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P5 STATE

AROUND 25000 WORKS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY THIS FINANCIAL YEAR: CS

Asserting that expenditure efficiencies in the system have vastly improved due to a series of financial reforms, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta on

P7

OUR DIGITAL GROWTH THE NEW AGE CRYPTO WORLD

We are growing in an era where digital platforms are growing currency. The digital mode of technologies are also growing with us, at a very fast rate, and one among the technologies that's taking over the



P11 SPORTS

SNOW CRICKET IN KASHMIR'S GUREZ CATCHES EYES OF INT'L CRICKETERS

After witnessing huge tourist flow in summers for the first time, the Gurez Valley in north Kashmir's Bandipora district is yet again attracting the people



Quote!

People hasten to judge in order not to be judged themselves

— Albert Camus

NEWS DIGEST

Missing Youth Held With Arms: Police

SRINAGAR: A missing youth who had joined militant ranks, was arrested by police in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, officials said Thursday. Rahil Showkat Dar of Drabgam was arrested by a joint team of police, army's 44RR and CRPF 183 battalion **More on P10**

Darakhshan Andrabi Calls On LG

JAMMU: Dr Darakhshan Andrabi, Chairperson, Waqf Development Committee of Union Ministry of Minority Affairs, called on the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, at the Raj Bhavan here on Thursday. Andrabi expressed gratitude to the Lt Governor for the **More on P10**

Two Youth Held With Charas

SRINAGAR: Two youths were arrested on charges of carrying charas in the outskirts of this capital city on Thursday. Pineet Razdan and Vinay Sharma, presently residing at Muthi Jammu were arrested while checking on the bypass near Lasjan in the city outskirts, **More on P10**

National Lok Adalat On Mar 12 At Ganderbal

SRINAGAR: The District Legal Services Authority Ganderbal has invited interested litigants to register their cases for settlement in the National Lok Adalat being held on March 12, 2022 as per the calendar of National Lok Adalats for the year, 2022. The litigants/ **More on P10**

Weekend Wet Spell Likely To Disrupt Road, Air Traffic



KO File Photo

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: The meteorological department on Thursday revised its earlier forecast by now predicting widespread moderate rain and snowfall across Jammu and Kashmir this weekend.

"An Active Western Disturbance is Most likely to cause Widespread Moderate Rain/Snow in J&K during 22-23rd Jan," an official of the meteorological department here said, adding, that the weather system may temporary cause disruptions in

surface and air transportation. "(Probability of Occurrence as of today is 75%)," he said.

Meanwhile, the minimum temperature dropped slightly in most parts of Kashmir where the tourist resorts of Gulmarg and Pahalgam received fresh snowfall, officials said.

The minimum temperature in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, settled at a low of 2.2 degrees Celsius half-a-degree down from the previous night, they said.

Gulmarg, the famous skiing resort in Baramulla district of north Kashmir, **More on P10**

Jammu to Srinagar Traffic On Highway Today

Jammu-Srinagar highway shall remain open for only one-way traffic on Friday, officials said here. "On (Friday), subject to fair weather and better road conditions LMVs (Passenger)/ private cars shall be allowed from Jammu towards Srinagar (strictly one way) on Jammu-Srinagar highway," a traffic department official here. TCU Srinagar shall **More on P10**



AN ACTIVE WESTERN DISTURBANCE is Most likely to cause Widespread Moderate Rain/Snow in J&K during 22-23rd Jan, "

CAG Raps JK Home Dept For Failure To Buy High-End Security System

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has pulled up the Jammu and Kashmir home department for failing to utilise over Rs 500 crore funds sanctioned under the Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) to procure high-end security system to maintain law and order in the union territory.

The CAG, in its report, has taken a serious note of the home department's single-vendor purchases without ascertaining the reasonability of



rates and avoidable expenditures in purchase of the high-end security system.

Under the PMDP, the central government had sanctioned over Rs 500 **More on P10**

Lockdown Imposed From Friday Noon To Monday

Observer news Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Thursday modified the weekend lockdown orders and announced restriction on non-essential movement across the Union Territory from every Friday afternoon to Monday morning to battle the alarming spread of Coronavirus.

"In continuation to the Covid-19 containment measures ordered vide Government Order No. 04-JK (DMRRR) of 2022 dated 14-01-2022 and in reference to the task force meeting held under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary, J&K (Chairman State Executive Committee) along with the ACS (Finance), ACS (Health and Medical Education), Principal Secretary to the



Boys warm their hands while sitting on a tree trunk in a snow covered field in Tangmarg area of Baramulla district. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Government PWD (R&B) & other Senior Health functionaries on 20.01.2022 regarding an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in the entire J&K and the presence of variant of concern

(Omicron), the State Executive Committee, in exercise of the powers conferred upon it under Section 24 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 orders the following: **More on P10**

Hospitals See Low Admissions Despite Case Surge

Auqib Javed

SRINAGAR: In a positive sign, the hospitals in Kashmir are witnessing less admissions of Coronavirus infected patients even as the third wave of the pandemic continues to tighten its

grip over the Union Territory.

A health official said that even though there is a sharp spike of COVID-19 cases, the admissions of the same are minimal.

Professor and HoD Community Medicine, SPM, GMC Srinagar, **More on P10**

Govt Employees Directed To Attend R-Day Function As Part Of 'Official Duty'



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Thursday directed its employees and the officials of public sector undertakings (PSUs) to attend R-Day function as part

of their official duty.

"All Officers/Officials of the Government and Public Sector Undertakings, stationed at Jammu, are called upon to attend the function as a part of their official duty," reads a **More on P10**

Pole Reviews Arrangements At SKCC

The Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir Pandurang K Pole on Thursday directed the information department to make arrangements for public address system, installation of LED screens at prime locations besides ensuring smooth coverage of R-Day function by media. The Div Com passed these instructions during a visit to Sher-i-Kashmir Cricket Stadium, Sonwar to take on spot review of the preparations for the celebration of R-Day, an official spokesperson **More on P10**

5992 More Test Positive

Observer News Service

Nearly six thousand people in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday tested positive for Coronavirus, the biggest ever spike since the outbreak of pandemic in 2020, while seven more people succumbed to the deadly infection in the Union Territory during the last 24 hours. According to officials, Kashmir Valley registered an alarming spike in cases as 4072 more people were confirmed to have contracted the infection during the last 24 hours. Similarly, 1920 fresh cases of novel Coronavirus were detected in Jammu division, taking the total number of people infected since the outbreak of pandemic in J&K to 378661. In the Valley, the officials said, Srinagar reported 1306 new confirmed cases of Coronavirus, Baramulla 825, Budgam 636, Ganderbal 270, Kulgam 243, Bandipora 237, Kupwara and Anantnag 137 each, Pulwama 125 and **More on P10**

92 JKAS, JKPS Set To Retire This Year

Agencies

SRINAGAR: As many as 92 officers of Jammu & Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) and Jammu & Kashmir Police Service (JKPS) are attaining superannuation in the calendar year 2022.

According to reports, 56 JKPS officers and 36 JKAS officers would retire in the year 2022. Both the Home department and General Administration Department- who are respectively cadre controlling authority for JKPS and JKAS- have already notified the names of officers who are attaining superannuation in the next 12 months.

According to a notification of the Home department, 56 officers of different ranks, mostly deputy superintendents of police (DySPs), would retire in the next 12 months.

Of them, seven officers would retire on January 31, six on February 28, 11 on March 31, nine on April 30, six on May 31, one on June 30, three on July 31, one on August 31, three on September 30, four on October 31, one on November 30 and four on December 31.

It is worthwhile to mention that 36 JKAS officers would also retire in the calendar year 2022. Those **More on P10**

Despite being geographically distant from Kashmir how Kashmiris in West maintain cultural, social, and emotional linkages with their homeland. Tune-in to latest KO podcast

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Study Sheds Light On Benefits Of Movement For Creative Thinking

Agencies

Movement helps us to think creatively. This insight is over 2000 years old - and already known to the philosophers in ancient Greece. However, what is the connection between movement and cognition from a scientific point of view? What happens in the brain when we walk? Are people who rarely move less creative? "Our research shows that it is not movement per se that helps us to think more flexibly," said neuroscientist Dr Barbara Handel from Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg (JMU) in Bavaria, Germany. She and her doctoral student Supriya Murali conducted experiments that have been described in detail in a recent publication in the journal 'Psychological Research'.

According to Handel, the freedom to make self-determined movements has been responsible for humans to think more flexibly.

Accordingly, even small movements while sitting can have the same positive effects on creative thinking. However, the researcher does not derive any concrete movement suggestions from her work: "The important thing is the freedom to move without external constraints." It is important, she said, that movement is not suppressed or forced into regular patterns. "Unfortunately, this happens



when people focus for example on a small screen," explained the JMU researcher. The increased use of mobile phones and similar devices - also in the field of education at the time of the Corona pandemic - could therefore have a negative effect on cognitive processes such as creativity. How do people perceive their environment? What effect do sensory stimuli have in the peripheral nervous system

and what in the brain? What influence do body movements have on the perception of sensory input? Researchers like Barbara Handel have been interested in such questions for many reasons. In the long term, their findings could contribute to a better understanding of diseases that affect body movements as well as cognitive processes.

Remembering Faces And Names Can Be Improved During Sleep

Agencies

For those who rarely forget a face, but struggle with names, the remedy for boosting learning may be as near as one's pillow. New research by Northwestern University, became the first to document the effect reactivating memory during sleep has on face-name learning.

The paper titled, 'Targeted memory reactivation of face-name learning depends on ample and undisturbed slow-wave sleep' was published in the Nature partner journal, 'NPJ: Science of Learning'.

The researchers found that people's name recall improved significantly when memories of newly learned face-name associations were reactivated while they were napping. Key to this improvement was uninterrupted deep sleep.

"It's a new and exciting finding about sleep, because it tells us that the way information is reactivated during sleep to improve memory storage is linked with high-quality sleep," said lead author Nathan Whitmore, a PhD candidate in the Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program at Northwestern.

The paper's senior author, Ken Paller, is a

professor of psychology and director of the Cognitive Neuroscience Program at Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences at Northwestern. The paper was also co-authored by Adrianna Bassard, PhD candidate in psychology at Northwestern.

The research team found that for study participants with EEG measures (a recording of electrical activity of the brain picked up by electrodes on the scalp) that indicated disrupted sleep, the memory reactivation didn't help and may even be detrimental. But in those with uninterrupted sleep during the specific times of sound presentations, the reactivation led to a relative improvement averaging just over 1.5 more names recalled.

The study was conducted on 24 participants, aged 18 to 31 years old, who were asked to memorize the faces and names of 40 pupils from a hypothetical Latin American history class and another 40 from a Japanese history class. When each face was shown again, they were asked to produce the name that went with it. After the learning exercise, participants took a nap while the researchers carefully monitored brain activity using EEG measurements. When participants reached the N3 "deep

sleep" state, some of the names were softly played on a speaker with music that was associated with one of the classes. When participants woke up, they were re-tested on recognizing the faces and recalling the name that went with each face. The researchers say the finding on the relationship between sleep disruption and memory accuracy is noteworthy for several reasons.

"We already know that some sleep disorders like apnea can impair memory," said Whitmore. "Our research suggests a potential explanation for this -- frequent sleep interruptions at night might be degrading memory."

The lab is in the midst of a follow-up study to reactivate memories and deliberately disrupt sleep in order to learn more about the relevant brain mechanisms.

"This new line of research will let us address many interesting questions -- like whether sleep disruption is always harmful or whether it could be used to weaken unwanted memories," said Paller, who also holds the James Padilla Chair in Arts & Sciences at Northwestern. "At any rate, we are increasingly finding good reasons to value high-quality sleep."

از نیابت والکوکرلہ پورہ با اجلاس تنویر احمد نجار صاحب

نائب تحصیلدار ایگزیکٹو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول

مضمون کا مفادات درخواست مناجاب سجاد احمد زرگر ولد عبدل رحمان زرگر ساکنہ والکوکرلہ پورہ تحصیل کتر رحال چک مرزا انگمرگ

برادر اجرائی Migration Certificate بحق خود

اشتہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص وعام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اس سلسلے میں پنواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول مطلوبہ پتوں الا ت ریکارڈ طلب کے لئے جس سے عیاں ہوئے ہے کہ سائل ساکنہ والکوکرلہ پورہ ہے قتل از میں پچاس سال پہلے متبع چک مرزا تحصیل انگمرگ میں عبدل زرگر کو بطور کاندھلا چلا گیا ہے اور تاحال چک مرزا میں مسلسل طور رہائش پذیر ہے سرٹیفکیٹ اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ ہی ہم اندر دفتر ہذا میں پیش کرے معیا ذکر سے بعد کوئی بھی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

اشتبہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص وعام

Public Notice

I have applied for fertilizer license .If anybody having any objection in this regard He/She may contact office of the Chief Agriculture officer Anantnag within the period of 7 days .After that no objection will be entertained.

NAME: Riyaz Ahmad Bhat
S/o: Mohd Anwar Bhat
R/o: Khiram Anantnag

Public Notice

I have a Pnb Metlife policy under policy no. 21008932. In the name of Gul Mohd Dar S/O.ab Rehman Dar But My Correct Name Is Gull Mohammad Dar S/O. Abdul Razaq Malla now I want to correct it if anybody have objection may contact Pnb Metlife office Anantnag within 7 days after that no objection will be entertained.

GULL MOHAMMAD DAR
S/O.ABDUL RAZAQ MALLA
R/O.NAGBAL SHOPAIN 192303
JAMMU AND KASHMIR

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Idrees Hussain Khan, son of Nasir Hussain Khan, R/o Has-sanabad, Rainawari Srinagar want to renew my passport (J7221619) that is set to expire on 11/03.2022.

In the passport issued on 12/03/2012, my mother's name has been mentioned as Shaheena Khan while in other documents it is only Shaheena.

So, I want to correct the name of my mother on the passport from Shaheena Khan to Shaheena. Objections, if any, should be conveyed to the Regional Passport Office, Srinagar within one week from the publication of this public notice. No objection will be entertained thereafter

Idrees Hussain Khan

NOTICE

I, Mohd Shafi Shah, S/O Mohd Akbar Shah R/O. Kralpora NoorAbad Colony lane No.4 want to change the name in the PDD agreement and Electricity bill of my house bearing consumer number- 0206020032278 from Saima Farooq to Mohd Shafi Shah S/O Mohd Akbar Shah R/O. Kralpora NoorAbad Colony lane No.4. If anybody is having any objection, he/She may approach the AEE PDD department Chadoora within 7 days from the publication of this notice, after that no objection will be entertained.

از دفتر نائب تحصیلدار کلنٹرہ

درخواست مناجاب بشیر احمد شاہ ولد عبدل حبیب اللہ شاہ ساکنہ کاکوٹھل تحصیل کبری برادر حصول RBA سرٹیفکیٹ بحق پسران طاہر بشیر شاہ و نعیم احمد شاہ تحت سی آر 144,294,375 آ

اشتہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص وعام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اس نسبت پنواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول مطلوبہ پتوں الا ت ریکارڈ طلب کے لئے جس سے عیاں ہوئے ہے کہ سائل ساکنہ کاکوٹھل میں رہائش پذیر ہے۔ سیکمہ کی سالانہ آمدنی 144000 ہے سیکمہ بذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

1	بشیر احمد شاہ	سربرہ	52	زمینداری	12000 آمدنی
2	سلیمہ بیگم	زوجہ	50	گھر بلوکام	
3	نعیم احمد شاہ	پسر	22	زمین تعلیم	
3	رفعت بشیر	دختر	20	زمین تعلیم	
	طاہر بشیر شاہ	پسر	18	زمین تعلیم	

اسکے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد کہ نہیں بتلایا گیا ہے سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث میں اگر کسی شخص یا شخص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ ہی ہم اندر پیش کریں۔ معیا ذکر سے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار

اشتبہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص وعام

درخواست مناجاب غلام محمد صوفی ولد عبدل غنی صوفی ساکنہ شیخ پورہ تحصیل کبری برادر حصول RBA سرٹیفکیٹ بحق پسر نعیم احمد صوفی

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اس نسبت پنواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول مطلوبہ پتوں الا ت ریکارڈ طلب کے لئے جس سے عیاں ہوئے ہے کہ سائل ساکنہ شیخ پورہ میں رہائش پذیر ہے۔ سیکمہ کی سالانہ آمدنی 556296 ہے سیکمہ بذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

1	غلام محمد صوفی	سربرہ	55	زمینداری	47358 آمدنی
2	چاند بیگم	زوجہ	54	گھر بلوکام	
	حظیفہ بانو	دختر	36	گھر بلوکام	
3	شاہینہ بانو	دختر	34	گھر بلوکام	
	محمد شرف پسر		28	ملازم	
	رفیقہ بانو	دختر	26	زمین تعلیم	
	شعبیر احمد	پسر	22	زمین تعلیم	
	روپہ جان	دختر	18	زمین تعلیم	

اسکے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد کہ نہیں بتلایا گیا ہے سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث میں اگر کسی شخص یا شخص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ ہی ہم اندر پیش کریں۔ معیا ذکر سے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار

اشتبہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص وعام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول ایک وارڈ اور یا سرٹیفکیٹ دفتر ہذا میں پیش کیا ہے جو زیر کاروائی ہے پنواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا کنبہ بذیل افراد ہیں۔

نمبر شمار	نام و ولدیت	پیشہ	عمر	آمدنی
01	مظفر احمد شیخ ولد محمد محبوب شیخ	ملازمت	45 سال	
02	طاہرہ زوجہ مظفر احمد شیخ	گھر بلوکام	35 سال	
03	بشارت مظفر پسر مظفر احمد شیخ	زمین تعلیم	20 سال	
04	سلمان مظفر پسر مظفر احمد شیخ	زمین تعلیم	17 سال	
05	شیخ مایاں مظفر پسر مظفر احمد شیخ	زمین تعلیم	12 سال	

اسکے علاوہ اور کوئی افراد کہ نہیں موجود ہیں۔ لہذا سرٹیفکیٹ مذکورہ کو حاصل کرنے میں اگر کسی کو کوئی اعتراض ہوگا وہ ایک ہفتہ کے دوران دفتری اوقات میں اپنا اعتراض پیش کریں۔ معیا ذکر سے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار

اشتبہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص وعام

از نیابت باکوہ با اجلاس ایگزیکٹو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول مضمون درخواست مناجاب: شیخ مایاں مظفر ولد مظفر احمد شیخ ساکنہ بدگام بغرض حصول :- RBA سرٹیفکیٹ

اشتہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص وعام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول ایک وارڈ اور یا سرٹیفکیٹ دفتر ہذا میں پیش کیا ہے جو زیر کاروائی ہے پنواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا کنبہ بذیل افراد ہیں۔

نمبر شمار	نام و ولدیت	پیشہ	عمر	آمدنی
01	مظفر احمد شیخ ولد محمد محبوب شیخ	ملازمت	45 سال	
02	طاہرہ زوجہ مظفر احمد شیخ	گھر بلوکام	35 سال	
03	بشارت مظفر پسر مظفر احمد شیخ	زمین تعلیم	20 سال	
04	سلمان مظفر پسر مظفر احمد شیخ	زمین تعلیم	17 سال	
05	شیخ مایاں مظفر پسر مظفر احمد شیخ	زمین تعلیم	12 سال	

اسکے علاوہ اور کوئی افراد کہ نہیں موجود ہیں۔ لہذا سرٹیفکیٹ مذکورہ کو حاصل کرنے میں اگر کسی کو کوئی اعتراض ہوگا وہ ایک ہفتہ کے دوران دفتری اوقات میں اپنا اعتراض پیش کریں۔ معیا ذکر سے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار

اشتبہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص وعام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول ایک وارڈ اور یا سرٹیفکیٹ دفتر ہذا میں پیش کیا ہے جو زیر کاروائی ہے پنواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا کنبہ بذیل افراد ہیں۔

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City's heritage sites depleting, admin in deep slumber''

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference on Thursday expressed concern over the failure of the administration on restoration and preservation of Srinagar city's heritage sites, saying the administrative apathy and neglect is leading to decay of the city's architectural heritage.

This was said by the Party General Secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar while expressing concern over the failure of the incumbent government to Srinagar city in preserving and protecting the heritage shrines in Srinagar city.

Voicing concern over the depleting condition of the prominent shrines in Srinagar, Sagar said, "The city's heritage sites including prominent shrines like Khanqa-e-Moula, Dastagir Sahib Shrine, Maqdoom Sahib Shrine, Budshah's tomb, Jamia Masjid, Pather Masjid, Aali Masjid, Hari Parbat fort, Mughal era edifices in Mughal gardens and Naagar Nagar (Qalai) are all deteriorating," he said adding, "Traditional markets like Maharaj Gunj, Bohri Kadal, Gad Kocho, and Mahraj Bazar too are facing existential crisis."

NC Deplores Delay In Competition Of Bemina Hospital

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference on Thursday expressed concern over the delay in completion of construction work of Children/Maternity Hospital at Bemina, asking the administration to make the tertiary maternity and childcare facility fully functional.

Slated to be completed by 2015, the Bemina tertiary maternity and childcare hospital, Party Central Secretary Irfan Ahmed Shah said was conceived and commissioned by Omar Abdullah and expected to share load of maternity services at LD Hospital but the said facility, he rued, has been mired by inordinate delays.

"It was then NC led government that had earmarked Rs 50 Cr for the project under a centrally sponsored scheme. However, the work on the said project has been put into the cold storage by successive regimes since. The proposed facility was slated to act as an alternative tertiary care facility for women of north and central Kashmir," he said.

Woman Charred To Death In Old Srinagar Blaze

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A woman was charred to death while three others sustained burn injuries during a blaze which destroyed four houses in Aali Kadal area of Srinagar on Thursday.

Four houses were gutted and two partially damaged in the blaze, official sources said.

The fire broke out near Rahbab Sahab shrine in Aali Kadal area this evening.

"Today at about 5:00 PM, fire broke out in a residential house belonging to Ghulam Mohammad Fushoo at Rehbab Sahib Aali Kadal due to leakage of a gas cylinder due to which four residential

Today at about 5:00 PM, fire broke out in a residential house belonging to Ghulam Mohammad Fushoo at Rehbab Sahib Aali Kadal due to leakage of a gas cylinder due to which four residential houses were gutted completely and two residential houses damaged partially

houses were gutted completely and two residential houses damaged partially."

The houses belong to Abdul Salaam Bhat, Noor Mohammad Bhat, Ghulam Hassan Fushoo and Late Abdul Rehman Fushoo, Ghulam Mohammad Fushoo

and Mushtaq Ahmad Matoo and Riyaz Ahmad Matoo.

The partially damaged houses belong to Akhter Ahmad Ganie and Nisar Ahmad Kawa.

56-year-old Shakeela, wife of Ghulam Mohammad Fushoo died in the incident while three persons were injured.

The injured have been identified as Abdul Aziz Gujri, 48, son of Ghulam Rasool Gujree of Karfalli Mohalla Habbakadal A/p Rehbab Sahib Alikadal (burn injury in his head), Hajra, wife of Abdul Aziz Gujri of Karfalli Mohalla Habbakadal A/P Rehbab Sahib Alikadal (Burn injury in his face) and Ghulam Mohammad Fushoo, son of Late Abdul Rehman Fushoo (burn injury in his face)

Govt Relocates Bus Stops To Decongestion City

DC, SSP Traffic visit Panthachowk, Parimpora Bus Terminals to ensure decongestion

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In order to streamline the Traffic Management System in Srinagar City and ensure better inner city transportation facilities to the passengers from the terminals connecting the City with South and North Kashmir, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad accompanied by SSP Traffic City, Muzaffar Ahmad Shah Thursday conducted a visit to Bus Terminal Panthachowk and Parimpora Bus Stand for on the spot redressal of issues of Transporters and Passengers.

During the visit, the DC and SSP interacted with the stakeholders including Transporters and received first hand appraisal about the facilities available at both the Bus terminals for transporters and passengers as well.

On the occasion, the DC was informed that adequate public transport services have been made available for the passengers at both the junctions for the passengers travelling to City from South and North Kashmir.

While interacting with the Transporters and other stakeholders, the DC said that with an aim to ensure decongestion and better traffic management in the City, the authorities relocated the bus stops for incoming traffic from other districts to Pantha Chowk and Parimpora. He said the move is also aimed to lessen the traffic load and ensure smooth passage of vehicles and hassle free movement of people in Srinagar City.

With regard to the demands put forth

by the Transporters including filling and macadamization of approach roads at both the Bus Terminals, the DC directed the concerned officers to immediately take all necessary measures for pot filling and macadamization of approach, construction of toilet Block for Transporters/passengers, removing of scrap material besides ensuring proper hygiene, cleanliness, lighting and drainage system in and around both the Bus Terminals.

Adequate Public transport services have been made available for the passengers at both the junctions for the passengers travelling to City from South and North Kashmir

The DC also directed the RTO Kashmir to take necessary measures for rationalization of passenger fare of the vehicles coming from South and North Kashmir to Parimpora and Panthachowk Bus Terminals so that passengers are not constrained to pay extra fare.

Earlier, the Transporters and other stakeholders lauded the initiative and efforts of District Administration Srinagar and Traffic Police for decongestion on the City roads and assured full support for ensuring smooth passage of vehicles in Srinagar. They also said that they will help Traffic Police to decongest City routes, allow smooth movement of Ambulances, emergency vehicles as well as normal commuters.

Exhibition Of Historic Manuscripts Organized At SPS Library

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 20: An exhibition of historic Manuscripts, Rare Books and Miniature Paintings was organised at SPS Library Complex here today.

The day-long exhibition was jointly organized by the Oriental Research Library Srinagar and SPS Library, on the directions of the Director, Libraries & Research, Mr Mohammad Rafi, to commemorate Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav.

The attraction of the exhibition was the oldest manuscripts like Qarabai-Din, Sadh Pand Luqman and Shahnama Firdous. Some of the rare books including Rajtarangni by Kalhana, Tareekh-e-Rasheedi, Gazetteer of India and Kashmir - a history of Kashmir were also displayed at the exhibition.

Speaking about the exhibition, Assistant Director, Research & Publications, Mrs Zahida Bano said that the Oriental Research Library (ORL), Srinagar established in 1904, is a repository of around 6000 centuries old rare manuscripts in 17 languages encompassing varied fields.

She said the manuscript collection of ORL is a treasure-trove of religious, philosophical, historical, literary and scientific writings. Mrs Zahida said that due to COVID Protocol restricted number of visitors were invited to the exhibition.

DIAL-EMMA



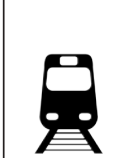
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- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmer EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS



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

HIGHWAY STATUS



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



HIJRI
CALENDAR
17 Jumada al-Sani
1443

PRAYERS

FAJR	6: 07
ZUHR	12:42
ASR	4:11
Magrib	5:52
ISHA	7: 16

This Day In History

- 1287 - The treaty of San Agayz is signed. Minorca is conquered by King Alfons III of Aragon.
- 1324 - Zen Buddhist religious debate between Tendai & Shingon
- 1664 - Count Miklos of Zrinyi sets out to battle Turkish invasion army
- 1720 - Sweden and Prussia sign a peace treaty ending hostilities between them during the Great Northern War
- 1732 - Russia & Persia sign Treaty of Riascha
- 1793 - Prussia & Russia sign partition treaty, dividing Poland.
- 1864 - The Tauranga Campaign of the New Zealand Wars begins
- 1900 - The second contingent of Canadian troops sails from Halifax to fight in South Africa against the Boers
- 1910 - British-Russian military intervention in Persia
- 1913 - Aristide Briand forms French government for the 2nd time
- 1919 - Irish militant nationalist party Sinn Fein creates its own parliament in Dublin and declares Ireland independent of Great Britain, sparking the Irish War of Independence
- 1924 - Vladimir Lenin's Testament is handed over to the Communist Party; it calls for changes to the Soviet governing structure and criticizes Joseph Stalin, Leon Trotsky and other members
- 1925 - Albanian parliament announces itself a republic; Ahmed Zogoe president
- 1926 Belgian parliament accepts Locarno treaties
- 1932 - USSR and Finland stop non-attack treaty
- 1941 - Australian and British troops attack Tobruk, Libya
- 1943 - Soviet forces reconquer Wroslawsk
- 1943 - Soviet forces reconquer Gumrak airport near Stalingrad
- 1944 - 447 German bombers attack London
- 1944 - 649 British bombers attack Magdeburg
- 1945 - British troops land on Ramree, near coast of Burma1952 - Jawaharlal Nehru's Congress party wins general election in India
- 1954 - USS Nautilus, the first nuclear-powered submarine, launched on the Thames River in Connecticut
- 1960 - Little Joe 4 suborbital Mercury test reaches 16 km
- 1960 - Rock falls traps 437 at Coalbrook, South Africa; 417 die of methane poisoning
- 1961 - Portuguese rebels seize cruise ship Santa Maria
- 1965 - Iranian premier Hassan Ali Mansur assassinated by 17-year-old Mohammad Bokharaei, a member of the Fadayan-e Islam
- 1968 - US B-52 bomber with nuclear bomb on board crashes in Greenland
- 1968 - The Battle of Khe Sanh - one of the most publicized and controversial battles of the Vietnam War - begins at the Khe Sanh Air Base
- 1972 - Assam's North East Frontier Agency becomes Arunachal Pradesh territory
- 1972 Belgian government of Eyskens-Cools forms
- 1972 - Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura become separate states of the Indian union
- 1972 - Mizoram, formerly part of Assam, creates an Indian union territory
- 1976 - Supersonic Concorde has its 1st commercial flights
- 1977 - US President Jimmy Carter pardons almost all Vietnam War draft evaders
- 1983 - President Reagan certifies El Salvador human-rights abuses have decreased making country eligible for US military aid

From KO Archives

Jihad in final phase: Saeed

NEW DELHI: Lashkar-e-Taiba has said the Jihad in Jammu and Kashmir is in final phase and vowed to carry on their operations. I believe that in Kashmir, Jihad is in the final phase. We will continue with our Jihad, Lashkar-e-Taiba chief Hafiz Muhammad Saeed told a portal.

He said the more the Mujahideen attacks occur, the chances of solving the Kashmir dispute, get brighter, he said. Saeed said India will lose a lot if it did not allow Jammu and Kashmir Jamaat-e-Islami chief Syed Ali Shah Geelani to join the Hurriyat Conference delegation for its proposed visit to Pakistan.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 21 January, 2001)

JAMMU AND KASHMIR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIO LIMITED

TOURIST RECEPTION CENTRE SRINAGAR

For and on behalf of Managing Director Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation, e-tenders are invited from registered/approved agencies in connection with supply of Kashmiri Wazawan & Allied items to Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation on profit sharing basis 65%:35% (35% profit towards JKTDC) and on "As and when required" under two bid tendering process i.e. "Technical" and "Financial Bid" as per details given below. The period of contract is for one year (12 months)

E-tender Notice No: JKTDC/GMO/5209-14

Dated 19/01/2022

1	Date of issue of tender notice	19.01.2022
2	Period of downloading of tender document	20.01.2022 10:00 am
3	Bid submission Start Date	22.01.2022 10:00 am
4	Bid submission End Date	12.02.2022 04:00 pm
5	Last date for receiving hard copy (Original Demand Draft as cost of Tender Document and EMD in shape of CDR)	14.02.2022 04:00 pm
6	Date of Opening of Technical Bid online (In case of untoward situation/Govt. holiday) the same will be opened in next working day	17.02.2022 11:00 am

- The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility, specification, bill of quantities (B.O.Q) Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/download from the website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given above:-
- The cost of tender document is Rs.1000/- (Rupees One Thousand Only) "NON-REFUNDABLE" payable by Demand draft in favor of "General Manager (O) JKTDC", payable at Srinagar.
- Submission of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) equal to Rs.50,000/- (Rupees Fifty thousand only) in the form of CDR pledged to General Manager (O) JKTDC, TRC Srinagar, payable at Srinagar
- Bidders who wish to participate in this tender will have to register on line www.jktenders.gov.in. Bidders will have to procure Digital Signature Certificate using which they can sign their electronic bids. Bidders who already have a valid Digital Certificate do not need to procure a new Digital Certificate.
- The bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents as specified in the "Technical Bid" in terms of soft copies within period specified above. No documents in terms of hard copies shall be entertained. However, the hard copies of Earnest Money Deposit (CDR) and Tender Document Fee (Demand Draft) should be submitted physically in the office of General Manager Operations Kashmir within the date and time specified above.
- Besides other documents, the bidders must ensure to upload the signed / accepted copy of "Terms and Condition" of the NIT without which the tender will be out rightly rejected.

Sd/-

DIPK-NB-6673/21

General Manager (Ops)
Kashmir

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER. MECHANICAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, KASHMIR.

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

GIST OF SHORT TERM E-NIT

NIT No. MDS/TS/2021-22/ 149 /e tendering Date: 18.01.2022

For and on behalf of the Governor, Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, e-tenders in two (02) cover system, are invited on item wise basis from Original Equipment Manufacturers or their authorized dealers for the following:

	Estimated Cost (In lakh of Rs.)	Earnest Money (In lakh of Rs.)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs.)	Time of Completion	Position of Funds
Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 500 Kg/Hr Animal Carcass Incinerator including 2 years Operation & Maintenance at Galander, Pampore for Srinagar Municipal Corporation Under Srinagar Smart City	280.00	5.60	3000/-	150 days	Available

- Accord of Approval: Authorization conveyed vide letter No:- SMC/Plg/2021-22/996-101, Dated:-14.09.2021
- Technical Sanction: :Accorded vide No: MED/K/TS/130 Dated: 08.12.2021.
- Project Authority: Srinagar Municipality Corporation
- Downloading of Bids: The Tender document Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in from 19 -01-2022 (16:00 hrs)
- Pre-Bid Meeting : The intending bidders may attend pre-bid meeting regarding bidding queries/clarifications which shall be held in this office on 24.01.2022 at 14.00 Hrs. The intending bidders can participate through online mode as well
- Submission of Bids: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above website from 19 -01-2022 (16:00 Hrs) to 01-02-2022 (18.55 Hrs) in two covers.
- Opening of Bids: The bid uploaded on the Web Site up to due date and time will be opened on 02 -02-2022 (15:00 Hrs) or any subsequent date convenient to the TOC in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, Mechanical Circle MED Srinagar

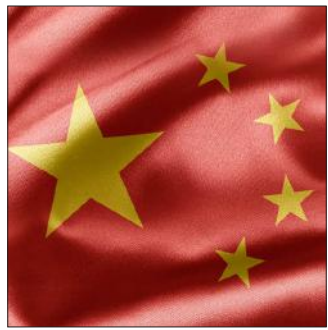
Sd/-

DIPK-16939/21

Executive Engineer,
Mechanical Division Srinagar

No: MDS/TS- / 10142-47
Dated: 18.01.2022

China's Foreign Ministry Says Not Aware Of Missing Arunachal Youth



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BEIJING: China's Foreign Ministry said on Thursday that it was not aware of the incident in which the Chinese People's Liberation Army reportedly abducted a 17-year-old youth from Arunachal Pradesh's Upper Siang district but said the PLA controls the borders and cracks down on "illegal entry and exit activities".

Member of Parliament from Arunachal Pradesh Tapir Gao said on Wednesday that a teenager, identified as Miram Taron, was abducted by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) from Lungta Jor area under Siyungla area on Tuesday.

The youth was abducted from inside Indian territory in the state's Upper Siang district, Gao said.

Taron's friend Johny Yaiying, who managed to escape, informed the authorities about the kidnapping by the PLA, Gao told the media.

Asked for his reaction to the allegation of the PLA abducting Taron, the spokesperson of the Chinese Foreign Ministry here said, "I don't know the situation."

"The Chinese People's Liberation Army controls borders in accordance with the law and cracks down on illegal entry and exit activities," the spokesperson said.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry's response came even as the Indian Army has sought assistance from the PLA to locate the missing boy on their side and return him as per established protocol, sources in the defence establishment said in New Delhi on Thursday.

They said when the Indian Army received the information about Taron, it immediately contacted the PLA through an established mechanism of hotline informing that an individual, who was collecting herbs and hunting, had lost his way and cannot be found.

SC To Hear Plea Of Journalist Tejpal For In-Camera Hearing Of Appeal In Sexual Assault Case



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court would hear on Friday the appeal of journalist Tarun Tejpal against the Bombay High Court's order rejecting his plea for an in-camera hearing of the proceedings challenging his acquittal in a 2013 rape case.

A bench comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao and B R Gavai has listed for hearing the plea of Tejpal whose application for conducting an in-camera hearing of the proceedings under section 327 of the CrPC was rejected by the Goa bench of the Bombay High Court on November 24, last year.

The acquittal of the former editor-in-chief of Tehelka magazine, who was accused of sexually assaulting his then-woman colleague in the lift of a five-star hotel in Goa in November 2013, by a sessions court in May 2021 was challenged in the Goa bench of the high court by the state government.

Senior advocate Amit Desai, who had appeared for Tejpal, had referred to the Law Commission and various judgements

of high courts supporting his application for an in-camera hearing. The high court, however, had rejected the submissions.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Goa government, had argued that the judgement (of acquittal of Tejpal) by the district court is in the public domain.

"Section 327 applies for the purpose of inquiring into or trying any offence. It has limited application during inquiry or trial. The appeal is something very clear. Appeals, revisions, etc are neither investigation nor inquiry nor a trial," he had said.

In its order in May last year, the Mapusa district and sessions court had held that the complainant had not shown the "kind of normative behaviour" expected from a "victim of sexual assault".

The court had granted Tejpal the "benefit of the doubt" in the absence of corroborative evidence to support the allegations made by the complainant.

Challenging Tejpal's acquittal, the state government had said that the court's judgement was "coloured by prejudice and patriarchy".



AirIndia tweeted about the changes in flight schedule. (File photo)

Amid 5G Scare, US Travel Plans Stuck For Thousands

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON: Travel plans for thousands of passengers, including those travelling to India, were disrupted after airlines cancelled or cut short the duration of many flights to and from the United States over aviation industry fears that 5G technology could interfere with crucial navigation instruments.

Several international airlines, including Air India, have announced that they will cancel flights to the US from Wednesday.

The US aviation regulator Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on January 14 said that "5G interference with the aircraft's radio altimeter could prevent engine and braking systems from transitioning to landing mode, which could prevent an aircraft from stopping on the runway".

Altitude measures the height of the aircraft above the ground. The band on which altimeter works is close to that on which the 5G system works. American telecom companies paid the US government USD 81 billion in 2021 for the right to use those frequencies, known as the C-Band.

The C-band service, which offers faster speeds and broader coverage, was due to be turned on from Wednesday. The frequency issue appeared to impact the popular Boeing 777, a long-range and wide-body aircraft.

I WILL TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON from New York by train and try and see if I can get a ticket on the flight. This last-minute cancellation and disruption is stressful but I have to take a chance.

Air India tweeted on Tuesday that due to deployment of 5G communications in the US, "our operations to the USA from India stand curtailed/ revised with change in aircraft type from January 19, 2022." Air India stated on Twitter that it won't be operate eight India-US flights on Wednesday "due to deployment of the 5G communications in the US".

These eight Air India flights were: Delhi-New York, New York-Delhi, Delhi-Chicago, Chicago-Delhi, Delhi-San Francisco, San Francisco-Delhi, Delhi-Newark and Newark-Delhi.

Three carriers -- American Airlines, Delta Airlines and Air India -- currently operate direct flights between India and the US.

Apart from Air India, several other airlines announced they were cancelling flights into the US over the issue of deployment of the 5G service.

Emirates said that due to "operational concerns" associated with the planned deployment of 5G mobile network services in the US at certain airports, it will be suspending flights from January 19 until further notice to Boston, Chicago, Dallas Fort Worth, Houston, Miami, Newark, Orlando, San Francisco and Seattle.

Delta said that telecom companies agreed Tuesday to limit the

scope of Wednesday's planned 5G deployment and will delay implementation around certain U.S. airports. "While this is a positive development toward preventing widespread disruptions to flight operations, some flight restrictions may remain," Delta said it has joined other airlines in seeking a delay by the US government of the deployment of the new 5G coverage into the C-band spectrum until more protections and assurances against potential interference with aircraft radio altimeters exist.

The airline said the impact on air travel could be immediate and significant, directly impacting passenger travel and cargo shipping.

"The nation's commerce will grind to a halt," the CEOs of major carriers, including Delta CEO Ed Bastian, wrote in a letter coordinated by Airlines for America to government officials, including Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and the chair of the Federal Communications Commission.

The sudden flight cancellations disrupted travel plans for thousands of passengers who were left in the lurch with little information forthcoming on when the flights will resume

Two Doses Of Sputnik Provide Two Times Higher Antibodies Against Omicron Than Pfizer Vaccine: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: A study has found that two doses of Sputnik V provide two times higher virus neutralising antibodies against the Omicron variant of COVID-19 than two doses of the Pfizer vaccine, Gamaleya National Research Center of Epidemiology and Microbiology and the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) said on Thursday.

The study was conducted at the Italian Spallanzani Institute on comparable groups of sera from individuals vaccinated with Sputnik V and Pfizer.

The joint study by the Gamaleya Center and Spallanzani Institute confirmed the results obtained in our separate study published in December 2021.

"The hard scientific data proves Sputnik V has higher virus neutral-



ising activity against Omicron as compared to other vaccines and will play a major role in the global fight against this new contagious variant," Gamaleya Center Director Alexander Gintsburg said in a statement.

Citing study findings, Gamaleya Center and RDIF noted that boosting with Sputnik Light as part of the "mix and match" approach may help address the lower efficacy of mRNA vaccines against Omicron as well as the documented,

quickly waning, efficacy of mRNA vaccines against COVID-19.

Partnerships between adenoviral and mRNA vaccines could provide for stronger protection against Omicron and other variants, they stated.

Based on the data collected by the Spallanzani Institute and results of previous studies, heterologous boosting with Sputnik Light is the best solution to increase other vaccines' efficacy and extend the booster protection period, they stated.

Dalit Icon Azad To Contest Against Yogi In UP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Prominent Dalit face and founder of the Azad Samaj Party (Kanshiram) party, Chandra Shekhar Aazad, will fight the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election from Gorakhpur Sadar seat, the party announced on Thursday, January 20. Gorakhpur Sadar is the seat from where the BJP has fielded UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

Taking forward the ideology of Babasaheb Dr BR Ambedkar and Kanshiram sahib for 'Bahujan Hitaay - Bahujan Sukhaay', the Aazad Samaj Party (Kanshiram) announced Chandra Shekhar Aazad as candidate from Gorakhpur Sadar (322) seat, the party said in a statement on social media. ASP (K)'s national core committee member Mohammad Aqib confirmed the development to PTI. He said the registered name of the party is Aazad Samaj Party (Kanshiram).

Chandra Shekhar Aazad, the 35-year-old lawyer-turned-activist, had co-founded the Dalit rights outfit Bhim Army and he is its national president. He launched the ASP (K) in March 2020 and is the party president. Gorakhpur Sadar goes to polls on March 3 during the sixth phase of elections in Uttar Pradesh. The results will be declared on March 10.

Aazad was until recently in



talks with the Akhilesh Yadav-led Samajwadi Party for a tie-up to contest the polls but was offered only two seats by it. In retaliation, Aazad had on Tuesday said that his party would no longer approach the SP for an alliance as it was a matter of self respect, but added he was open to finding new allies for the polls.

The leader has often said his fight is against the ideology of the BJP and the RSS.

Meanwhile, with a second list of 41 candidates, the Congress has announced 166 candidates who will contest the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections. The BJP, which is currently in power in the state and is contesting in alliance with the Apna Dal and the Nishad Party, has announced 110 candidates.

Winnability Obsessed BJP Packs In Couples, Minor Rape Accused In Goa Candidate List



PANAJI: Winnability at all cost appears to have been the thumb rule the BJP appears to have used in its declaration of first list of 34 candidates for the February 14 Assembly polls in Goa.

The list which was formally announced at the party's national headquarters in Delhi on Thursday includes tickets to two couples -- Vishwajit and Divya Rane from Valpoi and Poriem Assembly constituencies and Atanasio and Jennifer Monserrate from Panaji and Taleigao Assembly constituencies.

The BJP has, however, denied a ticket to the wife of Deputy Chief Minister Chandrakant Kavlekar, Savitri, who was claiming a BJP ticket to contest from the Sanguem Assembly constituency.

Atanasio, who has been accused of raping a minor girl, fills in former Chief Minister late Manohar Parrikar's boots in the Panaji Assembly seat, at the cost of Parrikar's son Utpal, who had sought to represent the Bharatiya Janata Party in the constituency, which had been held by Parrikar since 1994, before his demise in 2019.

"I cannot compare myself with Parrikar... but we will ensure that the BJP will win the seat with the highest margin yet," Monserrate told reporters after his ticket was cleared by the BJP high command. BJP's Goa election in-charge

Devendra Fadnavis said that the party was still in talks with the disgruntled Utpal to contest the elections from the Bicholim Assembly constituency. Utpal on Thursday confirmed that the BJP had offered him the Bicholim seat as a compromise, but added that he was not going to take up on the offer. Utpal has already warned the BJP, that he would contest as an independent candidate, if he is denied a ticket from Panaji.

Defending the BJP's decision to grant Monserrate the ticket, Fadnavis said: "A sitting MLA has been given a ticket in Panaji. Parrikar's family is our family. They are close to us".

"I had given Utpal Parrikar two options about where he could contest. He had refused one option. We are still discussing the second option with him. We all feel he should accept it. BJP has respected the Parrikar family," Fadnavis also told the press conference in Delhi.

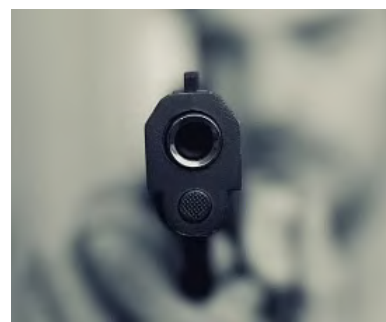
The BJP has also fielded sitting Vasco MLA and former Urban Development Minister Milind Naik, who last month was at the centre of a sex scandal, after the Congress released videos, audio and WhatsApp messages featuring the now former Minister alleging that Naik was sexually exploiting a widow from Bihar.

While the police have claimed that they have found no substance in the complaint filed by Congress vice president Sankalp Amonkar against Naik, the former Minister has denied all allegations.

Former Chief Minister Laxmikant Parsekar has been denied a ticket to contest from the Mandrem Assembly constituency, which has been allotted to sitting MLA Dayanand Sotpe. Sotpe was elected to the state Assembly in 2017 on a Congress ticket, but joined the BJP subsequently.. **IANIS**

SHORT TAKES

Dalit Boy Shot At For Not Greeting His Seniors



A Dalit boy was allegedly shot at by his friends for not greeting them while he was on his way to attend tuition classes. The boy, a student of class 10, has been shot in the leg. He is a student of a local public school and the two accused study in an inter college and are students of class 12. The police said the accused boys are adults and one of them has been arrested while the other is on the run.

The victim is out of danger. Police said an

FIR has been lodged under sections 307 (attempt to murder) of the IPC and under relevant sections of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. It is also being investigated as to how the accused managed to procure the gun and bullets.

According to reports, the accused first abused and thrashed the Dalit boy and then one of them took out a country-made pistol and fired at the victim and fled.

The locals rushed the victim to hospital immediately. SHO at the New Agra police station Arvind Nerval said the condition of the victim is stable, and that search is on for the other accused.

The arrested accused was booked last year on charges of attempt to murder and was remanded in judicial custody but was later released on bail. **-IANIS**

Govt To Ban 'Anti-India' Youtube Channels



NEW DELHI: Days after 20 YouTube channels and two websites were blocked for spreading anti-India propaganda and fake news, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur on Wednesday warned that the government will continue to take such action against those "hatching conspiracy" against the country.

"I had ordered for action against them.... I am happy that many big countries across the world took cognisance of it. YouTube also came forward and took action to block them," Mr Thakur told reporters while replying to queries on the issue. In a "closely coordinated" effort with intelligence agencies, the I&B ministry had in December last year ordered the blocking of 20 YouTube channels and two websites as they were spreading anti-India propaganda and fake news.

"And in future also, action will be taken to block any such account hatching conspiracy against India, spreading lies and dividing the society," the minister asserted. In a statement in December, the ministry had said that these 20 YouTube channels and the websites belonged to "a coordinated disinformation network" operating from Pakistan and spreading fake news about various sensitive subjects related to India".

The channels were used to post "divisive content in a coordinated manner on topics like Kashmir, Indian army, minority communities in India, Ram Mandir, General Bipin Rawat, etc", it had said... **-PTI**

No Bail In Bulli Bai Case



MUMBAI: A Mumbai court today rejected the bail pleas of three students arrested in connection with the 'Bulli Bai' app case in which the photos of prominent Muslim women were put up online for "auction".

The three accused are Vishal Kumar Jha, Shweta Singh and Mayank Rawat. Singh (18) and Rawat (21) were arrested by the Mumbai Police's cyber cell from Uttarakhand

on January 5, while Jha was arrested from Bengaluru on January 4. They were denied bail by a metropolitan magistrate in Mumbai's suburban Bandra. Earlier, the police had opposed their bail claiming the accused used names from the Sikh community for their social media handles with an intention to breach peace in society and create animosity among religious groups. The police have told the court that all the three accused were operating multiple social media accounts on Twitter, Instagram and Gmail.

The cyber cell has said many of the accounts were deleted or suspended for posting defamatory content and information regarding the same is yet to be procured. The Mumbai Police had registered an FIR in the case following complaints by several women targeted by the 'Bulli Bai' app. The app made public details of several Muslim women, allowing users to participate in their "auction". Meanwhile, Niraj Bishnoi and Omkareshwar Thakur, who were earlier arrested by the Delhi Police, were today brought to Mumbai by the city police's cyber cell on transit remand for questioning.. **-PTI**

Mehbooba Won't Be Allowed To Sway Youths Towards Violence: BJP

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Former Jammu and Kashmir deputy chief minister and senior BJP leader Kavinder Gupta on Thursday hit out at PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti for allegedly promoting "soft-separatism" by opposing every move of the Centre.

He said the BJP has ensured that she does not continue with her anti-national agenda by swaying youth towards stone pelting and picking up guns against the government.

Gupta said that the advent of the BJP in the Centre has decimated the plans of Mehbooba.

"This weird dream of Mehbooba Mufti will never see the day of light as BJP will not allow her to sway youth towards violence and loot the resources of Jammu and Kashmir with impunity again," he said told, reacting to the remarks of the PDP chief asking people to get rid of the BJP in Uttar Pradesh polls.

Mehbooba on Tuesday has taken a sharp dig at the BJP and said that getting rid of the party in UP will be a greater azadi than in 1947.

Gupta said, "The BJP has ensured that Mehbooba and her ilk in the Valley do not continue with their anti-national agenda like swaying youth towards stone pelting and picking up guns

against the government, swindle funds with no fear of the land of law and above all promoting soft-separatism by opposing every move of the government of India (GoI) as if the GoI is the enemy of Kashmir and Kashmiris.

He said that what the former chief minister is dreaming about is next to impossible because strong and dynamic Prime Minister Narendra Modi will never let her raise the pro-Pakistan slogans or give her the liberty to eulogise Pakistan and seek pre-August 5, 2019 status for J-K.

"The J-K under BJP government is a changed entity and now, no one is allowed to say or do anything without being questioned," Gupta said.

He said the kind of freedom she (Mehbooba) is seeking will never become a reality again because the BJP government is not a meek entity rather it can go to any extent to suppress the people and voices which are against the interest of the country.

He said, All such political entities in the Valley should understand that BJP is ensuring development as never before and it will be better for all to avail benefits of this development because the BJP government has accomplished colossal development for people without any discrimination on the basis of region, religion or caste.

Krishi Vigyan Kendra For Ramban Approved

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Krishi Vigyan Kendra for district Ramban has been approved by Indian Council of Agriculture Research, New Delhi under the administrative control of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu.

The proposal of KVK Ramban was long pending with the ICAR due to non-availability of land in favour of SKUAST Jammu.

With the kind intervention of Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir and concerted efforts of Professor J.P. Sharma Vice-Chancellor SKUAST Jammu, 117.18 kanals (5.859 ha) of land at Village Dalwas was transferred to SKUAST Jammu for the establishment of new KVK.

Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha congratulated SKUAST-Jammu for getting new KVK approved for district Ramban. Expressing his priority for the farming community, he said that KVK will be instrumental in uplifting the socio-economic condition of the farmers of Ramban. He reiterated that with the establishment of new KVK, farmers will have direct and quick exposure to the latest agricultural technologies. Also, the farmers will have better coverage under welfare schemes and rural youths have better entrepreneurship opportunities.

Professor J.P. Sharma, Vice-Chancellor, SKUAST-Jammu shared that KVK will focus on enhancing farmers' income through promotion of integrated farming system, value addition and processing of fruits and vegetables and development of innovative market linkages with effective marketing and branding.

Professor Sharma thanked Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor and Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State Science & Technology and PMO for supporting the approval of KVK Ramban.

With the approval of KVK Ramban, the tally of functional KVKs under SKUAST-Jammu enhance to nine for Jammu region. The Site Selection committee constituted for screening the application of KVK Ramban include Dr. P.L. Gautam, Pro-Chancellor Career Point University and Former Vice Chancellor GB Pant University of Agriculture & Technology, Pantnagar (Chairman), Dr.Rajbir Singh, Director, ICAR-ATARI, Ludhiana, K.K. Sharma, Director Agriculture, Jammu, SKUAST-Jammu, Dr. D.M. Makhdoomi, Director Extension, SKUAST-Kashmir and Dr.Javed Iqbal Mir, Scientist representative from ICAR-CITH, Srinagar. Dr. S.K. Gupta, Director Extension made the virtual presentation before the screening committee.

Truck Driver Dies In Samba Accident

JAMMU: A truck driver hailing from Gurdaspura area of Punjab died after he met with an accident at Food Corporation of India (FCI) godown at Jatwal area of Samba.

Police officials said that a truck loaded with ration was parked in FCI godown at Jatwal Samba when slipped on the

road and driver identified as Rajinder Singh of Gurdaspur Punjab, trying to stop the vehicle got stuck between two vehicles and died on the spot.

Body of deceased was later taken into the possession while further legal formalities have been started, police said—(KNO)

DHSK Orders Constitution Of Divisional Level Prescriptions Audit Committee

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Directorate of Health Service Kashmir ordered constitution of divisional level Prescriptions Audit Committee (PAC) and asked Chief Medical Officers and Medical Superintendents to nominate one Nodal Officer besides constitute similar committees at district level.

DHSK in an order issued here asked all the CMOs and Medical Superintendents to nominate one Nodal Officer for each district and sub-district hospital. They shall collect photocopies of at least 1 percent of prescriptions by doctors in OPDs on a random basis.

The order said CMOs should also constitute district-level PAC comprising of doctors on administrative posts, excluding consultants.

"These prescriptions collected by the Nodal Officer shall be scrutinized by PAC whether the prescriptions are written in capital

letters with the name of doctor, signature and registration number," read the order, a copy of which lies with GNS.

It said that generic drugs are prescribed and preference is given to the drugs, which are available free in hospital supplies.

"Unnecessary diagnostic tests/procedures are prescribed and patients are referred to the private clinics/specialists without requirement," the order said.

The directorate said that drugs are prescribed in contravention to the provisions of Drugs & Cosmetic Act & Regulations and it has taken a serious note of it.

"PACs shall prepare and submit fortnightly reports to this directorate while the divisional level PAC, which is being constituted, shall prepare monthly report along with their recommendations, highlighting actionable points that shall be submitted to the Administrative Department," the order said

Around 25000 Works Expected To Be Completed By This Financial Year: CS

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Asserting that expenditure efficiencies in the system have vastly improved due to a series of financial reforms, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta on Thursday said there has been a 12-fold increase in works completed in the current financial year over the previous years' average in the union territory.

Mehta also hailed the improvement in current year's revenue collections despite the ongoing pandemic and stated that a strong and consistent revenue performance and a positive outlook for future will underpin equally strong capex growth this fiscal and beyond.

"In the past, on an average 2,000 works would be completed. Now as on today, 11,508 works have already been completed and by the time the current financial year comes to a close, around 25,000 works are expected to be completed. This represents 12 times increase over the previous years' average," he said.

He made this observation while reviewing the functioning of the finance department. Additional Chief Secretary, finance department, Atal Dulloo and other senior officers of the department were present at the review.

The chief secretary said the expenditure efficiencies in the



system have vastly improved due to the recent introduction of a series of financial reforms.

Mehta further said the capital expenditure (capex) performance has to be further improved to maximise the gains of fiscal reforms so as to create a virtuous cycle of the growth in Jammu and Kashmir that feeds on itself and continues to grow.

Giving details, Dulloo said that out of 44,245 projects and works taken up during 2021-22 under district capex, 42,102 works have been accorded administrative approval, out of which 40,248 works have been tendered.

As many as 28,523 works out of the tendered works have been allotted and presently under execution. The department informed that out of 28,523 works under execution, around 25,000 are expected to be completed during this fiscal year.

Dulloo said out of 2,357 works sanctioned under languishing projects, 1,192 works have been completed so far at a cost of Rs 1,983.77 crore.

He further said the expen-

diture performance of various departments is being monitored and wherever necessary, instructions are being issued to increase the spending so that the annual capex targets are met by the department.

Highlighting the importance of monitoring the regular inflows from the Centre, the Chief Secretary said the department must work closely with the departments for seeking more funds from the union government.

Mehta laid emphasis on ensuring real time audit of the departments through e-audit and said instead of auditing account books on ex-post basis, the department needs to do so on ex-ante basis so that deviations from norms are checked before they happen.

Stating that Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are the top focus of the government, the Chief Secretary said the developmental spending in rural areas needs to be ramped up with the close support of the representatives of the local self government for better infrastructure development.

Omar Targets GoI Over Its Plan To Appropriate Powers Of Transferring IAS, IPS Officers

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: National Conference leader Omar Abdullah on Thursday said the Centre's plan to appropriate powers of transferring IAS and IPS officers will be "another nail" in the coffin of the country's federal structure.

He was reacting to media reports that the Union government is planning to acquire for itself overriding powers to



transfer IAS and IPS officers

through central deputation, doing away with the requirement of taking the approval of the state governments.

"This would be another nail in the coffin of India's federal structure. How would CM Modi react if PM Modi summarily removed his DG or CS? J&K lost all its powers of appointment in 2019, now it looks like the rest of India's states will go the same way," Abdullah tweeted.

KPC CLOSURE

Press Council Of India Seeks LG's Intervention

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Press Club of India (PCI) on Thursday termed the cancellation of the Kashmir Press Club's registration and takeover of its premises by the Jammu and Kashmir administration as illegal and said such coercive action against journalists will adversely affect the image of the Union Territory.

In a letter to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, seeking his effective intervention in the matter, the PCI also said the administration's move violated basic constitutional rights of the local journalists.

The action was deliberately taken as the elected management committee of the Kashmir Press Club (KPC) had announced the date for elections next month, the PCI alleged.

It is our humble request to you that the registration of the Kashmir Press Club and allotment of the club's land and building be restored immediately to protect the freedom of the press in the state, the PCI urged the Jammu and Kashmir lieutenant governor.

The journalists' body also demanded that the obstacles created in conducting fair and peaceful elections, according to schedule, should be removed.

The managing committee of the Press Club of India is deeply concerned that the local administration did not take any cognisance of the appeal made by all of us to you on January 16," it said.

Instead of responding to the questions that were raised, the Jammu and Kashmir administration unilaterally revoked the registration of the KPC and seized control of the land allotted to the club, without granting the democratically elected



body a chance to make its case, the PCI added.

We believe that cancellation of the registration of the Kashmir Press Club and handing over it to some people by removing the elected office bearers were unfair and illegal actions. Taking possession of the democratically run press club's land and its premises by the State Estates Department is violation of basic constitutional rights of local journalists, it said.

What is most troublesome in this entire episode is that a factional war within journalist groups was presented as the front behind which the administration executed its coercive action, the PCI added.

This misbehaviour and the coercive action against journalists will adversely affect the image of the state, it said.

The local administration's action is not only undemocratic and illegal but also an attack on the freedom of the press, the PCI said, demanding that an impartial inquiry into the episode is necessary to bring the truth out.

The PCI noted that the administration forcibly took possession of the KPC's land and its premises even though the renewal certificate of the registration of the club was handed over to its office bearers just a week ago.

The current elected management committee of the club had announced the date for elections next month but the local administration deliberately derailed the election process with its unilateral action, it said.

The unfortunate developments in the last few days are an attempt to forcibly interfere in the work of journalists and keep them under pressure and fear of administrative coercion, armed security forces and police. No democracy can run without the absence of a free media, the PCI said.

There should be effective intervention at your level to remove the obstacles created in conducting fair and peaceful elections as per schedule, it said in its letter to Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Sinha.

DISTRICT DAIRY

DC Anantnag Launches E-Services Of Revenue Dept

ANANTNAG: In an effort towards implementing basic indicator of Good Governance, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr Piyush Singla on Thursday launched e-services of Revenue department in the district.

Under this initiative, 12 services viz. income, dependence, category, marriage and other certificates will be issued to the beneficiaries through a completely online process.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Singla said that the move is aimed at ensuring transparency and accountability in the departments besides making the process of obtaining certificates affordable and hassle free for the common man. He said the service has been launched on the Service Plus web portal and can also be accessed through the Service Plus app available online.

The district has imparted necessary trainings among field functionaries for processing on-

line applications and directions have been issued to ensure on boarding of all stake holders in the process.

The services being provided through the portal include issuance of various certificates including dependency, OBC, RBA, ALC, legal heir, marriage, income, SC, ST, income and assets for EWS cases, character and pahari speaking category.

The portal can be accessed at <https://serviceonline.gov.in/jammu>. It is a simple GUI based interactive platform. The portal is accessible 24x7 and is a single window platform for submitting and tracking online applications.

It is in place to mention that SUKoon – an app based completely online process is already employed for processing relief cases in the district and has significantly reduced the time taken to process cases with some cases processed within 3 days of the event/damage being reported.

DC Kulgam Reviews Covid-19 Situation

KULGAM: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat on Thursday chaired a meeting of officers to review the situation arising due to Covid-19 and the measures and arrangements put in place to contain the spread of virus in the district.

The DC stressed upon the officers to ensure vigorous IEC activities in all areas to sensitize people about the do's and don'ts which are imperative to stay away from this infection.

He also directed the concerned officers to scale up the vaccination of the 15 -17 age group and ensure maximum coverage of this age group.

The DC also instructed the officers to ensure adequate arrangements at the quarantine centres and to augment the fa-

cilities and bed availability in the district.

He also stressed to ensure strict adherence of Covid appropriate behaviour and to mobilize joint teams for strict enforcement of CAB.

Meanwhile it was informed that there are 49 containment zones across the district and aggressive testing and contact tracing mechanism is in place.

During the meeting it was also informed that all 178 Panchayat Covid Care Centers have been made functional.

Meanwhile, the DC urged the people to adopt COVID appropriate behaviour and stick to framed guidelines and SOPs to defeat this virus.

The meeting was attended by ACR, SDM Noorabad, ACD, CMO, BMOs and Tehsildars.

DC Kupwara Calls For Smooth Conduct Of R-Day Celebrations

KUPWARA: To ensure proper arrangements for ensuing Republic Day (RD) celebration in district Kupwara, the Deputy Commissioner (DC), Imam Din, on Thursday convened a meeting of all concerned officers, here and finalized the arrangements.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC stressed upon the officers to ensure hassle free arrangements for smooth conduct of the National Event and instructed them to maintain proper coordination and follow a timeline for ensuring arrangements well in advance. He also directed them to follow protocol of COVID-19 strictly and ensure use of masks in the function.

The DC also stressed the need for maintaining protocol in seating arrangement and also issued directions to the police department for taking proper protocol of the National Flag.

Earlier, the meeting was briefed about the programme and responsibilities of each officer and was informed that the main function of the Republic Day will be held at District Police Lines (DPL) Kupwara, where

National Flag will be hoisted and the VIP will take salute on the March Past comprising the contingents of JKP, JKAP, CRPF, IRP, BSF, CRPF, FPP and Home Guard.

It was also informed that the function will start with Shahnai Vadan at 8.50 AM, whileas National Flag will be hoisted at 9.30 AM.

Entrusting the responsibilities for smooth conduct of the event, the DC asked R&B Department, Mechanical Engineering and Municipality Kupwara to ensure proper sanitation and cleanliness of the DPL ground. They were also directed to keep manpower available in case of snowfall on both days of rehearsal and main function.

Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) was directed to make seating arrangements for the function, while Power Development & PHE departments were directed to ensure uninterrupted power and water supply. CMO Kupwara was ordered to deploy doctors & paramedics along with Ambulance and first aid.

R-Day Arrangements Finalized At Ganderbal

GANDERBAL: The Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Ganderbal, Pir Muzafar Ahmad today finalized arrangements for smooth celebration of forth-coming Republic Day-2022, at a meeting, here.

It was informed that the main function shall be held at Qamaria Ground, Ganderbal where Chief Guest will hoist National Flag and will take salute on the march-past to be presented by the contingents of JKP, JKAP, CRPF, Fire and Emergency Services, NCC and School children.

Various necessary arrangements were discussed in the meeting including security plan, drinking water facility, cleanliness and sanitation, seating arrangement, traffic management, heating and power supply besides others at the venue.

The ADDC on the occasion directed all district heads to ensure adherence to Covid-19

guidelines by maintaining prescribed spacing in seating arrangements for the participants during the function.

The Health Department was directed to deploy ambulance at the venue with sufficient staff and emergency medicines on the full dress rehearsal to be held on January 24 and on the main function to be celebrated on January 26.

Besides, the department was also directed to make arrangements of first aid, sanitizers and masks at the venue along with thermal screening of the audience on the day of the function.

Keeping the weather forecast into consideration, the ADDC instructed concerned people to keep their men and machinery in ready mode and keep all snow related equipment stationed at the ground for prompt response in case there is any snowfall.

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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K O V I E W

Peaking Wave

Contrary to the second wave, the third wave is less virulent. Hospitalization, according to the Union Health Ministry, has been “significantly lower.” According to Director General ICMR Dr Balram Bhargava the number of deaths has been considerably reduced due to vaccinations. This is true of Kashmir Valley also, Despite the steep rise in the cases, the hospitalizations have been less. This, in turn, hasn't overburdened the healthcare infrastructure unlike during the second wave. This is despite the fact that the real number of Covid cases would be much larger than the official figure as a significant number of people are not testing and treating themselves at home.

But overall, the situation remains grave and it could once again get out of hand if the Standard Operating Procedure is not followed by the people and also not enforced strictly by the government. Overcoming the third wave and that too in the beginning of the year is crucial for India's otherwise reviving economy. The country can hardly afford yet another lockdown or for that matter the recurrent restrictions. Also, a prolonged wave could jeopardize yet another of schooling. In fact, to ensure that schools could be reopened this year, India has already started vaccinating children between 15 to 18 years of age. This is expected to create conditions for the children in this age group to return to school. Maharashtra government has decided to reopen schools for students of classes 1-12 on January 24 after closing due to the Omicron-fuelled third wave. Like Delhi, the recent Covid surge in Maharashtra too has shown signs of plateauing. And with an expected decline in caseload, other states are also expected to follow suit.

That said, there is still a significant section of the population, both in the country and in J&K, which is without vaccination. And during the current wave, they are most vulnerable. It is time that they too gets their shot. Similarly elderly population and healthcare workers need booster doses. The government has now fully approved the use of Covaxin and Covishield vaccines which would be now more widely available. The government has also suggested changes in rules for booster doses. According to this precautionary third doses of vaccines would be given to health and frontline workers and adults above 60 years of age, dealing with illnesses. The recommended gap between the second and the third dose is currently nine months. There is hope that the ongoing wave will start winding down in February and by March, the situation could be more or less normal again.

O T H E R O P I N I O N

Testing Matters

In the past week, the country's daily Covid caseload graph has virtually flattened. The 2.38 lakh cases detected on Monday were the lowest in the past six days. The positivity rate has, however, continued to rise steadily, indicating that — other than in Mumbai and Delhi to an extent — the Omicron-driven third wave is weeks away from peaking in the country. It's obvious now that the discordance between the two sets of figures owes to a sharp reduction in the number of samples being tested for Covid. On Tuesday, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare flagged this concern to the state health departments. “The data available on ICMR's portal shows that testing has declined in many states and Union Territories,” Additional Health Secretary Arti Ahuja wrote in a letter to the states. The nudge is much needed. But the Centre and its agencies must also clear the air on testing protocols, especially the revised set of guidelines issued by the ICMR last week. The guidelines, that do not require asymptomatic contacts of Covid-positive people to get tested, seem to have created an impression that testing benchmarks can be lowered during the current outbreak. By all accounts, the fall in the number of tests has followed the notification of these protocols. While the health ministry has rightly pulled up states for their laxity, its letter continues to give conflicting signals by reiterating the ICMR guidelines.

Given that Omicron has been behaving differently from the variants that drove the first two waves, many epidemiologists advocate a different set of metrics. These include making hospitalisation rates — and not the case count — the yardsticks for ascertaining the virus's virulence. But these experts have also cautioned that the high transmissibility of the virus could offset its relatively milder character. Therefore, while tweaks in testing protocols and measures such as home testing may well be in order, these norms must be implemented in ways that do not undermine the importance of tests as a pandemic-management instrument or downplay their significance as an exercise to understand the trajectory of the current wave. It's apparent from testing data that this message of caution has not been conveyed adequately: While the country's daily case burden is about the same as June last year, states are barely testing 60 per cent of what they were doing seven months ago.

The health ministry and the ICMR must elaborate on the testing protocols — and, if need be, revise them or issue clarifications. The message must be unequivocal: Testing remains crucial to dealing with the third wave.

The Indian Express

Personal Choice Over
Public Good?

Even As The Centre's Affidavit To SC Emphasised The Importance Of Vaccines, It Did Not Feel That Coercion Was The Way To Go



Haris Rashid

The Centre on Monday told the Supreme Court that no person can be administered Covid-19 vaccine against his/her will. The affidavit filed in the top court said, “It is duly advised, advertised and communicated through various print and social media platforms that all citizens should get vaccinated and systems and processes have been designed to facilitate the same”. However, no person can be forced to be vaccinated against their wishes.”

With the Omicron variant triggering a tsunami of cases and entire establishments getting infected with staff especially in the health care sector — it becomes all the more important to evaluate the precarious line between public good and private choice.

Even as the affidavit emphasised the importance of Vaccines, it did not feel that coercion was the way to go. Nonetheless, the vaccination status of a person has become more than just a private matter since the pandemic is a global issue. It had already started creating political differences especially with the right wing sympathisers being observed as the most hesitant towards vaccination.

Very recently, Serbian tennis star Novak Djokovic was deported from Australia due to his coronavirus vaccine status. The controversy around the issue unfolded in such a manner that every risk in the lack of knowledge of someone's vaccination status was exposed.

Now, in India engulfed in the third wave of covid-19, it is quite telling that the centre decided to choose choice over coercion in the case of vaccination. The centre also emphasised that having a vaccination certificate was not the part of the mandatory SOPs to be followed. How is one issue a matter of public choice and the other a matter of public good?

The measures taken by the governments across the world, to tackle the spread of Covid infection, has once again renewed the old debate- whether the public should be allowed to choose for themselves or should the expert opinion prevail? In a democracy, the public has the right to express diverse points of view on the issues that concern them and they expect their elected representatives to properly represent their views. Therefore, public

sentiment, as such, is one input to political decisions-whether it is to make the masks and the vaccination mandatory or whether to impose a lockdown.

On the other hand, one could argue that decisions such as these are best taken by the experts based on evidence, and not subject to, say, a referendum or mass opinion. But what happens if the public feels a certain way but experts disagree, what view

lions of people in an attempt to protect public health, China is engaging in a balancing act with a long and complicated history fraught with social, political and ethical concerns.” It further quoted an expert who said, “the shutdown would almost certainly lead to human rights violations and would be patently unconstitutional in the United States.” The Washington Post carried a news item on January 26, 2020, titled “China's

“NOW, IN INDIA ENGULFED IN THE THIRD wave of covid-19, it is quite telling that the centre decided to choose choice over coercion in the case of vaccination. The centre also emphasised that having a vaccination certificate was not the part of the mandatory SOPs to be followed. How is one issue a matter of public choice and the other a matter of public good?”

should win out? The pandemic further complicates the problem because it is a matter of life and death and because of the nature of the virus, it does not only concern a particular person but it concerns the whole community. One person choosing not to wear a mask or refusing to follow social distancing or choosing against getting vaccinated does not only endanger their own lives but the lives of all those around them. So, it raises the question of how we should navigate such complicated issues.

People are usually skeptical of their governments. US President Ronald Reagan once infamously quipped, “the nine most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the Government, and I'm here to help.” According to the selectorate theory, the primary goal of a leader (the government) is to remain in power. All the decisions (political, social or economic) made by the government are taken while taking into consideration the primary goal of prolonging its own survival. Hence, the possibility of governments using illegitimate political power disguised as expertise is very high.

When China decided to lockdown Wuhan in January 2020, Western media, especially the US-based media, highlighting its democratic credentials, carried reports and news items that raised concerns over the lockdown and suggested that it amounted to human rights abuses. On January 22, 2020, The New York Times published a report that said “By limiting the movements of mil-

coronavirus lockdown-brought to you by authoritarianism” which said, “Only the Chinese government could implement draconian measures to such a large scale.” However, the US later copied the China model to contain the spread of the disease. The Wall Street Journal published a news story on March 24, 2020, saying “U. S. and European leaders are looking at China's progress in curbing the coronavirus pandemic to guide them on how to beat the virus within their own borders.” Further, according to Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker's COVID-19: Stringency Index, which measures the Covid containment measures of countries on a scale of 100, China's measures were harshest at 81.94 while the US had its harshest measures at 75.46. Not much difference.

After the Covid positive cases and the number of resulting deaths surged in Italy in early March 2020, their government decided to lock down the country. Italian philosopher, Giorgio Agamben, best known for his work on the concepts of state of exception, vehemently attacked these stringent containment measures imposed by the government. In an opinion piece published in Quodlibet, Agamben wrote that the measures once again manifested the government's “tendency to use a state of exception as a normal paradigm.” He further wrote, “It is almost as if with terrorism exhausted as a cause for exceptional measures, the invention of an epidemic offered the ideal pretext for scaling them up beyond any limitation.” There are

many cases across the world where Agamben's words ring true. In India, the long-running Shaheen Bagh protest site was cleared on the pretext of curbing the spread of Coronavirus.

Similarly, in Kashmir, the government used Covid restrictions to stop returning militants' bodies to their families. It all started in Sopore where a JeM militant's body was returned to his family on April 9, 2020. A few hundred people participated in the funeral, following which an FIR was lodged against unknown persons who participated in the funeral of the militant for violating the Covid-19 protocols.

It is true that such “states of exception” can be used by the governments to target their opponents and crush dissent but does that mean that the government must not have any right to impose any kind of restrictions, even if it is a matter of life or death. When the whole world was months into wearing masks, President of the United States Donald Trump refused to wear a mask and refused to introduce a nationwide mandate that would make wearing masks mandatory because he wanted people to have “a certain freedom.” Despite the world's top public health experts in the US repeatedly recommending wearing masks based on evidence, the issue deeply divided the country with the political debate going on for months. Many lives would have been saved if the government and the public had heeded the experts.

Incidentally, today (on July 18, 2021) China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying tweeted a rhetorical question to the US, “How about the rights of 600,000+ Americans who died in the pandemic?” Unfortunately, it is too late to ascertain the opinion of all those people who died in the US on whether they would have temporarily preferred the “bare life” while sacrificing the normal social, political and economic conditions or would they have preferred “a certain freedom” even if it led to their death.

Some governments like China, with their good intentions of saving people's lives, can be criticized and accused of human rights abuses for locking down the country without involving the public's opinion in decision-making while other countries like the US can get away by putting the same measures in place but after months of debate and huge loss of life. Further, it is a fact that there would always be some governments who would use illegitimate political power disguised as expertise to consolidate their power in order to prolong their survival. Keeping in view all these facts, is it really necessary to include public opinion in decision-making, on issues like a pandemic-which is a matter of life and death- or should the government just heed the experts? Since the pandemic is receding and the focus is now on vaccination, it becomes more interesting.

Most of the countries have made vaccination mandatory for international travel and colleges and universities across the world are making vaccination mandatory for their students. But there is still a substantial proportion of the population that is vaccine-hesitant. Should the governments take their concerns into consideration or should they heed the experts?

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

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Shut The Lockdowns?

Lockdown has been imposed in Kashmir and was observed over the last weekend on account of a drastic increase in the number of cases in Kashmir. However, one is left to wonder, how is it that the government is assessing that week-ends account for an increase in the number of cases? Is there data that supports this claim? Has that data been available or been consulted to

formulate this decision?

Many healthcare workers and associations have been reassuring the public albeit cautiously that the current wave may not be as deadly as the one gone by. They are all vouching for vaccination and SOPs.

I feel that lockdowns only made sense when covid appropriate behaviour had to be learnt and still missed a lot of people. Now with everyone two years into the pan-

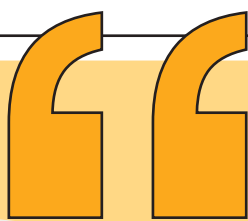
demic, most have learnt to follow CAB. One doesn't have to tutor people as to how to properly follow SOPs. It needs to be only made sure that such essentials are followed correctly.

Perhaps, a more sustainable way to find our way out of this pandemic is to device ways to increase testing in public places such as offices, markets and universities. A weekly testing drive across these may well stall the

spread of the virus and will also ensure that there are no infected people roaming around carelessly.

In addition to these measures, people must also be fined for not following CAB as is being done these days. Moreover, the administration must also find new ways to ensure that those who can, get vaccinated.

Bushra Tariq
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CRYPTOCURRENCY IS GAINING POPULARITY IN THE
Indian online market. One of the reasons is that traditionally, in India, the main source of savings was gold, and with increasing technological ease, crypto is emerging as a kind of digital gold

Our Digital Growth

The New Age Crypto World



KHALID MUSTAFA

We are growing in an era where digital platforms are growing currency. The digital mode of technologies are also growing with us, at a very fast rate, and one among the technologies that's taking over the world is Cryptocurrency, also known as "Crypto". Records of transactions are stored in a computerised database known as a ledger. Cryptocurrencies make the transfer of funds easier as there is no third party involved in the transaction such as a bank or a credit card company. In 2008, the pseudonymous \ Satoshi Nakamoto posted a white paper describing an implementation of a digital currency called Bitcoin that used blockchain technology. More than ten years later, hundreds of Cryptocurrencies and innumerable other applications of blockchain technology are readily available. This time, there are more than 1000 different Cryptocurrencies that are traded publicly and Bitcoin is the most famous one. The Concept of cryptography is used to secure the records of the transaction, to control the creation of new coins and also for the verification of ownership. Such currency follows the concept of decentralisation, meaning no involvement of a third party. All the transactions can be tracked publicly and not a single individual or entity can change the data making its security safe for use.

Cryptocurrency is gaining popularity in the Indian online market. One of the reasons is that traditionally, in India, the main source of savings was gold, and with increasing technological ease, crypto is emerging as a kind of digital gold. The advanced currency has democratized the currency and opened up avenues for international transactions.

Cryptocurrencies save money and time for both the sender and the receiver because they are conducted entirely on the Internet and they use a mechanism with very low transaction fees and are almost instantaneous. The rise of Cryptocurrencies can cause threat to many traditional functions in finance. For example, no bank account or credit card is needed to transact in the world of Cryptocurrencies. Indeed, a Cryptocurrency "wallet" serves the same function as a bank vault. India has a lot to



gain if Bitcoin and blockchain become mainstream and are not restricted by strict regulatory constraints. Bitcoin can or cannot be money.

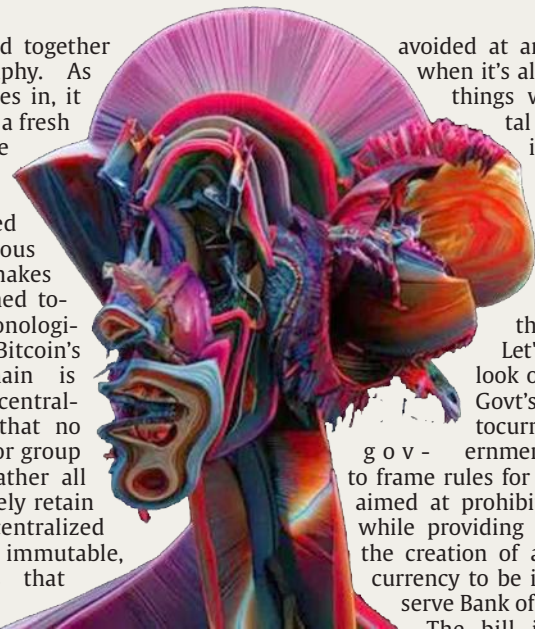
What may appear as a straightforward question turns out to be anything but clear. If we want to know how Bitcoin can be money, we must first gain clarity on what we mean by money. Any individual or entity presently which are ready to work with Cryptocurrencies or we can say with Bitcoin needs to have clear understanding of all the processes, laws of the digital currencies and its usage and should consultant the financial / accounting professionals for guidance.

Since various people and professionals from J&K have started investing in Cryptocurrencies, the education about digital currencies has become need of the hour.

Especially individuals presently working with Bitcoin and other Cryptocurrencies may have a clear understanding of the information technology, its databases and other technologies involved in process, storing, execution, transfer of digital currencies.

Let's talk about what Blockchain actually is? Blockchain is a type of shared database that differs from a typical database in the way that it stores information; blockchain stores data in blocks that

are then linked together via cryptography. As new data comes in, it is entered into a fresh block. Once the block is filled with data, it is chained onto the previous block, which makes the data chained together in chronological order. In Bitcoin's case, blockchain is used in a decentralized way so that no single person or group has control, rather all users collectively retain control. Decentralized blockchain is immutable, which means that the data entered is irreversible. For Bitcoin, this means that transactions are permanently recorded and viewable



avoided at any point of time when it's all about the cyber things whether its digital currency, banking transactions, shopping or personal data. If I talk about the various Cryptocurrencies in India, there are many. Let's have small text look overview on India Govt's Plans on Cryptocurrency & RBI. The government will move a bill to frame rules for Cryptocurrencies aimed at prohibiting private coin while providing a framework for the creation of an official digital currency to be issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The bill is listed among 26 items of legislation for consideration in the winter session of parliament, according to a bulletin is-

WHAT MAY APPEAR AS A STRAIGHTFORWARD
question turns out to be anything but clear. If we want to know how Bitcoin can be money, we must first gain clarity on what we mean by money.

to anyone. If I talk about the security of the Blockchain, Blockchain technology achieves decentralized security and trust in several ways. To begin with, new blocks are always stored linearly and chronologically. That is, they are always added to the "end" of the blockchain. After a block has been added to the end of the blockchain, it is extremely difficult to go back and alter the contents of the block unless a majority of the network has reached a consensus to do so. That's because each block contains its own hash, along with the hash of the block before it, as well as the previously mentioned time stamp. Hash codes are created by a mathematical function that turns digital information into a string of numbers and letters. If that information is edited in any way, then the hash code changes as well.

The security is excellent but the attacks of hackers, malwares etc. can't be

sued by the Lok Sabha on Tuesday. The crypto industry is hopeful there won't be a complete ban on Cryptocurrencies. "The bill also seeks to prohibit all private Cryptocurrencies in India. However, it allows for certain exceptions to promote the underlying technology of Cryptocurrency and its uses," the bulletin said with regard to the Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021. It also seeks "to create a facilitative framework for creation of the official digital currency to be issued by the Reserve Bank of India." Crypto Bill: Centre all set to ban private Cryptocurrencies in India, allow RBI digital coin (The Economic Times)

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Comedian Robin Williams once called cocaine "God's way of telling you you are making too much money". This role may now have been overtaken by non-fungible tokens, the blockchain-based means to claim unique ownership of easily copied digital assets.

The latest NFT mania involves fantastic amounts of money being paid for "Bored Apes", 10,000 avatars featuring variants of a bored-looking cartoon ape. Last month rapper Eminem (real name Marshall Mathers) paid about US\$450,000 in Ethereum cryptocurrency to acquire Bored Ape No. 9055 - nicknamed EminApe, because its khaki and gold chain resembles what Eminem wears. It purportedly joins more than 160 other NFTs in the rapper's collection.

The Bored Ape character seems derivative of the drawings of Jamie Hewlett, the artist who drew Tank Girl and virtual band Gorillaz. According to the creators, each variant is "generated from over 170 possible traits, including expression, headwear, clothing, and more". They say every ape is unique "but some are rarer than others".

So what does Eminem now own? He has an electronic version of an image, which he is using for his Twitter profile. But then so does anyone who copies it from the internet. The only difference is that he has a record in a blockchain that shows he bought it. He also gets to be a member of the "Bored Ape Yacht Club" a members-only online space whose benefits and purpose beyond being a marketing gimmick are unclear.

That's about it. The intellectual property (such as it is) remains with the creators. He is not entitled to any share of merchandising revenue from the character. He can only profit from his purchase if he can find a "greater fool" willing to pay even more for the NFT.

Which is unlikely. While publicity given

NFTs: A Pop Culture Bubble?

JOHN HAWKINS

to the rapper's purchase certainly seems to have boosted demand, the average price paid for Bored Ape NFTs so far in 2022 is about 83 Ether (currently about US\$280,000). Eminem may have been prepared to pay much more for the one that looked more like him; but would anyone else?

NFTs are a highly speculative purchase. The basis of the market is proof of unique ownership, which only really matters for bragging rights and the prospect of selling the NFT in the future. NFT mania arguably combines the most tawdry and avaricious aspects of collectibles and blockchain markets with celebrity culture.

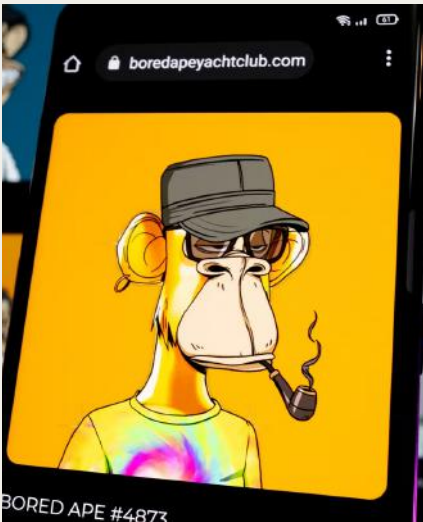
The rise of the celebrity influencer

Eminem's monster payment in particular has lent credibility to the idea these NFTs have value. But he is not the only celebrity who has helped attract attention to the Bored Ape NFTs.

Others to buy into the hype include basketball stars Shaquille O'Neal and Stephen Curry, billionaire Mark Cuban, electronic dance music DJ Steve Aoki, YouTuber Logan Paul and late-night television host Jimmy Fallon.

These well-publicised purchasers effectively act as a form of celebrity endorsement - a tried and true marketing tactic. It is a graphic example of the power of media culture to stoke "irrational exuberance" in financial markets.

There has been a shift away from traditional investments and sources of investment advice. With prices disconnected



from any future cash flows, there is less interest in forecasts from technical experts. Instead people turn to social media and "doing their own research".

One survey in mid-2021 (polling 1,400 investors aged 18 to 40) suggested about a third of Gen Z investors regard TikTok videos as a source of trustworthy investment advice.

This has opened up the field for celebrity influencers.

A lot like Ponzi schemes

While not illegal, many NFT marketing ventures have some similarities with Ponzi schemes, such as that operated by Bernie Madoff (who sustained his fraud

for decades by paying high "dividends" from the deposits of new investors).

Cryptocurrency markets work in essentially the same manner. For existing investors to profit, new buyers have to be drawn into the market. So too NFTs, with something illusory attached to the digital assets.

Some light on the worth of this attach-

THERE'S VIRTUALLY NOTHING HUMANS CAN'T
turn into a market. But increasingly there are speculative bubbles in things with absolutely no fundamental value. NFTs have joined Bitcoin and celebrity meme-based cryptocurrencies such as Dogecoin and Shiba Inu as examples of tokens with no intrinsic worth, which speculators just buy in the hope the price will keep rising

ment compared to the economics of NFTs themselves may come from the interesting (and also highly profitable) experiment by the (now not so) "young British artist" Damien Hirst - himself a master self-promoter.

Hirst's well-publicised "The Currency" project has involved selling NFTs for 10,000 similar but unique dot paintings. The twist is that at the end of a 12-month period those who have bought the NFT must decide if they want the digital token or the physical artwork. If they keep the NFT the artwork will be destroyed.

No fundamental value

There's virtually nothing humans can't

turn into a market. But increasingly there are speculative bubbles in things with absolutely no fundamental value. NFTs have joined Bitcoin and celebrity meme-based cryptocurrencies such as Dogecoin and Shiba Inu as examples of tokens with no intrinsic worth, which speculators just buy in the hope the price will keep rising.

Even Dogecoin, started as a satire on these excesses, is now valued at US\$20 billion and promoted in Ponzi-like ways.

Some studies have suggested tweets or Facebook posts can now drive stock prices. Elon Musk's tweets certainly seem to have a large impact on cryptocurrency prices.

We now appear to be in the monster of

all speculative bubbles. The creators of assets like NFTs will do well. It is not so clear about the holders.

Nor will the impact of NFT crashes be restricted just to the NFT market. Speculators, particularly if they have borrowed heavily, may need to liquidate other assets as well. This is all likely to make all financial markets more volatile.

The larger the bubble becomes, the wider the contagion when it bursts.

The author is Senior Lecturer, Canberra School of Politics, Economics and Society and NATSEM, University of Canberra. The article is being reproduced by arrangements with The Conversation

Agencies

Remember the basics

If you're isolating at home with COVID, it's important to:

- manage fever and other symptoms like aches, pains and sore throat with paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- maintain a healthy diet
- keep your fluid intake up, particularly if you have a fever
- stop exercise for at least 10 days, and depending on the severity of your symptoms, return to exercise slowly (if you have any questions about returning to exercise, ask your GP)

anxiety around illness and isolation

It's important to monitor your COVID symptoms. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners has a useful symptom diary to assist with this. Or use the Healthdirect symptom checker to decide whether you need medical help.

Some coping strategies to avoid

It's been extra hard for those with mental illnesses

The pandemic has made living with mental illness even more difficult.

The last few years have been challenging and exhausting for many. People with mental illnesses, and other chronic conditions, have had to adapt their normal management strategies to cope, shifting care and some forms of therapy online.

Recovery from, and management of, mental illness often involves activities like exercise, positive social engagement and therapy all of which may be limited due to COVID restrictions, financial constraints and staff shortages. Acute services, including hospitals and general practice, are struggling to meet demand.

Isolation can be particularly difficult for people who don't have a safe and secure home. People experiencing domestic violence have more difficulty accessing care as they may not be safe interacting with health professionals in their homes.

Children are at increased risk of harm if they live with domestic violence

They may have no safe places to go when schools or childcare facilities are closed, so family, friends and services like Kids Helpline play an important role in supporting children.

The Conversation

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B CONSTRUCTION DIVISION NO.II, SGR.

FRESH SNOW STAGE NOTICE INVITING TENDER

NIT No.154/CDII/19108-18 of 2021-22

DATED: 18.01.2022

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

S.No.	Name of the stage	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1	S.C.S-1	100/-	3054-SNOW	"DEE"
2	S.C.S-2	100/-	3054-SNOW	"DEE"
3	S.C.S-3	100/-	3054-SNOW	"DEE"
4	S.C.S-4	100/-	3054-SNOW	"DEE"
5	S.C.S-5	100/-	3054-SNOW	"DEE"
6	S.C.S-6	100/-	3054-SNOW	"DEE"
7	S.C.S-7	100/-	3054-SNOW	"DEE"
8	S.C.S-8	100/-	3054-SNOW	"DEE"
9	S.C.S-9	100/-	3054-SNOW	"DEE"

Position of AAA: Accorded

Position of funds: Available

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents
3	Bid submission Start Date
4	Bid Submission End Date
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar (tender inviting authority) (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar (tender receiving authority).

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

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

5. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar (tender receiving authority).

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

7. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

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

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

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

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

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

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

8. The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.

9. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar (The date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The original Treasury Challan (cost of tender document), and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of contract.

10. Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.

11. Bidders should note that if the documents uploaded/submitted on the basis of which the contract has been awarded are found fake/not genuine at any time, the contract shall be cancelled and the contractor/bidder shall be blacklisted for participation in this division for a period of five years besides the performance security deposited for the said work shall be forfeited.

12. Any item/items of work found necessary during execution of work though not in the BOQ shall have to be got executed and shall be paid At Par the %age quoted by the bidder.

13. Any addendum issued shall be the part of NIT.

13.1. Depending upon the depth of snow, the snow clearance period is fixed as under:-

13.1.1. Average Snow fall upto 12 Inch Depth of Snow = (One Day).

13.1.2. Average Snow Fall upto 24 Inches Depth of Snow = (Two Days)

13.1.3. Average Snow Fall upto 36 Inch and Above Depth of Snow = (Three Days)

General Conditions of Contract:-

14. Price escalation and Taxes:- The %age quoted by the bidder shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.

15. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.

16. In case of CRF and any other specified project. the relevant guidelines / standard bidding document shall be followed.

17. Instructions to Bidder (ITB)

17.1. All bidders shall upload the following information and documents along with qualification criteria / qualification information with their bids:-

a. All bidders shall upload Copies of original documents defining constitution/legal status, place of registration and principal place of Business with Cell No. and Correspondence address.

b. Registration Card duly renewed/valid for the year 2021-22

c. All bidders shall upload Verification Certificate duly issued by the card issuing authority.

d. All bidders shall upload Treasury Challan

e. All bidders shall upload Bid Security Declaration Form

f. All bidders shall upload Valid GSTIN Registration & PAN Card

g. All bidders shall upload Scanned Copy of GSTIN Registration and latest clearance certificate FORM GSTR-3B of last quarter i.e. ending October-December 2021 or preceding month i.e. December-2021.

h. Affidavit on Correctness of information submitted with the Bid duly notarized.

18. The bidder at his own responsibility and risk should visit and examine the site of work and its surroundings before submission of bid.

19. All documents relating to the bid shall be in the English Language.

20. Bidder must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents including tender documents fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid. No document (s) which has /have not been uploaded shall be entertained in the form of hard copy. However, in case of any clarification the bidders shall have to produce original documents in support of soft copies if need arises

No. 19108-18

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Construction Division IInd
Srinagar

Dated: 18.01.2022

LIST OF SNOW CLEARANCE STAGE TENDERS FOR WINTER SEASON 2021-22

STAGE NO.	STAGE NAME	NAME OF THE ROAD	KMS
1.	S.C-S-1	Residence lane from Linz to GPO	0.75
		Poloview lane, Ganda Singh Lane.	0.25
		Lal Sheikh lane	0.10
		Regal lane	0.25
		AbiGuzer lane, Khidmat lane, Lambert Lane.	0.80
		State Bank lane	0.20
		Estate Lane	0.26
		Anna Bazar lane	0.12
		Palladium lane	0.30
		Forest lane	0.28
		Court Lane including Loop	0.43
		Banquet Hall premises	0.20
		Women College M.A.Road complex	0.10
		S.P.College premises	0.50
		Directorate of Education premises complex	0.15
		TOTAL	4.69
2.	S.C-S-2	I.G.Road Naaz crossing to Tagore Hall Junction via Children Hospital.	0.27
		Road from Bakshi Stadium to Indoor Stadium connecting Circular Road	
		Abdullah Bridge	1.41
		Church Lane Sonwar	1.50
		Allied links, Khalsa Lane Sharma Tyre Lane, Gurdwara Lane	1.50
		Roads at Jawahir Nagar	2.00
		L.D Hospital Premises	0.75
		Chief Engineer PWD's Office Complex	0.75
		TOTAL	8.38
3.	S-C-S-3	New HMT road from Shalteng crossing via SICOP market via Chinar Chowk old HMT road crossing at Mustafabad.	5.70
		TOTAL	5.70
4.	S-C-S-4	Roads in SK Colony including link behind Police Housing Colony	9.60
		Roads of Qammerwari-Qammarabad	14.00
		Roads in Bemina area	7.00
		TOTAL	30.60
5.	S-C-S-5	Lawaypora Mujgund including inner roads of Lawaypora.	6.95
		Mujgund inner links	6.50
		Malroo inner links	13.00
		Khojabagh inner roads	5

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir

Tel:0194-2315378, Fax 0194-2479548, e-mail: ddtreg123@gmail.com.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir, by virtue of the J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act has been, mandated to permit and regulate tourist trade activities and services. It has come to fore that in the recent past the activity of All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and Snow Bikes at various tourist destinations in the Kashmir Division has emerged as a tourist attraction and hence its regulations is important. Besides, the Government has notified guidelines for operation of adventure tourism activities vide Government No.51-TSM of 2019 dated 14.2.2019, including operation of All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs). In the backdrop of provisions under the relevant Laws, permission to operate and subsequent registration for operation of any tourism related adventure activities are to be allowed strictly keeping view the various aspects and parameters at a particular location. It is also mandatory that the applications are cleared by the respective Tourism Development Authorities by way of issuance of clear "No Objection Certificates", and the applicants fulfil norms highlighted vide Government No.51-TSM of 2019 dated 14.2.2019.

It has now been learnt that some people are purchasing these machines (ATVs and Snow Bikes) en-masse at exorbitant prices without knowing the procedure to operate which has lead to financial losses to them. Purchase of any machine does not entitle the purchaser to get permission to operate and to get registration under the J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act.

Keeping in view the above and in the public interest as also notified in the past it is once again reiterated that no one shall be allowed to purchase and operate any of these machines for tourist use at any tourist place in Kashmir Division unless they have prior permission from the Tourism Department. The dealers of these machines are also asked not to misguide the people as procurement of these machines en-masse would lead people to suffer un-necessarily as they shall not be allowed to operate without permission and thus predisposing them to financial losses.

It is, therefore enjoined upon all the concerned people, not to purchase ATVs and Snow bikes as any tourist trade activity at tourist areas including operating of ATVs or Snow bikes, without registration, is liable for punishment under the Law.

Sd/-
Director Tourism,
Kashmir

DIPK-16964/21

No: Reg/1426/584/DTK
Dated: 20.01.2022

FDI Flows To India Slip 26% In 2021: UN Report

Press Trust Of India

UNITED NATIONS: Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows to India in 2021 were 26 per cent lower, mainly because large M&A deals recorded in 2020 were not repeated, the UN trade body has said.

The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Investment Trends Monitor published on Wednesday said global foreign direct investment flows showed a strong rebound in 2021, growing 77 per cent to an estimated USD 1.65 trillion, from USD 929 billion in 2020, surpassing their pre-COVID-19 level.

Recovery of investment flows to developing countries is encouraging, but the stagnation of new investment in the least developed countries in industries important for productive capacities, and key Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) sectors - such as electricity, food or health - is a major cause for concern, said UNCTAD Secretary-General Rebecca Grynsman.

The report said developed economies saw the biggest rise by far, with FDI reaching an estimated USD 777 billion in 2021 - three times the exceptionally low level in 2020.

FDI flows in developing economies increased by 30 per cent to nearly USD 870 billion, with a growth acceleration in East and South-East Asia (+20 per cent), a



recovery to near pre-pandemic levels in Latin America and the Caribbean, and an uptick in West Asia.

FDI flows to South Asia decreased 24 per cent to USD 54 billion in 2021 from USD 71 billion in 2020.

FDI in the United States the largest host economy increased by 114 per cent to USD 323 billion, and cross-border M&As almost tripled in value to USD 285 billion.

Flows to India were 26 per cent lower, mainly because large M&A deals recorded in 2020 were not repeated, it said.

China saw a record USD 179 billion of inflows - a 20 per cent increase - driven by strong services FDI.

Of the total increase in global FDI flows in 2021 (USD 718 billion), more than USD 500 billion, or almost three quarters, was recorded in developed economies. Developing economies, especially least developed countries (LDCs), saw more modest recovery growth, the report said.

Demand For Luxury Real Estate Bullish Despite Covid: Survey

Over 75% HNIs Want To Buy Over Rs 5 Cr Properties In 2 Yrs



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Around 75 per cent wealthy people will look to buy luxury properties, worth more than Rs 5 crore, over the next two years in big cities as well as holiday destinations, according to a survey.

India Sotheby's International Realty, one of the leading brokerage firms in luxury real estate space, has conducted a survey of over 200 HNIs (High Net worth Individuals) and ultra-HNIs to gauge the mood of the luxury real estate buyers across India's top 8 cities/regions—Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Chennai, and Goa.

"An overwhelming 76 per cent respondents said they would look to buy real estate in the coming two years," according to the report 'Luxury Housing Outlook-2022'.

This signals a very strong turnaround in sentiments for real estate amongst the wealthy in India, it added.

Out of the 76 per cent wanting to buy real estate, 89 per cent

would prefer luxury homes (city apartments, city bungalows and holiday homes), while the rest 11 per cent prefer premium commercial real estate.

As per the report, around 26 per cent of the respondents did purchase real estates during the last 18 months, mainly to upgrade their lifestyle and encash good investment opportunity.

In the 2-3 years preceding the Covid pandemic, the consultant noted that HNIs and UHNIs were mostly buying luxury homes for self-use. "The fact that people picked 'a good investment opportunity', as a strong reason for buying luxury real estate points to a bullish outlook on luxury home prices," said Amit Goyal, CEO of India Sotheby's International Realty.

"Unlike some of the developed countries, where the price increase frenzy seems to be cooling off, in India, I believe, we are at the start of a secular price rise," he added.

Among the prospective buyers of luxury residential properties, 29 per cent expressed their desire to acquire a holiday home.

'Excise Collections In FY22 Expected To Exceed Last Fiscal's Target By Rs 300 Cr In J&K'



Observer News Service

JAMMU: The excise collection during the current fiscal year is expected to exceed the last year's target by Rs 300 crore, Additional Chief Secretary Finance Atal Dulloo said on Thursday.

He made this observation while reviewing the functioning of the finance department in which other senior officers of the department were present on Thursday.

"Excise collections during the (financial) year are expected to exceed the last (financial) year's target by Rs 300 crore," Dulloo said.

He further said that SGST collections as on December 2021 have been 46 per cent higher than the corresponding period in the last year while IGST settlement has registered a growth of 35 per cent over the previous year in the same period.

He said that stamp collection is 87 per cent higher than

the previous year over the same period even as MST (motor and spirit tax) collections have shown a growth of 46.41 crore.

The department will ensure that all 24 services in the excise department are integrated in the single window under the business reform action plan of the department, he said.

The Additional Chief Secretary further directed the department to bring all 16 services under e-grass on top priority.

Jerri Hamlet Declared As 'Milk Village' In J&K



Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has declared Jerri settlement in Reasi district as the first 'milk village' of the Union Territory and sanctioned 57 more dairy farms under the Integrated dairy development scheme (IDDS) for the hamlet, officials said.

The milk village, which houses 73 individual dairy units with 370 cows, will give financial security to the local farmers, they said.

Taking a lead to carving out a hamlet of dairy farms, the women of the settlement have formed a cooperative of 11 females for collecting milk from the dairy farms and households for further transportation to the milk selling plants or other establishments.

"We have carved out this village into a dairy or milk hamlet, as local farmers of DC Reasi inspect dairy farms," a local farmer Dheeraj said.

After being declared as 'milk village', a total of 57 units have been sanctioned under the IDDS for the village, Agriculture Department officials said.

Under the integrated dairy development scheme, dairy units of five animals are provided with a 50 per cent subsidy.

The scheme also has a provision for milking machine, bulk milk cooling unit at 50 per cent subsidy (maximum Rs 5 lakh), paneer making machine, khoya making, Dahi making, cream separator, ice cream making machine, butter and ghee making machine (max subsidy Rs 3.5 lakh), milk van (maximum subsidy Rs 2 lakh), milk ATM subsidy of Rs 5 lakh, they added.

The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Reasi Charandeep Singh reached out to the hamlet to interact with farmers and also inquired about the income status and turnover of their dairy units.

He asked them to encourage fellow farmers for opening more such units for handsome earnings, as this will also resolve the issue of unemployment. The hamlet saw the formation of one cooperative of 11 women for collecting milk from the dairy farms and households for further transportation to the milk selling plants or other establishments, they said.

"More such cooperatives in the village will be set up to ensure collection of the milk by the cooperatives and its further transportation to the milk selling establishments thereby completing the supply chain," a senior official said.

In December, the administration declared the Jerri hamlet as a milk village.

Naveen Choudhary, Principal Secretary in the Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Department, lauded the launch of the milk village, terming it as a major economic reform by the locals.

The milk village, which houses 73 individual dairy units with a total of 370 cows, would give financial security to local farmers, he said.

Choudhary said that the establishment of the milk village and its eventual success would attract many others to launch similar units in their larger interest.

Timely support and subsidies by government agencies have immensely helped farmers in establishing such self-employment ventures to earn their livelihood with dignity, he noted.

The principal secretary also called for increasing the average size of a dairy unit besides asking dairy farmers to form their farmer producer organisations that can transform their lives towards a bright future.

He also directed the Animal Husbandry department to provide a refrigerated van to these farmers on a 50 per cent subsidy.

EPFO Adds 13.95 Lakh Subscribers In Nov 2021



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Retirement fund body EPFO added 13.95 lakh subscribers on a net basis in November 2021, an increase of nearly 38 per cent compared to the year-ago period, according to the latest payroll data.

The provisional payroll data of EPFO showed that there was an addition of 13.95 lakh net subscribers in November last year. This is a rise of 2.85 lakh or a growth rate of 25.65 per cent compared to October 2021.

"Year-on-year comparison of payroll data also shows an increase of around 3.84 lakh in net payroll additions (of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation) in November 2021 as compared to 10.11 lakh net subscribers added during the previous year in November, 2020," the labour ministry said in a statement on Thursday.

These figures provide a perspective about the formal employment in the country.

Out of the total 13.95 lakh net subscribers, 8.28 lakh members came under the social security cover of EPFO for the first time. Approximately, 5.67 lakh net subscribers exited but rejoined EPFO by changing jobs within the establishments covered under the purview of EPF & MP Act, 1952.

The subscribers opted to continue their membership with EPFO by transferring their PF accumulations from previous

to present PF account instead of applying for final withdrawal, the statement said.

An age-wise comparison of payroll data showed that those in the age group of 22-25 years registered the highest number of net enrolments with 3.64 lakh additions in November 2021. Those in the age group of 18-21 years also registered a healthy addition of around 2.81 lakh net enrolments.

People in the age groups of 18-25 years have contributed around 46.20 per cent of total net subscriber additions in November 2021. Members of these age-groups are usually fresh hands, entering into the job market following education signifies a crucial stage on application of academic learning and possibility of advancement.

A pan-India comparison of payroll figures showed that the establishments covered in the states of Maharashtra, Haryana, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka led the way by adding approximately 8.46 lakh subscribers in November. This figure is around 60.60 per cent of total net payroll addition across all age groups.

A gender-wise analysis of the data indicated that the net share of female subscribers in November was 2.95 lakh, which was almost 59,005 more than that of subscribers added in October 2021. This is an increase of 24.97 per cent compared to the figure of 2.36 lakh in the year-ago period.

Global Unemployment To Reach 207 Mn In 2022: ILO Report

Press Trust Of India

GENEVA: Global unemployment is expected to remain above pre-COVID-19 levels until at least 2023 and is estimated at 207 million this year, almost 21 million more than in 2019, according to a report from the International Labour Organisation that gives assessments on how labour market recovery has unfolded worldwide.

The Geneva-based United Nations agency has downgraded its forecast for labour market recovery in 2022, projecting a deficit in hours worked globally equivalent to 52 million full-time jobs, relative to the fourth quarter of 2019. The previous full-year estimate in May 2021 projected a deficit of 26 million full-time equivalent jobs.

While this latest projection is an improvement on the situation in 2021, it remains almost two per cent below the number of global hours worked pre-pandemic, according to the ILO World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2022 report.

The report warns of slow and uncertain recovery as the pandemic continues to have a significant impact on global labour markets.

Global unemployment is expected to remain above pre-COVID-19 levels until at least 2023. The 2022 level is estimated at 207 million, compared to 186



million in 2019, the report said.

It also cautions that the overall impact on employment is significantly greater than represented in these figures because many people have left the labour force.

The downgrade in the 2022 forecast reflects, to some extent, the impact that recent variants of COVID-19, such as Delta and Omicron, are having on the world of work, as well as significant uncertainty regarding the future course of the pandemic, it said.

The report warns of the stark differences in the impact the crisis is having across groups of workers and countries.

These differences are deepening inequalities within and among countries and weakening the economic, financial and social fabric of almost every nation, regardless of development status. This damage is likely to require years to repair, with potential long-term consequences for labour force participation, household incomes and social and possibly - political cohesion, it said.

NEWS MAKERS

Sensex Skids For Third Day To Close Below 60K

MUMBAI: BSE benchmark Sensex spiralled lower for the third consecutive session on Thursday to finish below the 60,000-level, weighed by hectic selling in IT, energy and finance stocks amid a sell-off in European equities.

A depreciating rupee and continued selling by foreign investors also affected the market sentiment, traders said.

The 30-share BSE index ended 634.20 points or 1.06 per cent lower at 59,464.62. Similarly, the NSE Nifty plunged 181.40 points or 1.01 per cent to 17,757.

Bajaj Finserv was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, shedding 4.57 per cent, followed by Infosys, TCS, Sun Pharma, HUL, HCL Tech, Dr Reddy's, HDFC and Reliance Industries.

On the other hand, PowerGrid, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, Maruti and UltraTech Cement were among the gainers, spurring up to 4.86 per cent. The market breadth was negative, with 23 of the 30 Sensex counters closing in the red.

"Persistent concern over global inflation and likely Fed rate hike acted as the major headwinds for the domestic market to tumble for the third consecutive day," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. (PTI)

'New Covid Wave, Regional Lockdowns May Dwindle Toll Collections'

NEW DELHI: The recent surge in fresh Covid infections as well as subsequent localised lockdowns emanating from Omicron spread are likely to shave off around 100 bps of growth in toll collections in fiscal year 2021-22, domestic rating agency ICRA on Wednesday said.

ICRA further said given that passenger vehicles (PV) category account for 20-25 per cent of overall traffic on toll projects, regional lockdowns imposed by state governments restricting people movement are expected to adversely impact the PV traffic as well as bus categories, as witnessed during the second wave of Covid-19.

The toll collections are, however, expected to be moderated by about 100 bps and will be supported by commercial vehicles as the manufacturing, construction activities and movement of goods are permitted, it added.

Giving more details, Vinay Kumar G, Sector Head, Corporate Ratings, ICRA, said the FastAG collections peaked at Rs 3,679 crore for December 2021, a growth of 12 per cent on a month-on-month basis as compared to November 2021. (PTI)

Gold Rallies Rs 415 On Global Cues; Silver Zooms Rs 858

NEW DELHI: Gold prices rose by Rs 415 to Rs 48,327 per 10 gram in the national capital on Thursday, reflecting overnight gains in the international precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at Rs 47,912 per 10 gram.

Silver prices also soared by Rs 858 to Rs 64,429 per kg from Rs 63,571 per kg in the previous trade. In the international market, gold was trading with gains at USD 1,841 per ounce and silver was flat at USD 24.13 per ounce.

"Spot gold prices for 24 carat gold at Delhi surged by Rs 415, reflecting overnight gains in COMEX gold prices despite rupee appreciation," HDFC Securities Senior Analyst (Commodities) Tapan Patel said. (PTI)

Rupee Slips 7 Paise To End At 74.51 Against USD

MUMBAI: The Indian rupee weakened by 7 paise to close at 74.51 against the US dollar on Thursday as sustained foreign fund outflows and rising crude oil prices hurt forex market sentiment.

Further, massive sell-offs in domestic equities for a third session in a row on Thursday too made investors more cautious, analysts said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened at 74.43 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 74.29 and a low of 74.53 during the session.

The rupee finally settled at 74.51, down 7 paise over its previous close of 74.44.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.02 per cent up at 95.53.

Meanwhile, Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.44 per cent to USD 88.11 per barrel. "The Indian rupee was unable to hold morning gains following FPI outflows, higher crude oil prices and weaker domestic equities. Risk sentiments failed to stabilise despite treasury yields retreating from multi month high," Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities. (PTI)

'Agri Exports Likely To Create History Crossing \$50 Bn'

NEW DELHI: The country's exports of agricultural products, including marine and plantation goods, increased 23.21 per cent to USD 31.05 billion in April-November 2021 and is expected to cross USD 50 billion for the "first time" this fiscal, the commerce ministry said on Thursday.

The ministry has taken several steps during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic to push the exports.

These measures include an extension of validity of various certifications/ accreditations beyond their dates of expiry; setting up of control rooms to resolve problems; issuance of online certificates for exports; and facilitating opening up of more testing laboratories.

Due to these initiatives, it said, India was able to meet the global demand, which has provided momentum to agriculture exports.

"With the present level of growth, India's agriculture exports are likely to cross USD 50 billion for the first time, which is the highest ever in history," it said. (PTI)

FMT Gives New Lease Of Life To Septuagenarian In Delhi-Based Hospital

New Delhi: A healthy person's stool recently helped cure a 78-year-old man here suffering from persistent diarrhoea along with bleeding.

The patient was admitted with fever, bloody diarrhoea, hypotension and tachycardia (high heart rate). His stool examination showed persistence of C. DIFFICLE (a bad bacteria) causing Pseudomembranous Colitis (ulcers in large intestine), leading to persistent diarrhoea with bleeding, a statement from the hospital read.

He had already been treated for two episodes of Pseudomembranous Colitis

(PMC) with standard treatment.

The only viable option for this disease was to take stool from a healthy person and transplant it in the large intestine of the patient. This leads to an increase in good bacteria in the intestine and suppression of C. DIFFICLE." Dr Piyush Ranjan, vice-chairperson, Institute of Liver Gastroenterology & Pancreatic Biliary Sciences, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, said.

The senior doctor said the hospital has in the past performed faecal microbiota transplantation (FMT) for severe alcoholic hepatitis not responding to steroids or having side effects

of steroids and Ulcerative Colitis.

"This is a rare case of the patient being treated with recurrent PMC treated with FMT in our country," he said.

Two days after performing FMT, the patient started showing positive response and his clinical condition improved. He was discharged subsequently and is doing well at two months of follow-up, Dr Ranjan said.

Pseudomembranous Colitis (PMC) is a condition when a harmful bacteria called Clostridium Difficile starts multiplying faster. This is a known side effect of prolonged antibiotic intake.

This condition usually affects the elderly and people on prolonged antibiotic therapy, chemotherapy or immunosuppressive medications.

Diarrhoea, blood in stool, fever and pain abdomen are among the symptoms exhibited by the patients.

In patients who have a relapse beyond the second episode, FMT is the best treatment option, according to experts.

It entails transferring stool extract from a healthy person after appropriate tests in the patients. This can be done by colonoscopy in the large intestine or in the small intestine.

Stop police excesses in Dinkia right away: HC

CUTTACK: The Orissa High Court on Thursday said police excesses must be stopped immediately at Dinkia, the site of the proposed JSW steel plant, and directed the state government to submit to it a status report on the situation there after the Jagatsinghpur district collector failed to do so.

The status report should be submitted by a senior officer of the home department and detail the ground realities of the area with reference to the grievances mentioned in two PILs filed by a local woman and three advocates alleging police atrocities on villagers who had protested against the demolition of their betel vines.

Police excesses, highhandedness and brutality in any

form by the local police have to be immediately stopped, a division bench headed by Chief Justice S Muralidhar said after hearing the petitioners' advocates.

The bench directed Advocate General Ashok Kumar Parija to ensure that the status report is filed in the form of an affidavit and posted the matter for hearing again on January 31.

The advocate general, who appeared in person during the analogous hearing of the two PILs, informed the Court through memo about the present situation at Dinkia village and denied the allegations leveled against the district administration, particularly against the district police.

He also informed the Court

that a steel and a cement plant would come up in the area, which would immensely boost its economic condition.

He however, admitted that some locals had objected to the land acquisition, which triggered a clash between the police and the protestors.

Three advocates of the High Court petitioned the court that the normal lives of the residents of Dinkia village have been severely affected since the violent clash between the villagers and the police on January 14 due to the "excess action" by the force.

Many villagers are still hiding in the jungles nearby and are not able to gather courage to return to their homes, the petition said.

NHRC forum pitches for law to end ambiguity in dealing with refugees, asylum-seekers

NEW DELHI: A forum hosted by the NHRC Thursday unanimously pitched for enacting a national law to end "ad hocism and ambiguity" in dealing with refugees and asylum-seekers in the country, officials said.

The National Human Rights Commission organised an online open discussion on the protection of the basic human rights of refugees and asylum-seekers in India on Thursday.

NHRC member justice M M Kumar chaired the event which was attended by NHRC chairperson justice (retd) Arun Kumar Mishra, other senior officials of NHRC, and representatives of ministries of law, external affairs and home affairs, UN Human Rights Council, domain experts, among others.

"It was unanimously felt that though India had a very good track record and tradition of dealing with and handling the international refugees

and asylum seekers since time immemorial, it is time a national law is enacted to include all the best practices and policies so far to have in place a uniformity and legal sanctity to ensure protection and realisation of human rights of refugees and asylum seekers across the country, the NHRC said in a statement.

This was also to help them seek the benefits of other welfare measures by the government even while taking care of the national security, it added.

Earlier, inaugurating the open forum, justice Kumar said that by the virtue of the Constitution of India, every citizen is entitled to basic human rights.

India is a signatory to various international conventions and treaties related to refugees and asylum seekers largely within the framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) but not on the basis



of Citizenship Act, 1955, which he said, can be regulated to protect their rights, according to the statement.

Because protecting their rights merely on the basis of certain

documents, depending on case to case basis, may lead to ambiguities in the uniform interpretation thereof compounding their problems in getting even basic necessities in different

parts of the country in the absence of a national law, the statement said.

Justice Kumar said that "legislature needs to be impressed upon for enacting a national law on refugees and asylum seekers to overcome ad hocism and confusion as these may lead to subjectivity and unnecessary litigation".

Triggering the discussion, NHRC Secretary General Bimbadhar Pradhan said that while there are various internationally acclaimed measures India has been using to deal with the refugees and asylum seekers, "these are largely with the intent that normalcy can be restored only by sending them back to their respective countries on voluntary repatriation".

Kavita Belani, Deputy Chief Mission, UNHCR said refugees by definition are victims of human rights violations.

She lauded India's support to refugees and displaced people with its

home grown solutions in line with the global commitments, and described these as very inclusive and forward looking. However, she said these needed to be put in a structured policy on predictable lines for a national response to make it easy for all the refugees and asylum seekers get access to their rights.

Besides the inaugural session, the open forum was divided into two thematic sessions focusing on policy framework and legal safeguards for refugees and asylum seekers; and issues and challenges in protection of right to life and dignity; and access to other socio-economic, educational and cultural rights, officials said.

Concluding the discussion, Justice Kumar said that all the suggestions will be further deliberated in the Commission before sending to the government as recommendations for implementation.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Weekend Wet

recorded a low of minus 5. degrees Celsius.

Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district recorded a low of minus 0.6 degrees Celsius, up from the previous night's minus 1.9 degrees Celsius, they said.

The officials said Qazigund recorded a minimum of 0.7 degrees Celsius, while the nearby south Kashmir town of Kokernag recorded a low of minus 0.1 degrees Celsius.

The minimum in Kupwara in north Kashmir settled at a low of 1.2 degrees Celsius.

The MET Office has said the weather will remain partly to generally cloudy in J-K with the possibility of a spell of light rain or snow during January 22-23.

Thereafter, the weather is likely to stay mainly dry till the end of the month and there is no forecast of any major rain or snow till the end of January, it said.

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

'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. (With PTI inputs)

Jammu to Srinagar

liaise with TCU Ramban before releasing the traffic, he said. He said cut off for LMVs and private cars from Nagrota (Jammu) is 0800 hours to 1200 hours and from Jakhni (Udhampur) at 900 hours to 1300 hours. "No Vehicle shall be allowed before and after cut off timings," he said.

Regarding HMVs and load carriers, he said, they shall be allowed to move from Jakhni (Udhampur) towards Srinagar after the tail of LMVs cross Jakhni (Udhampur).

Meanwhile, Mughal Road, connecting Shopian with Poonch and Rajouri districts, remained closed for vehicular movement in view of snow accumulation at Peer Ki Gali.

Also, Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri road remained shut for vehicular movement in view of snow accumulation on Zoji la axis and has been closed till further orders. Kishtwar-Sinthan road also remained closed in view of snow accumulation, the traffic department official said.

Lockdown Imposed

That there shall be a complete restriction on non-essential movement in the entire UT of J&K from every Friday 2.00 pm to Monday 6.00 am, henceforth," reads an order issued

here by the Chief secretary and chairman SEC.

However, the fresh order exempted the pregnant women employees from physical attendance and allowed them work from home.

"These directions shall be applicable till further orders," it adds.

5992 More

Shopian 34.

In the winter capital, the officials said, Jammu reported a maximum of 1217 new cases of virus, Udhampur 200, Kathua 105, Samba 86, Doda 72, Rajouri 70, Reasi 58, Kishtwar 47, Ramban 42 and Poonch 23.

"Moreover, 1177 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 716 from Jammu Division and 461 from Kashmir Division," the officials said.

Also, they said that seven more people—five from Jammu division and two from the Valley died of Covid-19 related complications, raising the death toll in the pandemic to 4586 in J&K—2237 in Jammu division and 2349 in Kashmir Valley.

The officials added that no new cases of Mucormycosis were reported on Thursday, thus the total number of confirmed cases remains 51 across J&K.

Hospitals See Low

Dr S. Muhammad Salim Khan told Kashmir Observer that the hospital admissions is not in consistent with the rising number of positive cases.

"There is a slow rise in admission. If a person comes positive, it doesn't mean he will get admitted. It depends on the severity," Khan said, adding that "but that doesn't mean we will lower our guard. We need to be alert,"

He further said since the first three weeks of the Omicron variant, we haven't seen much rise in admissions but it needs to be seen how it behaves in coming weeks.

The doctor maintains that the Omicron affects the upper respiratory tract thus mild severity. "But it's not only Omicron, we have other parents like Delta—which create havoc during the second wave," he said adding that "people need to understand that there may be more than one strain circulating presently"

According to Covid Control room data, a copy of which lies with Kashmir Observer, there are 112 beds with oxygen support and 54 are occupied and out of 11, 7 ICU beds are occupied with 49.50 percent of bed occupancy.

In SKIMS, Soura the number of oxygen beds are 74 and 34 are occupied. Out of 30, only 2 ICU beds are occupied with 30.77 percent of bed occupancy.

In territory care SMHS hospital, Srinagar 211 oxygen supported beds are available and only 41 are occupied. At the same time out of 16, only 3 ICU beds are occupied with 19.38 percent of bed occupancy.

At Defence Research and Development Organisation's (DRDO) hospital in Srinagar 375 beds with

oxygen support are available out of which only 88 are occupied with patients. The number of ICU beds are 125 and only 14 are occupied with 20.40 percent of bed occupancy.

At SKIMS Bemina out of 201 oxygen supported beds only 38 are occupied. Dr. Khawar Khan, Physician specialist argues that the Vaccines had a great role to play in decreasing the mortality and severity of the disease.

"The disease progresses more vigorously in those unvaccinated," he said.

He however says that the variant is not mild but is milder than previous variants to be precise.

"but unfortunately that is cancelled out by the fact that it is highly infectious. People need to follow SOPs more rigorously therefore," he added.

Dr Mushtaq Ahmad Rather, Director, Health Services Kashmir told Kashmir Observer that in the second wave the cases were less than in the third wave but hospitalisation was high.

"This is not the case in the third wave but people need to focus on home isolation and check the oxygen level regularly. We can treat them through phone calls as well,"

In a statement, Dr Rather said that they have set up call centres in all the districts which are functioning 24/7. He said people who are Covid positive and are in home isolation can call the helpline numbers in case they have severe symptoms and would be hospitalised.

The director said Covid beds have been kept available in rural areas where people have no option to go for isolation.

Dr Mushatq also said that apart from dedicated 500 bedded DRDO Covid-19 hospital, beds have also been kept available at tertiary care hospitals, district and sub-district level.

The director said that all the facilities have been kept ready in view of a new surge in cases and the same is being reviewed on a daily basis.

18-Day Old Militant

181 battalion during an input driven search operation in Gamader area of Chadoora on Thursday morning, a police spokesperson said.

"Incriminating materials, arms & ammunition including one pistol, two pistol magazines, and 16 pistol rounds have been recovered from his possession," he said.

Accordingly, he said, a case vide FIR number 06/2022 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Chadoora and further investigation has been initiated.

According to an army spokesperson, Naikoo was associated with Lashkar-e-Taiba and had joined the militant fold on January 2, this year.

Divulging more details of the search operation, the spokesperson said that soldiers established the cordon around 06:50 AM and due to imminent danger to civilians residing in the area the army men commenced with their evacuation to a safe area in the village.

Around 8:00 am, he said, the hiding militant tried to escape through a narrow lane when the soldiers started closing in the cordon.

"He was successfully apprehended without any collateral damage to any civilian or civil property by own troops," he added.

Govt Employees

circular issued by the General Administration Department (GAD) on Thursday.

The circular issued by the Principal Secretary to the government, Manoj Kumar Manoj Dwivedi has also directed all the heads of the departments and chief executives of Public Sector Undertakings to ensure their own participation and also of the employees subordinate to them in the function".

The circular further states that the main function of the R-Day - 2022 is being held at Maulana Azad Stadium, Jammu, where the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will preside over the function and take the salute.

Pole Reviews

said Thursday.

Pole was accompanied by DC Srinagar; officers of SMC, Information, School Education, Floriculture, Health Services, PWD (R&B), PHE, KPDCI, UEED, MED, Hospitality & Protocol, and other concerned departments. Besides, officers of Police, CRPF and other security agencies were also present on the occasion.

According to the official spokesperson, the Div Com directed concerned officers for keeping the exigency plan for snow clearance ready in view of snowfall ahead of Jan 26 to clear ground for conduct of main function of Republic Day.

"Pole also directed concerned officers to make the seating arrangements for guests in accordance with the Covid protocols besides setting up tents," he said.

The Div Com, he said, also directed for covering some particular areas of the ground with tarpaulin by tomorrow in view of snowfall so the ground doesn't get drenched with water.

Also, he said, Pole directed health officers to establish covid testing desk at the venue to conduct regular tests of participants during parade practice and monitor their body temperature.

"Div Com directed officers of PDD to ensure continuous supply of electricity besides directing CRPF to make arrangements of heating facilities for participants of Republic Day," the official spokesperson said.

Besides, he said, Pole also directed JD information to make arrangements for the Public Address System, installation of LED Screens at prime locations besides ensuring smooth coverage of Republic Day function by media.

92 JKAS, JKPS Set

figuring in the list include Gazzanfar Ali (Director General Youth Service & Sports), Farooq Ahmad Shah (Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department) and Showkat Aijaz Bhat (Commissioner State Taxes, J&K).

CAG Raps JK Home

crore for procurement of high-end security system to maintain law

and order in Jammu and Kashmir in 2016-2017, of which only 52 percent of funds were utilised by 2019, the report said.

"During the period from 2016 to 2019, the government of Jammu and Kashmir released Rs 501.86 crore, out of which an expenditure of Rs 261.96 crore (52 per cent) was incurred by the (home) department," the CAG said.

The report further said that the percentage of expenditure vis-a-vis funds available during the period ranged between 50 and 85 percent, respectively.

"The unspent balances increased from Rs 2.77 crore as of April 2017 to Rs 79.78 crore at the close of March 2019. Further, during the year 2019-20 an amount of Rs 119 crore was sanctioned by the Gol under the project and an expenditure of Rs 29.77 crore had been incurred by the department, leaving a balance of Rs 89.23 crore unutilised as of 31 March 2020," it said.

The CAG said that during the year 2020-21 (up to August 2020), an amount of Rs 25.15 crore was released by the Union government against which no expenditure had been incurred (till August 2020).

The government audit body pointed out that under the project 56 items and works were to be procured and installed and out of which the procurement of 33 items and works (59 per cent) was completed by the department as of August 2020.

It further lambasted the home department for its failure to take up the integrated command centers and its linked components for execution as of August 31, 2020.

Similarly, the procurement of 413 CCTVs for police stations was under tendering process even in August 2020, the report said.

The CAG said 669 vehicles of various types (bulletproof bunkers, Rakshak vehicles, Gypsy, anti-riot vehicles, hydraulic crane, JCB, tractor) were sanctioned and only 547 had been procured, of which 499 vehicles had been delivered as of August 2020.

It pointed out that purchases worth Rs 100.27 crore, which included vehicles, body protectors, bulletproof patkas, anti-riot vehicles, farm track tractors and backhoe loaders were made by the police headquarters (PHQ) either on repeat order basis or from original manufacturers without ascertaining reasonability of rates by way of inviting tenders.

The CAG also pointed out that audit scrutiny of records revealed that the department had made purchases from particular firms and single sources, which resulted in an avoidable expenditure of Rs 9.20 crore.

The department purchased seven MBP vehicles at higher rates from Ashok Leyland Limited, thereby incurring an extra expenditure, it said.

"Despite lower rates offered by Tata Motors Limited for MBP vehicles, vehicles were procured from Ashok Leyland Defense Systems Limited at higher rates," it added.

Although the department had taken the plea that MBP vehicles are a proprietary item, the process of placing

supply orders with both the firms was self-contradictory, the CAG said.

"Thus, considering the nature of urgency in such purchases, the department may adopt a streamlined procedure, consistent with the objectives of high-end security," it noted.

Missing Youth Held

when he tried to flee and fire at the security personnel at a checkpoint established in Pachahar Rajpora area of the district, a police spokesperson said Thursday.

Dar, he said, had recently gone missing regarding which a missing report was lodged by his family members at Police Station Rajpora. The missing youth, he said, had recently joined militant ranks.

"During his personal search, one Pistol and several rounds of ammunition were recovered from his possession," the police spokesperson said.

Accordingly, he said, a case vide FIR No. 04/2022 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Rajpora and further investigation has been initiated.

Darakhshan

recent initiatives of the UT administration pertaining to the development of vibrant industrial sector in the region, an official spokesperson said.

"She also shared her views and suggestions on devising a comprehensive roadmap for tackling the issue of drug menace in the UT, new waste disposal and treatment policy for towns and cities of J&K, besides issues of apple growers among others," he added.

According to the official spokesperson, the LG appreciated Dr Andrabi for presenting her valuable insights for furthering the overall development of UT and assured to consider her suggestions in the interest of the welfare of people.

Two Youth

a local news agency KNT reported. The duo, according to the report, were arrested after a police party stopped an Alto (JK02BP/6183) and recovered 75 grams of charas during checking.

Police seized the vehicle and arrested both the accused.

A formal case vide FIR number 8/2022 under section 8/20, 29 have been registered against them.

National Lok Adalat

general public, interested to settle his/her dispute/case pending in the various courts of the Ganderbal in the said National Lok Adalat shall approach to the DLSA Ganderbal/Tehsil legal Services Kangan and register their cases for hearing in the National Lok Adalat by or before 26 February, 2022, an official spokesperson said.

"All cases including Criminal Compoundable Offense; NI Act cases under Section 138; Money Recovery cases; MACT cases; Labour and Employment disputes cases; Electricity and Water Bills, Maintenance cases Matrimonial disputes and other civil cases will be taken in the aforesaid National Lok Adalat," he added.

2nd ODI vs SA

Rahul's India Aims At Improved Batting Show With Series On Line



Press Trust of India

PAARL: KL Rahul will have to show drastically improved leadership acumen when he leads India against a buoyant South African side in the second ODI on Friday, with the three-match series and his long-term Test captaincy ambitions both at stake.

Rahul was at best mediocre in terms of "on-your-feet-thinking", something that's basic to art of captaincy, and also didn't look the part with the bat in a deflating 31-run defeat in the opening ODI where India were outplayed for the better part of the game.

The middle-order, which had been a problem since Virat Kohli's heady days as captain, is still sticking out like a sore thumb and no one knows what exactly the solution is.

South Africa crushed India both strategically as well as on skills and therein lay serious questions about Rahul's wares as captain.

The next question that arose was whether Rahul spoke to Chahal or Ashwin when Van der Dussen and Bavuma started playing the sweep shots -- both conventional and reverse sweep

on a good batting strip.

There wasn't a singular inspired bowling change unlike Proteas who introduced Aiden Markram's off-breaks first-up and bottled up the Indian skipper.

When India batted, the game was lost at the halfway stage once Dhawan and Kohli were out in quick succession following their 90-plus stand. Suddenly, the strip where batting looked easy became difficult.

The difference between the two sides was how the spinners fared -- Ashwin and Chahal in their combined 20 overs gave away 106 runs for a single wicket while Markram, Tabraiz Shamsi and Keshav Maharaj bowled 26 overs between them for 124 runs and snared four wickets between them.

Test captaincy is a different ball-game compared to white ball but Rahul only knows too well that when it comes to decision-making, the top brass will fall back on references they have.

And a series defeat against South Africa isn't going to do his case any good unless the head coach is bent on trying to make a leader out of him.

Match starts 2 PM IST.

ICC ODI Men's Team Of The Year: After T20s, No Indians In This One Too

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: After going unrepresented in the ICC's men's 'T20 Team of the Year' due to a disastrous World Cup campaign in the UAE, no Indian player featured in the global body's 'ODI Team of the Year' which features two players from minnows Ireland.

Incidentally, the team also doesn't have any Australia, English, New Zealand or West Indies players.

The team, which has Pakistan's Babar Azam as its captain, has two Pakistanis including Fakhar Zaman.

South Africans Janneman Malan and Rassie van der Dussen, Bangladeshis Shakib Al Hasan, Mustafizur Rahman and Mushfiqur Rahim, who is also the designated wicketkeeper, Sri Lankans Wanindu Hasaranga and Dishmantha Chameera along with Irishmen Paul Stirling and Simi Singh form the rest of the

squad.

India, in the year 2021, played six ODIs and won four losing two.

The two 50-over series that they played were against England at home, which they won 2-1, and the other was an away clash against Sri Lanka in the island nation which was also won by an identical margin.

The problem with non-selection of an Indian player in the XI is more to do with lack of matches rather than poor show since they have won both the series that they played in 2021.

The only Indian player, who has played all the ODI matches in 2021 is veteran opener Shikhar Dhawan, who had 297 runs from six games.

The likes of Virat Kohli, KL Rahul and Rohit Sharma only played three ODIs in 2021 and ditto for premier bowlers, who also didn't play all the six games.

ICC Test Rankings: India Drop To 3rd, Australia Top



Press Trust of India

DUBAI: Australia displaced India from the top of the Test rankings after their 4-0 drubbing of England in the recently-concluded Ashes series, even as the Virat Kohli-led side squandered a 1-0 lead to go down against South Africa.

After suffering a 1-2 series loss in South Africa, India dropped to the third spot while inaugural World Test Championship (WTC) winners New Zealand held onto their second position after a 1-1 drawn series at home against Bangladesh, which included the hosts' first ever loss to Bangladesh at home across formats.

South Africa's 2-1 win over India at home took them one spot up to fifth place, while England

were in fourth position after a disastrous Ashes campaign Down Under.

India lost the top spot by losing the second and third Tests after winning the first in Centurion.

Australia, with 119 points, are three ahead of India in the rankings.

Overall, India played 14 Tests in 2021 and managed to win eight out of them. They lost three Tests last year, including the heart-breaking defeat in the World Test Championship (WTC) final against New Zealand.

Pakistan went down one spot to sixth, while Sri Lanka, West Indies, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan and Ireland retained their positions.

The South Africa tour was Kohli's final assignment as India Test captain as he stepped down following the series defeat.

Snow Cricket In Kashmir's Gurez Catches Eyes Of Int'l Cricketers

Famous celebrities desire to play cricket over frozen track



Agencies

BANDIPORA: After witnessing huge tourist flow in summers for the first time, the Gurez Valley in north Kashmir's Bandipora district is yet again attracting the people from outside Jammu and Kashmir as some video clips have went viral on social media platforms, in which Gurez youth can be seen playing cricket over snow.

The video clips as well as the photographs of the cricket over snow in Gurez have even caught the eyes of the international cricket players.

The photographs and videos of snow cricket played on a frozen track at snow bound Gurez valley, which is cut-off since December following heavy snowfall and is likely to remain disconnected for a few more months, are presently viral on social media and are attracting attention of celebrities worldwide.

Australian batting star, Mar-

nus Labuschagne, who plays internationally for the Australian national team and domestically for Queensland, also shared the video of young boys playing cricket over snow at Bagtore with a caption: "How good is this". Labuschagne's tweet has garnered thousands of retweets and likes since.

Fakhar-e-Alam, a famous Pakistani actor, TV host and a singer also shared the video of the cricket match played on a frozen track in Bandipora's Gurez valley and wrote: "I wanna play cricket here with these guys...this looks so much fun."

However, the locals from Gurez after witnessing such a response from the people on the social media platforms, hoped that the local youngsters would get support from the BCCI and other international players.

"Hope @BCCI @BCCIdomestic @SGanguly99 @IrfanPathan @ICC will support our youngsters to perform on national and in-

ternational level. Gurez valley is full of talent needs little bit support from administration and Government, and I assure starters will come from Gurez valley," a local from Gurez wrote on Twitter.

As already reported by KNO, people of Gurez, living in the border area organised snow cricket tournaments on the frozen snow ground in a bid to promote tourism during winters in Gurez and attract the attention of the administration.

The youngsters of three villages including Markoot, Achoora, and Bagtore in the border valley of Gurez, have organized three snow cricket tournaments on the snow-clad ground.

According to locals, the only aim behind organising these tournaments is to attract the government's attention to this area as there is a lot of potential for winter sports activities in Gurez. (KNO)

Hamdan Hurricanes Win Pusher's Den T20 Tourney

Defeat Delhi Warriors in the final played at Gurugram, Delhi

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Hamdaan Hurricanes on Wednesday won the Pushers Den T20 tournament by defeating Delhi Warriors by 20 runs in the final match played at Gurugram, Delhi.

Organised by Pusher's Den Cricket Club, the tournament was played at Pusher's Den Cricket Ground at Gurgaon (Gurugram). The finale of the tournament featured 3rd Umpire, DRS facility and live commentary by famous entertainer Raja Khan.

Earlier, Hamdaan Hurricanes, led by ex-Ranji player of J&K, Omar Alam, won the toss and decided to bat. The team managed 207/4 in the allotted 20 overs. Sahil Shafi scored unbeaten 108 and Numan Baba contributed 64. For Delhi Warriors PDCA XI, Lalit took 2 wickets each.

In reply, the Delhi team was all out for 185 in 19.2 overs.



Lalit Dahiya was the top scorer for his team, making a brisk 67. For the Hurricanes, Omar Alam, Karan, Suhail, Riyaz and Faisal took 2 wickets each.

Hamdan Hurricanes' Sahil Shafi was adjudged man of

the match for his blistering century. Sunil Singh of Delhi Warriors won fighter of the match award, while as Omar Alam was adjudged man of the tournament for his all-round performance.

Hockey J&K Holds Medical Camp For Players & Coaches

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Hockey J&K on Thursday said that it organised a free Ayurvedic medical camp at KK Hakku Astroturf Hockey Stadium Jammu in collaboration with Govt. Ayurvedic Hospital, Jammu and J&K Sports Council.

This camp was inaugurated by Rajeev Sharma, President Hockey J&K, in presence of Guest of Honour Ashok Singh Jamwal, Divisional Sports Officer J&K Sports Council, Jammu. Speaking on the occasion Sharma said that during last spell of Covid pandemic Hockey J&K organised such camp for the benefit of sporting community of J&K.

DSO Jammu, Mr. Jamwal said that Hockey J&K is pioneering in many ways to support the sport persons and coaches under the leadership of the President of Hockey J&K.

Dr. Taran Singh Secretary General said that this time Govt. is all out to help the people to fight the Covid infection. He said that Dr. Mohan Singh



Director AYUSH J&K has taken many steps to reach the doorsteps of community to provide instant relieve and formed many teams for the purpose.

Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh Foundation (Regd) gave away the certificate of appreciation to the Doctors for their services during the pandemic.

Dr. Dheeraj Raina, Medical Of-

ficer in charge camp, and Dr. Adnan Dar, along with paramedical staff, made the participants aware about the pandemic and distributed immunity boosting kits to the coaches, players and the staff of the Sports Council. 122 people were benefited during the camp. Satpal Singh, Chief Coach, Ajay Gupta, Anil Sharma, Gopal Das Sen Asst. all attended the camp.

U19 World Cup

COVID-Hit India Stroll Into QFs; Australia Win Too

Press Trust of India

TAROUBA (Trinidad): Record four-time champions and title contenders India stormed into the Super League quarterfinals of the U-19 World Cup after thrashing minnows Ireland by a whopping 174 runs in a league game here, in which they barely managed to field a playing XI.

India started their campaign on a winning note, beating South Africa by 45 runs on last Saturday and the win on Wednesday by such a huge margin is significant as the team fielded only the available 11 players after six members of the side were forced into isolation after testing COVID positive.

Put into bat at the picturesque Brian Lara stadium, India first rode on Harnoor Singh's brisk 88, which was well complemented by a run-a-ball 79 by his opening partner Angkrish Raghuvanshi, to post a challenging 307 for five.

The Hrishikesh Kanitkar-coached side then bundled out the opposition for meagre 133 in 39 overs to register a comfortable win.

Skipper Yash Dhull and his deputy Sheikh Rasheed were among those isolated after testing positive as Nishant Sindhu led the side.

Chasing 308, Ireland was teetering at 17 for three after losing both openers Liam Doherty (7), David Vincent (8) and one-down Jack Dickson (0) cheaply inside the first seven overs.

Ireland never recovered from the early blows as right-arm medium pacer Garv Sangwan (2/23) sent back skipper Tim Tector (15) in the 15th over, to leave the side reeling at 36 for four.

India now need to have enough players for their last Group B game against Uganda on Saturday as besides Dhull and Rasheed, batter Aaradhya Yadav, Vasu Vats, Manav Parakh, and Siddharth Yadav also tested positive for the virus.

In a Group D match in Basse-terre, Australia defeated Scotland by seven wickets.

Put into bat, Scotland rode on Charlie Tear (54), Thomas Mackintosh (54) and Oliver Davidson's (33) to post a respectable 236 for eight.

For Australia, Aiden Cahill (2/33) and William Salzmann (2/38) picked up two wickets apiece.

Chasing, Australia started well, with run-machine Teague Wyllie and Campbell Kellaway attacking in the powerplay.

The pair stuck 100 on the scoreboard without loss, before Kellaway (47) departed just shy of a half-century.

That couldn't stop an impressive Australia as Aidan Cahill then smashing 72 from 45 balls. Wyllie (101 not out) reached his century to help complete the job as Australia reached their target with seven wickets remaining.

Despite a third straight loss in the tournament, Scotland will enter the Plate quarterfinals with their confidence boosted after producing their best all-round show in their final Group D game.

Brief Scores: India U19 307/5 (Harnoor Singh 88, Angkrish Raghuvanshi 79; Muzamil Sherzad 3/79, Jamie Forbes 1/38) beat Ireland U19 133 (Scott MacBeth 32, Joshua Cox 28; Kaushal Tambe 2/8, Aneeshwar Gautam 2/11) by 174 runs.

Barcelona Tells Dembélé To Find New Club This Month

Agencies

BARCELONA: Barcelona wants to move France winger Ousmane Dembélé before the close of the winter transfer window, a top club official said on Thursday.

Barcelona soccer director Mateu Alemany said the club told Dembélé he needs to find a new club after having refused to agree to a new deal. His contract expires in June.

"During the six, seven months that we have been negotiating and talking, Barça has made several offers for Ousmane to continue with us, all of which have been rejected by his agents," Alemany said. "Given the situation, we have told the player and his agents that he must leave immediately, because we want players who are committed to the future of the team, and that he must leave before Jan. 31."

Coach Xavi Hernández has not included Dembélé on his squad for the Copa del Rey game at Athletic Bilbao on Thursday. Alemany said that decision was a direct result of his refusal to sign a new contract.



Barcelona broke its own club record for transfers to acquire Dembélé from Borussia Dortmund in 2017 with a deal, including add-ons, worth 147 million euros (then \$175 million). Many Barcelona fans questioned the expensive deal that used up a good chunk of the 220 million euros (then \$262 million) that Barcelona received from Paris Saint-Germain for Neymar just weeks before.

The young forward was injured for long stretches of his first two seasons and really established himself as a regular starter only last season. He has 31 goals in 129 appearances for Barcelona. (AP)

Asian Cup: Dominant India Play o-o Draw With Iran



Press Trust of India

NAVI MUMBAI: The Indian women's team wasted innumerable chances in a completely dominating performance as Iran held them to a goal-less draw in their Asian Cup opening match here on Thursday.

Iran were the better side in the opening minutes during which they got two scoring chances, including a hit on the crossbar, but the home side took control of the Group A match midway into the first half and dominated till the end.

India dished out a fine display of passing football in the second half about which head coach

Thomas Dennerby spoke eloquently. But they were unlucky not to have scored any goal and win the match.

As India pressed for a goal, Iran defended doggedly as they faced a deluge of attacks. The Indians were all over -- crosses, shots, toe-pokes, headers -- all inside Iran box but a goal still eluded the home side.

The best chance for India came in the 76th minute but substitute Dangmei Grace's header in front of an open goal was somehow saved by goalkeeper Zohreh Koudaei, who made a remarkable recovery after being beaten.

India play Chinese Taipei on Sunday.

Cyberattack On ICRC Exposes Data On 515,000 Vulnerable People

Agenceis

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) says there has been a hacking attack on its data servers that compromised confidential information on more than half a million vulnerable people.

The Geneva-based agency said on Wednesday the breach by unknown intruders this week affected data on more than 515,000 people "including those separated from their families due to conflict, migration and disaster, missing persons and their families, and people in detention".

The information originated in at least 60 Red Cross and Red Crescent chapters around the world.

"An attack on the data of people who are missing makes the anguish and suffering for families even more difficult to endure," Robert Mardini, the ICRC's director-general, said in a statement.

"We are all appalled and perplexed that this humanitarian information would be targeted and compromised."

ICRC said the breach targeted an external contractor in Switzerland that stores data for the humanitarian organisation, and

there was no indication the information had been publicly shared or leaked.

Agency spokeswoman Crystal Wells said while the ICRC cannot say for certain that the records were stolen "we feel it is likely. We know that they have been inside our system and have had access to our data".

Wells said the ICRC did not want to speculate about who might be behind the intrusion.

Addressing the person or people behind the attack, Mardini issued an appeal: "The real people, the real families behind the information you now have are among the world's least powerful. Please do the right thing. Do not share, sell, leak or otherwise use this data."

That suggests the ICRC suspects the culprits are criminals seeking to profit off the data - for purposes of identity theft, for instance.

The ICRC said the breach forced it to shut down systems around its Restoring Family Links programme, which aims to reunite family members separated by conflict, disaster or migration.

Ewan Watson, an ICRC spokesman, said the organisation had never before experienced a hack of similar scale.

Pakistani Court Sentences Woman To Death For Whatsapp 'Blasphemy'



Agenceis

Islamabad, Pakistan - A Pakistani court has sentenced a Muslim woman to death for committing "blasphemy" by sharing images deemed to be insulting to Islam's Prophet Muhammad and one of his wives, also considered a holy personage by many Muslims.

The trial court in the northern Pakistani city of Rawalpindi on Wednesday sentenced Aneeqa Ateeq under the country's strict blasphemy laws, which impose a mandatory death penalty for insulting the Prophet Muhammad.

"The blasphemous material which was shared/installed by the female accused on her status [on WhatsApp messaging platform] and the messages as well as caricatures which were sent to the complainant are totally unbearable and not tolerable for a Muslim," Judge Adnan Mushtaq wrote in his verdict in the case.

Ateeq, 26, had pleaded not guilty to the charges, which were first filed in May 2020.

In a statement to the court, Ateeq said her accuser, Hasnat Farooq, had deliberately pulled her into a religious discussion to frame her after she refused "to be friendly" towards him. The two had met on a popular online multiplayer game and continued communicating on WhatsApp.

"So I feel that he intentionally dragged into this topic for revenge, that's why he got registered [sic] a case against me and during [WhatsApp] chat he collected everything that went against me," she said in an evidentiary statement.

Farooq contends the accused shared the allegedly blasphemous material as a WhatsApp status and refused to delete it when he confronted her on that messaging platform.

Ateeq's death sentence is subject to confirmation by the Lahore High Court, a forum before which she also has the right of appeal.

Blasphemy is a sensitive subject in Pakistan, where the country's strict laws carry harsh penalties for several types of offences, including sentences of up to life imprisonment for some forms of the crime and the mandatory death sentence for insulting the Prophet Muhammad.

Increasingly, allegations of blasphemy have led to extrajudicial violence, mob justice or widespread violent protests.

Since 1990, at least 80 people have been killed in connection with blasphemy allegations, according to an Al Jazeera tally. Those killed include people accused of blasphemy, their family members, their lawyers and at least one judge, according to the data.

Half A Million Afghanistan Jobs Lost Under Taliban, Women Worst Hit: UN



Agenceis

KABUL: More than half a million people have lost or been pushed out of their jobs in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover, the UN International Labour Organization (ILO) said on Wednesday.

In a warning that the economy has been "paralyzed", ILO said that there have been huge losses in jobs and working hours, the United Nations said in a statement.

The statement said that women have been hit especially hard. By the middle of this year, it's expected that job losses will increase to nearly 700,000 - with direct predictions topping 900,000 - as a result of the crisis in Afghanistan and "restrictions on women's participation in the workplace".

Women's employment levels are already extremely low by global standards, but ILO said that they are estimated to have decreased by 16 per cent in the third quarter of 2021, and they could fall by between 21 per cent and 28 per cent by mid-2022.

"The situation in Afghanistan is critical and immediate support for stabilization and recovery is required," said Ramin Behzad, Senior Coordinator of the International Labour Organization (ILO) for Afghanistan.

"While the priority is to meet immediate humanitarian needs, lasting and inclusive recovery will depend on people and communities having access to decent employment, livelihoods and basic services."

Hundreds of thousands of job losses have been seen in several key sectors which have been "devastated" since the takeover, ILO said.

These include agriculture and the civil service, where workers have either been let go or left unpaid. In construction, the sector's 538,000 workers - of which 99 per cent are men - have suffered too, as major infrastructure projects have stalled, the statement said.

The Taliban takeover has also led to "hundreds of thousands" of Afghan security force members losing their job, said ILO, noting that teachers and health workers have been deeply impacted by the lack of cash in the economy, amid falling international donor support.

Iran, Russia, China To Hold Joint Naval Drill Amid Growing Ties

Agenceis

Iran, Russia, and China will hold joint naval exercises in the north of the Indian Ocean on January 21, Iranian media have reported, amid speculation that the three countries are teaming up in the face of growing pressure from the United States and its allies over Ukraine and European security guarantees.

A spokesman for Iran's armed forces told the semi-official ISNA news agency that the purpose of the drills was to "strengthen security and its foundations in the region."

The maneuvers, dubbed 2022 Marine Security Belt, will be the third joint naval exercises between the three countries since 2019, and will continue in the future, said the spokesman, Mostafa Tajdoldin.

Since coming to office in June 2021, hard-line Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has pursued a policy of deepening ties with both Moscow and Beijing.

Russia, Iran, and China are subject to Western sanctions imposed over various issues including Russia's threats on Ukraine's territorial integrity, human rights abuses in China, and Iran's nuclear program.

After meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on January 19, Raisi said Iran had "no limits for expanding ties with Russia," while the Russian leader praised the coun-



tries' "close cooperation" on the international stage.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian paid a visit to China last week during which it was announced that Beijing and Tehran had launched a 25-year cooperation deal aimed at bolstering economic and political ties.

In September, Iran's bid to become a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was approved by the seven current members of the security body led by Beijing and Moscow. The country will formally join the grouping after the technical and legal process concludes, which is expected to take up to two years.

The Iranian military spokesman said both navies from Iran's armed forces and Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC)

will take part in the upcoming drills with Russia and China.

The maneuvers are to include tactical exercises such as rescuing a burning vessel, releasing a hijacked vessel, and shooting at air targets at night.

Earlier this week, Russia announced that the three countries were planning joint naval exercises but provided few details.

The Pacific Fleet said in a statement on January 18 that a Russian naval group including a missile cruiser, a large anti-submarine-warfare ship, and a large sea tanker had anchored off Iran's port of Chabahar on the Gulf of Oman ahead of the drills.

"In the port, the official delegation of the Russian Navy will take part in a planned conference to hold a joint naval exercise of warships of Russia, Iran, and China," the fleet said.

How Long Till 'Midnight'? The Doomsday Clock Is About To Be Reset Again

Agenceis

Christchurch: In less than 24 hours the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists will update the Doomsday Clock.

The clock currently at 100 seconds from midnight -- the metaphorical time when the human race could destroy the world with technologies of its own making.

The hands have never before been this close to midnight. There is scant hope of it winding back on what will be its 75th anniversary.

The clock was originally devised as a way to draw attention to nuclear conflagration. But the scientists who founded the Bulletin in 1945 were less focused on the initial use of "the bomb" than on the irrationality of stockpiling weapons for the sake of nuclear hegemony.

They realised more bombs did not increase the chances of winning a war or make anyone safe when just one bomb would be enough to destroy New York.

While nuclear annihilation remains the most probable and acute existential threat to humanity, it is now only one of the potential catastrophes the Doomsday Clock measures. As the Bulletin puts it: "The Clock has become a universally recognized indicator of the world's vulnerability to catastrophe from nuclear weapons, climate change, and disruptive technologies in other domains."

Multiple connected threats

In 2022, scientists' warning extends beyond weapons of mass destruction to include other technologies that concentrate

potentially existential hazards - including climate change and its root causes in over-consumption and extreme affluence.

Many of these threats are well known already. For example, commercial chemical use is all pervasive, as is the toxic waste it creates. There are tens of thousands of large scale waste sites in the US alone, with 1,700 hazardous "superfund sites" prioritised for clean-up.

As Hurricane Harvey showed when it hit the Houston area in 2017, these sites are extremely vulnerable.

An estimated two million kilograms of airborne contaminants above regulatory limits were released, 14 toxic waste sites were flooded or damaged, and dioxins were found in a major river at levels over 200 times higher than recommended maximum concentrations.

That was just one major metropolitan area. With increasing storm severity due to climate change, the risks to toxic waste sites grow.

At the same time, the Bulletin has increasingly turned its attention to the rise of artificial intelligence, autonomous weaponry, and mechanical and biological robotics.

The movie clichés of cyborgs and "killer robots" tend to disguise the true risks. For example, gene drives are an early example of biological robotics already in development.

Genome editing tools are used to create gene drive systems that spread through normal pathways of reproduction but are designed to destroy other genes or offspring of a particular sex.

Disabled Man, 57, Swept Away In Tonga Tsunami Survives After 27-Hour Swim

Agenceis

A 57-year-old Tongan man who said he swam around 27 hours after getting swept out to sea during Saturday's devastating tsunami has been hailed a 'real life Aquaman'.

The eruption of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano on Saturday killed at least three people, sent tsunami waves rolling across the archipelago, damaging villages, resorts and many buildings and knocked out communications for the nation of about 105,000 people.

Lisala Folau, who lived on the small, isolated island of Atata which has a population of about 60 people, was swept out to sea when the waves hit land at about 7 p.m. on Saturday, he said in a radio interview to Tongan media agency Broadcom Broadcasting.

Folau said he was painting his home when he was alerted about the tsunami by his brother, and soon the waves had gone through his lounge.

He climbed on a tree to escape but when he got down another big wave swept him away, he said. The 57-year-old said he is disabled and cannot walk properly.

"I just floated, bashed around by the big waves that kept coming," he told the radio station.

Folau said he kept floating, and slowly managed to swim 7.5 km (4.7 miles) to the main island of Tongatapu, reaching the shore 27



hours later at about 10 p.m. on Sunday. Reuters was unable to contact Folau to verify the events.

The story of Folau's heroics went viral among Tongan groups on Facebook and other social media.

"Real life Aquaman," said one post on Facebook, referring to the comic book and film character.

"He's a legend," said another post.

Atata, which is about 8 km northwest of Tonga's capital Nuku'alofa, or a 30-minute boat ride, has been almost entirely destroyed in the tsunami that hit the islands. Tongan naval boats are still surveying the smaller islands and evacuating people to the main islands.



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