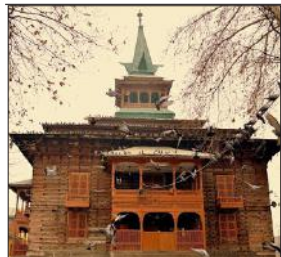




Maximum : 6.6°
Minum : 1.0°
Humidity : 97%

SUNSET
Today 06:07 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 07:24 AM



P3 NEWS

CITY SHRINES LACK MAINTENANCE, KHUDDAM QUESTION WAQF BOARD'S ROLE

The residents of Srinagar city on Friday alleged that despite getting hefty donations, the Waqf Board over the years have miserably failed to look after the maintenance of

P5 THINK

VIRUS INSIDE MANAGEMENT

ROLE OF POSITIVE & NEGATIVE ATTITUDE IN MANAGEMENT

We may have come across the word "virus" many times especially in relation to computers. Infact, with covid-10 halting all life ...



P7 STATE

J&K SET TO LOSE REPRESENTATION IN RS OVER NEXT FEW DAYS

In the next 10 days, Jammu and Kashmir will lose its representation in the country's upper house or the Rajya Sabha after their term, as the...



Widom Quote!

Language is a double-edged sword that can imprison or set us free.

— Louis Yako

DIGEST

Bomb Scare In Sopore

SRINAGAR: An unclaimed bag triggered panic in Sopore town of Baramulla district on Friday prompting the government forces to suspend traffic on the Srinagar-Baramulla highway and calling call bomb disposal to the spot to look for explosives. Traffic came to a grinding halt along the Srinagar-Baramulla highway near the busy Sangrama Chowk on Friday afternoon after the soldiers of 52 RR spotted an unclaimed red bag along the highway, reports said. The forces also restricted the movement of pedestrians suspecting ►► [More On P2](#)

2 Killed In Head-On Collision

SRINAGAR: Two people were killed and four others injured on Friday in a head-on collision between two vehicles on the Srinagar-Jammu highway near Bijbehara in Anantnag district. A cab (JK-01N-9983) and a car (JK-03D-0141) collided with each other near Simthan area of Bijbehara on Friday afternoon leaving at least six occupants injured, news agency GNS reported. All the injured, the report said, were removed to the nearby hospital for treatment. However, two among them injured identified as Mohammad Syed Yatoo ►► [More On P2](#)

HC Orders Release Of Pattan Youth

SRINAGAR: Jammu Kashmir High Court Friday issued directions to authorities to release a north Kashmiri detainee lodged at Agra Jail of Uttar Pradesh. The court of Justice Rajesh Oswal issued this direction after annulling the detention of Kashmiri youth under Public Safety Act (PSA), news agency KNT reported. Quoting Advocate Bashir Ahmed Tak, who represented the detained youth, the report said that police had arrested Nazir Ahmed Tantray, a fruit vendor by profession on 5 August 2019, shortly after the abrogation of special status of Jammu and Kashmir. ►► [More On P2](#)

Searches Conducted In Shopian, Budgam

SRINAGAR: The government forces on Friday launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) in twin districts of Shopian and Budgam, reports said. Police, Army's 1 RR and CRPF launched a joint search operation at Chitragram village in South Kashmir's Shopian district on Friday after receiving a tip off about the presence of militants, news agency KNT reported. All exit points, the report said, were sealed and house to house searches were launched. The report added that additional forces were deployed in the adjacent area to prevent any ►► [More On P2](#)

After 550 Days, Govt Lifts 4G Ban

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: High speed mobile internet was on Friday restored in the entire union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, exactly one and a half years after it was snapped in August 2019 when the Centre had abrogated the special status of the erstwhile state.

Principal Secretary of the Home Department Shaleen Kabra issued a notification and directed the Inspectors General of Kashmir and Jammu to "closely monitor the impact of lifting of restrictions".



The Raj Bhavan's official twitter handle of LG Manoj Sinha thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah for "acceding to our request and restoring 4G services in the entire Jammu and Kashmir UT. The move will fulfil the aspirations of the people, especially the youth".

The two-page order said an "objective assessment of the prevailing circumstances and necessity of continuation of these restrictions" was taken by a special committee constituted on the directions of the Supreme Court order of May 11 last year. ►► [More On P2](#)

NC, Apni Party Welcome Move

National Conference (NC) vice-president Omar Abdullah on Friday welcomed the move to restore high-speed 4G mobile internet services in Jammu and Kashmir, saying it was better late than never. The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Friday announced restoration of high-speed mobile internet services in the entire union territory, 18 months after they were snapped in the ►► [More On P2](#)

Pakistan Observes Kashmir Day

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan observed Kashmir Solidarity Day on Friday by holding public rallies, with Prime Minister Imran Khan saying he will be the ambassador of Kashmir at every forum.

Khan's remarks came during a public address in Kotli city in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK) to mark Kashmir Day. "However much I can, I am raising my voice on your behalf at every forum, and will continue to do so.

Dry Weather Conditions Brings Respite From Chill In Kashmir



File Photo: Abid Bhat

Agencies

Srinagar: With overnight cloud cover, the minimum temperature remained above

normal in Kashmir Valley except for Gulmarg, the weather department said on Friday. The mercury settled at 1.0°C against ►► [More On P2](#)

Highway Open For Jammu Traffic Today

After remaining closed for a day for repairs, Jammu-Srinagar shall reopen for one way traffic on Saturday and Jammu bound vehicles will be allowed to ply on the vital surface link. "Tomorrow (February 6), subject to fair weather and better road condition, only one way traffic shall be allowed from Srinagar towards Jammu including Banihal-Ramban (local traffic) on Jammu-Srinagar highway. No vehicle including fresh ►► [More On P2](#)

LG Calls Upon Youth To Join National Cadet Corps

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Terming National Cadet Corps (NCC) Cadets as the brand ambassadors of Unity, Discipline, Culture & Heritage, the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Friday called upon the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to join the organizations like NCC which inculcate discipline and the spirit of amity and harmony. Sinha made these remarks here while interacting with Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh contingent of NCC cadets who participated in the January 26

Parade at New Delhi. The LG congratulated the Cadets who got an opportunity to represent the UTs of J&K and Ladakh, and lauded the commitment of Cadets and their training instructors who, despite COVID did so well at trainings, an official spokesperson said Friday. The LG, he said, stressed upon the need to step up the efforts on the part of NCC Directorate of J&K and Ladakh and Education Department to engage more youth in NCC activities, with special focus on rural areas. As per the official spokesperson, Sinha ►► [More On P2](#)

Kashmir Resident Deported From Qatar Held In Delhi

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Police on Friday claimed to have arrested a most wanted militant associate of Jaish-e-Muhammad from New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport after his deportation from Qatar.

Muneeb Ahmad Sofi of Bejbehara was arrested by a police team from Kulgam from IGI airport after his deportation from Qatar, a police spokesperson said

Friday. Sofi, he said, was involved in a case pertaining to collection of funds for JeM.

During the course of investigation of the case, the police spokesperson said that a militant associate was arrested who revealed that he along with other OGWs were collecting money from various districts in Kashmir Valley for Jaish.

"Thereafter, the collected amount was handed over to Muneeb Ahmad Sofi who was staying in ►► [More On P2](#)

United States Will Repair Alliances, Engage With World: Biden

Press Trust Of India

WASHINGTON: Asserting that America and its diplomacy are back, US President Joe Biden on Thursday said his administration will repair the relationship with allies and engage with the world once again.

"We will repair our alliances and engage with the world once again, not to meet yesterday's challenges, but today's



and tomorrow's. American leadership must meet this new moment ►► [More On P2](#)

'Yemen War Has To End

President Joe Biden on Thursday ended US support for Saudi Arabia's devastating war in Yemen and dramatically increased the welcome to refugees, ushering in a major reset in American foreign policy. In his first major speech on foreign affairs as president, Biden also froze ►► [More On P2](#)

Civil Services Aspirants To Get Another Chance

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Centre Friday told the Supreme Court that it is agreeable to give an extra chance as a one-time relaxation to UPSC civil service aspirants, who had appeared in their last attempt in the 2020 exam amid the COVID-19 pandemic and are otherwise not age-barred.

"Relaxation, only to the extent of providing one ►► [More On P2](#)

'Chakka Jam': Farmers' Body Asks Protestors To Be Peaceful

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Samyukt Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of the farmer unions protesting the three farm laws, on Friday said there would be no 'chakka jam' in Delhi on February 6 even as it asserted that peasants in other parts of the country will block national and state highways for three hours but in a peaceful way.

In a statement, the SKM said emergency and essential services such as ambulance and school bus will not be stopped during the 'chakka jam' that is proposed to be held between 12 pm and 3 pm on Saturday.

"There will be no chakka



jam programme inside Delhi since all the protest sites are already in a chakka jam mode. All roads for entering into Delhi

will remain open except where farmers' protest sites are already located," the statement stated. Thousands of ►► [More On P2](#)

India Irked By Trudeau's Remarks

The Centre has informed the Rajya Sabha that it has clearly conveyed to the Canadian government that its Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's statement on the contentious central farm laws may damage bilateral ties. Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan said this in a written reply to an unstarred question put by Shiv Sena member Anil Desai in the Upper House of Parliament. Desai had asked: "Is the government aware of the intervention in India's internal affairs by the Prime Minister of Canada's comments ►► [More On P2](#)

DDC CHAIRPERSON POLLS

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Srinagar District Development Council (DDC) would likely have its first Chairperson from Apni Party led by former minister Altaf Bukhari as the party is enjoying the support of over nine DDC members.

The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), having less support, would likely face defeat tomorrow.

PDP Loses DDC Seat On Recounting

The authorities on Friday declared a new winner for District Development Council (DDC) election from Larnoo-8 seat in south Kashmir on recounting of votes. District Panchayat Election Officer, Anantnag, had on Thursday notified recounting of votes for 08-Larnoo DDC Constituency and the proceedings took place at Conference Hall, Dak Bungalow Khanabal. Deputy District Election Officer ►► [More On P2](#)



File Photo: Abid Bhat

A National Conference (NC) leader informed that party's DDC member Kaiser Ahmad

Ganaie will be contesting as Chairperson on PAGD ticket while Peoples ►► [More On P2](#)

From The Front Page

After 550

The committee held a meeting on February 4 during which “among other things, it took note of the inputs and apprehensions of the security agencies and police forces as also the assessment of opening of high speed mobile internet connectivity...”

“Now, therefore, keeping in view the advice of the special committee, I, Principal Secretary to the government....., hereby revoke the restrictions on mobile data services and fixed line internet connectivity....”

However, the order made it clear that high speed internet facility on pre-paid SIM card holders would be provided “only after verification as per the norms applicable for post-paid connections.”

The announcement about restoration of high-speed mobile internet came earlier this evening from Jammu and Kashmir administration spokesperson and Principal Secretary Rohit Kansal who said on his twitter “4G mobile internet services being restored in entire JK.”

The restriction on mobile internet services across the Union Territory, except Ganderbal and Udhampur districts, were till February 6.

The internet was completely shut in the erstwhile state on August 5, 2019 when the government announced abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution and also its bifurcation into two union territories -- Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Later, 2G services were restored on January 25 last year and 4G services on mobile devices in Ganderbal in Kashmir division and Udhampur in Jammu region was re-started in August last year.

This was done after the Centre had informed the Supreme Court that a special committee looking into the matter was considering allowing the facility on a trial basis in two of the 20 districts of the Union Territory.

The high-speed internet was restricted to only post-paid subscribers while pre-paid customers could enjoy the benefit of the services only after completing the verification process.

The apex court is also hearing a plea by an NGO seeking initiation of contempt proceedings against the Union Home Secretary and the Chief Secretary of JK for their alleged “wilful disobedience” in complying with the court’s May 11 order which had directed for constituting a committee that would go into the possibilities of restoring high-speed internet in the union territory

NC, Apni Party

erstwhile state following the Centre's abrogation of its special Constitutional status.

The announcement about restoration of high-speed mobile internet came from Jammu and Kashmir administration spokesperson and Principal Secretary Rohit Kansal who said on twitter “4G mobile internet services being restored in entire JK”.

“4G Mubarak! For the first time since Aug 2019 all of J&K will have 4G mobile data. Better late than never,” Omar wrote on Twitter.

Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) chief Altaf Bukhari also welcomed the move, terming it as a positive development.

Bukhari expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for restoring the high-speed mobile internet services in the 18 districts of the UT.

The 4G services were already working in two districts Ganderbal and Udhampur.

“Terming it as a positive development for students and the youth of J-K, Bukhari thanked the PM for fulfilling this demand of people of UT,” a JKAP spokesperson said.

Govt Confirms

parliamentarian Anand Sharma, the minister said that advisories were issued to States/UTs for increased surveillance and bio-security in poultry farms before onset of winter due to arrival of migratory birds during winter.

The states and UTs have been asked to increase surveillance around water bodies, live bird markets, zoos, poultry farms, etc., and also carry out proper disposal of carcasses, strengthening of bio-security in and around poultry farms, restrict movement of poultry from infected zones and taking preparatory measures— maintaining sufficient stock of PPE kits and accessories, disinfectants and other logistics required for control operations.

They were also asked to set up central control room to monitor daily progress of preventive and control measures, he said.

The states and UTs have been requested to ensure effective communication and coordination with Health and Forest authorities for close vigilance of the disease status to avoid any chance of jumping of the disease into humans.

“As per information gathered, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has issued a detailed guidance note on safe handling, processing and consumption of poultry meat and eggs during bird flu outbreak,” he said as per the reply.

As per the Action Plan, he said, there is a provision for compensating poultry farmers for forced culling of poultry and destruction of eggs and poultry feed.

The Department, under the Assistance to States for Control of Animal Disease (ASCAD) component, provides financial assistance for such compensation, he added. (GNS)

One Corona

Bandipora (61), Udhampur (57), Kulgam (54), Rajouri (55), Kathua (53), Ganderbal (47), Shopian (40), Samba (40), Poonch (24), Ramban (21), Kishtwar(22), and Reasi (15).

Meanwhile, sixty six fresh cases of coronavirus were reported across J&K on Friday, taking the total virus tally to 124785, officials said.

Among the fresh cases, the officials said 51 were reported from Kashmir Valley and 15 from Jammu division. Also, one district from Kashmir and six districts from Jammu division reported zero cases during the time. All other district barring Srinagar reported cases in single digit.

Giving the district-wise cases, they said, Srinagar reported 25, Baramulla 1, Budgam 8, Pulwama 5, Kupwara 1, Anantnag 6, Bandipora 1, Ganderbal 3, Kulgam 1, Jammu 9, Udhampur 2, Rajouri 1, Kathua 2 and Poonch one new case of coronavirus.

Moreover, 63 more patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals— 17 from Jammu Division and 46 from Kashmir.

With the fresh recoveries, 122187 patients have recovered so far while 1944 others have died, leaving the number of active positive cases at 654— 127 in Jammu and 527 in Kashmir Valley. (With GNS inputs)

2 BSF Constables

commandant of 69 battalion around midnight, the report said, while quoting unnamed officials.

“In this regard, a missing has been filed,” the official said.

Till the filing of this report, there was no trace of the duo. The report further said that the duo had recently returned from home following the expiry of the leave and were under institutional quarantine, a mandatory protocol for covid-19 pandemic.

Pakistan Observes

Whether it is with the United Nations, world leaders, or European Union leaders, I asked the past president of the US (Donald Trump) three times as well to resolve this issue, Khan said.

“Rest assured, I said I will be the ambassador of Kashmir, and I will raise my voice for you everywhere until Kashmir gets freedom,” he was quoted as saying by Geo News.

India has told Pakistan that it has no locus standi to comment on internal affairs of India, asserting that the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have been and will remain an integral part of the country.

On Thursday, spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs Anurag Srivastava said that India desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence.

“The onus is on Pakistan to create such an environment,” he said.

Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi wrote letters to the president and secretary general of the United Nations Security Council on the situation in Kashmir, Pakistan foreign office spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri said on Friday.

The ties between India and Pakistan came under severe strain after India launched an airstrike on Balakot in Pakistan in February 2019 following the deadly Pulwama militant attack in which over 40 CRPF personnel were killed.

The relations further deteriorated after India in August 2019 announced withdrawing special powers of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcation of the state into two union territories.

Dry Weather Conditions

the previous night’s 0.4 °C in the summer capital of J&K, a meteorological department official said. The minimum temperatures have consistently remained far below normal this season. On January 31, the mercury plunged to minus 8.8°C, the coldest January night recorded in after 30 years.

The minimum temperature also improved in other parts of the Valley, the MeT official said.

The mercury settled at minus 3.6°C in the world-famous tourist resort of Pahalgam in south Kashmir against minus 3.3 °C on the previous night while Qazigund recorded a low of minus 0.8°C, same as on the previous night. Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a minimum of minus 1.3°C against minus 5.1°C on the previous night.

The mercury settled at 0.8C in Kupwara against minus 2.3°C on the previous night while Gulmarg, the world-famous skinning resort, recorded a low of minus 9.4°C against minus 6.4°C earlier night and had 1.3 cm of fresh snowfall in the 24 hours till 0830 hours, the official said.

He said there would be “isolated very light rain/snow on higher reaches of Pirpanjal in Jammu divisions and mainly dry weather over the plains of J&K” in the next 24 hours. The dry weather has been forecast for the next one week in the plains of J&K.

Highway Open

perishables shall be allowed in the opposite direction,” a traffic department official said.

The highway, the only surface link connecting Kashmir Valley with outside world, remained closed on Friday and shall remain closed for next three Fridays for repairs, officials said.

Meanwhile, Mughal road, connecting Shopian and Poonch districts, also remained closed due to the snowfall. Srinagar-Leh highway was officially closed on the orders of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir on December 30.

LG Calls Upon

expressed delight that this year, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh Directorate received awards from Raksha Mantri & Raksha Rajya Mantri, besides DG Commendation.

“He advised the Cadets to make the most of the learning gained from the experience and wished them high success in their future endeavours,” he added.

Cadet Iqra Fayaz from Anantnag shared her experience and learnings during her time in the Republic Day camp. Similarly, Cadet Aman Singh expressed his pleasure for getting the golden chance after a strict screening and selection process to become a part of the J&K and Ladakh contingent for the Republic Day parade. Cultural team of the NCC contingent recited a song with the words “NCC ka naara –AatmaNirbhar Bharat Hamara”, penned down by an NCC Cadet.

The interaction concluded with the group pictures of Lt Governor with the Cadets.

Bishwajit Kumar Singh, Secretary to Government, School Education Department; Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary to the Government, Youth Services and Sports Department; Brig. N R Babu, Officiating ADG, NCC JK&L Directorate; Col. P Bhaumik, Contingent Commander and CO, J1&K Girls Bn; ANO; officers and Instructors were present on the occasion.

Kashmir Resident

Qatar & was in contact with a Pakistan based militant namely Waleed Bhai for purchasing of arms and ammunition from Pakistan,” he said, adding that Waleed was killed in an encounter in Kulgam last year.

“Accordingly, a look out notice was published against Muneeb Ahmad Sofi and a non-bailable warrant u/s 25 Police Act was obtained from the concerned court. Consequent upon the deportation of the said accused from Qatar to India, he was arrested at IGI Airport New Delhi,” the police spokesperson added.

Meanwhile, police also claimed to have arrested three alleged militant associates of Lashkar-e-Taiba from Hajin area of Bandipora

district.

Bashir Ahmed Mir, Irfan Ahmad Bhat and Hilal Ahmad Parray were arrested by a joint team of police, army’s 13 RR and CRPF 45 battalion on the basis of specific inputs, the police spokesperson said.

As per police records, he said, the trio were involved in providing shelter, logistics and other support to the active militants in Sumbal and Hajin areas. The police spokesperson also claimed to have recovered incriminating materials including 3 hand grenades, 1 AK-47 magazine and 21 AK-rounds from their possession.

“All the recovered materials have been taken into case records for further investigation. In this connection, a case FIR No. 10/2021 under relevant section of law stands registered in Police Station Hajin. Further investigation is in progress,” he added.

United States Will

of advancing authoritarianism, including the growing ambitions of China to rival the United States and the determination of Russia to damage and disrupt our democracy,” Biden said in his remarks to State Department employees.

The US, he said, must meet the new moment accelerating global challenges -- from the pandemic to the climate crisis to nuclear proliferation -- challenging the will only to be solved by nations working together and in common. “We cannot do it alone,” he said.

“We must start with diplomacy rooted in America’s most cherished democratic values: defending freedom, championing opportunity, upholding universal rights, respecting the rule of law and treating every person with dignity. That is the grounding wire of our global power. That is our inexhaustible source of strength. That is America’s abiding advantage.

“Though many of these values have come under intense pressure in recent years, even pushed to the brink in the last few weeks, the American people are going to emerge from this moment stronger, more determined and better equipped to unite the world in fighting to defend democracy, because we have fought for it ourselves,” Biden said.

In his maiden address to the employees of the State Department, the president said he has come to the building to send a clear message to the world: America is back. America is back. Diplomacy is back.

“You are the centre of all that I intend to do. You are the heart of it. We are going to rebuild our alliances. We are going to re-engage with the world and take on the enormous challenge we face dealing with a pandemic, dealing with global warming and again, standing up for democracy and human rights,” he said.

Biden said his administration will work with partners to support restoration of democracy and the rule of law, and impose consequences on those responsible.

“Over the past two weeks, I have spoken with the leaders of many of our closest friends -- Canada, Mexico, the UK, Germany, France, NATO, Japan, South Korea, Australia -- to begin reforming the habits of cooperation and rebuilding the muscle of democratic alliances that have atrophied over the past few years of neglect and, I would argue, abuse,” he said.

America’s alliances, he asserted are its greatest asset and leading with diplomacy means standing shoulder-to-shoulder with US allies and key partners once again.

“By leading with diplomacy, we must also mean engaging our adversaries and our competitors diplomatically, where it is in our interest, and advance the security of the American people,” he said.

On day one of his presidency, Biden said, he signed the paperwork to rejoin the Paris Agreement on climate change.

“We are taking steps led by the example of integrating climate objectives across all of our diplomacy and raise the ambition of our climate targets. That way, we can challenge other nations, other major emitters, up the ante on their own commitments,” he said, adding that he will be hosting a climate leaders’ summit to address the climate crisis on Earth Day this year.

“America must lead in the face of this existential threat. And just as with the pandemic, it requires global cooperation. We have also re-engaged with the World Health Organization. That way, we can build better global preparedness to counter COVID-19, as well as detect and prevent future pandemics, because there will be more,” he said.

Biden said he has elevated the status of cyber issues within the government, including appointing the first Deputy National Security Advisor for Cyber and Emerging Technology.

“We are launching an urgent initiative to improve our capability, readiness and resilience in cyberspace,” he said as he announced additional steps to course-correct foreign policy and better unite democratic values with diplomatic leadership.

To begin with, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin will be leading a Global Posture Review of forces so that US military footprint is appropriately aligned with foreign policy and national security priorities.

“While this review is taking place, we will be stopping any planned troop withdrawals from Germany.

“We are also stepping up our diplomacy to end the war in Yemen -- a war which has created a humanitarian and strategic catastrophe. I have asked my Middle East team to ensure our support for the United Nations-led initiative to impose a ceasefire, open humanitarian channels and restore long-dormant peace talks,” Biden said.

The US, he said is ending all American support for offensive operations in the war in Yemen, including relevant arms sales. “At the same time, Saudi Arabia faces missile attacks, UAV strikes and other threats from Iran-supplied forces in multiple countries. We are going to continue to support and help Saudi Arabia defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity and people,” he said.

Yemen War

former president Donald Trump’s plans to redeploy troops from Germany and vowed a tough approach against what he described as a rising authoritarian threat from China and Russia.

Two weeks into their term, Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris traveled together to the State Department in a symbol of a renewed focus on diplomacy after Trump’s tumultuous

four years.

“America is back. Diplomacy is back,” Biden told a socially distanced auditorium of diplomats.

In a speech shortly afterward in the ornate Benjamin Franklin room, Biden said the United States would end all support including connected arms sales for ally Saudi Arabia’s war in Yemen, which he said “has created a humanitarian and strategic catastrophe.”

He appointed a US special envoy for Yemen, veteran diplomat Timothy Lenderking, who Biden said would support UN efforts to reach a ceasefire and revive peace talks between the government and Huthi rebels who control much of the country including the capital Sanaa.

The United States will work “to ensure that humanitarian aid is reaching the Yemeni people who are suffering unendurable devastation.”

“This war has to end,” Biden said.

Activists have been pushing to end US support for the war in Yemen, where 80 percent of the population is surviving on aid in what the United Nations calls the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

Trump offered US logistical assistance and sales including of precision-guided bombs, arguing that Saudi Arabia was creating US defense jobs.

Trump also viewed the war as a way to hit back at the Huthis’ ally Iran, a fixation for the last administration which saw the Shiite clerical regime as an arch-enemy.

Biden backs a return of diplomacy and a nuclear accord with Iran but, strikingly, he only indirectly mentioned Tehran in what was billed as a broad-brush speech on his international priorities.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said he will quickly revisit Trump’s last-minute designation of the Huthis as a terrorist group -- a move that aid groups say effectively criminalizes vital humanitarian work.

In Yemen, senior political official Hamid Assem voiced hope that Biden’s plan will mark the end of a six-year war that has left tens of thousands dead.

“The Biden administration saw that the war in Yemen carries a heavy cost and that America’s reputation has been tarnished by the killing of the people of Yemen,” he told AFP.

Civil Services Aspirants

extra attempt for Civil Service Examination (CSE), specifically limited to CSE-2021, may be granted to only those candidates who appeared for CSE-2020 as their last permissible attempt and are otherwise not age-barred from appearing in CSE-2021,” the Centre told a bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar.

In a note filed in the apex court, the Centre said that no relaxation shall be granted for CSE-2021 to those candidates who have not exhausted their permissible number of attempts or to those who are otherwise age-barred from appearing in CSE-2021 as per the prescribed age limits of different categories, or to any other candidate for any other reason whatsoever.

“This relaxation for the candidates and to the extent as prescribed above, shall be a one-time relaxation only and shall apply only for appearing in CSE-2021 and shall not be treated as a precedent,” it told the bench, also comprising Justice Dinesh Maheshwari.

The Centre said that the relaxation “shall not create any vested right whatsoever or any other purported right on ground of parity or otherwise, in favour of any other set/class of candidates at any time in the future.” “As per the suggestion of this court, the Union of India is agreeable for the following ex-gratia, one-time, restricted relaxation to be granted to the prospective candidates, subject to the same being part of a consent order, disposing off the petition,” the note, filed by Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, said.

The bench told Raju to circulate the note and asked the petitioners to file their responses to it.

The top court said it would hear the matter on February 8.

The bench is hearing a plea seeking grant of one more chance in the UPSC’s civil services exam to those aspirants who could not appear in their last attempt in 2020 due to the pandemic.

On February 1, the Centre had told the top court that it cannot grant an extra chance to civil services aspirants who could not appear or prepare well for their last attempt in the UPSC civil service exam in 2020 due to the pandemic, while reiterating that it would amount to extending “differential treatment” to similarly placed candidates.

However, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta had on February 1 sought time to discuss the issue once again.

The Centre had furnished a chart in the apex court giving details of relaxation given by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) in civil services exams since its inception and had said that in 1979, 1992 and 2015 relaxations were given to the candidates due to change in patterns of examination.

The bench had observed that one-time relaxation would benefit over 3,300 students without even increasing the age-limit. In its affidavit filed earlier in the top court, the Centre had said the contention by the petitioners that their preparation was hampered due to the stress caused by the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic does not hold weight as the UPSC had already given extra time to the candidates by postponing the civil service (preliminary) examination from May 31, 2020 to October 4, 2020.

“It is further submitted that giving an additional attempt or relaxation in age for some candidates would amount to extending differential treatment for similarly placed candidates at the examination,” it had said and added that providing an extra attempt could further have “cascading effect” by creating a ground for challenge by candidates, who have already appeared for the October, 2020 exam.

It had said that non-final attempt candidates, who took the examinations without any murmur or discontent, would disadvantageously be placed in future examination, if the relief is granted to the petitioners as it would enable a vast number of experienced candidates, to participate in the examination again.

It had said 4,86,952 candidates appeared in the October 4, last year examination and the UPSC had “left no stone unturned in their

pursuit to accommodate for the means and interests of the candidates”.

The top court on September 30 last year had refused to postpone the UPSC civil services preliminary exam because of the COVID-19 pandemic and floods in several parts of the country.

However, it had directed the central government and the UPSC to consider granting an extra chance to candidates who have their last attempt in 2020, with corresponding extension of the upper age-limit.

‘Chakka Jam’: Farmers’

farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at three Delhi border points -- Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur -- for over 70 days, demanding a complete repeal of three central farm laws.

Darshan Pal, a senior member of Samyukt Kisan Morcha, said that ‘chakka jam’ will remain completely peaceful and non-violent, adding that protesters have been asked to not to indulge in any conflict with government officials or any citizen.

The SKM had earlier this week announced this nationwide chakka jam on Saturday, saying that farmers would block national and state highways for three hours in protest against the Internet ban in areas near their agitation sites, harassment allegedly meted out to them by authorities, and other issues.

According to the SKM, the chakka jam will conclude at 3 pm by blowing vehicle horn for one minute, a move that is aimed at expressing support and solidarity with the farmers.

Meanwhile, security at Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur borders has been tightened by deploying extra forces and putting up multi-layered barricades, barbed wires and nails studied on the roads.

Delhi Police Commissioner S N Shrivastava also held a meeting with the officers of the force and reviewed the security arrangements.’

The police will also be monitoring content on the social media to keep a watch on those spreading rumours against the force, officials said.

Elaborating about the security arrangements for the proposed ‘chakka jam’, Delhi Police PRO Chinmoy Biswal said in view of the violence that took place on January 26, adequate security arrangements have been put in place by the Delhi Police at the borders so that miscreants are not able enter the national capital.

“We are monitoring content on the social media to make sure rumours are not spread against the police. The protestors are camping at the borders of Delhi. We are in touch with the police force of other states also,” he added.

A senior police officer said to prevent any kind of law and order situation and disruption of normal life during the ‘chakka jam’, adequate forces are being deployed across the outer-north district of Delhi Police.

India Irked By

against farm laws passed by Indian Parliament? Does the government of India consider it unfair and unnecessary? If so, has any protest been lodged with Canada and if the Canadian authorities have responded on this matter?”

In reply, Muraleedharan said: “The government of India is aware of Trudeau’s remarks regarding the farm laws. We have raised this incident with competent authorities of Canada, both in Ottawa and New Delhi. The Indian government has told them that comments related to India’s internal affairs are inappropriate and unacceptable and may harm the India-Canada bilateral relations.” On December 1, Trudeau had supported the ongoing agitation by farmers since November 26, 2020, and expressed concern.

He said that Canada will always be there to protect the rights of peaceful protests, no matter wherever they take place.

PAGD Likely To

Democratic Party’s (PDP) Manzoor Ahmad Bhat will be contesting for Vice Chairperson Post.

Wishing anonymity, the leader admitted that the party is short of supporters, adding that the PAGD candidates don’t have a majority and would unlikely be elected as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

Apni Party leader, Muhammad Ashraf Mir said that the party has the support of over nine DDC members as many of the independent members have also joined the party following the results of maiden polls were declared.

“We have nine DDC members and would likely get two more votes from other Srinagar DDC members, thus would go up to 11,” he said.

Mir said that the meeting to finalize the candidates for the post of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson has been called in this evening. “We have not finalized the candidates yet, but will be decided later in the evening,” he said.

Reliable sources said that as the party has not finalized the candidates yet, but Aftab Malik, who emerged victorious from Soiteng constituency, would likely be the party’s candidate for the post of Chairperson while for the post of Vice Chairperson, many candidates are in the fray.

Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) lone candidate, Ajaz Hussain, who emerged victorious from Balahama area in Srinagar from Khonmoh-II constituency, said that he will support Apni Party candidate tomorrow.

Notably, the maiden DDC polls culminated on December 19, 2020 while the counting of votes was conducted on December 22.

Pertinently, Deputy commissioner Srinagar Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, who is also the District Election Officer (DEO) of the summer capital had on Monday issued a notification for a meeting of members elected to the District Development Council (DDC) Srinagar to elect the chairperson and the vice chairperson of the council as mandated under section 45-B of the Jammu & Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act 1989.

The notification issued in pursuance of sub-rule (4) of rule 108-ZN of the Jammu & Kashmir Panchayati Raj Rules 1996 stated that the meeting will be held at 11 am on 6 February 2021 in the Meeting Hall of DC Office Srinagar—(KNO)

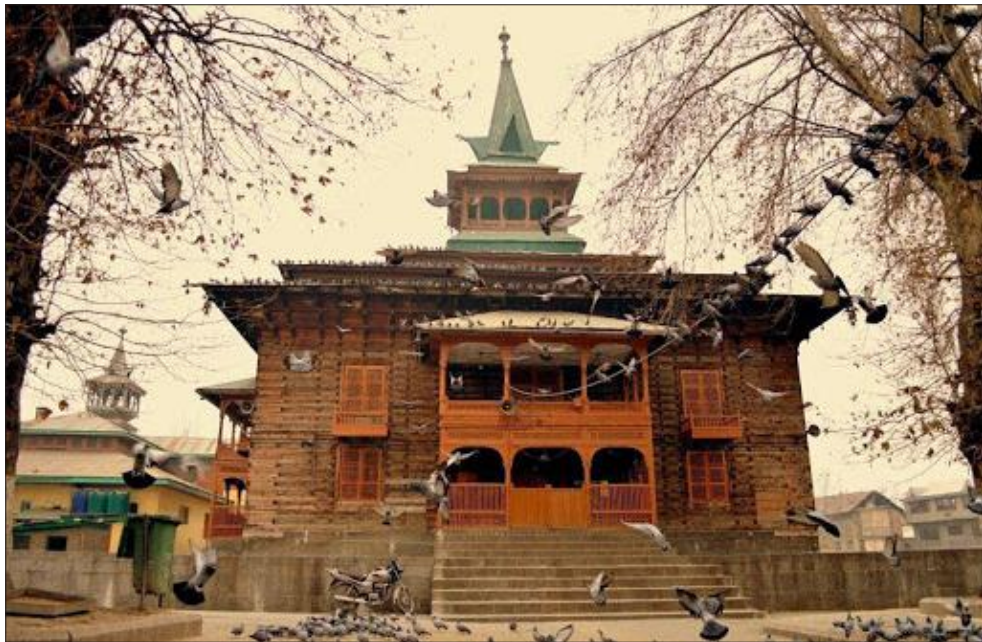
PDP Loses

Anantnag was Nodal Officer.

After recounting Sajida Begum (independent), who had previously lost by seven votes, was declared winner by 61 votes against Khahda Bibi, a PDP candidate and the previously declared winner.

City Shrines Lack Maintenance, Khuddam Question Waqf Board's Role

People Seek Accountability Of Donation Money



Agencies

SRINAGAR: The residents of Srinagar city on Friday alleged that despite getting hefty donations, the Waqf Board over the years have miserably failed to look after the maintenance of shrines in the city.

Mohamad Yaseen Zahra a local resident of Khankah in the downtown area of Srinagar who has been the Khudaam at the shrine from his childhood told news agency that since the Central Waqf Board has taken over, the area around the shrine is in shambles.

"Other then collecting the donations they hardly care about the other requirements of the shrine, while pointing out at the heaped mounds of the snow," Zahra said.

Another Khudaam, Mohamad Aultaf Quereshi at Khanyar a shrine said that that the non-seriousness of the Waqf Board

could be gauged from the fact that decades old flooring has not been changed, and even the installed ACs are lying defunct.

"It is not only Waqf Board who are taking care of shrines. There are people and lovers of this shrine who donate many things. In this freezing cold, the hamaam of the shrine has to be kept warm for devotees so that hot water remains available for ablution, but the Board hardly care about the stock of firewood," Quereshi said. "Despite repeated requests, they hardly pay heed towards the requirements of the shrine."

"Where is the collected donation went," Khudaam questioned, "people who have faith come here and we don't have any accommodation for devotees here."

"Devotees always desire to come here for night prayers but it is the callous approach of Waqf Board which has failed to make night accommodations

for devotees," he said.

A local vendor selling snacks outside the shrine in Khanyar said that he often witness stray dogs entering in the lawns of the shrine.

"Look at the lawn of shrine you can see the stray dogs, though Waqf Board has many employees deployed here they only care about the collecting donations," he said.

"Look at the deplorable conditions of the kiosks. Why isn't Waqaf Board people able to beautify it despite collecting donations in crores," he said.

Official of Waqf Board who works as a coordinator for two shrines in the Srinagar city said, "Whenever there is any requirement of a work which is under our domain we do that."

"Our top priority is to look after the maintenance of the shrines and we provide a proper receipt of the donation we receive," he said.

On fire safety precautions

605 Year Old Budshah Tomb Craves For Repair

Agencies

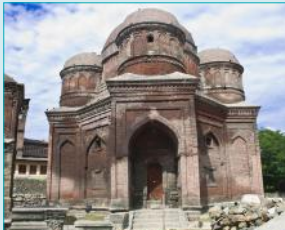
SRINAGAR: Around 605 years old historic Budshah tomb situated right at the riverbank of the River Jhelum, close to Zaina Kadal is now in a muddled state as it has not been repaired from the last 35 years.

The tomb is of the mother of the most benevolent Sultan Zain- ul- Abidin who ruled Kashmir in the 15th century. The Budshah Chowk in Srinagar still carries that name.

While talking to news agency famous historian Zareef Ahmed Zareef said " Budshah Tomb is one the important and historic example as well as the identity of Kashmiri culture "

"If we go through the names of adjoining areas of this tomb, various places are named after the great history of this tomb in which word YAR is used in nearby areas like Khanyar, Kralyar , Naidyar Ganpatyar," Zareef said. "The tomb was also known as Mazari Salateen "

"Archeologists had repaired it almost 35 years ago but after authorities oversight this historical tomb. If left unattended, it will be ruined because of its poor conditions,"



Zareef said. "The monument is fully visible only when one enters the adjacent graveyard because encroachments have popped up towards the façade in the shape of shops. Authorities must give an alternative to the shopkeepers and protect the monument for future," he said.

Director Archives, Archaeology and Museums Mohammad Shafi Zahid said the monument is in need of repair, however, it's under central government.

"Both centre and state administrations are not showing any interest to this historical monument," Zahid said.

People, however, complained that some miscreants were indulging into immoral activities like boozing and gambling at the graveyard.

"The place has become a safe haven for immoral activities like gambling, drinking and drugs," they said—(KNO)

taken by Waqf Board, he said that after the cloud burst hit the shrine, the Board carried out an audit, after which fireproof wires were used where ever necessary while more fire extinguishers were also kept available.

A Shopkeeper outside the Maqdom Sahib (RA) shrine said that keeping in view the flow of devotees the place should have been neat and clean while pointing towards

the stairs of the shrine.

"The stray dogs lying all around makes it difficult for children, women, and old age people to visit the shrine," he said. "If so many employees are working in Waqf Board can't they manage just two employees who will keep these stairs free from dogs."

"What is Waqf Board doing with the money which people donate for the maintenance shrines," he questioned—(KNO)

Dir Tourism Reviews Tourist-Centric Facilities, Beautification Plans For City Airport



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In view of the encouraging flow of tourists to Valley, the Director Tourism Kashmir Dr GN Ittoo Friday held a review meeting with Srinagar Airport Authority to discuss the ways and means to improve facilities and also beautify the ambience of the premises at Srinagar International Airport.

The meeting was attended by Officiating Director Airports Authority of India, Srinagar Mr Eshwarappa, Chief Security Officer Mr. Venugopal, Senior Manager Operations, senior other officers and representatives of Houseboat Owners Association and other stakeholders.

At the outset, the Director Tourism Kashmir expressed satisfaction over the increased flow of the tourists to Kashmir following effective and prompt measures undertaken by the JK administration to contain the spread of the pandemic and strict adherence of SOPs which

boosted the confidence of potential travellers to plan their trips to Kashmir.

Dr Ittoo said soon after the Government of India relaxed restrictions on domestic tourism, J&K Administration ensured that services providers follow all COVID19 guidelines for the safe holidays of the travellers.

Dr Ittoo said due to the tourism department's sustained promotional campaigns, they are expecting an increased influx of travellers in the upcoming spring and summer season.

To cater to the expected increase in the tourist arrivals Dir Tourism said the government and the airlines are also making every effort to increase the frequency of the early morning and late evening flights at Srinagar Srinagar Airport.

He emphasised on the need for tapping domestic tourism because of the restrictions on international travels.

He said the department is gearing up for the upcoming pro-

motional programmes outside J&K including participation in Travel Trade Fairs and roadshows in collaboration with the local stakeholders.

In this regard, he said the Department of Tourism will work in tandem with concerned departments including airport authority, floriculture department, cable car besides travel trade to ensure travellers have pleasing experiences in Kashmir from the time of their arrival to their departure.

While stating that airport is the first impression of the destination, Dr. Ittoo said tourist should feel welcomed at this airport and directed the concerned and sister agencies including Cable Car Corporation, Tourists Police, JKTCDC, Floriculture Department, Houseboat Owners Association, Taxi Operators Associations to provide all assistance and information to the travellers at their information counters.

He also impressed upon having tourist taxi services to all popular destinations from Srinagar Airport.

He said the department of tourism will also give a Kashmir Culture Centre facelift to its counter where all information will be provided to the travellers.

He also impressed upon Srinagar Airport authority and other concerned agencies on improving the overall ambience of the airport with the plantation of ornamental and fruit trees.

...Murder Of Woman For Dowry Family Demands Arrest Of All Culprits, Stages Protest

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Even after police arresting three members of a family, the relatives and family members of a woman who was found dead at the home of her in-laws demanded arrest of all family members. They said that police have arrested only 3 persons including the husband of the deceased women while her mother-in-law and two sister-in-laws are still free.

The relatives and family members of the deceased woman who hail from Latharwalpora area of North Kashmir's Bandipora district assembled here in Press Enclave Srinagar and staged a massive protest demanding arrest of all culprits responsible for the murder of Afrooz Bano.

Abdul Rehman Matahanji, the father of the deceased woman told News Agency that his daughter namely Afrooz Bano (25) who was married to one Shabir Ahmad Pahlloo son of Nazir Ahmad Pahlloo of Sadarkoot Payeen Bandipora has was allegedly killed by her husband on 21 December last year.

The protesters who raised slogans against police alleged that Afrooz was murdered by her in-laws while police arrested only three members of the family. "We demand the arrest of



all family members who killed Afroza in cold blood," they said accusing police of inaction.

The said Afroza was murdered over and issue related to dowry.

When contacted, a police official while divulging information about the case said that murder took place during the intervening night of 20 and 21 December, 2020.

He said during the course of investigation the role of one Shabir Ahmad Pahlloo, the husband of the deceased woman surfaced, and a search was launched to nab him. After strenuous efforts, the accused person was arrested and during questioning, he admitted that during the intervening night the duo was engaged in a brawl over Mehar and golden ornaments and he strangled his wife to death.

"It was a murder case and guilty have already been booked under relevant sections of law," the official said (KNT).

Wildlife Dept. Rebuts Losing 20000 Kanals Of Land To Encroachers In Hokersar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Department of Wildlife Protection J&K today issued a rebuttal in reference to a news item published in 'Early Times' newspaper with headline 'Hokersar loses 20000 kanals of land to encroachers, set to lose Ramsar status'.

As per the statement issued by Wildlife Warden, Wetlands Division, Kashmir, Srinagar, the department has termed the news report as wrong, devoid of facts, unverified and misleading.

The Wildlife Warden has made it clear

through an official statement that that Hokersar is not losing the status of a Ramsar Site nor has it lost 20000 kanals of land to encroachers.

He said on the contrary, Hokersar Wetland was recently demarcated by a joint team of Revenue, Forest Demarcation Division, Forest PI Division and Wildlife Department officials and the digitally demarcated and delineated Map arrived at is signed by all the stakeholder Departments.

The Wildlife Warden said that by virtue of the generated map on GIS platform Hokersar Wetland comprises 13.54

Sq.Kms i.e 1354 Ha i.e 27080 Kanals of land within the demarcated peripheries. The extent of area is in consonance with the archives of forest demarcation record of the 1960's form one which substantiates today's area figures as well.

He said however, as mentioned in the Form one of the old Demarcation record there are some chaks inside the Hokersar Wetland Reserve at the time of its notification which continues to be verified and authenticated by the revenue officials as on today.

He further said that it was very recently that the Department of Wildlife

Protection J&K has started the exercise of physically demarcating the peripheral limits of Hokersar Wetland by installing the Demarcation pillars at the digitally delineated points. Once this exercise is completed those found exercising any rights illegally within such demarcated limits shall be evicted, the process of issuing notices in favour of such offenders has been initiated.

The statement read that further on GIS platform land use and land cover map and satellite imageries hardly shows any settlements within the demarcated limits of this wetland.

DIAL-EMMA



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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS



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

HIGHWAY STATUS



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

This Day in History

- 1861 - 1st meeting of Provisional Congress of Confederate States of America (US Civil War)
- 1861 - British Vice-Admiral Robert Fitzroy issues first storm warnings for ships
- 1862 - American Civil War: Naval engagement on Tennessee River, USS Conestago vs CSS Appleton Belle
- 1904 - Japan notifies Russia that in view of Russia's delaying tactics and provocative military action, Japan is ending negotiations and recalling its members from Moscow
- 1911 - Great fire destroys downtown Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey)
- 1918 - Great Britain grants women (30 & over) the vote
- 1920 - Saarland administrated by League of Nations
- 1933 - German President Paul von Hindenburg and Franz von Papen end the Prussian parliament
- 1939 - Spanish government flees to France
- 1941 - British troops conquer Bengazi, Libya
- 1967 - Cultural Revolution in Albania
- 1979 - Supreme court affirms death sentence against Pakistan Premier Bhutto
- 1988 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalitinsk USSR
- 2014 - The Taliban and Pakistani government begin peace negotiations.
- 2017 - Qatar Airways achieves the longest-ever commercial flight in service when its B777 aircraft lands in Auckland after a 16 hour and 23 minutes flight from Doha
- 2018 - UN calls for ceasefire in rebel-held Eastern Ghouta area by Syrian government troops after 40 people reportedly killed



HIJRI
CALENDAR

23

JAMADI

-UL-SANI

1442

PRAYERS

FAJR

5: 59

ZUHR

12: 45

ASR

4:25

MAGRIB

6:09

ISHA

7:29

From KO Archives

US TEAM TO ASSESS PEACE PROCESS IN J&K

WASHINGTON -A four-member US congressional team led by Edward Royce, Republican member of the House of Representatives from California and co-chairman of the congressional caucus on India, will visit India and Pakistan for 10 days from February 16 to assess the progress of the peace process in Jammu & Kashmir.

The proposal for the visit came from David Bonior, member from Michigan, which has a large Pakistani community, besides Syrians and Iraqis. Indian American sources said Bonior espouses Pakistan's cause in the Kashmir dispute.

Talking to the United News of India, Democratic Representative Jim McDermott, co-chairman of the India caucus, said the team would try to figure out if they could play any role in resolving the longstanding dispute.

He, however, made it clear that the congressmen have no plan to be interlocutors for the peace process.

Besides Royce and Bonior, the other members of the delegation are McDermott and Joseph Pitts, a Republican from Pennsylvania.

"We want to look at the Kashmir situation, get a feel from both sides and try to figure out if there is any role for us," McDermott said, adding that the team would visit the Kashmir valley as well.

The congressmen are scheduled to meet both Indian and Pakistani leaders during their

visits to New Delhi and Islamabad, though no schedule has been worked out. They will also visit Lahore and the earthquake-affected areas of Gujarat.

McDermott said the proposal was mooted during a chat he had with Bonior a few days back. "We both came to a decision to contribute to the peace process in Kashmir and approached the House speaker to provide us a military plane to transport the delegation to India," he added.

He admitted the Bush administration had not moved as quickly as it should have in the Gujarat tragedy. "There is no need to wait for protocol as you see the human tragedy unfolding before you in a friendly country," he said, referring to the argument that New Delhi had not approached Washington for assistance.

The India caucus is also handicapped by the fact that President George W Bush is just putting his administration together and there is no assistant secretary in the South Asia division in the state department who can debate proposals.

But the near unanimous resolution adopted by the House of Representatives expressing solidarity with the quake victims was intended to send a message to the White House that Congress is keen to see the executive branch act. "If only the tragedy had occurred five days earlier, things would have been different as the Clinton government was still there," McDermott added.

US assistance to the earthquake victims should be a generous contribution reflective of the wealth of the country, he said.

The congressman said a decision to fill up the vacancy caused by the resignation of Assistant Secretary Karl F Inderfurth would be taken by the end of February. But the post of ambassador to India would need longer to be filled once the incumbent, Richard Celeste, demits office in a month's time.

Celeste has been asked to continue until alternative arrangements are made. But "we may end up having a long gap before the next ambassador is posted to India," McDermott said, referring to the long Senate confirmation process that will have to be gone through

He said Senator Sam. Brownback, Republican from Kansas, is currently spearheading a move to have the remaining sanctions against India lifted. The 100-member congressional caucus will extend full support to the move. The desire to lift the remaining sanctions is widespread and pressure will build up on the new administration soon. "Everything in politics has a timing," McDermott remarked.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 06 February, 2001)

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ALTHOUGH GROWTH OUTCOMES
around the world have been vastly better
than most expected in the early days of the pan-
demic, the current recession is still catastrophic.

School Bells Are Ringing

Hirra Sultan

A wave of joy, appreciation and a general sigh of relief was heaved all across the UT of Jammu and Kashmir when the government announced the reopening of schools on Saturday (23rd Jan). They have proposed a staggered start to all educational institutions, with 9th – 12th classes opening from 1st of Feb in Jammu division. Subsequently, elementary schools will be opened from 8th Feb. The authorities have asked the schools to follow all Covid-19 related protocols like seating the students at a minimum distance of 2 meters, and making sure no gatherings and crowds are formed. The schools in the valley would open up at the scheduled time after winter vacations.

This is probably the first winter parents are glad to hear of schools being reopened. Every other winter students and parents alike would want to hear of extended vacations because of cold and snow. This time though everyone is glad the kids would be going out. After such a long time.

All schools across the UT were closed last March due to the increasing scare and cases of Covid in the country and across the world. The pandemic had everyone, almost every government, at the end of their wits and every country was going into complete lockdowns to reduce spread and save some lives. The response was also triggered by the posts and videos that came from Italy and left everyone petrified, even of meeting their own family members or going out for walks. Closing educational institutions sounded right because they host a huge crowd of knowledge-seekers and a single carrier would have infected a huge number of families all at the same time making the infection curve grow exponentially. Also, children are seen as the future of every society and as such the protective instincts overrode all logic and reason.

Even though the initial closure of schools was for a time period of a month, the timeline soon changed. The increase in cases showed no signs of slowing down and hence the reopening of institutes got ambiguous. Instead, all offices and businesses started closing. The educational sector, once they realized that they would not be opening up anytime soon, switched to online mode. A lot of schools, colleges and tuition centers started taking classes on Zoom and tried to keep their students on track with their studies.

Even though this all had its perks and benefits, especially for those who had to travel long distances or roam around the city



“The fact that every other institution is working in full capacity is the question. If every other place was cleared for opening and operating, why not schools? If public transport is functional without any social distance or masks on people’s faces, why not schools?”

to attend all tuitions along with school, a lot of others suffered a great deal. Teaching fraternity also heaved a sigh of relief; at least till Zoom classes were not planned and executed. This though was only the sunny side. The darker side, the one most people missed was that of government school students. The ones whose parents weren’t as privileged. The ones for whom a smartphone was a luxury they couldn’t afford. How were they supposed to attend these online classes?

A lot of posts on social media appealed

to people to donate their old smartphones to students who couldn’t afford one.

In times when the lockdown was killing the economy and a lot of families didn’t have food to eat two square meals per day, they had to look for smartphones in order to let their wards keep studying.

The issue is not merely the closure of schools due to Covid, but the fact that our kids have been sitting at home since August 5, 2019. In between schools merely opened for a week before being closed up again. A

year and a half without any school. 500 days. Without any form of formal education, socialization or fun. Without any phone connections, schools or internet it has been a difficult task for families to keep their young ones entertained. These long periods of being confined at home have taken a toll on everyone and the boredom and agitation of the younger lot is no different.

As per a recent study published by UNICEF on 9th December, data from 191 countries was studied and no correlation of Covid

infection rates in the community was found with the school status. That means the number of infections would have remained the same even if schools were open. This absence of an education system puts strain on children coming from less privileged backgrounds. Mostly schools give them a temporary respite from the reality of their lives and a reason to smile. With the prolonged closure of schools we are not merely looking at the lack of support system and social life but also a probable increase in the number of students who drop out.

The question is not merely when schools and colleges would open. The fact that every other institution is working in full capacity is the question. If every other place was cleared for opening and operating, why not schools? If public transport is functional without any social distance or masks on people’s faces, why not schools?

Many people may claim that online classes suffice the need, but with 2G internet connectivity is it really possible to have a good online session? What about those students who do not own a smartphone, or are too young to own one and both parents are working? What about the attention span of 6 year olds? What about the distractions of games and WhatsApp messages while attending a class? The underprivileged? The areas where the internet remains suspended?

Higher secondary institutes were opened in late October for students who wanted to attend. No classes were given. Merely doubt clearing was done on a one-to-one basis with a teacher.

The current order can, in the same manner draw flak for how can anyone gather kids in a place and keep them from playing together or having their lunch together? How can we expect them to meet after a year and not embrace each other? How can they not hold each other’s hands to silently tell one another of how they longed this company, this togetherness? When we are asking them to maintain physical distance, are we even being fair to them?

If gatherings in mosques and on marriages can be allowed, why not schools?

Hirra Sultan is a Srinagar-based author whose work on gender, health and society has appeared in many local publications

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

KENNETH ROGOFF

CAMBRIDGE – Economic recovery, like COVID-19 vaccines, will not be evenly distributed around the world over the coming two years. Despite enormous policy support provided by governments and central banks, the economic risks remain profound, and not just to frontier economies facing imminent debt problems and low-income countries experiencing an alarming rise in poverty. With the coronavirus far from tamed, populism rife, global debt at record levels, and policy normalization likely to be uneven, the situation remains precarious. This is not to deny the overall good news of the last 12 months. Effective vaccines have become available in record time, far sooner than most experts originally anticipated. The massive monetary and fiscal response has built a bridge toward a much-hoped-for end to the pandemic. And the public has gotten better at living with the virus, with or without the help of national authorities.

But although growth outcomes around the world have been vastly better than most expected in the early days of the pandemic, the current recession is still catastrophic. The International Monetary Fund forecasts that the United States and Japan will not return to pre-pandemic output levels until the second half of this year. The eurozone and the United Kingdom, again declining, won’t reach that point until well into 2022.

The Chinese economy is in a league of its own, and is expected to be 10% larger by the end of 2021 than it was at the end of 2019. But at the other end of the spectrum, many developing economies and emerging markets could take years to return to their pre-pandemic trajectories. The World Bank estimates that the COVID-19 pandemic will push up to 150 million additional people into extreme poverty by the end of 2021, with food insecurity rampant.

The differing performance projections have much to do with the vaccine delivery timetable. Vaccines are expected to be widely available in advanced economies and some emerging markets by the middle of this year, but people in poorer countries will likely be waiting until 2022 and beyond.

Another factor is the staggering difference in macro-economic support between rich and poor countries. In advanced economies, additional government spending and tax cuts during the COVID-19 crisis have averaged nearly

The Perils Of An Uneven Global Recovery



“The differing performance projections have much to do with the vaccine delivery timetable. Vaccines are expected to be widely available in advanced economies and some emerging markets by the middle of this year, but people in poorer countries will likely be waiting until 2022 and beyond.”

13% of GDP, with loans and guarantees amounting to another 12% of GDP. By contrast, government spending increases and tax cuts in emerging economies have totaled around 4% of GDP, and loans and guarantees another 3%. For low-income countries, the comparable numbers are 1.5% of GDP

in direct fiscal support and almost nothing in guarantees. In the run-up to the 2008 financial crisis, emerging economies had relatively strong balance sheets compared to developed countries. But they entered this crisis burdened with far more private and public debt, and are thus much more

vulnerable. Many would be in deep trouble but for near-zero interest rates in advanced economies. Even so, there has been a growing rash of sovereign defaults, including in Argentina, Ecuador, and Lebanon.

In fact, a “taper tantrum 2.0” is near the top of the list of things that can go wrong, and if (or when) it happens, not only emerging markets will suffer. The 2013 taper tantrum occurred when the US Federal Reserve started signaling that it would someday normalize its monetary policy, triggering huge outflows of funds from emerging markets. This time, the Fed has taken great pains to signal that it does not plan to raise interest rates for a long time, even introducing a new monetary framework that basically amounts to a promise to keep its foot on the gas until unemployment is extremely low.

Such a policy makes perfect sense. As I have frequently argued since 2008, allowing inflation temporarily to rise above the Fed’s 2% target would do far more good than harm in an environment where debt levels are high and output is still below potential. After all, there are nine million fewer people working in the US today than a year ago.

But if the US has achieved its vaccination targets by this summer and coronavirus mutations remain contained, forecasts of a Fed “lift-off” from zero interest rates may well be brought forward significantly. This is especially likely given the huge reserve of savings that many Americans have built up, owing partly to rising asset prices and partly to government transfers that many recipients chose to save. Ultra-low interest-rate policies across the world are helping to prevent long-term scarring, but many larger companies, including Big Tech firms, do not need the support that is driving their stock prices through the roof. This is inevitably fueling populist anger (a small taste of which was evident in some US politicians’ reactions to the recent GameStop stock-price war).

Inflation may be stubbornly low for now, but a big enough blast of demand could push it higher, leading the Fed to raise rates somewhat sooner than it currently plans. The ripple effects of such a move on asset markets would separate the strong from the weak, and hit emerging markets particularly hard. At the same time, policymakers, even in the US, will eventually have to allow bankruptcies to pick up and restructuring to take place. A rising tide of recovery is inevitable, but it will not lift all boats.

Virus Inside Management

Role Of Positive & Negative Attitude In Management



Khalid Mustafa

“**LIKEWISE IN J&K,** most people are totally dependent on private sector and private organizations. But our private sector has limited growth and it never tries to boost their skills and future growth. Infact, they aren’t even given benefits that should be ensured to them by provisions and safety guaranteed by GOI for private employees



We may have come across the word “virus” many times especially in relation to computers. Infact, with covid-1o halting all life and businesses, “virus” was the word of 2020. However, these aren't the only kind of viruses. Many other glitches plagues many operations just as any other virus.

Here I would like to talk about the virus inside management which is the virus of bad and as well as of good attitude of

the employee with organization. The attitude of an employee plays a vital role in business growth and downfall. While some employee attitudes are inherent and come with maturity; others are an outcome of the environment present within the organisation. They are dependent on how the management treats employees or how they classify daily operations in business like roles and responsibilities of employees, company benefits, appreciations, rule and regulations and much more. Proper training to the employee and ap-

preciation also generates a positive attitude in employees. This positive attitude is shared from one employee to another and does through the organisation.

Likewise, an employee with a bad and negative attitude will share negative thoughts with other employees and the good one with a positive attitude will share positivity. Happy employees always boast and enjoy working within organizations and always try to curve the graph of business towards growth and give maximum output in every form but a single

bad and negative thought from a disappointed one leads to downfall of the graph to a lower ratio, far behind the growth.

Human resource management and training plays a great role in the employee life cycle to motivate and retain them for a significant amount of time. To detect a virus within the management, the HR team should scan all previous records of employee about the attitude in previous organization and incase of freshers, the attitude scan for virus gets easily detect during training sessions, group discussions

Likewise in J&K, most people are totally dependent on private sector and private organizations. But our private sector has limited growth and it never tries to boost their skills and future growth. Infact, they aren't even given benefits that should be ensured to them by provisions and safety guaranteed by GOI for private employees. This is the reason that they are not given basic respect and honor in society too as they are designated as “private employees” and not “government” ones; even when they have the same qualifications, skills and designation. This happens even as we witness that much of the Government sector already outsources a lot of their work to the private sector and they are working shoulder to shoulder for the same outcome of growth and development of our infrastructure.

The management of any organization needs to encourage youth and accommodate them well enough in the private sector. To irradiate and quarantine the virus inside management, the management like the board of directors should first clear the vision and question within the board about the reason for the bad attitude? “Are we providing the promised benefits? Do we provide all necessities to employees as per the order from our government? Are we demotivating the employee? Are we limited to favoritism and far away from our own responsibilities?”

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3 Reasons To Study Science Communication Beyond The West

Misha Ketchell

Ask a science communicator how old their field is. They might say a few decades, or even centuries, because they're thinking about the Western science communication tradition associated with a scientist-public gap.

These days, we almost exclusively associate science communication with Western science. Yet humans have always communicated knowledge about the world within their own societies and to others. There's evidence of this going back tens of thousands of years.

Society today should recognise past and ongoing science communication approaches that diverge from the West's relatively recent ones.

Also, as we have explored in a paper and webinar, we should include this knowledge in science communication histories. Here are three reasons why.

1. Framing science as 'Western' is political

The histories we tell are political. Political factors can determine important elements such as where a story begins and ends and what is included or excluded. Histories of science aren't immune to this.

We often equate science and scientific practice with a gold standard of credibility. But there's much rhetorical power behind the “science” label.

Some influential 20th-century scholars, such as the late British historian Herbert Butterfield, valorised Western science and judged other sources of human knowledge production as failed attempts.

Others such as Andrew Cunningham, while trying to redress that tendency, defined “science” so narrowly that only the Western version of professional knowledge production applied.

Both these stances denigrate non-Western knowledge systems as lesser, by excluding them from “science”.

They have shaped science communication histories taught today, wherein we mostly ignore the diverse ways in which cultures across the world have communicated knowledge.

Thus, most science communicators lack insight into how these cultures tailored their communication to different audiences, aims and mediums.

Did you know medieval European medical writers regularly used Arabic pseudonyms for their published works to confer prestige?

This was because, at the time, Arabic cultures demonstrated strong leadership in pharmaceuticals and other scientific fields across the Afro-Asian-European landmass.

Or consider the Persian engineers who built ingenious constructions to provide water, air conditioning and refrigeration to desert communities thousands of years ago.

They communicated their technical expertise over generations through spoken word and actions.



“**AT THE TIME, ARABIC CULTURES DEMONSTRATED** strong leadership in pharmaceuticals and other scientific fields across the Afro-Asian-European landmass. Or consider the Persian engineers who built ingenious constructions to provide water, air conditioning and refrigeration to

Such snippets offer deep insight into myriad science communication cultures. Unfortunately, they're rarely included in science communication histories today.

To borrow from Peter Pormann, a professor of Classics and Graeco-Arabic Studies at the University of Manchester, this is a case of intellectual amnesia.

It may be historians' wish to respect diverse cultural categories, since “science communication” is an English term associated with Western culture. But a side effect of this is a profoundly Eurocentric approach.

2. Human cultures are diverse and wonderful

All over the world, different science communication systems have been adapted to different lo-

cations, lifestyles, cultures and histories. They are manifestations of a glorious wealth of human expertise and creativity and should be celebrated, not ignored.

Some are poetic, some instructional. Some were used to bridge cultures and some to maintain knowledge throughout generations, over centuries and even millennia.

Mori p r kau (stories) are one example of a narrative technique for communicating m tauranga (M ori knowledge) about the environment, culture, values and more.

Westerners often dismiss p r kau as myths. In fact, they encode evidence-based knowledge, gathered and tested over many ages, into a meta-

phor-driven form of communication.

One p r kau associated with the Waitepuru stream in the Matat region of Aotearoa New Zealand describes a “taniwha” — in this case a lizard whose tail flicks from side to side.

Among this p r kau's many meanings is a warning about the stream's movement over time, indicating where it's dangerous to build.

The p r kau encodes complex hydrogeological knowledge that has been observed, tested and communicated over centuries.

The M ori process of constructing knowledge on the evidence of time-honoured experience is, in fact, consistent with Western science's expectations of evidence-based knowledge.

Yet, strategies such as p r kau for communicating that knowledge are culturally-specific and unique. Science communicators should pay them attention as part of the rich diversity of global knowledge communication.

3. Science communication should be inclusive

The past few years have seen the science communication discipline come under heavy fire for exclusionary practices.

The strongest supporting evidence comes from University College London science communication researcher Emily Dawson. She worked with low-income ethnic minority communities in London who weren't heavily involved in science communication practices.

They didn't visit science centres or museums. Dawson's work showed “powerlessness” and “cultural imperialism” (feelings of being “othered”) were key reasons why.

Western science museum exhibits incorporating historical narratives may tell stories about the world from a European perspective. This can perpetuate racism and ratify European colonialism.

If European-descended Westerners are the only demographic who see their culture reflected and respected in science communication histories, this can lead to further social exclusion.

For cultural resilience and continuity, we must support knowledge-keepers' efforts to sustain their science communication practices.

Even where ancient practices are no longer part of a society's contemporary life, cultural roots still matter.

For instance, many modern Iraqis have great interest in the 2,000-year-old cuneiform cultures of Babylonia and Assyria. Exploring cuneiform science and its communication practices should be on our collective agenda.

Who had access to Babylonian knowledge about lunar eclipses? Within what worldview did Babylonians frame that knowledge?

These are exciting questions we can and should explore, to ensure the science communication histories we learn and teach leave none behind.

The Conversation

JKCSF Demands Postings Of Local Officers On Key Positions



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Civil Society Forum (JKCSF) is up in arms against the deprivation of reach of a common man to the top administration to get their issues grievances settled.

In a statement, Chairman [JKCSF] Abdul Qayoom Wani said that in civil and police the top local officers who have earlier served at key positions as DCs, DGs and SSPs have now been co-opted to less important affairs.

While as on key administrative posts non-local officers have been preferred which has added to the sufferings and miseries of the local populace on account of understanding the language

while representing their plea. "We have a sufficient number of local IAS, IPS, KAS, KPS and other senior officers with a sense of localization to deliver as per the needs and expectations of common people particularly in the absence of a local govt," Wani said

Wani said that a large number of IAS,IPS,KAS KPS and many more senior officers who have proved their worth during their service carrier have been dumped in Civil Secretariate and out-side secret rate despite their Seniority, reputed PR, and proved administrative capabilities.

It would have been in the public interest if these local officers would have been given pivotal positions from Secretariate and outside at Divisional and district key positions so that the public could have a relief by virtue of language and localization domain.

In the present scenario while raising issues and representing their grievances public faces an array of difficulties which they are presently facing while meeting the officers who don't belong to Jammu and Kashmir, instead are non-Kashmiris from other states.(KNS)

In Sopore Village Health Centre Operates In Tin-Shed

SOPORE: Residents of Yemberzalwari, a remote village in Sopore, Friday complained about the non-availability of basic health facilities at sub-centre of health the department, thus leaving the patients vulnerable.

Speaking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the locals alleged that the claims being made by the Government regarding better health care in remote areas have fallen flat on the ground.

Locals said that the sub-centre was started in a rented house a decade ago, however, two years ago, the owner of the house dismantled his house, "since then the hospital is running in a tin-shed."

"Not a single doctor or other medical staff have come here for the last two years, as a result of 120 families are facing immense problems in the village. Either take this hospital equipment back from here or appoint medical staff in the sub centre,"

the locals said.

A local Mohammad Jabbar Lone said that the villagers have gone to the authorities several times requesting them to resolve the issue but haven't received any response from them.

"In the absence of medical staff, we are being forced to take patients to Tuijjar or Sopore even for minor ailments," he said.

"At least one employee should have been posted here so that people can have a sigh of relief," Lone said, adding that the government should have moved this centre from here to another safe place as it is running in an unsafe tin-shed for the last two years.

The villagers made a fervent appeal to the District Development Commissioner (DDC), Baramulla and Director of Health Service Kashmir to intervene and provide necessary medical staff and proper medical facilities in the health centre—(KNO)

LMD Books Edible Oil Manufacturer, Dealer For 'Smudging Of Mrp'

Handwara :- Legal Metrology Unit Kupwara has on Friday booked a manufacturer and dealer of edible oil for manufacture, packing and sale of edible oil 'in violation' of law.

An official said that the accused was found in contravention to Section 36 (1) of the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 read with the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011.

The edible oil packages of "Kamal Deep Brand" were found to bear 'smudged statutory declarations of Maximum Retail Price (MRP)' and manufacturing date, which according to the official was aimed to hike MRP of every single edible oil package, with 5 litre declared net quan-

tity, from Rs. 660 to Rs. 750.

Besides, date of manufacture was also changed from January 2020 to December 2020 in order to allow sale of the product beyond date of expiry, the official said.

"Department has seized the deceptive packages of the said brand of edible oil from retailers in Handwara market and legal proceedings are underway", the official said.

Meanwhile, a consumer alert has been sounded by Legal Metrology Unit Kupwara asking consumers to check MRP and manufacturing date on pre-packaged commodities in its effort to avoid gullible consumers falling prey to malpractices. (GNS)

J&K Set To Lose Representation In RS Shortly

Agencies

SRINAGAR:-- In the next 10 days, Jammu and Kashmir will lose its representation in the country's upper house or the Rajya Sabha after their term, as the legislative Assembly that elects RS members stands dissolved in the erstwhile state.

The six-year term of all the four members from Jammu and Kashmir including Congress veteran Ghulam Nabi Azad is expiring in the next few days.

According to reports no new member can be elected as legislative Assembly stands dissolved in the erstwhile state, which otherwise would constitute the electoral college for electing the Rajya Sabha members.

Fayaz Ahmad Mir, whose tenure as the Rajya Sabha member will come to an end on February 10, told News 18: "Since there is no Assembly in J&K, there is no way we can elect new members. These seats will fall vacant unless there are elections."

Mir was elected on the People's Democratic Party ticket six years ago. "It will be rare for J&K to have no representation in the Rajya Sabha. I am told only once, in the early 90s, we had such a scenario. There won't be anyone to challenge whatever new law they pass in the House," he added.

Mir said only five Lok Sabha members from J&K, including Dr Farooq Abdullah will be able to voice people's issues in Parliament.

"I will be speaking in Parliament on 9th February but that will be a thanks-giving speech and nothing else," he said, add-



ing the Parliament is aware of the Rajya Sabha's omission of representatives from J&K.

In addition to four RS members, J&K had six MPs, including three from the National Conference, in the Lok Sabha. Despite their opposition, the central government had abrogated Article 370 and divided the State into two Union territories.

The Centre has since brought sweeping changes including the crucial land laws that have vacated moratorium for any Indian to buy land in J&K. Earlier under Article 370, only J&K residents had the right to own immovable properties in the former state.

Officials said Azad's term ends on February 15. The terms of Nazir Laway, a former PDP member, and BJP's Shamsher Singh Manhas are expiring on February 15 and February 10, respectively.

"The state faced a similar situation in early 1990s, when we had no representatives in the Rajya Sabha as we were directly ruled by the Centre," an official said.

J&K was placed under Governor's rule in June 2017 after

the BJP pulled down the three-year-old coalition government with the PDP accusing the then chief minister Mehbooba Mufti for soft on separatism and militancy. The Centre wanted militancy to be dealt with a tough hand but realised Mufti's approach was a tad different.

Following the dismissal of Mufti, the then Governor Satya Pal Malik had suspended the Assembly in November 2017. No elections could be held after that and there seems to be no indication that it would be conducted anytime soon.

There are reports that elections would be held after the Centre effects the delimitation exercise that will reset and enhance the number of Assembly segments. J&K lost four seats to Ladakh after it lost its statehood and is now left with only 83 Assembly seats. Officials say the delimitation panel is likely to add 7 to 9 new Assembly seats. But the immediate concern of the region is that there would be no voice in the Rajya Sabha. With inputs from agencies (KINS)

Dwivedi Seeks Development Of Mineral Industry For Job Creation



JAMMU: Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, Manoj Kumar Dwivedi on Friday chaired 48th annual general meeting JK Minerals as member & representative of Lieutenant Governor.

The meeting was attended by Managing Director JKML, Vikram. K. Gupta; Director General Planning & Monitoring Department, Shahzada Bilal Ahmad; Director Industries & other officials at Civil secretariat Jammu.

The Managing Director placed before the shareholders the Annual financial Statements of the corporation which were in arrears and performance during the FY 2019-20. He informed that despite the COVID-19 crisis which had far reaching economic and social repercussions, J&K Minerals has shown a satisfactory performance and has to deliver much needed raw material to the mineral based industries in UT of J&K.

He said that the Corporation, for the first time, ventured into minor mineral exploitation & operationalized four minor mineral blocks in Jammu region which

has led to increased cash flow besides acting as a nodal Agency for supply of construction material like Sand, Boulders, Nalla Muck / RBM etc. for various prestigious projects of UT of J&K.

The Commissioner-Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, while appreciating the efforts of the management for making the corporation more vibrant amid COVID-19 pandemic. He directed the company to explore possibilities of further mineral extraction in Jammu & Kashmir in collaboration with central PSUs like National Mineral Development Corporation/ National Mineral Exploration Corporation etc. "This will help to develop the mineral based Industries in the UT of J&K and create more employment in the region" he added.

The Managing Director extended gratitude to all the stakeholders, bankers and customers, on behalf of the Board of Directors and thanked each member of the J&K Minerals family for their hard work and commitment.

5 Lakh Trout Ova Dispatched To 3 States From Kokernag



Agencies

SRINAGAR: The officials of Kokernag fisheries farm have received appreciation from ICAR Directorate of Coldwater Fisheries Research for sending 5 lakh trout ova to various states in India for rearing.

Last month, 5 lakh trout ova were dispatched from Kokernag fisheries farm in South Kashmir to Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Uttarakhand for rearing

In a letter written by ICAR Directorate of Coldwater Fisheries Research has thanked authorities of rainbow trout on payment basis.

"These eyed-ova have been supplied to the states of Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland for the promotion of trout farming under NEH activities of this institution. The consignment has reached safely to the respective destinations in these states and performing well," the letter reads.

At least 70 lakh eggs have been obtained from Trout fish at Kokernag fisheries farm this season and would generate huge revenue to Fisheries Department.

Known for its natural beauty, Kashmir has the distinction of

having Asia's largest fisheries farm in Kokernag.

The farm is emerging best producer of Rainbow Trout fish across the world.

Chief Project Officer at Kokernag trout fisheries farm, Mohammad Muzaffar Bazaz, said that 500,000 trout ova were dispatched from the farm to Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Bhimtal in Uttarakhand.

Bazaz said the farm is known worldwide for its production.

"Rainbow trout is cold water fish and should have temperatures between 0 to 20 degree Celsius. It is rich in protein and boosts immunity. The revenue and production increase with each year," he told news agency.

Every year between November and February, eggs are obtained from Trout fish in this farm. It has a breeding period of 51 days. After then fish are given feed first in tanks then taken to water reservoirs before taking them to sale centres.

The project is managed by the local officials who are technically knowhow about trout seed production.

Syed Manzoor is the supervisor of the farm, who has well expertise in rearing fish. KINS

NEWS MAKERS

Udhampur Court Awards Seven Year Jail To Rape Accused

UDHAMPUR:- Additional Sessions Judge Udhampur, Sobha Ram Gandhi, awarded seven year imprisonment to one Vijay Singh of village Bhatyari of Tehsil Ramnagar in a rape case.

After hearing Public Prosecutor, Anil Magotra for the State and counsel for the accused, the Court observed that despite the fact that rape is regarded as heinous crime and in the recent times drastic changes are made in the law by bringing stringent punishments but the level of crime and the inhumanity of this crime has been on a rise.

Be it in affluent or frugal, educated or non-educated, elderly or young contexts; or open or closed societies, the crime is on a rise. It compels one to reflect on the root cause for the same and its solution. Certainly it is the conscience that matters the most to us individually as well as collectively.

With these observations, the court awarded 07 years imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10,000 to accused Vijay Singh for commission of offence under Section 376 of the RPC.

For the commission of offence under Section 341 of the RPC, the convict shall further undergo rigorous imprisonment for one month. However both the sentences shall run concurrently. In default of payment of fine, the convict shall further undergo imprisonment for 06 months

A Selfie With A Rabbit Helps 12-Year-Old Girl To Feed Her Family

Agencies

ANANTNAG : Living in extreme poverty, a selfie with a rabbit has come to a rescue for a 12-year-old girl from South Kashmir to earn a livelihood to feed her family.

Mumtaza Jan, a 5th class student belonging to a nomad family in Pahalgam belt of Anantnag has two pet rabbits who help her in earning a little amount in a day to take care of her family.

Mumtaza Jan said that she wants to study and become a doctor but poverty is becoming an obstacle in fulfilling her dream.

"My father, who was a labour, is ill for seven years and is unable to work. The situation has forced me to start earning in order to help my family to bear the expenses besides medicine for my father," Mum-



taza said, adding that, she is elder among six siblings (two brothers

and 4 sisters) and has the responsibility to take care of all.

Mumtaza said every morning, she starts roaming around different parks of the Pahalgam in search of tourists who can take selfies with her pet rabbits.

"I get Rs 10 for every picture. I earn around Rs 200 every day, which is very less but enough to meet two ends of our family," she said.

Mumtaza wants to earn more to continue her studies and give education to her younger siblings besides that she wants to construct a comfortable house for her family.

"It has become part of my life to struggle and earn for my family. I have to take care of my family and struggling in such a young age is not an easy thing," she said—(KNO)



JOE ROOT'S

IND VS ENG 1ST TEST

Unbeaten Ton Helps England Reach 263/3 On Day 1

Press Trust of India

CHENNAI: Skipper Joe Root won the battle of attrition against Indian spinners with a classy century in his 100th Test as England reached a comfortable 263 for three at stumps on the opening day of the first match here on Friday.

A modern-day great, Root (128 batting, 197 balls) showed his mastery over slow bowlers during his 20th hundred and third in as many Tests, becoming the ninth player in the history of the game to score a ton on his 100th appearance.

He also admirably guided young opener Dom Sibley (87 off 286 balls), who showed commendable game awareness and enormous doggedness during their 200-run partnership for the third wicket before Jasprit Bumrah (2/40) got him in the final over of the day.

Root's innings was an exhibition of how to construct an innings on a low, slow track while countering a hostile post-lunch spell from Ishant Sharma (15-3-27-0) where he got the ball to reverse swing.

Root's speciality, the sweep shot, was also brought out of the closet once Indian

spinners started altering the length.

There were full-blooded slog sweep in front of the square, conventional sweep towards square, the paddle sweep behind the square and also switch-hit sweep where he changed the grip against Shahbaz Nadeem.

And towards the end, first six of the match, was also a slog sweep off Ashwin. This was after he had almost lost five litres of fluid in sapping Chennai heat.

Root and Sibley knew that they had to tire Ishant, Ravichandran Ashwin (11/56) and Bumrah out as Virat Kohli at some point would have to pay the price for Washington Sundar and Nadeem's relative inexperience.

With no purchase from the track, it became easier for Root and Sibley to use their feet and big stride to dominate the two spinners, who looked clueless.

Unlike a lot of batsmen, who in a pre-meditated fashion, come down the track, Root and Sibley waited for the Indian spinners to toss up the ball before they took the plunge.

An on-drive off Ashwin and a pull shot when he dropped one short along with a late cut off Nadeem were for the keeps.

There were 14 boundaries in all and

each one aesthetically brilliant.

Nadeem and Sundar for most part couldn't hit the right length and the abrasive surface of the track meant that the Red SG Test ball, which as per media reports was supposed to retain its hardness and seam for a longer duration, got soft and scuffed up by the 40th over.

The softness meant that both England batsmen got extra time to adjust their footwork against both spin and pace.

Save the two dismissals in the first session, England controlled the game during the next two sessions on a lifeless track, which will certainly become difficult for batting as the game progresses.

With India slated to bat fourth in the game, the first innings score by both teams will go a long way in deciding the course of this game.

The Chepauk track with its red clay soil content usually offers good bounce on the first day which becomes variable as the cracks start opening and spinners coming into the play.

But this was one such track, which was devoid of any pace and the edges were not even carrying half the distance to first slip or keeper Rishabh Pant.

Such was India's plight that Rohit

Sharma got his helmet and came up half way to Ishant's deliveries which weren't medium pace by any means.

Ashwin was brought into the attack as early as seventh over but Sibley and Rory Burns during the first 90 minutes were solid, putting on 63 runs for the opening stand.

Sibley in particular would shuffle towards off-stump to cover the line of the deliveries while waiting for the loose ones.

Burns was ready to tuck anything on his pads as there was no juice in the track to assist the new ball bowlers.

It was a moment's indiscretion on the part of Burns that brought about his downfall.

Burns tried a non-existent reverse sweep which lobbed off his gloves for Pant to complete the formalities after having dropped him down the leg-side.

As Sachin Tendulkar had predicted, there was reverse swing on offer as early as first session with Bumrah getting the shiny side to dart in, trapping Dan Lawrence (0) plumb.

But things turned for worse during the next two sessions as Indian bowlers with three spinners in their line-up bowled as many as 11 no-balls.

PAK VS SA 2ND TEST

Pakistan Take Command On Day 2 As Bowlers Reduce South Africa To 106/4



Agencies

RAWALPINDI: South Africa's top order stumbled to 106-4 at stumps after Faheem Ashraf's second successive half-century had rallied Pakistan's first innings to 272 in the second test on Friday.

South Africa trails Pakistan by 166 runs in a match it must win to draw the series.

Pakistan fast bowler Hasan Ali (2-29) grabbed his wickets off successive deliveries and Ashraf had Faf du Plessis (17) caught behind to leave South Africa struggling in its first innings on day 2.

Left-arm spinner Nauman Ali (1-19), who bagged seven wickets in his debut test at Karachi last week at the age of 34, got the key wicket of Aiden Markram (32) with South Africa troubled by both pace and spin.

Temba Bavuma survived a dropped catch and remained unbeaten on 15. Captain Quinton de Kock struck three successive boundaries off Yasir Shah for his unbeaten 24 off 11 balls.

Earlier, pacer Anrich Nortje picked up 5-56 to bowl out Pakistan half an hour before tea.

Ashraf anchored Pakistan's lower-order resistance with a top score of 78 not out, including 12 fours, before Nortje wrapped up the innings by claiming the last two wickets in three balls.

Nortje bowled with menacing pace — on a wicket which has eased considerably for batting — to bag his third five-wicket haul in his 10th test match.

He claimed two wickets in the first session, including Babar's off the second ball of the day after Pakistan resumed on 145-3. Azam played a loose cut shot and du Plessis held onto a head-high catch at second slip.

Babar couldn't add to his overnight 77. He had helped to revive Pakistan innings from 22-3 with Fawad Alam on the first day before

rain and a wet outfield wiped out the last session on Thursday.

Alam, who scored 45, fell to Bavuma's splendid direct throw at the non-striker's end from short mid-wicket as left-handed batsman went for a needless run.

Ashraf then provided the bulk of the scoring and shared a 41-run stand with Mohammad Rizwan (18) before Nortje struck immediately with the second new ball.

Nortje tested Rizwan with a short-pitched delivery and the top-edged pull went straight to Kagiso Rabada's hands at fine leg before Ashraf raised his fourth 50 in his eighth test match.

Ashraf completed his half century off 97 balls with a straight-driven boundary off Rabada just before lunch and two balls later pulled the fast bowler to midwicket for his ninth boundary.

Ashraf survived an early lbw TV referral against left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj (3-90), and he also needed brief treatment after Rabada's short-pitched delivery with the second new ball struck the left-hander's right arm.

Ashraf showed lot of patience in his more than 3-1/2 hour knock. He prolonged Pakistan's resistance after lunch, adding 30 runs with Yasir (8) and 21 with Nauman Ali (8) before Nortje claimed the last two wickets in three balls.

Hasan, returning to test cricket in this series after a two-year absence, had Dean Elgar (15) caught behind in the last over before tea and then followed it up by uprooting Rassie van der Dussen's off stump in the next delivery.

Du Plessis denied Hasan a hat trick with an edged boundary through slips but his poor run continued when Ashraf got a thin edge in the last session dominated by Pakistan. Pakistan leads the two-match series 1-0 after beating the Proteas in the first test by seven wickets at Karachi.

‘England Looking At A Total Of 600-700 Runs,’ Says Captain Joe Root

Press Trust of India

CHENNAI: Virat Kohli helping his opposite number Joe Root deal with cramps became one of the moments of the opening day but that act of "good sportsmanship" will not stop the England skipper from cashing on his memorable hundred and chasing a first innings total in the range of 600-700 on day two here.

Opting to bat, England ended day one at a promising 263 for three with Root scoring a fine century in his 100th Test. He batted with remarkable fluency, whether it was tackling the Indian spinners or the reverse swing generated by the pacers.

Speaking to media in a virtual interaction after day's play, Root said he would be ready for more on Saturday.

"Yeah, I am ready for more tomorrow...hopefully get back, a bit frustrating, very kind of Virat (Kohli) to help me out (with cramps), good sportsmanship from him... It's just like a long day and then after a few overs I get some fluids and cooled down."

About the surface and felt how many runs could be scored, Root said: "We have got to look and try and get as many as we can 600-700 if we can, really trying to make most of the first innings make it good and those four overs trying to work quickly."

"So if we can bat into whole of tomorrow or maybe day three then things could speed up quite quickly

for us and you never know what can happen for that point onwards..."

Root was in red hot form in the preceding series against Sri Lanka but said the conditions can't be compared to India.

"...It has been a really impressive start for us and we got to make it count and that is going to be the challenge for this tour, we need to bat long periods of time in these conditions."

"Different challenges, I think in Sri Lanka, there was obviously a little bit more lateral moment, more spin, while here it was more trying to counter the bounce initially against the spinners and obviously challenging reverse swing from the seamers."

"So it was very different and it's always difficult to try put two against each other," he added.

Batting on 128, Root stressed on the importance of carrying on.

"Playing the 100th Test was special and I mean coming in with some good form and I need to make sure I cash in on...Over the course of my career I've not always gone to make really big scores, so for me to be going and doing that currently is really pleasing..."

"And I keep getting myself in positions to make big hundreds and I have got to keep taking them and we're going to win more games if I'm doing that and so hopefully I can kick on tomorrow personally but most importantly we can have a bat tomorrow and we can be in a

strong position in this game."

The England captain was all praise for opener Dominic Sibley, who made a dogged 87.

"Yeah it was a fantastic innings today...coming from Sri Lanka, a few question marks about him. Against a high quality attack and reverse swing it was impressive, must take a lot of heart for the rest of the series as well," he added.

Asked if he had made any technical changes to his game of late, he said: "I have looked at few areas of my game and looked at certain trends of how I was getting out certain times in my innings and try to eradicate it, try to improve things and evolve as a player and at the moment it seems to be working nicely and then the challenge can I continue to, can I get better all the time."

He was surprised by his teammates on Thursday night ahead of his 100th Test.

"Yeah...it was very special, last night the guys (got a) surprise for me and said videos from past players, friends and family and Ben (Stokes) in particular stood up and said really kind words, and then to come today and for us start a series in the way we have it, it could not have gone any better..."

"...we got a little blip in end (Sibley getting out), so really hope that we can build on that tomorrow and delighted to have things go our way," he said.

Upset With Sachin Tendulkar's Tweets, Malayalee Netizens Offer Maria Sharapova Apology For 2015 Trolling

Press Trust of India

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Angered over Sachin Tendulkar's tweet on farmers protest, scores of Keralaites flooded tennis star Maria Sharapova's social media pages with messages, apologising for taking on her in 2015 after she had in an interview pleaded ignorance about the cricket icon.

While most messages were apologetic of their previous comments critical of her and lashed out at Tendulkar, a few even invited the Russian to come to God's Own Country to enjoy its scenic splendour and attend the iconic Thrissur Pooram once the coronavirus threat receded.

"Sharapova, you were right about Sachin, that he is not a person of quality that you should know," a social media user commented in Malayalam, as was hundreds of other messages in the south Indian language. The tennis star on Wednesday posted a tweet saying "Anyone else got their years confused?" after her twitter and Facebook page got flooded with comments in Malayalam once again like in 2015.

Sharapova had faced the ire of Malayalees in 2015 following her comment in an interview that she did not know Tendulkar.

But many were back on her wall since Wednesday, apologising for

their "crude behaviour" six years ago, soon after Tendulkar along with several Bollywood and other cricket stars rallied around the government in its pushback against support from several global celebrities to the farmers' protests against new agricultural laws.

Known as God of Cricket among his fans, Tendulkar had posted the message as part of identical tweets on India's unity sent out by celebrities in response to international pop star Rihanna expressing solidarity with the farmers' stir.

The tweet did not go down well with his fans too, with many hitting out at their "God". Over the thousands of comments in Malayalam, all had a similar pattern of apologising to Sharapova for attacking her earlier. "I am sorry, Maria, the legend. We knew Sachin as a player. But we didn't know him as a person. You were right and sorry for commenting bad on your FB post," another user said.

One person offered her shawarma and mouth watering Kuzhimanthi (a type of biryani) as part of peace offering and apologised saying, "I am the sorry", borrowing words from a Malayalam movie, while another said "One truck load of apologies, sister. We didn't have your foresight-edness. Time proved that you were right." NefilNappy, another user, said "We are sorry for cyber bullying".

UEFA Proposes Champions League Expansion With New Format

Agencies

LONDON: UEFA is preparing a significant expansion of the Champions League with a proposal for four additional group-stage rounds and backup slots for elite clubs who fail to qualify through domestic competitions.

Plans to transform the competition from 2024 will be discussed by European domestic leagues on Friday and the 55 national association leaders will be briefed by UEFA on Tuesday.

The overhaul is UEFA's strategy to rebuff plans to launch a largely closed breakaway competition which has been pushed by Barcelona and Real Madrid and maintain qualification through domestic leagues.

UEFA's proposal is to increase the number of group-stage participants from 32 to 36, with each team guaranteed 10 rather than six games, three people familiar with the plans told The Associated Press.

The people spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss plans not publicly disclosed.

England, Spain, Italy and Germany currently have four guaranteed slots in the group stage. But leading teams who don't make the top four of their

leagues could still qualify, with three of the additional group-stage slots lined up for such teams based on their historic record in Europe.

The fourth additional spot could go to France, which currently only has two guaranteed group-stage slots while a third team has to go through qualifying.

The current format of eight groups would also be transformed, with UEFA instead using a variation of the so-called Swiss system.

All 36 teams will be placed into a single league table, with opponents determined based on pre-season ranking positions.

The top eight would qualify automatically for the round of 16 with the next 16 teams potentially contesting a play-off to fill the other slots in the knockout phase. The plans were discussed by Premier League clubs at a virtual meeting on Thursday.

The European Leagues organization could resist the jump from six to 10 games in the group stage because of the struggle to fit in extra games in the congested calendar. But European Leagues chairman Lars-Christer Olsson in December showed a willingness to back the plan.

1097 Cricketers Register For IPL 21 Auction, Most From West Indies

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: As many as 1097 players have registered for the much-awaited IPL auction to be held here on February 18 with most entries coming from the West Indies (56) followed by Australia (42) and South Africa (38).

The player registration deadline closed on Thursday and the list comprises 207 international players including 21 capped Indians.

Twenty seven players will represent the associate nations and 863 uncapped cricketers, including 743 Indians and 68 overseas.

The number of uncapped Indians who have played at least one IPL game stands at 50 and two for overseas uncapped players.

"If every franchise were to have the maximum of 25 players in their squad, 61 players will be taken in the auction (of which up to 22 may be overseas players)," read the IPL statement on Friday.

The auction, scheduled a day after the second Test between India and England, will start at 3pm local time.

Kings XI Punjab go into the auction with the biggest purse available



at with Rs 53.

20 crore, followed by RCB (Rs 35.90 crore), RR (Rs 34.85 crore), CSK (Rs 22.90 crore), MI (Rs 15.35 crore), DC (Rs 12.9 crore) and Rs 10.75 crore each for KKR and SRH.

The 2020 edition was held in the UAE due to the pandemic but the upcoming edition is likely to be played in India.

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

January 20. The other notable names to be released were Chris Morris, Harbhajan Singh and Aaron Finch.

A total of 139 players were retained by the franchises and 57 players were released.

Country-wise breakdown of 283 overseas players who have registered: Afghanistan (30), Australia (42), Bangladesh (5), England (21), Ireland (2), Nepal (8), Netherlands (1), New Zealand (29), Scotland (7), South Africa (38), Sri Lanka (31), UAE (9), USA (2), West Indies (56), Zimbabwe (2).