

# KASHMIR OBSERVER<sup>TM</sup>

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P5 STATE

## IIT JAMMU TO HOLD ONLINE CLASSES AFTER 18 TEST POSITIVE

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Jammu on Wednesday said it will conduct all classes online after 18 members of the faculty, staff and the students tested

P7

STRESS LESS

STRESSING LESS CAN INCREASE YOUR PROTECTION AGAINST COVID-19

While stress has always been around, in 2021 it has seemed utterly inescapable. Between the stress of family possibly getting very ill, increased care responsibilities, perpetual



P11 SPORTS

## J&K WINS GOLD, AS NATIONAL CURLING CHAMPIONSHIP CONCLUDES

Jammu & Kashmir team won both junior and senior men's gold in the first ever National Curling Championship cum National Camp 2022 which



Widom Quote!

Life's tragedy is that we get old too soon and wise too late

– Benjamin Franklin

## NEWS DIGEST

### I&B Ministry Twitter Account Hacked Briefly

**NEW DELHI:** The official Twitter account of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) was hacked for a brief time on Wednesday and was restored later. According to officials, some posts tagging entrepreneur Elon Musk were tweeted from the ministry's Twitter handle. "It happened for around 10-15 minutes after **More on P10**

### LG Grooms People On Lohri, Makar Sankranti

**JAMMU:** Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Wednesday greeted the people on the eve of Lohri and Makar Sankranti in a message, the LG, as per an official spokesperson said, these festivals are a strong symbol of our shared ethos and culture "Lohri, the harvest festival, celebrated across **More on P10**

### Man Found Dead In Kulgam

**SRINAGAR:** A man was found dead on Wednesday under mysterious circumstances in south Kashmir's Kulgam district. 35-year-old Raouf Rather of Ashmuji Kapora was found dead around 12:30 pm on Wednesday in Buchroo village of the district, reports said. A police team reached the spot and took **More on P10**

### Vehicle Mows Down Teen Girl To Death

**SRINAGAR:** A teenage girl on Wednesday was crushed to death in a road accident in north Kashmir's Kupwara district. 15-year-old Khushbo Mushtaq was hit by a Tata mobile vehicle in Gugloosa area of the district leaving her critically injured, reports said. The injured teen was evacuated to the PHC Trehgam for treatment. **More on P10**

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## Militant, Cop Killed In Ongoing Kulgam Encounter

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A Jaish-e-Muhammad militant and a policeman were killed while three soldiers and two civilians were injured in an ongoing gunfight between militants and government forces in south Kashmir's Kulgam district, police said Wednesday.

The gunfight raged on in Pariwan village of the district on Wednesday evening when a joint team of police and army launched a search operation on the basis of inputs suggesting presence of militants, a police official said.

When the joint team started advances towards the suspected spot, he said, the holed-up militants opened fire upon them in a bid to break the cordon.

The police official further said that the exchange of gunfire between the two sides was going on even as the cordon has further been strengthened.

"KulgamEncounterUpdate: One police personnel SgCt Rohit Chhib attained #martyrdom, 03 Army soldiers got injured, 02 civilians also got minor injuries, 01 #terrorist of #terror outfit JeM killed. #Operation continues," police quoted IGP Kashmir as saying. Pertinently, the **More on P10**

## 'No Hostility For 100 Years'

# Pakistan's First Security Policy Seeks Peace With India

Press Trust Of India

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan is willing to make peace with immediate neighbours, including India, under its first-ever National Security Policy which leaves doors open for trade with New Delhi even without the settlement of the Kashmir issue provided there is headway in bilateral talks, according to a media report. The National Security Policy, separately endorsed by the National Security Committee and the Cabinet last month, is scheduled to be formally unveiled by Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday.

Peace with immediate neighbours and economic diplomacy will be the central theme of Pakistan's foreign policy in the new National Security Policy, the Express Tribune newspaper reported on Tuesday.

The five-year-policy document covering a period



between 2022-26, is being propped up by the Pakistan government as the country's first-ever strategy paper of its kind that spells out the national security vision and guidelines for the attainment of those goals.

The original 100-page policy, which would be kept under wraps, leaves the door open for trade and business ties with India without the final settlement of the longstanding Kashmir dispute provided there is progress in the talks between

the two nuclear-armed neighbours, an official was quoted as saying by the paper.

"We are not seeking hostility with India for the next 100 years. The new policy seeks peace with immediate neighbours, the official said on condition of anonymity.

If there is a dialogue and progress, there would be a possibility of normalising trade and commercial ties with India as it had happened in the past, the official added.

Ties between **More on P10**

## NIA Detains School Teacher In Raid



Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** A team of National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday raided a residential house of a private teacher in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, official sources said. They said that the residential house of a private teacher identified as Farooq Ahmad Wani son of Mum Wani, a resident of Gusoo Pulwama was searched by a team of the probing agency.

Official sources said that searches were carried out in connection with a case already registered at the police station of NIA and some documents were seized during the raid. "The house owner was picked up by the NIA for further questioning," they said, adding that further details will be shared later. (KDC)

## ...Hyderpora Killings

# HC Notice On Plea Seeking Return Of Victim's Body

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Wednesday issued notices to the Centre and the state administration on a petition filed by the father of Amir Magray, one of the four people killed in an alleged encounter in Srinagar's Hyderpora area last year, seeking the return of his body for last rites.

The court has given 10 days' time to the respondents and set January 27 as the next date for hearing for the case.

Magray's father Mohammad Latief had filed the petition on December 30 last year after his repeated pleas for the return of the body

were turned down. A special investigation team (SIT) of police probing the encounter revealed that while one civilian was killed by a foreign militant, two others, including a local "militant" (Magray), died in crossfire after being used as human shield by the hiding ultra.

However, Latief rejected the police's version and knocked the doors of the high court to press for the return of his son's body, mentioning his "innocence" and the family's long contribution in the fight against militancy in his 18-page petition. Latief's lawyer Deepika Singh Rajawat said that the petition came up for hearing in the Srinagar-wing of the high court before a **More on P10**

**THAT APART FROM THE SAME,** the petitioner has been well appreciated by the Indian Army for his service towards the nation in eliminating militancy in his area i.e. Gool Sangaldan, Ramban."

## Over 60K Acres Of Land Retrieved In J&K: Govt

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Over 60,000 acres of encroached land has been retrieved in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Wednesday.

R R Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lt Governor, directed for creation of a dashboard for continuous monitoring of the removal of encroachments in the Union Territory.

Bhatnagar also asked the revenue department to red flag any instance of new encroachment or re-encroachment by fixing responsibility down the line showing no laxity in taking action against the responsible.

The Advisor made the remarks while assessing the performance of the revenue

department at a meeting here which among others was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Revenue, Custodian General, Inspector General Registrations, Jammu and other officers of the department. Divisional commissioners participated through video conferencing, an official spokesman said.

He said the meeting was informed that 371901.1 kanals (46,487.6 acres) of state land, 110515.8 kanals (13,814.4 acres) of 'Kacharai' (grazing land) and 1314.11 kanal (164.2 acres) of common land has been retrieved from encroachers till date.

Bhatnagar directed the Revenue department to create a dashboard for **More on P10**

## MBBS Student From Budgam Dies In Bangladesh

### Family Seeks Help Of MEA, LG To Bring Body To Kashmir

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** A Kashmiri girl student from central Kashmir's Budgam district allegedly died of cardiac arrest in Bangladesh, reports said Wednesday.

According to reports, the deceased student has been identified as Seema Zehra daughter of Ghulam Mohammad, a resident of Zaber Mohalla in Budgam district. She was pursuing Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) at Ad din Sakina Medical College

Jessore in Bangladesh and was in second year. The real cause of her death is being ascertained.

According to reports, the family has appealed to the Ministry of external Affairs and Lt Governor Administration to help them to bring the students body back for the last rites.

The family of the deceased student is unable to reach Bangladesh since they do not have adequate documents to travel abroad, a close relative said.

"We came to know about her death in the morning and the whole family is in shock" he said, adding that parents of the deceased girl are eagerly waiting for their beloved daughter.

In a tweet, **More on P10**

## JDA's Demolition Drive Triggers Protest In Jammu PDP Asks People To 'Stand Up Against Atrocities'

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Hundreds of people on Wednesday held a protest against the demolition drive by the Jammu Development Authority (JDA) here with PDP President Mehbooba Mufti questioning the selective demolition of houses of tribal community and asked the residents to stand up against such 'atrocities'.

The JDA on Tuesday retrieved prime land worth crores of rupees from encroachers during an anti-encroachment drive with the assistance of police and district administration in the Roopnagar area on the outskirts of the city, rendering many families homeless.

According to the JDA officials,



the encroached land in the posh area measuring over five acres was retrieved during the five-hour-long drive which saw some 17 structures including houses and cowshed raised to the ground. The affected families, mostly belonging to Gujjars and

Bukerwals, are on the roads against the drive, claiming that they were in possession of the land for over eight decades and were rendered homeless by the government in winter without serving any notice.

We were taken **More on P10**



# Study Examines If Alexa Or Siri Make Kids Bossy

Agencies

A new study examined if kids hanging out with Alexa or Siri changed their behaviour towards their fellow human beings. The research has been published in the 'Interaction Design and Children Conference Journal'. The team had a conversational agent teach 22 children between the ages of 5 and 10 to use the word "bungo" to ask them to speak more quickly. The children readily used the word when a robot slowed down its speech. While most children did use bungo in conversations with their parents, it became a source of play or an inside joke about acting like a robot. But when a researcher spoke slowly to the children, the kids rarely used bungo, and often patiently waited for the researcher to finish talking before responding. "We were curious to know wheth-

er kids were picking up conversational habits from their everyday interactions with Alexa and other agents," said senior author Alexis Hiniker, a UW assistant professor in the Information School. "A lot of the existing research looks at agents designed to teach a particular skill, like math. That's somewhat different from the habits a child might incidentally acquire by chatting with one of these things," she added. The researchers recruited 22 families from the Seattle area to participate in a five-part study. This project took place before the COVID-19 pandemic, so each child visited a lab with one parent and one researcher. For the first part of the study, children spoke to a simple animated robot or cactus on a tablet screen that also displayed the text of the conversation. On the back end, another researcher who was not in the room



asked each child questions, which the app translated into a synthetic voice and played for the child. The researcher listened to the child's responses and reactions over speakerphone. At first, as children spoke to one of the two conversational agents (the robot or the cactus), it told them, "When I'm talking, sometimes I begin to speak very slowly. You can say 'bungo' to remind me to speak

quickly again."

After a few minutes of chatting with a child, the app switched to a mode where it would periodically slow down the agent's speech until the child said "bungo." Then the researcher pressed a button to immediately return the agent's speech to normal speed. During this session, the agent reminded the child to use bungo if needed. The conversation continued until the child had practiced using bungo at least three times. The majority of the children, 64 per cent, remembered to use bungo the first time the agent slowed its speech, and all of them learned the routine by the end of this session. Then the children were introduced to the other agent. This agent also started to periodically speak slowly after a brief conversation at normal speed. While the agent's speech also returned to normal

speed once the child said "bungo," this agent did not remind them to use that word. Once the child said "bungo" five times or let the agent continue speaking slowly for five minutes, the researcher in the room ended the conversation. By the end of this session, 77 per cent of the children had successfully used bungo with this agent. Only 19 parents conducted this part of the study. Of the children who completed this part, 68 per cent used bungo in conversation with their parents. Many of them used it with affection. Some children did so enthusiastically, often cutting their parents off in mid-sentence.

**ادفتر نائب تحصیلدار کبری ا کلترہ با اجلاس نائب تحصیلدار کبری ا کلترہ درخواست مناجب مریم رشید دختر عبدالرشید اہنگر ساکنہ کبری ا برادھصول OBC سرٹیفکیٹ**

**اشہار براد آگاہی بر خاص دعاء**

معاملہ مندر بنوعنوان الصدور میں درخواست سائل دفتر مذکور زیر کاروائی ہے اس نسبت پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول مطلوبہ تقوالات ریکارڈ طلب کے گئے جس سے کہا جاتا ہے کہ سائل سائلہ موصوعہ کبری میں رہائش پذیر ہے۔ سکتہ پڈیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

عبدل الرشید اہنگر	50	ایکٹر
سلیمہ بیگم زہدہ عبدالرشید	42	گھریلو کام
شائستہ رشید دختر عبدالرشید	21	تعلیم
رفعت رشید دختر عبدالرشید	21	تعلیم
مریم رشید دختر عبدالرشید	18	تعلیم
عصمت رشید دختر عبدالرشید	16	تعلیم

اسکے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد کمپنیز متلا یا گیا ہے سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا شخص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ ہیوم کے اندر پیش کریں۔ معاذکر نہ کرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار  
fko

**THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR STATE BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION SUB OFFICE PULWAMA.**

The candidate whose photograph is published in this notice is claiming to have lost his original 10th class pass marks certificate issued by the Board of School Education with following particulars :

Name: Asif Akbar Dar  
S/O : Mohammad Akbar Dar  
Class 10th. Roll No: 729269 Session Regular 2008  
Now the candidate has applied for the second duplicate certificate of the same. Anybody having any objection in this regard may file the same before undersigned within seven days of period from the date of publication of this notice. After due date no objection will or shall be accepted or entertained.

Assistant Secretary  
Sub office, Pulwama  
m pul

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

My name has been wrongly written in my Driving License bearing No:- JK-0320120020548 Raouf Ahmad Wani S/o: Mohd Shaban Wani R/o Pahalgam . While my correct name Rouf Ahmad Wani S/o Mohd Shaban Wani R/o Pahalgam which needs immediate correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the ARTO ANANTNAG within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Name :- Rouf Ahmad Wani  
S/o :- Mohd Shaban Wani  
R/o :- Pahalgam

RNA

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR**  
**Office of the Assistant Director**  
**Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Anantnag.**

Email: Capdang121@gmail.com  
Phone /Fax : 01932-222951

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is hereby informed to the general public of District Anantnag that the PDS-Kerosene Oil will be distributed to AAY/PHH Ration cards as per the SRO 285@ 3.00 liters/per ration card for the month of January 2022.

In case of any complaint regarding K Oil distribution and to know the Quota of Kerosene oil that has been allotted to the dealer of your area please contact office of the Assistant Director personally or call on 01932222951, 7006463655, 7889949219.

Assistant Director  
FCS&CA Anantnag.  
RNA

**Office of the Assistant Director**  
**Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Anantnag.**

Email: Capdang121@gmail.com  
Phone /Fax : 01932-222951

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is hereby informed to the general public of District Anantnag that the PDS-Kerosene Oil will be distributed to AAY/PHH ration cards as per the SRO 285@ 3.00 liters/per ration card for the month of December 2021.

In case of any complaint regarding K Oil distribution and to know the Quota of Kerosene oil that has been allotted to the dealer of your area please contact office of the Assistant Director personally or call on 01932222951, 7006463655, 7889949219.

Assistant Director  
FCS&CA Anantnag.  
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Government of Jammu & Kashmir  
**OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER**  
**FOREST RESEARCH DIVISION, SRINAGAR**

**e-NIT NO: - 02 OF 2021-22 DATED: 10-01-2022**

Name of Work:- Supply of Soil, Humus and Sand and preparation of potting mixture in the ratio of 3:2:1 after sieving soil, humus and sand, separating pebbles and other undesirable material and mixing net quantities together in desired ratio & volume followed by filling up of bags, preparation of beds and placement of such bags in suitable nursery beds for raising of nursery stock.

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble President of India, e-tenders (Two cover system) are invited from registered, reputed and resourceful Contractors/Firms registered with Jammu & Kashmir Govt./Central Govt. Organizations for the following work: -

Sr. No	Particulars of Work	Adv. cost (Rs. in Lakh)	Earnest Money Deposit	Class of contractor	Cost of Tender Document	Time of completion
1	(A) Supply of potting material consisting of Soil, Humus and Sand for filling up of nursery bags. Soil = 768.65 cft Humus = 572.13 cft Sand = 256.225 cft Total = 1597.00 cft (B) Preparation of potting mixture by sieving soil, humus and sand and removing pebbles and other undesirable material and mixing net quantity in the ratio of 3:2:1 & followed by filling up of bags, preparation of beds and placement of such filled bags in suitable beds of nursery for raising of nursery stock. No. of Polypots = 25000 No.'s  Note: Polybags shall be supplied departmentally. Name of Forest Nursery: Forest Research Station Haran Location of Nursery: Dagapora Range: Haran Division: Research Forest Division, Srinagar	1.46	BSD Form	"D" Class PWD Contractor/ Forest Contractor / JKFDCC Contractor	Rs. 200/=	One calendar month.
2	(A) Supply of potting material consisting of Soil, Humus and Sand for filling up of nursery bags. Soil = 768.65 cft Humus = 572.13 cft Sand = 256.225 cft Total = 1597.00 cfts (B) Preparation of potting mixture by sieving soil, humus and sand and removing pebbles and other undesirable material and mixing net quantity in the ratio of 3:2:1 & followed by filling up of bags, preparation of beds and placement of such filled bags in suitable beds of nursery for raising of nursery stock. No. of Polypots = 25000 No.'s  Note: Polybags shall be supplied departmentally. Name of Forest Nursery: Seer Nursery Location of Nursery: Seer Hamdan, Anantnag Range: Seer Division: Research Forest Division, Srinagar	1.46	BSD Form	"D" Class PWD Contractor/ Forest Contractor / JKFDCC Contractor	Rs. 200/=	One calendar month.

The e-NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, scope of work, Bills of Quantities, (B.O.Q), Terms & Conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental Website:- [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in).

Position of Funds: Budgeted  
Position of AA: Accorded,  
Position of TS: Accorded,

Publishing Date:-	10-01-2022
Download Start Date:-	10-01-2022 from 02:30 PM
Bid submission Start Date:-	10-01-2022 from 02:30 PM
Bid submission End Date:-	20-01-2022 Up to 06:00 PM
Date of Opening of Technical Bid through online:-	21-01-2022 at 02:30 PM in the office of the Divisional Forest Officer Research Forest Division Srinagar
Date of Opening of Financial Bid through online:-	To be opened (Online) at any convenient date and time after complete evaluation of Technical Bids received

**TERMS & CONDITIONS**

- The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the departmental website: <https://jktenders.gov.in>. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website [jktenders.gov.in](http://jktenders.gov.in). To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) as per Information Technology Act. Bidders can get Digital Certificate form approved vendor.
- Bids uploaded must accompany Govt. Treasury Receipt (cost of tender document) in the shape of Treasury Challan for the amount shown against the work above to be deposited in Govt. Treasury under Account Head 0406- Forest and Bid Security in the shape of Bid Security Declaration form duly filled in with time period prescribed and addressed to Divisional Forest Officer. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of bids.
- The bidders have to submit their Technical & Financial bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No Technical or financial bid will be accepted in physical/hard form Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents i.e BSD Form, Valid Registration Card issued by PWD/CPWD/Forest Dept. duly renewed for the current year 2021-22, PAN, Valid GST Registration, Govt. Treasury receipt (Cost of Tender Document).
- The successful bidder has to produce Valid Labour Registration Certificate issued by Labour Department after issuance of award of contract.
- The Department will not be responsible for any delay in online submission of the bid due to any reason (technical or otherwise).
- The Department shall not be held responsible for selection criteria/policy matter being adopted by the Directorate of Information regarding publishing the NIT, in any of the newspaper under circulation.
- The Tender Accepting Authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
- All other terms and conditions shall remain same as per PWD form 25 (double leaf) and as per the Detailed Tender document.  
NO: -JKFR/R/S/F-892-99  
Dated: -10-01-2022

Sd/-  
Divisional Forest Officer,  
Research Forest Division,  
Srinagar.

**DIPK-16479/21**

## 'Fewer Than 1 In 5 Adults With Type 2 Diabetes Meet Optimal Health Targets'

Agencies

A new study has found that fewer than one in five adults with Type 2 diabetes in the US are meeting health targets to reduce heart disease risk. The findings of the study were published in the journal 'Circulation'. Fortunately, available therapies can help when combined with new approaches that address social determinants of health and other barriers to care. "This new scientific statement is an urgent call to action to follow the latest evidence-based approaches and to develop new best practices to advance Type 2 diabetes treatment and care and reduce CVD risk," said Joshua J. Joseph, MD, MPH, FAHA, chair of the statement writing group and an assistant professor of medicine in the division of endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism at The Ohio State University College of Medicine

ciated with a substantially lower risk of CVD and CVD mortality. "In the United States, less than 1 in 5 adults with T2D not diagnosed with cardiovascular disease are meeting optimal T2D management goals of not smoking and achieving healthy levels of blood sugar, blood pressure and low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, also known as 'bad' cholesterol," Joseph said. A surprisingly large proportion -- as high as 90 per cent -- of factors to effectively manage CVD with T2D includes modifiable lifestyle and societal factors. "Social determinants of health, which includes health-related behaviours, socioeconomic factors, environmental factors and structural racism, have been recognised to have a profound impact on cardiovascular disease and Type 2 diabetes outcomes," he said. "People with T2D face numerous barriers to health including access to care and



in Columbus, Ohio. "Far too few people -- less than 20 per cent of those with Type 2 diabetes -- are successfully managing their heart disease risk, and far too many are struggling to stop smoking and lose weight, two key CVD risk factors. Health care professionals, the health care industry and broader community organizations all have an important role to play in supporting people with Type 2 diabetes," added Joseph. Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes, affecting more than 34 million people in the US, representing nearly 11 per cent of the US population, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2020 National Diabetes Statistics Report, and cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death and disability among people with Type 2 diabetes (T2D). Type 2 diabetes occurs when the body is unable to efficiently use the insulin it makes or when the pancreas loses its capacity to produce insulin. People with T2D often have other cardiovascular disease risk factors, including overweight or obesity, high blood pressure or high cholesterol. Adults with T2D are twice as likely to die from CVD -- including heart attacks, strokes and heart failure -- compared to adults who do not have T2D. The new scientific study, based on the writing group's extensive review of clinical trial results through June 2020, addresses the gap between existing evidence on how best to lower cardiovascular risk in people with T2D and the reality for people living with T2D. Targets to reduce CVD risk among people with T2D include managing blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol levels, increasing physical activity, healthy nutrition, obesity and weight management, not smoking, not drinking alcohol, and psychosocial care. Greater adherence to an overall healthy lifestyle among people with T2D is asso-

equitable care, which must be considered when developing individualized care plans with our patients," he added. Shared decision-making among patients and health care professionals is essential for successfully managing T2D and CVD. A comprehensive diabetes care plan should be tailored based on individual risks and benefits and in consideration the patient's preferences, potential cost concerns, support to effectively manage T2D and take medications as prescribed, including diabetes self-management education and support, promotion and support of healthy lifestyle choices that improve cardiovascular health including nutrition and physical activity and treatment for any other CVD risk factors. "One avenue to continue to address and advance diabetes management is through breaking down the four walls of the clinic or hospital through community engagement, clinic-to-community connections and academic-community-government partnerships that may help address and support modifiable lifestyle behaviours such as physical activity, nutrition, smoking cessation and stress management," Joseph said. The statement also highlights recent evidence on treating T2D that may spur clinicians and patients to review and update their T2D management plan to also address CVD risk factors. The American Heart Association's last scientific statement on blood sugar control was published in 2015, just as research was starting to suggest that glucose-lowering medications may also reduce the risk of heart attack, stroke, heart failure or cardiovascular death. "Since 2015, a number of important national and international clinical trials that specifically examined new T2D medications for lowering cardiovascular disease and cardiovascular mortality risk among people with Type 2 diabetes have been completed," Joseph said.





## Kanals Of State Land Worth Crores Retrieved: Admin

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR JANUARY 12:- Continuing its anti encroachment drive to retrieve the State/Kahchhari land from the land grabbers in District Srinagar, the District Administration on the directions of Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar Mohammad Aijaz, today launched a major anti-encroachment drive in various parts of the District and retrieved over 200 Kanal of State land worth crores of rupees.

The Revenue Officers/Officials headed by respective Tehsildars of Srinagar District conducted an anti-encroachment drive in the Tehsils of Pantha Chowk, Harwan and South Srinagar.

The major chunk of 113 kanals of state land was retrieved by demolition of wire fencing and concrete walls at Zawoora in Panthachowk Tehsil. While another patch of 70 kanals of land was retrieved at Saidpora bala.

Speaking about the preservation of Government land, the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar said anti-encroachment drives will continue in all the parts of the district to retrieve entire State and Kahchhari lands encroached by the land grabbers. He said involvement in land encroachment will be dealt with sternly as per the law.

The DC sought cooperation of the general public in its action against encroachments and also warned of action under CrPC in matters of encroachment on State/kahchharie lands.

The DC also asked encroachers state/kacharie land to voluntarily relinquish the illegal possession else action as warranted under law shall be taken against them, besides retrieval of all such land will be taken by district administration.

The DC has directed for erecting sign-boards on the land retrieved.

Meanwhile, the local people of these areas applauded the District Administration for removal of illegal occupation on land and appealed for further action against all such encroachments.

## Female Commuters Seek Revival Of 'Ladies Bus Service' In City

Agencies

Srinagar: In Srinagar city, female commuters seek revival of 'Ladies Special' bus service to curb the menace of harassment which they face while boarding the general public buses.

The initiative to overcome the issue was taken by Jammu and Kashmir Road Transport Corporation (JK-SRTC) back in April 2016 by launching the bus service for female passengers only on various routes of the city.

However, the female commuters believe that the authorities are 'least interested in resolving the issue and the initiative of the special bus was a mockery'.

One of the female commuters said that women-folk suffer the most when it comes to travel in public transport which are mostly overcrowded, especially in morning and evening hours.

"Congestion in the buses



becomes an excuse for some people to harass us. They take advantage of overloaded buses," she said.

Another female student said that the 'Ladies Special' bus service was very useful for girls who frequently have to travel via local buses.

"I don't understand why the service was stopped as it was good initiative for the female folk. The service had a huge potential for safety of females and making their travel

safe," she said.

Pertinently, the initial route was launched between Lal Chowk to Hazratbal via Rainawari which bypasses Kashmir University campus, further from Lal Chowk to Soura via SMHS hospital and Nowgam Railway station to Lal Chowk via Pantha Chowk.

The busses were scheduled to ply on hourly basis and Regional Transport Officer (RTO), Kashmir and General Manager, JK-SRTC were to monitor

the service regularly. The service timing was between 8 am to 6 pm.

Manager SRTC, Habibullah Reshi said that due to Covid-19 pandemic the service was stopped by the concerned authorities, however, the bus service will resume in the next couple of days.

"We have got the representation from authorities and demand from the public also to start the service again and all the five buses of this service will ply in Srinagar city in next three to four days," Reshi said.

Reshi said that due to Covid-19 lockdown, they didn't receive any response on the special bus service, as schools, colleges, universities were shut for a long time, and therefore they stopped the service earlier.

"The buses will run on all the previous routes and with the same timing, any change in routes and timing will be informed to the general public accordingly," he said—(KNO)

## Commissioner SMC Directs For Dewatering Of Parimpura Bus Stand

Observer News Service

Srinagar:—Commissioner SMC Athar Amir Khan along with VC SDA Mr Bashir Ahmed on Wednesday visited Parimpura Bus stand, Transport Nagar.

He was accompanied by various Officers including Joint Commissioner Adm Syed Abul Qasim, S.E Drainage, S.E R&B, Joint Commissioner Works, Exn City Wroks, Exn Water Works, Exn Right River works, Exn Left River works, Chief En-

forcement Officer, Chief Sanitation Officer, Ward officer and other officials.

Commissioner SMC on the occasion directed the S.E Drainage to depute mobile pumps for dewatering of the bus stand and Transport Nagar at Parimpura.

The officers of the SDA on the occasion informed that Parimpura Bus stand Project which is of Rs 9 Crores includes Drainage, Macdamisation, Road works, Central verge and Green Patches and stands approved under SMRDA.

The technical vetting of the project along with the administrative approval is already in place. The project is under process for technical sanction and after the technical sanction is accorded, the works will be put to tenders promptly.

Similarly it was informed that the project of Transport Nagar is also approved under SMRDA along with completion of technical vetting. After the rest of the formalities will be done, The work will also be put to tenders immediately.

## Business community cannot afford repeated lockdowns: KTA

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Kashmir Trade Alliance (KTA) on Wednesday urged the provincial administration to ensure implementation of Covid-19 guidelines, standard operating procedures and Covid appropriate practices in hospitals, markets, government offices and other places.

President KTA, Ajaz Shahdhar assured full support to the concerned authorities. He said the traders would extend full cooperation to the Administration in this regard. The Kashmir Trade Alliance appealed to the people and traders to adhere strictly to the Covid guidelines and SOPs.

Kashmir Trade Alliance President said that the traders need to be vigilant in this possible third wave so that the process of previous lockdowns is not repeated. He said the business community had suffered losses to the tune of hundreds of crores in the last three years and cannot afford one more lockdown.

## 'Only precautions will save is from Omicron'

Srinagar, Jan 12: With the detection of 5 cases of Omicron in Kashmir valley, Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Wednesday advised people to take precautions to protect themselves from the new variant of Covid-19.

"Simple precautions would help prevent the spread of the variant," said DAK President and Influenza expert Dr Nisar ul Hassan.

Dr Hassan said people should continue wearing masks as they are effective at reducing the risk of contracting or spreading Covid-19 including Omicron.

"Masks act as barrier, trapping and filtering out virus particles from the air we breathe," he said.

## NIT Will Always Act As Vibrant Platform For JK Youth: Director

Observer News Service

Srinagar, Jan 12: Director National Institution of Technology (NIT) Srinagar, Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Sehgal Wednesday said that 'youth are the future of every society and historic institution will continue to act as a vibrant platform for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir'.

While paying rich tributes to Swami Vivekananda, on his birth anniversary which is also celebrated as National Youth Day, he said 'His teachings have inspired thousands of youth across the globe. Vivekananda was a man of wisdom and a very simple human being', Prof. Sehgal said.

He said on the occasion of Youth Day, let us come together to contribute towards the wellness and happiness of youth for making our country a better one.

"For better future of youth, we need addi-

tional jobs to keep pace with the projected annual increases in the working-age population. We need a workforce that is well educated, and appropriately skilled," Prof. Sehgal said.

Director NIT Srinagar said the engineering institutions can play a crucial role in providing employment skillful and market-oriented education.

He said they will assure that quality of the teaching-learning process will not be compromised. NIT is among the oldest institutions in the country. We are in a position to offer the best quality engineering programs to our students," Prof. Sehgal said.

In his message, Registrar NIT, Prof. Kaiser Bukhari said Swami Vivekananda was the man of principles. In his short life span, he galvanized the youth of the country with a sense of self-respect and a sense of destiny, he said.

## THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR STATE BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION NEWS CAMPUS BEMINA SRINAGER

The candidate whose photograph is published in this notice is claiming to have lost his Qualification certificate of secondary school examination class 10th issued by the Board of School Education with following particulars :

Name: Asif Akbar Dar  
S/O : Mohammad Akbar Dar  
Mother's Name : Rahti Bano  
Class 10th .Roll No: 729269  
Session Annual Regular 2008  
DOB : 12/09/1994.  
R/O Trichal Pulwama District Pulwama



Now the candidate has applied for the duplicate certificate of the same. Anybody having any objection in this regard may file the same before undersigned within seven days of period from the date of publication of this notice .After due date no objection will or shall be accepted. Besides the original certificate bearing S.No 08ARKAM-5016209 be treated as cancelled.

Sd/  
Assistant Secretary  
certificates KD  
m.pul

Government of Jammu and Kashmir, H&ME Department  
**OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL**  
**GOVT. MEDICAL COLLEGE DIALGAM, ANANTNAG (J&K)**  
Phone no.01932-227624 email: gmcanantnag2018@gmail.com

**NO:GMCA/ESTT./2022/ 178-85 Dated: 08 .01.2022**  
**ORDER No. 09 GMCA of 2022**  
**DATED: 08 .01.2022**

**Subject: Cancellation of Selection and Operation of Waiting list thereof for the post of "Junior Staff Nurse" on Academic Arrangement Basis, under SO-364 in Government Medical College Anantnag.**  
**Reference: Order No.371 GMCA of 2021 dated 13.12..2021**

Whereas, subsequent to the recommendation by the designated Selection Committee constituted for engagement of Junior Staff Nurse on Academic Arrangement under SO-364, (03) candidates were selected against the post of Junior Staff Nurse vide this office order No371 GMCA of 2021 dated 13.12.2021.

Whereas only (02) candidates have reported in GMC Anantnag within stipulated time for document verification / joining and (01) candidate namely Shahyesta Ashraf D/O Mohd Ashraf Pandit R/O Nagbal Ganderbal failed to report for document verification/ joining within the stipulated time.

Therefore selection in favour of above named candidate who failed to report for document verification and also submitted undertaking to the effect of non-intention of her joining in GMC Anantnag, is hereby cancelled ab-initio.

In view of the above, the candidate namely Saika Rashid D/O Abdul Rashid Malik, New Colony, Batamalo, Srinagar, figuring next in waiting list is selected against available vacant post of "Junior Staff Nurse" on Academic Arrangement under SO-364 in GMC Anantnag on contractual basis for a period of one year or till the post is filled up on regular basis whichever is earlier.

Candidate shall report to the Principal Government Medical College, Anantnag for document verification/joining within a period of 21 days from the date of issuance of this order, failing which his/her selection shall stand cancelled ab-initio without any further notice and candidate next in waiting list shall be considered for selection.

The engagement of candidate shall be subject to the following conditions:

1. She/He shall have to submit an affidavit duly signed by 1<sup>st</sup> Class Magistrate to the effect that:
  1. I will adhere to the roster of duties to be issued by the administration.
  2. I will not participate in any kind of strike/protest against the administration during my tenure in the college/hospital.
  3. My engagement shall be purely on contractual basis and shall be non-transferable.
  4. My engagement is contractual and do not confer any right for the permanent absorption in the department.
  5. My engagement shall be terminated on account of non/poor performance/adverse conduct without any notice.
  6. If the documents filed by me are found wrong/incorrect at any point at time, my selection shall be terminated immediately and disciplinary action and legal proceedings shall be initiated against me alongwith recovery of remuneration.
  7. I will reside in the vicinity of GMC Anantnag during the whole period of my temporary services as Junior Staff Nurse under SO-364 in GMC Anantnag and shall provide residential details in GMC Vicinity to the administration at the time of joining.

Sd/  
(Prof. Syed Tariq Qurashi)  
Principal  
Government Medical College  
Anantnag  
DIPK-16477/21

**DIAL-EMMA**

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

**AIRPORTS**  
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

**RAILWAYS**

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

**HIGHWAY STATUS**

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

**HIJRI CALENDAR**  
09 Jumada al-Sani  
1443

PRAYERS	
FAJR	6: 08
ZUHR	12:39
ASR	4:04
Magrib	5:46
ISHA	7: 11

## This Day In History

- 1942 - World War II: First use of aircraft ejection seat by a German test pilot in a Heinkel He 280 jet fighter
- 1958 - 9,000 scientists of 43 nations petition UN for nuclear test ban
- 1964 - Hindu-Muslim rioting breaks out in the Indian city of Calcutta - now Kolkata – resulting in the deaths of more than 100 people.
- 1975 - Henry Kissinger hints at military action against oil countries in case of "actual strangulation of the industrialized world" in the wake of oil shock
- 1976 - Future undisputed world middleweight boxing champion Marvin Hagler suffers his first career loss in a controversial 10-round majority decision to Bobby Watts at the Philadelphia Spectrum
- 1978 - NASA select its first American women astronauts
- 1991 - UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar meets with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein
- 1992 - Japan apologizes for forcing Korean women into sexual slavery during World War II
- 1993 - STS-54 (Endeavour) launches into orbit
- 1993 - French, British, and US fighter jets launch bombing raids in southern Iraq
- 2000 - Microsoft chairman Bill Gates steps aside as chief executive and promotes company president Steve Ballmer to the position
- 2001 - Earthquake measuring magnitude 7.6 strikes El Salvador, killing more than 840 people

*From KO Archives*

## Lone's shocked reaction to Z-security report

Jawed Naqvi

NEW DELHI- On Tuesday, Abdul Ghani Lone went to a favourite C-grade barber shop in Delhi to have his beard trimmed. He picked up a leading newspaper and saw a care-fully placed front-page story which said that the senior leader of Kashmir's All Parties (Hurriyat Conference (APHC) was now covered by 'Z' category security by the government, a category Just below the prime minister's.

"I died in my boots, Lone told this correspondent. "The lipoor barber was so rattled by my shocked reaction that he nearly nicked my throat with the razor. Of course that story is bilge," thundered the 68-year-old veteran of Kashmiri politics known for his angry outbursts.

On Saturday the editor of another major Indian daily was advising Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee in a signed article on the urgent need to avoid saddling Lone with too many responsibilities in seeking a breakthrough over Kashmir. The article warned that Lone would run the risk of becoming Harchand Singh Longowal, the moderate Sikh leader who was assassinated by hardline Sikh insurgents.

"Lone as Longowal is a scary thought," the article said: If that was not enough, two internet news agencies, usually fairly reliable, filed stories on Sunday from Srinagar on how Lone's house had been surrounded by elite commandos.

"Rubbish!" said the be-spectacled leader. "I just spoke to my family in Srinagar. There's not a soul there. As for the second charge, I am not fighting for Kashmir's free-dom to please India. Do the media want me to get killed?"

For the record, Lone was emphatical that he would refuse any Indian security even if it was offered to him. "I have lived dangerously, but I am not a fool. I belong to the times of Sheikh Abdullah, when I used to take him on in the state assembly, calling him a traitor to Kashmir when others would have trembled in his presence."

Lone said he did not take lightly recent threats from hard-line Kashmir groups targeting him as a renegade. Lone's recent remarks addressed to Mujahideen groups may have contributed to his difficulties with Kashmir's armed organizations. Dawn

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 13 January, 2001)



## Repeat Booster Shots Could Be Bad For You, Warn Some Experts



Agencies

European Union regulators warned that frequent Covid-19 booster shots could adversely affect the immune system and may not be feasible.

Repeat booster doses every four months could eventually weaken the immune system and tire out people, according to the European Medicines Agency. Instead, countries should leave more time between booster programs and tie them to the onset of the cold season in each hemisphere, following the blueprint set out by influenza vaccination strategies, the agency said.

The advice comes as some countries consider the possibility of offering people second booster shots in a bid to provide further protection against surging omicron infections.

Earlier this month, Israel became the first nation to start administering a second booster, or fourth shot, to those over 60. The UK has said that boost-

ers are providing good levels of protection and there is no need for a second booster shot at the moment, but will review data as it evolves.

Boosters "can be done once, or maybe twice, but it's not something that we can think should be repeated constantly," Marco Cavaleri, the EMA head of biological health threats and vaccines strategy, said at a press briefing on Tuesday. "We need to think about how we can transition from the current pandemic setting to a more endemic setting."

The EU regulator also said at the briefing that oral and intravenous antivirals, such as Paxlovid and Remdesivir, maintain their efficacy against omicron.

The agency said that April is the soonest it could approve a new vaccine targeting a specific variant, as the process takes about three to four months. Some of the world's largest vaccine-makers have said they are looking at producing vaccines that could target new variants.



## Omicron Quickly Overtaking Delta's Circulation Globally, Covid Hospitalisations May Increase: WHO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

GENEVA: Omicron is quickly overtaking the Delta variant of COVID-19 and becoming dominant around the world, a senior WHO official has warned, with the global health agency cautioning that there is "increasing evidence" Omicron is able to evade immunity but has less disease severity as compared to other variants.

It could take some time for Omicron to overtake Delta in some countries because it depends on the level of circulation of the Delta variant in those countries, Infectious Disease Epidemiologist and COVID-19 Technical Lead at the World Health Organisation (WHO) Maria Van Kerkhove said on Tuesday.

"Omicron has been detected in all countries where we have good sequencing and it's likely to be in all countries around the world. It is quickly, in terms of its circulation, overtaking Delta. And so Omicron is becoming the dominant variant that is being detected," Kerkhove said during a virtual questions and answers session.

She further cautioned that even though there is some information that Omicron causes less severe disease than Delta, "it's not a mild disease because people are still

**SO PLEASE TREAT THIS virus as seriously as it needs to be treated. The narrative that it's the common cold is not true. The narrative that it is just mild is not true.**

being hospitalized for Omicron."

The COVID-19 Weekly Epidemiological Update, released by the WHO, said that over 15 million new COVID-19 cases were reported globally in the week of January 3-9, a 55 per cent increase as compared to the previous week when about 9.5 million cases were reported.

Over 43,000 new deaths were reported in the past week.

As of 9 January, over 304 million confirmed COVID-19 cases and over 5.4 million deaths have been reported.

The highest numbers of new cases were reported from the US (4,610,359 new cases; a 73 per cent increase), France (1,597,203 new cases; a 46 per cent increase), the UK (1,217,258 new cases; a 10 per cent increase), Italy (1,014,358 new cases; a 57 per cent increase) and India (638,872 new cases; a 524 per cent in-

crease), the update said.

Kerkhove said the 15 million cases reported in the last seven days are a "record high in this pandemic" and are an "underestimate" given the challenges in surveillance around the world and COVID-19 self-tests at home that are not registered.

The WHO update said that the Omicron variant has a substantial growth advantage and is rapidly replacing other variants.

"This variant has been shown to have a shorter doubling time as compared to previous variants, with transmission occurring even amongst those vaccinated or with a history of prior SARS-CoV-2 infection; there is increasing evidence that this variant is able to evade immunity," the update said.

It said that in terms of disease severity, there is growing evidence that the Omicron variant is less severe as compared to other variants.

Citing a non-peer-reviewed retrospective cohort study from the US, the update said the findings suggest that while the absolute number of cases and hospitalisations among children are currently increasing in the US, the risk of hospitalisation still remains lower compared to other age groups during the period when Omicron is circulating as compared to the period when the Delta variant was dominant.

## STUDY: Covid Loses 90% Of Ability To Infect Within Minutes In Air

Tribune Desk

A recent study has found the coronavirus loses 90% of its potential to infect humans within 20 minutes of being airborne, with the majority of the loss occurring within the first five minutes.

The findings from the world's first simulations of how the virus survives in exhaled air, highlights the significance of short-range Covid transmission, with social distancing and the use of masks likely to be the most effective measures of infection prevention. While ventilation remains necessary, it is likely to have a lesser effect, The Guardian reports.

"People have been focused on poorly ventilated spaces and thinking about airborne transmission over metres or across a room. I'm not saying that doesn't happen, but I think still the greatest risk of exposure is when you're



close to someone," Prof Jonathan Reid, director of the University of Bristol's Aerosol Research Centre and the study's lead author told The Guardian.

"When you move further away, not only is the aerosol diluted down, there's also less infectious virus because the virus has lost infectivity," he added.

To better understand what happens to coronavirus once it becomes airborne, the researchers developed an apparatus that allowed them to generate an

infinite number of tiny virus-containing particles and gently levitate them between two electric rings for anywhere between five seconds and twenty minutes while tightly monitoring the temperature, humidity, and UV light intensity in their surroundings.

According to the study, which has not yet been peer reviewed, once virus particles leave the relatively moist and carbon dioxide-rich circumstances of the lungs, they immediately lose water and dry up, whereas the transition to lower carbon dioxide levels is associated with a rapid increase in pH. Both of these variables make it difficult for the virus to infect human cells, but the rate at which the particles dry out depends on the relative humidity of the air.

"This is the first time anyone has been able to actually simulate what happens to the aerosol during the exhalation process," Reid told The Guardian.

## 'Sulli Deals', Form Of Hate Speech In India, Must Be Condemned: UN Official



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

UNITED NATIONS/GENEVA: Harassment of Muslim women in India through social media apps such as "Sulli Deals" must be condemned and prosecuted as soon as they occur, a UN Special Rapporteur has said.

UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues Dr Fernand de Varennes took to Twitter to raise concern on the issue of minorities in India, saying Muslim women in India are harassed and sold in social media apps.

"#Minority Muslim women in #India are harassed & 'sold' in #socialmedia apps, #SulliDeals, a form of #HateSpeech, must be condemned and prosecuted as soon as they occur. All #HumanRights of minorities need to be fully & equally protected," Varennes said in a tweet on Tuesday.

The Delhi Police last week arrested Aumkareshwar Thakur, 26, who is believed to be the creator of "Sulli Deals" app from Madhya Pradesh's Indore, the first arrest made in the case.

Hundreds of Muslim women were listed for auction on the mobile application with photographs sourced without permission and doctored.

The accused, a Bachelor of Computer Application degree holder, admitted that he was a member of a group on Twitter and the idea to defame and troll Muslim women was shared there.

"He admitted that he had developed the code/app on GitHub. After the uproar regarding the Sulli Deals app, he had deleted all his social media footprints," a senior police officer said.

In a separate "Bulli Bai" case, the Delhi Police on January 1 registered an FIR in connection with an online complaint submitted by a city-based woman journalist against unknown persons for allegedly uploading her doctored picture on a portal.

The case pertains to the creation of the 'Bulli Bai' app, which targeted Muslim women by putting up their images online for "auction".

According to Delhi Police, Nijar Bishnoi, 21, who was arrested from Assam, was the alleged mastermind and creator of the "Bulli Bai" application.

He had disclosed during interrogation that he was in touch with the person behind the Twitter handle @sullideals, the alleged creator of the "Sulli Deals" app that was hosted on GitHub in July last year.

**HE ADMITTED THAT HE HAD DEVELOPED the code/app on GitHub. After the uproar regarding the Sulli Deals app, he had deleted all his social media footprints,"**

## Taliban Free Popular Afghan Professor Critical Of Government

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Taliban have released a popular university professor and outspoken critic of successive Afghan governments who was arrested over the weekend, a family member said Tuesday.

Hasina Jalal, Faizullah Jalal's daughter, said her father was freed from Taliban custody. The group had accused him of nonsense remarks on social media, which were provoking people against the government and playing with people's dignity.

Jalal had been detained Sunday by the Taliban's intelligence arm.

TOLO TV, Afghanistan's largest station on which Jalal was a frequent commentator, tweeted that Jalal was arrested reportedly for making allegations against government departments, a security source said.

After Jalal's detention, he received an outpouring of support on social media, with many users posting Jalal's photos. A small group of women

**AFTER JALAL'S DETENTION, HE received an outpouring of support on social media, with many users posting Jalal's photos. A small group of women protested in Kabul, demanding his release.**



protested in Kabul, demanding his release.

The Taliban seized control of Afghanistan last August ahead of America's chaotic Aug 31 departure after nearly 20 years of war. The Islamic militant guerrillas-turned-rulers previously held power from 1996-2001.

Afghanistan faces a major humanitarian crisis, with the United Nations warning that 90 per cent of the country's 38 million people are in dire need. The arrest of a prominent political activist threatened to complicate humanitarian aid efforts.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Jailed For 7 Years For Setting 'Slow' Internet Cables On Fire

Agence France-Presse

BEIJING: A man in China has been sentenced to seven years in jail for setting internet equipment ablaze after becoming enraged over a slow connection, authorities have said.

The man, surnamed Lan, was at an internet cafe in southern Guangxi province last June when his frustration with the connection speed spilled over.

He responded by destroying a public box containing optical fibre network cables, a local court said in a statement on Monday.

The court said the man "used a lighter to set a napkin he had on him on fire, then burned down a telecommunications box at a traffic intersection".

The fire caused nearly 4,000 households and offices, including a public hospital, to lose internet access for 28 to 50



hours.

"After the incident, public security officials seized Lan's instrument of crime -- a lighter," according to the court in Cenxi, a small mountain city.

Lan was later hit with a seven-year jail term for "destroying public telecommunications facilities".

The story prompted widespread ridicule on the Chinese internet, with one Weibo user calling the man a "big baby".

## Hot Milk And Grooming For Camels At Saudi Luxury 'Hotel'

Agence France-Presse

RUMAH, SAUDI ARABIA: With heated stalls and hot milk, life couldn't get more glamorous for Saudi Arabia's most beautiful camels when they stay at a luxury compound near Riyadh.

For 400 riyals (just over \$100) a night, the camels are trimmed, scrubbed and pampered before taking part in beauty contests, where millions of dollars are at stake.

The camels, many of which are rented, are checked closely for Botox and other illegal enhancements which could see them thrown out for cheating.

And it's all done in a Covid-safe environment to prevent any disruptive outbreaks.

The Tatman, described as the first hotel for camels, is an open-air desert compound near the annual King Abdelaziz Festival, which has prizes totalling \$66.6 million. It's a logical step for the lucrative in-



dustry in the well-heeled Gulf, where camels are prized as a symbol of traditional life.

The animals are judged on attributes including their lips, necks, humps and colouring, and wins are highly prestigious for their owners.

Omar al-Qahtani, who is Saudi, checked 80 camels into the Tatman for 16 days, saying it would cost him \$160,000-213,000.

The facility is "very comfortable, as the camels remain under their care and undergo regular medical examinations", the 51-year-old businessman told AFP.

## 'A Hero Is Laid To Rest': Cambodia's Landmine-Sniffing Rat Dies

Agencies

Magawa, the landmine-sniffing rodent who found more than 100 landmines and explosives in Cambodia and won a medal for heroism, has died at the age of eight, according to the charity that trained him.

Magawa, who retired in June last year, died over the weekend, the international non-profit organisation APOPO announced on Tuesday.

"Magawa was in good health and spent most of last week playing with his usual enthusiasm, but towards the weekend he started to slow down, napping more and showing less interest in food in his last days," APOPO said in a statement.

Scared by decades of civil war, Cambodia is one of the world's most heavily mined countries, with more than 1,000sq km (386sq miles) of land still contaminated.



Belgium-based APOPO trains African giant pouched rats to detect landmines, and dubs them "HeroRATS".

Using the rats to sniff out the mines makes it less dangerous for the human handlers who have to disarm and remove the weapons.

"All of us at APOPO are feeling the loss of Magawa and we are grateful for the incredible work he's done," the organisation said in a heartfelt tribute. "His contribution allows communities in Cambodia to live, work and play, without fear of losing life or limb."



## No Appointment Order Issued For Watchers: Wildlife Dept

Says Fake Appointment Order Under Circulation In The Social Media

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Department of Wildlife Protection, J&K on Wednesday said that the department has not issued any appointment order for Watchers and a fake appointment order is currently under circulation in the Social Media.

As per a statement issued here, it has been informed that a fake appointment order is currently under circulation in the Social Media where under it has been shown that several persons have been appointed as Watchers in the Department of Wildlife Protection, J&K in Kashmir Region, whereas no such order or related correspondence has been issued by the Government or any Officer of this Department.

It was given out that preparation and circulation of such fake

order and correspondence is a criminal offense and the matter has been taken up with Crime Branch, J&K Police for investigation and legal action against mischievous persons involved in this act shall be initiated.

The directions have also been passed on to the sub-ordinate offices of this Department not to entertain this order and related correspondence, the statement read.

Meanwhile, the public in general is being informed to be aware of this criminal act of mischievous persons and anybody having any information about any mischievous person involved in this act may inform this Department on email: jk-wildlife72@gmail.com, rwl-wkashmir@gmail.com and/or can inform on Mobile No: 9419002529 through call or message or Whatsapp.

SMART CITY PROJECT

## 110 Spots In Jammu City To Have Static Ad Panels



Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The Jammu Smarty City Limited (JSLC) on Wednesday signed an agreement for the installation of Static Advertisement Panels at 110 different locations in Jammu City to improve the public information system along with enhancing the aesthetic value of the city.

The agreement was signed and exchanged between the Chief Executive officer (CEO), JSLC, Avny Lavasa, and Vice President of Parth Buildwell, Jatinder Singh, an official spokesperson said. He said that Additional CEO, JSLC, Hitesh Gupta and other senior officials of JSLC were also present on the occasion.

The static ad panels will be installed at 110 locations, which are different in sizes according to the available space as well as according to the aesthetic value of the city.

The prominent identified locations are Kunjwani Chowk, Gole Market, Tawi Bridge, BC Road, Vivekanad Chowk, Bahu Road, Trikuta Nagar, Greater Kailash Road, Narwal and Indira Gandhi Chowk.

The installation of Ad panels in Jammu City is intended to disseminate information regarding the government policies, drives undertaken from time to time as well as provide information about various agencies and commercial establishments

regarding their business and promotional activities.

In the imminent future, these stand-alone advertisement spaces could be scaled up to Variable Message Displays (VMDs) also.

Speaking on the occasion, CEO, JSLC, Avny Lavasa said that these ad panels will not only disseminate information but also enhance revenue.

"The project is being executed by JSLC under Jammu Smart City Mission and after the completion, the project will be handed over to Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC)," she said.

She added that the project will help JMC to improve municipal revenue, which will be utilised for the welfare of the public.

It is pertinent to mention here that several initiatives have already been taken under the aegis of JSLC to improve the urban experience of the population including tourists.

These include installation of wayfinding signages, establishing of WiFi zones, improving the drainage scenario in the city, improvement of junctions/rotaries, Roads developments, establishment of heritage trail, intelligent traffic management, creating Multi Level car parking and smart parking, Smart Police booths, Smart Anganwadi, upgradation of Fire and Emergency services etc.

## Advisors Greet People On Lohri, Makar Sankranti

**JAMMU:** Advisors to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Khan and R R Bhatnagar on Wednesday extended greetings to people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Lohri and Makar Sankranti being celebrated on January 13 and 14.

In their messages, the Advisors hoped that Lohri will bring joy and good health for all. These festivals mark the har-

vesting season of crops as the winter season ends and ushers in spring, they added saying that we all should recognize the contribution of our farmers on this occasion as a token of respect to these nation builders.

Advisors expressed hope that the people will celebrate the festivities amid strict observance of Covid SOPs for their safety and safety of their brethren as well.

## Admin Restored Facilities Through Quick Response After Snowfall

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** After the recent snowfall, Divisional Administration of Kashmir under the supervision of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole achieved maximum success in restoration of power, roads for traffic movement and Water supply schemes in all the districts of valley, an official spokesperson said.

According to the statement issued by Divisional Commissioner's office regarding the present status of snow clearance and restoration of other facilities by line

departments including Mechanical Engineering Department, Roads and Building Department, Urban Local Bodies, Jal Shakhti Department, KPDCCL besides SMC, it is informed that under action plan 1st, MED cleared 100% roads from snow while 98% roads were also restored under action plan 2nd & 3rd till January 11, 2022.

Similarly it is informed that R&B department has successfully cleared snow from roads of length 5339 KMs out of 5535KMs under its jurisdiction. The R&B has deployed 366 snow clearance machines during the recent



KOLENSMAN ABID BHAT captures a local train passing through snowfields in south Kashmir.

## IIT Jammu To Hold Online Classes After 18 Test Positive



Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Jammu on Wednesday said it will conduct all classes online after 18 members of the faculty, staff and the students tested positive for coronavirus.

The IIT Jammu said it has been conducting periodic COVID-19 testing amid a spurt in the infection.

Out of RT-PCR tests conducted on 300 people last week on campus, 18 members of the faculty, staff and the students have tested positive for the virus. However, everyone is under quarantine as per protocol and

reports of mild to no symptoms while being constantly monitored and supported by the medical unit. The IIT Jammu campus is currently under sanitisation, the IIT Jammu said in a statement.

It said most of the students had left the campus for semester break in December.

IIT Jammu will conduct all classes online and the staff and the faculty members will continue to work from home until further instructions. We are comforted to report that 100 percent of our community is vaccinated to fight the virus, it said.

Meanwhile, the Covid Task Force on Wednesday met here

under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta and reviewed the public health response and various mitigation measures being put in place for effective containment and mitigation of the infection in Jammu and Kashmir.

Observing that Omicron is being perceived as less dangerous than the delta variant responsible for the second wave, the chief secretary appealed to the public to raise their guard and remain cautious and vigilant to the infection since it has a high rate of transmission and can infect a larger group of people over shorter periods.

### OMICRON IN KASHMIR

## DAK Advises People To Take Precautions

**SRINAGAR:** With the detection of 5 cases of Omicron in Kashmir valley, Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Wednesday advised people to take precautions to protect themselves from the new variant of Covid-19.

"Simple precautions would help prevent the spread of the variant," said DAK President and Influenza expert Dr Nisar ul Hassan.

Dr Hassan said people should continue wearing masks as they are effective at reducing the risk of contracting or spreading Covid-19 including Omicron.

"Masks act as barrier, trapping and filtering out virus particles from the air we breathe," he said.

"If the infected person wears a mask, that reduces the risk of infection to those around them. If the uninfected person wears a mask, that reduces the risk of infection to them from the infected person," he added.

The DAK President said people are advised to avoid crowding and gatherings.

"Crowding puts you at higher risk of getting Omicron and it increases the chances for the virus to spread in the community," he said.

"If you are down with respiratory symptoms, self isolate and get tested," said Dr Nisar.

"If your test turns positive, report to the health authorities for tracing your contacts," he said adding contact tracing is an important tool to prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

General Secretary DAK Dr Arshad Ali said vaccine remains the single best tool against Covid-19 and its variants including Omicron.

"Fully vaccinated people have significant protection against Omicron infection, serious illness and death," he said.

"Those who are unvaccinated

should go and get it now. People who are eligible for boosters should take them as soon as possible to protect themselves, their families, loved ones and the community," he added.

Spokesperson DAK Dr Riyaz Ahmad Dagga said Omicron is more contagious than delta which devastated us in the second wave. We don't know how Omicron will impact our senior citizens and immunocompromised.

"Even though Omicron causes less severe disease, the sheer number of cases could once again overwhelm our hospitals," he said adding that healthcare capacity including ICUs, ventilators and staff need to be strengthened at all levels.

### DISTRICT DAIRY

## R-Day Arrangements Discussed In Pulwama

**SRINAGAR:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Baseer Ul Haq Choudhary on Wednesday chaired a meeting of the concerned officers to discuss arrangements for smooth celebration of the R- Day.

Threadbare discussion was held on the arrangements related to the smooth conduct of the function like seating, barricading, drinking water, power supply, sanitation, fire services, security, transport, traffic regulations and illumination of government buildings, an official spokesperson said.

He said that the DC directed the district heads to ensure their presence as well as of their subordinate officers and officials at the Republic Day function both at the District Police Lines Pulwama as well as DPL Awantipora, Tehsil and Block levels. He directed the concerned officers

to make the National function a grand success.

"In view of Covid-19 threat, the R-Day will be celebrated under strict adherence to SOPs like social distancing norms and wearing of face masks," Choudhary said.

The CMO was directed to ensure proper implementation of COVID-19 SOPs, besides emergency healthcare arrangements during rehearsals and national day function.

The DC stressed upon the departments to maintain close synergy while making the arrangements.

Among others, the meeting was attended by SSP Pulwama, Ghulam Jeelani; Additional District Development Commissioner Pulwama, Additional Deputy Commissioner Tral, Pulwama besides senior officers of security forces and all the district and sectoral officers and officials.

## DC Shopian Takes Stock Of Snow Clearance Ops

**SRINAGAR:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Sachin Kumar Vaishya on Wednesday visited various areas including Chitragram, Imam Sahab, Pargachi, Lasedavan, Aadakhar and different markets of Shopian Town to take stock of snow clearance operations and other basic amenities including power and water supply.

Enroute, the DC interacted with the people at various places, enquired about the basic amenities provided to them, listened to them patiently and assured for early redressal of their

genuine demands and grievances of public importance, an official spokesperson said.

During the visit, he said, Vaishya also took stock of Snow clearance operations across all town roads directing the concerned to ensure clearance of roads to allow smooth traffic and pedestrian movement.

The official spokesperson said that the DC on the spot directed the Tehsildar Shopian to ensure the lifting of snow from the town roads immediately to make hassle free movement of the people.

## DC Kupwara Urges People To Follow CAB Religiously

**SRINAGAR:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Imam Din on Wednesday chaired a daylong Municipal Diwas and Grievance Redressal Camp at Town Hall Handwara.

President, Municipal Committee Handwara, Masroor Ahmad Bandy; DDC Member Rajwar, Suliman Mir, District officers and citizens participated in the Municipal diwas with adherence of Covid Appropriate Behaviour (CAB).

In his address, the DC said that the objective of holding Municipal diwas is to listen and address the developmental issues of the people living in towns adding that this was the first of a kind initiative of the administration to hold a separate public interaction programme in the town.

The DC said that the augmentation of water and power supply is among the top priorities of the Government adding that the ambitious Jal Jeevan Mission programme is being implemented and every household will get taped water connection by August 2022.

Regarding power supply, the DC said that regular inspection

of Receiving Stations is being held on a weekly basis by himself to ensure uninterrupted power supply to the people. He said the power scenario is getting streamlined day by day by augmentation of various Receiving stations in the district.

Earlier, President Municipal Committee, DDC Member, councilors also spoke and raised various issues with regard to their local requirements.

The DC gave them patient hearing and assured that all genuine demands shall be fulfilled in a time bound manner.

District Officers on the occasion spoke and provided awareness of schemes of their concerned departments, besides, replied to the queries raised.

On the occasion, Imam Din highlighted the need for implementation of CAB in view of the spike in the Covid and omicron variant cases in the UT.

He exhorted upon the people to follow CAB and other SOPs religiously to keep the pandemic at bay. The DC directed the concerned Officers for implementation of CAB on ground in letter and spirit.

## DC Kulgam Listens To Public Grievances

**KULGAM:** To take firsthand appraisal of issues, grievances of people for immediate redressal, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat on Wednesday presided over a grievance redressal camp at Kulgam with strict adherence to Covid-19 SOPs.

People from Kund, Adapora, Kachloo, Lirao and other areas attended the grievance redressal camp and flagged-off their issues and grievances.

The DC after giving patient hearing to people redressed some of the grievances on the spot and assured that all the genuine demands shall be met at an earliest.

Dr Bilal on the occasion urged people to stick to preventive measures especially use of face masks and adopting social distancing besides to propagate this message to other people.

He stressed on the need of complete synergy in combating the impending threat of the Omicron variant, which is highly transmissible. He said Covid Appropriate Behaviour (CAB) enforcement is a solution to combat the aggressive transmission of the omicron variant.

The DC cautioned against negligent behavior of people in ob-

serving covid protocol, saying the district administration will act very tough against the violators even as he appealed all the stakeholders to extend co-operation to administration in the enforcement of CAB.

Dr Bilal observed that health is the priority of every individual and it is imperative to work in complete coordination to defeat the 3rd covid wave.

He also asked the traders and transporters to disallow unmasked people in their business establishments and public vehicles, adding the concerned trader and driver will be personally held responsible for such lapses.

He urged religious heads to use their influence to motivate people to adopt CAB.

Grievances redressal camps were also held at Block Devsar and D.H.Pora.

Moreover, the District Administration has also intensified mass awareness campaigns, vaccination and testing across the district.

Vehicles mounted with audio systems and banners are deployed for sensitizing people in markets, hospitals, villages and towns to adhere to COVID-19 SOPs and to adopt CAB.



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OBSERVER

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K O V I E W

Lingering Deadlock

India and China engaged in their 14th round of Corps Commander-level talks on Wednesday. The Indian delegation was led for the first time by Lt. Gen. Anindya Sengupta, who recently took over as the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Leh-based 14 Corps. He was also part of the talks in the previous round which ended in a stalemate. The two sides are looking at a possible agreement for disengagement from Hot Springs as part of the comprehensive disengagement and de-escalation efforts in eastern Ladakh. The stand-off is now over 20-month-long and the successive efforts to end it have met a modest success. Last year, the two countries had disengaged from the friction point at Pangong Tso lake.

There are, however, three other major friction points that will need to be sorted out now. There has so far been no progress in the dialogue over the restoration of the status quo ante in these areas. But China has so far refused to vacate the captured area and wants to cement the status quo. India, on the other hand, has been insisting on a comprehensive disengagement and de-escalation of the situation.

The stand-off has thus continued. And this is not a good evolving security situation for India. And the country's security brass is aware of this. But there is so far little that New Delhi can do about it. In the recent past, China has tried to expand the conflict along the LAC. As time goes by, the differences between the two countries are becoming irreconcilable.

India wants China to go back to status quo ante as it existed in April 2020 but Beijing is in no mood to do so. On the contrary, the People's Liberation Army has enhanced its military profile on the border by deploying thousands of its soldiers and equipment. In recent years China has reportedly more than doubled its total number of airbases, air defense positions, and heliports near the Indian border. This has now become a high-stakes war of nerves between the two countries.

An eyeball to eyeball confrontation between the two countries has lingered ever since the forces of the two countries clashed at Galwan Valley in June, 2020 leading to the death of 20 Indian soldiers and four Chinese personnel. A pragmatic way out to resolve the lingering stand-off is through negotiations, even if it takes time. But this depends on how soon, or if at all, China would be willing to withdraw from the remaining friction points at Hot Springs, Demchok and Depsang. Here's hoping that China sees the rationale of better relations with India and to this end takes concrete steps to calm the Line of Actual Control.

O T H E R O P I N O N

The Covid Gist

Though at times it can feel hard to believe – especially in recent weeks, perhaps – this pandemic will not last for ever. With more than 5 million dead and huge economic and social costs, its toll has been immense, and unnecessarily so.

Secrecy in China, complacency in Europe, reckless and callous rightwing populism in the US and Brazil, and the inequity in vaccine distribution have all contributed.

Yet if we learn its lessons, we will be better prepared next time. For there will be a next time. Covid is not a once-in-a-century crisis – an idea encouraged by its arrival 101 years after the last major pandemic, the “Spanish” flu, which killed at least 50 million. The mega-flu outbreak that many experts had seen as the next great threat is no less likely to arrive because Covid got here first. A pandemic of similar scale is likely within the next six decades, and could happen at any point in that timespan, according to research published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) in August; others have put the risk of a comparable crisis within the next decade at around one in four. And as Prof Dame Sarah Gilbert, the creator of the Oxford/AstraZeneca jab, warned recently: “The next one could be worse. It could be more contagious, or more lethal, or both.”

The price we pay then will depend on what we do now, using Covid's lessons. We have seen international scientific collaboration, incredible dedication by researchers and healthcare staff, and the ability and willingness of local and national communities to pull together. Richer nations will be less likely to take health security for granted. Covid-19 has also shown that the right decisions at the right time can make a profound difference. With a dozen direct flights from Wuhan each week, Taiwan was heavily exposed to risk. But, driven by the experience of the 2002-03 Sars epidemic, it rapidly introduced health screening for arrivals, border controls, effective contact tracing and mask-wearing, and gave its citizens clear and consistent messages. Fewer than 900 of its 22 million-strong population have died.

**Wishful thinking**

Yet the global response has too often looked like a triumph of science and a failure of politics. The wishful thinking seen in the first wave has been repeated again and again. And the way we live is increasing the risks of another major pandemic. The aforementioned research published in August in PNAS estimated that the probability of novel disease outbreaks will grow threefold in the next few decades. International trade and travel allow diseases to spread far more quickly. Some scientists argue that we have already entered another great pandemic: a wave of antimicrobial resistance that could see tens of millions die from currently treatable diseases, coming gradually, but ultimately proving far more punishing than the sudden Covid crisis. The overuse of antibiotics to treat humans and livestock is endangering us all.

Guardian

Policy Of Trespass



Ashok Kumar

**VARIOUS THEORIES  
ABOUT SUCH AS  
the abrogation of  
Article 370 in Jammu  
and Kashmir, India's  
rapid development of  
communications in the  
border areas (roads,  
habitats and airfields)  
and modernisation of  
India's Armed Forces  
have been put across as  
plausible factors. What  
is not spoken about  
much is a deliberate  
attempt by China to  
physically link with  
Pakistan in the  
Northern Areas by  
removing the Indian  
wedge of DBO, the  
doorway to the  
Karakoram Pass**

The Chinese have always been an expansionist civilisation. Couched in a language of culture and mutual coexistence, their designs on neighbouring territories have generally been tempered through dialogue, defence deals or concessions by neighbouring polities. Nothing exemplifies this fact more than the refusal of three successive Chinese governments in delineating or demarcating the boundary with either Tibet or India till the former was subsumed and the latter's psyche scarred. The last residue of the Qing dynasty was wiped out in the 1911 revolution when China was established as a republic. The republic was again overthrown in 1949 by the Chinese Communist Party.

British archival records, many declassified, are awash with innumerable attempts made by Imperial Britain to formally formulate a boundary with China. Yet, all three regimes were united in their refusal to accept a formal limiting of China's territorial expanse and kept their response ambiguous. Even during the Simla Convention of 1913-14, when the Republic was ascendant in China, there was a vehement refusal to recognise any demarcation of boundaries between Tibet and China, marking a continuation of expansive territoriality that was the hallmark of the Qing dynasty. Since then, a number of alleged ancient maps, ambiguous treaties and declarations have marked Communist China's attempts to keep on increasing its territorial reach.

Having operated from a maximalist position to settle its borders with 12 of its 14 neighbours so far, China has attempted to use the same strong-arm tactics with both India and Bhutan, with the latter's sovereignty dependent on India's security umbrella. China has now changed its strategy of dealing with Bhutan. It has offered to forgo its claims in the larger parts of North Bhutan in lieu of gain-

ing a relatively smaller area in West Bhutan. This seeming magnanimity is calculated to expand into the Chumbi Valley in the South, threatening the narrow and strategic Sili-guri corridor in India. Not only this, in its latest move, China has made a new claim on Sakteng sanctuary in Bhutan which may form a launchpad for future operations against Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.

China has also strengthened its collusion with Pakistan. A number of officers from Pakistan's ISI have been posted to the Central Military Commission in Beijing while China has posted Chinese intelligence personnel for tech surveillance and interception. A common grouse for the Iron Brothers is India's alleged “militaristic policies” in Kashmir, which is one of the supposed causes for China's attempted land grab in Eastern Ladakh in April 2020. What is the real cause? No one knows. Various theories abound such as the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, India's rapid development of communications in the border areas (roads, habitats and airfields) and modernisation of India's Armed Forces have been put across as plausible factors. What is not spoken about much is a deliberate attempt by China to physically link with Pakistan in the Northern Areas by removing the Indian wedge of DBO, the doorway to the Karakoram Pass.

Another factor, a Training Mobilisation Order (TMO) issued by Xi Jinping in January 2020 called for “confrontational training” for its troops and officers to assess their preparedness, especially in light of the new reforms undertaken by the PLA. Both these factors seem to be the tactical beginnings of China's grand strategy which also saw China flexing in the South China Sea and Taiwan, almost simultaneously. The latest in the series of aggressive Chinese actions is the use of lawfare through the passing of the “Land Boundary Law” on October 21 which became effective

this week.

The law formalises and legalises China's geographic creep towards Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh and parts of eastern Ladakh and creates conditions for using newly-constructed border villages close to the LAC for claiming sovereignty over disputed areas. The import of the law is most critical for India but will affect China's disputes with other countries too. What China has done, therefore, is convert a territory dispute over borders into a sovereignty dispute which precludes any give or take of territory.

Once these villages crop up at selected places along the LAC, China will attempt to settle its Han population in the Tibetan regions, reversing established demographic patterns and at the same time, making any negotiation beyond the limits of these villages a hypothetical process. Future negotiations over territory, if they occur, will then refer to the Border Defence Cooperation Agreements of 2005 and 2012 which call for border settlements to be done keeping in mind the local population in the border regions.

What emerges clearly is that by adopting the Land Boundary Law, in conjunction with its physical actions on the LAC, China has consolidated its position in eastern Ladakh and kept possibilities open in Arunachal Pradesh. A deliberate thought process needs to be evolved to offset our disadvantages as purely military actions may not solve the situation in the long term.

*Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The article was originally published by The Indian Express*

*The writer, a Kargil War veteran is a Visiting Fellow, Centre For Land Welfare Studies and specialises in India's neighbouring countries, especially China*



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Gulmarg Over Coaching Centres

The government's decision to close down coaching centers as a response to growing covid cases in the valley seems to be necessary but it is hardly honest.

Of the 196 cases reported yesterday, 30% were only travellers in Srinagar. Travellers with covid also made a substantial number in other districts

like Baramullah. This number is quite high and can be higher given that only partially and unvaccinated people are expected to get tested for travel and on arrival.

Winters in Kashmir are hosting many tourists from covid hotspots of mainland India. Infact, it is the administration that is organising entertainment events for the same.

Videos are abundantly present online which show senior officers dancing maskless.

In this schema, it seems dishonest on the part of the admin to stop students from attending coaching centers unconditionally. Perhaps, it would have made some sense if the admin would have demanded frequent covid tests and vaccination

certificates for children.

The government should be careful that double standards don't look good when it comes to an entire population's education. It is not a difficult choice to see which is a necessary evil – education or unnecessary travel?

**Hania Sheikh**  
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# What A Waist

Fat Phobia And Diet Culture Is An Evil That Is Only Worsening By The Body Image Standards Being Encouraged Online

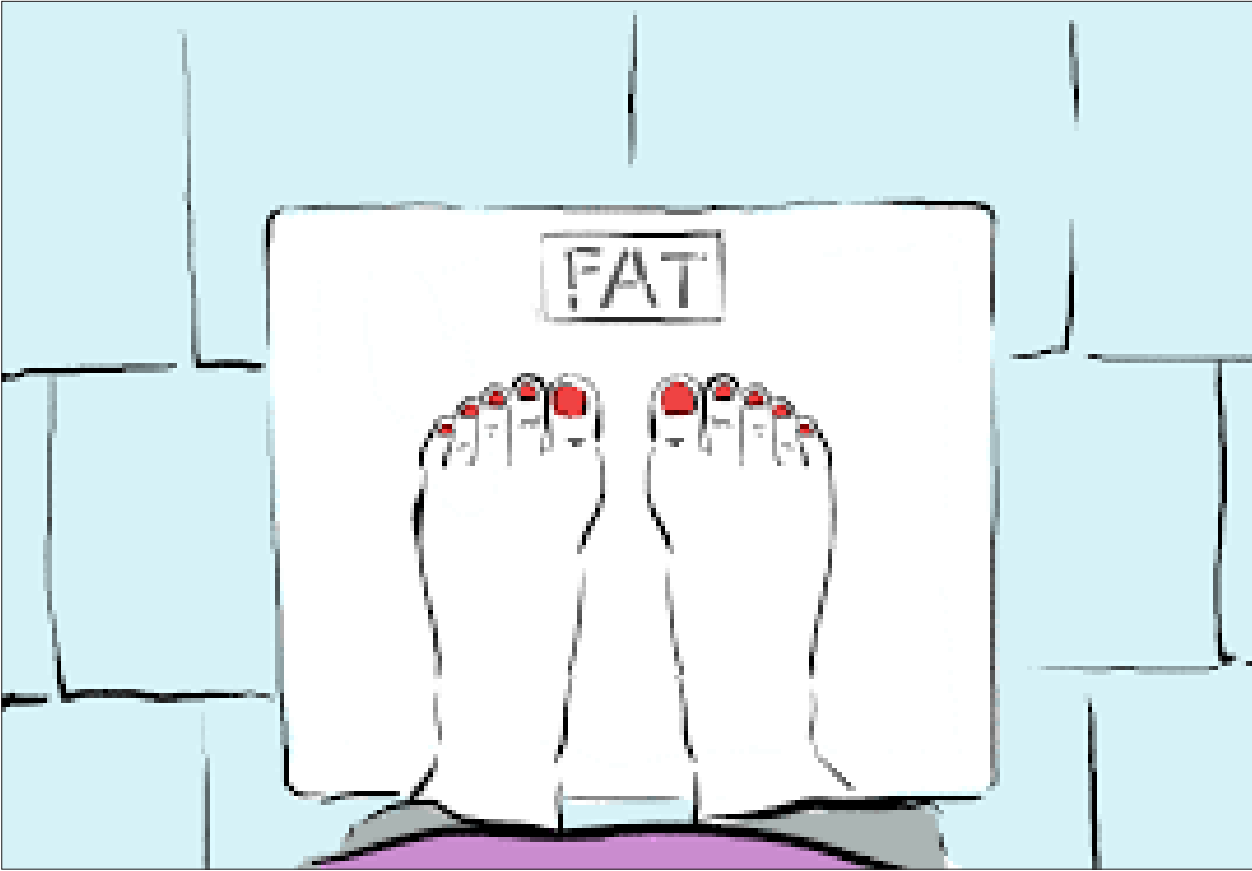
Dania Sheikh

The pandemic and the subsequent lockdown that was imposed altered our lives in several ways.As the covid cases surged, stringent lockdowns were imposed across the world, and quarantine became the new necessity.It was an unprecedented event and people took to several new activities and hobbies to keep themselves engaged.Social media was flooded with aesthetic pictures of dalgona coffee and quarantine bakes.There was an increase in social media consumption as people had a lot of free time on their hands. Memes were circulated to get through the monotony that was brought about by the lockdown and one particular meme which caught everyone's attention was the 'Barbie charbie' meme, it mockingly implied how our appearances would drastically change because of all the quarantine cooking, baking and immobility during the lockdown. While such memes might seem harmless but they are extremely problematic and can have grave repercussions on our physical and mental health. These memes perpetuate fatphobia and make us believe that weight gain is something that we must dread.

While these memes are directed towards everyone regardless of their age and gender but women especially are targeted. Women suffer this double jeopardy of living in a patriarchal and capitalistic society.

From quite early on in their lives women are indoctrinated with the socially constructed notions of beauty and are told that it is a pre-requisite for a happy life. Their worth is reduced to how they look, they are made to derive their confidence from their looks and their physique. Young girls begin to idealize the barbies they play with, the female actors they see on television, and the mannequins they see in stores.

Exposure to such unrealistic and homogenous standards of beauty in the formative years of children has grave repercussions for their physical and mental well-being. Studies have



**CAPITALISM TAKES ADVANTAGE OF THESE INSECURITIES THAT** are engendered especially among girls. Brands capitalize on this dissatisfaction and exploit our sentiments to expand their markets and aggrandize their profit. They come up with myriad products ranging from fat loss pills to fairness creams which only seem to validate these distorted notions of beauty and exacerbates the existing insecurities

shown that children who are not confident about their physical appearances lag behind their peers in academics and extra circular activities. A recent study reveals that 40-60% of elementary school-aged girls are dissatisfied with their weight and anxious about putting on weight.

Capitalism takes advantage of these insecurities that are engendered especially among girls. Brands capitalize on this dissatisfaction and exploit our sentiments to expand their

markets and aggrandize their profit. They come up with myriad products ranging from fat loss pills to fairness creams which only seem to validate these distorted notions of beauty and exacerbates the existing insecurities.

'Fat-phobia is defined as the 'irrational fear of, aversion to or discrimination against, obesity or people with obesity. Fat-phobia establishes the need for diet culture, and the consequences this unhealthy obsession with diet culture has are fright-

ening. It ruins a person's relationship with one's body and with food. Eating disorders like Anorexia nervosa, Bulimia nervosa, and binge eating are at an all-time high. Anorexia Nervosa mortality rate supersedes that of depression or any other psychiatric illness. Over the years these habits get so solidified that it becomes extremely difficult to rectify these habits, and these eating disorders if left untreated lead to suicides, deaths due to malnutrition, and cardiovas-

**WHILE THESE MEMES ARE** directed towards everyone regardless of their age and gender but women especially are targeted. Women suffer this double jeopardy of living in a patriarchal and capitalistic society.

cular diseases. A study reveals that every 62 minutes someone dies as a direct result of an eating disorder. It is, therefore, necessary to dismantle these toxic and misleading notions of what constitutes health and beauty.

The US weight loss market is worth a whopping \$72 billion, diet culture is so well marketed that it clouds our rationality and demands to be followed. People feel obligated to make these 'unhealthy healthy' choices.

The pandemic has exacerbated fatphobia and the obsession with clean eating. There is an urgent need to apprise people about what being healthy means, healthy is not a size, and more importantly healthy looks different on different bodies, it cannot be gauged by a weighing scale. The recent body positivity movements by plus-size models have been successful in helping people to embrace their bodies and to overcome their fears of eating.

Eating disorders are lethal, they can wreck a person's physical and mental health and are emotionally draining, if not taken into account and not given the attention it requires, it could become the next epidemic. Abandoning a diet culture should not translate into consuming inordinate amounts of junk and processed food either, healthy choices are choices that make you energetic and enable you to live a happier life.

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STRESS LESS

Stressing Less Can Increase Your Protection Against Covid-19

Annie Ginty & Sarah Pressman,

While stress has always been around, in 2021 it has seemed utterly inescapable. Between the stress of family possibly getting very ill, increased care responsibilities, perpetual concern about lost income, the pain of social disconnection and the rise of new variants, the stressors are never-ending.

Not surprisingly, recent US surveys have reported that 55% of the general population felt increased stress during the pandemic and university students around the world reported pandemic-related increases in depression and anxiety.

While many have acknowledged the decline in mental health since early 2020, what has gone mostly unspoken is how these feelings may be connected to your likelihood of getting sick.

You may have heard previously that stress is bad for you, but perhaps you did not understand exactly how. In fact, researchers have been studying the mechanisms of how this works for decades.

This body of evidence has proven without question that stress can cause damaging changes to the immune system in both humans and animals.

### Stress and sickness

Psychological scientist Sheldon Cohen and his colleagues have conducted a number of studies where healthy people are exposed to an upper respiratory infection via drops of virus placed directly into their nose. These participants are then quarantined in a hotel and monitored closely to determine who gets sick and who does not.

One of the most important factors that predict who gets sick and who stays well is prolonged psychological stress.

Individuals with stressors that persist



**INDIVIDUALS WITH STRESSORS THAT PERSIST FOR SIX MONTHS** to two years (nearly the length of the pandemic so far) are almost three times more likely to become sick with an infectious agent as those who are unstressed. This phenomenon is specifically driven by stressors common to many of us today, including unemployment and enduring difficulties with family or friends

for six months to two years (nearly the length of the pandemic so far) are almost three times more likely to become sick with an infectious agent as those who are unstressed. This phenomenon is specifically driven by stressors common to many of us today, including unemployment and enduring difficulties with family or friends.

But do not be too disheartened. One important fact that is frequently missed in these studies is that even when a virus is put into your nose, your fate is not sealed. In fact, as many as a third of the participants are resilient to viruses known to make us quite ill including cold viruses, flu viruses, and even, you guessed it, coronaviruses. So, who are these people who tend to not get sick?

In a recent article, Cohen explained that while coronaviruses have not been

studied nearly as much as cold and flu, there is reason to believe that some of the same protective factors will be relevant for the severity of coronavirus infection or resistance to it.

The biggest protective factors include feeling socially connected and supported and getting at least seven hours of sleep every night, but his studies over the years have also shown repeatedly that factors like lower stress and higher levels of positive emotions are also key to illness protection.

### Role of inflammation

How do feelings of stress or stressful life experiences get under our skin to change our likelihood of getting sick? One of the key factors is inflammation. Inflammation is responsible for the

critical trafficking of immune cells in your body so that the right cells are present in the right locations at the right times and at the right levels. When stress is high and long-lasting, the hormones in our body get unbalanced in a way that leads to higher than normal levels of inflammation and a host of adverse health outcomes.

As it happens, many of the preexisting conditions associated with severe Covid-19 symptoms and hospitalisation are also associated with higher levels of stress and inflammation, such as heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

It has even been proposed that Covid-19 activates inflammation in a similar way that chronic stress does and results in a "cytokine storm". This may be partly due to activities of stress

hormones like cortisol, revealed to be high in the most severe cases of Covid including an increased risk of death.

### Taking stress seriously

Your stress and well-being matter, especially during a time of rebounding Covid-19 infection levels and new variants around the world.

Having an optimally functioning immune system has never been so critical. Even if you are lucky enough to live somewhere with Covid-19 levels that have levelled off or dropped, or if you have been immunised vaccinated, it turns out that stress, loneliness, sleep and other inflammation-relevant phenomena are also key to how well your body responds to vaccination. That is, how much protective antibody you produce in response to the vaccine.

This gives us yet another reason to focus on our wellness right now. So please, follow the advice from decades of research: take your stress seriously and protect your well-being during this endlessly stressful time.

Stay socially connected, even if it has to be virtual. Focus on what you can control rather than what you cannot. Take time every day to do something that makes you happy. Rest. Prioritise your sleep and exercise.

And most importantly, listen to public health experts and get vaccinated, wear a mask and wash your hands, but also remember that that is not the end-all of staying healthy. Your mind affects your body in important and Covid-relevant ways, so taking care of your well-being, especially your stress level, is essential too.

Annie Ginty is an Assistant professor of psychology and neuroscience at Baylor University. Sarah Pressman is an Associate Professor of Psychological Science at the University of California, Irvine. This article is being reproduced by arrangements with The Conversation.



# Study Finds Indulging In Sports Is Good For Boys

Agencies

A new study has found that boys who participate in sports in early childhood are less likely to experience later depressive and anxiety symptoms -- known as emotional distress -- in middle childhood.

The research has been published in the 'Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics'.

The study also suggested that boys who experience less emotional distress in middle childhood are also more likely to

be more physically active in early adolescence.

In the study, "we wanted to clarify the long-term and reciprocal relationship in school-aged children between participation in sports and depressive and anxiety symptoms," said Marie Josee-Harbec, who did the work as a doctoral student supervised by UdeM psychoeducation professor Linda Pagani.

"We also wanted to examine whether this relationship worked differently in boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 12," said Harbec, who along with Pagani practices at

CHU Ste-Justine children's hospital.

"There's widespread evidence of a crisis these days in childhood physical inactivity, and this may ultimately have implications for later mental and physical health," she added.

Harbec and Pagani examined the sporting and physical activity habits reported by the kids at ages 5 and 12 years, as well by their parents, and also looked at symptoms of emotional distress from ages 6 to 10 years that were reported by the kids' teachers.

"We found that 5-year-old boys who never participated in sports were more

likely between the ages of 6 and 10 to look unhappy and tired, had difficulty having fun, cried a lot, and appeared fearful or worried," said Pagani, the study's senior author.

"Also, boys who exhibited higher levels of depressive and anxious symptoms during middle childhood were subsequently less physically active at 12 years old. For girls, on the other hand, we did not find any significant changes," Pagani added.

Collaborating with researchers at McGill University and the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Research Institute,

Harbec and Pagani examined data from a Quebec cohort of kids born in 1997 and 1998, part of the Quebec Longitudinal Study of Child Development done by the Institut de la Statistique du Quebec.

Parents of 690 boys and 748 girls they looked at had reported their past-year participation in sport at age 5 and their weekly level of physical activity at age 12; their teachers assessed emotional-distress symptoms observed in school from ages 6 to 10. The data were stratified by sex to identify any significant link between physical activity and emotional distress.

## Covid-19: How bad is Omicron?

Symptoms of current Covid variants are similar to those of common cold

Agencies

When delta appeared, we then noticed a shift in the most frequently reported symptoms. Previously common symptoms such as shortness of breath, fever and loss of smell fell down the rankings. Cold-like symptoms—including a runny nose, sore throat and persistent sneezing – became more common, along with a headache and cough, particularly in people who had been vaccinated.

Omicron appears to be continuing the trend set by delta. It's causing symptoms that are much more like a regular cold, particularly in people who've been vaccinated, and fewer general systemic symptoms, such as nausea, muscle pains, diarrhoea and skin rashes.

We looked at health reports from people who reported having Covid in December, as omicron spread through the UK, and compared them with data from early October, when delta was the dominant variant. We then checked our findings from this comparison by also analysing data from a small group of contributors who had been told by the government that their positive PCR results were suspected or confirmed omicron infections.

also now seeing cases rising in older age groups while the overall infection rate remains so high. The recent rise in positive cases in the over-75s is worrying, but we're hopeful that the high levels of vaccination in the UK in older and more vulnerable groups will continue to translate to milder symptoms and few hospitalisations. The major problem with omicron is more the wave of sickness absence it's causing in key health staff.

Is it omicron or a cold?

As we head further into the depths of winter here in the UK there are some pretty nasty colds going around, as well as the perennial flu. The ZOE Covid Study app data tells us the symptoms caused by the current Covid variants are very similar to those of a regular cold. This means that it's not possible to know for sure what you've got based on symptoms alone. When the rate of Covid is high, a new sore throat, runny nose or unusual fatigue should be treated as Covid until you've been tested.

Because contributors to the ZOE Covid Study app log any daily symptoms they're experiencing, as well as any Covid test results, we're also able to track the prevalence of non-Covid colds. Just three months ago, around one in 12 people with new respiratory



What are the symptoms of omicron?

Our analysis showed no significant difference in the overall symptom profile of delta and omicron, with the top five symptoms in both time periods being a runny nose, headache, fatigue, sneezing and a sore throat. But when it comes to the overall prevalence of the symptoms, there are some clear differences.

For example, anosmia (loss of smell or taste) was in the top ten in October but has fallen to 17th place. What was once a key indicator of Covid is now only seen in around one in five people testing positive. And according to our data, less than a third of people (29 percent) will ever experience a fever, which is also far less common than we've seen in the past.

Importantly, we found that only half of people with Covid had any of the classic three symptoms of fever, cough or loss of sense of smell, suggesting that the government's guidance for PCR testing (which suggests that you should get a test if you have one of these three symptoms) is woefully outdated.

How bad is omicron?

This new variant is much more infectious than previous variants, causing a surge in cases across the UK and in other countries. And although it's not yet clear whether we will be facing an overwhelming wave of hospitalisations from the disease, it's important to remember that while omicron and delta may feel like a cold to many of us, it can still kill or cause long-term symptoms that disrupt daily life, especially for people who have not been vaccinated or are immunocompromised.

So far, we've seen the majority of cases in younger people, but we're

We found that only half of people with Covid had any of the classic three symptoms of fever, cough or loss of sense of smell, suggesting that the government's guidance for PCR testing (which suggests that you should get a test if you have one of these three symptoms) is woefully outdated.

symptoms tested positive for Covid. However, with omicron around 50 percent of "new colds" currently are, in fact, Covid.

So if you or a family member are feeling unwell, there's a good chance that it could be Covid, especially if you're snuffling and sneezing a lot. You should stay home and get tested to be sure. Bear in mind that although lateral flow tests are good, especially if you swab both your throat and nose, they are less sensitive than PCR tests. When you do one, try and repeat it in the following days, as a single negative lateral flow result isn't a guarantee that you aren't infected.

Finally, regardless of the government guidelines, whether you have Covid or not, it's best to stay at home if you're feeling ill with strange or cold-like symptoms, and to avoid contacts and wear a mask if you do go out, to avoid spreading your germs to others who may be more vulnerable.

(The Conversation)

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,  
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER**  
**JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT (PHE) KASHMIR**  
NEW ENGINEERING COMPLEX, SILK FACTORY ROAD RAJ BAGH, SRINAGAR  
TELE: 0194-2311832. TELE FAX: 0194-2311835, E-Mail: kmrphed@gmail.com, kashmirphe@yahoo.com

CORRIGENDUM III  
AMENDMENT-I

**Subject:-** Supply of ISI marked Galvanized Mild Steel tubes conforming to IS: 1239(Part-I) 2004 read with subsequent amendments, in random length ranging from '4.00 Mts to 7.00 Mts' screwed on both ends in assorted sizes of nominal bore ranging from 15mm NB up-to and including 100mm NB Light Class and 125mm and 150mm NB Medium Class, for execution of works under Jal Jeevan Mission.

**Reference:-**

- This office e-NIT No: CE/PHE/KMR/ISD/89 of 2021-22 Dated:- 29-11-2021 issued under endorsement No:-CE/PHE/KMR/ISD/28741-50 Dated: 29-11-2021.
- Minutes of pre-bid meeting convened on 14-12-2021 and 15-12-2021 uploaded on www.jktenders.gov.in against tender Id 2021\_PHE\_I50682\_I.
- Meetings of the UT Level Committee convened on 27-12-2021 and 05-01-2022.

In view of the representations received from various intending bidders, minutes of pre bid meeting referred above and decisions taken during the meeting of UT level Committee convened under the chairmanship of Development Commissioner (Works) PW Department J&K on 27-12-2021 and 05-01-2022, the following amendments to the Bidding Document are hereby made.

Sr No	Clause of e-NIT No 89 of 2021-22	Description	To be read as
01	Pre-qualification 3.1 (vii) Page 9 and Eligibility and Qualification criteria (vii) at Page No. 12.	Copy of Supply order/Experience Certificate / Performance Statements from Govt. Department/Semi Govt./PSU /Corporations/State or National level only for the financial year i.e. 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21. The bidder should have manufactured and supplied not less than 20% (twenty percent) of the total advertised quantity of GMS tubes for all NBs in one of the last five years i.e. 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 ending March 2021.	Copy of Supply order/Experience Certificate / Performance Statements from Govt. Department/Semi Govt./PSU/Corporations/State or National level only for the financial year i.e. 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21. The bidder should have manufactured and supplied not less than 16% (sixteen percent) of the total advertised quantity of GMS tubes for all NBs in one of the last five years i.e. 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 ending March 2021.
02	Terms of Delivery Clause No. 27 at page No. 19 & 20.	The delivery will have to be made at the Consignee's stores located at Anantnag, Srinagar & Baramulla in Kashmir province. The supplier shall adhere strictly to the delivery schedule to be communicated by the Chief Engineer Jal Shakti Department Kashmir immediately after placement of Supply order. In case of any ordered supply is made beyond the delivery schedule, the supplier shall not claim from the Department any financial benefit on account of increase in raw material prices as well any increase in the statutory taxes/duties, for the supplies made beyond the delivery schedule. However, any decrease in raw material prices as well as the statutory taxes/duties shall be passed on to the Department. The Department reserves the right to impose Liquidated Damages, on account of delayed supplies. However, in the event of any eventuality beyond the control of the supplier, as per the Force Majeure clause and the supplier satisfies the Department with the sufficient documentary proof, reasonable extension in the delivery period shall be granted without any extra financial involvement to Department. The department shall, however, be entitled to the benefit of any decrease in price of raw material or on account of reduction in GST/ tax structure. The tenderer shall also intimate in "Section V" the tentative quantity diameter wise which can be supplied by them within a period of 45 days.	The delivery will have to be made at the Consignee's stores located at Districts Anantnag, Srinagar & Baramulla in Kashmir province. The supplier shall adhere strictly to the delivery schedule to be communicated by the Chief Engineer Jal Shakti Department Kashmir immediately after placement of Supply order. In case of any ordered supply is made beyond the delivery schedule, the supplier shall not claim from the Department any financial benefit on account of increase in raw material prices as well any increase in the statutory taxes/duties, for the supplies made beyond the delivery schedule. However, any decrease in raw material prices as well as the statutory taxes/duties shall be passed on to the Department. The Department reserves the right to impose Liquidated Damages, on account of delayed supplies. However, in the event of any eventuality beyond the control of the supplier, as per the Force Majeure clause and the supplier satisfies the Department with the sufficient documentary proof, reasonable extension in the delivery period shall be granted without any extra financial involvement to Department. The department shall, however, be entitled to the benefit of any decrease in price of raw material or on account of reduction in GST/ tax structure. The tenderer shall also intimate in "Section V" the tentative quantity dia, wise which can be supplied by them within a period of 60 days.
03	Price Fall Clause Sr No. 30 (i) at Page No. 20	The price offered for the item to be supplied under the contract by the supplier shall in no event exceed the lowest price at which the supplier sells the item or offers to sell the item of identical description to any person, organizations (s) including the purchaser or any department of the Central Govt. Or State/UT Govt. Or any statutory undertaking of the Central or a State Government as the case may be, during the period till performance/ currency of the contract.	If the Supplier reduces its price or sells or even offers to sell the item(s) following conditions of sale similar to those of the rate contract, at a price lower than the rate contract price, to any person or organization during the currency of the rate contract, the rate contract price will be automatically reduced with effect from that date for all the subsequent supplies under the rate contract and the rate contract amended accordingly.
04	Mode of Payment S. No. 23 at Page No. 17 & 18	A 90% (Ninety percent) payment shall be released against delivery of the material in the consignee's stores located at District/Divisional headquarters as listed in Para 16 (iii), with pre-dispatch inspection by the 3 <sup>rd</sup> party Inspection Agency (to be nominated by the Deptt.) at factory and subsequent verification thereof by the departmental verification Board Constituted vide Govt. Order No. 128-PW (Hyd.) of 2013 dated 16-04-2013 concerned Store officer/ in charge of the designed District / Divisional headquarters as listed in Para 16 (iii) above and Third-Party Inspection and Quality Monitor in line with JJM guidelines. The payment shall be centralized and made by Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Quality Control & Procurement Division Jammu. The documents, among other required details, shall include all original inspection and verification certificates and all test reports/certificates issued by third party inspection agencies during the testing of the material etc. Balance 10% (Ten percent payment shall be released after successful completion of the contract and only after issue of firm and final rate by the order placing authority.	A 90% (Ninety percent) payment shall be released against delivery of the material in the consignee's stores located at District/Divisional headquarters as listed in Para 16 (iii), with pre-dispatch inspection by the 3 <sup>rd</sup> party Inspection Agency (to be nominated by the Deptt.) at factory and subsequent verification thereof by the departmental verification Board Constituted vide Govt. Order No. 128-PW (Hyd.) of 2013 dated 16-04-2013 concerned Store officer/ in charge of the designed District / Divisional headquarters as listed in Para 16 (iii) above and Third-Party Inspection and Quality Monitor in line with JJM guidelines. The payment shall be centralized and made by Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Quality Control & Procurement Division HMT Srinagar. The documents, among other required details, shall include all original inspection and verification certificates and all test reports/certificates issued by third party inspection agencies during the testing of the material etc. Balance 10% (Ten percent) of the payment shall be released within a period of thirty days (30 days) after successful completion of the Supplies against a particular Supply order & subject to furnishing of a valid/verified BG for an equivalent amount i.e 10% (ten percent) of the allotment value. The BG shall be valid for 18 Calendar months from the date of its issuance. The thirty day time period shall be counted from the date of furnishing of the BG to the Department after completion of the supplies as per the terms and conditions of the order.
05	Pre-qualification S. No. 31 (v) at page No. 98 and Eligibility and Qualification S.No. 14 (v) at page No. 12	Scanned copy of Annual Report (Profit & Statement along with Balance sheet) with annual Turnover Statement for the tendered item during last five financial years (2016-17, 2017-18 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-2021 with supporting documents duly authenticated by a Chartered Accountant/Cost Accountant in India. (the average annual financial turn over must not be less than Rs 200 Crore.	The average annual financial turnover of 'the bidder' during the last five years (2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 & 2020-21), should not be less than Rs. 200 Crore as per the annual report (audited balance sheet and profit & loss account) of the relevant period, duly authenticated by a Chartered Accountant/Cost Accountant based in India.
06	Engraving stamping on GMS Tube Clause 5 at page 28/24 Section -III	Each GMS Tube shall be engraved with the following words over the barrel of each pipe equidistantly at 01 Meter distance. a) Manufacturers name on each pipe. b) Standard ISI certification mark. c) Class or pipe. d) Each pipe shall be Engraved with Department Name as "Jal Shakti PHE JJM (J)/ (K)" & Date of manufacture in DD/MM/YY format equidistantly on tube barrel. e) Different classes of the tubes shall be distinguished by colour bands as under: i. Light Class: - Yellow-Band ii. Medium Class: - Blue Band	Each GMS Tube shall be supplied with the following identification marks, engraved over the barrel of each pipe. a) Manufacturers brand name. b) Standard ISI certification mark. c) Class of pipe. d) Department Name as "JSD-JJM(K)" after every 01 Meter. e) Date of manufacture in MM/YY format. f) Different classes of the tubes shall be distinguished/identified by colour bands as under: i. Light Class: - Yellow-Band ii. Medium Class: - Blue Band
07	FORCE MAJEURE clause Page 17	If at any time during the pendency of this contract, the performance in whole or in part within the consent of purchaser or any obligation under this contract is prevented or delayed by the reasons of any war, sabotage, fires, floods, strikes lock-out, explosion epidemics, quarantine restriction or to other Act of God, Government or ruler (hereinafter referred as eventuality) but not including negligence or wrong doing predictable/ seasonal rain and any other.....	The clause shall remain the same i.e. as detailed in the tender document.
07	Commercial Terms and Condition Section "V" at page 34/30 (Supply of material within 45 days)	Quantities (in MTs of each GMS Tubes that can be supplied by firm within a period of 45 Days from the date of placement of supply order.	Quantities (in MTs) of each GMS Tubes that can be supplied by firm within a period of 60 Days from the date of placement of supply order.
08	Clause: 2 Page No. 27	Conversion Factor for metres/ tube tonne  40mm L :327 80mm L :145	Conversion Factor for metres/ tube tonne shall be 40mm (L) : 305.81 80mm (L) : 145.13

Besides with regards to the purchase and price preference for local SSI units, it is hereby clarified that "If the price quoted by any participant MSE is within price band of L1+15%, he shall be allowed to supply a portion of requirement by bringing down their price to L1 price, in a situation where L1 price is from someone other than MSE and such MSE shall be allowed to supply up to 20% of the total tendered value. In case of more than one such MSE the supply shall be shared proportionately to tendered quantity."

In such a scenario as detailed above, the balance quantity after deducting the share of MSE(S) shall be distributed as detailed in clause 8, section III "Special Conditions of Contract" of the bid document."

All other terms and conditions of the NIT shall remain the same.

**DIPK-16444/21**

No:- CE/PHE/KMR/ISD/36454-66  
Date:-08-01-2022

**Chief Engineer,  
Jal Shakti, (PHE) Department  
Kashmir**



## Retail Inflation Rises To 5.59% In December



Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Retail inflation rose to 5.59 per cent in December, mainly due to an uptick in food prices, government data showed on Monday.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based retail inflation was 4.91 per cent in November 2021 and 4.59 per cent in December 2020.

As per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), food inflation rose to 4.05 per cent in December this

fiscal compared to 1.87 per cent in the preceding month.

The Reserve Bank, which mainly factors in the retail inflation while arriving at its bi-monthly monetary policy, expects the inflation print to be somewhat higher over the rest of the year as base effects turn adverse.

According to the RBI, it is expected that headline inflation will peak in the fourth quarter of the current fiscal and soften thereafter.

## Kansal Advocates Mushroom Cultivation As Key Enterprise For Youth



Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Principal Secretary, Higher Education, Rohit Kansal, during his recent visit to Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu interacted with undergraduate students of Experiential Learning Programme on Mushroom Cultivation and Spawn Production.

He appreciated the efforts of faculty and students and motivated them to take up mushroom cultivation and spawn production as an enterprise as they have now become fully trained in various aspects of the trade. He emphasized that artificial cultivation of mushrooms round the year can be a reliable source of income generation and

help the students not only earn their livelihood but become job providers rather than job seekers. He stressed upon the students to take up the enterprise of spawn production in Jammu region so that the demand of the farmers regarding availability of spawn is taken care of.

Dr. J.P. Sharma, Vice Chancellor SKUAST highlighted various Experiential Learning Programmes being run in the University.

Dr. Pardeep Wali, Director Research, Dr. S.K. Gupta, Director Extension, Dr. Bikram Singh, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Dr. S.K. Gupta, Registrar, Dr. Rajesh Katoch, Dean Students Welfare, Dharam Pal, Estates Officer and faculty other members of the University were present on the occasion.

## Drive Against Substandard Pesticides, Fertilizers To Continue: Dir Agri



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Director Agriculture Kashmir (Controller Insecticides), Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal Wednesday reviewed the functioning of the enforcement/plant protection wing of the Department.

Addressing the meeting, the Director reiterated the Department's commitment to ensure the availability of quality agriculture inputs (seed, pesticide, fertilizers etc) to the farming community. He said the Department's drive against substandard pesticides and fertilizers will continue and anyone found guilty of violating the Insecticide Act-1968 would be dealt with as per law.

Director passed instructions to the concerned officers to constitute district-wise internal vigilance teams for monitoring the stock, supply and distribution of quality agriculture inputs. He said a multi level monitoring mechanism is needed to check irregularities, if any and to ensure that the consumers' interests are served at all levels in an effective manner.

Iqbal while reviewing the functioning of the plant protection wing asked the concerned divisional officers to increase the awareness among educated

youth regarding the online application process for obtaining the Licence of Pesticides, Seeds and Fertilizers. He said the process should be simplified and based on the single window clearance concept.

Plant Protection Officer was directed to clear the pending cases of issue of license (as per set guidelines) in a speedy manner.

Director marked the fact that agriculture is a very large sector and therefore it has a big role viz a viz employment generation. He asked the officers to put in extra efforts to constitute multi dimensional models of agriculture development so that more and more educated youth could be attracted towards this sector.

The meeting was attended by Joint Director Agriculture Extension, Joint Director Farms, Joint Director Apiculture and Mushrooms, Joint Director Agriculture Inputs, Deputy Director Law Enforcement Kashmir and other senior officers of the Department.

Earlier, Director Agriculture visited the hi-tech poly houses (grow-out section) of Seed Quality Control Laboratory at Lalmandi. He visited some subordinate offices also where he interacted with the officers/officials.

## Kashmir Fruit Growers Demand Ban On Import Of Iranian Apples

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers and Traders Association on Wednesday demanded a blanket ban on the import of Iranian apples.

They said the supply of Iranian apples is a serious threat to the century old Kashmir apple industry.

Addressing a press conference, president of Kashmir valley Fruit Growers and Traders Association Bashir Ahmad Bashir alleged that with the arrival of Iranian apples in the markets, the prices of Kashmiri apples have considerably dropped.

"The supply of Iranian apples in the country's markets has reduced the rate of Kashmiri apples and now the demand for Kashmiri apples in the markets is also very low", Bashir said.

The President said: "In the last few days, the rate of Kashmiri apples has dropped from Rs. 1200 per box to Rs. 600 per box."

He said apples packed in a box value Rs 600 and Rs 300 per carton are charged for transportation to reach to the market besides GST has been increased



from 12 percent to 18 percent. "how could we afford to sell a carton of apples at such a low price", he added.

He appealed the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to impose a complete ban on the import of Iranian apples in the Indian markets.

Bashir said, "the central government did not pay any heed to our appeals made time and again to stop the import of Iranian apples to Indian markets as it has caused mental depression to the fruit growers".

"We also had a meeting with the Union Agriculture Minister but he did not take any action to stop the supply of Iranian apples", he alleged.

"We have also written letters to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Lt Governor Manoj Sinha regarding the import of Iranian apples in Indian markets but nothing has been done so far", Bashir said.

"If the slogan of 'Make in India' is to become true, then why are apples being imported from Iran?" Bashir questioned.

He urged the government to take appropriate measures to protect the Kashmiri apple which is the backbone of the economy of Kashmir Apple industry.

He said about 70 to 80 per cent of people of Kashmir valley are earning their livelihood from this trade.

## Govt Puts Brakes On CEL Privatisation After Employees Union Approaches Court

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The government has put on hold the privatisation of Central Electronics Ltd (CEL) after the employees union approached the court against the sale of the company to a little-known firm, a top official said Wednesday.

Allegations of under-valuation in the Rs 210 crore highest bid made by the city-based Nandal Finance & Leasing are being examined, said Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Secretary in the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), which is running the privatisation process.

The Letter of Intent (LoI) for sale of 100 per cent government shareholding in CEL to Nandal Finance & Leasing has not been issued, as the allegations are being examined, Pandey told PTI.

The government had in November approved the sale of CEL, under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), to Nandal Finance & Leasing for Rs 210 crore. The transaction was scheduled to be completed by March 2022.

Following this, the CEL employee association approached the Delhi High Court against the privatisation, and Opposition Congress too alleged that the

company is being undervalued. Pandey said the inter-ministerial group on disinvestment is examining the allegations.

"We have kept the LoI on hold since it is a subjudice matter and allegations of employees association are under examination," he added.

He said the book value of CEL is Rs 108 crore and turnover is around Rs 200 crore.

"How can a company with a book value of Rs 108 crore have a valuation of Rs 1,000 crore. Some year they (CEL) earned Rs 20 crore profit, in some, they earned Rs 1 crore profit," Pandey said, referring to allegations of under-valuation.

He said the CEL's valuation has been done by the transaction advisor and asset valuer, following which the government arrived at the reserve price of Rs 194 crore for the company.

"The net asset value of the company is actually less than Rs 194 crore if we take the liabilities into account. The land lease is for 90 years out of which 46 years is already gone," he said.

The Congress party has claimed that the valuation of the CEL, using different methods, was between Rs 957 crore and Rs 1,600 crore.

Incorporated in 1974, CEL, under the Ministry of Science and Technology, is a pioneer in

the field of Solar Photovoltaic (SPV), and it has developed the technology with its own R&D efforts. It has also developed axle counter systems that are being used in Railway signalling systems for the safe running of trains.

The government had issued a request for Expressions of Interest (EOI) on February 3, 2020, for CEL sale, following which three preliminary bids were received. Later, two companies -- Nandal Finance and Leasing Pvt Ltd and JPM Industries Ltd -- put in financial bids on October 12, 2021.

While Nandal Finance and Leasing Pvt Ltd bid for Rs 210 crore, JPM Industries Ltd bid stood at Rs 190 crore.

The bid by Nandal Finance was higher than the 'Reserve Price' of Rs 194 crore set by the government based on the valuations by the Transaction Adviser and Asset Valuer.

This is the second time that the government had initiated the process of strategic sale of CEL after the Cabinet on October 27, 2016, approved its strategic sale.

In the first attempt, although 6 preliminary bids were received, no financial bids came. The CEL sale process restarted in February 2020 and finally, two companies put financial bids in October 2021.

### SHORT TAKES

### Horti Dept Organizes Awareness/ Training Camp In Pulwama

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A mega awareness/ training camp was Wednesday organized at Utimulla, Pulwama by the Department of Horticulture under the "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" campaign.

Director General (DG) Horticulture, Kashmir, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat was the Chief Guest at the function.

In his address, the DG elaborated in detail about the various central and UT sponsored schemes offered by the department and highlighted the various components of these schemes and advised the farmers to avail the benefits under these schemes.

He informed that the department is offering assistance on establishment of grading/ packaging lines, mini CA Stores, low-cost processing units and walnut de-hulling units etc. and advised the farmers to take the benefits under these initiatives.

He further informed that to cater the growing demand for HD exotic plants in the valley UT Govt. has launched the 'High-Density Plantation Nurseries Scheme' and advised farmers to establish nurseries under the said scheme for which the department will provide technical and financial help.

### Industrial Production Grows 1.4 Pc In Nov

New Delhi- India's industrial production rose 1.4 per cent in November 2021, according to official data released on Wednesday.

As per the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) data by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the manufacturing sector's output grew 0.9 per cent in November last year.

In November 2021, the mining output climbed five per cent, and power generation increased 2.1 per cent.

The IIP had contracted by 1.6 per cent in November 2020.

During April-November this fiscal, the IIP grew 17.4 per cent against a 15.3 per cent contraction in the same period last year.

Industrial production has been hit due to the coronavirus pandemic since March 2020, when it had contracted 18.7 per cent.

It shrank 57.3 per cent in April 2020 due to a decline in economic activities in the wake of the lockdown imposed to curb the spread of coronavirus infections. (PTI)

## Global Growth Could Slow Sharply Due To Omicron, Says World Bank

Agencies

**WASHINGTON:** Global growth will "decelerate markedly" this year, but the Omicron variant of Covid-19 that is spreading rapidly worldwide could make the situation worse and exacerbate labor shortages and supply chain snarls, the World Bank warned on Tuesday.

In its latest Global Economic Prospects report, the Washington-based development lender cut its forecast for world economic growth this year to 4.1 percent after the 5.5 percent rebound last year.

The forecasts for growth last year and this year were both 0.2 percent lower than estimates released in June.

However, the bank warned, "Various downside risks cloud the outlook, including simultaneous Omicron-driven economic disruptions, further supply bottlenecks (and) a de-anchoring of inflation expectations," the report said.

That could further reduce global growth this year to as low as 3.4 percent, a drop of 0.7 percentage points.

World Bank President David Malpass worries about the "huge toll" the pandemic is inflicting on people in poor countries, which could have ramifications for the future.

"We're seeing troubling reversals in poverty, nutrition and health. The reversal and education or scope from schools closures will have a permanent impact," he told reporters. "I'm very worried about the permanent scar on development." Ayan Kose, head of the bank's forecast unit, said the Omicron



strain is causing fewer restrictions than the initial outbreak, which means the overall impact could be more benign.

However, he cautioned, "If it stays around much longer, and cases remain elevated and continue pressuring health systems, under that scenario, the global growth will be lower." That would exacerbate ongoing struggles with labor shortages and global production and transportation snarls that have fueled a wave of price increases.

"The Omicron variant shows us once again, the pandemic is still with us and we need to learn how to live with the pandemic," he said.

Faced with inflation at a 40-year high, the US Federal Reserve is expected to begin raising interest rates soon, and perhaps take more aggressive steps, which will raise borrowing costs for developing countries already burdened with record debt.

That, in turn, could erode business and household confidence, lowering consumption and trade flows, a key engine of global growth.

US, China slowing Kose stresses that vaccination remains crucial, since the threat of new, more transmissible or more virulent variants will persist until a substantial part of the world's population is vaccinated.

## Book On Taxpayers Outreach Programs In JK Presented to LG



**SRINAGAR:** Principal Commissioner of Income Tax (RefAC) Jammu, Mona Singh and Principal Commissioner of Income Tax, Srinagar, Manoj Pal Singh Wednesday presented a book 'Mulaqaat' on Taxpayer Outreach Programme in J&K and Ladakh to Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha. The book documents the interactive sessions conducted by the Income Tax Department in J&K and Ladakh.

Upon the directions of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Income tax and Central GST authorities jointly visited all the districts of J&K and Ladakh

to carry out an outreach programme 'Mulaqaat' and held interactive sessions with various stakeholders, businessmen, young professionals and youth from 30th November 2021 to 11th December 2021.

The purpose of these outreach programmes and interactive sessions was to understand the difficulties being faced by the public in respect of Direct and Indirect Taxes and to assist them in solving the problems along with motivating the youth to pay taxes, by directly connecting with the pulse of each district.

### Rupee Ends Almost Flat At 73.93 Against USD

**MUMBAI:** (PTI) The rupee inched higher by just 1 paisa to close at 73.93 against the US dollar on Wednesday as elevated crude oil prices offset the impact of a weak American currency and positive domestic equities.

Forex traders said the less hawkish-than-expected testimony from Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell calmed fears of aggressive Fed policy tightening and supported emerging market

currencies. However, appreciation bias was capped as crude oil prices continued to strengthen.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit witnessed an intra-day high of 73.78 and a low of 74.04 against the US dollar. It finally settled at 73.93, a rise of just 1 paisa over its previous close.

On Tuesday, the rupee had surged 11 paise to close at an over three-month high of 73.94 against the US dollar. (PTI)

### Sri Lanka Seeks 1 Billion Dollar Loan From India

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka is negotiating a USD one billion loan from India to import goods from the country, the governor of the Central Bank Ajith Nivard Cabraal said on Wednesday, amidst a shortage of almost all essential commodities.

Cabraal also said that Sri Lanka is negotiating another loan from China as part of an attempt to restructure its debt repayment. The loan amount has not been decided.

He said that Sri Lanka is negotiating a USD 1 billion facility with India to import goods from the country.

Cabraal said that this will also help Sri Lanka in its debt repayment and promote more trade with the respective countries.

Last week, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa told the visiting Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi that Sri Lanka would be helped if the debt could be restructured. (PTI)

### Gold Rallies Rs 228; Silver Gains Rs 271

**NEW DELHI:** Gold in the national capital on Wednesday jumped Rs 228 to Rs 46,812 per 10 grams, reflecting overnight gains in international precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal settled at Rs 46,584 per 10 grams.

"Spot gold prices for 24 carat in Delhi rose by Rs 228 reflecting overnight gains in COMEX gold prices," HDFC Securities Senior Analyst (Commodities) Tapan Patel said.

Silver also gained Rs 271 to Rs 59,932 per kg from Rs 59,661 per kg in the previous trade.

In the international market, gold was trading marginally lower at USD 1,818 per ounce and silver was flat at USD 22.70 per ounce. (PTI)



## Militant, Cop

fresh gunfight in Kulgam comes two days after police claimed to have killed two local militants of Al Badr in south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Monday.

Muzaffar Wani of Arigam Pulwama and Abdul Rashid Thoker of Hassanpora, according to police were involved in attacking policemen and civilians in the south Kashmir district.

Pertinently, at least 13 militants have been killed in seven encounters across the Valley over the last twelve days.

## Pakistan's First

India and Pakistan nose-dived after an attack on the Pathankot Air Force base in 2016. Subsequent attacks, including one on an Indian Army camp in Uri, further deteriorated the relationship.

The relationship dipped further after India carried out an airstrike in Pakistan on February 26, 2019 in response to the Pulwama suicide attack in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed.

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

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

As the new national security policy seeks a shift in Pakistan's approach from geo-strategic to geo-economics, there is a renewed optimism of a possible thaw with India, the report said.

"Economic security will be the central theme of the new national security policy," the official disclosed.

"But geo-economics does not necessarily mean we overlook our geo-strategic and geo-political interests, the official said, adding the long-standing Kashmir dispute with India has been identified as a vital national policy' issue for Pakistan.

The official, however, clarified that there were no prospects of rapprochement with India under the current government in New Delhi.

The official said this would be the first-ever codified national security policy that would cover both internal security as well as foreign policy.

"Only a part of the national security policy will be made public, the official clarified, saying in the rest of the world such policies often remained classified.

The official said though Pakistan did have defence, foreign and internal policies, the new policy would act as an umbrella document providing direction for the future.

It took seven years to prepare this policy, which was started by then-national security adviser Sartaj Aziz in 2014.

"Inputs were taken from all the federal, provincial institutions as well as military and other departments, the official said.

The official said the Opposition was not taken on board since policy making was the domain of the executive but for a consensus, "we are ready to sit with the Opposition."

However, the Opposition had boycotted the session when National Security Adviser Moed Yusuf briefed the parliamentary committee on national security a few weeks ago.

When asked to comment on the implementation of the policy, the official said the classified document lays out a complete implementation mechanism and the prime minister will review the progress on a monthly basis.

The policy will be reviewed every year and at the time of change of government, the official said, adding the issue of political stability was also taken care of in it.

Pakistan has a chequered history with no elected prime minister having ever been able to complete his/her five-year term.

The new policy also deals with the issue of militant and dissident groups and advocates dialogue with reconcilable elements.'

On the internal front, the new policy identifies five key areas of population/migration, health, climate and water, food security and gender mainstreaming, according to the report.

## 350-400 Militants

At the same time, he said last year's ceasefire understanding between the Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) of Indian and Pakistani armies resulted in some improvement in the situation along the LoC.

"Along the Line of Control, after a heightened situation for a prolonged period, the DGMOs understanding in February last year was aimed at achieving mutually beneficial, and sustainable peace," he said.

"Resultantly, the situation has

witnessed marked improvement. However, increase in the concentration of terrorists in launch pads, across the LoC and repeated infiltration attempts, once again expose their nefarious intents," he said.

Gen Naravane further said: "We, on our part, have resolved to show zero tolerance to terror, and commit ourselves to extract dire costs, should that be forced upon us," he said.

In a significant move aimed at reducing tensions, the Indian and Pakistani armies on February 25 last year announced that they would cease firing across the LoC while recommitting themselves to a 2003 ceasefire agreement.

The Army chief said that the "proxy war" continues as militants are still there in the launch pads across the border.

"The combined intelligence inputs suggest 350 to 400 terrorists on the other side at the launch pads or in various training camps. This threat has in no way receded. We have to remain alert. A threat on the western front is very much there and cannot be ignored," he said.

On the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, Gen Naravane said a 'whole of government' approach has led to progressive improvement in the security situation.

"Efforts to give an indigenous hue to terrorism, by setting up a faade, of proxy terror Tanzeems, have failed miserably. Inimical elements, re-energised their attempts at disrupting peace in the valley by targeting minorities, and non-locals.

However, we have been able to counter these challenges," he said.

Asked whether demilitarisation on the Siachen glacier is possible, the Army chief suggested that it all depends on Pakistan.

"We are not averse to demilitarisation of Siachen glacier. But the precondition for that is to acceptance of the Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL). Pakistan has to accept it," he said.

Gen Naravane said both sides have to sign on the dotted lines before any kind of disengagement takes place. Pakistan has been opposed to accepting the AGPL.

Asked about drones being used by militant outfits in Jammu and Kashmir, he said it is a threat and armed forces are seized of the challenge.

He said the drones are being used primarily to transport ammunition and drugs.

"We are well seized of the issue... Union Home Ministry is very much alive and countering it," he said.

## Pahalgam Freezes

settled at a low of minus 5.5 degrees Celsius.

The MeT office said the weather is likely to stay mainly dry over the next few days.

Kashmir Valley is currently under the grip of the 40-day harshest winter period known as 'Chilla-i-Kalan' which began on December 21.

'Chilla-i-Kalan' is a period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies, including the famous Dal Lake here, as well as the water supply lines in several parts of the Valley.

The chances of snowfall are the most frequent and maximum during this period and most areas, especially in the higher reaches, receive heavy to very heavy snowfall.

The 'Chilla-i-Kalan' will end on January 31, but the cold wave continues even after that in Kashmir with a 20-day-long 'Chillai-Khurd' (small cold) and a 10-day-long 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).

## Nearly 1700 Test

Baramulla with 250 cases, Budgam 116, Kupwara 52, Anantnag 40, Bandipora 36, Pulwama 30, Kulgam 20, Ganderbal 18, while as Shopian reported single new case of Covid-19.

In the winter capital, officials said, Jammu registered a maximum of 438 fresh cases of Coronavirus, Kathua 93, Reasi 85, Udhampur 68, Rajouri 42, Samba 30, Poonch 22, Ramban 15, Doda 10 and Kishtwar 9.

Pertinently, the daily cases have witnessed four-fold spurt since last Wednesday when 418 cases were detected across the Union Territory.

"Moreover, 262 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 140 from Jammu Division and 122 from Kashmir Division," the officials said.

Also, they said that one more person died of Coronavirus related complications in Jammu division, raising the death toll in the pandemic to 4547 in J&K—2212 in Jammu and 2335 in Kashmir.

## Over 40000 Tests

details, the spokesperson said today a total of 11,273 RT-PCR tests were conducted while a total of 29,163 rapid antigens tests (RAT) were conducted throughout the day.

Director Health Services Kashmir

(DHSK), Dr Mushtaq Ahmad Rather has congratulated healthcare workers and said that they have proved their commitment and dedication.

He said that they have taken keen interest in the testing saying that testing is the only way forward to detect the disease and will help in mitigation of Covid-19.

The director said health experts have been asking people to go for testing so that cases are detected early and properly isolated and surveillance measures and their contacts can be traced for the contamination.

He said the role of the health department in this regard has been appreciated by all. The testing facilities have been kept available in all hospitals and vital places.

## Mehta Directs

These directions were passed by J&K Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta while chairing a meeting of Covid task force on Wednesday in which Additional Chief Secretary, H&ME, Administrative Secretaries of Home and Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction along with other officers were present, an official spokesperson said.

In view of the surge in COVID cases, he said, the Task Force reviewed the public health response and various mitigation measures being put in place for effective containment and mitigation of the infection in Jammu and Kashmir.

According to the official spokesperson, the Task Force was apprised that J&K has administered 1.94 crore vaccines to vaccinate 107% and 101% eligible population with the first and second dose, respectively.

The meeting, he said, was also informed that the UT is further speeding up its vaccination drive in the 15-17 age category and has already achieved 32% coverage.

Mehta, as per the official spokesperson, asked the H&ME department to prioritize administering booster doses in vulnerable populations, besides, expediting vaccination in the 15-17 age group and replenishing the stock of COVID specific medicines.

The Department, he said, was directed to ensure strict enforcement of CAB, COVID SOPs, and protocols towards ensuring the highest caution and preparedness and lowest fatality.

According to the official spokesperson, the Chief Secretary emphasized that Omicron has a growth advantage over the delta variant and as such requires ardent mitigation and containment measures from an early stage, preferably when the positivity rate breaks out the 10% benchmark.

Observing that Omicron is being perceived as less dangerous than the delta variant responsible for the second wave, Mehta, he said, appealed to the public to raise their guard and remain cautious and vigilant to the infection since it has a high rate of transmission and can infect a larger group of people over shorter periods.

"It remains the social and moral responsibility of every citizen to be responsible for themselves and those around them; they must exercise due diligence against any symptom of infection in the interest of their family members as well as that of society at large," Mehta said, as per official spokesperson.

He said that people were further appealed to avoid visiting crowded places and all symptomatic persons to appropriately isolate themselves and seek medical assistance, if required.

"In the event of non-availability of home isolation, institutional isolation facilities can be availed," he said, adding "The Chief Secretary directed immediate activation of emergency control rooms and decentralized COVID war rooms and re-activation of Panchayat level isolation facilities and COVID Care Centres to contain the rural spread of the disease.

The official spokesperson said that the Task Force directed NHM to widely publicize the COVID helplines and UT/Divisional/District-level emergency contact numbers for assistance including tele-consultations through bulk messages and proper advertisement, besides promoting medical interactions with medical experts on both electronic and social media.

He said that the Department was also asked to create visual content in vernaculars on COVID good practices for circulation among the general public.

"The Chief Secretary directed ramping up of testing facilities in Jammu and Kashmir to conduct over 2 lakh daily tests in the coming days while maintaining the contact tracing ratio at 1:15," he said.

According to the official spokesperson, the Task Force was further apprised that under ECRP-II, all infrastructural preparations have been completed and ICU beds, oxygen supported beds, and ventilators are in a state of readiness.

"At present, the bed occupancy in Jammu and Kashmir is less than 10% and the medical facilities are maintaining a healthy and comfortable state," he said.

Mehta, he said, further impressed upon the Health Department to circulate treatment SOPs for minor children and train the pediatrics staff accordingly, besides ensuring the availability of the best treatment and facilities including suitable ventilators and related machinery to this age category which has hitherto remained less affected from COVID-19.

## Engage Staff

Commissioners and senior officers of health and medical education department, an official spokesperson said Wednesday.

During the meeting, he said, the Div Com enjoined on DCs to prioritize containment of covid and focus on tackling surge of cases. Pole, he said, directed them to visit health institutions along with CMOs to boost morale of the medical and paramedical staff which would motivate them to manage patients and covid properly.

"He directed DCs to constitute teams who would distribute covid kits to the covid positive patients at home. He also stressed on delay in elective surgeries in view of surge in cases so the health care system is not constrained," he said.

Besides, the official spokesperson said that Div Com also directed to reactivate Panchayat Covid Care Centres established during the second phase which would help in enhancing the capability of district administrations to manage third wave.

The Div Com, he said, further stressed on restoration of all the equipments used during the 2nd wave without wasting any additional time.

According to the official spokesperson, Pole directed for the engagement of staff of other departments for non-medical purposes including distribution of testing kits, assisting control rooms and managing containment zones.

"Meanwhile, Div Com said that during the current phase of covid 19 pandemic, symptoms are mild in nature and so the home isolation cases shall be more while volume of hospitalization would be minimum. However, he directed all to be prepared for any exigency," he added.

## HC Notice

single bench headed by Justice Mohan Lal who issued a notice to the Union of India and others to file their response within 10 days.

Rajawat said the next date of hearing in the case was set on January 27.

A Pakistani militant and three other people were killed in Hyderpora on November 15, 2021 and the police claimed that all the slain men had links to militancy. The families of the three, alleging foul play, had claimed that they were innocent, prompting the police to order the inquiry. Separately, Lt Governor Manoj Sinha had ordered a magisterial probe into the incident.

"...That being close to Amir, the petitioner knew everything good and bad about him, thus can state on oath that his son was never involved in any anti-national activities nor was he associated with any such outfit that conspires to bring harm to the nation," Latief, a resident of Gool area of Ramban district, said in his petition.

Invoking Article 21 of the Constitution, which extends the right to have a decent burial according to religious ceremonies, for his son, Latief said he was instrumental in fighting and curbing militancy in Gool and Singaldan areas by working as a civilian volunteer with the Army.

He referring to an incident of August 6, 2005 when he, along with his wife and other family members, killed a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant who had entered his house and fired indiscriminately upon the inmates. The petitioner said he was given the State Award for Bravery for 2012 by the Jammu and Kashmir government for showing exemplary courage despite being injured in the firing which also resulted in the death of his cousin.

"That apart from the same, the petitioner has been well appreciated by the Indian Army for his service towards the nation in eliminating militancy in his area i.e. Gool Sangaldan, Ramban," the petition said, enclosing copies of appreciation letters and certificates given to him by authorities in acknowledgement of his services.

The plea said that in view of the family's open support to the Army by going against anti-national forces, the petitioner has remained vulnerable to attacks, owing to which security was provided to them, which is still in place outside their house.

"...it is obvious that Amir was groomed in an atmosphere of patriotism and away from anti-national

activities and forces, thereby associating Amir with terrorism is not justified to any stretch of imagination and shall also discourage all those who hold India close to their hearts and are fighting terrorism in difficult situation in Jammu and Kashmir, without caring about their lives and families," the petition read.

Referring to the exhumation and return of the bodies of two others, a building landlord and a doctor with whom Amir was working as an office peon on November 18, the petition pleaded the court to direct the respondents, including the Union Home Ministry, J&K administration and the director general of police to hand over Magray's body to the family.

"The magisterial probe was time-bound and was supposed to submit its report within 15 days but despite passage of more than one month, no such report has been submitted so far," the petition said.

It said the petitioner met the Lt Governor on December 7 to press for the return of the body and to make magisterial probe public, for which two days' time was sought to make the report public, but "since then two weeks have lapsed, giving cause of action to the petitioner to approach this court by way of filing the present petition".

The petitioner said he and his wife are grieving and restless as the respondents have not even given them a chance to see their son's face the last time.

Expressing his wish to bury his son close to his house, Latief said the burial would be ensured within a prescribed period after exhumation and in an atmosphere required to maintain peace.

## Over 60K Acres

continuous and effective monitoring of removal of encroachments on government land.

He asked the officers to devise a mechanism under which no retrieved patch of land is re-encroached and also advised them to prioritise the commercial chunks of land to be retrieved first followed by others.

The Advisor also enquired about the process of digitisation of land records, expunging of illegal entries, reconstructing the missing records afresh and progress of revenue courts, the spokesman said.

Bhatnagar called for a comprehensive report on all the cases pending in the courts besides the timeline showing progress registered, so far.

The spokesman said the meeting was informed that digitisation of land records for Srinagar and Jammu is in its final stage and slated to be completed in February.

The work on updation of 'Jamabandis' in remaining districts is going to be completed in this month followed by digitisation of the same immediately in a decentralized manner, he said.

Regarding the settlement and digital survey of all 6,850 revenue villages, the spokesman said the draft survey manual has been prepared and the project management module is also under process.

The meeting also dealt in detail with the proposed roadmap for online services to get revenue extracts besides integration of mutation and registration system for real-time updation of revenue records without any extra encumbrance, he said.

With addition of about 127 slots a week in favour of each sub-registrar, the process of registration of properties has become quick and easy, the spokesman said.

He said around 60 percent increase in registration of properties through these offices has been made this year as compared to the previous year.

The registrations in 2021 were calculated at 65,626 in contrast to only 39,039 registrations made in 2020, the spokesman said.

## MBBS Student

Jammu and Kashmir Students Association J&K Students Association also requested Lt Governor Manoj Sinha to facilitate the return of the MBBS student's body from Bangladesh.

Additional Resident Commissioner of J&K in New Delhi, Niraj Kumar has written to the Ministry of External Affairs for facilitation in ferrying the body of girl Student.

In a communication to joint Secretary (BM) Ministry of External Affairs Kumar has endorsed the letter of Assistant commissioner central with Divisional Commissioner Kashmir and has requested the MEA about facilitation in ferrying the corpse of the student from Budgam at an earliest.

## JDA's Demolition

by surprise when a strong contingent of police and other government officials came and demolished our houses. We have been living here for the last over 80 years, a woman,

whose house was demolished, said.

The officials said the JDA has already sold many plots of the land but were not able to give possession to the legal owners owing to the encroachment and legal battle. Since the court had vacated the stay sometime back, the JDA took the action to retrieve the land, they added.

Many social and political activists joined the protesters on Wednesday and blocked the main road, officials said, adding police personnel have been deployed in strength to maintain law and order.

Former chief minister Mehbooba, reacted sharply to the demolition drive.

J&K admin's selective demolition of houses in Jammu & rendering tribals homeless is yet another method to vent their hatred by targeting minorities. Seemingly these communal policy decisions are sanctioned at the top. People need to stand up against such atrocities, she wrote on twitter in response to a video clip shared by a social media user.

Senior CPI(M) leader and former legislator M Y Tarigami said, This is how ST (scheduled tribe) and tribal communities are being treated while government claiming to be empowering them.

J-K Apni party leader Rafiq Khan, who joined the protesters at Roopnagar, said the party has decided to wait for two days for Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to intervene against the selective approach and ensure rehabilitation of the affected families.

If nothing is done, we will launch an agitation in and outside Jammu and Kashmir, he threatened.

Jammu West Assembly Movement President Sunil Dimple also addressed the protesters and extended his support.

It is not about any particular community as we are all living together for centuries in harmony and peace. Jammu and Kashmir is in danger as the government is dislodging the real citizens and inviting outsiders to change the demography of the region, Dimple said.

He alleged that the BJP is selling the land of Jammu to real estate investors of the country and Kashmir to business tycoons of Dubai.

Our own people are being rendered homeless and forced to live under open sky in severe cold without food. We will not allow this to happen and will stand up against this injustice, he said.

Later, the protesters moved towards the demolition site and staged a peaceful sit-in there.

## I&B Ministry Twitter

which the Twitter handle was resumed. There were random posts and replies tagging Elon Musk. It is too early to comment on the inquiry aspect of the matter as the plan of action is yet to be decided," a ministry official said.

According to reports, the hackers re-tweeted several posts of Musk and also tweeted "great job" from the official handle of the ministry.

The tweets were deleted after the account was restored.

"The account of @Mib\_india has been restored. This is for the information of all the followers," the ministry tweeted.

Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Twitter handle was also briefly hacked and a tweet claiming that India has "officially adopted bitcoin as legal tender" was put out from it. However, the Prime Minister's Office had later said the account was immediately secured after the matter was escalated to Twitter. (PTI)

## LG Greets People

the country, brings the promise of growth, prosperity and fosters spirit of sharing in our lives. It is also a joyous occasion to salute the indomitable spirit of our farmers and to recognize their invaluable contribution in nation-building. Sankranti indicates the beginning of auspicious period of the year," Sinha said.

"May these festivals bring prosperity, happiness and joy for all," he added.

## Man Found Dead

the body to hospital Kulgam for autopsy.

Quoting an unnamed official, a local news agency KNO reported that preliminary investigations have suggested that the man died due to overdose of drugs.

## Vehicle Mows Down

However, the doctors there referred her to Sub District Hospital (SDH) Kupwara where doctors declared her dead on arrival.

The driver of the vehicle was later arrested and the vehicle seized, officials said.

Meanwhile, a police official said that a case (FIR No.02/2021/ 279, 34A stands registered in Trehgam police station regarding the incident.



## Bumrah Bags 5 As India Gain Slender Edge Over SA



Press Trust of India

CAPE TOWN: Jasprit Bumrah shut his critics with one of his best five-wicket hauls in the traditional format as the Indian fast bowling unit gave the team slight edge over South Africa on an exhilarating second day of the third and final Test here on Wednesday.

Bumrah (23.3-8-42-5) was at the heart of India's swift and brutal counter-attack as he got his seventh five-wicket haul with fine complementary acts from Mohammed Shami (16-4-39-2) and Umesh Yadav (16-3-64-2) that helped them bundle out the Proteas for 210.

The lead of 13 that India managed was less about the quantum and more about the psychological advantage that they gained and despite losing Mayank Agarwal (7) and KL Rahul (10) cheaply, the visitors scored runs at a fair clip to reach 57 for 2 at stumps.

Skipper Virat Kohli (14 batting) and Cheteshwar Pujara (9 batting), with a cumulative experience of 194 Tests, have the responsibility of taking the team to a winning total.

And while statistics at times are of little or no relevance but Kohli wouldn't be too unhappy to know that India have never lost a Test match in which his premier strike bowler has taken a five-wicket haul.

It was a day when Kohli's captaincy acumen was worth praising as he made relevant bowling changes at the right time, juggled with subtle field placings and also took his 100th catch in Test cricket.

But someone who would be really smiling at the end of the day is Bumrah, who had a forgettable game at the Wanderers and copped a fair amount of flak for bowling too short and not depending on his

strengths.

There were analytics showing how his strike-rate (wickets per deliveries) had doubled since a back injury but on Wednesday, he showed that he is skipper Kohli's real X-factor, the man who makes the difference between a good and a world-class side.

The delivery that got Aiden Markram was pitched just a shade outside off-stump and it seemed to be going straight but suddenly jagged back embarrassing the South African opener, who had shouldered arms.

Whenever Markram sees the replay, he would know that Bumrah made him feel inadequate when it came to knowing where his off-stump was.

On the day, Bumrah slightly altered the length making it slightly fuller on the off-stump and the off-stump channel line. The length and bounce was such that batters seemed confused about whether it would bounce above stumps or come at the stumps.

One such delivery got South Africa's best performer Keegan Petersen (72 off 166 balls) as it kicked up awkwardly from length but enough for the batter to have a jab at it and Cheteshwar Pujara accepted the offering at second slip.

But credit should also go to Shami, who in the post lunch session, got two wickets in three balls to unsettle the Proteas after Petersen and Rassie van der Dussen (21) had added 67 for the fourth wicket.

If Umesh set up the session with a conventional outswinger that saw Van Der Dussen edging one to Kohli at second slip, Shami removed the dogged Temba Bavuma (28) and Kyle Verreynne (0) with two ideal Test match deliveries in the 56th over.

## India Names Squad For South Africa ODIs

Agencies

NEW DELHI: BCCI on Wednesday announced the KL Rahul-led India squad for the upcoming South Africa ODI series.

India off-spinner Washington Sundar was ruled out of the upcoming three-match ODI series against South Africa after testing positive for COVID-19.

Jayant Yadav was named as his replacement for the assignment, starting January 19.

Pacer Navdeep Saini was also added to the ODI squad as backup for pacer Mohammed Siraj, who is recovering from a hamstring injury.

"Team India off-spinner Washington Sundar has been ruled out of the forthcoming ODI series against South Africa after testing positive for COVID-19 during the camp in Bengaluru," read a statement from the BCCI on Wednesday.

"Sundar was supposed to travel to Cape Town with the ODI members on Wednesday and join the rest of the squad ahead of the ODI series starting January 19th," it added.

## Tasnim Mir First Indian To Claim World No.1 In U-19 Girls Singles

Press Trust of India

GUWAHATI: Young shuttler Tasnim Mir on Wednesday became the first Indian to grab the world no 1 ranking in the under-19 girls singles in the latest BWF junior rankings.

The 16-year-old from Gujarat was rewarded for last year's stellar run when she had secured titles in three junior international tournaments to jump three places to grab the top position in the junior world rankings.

"I can't say that I expected this. I thought I will not be able to become no 1 as tournaments were getting affected by COVID-19 but I won three events in Bulgaria, France and Belgium. So I am really excited and happy that finally I could become the world no 1. It is a great moment for me," Tasnim told PTI from Guwahati.

"I will completely focus on the senior circuit from now on and looking forward to playing at Iran and Uganda next month. My



aim now is to improve my senior ranking. If I can weave some good performances and get into top 200 by end of the year that would be great."

Tasnim, who is supported by OGC, is currently ranked a lowly 602 in the women's singles.

Tasnim's feat has never been achieved by any Indian girl, including two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu and London bronze winner Saina Nehwal.

While Sindhu was world no 2 in her under-19 days, Saina didn't make the cut for being a junior with the BWF junior rankings starting only in 2011. An-

## J&K Wins Gold, As National Curling Championship Concludes



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu & Kashmir team won both junior and senior men's gold in the first ever National Curling Championship cum National Camp 2022 which concluded at Gulmarg on Wednesday.

Women's gold medals, both junior and senior were won by Andhra Pradesh women's team. Team from Uttarakhand, Telengana, Karnataka, MP and Haryana also won silver and bronze medals under various categories.

Curling Federation of India, the National Governing body

for the sport of Curling had organised this camp cum Championship in association with J&K Curling Association and JKTDC. The event was sponsored by likes of Religare Group, a financial conglomerate, Hamdard Group, amongst others.

The Championship was attended by more than 250 athletes from 20 state teams, who enthusiastically participated in the games. Talking to media at the closing ceremony, Dr Rashmi Saluja, President of Curling Federation of India (CFI) thanked J&K Tourism, J&K Government, Indian Olympic

Association, Curling Federation, Sponsors including Religare & Hamdard and all other state federations for their contribution and support towards making Gulmarg games as success. She specially mentioned that collaboration and support from JKTDC was very crucial at every stage in successfully conducting the games.

Yogeshwar Dutt, Olympian & world-renowned wrestler said that he is thankful to Dr. Rashmi Saluja for inviting him for this event. He congratulated all the medal winners and participants of the tournament. (KNT)

## DYSS Celebrates National Youth Day Across J&K

Speakers throw light on life, teachings of Vivekananda, Aurobindo

Observer News Service

JAMMU: On the directions of Principal Secretary to Government Youth Services and Sports Department, Alok Kumar and Director DYSS, Gazanfar Ali, while adhering to Covid protocol, the Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) celebrated National Youth Day on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda with great enthusiasm and national spirit across all the district headquarters of J&K and the Directorate Office, here on Wednesday.

The 5-day National Youth Festival also took off at Pudukerry, which was virtually inaugurated by Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi.

The officers, the field staff and the youth in particular took part in various activities online as well as offline.

After the PM's speech, a day-long programme of activities was organised at District Headquarters of twin divisions, which included meditation & yoga; forest bathing- to improve mental wellness and increase awareness towards ecology and



climate change; Swachh Bharat Abhiyan for clean and green India; Youth summit by iconic speakers; Keynote address by youth icons; Panel discussion; Indigenous sport (Martial Art) and finally cultural items.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Director Youth Services and Sports Jammu, Jitender Mishra said that the philosophy of Swamiji and the ideals for which he lived and worked serve as a great source of inspiration for the Indian youth.

He said the majority of the population of the country comprises youth, so, it is very important that our youth are physically and mentally strong. "Youth empowerment is all the more necessary so that their

positive energies are channelized in such a way that they can contribute their best in nation building," added Mr Mishra.

He also threw light on Swami Vivekananda's message for the youth, which is-"Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is achieved".

The speakers said that it was Aurobindo who carried forward the legacy of Vivekananda.

The participation was limited to 25 persons at each venue owing to the adherence of COVID -19 protocols.

Earlier, the Prime Minister's virtual inauguration of the programme was attended by the Physical Education Lecturers, Zonal Physical Education Officers, PEM's, PET's, ReK's, NYC's and students via virtual mode.

## Director Tourism Reviews Winter Games' Preparations In Gulmarg

Observer News Service

GULMARG: Director, Tourism, Kashmir, Dr. G N Itoo visited the ski resort of Gulmarg where he held a series of meetings with stakeholders and officials. He impressed upon them to strictly follow the Covid mitigation protocol as devised by the Government from time to time.

Chairing a meeting on regulating winter sports activities at the world famous resort, the Director Tourism asked the officers of Tourism Department, local Revenue authorities, Health officials to undertake mass testing of all the participants of batches sponsored by different organisations and Departments for various sporting events and the participants who test positive shall be immediately isolated by the sponsoring organisation /Departments till they complete quarantine period as per latest SOPs. He directed the constitution of a special Medical team to be deployed for monitoring all isolation facilities.

The meeting decided to constitute a committee of officers to ensure that sports activities at the resort are carried out as per notified Covid SOPs. The committee would be headed by CEO, Gulmarg Development Authority and it would have SDM Tangmarg, BMO Tang-



KO FILE PIC

marg, SDPO Tangmarg and Assistant Director Tourism Gulmarg as its members.

Dr. Itoo instructed the officers and local authorities to ensure that the children participating in the Winter Games are vaccinated, tested and follow Covid SOPs properly. He also instructed the children to follow Covid SOPs during their stay, whether in hotels or other accommodations.

The Director Tourism asked the Municipal Committee Tangmarg to undertake weekly fumigation of all the lodging facilities being used by Winter Sports organisations/ Government departments. He also asked the J&K Cable Car Corporation to strictly follow the Covid protocols at the tick-

eting counters, especially at Kangdori.

The meeting was attended by CEO, GDA Dr Zahoor Raina, Sub Divisional Magistrate, Tangmarg, Principal, IISM, Gulmarg, Dy. Director Tourism Registration, SDPO Tangmarg, General Manager, JKCC, Asstt. Director Tourism Gulmarg, officers from YSS Kashmir, Health Department, MED, JKTDC, Snow Safety Officer, Ski Petrol Team representatives of various institutions which are attending the sports events.

Besides, President Winter Games Association, Mohammad Abbas Wani and other representatives of various organisation conducting winter Sports activities attended the meeting.



## Djokovic Clarifies Movements, Aus Visa Saga Continues

Agencies

MELBOURNE: Novak Djokovic has moved to clarify how mistakes were made on the immigration document he submitted on his arrival in Melbourne last week, before his visa was revoked and then reinstated in a COVID-19 vaccination saga that has overshadowed the days leading up to the Australian Open.

A statement was posted on Djokovic's social media accounts Wednesday while the men's tennis No. 1 was in Rod Laver Arena holding a practice session against Tristan Schoolkate, a 20-year-old Australian.

The nine-time and defending Australian Open champion is in limbo before the year's first tennis major starts next Monday. Djokovic won a legal battle on Monday allowing him to stay in the country, but he still faces the prospect of deportation because he's not vaccinated against COVID-19.

Reports emerged that he'd been attending events in his native Serbia last month while infectious, and he'd made errors on an immigration form to enter Australia that could potentially result in the cancellation of his visa.

On the form, Djokovic said he had not travelled in the 14 days before his flight to Australia. The Monte Carlo-based athlete was

seen in Spain and Serbia in that two-week period.

In a statement posted on Instagram, Djokovic described the speculation as hurtful and said he wanted to address continuing misinformation in the interest of alleviating broader concern in the community about my presence in Australia.

Djokovic said he'd taken rapid tests that were negative in the days before he returned a positive on a test he undertook out of an abundance of caution because he was asymptomatic.

He addressed the travel declaration by saying it was submitted on his behalf by his support team and my agent sincerely apologizes for the administrative mistake in ticking the incorrect box.

"This was a human error and certainly not deliberate," he wrote. "The team has provided additional information to the Australian Government to clarify this matter."

At issue is whether he has a valid exemption to rules requiring vaccination to enter Australia since he recently recovered from COVID-19.

Immigration Minister Alex Hawke's office said Djokovic's legal team had filed further submissions against the potential cancellation of his visa. (AP)

## MATCHDAY: Liverpool-Arsenal, Atlético-Athletic In Cup Semis



Agencies

A look at what's happening in European soccer on Thursday:

ENGLAND

A week later, Arsenal and Liverpool finally get to meet in the League Cup semifinals – but in a different stadium than initially scheduled. The first leg was set to be hosted by Arsenal last week, but Liverpool got the game postponed because of an apparent outbreak of coronavirus cases. Liverpool's Anfield will now stage the first leg, with the second leg pushed back to next week.

Both teams are without players who are away at the African Cup of Nations, with Liverpool particularly hurt by the absence of star attackers Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane. Arsenal is looking to rebound from losing to second-tier Nottingham Forest in the FA Cup on Sunday.

SPAIN

Looking to rebound from a poor run in the Spanish league, Atlético Madrid faces Athletic Bilbao in the semifinals of the

Spanish Super Cup in Saudi Arabia. The defending Spanish champion has lost four of its last six league matches and is 16 points behind leader Real Madrid with a game in hand.

Diego Simeone's team is coming off a 2-2 draw at Villarreal. Simeone has been tinkering with a few formations in attack, with Luis Suárez, João Félix, Matheus Cunha and Ángel Correa fighting for a spot in the starting lineup on Wednesday. Athletic, mid-table in the Spanish league, has won only two of its last 12 league matches.

ITALY

AC Milan is at home in the last 16 of the Italian Cup against a Genoa team managed by one of its former star players, Andriy Shevchenko. The Ukrainian great, who spent eight years at Milan across two spells, is under pressure at Genoa having won just one of his 10 games since taking charge in November. That was in the Italian Cup against Salernitana. Included in that run is a 3-0 loss at home to Milan in Serie A, where Genoa is in next-to-last place above Salernitana. Napoli hosts Fiorentina in another cup game. (AP)

## Hockey India Moves High Court Challenging CIC Order

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: National Sports Federation, Hockey India, Wednesday approached the Delhi High Court challenging an order of the Central Information Commission (CIC) directing it to disclose certain information, including list of its members and employee salaries under the Right to Information (RTI) Act.

The matter came up before Justice Rekha Palli who asked the counsels for Hockey India, the RTI applicant and the Centre to place on records the documents being relied upon by them and listed the plea for further hearing on Thursday.

Hockey India has challenged the CIC's December 13, 2021 order directing it to provide under the RTI the

complete list of its members with their designation and official addresses, names of its employees along with their pay, and gross income.

The commission had also directed the NSF to give information pertaining to monthly rents paid by it at each of the addresses since the date of occupation and information relating to monetary transactions like cash withdrawals and fund transfer to bank accounts in foreign countries.

The petitioner claimed that the CIC order was patently illegal, arbitrary, unreasoned and passed in violation of settled principles of law and that it was contrary to section 8(1) of the RTI Act which related to exemption given from disclosing information.



## 5 Covid Positive Passengers Stopped From Boarding Dubai-Bound Flight

Agenceis

**INDORE:** A 37-year-old pregnant woman and four other passengers tested positive for coronavirus at the Indore airport on Wednesday following which they were prevented from boarding the Air India's Dubai-bound flight, an official said.

The woman, who was from Bhopal and six months' pregnant, had not taken a single dose of COVID-19 vaccine, while the other four infected passengers were inoculated, Dr Priyanka Kourav, medical officer of the Madhya Pradesh health department, told PTI.

"Every passenger boarding the weekly Indore-Dubai flight has to undergo a rapid RT-PCR test at the airport. On Wednesday, 76 passengers were tested and the results of two women,

two men and a 17-year-old boy came out positive," she said.

Four of the infected persons were vaccinated against the viral infection, she said.

"Two of these infected passengers have taken two doses each of Sinopharm and Pfizer's vaccines for coronavirus prevention, which means both of them have received a total of four doses of the vaccines," she said.

The infected passengers include one each from Indore and Barwani and three from Bhopal, the official said, adding that all the five people are asymptomatic and have been advised to isolate at home.

The administrations of Indore, Barwani and Bhopal were being informed about the infected passengers, she said.

## SC Issues Notice To Centre, Others On Plea On Alleged Hate Speeches Made In Haridwar

Agenceis

The Supreme Court on Wednesday sought responses from the Centre and others on a petition seeking a direction to ensure investigation and action against those who allegedly made hate speeches during two events held recently in Haridwar and the national capital.

A bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana issued notice on the plea filed by journalist Qurban Ali and former Patna High Court judge and senior advocate Anjana Prakash, who have sought a direction for an "independent, credible and impartial investigation" by an SIT



into the incidents of alleged hate speeches.

The bench also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima

Kohli permitted the petitioners to give representation to the local authority against holding of future Dharam Sansad'

It posted the matter for hearing after 10 days.

The plea, which specifically referred to the alleged hate speeches delivered between the "17th and 19th of December 2021 at Haridwar and Delhi", has also sought compliance of apex court's guidelines to deal with such speeches.

One event was organised in Haridwar by Yati Narsinghanand and the other in Delhi by 'Hindu Yuva Vahini' allegedly "calling for genocide of members" of a community, it said.

## PM Security Breach In Punjab: Ex-SC Judge Indu Malhotra To Head Probe Panel



Agenceis

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said retired top court judge Justice Indu Malhotra will head the committee to investigate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's security breach in Punjab last week.

A bench headed by Chief Justice N.V. Ramana and comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli said the panel will inquire into causes of the security breach, persons responsible for the breach, and also measures to be taken in future to prevent security breach of the Prime Minister and other constitutional functionaries.

The other members of the panel are -- Director General of Police, Chandigarh; Inspector General, National Investigation Agency (NIA) or his nominee not below the rank of IG; Registrar General of the Punjab and Haryana High Court; and Additional DGP, Security, Punjab.

The bench emphasised that such questions cannot be left open for one-sided inquiries. Both the state government and the Central government had formed their committees to inquire into the matter. The top court had asked both the Centre and Punjab government to not

move ahead with their respective inquiries into the matter.

Earlier during the hearing, the bench had said: "We are taking the PM's security breach very seriously." It added that it will ask the committee to submit its report to it within a short span.

The top court order came on a petition by NGO Lawyer's Voice, which was represented by senior advocate Maninder Singh. The petitioner had emphasised on the importance of protection to the PM of the country and cited previous top court ruling that looked at the SPG Act.

Advocate General D.S. Patwalia, representing the Punjab government, complained against show-cause notices to its Chief Secretary and the DGP. He urged the top court to form an independent committee to probe the matter. "Hang me if I am guilty... but don't condemn me unheard," submitted Patwalia.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, defended the show-cause notices issued by the Central government. However, the top court expressed its displeasure at Centre's stand, questioning what is the point of asking the court to examine the matter if the Centre wanted to go ahead on its own.

## Omicron Is Not Common Cold: Centre's Warning As Case Positivity Rises



Agenceis

**NEW DELHI:** As many as 300 districts in India are reporting weekly Covid case positivity of more than 5 per cent, the Union government said on Wednesday as it urged people not to treat infection due to Omicron variant as common cold and get vaccinated.

It said Maharashtra, West Bengal, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Gujarat are emerging as states of concern due to the rise in Covid cases there.

Addressing a press conference, Joint Secretary in Health Ministry Lav Agarwal said a sharp rise in COVID-19 infections has been noted in India with the case positivity climbing to 11.05 per cent on Wednesday from 1.1

per cent on December 30.

Concurrently, Covid cases have been rising globally with January 10 recording the highest ever single-day rise of 31.59 lakh cases worldwide, he said.

The official said that currently, 300 districts in India are reporting weekly case positivity of more than 5 per cent.

Informing the press conference that 19 states have over 10,000 active Covid cases, Agarwal said Maharashtra, West Bengal, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Gujarat are emerging as states of concern due to the rise in Covid cases there.

Stressing on the importance of getting inoculated, he quoted the World Health Organisation to say that vaccine effectiveness against hospitalization appears to be

substantially higher than against symptomatic COVID-19 disease.

NITI Aayog Member (Health) V K Paul said, "Omicron is not the common cold, cannot take it lightly. We need to be vigilant, get vaccinated and follow Covid-appropriate behaviour." "Vaccination is an important pillar in our Covid response programme," he added.

India added 1,94,720 new infections to its tally of COVID-19 cases pushing it to 3,60,70,510, according to the Union Health Ministry data on Wednesday.

Active cases have increased to 9,55,319, the highest in 211 days, while the death toll has climbed to 4,84,655 with 442 fresh fatalities. Of the total 4,868 cases of the Omicron variant, 1,805 people have recovered or migrated so far.

## Arrest Warrant Against Ex- Minister Who Left BJP



Agenceis

Sultanpur (UP): A local court on Wednesday here issued an arrest warrant against BJP MLA Swami Prasad Maurya, who recently resigned as cabinet minister, in a seven-year-old case.

The case was lodged against Maurya in 2014 for allegedly making objectionable comments against Hindu gods.

The MP-MLA court Judge Yogesh Kumar Yadav issued the warrant against him after he did not attend the court hearing on

Wednesday.

In 2016, an arrest warrant was issued against him in the same case which was stayed by the Lucknow bench of Allahabad High Court.

Issuing the warrant, the Judge fixed January 24 as the next date of hearing.

The court had on January 6 directed Maurya to appear before it on January 12 but he did not appear, lawyer Anil Tiwari said.

Maurya, an influential OBC leader, had resigned from the Yogi Adityanath cabinet on Tuesday.

## Battle For UP: SP Leader Sends Air Ticket For Yogi, Lock For BJP



Agenceis

First he booked an air ticket for Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for March 11 to Gorakhpur and now he has ordered a lock from Aligarh for Swatantra Dev Singh at the BJP headquarters in Lucknow.

I.P. Singh, Samajwadi Party spokesman, apparently believes in getting maximum publicity with minimum effort.

Following the resignations of four BJP MLAs, including minister Swami Prasad Maurya, on Tuesday, I.P. Singh tweeted that he had placed an order for a lock that would be delivered to the BJP of-

fice so that their leaders can lock it up and go home after March 10 -- the day votes will be counted.

Two days ago, Singh had shared a screenshot of an air ticket he had booked for 'Mr Yogi Adityanath' for March 11 on an Air India flight to Gorakhpur.

"I have done this as a goodwill gesture. Yogi Adityanath has been the chief minister for five years and deserves an air ticket for homeward journey," he told reporters.

I.P. Singh, incidentally, was in the BJP before he was expelled in 2019 for praising Akhilesh Yadav. He joined the Samajwadi Party and is now one of the most vocal critics of the BJP.



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