



Maximum : 15.1°
Minum : 1.2°
Humidity : 84%

SUNSET
Today 06:14 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 07:17 AM



P3 NEWS

SMC TO RETAIN PARKING LOTS
NOT ELICITING GOOD OFFERS

Srinagar Municipality has decided that all the Municipal car parking lots which have not elicited any response in recent times shall....

P7 THINK

BBC VS ZARA MOHAMMED:
AN EXERCISE IN
ISLAMOPHOBIA

The Muslim Council of Britain just elected its first female secretary general - but instead of celebrating this achievement, the BBC's....



P11 SPORTS

LUKMAN ADEFEMI HAT TRICK
GIVES REAL KASHMIR 4-3 VICTORY
OVER DEFIANT NEROCA

Real Kashmir FC's Nigerian export Lukman Adefemi on Saturday scored with his head, his right foot...

Widom
Quote!

Recognizing power
in another does not
diminish your own.

— Joss Whedon

NEWS DIGEST

2 Charged Over Forged
Bank Guarantee

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Police's Crime Branch on Saturday filed a chargesheet against two accused in a seven-year-old case related to issuance of a forged bank guarantee bond for an amount of Rs 1 crore fraudulently to a New Delhi-based businessman, an official said. The chargesheet was filed against Vishal Mahajan of Jammu and Vinay Mittal of Delhi in the passenger tax » [More On P10](#)

J&K Logs 66 New
Corona Cases, 1 Death

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 60 fresh cases of the novel coronavirus on Saturday, taking the tally to 1,25,268, while another death raised the toll to 1,949, officials said. Thirteen of the fresh cases were from the Jammu division and 47 from the Kashmir division of the Union Territory, they said. The officials said Srinagar district recorded a maximum » [More On P10](#)

Heart Attack Kills
Tourist In Pahalgam

SRINAGAR: A middle-aged tourist died of a heart attack at the famous tourist resort Pahalgam in South Kashmir's Anantnag district on Saturday. 56-year-old KM Pradeepan, son of PVK Nair of Cochin, Kerala, fell unconscious at Pahalgam and was rushed to a nearby hospital where doctors declared him brought dead, reports said. The slain was on tour to Kashmir Valley with nine of his family members » [More On P10](#)

Leopard Caught
In Balhama

SRINAGAR: Wildlife officials on Saturday caught a leopard in Balhama area of the city outskirts. A leopard was spotted by locals roaming in residential area of Balhama in the Srinagar outskirts on Saturday morning after which they informed the wildlife officials, reports said. After receiving the news, a team of wildlife officials reached the area and trapped the beast in a net. » [More On P10](#)

3 CISF Men Injured
In Uri Accident

SRINAGAR: At least three CISF personnel sustained injuries when a vehicle they were travelling in, skidded off the road in Uri in Baramulla district on Saturday. Reports said that a vehicle (JK-05 7458) on its way from NHPC-II Chandayan towards Uri when it met with the accident near Salamabad Uri, resulting in injuries to three persons. A senior police officer confirming the incident told » [More On P10](#)

Panchayat Related
Machinery Overhauled In J&K

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: To further streamline the implementation of J&K Panchayati Raj Act and Rules, the Jammu and Kashmir administration on Saturday approved an overhaul of the field administrative machinery supporting Panchayats by rationalizing various categories of existing posts in the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj.

The decision to this effect was taken at a meeting of the administrative council (AC) under the chairmanship of Lt Governor Manoj Sinha here, an official spokesman said.

As a result of the decision, every district would now have

an assistant commissioner panchayat, a dedicated officer to look after the functioning of Panchayats and coordinate their activities, the spokesman said, adding the officer would report to the Chief Executive Officer of the District Development Council, recently constituted in the Union Territory.

He said the reorganization of the panchayats has become necessary keeping in view that the functioning of the department concerned has undergone a sea change after the Panchayat elections in 2018 with subsequent devolution of greater funds and functionaries and decentralization of planning and execution functions right down to » [More On P10](#)

Statehood To J&K At
Appropriate Time: Amit Shah
Says 'No One Will Lose Their Land', Promises 25000 Jobs In 2022

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Home Minister Amit Shah gave an assurance in Lok Sabha on Saturday that the Centre

will grant full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir at an appropriate time and asserted that the government has done more for it since Article 370 was scrapped in » [More On P10](#)

LS Passes
Bill To Merge
J&K Cadre
With AGMUT

A bill to merge the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) cadre of all-India services officers with the Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre was passed by Lok Sabha on Saturday by a voice vote. The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2021 has already been passed by Rajya Sabha. » [More On P10](#)

Polls for DDC Chiefs Held In
2 Kashmir Districts Adjourned
In 3 Jammu Districts

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Elections for posts of chairperson and vice-chairpersons of the District Development Council (DDC) were held in two districts of Kashmir in the final phase on Saturday, while a lack of quorum forced adjournment of polls in three of the four districts in Jammu region.

In the fifth and the last phase of the polls, the chairpersons and vice-chairpersons for the DDCs in Baramulla and Bandipora, both in north Kashmir, were elected on



Saturday, the officials said.

They said that People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) won the election for the post of the chairperson in Bandipora » [More On P10](#)

Govt Panel
To Supervise
Websites Updation

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Saturday constituted a committee headed by Secretary to the Government Information Technology Department to supervise the updation of official websites of various government departments and districts of Union Territory. In an order issued » [More On P10](#)

Absconder Arrested 41 Years After Crime: Police

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Saturday arrested an absconder from central Kashmir's Ganderbal district over four decades after he was charged for theft.

Majeed Tanch, son of Fateh Tanch was arrested by a police team from his house in Anderwan village of Kangan on Saturday in a theft case filed against him 41 years ago,



a police official told Kashmir Observer. Majeed, who is originally from Check Dara Harwan was evading arrest after police slapped charges under section

379 RPC, 6 Forest Act at Police Station, Saddar in 1980, he said.

"He might have stolen any forest-produce and gone absconding to evade his arrest from the last 41 years," said the police official on the condition of anonymity.

When asked why the case took 41 years to crack, he said that every police station has a file of absconding cases that needs to be produced in the court.

"...and it's up to » [More On P10](#)



KO lensman Abid Bhat captures a view of Hokersar wetland which is abuzz after the arrival of migratory birds this winter.

Top Militant Held
In Samba: Police

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: A top militant affiliated with The Resistance Front (TRF), wanted in connection with the killing of three BJP workers and a policeman in south Kashmir last year, was arrested in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said on Saturday.

Zahoor Ahmad Rather alias "Sahil", "Khalid" was hiding in Samba district of Jammu region and was arrested on a specific information by Anantnag police, a senior police official said.

The TRF is considered an offshoot of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant » [More On P10](#)

Choudhary Given Additional
Charge Of Div Com Kashmir

J&K Recalls 2 IAS
Officers, Deputes As
Many Others To Ladakh
Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: The government on Saturday directed Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Shahid Iqbal Choudhary to hold the charge of Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir for a temporary period of six days

According to an order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD) Choudhary will hold additional charge of Div Com Kashmir from February 15 to February 20 as an earned leave



of six days has been sanctioned to Pandurang K. Pole.

Meanwhile, the J&K administration on Saturday recalled two IAS officers from Lakdakh and deputed as many others to the UT. Also, it posted a new deputy » [More On P10](#)

...ONLINE FRAUD

Court Orders 'Necessary
Action' By Cyber Police

SRINAGAR: A local court here has forwarded to Station House Officer Cyber Cell here a complaint for "necessary action" into an alleged scam by "online application".

The complainant (name withheld) has alleged that the online application promised

its investors three percent commission over the principal amount within 24 hours.

Accordingly, the complainant said that he submitted Rs 41,517 during one week but the principal amount was not returned nor any profit given as "assured by » [More On P10](#)

Barring Gulmarg,
Mercury Rises
In Kashmir

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The minimum temperature across Kashmir, except in Gulmarg, improved on Saturday, even as the mercury settled above the freezing point in Srinagar and Kulgam, officials said.

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded a low of 1.2 degrees Celsius last night, up from the previous night's minus 0.6 degrees Celsius, they said.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of minus 2.0 degrees Celsius, a degree up from the previous night, the officials said.

Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 2.3 degrees » [More On P10](#)

...LAWAYPORA 'ENCOUNTER'

Mehbooba 'Barred' From
Visiting Pulwama Teen's Family

KO Photo: Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: PDP president and former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti on Saturday claimed that she was placed under

house arrest ahead of her visit to the family of Athar Mushtaq, one of the three alleged militants killed in an encounter in Parimpora locality here in December last year.

Placed under » [More On P10](#)



To place an advertisement

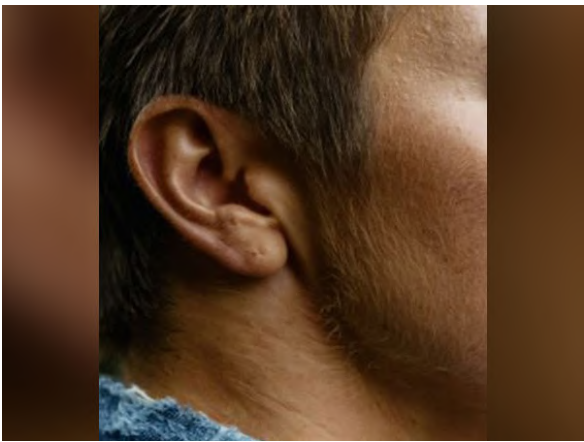
CALL +91-194 2502327

Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)

No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

To establish connection, brain synchronises sound waves: Study

Have you ever imagined how we determine from which direction sounds are coming from? Why human beings don't hear everything twice? Well, this is what our brain has to be praised for. Researchers from the University of Zurich explained how the brain combines the information from both ears to avoid echo while listening. In addition, input from the right ear reaches the left brain hemisphere first, while input from the left ear reaches the right brain hemisphere first. The two hemispheres perform different tasks during speech processing: The left side is responsible for distinguishing phonemes and syllables, whereas the right side recognises the speech prosody and rhythm. Although each hemisphere receives the information at a different time and processes different features of speech, the brain integrates what it hears into a unified speech sound. The exact mechanism behind this integration process was not known until now. In earlier studies, however, Preisig had found indications that measurable oscillations elicited by the brain - known as gamma



waves - played a role.

Now he has managed to demonstrate that the process of integrating what we hear is directly linked to synchronisation by gamma waves. Neurolinguistics from UZH worked on the project alongside researchers from the Netherlands and France. The study, which took place at the Donders Center for Cognitive Neuroimaging in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, involved 28 healthy subjects who had to repeatedly solve a listening task: An ambiguous syllable (a speech sound between ga and da) was played in their right ear while a click containing a fragment of the syllables da

or ga was played unnoticed in the left ear. Depending on what was played in their left ear, the participants heard either ga or da and then had to report what sound they had heard. During the process, the researchers were tracking activity in both hemispheres of the brain using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). During the experiments, the researchers disrupted the natural activity pattern of gamma waves by stimulating both hemispheres of the brain with electrodes attached to the head. This manipulation affected participants' ability to correctly identify the syllable they heard.

The fMRI analysis showed that there were also changes in the activity of the neural connections between the right and the left brain hemispheres: The strength of the connection changed depending on whether the rhythm of the gamma waves was influenced by electric stimulation in the two brain hemispheres synchronously or asynchronously. This disruption also impaired the integration process. Thus, synchronisation of the gamma waves seems to serve to balance the different inputs from the two hemispheres of the brain, providing a unified auditory impression. "Our results suggest that gamma wave-mediated synchronisation between different brain areas is a fundamental mechanism for neural integration," said Preisig. "Moreover, this research shows for the first time, using human hearing as an example, that the connection between the two hemispheres of the brain can be successfully modulated by electric stimulation," adds Alexis Hervais-Adelman, head of neurolinguistics at the UZH Department of Psychology, who was also involved in the study.

Public Notice

I have applied for the issuance of 2nd Class Pass discharge certificate . If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Govt Upper Primary School Herbagh Patal Bagh Pampore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mudasir Ambir
S/o Ambir Wani
R/o Patal Bagh Pampore FYP

اعلانت نامہ تحصیلدار اہت ناگ باا جلاس زیر اہمیت صاحب۔ درخواست نمائند: محمد یوسف اللہ محمد عبداللہ اکتا آزاد پورہ اپنی ذمہ داری ناگ تحصیل و ضلع اہت ناگ بنرض حصول یگل بیر اڈ پینڈی سرٹیفکٹ

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست بنرض حصول یگل بیر اڈ پینڈی سرٹیفکٹ اجرا کرنے میں کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہوگا تو ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر دفتر بازہ میں پیش کریں بعد گزرنے معیا کو عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ تجریہ الصدر نائب تحصیلدار اہت ناگ

MJA

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معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست بنرض حصول یگل بیر اڈ پینڈی سرٹیفکٹ اجرا کرنے میں کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہوگا تو ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر دفتر بازہ میں پیش کریں بعد گزرنے معیا کو عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ تجریہ الصدر نائب تحصیلدار اہت ناگ

MJA

Ensuring Gut Integrity May Improve Results In Blood Cancer: Study

Agencies

A new study led by cancer researchers of Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) found that a solitary strain of Bacteroides fragilis altogether diminished graft-versus-host disease (GVHD) by ensuring gut integrity. The findings reported in JCI Insight shows that even though bone marrow transplant can be a lifesaving procedure for patients with blood cancers; however, GVHD is a potentially fatal side effect of transplantation, and it has limited treatment options. This proof-of-concept study demonstrates that better treatment options may be on the horizon for patients with GVHD. Xue-Zhong Yu, M.D., associate director of Basic Science at Hollings Cancer Center, and lead author Hanief Sofi, Ph.D., realized that protecting the health of the gastrointestinal tract is a good target for reducing severe GVHD. "If we can figure out how to keep a patient's intestinal tissue healthy before and after bone marrow transplant,

then the patient's outcome will be much better. We know that restoring the microbiota diversity in the gut is an effective solution, but that comes with many challenges," said Yu. Patients with blood cancers, such as leukemia, must undergo radiation and chemotherapy before they can get their new cancer-free immune system through bone marrow transplantation. The balance between the immune system and intestinal microbiota, communities of microorganisms that live in the gut, is especially important for proper intestinal health. Unfortunately, the radiation and chemotherapy radically throw off this balance, and the diversity of the microbiota is reduced 100- or even 1,000-fold. This leads to a condition called "leaky gut." Clinical studies have shown that patients who recover microbiota diversity faster have better outcomes and less severe GVHD. Reduced microbiota diversity is associated with more severe GVHD.

((Government of Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir)) OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MUFFASIL (R&B) DIVISION BUDGAM NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS (Modified as per Circular No. A/Misc(2018)-III-895/J Dt.22-12-2020 (Issued by Finance Department)).

NIT No. 200/e-tendering /MDB/2020-21/12472-92 DATED. 12-02-2021

For and on behalf of the President, of India, e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K UT Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/UT/Central Government Departments for the following works:-

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (In Rupees)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Time of Completion (calendar days)	Class of Contract	Major Head of Account
1	Repairs/Renovation of PHC at Narbal	3.91 Lacs	200/-	30 days	DEE	2210 Medical
2	(Balance work) for Providing and fixing of Ply wood ceiling including window shutters for PHC Building at Wadwan Budgam	1.00 Lacs	200/-	15 days	DEE	Medical
3	Improvements/Upgradation of Chewdarah Bundgam road at Meeripora - A by way of GSB course in patches/stretchers and P/I of WBMG - 110 full	4.30 Lacs	200/-	20 days	DEE	Back to Village

Position of Funds:- As per Circular No. 1/2020 dated 12.02.2021.

Position of Funds:- Available.

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	12.02.2021 10.00 AM
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	12.02.2021 10:00 4.00 P.M.
3.	Bid submission Start Date	12.02.2021 from 4.00 P.M.
4.	Bid Submission End Date	18.02.2021 upto 4.00 P.M.
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	19.02.2021 at 11:00 AM in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Muffasil (R&B) Division Budgam

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

Note :-The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploading softcopy any short fall found in the soft copy the tender shall be rejected . Note: As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir CivilSectariat Finance department vide No.OM No.A/24(2017)-651 dtd.07-06-2018 which reads as under:-

a) Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared its Lowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.

b) The Cost of tenders should be collected by introducing E-challan/ or simply uploading a copy of necessary Treasury Challan/Receipt.

c) Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/ in favour of Executive Engineer Muffasil (R&B) Division Budgam (tender inviting authority).

1. All Bidders has to submit Bid Security Declaration Form instead of Earnest money deposit (EMD) as per the circular of Finance Department (Bid Security Declaration form is as per Annexure "A" below).

2. The 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR within 02 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work.

3. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer Muffasil (R&B) Division Budgam (tender receiving authority).

3. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.

DIPK-13043/20

No: 12472-92.

DATED: 12.02.2021.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Muffasil (R&B) Division Budgam

Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Directorate of Rakhs and Farms Department, Lalmandi Srinagar

Notice Regarding Non-cultivation of Government Rakh Land (Cultivable area) - Eviction of Non-Cultivators (Kamas) from the Government rakh land there.

The Government Rakh land under the possession of Rakhs and Farms Department which is spread over in seven Districts of the Valley, divided in nine Circles. A Geographical area of about 39200 Kanals is cultivable land which has been allotted by the Government in favour of the needy people from the inception of the Department for cultivation purposes in order to improve the socio economic conditions of the common masses and to meet out the acute food shortage in the state.

Reports has been received from the field Agency of this department that some Kamas have left the Government cultivable rakh land idle for past some years without any reason, avoiding the conditions laid down in the pat-tanamas on the basis Government Rakh land has been allotted by the Government to them and putting the Government exchequer in loss by non cultivation of the Government Rakh land.

By medium of this notice the Kamas are warned not to keep the Government cultivable land idle and Government dues (1/4th) crop share unauthorisedly retained may be cleared at an earliest. In case of non-cultivation of the Government Rakh land/ non-payment of outstanding dues they shall be evicted from the Kama-ship.

DIPK-13050/20

Rakhs and Farms department,
Lalmandi Srinagar.

Issued through: Information & Publications
Directorate of Agriculture Kashmir Lalmandi, Srinagar

F. No NESTS/HR/Deputation/10/2020-21 NATIONAL EDUCATION SOCIETY FOR TRIBAL STUDENTS Ministry of Tribal Affairs Jeevan Tara building, Parliament street New Delhi -110001 CORRIGENDUM

With reference to the advertisement Number-1 Dated 04.01.2021 for Direct recruitment of various officials for NESTS (National Education Society For Tribal Students), Ministry Of Tribal Affairs, the following amendment is made w.r.t Upper Age Limit as mentioned in the point No.4 (Details of vacancies) for the following Posts:-(Post code 01/7, 02/7, 05/7 & 06/7). Other terms and conditions will remain the same.

Sl. No.	Post Code	Position	Upper Age Limit As on 31.12.2020 (Published in the Advertisement dated- 04.01.2021)	Amended Upper Age Limit As on 31.12.2020
1.	01/7	Assistant Commissioner (Finance)	40	45
2.	02/7	Assistant Commissioner (Administrative)	40	45
3.	05/7	Stenographer Grade - II	30	27
4.	06/7	Office Assistant	27	30

Note: -

- The application registration is being reopened for 15 days and the link will be made available/Live from 16/02/2021 (10:00 hrs.) up to 02/03/2021 (23:59 hrs.) for all the seven (07) posts.
- Eligible Candidates may refer to the detailed advertisement available in "What's New" and "Tenders, Vacancies & Advertisement" Section of the website (www.tribal.mca.in) and submit their applications through the link thereof. No other means/mode of submission of applications will be accepted.
- Fees of the Candidates who have applied for the post of Stenographer Grade - II and whose age is more than 27 without any relaxations as on 31.12.2020 shall be refunded and will be notified on their registered E-Mail/Mobile No. Eligible candidates as per advertisement, who have already applied need not to apply again.

Sd/- (Vinod Pati)
Assistant Commissioner,
NESTS

DAVP/ 43101/11/0017/2021

The Jammu And Kashmir State Board Of School Education Branch Office, Magam

NOTICE

The candidate whose photograph is given is claiming to have lost his/her marks card/s with the following particulars issued by the J&K State Board Of School Education:-
Name Saqlain Ahmad Wani
S/o Ghulam Mohammad Wani
R/o Malwah



Details Of Marks Certificate Lost
Secondary School Examination (10th class)
Roll No 2425457 year and Session Bi-Annual 2016
The said candidate has applied for issuance of duplicate marks certificate/s in this office. Before the same is processed and issued to the candidate, any body having any objection in this regard may file the same in the Board Branch Office Magam within Seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice, Besides the original marks card be treated as cancelled.
Sd/- Asstt. Secretary,
Br. Office, Magam
bmg

Public Notice

My father's name has been wrongly spelled in school records as Ab. Hamid Dar While the correct spelling is Abdul Hamid Dar which needs immediate correction . If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the AL. Noor Model School Dobiwan Kunzer Tangmarg. After given time no objection shall be accepted.
Farhat Jan D/o Abdul Hamid Dar
R/o Peth Makhama Budgam
bmg

Public Notice

My father's name has been wrongly spelled in school records as Ab. Hamid Dar While the correct spelling is Abdul Hamid Dar which needs immediate correction . If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the AL. Noor Model School Dobiwan Kunzer Tangmarg. After given time no objection shall be accepted.
Humaira Hameid D/o Abdul Hamid Dar
R/o Peth Makhama Budgam
bmg

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR NOTICE



Where as an application for transfer of ownership has been received from Mohammad Hussain Sheikh S/o Mohammad Ismail Sheikh R/o Sheikh Colony Lal Bazar Srinagar (Transferor) of Ignis bearing registration No. JK01-AK-4691 chasis No: 245140 Engine No: 4594599 Model 2019 in favour of Shahid Rashi S/o Abdul Rashid Reshi R/o Brane Srinagar (Transferee). Now, therefore, it is notified for the information of the general, public that representation/ Objection, if any in connection with proposed transfer will be received within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer to the address of undersigned.
No, representation/ objection shall be considered unless it is made writing it is made in the aforesaid period.

NOJK-RTOK 6488
Dated: 12/02/2021
fko

Sd/-
Regional Transport
Office, Kashmir

Public Notice

I want to change my name in my birth certificate from Umer Hamid Laway To Hafiz Hamid Laway . If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection may contact Municipal Committee Pampore within a week after that no objection shall be entertained.

Hafiz Hamdi Laway
S/o Ab Hamdi Laway
R/o Frestabal Pampore

FYP

White House Says No Call Planned To Saudi Arabia



Agencies

US President Joe Biden has no plans to call the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS), the White House said. Biden said he intends to make human right a key issue in US-Saudi relations, which he pledged during the 2020 election campaign. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said on Friday no call was planned to the crown prince. "Well, obviously there's a review of our policy as it relates to Saudi Arabia. There's not a call planned that I'm aware of," she said in the daily news briefing. Psaki previously side-stepped a question on whether the administration would impose sanctions on Saudi Arabia for the 2018 murder of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi operatives in the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul. Biden earlier this month unveiled a first step in taking a firmer line with the kingdom, announcing an end to US support for offensive operations by the Saudi-led military coalition fighting the Iranian-aligned Houthi movement in Yemen. Calling Khashoggi's death a "horrific crime" earlier this

month, Psaki reiterated the administration's intention to de-classify a US intelligence report on the murder, which the CIA assessed was approved – and possibly ordered – by MBS. The prince denied ordering the murder. Signs are emerging Saudi Arabia is trying to improve its human rights record. Prominent women's rights activist Loujain al-Hathloul was released this week from a Saudi prison after nearly three years behind bars. Rights groups and her family say she was subjected in prison to electric shocks, waterboarding, flogging and sexual assault – accusations Saudi Arabia denies. Al-Hathloul, who pushed to end a ban on women driving in Saudi Arabia, was imprisoned in 2018 and sentenced by a court in December to an almost six-year jail term on terrorism-related charges, in a case that drew international condemnation. Held for 1,001 days, with stints in pre-trial detention and solitary confinement, she was found guilty on charges including agitating for change, pursuing a foreign agenda, and using the internet to harm public order. Although released, al-Hathloul will remain under strict conditions including a five-year travel ban and three years of probation.

UN Welcomes US Revocation Of Yemen's Houthis As Terrorists



Agencies

The United States announced on Friday it was revoking the designation of Yemen's Houthi rebels as a terrorist group effective February 16, a reversal by the Biden administration which was welcomed by the United Nations and humanitarian groups who feared former president Donald Trump's actions would impede aid deliveries to the conflict-torn country facing the world's worst humanitarian crisis. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called President Joe Biden's decision to rescind the designation "a recognition of the dire humanitarian situation in Yemen". He said the new US administration listened to warnings from the United Nations, humanitarian groups, bipartisan members of Congress and others "that the designations could have a devastating impact on Yemen's access to basic commodities like food and fuel". Yemen imports 90 per cent of its food, nearly all purchased through commercial channels, and UN human-

itarian chief Mark Lowcock warned last month that the US designation of the Houthis already had companies pulling back from dealing with the Yemenis and would likely lead to "a large-scale famine on a scale that we have not seen for nearly 40 years". Blinken's announcement followed a phone conversation on Thursday with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, where Yemen was one of the issues they discussed. UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric on Friday called the US action "extremely positive". "We hope that helps build momentum for a political solution to the conflict in Yemen," Dujarric said. "I think the reversal of the designation, the naming of the [US] special envoy [for Yemen], and the clear, clear language from the top of the administration, from president Biden himself, expressing his strong support for the UN-led mediation process [...] are very, very welcome indeed." In 2014, the rebel Houthis overran the capital, Sanaa, and much of Yemen's north, driving the government into exile. A US-backed, Saudi-led coalition intervened the following year to try and restore the internationally recognised government, but years of UN efforts to get both sides to agree to a ceasefire and start peace negotiations have not succeeded. The conflict has been disastrous for Yemen, the Arab world's poorest country, killing more than 112,000 people, creating a humanitarian disaster, and wrecking infrastructure from roads and hospitals to water and electricity networks.



WHO Chief Warns Of Complacency As Global Coronavirus Cases Drop

Agencies

GENEVA: The head of the World Health Organization said Friday that the drop in confirmed COVID-19 infections around the world was encouraging, but cautioned against relaxing restrictions that have helped curb the spread of the coronavirus. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the number of reported infections globally has declined for the fourth week in a row, and the number of deaths also fell for the second consecutive week. "These declines appear to be due to countries implementing public health measures more stringently," Tedros said. "We should all be encouraged, but complacency is as dangerous as the virus itself." "Now is not the time for any country to relax measures or for any individual to let down their guard," he added. "Every life that is lost now is all the more tragic as vaccines are beginning to be rolled out." While the figures reported by countries to the WHO for

the week ending Feb. 8 are still incomplete, the global body said so far about 1.9 million newly confirmed cases were registered worldwide, down from more than 3.2 million the previous week. Tedros said members of a WHO expert mission who recently visited China to investigate the possible source of the outbreak would publish a summary of their findings next week. Chinese scientists and the WHO's team of international researchers said this week that the coronavirus most likely first appeared in humans after jumping from an animal, and an alternate theory that the virus leaked from a Chinese lab was unlikely. Peter Ben Embarek, the leader of the WHO mission, said Friday the labs in Wuhan that his team visited stated they had not been working with the virus that causes COVID-19, or had it in their collections before the outbreak. But he said it was possible the virus could still be present in samples that haven't yet been analyzed. He said the team had gained a much better insight into the

early stages of the outbreak and concluded there was no large cluster of the disease in Wuhan or elsewhere around the city in the months prior to the first cases in December 2019. But he added that scientists are still "far away from understanding the origin and identifying animal species and, or the pathways from which the virus could have entered the human in December." Tedros, the WHO's director-general, said that the Geneva-based body had this week held its first meeting to help define and diagnose what he called post-COVID condition, also known as long COVID. "This illness affects patients with both severe and mild COVID-19," he said. "Part of the challenge is that patients with long COVID can have a range of different symptoms that can be persistent or can come and go." "Given the scale of the pandemic, we expect many people to be affected by post COVID-19 condition," said Tedros. "Of course, the best way to prevent long COVID is to prevent COVID-19 in the first place."

"All Hypotheses Remain Open" On Covid Origins: WHO Chief

Agencies

GENEVA: The head of the World Health Organization said Friday that all hypotheses on the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic remained on the table, following an investigation mission in China. The WHO's mission to Wuhan, where the first cases were identified, failed to identify the source of the virus but poured cold water on the theory that it leaked from the city's virology laboratory. At a press conference in Geneva alongside mission head Peter Ben Embarek, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the team had conducted a "very important scientific exercise in very difficult circumstances". "Some questions have been raised as to whether some hypotheses have been discarded. Having spoken with some members of the team, I wish to confirm that all hypotheses remain open and require further



analysis and studies. "Some of that work may lie outside the remit and scope of this mission. We have always said that this mission would not find all the answers, but it has added important information that takes us closer to understanding the origins of the virus. "The mission achieved a better understanding of the early days of the pandemic, and identified areas for further analysis and research. And we will continue working to get the information we need to answer the questions

that still need to be answered." At a press conference in Wuhan on Tuesday, Ben Embarek quashed the theory that a leak from a virology lab in Wuhan could have caused the pandemic. "The laboratory incident hypothesis is extremely unlikely," he said. It "is not in the hypotheses that we will suggest for future studies." Tedros said he hoped a summary report from the mission would be published next week, with the full final report to follow in the coming weeks.

Conflict-Scarred Rohingyas On Edge With Return Of The Generals



Agencies

Myanmar's stateless, conflict-scarred Rohingya community are on edge with the return of military rule, fearing further violence in a restive part of the country where others have shown support for the new regime. Much of the long-persecuted Muslim minority have spent years in cramped displacement camps, with no freedom of movement or access to health-care, living in what rights groups call "apartheid" conditions. They are still reeling from a 2017 military crackdown that razed entire villages and sent around 750,000 Rohingya fleeing across the border into Bangladesh carrying accounts of rape and extrajudicial killings. "Under a democratic government, we had a little hope we could go back to our old home," said a 27-year-old, who asked not to be named, from a camp near the city of Sittwe. "But now it is certain we will not be able to return." Myanmar and its generals are on trial in a UN court for charges of genocide from the 2017 violence in northern Rakhine state, where the majority of the country's Rohingya population lived before their exodus. Army chief Min Aung Hlaing, who now heads the country's new junta, repeatedly claimed the crackdown was necessary to root out insurgents in northern Rakhine state. "There is a real risk that (this regime) can lead to new violence in Rakhine," said Tun Khin,

president of the Burma Rohingya Organisation UK lobby group. Shortly after seizing power, the junta promised to abide by plans to repatriate the refugees from Bangladesh -- a scheme that has been in limbo for years. But "no one believes a word they say," Tun Khin said. Aung San Suu Kyi, the civilian leader ousted and detained by the generals last week, had travelled to The Hague to defend them from genocide charges while in office. But across the border in Bangladesh, Rohingya refugees have sent messages of support to anti-coup protesters calling for her return. Some have posted photos of themselves on social media while flashing the three-finger salute that has come to signify opposition to army rule. "This time will be different" Rakhine state, home to both the Rohingya and a largely Buddhist ethnic Rakhine majority, has been a tinderbox of conflict for decades. In recent years the military has battled the Arakan Army, which is fighting for more autonomy for the state's ethnic Rakhine population. But days after its coup, the junta ended a 19-month internet shutdown and reaffirmed a commitment to a ceasefire with the militant group. The regime also announced a member of a local Rakhine nationalist party would be joining its cabinet. It released from prison former party leader Aye Maung -- jailed by Suu Kyi's government in 2019 over a speech the powerful orator gave in Rakhine state a day before deadly riots -- as part of a mass amnesty.

Copyright Spat: Google To Pay \$76M To French News Publishers

Alphabet Inc's Google has agreed to pay \$76m over three years to a group of French news publishers to end a more than year-long copyright spat, documents seen by Reuters news agency show, a deal one news publishers' lobby deemed unfair. The two documents, seen by Reuters and disclosed publicly for the first time, include a framework agreement that stipulates Google is ready to pay \$22m annually in total to a group of 121 national and local French news publications after signing individual licensing agreements with each of them. The second document is a settlement agreement under which Google agrees to pay \$10m to the same group of publishers in exchange for their commitment to end all present and future potential litigation tied to copyright claims over the duration of the three-year agreement. Google declined to comment. The tech firm and the publishers announced that they had reached an agreement last month, but financial terms were not disclosed. "These opaque agreements don't ensure the fair treatment of all news



publishers, since the calculation formula isn't made public," the union for independent online news publishers SPILL said earlier this week. It said it regretted that the profession had not offered a united front in the talks with Google. "Google took advantage of our divisions to advance its interests," it said. APIC, the lobby group that signed the deal with Google, was not immediately available for comment. In order to receive a share of the \$22m that will be split among the publishers, each organisation will be obliged to sign an individual licensing agreement with Google. The fees range from \$1.3m for France's reference daily Le Monde at the top of the list to \$13,741 for local publisher La Voix de la Haute-Marne, documents show. The document did not specify how these amounts are calculated.

NEWS MAKERS

200 Years After Napoleon Defeat, Russia And France Bury Their Dead



The remains of French and Russian soldiers who died during Napoleon's catastrophic retreat from Moscow in 1812 were laid to rest on Saturday in a rare moment of unity between the two countries. Officials and descendants of 19th-century Russian and French military leaders gathered for a windswept ceremony in the western town of Vyazma to re-bury the remains of 126 people killed in one of the bloodiest battles of Napoleon's Russian campaign. The snow fell and a military band played in temperatures of -15°C as uniformed pall-bearers carried eight flag-draped caskets at a cemetery in Vyazma, a town more than 200 kilometres west of Moscow. The caskets containing the remains of 120 soldiers, three women and three teenagers were later put into the snow-covered ground to the sounds of a gun salute. The earth had frozen, and the coffins were left in the ground covered by a white canvas. "As generations pass, death and time reconcile everyone," Yulia Khitrova, a descendant of Russian field marshal Mikhail Kutuzov considered a national hero for repelling Napoleon, said at the ceremony. Prince Joachim Murat, a descendant of one of Napoleon's most celebrated marshals, was also in attendance along with dozens of re-enactors in period uniforms. The interment took place as France marks the bicentenary of the military leader's death this year. The remains were discovered in a mass grave by French and Russian archaeologists in 2019. The dig was led by Pierre Malinowski, the Kremlin-connected head of the Foundation for the Development of Russian-French Historic Initiatives. The three women are believed to be so-called "vivandieres," who provided first aid and kept canteens in the French army, while the three adolescents are believed to have been drummers. All are thought to have fallen during the Battle of Vyazma on November 3, 1812 at the beginning of the French army's retreat from Moscow and before the horrific crossing of the Berezina River. The ceremony marked a rare moment of unity between Russia and Europe at a time of heightened tensions over a litany of issues including the Kremlin's increasingly harsh crackdown on the opposition. "Sign of reconciliation" "Direct descendants of the main players in the conflict are meeting here together in a sign of reconciliation to commemorate the Russian and French soldiers that their ancestors commanded more than 200 years ago," Malinowski told AFP ahead of the re-burial. The site was first discovered during construction work and was initially believed to be one of the many World War II mass graves that dot western Russia.

Britain's Karim Khan Elected International Criminal Court Prosecutor

Parties to the International Criminal Court (ICC) on Friday elected Britain's Karim Khan as the new prosecutor for a nine-year term starting on June 16. Khan won a secret ballot against three other candidates to replace lead prosecutor Fatou Bensouda. The 123-member Hague-based court, which began work nearly 20 years ago, handles war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and crimes of aggression. British barrister Karim is best known for heading the United Nations' special investigative team looking into Islamic State crimes in Iraq. In his 27-year law career Khan, who is also Queens Counsel, has worked for almost every international criminal tribunal in roles in prosecution, defence and as counsel for victims. At the ICC Khan is best known for being a lead defence counsel who has worked on cases from Kenya, Sudan, and Libya. There was intense political jostling for the top ICC job at a time of heightened scrutiny of the prosecutor's office.

UN Employee Announces Candidacy For Top Post

An Indian-origin employee at the UN has announced her candidacy to be its next Secretary-General, the first person to throw her hat in the ring against incumbent Antonio Guterres, who is seeking a second five-year term beginning January 2022 as chief of the world organisation. Arora Akanksha, 34, working as an audit coordinator for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), said she will run for the post of the world's top diplomat and launched her campaign #AroraForSG this month. "People in my position aren't supposed to stand up to the ones in charge. We are supposed to wait our turn, hop on the hamster wheel, go to work, keep our heads down and accept that the world is the way it is," Akanksha said in a two and half minute campaign video posted online. The video shows Akanksha walking inside the sprawling UN headquarters, as her voiceover says that people who have come before her have failed to hold the UN accountable.

Mission Youth Society Approved To Harness Demographic Dividend

Observer News Service

JAMMU: With an aim to optimally utilize the demographic dividend of Jammu and Kashmir, the Administrative Council (AC), which met here today under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, approved the proposal to register the Mission Youth as a Society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. This will facilitate establishment of required organizational and administrative structure for proactive outreach and purposeful engagement of the youth of the Union Territory.

The decision is aimed at providing a vibrant medium for youth engagement & empowerment to transform them into ambassadors of peace, prosperity, and development through a sieve of systematic interventions and positive beneficence across the domains of livelihood generation, education/skill development, psycho-social/career counselling, financial assistance, social recognition, sports, and recreation.

To enhance skill and employability of the youth, the Mission has partnered with reputed in-

stitutions/organizations of the country including BSE Institute, ICICI Foundation and Ashok Leyland. It will also roll-out skill development courses in various upcoming high employability sectors like banking, financial services, insurance, among others. Besides, two Centres of Excellence in the Automobile sector, one each in Kashmir and Jammu region will be shortly started.

More significantly, to shift the fulcrum of developmental policy towards youth, super-specialized district youth centres shall be established across all the districts of Jammu & Kashmir. These centres are primarily aimed to present a safe, appealing environment with manifestations of hope, security and aspirations of the youth and are planned to offer a first of kind initiative in an environment covering four fundamental contours of youth engagement & empowerment viz. Inform, Inspire, Interact & Innovate.

Mission Youth envisions engaging with 80% of J&K's youth population over the next five years and transforming them into a propelling force for socio-economic development of Jammu & Kashmir.

Admin Flouted All Norms In Budgam DDC Elections: Omar



Srinagar- The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Vice President Mr. Omar Abdullah on Saturday rued the unfair mode of selection of DDC Chairman Budgam, terming the entire exercise a clear violation of law and rules.

Interacting with a delegation of party's eight DDC Members from District Budgam who had called on him at his residence in Srinagar, Party Vice President rued the active involvement of the district Administration which he said issued blatant threats about the power to detain people for two years.

"Flawing all norms the administration is playing partisan to curry favor with particular DDC members; the mode and manner in which the election of DDC Chairman was conducted is a point in case. The manner in which the normal course of election of DDC Chairman at Badgam was fiddled is an indictment of the aversion the ruling dispensation nurtures for due democratic values. What is more alarming is the manner in which the J&K administration benefits a particular candidate.

The entire exercise has already been brought to light by nine DDC members of Budgam district with the media the other day. Out of the nine members 8 belong to NC and one to PAGD. Such inequitable occurrences will discredit the entire election process and will prove counterproductive," he said adding, "The mechanism framed for the selection of DDC chairman, it goes without saying, is to facilitate horse-trading and defec-

tions." He further stated that the party would challenge the undemocratic action in the court of law. "The party MPs raised the issue in the lower house of the parliament; in addition to that the dubious mode and manner in which the elections for DDC chairman were held at Budgam was also brought to the notice of the J&K CEC KK Sharma. The party has also brought the issue in public domain through the media. We will take a legal recourse as well and challenge the undemocratic exercise in the court of law," he said.

Later Party's district president Anantnag Altaf Wani accompanied by newly elected DDC chairman Anantnag Mohammad Yousuf Gorsi called on party President Dr Farooq Abdullah and vice president Omar Abdullah at Gupkar, Srinagar. They also met party General Secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar at Nawa e Subah.

Cross-Voting By PAGD Helps Safeena Baig To Win Post Of Chairperson

PC Walks Away With Post Of Vice-Chairperson



Agencies

SRINAGAR: In a major embarrassment to the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), its district development council (DDC) members in north Kashmir's politically-significant Baramulla district on Saturday cross voted against its own candidate, helping Safeena Baig to win.

Safeena Baig, an independent candidate backed by Peoples Conference and others, won the election for the post of chairperson of district development council (DDC)

Baramulla while Sonullah Parrey of PC bagged the position of deputy chairperson.

Both the camps had support of seven members each, which they also publicly demonstrated on February 8 when election was adjourned due to lack of quorum after PAGD members abstained.

While three members of PC, two from Apni Party and Muzaffar Dar (an independent candidate) were supporting Safeena, PAGD comprised of two members each from NC, PDP, Congress and Irfan Hafeez Lone (an independent candidate)

An official said that Safeena Baig secured 10 votes while her rival Qurat-ul-Bashir of PDP managed to get only four votes. For the post of vice-chairperson, PC's Sonullah Parray and Irfan Hafiz Lone got seven votes each.

"The winner for the VC post was declared through a draw of lots," he said. This means three members who voted for Safina did not vote for PC candidate during the election for VC post. "Apni Party voted against us during the election for the VC post," a People's Conference leader said.

--With inputs from KNO

PAGD Takes Top DDC Posts In Bandipora

BANDIPORA: People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), a conglomerate of different political parties in Kashmir on Saturday bagged the chairperson and vice-chairperson posts of the District Development Council (DDC) Bandipora in North Kashmir.

Official sources said that National Conference's Abdul Gani Bhat was elected as chairperson while PDP's Kousar Shafeeq was elected as Vice-Chairperson.

Abdul Gani Bhat of NC became victorious after bagging a total of seven votes against his nearest rival Firdousa Akhter of Apni Party.

Similarly, Kousar Shafeeq of PDP became the vice chairperson of DDC Bandipora after bagging eight votes against his nearest rival Tahir Qadri, who was contesting the elections as

an independent candidate.

Pertinently, 13 DDC members including five from NC, three of PDP, two each from Apni Party and Independent, and one each from Congress and BJP participated in the election process and the exercise remained peaceful. Moreover, ECI had withheld the vote count on Hajin-A DDC constituency last year and it remained undecided since then.

High Drama In Rajouri Forces Adjournment Of Election

SRINAGAR: A high pitched drama triggered by internal rebellion within National Conference and fears of cross voting by Congress led to postponement of DDC Chairman's election in district Rajouri.

Official sources said that the election process which began at 11:30 lacked quorum even

as PAGD had nine members on record. Only four of the National Conference, three of Congress and one from PDP turned. The BJP and Apni Party had abstained.

The fifth NC candidate, Khalid Choudhary, who stayed away for one and half hour made a dramatic entry at 1 PM raising

the hopes for a smooth election.

However, upon arrival he said he can mark his entry only if the candidature is changed to him and the official NC candidate Naseem Liaqat is made to withdraw. This caused a stalemate leading to deferment of elections even as the meeting remained short of quorum.

Govt Notifies ANTF Srinagar, Jammu As Police Stations For NDPS Cases

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The government has notified Anti Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) for Jammu and Srinagar to be the Police Stations having jurisdiction within their respective divisions for the purposes of investigation of offences under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS) and any other related activities in J&K.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (s) of section 2 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, the Government hereby declares the office of Anti Narcotics Task Force (ANTF),

Jammu and Anti Narcotics Task Force (ANTF), Srinagar to be the Police Stations having jurisdiction within their respective divisions for the purposes of investigation of offences under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS) and any other laws, pertaining to investigation of offences relating to and emerging from Narcotic and Psychotropic Drug related activities," reads the notification issued by the Home department.

"The Deputy Superintendents(s) of Police, posted in these offices shall be the Station House Officer (SHO) of their respective Police Stations," the notification adds.

BANIHAL CONVOY ATTACK CASE

NIA Files Supplementary Charge Against Hizb's Naveed Babu

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Saturday filed a supplementary chargesheet against arrested Hizbul Mujahideen commander Naveed Babu before the special NIA court Jammu.

In a statement, the NIA said that today (13.02.2021), NIA filed Supplementary chargesheet against Hizbul Mujahideen militant Naveed Mushtaq Shah alias Naveed Babu@ Babur Azam in the Special NIA Court, Jammu under sections 120B, 121, 121A, 122, 307 of RPC, section 3 of Explosive Substances Act, section 4 of Jammu and Kashmir Public Property (Prevention of Damage) Act and sections 16,18,20,23,38 & 39 of UA(P) Act.

"The case relates to an attack on the CRPF Convoy at Tethar, Banihal, District Ramban J&K by a militant who had exploded an explosive laden Santro car on 30.03.2019 with the intention of killing security personnel and waging war against the Government of India. In this regard, a case FIR No. 39/2019 dated 30.03.2019 was registered at PS Banihal, District Ramban. NIA re-registered the case as RC-03/2019/NIA/JMU dated 15.04.2019 and took over the investigation of the case," the statement said.

It said that the NIA had earlier filed charge-sheet against six Hizbul-Mujahideen militants for their role in this attack.

"Accused Naveed Mushtaq Shah alias Naveed Babu is an ex-constable of J&K Police. He had decamped with arms and ammunition in 2017, when he was posted as a guard in FCI, Budgam. After deserting the force he had joined the militant group Hizbul-Mujahideen and became an active militant," the statement said.

"Investigation has established that accused Naveed Mushtaq Shah was actively involved in the planning and execution of the attack on the CRPF convoy in Banihal along with other militants Riyaz Ahmed Naikoo, Rayees Ahmed Khan and Dr. Saifullah Mir who were subsequently killed in encounters with Security Forces.

The deceased militants Sahil Abdullah Bhat, Adil Bashir Sheikh and Zubair Ahmed Wani were actively involved in preparation of the explosives which went into the making of the IED.

Charges have been abated against the deceased terrorists involved in the conspiracy." The NIA statement said that charges have been framed by the Hon'ble Special NIA Court, against the six accused chargesheeted earlier.

CUK VC Interacts With Class Representatives

GANDERBAL: Central University of Kashmir (CUK) Vice Chancellor, Prof. Mehraj ud Din Mir, along with senior academic and administrative functionaries of the varsity held a detailed interaction with the Class Representatives (CRs) of various departments at Green Campus of the varsity here on Saturday.

Addressing the gathering, Prof. Mehraj ud Din Mir, said the teaching-learning process undertaken by the faculty members (work from home) during the harsh winter conditions in Kashmir, have been effective and the students have been suc-

cessful in completing some portion of their syllabi. "We have to move ahead despite the trying times due to Covid-19 pandemic", he said and complimented the faculty members for taking regular online classes and ensuring participation of the students during the lockdown period. He also lauded the efforts of the administrative staff in providing the much needed support to the faculty and students. Prof. Mehraj ud Din Mir listened to queries and grievances of the students and assured them that their genuine demands would be fulfilled.

MISSION DIRECTOR NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION, J&K

Jammu Office: Regional Institute of Health & Family Welfare, Nagrota, Jammu.

Fax: 0191-2674114; Telephone: 2674244. Pin: 181221

Kashmir Office: Block-A, Ground Floor, Old Secretariat, Srinagar. Pin: 190001

e-mail: mdnhmjkg@gmail.com

NHM Help Line for Jammu Division 18001800104: Kashmir Division 18001800102

NOTICE

Applications received in response to Advertisement No. SHS/NHM/J&K/CPHC/AD/1799- 1806 dated 21-12-2020 were scrutinized for eligibility as per the criteria laid down in advertisement notice and accordingly the list of eligible candidates of Jammu Division and Kashmir Division is available on the official website of NHM, J&K www.jknhm.com along with the allotted Roll Numbers. Written examination of eligible candidates for six (6) months Certificate Programme in Community Health for Mid Level Health Providers (MLHPs) shall be held on 24th February 2021, at 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM at following venues.

S.No	Date of Examination	Division	Venue	Roll Number	Timing
1	24 th February 2021	Kashmir Division	Govt. SP College, M.A Road, Srinagar	100001 to 100736	2:00 PM to 4:00 PM
2			S.P. Higher Secondary School, Srinagar	100737 to 101366	
3		Jammu Division	Govt. Gandhi Memorial Science College, Jammu	200001 to 200288	
4			Govt. Women College Parade, Jammu	200289 to 200732	

The eligible candidates shall submit the attached format duly filled by the candidate and collect Admit Card in person from National Health Mission office, Regional Institute of Health & Family Welfare, Nagrota, Jammu for Jammu Division and Ground Floor, Block- A, Old Secretariat Srinagar for Kashmir Division w.e.f. 13th February 2021 to 22nd February 2021 (10:00 AM to 4:00 PM). The format of Admit Card is also available on official website (www.jknhm.com) and at NHM, offices Srinagar/ Jammu.

All eligible candidates shall carry a valid photo identity (Passport, Adhar Card/ Driving Licence, Election Card) at the time of collection of Admit cum Roll no. slip.

No candidate shall be permitted to enter the Examination Centre without the Admit Card issued by NHM office.

DIPK-NB-5599/20

Sd/-

Mission Director,
National Health Mission, J&K.

Admit Card (To be filled by the Candidate)

Name (In Capital Letters) : _____
Parentage: (In Capital Letters) : _____
District: _____
Roll No: _____
Venue of Examination: _____
Date of Examination: 24th February 2021 Time: 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Paste passport
size latest
photograph

Seal & Signature of the issuing authority

- Note:
1. Candidate shall carry the Admit Card to examination centre, failing which candidate will not be allowed to sit in the Examination Centre.
 2. Candidate shall carry identity proof having photo graph (Aadhar Card, Driving Licence, Passport & Election Card).
 3. No electronic gadgets/ mobile phones will be allowed in the examination hall.
 4. Candidates without Face Masks shall not be allowed in the examination hall.

For Official Use (To be filled by Candidate)

Name: _____
Parentage: _____
District: _____
Roll No: _____

Paste passport
size latest
photograph

Seal & Signature of the issuing authority

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR TOURISM (M&W) KASHMIR, SRINAGAR

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No. DT/M and W/K/ 45 of 2020-21 Dated 10.02.2021

For and on behalf of the Governor, J&K State, e-tenders are invited by Deputy Director Tourism (M&W), Kashmir by e-tendering mode on item rate basis from approved and eligible Civil Contractors registered with J&K State Govt., PWD, CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Govt. for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs.InLacs)	Cost of T/Doc	Time of Completion	Class of Contract	Major Head of Account
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Restoration of Heritage stone walling / fencing of monuments at Narastan Tral, Pulwama.	100.00	1600	120-days	AAY	PLAN

Position of AAA/TS: Accorded Position of Funds: Available

Special conditions:-

- The intending tenderer must have sufficient skilled /unskilled labour force.
- The unbalanced bid/bids on account of low rates will not be accepted beyond 50% below (BID < 50%) of the advertised cost.
- All Bidders has to submit Bid Security Declaration Form instead of Earnest money as per the circular of Finance Department (Bid Security Declaration Form is as per Annexure "A" below)
- The 1st. lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 02 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work
- The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any tender or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	10 /02/2021
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	10/02/2021 3.00 P.M to 22/03/2021,04.00 P.M
3.	Bid submission Start Date	10/02/2021 From 3.00 P.M.
4.	Bid Submission End Date	22/03/2021 4.00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids(Online)	23/03/2021 at 11.00 A.M

General Conditions:

1. The successful bidder shall submit original Treasury Receipt (1452-Tsm Revenue Head)/CDR and copies of Registration Certificate and PAN/TIN/ GST No. & experience in person within two days from the opening of the bids failing which proceeding as warranted under rules shall be initiated in the matter. No Demand Drafts shall be entertained.
2. The bidders will provide email ID and complete postal address including cell numbers.
3. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Website in o/o Dy. Director Tourism, (M&W) Kashmir, Srinagar (Tender Receiving Authority).
4. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of Bids
5. The earnest money shall be forfeited, if:-
 - a. Any bidder/ tenderer withdraw his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or make any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
 - b. Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
 - c. Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
6. Bidders are advised to visit and examine the site / location of work, its surroundings and familiarize himself with existing facilities / difficulties and environment and collect all other information which he may require for preparing and submitting the bid entering into the contract. Claims and objections due to ignorance of existing conditions are in-adequacy of information will not be considered after submission of the bid and during execution of work.
7. Bidders are advise to examine the departmental store before quoting the rates and ensure the condition of material available to be fixed and erected at work site any defect or damages in the material shall be rectified by the successful contractor at his own risk & cost.

DIPK-12996/20

Deputy Director Tourism
(M&W), Srinagar

NIT No:- DT/M&W/K/ 45 / 260-64/TD,

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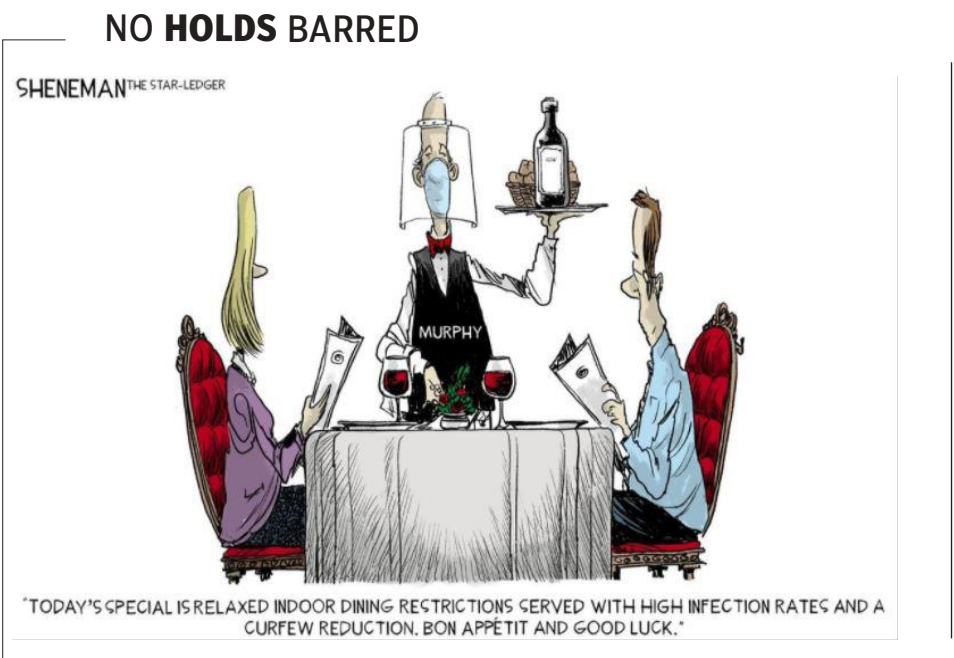
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Women’s empowerment and equality are thus allotted a new task: serving as informants to catch “militant jihadist violent extremists” with whose apprehension the Western world has busied itself for the past two decades. It is a slick move, this conflation of catching terrorists and being empowered a la UN Women.

India’s Vaccine Diplomacy

Vaccine hoarding will only dampen the prospects of eliminating the virus. Heightened levels of globalisation mandate that countries cooperate for any strategy to succeed. While vaccines are offering some respite but the absence of a global strategy and the preoccupation with Vaccine Nationalism are great obstacles.

Dania Sheikh

India’s vaccine assistance programme, ‘Vaccination Maitri’ intends to distribute 160 million covid vaccines to 60 friendly countries by the end of March 2021. Under this programme, 10 million doses of Covishield vaccine manufactured by the Serum Institute of India are to be gifted to the countries in the immediate and extended neighbourhood like Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Maldives, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Afghanistan and Mauritius. Indian foreign secretary, Harsh Shringla has also stated that India’s closest neighbours, friends and partners will receive privileged access to the vaccine, India has received immense appreciation from WHO for its Vaccination Maitri.

However, the motivation behind India’s Vaccine assistance programme is not entirely based on altruism, it partly stems from the need to counter China’s ascendancy in the South Asian region. China’s BRI (belt and road initiative) which encompasses around 70 countries jeopardises India’s clout in the region. This context necessitates India to give foreign aid to its neighbours to maintain and expand its geopolitical influence.

As China’s Infrastructure programmes have attracted several South Asian countries, it becomes pertinent for India to resolve its outstanding conflicts with countries like Nepal, Bhutan and even Pakistan and garner their support in thwarting Chinese aggression. India’s good will gesture during this time of crises will enable India to cement good relations with its neighbours. Good relations with neighbours reduce the need to spend hefty amounts on defence and that money can be allocated to other sectors like health, infrastructure and education, so spending huge amounts on vaccine



diplomacy is a win for India.

The vaccine developed by India’s Bharat Biotech has been given an emergency approval by Drug Controller General of India, this has led to an outage in the country as the efficacy results of the phase 3 trials have not been made public but despite that it has been regarded as a more credible vaccine than the Chinese vaccines Sinopharm and Sinovac. This can be ascertained from the fact that China’s closest ally Cambodia, has refused to accept the Chinese Vaccine and is pinning its hopes on the covax which is an initiative to distribute covid vaccines for the lower and middle income countries. Unlike India, China has not gifted vaccines to its allies. Despite the cordial relations shared between China and Pakistan, the latter has to purchase covid vaccine from China. This provides India an opportunity to

mitigate its tensions with Pakistan by lending a helping hand during these testing time.

The NDA government has taken up several other goodwill measures as a part of its “Neighbourhood Policy”. NDA has attempted to build alliances even with the countries in the extended neighbourhood like Seychelles and Mauritius. Striking a partnership with these countries is essential for ensuring security and stability in the Indian Ocean region.

However, the government has received domestic criticism for undertaking this vaccine assistance programme as the masses in India are yet to be inoculated with the vaccine. The government claims that there are sufficient vaccines and that it plans to vaccinate 300 million workers over the next 6-8 months. About 3500 crore have been allocated for vaccines in the 2021

budget and the Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharam has stated that this figure could increase if the need arises.

Additionally, the plethora of leading pharmaceutical companies located in India make it the world’s largest vaccine manufacturer. India has played a significant role in eradicating viruses in the past. Its role in combating the public health crises in Africa and polio in the South East Asian region had received global recognition. It is this capacity to produce vaccines on a massive scale which grant it a leverage over China.

Vaccine diplomacy will not only enhance India’s stature in the international arena but will also help in effectively warding off the challenge posed by Covid. A pandemic cannot be eliminated by one country alone. In this regard, WHO director Tedros Adhanom had stated that, “Vaccine Nationalism will prolong the pandemic”. He has been critical of the ‘me first approach’ adopted by several countries which have worsened the chances of the poorest countries to acquire the vaccine.

Vaccine hoarding will only dampen the prospects of eliminating the virus. Heightened levels of globalisation mandate that countries cooperate for any strategy to succeed. While vaccines are offering some respite but the absence of a global strategy and the preoccupation with Vaccine Nationalism are great obstacles.

Views expressed in this article are the author’s own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

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Around the time the world was about to shut down in early March 2020, a much-anticipated meeting of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women died a premature death. The CSW64/Beijing+25 was going to mark the passage of twenty-five years since a conference that had taken place in Beijing. It was meant to take stock, to see how far the world’s women had progressed in the quarter century. But while the session was not held in its entirety, given the continued constraints of a global pandemic, the UN’s affiliate entity UN Women has continued to put out reports and training manuals and other similar products that we have come to expect of the organization, which defines itself as the “global champion for gender equality.”

One of these, released this month, is a training manual on “Women in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism.” UN Women seems to have decided that championing global gender equality requires training women to fight terrorism, where terrorism is “militant jihadist violent extremism in Europe and Central Asia.” Of the five modules in the training, three “provide specific ways to identify signs of violent extremism and how women can counter them in various roles.” Women’s empowerment and equality are thus allotted a new task: serving as informants to catch “militant jihadist violent extremists” with whose apprehension the Western world has busied itself for the past two decades.

It is a slick move, this conflation of catching terrorists and being empowered a la UN Women. Who, after all, would oppose the apprehension of violent extremists? Here again, then, is the deployment of the crude logic of the War on Terror—George Bush’s infamous “You’re either with us or against us”—which eschews nuance and eliminates complexity. The idea is to send out UN workers to run workshops that can teach women who belong to communities in which terrorists are found (and we know this means Muslim women) to screen and scan and tell on the men they know and love. That this prescription replicates the particular worldview and prejudices of a neo-imperialist and expansionist West is not a concern for UN Women.

One module in the UN’s training manual sets up a true-and-false game that brings the necessity of empowered terror-fighting home by handing out imperative truths such as: women suffer

Women’s Work The UN wants to conscript women into the War on Terror

Rafia Zakaria

the most from the actions of terrorists; women follow husbands and other family members into terror groups; radicalized men are prone to domestic violence.

The other modules do not get much better. As a native of a country where UN aid workers regularly rounded up people to attend trainings, I can just see the women awkwardly seated around tables as the UN trainer demands this or that from them. In one “warm-up activity” outlined in the second module, the participants must walk up to a white sheet of paper and mark their favorite responses, while in others they can anonymously vote and rank them.

The “factors to consider” provided in the manual for this would-be audience are even more bizarre and poorly documented. For instance, a section called “romance” insists that “men joining ISIS in the hope of finding a pure Muslim wife” is “well-documented,” but provides no documentation for that claim. The assertion that follows—“many women joined ISIS in the hope of finding a pure Muslim husband and the excitement of marrying a jihadi fighter”—does have a footnote, but one that simply cites an essay written by the author of the manual herself. On the issue of migrants, the report asserts that “a recent study on migrant vulnerabilities in Central Asia found a positive relationship between migrant vulnerabilities . . . and radicalization,” while conceding that “more research is warranted.” Finally, we are told that “traumatic life events” also “drive an individual toward radicalization,” and yet we are never provided with any reference to how this conclusion has been reached.

Through structure and content, the training manual demeans and infantilizes. The puerile come-up-to-the-front-and-mark-your-answers activities have a distinct schoolchildren quality

to them, situating the “trainees” not as equals in the conversation but as individuals who can be told what to do. Then again, what they’re being told—that “romance” is a pull factor for terror and that migrants are predisposed to joining terror groups—is completely unsubstantiated. Perhaps the truth does not matter when the audience is made up of people being indoctrinated in the flawed logic of the War on Terror. It makes sense; the metrics of the success of such trainings and workshops is the number who are rounded up to attend, rather than the usefulness or accuracy of the information that is shared.

As a feminist who once believed in the work of UN Women, I was disturbed by the training manual and its contents. The vast ambit of the War on Terror and its capacity to infect everything is well-known, but this manual proves that even women’s empowerment must be defined in the securitized lingo of this never-ending conflict. Then there is the racism woven into the content; despite the fact that this report is produced by UN Women Europe and Central Asia, there is no mention at all of the white supremacist terror that is growing at an alarming rate.

Aligning women’s empowerment with a security-state agenda connected to fighting terror ignores the latter’s political dimensions. Opposition to that agenda immediately becomes opposition to women’s empowerment. International women’s rights organizations are thus made vehicles for propagating the strategic agendas of powerful countries. If the War on Terror signifies neo-colonialist expansion into the public spaces of foreign countries, the connection of romance or personal trauma to inclinations toward terror represents a colonization of private space. Women who inhabit and dominate these private spaces are therefore being dragged into the CVE program. UN Women,

once the champion of global gender equality, has become an instrument that disguises this attempted colonization of private space in the lingo of gender mainstreaming and women’s participation.

The disappointing content of this training manual produced by UN Women suggests that the cancellation of the historic meeting in March of 2020 was not the worst thing in the world. The UN bureaucracy, with its complicated divisions and teams and casts of insiders, has spent too many years holding “historic” conferences, then other conferences to commemorate those conferences, all of them events that rarely mark some actual achievement, deeming themselves historic for the simple reason that they occurred. The characters who show up to them, who are invited to travel and granted per diems, are usually the same familiar faces. Those from poor countries are hosted by richer donor countries, which naturally ensures the continuation of hierarchies and a hesitation to criticize the slide shows and programmatic directions and training manuals produced by the white and the Western.

In a world where human connection across vast distances was difficult, the necessity of transnational institutions was more integral to provide essential platforms for even basic exchanges on issues of rights and human uplift. In this moment, where the performative kumbaya of a fancy conference in New York is not worth much, UN Women needs to rethink its own role and its own hierarchies. A world of equality for all women means that white and Western women must not be permitted to treat everyone else like schoolgirls and feed them information whose insidious agenda has not been critically evaluated.

“Women in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism” is just one of scores of reports and manuals and policy papers that the UN Women machine spews out. At the same time, it illustrates much that is wrong with it; the hierarchies among women, the naïve alignment with security agendas masked as empowerment strategies, the thick and indolent bureaucracies that are committed singularly to their own survival can all be glimpsed here. And all of it poses the central question that no one at UN Women appears to be grappling with: UN Women; what is it good for?

The Baffler

BBC vs Zara Mohammed: An exercise in Islamophobia

Fatima Rajina

Whenever Muslims become public figures, they are confronted with a host of litmus tests. Once they pass, they are deemed one of the 'good ones'

Zara Mohammed, a young Scottish Muslim, last week became the first woman to be elected as secretary-general of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB). This marks a historic occasion for the British Muslim community, and it could pave the way for much-needed change.

The MCB describes itself as the “largest and most diverse umbrella body of mosques, Islamic schools and Muslim associations” in the UK, with more than 500 affiliates. The election of 29-year-old Mohammed has been particularly well-received by Muslim women, viewed as an encouraging sign to consider leadership roles.

On 4 February, the BBC's Emma Barnett interviewed Mohammed on Radio 4's Woman's Hour programme. I had expected this huge milestone to be recognised with a genuine interest in Mohammed's role and journey. Instead, Barnett chided and questioned her on the presence of female imams, Jewish-Muslim relations and how self-described “moderate” Muslims would be accommodated (citing Qanta Ahmed's 2019 Spectator piece).

Watchful gaze

Interestingly, the clip that the BBC chose to share on social media was when Barnett asked Mohammed how many female imams there are in Britain. It was less about the question itself than the persistent and seemingly arrogant way in which it was asked - the undermining and condescending manner by which Barnett kept insisting on getting an answer, even interrupting her guest.

Mohammed rightfully asked Barnett what she meant by the term “imam” - was it a reference to a chaplain, to a woman who leads prayers? Barnett merely deflected and shifted the question back onto Mohammed.

Whenever Muslims become public figures, they are confronted with a host of litmus tests. Once they pass, they are deemed one of the 'good ones'

This style of questioning illus-



trates how the Muslim community continuously finds itself under a watchful gaze. Even a celebratory moment such as this one is not afforded to the community, as public commentators find ways to cast Muslims as the enemy. There is no curiosity or inquiry; instead, antagonism is subtly infused with Islamophobic undertones.

Whenever Muslims become public figures, they are confronted with a host of litmus tests. Once they pass, they are deemed one of the “good ones” - one of the “moderate” ones (Barnett uses the latter term in reference to Ahmed's Spectator piece).

The Muslim figure is somehow morphed into a bogey(wo)man, unless they adopt a public presence that makes Islam palatable and neatly packaged so as not to disturb mainstream white audiences; or as long as its traditions are made legible through the prism of Judeo-Christian traditions.

Studying the 'Other'

This is entrenched in a long-standing history by which Orientalists have presumed Islam to be an extension of Christianity and/or Judaism, refusing to acknowledge its independent

identity. This happened when colonial officers were sent to Muslim-majority regions to study the faith, and new typologies, categorisations and terminologies were constructed. Through studying the “Other”, Orientalists declared that Islam was a faith that borrowed from others.

Barnett's attempt to question Mohammed on the presence of female imams, while making reference to other religions, was not ahistorical. There is a long history of using Judeo-Christian framing as a normative standard against which to judge other faith traditions - a flawed premise.

Barnett also resorts to the classic trope of the Muslim woman's body as a test of whether the community - which is almost always framed as monolithic - is truly “progressive”. The community is still structurally presented as having issues with women, as though patriarchy and misogyny were exclusively a “Muslim” problem.

Using the Muslim woman as a signifier of whether Muslims have caught up with modernity is an argument with which Muslims are very well-acquainted. Before the invasion of Afghanistan, US First Lady Laura Bush campaigned for the war, arguing that

Afghan women (read: Muslim women) needed liberating.

Gendered Islamophobia

Muslim women enter the public sphere knowing full well how we are scrutinised. The BBC interview reminds us of how attacks against Muslim women are made in insidious and coded ways. Research in gendered Islamophobia shows us how Muslim women bear the brunt of physical violence committed against Muslims by members of the public.

Barnett's incessant questioning offers a glimpse of the Islamophobic targeting that Muslim women have to endure. The BBC's choice of that clip to promote the interview is also part of the problem; it taps into people's fears of Muslims and Islam, how Muslims allegedly treat “their women”, and the constant association with backwardness.

When Muslim women provide necessary interventions concerning the Muslim community, we do not want special treatment. But we also do not want our community used in a manner that deliberately elides Muslim voices in favour of preconceived ideas about Muslims.

For Muslims to successfully participate in public and professional spaces there must be a thorough and non-speculative discussion around having shows where Muslims can be free to speak about issues without unnecessary, Islamophobic examination. The latter only pushes Muslim women away from entering the public sphere to talk about their faith, identity and other issues.

When Muslim women raise their voices, which might not sit comfortably with many, let's not pathologise them. Let's instead show some genuine curiosity, rather than masquerading aggressive questioning as inquiry.

...
Middle East Eye

3 reasons to study science communication beyond the West

Lindy Orthia | Dan C H Hikuroa
Ehsan Nabavi | Francesca Rochberg
Paula DeVos

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.

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 Euro-

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.

centric approach.

2. Human cultures are diverse and wonderful

All over the world, different science communication systems have been adapted to different locations, 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 (Mori 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 metaphor-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 Mori 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.

By arrangements with
the Conversation

Colour Your Hair, Limit the Damage



SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

HAIR colouring is the mantra of the day. But, however glamorous it may look, hair colourants and dyes can cause a lot of hair damage. Once the colour wears off, one wants to have the hair coloured again. It is this kind of repeated colouring that damages the hair, making it dry and brittle. Moreover, if dark hair is coloured to a lighter colour, a bleaching process is also used. This causes added damage.

So, before going in for colouring, it is essential to know the methods that are available and how they affect

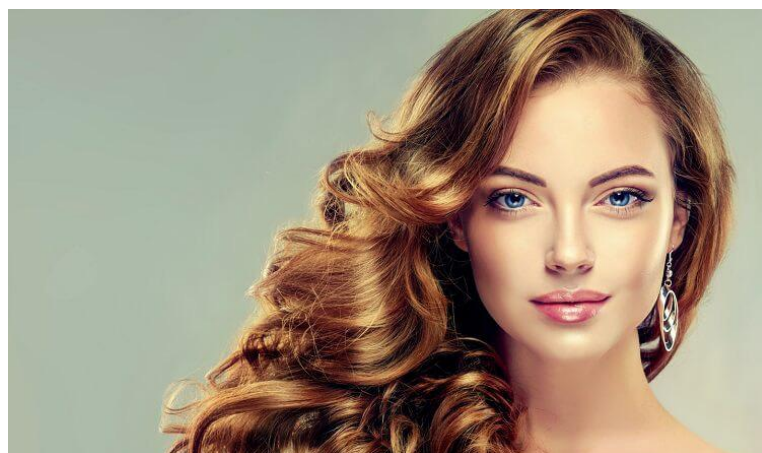
the hair. Also, find out about limiting the damage and the latest trends.

Permanent dyes and colours work by changing the structure of the hair and entering the inner layer. They actually strip off the outermost layer, in an uneven manner, in order to penetrate the inner layer. Damage to the outer layer, or cuticle, weakens the hair and also makes it dry, rough and dull.

Semi permanent methods, like hair rinses and creams, last for 4 to 6 shampoos. They do not cause as much damage as the permanent dyes. Semi-permanent methods are suitable for disguising grey hair, or for lending a richer colour to dull hair.

Temporary Hair Colours are also available, in the form of "hair mascaras."

Hair mascaras are somewhat like crayons, which can be used to "streak" strands of the hair. Hair mascaras are temporary methods of colouring the hair. They are easier to use and remove and the effect lasts till the next shampoo.



One can also use a natural hair colour which contains natural colourants like indigo, catechu and henna. It gives the hair a blackish brown colour and is free of chemical dyes.

Streaks and highlights are back in hair colour. In fact, apart from blonde, gold, or platinum, you can

even go for pink, violet, green or orange streaks, as bright coloured streaks are predicted in the coming seasons! Of course, you can keep to subtle colours, close to your normal colour, with lighter and darker tinted strands all over.

Streaking is a method in which some strands are bleached or co-

loured. A few streaks of colour can also save the rest of the hair from damage and yet, give you a new and glamorous look. You could have about four streaks in front, which means that some strands in front are coloured. This can really look attractive and certainly cause less damage. Of course, this is suitable for those who have no gray hair and are mainly looking for a colour change.

If you go in for half-head streaking, it helps to limit the damage. In this method, some strands are selected. They are bleached and wrapped in special foil. It can be started from the hairline to the crown, so that the streaked hair is fully visible. You will need to touch it up in about 4 weeks, as the roots of your original hair colour will show through. Or, if you have short hair, the ends can be streaked in a different colour.

It is also very essential to choose the right colour, which goes with the colour tone of your skin. For instance, a blonde or whitish colour would not suit an Indian skin tone.

However, a lighter colour may be used for highlighting or streaking. Your choice of colour would depend on the reason for colouring your hair. If you wish to conceal a lot of grey hair, you may have the colour the entire head of hair the same colour. If you want highlights or streaks, you have to select a lighter colour which complements the colour of the rest of your hair.

Experts recommend that the colour you choose for highlighting your hair should be 3 shades lighter than your natural hair colour. Of course, if you wish to go for bright colours, like red, purple, blue or gold, it is necessary to see if they suit your natural skin tone. The new trend is to highlight only the tips of the hair. This is actually favoured for a bright look. It also helps to limit the damage.

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The author is an international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India.

Scholarships This Week



Kashmir Observer in association with Bud-4Study.com presents scholarships available for the meritorious students of Jammu and Kashmir

Scholarship Name 1: IIT Indore Discipline of Civil Engineering Junior Research Fellowship 2021

Description: Indian Institute of Technology, Indore invites applications for IIT Indore Discipline of Civil Engineering Junior Research Fellowship 2021 from Master's degree holders. The fellowship is meant for the project entitled, "Quantification of Soil organic carbon sequestration using remote sensing and field-based approach".

Eligibility: The fellowship is open for candidates who have a Master's degree in relevant fields or a Bachelor's degree in any branch of Engineering. Prior knowledge in field collection data and publication is desirable. Also, candidates having NET/GATE will be preferred.

Prizes & Rewards: INR 25,000 per month as per DST norms
Last Date to Apply: 28-02-2021
Application mode: Via email only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/ICE5

Scholarship Name 2: ABV-IIITM Gwalior DST-SERB Junior Research Fellowship 2021

Description: ABV- Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management Gwalior, India for ABV-IIITM Gwalior DST-SERB Junior Research Fellowship 2021 from B.Tech/ BE/MSc/MTech/MS/ME degree holders. The fellowship is meant for the project entitled, "Design and Modeling of Ultra-Scaled Copper-Graphene Hybrid On-Chip Interconnect for Low Power and High-Speed IC Applications with Machine Learning".

Eligibility: The fellowship is open for candidates who hold an M.Tech/ MS/ME or equivalent in EC (Electronics and Communication)/CSE (Computer Science and Engineering)/Electrical Engineering/IT (Information Technology)/degrees or equivalent. They must hold a B.Tech/BE/MSc in EC/ CSE/ IT/EE or equivalent. They must have BE/B.Tech & ME/M.Tech in relevant branch with 1st class or equivalent either in BE/B.Tech or ME/M.Tech.

Prizes & Rewards: Up to INR 28,000 per month with medical allowance
Last Date to Apply: 28-02-2021
Application mode: Via email only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/AGM7

Scholarship Name 3: College Board India Scholars Program 2020-21

Description: College Board in association with Global Higher Education Alliance Institutions is offering financial support to students looking forward to taking admission in Indian universities post class 12, based on the SAT. Also, the program offers full tuition fee scholarship for graduation degree at member institutions.

Eligibility: For SAT fee discount, the applicant must be an Indian resident with an annual family income less than 10L and must be studying in class 11 or 12. To be considered eligible for a full college tuition scholarship, the applicant's family income should be below INR 4L p.a. The student must also perform very well in SAT and must receive an offer of admission from the Global Higher Education Alliance Institution.

Prizes & Rewards: Up to 90% waiver for SAT examination and complete tuition fee waiver for study in member institutions based on their SAT Exam performance of minimum 1350 out of 1600 and annual income should be less than 4L acceptance to the respective courses.
Last Date to Apply: 12-02-2021
Application mode: Apply online
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/CB12

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website: <http://www.jakbopee.org> email: ceojakbopee@gmail.com

Subject: Conduct of second (physical) up-gradation/ allotment round of counselling for admission to BAMS/BUMS/BPT courses-2020 of eligible candidates.

Reference: i) Letter No. F. No. L-14014/239/2020-EP-1 dated 09-02-2021
ii) Notification No. 021-BOPEE of 2021 dated 11-02-2021

Notice No. 021 -BOPEE of 2021
Dated: 12-02-2021.

It is notified for information of all candidates who are desirous to participate in the second round of physical counselling for BAMS/BUMS/BPT Courses-2020 shall be tentatively held on 18-02-2021 at BOPEE office Srinagar/ Jammu. The detailed date-wise schedule along with seat matrix shall be notified separately on 16-02-2021.

E&OE.

DIPK-NB-5617/20

No: BOPEE/Exam-35/2020

(Dr. Sunil Gupta)
Controller of Examinations
J&K BOPEE
Dated: 12-02-2021

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT INFORMATION OFFICER ANANTNAG

Ph. /Fax: 01932-222326:

Email: dio.angkmr@gmail.com

SHORT TERM QUOTATION

Short term quotation affixed with Revenue stamps of Rs.5/- are invited from the registered workshops of Anantnag for repairment of departmental vehicle (Bolero).

The tenders should reach to this office within 07 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.

Sd/=

District Information Officer,
Anantnag.

DIPK-13066/20

No: DIC/A-301/2021

Dated: -11-02-2021

((Government of Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir))

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MUFFASIL (R&B) DIVISION BUDGAM

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

(Modified as per Circular No. A/Misc(2018)-III-895/J Dt. 22-12-2020

Issued by Finance Department).

NIT No.197/e-tendering /MDB/2020-21/12291-12310 DATED. 09-02-2021

For and on behalf of the President, of India, e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K UT Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/UT/Central Government Departments for the following works:-

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (In rupees)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Time of Completion (calendar days)	Class of Contract	Major Head of Account
1	Repairs and Renovation of Sub Center Palpora	6.88 lacs	300/-	30 days	DEE/CEE	4210- Medical
2	Repairs and Renovation and Branding of Sub Center at Suresh	7.00 lacs	300/-	30 days	DEE/CEE	4210- Medical
3	Construction of CC drain and R/Wall and Edge wall on link road taking off from Trahy road at Khag to the H/O Irshad, Fayaz Ahmad, Bashir Ahmad and others	4.40 Lacs	200/-	20 days	DEE	District Sector

Position of AAA/TS:- Accorded Position of Funds:- Available.

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	09.02.2021 11:00 AM
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	09.02.2021 10:00 4.00 PM
3.	Bid submission Start Date	09.02.2021 from 4.00 PM
4.	Bid Submission End Date	16.02.2021 upto 4.00 PM
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	17.02.2021 at 11:00 AM in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Muffasil (R&B) Division Budgam

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

Note :-The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploading softcopy any short fall found in the soft copy the tender shall be rejected. Note: As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir CivilSectariat Finance department vide No.OM No.A/24(2017)-651 dtd.07-06-2018 which reads as under:-

a) Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared 1st Lowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.

b) The Cost of tenders should be collected by introducing E-challan/ or simply uploading a copy of necessary Treasury Challan/Receipt.

Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/ in favour of Executive Engineer Muffasil (R&B) Division Budgam (tender inviting authority).

1. All Bidders has to submit Bid Security Declaration Form instead of Earnest money deposit (EMD) as per the circular of Finance Department (Bid Security Declaration Form is as per Annexure "A" below).

2. The 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR within 02 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work.

3. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer Muffasil (R&B) Division Budgam (tender receiving authority).

4. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.

No: 12291-12310.
DATED: 09.02.2021.

DIPK-12967/20

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Muffasil (R&B) Division Budgam

Govt of Jammu and Kashmir Office of the Chief Operating Officer Himayat

Jammu office H. No 9 Channi Bija Jamu 180012
Srinagar Office H. NO 397 Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar 190008 Email coohimayat@gmail.com

ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE

Applications are invited from eligible candidates on prescribed format for engagement purely on contractual basis in the office of Chief Operating Officer, Himayat, Mission Management Unit, JKRLM, for filling up of the below mentioned post:-

Name of the post	No of post	Prescribed Qualification	Salary structure per month
State Project Manager (PIA Coordination and Development)	01(One)	Post-Graduation or equivalent in Management or relevant disciplines. 1. Minimum 7 year's experience in relevant fields dealing with industry engagement, marketing, sales and partnership engagement. 2. Familiarity in local language and in ICT usage skills. 3. Proven experience of handling projects involving forging linkage with industries, NGOs, UT/State/Local Government. 4. Experience in assisting set-up of self employment initiatives for the skilled youth through incubation preferred.	Rs:60,000=00 (Sixty Thousand) Consolidated

The eligible candidates shall submit their application forms along with self-attested copies of all the relevant testimonials/documents by or before 4th of March 2021 only through registered/speed post with POD (Proof of Delivery) or personally in the office of Chief Operating Officer, Himayat Mission Management Unit at H.No 09 (Near Needish Apartment) Channi Bija, Jammu -180012, incomplete application shall be rejected without informing the reasons of rejection to the candidates

Terms and Conditions for engagement:-

The engagement shall be purely on Term Contractual Basis, initially for one year only, terminable at one month's notice from either side. The extension shall be subject to the need of the Mission and the performance of the incumbent in terms of achievements or targets so fixed.

- The candidate must have the requisite qualification and experience for the post.
- The age criteria shall be same as applicable in J&K Govt. service.
- The candidates should be a domicile of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir as defined in terms of S.O. 166 Dated 18-05-2020 issued by the General Administration Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir. The candidate must possess domicile certificate issued by the competent authority on the format prescribed for the purpose on or before the last date of submission of application form.
- In case of candidate claiming possession of equivalent education qualification, it shall be mandatory to produce relevant equivalence certificate from the concerned competent authorities at the time of document verification. Moreover, final decision regarding selection of candidate will be taken by the Himayat Mission Management Unit.
- The selected candidates shall have to file an affidavit in the shape of undertaking (duly attested by the 1st Class Judicial Magistrate) to the effect that they will not claim any entitlement for absorption in the Govt. service at any stage of their engagement or thereafter at the closure of the project. He/she is ready to serve in move office or any part of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir or such place where operations of the society are conducted.
- Candidate should have a good moral character and there should not be any case of Criminal nature pending against the candidate in any police station/crime Branch/vigilance or any other organization or in any court of law.
- The candidate has to appear in the written test/interview accompanied with original relevant testimonials/documents.
- The nature of the post is move on six monthly basis from Srinagar to Jammu and vice/ versa.
- Extension in the period of contract may be accorded only after consideration and recommendation of the Performance Evaluation Committee to be set up by the Chief Operating Officer, Himayat, Mission Management Unit, JKRLM.
- The Himayat Mission Management Unit, JKRLM reserves the right to cancel the selection process at any stage.
- Incomplete application form shall not be considered and summarily rejected. No representation against such rejection will be entertained. The application form is attached herewith which is also available at our website www.himayat.org

DIPK-12994/20

No: COO/JKRLM/HMT/03/2017

Dated:- 11-02-2021

APPLICATION FORM

Name of the Post applied for: State Project Manager(PIA Coordination And Development)
Advertisement Notice No: _____ Date _____
Name of Candidate (in Block Letters): _____
Father's Name (in Block Letters): _____
Mother's Name (in Block Letters): _____
Marital Status: _____
Permanent Address: _____
6. Postal Address: _____
9. Date of Birth as per Matriculation Certificate: _____
10. Age as on 1/1/2021: _____ Years _____
11. Gender: - Male/female
12. E-mail ID: _____
13. Mobile No: _____ Tel No. _____
14 Qualification _____

Past your recent coloured photograph, self attested. (Don't Staple) & Attach 1 passport size photograph

Name of Examination	Year of passing	Board/University	Stream	Marks Obtained	Maximum marks	%age

Experience:

S. No	Name of Institution	Experience From	To	Details

15. Self-attested photocopies of the documents are enclosed:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
4. _____ 5. _____

I hereby declare that:

- The statement made/information furnished in the application form and the enclosures submitted by me are correct.
- I have not concealed any information and in the event of any of the particulars or information given herein above is found incorrect or false, candidature for the post applied shall be cancelled.
- In the event any mis-statement / discrepancy is found at the time of recruitment or at later-stage, my service shall be liable for the termination
- I also understand that if at any stage I am found by selection committee to have used unfair means in the interview / test or to have violated any of the rules /regulation governing the conduct of selection process my candidature can be cancelled or to be declared to have failed by the selection committee at its sole discretion.

Signature of candidate

DDC Budgam Reviews Progress On Craft Tourism Village

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: The District Development Commissioner, (DDC) Budgam, Shahbaz Ahmed Mirza today convened a meeting to review the progress of development on Kanihama Craft Tourism Village at New Conference Hall here.

The meeting was informed that 27 weaver sheds will be constructed in the Craft Tourism Village, and for this the government will provide 70 percent assistance to the general category weavers and 100 percent assistance to those belonging to BPL/PHH/SC category or women.

The DDC said that 150 identified weavers houses across the craft village will be renovated.

Regarding the marketing and promoting of Kani shawl and other products at Global level, the DDC said that Kani

Shawl and other products shall be made available on web portal to encourage display and online purchasing of these products

He also took status of other development works including one Cafeteria, lighting system across the village, construction of one view point, development of sumo stand and development of one wellness centre besides development of entry points to the village and installation of drinking water facility.

The DDC directed the concerned officers that the work should be completed before the 10th of March 2021.

Among others, the meeting was attended by JD Planning, DD Tourism, District Evaluation Officer, District Informatics Officer, BDO SK Pora, Executive Engineers of PDD, PHE, R&B, and other concerned.

District Handicraft & Handlooms Offices Organise Awareness Camps

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a sequel of Public outreach programme, the Handicraft Office Srinagar, Budgam and Kupwara today organised Awareness camps in their respective districts to raise awareness among artisans and weavers about various activities being carried out by the department for the benefit of the artisan community.

In this connection, a one day awareness camp was organised by District Handicraft Office Srinagar at Zadibal, here.

Speaking on the occasion Assistant Director Handicraft, Shariq Iqbal, informed the participants about the various activities that the department is conducting for the benefit of the artisan including providing of financial assistance under Credit Card Scheme and facilitation/guidance to make artisans aware about the global e -market trends besides export related activities.

He further informed the participants that the department is running a special training programme in which the trainees, who are willing to learn the crafts, shall be provided stipend of Rs 1000 and RS 1500 for elementary and advance programme respectively with effect from 01 April, 2021.

The designers of the School of Designs also provided the information about the latest designs which the artisans can avail from School of Designs on free of cost basis for the artisans who are registered with the department, besides showcasing different designs.

The Director Handicrafts and Handlooms Kashmir, Mahmood Ahmad Shah, praised the departmental officers for their doorstep outreach of the Artisans of the city, which is regarded as the hub of the Handicrafts sector.

He also put across a message to the Artisan and Weaver Community that the department is adamant to provide full support to the artisans for their economic well being.

The artisans and weavers besides the representatives of the financial institutes and Departmental Officers were present in the camp.

At Budgam: Department of Handicrafts and Handlooms organised an awareness camp at the conference hall of DIET Beerwah to cre-

ate awareness among the artisans and weavers about various facets of entrepreneurship as a career option and also to highlight the merits of pursuing such an option.

Chief Designer, School of Designs Srinagar, Deputy Director, District Employment/Counselling Centre Budgam and District Nodal Officer EDI Budgam were the Guests on the occasion.

More than 200 artisans and weavers of the adjoining areas participated in the programme. On the spot registration of artisan and weavers was also carried on during the camp.

Speaking on the occasion the Assistant Director Handicrafts and Handlooms, G M Najar said that the aim of holding such camps is creating awareness among the artisan and weavers about the merits of pursuing various departmental schemes with special focus on credit card schemes for individual artisans.

Saima Shafi, a renowned artisan in Pottery craft briefed the artisans about innovation in the potter craft which is achieving newer heights due to the departmental interventions.

The Director Handicrafts and Handlooms, Mr. Mahmood Ahmad Shah while applauding the practice of on the spot enrolment of artisans during the camp, stressed on hassle free registration of artisans and weavers. He laid a stress on the need of the field staff to come together and work closely with the craftspeople, listen to their voices, build on their strengths and think out of the box to rediscover the golden morning of the artisans and weavers.

At Ganderbal: The Department of Handicrafts organised an Awareness Camp to spread awareness among the artisan community at Wakura, here.

Tehsildar Wakura, Ab Majeed Dar was the Chief Guest on the occasion. He appreciated the efforts of Handicrafts Department Ganderbal in reaching out to people and suggested that Zari Embroidery Training Centres be established in Block Wakura as a large population is associated with the craft.

Assistant Director Handicrafts Ganderbal, RahilaQadri, emphasized the importance of Handicrafts in Kashmiri culture and economy and enlightened the audience about its future prospectus.

Functioning Of JKIDFC Reviewed

LG Takes Stock Of Status Of Projects Approved Under JKIDFC

Asks Officers To Prepare Advance Action Plan For Next Financial Year; Remove Bottlenecks In Execution & Payments Of Projects



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha today chaired a high level meeting to review the functioning of Jammu & Kashmir Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation (JKIDFC) Ltd. here at Civil Secretariat.

The Lt Governor also launched the e-Book IV of JKIDFC, giving a detailed briefing about the 800 Physically Completed Projects funded by JKIDFC.

During the meeting, the Lt Governor sought a detailed report on the status of projects approved for funding under JKIDFC. Detailed discussion was held on removing the bottlenecks in execution and payments of projects for timely completion of the projects.

While taking the assessment of progress achieved in the current Financial Year, the Lt Governor directed the officers for expediting the execution of developmental projects and asked them to achieve the current year target of completion of 1000 projects till March.

The Lt Governor asked all the Administrative Secretaries to prepare an advance action plan for next financial year as well.

The officers were also directed to regularly monitor the working of their respective departments for ensuring speedy execution, besides working in close coordination to avoid time lag between the funds released and their utilization. Discussion was also held on the possibility of enhancing the advance drawal limit for Administrative Secretaries to ensure timely execution of various projects of public importance.

The Lt Governor stressed on taking all the requisite measures to maintain transparency in the execution of works by enabling citizens to overview works and projects being implemented in their areas and become a partner in the process of development.

The chair was informed that JKIDFC, since its inception in September 2018 has undertaken 2367 projects including 83 CRF Projects for an amount of

Rs 7125.49 crore. JKIDFC has also been successful in implementation of Geo-Tagging of all the projects undertaken.

BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Arun Kumar Mehta, Financial Commissioner, Finance Department; Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department; Rohit Kansal, Principal Secretary, Power Development Department, and Information Department; Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary, Public Works Department; Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Commissioner/Secretary; Hirdesh Kumar, Commissioner/Secretary, Transport Department; Ms. Sarita Chauhan, Commissioner/Secretary, Department of Forest, Ecology, and Environment; M Raju Commissioner/Secretary, Jal Shakti Department; Ms. Sheetal Nanda, Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj; Samad Hafeez, Secretary, Youth Services and Sports Department; Mohammad Yaqoob Itoo, Director General Budget, Finance Department, and other senior officers of Finance and JKIDFC attended the meeting.

J&K Sheep & Sheep Products Dev Board Disbanded

I&C Deptt To Prepare A Scheme For Marketing Of Wool

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Administrative Council (AC), which met here today under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, approved the proposal of the Animal, Sheep Husbandry &

Fisheries Department to wind up the J&K Sheep & Sheep Products Development Board.

The decision was taken considering that there has been no significant on-ground impact on production and marketing of wool and wool based products.

The Administrative Council further directed the Industries and Commerce Department to prepare a scheme tailored to the marketing needs of wool producers and provide Government support towards ensuring a remunerative price for woollen products.

RD Kashmir Reviews Progress Of Various Schemes, CSSs At Shopian, Pulwama

Observer News Service

SHOPIAN/ PULWAMA: The Director, Rural Development Kashmir, Qazi Sarwar today reviewed the progress of different schemes including Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) viz MGNREGA, PMAY, 14th FC, RGSA being implemented by the department in Shopian and Pulwama districts.

During the review meeting held at District Headquarter Shopian, it was observed that against total Labour Budget of 700 lac person days under MGNREGA, District Shopian has achieved 8.23 lac person days and an amount of Rs. 325493 lacs stands disbursed under MGNREGA during the current financial year.

The indicators under other schemes were also reviewed and the officers were enjoined upon to achieve the targets in a time bound manner.

At Pulwama, the review meeting was held at District Headquarter and during the meeting it was observed that under MGNREGA, out of total Labour Budget of 700 lac person days, the district has achieved a target of 11.00 lac persondays and an amount of Rs. 3351.11 lacs stands disbursed during the current financial year.

The Director stressed for completion of works under various schemes within stipulated time and laid stress upon creation of quality assets having wide scope of community benefits. He also directed the concern that the designated web portals for different schemes be updated simultaneously so that the relevant information is disseminated to the general public to ensure transparency.

Further the Director stressed upon the officers to be proactive in disposal of pending complaints on Griev-

ance Portal of LG J&K UT, Grievances/ Complaints forwarded by Administrative Department, Anti-Corruption Bureau besides, the pending court cases be pursued vigorously, so as to ensure their time bound disposal.

The Director also impressed upon all the officers to be punctual and adhere to the set time line for payment of wages, completion of works, geo tagging, preparation of bills, completion of PMAY (C) houses, He also asked them to expedite the progress under 14th Finance Commission Award.

The Director during the visit was accompanied by Superintending Engineer, REW Kashmir, Deputy Director (P&S), concerned Project Officer Wage Employment (ACD), concerned Executive Engineer REW, concerned BDOs of the district and others officers/officials of district Shopian and Pulwama.

Petrol Nears Rs 95 In Mumbai As Rate Hiked For Fifth Day In A Row

NEW DELHI: Petrol price in Mumbai neared record Rs 95 per litre mark on Saturday as its rate as well as diesel prices were hiked for the fifth day in a row.

Petrol price was increased by 30 paise per litre and diesel by 36 paise a litre, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

This took petrol price to an all-time high of Rs 88.414 a litre in Delhi while diesel rate climbed to Rs 78.74.

In Mumbai, petrol price soared to Rs 94.93 per litre and diesel price jumped to record Rs 85.70 a litre.

In five days this week, price has gone up by Rs 1.51 per litre for petrol while diesel rate has risen by Rs 1.56 a litre.

The relentless hike in prices has been criticised by the opposition parties, including Congress that has demanded an immediate cut in taxes to ease the burden on the common man.

However, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Wednesday had told Parliament that the government was not considering a reduction in excise duty to cool



rates from their record highs.

"Rates have risen as international oil prices touched \$61 per barrel for the first time in more than a year on improving demand outlook amid the global rollout of COVID-19 vaccines," he had said.

Central and state taxes make up for over 61 per cent of the retail selling price of petrol and about 56 per cent of diesel.

The Union Government levies Rs 32.9 per litre of excise duty on petrol and Rs Rs 31.80 a litre on diesel.

Retail petrol rates have risen by Rs 18.87 per litre since mid-March 2020 after the government raised taxes by a record margin to mop up gains arising from fall in international oil prices. Diesel rates have gone up by Rs 16.45. PTI

Jan Retail Inflation Declines To 4.06%, Vegetables Become Cheaper



Retail inflation eased to a 16-month low of 4.06 per cent in January mainly on account of softening of food and vegetable prices, government data showed on Friday.

It is for the second consecutive month that retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has remained within the target range of RBI which is 4 per cent (+/-2 per cent).

The retail inflation stood at 4.59 per cent in December 2020 and 7.59 per cent in January 2020. The previous low for retail inflation was in September 2019 at 4 per cent.

The rate of price rise in the food basket was 1.89 per cent in January this year, significantly down from 3.41 per cent in December, revealed the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).

"Driven by a fairly broad-based moderation in the food inflation, the CPI inflation in January 2021 softened appreciably to a 16-month low..."

"Food prices have displayed a mixed trend so far in February 2021. The rise in onion prices, as well as higher crude oil prices and their transmission into retail fuel prices are areas of concern that need to be monitored," said Aditi Nayar, principal economist, ICRA.

Vegetable prices showed further decline during the month with a negative inflation print of 15.84 per cent, while that of pulses and products eased to 13.39 per cent. Inflation in vegetable was (-)10.41 per cent and pulses and products at 15.98 per cent in the preceding

month (December 2020).

Likewise, protein rich 'meat and fish', eggs and 'milk and products' witnessed softening of inflation at 12.54 per cent, 12.85 per cent and 2.73 per cent, respectively.

The rate of price rise in 'fuel and light' category, however, picked up to 3.87 per cent as against 2.99 per cent.

Nayar also said in an uncomfortable trend, many of the non-food categories recorded a rise in inflation in January 2021, with inflation expected to resume an uptrend in February-March 2021.

"We do not think that today's softer-than-anticipated print creates the room for an imminent rate cut. If the pace of growth in Q4 FY2021 exceeds the prevailing tepid expectations, the stance may be revised to neutral in the June 2021 MPC review," she opined.

Earlier this month, the Reserve Bank lowered the retail inflation projection for the ongoing quarter of this fiscal at 5.2 per cent, saying it has returned within the "tolerance band".

The regulator expects retail inflation to be around 5.2-5 per cent in the first half of next fiscal year before easing further to 4.3 per cent in Q3 FY22.

"The inflation rate has come well below the RBI's threshold rate, and this actually gives some relief to the markets on the immediate trajectory of interest rates. However, core inflation is perched at 5.70 per cent, something that may take more time to move down," said Joseph Thomas, Head of Research - Emkay Wealth Management. PTI

NEWS MAKERS

Physical, Financial Achievements Under CSS, Capex Reviewed at Baramulla

Observer News Service

BARAMULLA: The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal today convened a meeting of concerned officers here, to review physical and financial achievements of Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Capex budget.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director stressed upon the officers of the department to work in a mission mode for achieving cent percent target both physical and financial under Capex and Centrally Sponsored schemes within the stipulated time.

He directed them to ensure that the budgetary allocations to their respective sub-divisions under different schemes and projects are uti-

lized judiciously.

The Director impressed upon the officers to play a proactive role in the execution of different schemes and programmes and further directed them to establish monitoring and vigilance committees at village level to monitor and verify the proceedings and progress on the ground level, so that accountability and transparency is maintained in the implementation of different schemes.

He reiterated the officers for maintaining documentation besides pre and post-photographic evidence of each activity conducted by the department.

Chowdhary said the need of the hour is to identify and explore Agri-based sectors to harness the impact in terms of economy and employment.

Regarding Apiculture and Mushroom sectors, the Director emphasized on the fact that Baramulla district has a lot of potential for development of these two sectors and stressed upon the concerned officers to take the farmers involved with these schemes on board to take these two sectors to new heights.

He said that the department will provide special funds for creating mushroom villages.

Joint Director Apiculture and Mushroom, Farooq Ahmad Shah, Joint Director Agriculture Extension, Mohammad Muzaffer Hurra, Joint Director Amir ud din Andrabi, Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla, and other district and sub divisional officers besides others concerned attended the meeting.

Commissioner Settlement Reviews Implementation Of DILRMP

KUPWARA: Commissioner Settlement, Shah Nawaz Bukhari today convened a meeting of Revenue Officers here to review the progress of updation, preparation of Jamabandies and implementation of 'Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme' (DILRMP) in Kupwara district.

At the outset, Assistant Commissioner Revenue apprised the Commissioner about the functioning and special efforts of revenue functionaries in streamlining the essential revenue records. He informed that all 379 Jamabandies have been completed in the district thus paving way for its digitalization.

The Commissioner expressed satisfaction over the progress of written Jamabandies and directed the concerned officers to keep records ready for digitalization within 10 days. He further directed them to fine tune the Jamaban-



dies after proper parital by Director S&LR for its digitalization.

Regional Director, S&LR, Baramulla, Nazir Ahmad Baba, Additional Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Nazir Ahmad Lone, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Bashir Ahmad Bhat, SDM Lolab, Aijaz Ahmad Bhat, Tehsildars and Naib Tehsildars attended the meeting.

Lufthansa Terminates Services Of 103 India-Based Flight Attendants

Lufthansa has terminated the services of 103 India-based flight attendants after they allegedly sought "job assurance" from the management while the German airlines group had offered them leave without pay option for two years, sources close to the developments said. These employees had been working on a fixed-term contract with the airline and some of them were with the carrier for more than 15 years, the sources added. In a statement to PTI, a Lufthansa spokesperson said that severe financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic leaves it with no choice but to restructure the airline and as part of that "it will not be extending the fixed-term employment contracts of its Delhi-based flight attendants". However, Lufthansa did not provide details on the number of flight attendants who have been terminated. According to the spokesperson, Indian cabin crew with unlimited contracts remain unaffected from restructuring as it "was able to reach individual agreements with these flight attendants".

LS Passes Bill

The statutory resolution, opposing the ordinance which the bill has replaced, was rejected by the House. An amendment too was defeated by a voice vote.

Introducing 'The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2021', Minister of State for Home Affairs G. Kishan Reddy said the government was working to take Jammu and Kashmir on the path to development.

He said around 170 central laws are being implemented in Jammu and Kashmir after abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution that gave a special status to the erstwhile state.

The government is implementing different development projects and schemes in Jammu and Kashmir, he added.

"I request the members to pass the bill," he added. Raising objections on the bill, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury asked "what was the need to bring an ordinance for this?"

He said regularly promulgating an ordinance is not good for a parliamentary democracy as an ordinance should be preceded by an emergency situation or any urgency.

"Our point of contention is loud and clear," he said, adding after abrogating Article 370, the government showed a "dream" to the people that they would "make heaven" in Jammu and Kashmir and create jobs there.

Introduction of this bill reflects that the government took the step of abrogating Article 370 without any preparation, Chowdhury alleged.

The Congress leader said Jammu and Kashmir is a sensitive state and the cadre should be local and officers having ground knowledge should be appointed there.

He alleged that militancy is still prevalent in the union territory and people are living in an atmosphere of fear.

The government tried to turn Jammu and Kashmir into a large prison, the opposition leader said, adding they blocked telecommunication services and failed to normalise the situation there.

"There is unemployment, restriction, lost avenues and total confusion," Chowdhury added.

He further said the government had promised to bring back Kashmiri Pandits to the Kashmir valley but has failed to ensure their return.

"Please think for Jammu and Kashmir with new ideas and do not take adhoc measures," he said, adding the government should make Jammu and Kashmir a state and create a cadre to appoint officers there.

Speaking against the bill, Hasnain Masoodi (J&K NC) said this bill is akin to an assault on the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"You are continuously increasing confusion...What is the objective of this bill?...You are taking Jammu and Kashmir towards uncertainty through this bill," he said, adding appointed officers should have connected with the ground realities.

He added that the government should restore the position of Jammu and Kashmir to that prior to August 5, 2019, PTI

Cricket Bats

The PM Modi led government in J&K was that today's youth in J&K are holding bats in their hands instead of guns.

"This is what we have done in J&K in just 17 months (post abrogation of article 370)," Shah said, adding that as far as the statehood to J&K UT, "it will be given at the right time."

He said that he was ready to give clarification to every issue raised in the parliament. "What did others (Congress) do in J&K for the past 70 years? What others couldn't do, we did just in 17 months," Shah said.

The Union Home Minister said that the country did not need Article 370 as there was no place for two constitutions in one country.

"We have covered 50,000 families under the health scheme and more people are being covered. Every single resident will be covered under this scheme," he said.

Shah said that 4G internet services were also restored across J&K and by 2022, J&K will be connected to the rest of the country through the train.

"We are doing everything possible to boost tourism," he said, adding two AIIMS are being set up in J&K while seven new medical colleges will come up in the UT soon.

"This will help 1100 youth of J&K to become doctors. And you (the opposition) is asking us what we have done?" he said.

He said dynasty rule prevailed in the UT for the past 70 years and those who ruled filled their own coffers.

"On the power sector front, in the past 70 years out of total availability of 14000 MWs only 3500 MWs were explored. In just 17 months, we ensured that 3450 MWs of power was generated. And members ask us what PM Modi led government has done in J&K," Shah said.

He said that the biggest hurdle for J&K's development was that people couldn't buy land there. "This issue stands resolved and factories are all set to come up in the J&K UT," Shah said. Today, the Union Home Minister said that J&K is far better than Rajasthan and Punjab.

He said people of J&K should not worry about their land as "nobody's land will be snatched."

"We have enough government land bank that can be used for setting up industries that will give fillip to J&K's economy," Shah said, adding "Land bank to be created out of the land being retrieved under Roshni Land retrieval process".

He further said that Congress and other parties gave away land under the Roshni scheme and his party was retrieving the same for setting up industries. "Roshni scheme has been rolled back as it was a major source of corruption," he said.

He said that Kashmiri Pandits living in various parts of the country are getting Rs 13000 on monthly basis while 3000 KPs have been provided jobs and process is on to build homes of 6000 KPs in J&K.

Promise Of Statehood

and accused it of alienating Kashmiris with actions like merger of Jammu and Kashmir civil services cadre with AGMUT.

Participating in a discussion on the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, Owaisi said that he stands firm on his earlier statement that the Article-370 was revoked unconstitutionally by the BJP-government on August 5, 2019.

"I oppose this Bill because my party believes that Article 370 was revoked unconstitutionally. I also oppose this Bill because Centre had said that they will restore J&K's statehood, but you are deviating from your promise. By integrating J&K cadre with the Centre, it is evident that promise of statehood was 'jumla'," he said.

The Hyderabad MP further said that J&K was the only Muslim-dominated state in India, yet their proportion in the state administration is less.

"Out of 24 secretary posts, only 5 are Kashmiri Muslims. In 58 IAS posts, only 12 are Muslims. As per the 2011 census, the population of Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir was 68.31 percent while the population of our Hindu brethren is 28 percent. Now coming to IPS, out of 66 posts, only seven are Muslims. And in Tier-2 out of 248 officers, only 108 are Muslims. What are you planning to do? He asked

Coming down at the government over the proposed tour of EU delegation to J&K next week, Owaisi said that

with such actions, the government was internationalising the issue.

"It is right that no other country must interfere in our internal issues. But you arranged for European Parliament officials to visit there and are again arranging a visit on 16 February. Why are you taking Europeans and not an all-party delegation there? Do you wish to internationalise this issue? How many children from Kashmir have housed in Agra, Bareilly and Ambedkar Nagar jails under PSA? When will you release them?" he asked.

"I want to warn all secular parties here. This government will repeat this again. God forbid if Chennai, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru and Hyderabad be made Union territories. People are applauding this move now when Lucknow, Bengaluru and Mumbai are made into UTs, they will lament," he said.

He also claimed that the government restored high speed internet in Jammu and Kashmir under the pressure of United States administration.

NC Welcomes HM's

and Kashmir and said this will be a step forward in fulfilling the aspirations of the people.

However, he questioned the boycott of District Development Council (DDC) chairperson elections by BJP members in three of the four districts in Jammu region leading to adjournment of the meetings and said it has dealt a setback to democracy.

"We welcome the statement of the Home Minister on full restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir which should not be made a political battlefield. All parties must rise above political silos and work towards restoring J&K to its glory," Rana told reporters at the party headquarters in the evening.

Speaking in the Lok Sabha, Shah asserted that the central government has done more for Jammu and Kashmir since Article 370 was scrapped in August 2019 than those who ruled it for generations, even as he assured that the Centre will grant full statehood to the Union Territory at an appropriate time.

However, Rana invited the attention of Shah towards what he called "political drama" enacted in Jammu region by the local unit of BJP after its DDC members did not turn up to take part in the DDC chairperson elections in Ramban, Rajouri and Kishtwar districts.

"Why did you boycott the process of democracy that you have been projecting all around as the restoration of democracy in J&K. You have failed the democratic process by boycotting it by a design," he said, adding, "The BJP must come clear on its intent and motivation behind the boycott, as it has raised many questions in the public mind. Jammu and Kashmir is part of India and such a happening weakens the democracy."

"We need to rise above political considerations, leave behind our interests and work in unison to strengthen democracy, democratic values and Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

He said the obstructive politics is not only an affront to the electors, who participated in the democratic process braving odds but also an unpardonable assault on the sustenance and evolution of democracy.

The NC leader questioned the rationale behind postponing the election process despite the presence of nine councillors in Kishtwar and Rajouri, which formed the quorum, as per Election Commission rules.

"Two-third majority accounts for 9.3 members which being less than 9.5 has to be counted as 9. The issue was taken up with the State Election Commissioner, K K Sharma, with a plea that the Division Bench of Jammu and Kashmir High Court had also upheld the judgement of the single bench in Purshotam Singh vs Public Service Commission case in 2004 with regard to quorum on similar lines," he added.

"We pleaded with the State Election Commissioner asking the rationale behind deferring the election process in Rajouri and Kishtwar where nine councillors each were present," he said.

The Provincial President regretted torpedoing the popular mandate not only by obstructing the process but also by browbeating and intimidating the elected representatives.

"A deplorable trend has been put in place by harassing the elected candidates and their families. This has serious ramifications for governance, with the neutrality and credibility of the administration becoming a casualty," he said.

Rana recalled the assurance held out by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to the National Conference delegation recently about impartiality of the administration in the conduct of polls for chairpersons and vice-chairpersons, hoping this will be adhered to in letter and spirit.

He said administrative non-interference should not only be ensured but should also appear so in its totality.

He said everybody knows that the decision of the electors of Kishtwar, Ramban and Rajouri is in favour of the National Conference and the obstructive methods were further exposing the BJP and its "sinister undemocratic motives".

Responding to a question about J&K BJP President Ravinder Raina affixing ranks on the shoulders of the promoted police personnel at an official function, the NC leader termed it as "unfortunate".

He deplored such tendencies and said such acts amounted to belittling the institution of the police.

He hailed the Jammu and Kashmir Police as one of the finest professional forces in the country, saying this image is needed to be sustained and preserved at all costs. PTI

Statehood To J&K

August 2019 than those who ruled it for generations.

Replying to a discussion on the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, he also slammed some Opposition members for their claim that the proposed law negates the hopes of the region getting back its erstwhile statehood.

The bill to merge the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) cadre of all-India services officers with the Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre was later passed by Lok Sabha by a voice vote.

The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2021 has already been passed by Rajya Sabha. It replaces an ordinance issued last month.

This legislation has nothing to do with statehood, and Jammu and Kashmir will be accorded the status at an appropriate time, Shah said.

He took a swipe at the Congress and other parties -- which had backed Article 370 of the Constitution that gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir -- saying this was a temporary provision but they continued with it for over 70 years before the Modi government annulled it.

Jammu and Kashmir has been a top priority for the current government since it took power in 2014, he said.

Responding to Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Shah said opposition parties were free to visit the region. Chowdhury had claimed that foreign delegations were being taken to the region, no all-party delegation was sent.

The home minister also gave the assurance to the people of Jammu and Kashmir that "no one will lose their land". The government has sufficient land for development works, Shah said.

Decentralisation and devolution of power have taken place in the union territory following the revocation of

Article 370, Shah said, noting that panchayat elections saw over 51 per cent voting. Panchayats have been given administrative and financial powers for local development, something they lacked earlier, he added.

Now people chosen by the masses will rule Jammu and Kashmir, not those born to "kings and queens", he said, attacking dynastic parties in the region.

Even our rivals could not allege any wrongdoing in these polls which were conducted fairly and peacefully, he said.

Work on two AIIMS in the region has begun, and the Kashmir Valley will be connected to the railways by 2022, the Union Home Minister said.

Attacking the opposition, he said while they were seeking a report card from the government about the development of Jammu and Kashmir since the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, "have you brought a report card of what you have done in the last 70 years".

Shah said the government expects that around 25,000 government jobs will be created in Jammu and Kashmir by 2022.

Replying to AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi, he said 4G services are resumed not under pressure of any foreign government.

"This is Modi's government and in this, the country's government and Parliament takes decisions for its people," he added.

Criticising Owaisi, he said the AIMIM leader was creating a divide between Hindu and Muslim officers.

Citing certain developmental projects, he said by 2022 we will be providing rail connectivity to Kashmir valley.

Since the imposition of President's rule in Jammu and Kashmir, the government has almost completed the work of giving electricity to every house.

Shah said the government has changed the land laws to facilitate setting up of industry. "We are providing Rs 13,000 per month cash assistance to those 44,000 displaced Kashmiri families who have 'Rahat Cards'," he said adding they were displaced because Congress had failed to provide them security.

"We should not do politics on Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. There are several issues over which politics can be done. These are sensitive places and people have suffered a lot. We need to assuage their feelings," he observed.

Participating in the discussion earlier, Owaisi said the bill will further alienate the Muslims and Kashmir. He also sought to know about the number of youths from the Valley arrested under the Public Security Act (PSA).

Manish Tewari (Cong) said when the government says the statehood will be restored, the bill to merge the J&K cadre with AGMUT is a contrary step.

Shah explained that states such as Mizoram, Goa and Arunachal Pradesh are part of the cadre and the suggestion is unfounded.

Attacking Chowdhury for his comment that the cadre should be local and officers having ground knowledge should be appointed there, Jamyang Namgyal, BJP MP from Ladakh, said when local officers were appointed the Valley on the same logic, there was no let up in cases of terrorism.

He said when it came to promoting locals it was not applied to the Valmikis, Gorkhas and those came from west Pakistan.

Namgyal said the move will ensure that efficient and experienced officers will be able to work in Ladakh and even officers from the UT can work in other parts of the country.

160 Earthquakes

witnessed another earthquake of mild intensity.

Most parts of Kashmir come under Seismic Zone V and are prone to earthquakes. Experts give varied reasons for earthquakes in J&K including various faults run through Kashmir and exploding of gases. Kashmir valley is vulnerable to disasters. At least 13 districts out of 100 districts in India have been identified as 'multi hazard districts'.

According to the Indian Meteorological Department, most parts of Kashmir covering the districts of Srinagar, Ganderbal, Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora, Budgam, Anantnag and parts of Jammu region, Doda, Ramban, Kishtwar come under Seismic Zone V and are prone to earthquakes. While the rest part of the state comes under Seismic Zone IV.

A senior official of the Meteorological Department said the frequent earthquakes have proved that people and the government should be well prepared in dealing with such incidents.

"We need to take some measures like building earthquake resistant constructions," he said.

He said people should be well prepared for earthquakes.

"We can't predict the timing, magnitude and place of an earthquake but we should be well prepared in dealing with any such natural disaster," he added.

Meanwhile, Friday's earthquake that forced people out of their homes in panic and fear has also caused damage to dozens of houses in parts of the Valley, especially in north Kashmir, an official said Saturday.

"Final details are yet to come. It will take a few days to know exact details about damages," he said.

In North Kashmir, the official said Kupwara is the most affected district where many houses have developed cracks due to the impact of jolts. (With KINS inputs)

Polls for DDC Chiefs

district and an independent candidate won from Baramulla.

The PAGD is an amalgam of six parties, including the NC and the PDP, seeking the restoration of the special status of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir which was revoked by the Centre in August 2019.

In Bandipora, the candidate of PAGD, Abdul Gani Bhat from the NC was elected the chairperson, while Kaunsar Shafeeq of the PDP was elected as the vice-chairperson, the officials said. They said Bhat polled seven votes out of the total 13, while Shafeeq secured eight votes.

One of the 14 DDC seats in the district is vacant as the result has not been declared yet. The counting of the votes in two DDC constituencies has been kept in abeyance to clear doubts over the citizenship of two of the contesting candidates from Bandipora and Kupwara districts.

Two persons hailing from Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK), who are married to former militants, are among the contestants from the Dragnmulla, in Kupwara, and Hajin-A, in Bandipora, constituencies.

In Baramulla, where the election was postponed earlier this week due to lack of quorum, an independent candidate Safina Baig won the poll for the post of the chairperson, while Sonullah Parrey of Peoples Conference bagged the position of the vice-chairperson, the officials said.

They said Baig, the wife of former PDP leader Muzaffar Hussain Baig, polled 10 votes, while her rival got only four. For the post of the vice-chairperson, Parrey and an independent candidate Irfan Hafiz Lone got seven votes each, they said.

The officials said a draw of lots was then held to determine the winner, by virtue of which Parrey was declared as elected. The PAGD has won five chairperson posts in the valley after the successes in Kulgam, Ganderbal,

Pulwama and Anantnag.

In Jammu, while independents won both the posts in Poonch district, voting could not take place in the three districts of Ramban, Rajouri and Kishtwar where PAGD enjoys the majority and was poised to head the DDCs with support from Congress or independents.

The National Conference which along with the Peoples Democratic Party is the main constituent of the PAGD, which emerged the largest party in Ramban and Kishtwar by winning six seats each, besides five seats in Rajouri district.

Against the requirement of 10 members out of total 14, only nine members each, mostly from PAGD and Congress, attended the meeting in Rajouri, Ramban and Kishtwar districts, prompting the concerned district panchayat election officers to adjourn the meetings citing lack of quorum, the officials said. They said the date for the second meeting would be notified by the authorities separately but the quorum for the second meeting will be eight as the rules mandate that election will take place if only a simple majority is present.

While Kishtwar and Ramban are reserved for women, Poonch is reserved for scheduled tribe women and Rajouri for Scheduled Tribes.

However, elections were held in Poonch district where independent candidate Tazim Akhtar was elected to the post of chairperson and Mohammad Ashfaq won the post of vice chairperson.

"I will work with passion to ensure development of the border district," Akhtar said after becoming the first DDC chairperson in Poonch.

Akhtar was among eight independents who had won the maiden DDC elections held in November-December last year from Poonch. Congress had got four territorial constituencies and National Conference (NC) two in the district.

In Kishtwar, NC DDC member from Thakrai territorial constituency, Shareefa Begum along with a sarpanch Farooq Ahmad joined J&K Apni Party (JKAP) on the day of the voting.

Senior National Conference leader from Ramban Sajad Shaheen accused the BJP of using different tactics to pressurize DDC members into submission.

"The DDC members are being offered money and bungalows to change their loyalties. Those who are not ready are being threatened along with their families," he claimed.

In the earlier three phases covering six districts of Jammu, Kathua, Samba, Udhampur, Doda and Reasi, the BJP had won six DDC chairpersons' and five vice-chairpersons' posts, while one vice chairperson post was secured by an independent candidate in Reasi district.

Top Militant

outfit and the arrest of Rather comes a week after police arrested commander of Lashkar-e-Mustafa Hidayatullah Malik alias "Hasnain" from Kunjwani area of Jammu.

Rather, a resident of south Kashmir, had reportedly moved to Samba to receive an arms consignment from Pakistan and was arrested from his rented accommodation in Bari Brahmana area during a joint raid by Anantnag and Samba police, the official said.

Termining the arrest of the top militant as a "major breakthrough", he said he was involved in the killing of three BJP workers in Kulgam and a policeman at Furra village in south Kashmir district last year.

Security officials said Rather had undergone arms training in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK) in 2004 and infiltrated into India along with five foreign militants. However, he surrendered in 2006 but got recycled into militancy last year after joining the TRF.

The interrogation of the captured militant is underway and some more arrests and recoveries are expected at his disclosure, the official said.

Govt Panel

on Saturday, Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Manoj Kumar Dwivedi accorded sanction to the constituting of a committee, for continuously supervising the updation of official websites of various Government Department and Districts of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

According to the order, the committee comprises of Secretary to the Government, Information Technology Department as Chairman while State Informatics Officer, National Informatics Centre (NIC), Civil Secretariat, Jammu and representative of Jammu and Kashmir e-Governance Agency (JaKeGA), to be nominated by Secretary to the Government, Information Technology Department as members.

The committee has been asked to frame SOPs to ensure that all the Government websites are updated regularly by departments/districts and also to monitor and guide NIC in designing Government websites so as to make them more informative, interactive and user-friendly.

It has also been directed to ensure that the Government websites have easy interfaces/access to all important Circulars/Notifications/Acts and to ensure that websites become easy means for accessing/enrolling in Government schemes/programmes.

Absconder Arrested

the concerned police officials how much interest they show in cracking the case," he added.

The official further said that the accused was produced before the Forest Magistrate by Police for obtaining remand.

Choudhary Given

commissioner in Shopian, less than a month after Shrikant Balasaheb Suse (IAS) took charge of the south Kashmir district.

"In the interest of administration, Baseer-ul-Haq Chaudhary, IAS (JK:2015), Deputy Commissioner, Kargil and Sachin Kumar Vaishy, IAS (JK:2015), Deputy Commissioner, Leh (are) recalled from Union territory of Ladakh to the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, according to an order issued by the government.

Consequently Baseer-ul-Haq Chaudhary was asked to report to the General Administration Department for further posting.

Sachin Kumar Vaishy has been posted as Deputy Commissioner, Shopian while Suse, who took charge as the DC of the south Kashmir on January 18 last, has been transferred and deputed to Ladakh with immediate effect. Also, Santosh Sukhadavee-~~IAS~~(JK:2017), SubDivisional Magistrate, Mahore, holding additional charge of Sub-Registrar, Mahore, has been transferred and deputed to Ladakh. Faz Lul Haseeb (IAS) Sub Divisional Magistrate, Dharmari, has been ordered to hold the charge of the posts of SDM Mahore and Sub-Registrar, Mahore, in addition to his own duties, till further orders.

Panchayat Related

the Panchayat level.

"The proposed overhaul in the administrative structure for Panchayats is aimed at strengthening the 3rd-tier of democracy through a cadre of trained professionals, as per the spirit of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act," the spokesman said.

He said the decision would give way to a uniform structure of the officials performing the duties of secretary to Panchayats by re-designating the posts of village-level worker and gram sevika as Panchayat secretary.

Likewise, posts such as mukhya sevika, Panchayat

supervisor, lady project officer, cooperative extension officer, plantation ranger, road roller operator, katib, and photographer, which have become redundant, will be utilized for the creation of posts in tandem with contemporary dynamics of the department, the spokesman said.

Further, to streamline the career progression of employees, the posts of Panchayat Inspector Grade I & Grade II will be merged into a single cadre of Panchayat Inspector.

Similarly, five different categories of class IV posts having similar functions and pay scale will be clubbed in a single category as orderlies to simplify the hierarchical structure, he said.

Mehbooba 'Barred'

house arrest as usual for trying to visit the family of Athar Mushtaq killed allegedly in a fake encounter. His father was booked under UAPA for demanding his dead body. This the normalcy GOI wants to showcase to the EU delegation visiting Kashmir (sic), Mehbooba said on Twitter.

She also uploaded a video of her interaction with her security staff at her 'Fairview' residence in the Gupkar area here.

This reign of suppression & terror in Kashmir is the unvarnished & unpalatable truth that GOI wants to hide from the rest of the country. A 16 year old is killed & then hurriedly buried denying his family the right & chance to perform his last rites (sic), she said in another tweet.

In the video, when Mehbooba asks security officials why she was being stopped from visiting Pulwama, they tell her there is a security problem .

The PDP chief said she was being stopped from visiting different areas of the Valley without being informed about the reasons.

Why am I not being allowed to go? Am I a prisoner, or a criminal? What is the reason? Show me the orders, the sections, under which I am being detained, she told the officials.

Mehbooba claimed the gate of her house was locked and additional security forces were put outside it to stop her from leaving the residence.

Referring to the upcoming visit of a delegation of the European Union, Mehbooba asked the officials how can the security forces secure them when they cannot provide security to the people here.

When you cannot provide security to me, how are you going to secure the delegation?... Let you keep my security and allow me to go there without the security. You cannot keep the gates of my residence locked always, she says in the video.

Barring Gulmarg,

Celsius, up from minus 4.6 degrees Celsius the previous night.

Kupwara town, in north Kashmir, registered a low of minus 0.3 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag, in the south, 0.2 degrees Celsius.

The minimum temperature in the famous ski-resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir, settled at minus 3.8 degrees Celsius last night, down from minus 2.4 degrees Celsius the previous night, the officials said.

They said the resort was the only place in the valley where the minimum temperature dropped last night.

The Meteorological (MeT) Office has said the while the weather is expected to remain mainly dry in the plains of Jammu and Kashmir, there is a possibility of very light snowfall on the higher reaches.

Court Orders

the online application."

The complainant submitted that he tried to contact the customer care center of the "online application" but there was no response."The complainant is not the only victim of the application but the millions of people who have invested in the said mobile application continuously from the last two months have also been duped."

He said that the modus operandi of the application with the office at Bangalore was to deceive the innocent people by grabbing their amount and running away.

'If You Want To Sweep, You Sweep,' Rohit Sharma Reveals Art Behind His Knock Against England



Press Trust of India

CHENNAI: India opener Rohit Sharma is very clear in his mind that even an iota of doubt while playing the sweep shot on a rank turner could lead to inevitable trouble.

With one of the best exhibitions of sweep shots played at the Chepauk since Sachin Tendulkar's valiant 136 against Pakistan in 1999, Rohit has put his team in a commanding position on a track that is deteriorating pretty fast.

England know a tough task await them in the second Test, which started here on Saturday.

"Before it's too late, you start doing what you want to do and you can't be tentative. If you want to sweep, you sweep it," Rohit's statement had a touch of Mexican bandit Tuco Ramirez's famous punch line – "When you have to shoot, shoot, don't talk" from the Hollywood classic 'The Good The Bad The Ugly'.

Having watched Joe Root play the Indian spinners in the first Test, it was like a ready reckoner for Rohit, who had prepared well during the last two training sessions.

"We knew how the pitch was prepared and we knew that it would turn. So we had a good few training sessions before today and trained according to what we were supposed to expect today," he said. "When you play on turning pitches where you have to be proactive and you can't be reactive. Getting on top of the bowler and making sure you are ahead of him. Little adjustment based on that."

"If it's turning, then how much of it... things like that before making decisions on shot selection," said Rohit.

Moeen Ali had troubled the Indian batsmen in the past and for Rohit, it was imperative that England's senior off-spinner needed to be swept from the rough to negate any chance of a leg before decision.

"What helped me was preparation I had before the game. Understanding the line that Moeen

Ali was bowling. He was bowling into the rough, so there is a slight chance of getting leg before decision," he explained.

"Also I saw the deep square leg was pushed back, so even if I top-edged it wouldn't carry and land in safe place. Those were my ideas and thoughts."

According to Rohit, sweep is a percentage shot, which takes the condition of the pitch out of the equation.

"Sweep shot is something that you know can frustrate a bowler if you are playing that very well. If you play that shot, there is not much that the bowler can do from there or pitch can do from there."

"It was a percentage shot to play as he was bowling outside off-stump and lbw doesn't come to play. Only an odd ball he was bowling on the wicket where I wanted to use my feet and cover the spin while reaching towards the ball."

In the case of left-arm spinner Jack Leach, it was about presenting a straight bat.

"Leach was bowling stump-to-stump, so it was important that I play with the turn. It was important to play with a straight bat as the turn was slightly angled. I was making sure that I push the ball between cover and point and rotate the strike."

"Once you rotate strike, it's not easy for a bowler to bowl to a different batter every time. I wanted to bat as long as possible since the pitch is going to show a lot of wear and tear from days two and three."

The 'Hit-Man' didn't want to rate any of his hundreds even though he would know in his heart that this would be the top most among his seven three-figure marks.

"I am not going to rate any of my knocks because every knock comes under different kind of pressure and this came under different circumstances."

"I am not the person to rate any of my knocks. Little disappointed to get out like that but happy that team is in a good position," he said.

Lukman Adefemi Hat Trick Gives Real Kashmir 4-3 Victory Over Defiant NEROCA

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Real Kashmir FC's Nigerian export Lukman Adefemi on Saturday scored with his head, his right foot and then his left foot to complete a perfect hat trick against a defiant NEROCA FC side in The Hero I-League match played at Kalyani Municipal Stadium, Kalyani.

Lukman opened the score for his side with a 9th minute header before smashing another goal, this time with his right foot, in the 24th minute to give his side a 2-0 lead.

The determined NEROCA side found its way back in the 29 minute of the match through a goal by their defender Varney Kallon.

Real Kashmir captain Mason Robertson then restored their 2-goal lead with a goal in the 35th minute.

However, NEROCA struck back again in the extra time of first half, with midfielder Khaiminthang Lungdim scoring



past Real Kashmir Goalkeeper Mithun Samanta. At half-time the scoreline read 3-2 in favour of Real Kashmir.

In the second half of the match NEROCA continued to showcase their attacking threat and were rewarded with the 3-3 equaliser in the 57th minute through left-winger Songpu Singst.

With emotions running high in the high-scoring match, the Srinagar-based Snow Leopards showed their title credentials by

scoring the winning goal of the match in the 63rd minute. Danish Bhat found Lukman on a counter-attack and the Nigerian blasted the ball past NEROCA Goalkeeper to complete his hat trick and to win the game 4-3 for Real Kashmir.

Kashmiri-duo of Danish Bhat and Farhan Ganie played the full 90 minutes for RKFC.

The victory takes the Snow Leopards into second place of the I-League table, having raked in 13 points from 7 games.

IND VS ENG 2ND TEST

Rohit Sharma Slams 161 To Propel India To 300/6 At Stumps On Day 1

Press Trust of India

CHENNAI: Opener Rohit Sharma slammed a magnificent 161 before India stuttered in the final session to reach 300 for six on the opening day of the second Test against England here on Saturday.

At stumps, Rishabh Pant and debutant Axar Patel were batting on 33 and 5, respectively.

Seeking to level the four-match series after their defeat in the first Test, India opted to bat after winning the toss. The hosts lost Shubman Gill without any run on the board but Rohit added 85 for the second wicket with Cheteshwar Pujara (21).

India, then, saw Pujara and captain Virat Kohli, who has also failed to open his account, fall in quick succession as they slumped to 86 for three.

Looking in great nick, Rohit found an able ally in vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane (67) as the two senior batsmen forged a



partnership of 162 runs for the fourth wicket at the MA Chidambaram Stadium.

Rohit, who scored his seventh century in the Test format on Saturday, struck 18 boundaries and two sixes, much to the delight of those present inside the stadium, the first time for an international cricket match in India amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rohit faced 231 deliveries during his stay in the middle, which was eventually cut short

by left-arm spinner Jack Leach in the final session of play, while Rahane hit nine fours before being dismissed by Moeen Ali.

India lost three wickets in the final session after sitting pretty at 248 for three.

Brief Scores:

India 1st innings: 300 for 6 in 88 overs (Rohit Sharma 161, Ajinkya Rahane 67; Jack Leach 2/78, Moeen Ali 2/112.

Controversial Third Umpire Decision Leaves England Team Miffed



Press Trust of India

CHENNAI: A Decision Review System (DRS) referral was on Saturday restored to England after an error by the third umpire on the opening day of the second Test against India here.

England were left frustrated and their captain Joe Root miffed after a blunder by third umpire Anil Chaudhary denied them the wicket of India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane and a DRS review.

However, a few moments after it became clear that Chaudhary had erred, England's review was reinstated.

The incident took place in the 75th over of the day when a Jack Leach delivery brushed Rahane's gloves on the way to the forward short-leg fielder Ollie Pope.

As England appealed for a catch off the gloves, it was turned down by the on-field umpire before Chaudhary, failing to read the correct passage of play, also rejected the review thinking that the ball had landed outside the leg-stump and that the visitors had appealed for an LBW.

However, the visitors appeared to

clarify that they were appealing for a catch off the glove and not the bat.

Seeing the replays on the big screen, Root was left unimpressed and the skipper also raised the matter with the on-field umpires. Chaudhary turned down that also as England lost a review.

The review was later restored to England as per ICC playing conditions. As per 3.6.8 of the ICC's playing conditions: A Player Review categorised as 'Unsuccessful' may be reinstated by the ICC Match Referee at his/her sole discretion (if appropriate after consultation with the ICC Technical Official and/or the television broadcast director) if the Player Review could not properly be concluded due to a failure of the technology.

Rahane, though, was dismissed six balls later, bowled by Moeen Ali for 67. There was also some issue over a stumping attempt by Ben Foakes against Rohit Sharma when he appeared to drag his backfoot to a Leach delivery.

Though TV replays showed Rohit's backfoot to be on the line, the third umpire reckoned some part of it was behind the line and ruled him not out.

Bopanna Knocked Out Of Mixed Doubles Ending India's Campaign In Australian Open

Press Trust of India

MELBOURNE: Veteran Rohan Bopanna crashed out of the mixed doubles event with a straight-set loss in the opening round to draw curtains on India's campaign at this year's Australian Open here on Saturday.

Bopanna and his Chinese partner Yingying Duan lost 4-6 4-6 to the pair of American Bethanie Mattek-Sands and United Kingdom's Jamie Murray in a first round match that lasted an hour and three minutes.

Bopanna and Japan's Ben McLachlan had earlier bowed out of the men's doubles event after a 4-6 6-7 (0) defeat to the Korean wild card

pair of Ji Sung Nam and Min-Kyu Song in an opening round match.

Divij Sharan and Ankita Raina had already crashed out of the men's and women's doubles events after suffering straight-set defeats in the opening round on Thursday.

Ankita, the fifth Indian woman tennis player ever to secure a place in the main draw of a Grand Slam event, and her partner Mihaela Buzarnescu of Romania lost 3-6 0-6 at the hands of Australian wild cards Olivia Gadecki and Belinda Woolcock.

Divij and his Slovakian teammate Igor Zelenay lost 1-6 4-6 to the German combination of Yannick Hanfmann Kevin Krawietz in the first round.

Small Barmy Army Group Enjoys Day Out At The Chepauk

Press Trust of India

CHENNAI: The Barmy Army may not be in full force at Chepauk owing to the COVID-19 pandemic-related restrictions but they are keen to make their presence felt during the second India-England Test.

A group of six belonging to the Barmy Army from various parts of India is in the city to catch action from the match that got underway here on Saturday. Barmy Army follows the England cricket team on tours across the world.

According to Joe Phelan, who works in New Delhi, "The atmosphere is fantastic."

"There's six of us, from Mumbai, Delhi and Hyderabad and we have made it here to support the England cricket team. It is a nice feeling to be at the ground and cheer for our team," he told PTI.

Asked if he and the other members of the group gave it a lot of thought before making the trip to

the southern city, Phelan responded in the negative.

"No... the (COVID cases) numbers have dropped a lot, we took precautions, wearing our PPEs but we were pleased to be coming here," he said.

Phelan said he was enjoying the atmosphere at the MA Chidambaram Stadium and there was a lot of buzz around.

"The atmosphere is fantastic... I think if there was 50,000 or 60,000 it would be incredible. Everyone is good natured here and love their cricket. There is a lot of noise and buzz and it is great fun," he said.

Phelan said the Barmy Army enjoyed singing, adding "win or lose", we always sing as the six-member group enjoyed the day under the sun by belting out some songs.

He said it was good that fans had been allowed entry which meant members of the Barmy Army here could come down to watch the England team in action.

"It is good that the authorities permitted entry of spectators into the stadium which meant we could come down and watch the match at the stadium."

"We hope to watch play here for two days before getting back to work. Fans are a huge part of sport, and they help it grow," he added.

On the COVID-19 protocols, he said, "I see most people have got their masks on. I would say they realise the risk they face. It is good to be among the spectators..."

The Barmy Army member also said the authorities had made good arrangements for the fans, with sanitisers being provided, apart from health kiosks.

"Yeah, the arrangements are fine. We got our own sanitisers and our own masks. Sanitisers are being provided for the spectators and health kiosks have been set up. There is good signage here, telling people what to do," he added.

Phelan appreciated the efforts

of the cricketers to entertain the people and said by watching sporting action, many like him felt better during the lockdown.

"COVID-19 has taken a toll on everyone. Sport has helped us, those who like sports feel a lot better. There is very bad lockdown in the UK now. Here in India, we have had a long lockdown."

"The lockdown made us remember to appreciate what normal life is like. So we are very lucky to be able to come here. Appreciate the cricketers for the effort they make to give us some entertainment," he said.

Asked what he thought about the day's proceedings, Phelan said India opener Rohit Sharma, who scored a sparkling ton, was brilliant.

"It is fantastic. Rohit has been brilliant and England have worked really hard and there have been a few misses. It has been an enjoyable day for us, though it could be better," he said.

Three More Indian Race Walkers Qualify For Tokyo Olympics With New National Records Set

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Three Indian race walkers qualified for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics during the National Open Race Walking Championships here on Saturday, with Sandeep Kumar and Priyanka Goswami shattering national records in the men's and women's 20km events respectively.

The National Open Race Walking Championships are the first major athletics event after the end of a COVID-19 lockdown, which had caused the entire domestic calendar to be wiped out last season.

With the three new entrants, the total number of Indian race

walkers who have qualified for the Tokyo Games has swelled to five as K T Irfan (men's 20km) and Bhawana Jat (women's 20km) have already made the cut earlier.

Sandeep clocked 1 hour 20 minutes and 16 seconds to win the men's group A 20km event while Goswami emerged victorious in the corresponding women's group A event with a time of 1:28:45.

Rahul, who finished second in the men's group A 20km race walk event with a time of 1:20:26, also qualified for the Tokyo Olympics.

The Tokyo Olympics qualification time for men's and

women's 20km race walk event are 1:21:00 and 1:31:00 respectively. A country can send a maximum of three athletes in an individual event.

Sandeep, who represented India in the 2016 Rio Olympics in the 50km race walk event, bettered the earlier national record of 1:20:21, which was jointly held by Irfan and Devender Singh.

On Saturday, Irfan could not finish the race. He had qualified for the Tokyo Olympics way back in March 2019 during the Asian Race Walking Championships in Nomi, Japan.

Goswami, on the other hand, erased the earlier women's na-

tional record of 1:29:54 which was in the name of Bhawana, who finished second on Saturday with a time of 1:32:59.

Bhawana had qualified for the Olympics by winning the women's 20km event in the last edition of the National Race Walking Championships here just before the pandemic struck.

Besides the five race walkers, javelin throwers Neeraj Chopra and Shivpal Singh, 3000m steeplechaser Avinash Sable and the 4x400m mixed relay team have so far qualified for the Olympics in the track and field.

The Olympics are scheduled to be held in July-August this year.

Launching Elite Educational Consultancy in Kashmir

Indus Discoveries is proud to announce its partnership with Theseus Aspire, a leading Educational Consultancy in the United Kingdom.

Yasin Zargar – Managing Director of Indus Discoveries – has long been aware of the difficulties faced by aspiring students from Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh in seeking education overseas.

He has seen many moist eyes and is aware of the numerous distressed parents who have been misled and traduced by people purporting to be agents.

He has therefore decided to act – and create this partnership with one of the leading educationalists in the UK, Dr Dominic Shellard – to offer value for money support to ensure students are given the highest quality support to achieve their dreams of the finest international education.

Helping students from Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh in education is his particular passion and this is why he is extremely excited to announce this partnership.

Dominic Shellard, the Founder of Thesus Aspire in the United Kingdom comments:

"I am delighted to be partnering with Mr Yasin Zargar and Indus in this unique collaboration to provide honest, ethical advice and support to students from Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh who have aspirations to study at a British university."

The pandemic has shrunk many horizons, but we are committed to forging the very strongest links between Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh and the UK.

Throughout my career as a Shakespearean scholar, Professor of English Literature, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor, I have always believed in the transformative power of education. I also believe in education as a social good."

Nowhere is this more appreciated than in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh and I am looking forward to helping generations of these students graduate from excellent British universities.

As our opening initiative, we will be offering the following FREE presentations delivered by Dr Dominic Shellard:

**Why study in the UK?
How to get a place at a British university
How to revise successfully for your exams**

Please register your interest here:
aspire@indusdiscoveries.com

Taking its name from the river Indus that nurtured the subcontinent's first inhabitants, Yasin Zargar set up Indus Discoveries in year 2000.

Yasin has 38 years' experience as a professional in Global Tourism Business, thus bringing with him unrivalled knowledge and expertise to this area.

His passion has been to help students from Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh realise their dreams. In 2012 he pledged to help bring Vidya Bhawan School in Srinagar back on its feet. With just 14 students studying in a nearly collapsed school building in 2012, the school now has 84 students

and has completed most of the renovations to the school building including a new chemistry laboratory.

Yasin Zargar graduated in science from S.P College Srinagar, studied French at Kashmir university, he is a fellow of Institute of Travel & Tourism London and Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society in London For further information, contact:

e-mail: aspire@indusdiscoveries.com

Dr Dominic Shellard is the Founder of AceTute Ltd (www.acetute.com), an online learning company dedicated to linking high quality British teachers and academics with Indian students, as well as the Founder of Theseus Aspire (www.theseusaspire.co.uk), an elite educational counselling service.

Educated at St Peter's College, Oxford University, where he was awarded an MA in English and German and a DPhil in English Literature, he is a renowned theatre scholar, having authored 10 books, including Shakespeare: A Writer's Life (British Library and Oxford University Press).

In an academic career spanning over 25 years, Dr Shellard was the Head of the School of English and the Pro-Vice Chancellor for External Affairs at the University of Sheffield, before becoming the youngest Vice-Chancellor in the UK at DMU in 2010. A recipient of the Gandhi Global Seva Medal from the Gandhi Global Family – the J&K based UN NGO – for services to Social Good in India and the UK, Dr Shellard founded Theseus Global (Education) Ltd in 2019 to further his passion for international education.

30% Pay Cut For 7 Staff Of Maharashtra Local Body For Neglecting Parents

Press Trust of India

AURANGABAD: Latur Zilla Parishad in Maharashtra has started deducting 30 per cent salaries of seven of its employees for not taking care of their old parents, its president Rahul Bondre said on Saturday.

Notably, six of the 12 employees against whom the complaints of neglecting their parents were received, are teachers, he told PTI.

The deducted amount is transferred in the bank accounts of the parents of these employees, he added.

The general body of the Latur Zilla Parishad had passed a proposal to cut 30 per cent salaries of all employees found to be not taking care of their parents in November

last year.

The pay cut from the monthly emoluments of the erring employees began in December, 2020, Mr Bondre said.

"We have been probing 12 such complaints wherein parents of the employees claimed that they were neglected. Out of these 12, we began deducting salaries from accounts of seven employees since December," he said.

Mr Bondre said the 30 per cent deduction will continue every month.

He said the average deduction in one such case was around 15,000.

"Some cases were mutually resolved between employees and their parents after we sent notices to them," Mr Bondre added.

No New Deaths Due To Covid Reported In 17 States In India: Centre



Press Trust of India

New Delhi: The distribution of daily deaths among states and union territories in a span of 24 hours reflects a significant decline, with 17 of them not reporting any new COVID-19 fatality, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday.

A total of 17 states and union territories that have not reported any new deaths in the last 24 hours are Telangana, Odisha, Jharkhand, Puducherry, Chandigarh, Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Ladakh, Mizoram, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Tripura, Lakshadweep, Arunachal Pradesh and Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

While a total of 13 states and UTs have reported between 1-5 new deaths due to COVID-19.

Meanwhile, India has vaccinated close to 80 lakh beneficiaries against COVID-19, the ministry said.

Till 8 AM on February 13, a total of 79,67,647 beneficiaries have been administered shots under the countrywide COVID-19 vaccination exercise. Out of these, 5,909,136 are healthcare workers and 2,058,511 are frontline workers. A total of 1,64,781 sessions have been conducted so far.

On day 28 (February 12) of the vaccination drive, 4,62,637 beneficiaries (healthcare workers- 94,160 and frontline workers- 3,68,477) were vaccinated across 10,411 sessions, the ministry said.

The number of beneficiaries being vaccinated every day has

shown a consistent enhancement, it underlined.

Eight states account for 60 per cent (59.70 per cent) of the total beneficiaries vaccinated in India.

These eight states have vaccinated over 4,00,000 beneficiaries each. Uttar Pradesh alone accounts for 10.8 per cent (8,58,602 beneficiaries) of the total beneficiaries in India.

India's total COVID-19 active caseload currently stands at 1.36 lakh (1,36,571) comprising just 1.25 per cent of the total infections.

A total of 1,06,00,625 people have recovered so far with 11,395 patients getting discharged in a day.

The ministry said 81.93 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in six states.

Kerala has reported the maximum number of single-day recoveries, with 5,332 newly-recovered cases. A total of 2,42,222 people recovered in Maharashtra in the past 24 hours, followed by 486 in Tamil Nadu.

A total 12,143 daily new cases registered in a span of 24 hours, it said, adding that 86.01 per cent of the new cases are from six states.

Kerala continues to report the highest daily new cases at 5,397, followed by Maharashtra with 3,670, while Tamil Nadu reported 483 new cases.

Further, 103 deaths were recorded in a span of 24 hours.

Six states account for 80.58 per cent of the new deaths. Maharashtra saw the maximum of 36 casualties. Kerala follows with 18 daily deaths, while Karnataka and Punjab reported 8 deaths each.



Data Breach: 3.2 Billion Email And Password Leaked

Agencies

It is found that more than 3.2 billion email and password pairs are posted online. According to a news report, it is being called the biggest breach of all time and the mother of all breaches: COMB, or the Compilation of Many Breaches.

It is assumed that the data has been compiled due to breach that is taking place in various platforms like Gmail, Netflix, LinkedIn among others. According to Cybernews, COMB would include

the data of nearly 70 per cent of global internet users. The online users who use the same login and password for various sites have been largely impacted.

It is unclear how much of these data has been used for further wrong doings. In addition, Cybernews is allowing users to check if their email and password was breach.

Data leaks have been a very common phenomenon today.

Meanwhile, FE reported that Slack is informing a large section of its users to change their passwords as the company had stored the pass-

words of its users in plain text for a period of a month between December 21, 2018 and Jan 21, 2019. "The company has strongly recommended its users to change their password as the hackers may have got the access to the password through plain text storage," stated the report.

In January this year, there was a report about information of over 100 million debit and credit card users being leaked online from payments processor Juspay. The payment gateway processes payments for companies like Amazon, Swiggy, MakeMyTrip among others.

Parliamentary Panel On Defence Plans To Visit Galwan, Pangong Tso

Agencies

The parliamentary standing committee on defence has decided to visit the Galwan valley and Pangong Tso lake in the eastern Ladakh region, which has been witness to a stand-off between the troops of India and China, sources said on Friday.

The 30-member committee—chaired by senior BJP leader and former Union minister Jai Oram and of which Rahul Gandhi is also a member—wishes to visit the eastern Ladakh region in the last week of May or in June. The decision to visit these areas was taken in the panel's last meeting, which was not attended by Rahul Gandhi, sources said, adding since the panel intends to visit the LAC, it depends on approval from the government.

After a nine-month standoff, the two militaries reached an agreement on disengagement in the north and south banks of Pangong lake that mandates both sides to cease forward deployment of troops in a "phased, coordinated and verifiable" manner.

On Thursday, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh made a detailed statement in Parliament on the disengagement pact.

According to the agreement, China has to pull back its troops to east of Finger 8 in the northern bank while the Indian personnel will be based at their permanent base at



Dhan Singh Thapa Post near Finger 3 in the region.

Similar action will take place on the south bank of the lake as well, Singh said in Parliament.

India has not "conceded" any territory to China by firming up an agreement on the disengagement process in Pangong Tso in eastern Ladakh, and other outstanding "problems" including in Depsang, Hot Springs and Gogra will be taken up at the upcoming talks between military commanders of the two countries, the defence ministry said on Friday.

The statement by the ministry came hours after Rahul Gandhi alleged that the government has "ceded" Indian territory to China and raised questions over the agreement on the disengagement process.

The ministry also dubbed as "categorically false" the assertion

that Indian territory is up to Finger 4 in the Pangong Tso area, adding the permanent posts of both sides in the area are "long-standing and well-established".

"India has not conceded any territory as a result of this agreement. On the contrary, it has enforced observance and respect for LAC and prevented any unilateral change in the status quo," the ministry said in the strongly-worded statement.

The MEA also said the two countries have agreed to convene the 10th round of senior commanders' meeting within 48 hours after complete disengagement in the Pangong Lake area to address the remaining issues, and added that no date has been set for the meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) on India-China border affairs.

2 White Tiger Cubs In Pakistan Likely Died Of COVID-19, Zoo Officials Say



LAHORE: Two 11-week-old white tiger cubs that died in a Pakistani zoo last month appear to have died of COVID-19, officials said.

The cubs died in the Lahore Zoo on Jan. 30, four days after beginning treatment for what officials thought was feline panleukopenia virus, a disease that zoo officials said is common in Pakistan and targets cats' immune system.

But an autopsy found the cubs' lungs were badly damaged and they were suffering from severe infection, with pathologists concluding they died from COVID-19. Although no PCR test for the new coronavirus was conducted, zoo deputy director Kiran Saleem told Reuters the zoo believes the cubs were the victims of the pandemic that has killed 12,256 people in Pakistan.

"After their death, the zoo administration conducted tests of all officials, and six were tested positive, including one official who handled the cubs," Saleem said. "It strengthens the findings of the autopsy. The cubs probably caught the virus from the person handling and feeding them."

Pakistan's zoos regularly draw the ire of animal rights activists, who say hundreds of animals have died from poor living conditions there.

"The last two white tiger cubs

have died at Lahore zoo and once again the negligence of the management and authorities has come out," Zafishan Anushay, founder of JFK (Justice for Kiki) Animal Rescue And Shelter, told Reuters.

"White tigers are extremely rare and need a specific habitat and environment to live a healthy life. By caging them in unhygienic conditions with no medical arrangements, we will keep witnessing these incidents."

COVID-19 is a new virus, and the world is making policies for humans, she said. "It should not forget animals in pet shops, zoos and everywhere else."

Saleem rejected the allegations of neglect at the zoo, telling Reuters that animal rights activists were welcome to visit and check the facility's safety and hygiene protocols themselves. In December two Himalayan brown bears were airlifted out of the Islamabad Zoo to a sanctuary in Jordan.

That rescue came weeks after an elephant Kaavan was moved to a sanctuary in Cambodia, the culmination of a years-long campaign that included U.S. pop star Cher.

At the Peshawar Zoo, officials have said four giraffes died in 2020. Last year two lions at Islamabad Zoo suffocated when workers lit fires in their cages.

Roses Are Red And Contributing To Climate Change, Florists Warn

Agencies

It is the classic romantic combination: Valentine's Day and a bouquet of red roses. But some Parisian florists are trying to wean customers off the flowers because of their ecological cost.

Most roses sold in France in the run-up to Valentine's Day, a peak sales period for the global flower industry, have to be imported by air freight from countries such as Kenya, resulting in carbon emissions that contribute to climate change.

Florists worried about the environmental damage from this trade say there are viable alternatives that can be grown locally and are trying to encourage their customers to try them.

But these ecologically-minded florists face an uphill struggle because the tradition of gifting red roses on Valentine's Day, which is celebrated on February 14, is so ingrained in many cultures.

Hortense Harang, founder of an online flower shop called "Fleurs d'Ici" — French for "Flowers from here" — has been spearheading the campaign to wean people off roses. "Red roses are so 1950s," she said. "Roses are something that is



completely a no-go in this season because it doesn't make sense basically to buy roses. Roses do not grow under our latitudes in this season."

Her campaign has gathered support.

"It's not logical to have flowers from the other side of the planet if we can get them locally," said Edith Besenfelder, a 46-year-old Parisian florist who works with local and seasonal flowers.

But old habits die hard. Celine Argente, the 40-year-old owner of the Sylvine flower shop in Paris, said she had been encouraging clients to buy red tulips as a way of declaring their love. But despite that, her shop this week was packed to the rafters with red roses to meet demand.

"It's a classic which people can't change from," she said. "The red rose remains the flower for Valentine's Day."

Robots Discern Human Touch By Sensing Shadow Movements

Agencies

Researchers have created robots that detect a range of physical interaction using 'ShadowSense technology'.

The low-cost method, developed by Cornell University researchers, for soft, deformable robots can identify from pats to punches to hugs, without relying on touch at all. Instead, a USB camera located inside the robot captures the shadow movements of hand gestures on the robot's skin and classifies them with machine-learning software.

The new ShadowSense technology is the latest project from the Human-Robot Collaboration and Companionship Lab, led by the paper's senior author, Guy Hoffman, associate professor in the Sibley School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering.

The study has been published in the Proceedings of the Association for Computing Machinery on Interactive, Mobile, Wearable and Ubiquitous Technologies.

The technology originated as part of an effort to develop inflatable robots that could guide people

to safety during emergency evacuations. Such a robot would need to be able to communicate with humans in extreme conditions and environments. Imagine a robot physically leading someone down a noisy, smoke-filled corridor by detecting the pressure of the person's hand.

Rather than installing a large number of contact sensors—which would add weight and complex wiring to the robot, and would be difficult to embed in a deforming skin—the team took a counterintuitive approach. In order to gauge touch, they looked to sight.

"By placing a camera inside the robot, we can infer how the person is touching it and what the person's intent is just by looking at the shadow images," said Hu, the lead author. "We think there is interesting potential there, because there are lots of social robots that are not able to detect touch gestures."

The prototype robot consists of a soft inflatable bladder of nylon skin stretched around a cylindrical skeleton, roughly four feet in height, that is mounted on a mobile base. Under the robot's skin is a USB camera, which connects to a laptop.

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