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P3 CITY

SRINAGAR ADMIN SETS UP COVID VACCINATION CENTRES

In wake of rising Covid-19 cases, the Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Mohammad Ali Jaz Tuesday took a comprehensive review of the COVID19 control and management measures...

P7 HEALTH

HEALTH CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

World Health Day is celebrated annually on 7 April and each year draws attention to a specific health topic of concern to people all over the world. The theme for 2021 is "Building a fairer, healthier world"...



P5 STATE

IGNORED BY AUTHORITIES, BANDIPORA VILLAGERS SCRAMBLE TO CONSTRUCT ROAD

Owing to the lackadaisical approach of the administration, residents of Banilpora village in North Kashmir's Bandipora district have donated...



Widom Quote!

Fiction reveals truth that reality obscures.
—Jessamyn West

NEWS DIGEST

CASO Launched In Srinagar Outskirts

SRINAGAR: The government forces on Tuesday launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) in Gulab Bagh area of this capital city. A senior official said that CASO has been launched by the joint teams of police and CRPF in Shah-e-Hamdan Colony of Gulab Bagh area of the city outskirts.

"CASO is on and one or more militants are believed to be trapped in the area. No contact has been established yet," • More On P10

Missing Minor's Mutilated Body Found

SRINAGAR: A mutilated body of a missing minor boy was recovered on Tuesday in a forest area in Qazigund area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district. According to the reports, body parts of four-year-old Nazakat Hussain Khan were recovered on Tuesday afternoon in a forest area of Chowgam in Qazigund by a joint • More On P10

Three Landmines Destroyed In Samba

JAMMU: Three anti-personnel mines were found and subsequently destroyed in a controlled explosion by the Bomb Disposal Squad in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said. The mines, which have gathered rust indicating that they had remained buried for a very long time, were found by a local resident during excavation work adjoining his field in Dera village around 7.45 pm on Monday, a police official said. • More On P10

ACB Nabs Works Supervisor With Bribe

SRINAGAR: The sleuths of anti-corruption bureau (ACB) on Tuesday arrested a works supervisor for allegedly demanding bribe from a contractor in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. Abdul Rehman Bhat, in-charge supervisor (Works), Block Development Office, Gund in Kangan was arrested by ACB after a case FIR No.08 of 2021, under section 7 Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 was registered • More On P10

Unclaimed Bag Triggers Bomb Scare

JAMMU: A security alert on Monday was sounded in Rajouri after a bag, lying suspiciously near an army hospital in Rajouri district was recovered, officials said here. Officials said that a suspicious black coloured backpack was found lying near the main gate of General Hospital of army after which army troops of regiment dealing with town security and • More On P10

AMARNATH YATRA

LG Directs PWD To Complete Ongoing Projects On Twin Routes



Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj

Sinha on Tuesday directed the Public Works Department to complete on priority ongoing projects along the • More On P10

Portal For Infra Monitoring, Management

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday launched an online portal to facilitate e-management and monitoring of infrastructure, an official spokesperson said. • More On P10

Mookerjee's Kashmir Dream Realised: PM



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday that his government has realised the dream of Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder Syama Prasad Mookerjee by revoking special status of Jammu and Kashmir and integrating the erstwhile state with the country.

Addressing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members on party's 41st foundation day, Modi said that his party's mantra remains "Vyakti Se Bada Dal Aur Dal Se Bada Desh".

"This tradition continues to

this day. We fulfilled Syama Prasad Mookerjee's vision (of one India) and scrapped Article 370 to give Kashmir the constitutional rights," he said.

He also lauded former Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and said that despite the fall of his government by just one vote, he did not compromise on party's principles and integrity.

PM Modi also lashed out at the BJP's rivals as he accused them of spreading "false narratives" over issues ranging from the farm laws to the citizenship law to trigger political instability in • More On P10

Only 'Immunised' Pilgrims Allowed In Makkah During Ramadan

AGENCIES

Saudi authorities said Monday only people immunised against Covid-19 will be allowed to perform the year-round umrah pilgrimage from the start of Ramadan, the holy fasting month for Muslims.

The hajj and umrah ministry said in a statement that three categories of people would be considered "immunised" — those who have received two doses of the vaccine, those administered a single dose at least 14 days prior, and people who have recovered from the infection.

Only those people will be eligible for permits to perform umrah, as well as to attend prayers in the Grand Mosque in the holy city of Mecca.

The policy would effectively "raise the operational capacity" of the Grand Mosque during Ramadan, it said, adding that the condition also applies for entry into the Prophet's Mosque in the holy city of Medina.

The ministry said the policy starts with Ramadan, which is due to begin later this month, but it was unclear how long it would last. It was also not clear whether • More On P10

Weather Conditions To Improve From Thursday: MeT

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: The meteorological department said on Tuesday that the weather conditions will significantly improve from Thursday, even as it predicted erratic weather with intermittent light to moderate rain in plains or snow on higher reaches of J&K and Ladakh till • More On P10



Highway Closed For Traffic Today

Jammu-Srinagar highway, the vital surface link connecting Kashmir Valley with the outside world, shall remain closed on Wednesday in view of inclement weather predicted by the meteorological department, traffic police said Tuesday.

"Tomorrow on 07-04-2021, no vehicular • More On P10

Govt Places DDC Chairpersons At Par With Mayors

VCs Given Status Of Div Coms, IGPs

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Tuesday issued a fresh official protocol list putting the status of district development councils' chiefs at par with those of the mayors of the Jammu and Srinagar municipal corporations.

The J&K General Administration issued the new 'warrant of precedence' nearly a month after the newly elected members staged a protest over the issue of protocol and monthly honorarium.

Nearly a month ago, a delegation of agitators • More On P10

J&K Inks 456 MoUs For Potential Investment Of Rs 23000 Cr

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu & Kashmir has inked 456 memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with different companies to bring in investment worth Rs 23,152 crore.

Documents reveal that 456 MoUs amounting to Rs 23,152.17 crore have been signed by the J&K administration with potential • More On P10

KPDCL Assures Adequate Electricity During Ramadan

Agencies

SRINAGAR: As the winter power schedule continues in view of frequent wet spells across Kashmir, the Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) on Tuesday said that it will ensure adequate electricity in the month of Ramadan especially at Sehri and Iftari time.

"To ensure that the people will not suffer in the holy month of Ramadan, we have prepared plans for supplying adequate electricity at Sehri and Iftari time across the Valley," Mir Lateef, In Charge Chief Engineer KPDCL said.

"We had plans to come up with fresh power schedule, but the process got halted due to the frequent wet spells across Kashmir," he said, adding that the load has been increasing soon after it rains, thus the fresh schedule got • More On P10

J&K Reports 561 New Cases, 2 More Corona Deaths



Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 561 fresh COVID-19 cases on Tuesday that took its tally to 1,34,015, while two more fatalities pushed the death toll to 2,012, officials said.

Of the fresh cases, 384 were reported from the Kashmir division and 177

from the Jammu division, they said.

Srinagar district recorded the highest number of fresh cases at 222, including 63 travellers, followed by 99 in Jammu and 54 in Baramulla, according to the officials.

Budgam, Anantnag, Ganderbal, Kulgam, Udhampur and Kathy were the other districts • More On P10

Govt Employees Asked To Get Vaccinated

The government on Tuesday asked all employees aged 45 or above to get vaccinated. "In view of the recent spike in COVID-19 infection cases across the Country and the Union territory

Indoor Sports Activities Suspended

The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Tuesday ordered a temporary suspension of indoor sports activities in view of a surge in coronavirus cases in the Union territory in the last few weeks. An order issued by Principal Secretary, Youth Services and Sports Department, Alok Kumar, • More On P10

Dr Farooq Getting Better, Says Omar

National Conference (NC) president and Srinagar MP Farooq Abdullah, who is undergoing treatment for COVID-19 at SKIMS hospital here, is responding well to treatment and getting better, his son Omar Abdullah said on Tuesday. The 85-year-old NC president had tested positive for COVID-19 on March 30. After initially being in home isolation, he was shifted to the hospital on April 3 • More On P10

A Unique Initiative by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Block Diwas

on every Wednesday

at Locations Specified Below
Speedy disposal of public grievances
on spot at grassroots level.

All are invited to participate

Shri Manoj Sinha
Lieutenant Governor

District wise Locations for Block Diwas

01

Kupwara

› Kupwara
› Handwara
› Lolab
› Tangdhar

02

Bandipora

› Bandipora
› Bankoot
› Aloosa
› Sumbal

03

Shopian

› Shopian
› Zainapora

04

Pulwama

› Pulwama
› Pampore
› Tral

05

Kulgam

› Kulgam
› Davsar
› D.H. Pora

06

Srinagar

› Harwan
› Khunmoh
› Panzinar

07

Ganderbal

› Ganderbal
› Kangan
› Lar

08

Anantnag

› Anantnag
› Bijbehara
› Pahalgam
› Kokernag
› Dooru

09

Budgam

› Budgam
› Beerwah
› Khansahib
› Chadoora

10

Baramulla

› Baramulla
› Sopore
› Pattan
› Tangmarg
› Uri

DC, SSP & District Level Officers to remain available by turn at every Location every Wednesday.
All Departmental functionaries to remain available for resolving grievances.



Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Study reveals low glucose levels might assist muscle repair

A new study has revealed a new benefit of keeping sugar at bay. Researchers from Tokyo Metropolitan University have shown that skeletal muscle satellite cells, key players in muscle repair, proliferate better in low glucose environments.

This is contrary to the conventional wisdom that says mammalian cells fare better when there is more sugar to fuel their activities. Because ultra-low glucose environments do not allow other cell types to proliferate, the team could produce pure cultures of satellite cells, potentially a significant boost for biomedical research.

Healthy muscles are an important part of a healthy life. With the wear and tear of everyday use, our muscles continuously repair themselves to keep them in top condition. In recent years, scientists have begun to understand how muscle repair works at the cellular level.

Skeletal muscle satellite cells have been found to be particularly important, a special type of stem cell that resides between the two layers of sheathing, the sarcolemma and basal lamina, that envelopes myofiber cells in individual muscle fibres. When myofiber cells get damaged, the satellite cells go into overdrive, multiplying and finally fusing with myofiber cells.

This not only helps repair the damage but also maintains muscle mass. To understand how we lose muscles due to illness, inactivity, or age, getting to grips with the specific mechanisms involved is a key challenge for medical science.

A team of scientists from Tokyo



Metropolitan University led by Assistant Professor Yasuro Furuichi, Associate Professor Yasuko Manabe and Professor Nobuharu L Fujii have been studying how skeletal muscle satellite cells multiply outside the body. Looking at cells multiplying in Petri dishes in a growth medium, they noticed that higher levels of glucose had an adverse effect on the rate at which they grew. This is counter-intuitive; glucose is considered to be essential for cellular growth.

It is converted into ATP, the fuel that drives a lot of cellular activity. Yet, the team confirmed that lower glucose media led to a larger number of cells, with all the biochemical markers expected for greater degrees of cell proliferation.

They also confirmed that this doesn't apply to all cells, something they successfully managed to use to their advantage. In experiments in high glucose media, cultures of satellite cells always ended up as a mix-

ture, simply due to other cell types in the original sample also multiplying.

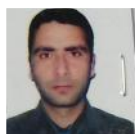
By keeping the glucose levels low, they were able to create a situation where satellite cells could proliferate, but other cell types could not, giving a very pure culture of skeletal muscle satellite cells. This is a key prerequisite for studying these cells in a variety of settings, including regenerative medicine.

So, was the amount of glucose in their original experiment somehow "just right"? The team added glucose oxidase, a glucose digesting enzyme, to get to even lower levels of glucose, and grew the satellite cells in this glucose-depleted medium. Shockingly, the cells seemed to fare just fine and proliferated normally.

The conclusion is that these particular stem cells seem to derive their energy from a completely different source. Work is ongoing to try to pin down what this is.

Agencies

Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir



NOTICE

Where a application for transfer of ownership has been recieved from one.
Shri : Sajad Hussain Bhat
S/o: Ghulam Hussain Bhat



R/o: Budgam (Transferor) of M/Cycle. Vehicle bearing registration number JK04B - 9555. Chasis number 08785 Engine no. 12205 Model 2012. in favour of Shri.. Mohamad Yousuf Khan S/o. Ghulam Mohammad Khan R/o Gariend Khurd Budgam (Transferee) as well as HPA cancellation with M/S J & K Bank Ltd B/U Budgam.

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.129
Dated 06/04/2021

mcb

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir



NOTICE

Where a application for transfer of ownership has been recieved from one.
Shri : Abdul Ahad Parray
S/o: Ghulam Ahmad Parray
R/o: Solbugh Budgam



(Transferor) of LMV Ecco. Vehicle bearing registration number JK04D - 0905. Chasis number 426883 Engine no. 404338 Model 2015. in favour of Shri.. Mohammad Maqbool Bhat S/o. Gh Mohammad Bhat R/o Batpora Lalpora Kupwara (Transferee) as well as HPA cancellation with M/S HDFC Bank Ltd B/U Budgam.

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.106
Dated 06/04/2021

mcb

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

Public notice

I have lost my 12th class pass School leaving and character certificates of year 2019-20, now I am applying for their duplicates in this regard if anybody have any kind of objection may file the same to Principal Government higher secondary Institute Bomai Sopore with in the period of Seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

Aamir Yousf Bhat
S/o: Mohmad Yousf Bhat
R/o: Wadoora Payeen Sopore

GMS

Publci Notice

I have lost my Driving licence bearing DL No: JK1320120008487 While travelling from Ladhoo to Khrew. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the RTO Pulwama within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Muzaffar Habiba Wani
S/o Habib Ullah Wani
R/o Mandakpal Khrew
9596141001

fpv

Publci Notice

My father's name has been wrongly written in school records as Ghulam Hussain Bhat while his correct name is Mohd Hussain Bhat which needs immediate correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the FEM School Lathpora within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Burhan Hussain
S/o Mohd Hussain Bhat
R/o Lathpora Pampore

fpv

Office of Assistant Regional Transport Officer Shopian

NOTICE

Sub: Transfer of ownership (Sub section (1) of section 50) & cancellation of Hire Purchase Agreement (Sub Section (3) of Section 51)
Ref: No; ARTO/SPN/2021/458 Dated: -06-04-2021



While A Joint Application Has Been Received For Transfer Of Vehicle Bearing Registration Mark JK22B- 1160 From Javid Shafiq S/o Mohammad Shafiq Shah R/o Wani Mohalla Hirpora Shopian



J&K 192303 As Transferor And Firdous Ahamd Magray S/o Abdul Qayoom Magray R/o Wattoo Kulgam J&K 192231 (Transferee) As well as HPA cancellation with Axis Bank Ltd Sgr Now there it is notified for general information that objection if any to the proposed transfer of Ownership shall be filled in writing in the office of the regional transport officer Shopian within a period of seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily Newspaper Kashmir Observer.

Seller and purchaser identified by the authorized representatives of ---
SD/ Assistant Regional Transport Officer Shopian

ast

Office of Assistant Regional Transport Officer Shopian

NOTICE

Sub: Transfer of ownership (Sub section (1) of section 50) & cancellation of Hire Purchase Agreement (Sub Section (3) of Section 51)
Ref: No; ARTO/SPN/2021/ Dated: -



While A Joint Application Has Been Received For Transfer Of Vehicle Bearing Registration Mark JK22B- 2546 From Sartal Ahamd Teli S/o Abdul Majeed Teli R/o Daghpura Shopian As Transferor And Hilal Ahamd Lone S/o M Shafi Lone R/o Kanipora Shopian (Transferee) As well as HPA cancellation with JK Bank Imamsahib



Now there it is notified for general information that objection if any to the proposed transfer of Ownership shall be filled in writing in the office of the regional transport officer Shopian within a period of seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily Newspaper Kashmir Observer.

Seller and purchaser identified by the authorized representatives of ---
SD/ Assistant Regional Transport Officer Shopian

ast

THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

Tel/Fax: 0194-2433590- , 2437647 (srinagar) : 0191-2479371, 2470102 (jammu)
website: <http://www.iaakbopee.org>. email: ceoiaakbopee@gmail.com

Subject: - Extension in date for submission of online Application Forms for B. Ed. Kashmir (IASE) & B. Ed. Special Education (CRC) Courses, 2021.

Reference: - (i) Notification No. 033-BOPEE of 2021 dated 06-03-2021.

(ii) Notice No. 035-BOPEE of 2021 dated 27-03-2021

Notice No. 38-BOPEE of 2021

Dated: 05-04-2021

In view of the poor response to above referred Notification & Notice for submission of online Application Forms for B. Ed. Kashmir (IASE) & B. Ed. Special Education (CRC) Courses, 2021, the Board has decided to extend the last date for submission of online Application Forms for the said Courses from 06-04-2021 to 12-04-2021(mid-night). The other terms and conditions shall remain the same as notified in the elnformation Brochure and the Notification No. 033-BOPEE of 2021.dated 06-03-2021.

E&OE.

(Dr. Sunil Gupta)
Controller of Examinations
J&K BOPEE

DIPK-NB-88/21

No. BOPEE/Exam-03/2021

Dated: 05-04-2021

NATIONAL EDUCATION SOCIETY FOR TRIBAL STUDENTS (NESTS)

(Autonomous organization Under Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India)
GF Gate No. 3 A Jeevan Tara building, Parliament street New Delhi, 110001

EKLAVYA MODEL RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS TEACHING STAFF

SELECTION EXAM (ETSSE) – 2021

National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS), an autonomous organization under Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860, invites online applications for the recruitment of the teaching staff viz. Principal, Vice- Principal, PGT and TGT for Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) across the states.

Details regarding the online application, educational qualifications, teaching experience (wherever applicable) and other eligibility criteria etc. for the ETSSE-2021 has been detailed in the Information Bulletin, which is accessible at <https://recruitment.nta.nic.in> .

The eligible and interested candidates can apply online up to 30.04.2021 (up to 23:50 Hrs. on the above-mentioned website by submitting the prescribed application-cumexamination fees mentioned there on). State-wise vacant positions are available in the Information Bulletin and vacant positions in a State are open to only those who are domiciled in the concerned State.

The candidates are advised to keep visiting the official website of National Testing Agency (<https://recruitment.nta.nic.in>) for the latest updates.

DIPK-167/21

SD
Commissioner,
NESTS

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ESTATES DIVISION, SRINAGAR.

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

E-TENDER NIT NO. 7/XEN/EDS/2021-22 OF 04/2021

Executive Engineer Estates Division Srinagar on behalf of Lt. Governor of Union Territory J&K invites tenders by E-tendering on Item rate basis from approved and eligible Registered Civil Contractors with Union Territory J&K /CPWD/Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works.

S. No.	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (Amt In Rs)	Time of	Class of Contractor	Major Head of Account
1.	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Face Lifting of Compound Walling DMQ-1 to 3 at M.A Road Srinagar.	1.32 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	2216 Non-Plan
2.	Face Lifting of Compound Walling DMQ-4, 5 and 6 at M.A Road Srinagar.	1.44 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
3.	Face Lifting and Painting of RSW Blocks (RSTUVW) Blocks at Tulsibagh Srinagar.	1.82 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
4.	Face Lifting and Painting of TUV Blocks (RSTUVW) Blocks at Tulsibagh Srinagar.	2.05 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
5.	Face Lifting and Painting of M&N Blocks (LMNOPQ) Tanky Blocks at Tulsibagh Srinagar.	0.98 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
6.	Face Lifting and Painting of L, O, P & Q Blocks (LMNOPQ) Tanky Blocks at Tulsibagh Srinagar.	2.68 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
7.	Face Lifting and Painting of Block No's B-1 and B-3 at New Phase Tulsibagh Srinagar.	2.90 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
8.	Face Lifting and Painting of Block No. B-2 at New Phase Tulsibagh Srinagar.	1.22 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
9.	Face Lifting and Painting of Block No. A-1 at New phase Tulsibagh Srinagar.	1.37 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
10.	Face Lifting and Painting of Block No. A-2 at New Phase Tulsibagh Srinagar.	1.37 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
11.	Face Lifting and Painting of Block No. A-3 at New Phase Tulsibagh Srinagar.	1.37 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
12.	Face Lifting Exterior Area at New Phase Tulsibagh Srinagar.	1.12 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
13.	Face Lifting and Painting of Block A and B at Slik Factory Road Srinagar.	2.43 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
14.	Face Lifting and Painting of Block C and D at Slik Factory Road Srinagar.	2.42 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	
15.	Face Lifting and Painting of Block E and F at Slik Factory Road Srinagar.	2.38 lacs	200/-	7 Days	DEE	

Position of AAA:

Position of funds:

1. 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:-

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	05.04.2021 from 3.00 PM.
3.	Bid submission Start Date	05.04.2021 from 3.00 PM.
4.	Bid Submission End Date	12.04.2021 upto 3.00 PM.
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	12.04.2021 at 3.05 PM.

In the office of Executive Engineer Estates Division, Srinagar.

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan under Major Head-0216/Revenue (others) in favour of Executive Engineer Estates Division, Srinagar (tender inviting authority) (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer Estates Division, Srinagar (tender receiving authority).

3. 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)

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

5. 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 Estates Division, Srinagar (tender receiving authority).

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

7. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

7.1. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.

7.2. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.

7.3. The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.

7.4. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.

7.5. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the technical bid.

a. On contractor's representation based on the grounds as detailed above the time for completion of the work may be extended by a period considered reasonable by the Department.

b. Extension of time shall be also admissible in the event of temporary suspension of work.

8. The tender / bid is liable to rejection if it does not fulfill the requirements as laid down in NIT.

9. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form) and detailed NIT issued by this office time to time.

SD/-
Executive Engineer,
Estates Division, Sgr.

No: - E-Tender/NIT/EDS/109-18/2021-22 /T-1

Dated: -05-04-2021

DIPK-183/21

11 Injured In Srinagar Fire Mishap

Srinagar: Eleven persons were injured after a massive fire broke out in Tarabal, Nawakadal area of Srinagar city.

Eyewitnesses said that seven injured persons were shifted to Shri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) hospital for advanced treatment where

their condition is said to be stable.

The rest of the 4 persons have been discharged from the hospital.

The fire broke out from the house of Mehraj Din Mattu which later spread to other structures belonging to the Showkat Ahmad and other neighbours.

KTMF Apprises DC Srinagar About Various Issues

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A delegation led by Haji Mohammad Yaseen Khan of Kashmir Traders & Manufactures Federation (KTMF) representing some 250 markets from various areas of the district called on the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad.

The delegation projected various issues including macadamisation and repairs of roads, providing of for adequate parking facilities especially in Sher-e Khaas, sanitation and cleanliness measures in City, besides other concerns pertaining to the trade community in Srinagar. With regard to con-

tainment and management of new wave of Covid-19, the delegation urged for strict compliance to the SOPs to prevent its spread.

Senior Vice President KTMF, Manzoor Ahmad Bhat projected several issues of traders in Shaher-e-Khaas particularly regarding traffic jamming caused due to non availability of parking facility near SMHS, Super Specialty hospitals and Dental College.

Responding to the issues raised by the KTMF delegation, the Deputy Commissioner assured them that all their concerns will be looked and redressed on priority. He said black topping of roads would start shortly in Srinagar.

DC Srinagar For Prompt Disposal Of Public Grievances

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In order to ensure effective and prompt disposal of public grievances in Srinagar district, the Deputy Commissioner, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Tuesday visited Citizens Grievance Cell, HMT and took stock of its functioning.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner issued on the spot directions to con-

cerned officers of R&B, PHE, PDD and other departments for timely redressal of public grievances. He asked the concerned to ensure that directions of Lieutenant Governor are implemented on ground in letter and spirit so that people do not face difficulty for want of basic amenities.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by the concerned officers during his visit.

DDMA Sgr Notifies Three Micro Containment Zones

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on Tuesday notified three micro containment zones in Srinagar, saying that the decision was taken as no fresh case was reported on these areas in the last 30 days.

In a tweet, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Aijaz Asad said that three micro containment zones including Barzulla Baghaat Habib colony, Hawal Firdous cinema

near Brand shop and Il-lahi Bagh Hyder colony near Masjid Hyder have been denotified.

“DDMA Srinagar denotifies 3 Micro containment zones. Barzulla Baghaat Habib colony (No.193), Hawal Firdous cinema near Brand shop (No.194), Il-lahi Bagh Hyder colony near Masjid Hyder (195). De notification comes up as no fresh positive case reported in last 30 days from these MCZs,” DC Srinagar tweeted.

Three-day Covid Vaccination Drive Begins At KU

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A voluntary Covid vaccination drive for Kashmir University's teaching and non-teaching staff members, aged above 45 years, started at the University of Kashmir on Tuesday.

Nearly 100 doses were administered on day-one of the three-day special drive, organised by the University Health Centre in collaboration with the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, Government Medical College Srinagar, Block Hazratbal. These included in-charge Vice-Chancellor, Dean of Academic Affairs, Deans of various faculties, Registrar, heads of departments, senior offi-

cers including Joint and Deputy Registrars as well as scores of non-teaching staff members.

“There was a very good response to the vaccination drive on day one,” said Dr Ashfaq A Zarri, Joint Registrar, who looks after the affairs of the University Health Centre.

“We want all teaching and non-teaching staff members, as well as their family members and relatives aged above 45 years, to join this vaccination drive in the remaining two days at the Health Centre along with their I-day proofs (Aadhar/PAN/I-card),” he said as per a statement. The drive started at 11 am.



Two Abaya-clad students walk in a park on a rainy Tuesday in Srinagar. (Picture, Abid Bhat/KO)

Srinagar Admin Sets Up Covid Vaccination Centres

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In wake of rising Covid-19 cases, the Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Tuesday took a comprehensive review of the COVID19 control and management measures in the district, at a meeting of the concerned officers.

The key points discussed during the meeting included strict implementation of Covid-19 protocols as per laid down SOPs, strengthening of COVID19 checkpoints, sampling managements, management with regard to the quarantine of positive cases.

The Deputy Commissioner called for doubling the endeavours for controlling the spread of a new wave of the virus in the district. He asked for close coordination among line departments to keep close vigil and effective monitoring of tourists visiting Kashmir valley particularly at Airport and Lower Munda.

The Deputy Commissioner

sought cooperation from hoteliers and travel agencies in combating fresh Covid-19 wave so that balance is maintained between Tourism revival measures and restricting spread of Covid virus.

He asked hoteliers to keep two rooms reserved in every hotel for Isolation of covid positive tourists. He also urged them to identify some hotels in Srinagar which can be used as Isolation centers for tourists as a precautionary measure.

The Deputy Commissioner also stressed on Covid-19 vaccination of the employees working in valley hotels besides other people associated with tourism activity.

The RTO was asked to ensure routine checks of public and private transport so that Covid related SOPs are followed in letter and spirit.

Earlier, the Director Floriculture informed the meeting that 6 additional ticket counters have been setup at Tulip Garden to

avoid crowd and large queues so ensure social distancing. Besides volunteers are ensuring wearing of masks and social distancing by the visitors in the Gardens, in addition to place marking.

The meeting held threadbare discussions with regard to sampling and testing of tourists particularly at Srinagar International Airport, Lower Munda and Railway stations.

The meeting was informed that 76 vaccination centers have been set up besides three locations have been added at Kashmir University campus, SKUAST and JK Bank headquarter.

It was also given out that Panchayat Raj Institutions have also been involved in the vaccination process besides all necessary measures are being taken to contain the fresh wave of Covid-19. The Deputy Commissioner appealed to general public to ensure wearing of masks, social distancing to fight the new wave of Covid-19.

Congress Grieved Over Loss Of Lives In Haftchinar Blaze

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JK-PCC) has expressed deep sorrow over the tragic fire incident at Haft Chinara area of Srinagar district in which six houses were reportedly damaged.

Mir described the incident as very unfortunate and heartbreaking. “I have no words to express my grief over the loss of mother and son in this tragic incident,” Mir

added and conveyed deepest condolences to the bereaved family. Mir urged the administration to provide adequate relief to the fire-affected families, ensuring that they were able to construct their damaged houses.

JKPCC president also expressed solidarity with the bereaved family and prayed for their courage to bear this irreparable loss—(KNO)

SDA Demolishes Illegal Constructions In Nowgam

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Enforcement wing of Srinagar Development Authority Tuesday carried out a demolition drive at Nowgam Bypass area.

In a joint operation with Srinagar Municipal Corporation the illegal constructions including a shopping complex was successfully removed in the area, a government statement said.

The statement warned people residing within SDA jurisdiction not to go for any illegal constructions / encroachments. “The demolition drive against such constructions and encroachments shall continue in future.”

Chahrum of Late Zahoor-ud-Din Indrabi on April-8

The Rasam-e-Chahrum (Fateha Khawani) of Late Zahoor-ud-Din Indrabi S/O Late Abdul Rasheed Indrabi (employee of Information Department) Resident of Amirakadal Srinagar at present Tulbagh Pampore who passed away on April 5, 2021 (Monday) will be held on April 8, 2021(Thursday) at their graveyard Tulbagh Pampore from Nimaz Fajr onwards and will continue throughout the day. Participants are requested to follow guidelines and SOP of Covid-19 pandemic. For any query plz call on 9858016037 (Syed Altaf)



INF

از نیابت ماگام بالاجلاس جناب نائب تحصیلدار صاحب ماگام			
عنوان: مضمون درخواست عدنان رفیق پسر و نازیہ رفیق و ریحانہ رفیق دختران محمد رفیق			
تعلق ساکنہ ماگام برادر عطا علی بیکارہ ایرہ سرٹیکلیٹ تحت SRO294			
استہیار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص و عام			
معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست برادر بیکارہ ایرہ سرٹیکلیٹ پیش کی ہے۔ جو کہ فتر پڑا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اور اجرا کرنے مطلوب ہے کہم بذیل افتاد پر مشتمل ہے			
محمد رفیق دلد رجم تیلی	زمینداری	45 سال	
مہید بیگم زوجہ محمد رفیق	گھریلو کام	40	
ریحانہ رفیق دختر	تعلیم	18	
نازیہ رفیق دختر	زمین تعلیم	16	
عدنان رفیق پسر	زمین تعلیم	15	
افتان رفیق پسر	زمین تعلیم	12	
اسکے علاوہ عہدہ کی مہمان آمدنی ذریعہ و غیر ذریعہ 6250 روپے سرٹیکلیٹ زیر بحث ادا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ ہیمل کے اندر پیش کریں۔ میعاد گذرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔			
نائب تحصیلدار ماگام	sult		

نام کی درستی	
ہر خاص و عام کو بزرگوار استہیار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ غلطی سے میں میرے بیٹے کی تاریخ پیدائش سرٹیکلیٹ میں نام EKAM PREET SINGH اندراج ہوا ہے جبکہ اصل نام AKMPREET SINGH ہے اب انکی درستی کرانی مطلب ہے اس ضمن میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی بھی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا عذر یا اعتراض پولیس اسٹیشن ملٹن کے دفتر میں پیش کریں۔ بصورت دیگر کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔	
انستہار۔ رجیٹ نگھوہلا Akmpreet Singh ساکنہ ایس ایس پورہ	MJA

از عدالت ایگزیکٹو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول (نائب تحصیلدار است ناگ) بالاجلاس زیر احضار صاحب۔	
درخواست جناب:۔ محمد شفیع شیخ ولد غلام احمد شیخ ساکنہ ٹیپلی پورہ بغرض اجرائی تاریخ پیدائش سرٹیکلیٹ بذیل اسراجان	
ASRA JAN	
استہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص و عام۔	
معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل/ساکنہ مذکورہ بالا نے عدالت بذیل ایک درخواست تعلق بیان پیش کیا ہے سالہ کے دختر کا تاریخ پیدائش 15-04-2019 ہے اس ضمن میں سرٹیکلیٹ پیدائش نکلے کا خواہہ ہے کہ اسدر ٹیکلیٹ مذکورہ کو براہ راء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی بھی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر دوران دفتری اوقات میں پیش کرے بصورت دیگر کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔	
ایگزیکٹو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول	MJA

DIAL-EMMA

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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



HIJRI
CALENDAR
23 SHABAN
1442

PRAYERS

FAJR 4: 46
ZUHR 12:34
ASR 5:07
Magrib 6:59
ISHA 8:22

This Day In History

- 1946 - Syria's independence from France is officially recognised.
- 1953 - 1st west-to-east jet transatlantic nonstop flight
- 1954 - US President Dwight D. Eisenhower in news conference is first to voice fear of a "domino-effect" of communism in Indo-China
- 1956 - Spain relinquishes her protectorate in Morocco
- 1964 - IBM announces the System/360.
- 1967 - Israeli Syrian border fights
- 1969 - Supreme Court strikes down laws prohibiting private possession of obscene material
- 1978 - US President Jimmy Carter defers production of neutron bomb
- 1982 - Iran minister of Foreign affairs Ghotbzadeh arrested
- 1983 - Oldest human skeleton, aged 80,000 years, discovered in Egypt
- 1983 - STS-6 specialist Story Musgrave & Don Peterson 1st STS spacewalk
- 1988 - Russia announces it will withdraw its troops from Afghanistan
- 1996 - Sri Lanka's Sanath Jayasuriya hits fastest ODI fifty off 17 balls v Pakistan, Singapore
- 1996 - Pakistan beat Sri Lanka to win Singer Cup in Singapore
- 1999 - The World Trade Organisation rules in favor of the United States in its long-running trade dispute with the European Union over bananas
- 2001 - Mars Odyssey is launched
- 2009 - Former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori is sentenced to 25 years in prison for ordering killings and kidnappings by security forces
- 2012 - 130 Pakistani Army soldiers are buried in an avalanche near the Siachen Glacier.
- 2013 - 15 people, including 9 children, are killed by an air strike on Aleppo by the Syrian Air Force.
- 2016 - Longest-ever captured python found on Penang in Malaysia (26ft/8m)
- 2017 - Truck driven into a department store in Stockholm, killing 4 in a terror attack.
- 2017 - US President Donald Trump orders missile strike on Syrian airfield after chemical weapons attack on Khan Sheikhoun.

From KO Archives

Blazing start to historic bus

Militants Storm 'Passengers' Sanctuary, Tourist Reception Centre In Flames

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR - With barely hours left for the Muzaffarabad bag to roll and despite unprecedented security measures, militants attacked the Tourist Reception Centre (TRC), where the passengers have been lodged under heavy armed guard.

The front building of the complex was on fire within minutes of the initial shots ringing out at around 3:45 this afternoon.

A union of four militant groups that have issued threats against the bus service has claimed responsibility for the attack, which took place hardly 200 yards away from the venue the prime minister will flag off the bus service from.

An officer of the security forces said that militants had entered the building with guns blazing and later set it on fire.

Seven employees, including a woman, were injured in the heavy firing while the building which houses several government offices was being evacuated.

Security officers said that Muzaffarabad-bound passengers were safe as they had been lodged in a different wing of the complex.

They put the number of attackers at two and said the one of them was killed soon after the attack and the other in the subsequent action by security forces. Evacuation of the civilians from the building was carried out swiftly by the police as fire tenders went into action to control the blaze that spread from the attic to the lower floor within no time.

Reports said that the militants attacked from the main gate opening indiscriminate fire as they stormed into the complex.

The state police, BSF and CRPF immediately surrounded the site and launched the operation against the militants.

Among the injured were Roushan Ara of Hyderpora, Vakil Ahmad Pandith of Tangmarg, Basheer Ahmad of Wanabal.

Records or nearly score of government offices housed in the building have been lost in the fire. The losses in terms of property are expected to run into crores.

Even though the fire tenders and firemen desperately fought the flames, the building mainly constructed of timber was reduced to a burning hulk.

The building also housed an office of the State Road Transport Corporation, which has to operate the Indian sector of the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service.

The other offices that were located in the building, include the branches of Jammu and Kashmir Bank and the State Bank of India; an office of Tourism Development Corporation, Indian Airlines, post office, offices of fisheries and wild life departments, and the tourist police office.

(Kashmir Observer, 07 April, 2005)

Lavrov Arrives In Pakistan On Rare Visit To Hold Talks With Top Leadership

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov arrived in Pakistan on Tuesday on a two-day visit during which he will hold important talks with the country's top leadership and the Army chief on bilateral ties as well as on the situation in Afghanistan.

Lavrov, the first Russian foreign minister to visit Pakistan since 2012, was received at the airport by Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi.

"Pakistan and Russia share a multi faceted relationship and we welcome FM Lavrov's visit in line w/ our mutual commitment to further strengthen our bilateral ties, deepening our growing bonds of cooperation & collaboration," Qureshi tweeted after receiving his Russian counterpart.

During various interactions, the entire gamut of Pakistan-Russia ties and enhancing understanding on mutual areas of interest particularly in the fields of security and defence, energy, counter-terrorism, Afghan peace process, economy and trade will be discussed, the Foreign Office said.

Earlier, Qureshi had said Lavrov's visit will be the first by any Russian Foreign Minister in nine years and that he would personally go to the airport to receive him. Lavrov visited Islamabad in 2012.

"There is no second opinion that Russia is an important country of this region... his visit to Pakistan shows that our bilateral relations are taking a new turn," Qureshi said in a video statement.

The two countries want to take forward the North South

Gas pipeline project, which is under discussion for quite some time, he said, adding that the Pakistan Steel Mill was set up in Karachi with the Russian help and there was an opportunity to cooperate to pull it out of the current financial crisis.

Pakistan and Russia are playing a role in the Afghan peace process, Qureshi said.

He said Lavrov was coming to Pakistan after visiting India with which Russia enjoys historical ties.

"It can convince India to play a positive role in Afghan peace," he said. Qureshi said he would hold delegation-level talks with the visiting foreign minister who would later on meet Prime Minister Imran Khan and Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

The rare visit of the Russian foreign minister is part of the growing interaction and regular high-level exchanges between Pakistan and Russia.

Earlier, Qureshi met Lavrov on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Bishkek in June 2019 and the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) meeting in Moscow in September 2020.

Pakistan's ties with Russia have moved past the bitter Cold War hostilities and the chill in the US-Pakistan relations has further pushed the country towards Russia and China.

Lavrov, who arrived in New Delhi on Monday evening on a nearly 19-hour visit, has held extensive talks with the country's top leadership with a focus on various aspects of bilateral ties and preparations for the annual India-Russia summit. PTI



Night Curfew In Delhi From 10Pm-5Am Till April 30

Agenceis

Starting Tuesday night, a night curfew will be imposed in Delhi from 10pm to 5am in the wake of the COVID-19 situation, the Delhi government said. The curfew

will stay in effect till April 30.

On Monday, Delhi reported 3,548 cases and 15 deaths.

"A proposal for imposing night curfew is under consideration. The details are being discussed, including the time period of the curfew which could

be from 10 pm to 5 am," a senior government official had told PTI earlier.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had on Friday said that Delhi was undergoing the fourth wave of COVID-19 but a lockdown was not being considered yet.

West Bengal Third Phase Polls: Amid Turmoil, Polling Ends With 77.68 pc Turnout

Agenceis

KOLKATA: After a day of turmoil, voting for the third phase of the tightly contested West Bengal assembly elections ended on Tuesday evening with a voter turnout of 77.68 per cent. According to the Election Commission of India (ECI), some instances of violence and brawls were reported in a few areas and some arrests have been made.

"One incident happened in Khanakul where a candidate went to different polling stations. There was an altercation between two groups, and four were arrested. In Arambagh, another altercation took place after a candidate reached Arandi and five others were arrested," The Hooghly district and the Goghat constituency recorded the highest turnout of voters with 79.89 per cent and 84.71 per cent respectively. The districts of Howrah and South 24 Parganas registered a turnout of 77.92 per cent



and 76.94 per cent respectively.

Ahead of the third phase, three EVMs and four VVPATs were found in the residence of TMC leader Gautam Ghosh. Following this, the sector officer, Tapan Kumar Sarkar, was suspended along with two assistant sector officers, Samjit Majumdar and Mithun Chakraborty. The sector police officer was also suspended and 3 home guards were demobilised.

There was also an incident where media persons and agents were barred from entering a polling booth in Hooghly's Tarakeswar constituency. BJP candidate Swapan Dasgupta alleged that state police were misusing authority.

Moreover, BJP candidate from Diamond Harbour, Dipak Halder, also accused TMC workers of stopping people from casting votes during polling.

China Warns US Against Taking Superior Position On Global Affairs



Agenceis

WASHINGTON: Amid rising tensions between the US and China over a slew of issues, Beijing has warned Washington not to take a superior position and presume it has a final say on global affairs.

Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi said China would not accept a list from Washington of unilateral demands for negotiations with Beijing. "The door for dialogue with China is open. But the dialogue should be done on an equal basis and with mutual respect," he said.

"China will not accept that there is any nation in the world that [can] put itself superior to the others, and that any nation will have a final say on world affairs. If the US continues to confront, China will take it calmly without fear," Wang said, while China-US cooperation was possible, both sides should respect each other's core concerns, and China would not accept unilateral

demands and conditions from Washington, South China Morning Post reported.

"We resolutely resist gross interference in China's internal affairs, and even more resolutely oppose unlawful unilateral sanctions imposed on the basis of lies and false information," he said.

Diplomatic observers said Beijing was looking to improve ties with the US that had been badly damaged under former US President Donald Trump, but was facing a dilemma over drawing a line between cooperation and resisting US pressure.

Following the Alaska summit, the relations between China and the US have deteriorated and tensions have escalated.

Washington slapped additional sanctions on Chinese officials and entities over alleged human rights violations in Xinjiang, following a similar move by the European Union. Both countries have also stepped up their military presence in the disputed East and South China Seas.

'Iran Will In No Way Enter Negotiations Beyond JCPOA'

Agenceis

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Shamkhani says the Islamic Republic will under no circumstances enter negotiations beyond the nuclear agreement it clinched with six major world states in 2015.

"Regardless of whether Europe has the will or ability to persuade #USA to lift all sanctions at once & Washington's return to its commitments, there will be no possibility for Iran entering the talks in the new fields, more than JCPOA, under any circumstances," he said.

The security chief posted the tweet with the hashtag #activereistance in his tweet.

Shamkhani's tweet followed remarks by the US administration's special envoy for Iran, Rob Malley, who is based in a hotel near the venue of talks in the Austrian capi-



tal of Vienna between representatives of Iran and the remaining signatories to the JCPOA.

In an interview with the Ameri-

can National Public Radio, Malley was asked about a "follow-up" agreement in case the JCPOA gets back on track.

Jordan Bans Media Coverage Of Royal Rift, Saudi Reaffirms Support

Agenceis

AMMAN: Jordan banned all news outlets and social media users on Tuesday from publishing any content related to King Abdullah's half-brother Prince Hamza after the latter was accused of plotting to destabilise the country.

Prince Hamza pledged allegiance to King Abdullah on late on Monday after mediation by the royal family, two days after the military warned him over actions it said were undermining "security and stability" in Jordan and placed him under house arrest.

"To safeguard the secrecy of the investigations being undertaken by the security services in relation to His Highness Prince Hamza bin Hussain and others, Amman's public prosecutor has decided to ban the publication of everything related to the investigations at this stage," the state news agency reported.

It said the ban applied to all news outlets as well as social media platforms. Jordan has long placed media gags on publishing news on cases that are deemed sensitive. Civil activists and rights campaigners say the authorities are curbing free speech.

Prince Hamza said in a voice recording released by Jordan's opposition on Monday that he would not comply after being barred from any activity and told to keep quiet.

The government accuses Prince Hamza, who was heir to throne until King Abdullah removed him from the position in 2004, of liais-



ing with people linked to foreign parties in a plot to destabilise Jordan and that he had been under investigation for some time.

While not considered a direct threat to the king, Hamza in recent weeks visited tribal gatherings where the king and his government have been criticised more openly, suggesting he may have been trying to shore up his position with the Jordanian public after years of being sidelined following his removal as crown prince.

The state news agency said those arrested included Bassem Awadallah, a U.S.-educated confidant of the king who became minister of finance and adviser to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and royal family member Sharif Hassan Ben Zaid.

Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan delivered a message reaffirming Saudi support for Jordan, the Jordanian foreign ministry said on Tuesday.

The Saudi minister arrived on Monday in Amman and met with his Jordanian counterpart Ayman Safadi, the ministry said.

COVID-19: Pakistan To Vaccinate 80-Year-Olds And Above At Their Homes

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will administer COVID-19 vaccines to citizens 80 years of age and above at their homes, as the country battles a fresh wave of the coronavirus.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Ministry of National Health Services said Pakistan reported 103 COVID-19 deaths in the last 24 hours, while the number of new cases was 3,953 in the same period.

This was the smallest rise in daily new infections since March 25, when 4,368 new cases were reported. On April 1, 5,234 new

cases were reported.

The country's total number of cases presently stands at 696,184, with 14,924 related deaths. Over 3,500 patients are in a critical condition. On Monday, Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar said citizens aged 80 years and above would be vaccinated at their homes.

He said the decision was taken keeping in mind the onset of summer and the difficulty senior citizens would face in reaching vaccination centres and waiting in queues. According to official data, 936,383 people have been vaccinated in Pakistan till April 3. — PTI

WHAT WE WOULD PURSUE IS, first of all, a longer agreement. Even though this one lasts quite some time and some of its provisions last forever, of course, it would be better, as in any arms control agreement, to see whether we could get a follow-on deal that extends the timelines."

"What we would pursue is, first of all, a longer agreement. Even though this one lasts quite some time and some of its provisions last forever, of course, it would be better, as in any arms control agreement, to see whether we could get a follow-on deal that extends the timelines," he replied.

Earlier in the day, representatives of Iran and the P4+1 group of countries — Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China — began a new round of talks in Vienna over a possible return of the United States to

the JCPOA, which abandoned by the US under former president Donald Trump some three years ago.

The Vienna negotiations took place within the "in-person" and expert-level formats.

Ahead of the talks, Iran's Foreign Ministry reaffirmed in a statement that no representatives from the US are to attend the nuclear talks in Vienna, and that the Iranian delegation's agenda does not feature any direct or indirect negotiations with Americans either.

NEWSMAKERS

NASA's Ingenuity Helicopter Survives First Night Alone On Mars

Agenceis

WASHINGTON: NASA's Ingenuity mini-helicopter has survived its first night alone on the frigid surface of Mars, the US space agency said, hailing it as "a major milestone" for the tiny craft as it prepares for its first flight.

The ultra-light aircraft was dropped on the surface on Saturday after detaching from the belly of the Perseverance rover, which touched down on the Red Planet on February 18.

Detached from the Perseverance, Ingenuity had to rely on its own solar-powered battery to run a vital heater to protect its unshielded electrical components from freezing and cracking during the bitter Martian night, where temperatures can plunge as low as minus 130 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 90 degrees Celsius).

Making it through the frigid Martian night was "a major milestone for the small rotorcraft," NASA said in a statement Monday.

"This is the first time that Ingenuity has been on its own on the surface of Mars," said MiMi Aung, Ingenuity project manager at NASA's Jet



Propulsion Laboratory.

"But we now have confirmation that we have the right insulation, the right heaters, and enough energy in its battery to survive the cold night, which is a big win for the team. We're excited to continue to prepare Ingenuity for its first flight test."

Over the coming days, Ingenuity will undergo tests of its rotor blades and motors.

If all goes well, Ingenuity is expected to make its first flight attempt no earlier than the evening of April 11, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory said.

It will be the first aircraft to at-

tempt powered, controlled flight on another planet.

Tribute to Wright brothers

Ingenuity is carrying a small piece of cloth that covered one of the wings of the Wright brothers' first aircraft which achieved the first powered flight on Earth at Kitty Hawk in 1903, to pay tribute to the milestone.

Its attempt will also coincide with the 60th anniversary of the first human space flight, by Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin on April 12, 1961, and 40th anniversary of the April 12, 1981 launch of the first space shuttle, Columbia.

Ingenuity will be attempting to fly in an atmosphere that is one percent the density of Earth's, which makes achieving lift harder -- but will be assisted by gravity that is one-third of our planet's.

The first flight will involve climbing at a rate of about three feet (one meter) per second to a height of 10 feet (three meters), hovering there for 30 seconds, then descending back to the surface.

Ingenuity will be taking high-resolution photography as it flies from its "airfield" in the Jezero Crater. A series of flights are planned over its mission lasting 30 Martian sols (31 Earth days).

"Our 30-sol test schedule is front-loaded with exciting milestones," said Teddy Tzanetos, Ingenuity deputy operations lead.

"Whatever the future holds, we will acquire all the flight data we can within that timeframe."

The four-pound (1.8-kilogram) rotorcraft cost NASA around \$85 million to develop and is considered a proof of concept that could revolutionize space exploration.

Vladimir Putin Signs Law That Allows Him To Serve Two More Terms

Agenceis

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday signed a law allowing him to potentially hold onto power until 2036, a move that formalises constitutional changes endorsed in last year's popular vote.

The July 1 constitutional vote included a provision that reset Putin's previous terms, allowing him to run for president two more times. The change was rubber-stamped by the Kremlin-controlled legislature and the relevant law signed by Putin was posted Monday on an official portal of legal information.

The 68-year-old Russian president, who has been in power for more than two decades - longer than any other Kremlin leader since Soviet dictator Josef Stalin - said he would decide later whether to run again in 2024 when his



current six-year term ends.

He has argued that resetting the term count was necessary to keep his lieutenants from "daring their eyes in search for possible successors" instead of normal work."

The constitutional amendments also emphasised the

priority of Russian law over international norms, outlawed same-sex marriages and mentioned "a belief in God" as a core value. Russian lawmakers have methodically modified the national legislation, approving the relevant laws.

Two Mutton Sellers Among Six Shopkeepers Test Covid Positive In Bandipora



Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: Amid ongoing COVID-19 mass sampling, two butchers among six shopkeepers have been tested Covid positive in north Kashmir's Bandipora district on Tuesday.

An official said that soon after two mutton sellers among six shopkeepers tests positive for covid-19, their shops have been sealed as a precaution.

He said that they have tested positive after a mass sampling and vaccination drives was held in the district. The official said that contact tracing of the covid-19 positive patients was going on.

He also said that the Covid-19 vaccination process is in full swing in Bandipora and as many

as 25,000 persons have been administered the vaccine during the last two weeks in the district.

Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr Owais Ahmad said the administration devised an action plan for the vaccination to ensure maximum coverage. He said priority has been given to senior citizens and the people above the age of 45 years.

He said the strenuous and dedicated efforts of the dedicated teams during the past two weeks are bearing fruits as more and more people are turning.

He said to ensure the maximum outreach, district administration reached roped in NGO's, religious leaders, journalists, PRI members for wider participation of the people in the vaccination process—(KNO)

Abducted CRPF Personnel's Family Pleads For His Safe Return



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Family members of a CRPF Cobra Commando, who went missing after Bijapur Naxalite attack in Chhattisgarh on Monday appealed to the Government of India to undertake all necessary steps and ensure their son's safe return.

RS Manhas, a CRPF personnel, who hails from Jammu and was presently posted in Cobra Commando wing of CRPF in Bijapur, went missing during an Anti-

Naxalite Operation in Bijapur in Chhattisgarh.

Manhas's family members said that their son is missing and this is the only thing they have been told so far by the authorities.

The family members said that they are very much hopeful that their son is alive and fine. They appealed the Government of India to take steps for the safe return of their son.

"We want our son alive," said members of the family of the missing CRPF Commando while speaking to media persons in Jammu.

Ignored By Authorities, Bandipora Villagers Scramble To Construct Road

Villagers Donate Rs 6L For Construction Of The Road

Agenceis

BANDIPORA: Owing to the lackadaisical approach of the administration, residents of Banilpora village in North Kashmir's Bandipora district have donated Rs 6 lakh for the construction of a road leading to their area.

The residents said that they collected donations of around Rs 6 lakhs and constructed the road leading to their area (Molvi-Mohalla) from Banilpora.

They said that they approached authorities many times, but the authorities never bothered to address the issue.

"It took us around three years to collect the money and construct the road," they said.

Jabar Khan, a local said that he had informed the administration about the issue several times but nothing happened which forced the villagers to raise funds to construct the road on their own.

"We are very poor and can hardly feed our children and cannot afford such a huge amount all the



time for the development of our locality. It is now the responsibility of administration to look into this and do the required work," Ha-keem Khan another local said.

A female local panch from the area said that the people are living below the poverty line, while the area has been lacking all basic facilities for a long time.

"Though they have elected me

to end their sufferings and miseries but my efforts are also not working. This is a shame for the administration that even living below the poverty line these people had to raise funds on their own to construct the road," she said.

Locals appealed to DC Bandipora to pay due attention to their area so that their sufferings and miseries will come to an end—(KNO)

Winning Hearts And Minds Will Integrate J&K With India: PDP

'Hoisting Tricolour A Futile Exercise'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Tuesday termed the flag hoisting on government buildings in Kashmir as a "futile exercise" a move to hide government's failures vis-à-vis development of Jammu and Kashmir.

While NC said the move will not bring any major revolution in Jammu and Kashmir, PDP asked the centre to seek explanation from Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sang (RSS) as to when national flag was hoisted on

right wing party's headquarters at Nagpur.

"If it is mandatory, then I want the centre to seek explanation from its ally RSS as to when national flag was hoisted on its office building at Nagpur. RSS did not hoist tricolor for nearly fifty years after independence," PDP spokesman, Syed Suhail Bukhari told reporters.

He said hoisting tricolor on rooftops will not integrate Jammu and Kashmir with India until the government makes sincere efforts to win people's hearts. Bukhari said the BJP led dispensation wants to hide its failures with regard to the development of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Kashmir is not a mountain to be conquered, the way mountaineers hoist flags on achieving

their target. If they (BJP) think the move will integrate Jammu and Kashmir with India then I must say its people hearts and not flags which bring integration," he added.

NC senior leader and party general secretary, Ali Mohammad Sagar said the BJP keeps on floating all rules and precedence's ever since the special status of Jammu and Kashmir was abrogated. He also said the flag hoisting move will not bring any major revolution.

"Hoisting tricolor on rooftops will not bring any revolution; tricolor should be respected by heart and we do that as we are not against the national flag but BJP policies vis-à-vis Jammu and Kashmir," Sagar added—(KNO)

Wine Shop Fined Rs 1 Lakh

Observer News Service

KISHTWAR: The court of Adjudating Officer Kishtwar, (Additional Deputy Commissioner), Tuesday imposed a fine of Rs 1,00,000 on wine shop for not following the prescribed norms under Food Safety and Standard Act (FSSA).

A team of food safety officers inspected outlet in the Block Kishtwar of district Kishtwar wherein they found Misbranded whisky provided to the people.

Consequently, the liquor shop owner was booked under section 26/52 of FSSA 2006 and rules 2011 and summoned before the ADC, who is also the Adjudating Officer of the Food Safety Deptt. The AO imposed fine on the erring wine shop owner under various sections of FSSA.

Above 45 Years Of Age Govt Employees Asked To Get Vaccinated

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The government on Tuesday asked all employees aged 45 or above to get vaccinated.

"In view of the recent spike in COVID-19 infection cases across the Country and the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, all employees of Civil Secretariat and move offices outside Secretariat of the age of 45 years and above are advised to get themselves vaccinated at the Special Vaccination Centre setup in Civil Secretariat, Dispensary, Jammu, w.e.f 06.04.2021," reads an order issued by the government. "They are further



advised to continue to follow covid-appropriate behaviour, even after vaccination by maintaining hand hygiene, wearing face mask and observing social distancing etc."

The government impressed up on all the Administrative Secretaries to ensure vaccination of all eligible employees working in their respective Departments. (GNS)

Bandipora DDC Member Resigns From PDP

Agenceis

BANDIPORA: A District Development Council (DDC) member of People's Democratic Party (PDP) in North Kashmir's Bandipora district resigned from the basic membership of the party on Tuesday.

Sources said that the DDC member Abdul Gani Wani, who had emerged victorious in DDC elections from Banakoot constituency as PDP candidate, has sent his resignation, through a letter, to the general secretary of the party.

Wani writes that it was a very difficult decision for him to quit from the basic membership of the party as he had been a member with the party for a long time. He says that he resigned after consulting his party workers regard-



ing the issue.

"I am thankful for the support of my colleagues, their honour and I am feeling upset for resigning from the party membership," he writes. (CNS)

Operations Of 38 Erring Retail Medical Shops Suspended

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Operation of 38 retail medical establishments have been suspended by Drugs & Food Control Organisation across Jammu division districts.

The said outlets were disallowed u/s 22 (d) of Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940 by the sleuths of the Drugs & Food Control Organization during supervisory checks of Retail Sale Outlets in twin Districts of Chenab Valley - Doda & Kishtwar; Outskirts of Jammu District viz Bishnah, Phallian Mandal, Chatha and in Kathua and Samba districts.

The reasons for suspension ranged from Non maintenance of Sales records, Impersonation, Unhygienic/Unsanitary Conditions, Improper storage conditions etc. The Licenses were warned of severe action in case the deficiencies are not removed within stipulated period of time.

The chemist shops situated in far flung areas of Salehar, Arnia, Laswara, Makhampur, Bishnah, Paddar, Nagseni, Payharna, Chhatro, Muhgal Maidan, Ch-

ingam, Drabshalla, Kishtwar Seri, Bhalla, Pranoo, Doda, Prem Nagar, Thathri Kathua, Basholi, Nagri, Parole, Mahampur, Bani, Boillwar, Hiranagar, Marheen Samba, Vijaypur, Ramgarh, Bari Brahmana, Purmandal etc were inspected to ensure availability of safe, efficacious and quality drugs to the end users.

The drive was targeted to ensure that the pharmacies operate strictly in consonance with the mandate of law and in the best interest of patient care.

Meanwhile, Statutory Drug samples of more than Hundred formulations were lifted randomly viz Antibiotics, PPI, Steroid, NSAIDs etc for determination of strength and purity. These samples were referred to Drug Testing Laboratories located within J&K. The results of analysis are expected within one month as per the legal provisions.

"The Department is going to carry out more similar exercises in future also to ensure that no firm indulges in any unfair/unethical trade practices," said Lotika Khajuria, State Drug Controller.

Five Drug Peddlers Arrested, Contraband Recovered

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Tuesday arrested five drug peddlers and recovered contraband from them in two separate places in Kashmir valley.

A police spokesperson said that following specific information, police arrested three drug peddlers and recovered contraband substances and cash in Dangiwha, Sopore.

"A case FIR has been registered in Police Station Dangiwha and further investigation taken up," he said.

He said a police party during patrolling on Srinagar-Jammu

national highway intercepted a suspicious vehicle at Mirbazar in Kulgam. "During checking, police recovered 7.5 kilograms of poppy straw and Rs 71,790 believed to be the proceeds of narcotic crime was recovered," he said.

He said two persons onboard the vehicle, identified as Bilal Ahmad Rah and Abdul Majeed Dar, both residents of Waghama Bijebhara, were immediately taken into custody.

"A case FIR number 65/2021 under relevant sections has been registered in Police Station Qazigund and investigation has been taken up," he said.

Training Programme On Scientific Beekeeping Organised At Kupwara

Observer News Service

KUPWARA: Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, Imam Din Tuesday inaugurated 7 days Skill Development Training on Scientific Bee Keeping, at Kupwara.

The training was organised by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kupwara, (SKUAST-K, Shalimar) and sponsored by National Bee Board (GOI). In his inaugural address, the Deputy Commissioner stressed upon the stakeholders to make best of this workshop by equipping themselves with expertise, knowledge and scientific know-how of beekeeping.

He asked them to ensure value addition of the products and process for branded names and tags so that good market facilities are made available to the entrepreneurs.

The Deputy Commissioner expressed his gratitude for having 90 percent female students in the workshop, which he said is a symbol of women empowerment, the vision envisaged by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Imam Din said that efforts are on to adopt cash crops in the district so that the timeline of 2022 to double

the income of farmers is achieved.

Deputy Commissioner advised youth of the district to come forward and take benefits of the skill development programmes and become employment givers not employment seekers.

The Chief Agricultural Officer Kupwara, Nazir Ahmad Wani, who was the guest of honour on the occasion, said that KVK and Agriculture department are working together in the field and providing trainings to the farmers community and the youth to adopt new scientific techniques. He said 500 persons of Kupwara district are involved in beekeeping, who are generating employment avenues for themselves.

Earlier, Senior Scientist and Head KVK, Kupwara Dr. Sajad Mohi-ud-din during the welcome address briefed about the workshop. He said the workshop will continue for 7 days during which the 25 participants, including 21 female, shall be given knowledge of all basics of scientific beekeeping. Apart from this, he said that the participants shall be taken on an exposure tour to SKUAST-K, FOA, Wadoora and local Apiaries.

Panel Set Up To Assess Proposals For Approval To Revised Cost Of J&K Projects



Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Tuesday re-constituted a standing committee to assess proposals for grant of administrative approval to revised cost of projects.

The seven-member committee, headed by the principal secretary of the Housing and Urban Development Department, will fix the responsibility of officers concerned in every case in which over-runs are not justified, an official order said.

The order, issued by Commissioner Secretary, General Admin-

istrative Department, Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, said sanction was accorded to the re-constitution of the seven-member standing committee for assessing proposals for administrative approval to revised cost of projects.

The terms of reference set for the committee include assessing the reasons for time and cost over-runs against the pre-defined parameters so as to reduce the scope for discretion and open-ended cost in time escalation, the order said.

The committee has also been asked to undertake a detailed examination of basis and reasons for the cost and time over-runs, it added.

Work In Full Swing On Katra-Banihal Rail Project To Connect Kashmir Within 2-3 Years: Officials

Press Trust Of India

REASI: Work on the Rs 21,653-crore rail project connecting Kashmir with rest of the country is expected to be completed within two to three years in accordance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement, a senior official said here. General Manager, Northern Railway, Ashutosh Gangal also said there was no issue of seepage in the tunnels under construction as they are horseshoe-shaped to allow water to drain out.

The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) Project, the most challenging railway infrastructure project being undertaken after Independence, has missed several deadlines amid huge cost escalations since 1997, when then Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda laid its foundation at Udhampur.

"When you have a project of this magnitude, you come across various technical challenges and you need to improve knowledge and look for alternative ways to



complete it," Gangal said when asked about the delays.

He said the project was a learning process for the Railways and "now we have come to a stage where we are confident that we will complete the project as per the prime minister's declaration possibly in two and a half years".

Gangal and other senior railway officers were at Kauri in this hilly district of Jammu and Kashmir to witness the completion of the arch construction on the

world's highest railway bridge, which soars 359 metres above the bed of the Chenab river.

It has been described by the Northern Railways as a 'milestone'. A short film by the Railways on the achievement also highlighted the prime minister's message that the transporter was making all-out efforts to connect the Valley with rail lines in the next two to three years.

Asked about the seepage issue in some tunnels, he said, "It is an

issue in one or two tunnels in the Udhampur-Katra section."

"We have modified the construction to horseshoe-type to drain out the water. There will be no seepage issue in the tunnels (between Katra-Banihal section)," Gangal said, adding, "In a few old tunnels, seepage was an issue, and we are taking necessary measures to address the problem."

Of the 272-km-long USBRL project, 161 km was commissioned in phases. The 118-km-long Qazigund-Baramulla section commissioned in October 2009, followed by the 18-km-long Banihal-Qazigund in June 2013 and the 25-km-long Udhampur-Katra in July 2014.

The 111-km-long Katra-Banihal section is under construction, a railway official said.

"This project has many firsts. We have the longest railway tunnel with an overall length of 12.75 km, the highest railway bridge in the world which is higher than the Eiffel Tower of Paris, the first cable-stayed bridge, which when com-

pleted will be an engineering marvel of the 21st century," he said.

About the progress of work on tunnels, he said out of a total 97.64 km, 84.39 km stands completed on the main tunnels.

Similarly, he said 12 major bridges have been completed, and work is in progress on 14 more, while 10 minor bridges were completed and work is in progress on the last. He said the construction of over 205-km network access roads stands completed.

About the longest railway tunnel (tunnel number 49) between Sumer station yard and Arpinchala station yard, the official said out of a total 12.75 km, work on 11.21 km was completed. Another major tunnel of 11.21 km in Qazigund section was already completed and commissioned.

"Eighty-seven per cent length of Katra-Banihal section is in tunnels and the world's most advanced and modern technology is being used for planning and construction," he said.

KASHMIR OBSERVER

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KO VIEW

Enforce SOP

The Covid-19 pandemic is once again spreading like wildfire with the country's daily count crossing the 1-lakh mark for the first time since the contagion struck the nation last year. In just two weeks, Daily Covid-19 cases in India have increased fivefold to over one lakh from around twenty thousand. With every passing day, the pandemic is becoming a bigger health emergency. Since March 8, Covid-related deaths have risen at the same pace as the spike in infections, with the seven-day average of daily cases and deaths both surging by nearly 345 percent.

Maharashtra remained the worst-hit state with more than half of India's total cases daily. The state has now imposed night curfew and announced weekend lockdowns to get a handle on the runaway infection. The contagion is also spreading through states like Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu which are now also announcing night curfews and restrictions on the movement of people. This has led to a demand for making Covid-19 vaccine accessible to all. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to remove the age bar for vaccination. This is expected to expedite the inoculation drive in the country. There's no paucity of vaccines in the country as India has supplied them to many countries.

The government is also mulling measures to arrest the growing spread of the infection. On Thursday, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's will meet with state chief ministers and UTs administrators to discuss ways to contain the Covid-19 spike. But the choices before the PM aren't viable enough. For one, the fresh lockdown is now ruled out. Last year, the country-wide lockdown had cut the country's GDP growth by a whopping one-fourth. In real terms, this meant a loss of lakhs of jobs, ruining of businesses, migration of labour, etc. The economy is barely emerging from the recession and the government can hardly afford to undermine the recovery. One more lockdown will thus be disastrous. The only way out for the government is a strict implementation of the Standard Operating Procedure in public places, something that is not happening.

So, when the PM holds his scheduled meeting with the CMs, he needs to stress the enforcement of the SOPs by the governments. Not only that, the governments themselves have to lead by example. They can't be selective about enforcing the rules, much like in Kashmir where tulip garden is open and the government is holding cultural and music festivals but ensuring that schools remain closed.

OTHER OPINION

At stake, the future of the Indian polity

On Tuesday, voters in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, Assam and West Bengal will choose elected representatives for their state assemblies (Bengal's polls will continue through the month). What voters decide on April 6 will play a key role in determining the future of the Indian polity in two fundamental ways.

One, the polls will shape the distribution of political power in the system. If the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) wins Assam and Bengal, and is able to retain Tamil Nadu with its ally in the state, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, it will mark the continued eastern and southern expansion of the party. It will also mark the continued centralisation of the polity, where the idea of a "double engine" government — having the same party in power at the Centre and in the state — has voter approval. This will shrink the space for the Opposition and impact the balance in the federal system. Alternatively, if the Congress wins Assam, the Trinamool Congress retains Bengal, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam comes back to power in Tamil Nadu, and irrespective of whether the Left or the Congress leads the next government in Kerala, power will get diffused, the Opposition will get energised, and the BJP will face challenges.

Second, the outcome will also determine the balance of power within the Opposition camp — and whether it is the Congress which is still seen as the de facto challenger to the BJP or whether it is regional parties which will mount the more decisive challenge. There has been a disjunct between state and national politics, but both intersect too and this intersection will be on test on Tuesday.

Hindustan Times



Information under RTI through an online mode ?

Create an effective digital interface in all public authorities of J&K

DR RAJA MUZAFFAR BHAT

As citizen-government interactions almost came to a halt last year for several months at a stretch amid COVID-19 pandemic, this was perhaps the best time to realize the dreams of Digital India. However, except for the online meetings it held, the government did little to create a digital interface. In Jammu and Kashmir, the situation is depressing, as the government has not even provided basic digital services to citizens. The government snapped 4G internet services in the region after 5 August 2019 and did not restore them until 6 February 2021. If even 2G services were available, people could have uploaded their RTI applications on various RTI portals of the government, but in Jammu and Kashmir, and many other states, this was not the case. It complicated the situation immensely for RTI applicants.

On 26 August 2019, a Supreme Court bench headed by Justice NV Ramana issued notices to the Centre and state governments/Union Territories after a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed seeking the facility to file RTI applications online. The PIL was filed by the NGO, Pravasi Legal Cell, through its lawyer Jose Abraham. The NGO empowers Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Indians who work in foreign countries and wanted all state governments to allow online/electronic RTI applications. Abraham described the RTI Act as a powerful tool but said its objectives are met only if applicants get information without delay, electronically.

"One of the most effective provisions in the RTI Act is section 7(1) which states that 'information sought for concerns the life or liberty of a person, the same shall be provided within 48 hours of the receipt of the request' is not effective under the existing system and it severely affects the life and liberty of citizens," the petition says.

Earlier, the central government had directed the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to provide technical support such as software and source code to state governments that wished to provide online filing of RTI applications. Except for a handful of states such as Maharashtra, Delhi, Karnataka, and Uttar Pradesh, states did not take up this option.

Obtaining Postal Orders

An Indian Postal Order or IPO must get attached to every RTI application, but getting one is challenging. An IPO is one way to pay the application fees, other than cash, a bankers' cheque, or demand draft. I can say with some authority that IPOs are unavailable in 80% of the Post offices in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

I have ten years of field research experience in this field, so I know IPOs are only available from the General Post Office (GPO) at Srinagar. The smaller post offices hardly sell any IPOs, in Srinagar or other districts of the Kashmir Valley. So, people have to travel to Srinagar to get IPOs. Or, IPOs are available in a handful of district post offices.

In 2016, I sought details of the number of postal

In 2013, the government of India had advised all state governments and Union Territories to explore the possibility of implementing online RTIs. Eight years have passed with no progress. This is sheer negligence that needs serious attention. Judicial intervention is the only hope now to ensure RTI applications are accepted and responded through a digital mode

orders supplied to ten post offices of Kashmir valley from the GPO, Srinagar. However, the designated Public Information Officer (the Senior Post Master at the GPO) refused to share this information. He gave a misleading reply that information under the RTI Act cannot be provided in an excel format, as I had wanted. It is nothing but a cruel joke! His reply, sent via speed post and dated 20 June 2016, says, "The Information sought...in an excel format does not fall under the purview of section 2(F) of Right to Information Act 2005."

Those days, the valley was under curfew following Kashmiri militant commander Burhan Wani's death. So, I could not follow up this case with the State or Central Information Commission (CIC).

Now, the petitioner in the PIL filed in the Supreme Court has very rightly mentioned that even NRIs find it very difficult to access information from any public authority since there is only a physical application process. Imagine how agonisingly difficult it must be for people living overseas to obtain an IPO!

Notice to 25 High Courts

In another case, in January, the Supreme Court also issued notices to the 25 High Courts for failing to receive RTI applications through an online portal even 15 years after the RTI Act, 2005. This related to another PIL filed in November 2020 by an Agra-based lawyer and RTI activist, KC Jain. A bench of Justice Nageshwar Rao, Justice Indu Malhotra, and Justice Vineet Saran, after hearing a writ petition on 13 January, also issued a notice seeking the response of the government of India.

In his petition, KC Jain says that anyone seeking information from any court under the RTI Act has to write a physical application and obtain an IPO or bank draft to pay the application fees, although section 6(1) allows email applications, or via a designated portal.

Section 6(1) of the RTI Act 2006 says,

"A person, who desires to obtain any information under this Act, shall make a request in writing or through electronic means in English or Hindi in the official language of the area in which the application is being made, accompanying such fee as may be prescribed, to (a) the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, of the concerned public authority."

If the RTI Act is clear that electronic applications have to be accepted, why don't state governments, Union Territories, and Judicial institutions set up portals or explore other ways to make it happen?

RTI via email

These days, hectic advocacy is on to make RTI go digital. Yet, ironically, public authorities, including the higher judiciary, are not implementing its provisions. The Supreme Court needs to take note of this. It will revolutionize governance if all state governments, high courts, and subordinate judiciary start receiving RTI applications online. That is how to fulfill the Digital India dream. Some weeks back I assisted an applicant with sending an RTI application via email to a Public Information Officer (PIO). Those who are in the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category have to attach their ration card with their RTI application and send it to the PIO via email, which exempts them from paying Rs. 10 application fees. However, one must know how to use email and have the contact information of the PIO.

Immediately after the applicant submitted the RTI application via email, he called the officer concerned and she acknowledged receipt of the application. The very next day, the application was transferred to the concerned Block Development Office (BDO) via WhatsApp. Within a week this applicant got information. He had not have to wait for 30 days. Technology is more convenient and quick when it comes to using RTI services, and making it go digital will bring in the transparency this law envisages.

Conclusion

Almost all central ministries have established online RTI portals for Indian citizens including NRIs. Applicants can even submit their fees digitally. In 2013, the government of India had advised all state governments and Union Territories to explore the possibility of implementing online RTIs. Eight years have passed with no progress. This is sheer negligence that needs serious attention. Judicial intervention is the only hope now to ensure RTI applications are accepted and responded through a digital mode. This will not only save time and energy of information seekers but will ensure good governance and accountability of public authorities as well.

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

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Labour Code Bill - A Must

This refers to an opinion piece by Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat titled, "Labour Codes: The Only Hope for J&K's Consolidated Workers". We are thankful to Kashmir Observer for highlighting our cause. The consolidated sweepers working in J&K Health Department work in very difficult conditions

across Kashmir valley. During COVID-19, we performed duties risking our lives. Our families and children are going through the worst days as we have been waiting for our regularization for almost 3 decades now. We have been demanding payment of wages as per the Minimum Wages Act which is our right. We hope that the

Labour Codes Bill is made a law soon so that not only consolidated sweepers and other workers of the health department will get justice but this will also give benefit to thousands of other workers as well those who work in education, power, water works and other Govt and private organizations.

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World Health Day

Health Care for People with Disabilities

M AHMAD

World Health Day is celebrated annually on 7 April and each year draws attention to a specific health topic of concern to people all over the world. The theme for 2021 is "Building a fairer, healthier world".

Health is important in itself, because it enables a person to have a good life, and a full life expectancy. Persons with disabilities have the same health needs as every other member of the population, including immunization, screening, sexual and reproductive health, and all other aspects of regular healthcare. They may also have additional or more complex health needs, because of impairment and the conse-

quences of impairment.

People with disabilities may benefit from specialist services as a result of their impairment, which includes physical therapy, assistive devices, speech and language therapy, psychiatry and more. Many of these services are usually known as "rehabilitation".

Persons with disabilities are faced with a range of barriers when they seek healthcare. Strategies are required to overcome these different barriers in order to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the fulfillment of rights. Other types of barriers may be less well recognised and understood. For example, for people who are deaf or have other communication difficulties, may miss out information or on being informed about their options if there is a lack of sign language or other adapted

communication tools. People with visual impairment may not be able to read letters from health professionals or instructions regarding medication.

Efforts are needed to remove barriers so that access to healthcare services is made equitable for people with disabilities. By making healthcare services inclusive, respectful and barrier-free, will improve access for other vulnerable groups, as well as improve healthcare coverage overall. Improving healthcare services for persons with disabilities will likely be cost-saving, reducing future healthcare costs, promoting inclusion and improving economic productivity for these people. Overall, these changes will help in achievement of UHC and Sustainable Development Goals, by ensuring that healthcare services reach the whole population of persons with

disabilities, so that they can experience better health, better productivity, and less poverty.

Above all, providing better access to inclusive and non-discriminatory healthcare for people with disabilities will help ensure that their rights are met. Improving health of people with disabilities will reap benefits in terms of reduced morbidity and mortality. Better health will also help these people to realise their other rights, viz right to education, employment, and social inclusion, and so will improve well-being, social inclusion and reduce poverty.

The author is the Principal (I/C) Abhedananda Home, Higher Secondary Institution for Specially-abled Children, Solina, Rambagh, Srinagar email: abhome78@gmail.com

How to Know If You're Having a Heart Attack

JOHANNA YOUNGHANS | MICHIGAN HEALTH

Are you having a heart attack or experiencing chest pain that's related to heart disease?

"It's important to understand the difference between the two," says Eryn Smith, M.S., PA-C, a physician's assistant in Michigan Medicine's Frankel Cardiovascular Center, since they may feel similar, but a heart attack requires immediate medical attention.

"Angina, a symptom of heart disease, is when the arteries of the heart are narrowed down, but not completely closed off. This is very different than a heart attack. A heart attack is when the arteries of the heart suddenly close off and the sudden closure causes a sensation of chest pain," Smith explains.

Signs of a heart attack include:

- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of the chest that comes on quickly and won't go away with rest.
- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the



back, neck, jaw or stomach.

- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.

- Other signs such as breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

(If you're experiencing any of these symptoms, you should never take them lightly. Seek medical assistance immediately)

Signs of angina include:

- Chest pain, usually present during exertion.
- Pain or discomfort subsides with rest.

(Consult your doctor or visit a hospital nearby as soon as possible for a general check up to be sure and safe)

After Miscarraige: Do's and Don't to Show Support

JADE BILARDI, JAYASHRI KULKARNI,
MEREDITH TEMPLE-SMITH

It's often only when women start to talk about their miscarriage, that they find out others around them have experienced miscarriage too. Knowing they're not alone and that others understand how they're feeling can be really helpful



So your friend decides to forget the "12 week rule" and tells her family and social networks she is pregnant. She knows the stats – one in four pregnancies ends in miscarriage – but she wants to have the support of family and friends around her in case she needs it.

Then the worst happens: she miscarries. And she discovers many people around her, including health professionals, lack sensitivity when talking about the miscarriage. Some don't even acknowledge her loss.

Women who experience miscarriage fre-

quently feel grief and loss of a similar intensity to other major losses. It's common to have clinical levels of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the weeks, months or years following a miscarriage.

Family, friends and health professionals play an important role in supporting women affected by miscarriage: what they do or don't say can have a lasting impact. Yet our cultural discomfort with discussing any sort of loss – especially one that is "unseen" – means women are often met with a wall of silence.

So how can we support women better? What

do women need from family, friends and health professionals at the time of a miscarriage?

Do's

- 1) Acknowledge their loss. While you may worry you will say the wrong thing and upset them further, saying nothing at all is worse. It can make women feel you don't care or think their loss was insignificant. All you need to say is: "I'm sorry about your miscarriage."
- 2) Listen and let them grieve. Many women need to talk about their experience. Ask them how they are. Some women find it really helpful to talk about how they are feeling, others may not be ready, but will appreciate you asking.
- 3) Encourage them to talk to other women who've had a miscarriage. It's often only when women start to talk about their miscarriage, that they find out others around them have experienced miscarriage too. Knowing they're not alone and that others understand how they're feeling can be really helpful.
- 4) Offer practical support. Drop off a meal or help with childcare. Gifts and flowers show you care and are acknowledging their loss.
- 5) End the silence around miscarriage. Women want miscarriage talked about more openly so they don't feel so alone.

Don'ts

- 1) Avoid clichéd comments. While well intended, comments such as "it wasn't meant to be" or "it's so common" can be hurtful and dismissive of their loss.
- 2) Avoid blaming and offering unsolicited advice. Be sensitive and empathetic; don't offer advice that could make a woman feel she is to blame.
- 3) Recognise grief doesn't have a time limit. Women's levels of grief are not contingent on how many weeks pregnant they were – their baby has died. It's OK for them to work through their grief in their own time.

*By arrangements with
The Conversation*

External factors might help children to develop internal control

Agencies

The findings of a recent study suggest that the ability to control one's own behavior, known as executive function, might not exist at all in the head. A new theory proposes that it develops with many influences from outside the mind.

The theory, detailed in Perspectives on Psychological Science, draws on dynamic systems theory which originated in mathematics and physics and has been used to describe complex organizing phenomena like cloud formation and flying patterns of birds. Now, a research team led by Washington State University human development assistant professor Sammy Perone is applying it to executive function, which has been shown to play a role in everything from children's readiness for school to their social relationships. Its de-

velopment is also tied to long-term outcomes for adulthood.

"We propose that executive function is really about using cues from the environment to guide your behavior," said Perone. "As humans, we use our experience and norms to decide what's the appropriate path to take, so to encourage executive function development, we want to help children build those connections between cues and appropriate behaviors."

In a classroom, these cues might include things such as decorations on the wall, verbal instructions, or the way tables are set up. Eliminating environmental distractions may also help children control their behavior like having sharpened pencils on hand or resolving a tottering desk chair. In addition, physical things normally thought of as peripheral, like whether a child has adequate sleep or enough to eat,

also influence executive function, Perone said.

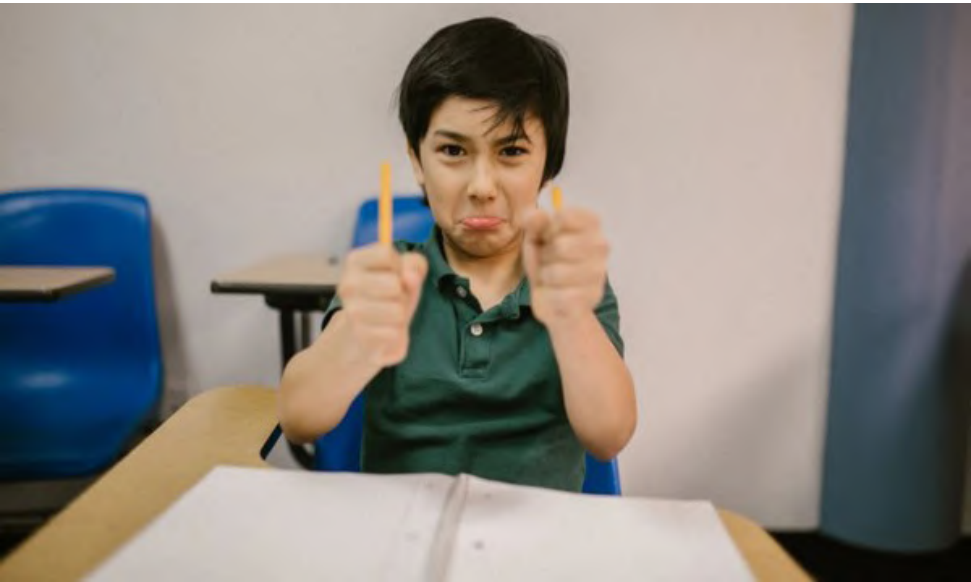
Previously, the dominant view held that executive function was three distinct neuro-cognitive processes: working memory, inhibitory control, which is the ability to stop yourself from doing something, and cognitive flexibility, which allows you to transition from one activity to the next. This perspective has been called into question, Perone said.

"If these different cognitive processes are what makes up executive function, you would think you could just train those processes, and then, you can then use them everywhere," he said. "Turns out, that doesn't work, and that's been shown over and over again. People think and behave in an environment, so we can't just train executive function by say doing computer exercises on

working memory."

The new theory builds on the work of cognitive scientist Sabine Doebel who called for a redefinition of executive function in 2020 as the "development of skills in using the control in the service of behavior." Perone and his co-authors from the University of Kansas and the University of Tennessee expand on that new definition by bringing in dynamic systems theory to help explain how humans use a variety of external factors to organize their behavior.

"We need to think more about executive function as it operates-as goal-directed behavior in the real world," Perone said. "When you take that perspective, all of the sudden, it becomes much more practical to childcare providers and parents, because that's where kids are thinking and behaving and developing."



If these different cognitive processes are what makes up executive function, you would think you could just train those processes, and then, you can then use them everywhere.

How Infant Antibiotic Exposure Affects Future Immune Responses To Allergies

Agencies

According to a new study, exposure to antibiotics in utero and infancy can lead to an irreversible loss of regulatory T-cells in the colon, a valuable component of the immune system's response toward allergens in later life, after only six months. The findings of the study were published in the journal mBio.

It is already known that the use of antibiotics early in life disrupts the intestinal microbiota - the trillions of beneficial microorganisms that live in and on our bodies - that play a crucial role in the healthy maturation of the immune system and the prevention of diseases, such as obesity and inflammatory bowel disease. However, less is known about how disruption of the microbiota, which produces short-chain fatty acids that regulate T-cells, affects T-cells in the colon.

The study, based on a mouse model, looked at fetal and newborn exposure to antibiotics through the mother in the weeks immediately preceding and after birth, the



time when microbial communities assemble and are prone to disruptions, to investigate how this reduction in beneficial bacteria affects neonatal immune system development. These effects were specific to the colon and not observed in the lungs, upper gastrointestinal tract, or spleen.

"By studying the exposure to newborns through lactating mothers, we see how the offspring acquire their mothers' antibiotic-impacted microbiota, which compromises their ability to generate a pool of CD41 T cells in the colon, resulting in long-term damage," said co-author Martin Blaser, director of the Center for Advanced Biotechnology and Medicine at Rutgers.

"The consequences persist into adulthood, compromising the body's ability to turn off allergic responses," Blaser concluded.

By studying the exposure to newborns through lactating mothers, we see how the offspring acquire their mothers' antibiotic-impacted microbiota, which compromises their ability to generate a pool of CD41 T cells in the colon, resulting in long-term damage

Sugary Beverages Consumed In Childhood Can Lead To Memory Loss Later: Study

Agencies

While it is known that the consumption of sugary beverages in large quantities may cause health issues including obesity, diabetes and tooth decay, a new study has found that drinking sugary beverages early in life may lead to impaired memory in adulthood.

The findings of the study were published in the journal 'Translational Psychiatry'. The study is the first to show how a specific change to the gut microbiome - the bacteria and other microorganisms growing in the stomach and intestines - can alter the function of a particular region of the brain.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, sugar-sweetened beverages are a leading source of added sugars in Americans' diets. Nearly two-thirds of young people in the United States consume at least one sugary drink each day.

Neuroscientist Scott Kanoski, associate professor of biological sciences at the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, has studied the link between diet and brain function for years. His research has shown that consumption of sugary beverages impairs memory function in rats and that those same drinks change the gut microbiome.

In the current study, Kanoski and researchers at UCLA and the University of Georgia, Athens, sought to find out if a direct link



exists between changes to the microbiome and memory function. The scientists gave adolescent rats free access to a sugar-sweetened beverage similar to those that humans drink.

When the rats grew to be adults after about a month, the researchers tested their memories using two different methods. One method tested memory associated with a region of the brain called the hippocampus. The other method tested memory function controlled by a region called the perirhinal cortex.

The researchers found that, compared to rats that drank just water, the rats that consumed high levels of sugary drink had more difficulty with memory than uses the hippocampus. Sugar consumption did not affect memories made by the perirhinal cortex.

"Early life sugar consumption seems to selectively impair their

hippocampal learning and memory," said study lead author Emily Noble, assistant professor in the UGA College of Family and Consumer Sciences and a former post-doctoral fellow at USC Dornsife.

The scientists then checked the rats' gut microbiomes and found differences between those that drank the sweet beverage and those that drank water. The sugar drinkers had larger populations of two particular species of gut bacteria: Parabacteroides distasonis and Parabacteroides johnsonii.

The researchers then asked if the Parabacteroides bacteria could, without the help of sugar, affect the rats' memory function. They transplanted Parabacteroides bacteria that were grown in the lab into the guts of adolescent rats that drank just water. The rats receiving the bacteria showed memory impairment in the hippocampus when

they grew to adulthood much the same as the sugar-drinking rats.

The scientists also found that, unlike the sugar-drinking rats, the transplanted rats also showed memory impairment in the perirhinal cortex. This difference provides further evidence that altered brain function associated with diet may actually be rooted in changes to the gut microbiome.

Previous studies have transplanted the entire gut microbiome from one group of animals to another, producing similar changes to brain function. However, this study is among the first to do so with just two specific species.

"It was surprising to us that we were able to essentially replicate the memory impairments associated with sugar consumption not by transferring the whole microbiome, but simply by enriching a single bacterial population in the gut," said Kanoski, who is a corresponding author on the study.

Finally, the scientists examined the activity of genes in the hippocampus, comparing rats that drank the sugary beverage to those that drank just water and comparing water drinkers to those transplanted with Parabacteroides.

Gene activity did, in fact, change in both the rats that consumed the sugar-sweetened beverages and the rats transplanted with Parabacteroides. The genes that were affected control how nerve cells transmit electrical signals to other nerve cells and how they send molecular signals internally.

Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology of Kashmir

Estates Wing, Main Campus Shalimar – 190 025

Notice Inviting e-Tender

E-NIT NO. (01) Of 2021

Dated:02.04.2021

For and on behalf of Vice-Chancellor, SKUAST(K), e-tenders (in single-cover system) are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Civil contractors whose cards are valid up to 31-03-2021 registered with State PWD, CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Govt. departments for the following work:-

S.No	Name of the work	Estimated Cost (in lacs)	Class of Contractor	Cost of Tender document	Time of completion
1.	Development of Playing Field by way of Earth Filling (Available) at Faculty of Forestry Benihama Ganderbal SKUAST-K	9.98	"C & D"	500/-	10 days
2.	Providing and fixing of Concrete pole points as demarcation at KVK Srinagar SKUAST-K(Fresh)	8.40	"C & D"	500/-	15 days

- a) Position of AAA: Accorded
b) Position of T.S : Sanctioned
c) Position of funds: Available

1. The Bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, set of terms and conditions and other details can be downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per following schedule:-

1.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	02.04.2021
2.	Date of start of downloading	02.04.2021
3.	Pre-bid meeting date	NA
4.	Bid submission start Date	02.04.2021
5.	Bid submission end date	12.04.2021
6.	Date & Time of opening of Technical bid/ Financial Bids of qualifying bidders (online)	13.04.2021

Further information can be had from the Office of the undersigned

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
SKUAST-K

No. Au/Estates/E-NIT (01)/17
Dated: 06 .04 .2021

DIPK-NB-95/21

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

DIRECTORATE OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS J&K

JKPCC Building Ground Floor Panama Chowk, Jammu

Email ID: tribalaaffairsjk.nic@gmail.com

NOTIFICATION

Subject: Verification date extended.

In order to complete the pending verification of online application forms under the Scheme "Post-Matric Scholarship to ST students" on National scholarship Portal (NSP) at Institution Nodal Officer & District Nodal Officer Level, this Office has approached the NSP (NIC) New Delhi authorities for extension of verification date. Accordingly the authorities have extended the verification date at INO & DNO Level as per the below.

1. Institutions Nodal Officer Level upto 15th of April, 2021
2. District Nodal Officer Level upto 18th of April, 2021

Through the medium of this notice all the Institution Nodal Officers and District Nodal Officers (Tribal Affairs Department) of National Scholarship Portal (NSP) who have not verified the applications in full till date shall complete the verification process within stipulated period failing which they shall be responsible for the lapses.

Note: - No further extension shall be granted

Mohammad Saleem Malik (KAS),
Director Tribal Affairs,
J&K

DIPK-188/21

No Need To Approve Iran-China Deal In Parliament: Iran Minister

Agenceis

Iran's finance minister says an economic partnership agreement signed with China last month would be effective without any need to win the approval of the Iranian parliament.

Farhad Dejjpassand said on Tuesday that the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between Iran and China is a broad document that sets out a framework for cooperation between private sectors of the two countries for the next 25 years.

"It is a strategic document focused on cooperation between the two countries' private sectors and does not need the approval of the Islamic Consultative Assembly," said Dejjpassand in remarks made after a meeting in the Iranian parliament.

The minister said, however, that any specific contract signed within the framework of the Iran-China deal that could affect relations between the two governments would need to obtain the parlia-

ment endorsement before it goes into effect.

He said implementing the current document without the approval of the parliament would not be a violation of articles 77 and 125 of the Iranian constitution, as stipulated by some members of the parliament.

After some five years of negotiations, foreign ministers of Iran and China signed off on the economic partnership agreement in Tehran on March 27.

The deal has sparked widespread concerns in the West about the formation of a stronger alliance between Iran and China that could harm the interests of the United States and allies in Asia and in the Middle East region.

China has committed to over \$400 billion worth of investment in Iran's energy and infrastructure sectors under the deal. Iran, in return, would guarantee to provide a stable supply of crude and energy products to China over the period of the agreement.

LG To Shut Down Its Smartphone Business Amid Mounting Losses

Agenceis

LG Electronics is shutting down its loss-making smartphone business, the company stated on Monday. This will make LG the first major smartphone brand to completely withdraw from the market.

The decision will also mean that Apple and Samsung Electronics will gobble up LG's 10 per cent market share in North America, where it is the No. 3 brand. "The division has logged nearly six years of losses totalling some \$4.5 billion (roughly Rs 33,010 crore), and dropping out of the fiercely competitive sector would allow LG to focus on growth areas such as electric vehicle components, connected devices and smart homes," it said in a statement.

LG had made many innovations including ultra-wide angle cameras, rising to third largest smartphone maker in 2013. While Apple and Samsung rose to become the industry toppers, LG suffered from its own hardware and software issues. The company said the mobile phone market had become "incredibly competitive".

As LG struggled with losses it had held talks to sell part of the

business but these fell through.

Last year it shipped 28 million phones, which compares with 256 million for Samsung, according to research firm Counterpoint. The smartphone business is the smallest of LG's five divisions, accounting for just 7.4 per cent of revenue. Currently its global mobile phone market share is about 2 per cent.

In addition to North America, it does have a sizeable presence in Latin America, where it ranks as the No. 5 brand. LG phones are still fairly common in its domestic South Korean market. However, analysts have criticised the company for lack of expertise in marketing compared to Chinese rivals.

LG's smartphone division—the smallest of its five divisions, accounting for about 7 per cent of revenue—is expected to be wound down by July 31. In South Korea, the division's employees will be moved to other LG Electronics businesses and affiliates while elsewhere decisions on employment will be made at the local level.

LG will provide service support and software updates for customers of existing mobile products for a period of time which will vary by region, it added.

State Refiners Deepen Cuts To Saudi Oil Purchases In May: Report

Agenceis

State refiners will buy 36 per cent less oil from Saudi Arabia in May than normal, three sources said, in a sign of escalating tensions with Riyadh even after the Kingdom supported the idea of boosting output from OPEC and allied producers last week. Energy relations between India, the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer, and Saudi Arabia have soured as global oil prices spiked. New Delhi blames cuts by the Saudis and other oil producers for driving up crude prices as its economy tries to recover from the pandemic.

State-run refiners have placed orders to buy 9.5 million barrels of Saudi oil in May, compared with the previously planned 10.8 million barrels, three sources said. The refiners - Indian Oil Corp, Bharat Petroleum Corp, Hindustan Petroleum Corp and Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd - normally buy 14.8 million barrels of Saudi oil a month.

The decision to place nominations for less oil was taken on Monday, within two days of a telephone conversation between Indian oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan and his Saudi counterpart Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman on Saturday, three sources said.

Contents of the conversation between the two ministers is not known. A source familiar with Saturday's conversation between the ministers said the talks were "positive". The Indian companies did not respond to Reuters' requests for comment. Saudi Aramco de-



clined to comment.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies, known as OPEC+, agreed on Thursday to a gradual easing of their oil output cuts from May after the new U.S. administration called on Saudi Arabia, the de facto leader of the producer group, to keep energy affordable for consumers.

On Sunday Saudi Aramco, the kingdom's state oil company, raised the official selling price, or OSP, of its oil for Asia while cutting it for Europe and American markets. "We were surprised when they announced cuts for other markets while raising OSPs for Asia," said one of the sources.

India suggested that refiners look for energy alternatives to Gulf oil, its main source of crude. Tensions between the two countries escalated further after Abdulaziz last month advised India to use the stocks of crude it bought cheaply during the price slump in 2020. Pradhan termed Abdulaziz's

response as "undiplomatic".

To dial down the disagreement, Abdulaziz last week said that Aramco maintained normal April oil supplies to Indian refiners while cutting volumes for other buyers and conceded that voluntary output curbs have put "Aramco in some difficulty with some of its partners".

He also said that Saudi Arabia will phase out its additional voluntary cut in stages by July. Indian state refiners, meanwhile, have begun diversification of purchases to include Brazil's Tupi grade, Guyana's Liza oil and Norway's Johan Sevreidrup in their crude diet.

"We've always believed that crude supply should be market determined rather than artificially managed," Arindam Bagchi, spokesman for the foreign affairs ministry, said on Friday. He said that even though OPEC+ has announced a slight easing of oil output cuts, they are still far below India's expectations.

Delegation of KTMF call on DC Srinagar

Agenceis

SRINAGAR: A delegation led by Haji Mohammad Yaseen Khan of Kashmir Traders & Manufacturers Federation (KTMF) representing some 250 markets from various areas of the district called on the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad here in his office Chamber.

The delegation projected various issues including macadamization and repairs of roads, providing of for adequate parking facilities espe-

cially in Sher-e Khasa, sanitation and cleanliness measures in City, besides other concerns pertaining to the trade community in Srinagar. With regard to containment and management of new wave of Covid-19, the delegation urged for strict compliance to the SOPs to prevent its spread.

Senior Vice President KTFM, Manzoor Ahmad Bhat projected several issues of traders in Sher-e-Khasa particularly regarding traffic jamming caused due to non availability of parking facility near SMHS, Super Special-

ty hospitals and Dental College.

Responding to the issues raised by the KTMF delegation, the Deputy Commissioner assured them that all their concerns will be looked and redressed on priority. He said black topping of roads would start shortly in Srinagar.

Earlier, the delegation welcomed the Deputy Commissioner on holding the charge in Srinagar as DC and hoped that issues and concerns confronting trade community of Srinagar would be resolved in time bound manner.

Postponed Films, Reduced Occupancy: Multiplexes Could Face Tough Times Amid Second Wave Of COVID-19

Agenceis

The rising COVID-19 cases in the second wave of the pandemic in India, and the local restrictions being imposed due to it, are likely to cause severe challenges to the business operations of multiplexes, which are still recovering from the effects of the last lockdown.

The second wave is being tackled with a curtailment of operations in multiple states, with Maharashtra, the biggest contributor to the cinema business, closing operations till April 30. This is likely to cause a postponement of content, which in turn could hurt the occupancy rates, observes a recent report by Motilal Oswal on COVID-19 and the cinema industry.

Four to five states including Karnataka have only allowed opera-

tions at 50 per cent capacity.

The report observes that all the restrictions will certainly lead to the postponement of many large budget movies as a few scheduled releases in Apr 2021 have been deferred. This in turn is bound to impact occupancies in many regions due to a drop in content on offer. However, the situation may not have the same impact as in the last lockdown; content flow may not fully drop up this time as select small ticket movies may explore exhibition revenues before selling their distribution rights to the digital players. The Motilal report points out that markets in south and central India will continue to do better.

The report analyses PVR, one of the largest multiplexes chains in the country, and notes that while its cost management was commend-

able during lockdown, the resumption of cost, with restricted operations, could push break-even and revise down its FY 22E estimates.

The report highlights that PVR has cut costs on a quarterly basis by 60-70 per cent in the last year to Rs 1.1-1.2 billion as the management saved on rent and CAM (Common Area Maintenance) charges, which took up 35-40 per cent of fixed cost. The report highlights that continued restrictions on cinema operations is fueling the OTT market, which could put pressure on occupancies for the multiplex chains in the country.

For multiplexes, most rental negotiations were till March 2021. Now, with operations in many regions resuming, real estate costs could increase, which could pinch if the COVID-19 fears continue to keep occupancies low. Global references

indicate that consumers will flock to cinema halls if they remain open, but restricted operations could stretch the break-even by a few quarters.

The Motilal report interestingly highlights that the continued restrictions on cinema operations are certainly fueling the OTT market, which is gaining a steady flow of good quality content, thus helping create a steady digital market. Once normalcy returns, the audience may flock to cinemas. Quoting industry statistics the Motilal report mentions that with just 32 million paid OTT subscribers out of a 700 million broadband subscriber universe, digital subscription and the advertising market is 40-50 per cent of domestic cinemas. This is all fuelled by a sizable (more than 1,600 hours) original content compared to over 1,800

movies released in Cinemas. The report further says that OTTs with strong digital content flow, could put pressure on Cinema occupancies and being highly sensitive to occupancies, multiplexes could see a sharp earnings risk.

Analysts from Motilal Oswal say that the multiplex major PVR had seen a steady 30 per cent EBITDA growth in the last 10 years, which had led to a steady jump in its stock price. This was led by improving occupancies and steady new screen additions. However now with a higher base of screens, expectations of the pace of additions slowing in the near term, and pressure on occupancies, earnings growth could be significantly lower for the company. The recent rise in COVID-19 risk will certainly impact FY 22E earnings.

India Will Outpace China In 2021 And Grow At 12.5%: IMF

Agenceis

The IMF on Tuesday projected an impressive 12.5 per cent growth rate for India in 2021, stronger than that of China, the only major economy to have a positive growth rate last year during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Washington-based global financial institution, in its annual World Economic Outlook ahead of the annual Spring meeting with the World Bank, said the Indian economy is expected to grow by 6.9 per cent in 2022.

Notably in 2020, India's economy contracted by a record eight per cent, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said as it projected an impressive 12.5 per cent growth rate for the country in 2021.

China, on the other hand which was the only major economy to

moderate to 3.3 per cent over the medium term, reflecting projected damage to supply potential and forces that predate the pandemic, including aging-related slower labour force growth in advanced economies and some emerging market economies.

In a blog post, Gopinath said the pandemic is yet to be defeated and virus cases are accelerating in many countries.

Recoveries are also diverging dangerously across and within countries, as economies with slower vaccine rollout, more limited policy support, and more reliant on tourism do less well, she said.

Gopinath said policymakers will need to continue supporting their economies while dealing with more limited policy space and higher debt levels than prior to the pandemic.



have a positive growth rate of 2.3 per cent in 2020, is expected to grow by 8.6 per cent in 2021 and 5.6 per cent in 2022.

Chief Economist at IMF Gita Gopinath said: "We are now projecting a stronger recovery in 2021 and 2022 for the global economy compared to our previous forecast, with growth projected to be 6 per cent in 2021 and 4.4 per cent in 2022".

In 2020, the global economy contracted by 3.3 per cent.

"Nonetheless, the outlook presents daunting challenges related to divergences in the speed of recovery both across and within countries and the potential for persistent economic damage from the crisis," she said in her foreword to the report.

According to the report, after an estimated contraction of -3.3 per cent in 2020, the global economy is projected to grow at 6 per cent in 2021, moderating to 4.4 per cent in 2022.

The contraction for 2020 is 1.1 percentage points smaller than projected in the October 2020 World Economic Outlook (WEO), reflecting the higher-than-expected growth outturns in the second half of the year for most regions after lockdowns were eased and as economies adapted to new ways of working.

The projections for 2021 and 2022 are 0.8 percentage point and 0.2 percentage point stronger than in the October 2020 WEO, reflecting additional fiscal support in a few large economies and the anticipated vaccine-powered recovery in the second half of the year, the report said.

Global growth is expected to

This requires better targeted measures to leave space for prolonged support if needed. With multi-speed recoveries, a tailored approach is necessary, with policies well-calibrated to the stage of the pandemic, the strength of the economic recovery, and the structural characteristics of individual countries, she said.

"Right now, the emphasis should be on escaping the health crisis by prioritising health care spending, on vaccinations, treatments, and health care infrastructure. Fiscal support should be well targeted to affected households and firms.

"Monetary policy should remain accommodative (where inflation is well behaved), while pro-actively addressing financial stability risks using macroprudential tools," she said.

Once the health crisis is over, policy efforts can focus more on building resilient, inclusive, and greener economies, both to bolster the recovery and to raise potential output, Gopinath said.

"The priorities should include green infrastructure investment to help mitigate climate change, digital infrastructure investment to boost productive capacity and strengthening social assistance to arrest rising inequality," she added.

The global economy shrank by 4.3 per cent last year, over two-and-a-half times more than during the global financial crisis of 2009.

According to Johns Hopkins University's coronavirus tracker, the COVID-19 has so far infected 131,707,267 people and killed 2,859,868 people across the world since it first broke out in central China's Wuhan city in 2019.

Tarun Bajaj Appointed As New Revenue Secretary, Ajay Seth To Join As DEA secy



Agenceis

The central government has appointed Tarun Bajaj as the new revenue secretary. Bajaj was appointed as the revenue secretary after the superannuation of Ajay Bhushan Pandey. Ajay Seth will now take over as the new secretary for DEA.

Bajaj, a 1988 batch IAS officer, is currently working as secretary to the department of economic affairs. He was appointed to the post on April 30, 2020. Before taking over the post of economic affairs secretary, Bajaj was the additional secretary in the Prime Minister's Office.

Prior to joining the Prime Minister's Office in 2015, Bajaj was joint secretary in the economic affairs department, looking after the multilateral funding agencies division. He also worked as a joint secretary and director in the department of financial services, where he looked after the insurance division.

Ajay Bhushan Pandey, who's a 1984 batch IAS officer of the Maharashtra cadre, retired on February 28. He had been serving as the revenue secretary (additional charge) since 2018. The ministry of personnel also carried out many other reshuffles in the top bureaucracy.

NEWSMAKERS

No Change In Petrol, Diesel Prices For Full Week

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NEW DELHI: Fuel prices in the country remained unchanged on Tuesday with oil marketing companies continuing on the pause mode and keeping petrol and diesel prices unchanged for seven consecutive days.

Accordingly, pump price of petrol and diesel remained at previous days level of Rs 90.56 and Rs 80.87 a litre respectively in the capital.

Petrol and diesel fell by 22 paise and 23 paise per litre respectively last week on Tuesday in the wake of global softening of oil prices. OMCs have decided to pause price revision as they want to watch the crude price movement that has now fallen to around \$62.5 a barrel from remaining above this level in much of the last week.

Across the country as well the petrol and diesel prices remained static on Tuesday but its retail lev-

els varied depending on the level of local levies on respective states.

In Mumbai, petrol continues to be priced at Rs 96.98 a litre and diesel at Rs 87.96 a litre. Premium petrol, however, continues to remain over Rs 100 a litre in the city as is the case with several cities across the country.

The OMCs went on price cut for the first time this year on two consecutive days - March 24 and 25 after keeping oil prices steady for past 24 days. It again reduced the price on March 30. Thereafter, fuel prices have remained unchanged.

Earlier, petrol and diesel prices increased 26 times in 2021 with the two auto fuels increasing by Rs 7.46 and Rs 7.60 per litre respectively so far this year.

Officials in public sector oil companies said that retail price may rise again if crude and product prices pick up but for now it will fall or remain static for few more days.

Adani Group Becomes 3rd Indian Conglomerate To Cross \$100 Billion In M-cap

Agenceis



has gained control of seven airports and almost a quarter of India's air traffic, made rapid strides in renewable energy capacity addition, won a contract to co-develop a port terminal in Sri Lanka and bought ports in India.

In recent weeks, the group has acquired stake in Gangavaram port, commissioned wind power plant in Gujarat, discovered natural gas reserves off the Mumbai coast, acquired solar projects, bought a power transmission project from Essel Infraprojects and signed a pact to develop 1 gigawatt of data centre capacity in India.

Adani Ports controls 30 per cent of the nation's port industry and

has French energy giant Total as a partner in its renewable energy and city gas distribution business.

Adani Green is targeting 25 gigawatts of renewable capacity by 2025. According to BSE data, Adani Enterprises closed at an all-time high of Rs 1,225.55 on the BSE on Tuesday, up 7.67 per cent over the previous day's close.

Adani Total Gas touched a record high of Rs 1,248 before closing at Rs 1,204.35, while Adani Transmission jumped 5 per cent to Rs 1,147 before settling at Rs 1,109.90.

Adani Ports gained 12.84 per cent to end at an all-time high of Rs 837.45. Adani Power rose 5 per cent to Rs 98.40, while Adani Green Energy gained 2.2 per cent to Rs 1,194.55. Except for Adani Green and Adani Power, the shares of other listed firms touched a record high.

Tata Group's current market cap is around USD 242 billion while RIL m-cap is at USD 171 billion.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Mookerjee's Kashmir

the country, and asked party members to caution people about their reality.

He said imaginary fears and rumours are stoked against his government with claims that people's citizenship will be revoked, farmers' land will be seized, Constitution will be changed, or reservation will be scrapped over various issues.

Modi said those who cannot accept their electoral defeats, a reference to opposition parties, people having vested political interests and those who are politically inimical towards the BJP are behind this.

What they are doing will harm the country for a long time, he said. "You have to caution people about their reality," he said in a virtual address, watched by party members across the country.

"Every BJP worker will have to understand that there is deliberate politics behind this. This is a very big conspiracy. Its aim is to trigger political instability in the country. A variety of rumours is spread, illusions are created and imaginary fears are stoked for this," he said, describing it as a serious challenge.

"A new tactic, strategy have entered our public life. What is this? False narratives are manufactured. Sometime it is about the CAA (Citizenship (Amendment) Act), sometime it is about farm laws and sometime it is about the labour laws... Blatant lies are spread quickly by some individuals and organisations. We have to be vigilant and go to people with true information," he said.

Opposition parties have criticised the laws on citizenship, and farm and labour reforms over a number of issues, including some which the prime minister has often rejected as blatant lies.

Modi also hit out at those who have often dubbed the BJP as an "election-winning machine" over its poll triumphs, and accused them of double standards, saying rival parties and their leaders are lauded when they win.

These people do not understand the maturity of Indian people and its democracy, and nor do they appreciate citizens' hopes, expectations and dreams, he said, asserting that voters have evaluated the party over its performance.

The BJP is a continuous movement to win people's hearts as it serves people for five years honestly, be in the government or outside, he said.

The poor and the rural India have embraced the BJP as for the first time they have seen 'anyodaya' (welfare of the most deprived) being realised through a number of schemes, he said, citing a number of welfare measures, including opening bank accounts, building houses and toilets and providing free LPG cylinders to the poor among others.

The youngsters born in the 21st century are also with the BJP, he said, adding that the party serves people when in power as well as when out of it honestly.

"The poor as well as the middle class have associated themselves with the BJP. We are in cities as well as in villages. The BJP today is a party of national interest as well as regional aspirations," he said.

Taking a swipe at the dynastic leadership among most of the opposition parties, which are generally dubbed as part of "secular" bloc, he said their veil of secularism is now slipping away.

Secularism was reduced to working for the welfare of a few while those worked for every section of society were dubbed "communal" by rivals, Modi said, asserting that the mantra of 'sabka saath, sabka vikas, sabka vishwas' has changed this definition.

With a section of farmers protesting against his government over the three farm laws, the prime minister asserted that the interests of small farmers, who are over 80 per cent of the agriculture community, have been at the centre of its schemes and programmes.

In his speech, Modi also said the BJP has risen in its over four decades of existence on the strength of its ideology, and said its work for the poor's welfare have realised Mahatma Gandhi's idea that the interest of the poorest should be central to a government's

work. (With PTI inputs)

Only 'Immunised'

the policy, which comes amid an uptick in coronavirus infections in the kingdom, would be extended to the annual hajj pilgrimage later this year.

Saudi Arabia has reported more than 393,000 coronavirus infections and 6,700 deaths from Covid-19.

The kingdom's health ministry said it has administered more than five million coronavirus vaccine doses, in a country with a population of over 34 million.

Downsized hajj

The announcement comes after King Salman replaced the hajj minister last month, less than a year after the kingdom hosted the smallest hajj in modern history due to the pandemic.

Mohammad Benteen was relieved from his post and replaced by Essam bin Saeed, according to a royal decree published by official Saudi Press Agency (SPA).

In late July last year, the kingdom hosted a downsized hajj pilgrimage, one of the five pillars of Islam and a must for able-bodied Muslims at least once in their lifetime.

Only up to 10,000 Muslim residents of Saudi Arabia itself were allowed to take part, a far cry from the 2.5 million Muslims from around the world who participated in 2019.

It is unclear how many pilgrims will be allowed for hajj this year. According to the pro-government Okaz newspaper, only vaccinated pilgrims will likely be permitted this year.

In a relaxation of coronavirus curbs last October, Saudi Arabia opened the Grand Mosque for prayers for the first time in seven months and partially resumed the umrah pilgrimage.

The umrah, the pilgrimage that can be undertaken at any time, usually attracts millions of Muslims from across the globe each year. Authorities said the umrah will be allowed to return to full capacity once the threat of the pandemic has abated.

Saudi Arabia's custodianship of Mecca and Medina -- Islam's two holiest sites -- is seen as its most powerful source of the monarchy's political legitimacy. The holy sites are also a key revenue earner for the kingdom, whose economy has been badly hit by the pandemic.

J&K Reports

that registered cases in double digits. Nine other districts recorded fresh cases in single digits while two did not report any new cases.

The number of active cases in Jammu and Kashmir stands at 4,483, while 1,27,520 patients have recovered so far, the officials said.

The two deaths were reported from the Kashmir valley, they said.

Govt Employees

of Jammu and Kashmir, all employees of Civil Secretariat and move offices outside Secretariat of the age of 45 years and above are advised to get themselves vaccinated at the Special Vaccination Centre setup in Civil Secretariat, Dispensary, Jammu, w.e.f 06.04.2021," reads an order issued by the government.

"They are further advised to continue to follow covid-appropriate behaviour, even after vaccination, by maintaining hand hygiene, wearing face mask and observing social distancing etc." The government impressed up on all the Administrative Secretaries to ensure vaccination of all eligible employees working in their respective Departments.

Indoor Sports

stated it was likely for young sportspersons to get infected as chances of transmission of the virus while playing close contact sports has increased due to the recent spike in the number of COVID-19 cases.

"It is hereby ordered that all close-contact sports like boxing, wrestling, judo karate, kabbadi, kho-kho, thanga-ta, taekwondo, wushu and many other sports of similar character shall remain temporarily suspended till further orders," it said.

The order, however, stated that other sports

activities could be conducted following necessary standard operating procedures (SOPs) issued by the Centre.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration had already ordered closure of all schools for students up to class 9 for two weeks and for students of classes 10, 11 and 12 for a week from April 5, besides restricting the social gathering to 200 people with strict adherence to SOPs and guidelines.

Dr Farooq Getting

for better care.

"My father has asked me to convey his deep gratitude to all our colleagues for these prayers & all the messages he has been receiving. He is responding well to the treatment and is getting better," Omar Abdullah said on Twitter.

Several leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, wished Farooq Abdullah a speedy recovery after the news of his testing positive for the disease came to light.

Earlier, the NC held prayer meetings across Jammu and Kashmir for Farooq Abdullah's speedy recovery and well-being. (PTI)

Weather Conditions

Wednesday afternoon.

"Occasional heavy snowfall is possible on Zojila, Banihal-Ramban and prominent passes of Leh-Manali Highways during the period," Director Meteorological department Sonam Lotus said.

He said that a "significant" improvement is expected from April 8 onwards in both J&K and Ladakh.

A meteorological department official here said that Srinagar received 3.0mm of rainfall in last 24 hours till 08:30 a.m. He said that the mercury settled at 8.8 degree Celsius against 7.2 degree Celsius on the previous night in the summer capital of J&K.

Qazigund received 1.0mm of rain during the time and it recorded a low of 8.0 degree Celsius against 7.2 degree Celsius on the previous night, the official said.

Pahalgam, the famous resort in south Kashmir, had 2.4mm of rain while as it recorded a minimum of 5.9 degree Celsius against 4.8 degree Celsius on the earlier night, he said.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, received 2.0mm of rain and recorded a low of 6.8 degree Celsius against previous night's 5.7 degree Celsius, the official said.

Kupwara had 9.8mm of rain while the north Kashmir district recording a low of 6.4 degree Celsius against 5.2 degree Celsius on the previous night, the official said.

Gulmarg received 11.4mm of rain and light snowfall during the time while as the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district recorded a minimum temperature of 0.8 degree Celsius against minus 0.6 degree Celsius on the previous night, the official added. (With GNS inputs)

Highway Closed

movement shall be allowed from either side on Jammu-Srinagar highway in view of inclement weather prediction issued by MeT department for next few days," a traffic police spokesperson said.

He said there were chances of highway getting blocked due to the bad weather.

The spokesperson also asked people to undertake journey on the highway only after confirming status of the road from Traffic control units.

Meanwhile, Mughal Road , connecting southern Shopian and Ponnch districts, remained closed due to snow accumulation, it added.

Govt Places

DDC chairpersons had also met Lt Governor Manoj Sinha who had reiterated his commitment to safeguarding their interests.

Commissioner Secretary (Hospitality and Protocol department) Talat Parvez Rohella issued the new protocol list in the supersession of all previous orders and to be observed at all functions in of Union Territory of J&K.

conservators, joint secretaries to the central government and major generals and officers of equivalent rank.

The DDC members have been placed at serial number 28, the last in the list, along with district magistrates, officers of the rank of brigadiers and equivalent, major heads of department, conservator of forests, district and sessions judges, block development councils' chairpersons and the presidents of municipal councils and municipalities, the order said.

On March 9, a day after the government issued the warrant of precedence, the DDC members cutting across party lines had boycotted a two-day training programme here and staged a protest demanding better status and monthly honorarium.

The protest, however, was called off by the DDC members on March 10 following an assurance by the LG to address their issues.

Subsequently, a delegation of the DDC chiefs met Lt Governor Sinha at the Raj Bhavan on the same issue on March 12.

Reiterating his administration's commitment to safeguarding the DDC representatives' interest, the Lt Governor had observed that the three-tier Panchayati Raj system was established to empower the grass-root democracy.

J&K Inks 456

investors since the creation of Union Territory.

The UT of J&K came into existence on October 31, 2019 when the erstwhile state of J&K was dismembered into two UTs.

After the imposition of Governor's rule in June 2018 when Jammu & Kashmir was still a state, the administration started making efforts to attract investments in different sectors.

It planned to hold maiden flagship business event -J&K Global Investors Summit, but it was postponed due to COVID-19.

The local administration has also undertaken reforms undertaken to build an investor-friendly ecosystem in the Union Territory.

The Centre has also unveiled a new scheme to bring about radical transformation in the existing industrial ecosystem of J&K which will enable it to compete with other States/ UTs of the country. The scheme is for the duration of 2021-22 to 2036-37 with financial outlay of Rs. 28,400 crore.

The scheme aims to give fresh thrust to industry and services led development of J&K with emphasis on job creation, skill development and sustainable development by attracting new investment and nurturing the existing one.

It is worthwhile to mention that the administration has also identified 14 focus sectors for investment in the UT—(KNO)

LG Directs PWD

twin routes of the Amamath Yatra.

The 56-day yatra to the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas is scheduled to start on the twin routes of Pahalgam in Anantnag district and Baltal in Ganderbal district on June 28.

Sinha issued the direction while reviewing the progress of projects being executed by the PWD (Roads & Buildings) on the Amamath Yatra routes so that all services are ready well before the start of the annual pilgrimage, an official spokesperson said.

Sinha also directed officers concerned to ensure that accommodation facilities for pilgrims in Ramban along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway are enhanced by May-end, he said.

Meanwhile, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Raghav Langer visited the Yatri Niwas at Bhagwati Nagar and inspected arrangements there.

The divisional commissioner took a round of the complex and directed the Tourism department to immediately start renovation and maintenance work there, the official said.

He also asked for building a shed over an adjoining vacant plot of land with all basic facilities like power and water supply, mobile toilets and charging points to augment the existing accommodation capacity, the spokesman said.

KPDCL Assures

simultaneously delayed.

"The new power schedule for the Valley will be announced in next few days," he said.

Pertinently, the KPDCL had told that it will come up with new power schedule by the end February, but got delayed in wake of frequent wet spells. "We are expecting an improvement in weather conditions and the new plan will be announced subsequently," Lateef said—(KNO)

Portal For Infra

The LG also launched two mobile applications that will allow residents to register and track their grievances and enable effective supervision of

development projects through data updated by field staff, he said.

The Jammu and Kashmir Public Works- Online Management, Monitoring and Accounting System (JKPW-OMMAS), and the two apps -- "Hamari Sadak" and "Tameer Taraqqi" -- of Public Works (Roads and Buildings) Department have been developed through the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), the J&K e-governance agency and the IT department, the spokesperson said.

The portal would facilitate complete online management and monitoring of infrastructure with various functionalities including geo-tracking and dynamic update, he said.

He added that it would also enable complete automation of human resource activities viz online employee details, seniority list, addition of new employees, besides updating of employee information.

Congratulating the Public Works (R&B) department for developing the online portal and mobile apps, Sinha said this would enhance transparency in the overall functioning of the department and make "Jan Bhagidhari" (public participation) an integral part of the project execution process through seamless flow of information in the public domain.

"Complete automation of human resource activities, management and monitoring of infrastructure, project proposal and estimation, project execution and quality control is being done to bring greater transparency and accountability in the functioning of the PWD(R&B) department," he said.

Sinha said the new online initiatives are also aimed at making the grievance management system more robust and responsive by covering important features like online registration of new grievances, tracking of grievances, online monitoring and real-time grievance report.

"Now, people can register and track their grievances regarding Public Works (Roads & Buildings) department through "Hamari Sadak" app, while "Tameer Taraqqi" app will ensure effective project supervision through dynamic updation of project status by the field staff," he said. (PTI)

CASO Launched In

the official said wishing not to be named.

Earlier, police had sealed all entry and exit points while as lights were installed to ensure smooth execution of operation if contact is established with the militants—(KNO)

Missing Minor's

team of police and wildlife officials. The mutilated body, reports said were recovered from the bushes in the forest area suggesting that he was mauled by a wild beast.

The minor had gone missing on March 31 from his native village of Chowgam.

Three Landmines

He said a police party immediately rushed to the spot and secured the place before informing the Samba police's Bomb Disposal Squad.

A team rushed to the scene and the explosive devices were destroyed in a controlled explosion without causing any damage, the official said.

ACB Nabs Works

against him in Police Station ACB Srinagar.

Divulging the case details, an ACB spokesperson said that a complaint was received by the anti-graft body on its WhatsApp helpline alleging that Bhat was demanding Rs 2000 bribe from a contractor to release an amount of Rs 23914 related to the construction of road under MGNREGA scheme worth Rs. 142223. He further said that the complainant had received only Rs118309 out of the estimated amount while rest of the amountRs.23914 was yet to be released in his favour.

"He approached the concerned office, for release of the same, the in-charge supervisor demanded bribe for releasing the same," the ACB spokesperson said.

"A trap team was constituted that laid a successful trap and caught Abdul Rehman Bhat red handed while demanding and accepting the bribe from the complainant. The amount of bribe to the tune of Rs. 2000 was also recovered on the spot," he added.

The Bureau spokesperson further said that the accused works supervisor was arrested and taken into custody by ACB Team.

"Further investigation is in progress," he added.

Unclaimed Bag

police team headed by SHO Rajouri Sameer Jillani rushed to the spot and bomb squad was also called in.

"The bag was searched and later seized from the spot by the police."

They added that a security alert was issued soon after the bag was found in high security zone—(KNO)

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No;-GDCS/canteen/277

Dated: - 06/ 04/2021

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed lenders affixed with the revenue stamps of Rs 06/- are invited from interested persons for running of college canteen. The tender should reach the office of the undersigned within five days from the date of publishing of this notice in the daily newspaper. The detail of the tender can be obtained from the office of the undersigned during all working days.

Terms & Conditions

1. The tenders should be properly sealed with sealing wax.
2. A call deposit receipt for an amount of Rs 500/- (Rupees five hundred only) pledged to the undersigned should accompany the tender.
3. The tenders without CDR will be rejected and will not be incorporated in the comparative statement.
4. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason thereunto.

Prof Muhammad Shafi Lone
Principal
GOVT. DEGREE COLLEGE Sogam

2 Ground-Staff Members Among 3 More COVID-19 Positives At Wankhede Stadium



Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: Two more members of the ground-staff and a plumber at the Wankhede Stadium have tested positive for COVID-19, a day after the facility was cleared to host its share of 10 IPL matches. The stadium is due to host its first IPL game of the season on April 10, following the lung-opener in Chennai between defending champions Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bangalore on April 9.

"Three at the stadium have tested positive, two are grounds-men," a Mumbai Cricket Association source told PTL.

Earlier last Saturday, 10 ground-staff members of the stadium had tested positive, but most of them have since recovered. On Monday, the Maharashtra government cleared the decks for the event in Mumbai despite the weekend lockdown provisions and night curfew in the city.

The government allowed teams to practice and travel from their respective hotels to the stadium after 8pm, when the night curfew would be on to curb the pandemic.

On Tuesday, Maharashtra reported over 47,000 COVID-19 cases of which Mumbai accounted for more than 9000.

'Bio-Bubble Is Tough But Indians More Tolerant,' Says Saurav Ganguly

Press Trust of India

KOLKATA: BCCI President Sourav Ganguly on Tuesday said Indian cricketers are "more tolerant" when it comes to dealing with mental health issues compared to those from England and Australia but acknowledged that being confined to bio-bubbles amid a raging pandemic is not easy for anyone.

International cricket in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced players to stay in bio-bubbles, where their life is restricted to hotels and stadiums.

They do not have access to people outside the bubble during series and India skipper Virat Kohli is among those who have voiced their concerns about the mental toll that the current situation is taking.

"I feel we Indians are a bit more tolerant than overseas (cricketers). I have played with a lot of Englishmen, Australians, and the West Indians, they just give up on mental health," the former India captain said at a virtual promotional event here.

"In the last six-seven months, with so much cricket being going on in the bio-bubble, it's so tough. Just going from the hotel room to the ground, handle the pressure and come back to the room and then get back to the ground again, it's an absolutely different life."

Ganguly cited the example of the Australian cricket team which pulled out of a tour to South Africa following a defeat to India at home.

Australia were slated for a three-Test tour in March-April but they pulled out citing an "unacceptable level of health and safety risk to players, support staff and the community".

"Look at the Australian team, they were supposed to go to South Africa for a Test series after India played there. They refused to go there..." he said.

"And always there's this scare of COVID. 'Hope it's not me the next time'. You have to stay positive, you have to train yourself mentally. All of us have to train ourselves mentally so that the good will happen. It boils down to training," Ganguly added.

The former India skipper further recalled the biggest setback in his career when he was stripped of captaincy in 2005 and was eventually dropped only to make a splendid return.

"You just have to deal with it. It's the mindset that you get into. Life has no guarantees, be it in sport, business or whatever. You go through ups and downs. You just have to bite the bullet. Pressure is a huge thing in everybody's life. All of us go through different pressures."

"When you play your first Test, it's the pressure of making yourself established and making the world know that you belong at this level. A little bit of blip and it doesn't stop people from scrutinising you and that adds to athletes in a long way," he added.

Amid Spike In COVID-19 Cases, Govt Suspends All 'Close Contact' Sports In J&K

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The J&K Government on Tuesday suspended all "close contact sports" like Boxing, Wrestling, Judo Karate, Kabbadi, Kho-Kho, Thanga-ta, Taekwondo and Wushu amid increase in COVID-19 cases across Jammu and Kashmir.

"The Department of Disaster Management Relief Rehabilitation & Reconstruction has issued guidelines via Govt. Order No.13-JK (DMRRR) of 2021 dated 04.04.2021 regarding temporary closure of all the educational institutions after overall assessment of COVID spike in Jammu and Kashmir. Similarly, the likelihood of young sportspersons getting infected and transmitting infection while playing close contact sports has also increased due to the recent spike in the number of infections," an order by the Principal Secretary reads.



"Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that all close contact sports like Boxing, Wrestling, Judo Karate, Kabbadi, Kho-Kho, Thanga-ta, Taekwondo, Wushu and any other sports of similar character shall remain temporarily suspended till further orders," it said.

However, all other outdoor sports activities have been ordered to be conducted after following necessary SOPs as detailed in the Circular instructions issued by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, dated 29 January this year. (KNS)

Former India Wicketkeeper Kiran More Tests Positive For Coronavirus

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: Former India wicketkeeper and Mumbai Indians' talent scout Kiran More has tested positive for COVID-19, the IPL franchise said on Tuesday.

The 58-year-old More is also the wicket-keeping consultant of the five-time IPL champions.

"Mr More is currently asymptomatic and has been isolated. Mumbai Indians and Kiran More have followed all the BCCI health guidelines," MI stated in a media release.

"The MI medical team will continue to monitor Mr. More's health and abide by the BCCI protocols." Among the players and support staff, Delhi Capitals' all-rounder Axar Patel has tested



positive and is in isolation.

Royal Challengers Bangalore opener Devdutt Padikkal is currently in home quarantine, having tested positive for COVID-19 before

joining the camp in Bengaluru.

There has been surge in COVID-19 cases in the country with Mumbai and state of Maharashtra being the worst-affected.

North Korea Says It Won't Take Part In Tokyo Olympics

Agencies

SEOUL: North Korea said it will not participate in the Tokyo Olympics because of the coronavirus pandemic.

A website run by the North's sports ministry said the decision was made during a national Olympic Committee meeting on March 25 where members prioritized protecting athletes from the "world public health crisis caused by COVID-19."

South Korea's Unification Ministry on Tuesday expressed regret over the North's decision, saying it had hoped that the Tokyo Olympics would provide an opportunity to improve inter-Korean relations, which have declined amid a stalemate in larger nuclear negotiations between

Washington and Pyongyang.

Japanese Olympic Minister Tamayo Marukawa told reporters she was still confirming details and couldn't immediately comment on the matter. Japan's Olympic Committee said North Korea has not yet notified it that it wouldn't participate in the Tokyo Games.

North Korea sent 22 athletes to the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea, along with government officials, performance artists, journalists and a 230-member all-female cheering group.

At the Pyeongchang Games, the North and South Korean athletes jointly marched under a blue map symbolizing a unified Korean Peninsula, while the red-clad North Korean cheerleaders captivated

global attention. The Koreans also fielded their first combined Olympic team in women's ice hockey, which drew passionate support from crowds despite losing all five of its games with a combined score of 28-2.

Those games were also much about politics. The North Korean contingent included the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, who conveyed his brother's desire for a summit with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, a move which helped it initiate diplomacy with South Korea and the United States.

That diplomacy has stalemated since, and North Korea's decision to sit out the Tokyo Olympics is a setback for hopes to revive it.

IPL 2021

Delhi Capitals – Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats And Opportunities

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Thrust into the leadership role, a completely transformed Rishabh Pant carries a lot of hope and responsibility on his shoulders as Delhi Capitals aim to build on the success of the last edition in the UAE, where they ended runners-up.

A solid batting line-up coupled with a potent pace attack makes DC strong contenders this year too.

Pant was handed captaincy a week back after Shreyas Iyer was forced out following a shoulder injury, sustained during the ODI series against England last month.

Delhi Capitals have grown from strength to strength as they finished second runners up in the 2019 before reaching summit clash last year.

Here is a look at the team which will begin its campaign against Chennai Super Kings in Mumbai on April 10.

pair, having scalped 52 wickets together in 2020.

With Chris Woakes also in the mix this time and Ishant Sharma and Umesh Yadav also in the ranks, Delhi have options in their pace battery.

WEAKNESSES:

Delhi's primary weakness is not having enough quality players in their ranks both overseas and home cricketers. Not having like-for-like replacements is one of the weak points.

It was precisely the reason they were not able to rest Kagiso Rabada and Anrich Nortje. Even in terms of wicket-keeping, in case Pant has a niggly they didn't have replacement. This year they have Vishnu Vinod of Kerala but he is a green horn.

Also the Indian fast bowling is pretty weak as their two premier fast bowlers Ishant and Umesh don't play much white ball cricket for the national team now.



STRENGTHS:

They are one of the most balanced sides in the tournament with a formidable batting line-up and a potent pace attack.

In Shikhar Dhawan, Prithvi Shaw and Ajinkya Rahane, Delhi boast of a solid top order. Pant along with Marcus Stoinis and Shimron Hetmyer or Sam Billings will look to fill the hole left by Iyer in the middle order.

The addition of Steve Smith will further bolster their batting.

Dhawan (618) was the second highest run-scorer in 2020 and looked in good touch in the recent ODI series against England with scores of 98 and 67.

Shaw too will be itching to prove his worth after amassing 827 runs in the Vijay Hazare Trophy following his ouster from the Australia Test series and a dismal last season.

Pant has emerged as a match-winner for India in the recent series against Australia and England. He along with all-rounder Stoinis and Billings will have to ensure that DC finish with a flourish.

On the bowling front, South African pace duo of Kagiso Rabada (2020 purple cap winner) and Anrich Nortje has proved to a dream

OPPORTUNITIES:

Although a big challenge, but it will also be a huge opportunity for young skipper Pant to step out of the shadows of the legendary MS Dhoni by guiding his team to its maiden title.

The league also provides Pant the opportunity to prepare for the T20 World Cup, where he will be a vital cog in India's batting line-up. Dhawan too will look to seal the opening slot, while it is also a chance for R Ashwin and Axar Patel to prepare for the ICC event.

THREAT:

Pant has displayed resilience and understanding in his short career thus far but he will have to ensure that the added leadership responsibility doesn't affect his natural attacking instinct as a batsman.

Also DC's pace unit is too dependent on Rabada and Nortje with back-up pacers Ishant and Umesh not boasting of a great T20 record.

Last year, Delhi suffered four successive losses after seven wins in first nine games, jeopardising their play-off chances. They need to be wary of such a slump and avoid collapses like last year.

Rishabh Pant Aims To Upstage Mentor MS Dhoni In First Match As Captain In IPL 2021



Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: Rishabh Pant cannot wait to start his captaincy stint with Delhi Capitals against mentor Mahendra Singh Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings, hoping to use "learnings" from the iconic former skipper to upstage him in the IPL clash on Saturday.

Delhi will take on Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings here on Saturday. The 23-year-old highly rated wicket-keeper-batsman cannot wait to start his stint as a leader in that match.

"My first match as captain will be against Mahi (MS Dhoni) bhai. It will be a good experience for me as I have learned a lot from him. I have my own experience as a player as well."

"I'll apply my own experience and the learnings from MS Dhoni, and try to do something different against CSK," Pant was quoted as saying in a press release issued by Delhi Capitals.

The effervescent youngster has endured a roller-coaster ride in international cricket, gaining in prominence and respect in the past

few months with his gutsy batting and drastically improved keeping.

He often draws comparisons with Dhoni but has maintained that he is aiming for a space of his own even though he does turn to the senior player for advice and mentorship. Pant, who has scored 2,079 runs in 68 IPL matches, said he would be working hard to give DC its maiden IPL title.

"...I am looking forward to making most of this opportunity. We haven't won a title yet and I will try my level best to get a title this year. We've been playing nicely as a team from last two-three years and our preparations are going on well," he said.

"Everyone looks in great frame of mind. Everyone is giving their 100 percent and is happy in the team environment, and that's what you want as a Captain," he added.

When asked about the influence of head coach Ricky Ponting on the team, Pant said, "He (Ricky) has been so amazing for us in the last two-three years."

When Will The Next Generation Of Tennis Stars Overtake The Big Three?

Agencies

MIAMI: The next generation of men's tennis remains a jumble of unrealized potential.

With Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer skipping the Miami Open, the tournament was expected to bring the game's new faces into sharper focus. Instead, the outlook remains fuzzy as the clay season begins.

Sunday's match between No. 37-ranked Hubert Hurkacz and No. 31 Jannik Sinner was the first ATP Masters 1000 final since 2003 with two players ranked outside the top 30. Hurkacz became the lowest-ranked champion in the ATP's top-level series since 2005. Meanwhile, for players touted as future Grand Slam champions, Miami represented an opportunity missed. Daniil Medvedev, Stefanos Tsitsipas and Alexander Zverev failed to make it even to the semifinals.

"With the Big Three absent, I think all the NextGen guys were trying their best to play their best game, to compete as hard as they can," Hurkacz said.

"Hopefully the spectators enjoyed it."

But what should fans make of it? Twenty-somethings have been trying to overtake the Big Three for years, and no front-runner for 2021 emerged in Miami. Medvedev, seeded No. 1 at a Masters 1000 event for the first time, was upset in the fourth round by Roberto Bautista Agut. No. 2 Tsitsipas exited in the same round with a loss to Hurkacz.



"I felt like it was my opportunity," Tsitsipas said.

"There was more space for me to show something greater."

No. 3 Zverev flopped worst of all, double-faulting three times on break point in a loss to No. 83-ranked Emil Ruusuvuori. No. 4 Andrey Rublev, a Russian who leads the tour with 20 wins this year, reached the semifinals before Hurkacz upset him.

This all came after Nadal and Federer withdrew before the tournament started due to injuries, while Djokovic decided to stay home in Serbia amid the pandemic.

For Hurkacz, 24, the title is by far the biggest of his career, and the first for a Polish player in a Masters 1000 event. But he won't be among the favourites at the French Open.

In sum, no 20-something appears poised to wrest the mantle from the 30-somethings who have dominated the sport for so

long. Dominic Thiem won his first major title at the U.S. Open in September, but he is just 5-4 this year and skipped Miami.

"The next generation still has to show they can beat the Big Three," Sinner said.

"The next generation is not ready yet to win against them consistently. At some point there will be the moment; I don't know when. It can be two years or five years, I don't know. But the moment will come."

Perhaps Grand Slam greatness will skip a generation, and it will be someone now a teenager who supplants the Big Three. Sinner, a 19-year-old baseline basher from Italy, took a giant leap in Miami, just his third Masters 1000 event.

Also making a splash was unseeded 20-year-old American Sebastian Korda, who reached the quarterfinals before losing to Rublev. Korda, the son of former Australian Open champion Petr Korda, is wide-

ly considered the best hope to end an 18-year drought in major titles for U.S. men. He sounds more patient than some fans.

"My parents are super big on baby steps," Korda said.

"You can play tennis for so long if you stay healthy for 15-plus years. Guys now are playing until 40; it's incredible. There are a lot of years ahead of me."

"I'll always put my head down and keep working, and hopefully one day I could achieve something like what my dad achieved."

Korda and Sinner have considerable flair and star appeal, as do Medvedev, Tsitsipas, Zverev and Rublev.

"The future of tennis looks great, because the generation is changing," Rublev said.

"The NextGen players, they are different. They look different compared with previous ones. I think they have charisma."

Charisma, yes, but not yet many trophies.

Last-Gasp Winner Helps Barcelona Reach Within 1 Point Of La Liga Summit

Agencies

MADRID: A late winner by Ousmane Dembele gave Barcelona control of its own fate in the race for the Spanish league title.

Dembele scored in the 90th minute on Monday as Barcelona defeated 10-man Valladolid 1-0 to move within a point of league leader Atletico Madrid.

Dembele scored with a left-footed shot from inside the area to make sure Barcelona can secure the title by winning all its remaining games, as it hosts Atletico in one of the final rounds in May.

This is the result of our work. We worked very hard in these last few months," Barcelona defender Clement Lenglet said. Things are starting to go our way."

Barcelona had been struggling to break through the tight defensive scheme of Valladolid, which played a man down from the 80th after Oscar Plano was sent off for a foul from behind to stop a dangerous run by Dembele.

"It's proof that this is a very difficult league, you have to fight hard to win in every match," Lenglet said.

"We created many chances and scored the winner in the end. We are happy but we have to keep working because this is far from over."

Atletico lost 1-0 at Sevilla on Sunday to see its once-comfortable cushion vanish. Seeking its first league title since 2014, Diego Simeone's team has been gradually losing ground at the top of the standings. Its lead over Barcelona was more than 10 points a few weeks ago.

Atletico's gap to third-place Real Madrid, which defeated Eibar 2-0 on Saturday, is three points with nine rounds left.

Barcelona next visits Real Madrid in the last Clasico of the season on Saturday. While Atletico hosts Eibar on Sunday.

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