged the

14-Days Old

recovered from Khan who is linked with JeM outfit.

The police spokesperson further said that the preliminary enquiry has revealed that Khan had joined militant ranks recently and was tasked to carry out "subversive activities" in Sopore and Bandipora towns. Khan, reportedly had joined militant ranks 14 days earlier and a pistol, 10 bullets and 5 grenades were recovered from his possession.

"It is pertinent to mention here that on January 26, the said militant managed to escape from a cordon and search operation at Adipora area of Sopore while taking advantage of darkness," the police spokesperson said.

"Accordingly, a case under relevant sections of law stands registered in Police Station Bandipora and further investigation has been initiated," he added.

Indo-Pak Troops

Meanwhile, a brother-sister duo were injured in a mysterious explosion in Naushera sector of neighbouring Rajouri district. The injured identified as Arti Kumari and her brother Roheet Kumar Chowdhary, residents of Sehar village were referred to Jammu hospital for specialised treatment.

Pak Officials Return

crossed over to the other side four months back, they said. She was handed over to Indian authorities by Pakistani side at the Chakhan-Da-Bagh cross-Line of Control point, which was opened on Thursday for handing over ceremony, the officials said.

In December last, Indian Army had handed over two teen sisters Laiba Zabair, and Sana Zabair, from Abbasspur PcK to Pakistan Army as a goodwill gesture.

J&K Records

Jammu division and 45 from the Kashmir division, the officials said.

They said Srinagar district recorded the highest of 26 cases, including 13 travellers, followed by 13 in Jammu district.

While eight districts -- Budgam, Kulgam, Doda, Kathua Kishtwar, Udhampur, Reasi and Ramban -- did not report any fresh case, 10 others recorded cases in single digits, the officials said.

The number of active COVID-19 cases was 963 in the union territory, while 1,21,402 patients have recovered so far, they said. One death was reported from Jammu in the past 24 hours, taking the death toll due to the virus to 1,932, the officials said. non-availability of such space, staggered schedule/shift timings and students rotation can be an option to be devised by Registrar/ Principal concerned, according to the guidelines issued as per UGC norms," he said.

The order, as per the official spokesperson added that sufficient hand washing points with proper soap should be made available for the students and Staff at suitable locations within the premises of HEIs.

"Éverybody should wash hands frequently maintaining proper physical distance. Safe water, cleaning supplies and sufficient segregated toilets shall be kept operational," he said.

"The guidelines stated that touching of surfaces by the students, Professors and other staff members in and around the area of college should be cautioned against and prohibited. Disinfecting, sanitizing and cleaning the learning spaces, laboratories to be ensured as per protocol in all the Institutions," he added.

The order, as per the official spokesperson also said that while coming and leaving colleges, the students and staff should maintain physical distance of at least one meter from each other and no student or staff member should breach this distance rule either during the colleges/universities or while coming or leaving the institute.

"In all cases gathering or grouping should be avoided and everybody should come and leave college/university individually," he said.

In addition to above advisories, the guidelines, as per the official spokesperson said that continuous monitoring of the students and faculty to be ensured and also the Isolation facilities shall be put in place in the campuses for symptomatic persons and quarantine facilities for those who were in contact with the positive tested persons and Rapid tests for Covid 19 be got conducted for such cases.

"Besides, the guidelines called for avoiding all such programmes and extracurricular activities where physical distancing is not possible. Universities/Colleges should ensure there is space to temporarily separate sick students and staff without creating stigma. Share procedures with staff, parents and students, including advising all sick students and staff to remain home," the official spokesperson said, adding "Colleges/Universities authorities should limit any non essential visitors, volunteers and activities involving external groups in the Colleges/Universities,"

About the reopening of hostels, the official spokesperson said that the same may be opened only in such cases where it is necessary while strictly observing the safety and health preventive measures as per instructions of the University Grants Commission.

"Director Colleges/Registrars of al

maintained from power corridors despite serving at important political positions once.

Madhvi Sharma.

"For his impeccable integrity and political views," the author of the celebrated book, "Exposing the Myth Behind the Narrative", said, "Sethi Sahib was admired by a large section of the people on both sides of the LoC."

Sethi favoured an independent Jammu & Kashmir as a geographical unit as it existed before 1947 "even as he believed that people of all the regions of the erstwhile princely state will have to arrive at a consensus on the future of Jammu & Kashmir," Bashir said.

Back in 2004, when Kashmir's celebrated journalist Yusuf Jameel visited Press Club of Mirpur, he was surprised to see Sethi's sway on scribes.

"Everyone was asking about Sethi Sb, such was the popularity," recalled Jameel.

"Although he was a proud Mirpuri," Jameel told Kashmir Observer, "Sethi was the real epitome of brotherhood, who never differentiated any person based on religion, caste and colour. Besides, he never accepted the government narrative on J&K. He was a people's politician."

Sethi was fond of Urdu poetry and would recite poetry quite often, recalled Anuradha Bhasin editor of the daily Kashmir Times. Her late father Ved Bhasin was Sethi's long time comrade.

"Sethi used to visit the Kashmir Times office regularly where he would have discussions and debates with his friend [Ved Bhasin] on different political issues," Bhasin told Kashmir Observer.

The fascinating thing about Sethi sahib was his humility and his easy-going personality, she said.

"My father, late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed sb, Mohammad Sayeed Malik and Sethi sb were very close. Despite the different ideologies and raging arguments, there was a sense of respect and mutual understanding among them. His demise is a personal loss for me," said Bhasin. **Jammu Bans**

permission from District Magistrate/ Additional District Magistrate in this regard, an official spokesperson said Thursday.

The restrictions, he said, have been imposed as a preventive measure for a period of two months to curb illegal transportation of bovine animals in the district which disturbs public peace and tranquility.]

Cops Recover

a briefcase at his rental house at New Plot and when he came back from market, he found his briefcase broken up and weapon was missing.

In this regard, a case under FIR number

CPI-M and RJD.

With a view to have a paperless Budget, all the documents and the Economic Survey would be made available online soon after the authenticated copies are laid on the Table of the House, the Lok Sabha Secretariat has said.

Like the last time, in this session too COVID-19 protocols will be in place and Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha will meet in shifts of five hours each -- with the upper house meeting in the morning and the lower house in the evening.

Due to the pandemic, the Winter session was not held.

The Question Hour also makes a comeback in this session.

Due to paucity of time, there was no Question Hour in the previous session. The Monsoon session also saw the two Houses working on Saturdays and Sundays. But this time, Parliament will not sit on weekends.

Private Members' business which usually takes place on Friday afternoons has also made a comeback in the Budget session, according to Lok Sabha secretariat. In the previous session, the Private Members' business was not taken up.

Members introduce their own bills and resolutions during this period which are debated by the House.

During the session the government will also push to convert ordinances issued recently into laws. An ordinance has to be converted into a law within 42 days of the beginning of the session, else it lapses.

The ordinances issued recently include The Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Ordinance 2020, The Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 and The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021.

The session would conclude on April 8. In order to enable the standing committees to consider the Demands for Grants of ministries and prepare their reports, the Houses will adjourn on February 15 and meet again on March 8.

Police Issue Lookout

that no culprit would be spared. On Thursday, Shrivastava held a meeting with the special commissioner of police (Intelligence) and other senior police officers at the police headquarters.

The farmer unions protesting against the three farm laws alleged that there was a conspiracy behind the violence, which left 394 police personnel injured and one protestor dead.

Thousands of protesting farmers, who reached

Meanwhile, Delhi border points remained under heavy police deployment on Thursday in the aftermath of the violence. Security personnel have also been deployed at the Red Fort.

A group of people claiming to be locals at Delhi's Singhu border staged protest at the Singhu border, demanding that the area be vacated following the Republic Day violence in the city.

Thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at several border points, demanding a complete repeal of the three farm laws.

'No Arrests Will

will be provided by the administration for farmers to go home. Around 1,200 farmers are protesting at the site. A massive deployment of security forces has taken place at the Ghazipur border protest site.

But as the police movement was witnessed near the protest site, BKU spokesperson Rakesh Tikait said that no arrests will happen there. If anything happens, the police will be responsible. "Yahan goli chalegi (Bullet will be fired here)," he said in exact words.

He also claimed that BJP and its members were doing "Gundagardi (hooliganism)" and that they brought 100 people to beat up the protesters. "We were ready for talks but we know what will happen if my companions and I are arrested," he said and added that "I will hang myself".

This development comes in as sources report that Tikait's arrest is likely to happen soon in the case of R-Day violence.

As power and water supply were cut off at the protest site, the BKU spokesperson refused to drink water. He said that he will only drink the water that comes from his village.

Police Puts Up Notice Outside Tikait's Tent

Delhi Police put up a notice outside Bharatiya Kisan Union spokesperson Rakesh Tikait's tent at the Ghazipur border asking to explain why legal action should not be taken against him for breaching the agreement with police regarding the tractor rally on January 26.

The notice reads, "You are directed to provide names of the perpetrators of such violent acts belonging to your organisation. You are directed to submit your response within 3 days".

In response to this, the BKU spokesperson said: "I'll read the notice, they've given me 3-day time for a reply. Farmers came here as responsibility of farmer unions and they take their responsibility. We had photographed the route given to us in writing. Police barricaded it and kept the route to Delhi free".

"Someone goes there and hoists a flag, why was no firing done? Where were the Police? How did he go there? Police allowed him to leave and didn't

Mehbooba Alleges

The former chief minister further said she felt there is a conspiracy to defame the farmers.

"Republic Day is a day of celebration of the Constitution. When you make laws and when these laws are against the fundamentals of the Constitution... For the farms bills, farmers were never consulted," she said.

Farmers feel scared, she said and demanded withdrawal of the laws to end this fear among the farming community.

Mehbooba claimed those involved in incidents on Republic Day violence were "BJP men".

This is her first visit to Jammu division post the District Development Council (DDC) elections which were held in November-December last year. Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), an amalgam of various political parties including National Conference and PDP, swept the polls by winning 110 out of 280 seats.

Mehbooba will also visit the border districts of Poonch and Rajouri and Chenab valley region and interact with party leaders and workers.

Colleges, Universities

and students alike to follow all Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) in letter and spirit, in addition to suggestions of District Disaster Management Authorities and SOPs for safety and health protocol issued by the UGC.

According to the guidelines for the ownership of the initiative, the official spokesperson said, an Advisory Committee needs to be framed by the Registrar/Principal of the University/College including members from Municipal Bodies, Health and few parents for monitoring and support of the Universities/ Colleges.

"The guidelines asked to avoid the risk of transmission, the students, faculty and staff should be screened and symptomatic ones be advised to get clinically assessed before allowing them entry into the campus. In this regard, adequate arrangements of thermal scanners, sanitizers, face masks should be made available at all entry and exit points including the reception area," he said.

He added that the order also directs that all students, Professors and other staff should wear face masks compulsorily and have their own sanitizer also with them.

"Besides, the Students shall sit almost 2 meters apart from each other. In case of Universities and Nodal Principals Jammu/ Kashmir shall strengthen counseling facilities for 24x7 for needy students and faculty," he added.

Vested Interests

in a sense ambassadors of people to people contact for return of normalcy and final and dignified return of Kashmiri Pandits to the valley, chairman, APMCC, Vinod Pandit said in a memorandum submitted to the Lt Governor.

However, there are certain vested interests in the state administration who are hellbent on damaging and failing this visionary step of the Government of India by creating unnecessary hurdles in the smooth working of these employees under one or the other pretext, he alleged.

While there are numerous such instances, we bring to your kind attention a few of them which include harassment to junior assistants recruited in 2017 in rural development, finance, planning, transport, animal husbandry departments whose recruitment is on the verge of being cancelled due to the tough stance adopted by these departments seeking clarifications on petty things even as the candidates are graduates and have passed the type tests on merit, the memorandum said.

In this regard, we urge you (LG) to call a meeting of the heads of the departments and the Chief Secretary and sort out the issues urgently as it has put the careers of many young Kashmiri migrants at stake besides discouraging other youngsters from joining services in the Kashmir Valley, it said.

Besides Pandit and Bharati, general secretary of APMCC Arun Kandroo was part of the delegation that called on the LG.

KD Sethi:

"He had a very strong and committed cadre not only in Jammu but in Mirpur, Punjab, Haryana and other states," Malik said. "But he lived a simple man's life."

Sethi was against any kind of violence and atrocity on people, Malik added.

"He did stick his neck out for the rights of people all the time. He was in favour of the rights of people of Kashmir at the time when everyone was trying to please their masters."

At the same time, Sethi ran his own Urdu weekly namely Jidd-o-jehad (The Struggle). He would regularly write about his mission in its editorials.

Calling the late politician as a "walking encyclopaedia" on J&K's political history, historian Khalid Bashir Ahmad said that among Sethi's great qualities was the distance he always 17/2021 under section 454/380 IPC was registered at Police Station Bakshi Nagar, Jammu, police said, adding that special teams of Police Station Bakshi Nagar under the supervision of SP North P D Nitya were constituted.

The team led by SHO Bakshi Nagar Inspector Manjeet Singh started an all-round investigation using all the possible means and led to rounding up of suspect namely Ranjeet Singh @ Raju S/O Balbir Singh R/O New Plot Jammu, the statement said.

"During sustained questioning, the suspect confessed his involvement in the said case. Also upon his disclosure stolen service weapon (Pistol) along with 9mm 35 cartages were recovered. The arrest was made by SHO P/S Bakshi Nagar Inspector Manjeet Singh," police said.

The statement added that further investigation is going on to ascertain their involvement in any other case—(KNO)

CASO Held In South

were conducted amid chill and identification documents were checked thoroughly. However, no arrests were made during the search operation. Similar kind of search operation was carried out at Dagapora Imam Sahab village of Shopian.

Eyewitnesses told KNT that soldiers from 44 Rashtriya Rifles and CRPF personnel from 178 Battalion cordoned off the area and conducted search operation. The search operation ended on a peaceful note.

Two Teens Injured

to the hospital for treatment

The injured have been identified as Musaib Makdoomi, son of Fayaz Ahmad Makdoomi of Sikhbagh Lal Bazar and Mir Raban, son of Late Rehman Mir of Hazratbal at present Botshah Mohalla Lal Bazar. Musaib as per officials has suffered head injury while Raban has sustained hand injury during the scuffle, adding that both the teenage boys are admitted in Soura hospital. They said Musaib's condition is stated to be critical.

Meanwhile, Medical Superintendent SKIMS, Dr. Farooq Jan told KNO that the condition of Musaib is so far stable. However, he said the medical examination to be done will determine the actual situation of the patient after six hours—(KNO)

School Building

as well as by locals. They said that the officials from F&ES were not able to take their vehicle near the school due to accumulation of snow and it took time to douse off the fire in wake of water crisis in the village. Meanwhile, a police officer sad that fire was put under control while the cause of fire is being ascertained–(KNO)



Press Trust of India

DUBAI: Former Sri Lanka pacer Dilhara Lokuhettige was on Thursday found guilty of three offences under the ICC Anti-Corruption Code, following a hearing by an independent tribunal.

Lokuhettige was charged under the ICC Anti-Corruption Code in November 2019 for his involvement in match-fixing during a T20 tournament in UAE in 2017, where a Sri Lankan team participated. Lokuhettige was also charged by the ICC on behalf of

the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) with breaching three counts of the ECB Anti-Corruption Code for Participants for the T10 League and these proceedings are ongoing.

The former pacer, who played nine ODIs and two T20 Internationals for his country, was found guilty on all charges after he exercised his right to a hearing before an independent Anti-Corruption Tribunal.

The Australia-based Lokuhettige remains suspended and sanctions will follow in due course.

"The three-member Tribunal concluded, by a majority, that the ICC had jurisdiction to bring the charges against Lokuhettige and was unanimous in deciding the merits of the case," an ICC release said.

Lokuhettige was found guilty on three counts. As per article 2.1.1, he has been a "party to an agreement or effort to fix or contrive or otherwise influ-ence improperly the result, progress, conduct or other aspect(s) of a match.

Article 2.1.4 states that he was "directly or indirectly soliciting, inducing, enticing, instructing, persuading, encouraging or intentionally facilitating any Participant to breach Code. As per article 2.4.4, Lokuhettige "failed to disclose to the ACU full details of any approaches or invitations received to engage in corrupt conduct under the Code."

He last played domestic cricket in Sri Lanka back in 2016 and T10 is still not an officially recognised format.

SPORTS CENTRE

Girls in Kashmir must be **empowered** and given freedom of choice so that they can surmount any challenge."

Meet Pulwama Wrestler

SIMNA Who Wants To Teach Kashmir Women Self-Defense

RAYES AFZAL

SRINAGAR: Born in the rural world of Drabgam, Pulwama, Syed Rashida Simnani is a 21-vearold Belt Wrestling, Taekwondo and Baseball athlete, with many laurels to her name.

A self-taught sportswoman, Rashida started her career at 17 when she participated at a School level belt wrestling competition.

"Belt wrestling is a form of martial arts and self-defense in which we have to grab our opponent's belt and pin him/her down to the mat," Rashida told Kashmir Observer.

"In 2017, I was selected to a belt wrestling competition at Pampore Higher Secondary. It was the first time I had ever played the game and almost instantly, I felt attached to it," Rashida said

"After that, it was all about learning more. Unfortunately, without any belt wrestling coaches or associations in Kashmir, I ended up watching videos of wrestlers like Sunil Kumar Solanki, Navjot Kaur, Divya Kakran, and others.'

Her zeal to learn paid off the same year as she was selected to represent Jammu and Kashmir at National Belt Wrestling competition in Maharashtra, where she won a Bronze medal. From there, her will and determination to succeed took her on different paths.

Once back home, her community needed her skills as 'mysterious' braid choppers had instilled

an atmosphere of fear among the womenfolk.

Friday | 29.01.2021

"The situation was so dire in 2017 that I had to take the initiative of teaching selfdefense and martial arts to girls. For 20 days. I was able to work with more than 200-300 girls from 10 different schools in District Pulwama," she says.

"The girls were so scared that sometimes I would invite them to a health centre and train them on how to best protect themselves in case of an attack."

Seeing the response of the girl students and their parents, who would accompany them, Rashida felt she could do more as there was a need for Kashmiri women, especially ones from the rural areas, to lookup to sports.

"Kashmir is already a tough place for women. I couldn't teach self-defense any more as it became evident to me that an initiative like this needed the help of the Administration," Rashida reflects.

Seeing the difficulties presented by a conservative society, teenage Rashida decided to better herself as a sportswoman first.

In 2018, she was selected for National Baseball Tournament at Chandigarh. Later that year, she represented Al Jawad Sports Academy at the 3rd International Taekwondo tournament in Delhi. Competing in the female under-68 kg category, Rashida Simnani bagged the Silver medal for India.

Simnani spent the next two years educating

herself, and others, at different levels. While being enrolled as a student of Arts at Women's College, Srinagar, she also completed a certificate course in Health and Fitness from Sports Authority of India (SAI) in Patiala.

Based on her sporting achievements, she was appointed as a fitness coach at her college on a contractual basis for one year.

"Wrestling is my game. For a girl from rural Kashmir, there are already so many hurdles. Even my parents didn't support me initially, but seeing my passion and dedication they gradually started recognizing my ability."

Now, in her final year of graduate studies, Rashida feels that her journey to inspire Kashmiri women has only just begun.

"Girls in Kashmir must be empowered and given freedom of choice so that they can surmount any challenge," she said. "While sporting stake-holders, like SAI and Sports Councils, must reach out to athletes from rural areas so that their talents don't go unnoticed."

With regards to her belt wrestling career and her ambition to teach self-defense, Simnani says, "The government must provide me with a coach or a trainer so that my capabilities as a belt wrestler don't get wasted.'

"I want to learn further and get more and more qualifications under my belt. I hope someday I will be able to set up my own wrestling club where I can teach girls various forms of martial arts, like self-defense."

PAK VS SA 1ST TEST, DAY 3

Spinners Help Pakistan Take Control As South Africa End Day At 187/4 Agencies

SPORTS

KARACHI: Pakistan spinners grabbed three late wickets to leave South Africa in trouble at 187-4 in its second innings at stumps on day three of the first test on Thursday.

Aiden Markram and Rassie van der Dussen led South Africa's resistance in overturning a 158-run firstinnings deficit. Their half-centuries in a gritty 127run stand nosed the Proteas ahead after tea, but both batsmen were dismissed within the day's last 33 balls, along with Faf du Plessis for 10.

South Africa was effectively 29-4 with two days to play. Legspinner Yasir Shah bagged 3-53 — six for the match — and Nauman Ali 1-27.

"The wicket has started to take turn and there is also some bounce for the spinners," Shah said. "Tomorrow, we will try to bowl them out quickly so that we do not have to chase that many runs for victory."

Aiden Markram made 74 and Van der Dussen 64, digging in together for nearly 3 1/2 hours. At stumps, captain Quinton de Kock was yet to score and nightwatchman Keshav Maharaj was 2 not out.

Shah ended the threatening stand by having Van der Dussen caught close to the wicket, and then had du Plessis plumb leg before wicket off a sharp googly. Du Plessis made a successful lbw video referral before he scored and was also dropped on 6.

Nauman secured Pakistan's advantage when he induced Markram forward to block and the ball nicked the bat's shoulder and gave Abid his second catch at silly point.



Earlier, Pakistan was bowled out for 378 in the morning, Shah leading the tailenders with an unbeaten 38 valuable runs.

South Africa scored only 47 runs in the middle session and lost only Dean Elgar, for 29 to Shah when wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan dived full length in front of the stumps and plucked a stunning two-handed catch. Markram and Van der Dussen rode their luck.

Markram survived a video referral on 22 and was dropped four runs later by captain Babar Azam at 71-1. Van der Dussen was adjudged lbw by umpire Aleem Dar off seamer Faheem Ashraf soon after reaching his halfcentury but the South African got the decision overruled. Van der Dussen overhauled the deficit in the same over when he guided Ashraf through gully to third man for a boundary before falling to Shah.

Shah ended Pakistan's innings in the first hour with a flourish, making an unbeaten 38 off 37 balls and sharing a 55-run, last-wicket stand with Nauman, 24.

Pakistan recovered from 33-4 on day one to post a ommendable total on the back of Fawad Alam

SYED MUSHTAQ ALI SEMI-FINALS Tamil Nadu Hold Edge Over Rajasthan While Punjab Favourites Against Baroda

Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: Big bodied Shahrukh Khan's brute power will be countered by experience and guile of Chahar brothers Deepak and Rahul, when a formidable Tamil Nadu lock horns with spirited Rajasthan in the semi-final of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy on Friday.

With IPL auction set for Februa 18, players from both side wouldn't like to miss out on an opportunity to impress the talent scouts of various IPL teams like Shahrukh did against Himachal Pradesh during Tamil Nadu's quarter-final victory. Rajasthan on the other hand have been a steady side with a host of young T20 specialists like Mahipal Lomror (170 runs at strike rate of 165 plus) in batting and Chahar along with last IPL's find Ravi Bishnoi and left-armers Khaleel Ahmed and Aniket Chaudhary in bowling department. Rajasthan's top-scorer in the tournament is Ankit Lamba (198 runs) but he would like to improve on his strike-rate. Rajasthan will however depend on their premier leg spinner Rahul Chahar (11 wickets) who has been named as a stand by for England series.



The trio will be keen to play their roles to perfection and aid the pacers Mohammed Mohammed and Aswin Crist in absence of Sandeep Warrier, who has been picked as a net bowler for the England Tests.

Punjab pacers Kaul and Sharma up against Vishnu Solanki: Punjab's battle hardened veterans

ke Siddarth Kaul and Sandeen Shai

Lead Atop I-League Table season. The Manipur-based club,

Churchill Brothers Face TRAU

FC With An Aim To Extend

Press Trust of India

KALYANI: Churchill Brothers will aim to consolidate their four-point lead at the top of the Hero I-league table when they clash against second-placed TRAU at the Kalyani Mu-

nicipal Stadium here on Friday. With TRAU FC and Mohamme SC hot on Churchill's heels, the Goan club will look to continue their winning streak and break free of the chasing pack by extending the lead to

built mostly around young Indian talent, is still undefeated in the league and have propelled themselves to second place after a hardfought 2-0 win over Chennai City FC in their last match.

A win tomorrow would bring TRAU just a point behind table-tor

Similarly for Tamil Nadu, their pre-

mier run-scorer N Jagadeesan (322

runs) would feel that he might have done enough to ensure that Mahendra Singh Dhoni gives him regular chances for CSK in the upcoming IPL. Skipper Dinesh Karthik, who

is certainly Tamil Nadu's best T20 player by a distance, have had a quiet season by his standards but is known to fire on big days.

Even the others batsmen like C Hari Nishanth, the ever-reliable Baba Aparaiith and KB Arun Karthik will be more than keen to make an impact against a quality Rajasthan attack. In the bowling department, leg-

spinner Murugan Ashwin and leftarm spinner R Sai Kishore have been quite a handful but it was Baba Aparaiith, who was the surprise packet, taking the new ball and enjoying a great degree of success too.

ma will pose a few questions in the semi-final for Baroda's Vishnu Solanki, who has won many fans with a perfect last ball execution of 'Helicopter Shot' during his team thrilling quarter-final win against Harvana. Kaul, Sandeep and Arshdeep Singh, along with leg-spinner Mayank Markande have been outstanding throughout the tournament with economy rate

of less than seven runs per over. Baroda would want their pacers Lukman Meriwala and former India U-19 Atith Sheth to rattle the Punjab top-order and their left-arm spinners Bhargav Bhatt, Ninad Rathwa and off-spinner Kartik Kakade would also hold the key.

But when it comes to their batting, it would be all about skipper Kedar Devdhar and Solanki, who have bailed out the team more than once in the tournament.

seven points with a win against TRAU. "It is very important to keep winning and keep the momentum alive. However, each game is different and TRAU have a different style of playing football," Churchill Brothers coach Fernando Santiago Varela Varela said at the pre-match press conference.

"They (TRAU) have a very good coach and very good individual players like (Komron) Tursunov and (Joseph) Olaleye. We will have to be on our toes and will have to pay attention.

"We would like to impose our gameplay and hopefully get a positive result that would extend our lead further," he added.

TRAU have been a revelation this

pers Churchill Brothers.

Chief coach Nandakumar said, "With the potential we have in our squad, I am not surprised to see us second in the league. But, the important thing now is to maintain our rhythm and hold our position. Our aim is to finish top six first in the league and then think of other things."

"All I can say is that we are focused on the next match against Churchill. We will try to do our best to get three points. Perhaps it is too early to dub us as title contenders and we aim to take one match at a time.

"It just takes one mistake for Churchill to punish you. That is how good they are and it is always difficult to play against a very balanced and technically good team. We will have to be cautious against them as every moment is precious and be on our toes," he added.

tient century and contributions from the lower order.

Kagiso Rabada's 200th test wicket was the highlight for South Africa after Pakistan resumed on day three at 308-8. Rabada reached the milestone in his first over of the day when he uprooted Hasan Ali's middle stump as the batsman attempted a reckless pull on 21.

The fast bowler, playing his 44th test, became the youngest South African at 25 to take 200 wickets. His innings figures were 3-70.

Rabada delivered 8,154 balls to become the third fastest bowler to 200 wicket in test history in terms of balls, after Pakistan bowling coach Waqar Younis (7,730) and Dale Steyn (7,848).

"It's a massive feat to be included in a list of such names," said Rabada, playing his first test in a year. "It is satisfying. But the show goes on."

Shah ensured Pakistan stretched its lead beyond 150 runs by smashing four boundaries and also lofting Maharaj (3-90) over long on for a six before the left-arm spinner ended the innings by having Nauman trapped lbw.

Lungi Ngidi took 2-57 but fast bowler Andrich Nortje returned an expensive 2-105.

England Has 'Formidable Combination of Players' That Can Beat India, Says Andy Flower

Press Trust of India

INDIA VS EN

NEW DELHI: He was among the key plotters of England's historic 2012 Test triumph in India and former coach Andy Flower sees no reason why an encore is not possible this year as he believes the visitors have enough "formidable players" to challenge the upbeat hosts.

The spin duo of Graeme Swann and Monty Panesar, along with the magnificent Kevin Pietersen, were the architects of England's 2-1 series win that year, the only victory by an overseas team in India during the last decade.

Flower, a former Zimbabwe captain and one of England's most successful coaches in recent history, didn't want to get into predictions but cited India's remarkable Test conquest of Australia to assert the point that visitors are no longer underdogs in the longest format.

"India won a T20 series, the Melbourne and Brisbane Tests this year and a Test series a couple of years ago in Australia, which goes to show that there are ample opportunities for vis-



iting squads to make a mark," Flower told PTI in an interview.

"The nature of cricket has changed, as both batsmen and bowlers have become more athletic, backed by an aggressive outlook. It must be viewed through the lens of changes taking place around us, and it will not be so monotonous anymore as we shall begin to see patterns," he said.

Asked to pick a favourite for the four-Test series starting February 5 in Chennai, Flower declined.

"It would be premature to declare the direction in which the fortunes of any team would swing. However, the English side has a formidable combination of players who can set themselves into comfortable or winning situations," Flower said.

He was obviously referring to the likes of skipper Joe Root along with the pace duo of James Anderson and Stuart Broad, and not to forget that powerhouse of all-round talent called Ben Stokes.

Flower said that the series, like every other contest, would be about how one seizes critical moments.

"A lot will depend on the game day, and the star performers' ability to convert critical opportunities. The English squad has some amazing players who have excelled in all formats of the game," the Zimbabwean said.

A lot of England's Test success can be credited to the champion pace bowling duo of Broad and Anderson. who between them, have a whopping 1100 plus Test wickets.

Flower admitted that once the two leave, it will be hard to fill in their big shoes

"All teams undergo such periods of transition when they have to replace star performers that are phasing out,' said Flower.

"Building a fierce bowling attack often takes some amount of time, and

both Anderson and Broad have dominated the pace attack for England for little over a decade.

"They will be leaving a memorable legacy behind, and the new set of bowlers have large shoes to fill," said the gritty left-hander of yesteryears, who himself enjoyed a lot of success in the sub-continent.

Asked to identify the successors, Flower came up with the very dynamic Jofra Archer's name among others.

...bowlers like pacer Jofra Archer, newer entrants like Ollie Robinson, Sadiq Mahmood, and all-rounder Sam Curran etc. need to be given the necessary support to create a depth in bowling.

England would be coming into the series after beating Sri Lanka in their own backyard, a confident build-up to what is likely to be a gruelling assignment next month.

India, on the other hand, can't be faulted if they are still a bit giddy after that epic win over Australia in Brisbane, which earned them all-round praise and respect.

Flower feels that in the past few

years, the game's traditional format has become way more competitive and interesting.

...as we can now see matches being decided or ending in result. This is in contrast to Test cricket at least until a decade ago when drawn matches were more commonplace, and batsmen played longer innings," he pointed out.

In recent times, there has been a trend of top batsmen playing express pace well but coming up short against swing bowling.

These include Indian players who haven't done well against Anderson, Broad or a Trent Boult for example.

"It is not necessarily true for all international batsmen, as it has got more to do with preparation for a series and reading the bowlers' tactics right," said Flower, who played 63 Tests and 213 ODIs for Zimbabwe.

He then cited the factors that, at times, lead to questionable technique.

"It could be due to the players not adjusting to the conditions, (not) taking the right guard while batting, or even the movement of feet, head weight and body," he explained.

OUTPOST

India Today Takes Rajdeep Sardesai Off-Air for 2 Weeks, Cuts Pay



Agencies

n the aftermath of the farmer's Tractor Rally violence on Republic Day, leading news channel India Today on Thurs-day, 28 January decided to take TV anchor and consulting editor Rajdeep Sardesai off-air for two weeks. This decision is followed by his misinformed claims about the Delhi Police killing a farmer, which was broadcasted and tweeted. The news channel has also cut Sardesai's one-month salary, The Wire reported.

On 26 January, amid a rally demonstrating against the BJP government's three farm laws, clashes broke out between the protesters and the police. Sardesai incorrectly reported that Navneet Singh, a farmer was shot and killed by the police. He had also tweeted this claim before the broadcast.

After his claims, a video footage was released by the Delhi police, which showed a tractor, reportedly being driven by Singh, crashing into police barricades and overturning Singh succumbed to his injuries.

Soon after the vide released, the TV anchor withdrew his statement, tweeting, "While the farm protestors claim that the deceased Navneet Singh was shot at by Delhi police while on a tractor, this video clearly shows that the tractor overturned while trying to break the police barricades."

"The police have shown great restraint despite grave provocation by the farm protestors," he added, expressing appreciation for the Delhi Police.

Finalise Policy On Rare Diseases by March 31: HC to Centre

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Thursday directed the Centre to finalise by March 31 its new National Health Policy for Rare Diseases of 2020 and make operational the digital platform envisaged under it for crowd funding of the expensive medicines and treatment for rare illnesses.

The direction was issued by Justice Prathiba M Singh while hearing two pleas moved on behalf of two children who are suffering from a rare disease known as Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD).

Justice Singh said she was issuing the direction to finalise the policy and operationalise the digital platform by March 31 as an affidavit filed by the Health Ministry said that both things were only "likely" to be done by March 31.

The court also noted in its order that the earlier policy on rare diseases of 2017 was k nt in



istry to write to the company - Sarepta Therapeutics in USAwhich manufactures the experimental drug used for treatment of DMD, enquiring whether they would consider providing the medicine free of cost to the two children whose families cannot afford the exorbitantly priced drug. With these directions, the court

February 4. During the hearing, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AI-

Big Banners in Kashmir To Explore Locations line producers. They will also be ex-**Observer News Service**

SRINAGAR: The big banners of Bollywood are on a 4-day visit to Kashmir to explore scenic back-

drops for their future film projects. The top names which have arrived here include Ajay Devgun Films, Sanjay Dutt Productions, Reliance Entertainment, Rohit Shetty Films, Zee Studios, Adhikari Brothers & SAB (Marathi), Endemol, Rajkumar Hirani, Excel Entertainment, etc besides representatives from Producers Guild, Mumbai.

Soon after their arrival here Wednesday, the 24-member delegation visited Gulmarg today. The team will stay in Srinagar on 29th January and also have interactive

sessions with media, travel trade

associations and Valley's film and

ploring the favourite backdrop locations at Pahalgam on 30th January before departing back to Mumbai. Director, Tourism, Kashmir, Dr. G

N Itoo said the top production houses are here and have visited various locations. "Kashmir has been receiving good response from the Bollywood filmmakers since opening of the tourism here in addition to the country's regional entertainment houses for shooting song sequences and commercial ads," said Dr. Itoo.

Dr Itoo said Kashmir is a natural backdrop for the filmmakers and the department has been making it easy for them to get permissions for shooting.

Kashmir has witnessed a steady increase in tourist footfall due to continuous snowfall since the onset of winter.

Celebrities who recently visited Kashmir include Singers Jubin Nautiyal, Guru Randhawa, Salman Ali, former Indian actress and model Sana Khan, Music Composer Salim Merchant, TV Host and Anchor Aditya Narayan, business tycoon Anil Ambani and most of whom visited Gulmarg. The ski resort also received 100 percent booking as most of the hotels are booked till February end owing to the huge tourist rush.

The Producers Guild praised the pristine beauty of the Gulmarg and expressed keen desire to shoot for their upcoming film projects at Various locations in Kashmir.

Kashmir has been traditionally a favourite spot for the Bollywood who have shot scores of movies here at Dal Lake, Srinagar's Mughal Gardens, Gulmarg and Pahalgam.

Unzipping Pants, Holding Minor's Hand Not 'Sexual Assault': Bombay High Court



Agencies

NAGPUR: The Bombay High Court (Nagpur Bench) has ruled that "unzipping pants or holding a minor's hand" does not amount to 'sexual assault' under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.

This came on the original complaint filed by a woman who came to her home one afternoon and found the accused with his pants unzipped flashing his private parts as he held the hand of her 5-year-old daughter and asked her to come to bed with him.

When she saw this, she hurled abuses at him after, which he released her daughter, who later informed her that the accused wanted her to get into bed and sleep with him.

The verdict by Justice Pushpa V. Ganediwala came in a criminal appeal against the conviction and imprisonment of one year and five-year jail plus fines under different laws, awarded to the 50-year-old man for molesting the 5-year-old girl, by the Special Judge of Special POCSO Court, Gadchiroli, in October 2020.

Partly allowing the appeal, the Bombay HC quashed aside the jail sentence of 5 years under the POCSO Act and modified the imprisonment as per the Indian Penal Code (IPC) to the extent the appellant-accused has already served as an undertrial. While considering these as-

pects, the high court referred to the definition of 'sexual assault'

Agencies

Dakistan International Air-lines (PIA) pilots have reportedly spotted an Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) in the skies of Karachi during a Lahorebound domestic flight (PK-304).

According to the details, the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) aircraft was flying at an altitude of 35,000 feet when the captain spotted a white round object emitting light from the center. The

under Section 7 of the POCSO Act: "Whoever with sexual intent touches vagina, penis, anus or breast of the child or makes the child touch the vagina, penis, anus or breast of such person or any other person or does any other act with sexual intent which involves physical contact without penetration is said to commit sexual assault."

In the present case, since no actual touching of the private parts of the (girl's) body happened, the high court ruled it would come under the third part of the definition "any other act with sexual which involves physical contact without penetration" Justice Ganediwala observed: "The acts of 'holding the hands of the prosecutrix', or 'opened zip of the pant' as has been allegedly witnessed by the (witness), in the opinion of this court, does not fit in the definition of 'sexual assault'"

However, the court ruled that the offence of sexual harassment under IPC Sec. 354(A)(1)(i) that deals with 'physical contact and advances involving unwelcome and explicit sexual overtures', is attracted.

Accordingly, the high court set aside the appellant-accused' conviction under the POCSO Act Sec. 8, 10, 12, but pronounced him guilty under the IPC Sec. 354(A) (1)(i) which attracts a maximum of 3 years jail term.

Justice Ganediwala said that since the appellant-accused had already undergone 5 months in jail, it was sufficient for the offence and directed him to be set free if not wanted in any other cases

PIA Pilots Spot UFO Over Karachi fighting during a Lahore-bound

light from Karachi. "It cannot be said for certain

whether it was a UFO or something else," the spokesperson said, adding that the captain of the flight had immediately reported the sighting back to the control room. According to the pilot, the

thing he spotted in the sky was not a planet but could be a "space station" or an "artificial planet" near Earth.

It is too early to say what that phiect was. In fact, we might no be



Press Trust of India

listed the matter for hearing on

NEW DELHI: The coronavirus-induced suspension of scheduled international passenger flights has been extended till February 28, aviation regulator DGCA

"However, international scheduled

Scheduled international passenger services have been suspended in India since March 23 due to the coronavirus pandemic. But special international flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat Mission since May and un-

Suspension Of Scheduled International Passenger Flights Extended Till Feb 28

has said on Thursday.

flights may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on a case-to-case basis," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation added.

A PARAL PROPERTY AND A DESCRIPTION OF A

abeyance from December 2018 onwards and the new policy was still awaiting comments from the public and other stakeholders. The court also asked the min-

IMS) told the court that it does not have the funds required to procure the drug for the two children as crores of funds were to be released to it by the central government.

der bilateral "air bubble" arrangements with selected countries since July.

India has formed air bubble pacts with around 24 countries including the US, the UK, the UAE, Kenya, Bhutan and

The DGCA circular also said the sus-France. Under an air bubble pact bepension did not affect the operation of tween two countries, special internainternational all-cargo operations and tional flights can be operated by their airlines between their territories. flights specifically approved by it.

flight crew immediately started filming the object and the video has gone viral on social media. Pakistan International Airlines

(PIA) spokesperson has confirmed

that aircraft pilots reported a UFO

able to tell what the object was at all," said the spokesperson. "However, something was spotted and it was reported in accordance with the required protocol."

BREIF N E W S

CBSE Class 10, 12 Board Exam Date Sheet To Be Released On February 2: Ramesh Pokhriyal

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: During his online interaction with CBSE school heads on Thursday, Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' announced that CBSE class and 12 board exam date sheet will be released on February 2. The exams will be held from May 4 to June 10.

The education minister interacted with presidents and secretaries of CBSE Sahodaya

School complexes to discuss changes in the CBSE curriculum for the year 2021-22. The virtual interaction saw a participation of over 1000 people heading CBSE-affiliated schools. The board said that the orientation programmes to create awareness about National Education Policy 2020 will begin after the interactive session ends. The orientation programme will be conducted through its 250 active Sahodaya School Complexes in the country.

MP High Court Rejects Comedian Munawar Faruqui's Bail Plea

Press Trust of India

Indore: The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Thursday refused bail to comedian Munawar Faruqui who is accused of passing "indecent" remarks about Hindu deities during a show, and noted that "promote harmony" is one of the constitutional duties.

Liberty of a person has to be "balanced" with his duties towards other citizens, Justice Rohit Arva of the Indore bench of the high court said, citing a Supreme Court ruling.

The court also turned down the bail plea of Nalin Yadav, another accused in the case. Faruqui and four others were arrested on January 1 following a complaint by a BIP MLA's son that objectionable remarks about Hindu deities and Union Home Minister Amit Shah were passed during a comedy show at a cafe in Indore on New Year's day. One more person was arrested subsequently.

Faruqui and Yadav are in judicial remand and lodged in Indore Central Jail. A magistrate's court and a sessions court rejected their bail pleas, following which they moved the high court.

In its order, the high court said it would not comment on merits of the case, but based on the material seized, the witnesses' statements and considering the fact that probe was going on, no case is made out for grant of bail.

"The evidence/material collected so far suggests that in an organized public show under the garb of stand-up comedy at a public place on commercial lines, prima facie, scurrilous, disparaging utterances, outraging religious feelings of a class of citizens of India with deliberate intent, were made by the applicant," it said.

"Liberty of an individual has to be balanced with his duties and obligations towards his fellow citizens," the order said, citing a past Supreme Court judgment.

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