



P3 CITY

NGO CLEANS, REVIVES FOUR LAKES IN SRINAGAR

Thirty years of destruction unleashed by human greed and official neglect have killed many of the interconnected water bodies of Srinagar city - once referred to as 'Venice of Orient' - but an NGO...

P6 CHOPANS OF KASHMIR

Kashmiri shepherds who're known here as Chopan or Pohul in local Kashmiri dialect have started migrating towards the upper reaches or what is called Bahak. This seasonal migration actually begins from May onwards, but for a...



P5 STATE

TO SIMPLIFY NOC PROCESS, CS INAUGURATES E-VIGILANCE CLEARANCE SYSTEM

The Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta Wednesday inaugurated the e-Vigilance Clearance System. Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department, Director Anti...



Pak Seeks UN Help To Reverse India's Kashmir Move

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has written another letter to the top UN officials highlighting the Kashmir issue, the Foreign Office said on Wednesday.

Qureshi addressed the letter to the President of the United Nations Security Council and the United Nations Secretary General, it said.

The minister, who has been regularly writing letters to the Security Council President and the UN Secretary General, in his latest letter alleged that India was changing the demographic structure of Kashmir through the issuance of fake domicile certificates and other measures. He urged the Security Council to call upon India to reverse its actions, including those initiated on and after August 5, 2019.

Tensions between India and Pakistan have spiked since New Delhi abrogated the Article 370 of the Constitution to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019. India's decision evoked strong reactions from Pakistan, which downgraded... [More On P10](#)



Dr. Yasir Wani
Consultant Paediatrician

- 1) Pfizer
Single dose - 33%
Two doses - 96%
- 2) Covishield
Single dose - 30%
Two doses - 92%

Bottom line : Two doses of both Pfizer and Covishield are almost equally and highly efficacious to prevent hospitalization by all existing Variants !
Vaccination (2 doses) are the only way to prevent the 3rd wave !

Dr. Muzaffar Maqbool
Researcher and Associate Professor, Internal Medicine, GMC

While asking many patients today about Vaccination status against Covid-19, most of them to my utter surprise haven't received the dose or have received a single shot. Let us spread the word that if we want our lives to be back to normal, Vaccination is the only way out.

Dr. Shah Nawaz B Kaloo
Consultant Interventional Radiology, Liver Cancer Interventions, Max Hospital

Everyone wants to live healthy
No body wants to get COVID
We must tell facts & publish data
If somebody is hesitating to get vaccine, it is mostly because they have been told lies
We just need to tell them truth:
Vaccine is life, COVID can mean death
Awareness, NOT Force

LG Takes Strong Note Of Power Outage In Jammu

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Taking a strong note of power outage during sweltering heat wave in the winter capital, the Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday ordered constitution of a panel to probe the erratic power cuts, fix the responsibility and punish the officials involved.

Chairing a high-level meeting at the Civil Secretariat here on Wednesday, LG assured the people of Jammu division that a committee will be constituted by the Chief Secretary to enquire into the recent unscheduled power outage in various areas, an official spokesperson said.

The LG said much before the onset of... [More On P10](#)

Govt Okays Rs 12,600 Crore District Capex Budget 2021-2022

With This Historic Move, Panchayati Raj Has Been Further Empowered: LG

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir government on Wednesday approved over Rs 12, 600 crore district capex budget for 2021-2022, terming it a historic decision for equitable development of the Union Territory with active involvement of Panchayats, Block Development Councils (BDCs) and District Development Councils (DDCs).

Compared to last year's budget of Rs 5134.40 Crore, the historic and unprecedented District Capex Budget of Rs 12,600.58 for all 20 districts was approved during a high-level meeting chaired by Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha at the Civil Secretariat here on Wednesday, an official spokesperson said.

During the marathon meeting, he said, 20 Chairpersons of DDCs and all Deputy



Commissioners gave a brief overview of their respective District Plans.

Highlighting the key features of the District Capex Budget, the LG, as per official spokesperson observed that the community need-based plan has been prepared through Public/PRI's participation which focuses on a rapid rise in the standard of living of the people, employment opportunities

to the locals, ensuring better roads, potable water and electricity, tourism potential, empowering youth and determining other priorities as per the public demand.

As per the official spokesperson, Sinha said that a bottom-up approach has been adopted to map optimal strategies for socio-economic development, sustainable and inclusive growth at the grass root level, strengthening of basic amenities, and development of human capital by solidifying health and educational institutions.

"J&K is witnessing a new dawn. For the first time, after the detailed deliberations, a plan has been prepared with collective efforts of the PRIs and the Administration. The active participation of the public and their... [More On P10](#)

'Financial Help To 50,000 Unemployed Youth In 2021'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir government on Wednesday approved over Rs 12, 600 crore district capex budget for 2021-2022, terming it a historic decision for equitable development of the Union Territory with active involvement of Panchayats, Block Development Councils (BDCs) and District Development Councils (DDCs).

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riding high on the success of ambitious 'Back to Village initiative', J&K government is planning to reach out to 50,000 youth for financial assistance under the next leg of Back to Village program, the details of which would be finalized soon, Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said Wednesday. Chairing a high-level meeting of DDC Chairpersons, Administrative Secretaries, and District Development Commissioners on Wednesday, the LG announced that this year, the UT administration should aim to provide financial assistance to 50,000 unemployed youth in order to make them entrepreneur. "Last year, our target was to pick up two unemployed... [More On P10](#)

Militant Killed In Nowgam Encounter: Police

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A local Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant was killed in an overnight gunfight with state forces in Nowgam area of the city outskirts, police said Wednesday.

Uzair Ashraf Dar, a resident of Wandina village in Zainapora area of Shopian was killed by the joint team of police, army and CRPF during the nightlong gun-battle in Wagoora area of Nowgam in the city outskirts, a police official told Kashmir Observer Wednesday. Dar, he said had joined militant ranks in January this year and was part of groups involved in many attacks on government forces.

According to the police official, one pistol along with a magazine and six rounds of ammunition besides two grenades were recovered from the encounter spot.

"All the recovered materials have been taken into case records for further investigation and to probe his complicity in other crimes," the police official said.

In this connection, he said, police has registered a case under relevant sections of law and investigation has been initiated.

The encounter, as per the police official started around 11:45pm Tuesday when the government forces launched search operation in the area on the basis of specific information suggesting... [More On P10](#)

Man Jailed For 'No Expectations From Outsiders' Remark Released

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: A political activist, who was jailed after he told an advisor of the Lieutenant Governor that he has hopes from a Kashmiri official like him rather than bureaucrats from outside, has been released from detention, officials said on Wednesday.

SSP Ganderbal Suhail Munawar said that Sajad Sofi (50), a resident of Wani Mohalla

in Safapora area of Ganderbal district has been released.

Sofi was jailed after he told LG's advisor Baseer Khan that he has hopes from a Kashmiri official like him rather than bureaucrats from outside during 'Janta Darbar' at Mansbal on June 10.

Speaking about the problems faced by the people of his area, Sofi told Khan that he can understand the issues better as... [More On P10](#)



A health worker administers Covid-19 vaccine jab to a farmer at a paddy field in Khag area of Budgam district on Wednesday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

....COVID-19 ON DECLINE

Lowest Number In 71 Days Test Positive In J&K

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Coronavirus graph continues to show a declining trend in Jammu and Kashmir as 635 new cases were recorded on Wednesday, the lowest daily single-day count after 71 days, even as 12 more people lost the battle with the deadly infection in the Union territory during the last 24 hours. While 442 fresh cases of coronavirus were reported from Kashmir Valley, the remaining 193, officials said, were detected from various parts of the Jammu division thus taking the total number of people infected by the virus across J&K to 309361.

Giving district-wise details of the new... [More On P10](#)

730 Doctors Died In Second Wave: IMA

As many as 730 doctors have succumbed to coronavirus infection during the second wave, according to data available by the Indian Medical Association (IMA). Bihar saw the maximum number of 115 deaths, followed by Delhi at 109, Uttar Pradesh 79, West Bengal 62, Rajasthan 43, Jharkhand 39, and Andhra... [More On P10](#)

Police Recover Rs 5.72L Fine From Violators

The Jammu and Kashmir police said on Wednesday that four people were arrested and a fine of over Rs5.72L was recovered from 3865 others during its ongoing driver against the... [More On P10](#)

Silent, Sulking: The Grand Party Mood During Talk Show

Zaid Bin Shabir

Oblivious of the growing clamour over the resumption of "quiet talks" in Kashmir, septuagenarian Abdul Rehman has turned up for his routine outing in his party bastion which once was an epicentre of the political undercurrents in the valley but now elapsed beyond the belief of its votaries.

Rehman's 'long walk' to the citadel passes through the bunkered entrance and a busy stretch hosting some struggling "showmen of Kashmir's tragic



drama" discussing small projects over the cup of tea. "We would pity these artists till yesterday when our party headquarter was a bustling

place," Rehman says, as he steps inside Nawa-e-Subah, the official address of Kashmir's grand old party, National Conference. "But now, it's a level playing

field for us. That's to say that we've become strugglers in our own style." The old loyalist, whose tribe became "expandable" after New

Delhi stripped the semi autonomous status of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019, doesn't look keen on the reported dialogue process.

"Despite facing militant guns and slurs from the society, we were made captives for upholding the flag of India in Kashmir in recent past," Rehman's colleague, Sultan Bhat, said. "We were shown our worth and value. So, now, even if they promise us moon, it won't undo the damage." Sulking and mostly silent, most of these Sheikh Abdullaha political workers see the old script being followed in the name of the reported talks. "Back in the day when our lion [Sheikh's sobriquet given by his admirers] was roaring and was

made captive for his people-centric politics, we faced the same treatment," Bhat continues. "To downsize our say and sway, proxies and parasites were floated time and again, but the good-old NC is still standing its ground and is seen as the only option for New Delhi to come out of the crisis it has created in Kashmir." However, despite this din over the political revival, the NC HQ has today become a jilted stone house—blanketed with silence, suspense and speculations. To keep the senior disgruntled diehards in... [More On P10](#)



To place an advertisement

CALL +91-194 2502327

Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)

No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

Department of (AYUSH) Govt. of J & K District Anantnag. AYUSH Immune Booster Medicine Distributed at Village Damjan Mir Bzar Anantnag from Govt. ISM Dispensary VESSU Anantnag



On 16/06/2021 Following the Protocol of AYUSH Department Ministry of AYUSH Govt. of India and the Orders of Director ISM J&K Dr Mohan Singh just and by the guidelines of ADMO MADAM Dr. Nuzhat Bashir & District Nodal officer Ayush Dr. Mir Javaid Hussain sahib an awareness programme and distribution of immune booster medicines was organized at at Village Damjan Mir Bazar Anantnag from Govt. AYUSH Dispensary Vessu Anantnag 430 beneficiaries received immunity boosting drugs also were briefed about importance of Ayush immunity boosters in enhancement of human immunity to combat Covid 19 panoramic along other importance preventive measures.

mja

KAWOOSA'S BEREAVED

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the demise of Abdul Hameed Kawoosa resident of Green Avenue Colony Bemina Sector 2F near Masjid Hyder on 15th June 2021 (Tuesday). May Allah keep his soul at the highest places of Jannah. Fateh Khawani will be performed on 18th June 2021 (Friday) at 02:30 pm at our ancestral graveyard behind Gazali Masjid Malkhah.



BEREAVED
Fayzan Kawoosa (Son), Justice Retd M. Y. Kawoosa (Brother), Kaiser Kawoosa (Nephew), Nazir Ahmed Shah (Brother in law)

از نیابت قلم اہاد
مضمون کاغذات درخوات منجانب عبدال کریم گوچرچی ولد ناک محمد گوچرچی ساکنہ لایہ کوئمبر اعطایگی ہڈ پوٹ سربسٹریٹیف تحت SRO 294
استہار ہمراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام
معاہدہ مندرجہ عنوان صدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر بڈام ڈیپارٹمنٹ سے اس سلسلے میں بنیادی حلقہ سے رپورٹ شمولہ ریڈیٹ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل مینٹن شدہ پورہ میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کبہ ذیل فریڈمیشن ہے سربسٹریٹیف ایجر کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ ہی اندر دفتر بڈام ڈیپارٹمنٹ میں پیش کرے مگر یہ عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا
نائب تحصیلدار sult

اطلاع عام
راٹم کورٹ لاڈیز لائسنس نکالنی مطلوب ہے۔ اس ضمن میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر چیف ایگریکچر آفیسر کو لکھ کر پیش کریں۔ بعد میں عذر یا اعتراض بھی قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
نائب: او ایس عباس ولد عباس احمد کول ساکنہ کول پورہ کو لکھ کر۔
RNA

از نیابت زبیر پورہ با اجلاس امتیاز احمد صاحب۔
مضمون درخواست منجانب: غلام نبی ڈار ولد علی محمد ڈار ساکنہ گول پورہ گلگان تحصیل منٹن ضلع انت ناگ ہمراد حوضو لیگل بائیر سربسٹریٹیف
استہار ہمراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام
معاہدہ مندرجہ عنوان صدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول لیگل بائیر سربسٹریٹیف دفتر بڈام ڈیپارٹمنٹ سے اس بارے میں منٹن کیلئے سے رپورٹ طلب کیا گیا جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کی ماں سہ ماہہ راجہ نگم بیوی علی محمد ڈار مورخہ 27-02-2020 کو فوت ہوئی ہے۔ لہذا موتی کے وارثان جائیز بڈام ڈیپارٹمنٹ سے قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
نائب تحصیلدار ار زبیر پورہ RNA

نمبر شمار	نام فراؤکنیہ	عمر	رشتہ ہمراد متوفیہ	پیشہ	آمدنی
01	غلام نبی ڈار ولد علی محمد ڈار	57 سال	پسر متوفیہ	ملازمت	
02	محمد شیخ ڈار ولد علی محمد ڈار	55 سال	پسر متوفیہ	زمینداری	
03	حیدر بیگم دختر علی محمد	60 سال	دختر متوفیہ	گھریلو کام	
04	مجمودہ بیگم دختر علی محمد	62 سال	دختر متوفیہ	گھریلو کام	

اطلاع عام
راٹم کورٹ لاڈیز لائسنس نکالنی مطلوب ہے۔ اس ضمن میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر چیف ایگریکچر آفیسر کو لکھ کر پیش کریں۔ بعد میں عذر یا اعتراض بھی قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
نائب: شیخ اعجاز احمد ولد شمس الدین شیخ ساکنہ منڈ بول دیو پورہ کو لکھ کر۔
RNA

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR NOTICE

Where as an application for transfer of ownership has been received from Mehraj U Din Garisaz S/O Ghulam Mohammad Garisaz R/o Kathi Darwaza Sgr (Transferor) of Eon Dilte bearing registration No. JK01U-5516 chasis No: 188705 Engine No: 163989 Model 2013 in favour of Aijaz Yousuf Zaroo S/o Mohammad Yousuf Zaroo R/O Railway Flyover Humhama Sgr (Transferee).
Now, therefore, it is notified for the information of the general public that representation/ Objection, if any in connection with proposed transfer will be received within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer to the address of undersigned.
No. representation/ objection shall be considered unless it is made writing it is made in the aforesaid period.
NOJK-RTOK 2189
Dated: 16/02/2021
Sd/-
Regional Transport Office, Kashmir
fko

Office of the Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag NOTICE

Whereas joint application has been received by this office from Mysar Jan D/O Ghulam Mohi-U-DIN r/o Bonpora Dupityar Anantnag (Party No. 2nd) as Transferee (purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted vehicle from Party NO. 1st and 2nd & HP cancellation with JK Bank Sirhama Anantnag.
Before the case is disposed off on its merit, any body having any objection regarding the proposed transfer any file his objection within seven (7) days from the publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned. No any representation / objection shall be entertained after stipulated period.
No: 101/6936/ang dated: 16-06-21
RNA
Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag

DEMISE
With profound grief, we inform the demise of our beloved father
Gh. Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat R/O Old Gagrival Road
on 16th of June 2021.
The Taziyat will be for 03 days.
The Fatehkhawani will be held on 18th June 2021 after Friday Prayers at 2:30 PM.
Near Bilaliya Masjid Zaffron Colony Sempora.
Their will be no gathering at home.
Bereaved: Bhat Family
Fayaz Ahmad Bhat +91-6005528051
+91-9622345674

FORM N.D.
[See rule 97(3) or the Jammu and Kashmir Motor Vehicle Rules, 1991]
Form of Notice to be published in Newspaper by the successor to the permit-holder.
It is hereby informed for the knowledge of public that Shri Late Ghulam Mohammad Bhat owner of the Motor Vehicle No. JK04A 7432 Covered by permit no 802/GC/Bud has expired on 31-05-2014
Shri. Gulzar Ahmad Bhat Address Daipora Budgam, being successor to the possession of the above-mentioned Vehicle / Permit intend to use the permit and accordingly, I have applied to the appropriate authority / Regional Transport Officer for the transfer of permit in my name.
Any person having any claim or objection in this regard, should within 15 days from the publication of this notice, bring such fact to the notice of Regional Transport Office ARTO Budgam.
mcb

Mechanical Engineering Department Kashmir. Mechanical Division Anantnag.

Gist of tender Notice No MDA/TS/Tender/36of 2021-22 dated: -14-06-2021.
For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K UT sealed Tenders affixed with Rs.6/= revenue stamps are invited from the registered suppliers /contractors having valid GST registration, for Repairs to Departmental snow cat 6th (sonalika60HP) of FSD Kulgam .

S.No	Particulars of work	Advertise cost (RS)	Cost T/D	Bid security Declaration	Sale of tender Documents from.	Last date Of Submission of tender.	Date of opening.	Position of AAA/ Technical sanction.
01	Repairs to Departmental snow cat 6 th (Sonalika 60HP) of FSD Kulgam.	42000.0	200	To be submitted with BOQ	15/06/2021 to 25/06/2021	26/6/2021	26/6/2021	Accorded/Yes

The detailed tender documents containing complete specifications, terms and conditions of this tender notice can be had from the office of the undersigned on any working day during office hours from 15/6/2021 to 25/6/2021 up to 2:00 PM) against the cash payment of Rs:-200/= (Non-refundable) as document cost. The documents shall be issued after production of following certificates.
01 Original valid registration certificate from competent authority.
02 PAN card.
03 GST clearance of previous quarter
The Tender should be submitted in the office of Executive Engineer Mechanical Division Anantnag on or before 26-06-2021 up to 2 PM and shall be opened on 26-06-2021 or any other working day convenient to the Executive Engineer Mechanical Division Anantnag
The tenderer who wish to participate in the bidding process shall remain present at the time of opening of tenders. The Executive Engineer Mechanical Division Anantnag reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof..
No:-MDA/TS /798/2411-14
Dated: -14/06/2021
Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Mechanical Division Anantnag.
DIPK-2922/21

Mechanical Engineering Department Kashmir. Mechanical Division Anantnag.

Gist of tender Notice No MDA/TS/Tender/37 of 2021-22 dated: -14-06-2021.
For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K UT sealed Tenders affixed with Rs.6/= revenue stamps are invited from the registered suppliers /contractors having valid GST registration, for Repairs to Departmental snow cat 4th (Holland 90HP) of FSD Kulgam .

S.No	Particulars of work	Advertise cost (RS)	Cost T/D	Bid security Declaration	Sale of tender Documents from.	Last date Of Submission of tender.	Date of opening.	Position of AAA/ Technical sanction.
01	Repairs to Departmental snow cat 4 th (Holland 90HP) of FSD Kulgam.	54000.0	200	To be submitted with BOQ	15/06/2021 to 25/06/2021	26/6/2021	26/6/2021	Accorded/Yes

The detailed tender documents containing complete specifications, terms and conditions of this tender notice can be had from the office of the undersigned on any working day during office hours from 15/06/2021 to 25/06/2021 to 2:00 PM) against the cash payment of Rs:-200/= (Non-refundable) as document cost. The documents shall be issued after production of following certificates.
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The Tender should be submitted in the office of Executive Engineer Mechanical Division Anantnag on or before 26-06-2021 up to 2 PM and shall be opened on 26-06-2021 or any other working day convenient to The Executive Engineer Mechanical Division Anantnag
The tenderer who wish to participate in the bidding process shall remain present at the time of opening of tenders. The Executive Engineer Mechanical Division Anantnag reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof..
No:-MDA/TS /799/2415-18
Dated: -14/06/2021
Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Mechanical Division Anantnag.
DIPK-2932/21

Office of the Executive Engineer lake Division No. 1st. J&K Lakes and Waterways Development Authority Srinagar

Fresh N.I.T No. LD- 1st. /15 of 2021-22(e).
For and on behalf of the LT. Governor, Jammu & Kashmir UT, Expression of Interest is invited from venders empanelled with (JKEDA) for Repair/ Replacement of Existing Grid connected Rooftop solar Power Plants Scheme, including its three years Comprehensive Maintenance Contract in double cover system as under:-

Sr. No.	Name of the work	Tender fee (Rs)
01.	Repairs/ Replacement of existing damaged parts for complete Restoration of Solar Off Grid Generation Plants installed at Head office Building at Miskeen Bagh and Sub-Divisional office of Inlake and Rehab-Sub-Division at Dalgate, Srinagar including its Comprehensive Maintenance Contract (CMC) for a period of three years.	500.00

Online bidding schedule;
01. Date of issue of tender Notice. 12.06.2021
02. Start date for downloading of bidding documents. 14.06.2021 (10.00 AM)
03. Pre Bid Meeting 16.06.2021 (11.30 A.M in the office Chambers of Vice Chairman J & K Lakes & Waterways Development Authority Miskeen Bagh Khanyar Srinagar)
04. Bid submission start date 17.06.2021 (10.00 A.M)
05. Bid submission end date 07.07.2021 (04.00 P.M)
05. Date and time of opening of bids (Technical & Financial) on line. 09.07.2021 (2.00 P.M)
06. Tender inviting authority. Executive Engineer Lake Division No: 1st J&K LDA Miskeen Bagh Srinagar.
07. Tender opening/receiving authority. Vice Chairman, J&K Lakes and Waterways Development Authority, Srinagar
09. Tender fee to be drawn in favour of. Tender fee to be deposited into account No. CDG/01850102 00 00 0004, JK Bank Upper Sathu through E-challan / treasury receipt/Pay in Slip.
Note:NIT No. and S.No. of the work shall be mentioned on paying slip while depositing the fee. The fee must be deposited between publishing date of NIT and bid submission end date. No before or after-wards shall be entertained.
1. The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in upto said bidding schedule.
2. The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in upto said bidding schedule.
3. The complete bidding process will be on line.
Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Lake Division NO. 1st.
JKLWDA Srinagar.
DIPK-NB-1203/21

Significant Improvement In Covid-19 Situation In Srinagar: DC



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Wednesday said that due to timely measures and tireless efforts by District Administration, a significant improvement has been seen in the situation arising from the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic. The DC informed that Srinagar has recorded 68521 Covid-19 cases so far out of which 65833 patients have recovered from the deadly disease and district has achieved recovery

er, transporters, street vendors, shopkeepers who were inoculated anti Covid-19 vaccine.

Till date 310000 persons have been covered under ongoing vaccination process, DC said. He further said Srinagar is 3rd district after Jammu and Baramulla districts where highest number of Covid-19 doses were administered.

The DC also informed that 100 percent population above the age group of 45 years stands vaccinated in all Panchayats of Srinagar district besides vaccination process for age group between 18-44 years will be completed soon.

With regard to notified containment zones in Srinagar, the DC said there are 104 containment zones and no containment zone shall be de-notified till satisfactory vaccination.

The DC reiterated his appeal to general public to get vaccinated at the earliest for safety and protection of themselves, family and whole society, besides to suppress expected 3rd wave of Covid-19.

At present stage we need to be more careful and follow Covid-19 SOPs in letter and spirit to make entry into Green Zone, the DC maintained.

rate of 96.1 percent.

He said the covid positivity rate in district has declined to 4.72 percent and the number of active cases now stands at 1873. While till date 728905 Covid related tests including RAT and RT-PCR were conducted, he added.

The DC further said that Mega anti Covid-19 Vaccination drive has been started across Srinagar by organising Vaccination Melas at prime City locations in coordination with Trade bodies and Civil Society members which witnessed huge response from general public including trad-

Help The Needy: Food-kit Distribution Drive Held In Srinagar



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: At a time when Jammu and Kashmir is battling the second wave of COVID-19, two social organisations: The Ark Group and Shamsul Huda Education and Research Trust (SHERT), have joined hands to help the poor sections of the society during the lockdown period.

Under their initiative 'Help The Needy', a food kit distribution drive was carried out from May 6 to 12 in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir. "The purpose of the drive was to reach out to the weaker section of the society and provide them with basic food items for their survival during the lockdown period," said Sheikh Owais, CEO of The Ark Group.

er eatables were distributed among the families with low or no income. In addition, sanitary items including hand sanitisers, masks, soaps, detergents and dish wash bars were also distributed among them.

"The help was not limited to kits, we also provided cash assistance to the selected families with the worst financial conditions," said Chairman, SHERT, Syed Hidayat Bukhari. He said that it is moral as well as a religious obligation upon us to look after the needy in these tough times.

"Our prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has always taught us to help needy, orphans, widows and the poorer sections of society," he said while appealing to everyone to come forward and take initiatives of helping poor and needy people in their respective areas.

DIAL-EMMA

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈️

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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



HIJRI CALENDAR

06

ZIQADAT -UL-HARAAM

1442

This Day in History

- 656 Ali ibn Abu Talib (RA) elected the 4th Caliph of the Rashidun Caliphate
- 1631 - Mumtaz Mahal dies during childbirth. Her husband, Mughal emperor Shah Jahan I, then spends more than 20 years building her tomb, the Taj Mahal
- 1861 - Battle of Boonville, MI-Brigadier General Lyon defeats Confederate forces
- 1863 - Battle at Middleburg, Virginia
- 1863 - Battle of Aldie, Confederates fail to drive back Union in Virginia
- 1877 - Indian Wars: Battle of White Bird Canyon - the Nez Perce defeat the US Cavalry at White Bird Canyon in the Idaho Territory
- 1885 - Statue of Liberty arrives in NYC aboard French ship 'Isere'
- 1896 - Polar explorers Fridtjof Nansen and Frederick Jackson meet by chance in Franz Josef Land, the Arctic
- 1916 - US troops under General Pershing march into Mexico
- 1938 - Japan declares war on China.
- 1940 - USSR occupies Estonia
- 1940 - World War II: sinking of the RMS Lancastria by the Luftwaffe near Saint-Nazaire, France
- 1947 - 1st round-the-world civil air service leaves NYC
- 1950 - Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia & Syria sign security pact
- 1953 - Riots in East Germany for reunification
- 1970 - Edwin Land patents the Polaroid camera
- 1976 - Indonesia annexes Portuguese East-Timor
- 1982 - President Galtieri resigns after leading Argentina to defeat in the Falkland Islands
- 1984 - John Turner succeeds Pierre Trudeau as Prime Minister of Canada
- 1988 - Microsoft releases MS DOS 4.0
- 1988 - Soyuz TM-5 launches
- 1991 - The body of the 12th US President, Zachary Taylor, is exhumed to test how he died; rumors had persisted since his death in 1850 of arsenic poisoning - no evidence of this was found
- 2018 - Ivan Duque is elected President of Colombia
- 2018 - Historic deal signed between Greece and Macedonia to end dispute over Macedonia's name - changing to North Macedonia
- 2019 - Activist Joshua Wong calls on Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam to resign after leaving prison amid street protests the day before of over 2 million people.

PRAYERS

FAJR 3:34
ZUHR 12:31
ASR 5:31
MAGRIB 7:46
ISHA 9:28

NGO Cleans, Revives Four Lakes In Srinagar

Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR: Thirty years of destruction unleashed by human greed and official neglect have killed many of the interconnected water bodies of Srinagar city - once referred to as 'Venice of Orient' - but an NGO supported by a group of volunteers and local residents have managed to restore four of these lakes.

Manzoor Ahmad Wangnoo, chairman of the Nigeen Lake Conservation Organisation (NLCO), says that he was shocked to see a 20-second video clip which showed Khushalsar lake almost turned into a landfill site with dogs able to walk over it.

That was about three and a half months ago. I decided to visit the place and it was in really bad shape. One could not stand the stench for more than two minutes. I spoke to some residents around the lake and sought their cooperation for restoring it, Wangnoo told a group of reporters.

The NLCO chairman said people laughed at him when he shared his thoughts with them. They were cynical because of earlier half hearted attempts. But when we began the work, the residents started to pitch in with their efforts too, he said.

The other water bodies that have been restored are Pokhril, Gilsar and Nallah Amir Khan.

The residents say that while the top of the lakes have been restored, all these efforts will be worthwhile only if the water bodies are dredged at the bottom. There are deposits of three decades which need to be cleared. You can gauge the enormity of the problem from the fact that we have removed nearly 1,500 truckloads of extracts from the water body. Even now six trucks are de-

ployed to remove the filth, Abdul Rehman Dhobi, president of the Nallah Amir Khan Mohalla Committee, said.

Dhobi said some vested interests claim proprietary rights over the lake. They should realise that they had those rights for earning a livelihood through lotus plantations. Otherwise, no one has ownership rights over water resources, he added.

He appealed Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to probe where the funds meant for cleaning the lakes have gone.

We keep on hearing that crores of rupees have come from the Centre for cleaning the lakes. Where is it going? Khushalsar lake has been cleaned by them (NLCO), nothing has come from the government so far, Dhobi said.

Mohammad Shafi Malik, a resident of Gillikadal, is all praises for the efforts of NLCO and its volunteers.

Stating that the condition of Khushalsar lake was very bad, he said, "One would need antibiotics if he or she came in contact with the Khushalsar water. Today it is clean."

He said the water bodies of Srinagar were interconnected and once frequented by tourists from various parts of the country and abroad.

A tourist would come in a boat from Dal Lake via Nallah Mar to Gillisar to Khushalsar to Anchar and finally Manasbal. That charm ended in the past 30-32 years. These lakes had some of the best fishes including the golden fish, Malik said reminiscing over the times gone by.

Dhobi and Malik, while being thankful to NLCO and their volunteers, now want the government to also play a proactive role in saving and restoring the water bodies.

KU Organises Webinar To Discuss Draft National Council For Social Work Bill

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The University of Kashmir Wednesday organised a webinar to discuss the Draft National Council for Social Work (Education and Practice) Bill, 2021.

A University statement said the day-long webinar was organised by the varsity's Department of Social Work (DoSW). Prof (retd.) Murali Desai from TISS and Prof (retd.) Devi Prasad from Andhra University, who have chiefly contributed to the content and process of the Draft Bill, addressing the webinar as special guests.

The Bill aims to bring progressive changes in social work education and practice in India and discusses the standards and benchmarks vis-à-vis social work course curriculum as well as the code of conduct and ethics related to the social work profession in the country.

Prof Desai highlighted the aims, objectives and structure of the Bill and also detailed out the issues and allied concerns related to social work profession in general and the Bill in particular.

The experts suggested the ways and means to carry forward the social work education and practice Bill, 2020.

Prof Prasad gave a detailed explanation on the coverage of the proposed Bill and clarified certain confusions and misconceptions regarding some of its provisions. The Bill is not aimed to criminalise any professional working in the social or developmental sector and the proposed registration under the Bill is voluntary and not compulsory as it is in certain professions which need licensing for doing any professional practice, he said.

Dr Aadil Bashir, Coordinator, Department of Social Work, KU introduced the theme of the webinar and welcomed the guest speakers.

Dr Bashir highlighted the importance of such deliberations on the Bill and indicated that these discussions will help in enriching both the process and content of the Bill in the long run.

CEO SHA Reviews Implementation Of AB-PMJAY SEHAT Scheme In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Executive Officer, State Health Agency, Dr Sagar D Dofode, Wednesday chaired a meeting of district officers to review implementation of AB-PMJAY SEHAT scheme in the district.

Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Haneef

Balki, Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Jameel Ahmad Mir and other officers of health department along with other concerned officials were present in the meeting.

CEO asked the BMOs to put in strenuous efforts to make sure that no eligible person is left uncovered under the scheme besides accelerating the pace on this people friendly government initiative.

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PARVAIZ AHMAD RATHER AB AZIZ RATHER R/O WARIPORA BALA KREERI BLOCK WAGOORA

AJJ

ازنیابت چندوسه
مضمون کاغذات درخواست محمد امین شیخ ولد ستار علی ساکنہ چندوسہ بمبراد عطا بیگی ایگل ہیر

اشتہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاہدہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے سائل کا والد 2013 میں فوت ہو چکا ہے اس سلسلے میں پٹواری حلقے سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیان ہے کہ سائل موضع شیر پورہ گوگاران میں رہائش پذیر اور کتبہ بذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے۔ سائل کی مہانت آمدنی 2700 روپے ہے۔ افراد کتبہ بذیل ہے

شوکت احمد شیخ 30 سال آشیاز
سرٹیفیکٹ زیر بحث اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ ہو تو وہ دفتر ہذا میں اندر سات یوم پیش کریں بعد معیاد گذر کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ قبول نہ ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار
ajj

ازنیابت چندوسه
مضمون کاغذات درخواست محمد امین شیخ ولد ستار علی ساکنہ چندوسہ بمبراد عطا بیگی ایگل ہیر

اشتہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاہدہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے سائل کا والد 2013 میں فوت ہو چکا ہے اس سلسلے میں پٹواری حلقے سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیان ہے کہ سائل موضع چندوسہ میں رہائش پذیر ہے۔ افراد کتبہ بذیل ہے

علی محمد شیخ
مزدوری 60 سال
نذیر احمد
مزدوری 50
جاوید احمد
مزدوری 46
محمد امین
مزدوری 48
مقصود احمد
مزدوری 38
گلشن بیگم
(شادی شدہ) گھریلو کام 55
محبوبہ بیگم
(شادی شدہ) گھریلو کام 52
صغیرہ بیگم
(شادی شدہ) گھریلو کام 48

سرٹیفیکٹ زیر بحث اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ ہو تو وہ دفتر ہذا میں اندر سات یوم پیش کریں بعد معیاد گذر کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ قبول نہ ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار
ajj

ازنیابت چندوسه
مضمون کاغذات درخواست شوکت احمد شیخ ولد گزرا احمد شیخ ساکنہ شیر پورہ گوگاران بمبراد عطا بیگی ڈیپنڈنٹ ٹیکس متوفی گزرا احمد شیخ

اشتہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاہدہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے سائل کا والد گزرا احمد شیخ مورخہ 14-02-1990 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے اس سلسلے میں پٹواری حلقے سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیان ہے کہ سائل موضع شیر پورہ گوگاران میں رہائش پذیر اور کتبہ بذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے۔ سائل کی مہانت آمدنی 2700 روپے ہے۔ افراد کتبہ بذیل ہے

شوکت احمد شیخ 30 سال آشیاز
سرٹیفیکٹ زیر بحث اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ ہو تو وہ دفتر ہذا میں اندر سات یوم پیش کریں بعد معیاد گذر کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ قبول نہ ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار
ajj

ازنیابت چندوسه
مضمون کاغذات درخواست محمد حسین بیگ و طالب حسین بیگ و پروینہ بیگم و جوہرہ بانو مسرت حسین ساکنہ چندوسہ بمبراد عطا بیگی PSC

اشتہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاہدہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے سائل کا PSC certificate حاصل کرنے کا خواہ ہے اس سلسلے میں پٹواری حلقے سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیان ہے کہ سائل پہاڑی بولنے والے طبقے سے تعلق رکھتا ہے سائل کی مہانت آمدنی 15000 روپے ہے۔ افراد کتبہ بذیل ہے

محمد حسین بیگ
طالب حسین بیگ
پروینہ بیگم
جوہرہ بانو
مسرت حسین بیگ
دانش حسین بیگ

مزدوری 58 سال
مزدوری 40 سال
گھریلو کام 33
زیتعلیم 15
زیتعلیم 15
زیتعلیم 18

سرٹیفیکٹ زیر بحث اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ ہو تو وہ دفتر ہذا میں اندر سات یوم پیش کریں بعد معیاد گذر کوئی اعتراض وغیرہ قبول نہ ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار
ajj

From KO Archives

Kargil War Could Have Led To Nuke Attack: Book

WASHINGTON - During the Kargil war, the Pakistan military had prepared their nuclear-tipped missile to fight back a possible Indian attack, and former US president Bill Clinton had informed about the military's move to the then Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif. Bruce Riedel, a close aide of Clinton, has been quoted as saying this in a forthcoming book "Pakistan between Mosque and Milli-tary" written by a Pakistani writer Husain Haqqani.

On learning about the military's plans, Sharif was taken aback and said that India was probably doing the same, writes Haqqani, a former Pakistani diplomat, journalist and senior adviser to Pakistan's government. Presently, he is a scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington.

According to the Dawn, Riedel further says: "Clinton asked Sharif if he knew how advanced the threat of nuclear war really was? Did Sharif know his military was preparing their nuclear-tipped missiles? Was that what Sharif wanted. Clinton asked? Did Sharif order Pakistani nuclear missile force to prepare for action? Did he realize how crazy that was? You have put me in the huddle today, set the US to fail and I won't let it happen. Pakistan is messing with nuclear war."

Riedel, a special assistant to Clinton and a senior director of Near East and South Asian affairs at the National Security Council in the Clinton era, says that he was present in the July 4, 1999, meeting between Clinton and Nawaz.

During the meeting, Clinton also raised the issue of Pakistan's reluctance to help the US catch Osama bin Laden and other al Qaeda leaders. "The president was getting angry. He told Sharif that he had asked repeatedly for Pakistani help to bring Osama bin Laden to justice from Afghanistan. Sharif had promised often to do so but had done nothing. Instead the ISI worked with bin Laden and the Taliban to foment terrorism." Riedel adds.

The former US official re-calls that Clinton's draft statement on the Kargil crisis also mentioned Pakistan's role in supporting terrorists in Afghanistan and India.

Apparently hinting that Sharif had withdrawn troops under US' pressure, Riedel says that at the end of that meeting, Sharif agreed to announce Pakistani withdrawal from Kargil and restoration of the sanctity of the Line of Control in return for Clinton taking a personal interest in resumption of the India-Pakistan dialogue

(Kashmir Observer, 17 June, 2005)

Reformist Drops Out Of Iran Election On Last Day Of Campaign



TEHRAN: The only reformist candidate in Iran's upcoming presidential election dropped out of the race Wednesday on the last day of campaigning, state media reported, likely trying to boost the chances of a moderate candidate.

Mohsen Mehralizadeh, 64, resigned in a letter to Iran's Interior Ministry, which runs elections in the Islamic Republic, the state-run IRNA news agency reported. Such dropouts are common in Iranian presidential elections in order to boost the chances of similar candidates.

Mehralizadeh's departure likely will boost former Central Bank chief Abdolnasser Hemmati, who has been running as a moderate and as a stand-in for President Hassan Rouhani, who is term limited from running again.

Hemmati on Wednesday said that he would select Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to join his administration as either his vice president or foreign minister, embracing the top diplomat who was an architect of Tehran's now-tattered 2015 nuclear deal with world powers.

"The economic development of Iran is not possible without strong diplomatic engagement abroad," Hemmati wrote on Twitter to explain his choice of Zarif. "My administration is after the removal of sanctions and use of foreign policy to achieve political development."

The move appeared aimed at consolidating the pro-reform vote just ahead of the poll. Zarif, among the best-known political figures in the Rouhani administration, has come under fire from the political establishment in recent weeks after the leak of a contentious audiotape in which he offered a blunt appraisal of power struggles in the Islamic Republic.

There was no immediate word from Zarif on Hemmati's announcement, but the minister has previously indicated a willingness to join the incoming administration.

Mehralizadeh's withdrawal Wednesday leaves six candidates in the race. Polling and analysts indicate Hemmati lags behind the country's hard-line judiciary chief, Ebrahim Raisi, the campaign's front-runner long cultivated by Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Other hard-line candidates may drop out Wednesday to lend their support to Raisi.

Mehralizadeh served as governor in two Iranian provinces, as the vice president in charge of physical education under reformist President Mohammad Khatami and as a deputy in the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, which runs the country's civilian nuclear program. He came in last place in Iran's 2005 election, but found himself barred from running in 2015.

Within Iran, candidates exist on a political spectrum that broadly includes hard-liners who want to expand Iran's nuclear program and confront the world, moderates who hold onto the status quo and reformists who want to change the theocracy from within.

Although a range of prominent reformists and key Rouhani allies registered to run for president, Iran's clerical vetting body allowed just several low-profile candidates, mostly hard-liners, to run against Raisi. Owing in part to the disqualifications as well as the raging coronavirus pandemic, voter apathy runs deep. The state-linked Iranian Student Polling Agency has most recently projected a 42 percent turnout from the country's 59 million eligible voters, which would be a historic low amid mounting calls for a boycott.

In his weekly Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Rouhani urged the public to vote, state TV reported.

"It does not do us any good if the election is cold, lacks people, and its ballots are sparsely populated," said Rouhani. AP

Junta Troops Burn Myanmar Village In Escalation Of Violence

BANGKOK: Government troops in Myanmar have burned most of a village in the country's central heartland, a resident said Wednesday, confirming reports by independent media and on social networks.

The action appeared to be an attempt to suppress resistance against the ruling military junta.

The attack is the latest example of how violence has become endemic in much of Myanmar in recent months as the junta tries to subdue an incipient nationwide insurrection. After the army seized power in February, overthrowing the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, a nonviolent civil disobedience movement arose to challenge military rule, but the junta's attempt to repress it with deadly force fueled rather than quelled resistance.

Photos and videos of devastated Kinma village in Magway region that circulated widely on social media on Wednesday showed much of the village flattened by fire and the charred bodies of farm animals. A villager contacted by phone said only 10 of 237 houses were left standing.

The villager, who asked that his name not be used because of fear of government reprisal, said most residents had already fled when soldiers firing guns entered the village shortly before noon on Tuesday.

He said he believed the troops were searching for members of a village defense force that had been established to protect against the junta's troops and police. Most such local forces are very lightly armed with homemade hunting rifles.

The village defense force gave residents advance warning of the troops' arrival, so only four or five people were left in the village when they began searching houses in the afternoon. When they found nothing, they began setting the homes on fire, he said.

"There are some forests just nearby our village. Most of us fled into the forests," he said.

The villager said he believed there were three casualties, a boy who was a goat-herder who was



shot in the thigh, and an elderly couple who were unable to flee. He believed the couple had died but several media reports said they were missing.

Asked if he planned to go back to the village, he said: "No, we dare not to. We think it isn't over. We will shift to other villages. Even if we go back to our village, there is no place to stay because everything is burnt."

The village defense forces are committed to forming a future opposition federal army, and some have allied themselves with ethnic minority groups in border areas that have been fighting for decades for autonomy from the central government.

Most of the fiercest fighting takes place in the border regions, where government forces are deployed in areas controlled by ethnic groups such as the Chin in the west, the Kachin in the north and the Karen in the east.

The incident in Kinma attracted special attention because the Burman, or Barmar ethnic group, the country's power-holding majority, is predominant in the Magway region and it is unusual for them to be targeted for such severe measures.

The army burned many villages of the Muslim Rohingya minority in 2017 in a brutal counterinsurgency campaign in the western state of Rakhine that drove more than 700,000 to seek safety across the border in Bangladesh.

There is widespread prejudice against the Rohingya and few in Myanmar protested the army's treatment of them, though international courts are now considering whether it constituted genocide. Some people commenting Wednesday on social media said the burning of Kinma made Rohingya claims of mistreatment more credible. AP

Israel Launches Air Raids In Gaza In Response To "Arson Balloons"



Agence France-Presse

Gaza City, Palestinian Territories: The Israeli air force launched air strikes on the Gaza Strip early Wednesday after militants in the Palestinian territory sent incendiary balloons into southern Israel, security sources and witnesses said.

The airstrikes and balloons marked the first major flare-up between Israel and Gaza since a ceasefire on May 21 ended 11 days of heavy fighting that killed 260 Palestinians, according to Gaza authorities, and 13 people in Israel, the police and army there said.

According to Palestinian sources, Israel's air force targeted at least one site east

of the southern Gaza city of Khan Younes.

An AFP photojournalist in Khan Younes saw the explosions.

The Israeli Defence Force said that in response to the "arson balloons", its "fighter jets struck military compounds belonging to the Hamas terror organisation."

It added that "facilities and meeting sites for terror operatives" in Khan Younes were targeted.

Around 1,000 apartments, offices and shops were destroyed in the latest round of fighting in May in Gaza, an impoverished enclave of two million controlled by the Hamas Islamist group.

Wednesday's strikes were

Israel's first against Gaza since a new coalition government took over on Sunday night, ousting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu after 12 years in power.

The incendiary balloons, which local firefighters said caused around 20 fires in southern Israel, were sent as more than a thousand ultra-nationalist demonstrators bearing Israeli flags poured into Jerusalem's flashpoint Old City on Tuesday.

The US and UN had called for restraint before the march, which the government of new Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett had authorised.

Police deployed heavily, blocking roads and firing stun grenades and foam-tipped bullets to remove Palestinians from the main route.

Medics said 33 Palestinians were wounded and injured said two officers were police and 17 people were arrested.

Hamas had threatened reprisals over the march, which celebrated the anniversary of Jerusalem's "re-unification" after Israel captured east Jerusalem from Jordan in 1967 and annexed it, a move not recognised by most of the international community.

WHO: Soaring E-Waste Affecting Health Of Millions Of Children

Agencies

Effective and binding action is urgently required to protect the millions of children, adolescents and expectant mothers worldwide whose health is jeopardized by the informal processing of discarded electrical or electronic devices, said a global report on Tuesday.

"With mounting volumes of production and disposal, the world faces what one recent international forum described as a mounting 'tsunami of e-waste', putting lives and health at risk," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO director general.

In the same way the world has rallied to protect the seas and their ecosystems from plastic and microplastic pollution, he said, they need to rally to protect their most valuable resource — the health of their children — from the growing threat of e-waste.

As many as 12.9 million women are working in the informal waste sector, which potentially exposes them to toxic e-waste and puts them and their unborn children at risk, according to the new groundbreaking report from the World Health Organization, Children and Digital Dumpsites.

Meanwhile, more than 18 million children and adolescents, some as young as 5 years of age, are actively engaged in the informal industrial sector, of which waste processing is a sub-sector.

Children are often engaged by parents or caregivers in e-waste recycling because their small hands are more dexterous than those of adults.



Other children live, go to school and play near e-waste recycling centres where high levels of toxic chemicals, mostly lead and mercury, can damage their intellectual abilities.

Children exposed to e-waste are particularly vulnerable to the toxic chemicals they contain due to their smaller size, less developed organs and rapid rate of growth and development.

They absorb more pollutants relative to their size and are less able to metabolize or eradicate toxic substances from their bodies.

Impact of e-waste on human health

Workers, aiming to recover valuable materials such as copper and gold, are at risk of exposure to over 1,000 harmful substances, including lead, mercury, nickel, brominated flame retardants and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

For an expectant mother, exposure to toxic e-waste can affect the health and development of her unborn child for the rest of its life.

Potential adverse health effects include negative birth outcomes, such as stillbirth and premature births, as well

as low birth weight and length.

Exposure to lead from e-waste recycling activities has been associated with significantly reduced neonatal behavioural neurological assessment scores, increased rates of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), behavioural problems, changes in child temperament, sensory integration difficulties, and reduced cognitive and language scores.

Other adverse child health impacts linked to e-waste include changes in lung function, respiratory and respiratory effects, DNA damage, impaired thyroid function and increased risk of some chronic diseases later in life, such as cancer and cardiovascular disease.

"A child who eats just one chicken egg from Agbogboshie, a waste site in Ghana, will absorb 220 times the European Food Safety Authority daily limit for intake of chlorinated dioxins," said Marie-Noel Brune Drisse, lead WHO author on the report.

"Improper e-waste management is the cause. This is a rising issue that many countries do not recognize yet as a health problem. If they do not act now, its impacts will have a devastating health effect on children and lay a heavy burden on the health sector in the years to come."

A rapidly escalating problem

E-waste volumes are surging globally. According to the Global E-waste Statistics Partnership (Gesep), they grew by 21% in the five years up to 2019, when 53.6 million metric tonnes of e-waste were generated.

Disagreements, Low Expectations As Biden, Putin Meet In Geneva

Agencies

US President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin are holding their first meeting since Biden took office with wide disagreements likely and expectations low for any breakthroughs.

The pair exchanged a brief handshake in front of reporters on Wednesday in Geneva, before entering a stately lakeside villa for talks.

Putin said he hoped for a "productive" meeting, while Biden said it was "always better to meet face to face".

The meeting in a book-lined room had a somewhat awkward beginning — both men appeared to avoid looking directly at each other during a brief and chaotic photo opportunity before a scrum of jostling reporters.

Biden nodded when a reporter asked if Putin could be trusted, but the White House quickly sent out a tweet insisting that the president was "very clearly not responding to any one question, but nodding in acknowledgment to the press generally."

Putin ignored shouted questions from reporters, including if he feared jailed Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny.

Both world had said earlier that they hoped their discussions lead to more stable and predictable relations, even though they remain at odds over everything from arms control and cyber-hacking to election interference and Ukraine.

In the hours leading up to the highly anticipated summit, Washington and Moscow were cool on the prospects for significant progress.

"We're not expecting a big set of deliverables out of this meeting,"



a senior United States official told reporters on board Air Force One as Biden flew to Geneva.

The talks are expected to last four to five hours.

"I'm not sure that any agreements will be reached," said Putin's foreign policy adviser Yuri Ushakov.

Relations have deteriorated for years, notably with Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine, its 2015 intervention in Syria and US allegations — denied by Moscow — of its meddling in the 2016 election that brought Donald Trump to the White House.

They sank further in March when Biden said he thought Putin was a "killer", prompting Russia to recall its ambassador to Washington for consultations. The US recalled its ambassador in April. Neither has since returned.

The senior US official said the United States aimed for a set of "taskings" — Washington jargon for assigning aides to work on specific issues — "about areas where working together can advance our national interests and make the world safer."

Arms control is one domain where progress has historically been possible despite a rift.

In February, Russia and the US extended for five years the New START treaty, which caps their deployed strategic nuclear warheads and limits the land and submarine-based missiles and bombers to deliver them.

Student Debt Wiped For Thousands Defrauded By For-Profit Colleges



Agencies

The United States Education Department said on Wednesday it is erasing student debt for thousands of borrowers who attended a for-profit college chain that made exaggerated claims about its graduates' success in finding jobs.

The Biden administration said it is approving 18,000 loan forgiveness claims from former students of IIT Technical Institute, a chain that closed in 2016 after being dealt a series of sanctions by the Obama administration. The new loan discharges will clear more than \$500m in debt.

The move marks a step forward in the Biden administration's effort to clear a backlog of claims in the borrower defence program, which provides loan forgiveness to students who were defrauded by their colleges. Claims piled up during the Trump administration, which stalled the program and only started processing claims after a federal court demanded it. There are now more than 100,000 pending claims.

In announcing the new action, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona pledged to continue standing up for students who are deceived by their schools.

Our action today will give thousands of borrowers a fresh start and the relief they deserve," Cardona said in a statement. "Many of these borrowers have waited a long time for relief, and we need to work swiftly to render decisions for those whose claims are still pending."

It follows another round of loan discharges in March, when the Education Department cleared \$1bn in federal student debt for 72,000 borrowers. Those claims all came from former students of for-profit colleges. Borrower advocates applauded the new approvals but called for swift relief for the thousands of other students whose claims are still pending, including many who attended IIT Tech.

"It appears the Biden administration genuinely wants to help people who are owed discharges," said Alex Elson, vice president of Student Defense, a Washington legal group. "But that makes it all the more confounding that they are so hesitant to use their authority to immediately and automatically help the countless additional borrowers who are still waiting."

Borrower defence is among several education programs targeted for an overhaul by the Biden administration as it works to reverse Trump-era policies. Cardona is hosting a series of hearings this month as his agency considers changes to that policy and others.

NEWS MAKERS

Biden Picks Pakistan-Origin Big Tech Critic As Top Federal Regulator

US President Joe Biden on Tuesday installed an energetic critic of Big Tech as a top federal regulator at a time when the industry is under intense pressure from Congress, regulators and state attorneys general.

The selection of Pakistan-origin legal scholar Lina Khan to head the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is seen as signaling a tough stance towards tech giants Facebook, Google, Amazon and Apple. Khan was sworn in as FTC chair just hours after the Senate confirmed her as one of five members of the commission on a 69-28 vote.

According to The New York Times, Khan was born in London to Pakistani parents who emigrated to the United States when she was 11. Khan has been a professor at Co-

lumbia University Law School and burst onto the antitrust scene with her massive scholarly work in 2017 as a Yale law student, "Amazon's Antitrust Paradox".

She helped lay the foundation for a new way of looking at antitrust law beyond the impact of big company market dominance on consumer prices. As counsel to a House Judiciary antitrust panel in 2019 and 2020, she played a key role in a sweeping bipartisan investigation of the market power of the tech giants.

At 32, she is believed to be the youngest chair in the history of the FTC, which polices competition and consumer protection in industry generally as well as digital privacy.

"Lina brings deep knowledge and

expertise to this role and will be a fearless champion for consumers," Senator Elizabeth Warren, who has called for tech industry breakups, said in a statement.

"Giant tech companies deserve the growing scrutiny they are facing, and consolidation is choking off competition across American industries. With Khan at the helm, we have a huge opportunity to make big, structural change by reinvigorating antitrust enforcement and fighting monopolies that threaten our economy, our society and our democracy."

Khan also was a legal adviser to Rohit Chopra, an FTC commissioner, and was previously legal director of the Open Markets Institute, an organisation that advocates against corporate concentration.

Botswana Says Found World's "Third Largest Diamond"



GABORONE, BOTSWANA: Botswana diamond firm Debswana said Wednesday it had unearthed a 1,098-carat stone that it described as the third largest of its kind in the world.

The stone, found on June 1, was shown to President Mokgweetsi Masisi in the capital Gaborone.

"It is believed to be the third largest gem-quality find in the world," said Debswana Managing Director Lynette Armstrong. "The 'rare and extraordinary stone... means so much in the context of diamonds and Botswana," she said. "It brings hope to the nation that is struggling."

It also the biggest stone of gem quality to be recovered in the history of the company, a joint venture between the government and global diamond giant De Beers.

The biggest diamond ever discovered in the world was the 3,106-carat Cullinan, found in South Africa in 1905.

The second largest was 1,109-carat Lesedi La Rona — a diamond the size of a tennis ball, discovered at Karowe, northeastern Botswana, in 2015.

Botswana is Africa's leading diamond producer.

To Simplify NOC Process, CS Inaugurates E-Vigilance Clearance System



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta Wednesday inaugurated the e-Vigilance Clearance System.

Secretary, General Administration Department, Director Anti Corruption Bureau, and Director IT&SS, University of Kashmir were present during the inauguration.

The Chief Secretary observed that the system has been developed to simplify the process for seeking NOC and vigilance clearance in a time-bound, efficient and transparent manner.

While complimenting the team associated with the development of the online system, the Chief Secretary asked the concerned to ensure that the process of issuance of NOC is completed within seven days from the date of submission of online application. He stressed upon integration of CPIS data with Vigilance Clearance Portal to enhance the efficiency of

the system by giving access to already existing employee database.

He further asked GAD to explore and replicate the module of the Government of India in vigilance clearance system.

The e-Vigilance Clearance System will modernise the manual vigilance clearance process by making it time-bound and transparent.

The Project has been designed and developed by the IT Expert Team of the Directorate of Information Technology & Support System, University of Kashmir in collaboration with the General Administration Department.

The new portal will allow online submission of applications by departments, real-time monitoring of applications and time-bound issuance of the no objection certificate with inbuilt mechanism of auto-reminders to both ACB & GAD on pending cases. The employees will also be informed on the status of the application through email/SMS.

ED NHIDCL Initiates Ceremonial Blast For Breakthrough Of Z-Morh Tunnel



Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: Breakthrough of one of the two tubes of Z-Morh Tunnel Project of 6.5 km was a landmark event at Sonamarg Wednesday which is a step forward towards the all weather connectivity to the Sonamarg valley.

The ceremonial blast for the breakthrough was done by Gurbjeet Kambo, Executive Director (Projects), Regional Office Srinagar, NHIDCL.

Kambo appreciated the efforts of APCO Infratech, the concessionaire, on the yet another milestone achieved while congratulating the people of Sonamarg and the District Administration on the occasion.

He also acknowledged the role of local public for the smooth progress of the project and assured the breakthrough of the main tunnel will also take place within the scheduled time frame.

It was also reiterated by Kambo that once the project is completed, the tunnel will provide seamless connectivity to the tourists travelling to Sonamarg during winters and will also be used for strategic movement.

Evening and Door to door vaccination drives are also being carried out to achieve the cent percent target, DC added. He also stated that to detect the person to have contracted covid infection, aggressive testing is being carried out on a daily basis.



A WOMAN PLANTS PADDY SAPPLINGS IN KHAG AREA of Central Kashmir's Budgam district on Wednesday. KO Photo Abid Bhat.

COVID-19

Positive Cases Decrease To 415 In Kulgam

Coordinated Efforts, Multi-pronged Strategies Bore Fruit: DC



Observer News Service

KULGAM: Coordinated efforts with multi-pronged strategies to tackle the situation arising from the second wave of Covid-19 have shown desired results and the situation has improved in the district said Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Dr Bilal Mohi Ud Din Bhat.

Regarding vaccination, the DC said that more than 80 percent population above the age group of 45 years stands vaccinated besides vaccination for age group between 18-44 years of age have also been kick started.

Evening and Door to door vaccination drives are also being carried out to achieve the cent percent target, DC added. He also stated that to detect the person to have contracted covid infection, aggressive testing is being carried out on a daily basis.

378 Cases Active In Ganderbal: DC

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Krittika Jyotsna Wednesday briefed media on the current Covid scenario and mitigation efforts put in place in the district.

The DC said that the active cases have drastically decreased in the district this month. She said only 378 cases are active in the district out of which 344 cases are in home isolation, 28 are in District Hospital besides 6 patients are referred to outside district for tertiary care.

Giving details regarding active positive cases, she said last week about 47 percent population of active cases was from micro containment zones. Micro containment zones witnessed slight increase this week and

now about 53 percent active positive population is from these zones, she added.

She appealed to people especially from micro containment zones to provide full cooperation to the authorities who visit these zones for sampling and testing adding that these zones are notified for their safety.

Elaborating on categorisation of districts in various colour zones, the DC said that categorisation of districts is based on five parameters viz weekly positive cases, positivity, death rate, vaccination coverage and bed occupancy in district. She said that district Ganderbal is in the Yellow zone and appealed to people to follow the COVID appropriate behaviour strictly as they followed earlier so that our district comes in the Green zone.

holders and the general public to adhere to COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour (CAB) during unlock to prevent any spike in infections. He also appealed to people to get vaccinated at an earliest and become covid mitigating agents.

Progress On Covid Vaccination Reviewed



Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: Nodal officer vaccination Lar, Owais Mir Wednesday convened a meeting to review the progress on Covid Vaccination for 18-44 years and address the issues with respect to the mobilisation of people for vaccination in the block.

Nodal officer drew the attention of concerned people towards the poor progress of the vaccination drive in the block. He sought active cooperation from each stakeholder in order to improve the drive to attain the daily target of around 300 doses fixed by District Administration in the Block.

It was decided to have a comprehensive mobilisation in each panchayat involving the frontline workers of the line departments so that people are

motivated for vaccination. Incharge mobilisation teams were advised to monitor the entire process and report any delinquency in this regard. BMO lar gave a detailed account of the vaccination centres constituted in the block.

He urged for maximum support of line departments to achieve the desired targets. He while acknowledging the cooperation of PRIs in the success of the 1st phase laid emphasis upon the repetition of the same enthusiasm in each panchayat.

The BDO also requested BMO lar to facilitate one-day vaccination special Camps in some areas for convenience of the people. For such camps, Sarpanch's may intimate in advance regarding the need and feasibility.

..SHAHPUR KANDI DAM PROJECT

JKWRRRA Stresses On Expediting Works For Timely Completion

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A joint high level team comprising officers both from Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab Wednesday inspected various components of Shahpur Kandi Dam Project to ensure expeditious execution of ongoing works on this prestigious project.

The officers from J&K led by Chairperson, Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources Regulatory Authority (JKWRRRA), G.S. Jha included Chief Engineer RTIC Jammu, Himesh Manchanda, Superintending Engineer RTIC Jammu, Ajay Gupta, Superintending Engineer, Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources Regulatory Authority, Anil Kumar and Assistant Commissioner (Revenue), Kathua, Sandeep Seoindra while General Manager (Dams), S.K. Saluja, Chief Engineer (Dams), R.D. Sawa, Chief Engineer, M.K. Jain and Superintending Engineer (Dams), B. S. Sandhu represented the Shahpur Kandi Dam Project, Punjab.

The team conducted extensive inspection of ongoing works on Ravi Canal at Basantpur, Shahpur Kandi Barrage and Hydrel Channel on the Punjab side besides visiting off-take site of BP Canal from the existing Ravi Tawi Canal and the head works of the Kashmir Canal.

Pertinently, the project coming up at a cost of Rs. 2715.70 crore is of utmost importance for the Union Territory as it will give a discharge of 1150 cusecs to J&K which shall bring about 32173 hectare of land under irrigation in the districts of Kathua and Samba which in turn shall improve the socio-economic conditions of the people related to agriculture and allied sectors.

Chairperson JKWRRRA stressed for expediting the pace of progress on all ongoing works for timely completion of the project. Meanwhile, the officers also held a meeting and discussed the issues threadbare to speed up the works, remove bottlenecks and resolve the land related matters for timely completion of the project.

Info Dept Condolences With Fayaz Ahmad Bhat

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Joint Director Information and Public Relations, Kashmir Division, Haris Ahmad Handoo Wednesday condoled the sad demise of father of Fayaz Ahmad Bhat, an ex. employee of Field Publicity Unit of the department, who passed away on Wednesday.

Joint Director in this regard convened a condolence meeting to offer his deepest condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for peace to the departed soul.

They offered their deepest condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and courage for the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Incharge-Deputy Director, PR, Kashmir, Mohammad Aslam Khan also offered his deepest condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for peace to the departed soul.

Meanwhile, the employees of JDIC also expressed grief and sorrow over the demise of the father of Fayaz Ahmad, a former employee.

They offered their deepest condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and courage for the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Four Drug Peddlers Arrested In Handwara, Kulgam



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police Wednesday arrested four drug peddlers in Handwara and Kulgam districts and recovered contraband substance from their possession.

In Handwara, a police spokesperson said, officers from Police Post Magam at a checkpoint established at Khanpora Magam intercepted a vehicle bearing registration number JK138-4500 with three persons on board.

They have been identified as Mushtaq Ahmad Mir son of Mohammad Sultan resident of Puwama, Hilal Ahmad Rather son of Abdul Rashid and Sajad Ahmad Bakshi sons of Gull Bakshi both residents of Chogal. "During checking, officers were able to recover 1.70Kgs of Charas and cash amount of 10,730/- from their

possession. They have been arrested and shifted to police station where they remain in custody."

Accordingly, a case FIR No. 189/21 under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Handwara and investigation has been initiated. It is pertinent to mention here that all the three accused persons were busy in inter district trade of drugs.

In Kulgam, the spokesperson said, officers at a checkpoint established at Mirhama under the supervision of DySP Hqrs Kulgam intercepted a person riding on a motorcycle bearing registration number JK188-8001 identified as Showkat Ahmad Zargar son of Bashir Ahmad Zargar resident of Lirow.

"During checking, officers were able to recover 200 grams of Charas from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody.

Accordingly, a case FIR No. 141/2021 under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Kulgam and investigation has been initiated."

Former Minister's Son Arrested For Rape Charges After Six Years

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Police has arrested the son of former Cabinet Minister Abdul Gani Kohli, Abid Kohli and lodged him in Domana Police Station of this district where an FIR was registered against him in 2015 for allegedly raping a girl.

Abid was arrested six years after committing rape on class 7 student. He is a resident of Rajouri.

Police officials said that Abid Gani was wanted in First Information Report (FIR) No. 130/2015 registered at Domana Police Station on April 26, 2015 under Sections 376/511/354/342/109 RPC and 4/25 Arms Act.

"He was arrested from Sopore in Kashmir on June 5."

Relatives of the victim girl said that during the six years, all previous SHOs made no attempt to arrest the son of the former Minister despite the fact that his whereabouts were fully known as Abid Gani used to stay in his house with his father.

They added that during these times Parents of the girl kept knocking doors of Domana Police Station but to no avail. Even senior officers posted earlier in the district took no interest in the case knowing well about the



"rapist" and his whereabouts as the family of the girl didn't have influence to ensure the arrest of the accused.

According to the complaint lodged by parents of the girl, on April 26, 2015, the minor girl studying in Class 7th hailing from village Karloop under the jurisdiction of Domana police station had gone to Bantatab along with her teacher and some other students for a sports function. She was returning home in a matador when two unknown persons called her to drop her to their house at Karloop.

"The girl got down from the matador and boarded the car, the kidnappers took her to Government Quarter at Poonch House in Talab Tillo and forcibly raped her. Thereafter, they dropped her at Patta Chowk from where she reached home and narrated the incident to her parents and they lodged the complaint. (CNS)

Adv Khan Condolences Demise Of Bashir Ahmad Malla

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Khan has condoled the demise of former DIG of J&K Police, Bashir Ahmad Malla, IPS.

In his condolence message, Advisor Farooq Khan recalled his close association with the deceased while both of them were working in the police department. He added that the deceased was an upright officer who always performed his duties professionally and diligently.

Khan said that the deceased was a competent and devoted officer whose services will be remembered for a long time in the department.

Khan while expressing sympathy and condolences with the bereaved family also prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and courage for the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Pedestrian Dies In Kunzer Road Accident

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A pedestrian died on Wednesday morning after being hit by a car at Batpora area in Kunzer area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Eyewitnesses said that a 'Swift' car bearing registration JK-01J 8333 hit Was-eem Ahmad Mir son of Ghulam Rasool Mir, a resident of Habligam Devbugh.

He was immediately rushed to SDH Magam, however he succumbed on the way.

Meanwhile a police official said that a case has been registered in and further investigations taken up.

Girl Rescued Days After Abduction In Jammu

Observer News Service

JAMMU: A girl, who was abducted three days ago from Jammu city, was rescued from Punjab and her kidnapper was arrested, officials said on Tuesday.

The minor was kidnapped from the Bakshi Nagar area of the city allegedly by Mukul Kalotra, following which a complaint was lodged by her father, they said.

Gorsi Emphasises On Timely Completion Of Projects In Anantnag

Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: Chairperson, District Development Council, Anantnag Mohammad Yousuf Gorsi reviewed the status of developmental projects being undertaken in the District.

Emphasis was laid on timely completion of all projects and early resolution of bottlenecks, if any, so that benefits of developmental projects accrue to the public. "Wherever, intervention of the DDC is required in taking up matters with higher authorities, Departments should bring it to our notice " DDC Chairperson said.

All Departments were asked to share the list of ongoing and upcoming projects to be taken up during the FY 2020-21 within a week and also month wise progress reports with the DDC. It was also reiterated that DDC members & other public representatives be taken on board during both the planning as well as the implementation phase of the projects for better outcomes.

To reach out to the people and to generate awareness about the various State & Central Sector scheme especially in sectors with potential to generate employment opportunities for the youth of the district like Fisheries, Animal & Sheep Husbandry, Agri and Horticulture and Industries etc, the concerned Departments were asked to hold awareness camps in every block on regular basis.

Employment generation schemes by all departments across all 16 blocks of the district should be prioritized and youth made aware about them and also facilitated to establish income generating units. Similarly, awareness regarding the many social sector schemes for women, elderly, differently abled, orphan children, girl child, SC, ST & others should be generated among the masses and for the purpose regular camps must be organized across all the blocks and the block level and other staff energised to reach out to cover all deserving.

KASHMIR
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K O V I E W

Expedite vaccination

The coronavirus caseload is continuing to plunge across India in an indication that the second Covid-19 wave may now be winding down. There has been a drastic drop since the peak of over 4 lakh cases in April. Similarly, the daily death count has almost halved. On Wednesday, India reported 62,224 new Covid cases. The fresh fatalities were 2,542. The drop has come amid the easing of the curbs on movement and hence is all the more welcome.

But while the fresh cases are declining, the vaccination is not picking up commensurately leaving India vulnerable to a third wave. India has now increased the gap between two Covishield doses to 12 to 16 weeks from six to eight weeks. The health ministry in its statement on May 13 had said that it had accepted the 12-16 weeks recommendation from the COVID working group of National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI), and from a group of mainly government officials tasked with vaccine administration. This was mainly done to compensate for the shortfall of the vaccines and to inoculate more people with the first dose.

This has now become a contentious issue with some experts on the government panel reported to have refused to back increasing of the gap between the two doses. Two doses are important for the Covid-19 vaccines with the first dose producing the vaccines and another acting as a booster.

New studies have claimed that the single dose of Covishield gives only 33 percent protection, not 65 to 85 percent as was estimated earlier. So, the scientists are calling for reducing the gap between two doses. And this should be the case. More so, in the case of the elderly population. There is a large number of the population above 65 years of age that has not received its second dose. Being in the high-risk and vulnerable group, the gap in their case needs to be urgently reduced. The government should make an exception for them.

At the same time, now that the government has got a grip on the second wave, care needs to be taken to pre-empt the third wave. While loosening the curbs to reopen the economy, the government has to strictly enforce the Standard Operating Procedure in public life. This should be done while simultaneously speeding up the vaccination in the country. This can only happen if more vaccines become available and the gap between the two doses is reduced.

OTHER OPINION

Moral High Court

The Delhi High Court granted bail to Natasha Narwal, Devangana Kalita, Asif Tanha, but on Tuesday, it did much more. In releasing from jail the three young students and activists, incarcerated for over a year in connection with the riots in North-east Delhi, and the anti-CAA-NRC protests, under grave charges including those of the stringent UAPA, the court spoke directly and wisely to fundamental concerns of the times. This is an era defined by a strong executive that does not hesitate to wield vaguely worded provisions of draconian laws to shrink spaces for dissent and criminalise the protester. And when crucial distinctions are being lost in public discourse. Between "law and order", "public order", and "security of the state". Between terror, which is a challenge to the sovereignty and integrity of a nation, and which, as the court said, produces a "prolonged psychological effect" on "society as a whole", and what falls within the definition of conventional offences under the IPC. These distinctions form the bedrock of the case against Narwal, Kalita and Tanha. This is only a bail order, and as such, there is no elaborate examination of the evidence. Yet, in effect, the court has called out the executive, and indicted it, really: "... it seems that in its anxiety to suppress dissent, in the mind of the state, the line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and terrorist activity seems to be getting somewhat blurred. If this mindset gains traction, it would be a sad day for democracy".

The high court liberally quotes the Supreme Court to buttress its conclusion that there is a "complete lack of any specific, particularised, factual allegations" and that "mere use of alarming and hyperbolic verbiage in the subject charge-sheet will not convince us otherwise". In the Sanjay Dutt case, a constitution bench had cautioned the courts to take extra care to ensure that those whom the legislature did not intend to be covered by the express language of a statute "are not roped in by stretching the law". In Anita Thakur, 2016, the SC recognised the right to protest as a fundamental right, flowing from Article 19 (1) (b) of the Constitution, and said that "... a distinguishing feature of any democracy is the space offered for legitimate dissent... organised, non-violent protest marches were a key weapon in the struggle for Independence..." The Supreme Court, the HC pointed out, has gone beyond upholding the right to protest — to say that the state must, in fact, aid the right to assembly of the citizens.

Indian Express



Corag meadow, altitude 3200 meters, Pir Panjaal mountain range

Chopans of Kashmir

Kashmiri Chopans are likely to get recognised as Scheduled Tribes but will these pastoralists be allowed to repair their log-huts this summer?

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

Kashmiri shepherds who're known here as Chopan or Pohul in local Kashmir dialect have started migrating towards the upper reaches or what is called Bahak. This seasonal migration actually begins from May onwards, but for a month or more these pastoralists take care of the sheep in low lying areas. It is around June the 20th that they reach their final destination where they stay for at least 2 months or more. In their bahaks, Chopans have temporary huts called Kothas which are made of wooden logs, stones and mud. Each chopan family has a separate and designated bahak away from their village, but these bahaks are mostly located within the district itself.

However, this is not the case with other pastoralist groups like Bakerwals from the Gujjar community who travel all the way from Rajouri to Kashmir valley. Some of them move on to far off places like Tulail in Gurez valley or as far as Drass or Zaskar in Ladakh. Similarly, other nomadic shepherds like Gaddis, Gadheras, Baghelas, Lambadis, Dhangers in India, travel a lot in search of fodder for their sheep and goats. These groups are mostly owners of goats and sheep but this is not the case with the chopans of Kashmir.

Unfortunately, Chopans are the most neglected of pastoralist groups in India. Unlike other pastoralist groups, they own no livestock of their own. Instead, they take care of sheep belonging to local farmers who pay them Rs 300 to 350 per sheep for a season which lasts for 5 to 6 months.

While both, Kashmiri Chopans along with Bakerwals are socially, educationally and economically backward only the latter has been brought under the scheduled tribe (ST) category in early 1990s. In spite of being tribals in real sense, successive Governments at the center have not given Chopans their due rights. The Kashmiri Chopans are similar to the Dangar or Gavlis of Maharashtra or to the Changpa community of Ladakh or the Gadis of Himachal Pradesh but even as all these castes have been included under the ST category chopans continue to be left at God's mercy.

While in 2000, the J&K assembly had adopted a resolution for the inclusion of chopans as scheduled tribe group but the J&K Govt could not do proper advocacy with the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs in this regard.

The Ministry brought back the model guidelines for conservation, management and sustainable use of Community Forest Resources (CFR Guideline) under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA) last year. A committee headed by N C Saxena, former member of the Planning Commission & National Advisory Council (NAC) in February last year was asked to examine and

recommend CFR Guidelines under FRA.

The CFR right under the FRA empowers Gram Sabhas to conserve and manage their forest. As per section 3 (1) (i) of FRA the Gram Sabhas have rights to protect, regenerate, conserve or manage any community forest resource that they have been traditionally protecting and conserving for sustainable use.

The Tribal Affairs Ministry had also created two more committees, headed by its former secretary Hrusikesh Panda along with the committee on CFR guidelines. One of the committees has been asked to look into the recognition and vesting process of habitat rights of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) and the second will submit a report on the seasonal resource access to nomadic and pastoralist communities which includes the Chopans of Kashmir.

A four member committee of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) which looks after PVTGs visited the Kashmir valley around the end of March this year to see implementation of FRA. This author facilitated their meetings in some villages with Chopans and Gujjars communities. The group submitted a detailed report to the Ministry. I have been told that the issue of Chopans was discussed threadbare during the recent meeting on PVTG's led by Mr Hrusikesh Panda. The expert committee who visited Kashmir has recommended the inclusion of Chopans under the scheduled tribe (ST) category. One of the senior members of the group, V Giri Rao along with his colleague Ramesh Bhatti have been great supporters of Chopans and have recommended that Chopans should be included un-

der the ST category.

While these developments unfold, Chopans continue to lead a tough life. With no means to buy even durable tents, they often take shelter under trees or tarpaulins/polythene during rains while on the way to highland pastures. As they are neither recognized as farmers or scheduled tribes (STs), they miss out on the subsidy schemes announced by the government. Farmers are provided subsidies for buying cattle, sheep, water motors, spray pumps, gen-sets but there is nothing for these poor shepherds. These poor shepherds are not even allowed to repair their kothas. Isn't this sheer injustice?

Several illegal Kothas have come up during the last several years in several bahaks and forests of Pir Panjal forest division. Now, under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) these newly constructed Kothas can be regularized through illegal ways.

These are the challenges which need to be addressed. The census report of the Kothas needs to be made public.

Pal Maidan bahak in Raithan forest range is not a high altitude bahak. The local migratory population from nearby Dragger village have not been allowed to repair their damaged Kothas by the forest department. The forest department officials in the area on the other end claim that there is no official order in this regard from their senior officers so they were helpless. If these tribals or shepherds can't even collect old fallen timber from the forests how can the Government claim that it has rolled out the Forest Rights Act (FRA) in J&K? FRA gives the forest dwellers the right to repair their huts as well, but this right is being denied on dubious grounds.

Section 3(1) (d) of the Forest Rights Act 2006 (FRA) says that other community rights of users or entitlements such as fish and other products of water bodies, grazing (both settled or transhumant) and traditional seasonal resource access of nomadic or pastoralist communities are recognized for individuals and communities. Those shepherds (Chopans) who actually live in villages located outside the forest areas and neither fall under the other traditional forest dwellers (OTFD) community, still have the rights on grazing their animals in bahaks and rangelands. They can now repair their Kothas as well under the FRA after following the due process of law.

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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Chopans continue to lead a tough life. With no means to buy even durable tents, they often take shelter under trees or tarpaulins/polythene during rains while on the way to highland pastures. As they are neither recognized as farmers or scheduled tribes (STs), they miss out on the subsidy schemes announced by the government



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Encourage Purchase of Hallmark Jewellery

The decision by the Central Government to make gold jewellery hallmarking mandatory is a positive step in the right direction. Hallmarking of jewellery is essential to increase the legitimacy of gold jewellery and customer satisfaction by providing third-party guarantees of gold purity

and consumer protection. Consumers may make an informed decision and avoid unneeded misunderstandings when purchasing gold by using hallmarking. Only 30 per cent of Indian gold jewellery is hallmarked at the moment. Additionally, jewellers with annual sales of up to Rs. 40 lakh will be excluded from the obligatory hall-

marking requirement. Hallmarking is not required for watches, fountain pens, or certain forms of jewellery like Kundan, Polki, and Jadau. Jewellers can continue to buy back old gold jewellery from customers who do not have a hallmark. It is hoped that the step will encourage people to purchase hallmark gold jewellery

and aid India's development as a global gold market center. It will also prevent a lot of smuggling and illegal gold acquisitions across the country.

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Intersectional Solidarities

Surely, you see the similarities in Black and Palestinian whose struggles has been through the paradigm of militarization, occupation and destruction like in Gaza, the mass open prison reduced to rubble?

Mohammed Khaku

Earlier this month, Israeli soldier held his knee on the neck of a Palestinian protester in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood posting a caption "I cannot breathe". I believe that Black and Palestinian solidarity must also increase and block any attempt to use taxpayer's money for occupation

One hundred years ago, one of the worst instances of racial violence in American history erupted in Tulsa, Oklahoma. On May 31 and June 1, 1921, a white mob attacked the city's Greenwood district, dubbed the "Black Wall Street," and inflicted two days of terror. This massacre was the worst incident of racial violence in American history where 300 Black people were murdered by white supremacists. A fine city of the wealthiest black community in the United States was reduced to rubble.

It is sad that my four children who all went to Parkland school district were not taught the true and complete history of the slavery, Jim Crow, and white supremacy.

Israel and US, both use their control of the education system to prevent the resistance movement of Palestinians and Blacks – BLM. Israeli authorities have erased from school curriculum any material referring to Palestine, Palestinian children do not see the history of their people reflected in the courses taught.

Sounds familiar?

In many schools in the United States, Black children do not learn the correct version of Black history and culture. Most school textbooks still claim that Abraham Lincoln enacted the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan 1st, 1863 that freed all African American slaves.

This is not entirely true. The case in point is the matter of Juneteenth and Tulsa massacres which are omitted from the history books for children to learn. And today, many Republican lawmakers trying to enact laws to prevent the teaching of history of racism and oppression of African American people relationship to the institution of slavery.

Juneteenth is the national celebration of the day – June 19, 1865 – when the last African Americans held in bondage in the state of Texas learned that they had been freed. The fact was that after nearly two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation, the news was delivered by Union General Gordon Granger in what is known as Order No. 3, which was delayed intentionally after the cotton harvest was completed!

Blacks and the Palestinians are both fighting the same historical foe of white supremacy and Zionism to end settler colonialism, imperialism, racism and militarism in all forms.

While we might think that this event took place 100 years ago, reverberations of those horrific events continue today. Juneteenth, the Tulsa massacre, the occupation of Palestine all have similarities. And all these events have to do with occupation, oppression, militarization, and brutality.

Surely, you see the similarities in Black and Palestinian whose struggles has been through the paradigm of militarization, occupation and destruction like in Gaza, the mass open prison reduced to rubble?



Activist art draw parallels between police brutality in U.S. and Israel

Credit: The Popular Chorus

The African American suffer at the hands of Police brutality while Palestinians are at the hands of Israeli military. There is no difference in the occupation of black and brown communities in USA and the Zionist occupation, colonization, and the IDF brutality against Palestinians.

American Muslims should view the Israel-Palestine and police brutality situation through the prism of racial justice. For over seven-decade America has supported Israel unconditionally without impunity to commit crimes against humanity.

While the US police have immunity against any lawsuits. Many of the same police departments that have brutalized and killed Black people in American streets have been trained in so-called counterterrorism by IDF.

We are in the belly of the beast. The United States gives close to \$5 billion to the State of Israel, including \$3 billion from Congress and the rest comes as military aid. This does not include fortune 500 companies giving billions more.

The funding with no accountability or transparency from the United States makes the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian people possible. Israel is an apartheid state no-one can deny that and if we do deny it, we are part of the Zionist violence.

Nelson Mandela said, "We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians."

Black freedom movement in the United States organized to help end apartheid in South Africa, the same must be done for Palestine.

The Boycott Divest and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which has for years called for an economic embargo of Israel should be enforced vigorously. BDS resolution should be put forward at all city and county levels.

Earlier this month, Israeli soldier held his knee on the neck of a Palestinian protester in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood posting a caption "I cannot breathe". I believe that Black and Palestinian solidarity must also increase and block any attempt to use taxpayer's money for occupation. The Black Lives Matter movement's support for Palestine is a reminder how African Americans have linked the Palestinian struggle with theirs since the early days of the black liberation movement.

The US and the international community should end its hypocrisy and double standards with Israeli crimes against humanity.

The liberation of Palestine can only come by ending the military aid, end occupation and end apartheid. The mass incarceration in the USA can end when we divert funding of the police department and prison industrial system to better education and job opportunities in Brown and Black communities. It is all interconnected.

As Malcom X said: "We suffer political oppression, economic exploitation, and social degradation — all of them from the same enemy. The government has failed us; you can't deny that."

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The 'good Arab': An Israeli invention to control Palestinians

Muneeb Tarabeyh

Since its inception, the Israeli establishment has worked persistently to marginalise and oppress Palestinians in the country, and to persecute anyone who attempts to resist the Zionist entity. Palestinians have faced unprecedented surveillance and control over their movements, with checkpoints erected across the country and various pretexts employed to justify Israel's repression.

Declaring Israel from the outset to be a "national home for the Jewish people", the Zionist movement disregarded the tens of thousands of Palestinians who remained within the country's borders after the Nakba, when 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced. The goal was to create a mono-national entity, without concern for the existence of other groups.

Some currents within Palestinian society count on the generosity of the Israeli establishment and accept the conditions it sets, in hopes of gaining a few meagre crumbs.

This racist, oppressive reality was accompanied by Israeli attempts to burnish the country's international image. This was done in part by creating and developing the notion of the "good Arab", who was absorbed into Israeli institutions such as the Knesset and spoke about the establishment in Israel's preferred terms.

The "good Arabs" spread the concept among the masses that it was necessary to assimilate and obey Israeli orders; that the Israeli establishment was not a military system that usurped the country and forcibly displaced its people, but rather a democracy accepting of all - the only democracy in the region.

These "good Arabs", however, remained a minority due to the national consciousness among Palestinian citizens of Israel, who preferred to keep the status quo rather than improve their situation according to the conditions of the establishment. This consciousness was strengthened by certain events in history that are carved into the hearts of all Palestinians, strengthening their connection to their land: from Land Day in 1976, to the First and Second Intifadas, among other developments.



Injustice and tyranny

Since the 1948 Nakba, national movements and political parties have worked to organise the struggle against Israeli oppression, displacement, land confiscation, persecution, torture and imprisonment. Many politically conscious youths have demonstrated against the injustice and tyranny practiced by Israeli authorities and their agents.

And yet, the Israeli establishment has never stopped attempting to define

“The “good Arabs” spread the concept among the masses that it was necessary to assimilate and obey Israeli orders; that the Israeli establishment was not a military system that usurped the country and forcibly displaced its people, but rather a democracy accepting of all - the only democracy in the region

and redefine Palestinian citizens. In 2018, it enacted the nation-state law, defining Israel as a state for Jews. All of those falling outside of this definition were portrayed as little more than subjects whose feelings the state would try to take into account; not first-class citizens with full rights, but truly second-class citizens.

In the meantime, Israel has continued its policies of persecution and oppression, land confiscation, exclusion of Palestinians from employ-

ment, and home demolitions, among other practices. In parallel, some currents within Palestinian society count on the generosity of the Israeli establishment and accept the conditions it sets, in hopes of gaining a few meagre crumbs.

Such currents are a direct or indirect extension of the "good Arab" concept, created by the establishment to mislead and sow internal discord among the people.

Inside the 1948 territories, the Palestinian national movement is politically divided and suffering from deep ideological rifts. Some participate in Knesset elections, while others boycott them.

Relatively insignificant disagreements can be used as a pretext for some to break ranks and adopt the "good Arab" narrative, in hopes of obtaining a better life. Such hopes dissipate quickly, however, so the Israeli establishment must always move fast to create new "good Arabs".

Suppressing Palestinian rights

Indeed, the establishment is determined to maintain the "good Arab" as a means of suppressing Palestinian demands for rights and full equality. The establishment's agents are many, and as such, national movements must confront these projects with unity, placing Palestinians and their land rights above any other considerations.

Palestinian society in the 1948 territories is complex, with different sects and currents that make it easier for the Israeli establishment to sow discord, whether religious or social. It succeeds in many cases, with influential social and political figures often intervening to end rifts - but those working for their own interests continue to create problems.

The only way to confront the Israeli establishment and its attempts to distort Palestinian identity is through unity. Palestinians must corner the system and force it to deal with them as indigenous people entitled to their full rights, without restrictions or preconditions.

Middle East Eye

'Introducing play to higher education reduces stress'

Agencies

A new study has found that higher education students are more engaged and motivated when they are taught using playful pedagogy rather than the traditional lecture-based method.

The study was conducted by University of Colorado Denver counseling researcher Lisa Forbes. The findings of the study were published in the *Journal of Teaching and Learning*.

While many educators in higher education believe play is a method that is solely used for elementary education, Forbes argues that play is important in post-secondary education to enhance student learning outcomes.

Throughout the spring 2020 semester, Forbes observed students who were enrolled in three of her courses between the ages of 23-43. To introduce playful pedagogy, Forbes included games and play, not always tied to the content of that day's lesson, at the start of each class. She then provided many opportunities for role-play to practice

counseling skills, and designed competitions within class activities.

During the study, students mentioned they saw more opportunities for growth while learning in a highly interactive environment. Students also described that the hands-on nature of learning through play established a means for skill acquisition, and they were able to retain the content more effectively.

"As we grow older, we're conditioned to believe that play is trivial, childish, and a waste of time," said Forbes.

"This social script about play leads to it being excluded from higher education. A more interactive learning approach leads to a deeper and more rigorous connection to the material," added Forbes.

To maintain what Forbes described as "rigor" within higher education, the most common approach tends to be lecture-based learning. However, according to Forbes, this mode of education is counter to the very outcomes educators set out to achieve.

The results of the study suggest there

is a unique and powerful classroom experience when play is valued and used in the learning process. According to Forbes, students who participated in this study also indicated that play increased positive emotions and connections with other students and the professor in the course.

"I also saw that when I introduced play, it helped students let their guard down and allowed them to reduce their stress, fear, or anxiety," said Forbes.

Forbes added, "Play even motivated students to be vulnerably engaged, take risks, and feel more connected to the content."

Play is underutilized and devalued in higher education, according to Forbes. She suggests educators reevaluate their understanding of using play in graduate courses.

Playful pedagogy creates an interactive and warm learning environment, resulting in greater understanding of the material. This method is also more aligned with the humanistic missions and values of universities and programs.



Study finds brain areas involved in seeking information about bad possibilities

Agencies

Researchers at the Washington University School of Medicine have identified the brain regions involved in choosing whether to find out if a bad event is about to happen.

The findings, published in the journal *Neuron*, describe the term 'doomscrolling' as the act of endlessly scrolling through bad news on social media and reading every worrisome tidbit that pops up, a habit that unfortunately seems to have become common during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The biology of our brains may play a role in that. Researchers at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis have identified specific areas and cells in the brain that become active when an individual is faced with the choice to learn or hide from information about an unwanted aversive event the individual likely has no power to prevent.

The research could shed light on the processes underlying psychiatric conditions such as obsessive-compulsive disorder and anxiety—not to mention how all of us cope with the deluge of information that is a feature of modern life.

"People's brains aren't well equipped to deal with the information age," said senior author Ilya Monosov, PhD, an associate professor of neuroscience, neurosurgery and of biomedical engineering. "People are constantly checking, checking, checking for news, and some of that checking is totally unhelpful. Our modern lifestyles could be rescuing the circuits in our brain that have evolved over millions of years to help us survive in an uncertain and ever-changing world."

In 2019, studying monkeys, Monosov laboratory members J. Kael White, PhD, then a graduate student, and senior scientist Ethan S. Bromberg-Martin, PhD, identified two brain areas involved in tracking uncertainty about positively anticipated events, such as rewards. Activity in those areas drove the monkeys' motivation to find information about good things that may happen.

But it wasn't clear whether the same circuits were involved in seeking information about negatively anticipated events, like punishments. After all, most people want to know whether, for example, a bet on a horse race is likely to pay off big. Not so for the bad news.

"In the clinic, when you give some patients the opportunity to get a genetic test to find out if they have, for example, Huntington's disease, some people will go ahead and get the test as soon as they can, while other people will refuse to be tested until symptoms occur," Monosov said. "Clinicians see information-seeking behaviour in some people and dread behaviour in others."

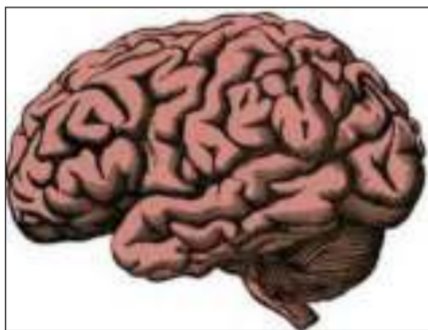
To find the neural circuits involved in deciding whether to seek information about unwelcome possibilities, first author Ahmad Jezzini, PhD, and Monosov taught two monkeys to recognize when something unpleasant might be headed their way. They trained the monkeys to recognize symbols that indicated they might be about to get

an irritating puff of air to the face. For example, the monkeys first were shown one symbol that told them a puff might be coming but with varying degrees of certainty. A few seconds after the first symbol was shown, a second symbol was shown that resolved the animals' uncertainty. It told the monkeys that the puff was definitely coming, or it wasn't.

The researchers measured whether the animals wanted to know what was going to happen by whether they watched for the second signal or averted their eyes or, in separate experiments, letting the monkeys choose among different symbols and their outcomes.

Much like people, the two monkeys had different attitudes toward bad news: One wanted to know; the other preferred not to. The difference in their attitudes toward bad news was striking because they were of like mind when it came to good news. When they were given the option of finding out whether they were about to receive something they liked — a drop of juice — they both consistently chose to find out.

"We found that attitudes toward seeking information about negative events can go both ways, even between animals that have the same attitude about positive reward-



ing events," said Jezzini, who is an instructor in neuroscience. "To us, that was a sign that the two attitudes may be guided by different neural processes."

By precisely measuring neural activity in the brain while the monkeys were faced with these choices, the researchers identified one brain area, the anterior cingulate cortex, that encodes information about attitudes toward good and bad possibilities separately. They found a second brain area, the ventrolateral prefrontal cortex, that contains individual cells whose activity reflects the monkeys' overall attitudes: yes for info on either good or bad possibilities vs. yes for intel on good possibilities only.

Understanding the neural circuits underlying uncertainty is a step toward better therapies for people with conditions such as anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder, which involve an inability to tolerate uncertainty.

"We started this study because we wanted to know how the brain encodes our desire to know what our future has in store for us," Monosov said. "We're living in a world our brains didn't evolve for. The constant availability of information is a new challenge for us to deal with. I think understanding the mechanisms of information seeking is quite important for society and for mental health at a population level."

Married men who avoid household responsibilities earn more at work: Study

Agencies

A new study has found that married men who don't help out around the house tend to bring home bigger paychecks than husbands who play a bigger role on the domestic chores front.

The study "Why Disagreeableness (in Married Men) Leads to Earning More: A Theory and Test of Social Exchange at Home" was published in the journal *Personnel Psychology*.

The study from the University of Notre Dame showed that "disagreeable" men in opposite-sex marriages are less helpful with domestic work, allowing them to devote greater resources to their jobs, which results in higher pay.

In contemporary psychology, "agreeableness" is one of the "Big Five" dimensions used to describe human personality. It generally refers to someone who is warm, sympathetic, kind and cooperative. Disagreeable people do not tend to exhibit these characteristics, and they tend to be more self-interested and competitive.

The study was led by Brittany Solomon and Cindy Muir (Zapata), management professors at Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business, along with Matthew Hall, the David A. Potenziani Memorial College Professor of Constitutional Studies and concurrent law professor at Notre Dame, and Elizabeth Campbell from the University of Minnesota.

"Across two studies, we find evidence that disagreeable men tend to earn more money relative to their more agreeable male counterparts because they are more self-interested and less helpful to their wives at home, which allows for greater job involvement and, ultimately, higher pay," Solomon said.

"This effect is even stronger among disagreeable men with more traditional gender role attitudes and when their wives are highly conscientious, presumably because in these cases their wives take on more household management and more seamlessly carry out the responsibilities," Solomon added.

The concept may bring to mind the '50s and '60s sitcom 'Leave it to Beaver', where Ward Cleaver always arrived home in time for dinner and June Cleaver wore dresses and pearls to clean floors. Did they have an advanced understanding of their respective roles?

The study suggests that because these men are able to preserve more time and energy at home, they can invest these resources into their work and earn more. However, the team found that disagreeableness does not predict career success for more egalitarian men, those whose wives are less conscientious or any men outside opposite-sex marriages.

"While disagreeableness in the workplace may lead some employees to success, those hoping to attain higher pay should at least hesitate before leaning into a disagreeable workplace persona," Solomon cautioned.

Solomon added, "Indeed, if self-interested



and less communal work behavior was the only key to higher pay, then disagreeable men would tend to earn more, regardless of whether they were married, how they viewed gender roles or to whom they were married."

Prior research has shown that disagreeableness predicts financial success (especially for men), and this association is attributed to workplace behaviour. However, this effect remains puzzling given that disagreeableness is negatively associated with valued workplace behaviors, such as cooperation and prosocial behavior.

In contrast, the team theorizes the male disagreeableness premium can be further understood by considering imbalanced social exchanges at home, specifically with one's spouse.

"Our findings build on the conventional wisdom that organizations seem to reward disagreeable workplace behaviors and highlight the importance of social exchange at home for success at work," Solomon said.

"Our research suggests that organizations acknowledge the role that spousal exchange plays in individual success and points to the potential for organizations to refocus efforts to fuel job involvement on lightening the burden of at-home responsibilities. Doing so could allow employees to preserve resources that could then be invested in their jobs," Solomon added.

"Presumably, this type of initiative would be especially beneficial to those who do not have the persona and gender that, we found, naturally drives individually advantageous spousal exchange — that is, everyone other than disagreeable, married men," she said.

Solomon further said, "To help those who do not have the built-in at-home arrangement that enhances job involvement and pay, organizations may consider investing in infrastructure that helps establish more level career-related playing fields."

These may include providing non-work resources, such as lists of reputable providers for home services and maintenance, establishing child care programs, pre-vetting caregivers or having couriers on retainer, which Solomon speculates may enhance job involvement even more than traditional work-focused incentives like bonuses.

"Practices that situate employees more equitably outside of work may offer more employees the opportunity to succeed," Solomon said.

Solomon added, "Also, some research shows that men are stigmatized for taking advantage of flex work policies. Changing the organizational culture, in addition to implementing such policies, may influence calculations within a marriage or partnership about whose career should take priority and who should do more at home. Consequently, organizations may also help support initiatives aimed to promote gender diversity and inclusion, especially efforts to reduce male dominance in high-income positions."

The study also carries implications for career self-management. Most notably, the findings may influence how employees view other people's roles in their own success, beyond their boss and other organizational members, and help improve the understanding of how one's choice of romantic partner and social exchange at home can have substantial implications for one's career success.

Researchers find an improved method of imaging objects through fog

Imaging of objects in foggy weather conditions may now be clearer. Researchers have found a method that can improve the images captured on such days. The technique involves modulating the light source and demodulating them at the observer's end.

Scientists have long attempted to use the physics of scattering and computer algorithms to process the resulting data and improve the quality of images. Whereas the improvements are not stark in some cases, computer algorithms require processing large volumes of data, involving ample storage and significant processing time.

Research by a team has offered a solution for improving the image quality without heavy computations. The team from the Raman Research Institute (RRI), Bengaluru, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology; Space Applications Centre, Indian Space Research Organisation, Ahmedabad; Shiv Nadar University, Gautam Buddha Nagar; and Université Rennes and Université Paris-Saclay, CNRS, France, modulated the light source and demodulated them at the observer's end to achieve sharper images. The research was published in the journal 'OSA Continuum'.

The researchers have demonstrated the technique by conducting extensive experiments on foggy winter mornings at Shiv Nadar University, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. They chose ten red LED lights as the source of light. Then, they modulated this source of light by varying the current flowing

through the LEDs at a rate of about 15 cycles per second.

The researchers kept a camera at a distance of 150 metres from the LEDs. The camera captured the image and transmitted it to a desktop computer. Then, computer algorithms used the knowledge of the modulation frequency to extract the characteristics of the source. This process is called 'demodulation'. The demodulation of the image had to be done at a rate that was equal to the rate of modulation of the source of light to get a clear image.

The team saw a marked improvement in the image quality using the modulation-demodulation technique. The time the computer takes to execute the process depends on the image's size. "For a 2160 x 2160 image, the computational time is about 20 milliseconds," shares Bapan Debnath, PhD scholar at RRI and a co-author of the study. That is roughly the size of the image containing the LEDs. His colleagues had estimated the rate in 2016.

The team repeated the experiment a few times and observed the improvement each time. Once, when the fog varied in intensity during the observation, they did not record a marked improvement in the image quality. In this case, there was a strong wind, and they observed fog trails across the scene. The density of the water droplets in the air changed as time passed, which rendered the modulation-demodulation technique less effective.

Next, the researchers changed the experimental setup. They made an external mate-

rial, a piece of cardboard kept at a distance of 20 centimetres from the LEDs, to reflect the light to the camera. The distance between the cardboard and the camera was 75 metres. The modulated light reflected from the cardboard travelled through the fog and was then captured by the camera. They demonstrated how their technique still significantly improved the quality of the resulting image.

Repeating the experiment under sunny conditions, they found that after performing the demodulation of the source, the image quality was high enough to distinguish the LEDs from the strongly reflected sunlight.

The study was partially funded by the Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India.

The cost of the technique is low, requiring only a few LEDs and an ordinary desktop computer, which can execute the technique within a second. The method can improve the landing techniques of aeroplanes by providing the pilot with a good view of beacons on the runway, significantly better than relying only on reflected radio waves as is presently the case. The technique can help reveal obstacles in the path that would otherwise be hidden by fog in rail, sea, and road transportation and would also help spotting lighthouse beacons. More research can demonstrate the effectiveness in such real-life conditions. The team is investigating whether the technique can apply to moving sources.(PIB)

Cricketer Suresh Raina Calls On LG Manoj Sinha



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Former India batsman Suresh Raina on Wednesday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, at Raj Bhavan and informed the LG of his sports development projects in J&K. Raina apprised the Lt Governor about the functioning of cricket academies, and schools adopted by him to develop and nurture young sporting talents in the UT. He further informed the Lt Governor about the future

strategy of his dedicated project to promote sports in Jammu and Kashmir.

Raina also presented his book "Believe" to LG Sinha.

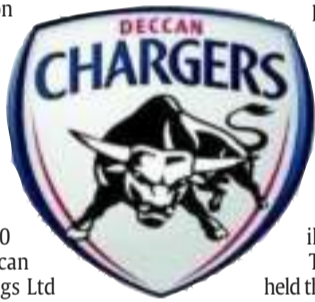
The Lt Governor appreciated the efforts of the star cricketer in boosting sports culture in J&K and assured him of all possible support from the UT Administration.

Raina later Tweeted about meeting with the LG and wrote: "I thank him for taking the time out for me, and accepting my book #Believe."

HC Sets Aside Arbitration Award That Required BCCI To Pay Rs 4,800 Cr To DCHL

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: The Bombay High Court on Wednesday set aside an arbitration award that directed the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to pay over Rs 4,800 crore to Deccan Chronicle Holdings Ltd (DCHL) over the alleged illegal termination of the latter's IPL franchise team, Deccan Chargers Hyderabad, from the Indian Premier League (IPL).



A single-bench presided over by Justice Gautam Patel "set aside" the award that had been passed in July last year by a sole arbitrator appointed by the high court to ascertain if the termination of the franchise during the fifth IPL season in 2012 was illegal.

The arbitrator had held the termination illegal and awarded DCHL a compensation of Rs 4,814.67 crore plus 10 per cent interest that was to be computed from 2012. The detailed order from the high court is awaited.

Greenpeace Apologises, Local Police Slam Euro 2020 'Parachute Protester'



Agencies

MUNICH: Greenpeace has apologised and Munich police are investigating after a protester parachuted into the stadium and injured two people before Germany's game against France at the European Championship. The match finished one-nil in favour of the French with the only goal coming via a Mats Hummels own goal.

The Greenpeace protester used a powered paraglider with a motor attached to his back but lost control and hit overhead camera wires attached to the stadium roof, careening over spectators' heads before he landed on the field ahead of Tuesday's game. Debris fell on the field and main grandstand, narrowly missing France coach Didier Deschamps. Greenpeace spokesperson Benjamin Stephan apologised for the botched protest and the injuries caused.

"That was never our intention," Stephan said.

"The paraglider was to fly over the stadium and drop a latex ball with a message of protest onto the field."

Munich police said on Wednesday they were investigating various potential violations of the criminal code and aviation act.

"The pilot injured two men during the landing approach. The injured were given medical care by the emergency services and taken to hospitals for further care," Munich police said in a statement.

The police said none of the injuries were serious and the pilot himself — a 38-year-old man with an address in the southwestern state of Baden Württemberg — was unharmed.

soever for such irresponsible actions in which a considerable risk to human life is accepted," the police said.

The protester's parachute had the slogan "KICK OUT OIL!" and "Greenpeace" written on it.

The parachutist managed to land on the field and Germany players Antonio Rüdiger and Robin Gosens were the first to approach him. He was then led away by security stewards.

"Technical difficulties meant the pilot was forced to land in the stadium," Stephan said.

"We deeply regret that this put people in danger and apparently injured two persons."

UEFA called the action "reckless and dangerous" and said "law authorities will take the necessary action". The German soccer federation also condemned the action.

"It could probably have turned out much worse," Germany team spokesman Jens Grittner said.

UEFA and one of its top-tier tournament sponsors, Russian state energy firm Gazprom, have previously been targeted by Greenpeace protests. In 2013, a Champions League game in Basel was disrupted when Greenpeace activists absented from the roof of the stadium to unfurl a banner protesting Russian oil and Gazprom, which sponsored the visiting team, German club Schalke. Greenpeace later donated money to a charity supported by Basel, which was fined by UEFA for the security lapse.

UEFA defended its environmental credentials in a statement on Tuesday after the incident.

"UEFA and its partners are fully committed to a sustainable Euro 2020 tournament," UEFA said, "and many initiatives have been implemented to offset carbon emissions".

Two India Squads Playing In Different Locations May Continue, Says Dhumal



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: India fielding two different squads in different locations due to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic can become a norm as it allows more bilateral cricket and some respite to all-format players from bio-bubble fatigue, said BCCI treasurer Arun Dhumal on Wednesday.

In a rare instance, Shikhar Dhawan will be leading a second string Indian team in Sri Lanka next month when the Virat-Kohli-led side will be in the UK ahead of the Tests against England.

Kohli has already spoken about the need to give players a break from the bubble life besides managing their workload.

"It is a definite possibility that India could play another limited overs tour with a younger squad while the main team players are playing elsewhere or need a break. The COVID-19 related re-

strictions also need to be factored in," Dhumal told PFI.

"It (two India squads) also shows the solid bench strength of the Indian team and gives us an opportunity to organise more bilateral cricket and help other boards which are facing financial challenges amid the pandemic."

"It is imperative to come up with new ideas to deal with the loss of bilateral cricket that has happened over the last 18 months," he said.

India have picked as many as six uncapped players for the Sri Lanka tour comprising three ODIs and as many T20 Internationals from July 13. All games will be played in Colombo.

Talking about women's cricket, for which BCCI has often faced criticism, Dhumal said the board is taking all the necessary steps to grow the game in the country.

"Women's cricket has come a long way after it came under the aegis of BCCI. The sport will grow

even more in the future and the board will leave no stone unturned to give more exposure and opportunity to budding women cricketers," he asserted.

"The board has already made a conscious attempt to give them substantial game time before the World Cup (next year) with tours of England and Australia lined up."

"We are also really happy to see them playing Tests again and wish the players the very best."

However, he said it would be tough to slot in the Women's Challenge during the IPL as the team is scheduled to play three ODIs, a pink ball Test and three T20s in Australia from September 19 when the second half of IPL begins.

The players will also have to do a 14-day quarantine upon their arrival in Australia.

"With the way schedule stands, it is tough to find a window for the Women's Challenge during the IPL," said Dhumal.

Milkha Singh 'Stable', Out Of COVID ICU: Family Statement



Press Trust of India

CHANDIGARH: Legendary Indian sprinter Milkha Singh is "stable" and he has been shifted out of COVID ICU to another section of the PGIMER hospital, a statement from his family said on Wednesday.

The 91-year-old had contracted the dreaded virus last month.

Milkha ji is stable and is out of the COVID ICU, but is in the Medical ICU, a spokesperson of the Milkha family said.

Thank you for your continuing prayers and good wishes, it added.

PGIMER sources said that Milkha Singh was "fine, stable and recovering".

"He has tested COVID negative after which he was shifted out of the COVID ICU," the sources said.

The sources further said that a medical team comprising senior doctors of the institute were closely monitoring his daily health progress.

Milkha's wife Nirmal Kaur

(85), who had also contracted the virus days after her husband tested positive, had passed away at a private hospital in Mohali on Sunday due to COVID-related complications.

Kaur was a former women's national volleyball team captain.

The couple were suspected to have contracted the infection from a house help.

Milkha Singh was admitted to PGIMER on June 3 after his oxygen levels dipped at home following treatment at the Fortis hospital in Mohali for a week.

The legendary athlete is a four-time Asian Games gold medalist and 1958 Commonwealth Games champion but his greatest performance remains the fourth-place finish in the 400m final of the 1960 Rome Olympics. His timing at the Italian capital was a national record for 38 years till Parmajet Singh broke it in 1998.

He also represented India in the 1956 and 1964 Olympics and was bestowed the Padma Shri in 1959.

Tempers Flare Between Shaheen Afridi & Sarfaraz Ahmed During PSL



Press Trust of India

KARACHI: Former Pakistan captain Sarfaraz Ahmed and left-arm pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi were involved in a heated argument during the Lahore Qalandars and Quetta Gladiators match of the PSL taking place in Abu Dhabi.

The two had to be separated by the Lahore captain Sohail Akhtar and senior Muhammad Hafeez and the umpires in the 19th over of the Quetta innings on Tuesday.

The argument took place after Sarfaraz was hit on the helmet by a bouncer from Afridi which was declared a no-ball by the umpire.

The ball hit the helmet and went down to third man and as Sarfaraz took the run and went to the non-striker's end, he apparently had something to say to the young pacer.

Afridi, however, didn't take kindly to the words from his former

Pakistan captain and reacted aggressively walking down from his run-up for a face off.

As Afridi got more animated and pointed towards Sarfaraz while trying to get close to him, the umpire intervened to keep the two Pakistan players apart with Akhtar and Hafeez also rushing down to cool down the situation.

Hafeez could be seen asking Sarfaraz to cool down with Afridi later saying the incident was part of the game.

It was later reported that Sarfaraz had asked Shaheen Afridi to apologise for bowling the bouncer. With the pacer seemingly taking it otherwise.

But the incident sparked a debate on social media with many criticizing Afridi for his aggressive reaction and behaviour towards his former captain and senior player while others defended the youngster.

Concussed Du Plessis Ruled Out Of Remaining PSL Matches, Returning Home

Press Trust of India

ABU DHABI: Former South African captain Faf du Plessis, who had suffered a concussion during a Pakistan Super League match here, was on Wednesday ruled out of the remaining matches of the T20 tournament.

Du Plessis suffered the concussion following a nasty collision with his Quetta Gladiators teammate Mohammad Hasnain while trying to save a boundary during their PSL match against Peshawar Zalmi here on Sunday.

"Faf du Plessis, who suffered a concussion in Quetta Gladiators' match against Peshawar Zalmi on Sunday, has been ruled out of the team's remaining games," ESPNcricinfo reported.

"He will be flying home to South Africa tonight."

Following the freak accident, the South Africa batting star ay prone on the ground for a few minutes while the team physio attended to him.

The 36-year-old Du Plessis eventually got on his feet and walked back to the team dugout before being taken to hospital for scans.

He later tweeted the same day that he was back from the hospital



and "recovering".

"Thank you everyone for all the messages of support. I'm back at the hotel recovering. Have concussion with some memory loss but I will be fine. Hopefully be back on the field soon. Much love," du Plessis had tweeted.

Du Plessis was playing his second game of the PSL upon its resumption. He had scored 5 against Islamabad

United as the Gladiators lost the match by 10 wickets.

Before the resumption of PSL, du Plessis was playing in the IPL 2021, where he scored 320 runs from seven matches, including four consecutive half-centuries, his form helping Chennai Super Kings to a strong position in the table. The lucrative league was then suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

ICC Test Rankings: Smith Topples Williamson As No 1 Test Batsman, Kohli 4th

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: India skipper Virat Kohli climbed to the fourth spot, while Australia batsman Steve Smith reclaimed the top position in the ICC Test rankings released on Wednesday.

Kohli, who will lead India in the World Test Championship final against New Zealand at the Hampshire Bowl in Southampton from Friday, has 814 points.

Keeping Kohli company in the top 10 is flamboyant Indian wicketkeeper batsman Rishabh Pant (747 points) and star opener Rohit Sharma (747 points), who have retained their joint sixth position.

Smith, who claimed the top spot for the first time since the Boxing Day Tests last year, takes over from New Zealand captain Kane Williamson, who is set to lead his team in the WTC final.

Williamson, who missed the second Test against England due to injury, has slipped five points behind Smith's 891 rating points and is second in the batters' list.

This means that Smith has been at the top for 167 Tests played worldwide in total, only behind Garry Sobers (189 matches) and

Viv Richards (179 matches).

In the Test bowling rankings, senior India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin continued to occupy the second place (850 points), behind Australian fast bowler Pat Cummins (908 points).

Ashwin is the lone Indian in the top 10.

West Indies' Jason Holder retained his top position in the Test all-rounder rankings with 412 rating points. India's Ravindra Jadeja (386 points) and Ashwin (353) are second and fourth respectively.

Kiwi pacer Matt Henry's player of the match performance has lifted him to a career-best 307 points and 64th position while Ajaz Patel too is at a career-high points tally of 323. Devon Conway continues his good run and is in joint-61st position.

The rankings update also includes performances from the first Test between South Africa and the West Indies in St Lucia. Quinton de Kock finds himself in joint-12th position with Cheteshwar Pujara while his compatriot Adrian Markram has advanced two slots to reach 14th position.

Warner, Cummins Among 7 Aussies To Pull Out Of WI, Bangladesh Tours

Press Trust of India

MELBOURNE: Seven top Australian cricketers who recently played in the IPL have pulled out of the country's white-ball tour of West Indies and Bangladesh.

The two tours are part of team's preparations for the T20 World Cup later this year.

David Warner, Pat Cummins, Glenn Maxwell, Jhye Richardson, Kane Richardson, Marcus Stoinis and Daniel Sams have requested not to be considered for the tours for various reasons while Steve Smith has been rested to fully recover from an elbow complaint which flared during the IPL, Cricket Australia said in a statement.

The move will leave coach Justin Langer without seven of his best players four months out from the T20 World Cup to be held in October and November.

Cricket Australia on Wednesday named a 18-man squad for the twin tours. Australia play five T20 Internationals and three ODIs between July 9 and 24. The five-match T20 tour of Bangladesh is yet to be confirmed.

"The tours are subject to agreement on bio-security arrangements and relevant government approvals," the CA said in the statement.

Cummins, Maxwell, Warner, Stoinis and Richardson were released from hotel quarantine late last month following the suspension of IPL and Australia's subsequent border closure for all arrivals from India, which led to the Australian contingent spending more than a week in the Maldives before they could return home.

Richardson left hotel quarantine around three weeks earlier than the rest of the IPL contingent after he, Adam Zampa and Aj Tye flew out of India before the federal government's travel ban had come into effect. Richardson, who has a young son, has declined to tour, while Zampa and Tye will go.

Jason Behrendorff, Moises Henriques and Riley Meredith have all agreed to go for the tour despite also being part of the IPL contingent that recently left hotel quarantine having returned home via the Maldives.

National selector Trevor Hohns said they "are naturally disappointed not to have all players available for the Australian team at this time however the NSP respects the decisions of those who have opted out of this tour."

"Steve Smith was unavailable for selection due to an elbow injury and will now be able to use

this time to fully recover ahead of the World Cup and home Ashes Series."

Hohns, however, said the missing out of some of the top players will present opportunities to others to push for selection in the Australian T20 World Cup squad.

"International tours in the time of Covid-19 undoubtedly present many additional challenges for athletes. This is a great chance for these players to make a case for the World Cup and all are considered very real prospects of making that tournament by performing well across these tours."

The squad is due to depart for the West Indies on June 28 for five T20 Internationals at Darren Sammy Stadium in St Lucia followed by three One-Day Internationals at Kensington Stadium in Barbados.

If confirmed, the team will then play five T20 Internationals against Bangladesh.

Australia squad: Aaron Finch (c), Ashton Agar, Wes Agar, Jason Behrendorff, Alex Carey, Dan Christian, Josh Hazlewood, Moises Henriques, Mitchell Marsh, Ben McDermott, Riley Meredith, Josh Philippe, Mitchell Starc, Mitchell Swepson, Ashton Turner, Andrew Tye, Matthew Wade, Adam Zampa.

RIOTS CASE

Delhi Police Moves SC Against HC Order Granting Bail To Three Student Activists

Agencis

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police Wednesday moved the Supreme Court challenging Delhi High Court verdicts granting bail to three student activists in a case related to the last year's communal violence in north east Delhi during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, saying that its findings are perverse and contrary to record and appeared to be based more on the social media narrative".

The police sought stay of Tuesday's three judgements which said in its anxiety to suppress dissent the State has blurred the line between right to protest and terrorist activity and if such a mindset gains traction, it would be a "sad day for democracy".

In the hurriedly filed appeal, the investigators dubbed the judgements as "mini trial" and said such observations were unfounded and perverse insinuation. Further, the Delhi Police contended that the bail was granted to the three accused on an irrelevant consideration which will have far reaching consequences for cases investigated by NIA and other investigating agencies.

The high court not only conducted a mini-trial but has also recorded perverse findings which are contrary to record and almost decided the case while adjudicating bail pleas," said the police while seeking to set aside three bail verdicts.

The appeal said the findings of the high court appeared to be

based more on the social media narrative than the evidence gathered and elaborated in the charge sheet.

It said the high court decided the case on a pre-conceived and a completely erroneous illusion, as if, the present case was a simplifier case of protest by students.

The high court, while granting bail to two JNU students Natasha Narwal and Devangana Kalita and Jamia Millia Islamia student Asif Iqbal Tanha, had come out with some harsh observations.

We are constrained to express, that it seems, that in its anxiety to suppress dissent, in the mind of the State, the line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and terrorist activity seems to be getting somewhat blurred. If this mindset gains traction, it would be a sad day for democracy, the high court had observed.

Delhi Police specifically referred this observation in its appeal and said the above observation in the respectful submission of the petitioner is an insinuation, albeit unfounded and perverse, that the present case was registered by the Government to suppress dissent. A fortiori, that it was a false case. This in the respectful submission of the petitioner was beyond the preview of the bail petition".

While contending that the judgements are unsustainable in law, the appeal highlighted the findings of the high court on provisions of the Unlawful

Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) related to terror, saying that they can only be applied to deal with matters of profound impact on the 'Defence of India', nothing more and nothing less.

The high court had termed as somewhat vague" the definition of 'terrorist act' under the stringent UAPA laws and had warned against its use in a "cavalier manner".

This in the respectful submission of the petitioner (Delhi police) was firstly, an irrelevant consideration to grant bail to the respondent, and secondly, will have far reaching consequences for cases investigated by NIA and other investigating agencies, the appeal said. The plea said the judicial scrutiny was not to ascertain as to whether on evidence on record prima facie the accusations were true or not but to somehow establish that the present case was a case of protest by students and suppression of dissent by the government of the day.

The High Court has not only conducted a mini-trial but has also recorded perverse finding which are contrary to record and the arguments made during the hearing of the case to arrive at a finding that case under Sections 15,17 and 18 of UAPA was prima facie not made out against the respondents, it said.

Police said unfortunately, contrary to evidence and the detailed oral and written submissions, the high court decided the case on a pre-conceived and a completely erroneous illusion, as if, the present case was

a simpliciter case of protest by students.

The high court completely lost sight of the evidences and statements which were produced before it and had arrived at the impugned judgment discarding the evidences which clearly made out a sinister plot of mass-scale riots being hatched by the respondent along with other co-conspirators, the plea said.

There was a cause and evidence of terrorist activity against the accused, the plea said, however, the high court misdirected itself and gave ex-facie perverse findings to arrive at a conclusion that no case of UAPA was made out.

The misdirection of the High Court is writ large from the observation made by it in the impugned judgment, wherein, the High Court has held that the present case was foisted in anxiety to suppress dissent, it said.

The high court had directed Narwal, Kalita and Tanha, who were arrested in May last year in connection with alleged larger conspiracy in the riots under stringent UAPA, to surrender their passports and not to offer any inducement to prosecution witnesses or tamper with the evidence in the case.

Kalita, Narwal and Tanha are accused in four, three and two cases respectively relating to communal riots that broke out on February 24 last year and will be released from jail now as they have already secured bail in other matters.

Govt Approves Restructuring Of Ordnance Factory Board Into 7 New Corporate Entities

Agencis

NEW DELHI: In a major reform initiative, the government on Wednesday approved a long-pending proposal to restructure the nearly 200-year-old Ordnance Factory Board that operates 41 ammunition and military equipment production facilities into seven state-owned corporate entities to improve its accountability, efficiency and competitiveness.

The decision to corporatise the OFB on the lines of defence public sector undertakings was taken at a meeting of the union cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, nearly two decades after the reform measure was first mooted to bring professionalism and significantly enhance its productivity, officials said.

Describing it as a "historic decision", Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said there will be no change in service conditions of nearly 70,000 employees of the organisation and that the decision is driven by efforts to boost India's defence manufacturing sector.

"It is a big decision that complements India's national security requirements. It will help in achieving our targets for defence production. There will be no change in service conditions of the employees," he told a small group of journalists.

Officials said the seven entities are likely to take shape by the year's end and they will be operated by professional management with a larger goal of enhancing the product range, increase competitiveness and

improve cost-efficiency.

"This restructuring is aimed at transforming the ordnance factories into productive and profitable assets, deepening specialisation in the product range, enhancing competitiveness and improving quality and cost-efficiency," said one of the officials.

The new entities will produce ammunition and explosives, weapons and equipment, vehicles, troop comfort items, optoelectronics equipment, parachutes and ancillary products, the officials said, adding the reform process is being rolled out as part of the prime minister's vision for self-reliance in the defence sector.

"All employees of OFB (Group A, B and C) belonging to the production units would be transferred to the corporate entities on deemed deputation initially for a period of two years without altering their service conditions as central government employees," said another official.

The pension liabilities of the retired and existing employees will continue to be borne by the government, according to the Cabinet decision.

At present, the OFB functions under the department of defence production of the Ministry of Defence.

The seven entities will include an ammunition and explosives group, vehicles group, weapons and equipment group, 'troop comfort items group', ancillary group, optoelectronics group and parachute group, the officials said.

The ammunition and explosives group would be mainly engaged in the production of

ammunition of various calibre and explosives and its focus would be to exploit the huge potential to grow exponentially including for the export market.

The vehicles group would mainly engage in the production of defence mobility and combat vehicles such as tanks, BMPs (infantry fighting vehicle) and mine protected vehicles. The focus of the group would be to increase its share in the domestic market through better capacity utilisation and also to explore new export markets.

The weapons and equipment group would be mainly engaged in the production of small arms, medium and large-calibre guns, and other weapon systems and is expected to increase its share in the domestic market through meeting domestic demand as well as product diversification, the officials said.

"The new structure would help in overcoming various shortcomings in the existing system of OFB by eliminating inefficient supply chains and provide these companies incentive to become competitive and exploring new opportunities in the market including exports," said the second official.

"Today's decision would allow these companies autonomy, as well as help improve accountability and efficiency in the functioning of the 41 factories under the new companies," he said.

The government has also decided to delegate the authority of the cabinet to an empowered Group of Ministers headed by Singh to decide on matters related to the restructuring of the OFB.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Govt Okays

representatives in the planning process has laid a strong foundation for the developmental plans at Gram panchayat, Block and District levels," the LG said, as per the official spokesperson.

"The district plan preparations started at Panchayat level & through BDC, it finally reached the DDC," he added.

Congratulating the DDCs, BDCs, Sarpanches, Panches, officials of UT Administration for preparing the 'historic' district development plan, the LG, as per official spokesperson maintained that the community-based planning will play a key role in the implementation of the development works.

"With this historic move, the three-tier Panchayati Raj system has been further empowered through funds, functions & functionalities in J&K UT to cater to the developmental needs of the people through efficient mobilization of resources," Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

He further said that the LG directed the Deputy Commissioners to take urgent action in order to tackle implementation constraints in infrastructure projects.

"More than 80% works taken up this year should be completed within 12-months with the true spirit of Jan Bhagidari and through help of PRIs," the LG told the DCS.

According to the official spokesperson, the LG further asked the DCS and PRIs to focus on Youth engagement, Solid waste management, improving Health & Education sector, provision of clean drinking water/irrigation facilities, better mobility, livelihood generation, and tourism & sports infrastructure.

Sinha, he said, advised the DCS to maintain connect with the public, besides sharing best practices for better and effective implementation of developmental works.

"Fulfilling people's requirements is the top-most priority of the UT Government. The change must be visible on the ground. People need better governance, transparency and timely completion of welfare projects," the LG said, as per official spokesperson.

He said that the LG reiterated the directions passed in earlier meetings, and further instructed the DCS for updation of the Districts' websites with details of beneficiary-oriented & social security schemes, works under District Plans, besides ensuring availability of online services to the people.

Emphasizing on maintaining transparency and accountability in the implementation of the District plan, the LG, as per official spokesperson, directed the concerned functionaries to ensure that each panchayat must display the list of plans approved and date of completion of the works.

He said that the LG further informed that the Government is initiating District Evaluation Framework which will be finalized soon and the performances of the districts and their ranking will be published monthly.

"An institutional mechanism will be put in place for monthly review of the progress in every district," Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar and Baseer Ahmad Khan- Advisors to the Lieutenant Governor; Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Atal Dulloo, Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education Department; Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Administrative Secretaries, besides other senior officers participated in the meeting, in person and through video conferencing.

Financial Help

boys and girls from each Panchayat to make them Entrepreneur. The youth of Jammu & Kashmir have immense talent and till date, we

have provided this opportunity to more than 19,000 boys and girls. This year our aim should be to reach out to 50,000 youths with all the assistance so that they can become entrepreneurs," the LG said, as per official spokesperson.

"Besides this, 18,000 posts have been advertised by SSB for recruitment in various departments. More posts are being identified. We had promised 25000 jobs in the public sector/government departments. We are moving in that direction. We want to empower the people of Jammu and Kashmir, especially the youth. The grassroots democracy is flourishing in J&K for the first time. Youth have an important role to play in the decision making process. We will ensure that the youth is given maximum opportunities," he added.

According to the official spokesperson, the LG also announced that no work will be taken up by any department without following due procedure of tendering.

"Avoiding laid down procedures has been found leading to pilferages and quality issues. Tendering process will ensure transparency, accountability, and quality of works. Our aim is to ensure responsive, accountable, transparent governance. And we are here to see that we deliver what we promise," the official spokesperson quoted LG as saying.

He further said that Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha during his visits to various villages in the third phase of B2V program had explicitly underscored the need to involve youth in the developmental process to make them financially independent, and job providers instead of job seekers.

"Taking his vision forward, Jammu and Kashmir Bank advanced more than Rs 340 crores to as many as 19,600 youth from across the UT, against the target of about 8800 youth. These youth were granted financial assistance, making them not only financially independent but also a source of livelihood to other families," he added.

Pak Seeks UN

diplomatic ties and expelled the Indian envoy.

In his letter, Qureshi also affirmed that Pakistan desires peaceful relations with all its neighbours, including India.

He has also emphasised that the onus is on India to create an enabling environment for result-oriented engagement with Pakistan, the FO said.

India has told Pakistan that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Islamabad in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence.

Militant Killed

presence of militants.

"During the search operation as the presence of militant got ascertained he was given an opportunity to surrender, however, he fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party, which was retaliated leading to an encounter," the police spokesperson said.

Initially, police had claimed presence of two militants in the area when the gunfight raged on.

Meanwhile, the police have urged people to cooperate with police till the area is completely sanitized and cleared off of all the explosive materials, if any.

Man Jailed For

compared to officers from outside the union territory because he is a local, according to the police report.

He said, "I can have expectations from you because you are a Kashmiri and you can understand us. I can grab you by the collar and seek answers. But what expectations can I have from officers who are outsiders?"

This comment did not go down well with

Ganderbal Deputy Commissioner Kritika Jyotsna, a 2014 IAS officer and wife of Rahul Pandey, who is posted with the Raj Bhavan as the director of information. Jyotsna and Pandey came to Jammu and Kashmir in February this year on inter-cadre deputation.

The police report said that Jyotsna stood up from her seat and "strongly objected" to Sofi's comments.

Sofi was summoned and booked by the police under Section 153 of the IPC on the same night.

"The circumstances of the incident and from the statements, a crime under 153A of the IPC is made," the police report said.

Sofi was granted bail by a local court here on Saturday, saying "bail is a rule and its rejection is an exception".

"Bail in non-bailable crime cannot be refused without assigning a strong reason although bail is a discretion of the court and discretion of bail cannot be exercised arbitrarily.

"The allegedly committed crime attributed to the applicant does not carry life imprisonment or death penalty debaring this court to exercise discretion of bail in favour of the applicant. As such, this court has a sufficient reason to exercise discretion of bail in favour of the applicant," the court said.

However, even after this, the police did not release Sofi and instead booked him under Section 107 of the IPC which entitles them to keep a person under "preventive custody" for being a "threat to peace".

"Sofi is under preventive custody under sections 107 and 151 (of IPC)," Senior Superintendent of Police, Ganderbal, Suhail Munawar said.

He said there were apprehensions of "breach of peace, so he (Sofi) was taken into custody".

Lowest Number

cases, the official said that Srinagar reported 129, Baramulla 64, Budgam 76, Pulwama 27, Kupwara 26, Anantnag 49, Bandipora 23, Ganderbal 17, Kulgam 23, Shopian 8, Jammu 54, Udhampur 22, Rajouri 19, Doda 32, Kathua 16, Samba 3, Kishtwar 9, Poonch 14 and Ramban 24 fresh cases of Covid-19. No new case was reported in Reasi district.

Also, officials said 1649 more patients have recovered, 541 from Jammu Division and 1108 from Kashmir. So far, 293763 people have recovered, leaving the active positive cases at 11381 in J-K-4190 in Jammu and 7191 in Kashmir.

Regarding the fatalities, the officials said that six each were reported from Jammu Division and Kashmir valley, taking the overall fatality count since the outbreak of pandemic last year in J&K to 4217.

Police Recover

people violating coronavirus rules across the Kashmir Valley.

"During the last 24 hours, police have arrested 4 persons, lodged 2 FIRs and also realized fine to the tune of Rs 5,72,435 from 3865 people throughout the Kashmir valley for violating the various guidelines, rules regarding Covid-19," a police spokesperson said Wednesday.

The special drive against the violators, he said, continued throughout all the districts of Kashmir Valley to ensure that people adhere to guidelines envisaged by government to curb COVID-19 pandemic.

"Community members are once again requested to cooperate with the Police in containing the spread of Coronavirus by following the SOPs/ guidelines/protocols for their own safety and for the safety of others. The special drive shall continue throughout the districts of Kashmir Valley to strengthen the safety measures," the police spokesperson added.

730 Doctors Died

Pradesh 38, the data showed.

According to the IMA, 748 doctors died in the first wave of the pandemic.

"Last year 748 doctors across India succumbed to COVID-19, while in the current second wave, in a short period we have lost 730 doctors," a doctor associated with the IMA said.

LG Takes Strong

summer, several meetings were held under preparation plan to prevent erratic electricity supply in Jammu division for May-June when mercury soars high.

"Unscheduled power cuts that Jammu faced was not normal. That's why, I have asked the Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta to constitute a committee to enquire into the matter and those found responsible should be given the highest punishment as permissible under the law. I want to assure the people that your sweat will not go in vain and officers responsible for your suffering will be punished soon," Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

The LG said despite losses to the tune of Rs. 3,500 Crores incurred every year on electricity, the Union Territory is working round-the-clock to strengthen transmission, distribution network, and power generation capacity in the UT.

"The results were visible on the ground during winter when people in the Kashmir valley for the first time had uninterrupted power supply even during the snow," Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

"J&K has been bestowed with enormous hydro resources, however, out of total identified power potential of 14,867 MW, only 3504.90 MW could be harnessed since the past 70 years. In the last 11-months, we have finalized the project that will generate 3500 MW within next 4 years. Transmission network upgradation works have been taken up, not just to evacuate power from the upcoming power projects, but also to provide robustness to the existing system spread across the UT as also to plan for the future power requirements with the ultimate goal of 24X7 Power for All," he added.

As per the official spokesperson, the LG said adequate key logistics in terms of transformers, poles and conductors have been stocked in remote areas in addition to divisional stores so as to ensure swift restoration in case of damage to electrical infrastructure due to weather vagaries.

Silent, Sulking

check and balance, the party's new torchbearers advise them to maintain silence—especially in front of "prying scribe" and the new party entrants. "This isn't PDP," a woman leader tells a bunch of old-timers with an aggressive tone. "This is Ferooz Sahab's party, where against any intimidation, a severe response is given."

But this rebuke of sorts hardly stops the old guards from asserting that whatever the party elitists are vocalising, the ground layer is still being rendered aimless.

Another party patriot has his eyes ecstatic on the single party flag—bearing white plough on the red cloth—unfurling with large caches of dust fading the red from Sheikh's "Naya Kashmir" flag. On top of this, the mood inside NC's citadel is overcoming the "impact of distress".

"In the DDC election," Rehman continues, as we sit to talk in the sunny courtyard where a cop keeps a hawkish gaze on the visitors, "our party was dethroned in Srinagar and Shopian by the BJP's "B-Team" that isn't even a year old. Those were the consequences of subduing your own party cadres."

After the defeat, many party bigwigs had to taste their own medicine when NC picks drifted towards a new crusader for "Statehood" and

shifted sides.

Before his voice buzzes up the deserted-view of party headquarters, Rehman is mainly quiet, self-possessed and staunchly reserve but as soon as he starts to spill few beans, his body becomes pinched and his voice turns fluent and aggressive, issuing the secret denunciations against his own party in a mixture of Kashmiri and a broken English.

"They've shattered Sheikh Sahab's National Conference," he says while his thumb skitters over his Samsung cell phone scanning through outrageous responses from a few party workers.

"If Sheikh Sahab would've thought about the grave repercussions before retaining the Dogra storm with his 'Naya Kashmir' slogans followed by a historical rift between him and the Indian Government, his two generations would've never got the opportunity of becoming the party supremos."

Some political vigour was seen at the fag-end of year 2020, when the party patron hosted his archrivals inside Nawa-e-Subah, saying: "We will fight against the Indian Government." Following that adrenaline-rush moment, Ferooz Abdullah told his party workers that "these detentions, intimidation and political threats are a part of NC's history".

But now when the same group is visiting New Delhi for the reported talks, the party workers fear that their leadership might play according to the centre's script.

"After all," says a NC youth worker killing his time in the party chamber, "the lion's party is now merely a desperate cat's show."

CIK Raids Old

conducted in connected with militant funding.

The sources further said that in this regard an FIR vide number 06/2021 under section 13, 17,20,38,39 ,40 UA(P) Act read with section 13 prevention of corruption Act and 120-B ,121,121-A, of IPC stands registered.

"The sleuths of CIK assisted by police and others seized multiple bank passbooks and check books of the accused. Besides, some cards and photostate copies related to business dealings were also seized," the report added.

Dulloo Redesignated

by Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Commissioner-Secretary to the administration.

Dulloo is the senior-most IAS officer in Jammu and Kashmir after chief secretary Arun Kumar Mehta.

The health and medical education department led by Dulloo has been complimented by the administration for exemplary work done in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dulloo is credited with dealing with the pandemic with multi-sectoral initiatives from treating influx of coronavirus patients, building Covid infrastructure and implementing preventive measures.

CASO Launched

Police sources said that a search operation was launched following inputs about the presence of militants in the area.

Searches were going on in the area when reports last came in. (KDC)

Teen Found

said proceedings under 174 CrPc have been initiated in this regard. (GNS)

Reasi district, the officials said. To avoid conviction, the accused jumped the trial proceedings by going underground in all the four trials as he shifted to unknown places without leaving footprints of his movement, they said. It took more than three years for the Reasi Police to pick up clues, trace and arrest Ahmed, they said.

IT Minister Blasts Twitter, Says It Failed To Comply With New Guidelines



Agencies

EAST DELHI: In a series of tweets, the minister came down hard on the platform over its reluctance to comply with the new norms.

"There are numerous queries arising as to whether Twitter is entitled to safe harbour provision. However, the simple fact of the matter is that Twitter has failed to comply with the Intermediary Guidelines that came into effect from the 26th of May," Prasad said.

He also said that Twitter was given multiple opportunities to comply with the same, however it has "deliberately chosen" the path of non-compliance.

Observing that the culture of India varies like its large geography, he said in another

tweet: "In certain scenarios, with the amplification of social media, even a small spark can cause a fire, especially with the menace of fake news. This was one of the objectives of bringing the Intermediary Guidelines."

"What happened in UP was illustrative of Twitter's arbitrariness in fighting fake news. While Twitter has been over enthusiastic about its fact checking mechanism, it's failure to act in multiple cases like UP is perplexing & indicates its inconsistency in fighting misinformation," he said.

Prasad said that it is astounding that Twitter which portrays itself as the flag bearer of free speech, chooses the path of deliberate defiance when it comes to the intermediary guidelines.

"Further, what is perplexing is that Twitter fails to address the grievances of users by refusing to set up process as mandated by the law of the land. Additionally, it chooses a policy of flagging manipulates media, only when it suits, its likes and dislikes," he said.

Further, in another development, official sources have said that Twitter has lost its status as intermediary platform in India as it has not complied with new guidelines.

Fuel Price Hiked Again; Petrol Nearing Century Mark Across Country

NEW DELHI: Fuel prices increased again across the country on Wednesday adding more misery for the common man already grappling with rising food prices amidst shrinking income.

With this rise, petrol prices have reached very close to hitting the century-mark all across the country extending the scope of historic high prices that had already made the fuel rate cross the Rs 100 per litre mark in certain cities and towns of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh.

On Wednesday, the oil marketing companies (OMCs) raised the price of petrol and diesel between 12-25 per litre across the four metros.

Accordingly, the price of petrol increased by 25 paise per litre to Rs 96.66 per litre and diesel by 13 paise per litre to Rs 87.41 per litre in Delhi.

In Mumbai, where petrol prices crossed Rs 100 mark for the first time ever on May 29, the fuel price reached new high of Rs 102.82 per litre on Wednesday. Diesel prices also increased in the city by 14 paise per litre to reach Rs 94.84 a litre, the highest among metros.

Across the country as well, petrol and diesel prices increased on Wednesday but its retail prices varied depending on the level of local taxes in



different states.

Petrol prices in three other metros have also reached closer to Rs 100 per litre mark and OMC officials said that if international oil prices continue to firm up, this mark could also be breached in other places by month-end.

With Wednesday's price hike, fuel prices have now increased on 25 days and remained unchanged on 22 days since May 1.

The 25 increases have taken up petrol prices by Rs 6.26 per litre in Delhi. Similarly, diesel has increased by Rs 6.68 per litre in the national capital.

With global crude prices also rising on pick up in demand and depleting inventories of world's largest fuel guzzler -- US, retail prices of fuel in India is expected to firm up further in coming days.

The benchmark Brent crude is currently close to multi-year high level of \$75 on ICE or Intercontinental Exchange. IANS

J&K Bank To Raise Rs 150 Crore By Issuing Shares To Employees



Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Bank said on Wednesday that it has decided to raise Rs 150 crore by issuing shares to its employees under the em-

ployee stock purchase scheme. The decision followed the meeting of the bank's compensation committee on Wednesday which recommended issuance of Rs 7.5 crore equity shares of the face value of Re 1 each

aggregating to Rs 150 crore in one or more tranches to bank's eligible employees.

The Bank's shares appreciated by 4.27 per cent from its previous value and closed at Rs 30.55 per share on the BSE.

THE DECISION FOLLOWED THE MEETING OF THE BANK'S compensation committee on Wednesday which recommended issuance of Rs 7.5 crore equity shares"

Hallmarking Of Gold Jewellery Mandatory Now: Govt

KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: In the interest of consumers, the Directorate of Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) department on Wednesday issued a charter of rights consumers have while purchasing jewellery item.

As per the statement issued here, it was informed that the Hallmarking of gold jewellery is becoming mandatory from 16th June, 2021 under the quality control order issued by Bureau of Indian Standards i.e. jewellers have to sell only hallmarked gold jewellery in their sale-centres.

It was given out that the Hallmarking of gold jewellery has



been restricted to only three grades i.e. 22 carat, 18 carat and 14 carat and in case of doubt about the purity of gold-content in the ornament, consumers can get their jewellery tested from any of the BIS recognized Assaying & Hallmarking (A&H) Centre on nominal charges.

Presently, there are only four A&H Centres in UT of J&K of which one is at Srinagar. Where-

as in case of shortage of purity, consumer is entitled for compensation by the jeweller.

The complaint of shortage of purity etc. can be lodged online on the mobile app BIS CARE or on the BIS website www.bis.gov.in.

While buying gold jewellery/artefacts, consumers should check whether the jeweller is registered with BIS and has a certificate of registration displayed at the sale-centre.

Besides, they should also check the mandatory marks on the ornament by using magnifying glass which remains available at the sale-centre. Ask for the bill carrying net weight, cost, purity in carat/ fineness and mention of hallmarking.

Jio Launches Jiofiber Post-Paid Service, Installation Free

MUMBAI: Reliance Jio will start Jiofiber post-paid broadband service from Thursday without charging installation fee on new connections.

The company at present charges Rs 1,500 as an installation fee for new connections.

Customers applying for Jiofiber post-paid connection will have to choose either six-month or 12-month plan starting at a price of Rs 399 per month. This is the lowest plan in the industry.

In case customers want to subscribe for a higher plan which



has over-the-top (OTT) services for entertainment then the customer will have to pay a Rs 1,000 refundable security deposit, the

company said on Wednesday.

The 4K Set Top Box at no extra cost for OTT apps will be available. Up to 15 paid OTT apps on Rs 999 and above plan, all leading OTTs including regional apps such as DisneyHotstar+, Amazon Prime, Zee5, SonyLiv, SunNxt and HoiChoi.

Reliance Jio is the largest broadband player in the country with 54.56 per cent market share. It is the third largest wireline broadband company in the country with 15.6 per cent market share and over 31 lakh customers. — ANI

Growth Of Indian Consumer Credit Market To Outrun Major Economies

NEW DELHI (IANS): India's credit ecosystem remains resilient despite the pandemic and the consumer credit market is projected to grow at a higher rate than most major economies globally, according to a report by Experian and Invest India.

Titled 'A Review of India's Credit Ecosystem', it noted that the growth would be driven by a shift in India's demography, a burgeoning affluent middle class ramping up private consumption, as well as growth in rural populations, all catalysed by technology.

It noted that NBFCs and fintech firms have transformed the lending landscape to cater to the financial needs of the consumers.

The data, which tracks India's credit ecosystem from March 2017 to February 2021, highlights a v-shaped recovery across Indian markets, with a gradual and steady improvement in sourcing trends.

New sourcing crossed the pre-Covid-19 level in October 2020. However, sourcing volumes declined from January 2021 onwards, due to the second Covid-19 wave and lockdowns being imposed.

It said that a remarkable recovery was observed across all unsecured credit products. Recovery of personal loans has been high in both low (sub Rs 1 lakh) and high (above Rs 5 lakh) ticket size segments while the recovery in higher ticket size loans is also improving steadily.

The credit portfolio has been resilient, and in February 2021, growth stood at

eight percent year-on-year for the portfolio of key products, lower than the 13 per cent observed for March 2020.

The pace of growth slowed down for all products, however, with unsecured products experiencing a faster year-on-year growth rate compared to secured loans.

Experian India Managing Director Neeraj Dhawan said: "The behavioural shift in Indian population has been tremendous just over the last five years. Consumerism has been growing in the previously untapped semi-urban and rural regions as millennials become the main driving force of the mass market."

Noting that technological adaption is steep which has, in turn, created acceptance for new financial tools, he said: "The biggest beneficiary of this change is the credit market, which is evolving into a self-generating and self-sustaining one. In line with this trend, the risk appetite of traditionally conservative lenders is growing as the horizon of creditworthiness expands."

Invest India Managing Director & CEO Deepak Bagla said: "India is making giant strides in financial inclusion. The rise in the affluent middle class and growth in the rural economy is changing consumer spending patterns and driving the bulk of India's consumption growth."

Additionally, rapid technological advancements have further expedited the growth of the credit lending ecosystem, he added.

India's Fuel Demand Rebounds In June



NEW DELHI: While petrol sales rose by 13 per cent during June 1-15 over the same period of last month, diesel consumption was up 12 per cent, according to data compiled by state fuel retailers.

This is the first monthly increase since March.

Fuel demand had recovered to near-normal levels in March before the onset of the second wave of Covid-19 infections led to the reimposition of lockdowns in different states, stalling mobility and muting economic activity.

Consumption in May slumped to its lowest since August 2020.

With COVID case addition down 79 per cent since peak 5 weeks ago and vaccination pace picking up, state governments have continued rule relaxations at a relatively faster pace than in 2020.

Delhi has already announced the reopening of markets and malls for near-normal hours while restaurants can open at 50 per cent capacity. Maharashtra govern-

ment allowed malls to open in Pune.

Significant relaxations in South including TN allowing non-essential shops to open from this week. Barring any unforeseen COVID rebound, economic activity is expected to improve in the weeks ahead.

Diesel sales at 2.48 million tonnes during June 1-15 were however 7.5 per cent lower than consumption in the same period last year and 21.4 per cent lower than pre-Covid June 2019.

Similarly, petrol sales at 904,900 tonnes were 3.5 per cent lower year-on-year and 20.7 per cent lower than June 2019.

Consumption of LPG, the only fuel which showed growth even during the first lockdown because of free supplies by the government to the poor, was down 1.3 per cent at 1.1 million tonnes month-on-month but was 14.6 per cent higher than last year and 2.19 per cent more than June 2019.

With airlines yet to resume full scale operations because of travel restrictions around the globe, jet fuel sales at 107,400 tonnes was down 17.4 per cent month-on-month but 13.2 per cent higher than June of 2020. It was 65.5 per cent lower than June 2019 sales.

NEWS MAKERS

India To Have 330M 5G Smartphone Subscriptions In 5 Years

Globally, 5G mobile subscriptions will exceed 580 million by the end of 2021, driven by an estimated one million new 5G mobile subscriptions every day, according to a report by Swedish telecommunications giant Ericsson.

The average traffic per smartphone user in India has increased from 13GB per month in 2019 to 14.6GB per month in 2020.

The average traffic per smartphone in the India region stands second highest globally and is projected to grow to around 40GB per month in 2026, according to Ericsson Mobility Report.

"COVID-19 has accelerated India's digital transformation as more and more consumers rely on digital services -- be it digital payments, remote health consultations, online retail or video con-



ferencing -- to fulfil their business or personal needs," said Nitin Bansal, Head of Ericsson India.

"The average traffic per smartphone in the India region stands second highest globally and is projected to grow to around 40GB per month in 2026," added Bansal, also Head of Network Solutions for South east Asia, Oceania and India, Ericsson.

5G subscriptions with a 5G-capable device grew by 70 million during the first quarter of 2021

About 3.5 billion 5G subscriptions and 60 percent 5G population coverage are forecast by the end of 2026.

However, the pace of adoption varies widely by region.

Europe is off to a slower start and has continued to fall far behind China, the US, Korea, Japan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) markets in the pace of 5G deployments, the report noted.

5G is expected to surpass a billion subscriptions two years ahead of the 4G LTE timeline for the same milestone.

"Key factors behind that include China's earlier commitment to 5G and the earlier availability and increasing affordability of commercial 5G devices. More than 300 5G smartphone models have already been announced or launched commercially," the report added.

OnePlus Merges With OPPO To Create Better Products

NEW DELHI: With an aim to create better products, global smartphone brand OnePlus on Wednesday announced that it has decided to further integrate with its sister smartphone brand OPPO.

In an official forum note, One Plus Founder and CEO Pete Lau said that it will also allow them to be more efficient, for example, bringing faster and more stable software updates for OnePlus users.

He informed that he took on some additional responsibilities to oversee product strategy for both OnePlus and OPPO last year.

"Since then, we have integrated a number of our teams together with OPPO to better streamline our operations and capitalise on additional shared resources.



After seeing a positive impact from those changes, we have decided to further integrate our organisation with OPPO," Lau said.

"I am confident that this change will be positive for our community and our users. With this deeper integra-

SINCE THEN, we have integrated a number of our teams together with OPPO to better streamline our operations and capitalise on additional shared resources. After seeing a positive impact from those changes, we have decided to further integrate our organisation with OPPO," Lau said.

tion with OPPO, we will have more resources at hand to create even better products for you," he added.

However, he also mentioned that the OnePlus brand will continue to operate independently, focused on providing the best possible products and experience as they have always done. "We will continue launching OnePlus products, holding events (hopefully in person soon) and engaging directly with you for feedback through the same OnePlus channels as before. OnePlus' commitment to you remains the same," Lau said. — IANS

Sena, BJP Workers Come To Blows Over Saamana's Comments On Ayodhya Land Row

Agenceis

Clashes broke out between Shiv Sena and BJP workers in Dadar area here on Wednesday after the youth wing of the BJP took out a protest march against 'offensive' remarks in the Sena mouthpiece Saamana about the land deal controversy in Ayodhya.

The police used force to disperse the supporters of the two parties which were once allies. Sena workers assaulted a woman member of the BJP, the latter alleged.

The trouble started after the demolition of the Babri mosque, but now for political reasons it is defaming Lord Ram. Sonia or Vadra (Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi-Vadra) have now become the Sena's deities," he said, in a swipe at the Sena's alliance with the Congress in Maharashtra.

Sena MLA Sada Sarvankar said, "We were first told that BJP workers were coming to protest, later we learnt that they are coming to vandalise the Sena Bhavan. So we stopped them before they could reach near it."

Akshada Tendulkar, a BJP supporter, alleged that when she was returning to her vehicle after the protest, she was suddenly attacked by Sena workers and "police did nothing to stop them".

The Shiv Sena and BJP broke off their decades-old alliance after the 2019 Assembly elections in Maharashtra.



a woman supporter of the BJP in the presence of police.

The Sena was once proud of the demolition of the Babri mosque, but now for political reasons it is defaming Lord Ram. Sonia or Vadra (Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi-Vadra) have now become the Sena's deities," he said, in a swipe at the Sena's alliance with the Congress in Maharashtra.

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Centre Rejects Reports Of Dissent By Experts About Increasing Gap Between Covishield Doses

Agenceis

The Union health ministry, on Wednesday, dismissed media reports claiming there was dissent from technical experts about increasing the gap between two Covishield doses and said the decision was based on scientific reason about the behaviour of adenovector vaccines.

The Centre, on May 13, had approved extending the gap between the two doses of the Covishield vaccine from six to eight weeks to 12 to 16 weeks following a recommendation from the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI).

The 22nd meeting of COVID-19 working group of NTAGI was held on May 10. There, a proposal for a change in dose interval for Covishield, used under the National Vaccination Policy, was considered.

Based on the real-life evidences, particularly from the United Kingdom, the COVID-19 working group agreed to increase the interval between two doses of Covishield vaccine to 12 to 16 weeks, the health ministry said in a statement.

This recommendation was



taken up for discussion at the meeting of the Standing Technical Sub-Committee (STSC) of NTAGI held on May 13 under the joint chairpersonship of the secretary of the department of biotechnology, the secretary of department of health resources and the DG of the Indian Council of Medical Research, it said.

"The STSC of NTAGI gave the following recommendation: 'as per the COVID-19 Working Group recommendation, a dosing interval of minimum three months between two doses of Covishield vaccine was recommended'," the statement said.

"It may be noted that the de-

Has Twitter Actually Lost Its 'Legal Shield' In India?

Agenceis

New Delhi: With IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad slamming Twitter once again, ironically in a series of tweets, leading experts on Wednesday began a debate on whether the micro-blogging platform has actually lost its "legal shield" in the country from prosecution over posts.

There is no doubt that India needs to ensure that the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 do not become a mere paper tiger and are effectively implemented.

However, can the country stipulate stringent liabilities against social media firms like Twitter for failing to comply with its directions?

By virtue of Rule 7 of the IT (Intermediary Guidelines) rules 2021, the moment any intermediary including any significant social media intermediary does not comply with the IT rules, they automatically lose their statutory exemption from legal liability.

"Further, they become liable for being punished for various offences under the Information Technology Act, 2000 and the Indian Penal Code, 1860. In this case, Twitter by not complying with the IT rules 2021 has lost its

statutory immunity after the expiry of 90 days from February 25," leading cyberlaw expert Pavan Duggal said.

According to him, Twitter no longer has the "suraksha kavach" or statutory exemption from legal liability.

"This effectively means that they are liable to be sued in civil and criminal actions across the country, and they are liable to defend each one of them for third party data or information made available by them," Duggal added.

However, according to non-profit Internet Freedom Foundation, the "intermediary status" is not a registration that is granted by the government.

"The present concerns arise from Rule 7 of the IT Rules, but Rule 7 only says that the provisions of Section 79 of the IT Act won't apply to intermediaries that fail to observe the IT Rules," the foundation said in a series of tweets.

"The new IT Rules, as per several digital rights organisations, are unconstitutional. In fact, they have been challenged in several state High Courts (like by TM Krishna, a prominent Carnatic music vocalist

and cultural critic in Madras HC)," the foundation added.

According to Virag Gupta, the lawyer of former RSS ideologue K.N. Govindacharya, who is arguing the social media Designated Officers' matter before the Delhi High Court, there are three aspects of new IT Rules.

"However, there is debate only on one aspect of Grievance Officer. Facebook, Google, WhatsApp and other tech giants including Twitter have yet not fully complied with rules related to Nodal Officer and Compliance Officer," Gupta said.

Article 14 of the Constitution mandates equality, but the government is "singling out Twitter and not taking action against other social media companies which are not compliant with the law", Gupta argued.

According to Minister Prasad, Twitter was given multiple opportunities to comply with the same, but has "deliberately chosen" the path of non-compliance.

"In certain scenarios, with the amplification of social media, even a small spark can cause a fire, especially with the menace of fake news. This was one of the objectives of bringing the Intermediary Guidelines," he said in a series of tweets.

"Further, what is perplexing is that Twitter fails to address the grievances of users

by refusing to set up process as mandated by the law of the land. Additionally, it chooses a policy of flagging manipulated media, only when it suits, its likes and dislikes," the IT Minister added.

Twitter was yet to react to the latest tweets by IT Minister.

Experts argued that India needs to come up with effective legal provisions stipulating the consequences to be faced by social media companies in case they do not take effective steps to fight the menace of fake news/misinformation on their platforms.

The options for the government are now to start legal proceedings against Twitter for third-party data and information.

"Further, all affected persons who have been affected by the inactions of the service provider, can sue the service provider, both for legal action and also for criminal liability," said Duggal.

Since Twitter, as a service provider, has not complied with the new IT rules, the government can also start initiating action to prevent them from offering their service in "a seamless manner in the Indian context", the experts noted.



CBSE To Submit Class XII Assessment Formula In SC On Thursday

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is likely to submit before the Supreme Court on Thursday the assessment system for Class XII students. Senior officials of the CBSE have expressed hope that the evaluation criteria, which has been prepared on the basis of the report of the 12-member committee of experts, may be released this week.

The committee was formed to prepare the formula for giving results and marks for class 12 students. The committee consists of 12 persons, including Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Education and senior IAS officer Vipin Kumar.

The CBSE had issued a notification in this regard on June 4.

This committee will decide the basis for promoting the students and preparing their mark sheets.

According to the notification issued by Sanyam Bhardwaj, the committee was to prepare its report within 10 days. Now this report was not submitted within 10 days i.e. till June 14, so the evaluation criteria have not been released so far.

The government had cancelled the 12th board examinations on June 1 due to the surge in Covid cases.

The Supreme Court while welcoming the government's decision had wanted to know the criteria to be applied for evaluation of students. The CBSE wanted four weeks time, but the court said that would delay the process for students looking to study abroad and gave two weeks time.

Now the CBSE board has to submit the formula for awarding marks to the students of Class XII.

Modi Calls For 'Repair And Prepare' As India Emerges From Pandemic

Agenceis

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday called for focus on 'repair and prepare' as the nation emerges out of a devastating pandemic.

"Over the past year, we have witnessed a lot of disruption in different sectors. Much of it is still there. Yet, disruption does not have to mean despair," he said at VivaTech Summit.

"Instead, we must keep the focus on the twin foundations of repair and prepare," he said referring to the need to augment healthcare infrastructure in the country as well as prop up the economy.

Indian economy suffered its worst contraction in decades in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021, as the pandemic-induced lockdown impaired economic activity.

The government, however, continued with the reforms that would help sustain higher growth rates



after the world emerges from the pandemic.

India implemented huge reforms across sectors - from mining to space, from banking to atomic energy, he said.

"This goes on to show that India as a nation is adaptable and agile, even in the middle of the pandemic."

"India offers what innovators and investors need," Modi said. "I

invite the world to invest in India based on the five pillars of talent, market, capital, eco-system and culture of openness."

Stating that India's strides in the world of tech and start-up are well-known, he said the country is home to one of the world's largest start-up eco systems and several unicorns have come up in recent years. PTI

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GIFT ITEMS,
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