

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Friday 18 June | 07 Zul Qadah | 1442 Hijri | Vol:24 | Issue: 142 | Pages:12 | Price: ₹3

www.kashmirobserver.net • twitter.com / kashmirobserver • facebook.com/kashmirobserver • Postal Regn: L/159/KO/SK/2014-2016



P3 CITY

CONSUMERS ALLEGE PDD CHARGING LATE FEE WITHOUT A REASON

The Power Development Department (PDD) consumers of Srinagar Thursday alleged that the department, despite failing to serve monthly bills last month, have charged extra amount as late fee from

P6
THINK

THE TWO RIVALRIES THAT BENEFIT THE JUNTA IN MYANMAR

Myanmar's military, the Tatmadaw, carried out a Coup d'état in the country on 01 February 2021, preventing the formation of a democratically elected government whose members had been elected in the November



P5 STATE

GOVT MULLS RESUMPTION OF OPD SERVICES IN ALL J&K HOSPITALS

The Jammu and Kashmir government is mulling to resume OPD services in all hospitals of Jammu and Kashmir as the covid graph has flattened. Health Officials said that OPD...



Quote!

The more you know the less you need to say.

— Jim Rohn

NEWS DIGEST

Many Booked For Fraud To Procure IRCON Contract

Agencies

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir police's Crime Branch booked Imran Beigh, managing director, Beigh Construction Company Private Limited, and others on charges of forgery in procuring contract for tunnel work from IRCON, an official said on Thursday. A criminal case was registered against Beigh; Mohit Singh, accountant manager, Beigh Construction Company Private Limited (BCC); chartered ● More On P10

Two Youth End Lives In Srinagar

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Two youth on Thursday allegedly committed suicide in Batamloo and Nowgam areas of Srinagar respectively, by hanging themselves at their respective homes. Official sources said that a 27-year old youth and 24-year-old youth hanged themselves at their homes in the wee hours today, according to news agency KNO. They identified them as Taha Mohi-ud-din (27) of Batamloo and Tehzeeb Akbar (24) ● More On P10

LG Greets KPs On Jyeshtha Ashtami

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha extended his heartiest greetings on the eve of auspicious occasion of Jyeshtha Ashtami to all people, especially Kashmiri Pandit community. In his message, the Lt Governor said that Jyeshtha Ashtami holds immense religious importance for our Kashmiri Pandit brothers and sisters. The Kheer Bhawani Mela ● More On P10

Milkman Held For Selling Liquor

SRINAGAR: Police on Thursday arrested a milkman for allegedly selling liquor to people in south Kashmir's Kulgam district. Locals said that a milkman instead of milk was selling liquor bottles to drunkards in Damhal Hanjipora area of Kulgam. Shortly after receiving information, a police party from DH Pora raided the shop of milkman and ● More On P10

Cardiac Arrest Kills CRPF Officer

SRINAGAR: A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) officer died after suffering a cardiac arrest in Sopore area of Baramulla district, reports said Thursday. Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Sheer Singh of CRPF 92 battalion complained of chest pain during duty in Panzla village of Sopore, local news agency CNS reported Thursday. Singh's colleagues rushed him to Sub-district hospital Rohama when his condition deteriorated. However, the doctors there declared him dead, ● More On P10

Cop Shot Dead By Militants In Srinagar



■ File Photo

Firdaus Ali

SRINAGAR: Unidentified militants on Thursday shot dead a policeman near his home in Eidgah area of this capital city.

The policeman Javaid Ahmad Tambi was outside his house in Saidpora locality of Eidgah on Thursday evening when unidentified militants appeared there and fired shots at him, officials said. In the surprise militant attack, they said, the cop was critically injured and was removed to the nearby SK institute of medical sciences

Soura for treatment.

He was declared brought dead on arrival at the tertiary care hospital, they said.

A senior police officer confirmed the killing of the policeman and said that he was posted with a judicial officer. He has shortly returned to home after duties, they said.

Pertinently, today's attack on police in Srinagar comes a day after a local Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant was killed in a gunfight with state forces in Nowgam area of the city outskirts on Wednesday.

Army Top Brass Discuss Threats From China, Pak

Agencies

NEW DELHI: Amidst border standoff with China, the Indian Army holds a commanders' conference led by General Manoj Mukund Naravane from Thursday to review the operational situation at the border with China and Pakistan. Indian Army Commanders' Conference is an apex level biannual event, which formulates important policy decisions through

collegiate deliberations.

The conference is attended by senior officers of the Army including the vice chief of the army staff, all commanders, principal staff officers (PSOs) of the Army Headquarters and other senior officers.

In the two-day conference, the Army top brass will discuss the current position of Chinese People's Liberation Army positions in disputed areas at Gogra, Hot Springs, ● More On P10

Huge Tracts of Fertile Land Turns Barren Due To 'Official Apathy'

Canal Damaged In Budgam By Landslide In 2014 Yet To Be Restored

Ajaz Ali

SRINAGAR: Hundreds of acres of once fertile agricultural land in central Kashmir's Budgam district has turned barren due to the brazen failure of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department to restore a vital water channel which was blocked by a landslide during the 2014 floods.

According to the villagers, a paddy field spread over 2000 kanals of land in the remote Batwudur area of Budgam used to be a major source of income



for hundreds of families of Surasyar, Bonyen, Kathiyar and other adjoining villages till 2014.

However, a landslide triggered by incessant rains in 2014 damaged the only ● More On P10

Government Announces 'Youth Clubs' In Every Panchayat

22,500 Youth from 4290 Panchayats To Be Engaged In The Clubs: LG

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Thursday announced to establish Youth Clubs in every Panchayat across the Union Territory for constructive activities and addressing all the concerns of the young generation.

The announcement about the Youth Clubs was made by J&K Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha while chairing the governing body meeting of Mission Youth at Civil Secretariat here on Thursday, an official spokesperson said. Besides Youth Clubs, he said, approvals were accorded to a host of schemes, to be launched soon, in various sectors which will make a greater impact on the Youth engagement



and Livelihood generation programmes in the UT.

"In first phase 22,500 Youth from 4290 Panchayats to be engaged in the Youth clubs, with Government incurring expenditure to the tune of Rs.12 Crore for this initiative," Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

The Government, through Mission Youth, will provide

financial assistance to dental surgeons to start their own clinic. In the first phase, 400 dental surgeons and 800 paramedics will be selected for a specially tailored self-employment scheme," he added.

The meeting, he said, also decided to start two state-of-the-art coaching centres in Jammu & Srinagar ● More On P10

IT IS IMPORTANT TO INCORPORATE the young generation's perspective in government policy and ensure their participation and representation at all levels."

Govt Transfers 26 Senior Officers

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Government on Thursday ordered transfer of 26 JKAS officers in the interest of administration with immediate effect.

According to an order issued here, Ms. Ruksana Gani (JKAS) Inspector General of Registration, J&K, has been transferred and posted as Chairperson, J&K Special Tribunal, relieving Ms. Sarita Chauhan (IAS) of the additional charge of relieving the post.

Nazim Zai Khan (JKAS) Director, Industries and Commerce, Kashmir, has been transferred and posted as Secretary in the Skill Development ● More On P10

of Secretary in the Revenue Department, has been transferred and posted as Secretary to the Government, Public Grievances, relieving Simrandeep Singh (IAS), of the additional charge of the post.

Amit Sharma (JKAS) Special Secretary to the Government, Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment, has been transferred and posted as Chief Executive Officer, JaKeGA, relieving Simrandeep Singh (IAS) of the additional charge of the post.

Nazim Zai Khan (JKAS) Director, Industries and Commerce, Kashmir, has been transferred and posted as Secretary in the Skill Development ● More On P10

India Rebuffs Pak Over Missive To UN

J&K Is An Integral Part Of India: MEA

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: India on Thursday said Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of it and no amount of questioning can change the reality, an assertion that came following a letter by the Pakistan foreign minister to two top UN officials over alleged design by New Delhi to change the demographic composition of the Muslim majority region.

Spokesperson in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Arindam Bagchi also repeated the old line that cross-border terrorism was "unacceptable".

"The Union Territory of Jammu and ● More On P10

Health Workers Told Not To Shoot Vaccination Video

Auqib Javed

SRINAGAR: After facing public backlash, the Director Health Services Kashmir on Thursday directed the health workers not to breach the privacy of families by filming them during the vaccination drive.

Dr Mushtaq Ahmad Rather, told Kashmir Observer that he has directed all the CMO's to advise the health workers to desist from such acts.

"I have given clear cut directions not to take any videos to the health workers," Dr Rather told ● More On P10

Vaccination Team Attacked In Bandipora

Police on Thursday detained a man after a medical team was allegedly attacked by a family during a vaccination drive in Chuntimulla village of Bandipora district. According ● More On P10



■ File Photo

Kashmir division, they said. Srinagar district recorded

the highest number of cases at 112, followed by 94 in Budgam. The number of active COVID-19 cases in Jammu and Kashmir stands at 10,602 and 2,95,189 patients have recovered so far, the officials said. There are 22 confirmed cases of mucormycosis (black fungus) in the union territory with one fresh case reported since last evening, they said.

J&K Reports 656 Cases, 9 Coronavirus Deaths

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday recorded 656 fresh COVID-19 cases that took its tally to 3,10,017 while nine more fatalities pushed the death toll to 4,226, officials said.

Of the fresh cases, 190 were reported from the Jammu division and 466 from the

Majlis Starts Campaign To Encourage Vaccination

Mutahida Majlis-e-Ulema (MMU), a socio-religious conglomerate has launched multiple campaigns to persuade people to shun vaccine hesitancy and take the vaccine shots to save themselves, their fellows and society from the deadly virus. On the directions of its incarcerated chief patron Mirwaiz Moulvi Muhammad Umar Farooq, the amalgam started a campaign through posters and social media so that the people realise ● More On P10

84 Oxygen Plants Being Installed In Hospitals

To augment oxygen generation capacity amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jammu and Kashmir government is installing 84 medical oxygen generation plants in 37 major hospitals in the union territory. "Forty-four oxygen generation plants (having capacity of 39,350 litre per minute or LPM) have been installed and made operational so far. The remaining 40 oxygen generation plants (with a total capacity of 31,750 LPM) are in the process of installation and likely to be installed ● More On P10

Proposal Moved To Declare ESZ Around Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Union Ministry of Forests, Environment and Climate Change has unveiled a proposal to declare 62.2 square kilometres around the boundary of Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary as eco-sensitive zone (ESZ).

The Ministry has put the draft proposal in public domain to seek suggestions over it.

"The eco-sensitive zone shall be of 62.2 square kilometres with an extent of zero (0) to 4.1 kilometres around the boundary of Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary,"



■ File Photo

reads the proposal.

As per the notification, the 'zero' extent of eco-sensitive zone in some directions is proposed as the areas have tourist potential and the population

living around the Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary mainly are dependent on tourist activities. "If the entire area is included within the eco-sensitive zone, then livelihood of the villagers will be directly affected," it reads.

Spread over an area of 180 in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, the Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary was declared as a Wildlife Sanctuary on March 14, 1987.

The area harbours viable population of the endangered and endemic Himalayan musk deer besides other faunal species. It is also rich in ● More On P10

Forage Field Day Organized At Dars Rangreth

In order to upscale scientific adoption of cultivation of fodder crops among the farmers of the valley, a Field Day on Forage Crops was organized by Dryland Agriculture Research Station, SKUAST-K in collaboration with ICAR-Indian Grassland & Fodder Research Institute, Jhansi on 17th of June 2021 at Rangreth Srinagar. Around 25 progressive farmers from the Districts of Srinagar and Budgam participated in the day long event. Dr. Sarfaraz A. Wani, Director Research of the varsity was the Chief Guest on the occasion whereas Director Education Prof. M. N. Khan and Registrar SKUAST-K Dr. Gul Zaffar were the guests of honour. At the outset, Dr. N. S. Khuroo, Senior Scientist (Forage scheme) welcomed the dignitaries and the farmers. He then gave a brief report about the fodder research programme running at the Station and the scientific cultivation of fodder oats in Kashmir. Prof. S. A Dar, Incharge of the Station gave the overview of research activities and new technological innovations being contemplated at DARS Rangreth. Director Research Dr. Sarfaraz A Wani in his address underlined the importance of working in collaboration with various stakeholders like progressive farmers to get the technology refined with their feedback. A field visit was also arranged for the farmers in which they were sensitized with the recent technology in fodder production to uplift their livelihood. Dr. Gul Zaffar, while visiting the experiment field, encouraged the farmers to take up scientific cultivation of oats as recommended by the University. He also emphasised on strengthening technology base of the Station with inclusion of



newly developed tools.

The Chief Guest then interacted with scientists of the Station and focused on need based market oriented research in field and fodder crops as well as optimal utilization of resources available. He praised the work done by the scientists of the Station. In his brief address, Prof. M. N. Khan stressed upon developing climatic resili-

ent technology for economic prosperity. While concluding the day long visit, the Chief Guest inaugurated the new seed processing unit and gene bank established at the Station under Pulse Seed Hub project. All Covid-19 SOPs were strictly followed during the event. The programme ended with vote of thanks by Dr. Zahida Rashid. Scientist (Agronomy).

FIR Registered Against Baba Ramdev For Spreading False Information On COVID-19

Agenceis

Police in Chhattisgarh's Raipur have registered an FIR against Baba Ramdev for allegedly spreading "false" information about the medicines being used by the medical fraternity for the treatment of COVID-19, a police official said on Thursday.

The case was filed on Wednesday night against Ramkrishna Yadav alias Baba Ramdev based on a complaint filed by the Chhattisgarh's unit of the Indian Medical Association (IMA), Raipur's Senior Superintendent of Police Ajay Yadav said.

Ramdev has been booked under sections 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant), 269 (negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life), 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace) and others of the IPC and provisions of Disaster Management Act, 2005, he said.

Further investigation into the matter is underway, he added.

Chairman of Hospital Board IMA (CG) Dr. Rakesh Gupta, IMA's Raipur President and Vikas Agrawal were



among doctors who had earlier lodged the complaint.

As per the complaint, since over the last one year, Ramdev has been allegedly propagating false informa-

tion on social media against medicines being used by medical fraternity, government of India, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and other frontline organisations in treatment of

coronavirus infection.

There are several videos of him on social media in which he had allegedly made such misleading remarks, it said.

At a time when doctors, paramedical staff and all branches of government and administration have been together battling COVID-19, Ramdev has been allegedly misleading people about established and approved treatment methods, the complaint said.

Ramdev's remarks on modern medical facilities and allopathy medicines, which have been curing over 90 percent of the patients, would put the lives of people in danger, it alleged.

"During the investigation of the complaint, it was found that his statements amount to violation of the notification of the Chhattisgarh government dated March 13 last year," the official said.

The notification states that no person/institution/organisation will use any print or electronic media for information regarding COVID-19 without prior permission of the state's Health Department. This is to avoid spread of any rumour or unauthenticated information regarding COVID-19.

Office Of The Principal

NEW TINY BUDS SCHOOL

Iqra Colony Bemina Sgr.

Ref. No. NTBS/05/21

Dated: 05/04/21

The following persons have been selected as Managing Body of New Tiny Buds School, Iqra Colony, Bemina. Sgr.

S.No	Name	Parentage	Residence	Qual.	Occupation	Desig.
1	Fayaz Ahmad Dar	Abdul Salam Dar	Iqra Colony Bemina, Sgr	B.Com.	Private Employee	Chairman
2	Mohammad Shafi Hakak	Ghulam Hussan Hakak	Hilal Abad Qammarwari Sgr.	M.Sc. B. Ed	Retired Govt. Employee	Vice Chairman
3	Umer Hafiz	Hafiz Ullah	Qammarwari Sgr.	Msc. Bed	Principal of the school	Member
4	Zahoor Ahmad Baihaki	Syed Hafeez Ullah Baihaki	Hajjabad Bemina Sgr.	B. A.	Retired Govt. Employee	Member Parent
5	Anaam Mushtaq	Mushtaq Ahmad Dar	Bemina, Sgr. Umer Colony	B.Sc.	Teacher of the school	Member
6	Qaiser Ahmad Zargar	Abdul Hameed Zargar	Iqra Coly Bemina Sgr.	B.Sc.	Private Employee	Member Parent
7	Fayaz Ahmad Khan	Ghulam Rasool Khan	Madina Colony Bemina, Sgr	T.D.C	Business	Member

Note: Anybody having any objection should contact to Director School Education Kashmir within seven days.

Principal,

New Tiny Buds School

Bemina, Sgr

GREATWAY/ADVT/9419034569

Iqra Educational Institute

S. D. A. Colony Bemina, Sgr.

Contact No's: 2491226, 9796341343, 9541756867

The newly constituted managing body of Iqra Educational Institute is published for information of general public objections, if any, be communicated to the office of the Director School education Kashmir within seven days.

No.	Name/Parentage/Address	Qualification	Desig.
1.	Bashir Ahmad Mir S/o Abdul Ahad Mir R/o Iqbal Abad, Bemina, Sgr	M.Com	Chairman
2.	Fayaz Ahmad S/o Abdul Rehman R/o Ibrahim Colony, Bemina	B.Ed, L.L.B	Secretary
3.	Ali Mohammad Darzi S/o Ghulam Ahmad Darzi R/o Brane, Sgr	B.Sc, B.Ed, M.A (Eng)	Member
4.	Asmat Jan D/o Ghulam Mohammad R/o Zakoora Near J&K Bank	B.A, B.Ed	Principal Iqra Edu. Instt.
5.	Firdous Ahmad Sheikh S/o Khalek u Rehman Sheikh R/o Hanjipora Kupwara P/A Haji Abad Bemina, Sgr	M.A (Tourism)	Parent
6.	Parveena Akhtar D/o Abdul Hameed Rather R/o Tawheed Abad Bemina	B.Sc, B.Ed	Staff Representative
7.	Amil Ahmad Sofi S/o Ghulam Mohd. Sofi R/o Arampora Qamarwari	M.Sc, B.Ed	Parent
8.	Deeba Nazir D/o Nazir Ahmad R/o Merjanpora Eidgah	M.A, B.Ed	Member
9.	Malik Mushtaq Ahmad S/o Malik Ghulam Rasool R/o Iqbal Abad Bemina	Under Graduate	Member

(MANAGER I.E.I)

UNION TERRITORY JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER
GULMARG DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY GULMARG

CORRIGENDUM

Kindly read 04No log
Huts near Children's park
instead of Entry fee of
Children park at Gulmarg
in the open auction notice
issued under endorsement
NO.GDA/2021/295-99 Dated:
14-06-2021.

Sd/- Chief Executive Officer
Gulmarg Dev. Authority

No: GDA/F-698/2021/324-28 Dated: 17/06/2021

DIPK-NB-1257/21

ATTENTION

Kashmir shawl traders to conduct an urgent meeting tomorrow at 4pm venue Nigeen Club, all the shawl traders, associations, communities and representatives from all districts of kashmir are requested to attend the meeting. They will elect a representatives who will then take up their issues further to higher authorities and administration. Shawl traders have suffered financially from decades and don't have any representative who could come forward and speak for their rights, hence they decided to commence and urgent meeting and chose representative.

Venue : Nigeen Club Timing : 4Pm .

Iqra Educational Institute

S.D.A Colony Bemina Sgr.

Contact No's: 0194-2491226 Fax:0194-2491226

EXISTING

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21

Class	Monthly Fee	Monthly Com. Fee
Nursery	1390.00	Nil
L.K.G	1295.00	Nil
U.K.G	1235.00	Nil
1st Grade	1110.00	140.00
2nd Grade	1055.00	140.00
3rd to 7th Grade	1030.00	140.00
8th Grade	1055.00	140.00
9th Grade	1160.00	Nil
10th Grade	1160.00	Nil

Note:

1. Number of deserving students avail full fee remission/fee concession.

2. Computer Fee includes in Annual charges.

MANGER I.E.I

OFFICE OF THE ESTATES SPECIAL
SUB-DIVISION,JKPDC SRINAGAR

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

E-NIT NO: 07 of 2021 Dated: 15-06-2021

For and On behalf of Managing Director JKPDC J&K Corporate Office Exhibition Grounds Srinagar, tenders are invited by the General Manager Estates Special Sub-Division Srinagar through e-tenders mode (In Single Stage Two-Cover system) ON ITEM/RATE BASIS from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Central or State/UT Government Departments/PSU , CPWD, Railways and MES for the below mentioned work: -

S.No.	Particulars of the Work	Estimated Cost (Rs in Lakh)	Cost of Document (in Rs.)	Earnest Money	Time for Completion	Class of Contractor
1.	Facelifting of MD's Office Chamber at Corporate Office, Srinagar.	5.43	500	Bid security not required. All the Bidders have to submit Bid Security	25 Working Days	"CEE" & "DEE"
2.	Repair and Renovation/ creation of cabins for newly established finance cell (Double Entry) at Bemina	4.08	500	Declaration Form fully notarized instead of Earnest money as per the Circular of Finance Department (Bid security Declaration Form).The 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of DD within 03-Days before fixation of	25 Working Days	"CEE" & "DEE"

Sequence Of Events

S.No.	Particulars	Time
1	Date of publishing on(www.jktenders.gov.in)	1030 Hours
2	Bid documents download start date	1030 Hours
3	Bid documents submission start date	1400 Hrs.
4	Bid documents download end date	1600 Hrs.
5	Bid documents submission end date	1600 Hrs.
6	Technical Bid Opening Date	1100 Hrs.
7	Price Bid Opening Date	The Date and Time of Opening of Price Bids Shall be Intimated to the Technically Qualified bidder later on.

The cost of the tender document shall be deposited into the Bank Account of GENERAL MANGER ACCOUNTS, JKSPDC CORPORATE OFFICE SRINAGAR by the bidder for which the following information can be used by the bidder

1. Name of the Bank = J&K Bank Ltd.

2. Account title = GENERAL MANAGER ACCOUNTS

3. GENERAL MANGER ACCOUNTS, (CURRENT Account)

4. Account No. = 0005010100005196

5. Branch = RESIDENCY ROAD

6. BRANCH ADDRESS= JAMMU AND KASHMIR BANK BUILDING, RESIDENCY ROAD, SRINAGAR

7. IFSC Code = JAKA0CHINAR

8. Swift Code = JAKABINRSGR – Optional

The Date of acknowledgement receipt should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date and NIT No. /JKPDC General Manager Estates Special Sub-Division JKPDC Corporate Office Srinagar should be mentioned on the receipt itself. No previous cost of tender receipt shall be entertained at all.

Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

X. Technical bid must include:
Document to be uploaded by the bidder:-
A. Proof/Transaction details of deposit of Cost of tender documents (non-refundable) as specified in NIT to be deposited in official A/c No. General Manager(Accounts)through Internet Banking or any other means as per details below:
Name of Bank – Jammu & Kashmir Bank
Account title:- General Manager Accounts
A/c No.:- 0005010100005196
Branch:- Residency Road
IFSC Code:- JAKA0CHINAR
i. If any tender fee exemption, the tenderer should upload the exemption certificate along with the technical bid failing.
ii. MSME registered under NSIC are exempted, the tenderer should upload the exemption certificate along with the technical bid.
B. Registration card duly renewed for the current financial year.
C. Valid latest ITR certificate.
D. Valid GST Certificate.
E. Evidence of access to a revolving line of credit (i.e Bank Statement).
F. Valid PAN card.
G. Undertaking in the form of Affidavit
a) Concerning submission of bid.
b) Abiding by Bid conditions.
Abiding by JKPDC laws and regulations.
Y. Financial bid must include:
a) Priced BOQ

Sd/- General Manager
Estates Special Sub-Division,
JKPDC Srinagar

DIPK-NB-1254/21

DC Srinagar Asks Officers To Make Water Bodies Navigable

Inspects Restoration Works On Nigeen Lake, Nalla Amir Khan, Gilsar, Khushaalsar



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Thursday said local communities are actual guardians and have a vital role in identification of encroachments and conservation of water bodies in Srinagar.

He along with Vice Chairman Lakes and WaterWays Development Authority (LAWDA), Dr.

Bashir Ahmad Bhat conducted a tour of City areas to inspect the works being carried out for restoration of historical water bodies in Srinagar including Nigeen Lake, Khushaal sar, Gilsar and Nalah-e-Amir Khan.

The DC asked the concerned to take all necessary measures for cleaning the accumulated waste to make all water bodies navigable to pave way for starting inland water transport along

these bodies. He said one of the purposes of the restoration measures is to restore the original water navigation circuit in Srinagar district.

The Vice Chairman, LAWDA said that they are focusing on restoring the channel till Nallah Amir Khan and efforts are on to continue the cleaning process.

The choked channel was cleaned to a major extent making it possible to navigate through it in a boat. He said Dal Lake, Nigeen Lake, Pokhribal, Gilsar, Khushalsar and Anchar are all connected by this channel and if kept clean, the ecosystem will improve a lot.

Social worker and chairman of Nigeen Lake Conservation Organization (NLCO) Manzoor Ahmad assured the DC that all public support is at the back of administration to bring back to life the dead water bodies in Srinagar. He said while administration and local community are on the job to clean the channel, it is ultimately the people who have to understand and stop throwing garbage in these water bodies.

The DC urged the concerned to speed up the pace of work undertaken for dewatering and cleaning of these water bodies. He also directed the officers to complete the demarcation process to remove all illegal constructions.

Governance, Development Have Taken A Back Seat In Srinagar: NC

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Senior Leader and Former Assembly Speaker Mubarak Gul on Thursday said the governance and development has taken a back seat in Srinagar.

He said the prevailing conditions have created an environment of negative growth rates, scathing unemployment and unaccountability in the district.

During his day-long tour of Eidgah constituency, he interacted with the local populace, who apprised him about the plethora of predicaments they are facing in the form of crumbling road infrastructure, paucity of electricity, proper sanitation and drainage facilities.

"The projects of public importance which were initiated by me have been left midway by the incumbent administration. Roads at Pal-pura, Noorbagh, Safakadal, Nawabazar and Sagam in particular narrate a grim tale of official neglect. What is aggravating the local populace more is the ruined condition

of roads at Rathpura, Nawa-bazar, Nawakadal, Safakadal, and Noorbagh. The unfinished drainage project at Pal-pura has in particular jeopardized the lives of locals. The unfinished drainage project often creates cesspools of slush minutes after it rains a little," he said.

Referring to the ravaging impact of the Covid-19 induced crises, Gul said the people associated with handicraft sector constitute a greater chunk of the population in Eidgah, saying that the ravaging impact of the ongoing crises and its predatory effect on the trade; commerce and tourism have hard pushed them to poverty and destitution.

Gul also visited a local Public health centre at Sangam and enquired about the pace of Covid Vaccination being at the facility and availability of other various critical Covid care drugs.

While expressing concern over the plight of youth suffering on account of joblessness and closure spaces for pursuance of vocations, Gul said the government has turned a volte face towards the issues concerning the youth of J&K.



After One Year, SKIMS Withdraws Advertisement Of Recruitment For 66 Posts

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura has withdrawn at least 66 advertised posts one year after the posts were advertised.

The move has left job aspirants high and dry who have sought explanation from authorities.

The aspirants who had applied for the different posts advertised by the SKIMS staged a protest at Press Enclave Srinagar.

They said that SKIMS advertised 183 posts in June 2020. "Applications were invited for the posts of Accountant Assistants, Lift Mechanics, Technicians Medical Group, Stewards and others. Our one year long wait ended on a sordid note when SKIMS abruptly

withdrew 66 posts and informed the applicants that these posts won't be filled up now."

The questioned why were they made to wait for a year. "We were preparing for the examination and didn't apply for jobs anywhere from past one year. Nobody responds from SKIMS and no concrete reason is being given for the withdrawal of these posts," the job aspirants said adding they have apprehensions that these posts might have been filled up already through 'illegal' means.

The protesting job aspirants sought intervention of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

Despite repeated attempts, Director SKIMS didn't respond to phone calls. (Agencies)

IRCS-J&K Organises Blood Donation Camps In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Indian Red Cross Society, Jammu & Kashmir (IRCS-J&K) in collaboration with CRPF-Srinagar Sector organised blood donation camps at four locations around Srinagar City.

The main event was inaugurated by Kifayat Hussain Rizvi, General Secretary, IRCS-J&K in presence of D.S. Maan, DIG (South), CRPF, Srinagar Sector at 25 BN of CRPF-Srinagar Sector.

While interacting with the CRPF Personnel, Kifayat Hussain Rizvi appreciated the ef-

forts of the CRPF to mitigate the human sufferings and generously donating blood in the service of humanity.

Blood donation camps were also held at 161 BN of CRPF, 49 BN of CRPF and 35 BN of CRPF. 126 blood pints have been donated by the CRPF Personnel in these camps which was received by Blood Banks of Govt. Hospitals. Kifayat Hussain Rizvi and D.S. Maan lauded the role of blood banks of Associated Hospitals of GMC Srinagar and SKIMS MC&H, Bemina and thanked officers and staff of these banks for their selfless service and support.

RC LOST

I have lost my Registration certificate (RC) of my Motor Cycle Pulsar 180 under registration no JK01U 2563. Now i am applying for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact RTO Kashmir srinagar within seven days from the publication of this notice after no objection will be entertained.

AIJAZ AHMAD S/O GHULAM MOHAMMAD DAR R/O DAR MOHALLA ZHAINAKOTE HMT SRINAGAR .

AJJ

از نیات نائب تحصیلدار است ناگ با اجلاس زیراموش صاحب درخواست مناجاب: سعید بلال احمد ولد سعید فیروز الدین ساکن کلیہ ہرم شاہ است ناگ تحصیل و ضلع است ناگ بفر ض حصول ایگل ہیر سرٹیفکٹ

اشعار عام

معاہدہ مندر عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بفرض ایگل ہیر سرٹیفکٹ پیش کیا ہے سب رپورٹ پذاری حلقے سائل کا والد محسی سعید فیروز الدین مورخہ 05/02/2018 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے متوفی ایک رات قبل سرکاری ملازم تقاضا دے متوفی کے وارثان بزیل درج ہے۔

نام صاحب کبیہ معولہ بیت	عمر	پیشہ	رشتہ ہر اولیت
سعید طارق احمد پسر سعید فیروز الدین	48 سال	ملازمت	پسر متوفی
تنویر اختر دختر	52 سال	گھریلو کام	دختر متوفی
عشرت جان دختر	46 سال	---	---
سعید بلال احمد پسر	43 سال	نمبر دار	پسر متوفی
گوہر جان دختر	40 سال	گھریلو کام	دختر متوفی
انقرین جان دختر	35 سال	---	---

اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی فرد کبیہ میں موجود نہیں ہے لہذا اگر کسی شخص یا شخص کو مذکورہ سرٹیفکٹ اجرا کرنے میں کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہوگا تو ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر دفتر بازہ میں پیش کریں بعد ازاں رے معیا کو عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

تقریر الصدر نائب تحصیلدار

MJA

Illegal Structures Demolished At Tschuntikal

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The joint teams of enforcement wing of Lakes and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA), Lake Division-1st LAWDA, Irrigation and Flood control Department and Revenue Department today conducted demolition of illegal constructions raised by Tschuntikal dwellers on the bank of Tschuntikal.

During the anti-encroachment drive many illegal structures were demolished.

The demolition drive was held under the supervision of Enforcement Officer Abdul Aziz Qadri, Asstt Executive Engineer Shabir Hussain Janwari along with Naib Tehsildar Javeed Ahmad and police contingent from Kothi Bagh Police Station also assisted in this drive.

Most of the sheds were erected by dwellers already rehabilitated by LDA. There was serious resistance and some people who had created hurdles in this regard. However, the enforcement wing of LDA removed



them in spite of resistance.

The demolition was taken in the backdrop of the beautification of the shoreline which is being taken up shortly by LAWDA.

Meanwhile, the people have been

requested to refrain from raising illegal constructions and encroachments on Dal Lake. They have also been warned that strict action shall be taken against those found indulging in such activities.

Consumers Allege PDD Charging Late Fee Without A Reason

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Power Development Department (PDD) consumers of Srinagar Thursday alleged that the department, despite failing to serve monthly bills last month, have charged extra amount as late

fee from them.

The consumers from Safa Kadal and its adjoining areas, said that they didn't receive electricity bills for the month of April.

"We got the electricity bills for two months including April and May together. However, the department has

charged late fee for not paying the previous month's bill. How can we pay the amount when we didn't receive electricity bills," Faizan Ahmad, one of the consumers said.

He appealed that the department must look into the matter and ensure that late fee being charged is waved off.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for fertilizers license If anybody have any objection in this regard He /She may Contact Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

HILAL AHMAD BHAT S/O HABIBULLAH BHAT R/O SUCHIPORA KREERI BARAMULLA

AJJ

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for fertilizers license If anybody have any objection in this regard He /She may Contact Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

ISHFAQ AHMAD RATHER S/O GH AHMAD RATHER R/O DOLIPORA KREERI BARAMULLA

AJJ

از نیات نائب تحصیلدار نکل با اجلاس سعید فیاض احمد ناگ بفر ض حصول درخواست مناجاب: محمد عبداللہ قادری بفر ض حصول ایگل ہیر سرٹیفکٹ نکل با اجلاس سعید فیاض احمد ناگ بفر ض حصول ایگل ہیر سرٹیفکٹ

اشعار برادرہ گادی ہر خاص و عام

معاہدہ مندر عنوان الصدر میں ساکنان صدر نے ایک درخواست بفرض حصول ایگل ہیر سرٹیفکٹ دفتر بازہ میں پیش کیا ہے سب رپورٹ پذاری حلقہ تحصیل افراد کبیہ بزیل درج ہے۔

نام صاحب کبیہ معولہ بیت	عمر	پیشہ	آمدنی
علی محمد ولد محمد تھار	62 سال	نا تو ان	---
خطیب زید علی محمد تھار	60 سال	گھریلو کام	---
محمد عبداللہ تھار پسر	28 سال	پرائیویٹ ٹیچر	5000
سرودہ جان محمد عبداللہ	26 سال	گھریلو کام	---
عائیدہ بنت محمد عبداللہ دختر	2, 1/2 سال	شری خواہ	---
عابد علی پسر علی محمد تھار	26 سال	زیر تعلیم	4000
مطلق جان زید عبداللہ	25 سال	گھریلو کام	---
خورا بیگم دختر	1, 1/2 سال	شری خواہ	---
محمد عطاء پسر	02 سال	---	---

اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی فرد کبیہ میں موجود نہیں ہے سائل کی کبیہ کی کل ماہوار آمدنی 9000 ہے سائل کا کبیہ بچنے پھرنے والا ہے سب رپورٹ پذاری حلقہ تحصیل افراد کبیہ بزیل درج ہے سائل نے اس حوالے سے اگر کسی شخص یا شخص کو مذکورہ سرٹیفکٹ اجرا کرنے میں کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہوگا تو سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض دفتر بازہ میں پیش کریں معیا کو مذکر نے کے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

تقریر الصدر نائب تحصیلدار

MJA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for D Class Contractor registration card if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact concerned authorities within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

MUSHTAQ AHMAD WANI S/O MOHD ASSADULLAH WANI R/O ALLAPORA KREERI BLOCK WAGOORA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for D Class Contractor registration card if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact concerned authorities within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

PERVAIZ AHMAD PARRAY S/O AB REHMAN PARRAY R/O ALLAPORA KREERI BLOCK WAGOORA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for D Class Contractor registration card if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact concerned authorities within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

MOHD ASSADULLAH WANI S/O AB AZIZ WANI R/O ALLAPORA KREERI BLOCK WAGOORA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for D Class Contractor registration card if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact concerned authorities within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

SHABIR AHMAD KHAN S/O GH AHMAD KHAN R/O DARDAPORA BLOCK KHAHIPORA

AJJ

DIAL-EMMA

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

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- (Closed)

This Day in History

- 618 - Coronation of the Chinese governor Li Yuan as Emperor Gaozu of Tang, the new Emperor of China, initiating three centuries of the Tang Dynasty's rule over China
- 860 - Rus Vikings attack Constantinople
- 1155 - Pope Adrian IV crowns Frederick I Barbarossa Roman-German Emperor
- 1264 - The Parliament of Ireland meets at Castledermot in County Kildare, the first definitively known meeting of this Irish legislature
- 1316 - Peace of Fexhe: prince-bishop Adolf II of Mark and Luikse towns
- 1538 - Treaty of Nice: ends war between Emperor Charles V & King French I
- 1541 - Irish parliament selects Henry VIII of England as King of Ireland
- 1574 - Polish King Hendrik of Anjou secretly leaves Poland
- 1580 - States of Utrecht forbid catholic worship
- 1583 - Richard Martin of London takes out first life insurance policy, on William Gibbons; premium was £383
- 1629 - Sea battle at Dungeness: Piet Heyn beat the Dunkirkers, commerce raiders in the service of the Spanish Monarchy
- 1639 - Treaty of Berwick: Ends the First Bishops' War between England and Scotland
- 1682 - William Penn founds Philadelphia, US
- 1757 - Battle at Kolin Bohemia: Austrian army beats Prussia
- 1812 - War of 1812 begins as US declares war against Britain
- 1815 - Battle of Waterloo; Napoleon and France defeated by British forces under Wellington and Prussian troops under Blucher
- 1821 Opera "Der Freischutz" is produced (Berlin)
- 1822 - Part of US-Canadian boundary determined
- 1837 - Spain gets new Constitution
- 1912 - The Chicago national Republican Convention splits between President Taft and Theodore Roosevelt; after Taft is nominated, Roosevelt and progressive elements of the Party form the Progressive Party (also known as the 'Bull Moose Party')
- 1941- Turkey signs peace treaty with nazi-Germany
- 1948- UN Commission on Human Rights adopts the International Declaration of Human Rights
- 1953- Egypt proclaimed a republic, General Neguib becomes president
- 1959- 1st telecast transmitted from England to US
- 1977- Space Shuttle test model "Enterprise" carries a crew aloft for 1st time, It was fixed to a modified Boeing 747
- 1981- Vaccine to prevent hoof & mouth disease announced
- 1981-The AIDS epidemic is formally recognized by medical professionals in San Francisco, California.
- 1983 - 7th Shuttle Mission-Challenger 2 launches Sally Ride as 1st US woman in space
- 1986 - De Havilland Twin Otter & Bell 206 helicopter collide, kills 25
- 1986 - US House of Representatives approves Bill to impose stricter sanctions on Apartheid South Africa
- 2003 - Google launches AdSense, a program that enables website publishers to serve ads targeted to the specific content of their individual web pages, many of which like On This Day (then HistoryOrb.com) go on to start their own publishing businesses
- 2006 - The first Kazakh space satellite, KazSat is launched
- 2012 - 15 people are killed and 40 injured in a suicide attack in Baquba, Iraq
- 2014 - King Juan Carlos I of Spain abdicates the Spanish throne to make way for his son Felipe 2015 - Pope Francis blames human selfishness for global warming in his encyclical, named "Laudato Si (Be Praise)", On the Care of Our Common Home"

From K.O Archives

Jam'at Replaces Geelani, Orders Him To Leave-House

SRINAGAR Toughening its stand against pro-Pakistan leader Syed Ah Shah Geelani, the Jamaat-i-Islami has removed him from its Advisory Council and told him to vacate his house in Srinagar which is Jamaat property.

A letter was sent to Geelani late Wednesday night informing him about his "replacement" and directions to vacate his residence. Amir-e-Jamaat Nazir Ahmed Kashani told PTI Thursday. Kashani, however, refused to divulge the name of Syed Ah Shah Geelani's successor in his council.

Geelani, along with Ashraf Sehrai and two others, had been suspended, from the Majlis-e-Shura (General Advisory Council) a few months back.

Confirming receipt of the letter, Geelani told PTI that it was "unconstitutional" and his replacement or the decision to expel him from the Advisory Council had to be taken by the council itself.

"No individual is authorised to take the decision on behalf of the council," he said.

Kashani said "as and when Geelani and others dissociate themselves front Tehrik-e-Hurriyat (a parallel Hurriyat Conference formed by Geelani), they will be welcomed back into the fold."

(Kashmir Observer, 18 June, 2005)

Major Banks, Airlines Hit In New Global Online Outage



Agencies

Major banks and airlines were among businesses hit by a fresh global online outage on Thursday, with the problem traced to US-based tech provider Akamai.

An hour-long blackout hit a number of US airlines and several Australian financial firms as well as other companies dotted around the world, with angry customers unable to access websites and mobile apps.

"We are aware of the issue and actively working to restore services as soon as possible," an Akamai spokesperson told AFP.

American, Delta, United and Southwest airlines were among those affected, while the issue appeared to be more prolonged in Australia -- where problems struck in mid-afternoon as much of the rest of the world slept.

Australia's largest financial firm Commonwealth Bank told AFP that it and many of the country's major lenders had been hit. The outages, which began around 0510 GMT, also hit Australia's postal service and Virgin Australia.

The airline said in a statement that it "was one of many organisations to experience an outage with the Akamai content delivery system."

A spokesperson for ANZ bank told AFP the incident was "related to an external provider" but that "connectivity was restored quickly and the most impacted services are back online."

Westpac and ME Bank also reported problems with their mobile apps or online banking products, while customers for St George and several regional banks reported they were also down.

It is the latest incident to draw attention to the stabil-

ity of economically vital online platforms, and the key role that a handful of mostly unknown companies play in keeping the web running.

Last week US media and government websites, including the White House, New York Times, Reddit and Amazon were temporarily hit after a glitch with cloud computing services provider Fastly.

Fastly offers a service to websites around the world to speed up loading time for websites.

Akamai offers a range of similar IT products designed to boost online performance and security.

The Cambridge, Massachusetts-based company did not specify what product the problem came from, but one company reported it used Akamai for "IT network authentication."

A series of high-profile hack-for-ransom attacks have also left corporations around the world jittery over cybersecurity risks, although there was no indication the latest problems were caused by malicious actors.

Colonial Pipeline was briefly shuttered after an attack in May, and JBS, the world's largest meat producer, was forced to stop operations in the United States and Australia.

Both firms reportedly paid ransom to get operations back up and running.

The issue of cybersecurity was at the top of the agenda when US President Joe Biden and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin met in Geneva on Wednesday.

Washington believes hackers who have extorted hundreds of millions of dollars from Western governments, companies, and organisations operate from Russian soil.

UN Warns Drought May Be 'The Next Pandemic'



Agencies

Water scarcity and drought are set to wreak damage on a scale to rival the Covid-19 pandemic with risks growing rapidly as global temperatures rise, according to the United Nations.

"Drought is on the verge of becoming the next pandemic and there is no vaccine to cure it," Mami Mizutori, the UN's special representative for disaster risk reduction, told an online press briefing ahead of the report's release.

Already, droughts have triggered economic losses of at least \$124 billion and hit more than 1.5 billion people between 1998 and 2017, according to a UN report published on Thursday.

But even these figures, it said, are "most likely gross under-estimates."

Global warming has now intensified droughts in south-

ern Europe and western Africa, the UN report said with "some confidence." And the number of victims is set to "grow dramatically" unless the world acts, Mizutori said.

About 130 countries could face a greater risk of drought this century under a high-emissions scenario cited by the UN.

Another 23 countries will confront water shortages because of population growth, with 38 nations affected by both, it said.

Drought - like a virus - tends to last a long time, have a wide geographic reach and cause knock-on damage, Mizutori said.

"It can indirectly affect countries which are not actually experiencing the drought through food insecurity and the rise of food prices," Mizutori said.

The UN expects more frequent and severe droughts in most of Africa, central and south America, central Asia, southern Australia, southern Europe,

Mexico and the United States.

Ibrahim Thiaw, executive secretary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation that desertifying soil, caused in part by poor land management, had brought the world close to "a point of no return."

The UN has not researched the effect that desertification could have on internal migration within continents, but Thiaw said that it was no longer unthinkable, even in Europe.

"It is certainly a phenomenon that is happening in other parts of the world and may well occur in Europe," he said.

More than 40% of the European Union's agricultural imports could become "highly vulnerable" to drought by the middle of this century due to climate change, according to a separate study published in the journal Nature Communications this week.

EXPLAINER: Iranians Vote To Determine Next President, Direction



TEHRAN: Iran's presidential election Friday will determine who will lead the country's civilian government as tensions remain high between the Islamic Republic and the West over its tattered nuclear deal with world powers.

WHO IS RUNNING?

Among the four candidates, judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi appears to be the front-runner based on early poll indicators. Abdolnasser Hemmati, the former head of Iran's Central Bank, appears to be representing moderates in the race. Also running are Mohsen Rezaei, a former Revolutionary Guard commander; and Amir Hossein Ghazizadeh, a current lawmaker. At the country's three debates, it appeared to instead be a two-man race as candidates largely targeted Hemmati for criticism over being part of the administration of current President Hassan Rouhani until recently.

WHO IS NOT RUNNING?

Rouhani, who is limited from seeking a third four year term in office by the constitution. The Guardian Council, Iran's constitutional watchdog that approves candidates, also barred a number of prominent candidates from running this year. They included Ali Larijani, a conservative former parliament speaker who in recent years found himself allied with Rouhani. Also barred was former hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. He still remains popular for his populist policies while in office despite his antagonism of the West. While Larijani accepted being blocked, Ahmadinejad has urged his supporters not to take part in the vote.

WHAT IS AT STAKE?

Iran's president oversees the civilian arm of the country's government. The president sets domestic policy, which is important as Iran has faced years of crushing sanctions from the

WHAT POWER DOES THE SUPREME LEADER HAVE?

At the heart of Iran's complex system of governance created after the 1979 Islamic Revolution is the supreme leader. The supreme leader also serves as the supreme commander of armed forces. In turn the supreme leader is himself chosen by an 88-member elected panel called the Assembly of Experts which has the power even to remove one as well. Iran's current supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, is 82 - leading some analysts to suggest this might be the last election he oversees.

SO IS IRAN A DEMOCRACY?

The referendum held immediately after the revolution voted for an Islamic Republican system. Iran holds regular elections and has elected representatives passing laws and governing on behalf of its people, though the supreme leader acts as the guardian of the system.

Australia Restricts AstraZeneca Vaccine For All Under 60 Due to Clotting Concerns

Agence France-Presse

SYDNEY: Australia recommended that AstraZeneca's Covid-19 jab should not be given to people under 60 on Thursday, a fresh blow to the country's glacial vaccine rollout.

Health Minister Greg Hunt said concerns over possible links to blood clots meant Pfizer was now "the preferred vaccine" for everyone under 60 years old.

Australian authorities had already restricted the AstraZeneca shot to those over 50 in April, after several cases of severe blood clots were possibly linked to it.

Thursday's further restriction came after a 52-year-old woman died of blood clotting after receiving the jab.

Hunt admitted the move would "challenge" the country's already badly stalled vaccine rollout, which has seen just three percent of its population of 25 million fully inoculated so far.

Facing growing public disquiet over the slow rate of jabs, the conservative government also announced Thursday that a senior army officer, Lieutenant General John Frewen, would lead the federal vaccine rollout, now dubbed operation "Vaccine Shield".

The move is likely to have a marginal impact, as responsibility for inoculations has largely fallen to Australian states.

Australia has invested heavily



in the AstraZeneca vaccine, developing a facility to produce 50 million doses locally.

Purchases of other shots have been more limited and have faced multiple delays, forcing the government to abandon its target of vaccinating all adults by September this year.

Australia has only a few locally transmitted cases of Covid-19 and has closed its borders to all but a handful of foreign travellers.

Those measures are likely to stay in place until a large percentage of adults are vaccinated, but in the meantime the virus has repeatedly jumped from hotel quarantine facilities into the community, sparking lockdowns and costly restrictions.

Melbourne exited its fourth lockdown last week and Sydney is now on high alert after a cluster of three cases linked to a foreign air crew shuttle driver emerged.

Several venues around the famed Bondi beach have been labelled potential virus hotspots, with anyone visiting told to get tested and stay at home for two weeks.

Japan To Issue Vaccine Passports To Citizens For Travelling Abroad



Agence France-Presse

TOKYO, JAPAN: Japan said on Thursday it will make a vaccine passport available from next month for Japanese travellers, as governments around the world experiment with ways to relaunch tourism and business trips.

"We are preparing to issue a certificate of vaccination for those who need one... when they visit foreign countries," top government spokesman Katsunobu Kato told reporters.

The certificate will be paper-based rather than digital and will be issued by local governments from sometime next month, he said.

The European Union is working on a digital vaccine passport for this summer so it can welcome back badly needed tourists, and some EU countries plan to introduce certificates at the national level.

The EU version will feature in-

formation on whether a person has been vaccinated, or had the virus, tested negative, and recovered.

Last month, Washington said it was also considering special documentation for vaccinated Americans who want to travel abroad.

But the idea is controversial in some places, with conservative US states like Florida and Texas rejecting the idea of vaccine travel documents as a violation of peoples' basic rights.

In Japan, company officials have been keen for a vaccine document that would help reestablish business travel.

Japan's vaccine rollout started comparatively slowly, but has picked up pace in recent weeks. Just over six percent of the population is currently fully vaccinated.

The country's borders are closed to almost all foreign arrivals, though the rules will be relaxed for the Olympic Games, which open in Tokyo on July 23.

US Medical Body Classifies COVID-19 Delta Variant As A "Variant Of Concern"



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON: The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has classified the Delta, a highly transmissible COVID-19 variant first identified in India, as a "variant of concern."

"The B.1.1.7 (Alpha), B.1.351 (Beta), P.1 (Gamma), B.1.427 (Epsilon), B.1.429 (Epsilon), and B.1.617.2 (Delta) variants circulating in the United States are classified as variants of concern. To date, no variants of high consequence have been identified in the United States," the US CDC said in a statement on Tuesday.

The CDC said the Delta variant shows increased transmissibility, potential reduction in neutralisation by some monoclonal antibody treatments under emergency authorisation and potential reduction in neutralization from sera after vaccination in lab tests.

The variant of concern designation is given to strains of the virus that scientists believe are more transmissible or can cause more severe disease. Vaccines, treatments and tests that detect the virus may also be less effective against a variant of concern.

Previously, the CDC had considered the Delta variant to be a variant of interest. The World Health Organization classified the Delta variant as a variant of concern on May 10.

The CDC estimates it accounted for 9.9 per cent of cases in the US as of June 5.

By June 13, it accounted for 10.3 per cent of cases, according to the website outbreak.info, which tracks variants. The Delta variant could be the dominant strain in the US within a month, the CNN report warned.

US President Joe Biden and his Chief Advisor Dr Anthony Fauci last week have warned that the Delta variant of the novel coronavirus is highly infectious, which is now the dominant strain in the United Kingdom, spreading rapidly among young people between 12 and 20 years old.

COVID-19 cases have been declining over the past few months in the United States, but there's concern that could change as the pace of vaccinations slows and the Delta variant spreads.

The US, the worst hit country by COVID-19 pandemic, has so far reported 33,498,155 confirmed cases and 600,649 deaths.

NEWS MAKERS

Socially Distanced Robots Serve Mecca Holy Water Ahead Of Hajj

Agence France-Presse

MECCA, SAUDI ARABIA: Robots began handing out bottles of sacred water in Mecca this week in preparation for a socially distanced Hajj pilgrimage in Islam's holiest city, due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Saudi Arabia announced on Saturday that 60,000 residents vaccinated against the coronavirus would be able to perform the July pilgrimage -- a number up from last year but drastically lower than in normal times.

Some 2.5 million Muslims from around the world participated in 2019.

Officials hoping to prevent any coronavirus outbreaks rolled out the small black-and-



white robots on Sunday, each loaded with three shelves of water bottles, as a few devotees helped themselves with a mixture of bafflement and amusement.

"The aim of these robots is to provide personal services without any human contact," said Bader Al-Loqmani.

He manages water from the sacred spring of Zamzam which emerges in Mecca's

Grand Mosque, built around the Kaaba, the black cubic building towards which Muslims around the world pray.

"Roughly 20 robots are currently available for helping visitors and pilgrims at the Hajj," Loqmani said, noting that more could be brought onstream if necessary.

For centuries, pilgrims have flocked to drink water from the Zamzam spring, seen as miraculous in Islamic tradition.

Hundreds of thousands of bottles of Zamzam water are usually distributed each year.

The Hajj is one of the five pillars or key duties of Islam, but for the second year in a row will only be permitted for vaccinated residents of Saudi Arabia.

Moroccan King Congratulates Israel's New Prime Minister

Agencies

Israel's new leader has received "warm greetings" in a letter from Morocco's king as Hamas' political chief Ismail Haniyeh visited the country for discussions on the Palestinian cause.

The message sent by King Mohammed VI congratulated Naftali Bennett on becoming Israel's first new leader in 12 years after the coalition government he cobbled together ousted long-serving leader Benjamin Netanyahu this week.

Morocco will "continue its efforts to promote peace, justice and coexistence in the Middle East, which will ensure security, stability and brotherhood for all peoples living side by side," said the king's correspondence. "Warm greetings and best wishes for great success," said the letter, which was quoted by Israel's Prime Minister's Office on Wednesday.

Morocco has North Africa's largest Jewish community of about 3,000 people, and Israel is home to 700,000 Jews of Moroccan origin.

It became the fourth Arab state last year, along with the United Arab Emirates, Sudan, and Bahrain, to normalise ties with Israel under US-brokered deals.

Palestinians have condemned the agreements, calling them a betrayal of a longstanding position that Israel first meets their statehood demand before achieving normalisation.

Supporting 'the Palestinian cause' Meanwhile, Haniyeh met on Wednesday with Moroccan Prime Minister Saad-Eddine El Othmani and officials from the ruling Justice and Development Party (PJD). Haniyeh thanked El Othmani for the invitation to Morocco. "I hope that this visit will lead to getting the desired and expected results from the brotherly country Morocco," said Haniyeh.

DC Kulgam Reviews Arrangements For Smooth Conduct Of Kheer Bhawani Asthapan



Observer News Service

KULGAM: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat Thursday visited Kheer Bhawani Asthapan Manzgam and Shree Tripoori Sundri Asthapan Khanbarni Devsar to oversee the arrangements put in place for smooth conduct of annual Kheer Bhawani Mela at both the places.

Officers from KPDC, Jal Shakti, Health and other line departments briefed the DC about the arrangements put in place for smooth conduct of the celebrations.

On the occasion, the DC asked the concerned officers to synergize efforts to ensure smooth conduct of celebration of Mela Kheer Bhawani and extend all requisite facilities to the devotees.

He directed all the offices to ensure appropriate arrangements are put in place for the smooth conduct of Mela.

The DC during the visit was accompanied by ACR, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Tehsildar Devsar, Tehsildar D. H. Pora, AEE KPDC, Jal Shakti besides other officers.

Community Classes Commence Across Kupwara



Observer News Service

KUPWARA: The District Administration Kupwara with active participation of the Education Department has started Community classes in the border district Kupwara.

The Community classes were started in view of Covid-19 and the resultant lockdown which has affected every sphere of life, children and their education being hit the hardest.

To compensate for the loss, the Department of Education has taken many steps. Online and offline virtual classes are being delivered through different social media platforms, said the Chief Education Officer, Kupwara Abdul Hameed Fani, adding that the virtual teaching-learning is going on through Learning Management System (LMS), developed by the Directorate of School Education, Kashmir.

He said that the government has decided to initiate Community Classes for students

residing in the areas which are yet to get connected to mobile network, vis-à-vis for those who have network facilities but do not have Android mobile phones.

Administration has advised field functionaries, particularly, the Zonal Education Officers to monitor the teaching-learning process and ensure that Covid-19 SOPs are adhered to in letter and spirit. He has directed them to visit the areas in their jurisdiction frequently, particularly, the no-network areas and ensure that the process is carried out smoothly.

These Community Classes will be conducted along with teaching through LMS.

The CEO said that in Kupwara district about 90,000 students and 7000 teachers of about 1400 schools have been registered on LMS. About 8000 e-content (videos, audios, study material and assignments) are being uploaded by the teachers on the LMS on a daily basis.

VC DDC Kupwara Tours Lolab Sub Division

Observer News Service

KUPWARA: The Vice Chairperson, District Development Council (DDC), Kupwara, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir Thursday visited various areas of Lolab sub division including Lalpora, Darpura, Bedibera, Surigam, Tower Mohallah Surigam, Kawari and Nard Kawari to take firsthand appraisal of the issues and grievances of general public.

During the visit, various delegations interacted with the VC and projected their developmental issues. The major issues raised by the public include Construction and Macadamisa-

tion of roads, augmentation of drinking water and irrigation facilities, besides power supply in the area.

The Vice Chairperson gave patient hearing to the grievances and issues of the public and assured them that he will take up their genuine issues and demands with higher ups and will resolve them within a stipulated time.

The VC said that the poor and downtrodden families are his prime concern. He also reiterated the slogan of peace, prosperity and development of the poor and downtrodden section of society.

Govt Mulls Resumption Of OPD Services In All J&K Hospitals



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government is mulling to resume OPD services in all hospitals of Jammu and Kashmir as the covid graph has flattened.

Health Officials said that

OPD services will resume at their full strength in non-COVID hospitals across J&K in the coming days.

They said that tertiary care hospitals having separate COVID care facilities will also make their OPDs functional in a phased manner.

"The government is monitoring the situation keenly and the dip in Covid-19 cases has given a sigh of relief and very soon a decision will be taken in this regard.

We don't want to risk the lives of people by intermixing Covid patients with non-Covid patients and the hospitals having separate Covid centre will be allowed to resume full OPD services very soon," they said

Dr Mir Mushtaq, spokesperson of Directorate of Health Services Kashmir said that OPD services in non-Covid hospitals were not closed and elective surgeries have also resumed in the non-Covid hospitals.

He said that as the situation eases out, all hospitals will resume OPD services in full operation. (Agencies)

NEP Aims At Development Of HE In All Aspects: Adv Bhatnagar

Reviews Progress On Implementation Of NEP-2020 In HED

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar Thursday maintained that the NEP-2020 aims at the development of Higher Education in all aspects like innovation, research advancements and other related fields which need timely interventions. He said that the needs of the country as well as J&K regarding the development of education sector will be met through this Policy.

He was speaking during a review meeting on implementation of National Education Policy-2020 in Higher Education Department (HED) at Civil Secretariat.

Appreciating the ground work done by the Task Force and the specific NEP implementation Action Plan drawn for roll out in this year, Advisor Bhatnagar stressed upon all the Task Force Members to work closely towards achieving the objectives of NEP in a time bound manner.

He laid special focus on the role of Central Institutes like IIT Jammu, IIM Jammu and NIT Srinagar in collaborating with the Government Degree colleges for research and training programmes in times ahead.

The Advisor delved upon all the participants that regular



review meetings shall be held to assess the progress in the implementation of NEP which is crucial to remodelling the HEIs in order to achieve good thoughtful and well rounded and creative individuals. He asked the participants to utilise the existing resources and be practical in implementation of the policy on the ground.

Advisor Bhatnagar impressed upon the members to work cohesively and in synergy with each other as well as within the Sub-Groups and suggested them to co-opt members from other diverse fields for requisite expertise and proper implementation.

The Advisor further emphasised on the members to create linkages between Higher Education and School Education Departments with regard to NEP-2020 so that several aspects of the policy can be

implemented in cohesion with School Education department.

The Advisor asked the members of the Committee to utilise their academic expertise and other available resources so that the goals of the policy can be met and translated on the ground.

Administrative Secretary, HED Sushma Chauhan gave detailed presentation highlighting the deliberations and comments received from members of NEP Task Force.

During the course of presentation, the Secretary informed about the steps initiated by the Higher Education Department for implementation of NEP in the UT of J&K. She also said that the HED has initiated steps for the formation of a Research consortium at Jammu and Srinagar and Higher Institute Management System (HIMS) which Supports Online Learning and Teaching.

THE ADVISOR DELVED UPON ALL THE PARTICIPANTS that regular review meetings shall be held to assess the progress in the implementation of NEP which is crucial to remodelling the HEIs in order to achieve good thoughtful and well rounded and creative individuals.

H&ME Dept To Augment Existing Oxygen Generation Capacity In 37 J&K Hospitals

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In the wake of Covid-19 pandemic in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, the Health & Medical Education Department has taken an initiative to augment the existing oxygen generation capacity in 37 major hospitals of the UT by way of installation and commissioning of additional 84 medical oxygen generation plants having capacity of 71650 LPM.

44 oxygen generation plants (39350 LPM) have been installed and made operational so far. Remaining 40 oxygen generation plants (31750 LPM) are in the process of installation and likely to be installed

by July, 2021. Before April, 2021, the oxygen generation capacity of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir was 15082 LPM only.

30 Oxygen generation plants (13300 LPM) are being installed in 30 CHCs/SDHS, 15 each in Jammu and Kashmir division under World Bank Funding. The installation of these plants is also in progress through J&K Economic Reconstruction Agency.

Considering further demand and need to make the oxygen generation facility available in all Tertiary Care Hospitals/District Hospitals and some major CHCs for tackling the second wave and possible third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Govern-

ment of Jammu and Kashmir approached the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt for providing additional Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) plants to the UT under PM CARES Fund.

The Government of India sanctioned additional 32 PSA plants of 24850 LPM, 13 for Kashmir division (13550 LPM) and 13 for Jammu Division (12350 LPM), thereby raising the total no of PSA plants to 146. The UT of Jammu and Kashmir shall have the capacity of generating oxygen to the extent of 1.26 lakh litre per minute after installation of additional 102 PSA plants including 32 sanctioned under PM CARES Fund by Govt.

DAK Raises Issues In Meeting With CS, Financial Commissioner H&ME

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) led by its president Dr Mohd Yousuf Tak Thursday met Chief Secretary AK Mehta at Civil Secretariat and demanded the redressal of the long pending issues.

In a statement, DAK said, the Chief Secretary gave a patient hearing to all demands and assured the association of a bonafide redressal of their genuine grievances within a limited time frame.

Later the delegation met Financial Commissioner HME, Atal Dullo and delineated the crucial role of doctors and other healthcare workers during the current crisis and highlighted their dedication towards their

duties in these trying times.

Dullo while appreciating the efforts of doctors, promised to resolve the genuine issues of the fraternity and designated Mohammed Rafiq, Director Finance HME as "Special officer" for redressal of long pending demands of doctors.

"The delegation latter held a meeting with Director Finance HME, Mohammed Rafiq and discussed all the issues pertaining to Medical fraternity in length and breadth."

DAK President while elaborating on the demands, pressed for covid incentives for all, two and half day salary, monthly risk allowances, caderisation of medical officers, Dental surgeons, consultants apart from restoration of administrative seniority.

Development, Conservation Plan For Manasbal Lake Discussed At Ganderbal

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Ganderbal, Kritika Jyotsna Thursday chaired a meeting to discuss the measures taken for development of Manasbal Lake and its adjoining areas.

The CEO briefed the meeting about the works undertaken for beautification of Manasbal Lake and its adjoining area. He said that efforts are underway to develop Manasbal Park into a beautiful recreation area which will add to its tourist influx.

The DDC directed the CEO to prepare a beautification and infrastructure plan with various facilities including restaurant facility, lighting, de-weeding, dredging, garbage disposal, etc besides exploring the possibility for introducing activities that shall bring glory to the Manasbal in addition to attracting the tourists.

While praising the aesthetics of the lake and its adjoining areas, the DDC said that Manasbal Lake being one of the major tourist at-

tractions of the district requires protection and directed concerned to expedite beautification work on the lake and called for massive awareness generation on the importance of its preservation.

The CEO was directed to evolve a strategy for regulation of activities within the lake besides recommending conservation plans for sustainable use of water resource in accordance with the provisions of concerning rules and regulations

The DDC instructed Executive Engineer R&B to pace up the ongoing work process on the pathway construction and related works adjacent to Manasbal Lake.

The DDC exhorted the officers to work in cooperation and redouble their efforts so that the general environment of the lake is preserved and its glory is restored.

Calling for preventing illegal encroachments, the DDC directed the concerned to ensure timely demarcation of all pending areas of the lake and take stringent action against the offenders indulging in repeated illegal activities.

Enforcement Of Lockdown, Public Cooperation Helped Flatten Covid Curve: Adv Khan



Observer News Service

BUDGAM: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan Thursday said proactive and aggressive approach initiated by the administration in tandem with the civil society and other social organisations including religious leaders has brought down the incidence of positive cases substantially.

He said support and cooperation from public has proved pivotal in containing 2nd wave of Covid-19 which seemed to be more infectious and dangerous. Being a challenging task for everyone, strong commitment, resilience, effective alertness and dedication demonstrated by administration and all stake holders during this tough period didn't let the 2nd wave of Covid-19 go out of control.

He was speaking during a visit to Nagam Chadoora, Budgam where

he held an interaction with various stake holders regarding assessment of arrangements and status amid 2nd wave of Covid.

Regarding the vaccination status the Advisor said, that the efforts are being put in place to get the most of people vaccinated. Vaccines have proved a golden bullet to defeat Covid-19 infection. The vaccinated person gets improved immunity against Covid 19 and there is less severity of this deadly disease if at all they become positive.

On the issue of relaxation in curbs raised by some individuals present, the Advisor reiterated that the decision on relaxations is taken after thorough assessment of Covid -19 situation. He said keeping present scenario in view it's likely that in coming days condition will improve more. He laid emphasis on discarding rumours and advised not to pay heed to rumour mongers.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

NOTICE



Whereas an application has been received from one, Shri : Ghulam Rasool Ganai S/o: Mohammad Ramzan Ganai R/o: Budina Budgam owner of vehicle bearing

Registration No: JK04B-5522 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S J&K Bank B/U Budgam.

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

Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam Kashmir

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.748
Dated 17-06-2021

Q-B

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

NOTICE



Whereas an application has been received from one, Shri : Javid Ahmad Khan S/o: Kh Mohi ud din Khan R/o: Khag Budgam owner of vehicle bearing

Registration No: JK04E-9351 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S J&K Bank B/U Khag. Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport officer ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper.

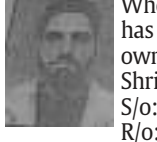
Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam Kashmir

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.745
Dated 16-06-2021

Q-B

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

NOTICE



Where as a joint application has been received from owner, Shri : Ab Qayoom Khan S/o: Gh Mohammad Khan R/o: Humhama Budgam

as Transferor) & Shri. Tanveer Ahmad Bhat S/o Gh Nabi Bhat R/o Khaja Pora Nowgam. as Transferee) for transfer of Maxi cab Carriage route permit No.492/ CC/ Budgam vehicle No. JK04A -5477

Now it is therefore notified for general information that objections, if any to the proposed transfer of the said route permit/vehicle shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport officer ARTO Budgam within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper.

Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam Kashmir

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM. 757
Dated 17/06/2021

Q-B

DEPARTMENT OF (AYUSH) GOVT. OF J & K DISTRICT ANANTNAG.

AYUSH Immune Booster Medicine Distributed at Village NIPORA Mir Bazar Anantnag from Govt. ISM Dispensary Sadoora Anantnag



On 17/06/2021 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 Nipora Mir Bazar Anantnag from Govt. AYUSH Dispensary Vessu Anantnag 255 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

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of the
Kashmir Observer LLP
Published from: # 5- Boulevard, Srinagar-190001
Printed at: KT Press Pvt. Ltd, Rangreth Ind Area, Srinagar.
RNI Registration No: 69503/98
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16
Editor-in-Chief : **Sajjad Haider**
Legal Counsel: **Tasaduq Khwaja**
Switchboard: (0194) 2106304
Editorial: (0194) 2502327
Email editorial: editor@kashmirobsvserver.net

K O V I E W

Hope For Tourism

With the second Covid-19 wave winding down, J&K tourism department has chalked out a plan to vaccinate the people associated with tourism to pave the way for the arrival of more tourists to Jammu and Kashmir. The department is also working to ensure that the SOPs are strictly followed to ensure the safety of the holidaymakers during their stay in the Valley. The administration has already carried out vaccination drives at tourist destinations. However, it will be sometime before the tourist arrivals get to the levels before the second wave.

Tourism in Kashmir had significantly picked up through winter. There were two favorable factors: one, the recurrent and heavy snowfall this winter. Snow is a novelty for most Indians, so Kashmir became their preferred destination. And second, the continuing ban on international travel due to the Covid-19 pandemic. So, a large number of tourists across the country made their way to the Valley. Acknowledging the trend, Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel said in a statement in Rajya Sabha that the tourist footfall in the union territory this year has broken the record of the last 16 years.

Over the last more than two years, the tourism sector in Kashmir has grievously suffered. Fewer tourists turned up in the wake of the security lockdown and communication blockade following the revocation of Article 370 in August 2019. The Covid-19 lockdown that followed subsequently made Kashmir out of bounds for all kinds of visitors, like other parts of the country. Authorities banned the entry of foreign tourists into the region and also ordered the closure of parks and gardens, including tourist places like Mughal Gardens. Similarly, Srinagar Tulip Garden, one of the largest such gardens in Asia where over 1.5 million flowers bloom, was also shut down. During April, May and June last year zero tourists visited the Valley. Following winter's uptick in tourism, the fresh arrivals petered out as the second wave reared its head and soon overwhelmed everything. Since the latter part of March, there have hardly been any tourists. This cut the nascent recovery of the sector in its bud, leading to loss of livelihoods again.

This prompted the administration to announce a Rs 3 crore relief package for people employed in the industry. According to the package, Rs 2,000 financial assistance was provided to the registered shikara owners, tourist guides, ponywalas, and others, including those who rent palanquins for yatris. The money was paid for the two months to tide over the peak of the ongoing wave. But as is apparent this money is peanuts and would hardly have compensated for the massive loss due to loss of tourists. Here's hoping that things improve from hereon. The complete vaccination of the population is certain to reign in the pandemic, creating conditions for businesses including tourism to reopen.

O T H E R O P I N O N

Being Hemmed In

Recent inflation data released by the National Statistical Office is likely to restrict the Reserve Bank of India's room for manoeuvre as it navigates this difficult period. Retail inflation, as measured by the consumer price index, rose to a six-month high of 6.3 per cent in May, breaching the upper threshold of the central bank's inflation targeting regime. The increase in prices is more broad-based than expected. Retail food inflation rose to 5.01 per cent in May, up from 1.96 per cent the month before, while core inflation, which excludes volatile food and fuel prices, rose to 6.6 per cent — the highest in seven years. At the wholesale level, too, prices continue to edge upwards. While growth considerations continue to dominate, the central bank needs to be cognisant of the risks of higher inflation as it calibrates its policy response, and assesses when to embark on the road to policy normalisation.

A possible explanation for the higher than anticipated rise in retail inflation stems from supply-side disruptions caused by the imposition of restrictions on economic activities by states to deal with the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. This would imply that the current spurt in inflation is likely to be transitory, and will abate as states start relaxing the restrictions imposed. However, the rise in core inflation is worrying, even as capacity utilisation rates continue to signal a lack of demand side pressures. To what extent such price pressures are durable is debatable. It is possible that retail inflation may prove to be rigid on the downside. Higher global commodity prices, along with producers being able to pass on higher input prices to consumers towards the second half of the year as household demand recovers on the back of the vaccination drive gathering momentum, may well keep retail inflation elevated.

Considering that the monetary policy committee has attached primacy to reviving growth, and rightly so, it is likely that, at least in the near term, it will look through this spike in inflation, treating it as transitory in nature until more data is available. In his remarks after the last MPC meeting, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das had dismissed talk of a withdrawal of stimulus measures arguing that it was premature to talk of policy normalisation — implying that the MPC was in no hurry to either change the stance of monetary policy or the policy rate. If inflation remains elevated, however, it will be difficult for the committee to justify consistently looking through high inflation prints. On the other hand, with the second wave ebbing, and states beginning to lift restrictions, some indices do signal a pick-up in economic activities. More data over the next few months will provide greater clarity over the trajectory of both inflation and growth, allowing for a more considered view on when to pivot towards policy normalisation.

The Indian Express

Two Rivarlies That Benefit Junta In Myanmar

Following the coup in Myanmar, different countries, in consonance with their own interests have reacted differently to the unfolding situation in Myanmar. Two rival competitions-- India-China and China-West have not only made isolation of the Tatmadaw impossible but actively benefit the junta in Myanmar



Haris Rashid

Myanmar's military, the Tatmadaw, carried out a Coup d'état in the country on 01 February 2021, preventing the formation of a democratically elected government whose members had been elected in the November 2020 elections. The coup was met with mass protests and armed resistance across the country. In the military's crackdown on protests, more than 800 people have been killed so far. Different countries reacted differently to the unfolding situation in the country, based on their interests. Now that it has been more than four months since the military took over, there is very little change to expect in the type of government. Even though the junta has announced that it will rule only for one year, given its history of rule in Myanmar from 1962 to 2011, it is expected to hold power for a long time. This article examines the response of two rivalries in Myanmar-- India-China and the China-West rivalries and analyses how the conflict of interest between these actors not only provides legitimacy to the Tatmadaw's rule but also benefits the junta.

India shares a land boundary of 1,643 km with Myanmar in four north-eastern states as well as a maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. It is the only ASEAN country that shares a land boundary with India and hence is a bridge between India and ASEAN where India has strong regional aspirations. Immediately following the coup, India's Ministry of External Affairs, while noting the developments in Myanmar with "deep concern", expressed its support for "democratic transition" in the country. There was no direct condemnation of the coup. On 27 March this year, India was among the eight countries that attended the Armed Forces Day military parade in Naypyitaw. Russia, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand were the other seven attending the parade.

India has been cautious in its response to the Myanmar coup for two reasons- insurgency in the North East and its competition with China over regional influence. After the 1962 military coup in Myanmar in which Ne Win came to power, India-Myanmar relations remained mostly stagnant because India championed idealism that prioritized "commitment

IF THE BURGEONING INSURRECTION against the junta continues, there are chances that Myanmar might turn into a failed state. In order to save the poor and the vulnerable in Myanmar, an international consensus on the restoration of democracy in the country is required

to democratic values" over anything else. However, the 1990s saw India shift its policy towards realism and it prioritized "security concerns" over "commitment to democratic values". India has been facing insurgency-related problems in the northeast since its independence from the British. Due to their ethnic connections, the insurgent groups operate their bases in Myanmar. India, therefore, needs help from the Tatmadaw to fight these insurgent groups and hence has been careful not to upset the generals in Myanmar.

Myanmar is also perceived to be a buffer state between India and China and India has always been concerned about China's relative gains in Myanmar. Starting in 1988, Myanmar has become a close ally of China and China today has a considerable presence in Myanmar which has serious implications for India's security. China also happens to be the biggest investor in Myanmar and its chief supplier of arms. With Coco islands on lease from Myanmar since 1994, China can directly monitor the movement of the Indian Navy and observe India's missile launching facilities on Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Therefore, India does not want to distance itself from the regime in Myanmar because that would provide space for China's influence to grow further.

Regarding civilians and policemen from Myanmar fleeing into India to escape violence, the Union Home Ministry had earlier in its March 10 order asked the four north-eastern states to "take appropriate action as per law to check illegal influx from Myanmar into India." The order was met with anger and protests by people in the northeast. The prevention of Myanmar nationals from entering and showing them they are not welcome in India is a desperate move by the Indian government to not offend

the junta. India also joined China, Russia and Vietnam in opposing a UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution drafted by the United Kingdom that would have condemned the military coup and threatened "possible measures" under the U.N. Charter should the situation deteriorate further.

China shares a border of 2,160 Km with Myanmar. Myanmar and China gained independence almost at the same time and Myanmar was one of the first non-Communist countries to recognize China. However, the relationship between the two countries drastically changed in the 1960s. In 1962, the military overthrew the civilian government in a coup in Myanmar. In China, the Cultural Revolution began in 1966 and it started exporting the Communist ideology to its neighbour Myanmar by funding its largest anti-government armed group Burma Communist Party, which deteriorated the relationship between the junta and China. The two started coming closer after the 1988 uprising and the subsequent "internal coup". The US and the EU tightened sanctions on the junta in 1997 which made them entirely dependent on China. However, the overdependence on China worried the Tatmadaw who were now trying to distance themselves from China. In 2011, the civilian-led, military-backed government in Myanmar, while upholding the "wishes of the people" suspended the construction of Myitsone Dam which was being built by a state-owned Chinese company. The February 2021 coup and the accompanying sanctions from the West have once again forced Tatmadaw to turn to China. Given its own economic and strategic interests in Myanmar, China has always been ready to embrace every kind of government in Myanmar with open arms.

In its response to the recent

coup, China's state-run Xinhua News Agency reported the coup as a "major cabinet reshuffle." Further, China with its veto power in the UNSC has been successful in blocking the UN condemnation of the military coup. Also, in the recent ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' meeting on 07 June chaired by China, it declared that they will jointly urge "all countries to abide by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and avoid unilateral sanctions and undue interference." Further, in a separate meeting with his Myanmar counterpart Wunna Maung Lwin, following the ASEAN-China meeting, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi assured him "China's friendly policy toward Myanmar is not affected by changes in Myanmar's internal and external situations and remains oriented toward the people of Myanmar," adding that "in the past, present and future, China supports Myanmar to independently choose a development path that suits its national conditions." With the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank temporarily suspending disbursements and new contracts in Myanmar following the coup, Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has left its lending doors open to the junta. AIIB recently clarified that it deals with "de facto governments" and does not base its decisions on 'form of government.'

As far as the US response is concerned, it took quick and concrete action to hold all the involved people in the coup responsible. The Biden administration launched a new sanctions regime targeting the Tatmadaw, its leaders and their business interests. The sanctions were accompanied by the export restriction on sensitive goods to the Tatmadaw and blocking access to its US-based assets as well as a seizure of about \$1 billion held at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Similarly, European Union also sanctioned several individuals and companies related to the junta for undermining the rule of law in Myanmar.

The situation in Myanmar right now is concerning with several ethnic armed forces and dozens of new armed groups fighting the junta all across the country. If the burgeoning insurrection against the junta continues, there are chances that Myanmar might turn into a failed state. In order to save the poor and the vulnerable in Myanmar, an international consensus on the restoration of democracy in the country is required. The international community must leave its differences and interests aside and unequivocally demand that the elected government in Myanmar be restored at the earliest. This article considers two rivalries-- China-West and India-China in Myanmar, which are not only contributing to the inaction but further benefit the junta in Myanmar. While it can be understood that India for the above mentioned self-interests in Myanmar, cannot risk upsetting the Tatmadaw, West's response does not seem to be effective. Given the fact that China will anyways help the Tatmadaw and fill the void created by the West, it raises the question- if sanctions are the best strategy?

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

The author can be reached at haris.rashid_ug22@ashoka.edu.in



OBSERVER
MAIL

All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, space and accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

► MAIL YOUR LETTERS

P.O.Box # 337, GPO, Srinagar-190 001
email: editpage.ko@gmail.com

Proactive Approach To Vaccination

Even as vaccination drives have sped up in Kashmir, the numbers are still not promising. Videos with people reluctant to get jabbed are a cause of concern and may in fact discourage others from getting vaccinated.

Civil society members must team up with the government in ensuring awareness campaigns about covid-19 vaccines. Even as Kashmir is months into vaccine drives, the number of people vaccinated is still not encouraging enough. We're watching healthcare

workers reach out with vaccines to people who are refusing to get jabbed. This means that we as a community must reach out to everyone first to ensure that everyone is willing to get vaccinated.

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.

At an individual level, we must share our personal vaccination experiences to encourage others. We must lend a helping hand in letting people know about the availability of vaccines in our precincts and assist those who

may find it difficult to get registered online or download their certificates.

At mohalla levels, mosques should proactively and consistently send reminders to people about the importance of getting vaccinated. Those with influence should also send messages across and encourage people.

We must realise that vaccination is extremely important for the overall well being and progress.

Bashir Rather
Bashirr@rediffmail

MINDFUL FRIDAYS

Covid And Beyond: The Power Of Life Skills

Wasim Rashid Kakroo

Academic achievement has frequently been used as the sole measure of learning and success, overlooking the fact that we also require non-academic abilities to assist us through life's many problems. Such skills are known by various terms – such as life skills, soft skills, social-emotional skills, and psychosocial skills and refer to competences that are required to meet the challenges and demands of everyday life.

DUE TO COMPETITION for limited resources, space, and division of household duties, working and learning from home has created friction in many households. Students must learn how to ensure that their interests and needs are addressed through mutual agreement in order to avoid conflict and confrontation

Existing research evidence from studies with adolescents and youth shows that life skills acquisition is linked to improved academic outcomes, enhanced educational goals and future aspirations, good parent-child relationships, improved behaviour, peer-pressure resilience, and positive coping mechanisms.

The enormous challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic have intensified the need to cultivate academic, social, and emotional competence holistically in young minds.

Due to school closures in Kashmir, most pupils must now rely on their own initiative to learn. Students have been compelled to make decisions about how, what, when, where, and why they would learn in order to determine their academic fate. The abruptness of the school closures exacerbated the problem, leaving most pupils with few or no learning tools. Even if learning is taking place remotely as is the case nowadays, students must remain disciplined and motivated in order to engage effectively. It is therefore critical that students receive support from both their parents and instructors in order to master soft skills such as time management, planning, and goal setting so that they can learn effectively at home. A timetable detailing the activities and scheduled time – academic, family duties, play – for a given day is one approach for pupils to stay focused and motivated to learn. To prevent students from engaging in haphazard learning activities, the timetable should include the precise topic to be learnt, the resources required (e.g. textbooks, the internet links), and the amount of time required for the learning activity. A second stage in determining the success of the learning activity could be completed, for example, by completing an exercise or writing key notes on a subject.

The other cardinal requirement is adaptability. Education systems around the world



Nicole Xu for NPR

are evolving and embracing the new normal. Governments are working nonstop to ensure that teaching and learning continue successfully throughout and after COVID-19 pandemic is over. In comparison with the traditional classroom, remote learning (internet, radio, and television) is growing increasingly popular. Students and parents, on the other hand, are/must adjust to the new arrangements. While change can be frightening, kids can improve their adaptation abilities by embracing new ways of learning, letting go of the "that's how it's always been done" mentality, learning from their mistakes, and seeking clarification from their instructors, parents, and peers in tough situations.

Yet another life skill is the art of negotiation which is perhaps the most important during these challenging times. Due to competition for limited resources, space, and division of household duties, working and learning from home has created friction in many households. Students must learn how to ensure that their interests and needs are addressed through mutual agreement in order to avoid conflict and confrontation. Giving all parties involved an opportunity to express their case and, as a result, arrive at an equitable settlement is an important feature of negotiation. As a result, effective negotiating necessitates clear communication and empathy.

Additionally, most people's psychological wellness has been negatively impacted as a result of the pandemic's uncertainty, which manifests as panic, anxiety, insomnia, stress, and depression. Adults may be able to navigate some of these challenges due to maturity and lived experiences, but for many young learners, the added frustrations of school repetition, halted final examinations, the prospect of finishing school older, reduced or lost contact with friends and

IF LEFT UNCHECKED, SCHOOL CLOSURES COMBINED with boredom and inactivity during this pandemic might lead to negative peer pressure among pupils. This pressure stems from the influence of one's peer group to act, behave, think, or look a specific way

restricted play present a significant psychosocial challenge if not addressed. For example, some students may drop out of school, engage in drug and substance abuse, or even commit suicide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, keeping social connections with friends and family through phone calls and video conferences and sustaining a healthy lifestyle through proper nutrition and exercise and reaching out to people you trust about your issues are some of the strategies to alleviate stress.

If left unchecked, school closures combined with boredom and inactivity during this pandemic might lead to negative peer pressure among pupils. This pressure stems from the influence of one's peer group to act, behave, think, or look a specific way. For example, there may be a negative influence on drug and substance misuse, dropping out of school or avoiding learning, fleeing from home, porn addiction, and avoiding family tasks. Peer pressure is significantly worse during adolescence (12-19 years), when people are more likely to explore, take risks, and make rash decisions. As a result, children, adolescents, and young people should be encouraged to gain skills like self-assertiveness, or the ability to stand up for one's own rights, ideas, and ideas. To put it another way, it's the ability to say "No"

when faced with excessive peer pressure. One method parents can help their children is by talking to them freely and honestly about the different social evils that they encounter so that they may make educated judgments about their social interactions and behavior.

Role of clinical psychologists in building life skills among youth:

Clinical psychologists as mental professionals are trained to understand the various facets of human behavior and also have an in-depth understanding of various dimensions of human relations. So, by nature, clinical psychologists are well equipped to train members of a community, be their policy makers, teachers or parents to help children and adolescents to learn various life skills.

Because life skills play such an important part in the development of holistic learners, policy makers, teachers and parents should ensure that their efforts can produce youth who are academically, socially, and emotionally competent so that they are able to handle their life during pandemic and post pandemic and clinical psychologists can very well help policy makers, school administrators, teachers and parents alike in building the life skills of youth.

The author is a practicing Clinical Psychologist and can be reached at wasimkakroo21@gmail.com

As we get closer to Iran's 13th presidential elections, once again Iranians with great passion and enthusiasm are going through another democratic process to determine their future – after carefully assessing initiatives, pledges and programs of the seven presidential candidates who have been deemed qualified for this election.

Elections in Iran are the highest manifestation of the public will in the socio-economic and political spheres and it is the most effective instrument to realise the sovereignty of Iranian people through a peaceful and participatory process. Therefore, every four years, Iranians elect a new President, and Members of the Parliament (Majlis), the Assembly of Experts and Local Councils to show their responsibility and to enforce their legal rights for a better future.

Now, after 42 years since the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, on an average, one election in a year has been held which indicates the significance of democracy in the country. This is of crucial importance, because Iran's history, prior to the 1979 Islamic Revolution, had never witnessed any landmark juncture at which the Iranian people played a leading role in determining their destiny. Moreover, Iran is the only country in the region which has successfully and consistently held such elections on time and without delays even during extraordinary situations such as natural disasters, pandemics and the 8-year imposed war during the past four decades.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, in order to fulfil the aspirations of its people and hedging against despotism and foreign in-

Iran's 2021 Presidential Elections Dynamics & Merits Of A Political System

Dr. Ali Chegeni

terventions, has developed a unique political system which consists of two major pillars of "Islamic identity" and "republican values". In such a system which is rooted in Islamic teachings, lessons learned in the course of the history and from the resistance against notorious regimes and foreign occupations, the people could freely express their views on governance and to change the incumbent leadership in line with the Islamic values and democratic merits highly recognised and endorsed by its constitutional system.

The important point, in terms of domestic political stability in the country is that the rotation in the Government administrations and other decision making bodies has always been through the polls and direct involvement of the Iranian citizens and interestingly, the result has always shocked the foreign observers. This shows how the will of the people is relevant in Iran's political system.

With Iran's 13th presidential elections just around the corner, there are heated debates about good governance between candidates from different factions and affiliations which have been reflected during several televised debates. This time, the mainstream call of candidates is focusing



on the imperative of an inward looking economy to ensure its sustained growth and development. Accordingly, there are much heated debate among Iranians on how the next president would and should

tackle the problems facing the country, especially at a time when the nation has been the target of economic terrorism and the toughest unjust and inhumane sanctions imposed by the United States on the Iranian

people to punish them for their steadfastness on independence and the non-aligned path carved by the Islamic Revolution.

Contrary to the biased narrative on Iran's domestic dynamics and regardless of any poll results, the ongoing debate on the best direction of economy and other internal and foreign policy related issues indicates that thanks to the large degree of democracy existing in the country, the debates are not restricted and the candidates freely question and discuss every aspect.

Now, as a result of a vibrant political system in Iran which is a source of strength and sustainability, it has been more than four decades that, the Iranian people have been standing firm in safeguarding the values and achieving the aspirations of the Islamic Revolution in the face of all the hostilities and the conspiracies orchestrated against them by those who have been bent on breaking the people's will and bringing down the Islamic establishment.

In summary, Iran has exercised a dynamic and unique political system in more than four decades after its establishment, manifested in regular and frequent elections at an inclusive participation of its people. No matter what the result would be the day after the elections, the significant outcome would be the evolving dynamism of the political system in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

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

The author is Iran's ambassador to India

A \$50,000 HELMET.

Can Read User's Mind. And It's Ready

Over the next few weeks, a company called Kernel will begin sending dozens of customers across the U.S. a \$50,000 helmet that can, crudely speaking, read their mind. Weighing a couple of pounds each, the helmets contain nests of sensors and other electronics that measure and analyze a brain's electrical impulses and blood flow at the speed of thought, providing a window into how the organ responds to the world. The basic technology has been around for years, but it's usually found in room-size machines that can cost millions of dollars and require patients to sit still in a clinical setting.

The promise of a leagues-more-affordable technology that anyone can wear and walk around with is, well, mind-bending. Excited researchers anticipate using the helmets to gain insight into brain aging, mental disorders, concussions, strokes, and the mechanics behind previously meta-physical experiences such as meditation and psychedelic trips. "To make progress on all the fronts that we need to as a society, we have to bring the brain online," says Bryan Johnson, who's spent more than five years and raised about \$110 million-half of it his own money-to develop the helmets.

Johnson is the chief executive officer of Kernel, a startup that's trying to build and sell thousands, or even millions, of lightweight, relatively inexpensive helmets that have the oomph and precision needed for what neuroscientists, computer scientists, and electrical engineers have been trying to do for years: peer through the human skull outside of university or government labs. In what must be some kind of record for rejection, 228 investors passed on Johnson's sales pitch, and the CEO, who made a fortune from his previous company in the payments industry, almost zeroed out his bank account last year to keep Kernel running. "We were two weeks away from missing payroll," he says. Although Kernel's tech still has much to prove, successful demonstrations, conducted shortly before Covid-19 spilled across the globe, convinced some of Johnson's doubters that he has a shot at fulfilling his ambitions.

A core element of Johnson's pitch is "Know thyself," a phrase that harks back to ancient Greece, underscoring how little we've learned about our head since Plato. Scientists have built all manner of tests and machines to measure our heart, blood, and even DNA, but brain tests remain rare and expensive, sharply limiting our data on the organ that most defines us. "If you went to a cardiologist and they asked you how your heart feels, you would think they are crazy," Johnson says. "You would ask them to measure your blood pressure and your cholesterol and all of that."

The first Kernel helmets are headed to brain research institutions and, perhaps less nobly, companies that want to harness insights about how people think to shape their products. (Christof Koch, chief scientist at the Allen Institute for Brain Science in Seattle, calls Kernel's devices "revolutionary.") By 2030, Johnson says, he wants to bring down the price to the smartphone range and put a helmet in every American household—which starts to sound as if he's pitching a panacea. The helmets, he says, will allow people to finally take their mental health seriously, to get along better, to examine the mental effects of the pandemic and even the root causes of American political polarization. If the Biden administration wanted to fund such research, Johnson says, he'd be more than happy to sell the feds a million helmets and get started: "Let's do the largest brain study in history and try to unify ourselves and get back to a steady state."

Johnson is something of a measurement obsessive. He's at the forefront of what's known as the quantified-self movement. Just about every cell in his body has been repeatedly analyzed and attended to by a team of doctors, and their tests now cast him as a full decade younger than his 43 years. Along those lines, he wants to let everyone else analyze, modify, and perfect their minds. No one knows what the results will be, or even if this is a good idea, but Johnson has taken it upon himself to find out.

Unlike many of his tech-millionaire peers, Johnson grew up relatively poor. Born

batches of wheat to make bread. "We were not like my friends," he says. "They would buy things from stores, and we just did not do that." His dad, a trash collector turned lawyer, had a drug problem and an affair, which led to his divorce from Huff. Later, delinquent child support payments, missed pickups on the weekends, and legal troubles contributed to his disbarment. "After some time of challenge, my father successfully overhauled his life 20 years ago," Johnson says. "Throughout his struggles, we remained close and without conflict. He has been a unique source of wisdom, counsel, and stability in my life."

Johnson had little idea what to do with his life until he served a two-year church mission in Ecuador, where he interacted with people living in huts with dirt floors and walls made of mud and hay. "When I came back, the only thing I cared about was how to do the most good for the most people," he says. "Since I didn't have any skills, I decided to become an entrepreneur."

While at Brigham Young University, he started his own business selling cell-phones and service plans, making enough money to hire a team of salespeople. After that, he invested in a real estate development company that collapsed and left him \$250,000 in debt. To get out of the hole, he took a job selling credit card processing services to small businesses door to door. Soon he was the company's top salesman.

This was the mid-2000s, and Johnson's customers kept complaining about the hassle of setting up and maintaining credit card payment systems on their websites. In 2007 he started Braintree, a software company focused on easing the process with slick interfaces. It succeeded—and had good timing. After signing up a slew of restaurants, retailers, and other small businesses, Braintree became the middleman of choice for a profusion of startups premised on ordering services online, including Airbnb, OpenTable, and Uber. The company also made a great bet on mobile payments, acquiring Venmo for only \$26 million in 2012. The next year, eBay bought Braintree for \$800 million in cash, a little less than half of which went to Johnson.

Despite his newfound fortune, Johnson felt miserable. He was stressed out and overweight. He'd gotten married and had kids at a young age, but his marriage was falling apart, and he was questioning his life, religion, and identity. He says he entered a deep depressive spiral that included suicidal thoughts.

The decision to sell Braintree well before it peaked in value had been motivated in part by Johnson's need to change those patterns. "Once I had money, it was the first time in my life that I could eliminate all perimeter structures," he says. "I could do whatever I wanted." He broke with the Mormon church, got divorced, and moved from Chicago, where Braintree was headquartered, to Los Angeles to start over.

Arriving in California, Johnson consulted with all manner of doctors and mental health specialists. His bodily health improved with huge changes to his diet, exercise, and sleep routines. His mind proved a tougher puzzle. He meditated and studied cognitive science, particularly the ways people develop biases, in an effort to train himself to think more rationally. By late 2014 he was convinced his wealth would be best spent advancing humanity's understanding of the brain. He took a large portion of his windfall and started OS Fund, a venture firm that has invested in several artificial intelligence and biotech companies. These include Ginkgo Bioworks, Pivot Bio, Synthego, and Vicarious, some of the most promising startups trying to manipulate DNA and other molecules.

Mostly, though, Johnson staked his fortune on Kernel. When he founded the company, in 2015, his plan was to develop surgical implants that could send information back and forth between humans and computers, the way Keanu Reeves downloads kung fu into his brain in The Matrix. (In the early days, Johnson discussed a potential partnership with Elon Musk, whose company Neuralink Corp. has put implants in pigs and monkeys, but nothing came of it.) The idea was, in part, to transfer thoughts and feelings directly from one consciousness to another, to convey emotions and ideas to other people more richly than human language allows.

Perhaps more important, Johnson reckoned, AI technology was getting so powerful that for human intelligence to remain relevant, the brain's processing power would need to keep pace.

Johnson and I began discussing brains in mid-2018, when I was working on a story about the overlap between neuroscience and AI software. During an initial interview at his company's headquarters in L.A.'s Venice neighborhood, Johnson was cordial but somewhat vague about his aims. But at the end of the visit, I happened to mention the time I underwent a mental healing ritual that involved a Chilean shaman burning holes in my arm and pouring poisonous frog secretions into the wounds. (I do mention this a lot.) Excited, Johnson replied that he had a personal shaman in Mexico and doctors in California who guided him



on drug-induced mind journeys. Based on this common ground, he decided to tell me more about Kernel's work and his own adventurous health practices.

By then, Johnson had abandoned neural implants in favor of helmets. The technology needed to make implants work is difficult to perfect—among other things, the human body tends to muddy the devices' signals over time, or to reject them outright—and the surgery seemed unlikely to go mainstream. With the helmets, the basic principle remained the same: put tiny electrodes and sensors as close as possible to someone's neurons, then use the electrodes to detect when neurons fire and relay that information to a computer. Watch enough of these neurons fire in enough people, and we may well begin to solve the mysteries of the brain's fine mechanics and how ideas and memories form.

On and off for almost three years, I've watched as Kernel has brought its helmets into reality. During an early visit to the company's two-story headquarters in a residential part of Venice, I saw that Johnson's team had converted the garage into an optics lab full of mirrors and high-end lasers. Near the entryway sat a shed-size metallic cube designed to shield its contents from electromagnetic interference. On the second floor, dozens of the world's top neuroscientists, computer scientists, and materials experts were tinkering with early versions of the helmets alongside piles of other electrical instruments. At that point the helmets looked less like 21st century gadgets and more like something a medieval knight might wear into battle, if he had access to wires and duct tape.

Despite the caliber of his team, Johnson and his odd devices were considered toys by outsiders. "The usual Silicon Valley people and investors would not even talk to us or poke around at all," he says. "It became clear that we would have to spend the time, and I would have to spend the money, to show people something and demonstrate it working."

A hospital or research center will typically employ a range of instruments to analyze brains. The list is a smorgasbord of acronyms: fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging), fNIRS (functional near-infrared spectroscopy), EEG (electroencephalography), MEG (magnetoencephalography), PET (positron emission tomography), etc. (et cetera). These machines measure a variety of things, from electrical activity to blood flow, and they do their jobs quite well. They're also enormous, expensive, and not easily condensed into helmet form.

In some cases the machines' size owes in part to components that shield the patient's head from the cacophony of electrical interference present in the world. This allows the sensors to avoid distracting signals and capture only what's happening in the brain. Conversely, signals from the machines need to penetrate the human skull, which happens to be well-evolved to prevent penetration. That's part of the argument for implants: They nestle sensors right up against our neurons, where the signals come in loud and clear.

It's unlikely a helmet will ever gain the level of information an implant can, but Kernel has striven to close the gap by shrinking its sensors and finding clever ways to block electromagnetic interference. Among its breakthroughs, Johnson's team designed lasers and computer chips that were able to see and record more brain activity than any previous technology. Month after month, the helmet became more refined, polished, and lightweight as the team made and remade dozens of prototypes. The only trick was that, to suit the different applications Johnson envisioned for the helmet, Kernel wound up needing to develop two separate devices to mimic all the key functions of more traditional machines.

One of the devices, called Flow, looks like a high-tech bike helmet, with several brushed aluminum panels that wrap around the head and have small gaps between them. Flip it over, and you'll see a ring of sensors inside. A wire at the back

can be connected to a computer system.

This helmet measures changes in blood oxygenation levels. As parts of the brain activate and neurons fire, blood rushes in to provide oxygen. The blood also carries proteins in the form of hemoglobin, which absorbs infrared light differently when transporting oxygen. (This is why veins are blue, but we bleed red.) Flow takes advantage of this phenomenon by firing laser pulses into the brain and measuring the reflected photons to identify where a change in blood oxygenation has occurred. Critically, the device also measures how long the pulse takes to come back. The longer the trip, the deeper the photons have gone into the brain. "It's a really nice way to distill out the photons that have gone into the brain vs. ones that only hit the skull or scalp and bounced away," says David Boas, a professor of biomechanical engineering and director of the Neurophotonics Center at Boston University.

The other Kernel helmet, Flux, measures electromagnetic activity. As neurons fire and alter their electrical potential, ions flow in and out of the cells. This process produces a magnetic field, if one that's very weak and changes its behavior in milliseconds, making it extremely difficult to detect. Kernel's technology can discover these fields all across the brain via tiny magnetometers, which gives it another way to see what parts of the organ light up during different activities.

The helmets are not only smaller than the devices they seek to replace, but they also have better bandwidth, meaning researchers will receive more data about the brain's functions. According to the best current research, the Flow device should help quantify tasks related to attention, problem-solving, and emotional states, while Flux should be better suited to evaluating brain performance, learning, and information flow. Perhaps the No. 1 thing that has scientists gushing about Kernel's machines is their mobility—patients' ability to move around wearing them in day-to-day settings. "This unlocks a whole new universe of research," Boas says. "What makes us human is how we interact with the world around us." The helmets also give a picture of the whole brain, as opposed to implants, which look solely at particular areas to answer more specific questions, according to Boas.

Once their Kernel helmets arrive, Boas and his colleagues plan to observe the brains of people who've had strokes or suffer from diseases such as Parkinson's. They want to watch what the brain does as individuals try to relearn how to walk and speak and cope with their conditions. The hope is that this type of research could improve therapy techniques. Instead of performing one brain scan before the therapy sessions start and another only after months of work, as is the practice today, researchers could scan the brain each day and see which exercises make the most difference.

Devices are also going out to Harvard Medical School, the University of Texas, and the Institute for Advanced Consciousness Studies (a California lab focused on researching altered states) to study such things as Alzheimer's and the effect of obesity on brain aging, and to refine meditation techniques. Cybin Inc., a startup aiming to develop therapeutic mental health treatments based on psychedelics, will use the helmets to measure what happens when people trip.

All of this thrills Johnson, who continues to harbor the grandest of ambitions for Kernel. He may have given up on computer-interfacing implants, but he still wants his company to help people become something more than human.

A couple years ago, Johnson and I boarded his private jet and flew from California to Golden, Colo. Johnson, who has a pilot's license, handled the takeoffs and landings but left the rest to a pro. We were in Colorado to visit a health and wellness clinic run by physician-guru Terry Grossman and have a few procedures done to improve our bodies and minds.

The Grossman Wellness Center looked like a cross between a medical clinic and the set of Cocoon. Most of the other guests were elderly. In a large central room, about 10 black leather chairs and matching footrests were arranged in a loose circle. Each chair held a couple of fluffy white pillows, with a metal pole on the side for our IV drips. A few of the ceiling tiles had been replaced and fitted with pictures of clouds and palm trees. In rooms off to the side, medical personnel performed consultations and procedures.

Our morning began with an IV infusion of two anti-aging fluids: Myers' Cocktail—a blend of magnesium, calcium, B vitamins, vitamin C, and other good stuff—followed by a helping of nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide. Some of the IV fluids can trigger nausea, but Johnson set the drip to maximum and complemented the IV by having a fiber-optic cable fed into his veins to pepper his blood with red, green, blue, and yellow wavelengths of light for added rejuvenation. "I have to experience pain when I exercise or work," he said, adding that the suffering makes him feel alive.

A few hours later, Johnson went into one of the treatment rooms with Grossman to get a stem cell injection straight into his brain. Earlier he'd provided 5 ounces of his blood, which had then been spun in a centrifuge so Grossman could separate out the plasma and put it through a secret process to "activate the stem cells." Now, Johnson hopped onto a reclined exam table, lying on his back with his head angled toward the floor. Grossman pulled out a liquid-filled syringe. Instead of a needle at the end, it had a 4-inch-long, curved plastic tube, which the doctor coated with some lubricating jelly. He pushed the tube into one of Johnson's nostrils, told the patient to take a big sniff, then pinched Johnson's nose shut. They repeated the process for

older internally than his chronological age, but a couple of years into his regimen under Grossman, when he was in his early 40s, his doctors were telling him he was testing like a man in his late 30s.

During one of our most recent conversations, Johnson tells me he's stopped snorting stem cells and experimenting with hallucinogens. "I got what I wanted from that and don't need to mess with it right now," he says. After many tests and much analysis, he's discovered he operates best if he wakes up at 4 a.m., consumes 2,250 calories of carefully selected food over the course of 90 minutes, and then doesn't eat again for the rest of the day. Every 90 days he goes through another battery of tests and adjusts his diet to counteract any signs of inflammation in his body. He goes to bed each night between 8 and 8:30 p.m. and continues to measure his sleep metrics. "I have done tremendous amounts of trial and error to figure out what works best for my health," he says. "I have worked very hard to figure these algorithms out."

In terms of what our birth certificates say, Johnson and I are the same age. He'll turn 44 in August, a month before I do. To someone like me, who prizes late nights with friends, food, and drink, Johnson's rigid lifestyle doesn't exactly sound romantic. But it does seem to be paying off: When he last got tested, he had the exercise capacity of someone in his late teens or early 20s, and a set of DNA and other health markers pegged his age at somewhere around 30. As for me, I lack the courage to ask science what it makes of my innards and will go on celebrating my dad bod.

As Johnson sees it, had he not changed his lifestyle, he'd have remained depressed and possibly died far too young. Now he does what the data say and nothing else. "I did a lot of damage to myself working 18-hour days and sleeping under a desk," he says. "You might earn the praise of your peers, but I think that sort of lifestyle will very quickly be viewed as primitive." He says he's at war with his brain and its tendencies to lead him astray. "I used to binge-eat at night and could not stop myself," he says. "It filled me with shame and guilt and wrecked my sleep, which crushed my willpower. My mind was a terrible actor for all those years. I wanted to remove my mind from the decision-making process."

The nuance in his perspective can be tricky to navigate. Johnson wants to both master the mind and push it to the side. He maintains, however, that our brain is flawed only because we don't understand how it works. Put enough Kernel devices on enough people, and we'll find out why our brain allows us to pursue addictive, debilitating behaviors—to make reckless decisions and to deceive ourselves. "When you start quantifying the mind, you make thought and emotion an engineering discipline," he says. "These abstract thoughts can be reduced to numbers. As you measure, you move forward in a positive way, and the quantification leads to interventions."



the other nostril. The procedure looked incredibly uncomfortable, but again, Johnson was unfazed, pulling in the stem cells with determination and excitement.

This snorting procedure—designed to improve mood, energy, and memory—was just a small part of Johnson's overall health regimen. Each morning the CEO took 40 pills to boost his glands, cell membranes, and microbiome. He also used protein patches and nasal sprays for other jobs. After all this, he did 30 minutes of cardio and 15 minutes of weights. At lunch he'd have some bone broth and vegetables foraged by his chef from the yards of houses in Venice. He might have a light dinner later, but he never consumed anything after 5 p.m. He went to bed early and measured his sleep performance overnight. Every now and then, a shaman or doctor would juice him up with some drugs such as ketamine or psilocybin. He'd taken strongly enough to these practices to tattoo his arm with "5-MeO-DMT," the molecular formula for the psychoactive compound famously secreted by the Sonoran Desert toad.

To make sure all his efforts were doing some good, Johnson had a lab measure his telomeres. These are the protective bits at the end of DNA strands, which some Nobel Prize-winning science has shown can be good indicators of how your body is aging. The longer the telomeres, the better you're doing. Johnson used to register as 0.4 years

Of course, not everyone will want to make decisions based on what a helmet says their brain activity means. Taking the decisions out of thought patterns or analyzing them for the purposes of market research and product design—poses its own, perhaps scarier, questions about the future of human agency. And that's if the Kernel devices can fulfill the company's broader ambitions. While the big, expensive machines in hospitals have been teaching us about the brain for decades, our understanding of our most prized organ has remained, in many ways, pretty basic. It's possible Kernel's mountain of fresh data won't be of the kind that translates into major breakthroughs. The brain researchers who are more skeptical of efforts such as Johnson's generally argue that novel insights about how the brain works—and, eventually, major leaps in brain-machine interfaces—will require implants.

Yet scientists who have watched Kernel's journey remark on how the company has evolved alongside Johnson, a complete outsider to the field. "Everybody he's recruited to Kernel is amazing, and he's been able to listen to them and motivate them," says MIT neuroscientist Edward Boyden. "He didn't have scientific training, but he asked really good questions." The test now will be to see how the company's devices perform in the field and if they really can create a whole new market where consumers buy Flow and Flux helmets alongside their Fitbits and Oura rings.



in 1977, he was raised in Springville, Utah, the third of five children. "We had very little and lived a very simple life," says his mother, Ellen Huff. A devout Mormon, she stayed home with the kids as much as possible and earned a modest income from a rental unit on the other side of the family's duplex.

Johnson remembers his mother knitting his clothes and grinding wholesales

IND VS NZ, WTC FINAL

BCCI President Sourav Ganguly Tells Virat Kohli What India Should Do



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Up against the "best New Zealand" side of the past 35 years, India should opt to bat first even if the conditions are overcast as that is what has worked best for the side during overseas tours, feels BCCI President and former captain Sourav Ganguly.

The decorated former batsman is hopeful that Virat Kohli's men will bring the World Test Championship trophy home but it won't be easy considering the quality and depth of the Kane Williamson-led Blackcaps.

"If you dig into the record books and see India's best overseas performances (save 2021 Australia), we have always won matches when we have batted first. It's about a choice whether you want to face the pressure first up in adverse conditions or wait for the fourth innings," Ganguly told 'Aaj Tak'.

"Look at Leeds in 2002 or 2018 South Africa, we batted first in bowling friendly conditions, soaked in the initial pressure, put runs on the board and that's how won those games.

"Even Mark Taylor or Steve Waugh's Australian teams rarely fielded even in seaming conditions. May be occasionally when

the wicket used to be damp," said Ganguly.

He didn't forget to mention that it will be a big responsibility for Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill to blunt the new ball attack of New Zealand and then England in subsequent Test engagement.

"Rohit and Shubman will need to give a good start. They have to at least bat 20 overs which will help Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant to work on the foundation laid by them."

He was all praise for the New Zealand team especially for having won a Test match against England without Williamson and Tim Southee.

"This is the best New Zealand team in last 30-35 years. They have beaten England in England. They will be high on confidence. India won't have it easy as they are playing good cricket," he said.

"It's not just about the win but also about how solid they looked as a team. They won without Williamson, Southee and Jamieson. That's why it was more satisfying and worth its weight in gold

"I liked the new guy Will Young. He played a good knock in Birmingham against Stuart Broad and James Anderson. India will take some time to settle having not played a lot of games but it will be good contest."

BCCI Appoints 2 BJP Spokespersons In 3-Member Panel To Run J&K Cricket



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has appointed two Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spokespersons in a three-member administrative panel established to oversee the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA).

In a statement, the BCCI said the appointments of Brigadier Anil Gupta and lawyer Sunil Sethi have come after a J&K High Court directive in April that asked the BCCI to run JKCA, whose previous administrators are under Government scanner for financial wrongdoings.

Former Delhi and J&K cricketer Mithun Manhas forms the third member of the committee.

According to reports, BCCI secretary Jay Shah personally called

Brigadier Gupta and asked him to take up the role.

"I got a call from BCCI secretary Jay Shah... asking me to come on board. I'm happy to be part of it. My job is to clear misdeeds of the past. BCCI has appointed us as they wanted men of integrity and they thought we are the best," Gupta told Indian Express.

Gupta further added that the 3-member panel will do its utmost to revive cricket in the Valley and that the committee plans to meet cricketers and coaches soon.

Advocate Sunil Sethi, who is also the chief spokesperson of BJP in J&K, told Times of India that the appointment of the BJP workers is professional and not political.

"The BCCI has appointed us based on our experience. I am a

legal expert who has represented JKCA in courts, Gupta has administrative experience and Manhas has cricketing expertise," Sethi told TOI.

Sethi asserted that sports activities have nothing to do with politics and that the selection of players will be based on merit.

The BCCI has also appointed Majid Dar, who has been tasked to look into the development of cricket in Srinagar and asked to report directly to the committee.

The BCCI said in a statement, that the newly formed committee shall at all times work under the supervision and the control of the BCCI top brass, consisting of president Sourav Ganguly, secretary Jay Shah, treasurer Arun Dhimal and vice-president Rajeev Shukla.

PSL 2021: Multan Sultans Knock Quetta Gladiators Out Of Playoffs With 110-Run Win

Agencies

ABU DHABI: Multan Sultans ended Quetta Gladiators' bid to qualify for the Pakistan Super League playoffs after a 110-run victory. Opener Shan Masood orchestrated Multan's healthy total of 183-5 with 73 off 42 balls before leg-spinner Imran Tahir's haul of 3-7 helped skittle out Quetta for 73 in 12.1 overs.

"We couldn't get the team combination right this season, especially with the foreign players," said Quetta captain Sarfaraz Ahmed.

Quetta's two leading foreign cricketers -- Andre Russell and Faf du Plessis -- suffered concussion during the early part of the Abu Dhabi leg of the Super League, taking the sting out of Sarfaraz's team.

In the absence of Russell and du Plessis, Quetta's two other foreign batsmen Jake Weatherald (19) and Cameroon Delpoit (0) fell

cheaply on Wednesday.

Earlier, after being put into bat, Masood dominated an opening stand of 72 with captain Mohammad Rizwan (21).

Masood hit seven fours and four sixes before being caught on the long-on boundary. Johnson Charles then smashed 47 off 24 balls.

Fourth-placed Multan now has eight points from eight matches.

"We play 10 matches so you need momentum somewhere," Rizwan said.

"We didn't get that in Karachi but have gelled well here in Abu Dhabi. Someone or the other keeps performing and that's giving us the results."

Islamabad United, on 12 points, is the only team to have qualified for the playoffs. Peshawar Zalmi and Lahore Qalandars have 10 points each, while defending champion Karachi Kings is fifth on 6 points.

From Playmaker To Pacemaker: How ICD Can Save Eriksen's Career

Agencies

COPENHAGEN: Christian Eriksen's football career could be saved by an implantable cardioverter defibrillator or ICD, a small battery-powered device to regulate his heartbeat following a cardiac arrest suffered on the pitch at a Euro 2020 game.

The Danish midfielder collapsed and received CPR on the pitch during their Group B clash with Finland in Copenhagen on Saturday, and on Thursday the Danish FA announced that he would have an ICD fitted.

Gunnar Gislason, head of research at the Danish Heart Foundation and a professor of cardiology, said that a return to elite sport after the insertion of an ICD is possible.

"It really depends on the condition you are treating, what kind of heart disease you are suffering from, that's very individual, (but) there are examples of top athletes that have come back to the field and restart normal activity," he said.

The operation to insert an ICD takes one to two hours and is done under local anaesthetic, Gislason explained, with patients usually kept in an extra day to calibrate the unit and ensure there are no issues with its operation.

"It's like a monitor, it monitors the rhythm of the heart. For most people, they will never have to use it, but for those who maybe have a serious cardiac arrhythmia or cardiac arrest, the ICD can detect it and respond to it," Gislason said.

Daley Blind, a former teammate of Eriksen's at Ajax Amsterdam, had an ICD fitted after collapsing in a friendly against

Hertha Berlin in 2020 and was part of the Netherlands side that faced Ukraine less than 24 hours after Eriksen's collapse.

After the game Blind spoke of his distress at seeing his friend fall to the ground, saying "it made me sleep badly and also really think about not playing, it was a big mental hurdle to overcome, but I'm glad I did".

Blind's career could have ended following his own collapse, but doctors inserted an ICD and he was cleared to return to football.

"It (the ICD) has two main functions. It can try to override the fast heart rhythm, and in that way take control of the rhythm of the heart and then slowly go down and restore the normal heart rhythm," Gislason explained.

"If it doesn't succeed with that, it will give a shock, like a normal defibrillator, and it will try to regenerate a normal heart rhythm in that way, so it's a life-saving device for those who have a serious cardiac arrhythmia or cardiac arrest."

Danish fans at Radhuspladsen in Copenhagen on Thursday were unanimous in their desire to see Eriksen back on the field.

"Christian Eriksen has to play—he's a national symbol, a legend, so of course I want him to play," Anton Olesen told reporters ahead of Denmark's second Group B game against Belgium.

"Of course, he should play again—if he's fit he should play again, but it's up to him to decide. As a Danish fan I would be sad if he didn't play again because he's the best player we have," his friend Jeppe Andersen added.

Italy Impress Again In 3-0 Win Over Switzerland At Euro 2020

Agencies

ROME: The wingers sprint forward like Ferraris. The midfielders are just as capable at scoring as the forwards. And the reserves look like starters.

A new-look Italy is impressing with its offensive flair at the European Championship.

Midfielder Manuel Locatelli scored two goals Wednesday and the Azzurri beat Switzerland 3-0 to become the first team to reach the last 16 at Euro 2020, and they

did it with a game to spare.

They also did it with their 10th consecutive victory.

"I'm fortunate to have great players who enjoy playing soccer, like to have fun and take some risks — which is the essence of soccer," Italy coach Roberto Mancini said.

As usual — and perhaps the only characteristic carried on from Italy teams of the past — the defense was impenetrable.

It's quite a turnaround for a team that failed to qualify for the 2018 World Cup.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION DIVISION PULWAMA NOTICE INVITING TENDER

FRESH SHORT TERM NIT NO. (10) OF 2021-22 (e-Tendering)

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K U.T. e-Tenders are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K U.T. for the following work which was already put to tenders vide Short Term NIT No 07of 2021-22(e-Tendering) Circulated Vide No. PID/CS/ 918-42 Dated 29-05-2021.

S. No.	Name of work	Adv. Cost In Lakhs	Cost of Tender Doc. In Rs.	Class of Contract	Head of Account
	Stage Contract for restoration & Maintenance of Irrigation Canals of Irrigation Sub Division Pulwama for the year 2021-22	2.00	200	DEE	2702-M&R

Position of Funds: Demanded.

The Bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, Set of terms and conditions and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:

01	Date of issue of Tender Notice	15-06-2021 (06.00 pm)
02	Date of start of downloading.	15-06-2021 (06.00 pm)
03	Bid submission start date Technical/ Financial.	15-06-2021 (06.00 pm)
04	Bid submission end date.	22-06-2021 (04.00 pm)
05	Date & Time of opening of Bids (online).	23-06-2021 (10.00 am)

Terms and Conditions:-

Bids must be accompanied with proof of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury receipt/e-challan under (MH: 0702- PWD Remittance) in favour of Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Pulwama (tender inviting authority The first lowest bidder has to produce an amount of 3% of Advertised cost in the shape of CDR/ FDR pledged to Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Pulwama (Tender Receiving Authority) within three days positively after opening of the tenders else his bid will be rejected and the 2nd lowest bidder will be called for the same.

These tenders are invited to meet the flood /Emergency situations whereby damages /disruptions are caused . The restoration of the damages are required to be combated on urgent and emergency basis. Therefore, the bidders are advised to quote their unit rates as per such emergency/urgency.

Any item or items of work found necessary for execution at the site and not covered in the allotted items of work, will be paid as per SSR 2020 with over all allotted appreciation/depreciation accepted by the allottee and other items not included in the SSR 2020 will be as per the LMR or analyzed rates respectively whichever is found lowest .

The allottee agency has to mobilize his resources like men /machinery /material for deployment within two hours, at multiple spots, immediately as and when directed by Engineer in charge , or by his authorized representative in any emergency as may arise , telephonically /SMS/ What's app / verbally. However, in case the allottee fails in this regard, the work shall be got executed by other agency at the risk, responsibility and cost of allottee. The number of men /Machinery and material deployed at multiple spots, shall be sufficient to tackle the situation during peak flood hours or at any kind of breach thereof caused due to floods etc. The machinery includes earth moving equipment's / excavators / tipper / tractors etc. The material means earth, sand, earth/sand filled bags and other allied materials required for flood mitigation measures/restoration measures as per the directions of Engineer-in-Charge.

The contract shall be valid upto 31-10-2021 from the issuance of formal LOI/ allotment by this office and the earnest money will be released only after the completion of the validity period.

The tender is floated only to mitigate the flood like situation, in the absence of such situation contractors can't claim for any work. Besides the scope of work, if required, involves temporary restoration like plugging of breaches, removal of obstructions, Laying of EC bags filled with Earth/sand, Temp. Strengthening of embankments, Channelization of water course etc

Payment shall be made as and when funds are made available.

The Lowest bidder has to submit hard copies of CDR/FDR/Treasury Receipt/E-Challan etc. in the office of Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Pulwama as per the time Schedule given above after opening of the tender.

The NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, Specification, Bill of Quantities (B.O.Q) set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Department website www.jktenders.gov.in. The tenders shall be uploaded in electronic format on the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in in the tenders uploaded on the website up to due date will be opened as per the schedule given above in the office of the Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Pulwama.

All other terms & conditions shall be the same as laid down in the PWD Form 25 (Double Agreement Form). No.: PID/CS 1245-69.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Irrigation Division Pulwama.

DIPK-3105/21

Indian Olympics Association Ropes In Virat Kohli-Backed MPL As Principal Sponsor

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Indian Olympic Association on Thursday roped in mobile gaming platform, MPL Sports Foundation as the principal sponsor of the country's contingent for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics and next year's Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

According to the IOA, the association with Mobile Premier League (MPL) is for one-and-a-half years and will end on December 31 next year.

"We are delighted to inform you that the IOA has entered a sponsorship agreement with MPL Sports Foundation

as the Principal Sponsor covering the Tokyo Olympic Games, 2022 Asian Games & Commonwealth Games," IOA president Narinder Batra and secretary general Rajeev Mehta said in a joint statement.

The statement further read that according to the terms and conditions of the sponsorship deal, MPL will pay a total of Rs 8 crore to IOA.

"...and in addition to this sports kit for the 2022 Asian Games and Commonwealth Games Indian contingent will also be supplied by them," it said.

The IOA also said that diary giant, Amul has agreed to be a sponsor for the Tokyo Games to be held from July 23 to August 8.

"Amul, who has supported us in the previous games also, has

come forward to support IOA for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. Amul's sponsorship is for Rs 1.00 Crore for a period till 31st December, 2021," the IOA top officials said.

"We are hopeful of bringing such more good news in the coming weeks as the talks are going on with some more sponsors."

IOA inked the deals days after dropping Chinese sportswear brand Li Ning as the Indian team's official kit sponsor for the Tokyo Olympics and stating that the country's athletes will wear unbranded apparel during the Games.



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL DIVISION SRINAGAR MECHANICAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, KASHMIR

Fax No: 0194-2497093 | email: xenmds@gmail.com | website: www.medkashmir.org |

GIST OF E-TENDER

NIT No:	MDS/TS /2021-22/28 /e-tendering
Date	14 .06.2021

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited on item rate basis from Registered and Reputed firms/contractors for the below mentioned supply:-

Name of the Work	Cost of Tender Doc. (In rupees)	Estimated Cost (In Rs)	EMD	Time of completion (in days)	Position of Funds
1	2	3	4	5	6
Supply of spares and allied repairs to Ambassador Car (JK01H-3718) of J&K LAWDA Srinagar.	200/-	95,622/-	In shape of Bid Security declaration	15 Days	Available with the Indenting Department

Downloading of Bids: The Tender document 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 Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in from 16-06-2021 (16.00 Hrs)

Submission of Bids: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above website from 16-06-2021 (16 :00 Hrs) to 22-06-2021 (18 :00 Hrs) in two covers. Opening of Bids: The bid uploaded on the Web Site up to due date and time will be opened on 23-06-2021 (14.00 hrs) in the Office of the Chief Engineer, Mechanical Division Srinagar.

No: MDS/ TS- 694/1246-50
DIPK-3052/21

Date: 14 .06. 2021

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Mechanical Division, Srinagar

the seriousness of the issue and not exhibit any kind of

reports said. Meanwhile, a senior police official said that a case under the relevant law has been registered in the Sopore police station.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer
R&B Division Chadoora**

J&K Bank Posts Rs 315.75 Cr As Profit For Q4, Highest Since Jan-March 2014



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Posting its highest quarterly profit since January-March quarter of FY 2013-14, J&K Bank on Thursday capped its incredibly progressive performance by delivering Q4 profits of Rs 315.75 Cr despite COVID-19 pandemic induced disruptions while clocking decent annual profits of Rs 432.12 Cr for the Financial Year 2020-21.

In a statement, the bank declared its Q4 and FY 2020-21 annual results today after the Bank's Board of Directors approved the numbers in a meeting held here at the bank's Corporate Headquarters.

Highlights of Performance

In one of the sharpest turnarounds of financials in its history, J&K Bank's Q-o-Q profit jumped more than four times to Rs 315.75 Cr for the fourth quarter of FY 2020-21 from Rs 65.94 Cr recorded for the third quarter of the financial year. The bank's operating income increased by 6% YoY to Rs 4489.77 Cr from Rs 4252.59 Cr recorded for the corresponding period last year.

The operating profit of the bank for the financial year is up by 6% YoY to Rs 1611.23 Cr as against Rs 1525.05 Cr recorded on March 31, 2020, while as the Net Interest Income has increased to Rs 3770.78 Cr from Rs 3706.67 Cr. The Net Interest Margin (NIM) for the reviewed financial year is 3.64%.

Boosted by the contribution by the treasury operations bank's other income increased from Rs 546 Cr in FY 19-20 to Rs 719 Cr in FY 20-21 registering a YoY growth of 32%.

"It is really an outstanding turnaround in numbers amid the

devastating impact of the second-wave of COVID-19 pandemic across the country. We have successfully braved the challenges with our steely resolve, prudent balance-sheet management and effective guidance from our Directors-on-Board. The numbers especially of Q4 results are very encouraging and will generate a long-term organisational momentum for the steady growth of business while cementing our collective resolve to march ahead and implement the government's vision of self-reliant, entrepreneur-friendly and socially-inclusive economy", commented the Bank's Chairman & Managing Director R K Chhibber on the occasion.

Increase in Provisioning

Creating sufficient provisioning buffer to strengthen its balance sheet further, the Bank's Provision Coverage Ratio for the reviewed quarter has improved to 81.97 % - one of the highest in the industry - as against 78.59 % recorded during the corresponding period last year.

Improved Asset Quality

Bank's net NPA's as percentage to net Advances ratio has significantly declined to 2.95 % from 3.48 % while as the Gross NPA ratio has reduced sharply to 9.67% from 10.97% recorded as on March 31, 2020.

Regarding the bank's asset-quality, the CMD asserted, "It is because of the war-footing efforts put in at all levels of operations by the staff soon after Honourable Supreme Court withdrew its direction to banks to withhold the classification of accounts as NPAs. Notably, we were able to restrict our slippages to below Rs 1000 Cr as against the proforma NPA figure of about Rs 4600 Cr disclosed in our Q3 results. Despite getting a short window of just 7 days post revocation of earlier directions by the honorable Supreme Court, we successfully conformed with the assertions and assurances given to the market."

Director Agriculture Kashmir Flags-Off Vegetable Consignment To Different Mandis

KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: The Director Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Department Kashmir, Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal today flagged-off a consignment of 35 load carriers carrying fresh vegetables to the different markets and mandis in and outside of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

These fresh vegetables were procured from the different areas of valley including Safanagri Shopian, Chadoora Budgam and zone Qamarwari Srinagar etc.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director said that in order to provide multiple marketing channels to the vegetable farmers of the valley for their produce and to offer fresh vegetables of valley to the customers from different parts of the country, this initiative has been taken by the

Department.

He said proper marketing and value addition of the agriculture produce and the produce from allied sectors like Apiculture, Mushroom etc is a priority of the department.

Iqbal said that the farmers are now coming forward to adopt organic and exotic vegetable cultivation because of its economic sustainability and multi fold profitability. He appreciated the vegetable farmers of these areas and assured them of every possible support from the department in future also.

He asked the concerned officers to work in close coordination with the farmers and make sure that they get all the necessary technical support from the department.

Director Agriculture was accompanied by Deputy Director Law Enforcement Kashmir Mohammad Younis Chowdhary and some other senior officers.

Tourism Players Getting Queries, Hopeful Of Good Season Once Situation Improves: Hafeez



Agencies

SRINAGAR: With the Covid-19 positivity graph showing a decreasing trend in Kashmir, Commissioner Secretary Tourism Sarmad Hafeez on Thursday held a review meeting at SKICC regarding the ongoing vaccination and other measures taken by the tourism department.

Commissioner Secretary Tourism Sarmad Hafeez while speaking to news agency, said that there has been a good improvement in Covid-19 situation in the valley along with the other parts of the country, and people who are associated with the travel trade industry are getting queries.

"We are hopeful of a good season once the Covid situation stabilizes," Hafeez said.

On the current Covid-19 situation in the valley, Hafeez said it is a developing situation, and

the government is monitoring and reacting accordingly.

"Currently we are focusing on vaccination and training. Anyone who comes to Jammu and Kashmir feels safe while they interface with a cab driver, hotel staff, waiters, houseboat staff, shikarawallas, or with any person associated with the tourism industry," he said.

"After the Lt. Governor directed to ramp up the vaccination in the entire UT, the tourism department and stakeholders associated with the industry are ensuring 100 percent compliance, and so far we have received a good response," Hafeez said.

While talking about the Capacity Building Measure Programs, he said, after much deliberation it was decided that stakeholders associated with the industry who have direct interface with the tourists, need to be trained

CURRENTLY WE ARE FOCUSING ON VACCINATION AND training.

Anyone who comes to Jammu and Kashmir feels safe while they interface with a cab driver, hotel staff, waiters, houseboat staff, shikarawallas, or with any person associated with the tourism industry,"

Delegation Of PHD-Chambers Of Commerce & Industry Kashmir Call On DC Srinagar

KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: A delegation of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Kashmir Chapter led by its Chairman, Baldev Singh Raina on Thursday called on the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad to acknowledge the contribution of 'Corona Warriors' during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The delegation felicitated the Deputy Commissioner who is also the Chairman District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Srinagar and presented him a memento for his tireless efforts in Covid-19 mitigation measures.

During the meeting, the delegation put forth several suggestions with regard to the livelihood scenario of district Srinagar and overall Covid-19 containment and management aspects.

The delegation stressed that collective efforts of stakeholders and Administration are necessary to defeat the Covid-19 pandemic and strict adherence to the Covid-19 SOPs and vaccination is the only remedy to control the infection of deadly Coronavirus virus.

The DC sought cooperation from the business community to complete Covid vaccination pro-



cess in the district.

They said people should come forward for vaccination for the expected jump in vaccine inoculation to safeguard every one from Covid-19.

It was added that vaccination camps need to setup in colonies, societies, industrial estates and other important places with the support of local Mohalla Committees and Tourism stakeholders to push the vaccination drive.

The delegation also brought various issues pertaining to socio-economic development, livelihood security for marginalised besides revival of Busi-

ness and Tourism industry.

The delegation also demanded that public parks and gardens be thrown open for public with strict adherence to Covid-19 protocols.

The DC gave patient hearing to the delegation and assured that all their issues will be taken with concerned for early redressal.

The members who were part of the delegation include Mush-taq Ahmad Chaya, Vicky Shaw, Jan Muhammad Kaul and Himayu Wani.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Syed Hanief Balkhi and Chief Planning Officer were present on the occasion.

SDD Approves IAI Plan Under STRIVE Project

Plan To Ensure Capacity Building, Apprenticeship Of Dozens Each Year



KO NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: The UT steering committee meeting chaired by Principal Secretary, Skill Development Department (SDD), Dr Asgar Hassan Samoon today approved the Industry Apprenticeship Initiative (IAI) plan under STRIVE project submitted by Industry Cluster (IC), Bari Brahmana, Jammu.

The plan is the beginning of Result Area-4 of this World Bank funded, centrally sponsored project under which improved and broadened apprenticeship training has to be imparted to member firms and facilitate registering of apprentices on apprenticeship portal and signing apprenticeship contracts thereof.

The meeting was attended by Director SDD, representatives from DG Employment & Training, GoI, Finance, PWD, Joint Directors of SDD, ITI Principals, representatives of Industrial bodies and many others.

Outside station participants joined the meeting through video conferencing.

Speaking in the meeting, Asgar Samoon impressed upon the officers to increase the industry-academia partnerships so that the youth can be trained as per the requirements of the industries.

He asked the officers to optimally utilize the services of two premier institutes, CIIT Jammu and CIIT Baramulla for skill upgradation of workforce besides attracting youth towards the courses offered by these institutes.

Samoon assured the officers that sufficient funds for all the skill plans as per the requirements of all districts would be made available under this plan for upgradation of infrastructure related to Skill Development.

The Principal Secretary further said that the Department is planning to start training program for health workers so that required workforce can be created in this sector.

Samoon also assured the industrialists of full support from the department and asked them for hand holding of youth so that their skills can be upgraded and made self reliant.

The meeting was informed that under IAI programme a sum of Rs 100 lacs has to be spent on the training of apprenticeship to member companies and their subsequent registration of apprentices under different trades.

It was given in the meeting that the selected IC has been shortlisted out of 12 clusters who participated in the process as per standard evaluation procedure as per the given operational manual. And a tripartite grant agreement stands signed between GoI, local government and IC.

It was also said that 22 member companies of this IC would participate in which capacity building of about 120 member companies shall be conducted. Around 70 apprentices would be taken for training by these member companies during the first year of this programme.

Unfair Practices Of E-Commerce Websites Affect Business In Kashmir: KRA

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Accusing the e-commerce websites like Amazon and Flipkart and many other foreign-funded e-commerce companies of indulging into unethical business practices, Farhan Kitab, President of Kashmir Retailers Association (KRA) said the malpractice has badly affected business of traders in the valley.

In a statement issued to the news agency, Kitab supported the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) for the launch of "e-commerce purification week" from Monday to June 21, which is gaining massive support from thousands of trade associations across the Country.

Farhan said as a part of the event, a memorandum would be handed over to district Commissioner Srinagar and to other con-

cerned in Jammu and Kashmir.

Kitab said the way foreign companies like Amazon and Flipkart defied all the laws of the country, adopting predatory pricing, deep discounting, loss funding, controlling inventory, and adoption of preferential sellers have killed the small businesses in Kashmir.

During the e-commerce purification campaign, the trade organizations across the country will hand over a memorandum to the District Collectors in all states in the Country.

On the other hand, the trade delegations will meet the Chief Ministers and Finance Ministers of their respective States urging them to set up a monitoring mechanism for e-commerce trade in the State for ensuring strict implementation of FDI in e-commerce policy of the Government—(KNO)

NEWS MAKERS

Airtel Deploys Additional 30 MHz Spectrum In J&K, Ladakh To Boost Network Capacity

Agencies

JAMMU: Telecom operator Bharti Airtel on Thursday said it has upgraded its mobile network in the twin Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh to deliver the best network experience for its customers.

Airtel has over 5.59 million customers in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and its network covers 91.13 per cent of the population of both the UTs.

"Airtel has deployed additional 30 MHz spectrum in the 1800/2300 MHz bands along with advanced network software tools to bolster high speed data capacity in its network," the company said in a statement here.



Of this, 20 Mhz has been added in the 2300 band and 10 Mhz in 1800 Mhz band.

"It will enable improved network availability and data speeds along with better coverage inside homes and buildings in urban and rural areas. It also allows Airtel to offer wider coverage along highways and rail routes as well as increase footprint in villages as more people access high-speed data services," the statement said.

With the addition of this spectrum, which was acquired

during the latest spectrum auctions, Airtel has the largest spectrum bank of 71.2 MHz in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

Airtel Hub CEO Upper North, Manu Sood said, with the highest spectrum holding at 71.2 MHz in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Airtel is well positioned to meet the surging demand for high-speed data.

"We remain obsessed with delivering a world-class service experience to our customers and continue to invest aggressively in new spectrum and network upgrades at a

time when our customers need it the most," he said referring to the ongoing coronavirus-induced lockdown, closure of educational institutions and dependence of students on online mode of learning.

Following the pandemic, the adoption of the work from home, online classes, and video streaming has witnessed a massive surge.

"Airtel's intervention to build additional capacities will go a long way in helping customers stay connected," Sood said.

He said Airtel has also deployed advanced network technologies and tools such as pre-5G Massive MIMO, 4G Advanced and Carrier Aggregation to step up high speed network capacity and coverage.

Edible Oil Prices Down Up To 20% In Certain Categories, Says Govt

IANs

NEW DELHI: Prices of edible oil are showing a declining trend across a wide array of oils, the Food and Consumer Affairs Ministry said on Wednesday.

As per the data from the Department of Consumer Affairs, the prices of edible oils are now coming down over the past month, and in some cases, the decline is by as much as nearly 20 per cent, as shown in prices in Mumbai.

It said the price of palm oil was Rs 142 per kg on May 7 but has come down to Rs 115 per kg, a drop of 19 per cent, and of sunflower oil, which was Rs 188 per kg on May 5, is now at Rs 157 per kg, a drop of 16 per cent.

The price of soya oil was Rs 162 per kg on May 20, but has dropped 15 per cent to Rs 138 per kg in Mumbai, while mustard oil, which was Rs 175 per kg on May 16, is now down to Rs 157 per kg, a drop of nearly 10



per cent, and groundnut oil at Rs 190 per kg on May 14 has now down to Rs 174 per kg, a drop of 8 per cent.

Vanaspatti was Rs 154 per kg on May 2 and now has come down to Rs 141 per kg, a drop of 8 per cent.

The Ministry said the prices of edible oil are dependent on a complex set of factors which also include international prices, and domestic production. As the gap between

domestic consumption and production is high, India has to import a significant amount of edible oil, it said, adding that the government is working on a series of mid- and long-term measures to resolve the issue on a permanent basis.

The measures will contribute towards making India 'Atma Nirbhar' in edible oils, which is a key ingredient in cooking of food in India.

India Maintains 43rd Rank On IMD's World Competitiveness Index; Switzerland Tops Chart



NEW DELHI: India maintained 43rd rank on an annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by the Institute for Management Development (IMD) that examined the impact of Covid-19 on economies around the world this year.

The 64-nation list was led by Switzerland, while Sweden has moved up to the second position (from sixth last year), Denmark has lost one place to rank third, the Netherlands has retained its fourth place and Singapore has slipped to the fifth place (from first in 2020).

At eighth, Taiwan reached the top-10 for the first time since the ranking began 33 years ago (moving up from 11th last year). The UAE and the USA remain in their same spots as last year (9th and 10th, respectively).

The top-performing Asian economies are, in order, Singapore (fifth), Hong Kong (seventh), Taiwan (eighth) and China (16th).

The IMD World Competitiveness Ranking ranks 64 economies and assesses the extent to which a country promotes the prosperity of its people by measuring economic well-being through hard data and survey responses from executives. This year, the rankings expose the economic impact of the pandemic across the globe.

Among the BRICS nations, India is ranked second after China (16), followed by Russia (45th), Brazil (57th) and South Africa (62th).

India has maintained its position for the past three years but this year, it had significant improvements in government efficiency, IMD said.

"India's improvements in the government efficiency factor are mostly due to relatively stable public finances (despite difficulties brought by the pandemic, in 2020 the government deficit

stayed at 7 per cent) and to the positive feedbacks we registered among Indian business executives with respect to the support and subsidies provided by the government to the private companies," IMD said.

It, however, added that the short term performance of India's economy will depend on its ability to address the pandemic.

The report finds that qualities such as investment in innovation, digitalisation, welfare benefits and leadership, resulting in social cohesion have helped countries better weather the crisis the best and thus ranked higher in competitiveness.

The report said top-performing economies are characterised by varying degrees of investment in innovation, diversified economic activities, and supportive public policy, according to the experts at the World Competitiveness Center. "Strength in these areas prior to the pandemic allowed these economies to address the economic implications of the crisis more effectively," the report said.

Competitive economies succeeded in transitioning to a remote work routine while also allowing remote learning. Addressing unemployment has been fundamental.

Countries that ensured the effectiveness of key public spending, such as public finance, tax policy and business legislation, are seen as essential policies to relieve the pressure on the economies hit by Covid-19, the report said.

The ranking, produced annually by the IMD World Competitiveness Center, measures the prosperity and competitiveness of 64 nations by examining four factors—economic performance, government efficiency, business efficiency, and infrastructure. — PTI

Possible Third Covid Wave Unlikely To Affect Children, WHO-AIIMS Survey Reveals

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: A third possible wave in India by the prevailing Covid-19 virus variant is unlikely to disproportionately affect children than adults, a seroprevalence study conducted by the World Health Organisation and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences has revealed.

The SARS-CoV-2 sero-positivity rate among children was high and were comparable to the adult population in the survey, which conducted in five-selected states with a total sample size of 10,000.

Data of 4,500 participants were taken for the results of the time of mid-term analysis from four states of India and more results are likely to come in the next two to three months.

It was found that in resettlement colonies in South Delhi's urban areas which have a very congested population had a very high (highest reported yet in any sero-assessment) seroprevalence of 74.7 per cent, Dr Puneet Misra, Professor of Community Medicine at AIIMS, New Delhi, who led the survey said.

Even before the second wave, children below the age of 18 in South Delhi had as much seroprevalence (73.9 per cent) as the below 18 years (74.8 per cent).

"These areas in Delhi and NCR (Faridabad) may have higher sero-



prevalence after the intense second wave. Probably, these levels of seroprevalence may be protective against any 'Third wave'," Dr Misra said.

"In congested Urban areas of Delhi, since children already have high seroprevalence, opening schools, may after all not be a very risky proposition. During the second wave, the NCR region of Faridabad (rural area) has a seroprevalence of 59.3 per cent (almost equal in both age groups), could be considered high compared to previous national surveys," the survey said.

Gorakhpur Rural has a very high seroprevalence of 87.9 per cent (2-18 years) with 80.6 per cent and above 18 years with 90.3 per cent.

These levels are likely to ward off the "third wave". The survey says Gorakhpur is mostly affected in rural areas that means more chances of herd immunity.

The accelerated peaks and precipitous decline in Covid-19 cases in Both Delhi and Uttar Pradesh could be explained partially by these findings.

Overall, more than half (62.3 per cent) of the rural population surveyed showed evidence of past infection.

The Agartala Rural site had the least seroprevalence (51.9 per cent) probably because it also included some tribal population which generally have lower mobility resulting in lower vulnerability to infection.

Centre Makes Puc Certificate For All Vehicles Uniform Across Country, Introduces Rejection Slip

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has issued a notification to make the PUC (Pollution Under Control) certificate for all vehicles uniform across the country and also to link the PUC database with the National Register. The statement said the concept of rejection slip is being introduced for the first time.

After the changes in the Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989 by the road ministry, the QR code shall be printed on the PUC form and will have details of the vehicle, owner

and the status of the emission.

"The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has issued a notification dated 14th June, 2021, for a common format of the PUC Certificate to be issued across the country, under Central Motor Vehicle Rules 1989," an official statement said.

According to the statement, the new PUC will have vehicle owner's mobile number, name and address, engine number and chassis number.

"The owner's mobile number has been made mandatory, on which an SMS alert will be sent for validation and fee," it said.

In a first, vehicles found to be ex-

ceeding emission limits will be issued rejection slips, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said in a notification. "The concept of rejection slip is being introduced for the first time. A common format of rejection slip is to be given to the vehicle owner in case the test result value is more than the maximum permissible value, as mandated in the concerned emission norms," the ministry said.

It added that this document can be shown at the service centre for getting the vehicle serviced or can be used, in case the PUC centre device is not working properly when tested at another centre.

SC Gives Go Ahead To Schemes Of CBSE, CISCE For Evaluating Class 12 Students

Agenceis

The Supreme Court on Thursday accepted the formula of CBSE and CISCE to evaluate the Class 12 students, whose board examinations were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A special bench of Justices AM Khanwilkar and Dinesh Maheshari said after perusing the scheme presented by the concerned Boards, prima facie, we have no hesitation in accepting the same and permit the Boards to proceed on that basis.

The Centre told the bench that CBSE will be adopting 30:30:40 formula to evaluate class 12 students based on the results of Class-X, XI and XII examinations respectively.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) said that for evaluating Class XII students, after their board examinations were cancelled for the academic year 2020-21, it has entered into consultative process with stakeholders to know the factual position of the students and the schools.

The CBSE said that consultation process was held with principals of affiliated schools, feedback was obtained from 229 Sahodaya School Complex comprising of 7,734 schools and 13-members committee of experts.

Based on the recommendation given by the Committee, feedback received from Sahodaya School Complex, feedback received from school principals and representation received from various corners, CBSE has decided that the assessment of theory portion of Class-XII will be done by the schools, the CBSE affidavit filed in the top court said.

It said that theory paper evaluation formula will be of 30 per cent weightage will be given to class X marks, 30 percentage weightage to Class XI marks and 40 per cent weightage to Class XII marks obtained in unit test/mid-term/pre-board exams.

The CBSE said that 20 marks will be given for practical in class-XII and the result will be declared by July 31. The CBSE scheme further elaborated that for Class X-30 per cent marks based on average theory component of best three performing subjects out of main five subjects will be taken.

For Class XI-30 per cent marks based on theory component of final exam will be taken and for

Class XII-40 per cent marks based on unit test/mid-term/pre-board exams will be taken.

The marks of practical/internal assessment of Class XII will be on actual basis as uploaded by the school on the CBSE portal, the CBSE said, adding that the total marks awarded should be in consonance with the past performance of the school in class-XII board examinations.

The board said that each school shall form a result committee comprising of five members (principal of the school as chairperson, two-senior most teachers of the school, teaching class-XII and two teachers from neighbouring senior secondary school teaching class-XII) and it may decide weightage to be given to each exam based on credibility and reliability of the assessment.

It said that the marks of class XI and class XII component will be awarded at school level; they will strictly not be comparable across schools due to variations in the quality of question papers, the evaluation, standard and processes, the mode of conduct of exams.

Therefore, to ensure standardisation, each school will have to internally moderate the marks to account for the school level variations by using a reliable reference standard, the CBSE said, adding that the historical performance of the school, in terms of the best overall performance in the previous three years' Board examination, will be taken as the reference for moderating the marks assessed by the schools for 2020-21.

The board further said that in case, any student is not able to meet the qualifying criterion; he/she will be placed in essential repeat or compartment category.

Students who are not satisfied with assessment, done based on the policy will be given an opportunity to appear in examinations to be conducted by the board when conditions are conducive for holding the examinations. As per this policy, marks scored in later examination will be considered as final, the CBSE said.

The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) has also informed the top court that it will declare the Class XII results by July 20, after evaluating the students based on its well defined objective criteria.

Gulberg Collections

ME & MY HOME

AN ONLINE STORE

PAINTINGS,
HOME DECOR,
COMFORT &
GIFT ITEMS,
WOMEN &
KIDS WARE



SELECT ONLINE &
PAY AT YOUR DOORSTEP

**Gulberg
Collections**
ME & MY HOME

gulberg@gulberg.net
Cell: 7006034174

www.gulberg.net