

# KASHMIR OBSERVER<sup>TM</sup>

Tuesday 15 February 2022 | 13 Rajab al Murajab | 1443 Hijri | Vol:25 | Issue: 39 | Pages:08 | Price: ₹3

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P7 STATE

## PULWAMA SUICIDE ATTACK: PM REMEMBERS FALLEN CRPF MEN ON 3RD ANNIVERSARY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday led the nation in paying homage to the slain Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel on the third anniversary of the

P5

## MUSLIM-E-AWWAL SHAHE MARDAN ALI: DR IQBAL ON HAZRAT ALI

13th of Rajab is the birth anniversary of Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the first Imam and fourth Caliph of Muslims. Thinker of The East, Allama Muhammad Iqbal who spear-headed the Muslim Renaissance in British India had a profound love for the progeny



P8 SPORTS

## LG FELICITATES YOUNG CHESS CHAMPION ARUSHI KOTWAL

LG Manoj Sinha on Monday felicitated young Chess Champion Arushi Kotwal at Raj Bhavan. The LG congratulated Ms Kotwal for bringing laurels to



**Quote!**  
The visionary lies to himself, the liar only to others  
— Friedrich Nietzsche

### NEWS DIGEST

#### AK-Rifle, 2 Pistols Recovered In Poonch

JAMMU: The government forces on Monday recovered an AK rifle and two pistols along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said. A joint search [More on P6](#)

#### CB Issues Advisory For Students, Parents

SRINAGAR: The Crime Branch of police on Monday cautioned parents and guardians of students, who have appeared in matriculation exams, about fake calls from [More on P6](#)

#### Matric Results To Be Out This Week

SRINAGAR: Amid rumours about the declaration of result of class 10 annual regular examinations, the state board of school education on Monday said that the result will be announced within [More on P6](#)

#### PDD Not To Retain Outgoing CE

JAMMU: The Power Development Department (PDD) on Monday denied the reports of retaining a retiring Chief Engineer on the post of Executive Director in the department. In a statement issued here on [More on P6](#)

# Building New Infra In J&K On Unprecedented Scale: LG

‘Govt Will Not Rest Till J&K Truly Becomes One Of The Country's Best Developed Regions’

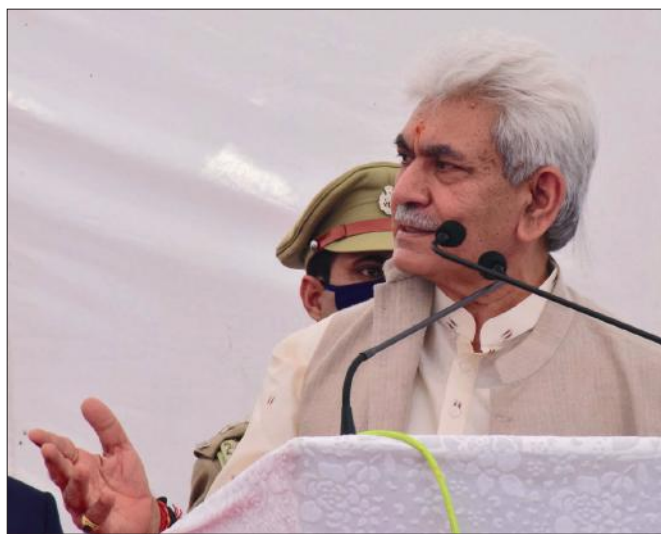
Observer News Service

**SAMBA:** The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Monday that his administration is working on an unprecedented scale in building new infrastructure and improving the facilities available to the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir.

“Govt will not rest till J&K truly becomes one of the country's best developed regions, which the entire nation can be proud of,” Sinha said, as per an official spokesperson on Monday.

He made these remarks after inaugurating 22 power transmission & distribution projects costing Rs. 216 Cr at Samba. According to the spokesperson, the LG said that J&K's power infrastructure, which remained dilapidated for the last several decades, is being transformed at a fast pace.

“Today's development represents a giant stride in capacity augmentation and improvement in power supply to consumers of Jammu, Samba, Hiranagar, Kathua, Udhampur and adjoining areas. The new power projects will meet the



power supply demand of the citizens as well as the industrial sector,” Sinha said.

Terming the occasion as historic for the people of Samba, the LG, as per the spokesperson said that the Samba district has also received a dedicated grid station after a long wait of 15 years.

“We are firm in our resolve for practical, pragmatic and viable solution to strengthen

power infrastructure in every district of J&K UT,” the LG said.

“To address the current power deficit and to meet the needs of our expanding economy, the government is upgrading transmission & distribution infrastructure that will also enable us to generate productive employment opportunities for youth,” he added.

According to the spokesperson, the LG [More on P6](#)

## Withdrawn Posts: Govt Announces One-Time Age Relaxation

Observer News Service

The Jammu and Kashmir government on Monday announced one-time age relaxation for the candidates who had applied for the posts recently withdrawn by the administration. “In respect of the posts withdrawn by virtue of a recent decision of the Administrative Council, the J & K Government has ordered one-time age relaxation for candidates who had earlier applied for these posts and were eligible in terms of age but have in the meantime crossed the upper age limit,”

an official spokesperson said. He further said that the government had also stated that subject to the fulfillment of other conditions of eligibility, a candidate shall be deemed to be eligible in terms of upper age limit, if he/she applies for the said post(s) in pursuance to fresh advertisement, as and when issued by JKPSC/SSB. Earlier this month, the government had announced to withdraw all the posts referred to the Public Service Commission (PSC) and Services Selection Board (SSB) before October 31, 2019, for which selections have not been finalized till date. [More on P6](#)

**6 ALL POSTS REFERRED TO JKPSC/SSB** prior to 31.10.2019, for which selections have not been finalized till date, as also the posts in which there are litigations and the cases are pending in Hon'ble court shall be deemed to have been withdrawn with immediate effect.”

## 6 IAS Officers Promoted To Various Scales

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir government on Monday ordered promotion of six IAS officers to various scales of Indian Administrative Service.

According to an order, two officers—Sheetal Nanda and Saugat Biswas—have been promoted to the Super Time Scale of IAS (Level 14 of Pay matrix) with effect from 1 January 2022.

The officers shall undergo Mid Career Phase-IV training as and when deputed by Government of India and have to pass the departmental examination within one year, as applicable, the order reads further. Consequently, Sheetal Nanda shall be designated as Commissioner/ Secretary to the Government, it reads.

Three officers—Sushma Chauhan, Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary and [More on P6](#)

### COVID CONCERNS

## Govt Asks Schools To Regularly Screen Students

2022-23 Shall Be The Year Of Educational Transformation For J&K: CS



KO File Photo

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** As schools and colleges reopened in Jammu and Kashmir after a two-year-long break, the Union Territory administration on Monday directed the educational institutions to regularly screen

their students and ensure that symptomatic students are tested timely and isolated to prevent the spread of infection.

These directions were passed by the Chief Secretary; Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta on Monday, while chairing a meeting to take stock of arrangements

## Classes Resume In Jammu As Cases Dip

As the third wave of COVID-19 shows signs of ebbing, schools here resumed offline classes on Monday after the Jammu and Kashmir administration ordered phased [More on P6](#)

## KU To Issue Guidelines To Re-Open Campuses

The University of Kashmir will shortly notify the modalities for reopening of its main and satellite campuses for in-person teaching from next [More on P6](#)

### DELIMITATION EXERCISE

## NC Files Objection Against Panel Proposals

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Contending that the Reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir Act is “Constitutionally suspect”, the National Conference (NC) on Monday questioned the recommendations of the Delimitation Commission especially its rationale behind increasing six seats in the Jammu division as against one in the Kashmir region and claimed that they are in violation of laid down norms.

In its 14-page reply to the Commission, the NC maintained that there were question marks over the Constitutional propriety of the panel especially when the party along with several others had approached the Supreme Court challenging

the Centre's August 5, 2019 action of revoking the special status and bifurcating the erstwhile state in two Union territories - Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir.

The three NC Lok Sabha members - Farooq Abdullah, Justice (ret'd) Hasnain Masoodi and Akbar Lone - had participated in the second meeting of the Delimitation Commission, headed by Justice (ret'd) Ranjana Desai, held in December last year.

Masoodi handed over the party's reply at the Commission's secretariat located in a hotel on Monday. The party said the formation of the Commission is linked to the Reorganisation Act of Jammu and Kashmir 2019 which was under judicial scrutiny and the [More on P6](#)

## Cop Suspended For ‘Smuggling’ Mobile Phone Into Jail

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** A policeman was suspended on Monday following a complaint by the Jammu and Kashmir Prisons' Department that claimed he was smuggling a phone inside the high-security Srinagar Central Jail, officials said.

The suspended policeman, selection grade Constable Mutazir Abbas of 6th battalion of the J&K Armed Police (JKAP), was caught in the act during an in-house surveillance initiated by the Prisons' Department last month, they said.

The officials said Director General of Prisons B Srinivas reported the matter to the Home Department which repatriated him to his battalion before placing him under suspension and ordering a

time-bound departmental inquiry against him.

In an order issued by the Home Department on Monday, Principal Secretary tShaleen Kabra said Abbas had been placed under suspension and an inquiry was ordered in reference to the January 25 communication of the director general of police, prisons.

“...the government, in exercise of the powers conferred by Rule 31 of the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956 read with Rule 353 of the Jammu and Kashmir Police Rules, 1960 hereby places Abbas under suspension with immediate effect,” the order read.

However, the order did not provide any specific reason for his suspension.

“The director [More on P6](#)

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## LC&MA conducts demolition drive

Observer News Service

**S**rinagar: The Enforcement Wing of Lake Conservation & Management Authority today carried out a demolition drive in the areas of kanitar/Saderbal and Nigeen.

During the demolition drive, two structures including one single storey house, one 2nd storey house and piling inside the water body were demolished / removed.

The demolition drive was carried out in assistance from SHO Nigeen, NT North and the police contingent from PCR Srinagar.



A peaceful protest was held by JK PhD Scholars Association to highlight the various issues faced by the PhD scholars working in the various colleges and universities of Jammu and Kashmir. The participants expressed their disappointment over the lack of comprehensive job policy, delay in advertisement of Academic Arrangement notification for the year 2022 etc Pic Abid Bhat

## Amid 'Hijab Ban', Women offer flowers to Hijab-clad students at KU

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: A group of local women on Monday distributed flowers and chocolates to students with Hijab outside Kashmir University.

The flower distribution came amid Hijab controversy that has erupted in Karnataka where a lesser-known Hindu outfit is demanding a ban on the Hijab in schools and colleges. The matter is in the court right now.

The event was organised by Tahira Najma, a religious scholar and an alumnus of Qom seminary in Iran.

She said that the campaign is being initiated to encourage girls to wear hijab and she had organized it in her personal capacity.



paigh is being initiated to encourage girls to wear hijab and she had organized it in her personal capacity.

"This is an effort to encourage girls who wear hijab and the event is in no way meant to ferment discord in the society".

She further said they organized this event on valentine's day in order to counter the narrative of the western world.

"We are Muslims and we should not be celebrating to the Valentine's Day". "Celebrating Valentine's Day is not line with our cultural ethos but unfortunately it has made inroads in our society". She added.

The organiser condemned the decision of Karnataka government to not allow women with hijab to enter the Educational Institutions.

## KCCI concerned at problem faced by tourism industry

Srinagar: The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) Monday expressed concern at the problem faced by the Tourism Industry with regard to issuance of permits to commercial vehicles for Tourism purposes.

A spokesperson in a statement issued to the said that it is a well known fact that the Tourism Industry over five years have deteriorated to the worst level. "To encourage the tourism sector from J&K, we need to support the upcoming tourist season at all levels. The government and tourism players are putting their best efforts to attract tourists and limit the damages," he said.

"Tourist operators are facing problems due to non-availability of permits to the vehicles which results in cancellation of bookings, he said, adding that the tourism sector in general and tour operators in particular are running into the most difficult time due to business losses since August, 2019."

## Women's Safety Squad Launched In Sgr: Police



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Srinagar District police on Monday launched two women's safety squads for ensuring safety and security of women in Srinagar city.

DIG CKR Sujit Kumar launched the squads by flagging off first patrolling of these squads.

Speaking on the inauguration, DIG Sujit Kumar, as per a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) applauded District police Srinagar for the initiative and said this will bring down crime against women and prevent crimes like the recent acid attack by acting as deterrent.

SSP Srinagar Rakesh Balwal and other senior officers of district police were also present at the inauguration.

Initially two squads were launched which will be patrolling areas around coaching centres, schools, colleges and other vulnerable areas in Srinagar City.

These squads will also be directly in touch with administrators of the educational institutions/coaching centres for immediate action in case of any emergent requirement.

Each squad will contain 5 Lady Police officers/ Personnel each.

**Initially two squads were launched which will be patrolling areas around coaching centres, schools, colleges and other vulnerable areas in Srinagar City.**

nel each.

One lady Inspector namely Khalida Parveen of Srinagar Police has been made overall incharge of these two squads.

A dedicated Women's helpline 9596770601 was launched by Srinagar Police which is already operational 24x7 exclusively for women's safety related issues.

This squad will work in close coordination with PCR vans, jurisdictional police stations and women's Police Station, Rambagh.

Srinagar Police ensures all citizens that crime against women will not be tolerated at all and both preventive & corrective measures in this regards will be vigorously implemented.

## 'Semicolon Coding Club' organizes 'CODEVITA' at NIT

Observer News Service

Srinagar, Feb 14: National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar's 'Semicolon Coding Club' on Monday organized a coding completion titled 'CODEVITA' aiming to promote out of the box thinking, analytical thinking among students.

The event was held in a virtual mode in which more than 150 participants participated. The competition was divided into two rounds including the aptitude round and the coding round. Participants who qualified for the first round proceeded to the next and final round.

During the event, the participants were given twenty minutes for the aptitude round which consisted of 15 questions and one hour fifteen minutes to solve three

coding problems.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof (Dr.) Rakesh Sehgal said the event was aimed to enhance the knowledge of the participants and promote out-of-the-box thinking, analytical thinking among students.

Registrar NIT, Prof Kaiser Bukhari appreciated the organizers for organizing an event on a relevant theme and stated that such topics are the need of the hour for the all-round development of the students.

Three winners were declared at the end of the competition; the first position was bagged by Vikram Kangotra, from Computer Science B.Tech 1st year, the second position by Rahul Kumar, from Electronics and Communication B. Tech III year and similarly third position was bagged by

Navneet Khar from Information Technology.

Later the winners were awarded certificates. The event was managed by Sanna Showkat, Ishika Gupta, Rishabh Kumar Gaud, and Kritika Sharma, 3rd-year B.Tech undergraduates from NIT Srinagar.

On the occasion, Sanna Showkat said the questions of the event were designed to challenge the students and promote analytical thinking among participants. The event was conducted with an aim to promote students to take up coding and make them ready for coding competitions for future placements, she said.

While a formal vote of thanks was presented by Ishika Gupta. She thanked all participants for making the event a grand success.

## Drivers accuse traffic cop of 'assault', stage protest in Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Sumo drivers from Pantha Chowk area of Srinagar outskirts Monday staged a protest against alleged 'assault' from a traffic cop on the Cashier of the Panthachowk Drivers Association.

Drivers assembled at Press Enclave Srinagar and alleged that a traffic police officer 'slapped' and 'misbehaved' with the Cashier of the Panthachowk Drivers Association.

They said that a passenger was declining to pay Sumo fare (Rs 125) and he

approached the police officer who despite checking the rate list not only tore that but slapped the Cashier as well.

"A passenger from South Kashmir's Islamabad district deboarded at Pantha Chowk but declined to pay the fare fixed by the Regional Transport Office. He instead of Rs 125 paid only Rs 110. When the Cashier showed him rate list, the traffic cop present on the spot, not only repeatedly slapped the Cashier but also tore the rate list," one of the protesters said.

The protesting driver

amid sloganeering against the traffic department appealed to LG Manoj Sinha to give justice to them. "We are oppressed lot. We are being challaned on daily basis for no fault. Despite carrying all the documents our vehicles are being seized and we are forced to pay hefty amounts in the form of challans. The online challan system has become nuisance for us," they said.

The victim Cashier said he had recently undergone a surgery and today he was repeatedly slapped by a traffic cop. "There is no rule of law," he added.

### DIAL-EMMA

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



### AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



### RAILWAYS

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



### HIGHWAY STATUS

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



**HIJRI CALENDAR**  
 14 - Rajab  
 1443

### PRAYERS

FAJR 5: 52  
 ZUHR 12:45  
 ASR 4:35  
 Magrib 6:17  
 ISHA 7: 39

## This Day In History

- 1933 - President-elect Franklin Roosevelt survives assassination attempt
- 1936 - Hitler announce building of Volkswagens (the People's Car, aka the Kaefer/beetle)
- 1939 - German battleship Bismarck was launched
- 1942 - German U-boat shells Antillian oil refinery
- 1942 - Japanese troops march into Palembang, South Sumatra
- 1942 - WWII: British ruled Singapore surrenders to the Japanese
- 1944 - 891 British bombers attack Berlin
- 1944 - Attack begins at Monte Cassino monastery, Italy
- 1948 - Mao Zedong's army occupies Yenan.
- 1955 - 1st pilot plant to produce man-made diamonds announced.
- 1956 - Pirates & KC As cancel an exhibition game in Birmingham Alabama, because of local ordinance barring black from playing against white.
- 1959 - Antonio Segni forms Italian government
- 1965 - Canada replaces Union Jack flag with Maple Leaf
- 1965 - Maple Leaf becomes official flag of Canada
- 1966 - Kees Verkerk becomes world champion all-round skater
- 1967 - 1st anti-bootleg recording laws enacted
- 1970 - Dominican DC-9 crashes into sea at Santo Domingo, kills 102
- 1970 - Nationalists disrupt UN session on Congo
- 1971 - After 1,200 years Great Britain abandons pence & shilling system for decimal currency
- 1973 - USSR launches Prognoz 3 to study sun (589/200,300 km)
- 1977 - Social-democrats win Danish parliamentary election
- 1984 500,000 Iranian soldiers move into Iraq
- 1985 - STS 51-E vehicle moves to launch pad
- 1985 - World chess championship match abandoned-Karpov 25, Kasparov 23.
- 1989 - Israel attacks border strip Taba near Egypt
- 1989 - Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan ends
- 1993 - Bombings by mafia drug lords kill 14 in Bogota, Colombia
- 1994 - US asks Aristide to adopt a peace plan from Haiti
- 1995 - Population of People's Republic of China hits 1.2 billion
- 1996 - Mortar attack on the US Embassy in Athens, Greece.
- 2000 - Indian Point II nuclear power plant in New York State vents a small amount of radioactive steam when a steam generator fails.
- 2001 - First draft of the complete human genome is published in the journal "Nature"
- 2002 - At the Tri-State Crematory in La Fayette, Georgia, investigators find uncremated bodies disposed of in the woods and buildings on crematorium's property. One of the worst incidents of abuse in the funeral service industry.

*From KO Archives*

## Farooq, Kukka Parray Join Hands Against Militancy

Observer News Service

**S**rinagar: Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah today said the peace process initiated by the Prime Minister would be earned forward with full commitment in view of the people's yearning

Addressing a 15,000 strong rally organised by pro-India gunmen turned legislator Kuka Parray at his home town, in Hajin, Abdullah described reports about his opposition to the ceasefire as misleading and clarified that he was never against it.

He said he had been consistent in his views that silence at the borders was meaningless when guns were booming in the "hinterland".

Referring to the recent attack on the police control room here, Abdullah said, "Pakistan and her mercenaries were mistaken if they thought they could terrorize us and succeed in their designs". He asserted, "Hum mar jayengey lekin ek inch zameen bhi nahin chodengey".

India, he said, had the might to teach a lesson to Pakistan that could be used at the appropriate time and recalled the befitting reply given to her in Kargil recently.

Making a fervent appeal to militants to drop the gun, Abdullah called upon them to join the mainstream and channelize their energies for the betterment of the people rather than soaking their hands with the blood every day. He also asked the foreign militants to go back to their respective countries and let the people of the state live in peace. He said the people want to get rid of the gun culture which was alien to them.

Earlier, the Awami League leader and MLA Kukka Parray assured the chief minister of his full support in his fight against militancy. He described the rally as coming together of anti-militancy forces and hoped this would auger well for return of peace in the state. He said the rally represented the people's yearning for peace and appealed all political parties to unite and face the militant challenge.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 15 February, 2001)



KASHMIR  
OBSERVER

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

K O V I E W

LG's Assurances

Trying to dispel the growing apprehensions about the work of the Delimitation Commission in Jammu and Kashmir, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said that the Commission would not err and he had full trust in its transparent functioning. He also downplayed the voices of protest against the Commission's draft proposals that seek to drastically redraw the Assembly and parliamentary constituencies in Kashmir. He said that the Commission is a constitutional body and it was improper for anyone to question or comment on its decisions. The LG tried to further allay fears by saying that the Commission had so far only proposed changes saying it had only given the draft only to its Associate members. "If they wish so, they can give their opinions or objections pointing out 'discrepancies,'" the LG said adding that the draft would subsequently be put in the public domain and the common people would be asked to give their opinions and make suggestions.

As for the Assembly elections, the LG Sinha repeated the assurances of the union home minister Amit Shah. If we go by the sequence of the steps to be followed before the statehood is restored, the completion of the delimitation exercise would lead to the holding of the elections within the union territory framework. And statehood would be a third step in the process. But this sequence is unacceptable to the major J&K parties including Congress. Likewise, the parties are unhappy about the home minister's condition that statehood would be restored once the situation in J&K is "normal." The logical question that follows is who will decide Kashmir is now normal now, the local parties are asking. The parties are thus unsure that the centre is serious about restoring statehood even after elections are held and a government is in place. The centre, it appears, would first like to see the behaviour of the elected government before taking a call on returning the statehood.

Going forward, the situation looks very uncertain. It is unlikely that space for a normal political activity will open up anytime soon. The centre is in no mood to engage with Kashmiri establishment parties after their meeting with the prime minister last year. The harsh truth is that if at all, the centre will engage, it will do so on its terms and offer little accommodation to the demands of the major regional parties like the National Conference and the PDP. However, it makes sense that we take the LG Sinha's assurances on their face value and hope the Delimitation Commission's recommendations will be to the satisfaction of both Kashmir and Jammu regions.

O T H E R   O P I N O N

Friendly Pitch

The gift of a cricket bat, signed by former Indian captain Virat Kohli, from the External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar to his Australian counterpart Marise Payne last week might suggest ties between Delhi and Canberra are stuck with the clichés of "cricket, curry and Commonwealth". But the story of India's Australia ties today is anything but. If Delhi and Canberra found it hard to get along in the past, they have become highly valued partners for each other, thanks to unprecedented political commitment in both capitals to rapidly transform bilateral relations. If Cold War geopolitics divided India and Australia, the new strategic dynamic in Asia – driven by China's quest for regional dominance – is pushing the two nations toward each other. Equally important is the new convergence of commercial interests and deepening diasporic links.

That the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and the Japanese foreign minister Yoshimasa Hayashi joined Jaishankar and Payne at the Melbourne cricket ground at the end of their talks in the Quadrilateral format may not have much political significance. Blinken and Hayashi, with no interest in cricket, were merely indulging their cricket-crazy partners in the Indo-Pacific. Fifteen years ago, Delhi and Canberra were deeply sceptical of the Quad framework proposed by Tokyo and backed by Washington. India and Australia are now active champions of the forum. Delhi and Canberra, which were too deferential to Beijing in the past, are now ready to stand up to Chinese pressures. It was not too long ago that China dismissed the Quadrilateral forum as "sea foam" that is here now but gone the next moment. But as the Quad consolidated itself, Beijing's tone has become harsher. As the Quad foreign ministers gathered in Melbourne, a spokesperson of the ministry of foreign affairs in Beijing attacked the group "as a tool to contain China" and called on its members to shed their "Cold War mentality".

There is more, however, to the India-Australia relationship than the Quad and the Indo-Pacific geopolitics. Jaishankar and Payne reviewed the growing bilateral cooperation in a range of areas from tourism and critical minerals to defence and security cooperation. The two ministers also launched the first India-Australia cyber framework dialogue. Australia is raising its profile in the subcontinent as part of its effort to coordinate regional policies with India. Delhi, in turn, is leveraging its Canberra connection, to strengthen its outreach to the strategic South Pacific Islands. Jaishankar and Payne also welcomed the rapid progress in the trade talks between the two sides. In New Delhi, after his talks with the visiting Australian trade and tourism minister Dan Tehan, commerce minister Piyush Goyal announced that the two sides are pushing hard to conclude an early harvest trade deal within the next month. During his visit, Jaishankar spent time with representatives of the Indian diaspora that has rapidly grown to about 700,000 and is making major contributions to Australian society. During the Cold War, cricket, curry and Commonwealth were just not enough to overcome the geopolitical distance between Delhi and Canberra; today, they will not only become more salient, but also reinforce the deepening strategic partnership between India and Australia.

The Indian Express

# India State Of Forest Report 2021

## Reflections For Jammu & Kashmir



Forest Survey of India is the premier organisation of Government of India which maps, prepares inventory and publishes the report on the Forest resources of country every two years since 1987. The organisation has done great job in generating useful database for policy makers over years to take informed decisions in managing forests of India. The present report titled ISFR-2021 is 17th such report published by the organisation. Despite the criticism regarding various aspects of the report like definition of Forests the data compilation and mapping exercise of such a large and diverse landscape is a magnanimous job. The present writeup on the report is to have an insight into the report, to bring clarity on various aspects which are vigorously deliberated upon and to reflect on what the report has in it for Jammu & Kashmir.

**Definition of Forest as per ISFR:**

The Forest Survey of India for the purpose of the report defines 'Forest Cover' as all tree patches having canopy density of more than 10% and area of 1 Hectare or more irrespective of land-use, legal status and ownership.

Now the issue that is most debated is whether it includes orchards, private plantation etc under the forest cover. The answer to this question is 'Yes'. But is FSI transparent about this the answer is again clear 'Yes'. The data generated and given by FSI for various UTs and States clearly reflects it and as it is with any scientific data you have a basis and accordingly you need to interpret it. The report clearly mentions the Forest Cover within the Recorded Forest Areas (Legal Forest) and Forest cover outside Recorded Forest area i.e., private plantations & orchards having area more than 1 Hectare. Thus, it is for researchers and policy makers to interpret the same rather than simply generating the narratives.

**Insights for Jammu & Kashmir from the report:**

By going through the report many threads can be picked regarding the direction in which green cover of Jammu & Kashmir is progressing. There are many green flags to get encouragement from, red flags of concern and yellow flags to pause, reflect and act for J&K. The inferences drawn are purely on the data available in the report and are open to scrutiny.

**The Green Flags:**

**The Forest Cover within the Recorded Forest Area:**

The Forest Cover within the Recorded Forest Area (Recorded Forest Area is the legal forest managed by Forest Department & duly demarcated) has shown an increasing trend and as compared to last report. The area under forest cover within RFA has shown an increase of 954 sqkm from the last report. Further the area under Very Dense, Moderately Dense & Open Forest has increased. A comparison is given below:

ISFR-2019				
Forest Cover inside the Recorded Forest Area (or Green Wash)				
VDF	MDF	OF	Total	
2,664	5,046	4,512	12,222	
21.80%	41.29%	36.91%		

ISFR-2021				
Forest Cover Inside the Recorded Forest Area (or Green Wash)				
VDF	MDF	OF	Total	
3,036	5,432	4,708	13,176	
23.04%	41.23%	35.73%		

\*in case of Jammu & Kashmir, RFA boundaries have been used.

This can be attributed to enhanced protection of forests, increased efforts at afforestation, better transparency and accountability and most importantly the people's involvement, PRIs, NGOs etc on large scale which is giving great results. Further focus on problems of socio-economic upliftment of people and developing the assets which help in increasing the livelihood opportunities are becoming pivotal in this regard. A visible and great example of this would be Kandi Forest

**THIS IS CAUSE OF GREAT CONCERN**

As the area under trees or green cover outside the Recorded Forest Areas has tremendously fallen and at an alarming rate. The tree cover outside RFA has fallen by 6658 sqkm since last two years which is huge and can be catastrophic to the environmental resilience, livelihoods and sustainable development needs of J&K

Range of Kamraj Forest Division where eco-development activities were taken by democratising decision making. The success of the programme is for everyone to see and is now being replicated in whole of the J&K by way of opening of trekking routes, eco-parks and biodiversity parks and other such initiatives.

**The Red Flags:**

**Tree Cover outside Recorded Forest Areas:**

The tree cover outside Recorded Forest areas included plantations, orchards and other scattered trees grown on farmlands etc. This is cause of great concern as the area under trees or green cover outside the Recorded Forest Areas has tremendously fallen and at an alarming rate. The tree cover outside RFA has fallen by 6658 sqkm since last two years which is huge and can be catastrophic to the environmental resilience, livelihoods and sustainable development needs of J&K. A comparison of same is given below:

	ISFR-2021	ISFR-2019	Net Change JKUT
Extent of Trees Outside Forests	11,722	19,334 (Includes 954 sqkm of Ladakh UT)	-6,658 sqkm

Further if we compare the top trees by number of stems between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2021 outside RFA we can immediately realise that where the decrease has occurred. The Poplars which dominated the tree cover outside the Forest are not in Top 5.

The main reason which I can infer from above is massive felling of poplars owing to some policy/

**WE NEED TO**

have a course correction and focus on restoring landscapes and keep intact the natural ecosystems, their composition rather going ahead with only tree plantations. We need to define what is a Degraded Forest.

legal decisions over years. The government has taken right step in this regard by constituting the Poplar commission and hopefully they will take note of this and give right direction to poplar cultivation in J&K and give confidence to people in taking this up again. Poplar is not only insurance crop of rural economy but also it is most important tree which helps in conservation of natural forest by taking the demand away from them for timber. Other reasons can be rapidly happening urbanisation especially the horizontal expansion, reducing the areas occupied earlier by trees.

**The Yellow Flags:**

There are many yellow flags or the areas in which we need to pause, reflect and then act with renewed wisdom. These give us an opportunity to refine our policies and shape them for improving on present.

**1. Forest Regeneration/ Rejuvenation:**

An interesting inference regarding regeneration of forest can be drawn by comparing the trees by diameter class in ISFR-2019 and ISFR-2021 and it can be corroborated by any field forester. The tables for same are given below:

If we compare the trees in Top 5 Pinus wallichiana (Kail) and Cedrus deodara (Deodar) have improved their rankings while as Abies pindrow (Fir) has gone

ISFR-2019				
Table 11.11.16 Diameter class distribution of top five species inside RFA in UTs of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (combined) (in '000)				
Sl.No.	Species	10-30	30-60	>60
1.	Abies pindrow	9,968	16,356	12,912
2.	Pinus wallichiana	17,877	23,291	6,948
3.	Quercus leucotrichophora	21,730	5,579	366
4.	Cedrus deodora	7,784	9,994	8,567
5.	Pinus roxburghii	12,847	8,695	2,364

ISFR-2021				
Table 11.11.17 Diameter class distribution of top five tree species inside RFA in Jammu & Kashmir (in '000)				
Sl. No.	Species	10-30	30-60	>60
1.	Pinus wallichiana	32,267	15,186	7,692
2.	Cedrus deodara	16,394	15,559	9,094
3.	Abies pindrow	9,457	17,473	8,480
4.	Pinus roxburghii	16,140	16,376	3,763
5.	Abies pindrow	2,942	6,009	2,347

down. If we critically examine it further the number of stems for Pinus wallichiana and Cedrus deodara have almost doubled while as for Abies pindrow has remained static. This indicates the Kail & Deodar Forest are having very good health. While as forests dominated by Fir are not recruiting new stems and should be our area of focus. The Fir forests have not great regenerating potential and need special attention and further they are under huge grazing pressures since they occur in higher reaches frequented by graziers. Unless the Fir forests are freed from anthropogenic pressures and supplemented by Artificial regeneration it will remain cause of concern. The department has taken special projects on Fir regeneration but it will need massive efforts and research backing by universities like SKUAST to solve this problem as it is more of scientific problem than a managerial one. The department needs to pay attention to developing Fir planting stock and knowing the nurseries we have for other conifers especially Kail & Deodar we can do a good job here too.

**2. The Grasslands:**

The report is focussed on Trees however it gives an indication on the extent of Grasslands we have. As per the report the grassland area of JKUT is around 4437.70 sqkm. Grasslands need detailed study and we have to ensure we are not increasing the tree cover at the expense of grasslands. The dwindling grasslands means reduced herbivores and increased man-animal conflict. Further reduced grasslands means reduced grazing grounds for nomads, cattle herders etc which will bring great amount of conflict, affect livelihood and in turn the economy. Also, the unique biodiversity of these areas will be put in red.

**3. Defining a degraded forest:**

The department has done tremendous job in increasing the green cover despite of the difficult decade in which forests were most hit. Most of the forest areas lost have been reforested and the trend has always remained on positive side. However now is the right time to define where we want to take this Forest Cover which has become synonymous to tree cover. We have to define what is a degraded forest based on whether it has lost capacity to provide ecosystem services or others due to degrading factors like deforestation. Should we go on planting trees on all forest areas devoid of trees. Whether the ecosystems like scrublands, shrub dominated areas, grasslands occurring naturally are not important ecosystems which harbour diverse and unique flora and fauna. We need to have a course correction and focus on restoring landscapes and keep intact the natural ecosystems, their composition rather going ahead with only tree plantations. We need to define what is a Degraded Forest.

J&K has already sufficient area under Forest cover what we need to work on now is improving the health of these ecosystems by having scientific studies at micro-level and planning for each forest ecosystem in a holistic manner. We need to move from bird's eye view to worm's eye view for restoring our natural forest ecosystems.

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

The author is the Deputy Conservator of Forests, J&K Forests Department

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## Re-Opening Schools Is A Great Step

The government's decision to re-open schools is a welcome one. The pandemic has caused irreparable damages to education especially primary school education. Nothing can aid education the way schools can do. They are cardinal for the over-

all development of a child. What we've observed for the past three years has been heartbreaking. Many above 3-10 years of age have not developed basic cognitive skill. Even social skills have been severely compromised. As far as education is concerned,

online education, although life saving could never replace in-person classes. Students from primary to higher secondary suffered a great deal. With the news of the re-opening of schools, one hopes that all that was lost over the years is compensated sufficiently. It is truly an emotional

moment for us as a community that after three years of lockdown, our kids can finally wear those uniforms and venture into a world of their own.

The sky is the limit!  
Beerish Rouf Khan

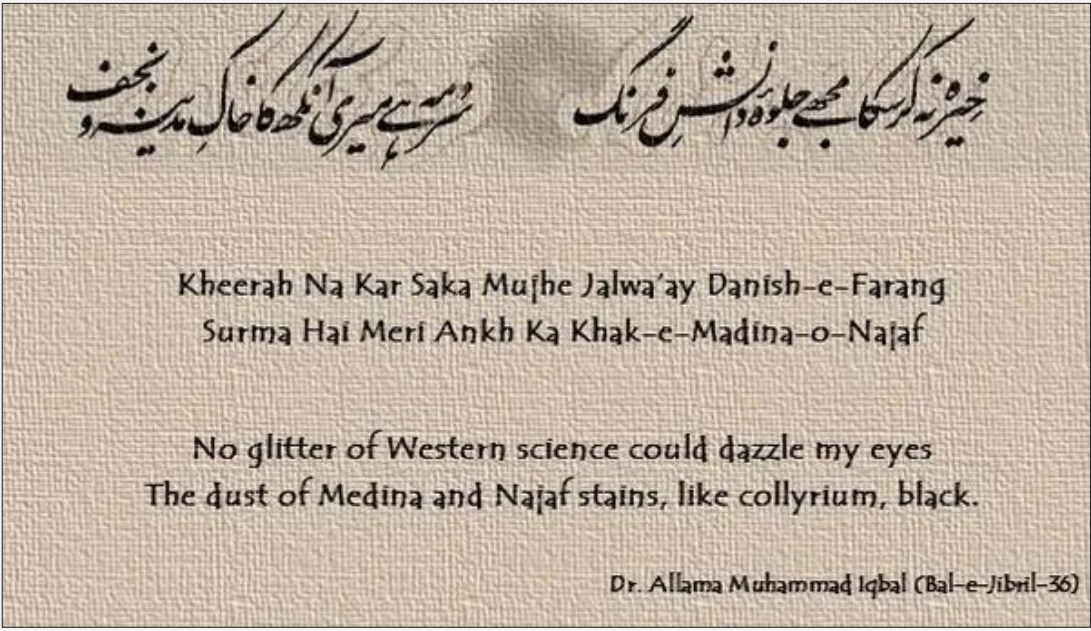
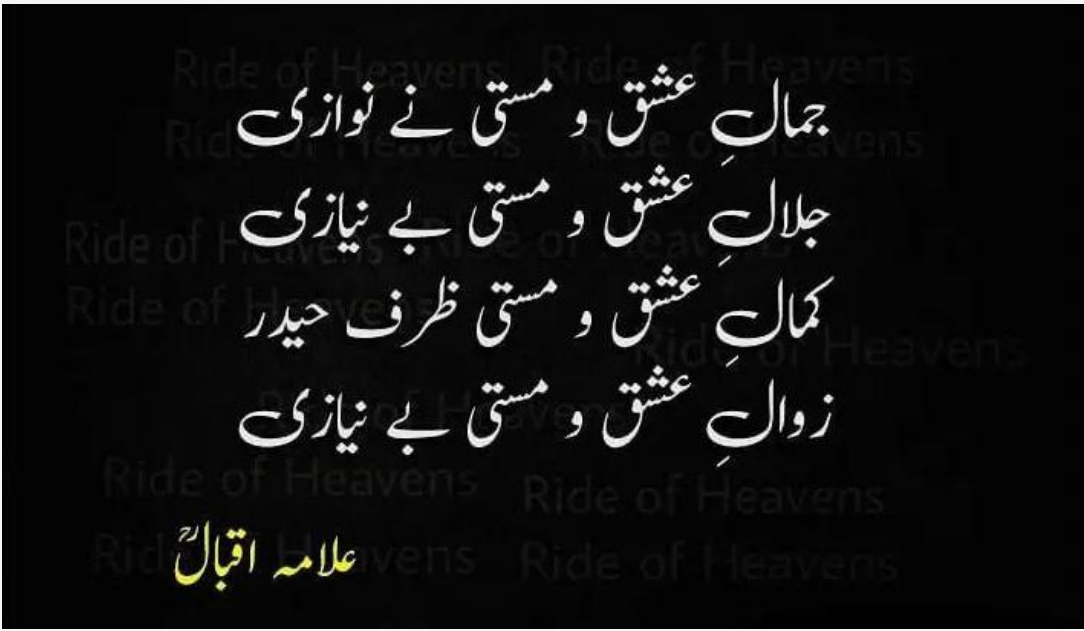




**THINKER OF THE EAST, ALLAMA MUHAMMAD IQBAL**  
who spear-headed the Muslim Renaissance in British India had a profound love for the progeny of Prophet (Pbuh). In one of his books, Asrar-e-Khudi, Iqbal had expressed his respectful love and admiration for Imam Hazrat Ali

# Muslim-E-Awwal Shahe Mardan Ali

Dr Iqbal On Hazrat Ali



**KO Web Desk**

13th of Rajab is the birth anniversary of Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the first Imam and fourth Caliph of Muslims. Thinker of The East, Allama Muhammad Iqbal who spear-headed the Muslim Renaissance in British India had a profound love for the progeny of Prophet (Pbuh). In one of his books, Asrar-e-Khudi, Iqbal had expressed his respectful love and admiration for Imam Hazrat Ali. Some of its extracts are reproduced below:

**Muslim e awwal shahe mardan Ali  
Ishq ra sarmaya e iman Ali**

*Ali is the first Muslim and the king of men, In  
Love's eyes, Ali is the Treasure of the faith*

**Az wilae dood manish zinda um  
Dar jahan misle guhar tabinda um**

*Devotion to his family inspires me with life,  
so I am shining like a pearl*

**Az rukhe uo faal Paighambar griff  
Millat e Haq az shikohish far griff**

*From Ali's face, the Prophet drew many a fair omen,  
by his majesty the true religion is glorified*

**Quwwat e deen e mubeen farmudaish  
Kainaat aaen pizeer az doodaish**

*His commandments are the strength of Islam, all  
things pay allegiance to his House*

**Mursal e Haq kard namish Bu Turab  
Haq Yad Allah khawnad dar Ummul Kitab**

*The Apostle of God gave him the name Bu Turab (Father  
of soil), God in the Quran called him The Hand of Allah"*

**Sher e Haq ien khaak ra taskheer kard  
Ien gile tareek ra akseer kard**

*Ali, The Lion of God subdued the body's clay and  
transmuted this dark Earth to gold*

**Murtaza kaz taigh e uo Haq raushan ast  
Bu Turab az fathe aqleem e tan ast**

*Murtaza(a), by whose sword the splendor of  
truth was revealed, is named  
Bu Turab from his conquest of the empire of body (clay)*

**Hark e dar afaaq gardad Bu Turab  
Baaz gardanad za maghrib aftaab**

*Whosoever in the world if become a Bu Turab, turns  
back the Sun from West*

**Zaire paaish ienja shikohe Khyber ast  
Dast e uo Unja khaseem e Kauser ast**

*Here the Might of Khyber is under his feet and in  
Hereafter his hand will distribute the water of Kauser.*

**Az khud aagahi Yadullahi kunad  
Az Yadullahi shahinshahi kunad**

*Through self-knowledge, he acts as God's Hand  
and by virtue of being God's Hand/ he reigns  
over everything*

**Zaat e uo darwaza e shahre uloom  
Zair e farmanish Hijaz o Cheen o Room**

*He is the Gateway of the City of Knowledge; Ara-  
bia, China, and Greece are under his governance*

## Never Forget Brevity Is The Soul Of Wit

The Art Of Brevity Is About Removing All The Unnecessary Linguistic Elements To Convey Our Message.

Shilpa Bhasin Mehra

William Shakespeare coined this phrase in the play Hamlet, written in 1602. The funniest, wittiest statements are short and to the point. To say that brevity is the soul of wit is to say that keeping something succinct sounds wiser, wittier, and even funnier than a long, drawn-out statement.

We are living in the fast age where people are suffering from ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), we scan and skim, picking out headings, sentences and single words. Knowing that, we must communicate with extreme efficiency.

It's amazing how what was written in 1602 seems to be so relevant today. Today brevity is not only desirable but is a virtue. In the times that we are living in, where everything is on the go, from grabbing a sandwich to a coffee to workouts in 7 minutes.

If someone is writing a speech, he may be struggling to cut down his total time to fit within the timeframe. He needs to know that it's the quality and not the quantity that matters and to keep his writing short and to the point. In another situation, in which someone was giving a very long and boring speech, making the audience yawn with boredom, one audience member may turn to another and sarcastically say, "brevity is the soul of wit" as a way of complaining. This phrase refers to the idea that keeping thoughts to the point sound smarter and wittier.

Why is it that people like to use long



sentences where the essence of the matter is lost and the listener bored (maybe confused too). Take pride in simple word choices, rather than flowery phrases.

Use provides, rather than is designed to provide, use because, rather than due to the fact that, use if, rather than in the event of.

People need to get over their love affair with flowery phrases and verbosity. The purpose is to communicate not complicate and bore. With shortage of resources, the most valuable one being time, to waste someone's time in long drawn talks should be made an offence.

I had decided way back in 2003 that I will make brief conversation and if it was a slightly long one, it should either be of serious interest to the listener or be humorous (we all can do with a laugh). Our life is our biggest teacher. When I was laid up in bed for over 2 years, I had some people who would come and make the most mundane conversation, I would be stifling my yawns and nodding politely. I promised myself then that I would not inflict anybody with boring talks.

One thing that I like about the organised Zoom meetings these days (opera-

**OF COURSE, BREVITY ISN'T ALL**  
pros and no cons. Brevity without consideration can come off as tactless and cold. It doesn't give you carte blanche to be rude. Saying, "This looks bad," to a presentation will probably end up in offending the presenter. Saying, "This would look better if we added a message," starts a healthier conversation

tive word here being "organised") is the timetable and timeline to be adhered to. The meeting can be so productive, with no time to yawn for sure. It is amazing how the same matter can be addressed in 30/40 minutes, from introduction to conclusion, with even some time for Q&A. The same matter was discussed at length in a 9 to 5 conference and when we came out of the room, I don't think we were smarter. The coffee breaks were most awaited and the best part of those conferences (a breath of fresh air).

Technology has further spoilt us with choices of WhatsApp, emojis and abbreviations. Forget about writing a nice beautiful birthday wish, people type HBD. When this is the pulse of the people, where is the scope of lengthy conversations.

Different people, different strokes. We can spend hours talking to our friends and loved ones, yet can't wait to disconnect the phone with some others. In law, we place a lot of importance on free will (when we are making contracts for example). My request would be please let our talks/meetings be of our free will (mutual for sure).

The art of brevity is about removing all the unnecessary linguistic elements to convey our message. Just like sculptures are produced by removing excess stones, diamonds become precious after they are polished and the carbon is removed, let our words actually convey our message.

Of course, brevity isn't all pros and no cons. Brevity without consideration can come off as tactless and cold. It doesn't give you carte blanche to be rude. Saying, "This looks bad," to a presentation will probably end up in offending the presenter. Saying, "This would look better if we added a message," starts a healthier conversation.

There's an old saying that the more you say the less people hear. So, the choice is yours, do you want to say more or be heard more. "Brevity is a great charm of eloquence", sums up Marcus T Cicero just perfectly.

*The author is a legal consultant based in Dubai and the founder of SBM Consultancy (formerly Legal Connect). The article was originally published by Khaleej Times*



# Govt Blocks 54 More Chinese Apps Over Security Threat, Privacy Risks

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** India on Monday blocked 54 more apps with Chinese links, including Tencent Xriver, Nice Video baidu, Viva Video Editor, and gaming app Garena Free Fire Illuminate, citing security and privacy concerns.

According to sources, these 54 apps allegedly obtain various critical permissions and collect sensitive user data. The collected real-time data are being misused and transmitted to servers located in a hostile country, they added.

The banned apps were allegedly engaged in activities prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of the country, also posing serious threat to security of the state and defence of India, the sources said.

IT ministry has issued interim directions for the blocking of 54 apps, the sources said.

In a statement, Google said: "On receipt of the interim order passed under Section 69A of the IT Act, following established process, we have notified the affected developers and have temporarily blocked access to the apps that remained available on the Play Store in India."

The list of banned mobile apps include Beauty Camera: Sweet Selfie HD, Beauty Camera - Selfie Camera, Rise of



Kingdoms: Lost Crusade, Viva Video Editor, Tencent Xriver amongst others. Other apps that have been banned, as per fresh orders, include Garena Free Fire Illuminate, Astracraft, FancyU pro, MoonChat, Barcode Scanner - QR Code Scan, and Lica Cam.

The crackdown marks the first such step taken this year after a massive sweep against the Chinese apps in 2020.

In June 2020, the government had banned 59 apps with Chinese links, including the hugely popular TikTok and UC Browser, saying they were prejudicial to sovereignty, integrity and security of the country.

The 2020 ban -- that had come in the backdrop of stand-off along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh with Chinese troops -- was also applicable for WeChat and Bigo Live, besides Helo, Likee,

CamScanner, Vigo Video, Mi Video Call Xiaomi, Clash of Kings as well as e-commerce platforms Club Factory and Shein.

Thereafter, the government banned 47 more Chinese apps that were clones and variants of the apps blocked earlier.

In September the same year, the government blocked 118 more mobile applications, including the popular gaming app PUBG, terming them prejudicial to the sovereignty, integrity and defence of the nation. The banned apps in that lot included Baidu, Baidu Express Edition, Tencent Watchlist, FaceU, WeChat Reading and Tencent Weiyun, besides PUBG Mobile and PUBG Mobile Lite.

On Monday, the sources said the IT ministry received a request for the blocking of 54 apps from the Ministry of Home

Affairs (MHA) under the emergency provision envisaged in Section 69(A) of the Information Technology (IT) Act.

As per the report shared by MHA, these apps are either the cloned version or having similar functionality, privacy issue and security threats as alleged in previously blocked 267 apps by the government in 2020.

The government had initially blocked 59 apps on June 29, 2020 followed by 47 related/cloning apps on August 10, 2020 and 118 apps were blocked on September 1, 2020. Another 43 apps were blocked on November 19, 2020.

The sources said the real-time data collected by these apps are being misused and transmitted to servers located in a hostile country. This will enable them to compile huge personal data to mine, collate, analyse and profile by the elements who are hostile to the sovereignty and integrity of India and for activities detrimental to national security, they added.

In addition, there are other serious concerns as some of these apps can carry out espionage and surveillance activities via camera/microphone, accessing fine location (GPS) and do malicious network activity similar to previously blocked apps, the sources said.

# It's Like Munna Bhai MBBS Movie, All Patients Are "Hale, Hearty": SC On Medical College Inspection

Press Trust of India

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Monday came across a Bollywood movie 'Munna Bhai MBBS' moment while dealing with a case of cancellation of permission for admission of additional students in a medical college, owing to surprise inspection on grounds that patients in the wards were "hale and hearty and no serious in-patient was found in paediatric ward."

The National Medical Commission (NMC) told the top court that permission for admission of additional students was cancelled as there were no operation theatre and no X-RAY machines in the college besides other deficiencies.

A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Surya Kant said, It is shocking. It's like a Munna Bhai movie. All the patients in the ward were found to be hale and hearty. In the paediatric ward, there was no serious patient. We can't tell what else we found in the inspection report. We were surprised.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Annasaheb Chudaman Patil Memorial Medical College, said that the inspection was carried out by the NMC without any notice and that too on a public

holiday that is on the day of the festival Makar Sankranti', which is prohibited.

The bench told Singhvi, Illness does not stop on Makar Sankranti'. Your client (college) did not say that there were no patients.

The bench was hearing appeals filed by NMC and the medical college, which is situated in Dhule district of Maharashtra, against the Bombay High Court order, which had directed for fresh inspection of the college by the commission and allowed the admission of students.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and advocate Gaurav Sharma said that NMC can take surprise inspection under the law and what the High Court order did was that it allows 100 MBBS students, to take admissions "in this type of college", which was the initial capacity.

There is no operation theatre and no X-Ray machines, Mehta said, adding that students need not to be worried as they would be accommodated in other colleges after consultation with the government.

Mehta said, Only one thing I need to point out, 100 were given the permission and 50 was new and what this order does is that they continue with 100 but don't admit new so that new

batch does not come in this kind of institution. Now, if we cancel their recognition, those students will not suffer, as in consultation with the government we will distribute them in other colleges. But they cannot now start adding new students in this kind of institution.

Singhvi said that this college has been running since 1992 with 100 MBBS seat capacity and therefore NMC has no power to withdraw the permission for admission to these seats.

He said that NMC did not give permission for additional 50 seats based on the inspection report.

Senior advocate Nidesh Gupta, also appearing for the college, said that the infrastructure which has been flagged in the inspection report by the NMC has been in existence for decades, and then there was no issue about it.

The bench set aside the orders of Aurangabad bench of Bombay High Court and asked it to consider afresh saying the High Court having not dealt with the merits of the rival contention, we set aside the impugned order of the High Court dated January 25, 2022 and February 2, 2022, and restore admission before the High Court.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Building New Infra

expressed gratitude to the Prime Minister and Union Power Minister for their continuous support in strengthening the power sector in J&K.

Sinha, he said, further stated that J&K under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi is moving towards fulfilling the dream of a better life for every citizen.

He said that the upcoming Rs 12,922 Cr power sector project for the UT will increase the total availability of electricity in the system, especially for the household, industries and agriculture sector.

"We are working on an unprecedented scale in building new infrastructure and improving the facilities available to the citizens," Sinha said.

The LG, according to the spokesperson congratulated the officials of Power Development Department, the people of Samba and the adjoining areas on the commissioning of new power projects.

"PDD is making efforts to reduce T&D losses and bring them within reasonable limits. The department has achieved praiseworthy results. However, due to power theft, honest consumers who pay their electricity bills regularly are bearing the brunt of the cost of theft by other unscrupulous elements. We need to sensitize people to pay their bills on time and help the government to make power sector financially viable," the LG said.

He also made a special mention of Jagmohan Sharma, Chairman JPDC for highlighting the core issues of power sector in the UT.

### Withdrawn Posts

"All posts referred to JKPC/SSB prior to 31.10.2019, for which selections have not been finalized till date, as also the posts in which there are litigations and the cases are pending in Hon'ble court shall be deemed to have been withdrawn with immediate effect," reads the decision of administrative council.

In the letter, the GAD has also directed all the concerned to implement the directions of the administrative council in letter and spirit under an intimidation to the GAD.

However, addressing a press conference in Jammu last week, the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha had assured that these posts shall be put to fresh advertisement within two months for recruitment on fast track basis.

"In some cases, there are referred posts which have remained stuck since 2004. Now, recruitment rules, reservation laws have been changed. Some posts were also transferred to the Union Territory of Ladakh. Hence withdrawal of these posts was essential to ensure transparent and merit based recruitments," he had said.

He had also announced one-time relaxation to the aspirants who had already applied for the withdrawn posts. This will ensure equal opportunity to all.

"We have ensured free, fair, and merit based selections in the recruitment process. The pending 3000 Class-IV posts will be filled within two months on merit basis," he had said.

Asking the aspirants to not get misled, Sinha had said that his administration is sensitive to the concerns of people, especially youth.

"They can reach out to my office, or the office of any senior officers and their issues will be redressed on merit," he had said.

### 245 Covid Cases,

pandemic in J&K to 451016. In the Valley, officials said, Srinagar reported the highest 32 new cases of Coronavirus, Kupwara 16, Budgam 12, Baramulla 10, Kulgam 5, Bandipora 4 and two new cases each from Pulwama, Anantnag and Shopian. No cases were reported from Ganderbal district.

In the winter capital, officials said, Doda district registered a maximum of 65 new cases of virus, Jammu 38, Ramban 27, Reasi 14, Rajouri 8, Udhampur 4, Kathua 2 and one new case each in Kishtwar and Poonch. Samba reported no new cases of Covid-19.

"Moreover, 808 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 339 from Jammu Division and 469 from Kashmir Division," they said.

Also, the officials said that the death toll due to the pandemic remained 4745 in J&K as no fresh fatality was reported in the Union Territory during the last 24 hours.

The officials further said that no new cases of Mucormycosis were reported today, thus the total number of confirmed cases remains 51 across J&K.

### SKIMS Bemina

de-notified as COVID-19 dedicated Hospital," reads a communication by the Principal of the College, Prof. Irfan Robbani.

"Accordingly, it is hereby ordered that SKIMS Medical College-Hospital, Bemina shall resume normal activities with effect from Wednesday (16th February 2022)," the order reads.

It further adds that the Medical Superintendent and the HODs of Clinical Departments shall ensure that normal Hospital service systems are put back in place, prior to resumption of routine activities from the aforementioned date, in the best interests of patient care."

### 6 IAS Officers

Sarmad Hafeez—have been promoted to the Selection Grade of IAS (Level 13 of Pay matrix) with effect from 1 January 2022.

Consequently, these officers shall be designated as Secretary to the Government.

Also, Fazl ul Haseeb (IAS) has been promoted to the Senior Time Scale of IAS (Level 11 of Pay matrix) with effect from 1 January 2022.

### Govt Asks Schools

for reopening of educational institutions and resuming offline teaching in Jammu and Kashmir, an official spokesperson said.

In the meeting, he said, it was informed that the government has been regularly reviewing the Covid situation in the Union territory and has now decided to resume offline teaching by reopening all educational institutions.

"The Chief Secretary stated that the COVID positivity rate in the UT has been contained to 0.7% and impressed upon the Heads of all educational institutions to remain vigilant to any signs of infection especially among unvaccinated students below the age of 17 years, besides ensuring adherence to COVID appropriate behavior, SOPs and protocols; proper social distancing; and hand hygiene provisions, and compliance to UGC guidelines in the matter," he said.

Mehta, the spokesperson said, asked the Vice-Chancellors of universities,

Principals of colleges, and Heads of all schools to submit Covid prevention and mitigation plans taking into account capacity of class rooms with 6 feet norm, staggered teaching plan, Covid protocols, vaccination, screening, and emergency SoP; within two days.

"Further, to enhance effectiveness of COVID mitigation and management, the Chief Secretary advised the educational institutions to base their COVID management plans on the model UGC guidelines," he said.

According to the spokesperson, the education institutions were further asked to regularly screen their students and ensure that symptomatic students are tested timely and isolated to prevent the spread of infection.

Meanwhile, the Health and Medical Education Department was also asked to address the health-related needs of all schools, colleges, and universities in a time-bound manner, through the concerned divisional and district administrations.

Considering the educational institutions in Jammu & Kashmir are reopening for offline classes after a hiatus of almost two years, Mehta, the spokesperson said, impressed upon the concerned to ensure proper maintenance, upkeep, and cleanliness in the institutions along with functional electricity and water supplies as well as proper sanitation facilities therein.

The Chief Secretary, he said, impressed upon the institutions to build on the experience of online classes and adopt an ideal blend of IT-based offline teaching curriculum to boost students' learning outcomes and successfully train them for national-level examinations.

"The academic year 2022-23 shall be the year of educational transformation for Jammu and Kashmir", Mehta said, while emphasising that each head of the Institution shall be personally responsible for Covid management and healthy teaching environment.

"There should be no tolerance for unhealthy activities in places of learning," Mehta said, as per the spokesperson.

Additionally, he said, the Higher Education Department and School Education Department were asked to fully implement the National Education Policy across Jammu and Kashmir during 2022, thereby making the Union territory, the first among in the country to do so.

### Classes Resume

opening of educational institutions across the union territory. Students of classes 9 to 12, dressed in uniforms and carrying vaccination certificates, were seen thronging their institutions in Jammu and other districts of the region on Monday morning, officials said.

In an order issued on Sunday, the state executive committee had said all universities, colleges, polytechnic institutes and ITIs, and classes from 9 to 12 can commence their routine offline teaching by following Covid Appropriate Behaviour and standard operating procedures from February 14.

However, most of the educational institutions, including universities and colleges, remained closed and are likely to resume activities in a day or two after making necessary arrangements.

The officials said the attendance in both private and government high and higher secondary schools on Monday was low, but it was expected to pick up in the coming days.

A Jammu University official said since the order was issued on Sunday evening, they were finalizing the arrangements to reopen the university.

In summer zone schools, the offline mode of teaching for the remaining junior classes shall begin from February 21, allowing the students to attend school after over two years.

Offline teaching at all schools in the winter zone will commence after February 28.

The schools situated in the winter zone of Kashmir and snow-bound parts of Jammu region are currently on winter vacation.

Welcoming the decision of the administration to open educational institutions, principal of Shiksha Niketan Higher Secondary School, Rajeev Nagar, Rameshwar Mengi said, "...it is a happy moment for all of us that the students are back in their classrooms."

Such a decision should have come long ago the young buds are the future of the country and the government should accord top priority to education, he said, noting that the online mode of education is no alternative to traditional schooling.

He said the school had made all necessary arrangements, including sanitization of classes, screening of students at the main gate and adequate availability of hand sanitizers.

Gourav Gupta, a class 9 student, said he is happy to be back on the school premises.

After remaining shut for about five months, educational institutions opened for classes 10 and above in September last year but the rising cases of COVID-19 forced the administration to shift back to online classes from

October.

### KU To Issue

month, an official spokesperson said Monday.

The decision in this regard was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Vice-Chancellor Prof Talat Ahmad in the wake of deliberations held by J&K Chief Secretary Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta with heads of educational institutions on Monday, a day after the UT administration issued fresh guidelines on reopening of educational institutions for in-person teaching.

After thorough deliberations, it was decided that the University shall immediately notify all the guidelines for students and faculty on reopening of the campuses from March 1.

The University is presently off for teaching purposes owing to ongoing winter vacations which shall conclude on February 28.

The high-level meeting was attended by Dean Academic Affairs, Dean Research, Dean College Development Council, Registrar, Controller of Examinations, Chief Proctor and some other top officers.

"The University should be ready, in all respects, to reopen for on-campus classes on March 1. All necessary SOPs shall be immediately notified in this regard and circulated among the faculty and students for compliance," Prof Talat, as per varsity PRO said.

He urged strict adherence to Covid Appropriate Behavior (CAB) to ensure smooth conduct of academic activities.

Prof Talat also called upon students to focus on their studies and examinations with renewed vigour to fast compensate for the disruptions caused by the Covid19 pandemic.

The meeting urged students to

frequently visit the University website for all updates pertaining to reopening of the University.

### NC Files Objection

Supreme Court is yet to deliver its order.

The panel's recommendations are borne out of an Act that is a "Constitutionally suspect" law. In legal parlance, if any Act is under judicial custody and the apex court is seized of the matter, it can be termed as a Constitutionally suspect law.

The party said the principle of Constitution propriety demands that such a law should not be implemented and all the limbs of the state and their institutions should, out of deference to the top constitutional court, desist from implementing such law till its constitutionality is determined.

The party also accused the Delimitation Commission of "departing from its laid down norms and practices".

The party said the population criteria, which is being followed across the country, has "taken a back seat" while finalising the share of seats in Jammu and Kashmir.

Citing Article 81 of the Constitution which states "each State shall be divided into territorial constituencies in such manner that the ratio between the population of each constituency and the number of seats allotted to it is, so far as practicable, the same throughout the State...", the National Conference said even this basic principle stands violated by the Delimitation Commission.

The party pointed out that as per the census of 2011, the average population criteria was placed at 1.36 lakh but the reorganisation and distribution of seats presents a different picture altogether.

Seven seats in the Jammu region which included newly carved out Paddar, Mata Vaishodevi and Bani have less than one lakh population as against three in Kashmir that include a newly carved out Kunzer assembly seat.

The Delimitation Commission, after receiving representations from Associate members, had handed over a draft report in which an overhaul of assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir had been proposed.

The voluminous report has proposed redrawing of Anantnag Parliamentary seats by including Rajouri and Poonch from Jammu region with it besides carrying out massive changes in Kashmir division, they said.

Many of the assembly seats in erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state vanished including Habba Kadal, a seat which was seen as a traditional bastion of migrant Kashmiri pandits.

Barring Khanyar, Sonwar and Hazratbal assembly seats of Srinagar district, all other seats have been redrawn and merged with new assembly seats being carved out like Channapora and Srinagar South, the officials said.

Besides Justice (retd) Desai, Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra and state election commission K K Sharma are the members of the Commission that was set up on March 6, 2020 and was granted an extension of a year on March 6, 2021. The term is coming to an end next month in case the government does not give it another extension.

The NC had vociferously opposed the draft proposals which will increase

the number of Assembly seats in the Jammu division from 37 to 43 and in Kashmir from 46 to 47.

The National Conference also challenged the contention of the Commission that the seats had to be extended in Jammu region because of difficult terrains and geographically remote areas and highlighted that several areas in Kashmir remain cut-off for months and are equally arduous when it comes to the remoteness of an area.

These included Anantnag, Kupwara, Baramulla, Kulgam and Uri in the Kashmir division.

The Kashmir division currently has 46 seats and Jammu 37 seats. The population of the Jammu region is 53.72 lakh while it was 68.83 lakh for the Kashmir division, according to the census of 2011.

### Cop Suspended

general of police shall, in terms of the extant rules, initiate departmental inquiry against Abbass and submit the report of inquiry along with the findings on each charge, with supporting documents to the administrative department within two months," the order read.

Kabra said till the suspension order remains in force, the headquarters of the suspended policeman would be the Jammu armed police headquarters and he will not leave the premises without obtaining the permission of the additional director general of police, armed police.

The order said Abbass shall be entitled to subsistence allowance, as admissible under rules.

### AK-Rifle, 2 Pistols

operation was launched by the police and the Army along the LoC in Mendhar sector, they said.

One AK rifle and two pistols were recovered in the Dehri area of the sector, the officials said. (PTI)

### CB Issues Advisory

unknown persons.

In a statement issued here on Monday, a CB spokesperson said that if someone received fake call claiming to be School Board Officials etc and offers to help students for clearing exams, they must immediately inform Crime Branch Kashmir through JK-eCop Mobile App or by Email: ssp-crimkmr@jkpolice.gov.in or visit Crime Branch Kashmir personally (whichever is convenient)..

### Matric Results

two to three days.

Chairperson JKBOSE, Veena Pandita said that the result will be declared after two to three days.

She said that reports doing rounds on various social media sites regarding declaration of results in a day or two are baseless.

Notably, the annual examination for class 10 was held in the month of November last year. (KNS)

### PDD Not To Retain

Monday, an official spokesperson said that as some associations of Power Engineers have expressed their apprehension over the alleged re-appointment of a retiring Chief Engineer (CE) on the post of Executive Director (ED) in Power Development Department (PDD).

The department in this context clarifies that there is no such proposal under the consideration of the Government.



## Police Detain 35 Dental Surgeons Protesting For Jobs In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** At least 35 dental doctors were detained Monday after they staged a protest here in support of their demand for jobs by creating new posts of dental surgeons in hospitals across Jammu and Kashmir, police said.

The protesters, both men and women, assembled under the banner of Dental Surgeons Association J&K at Dogra chowk and tried to block the vital Tawi bridge near the statue of Maharaja Hari Singh when police moved in and detained them, the police officials said.

General Secretary of the association, Robin Tikoo said their employment woes have not been addressed since 2008 when the government last officially advertised posts for dental surgeons in the health department.

He said thousands of dental doctors are unemployed across the Union Territory and more than 500 of them have already crossed the age limit without fac-

ing the J&K Public Service Commission examination even once.

"We reject the financial assistance scheme announced by the Lt Governor administration for the dental doctors to set up their own clinics. We do not need the financial assistance offered by the government but a proper job. For financial assistance, we can go to a bank, he said.

He said the government has announced a loan of Rs 8 lakh with a condition that the clinic should have two dental surgeons and one technician.

Many of us are still repaying the education loan and it is not possible for us to set up a private clinic with another bank loan, the doctor said.

Tikoo claimed the association has given several representations to the authorities time and again but nothing has been done till date for their welfare.

He said the association appeals to the Lt Governor to take note of their plight and address their issues without any further delay.

## DAK Seeks To Shorten Booster Shot Interval

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Monday has sought to shorten the booster shot interval to 6 months.

Currently, the gap between the second dose and the booster shot in India is 9 months.

"Shortening the interval would prevent the emergence of new variants of Covid-19," said DAK President and influenza expert Dr Nisar ul Hassan.

Dr Hassan said while two doses of Covid-19 vaccine protects you from severe disease, but immunity wanes over time.

"Various studies have confirmed that Covid-19 vaccine becomes less effective over time," he said.

The DAK President said analysis from a UK study found that the protection provided by the two doses of Pfizer and Oxford (Covishield) vaccine wanes within six months.

"The study revealed that protection after two doses of the Pfizer vaccine decreased from 88% at one month to 74% at five

to six months and protection for Oxford decreased from 77% at one month to 67% at four to five months," he said.

Booster doses of Covid-19 vaccine are being given within 6 months of the second dose in many countries.

General Secretary DAK Dr Arshad Ali said booster shots should be extended to all adults to broaden individual's immune response against the emerging variants of Covid-19.

"At the moment booster doses are being given to healthcare workers, frontline workers and people aged 60 with comorbidities," he said.

"Dubbed as precautionary dose in India, booster shot is the third or the additional dose of Covid-19 vaccine given to ensure the protection is maintained against the new variants," said Dr Riyaz Ahmad Daggia Spokesperson DAK

"CDC and FDA have approved booster shots for all adults to be given within six months after the second dose of Covid-19 vaccine," he said.

### EMERGING MEDIA TRENDS

## Online Orientation Course By IIMC For DIPR Officers Begins

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Government of Jammu and Kashmir, in conjunction with Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), on Monday organized a 5-day virtual session on emerging trends and techniques in media and communication to meet the professional training needs of officers and officials engaged in highlighting initiatives being taken for welfare, empowerment and development of the Union Territory.

The objective of specialized short term courses is to contribute better understanding of officers towards various issues pertaining to media and communication. The focus of the online sessions will be on making the officers aware about emerging trends and techniques and sharpen their professional skills.

Lauding the initiative of IIMC, Director Information and Public Relations, Rahul Pandey, exuded confidence that such orientation and refresher courses will benefit the officers of the department in enhancing their communication skills.

Professor Govind Singh, Dean Academics and Course Director, Short Courses Department, IIMC, Media and Communication Course, took up the first session delivering an informative opening lecture elaborately explaining the subjects and topics to be covered during this mind storming training sessions.

The second session on "Media Landscape in India & Image Building through PR" was conducted by Dr. Surbhi Dahiya, Course Director, EJ Department, IIMC while Dr. Abhay Chawla, Senior Academician, took up the third session on "Social Media Ecosystem for PR".

In the fourth series of the session, Arun Anand, author and senior journalist, Media and Communication Course delivered a lecture on Crisis Communication. This was followed by the question and answers by the officers who sought clarifications and added information on various themes of the lecture.

Pertinently, this orientation course would conclude on 18th of February with exclusive sessions on participants' feedback and suggestions as well.

## Intl Workshop On Research Methodology, Publication Ethics Concludes At IUST

Observer News Service

**AWANTIPORA:** To equip faculty and doctoral scholars with importance of maintaining honesty and ethics in research, One-Week International Faculty Development Programme on the theme "Research Methodology and Publication Ethics" was organized by the Department of Computer Science & Engineering at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST).

The resource persons in the FDP were from national and international institutes of eminence with expertise in the

respective fields and included Prof. Rita M. Powell, Director of Fife-Penn CS Academy and Director of Diversity and Belonging, University of Pennsylvania, USA and Professor Sri-ram Chellappan University of South Florida, USA as foreign speakers. Experts of national repute included Prof. Dhruv Raina from JNU, New Delhi, Dr. Santanu Pramanik, Senior Fellow at NCAER and the Deputy Director of the National Data Innovation Centre, New Delhi and Dr. Touseef Rizvi, Head, Department of Psychology, University of Kashmir.



**CRPF MEN ON MONDAY** paid tributes to their colleagues killed in a suicide attack on this day in 2019 in Pulwama district.

📷 Pic: Abid Bhat/KO

### PULWAMA SUICIDE ATTACK

## PM Remembers Fallen CRPF Men On 3rd Anniversary

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday led the nation in paying homage to the slain Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel on the third anniversary of the deadly Pulwama suicide attack, and said their bravery and supreme sacrifice motivate every Indian to work towards a strong and prosperous country.

In the attack by militants in the south Kashmir district on this day in 2019, as many as 40 CRPF personnel were killed when an explosive-laden vehicle hit their convoy at Lethpora when they were heading from Jammu to Srinagar to join their duties after availing leave.

In a retaliatory strike, the Indian Air Force had carried out an air strike in Pakistan's Balakot on February 26, 2019, targeting militant camps.

Several events were organised across the country to mark the occasion with political leaders cutting across party lines paying rich tributes to the fallen jawans. The CRPF also held a series of functions, including one near the scene of the attack to pay floral tributes to their colleagues.

Modi tweeted, "I pay homage to all those martyred in Pulwama on this day in 2019 and recall their outstanding service to our nation. Their bravery and supreme sacrifice motivates

### LG Pays Tributes To Slain CRPF Personnel

**JAMMU:** Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday paid tributes to the CRPF personnel who were killed in the 2019 Pulwama suicide attack and resolved to eliminate the menace of militancy in the union territory.

On February 14, 2019, Jaish-e-Mohammed attacked a convoy of the Central Reserve Police Force in Pulwama, killing 40 personnel of the paramilitary force.

"The nation will forever be grateful to our brave soldiers of @crpfindia and their families," Sinha said in a tweet.

He said the Jammu and Kashmir administration is determined to eliminate the menace of militancy.

every Indian to work towards a strong and prosperous country."

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh tweeted, "This country will never forget the sacrifice of the brave CRPF jawans killed in Pulwama in 2019. I pay my tributes to them."

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also paid tributes to the CRPF jawans and said their memory will motivate India to

fight the "evil of cross-border terrorism".

"Tributes to the brave jawans who made the supreme sacrifice at Pulwama. Their memory will always motivate us to fight the evil of cross-border terrorism. Today, and always, the nation will remember," he tweeted.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the sacrifice of CRPF jawans killed in the Pulwama attack will not go in vain and asserted that "we will ensure answers are given".

"We can never forget the martyrs of Pulwama. Their sacrifice and that of their families will not go in vain -- we will ensure answers are given. Jai Hind," Gandhi tweeted in Hindi.

At an event at Lethpora in Pulwama district, Additional Director General (ADG), CRPF, D S Chaudhary, led the officers and jawans of the paramilitary force in paying tributes at the martyrs' memorial, about 25 km from Srinagar.

"Every year we come together here on this day to remember the 40 brave jawans who lost their lives in Pulwama (attack). We remember their sacrifice and pay tributes to them from the bottom of our hearts, Chaudhary told reporters on the sidelines of the ceremony.

The CRPF officer said the endeavour of the force is to maintain peace in the valley and not let the sacrifices of their personnel go in vain.

## No Jammer, Ambulance Facilities For Former J&K CMs In Srinagar

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR/NEW DELHI:** The security cover of four former Jammu and Kashmir chief ministers has been scaled down further with the Union Territory administration's decision to stop deployment of jammers and ambulances during their movement within Srinagar district, according to officials.

On Saturday, veteran politician and Lok Sabha member Farooq Abdullah, was seen offering prayers at the famous Hazratbal shrine and Dastgeer Saab in downtown Srinagar but there was neither an ambulance nor were there jammers, which, among other things, also blocks signals in cases where militants have planted an improvised explosive device that can be triggered by remote control.

The ambulance is provided to attend to medical emergencies during travel.

However, the officials, said during inter-district movement of former chief ministers Farooq Abdullah, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti jammers and ambulances will continue to be deployed.

This comes in the wake of the recent decision to downsize the Special Security Group (SSG), which had been created under a law enacted by the assembly of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir for protection of chief ministers and former chief ministers.

Subsequently, the SSG cover for the four former chief ministers was withdrawn and their protection entrusted to the security wing of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, which will be backed by central armed paramilitary forces.

Queries to the Jammu and Kashmir Police on the subject elicited no formal response.

The move comes at a time when



Srinagar city has been witnessing militancy-related incidents since last year.

Many encounters between security forces and militants have taken place within the city's limits besides some targeted killings of civilians being carried out by the The Resistance Front, a shadow group of the banned militant organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration had withdrawn SSG protection after it was decided to downsize the elite unit established in 2000.

This move came over 19 months after the Centre issued a gazette notification Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Adaptation of State Laws) Order, 2020, on March 31, 2020, under which it amended the Special Security Group Act of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir government by omitting a clause that provided former chief ministers and their families with SSG cover.

The officials said the SSG was in the process of being "right-sized" by reducing number of personnel in the elite force to "bare minimum" and that it will be headed by an officer below the rank of superintendent of police as against a director, who is in the rank of an inspector general of police or above.

The SSG has now been entrusted with the security of serving

chief ministers and their immediate family members.

The decision entailed withdrawal of security cover of National Conference leaders Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah, PDP chief Mehbooba and Congress leader Azad at a time when a number of militancy-related incidents have taken place in Srinagar where all of them except Azad reside.

Farooq Abdullah and Azad, however, will continue to be provided National Security Guard cover, whose personnel are known as Black Cat commandos, as both have been categorised as Z-plus protectees.

Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba also continue to have Z-plus security cover while in Jammu and Kashmir but are likely to have a reduced security outside the Union Territory.

The security to the leaders would be provided by the district police as well as the security wing based on threat assessment, the officials said.

Some of the SSG personnel would be posted with the security wing of the Jammu and Kashmir Police for a "close protection team".

The officials said that remaining personnel of the SSG are likely to be posted to other wings so that the police force could make best use of their training and knowledge.

The vehicles and other gadgets have been transferred to the police's security wing.

## Dr Farooq Prevented From Leaving Residence In Srinagar

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** Former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir Farooq Abdullah was on Monday prevented from leaving his residence here in view of security concerns on the anniversary of the Pulwama suicide attack, prompting him to lodge a strong protest.

Sources in the National Conference, of which Abdullah is the president, said that he was scheduled to travel to Jammu by road, a stretch of nearly 300 kilometers. The information about the programme had been conveyed to authorities concerned five days ago, but to his dismay, Abdullah found that the exits from his house were barred.

Abdullah, a former three-time chief minister and a sitting Lok Sabha member from Srinagar, managed to walk out of his



house in the afternoon and is said to have hitched a ride from a passerby for a short distance before the security team persuaded him to return home in a police vehicle.

Police officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said that no VIP movement is advised on the day of the Pulwama attack anniversary.

On this day in 2019, 40 CRPF personnel lost their lives when a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist rammed an explosive-laden car into a bus carrying security personnel.

## Dr Imran Khan Elected Chairman Of Certificate Committee LISA 20

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir, an official member of a global consortium of 35 statistical laboratories - LISA 2020, has added another feather in its cap. Associate Professor of the Division of Agri Statistics, Faculty of Horticulture, Dr Imran Khan, has been elected as chairman of the Certification Committee of LISA 2020 (Laboratory for Interdisciplinary Statistical Analysis).

LISA 2020 is implemented by the University of Colorado Boulder's Laboratory for Interdisciplinary Statistical Analysis (LISA) in cooperation with the USAID.

SKUAST-K was granted official membership of the LISA network in October 2020 as SKUAST-K-LISA. The membership was granted for SKUAST-K's dedication to uphold the missions of LISA 2020 Statistical Collaboration Laboratory to: Train statisticians and data scientists to become effective, interdisciplinary collaborators who can move between theory and practice to solve problems for real-world impact; Serve as a research infrastructure for re-

searchers and decision-makers to collaborate with statisticians and data scientists to enable and accelerate research and data-based decisions that make a positive impact on society; Teach short courses and workshops to improve statistical skills and data literacy widely.

Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai, while congratulating Dr Khan asked him to encourage his fellow colleagues and students during his tenure as Chairman. Besides, Dean Faculty of Horticulture Prof Shabir Ah Wani and Head, Div of Agri. Statistics, Prof MS Pukhta congratulated Dr Khan.

LISA 2020 is led by Dr Eric Vance at the University of Colorado Boulder's Department of Applied Mathematics. Dr Imran was elected as the new Chairman for the said programme after Dr Eric Vance stepped down as Chairman of the Certification Committee. Dr Imran is PhD in Statistics from HAU Hisar and a post-doctorate from the University of Colorado Boulder USA. Dr Imran was awarded the prestigious Raman fellowship by the University Grants Commission, Govt. of India. His term as Chairman is for a period of two years from February 2022 to February 2024.

## Jammu University To Reopen Campuses For Students From March 1

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** The University of Jammu on Monday said it will reopen its campuses for students from March 1, after COVID-19-induced closure.

University spokesperson Vinay Thusoo said the decision was taken at a meeting chaired by vice chancellor Manoj K Dhar and attended by all rectors, campus deans, directors, heads of departments, in-charge librarian and provost boys and girls.

"After detailed discussions, it was decided that the University of Jammu shall immediately notify all the guidelines on reopening of the campuses for students from March 1, Thusoo said.

After a review of the CO-

VID-19 situation on Sunday, the State Executive Committee headed by Chief Secretary A K Mehta said all universities and colleges shall commence physical classes from February 14 following guidelines.

Schools were allowed to reopen for students of classes 9 to 12.

Many senior school students in uniform and carrying vaccination certificates were seen thronging their institutions in Jammu and other districts of the region on Monday morning.

However, most of the educational institutions, including universities and colleges, remained closed and are likely to resume activities after making necessary arrangements.

### HEALTH CARE INVESTMENT POLICY

## 'A Door For Providing Quality Health Care To People Of J&K'

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Policy and planning decisions have powerful implications for individual behaviours and public health. The prevention of today's major health problems requires understanding and intervention to affect the root causes of ill health and the policies that shape and affect the root causes.

In Jammu and Kashmir, to address these problems effectively, the administration has taken several measures proactively to provide best health care services to its people.

One of the major decision in that direction was the introduction of "J&K Health Care Investment Policy (HCIP)" aimed at promoting private parties and entrepreneurs to set up healthcare infrastructure in the state. This Healthcare Investment Policy aims to realize the UT's obligation of providing quality and effective healthcare to its citizens and to take healthcare service to the door steps of the masses so as to ensure availability of the complete gamut of

healthcare services in the primary, secondary and tertiary care sectors to the people of the UT.

Healthcare sector in Jammu and Kashmir has shown significant progress in terms of improvement in infrastructure, manpower and health system, which is now reflected in improved healthcare indicators of the UT that have become comparatively better than those in many other states and even better than the national average, as per NFHS indicators. Despite the COVID situation, the health and medical sector took a lead in Jammu and Kashmir to attract global investment into health care.

In J&K, where the private sector is still in infancy and almost 80% of the healthcare facilities are being provided by the public sector, the overcrowding of the government health institutions has led to compromise in the quality of care. In government institutions, out of pocket expenditure is quite substantial as the patients have to purchase the medicines and other essential items from the market.



## WINTER CARNIVAL KULGAM

## Div-Com Kick Starts Event From Snow Covered Aharbal

Flags-off trekkers group, inaugurates multiple Snow games



Observer News Service

**KULGAM:** Winter Carnival, the festival to showcase the beauty of Kulgam for its recreational and adventure potential commenced today with a colourful start from the Snow-covered Aharbal tourist destination, here.

The Winter Carnival was thrown open by Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole in presence of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat from Aharbal Tourist destination by flagging-off trekkers group and by inaugurating several Snow games.

This event has been organised by the District Administration in collaboration with Aharbal Development Authority, Tourism department and Forest Division Kulgam.

The event was attended by DDC Chairperson, Mohd Afzal Parrey, DDC members of Manzagam, D.K.Marg, SSP, G.V. Sandeep, President MC Kulgam, members of PRIs and local people and sports persons and officers from civil and Police administration.

Speaking on the occasion, the Div Com said that the Government intends to develop Aharbal at par with other tourist destinations in Kashmir. He said that the tourism destination in Kulgam has huge potential to attract tourists which needs to be fully exploited.

He also added that facilities are being developed at various unexplored tourism destinations to provide much wider

choice to the tourists.

Pole, while praising the beauty of Aharbal and other unexplored destinations of Kulgam, urged the tourists to visit these areas.

The District Development Chairperson complimented and applauded the District Administration for the initiative to promote tourism and tourist destination of district.

Earlier, in his welcome address, the DC said that the initiative of organising this winter carnival is to promote winter tourism activities in unexplored scenic places, destinations of the district and to boost the tourism sector in Kulgam.

Snow games which were inaugurated and played today at Aharbal include Snow Rugby, Snow Volleyball, Snow Runs for peace, Snow skiing, Tug of war etc and such Snow events/games were carried out for the first time here in Aharbal.

Gender neutral games also included multiple Snow games viz. Snow Volleyball, Tug of War, etc. and gained attention and appreciation of people at large.

Later, the Div Com released a digital calendar of District Administration which is meant to promote unexplored, marvelous and scenic tourist spots/destinations of the district.

Pole also released a booklet prepared by Forest Division Kulgam in collaboration with District Administration containing information about various trek routes of district, Do's and Don'ts during trekking.



**IPL COME BACK** for Kulgam-born pacer Rasikh Salam Dar. The 21-year-old was on Sunday signed by KKR on Sunday for 20L. The talented cricketer was first signed by Mumbai Indians in 2018. "I am really excited and thrilled to be a part of KKR. I thank the owners and the management for showing their faith in me. Can't wait to join the squad," Rasikh said in a statement on his Instagram handle @rasikhsalam04.



**ARIF KHAN FINISHED** 45th in the giant slalom event at 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics on Sunday. Arif ended 38 seconds behind gold medallist Marco Odermatt. "It was a bit difficult today with the weather, the snow," Arif told Associated Press. "You could hardly see what was next to the gates. The guys who go down earlier, sometimes they make those icy ruts. "If you try to keep up with your speed and (take) some other chances, you hit a rut, you go out, as you've seen today. My focus was more about just finishing the race until the end, and I did it."

## Roundup Of Olympic Gold Medals From Monday, Feb 14

## Agencies

**BEIJING:** A roundup of gold medals from Monday, Feb. 14, at the Beijing Games:

## BOBSLED WOMEN'S MONOBOB

Former Canadian bobsledder Kaillie Humphries easily won the inaugural women's monobob event. It was her third Olympic gold medal and her first for the U.S.

It was also the first sliding medal for the U.S. in seven events so far at the Beijing Games.

Elana Meyers Taylor of the U.S. won silver. It was the fourth medal of Meyers Taylor's career, the most won by anyone in USA Bobsled history. Christine de Bruin of Canada won bronze.

Humphries, who also has four medals, began sliding for the U.S. in 2019 and got her citizenship in December. That allowed her to represent the U.S. in Beijing.

## FIGURE SKATING ICE DANCE

Gabriella Papadakis and Guillaume Cizeron of France broke their own ice dance world record to win the Olympic gold medal that narrowly eluded them four years ago in Pyeongchang.

Papadakis and Cizeron scored 136.15 points to "Elégie" by the early 20th century French composer Gabriel Faure. That gave them 226.98 points Russian world champions



Victoria Sinitsina and Nikita Katsalapov took silver with 220.51 points while the American duo of Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue claimed bronze in their final Olympics. The two have already announced they plan to retire.

## FREESTYLE SKIING WOMEN'S AERIALS

Xu Mengtao of China landed a jump with three somersaults to win Olympic gold in women's aerials on a frigid evening. Xu becomes the first woman from China to win the Olympic ski aerials event.

She instantly knew her run was a gold-medal worthy jump, too, pointing up at the sky soon after landing. She later leaned back and screamed into the cold air as the temperature hovered around minus-10 Fahrenheit.

Xu scored a 108.61 to edge defending champion Hanna Huskova of Belarus. American

Megan Nick was a surprise bronze medalist, holding off teammate Ashley Caldwell.

## SKI JUMPING MEN'S TEAM

Austria won Olympic gold in the ski jumping team event at the Beijing Games. Manuel Fettner jumped 128 meters Monday night on his final jump to seal the first-place finish.

The team of Fettner, Stefan Kraft, Daniel Huber and Jan Hoerl combined to score 942.7 points, beating Slovenia by 8.3 points with a combination of jaw-dropping distances and style that impressed the judges.

The Slovenians earned silver and Germany won bronze.

Norway, Germany, Japan and Poland followed after the first round in the last ski jumping event of the 2022 Olympics, but they couldn't keep up with the top two nations.

## Don't Think Kohli Going Through A Lean Patch: Rathour

Press Trust of India

**KOLKATA:** Virat Kohli's prolonged lean patch is not a concern for the Indian team, batting coach Vikram Rathour said on Monday, expressing confidence that the superstar batter would be back among runs in the upcoming T20I series against West Indies here.

The 33-year-old, whose tenure as India captain across formats came to an end last month, had a disappointing run in the recently-concluded three match ODI series with a total score of 26 runs at an average of 8.6 with a best of 18.

Rathour said it does not mean lack of form as Kohli has been doing well in the nets.

"I don't think he's going through a lean phase. I understand he had a poor series against the West Indies (in ODIs) but no conversation as such," Rathour said in a media interaction in the build-up to the three-match T20I series beginning at the Eden Gardens on Wednesday.

Across formats, Kohli is yet to score an International century in more than two years. His last century came against Bangladesh in India's first pink ball Day/Night Test at Eden Gardens here in November 2019.

In ODIs, Kohli last scored a century against the West Indies in August 2019, in Port of Spain and since then, he has had 10 50-plus scores but failed to convert them into a ton.

In the last 12 months, he has



been part of nine ODIs and scored a total of 271 runs in them.

"He's batting really well in the nets and the kind of preparation he's putting in. We are waiting for... I'm certain that in one of these innings he will be back among runs," the batting coach said, strongly backing the former skipper.

The series is seen as India's preparation for the T20 World Cup slated in Australia in October and Rathour said he's confident that the batters will put up a strong show Down Under.

"With the batting that we have I don't think we have any issues. All our batters are capable of batting well in those conditions.

"Of course that is the focus at the moment. We are working towards the World Cup in Australia... unfortunately we are struggling a little bit with the injuries at the moment, few people are missing out.

"Till we have everybody available it's difficult to make sure what their role going to be. But so far that's the focus. We have started our preparation for Australia," he said.

## Babar Azam's Karachi Suffer 6th Straight Loss

Press Trust of India

**LAHORE:** Nothing seemed to go right for the injury-hit Karachi team, led by Babar Azam, as its batters yet again struggled and reached just 138-6 in its unsuccessful chase against Peshawar.

After losing the toss, Peshawar had earlier capitalized on sloppy Karachi fielding to score 193-6 with the opening pair of Hazratullah Zazai (52 off 42) and 20-year-old newcomer Mohammad Harris (49 off 27) providing a rollicking start of 97 runs from 10 overs.

Australian Ben Cutting provided a late flourish to Peshawar's total with a breezy 26 off 15 balls that included three boundaries against Chris Jordan (3-41) in the 19th over.

Babar had scored an unbeaten 90 against Peshawar in the first leg at Karachi in a losing cause and again on Sunday his 59 runs off 46 balls were not enough.

"The drop chances and death bowling led to a score that was well over par," Babar said. "We played poorly in the powerplay and that cost us the match... but they bowled well and deserve credit for it."

Fast bowlers Salman Irshad (2-24) and captain Wahab Riaz (2-26) didn't allow Babar and Joe Clarke to score freely as the boundaries dried up for Karachi. Liam Livingstone (1-22) also bowled three tidy overs in the middle and had Clarke clean bowled off his leg-spin for a run-a-ball 26.

Babar got little support from the other end to pace the chase before Irshad had him leg before wicket off a full-pitched delivery in the 17th over.

Karachi is on the brink of elimination, needing not only to win its remaining four league games but also hoping results elsewhere go in their favor. Peshawar is still in the race for the playoff with six points from seven games.

## JKFA Holds Sports Activities In Tangdhar Tehsil Karnah

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A delegation J&K Football Association (JKFA) led by Tariq Madni, Secretary DFA Srinagar, visited a far flung area of District Kupwara, Tangdhar, Tehsil Karnah on February 11, 2022, for the inauguration of a football league tournament.

The other members of the delegation were Abdul Majeed Kakroo, former international footballer, Farooq Shaheen, Chairman Referees Committee, Sarfaraz Nabi and Mr. Bilal Ah-

mad, members of J&K Football Association.

"J&K Football Association is concerned about promotion of the game in the nook & corner of the UT. 20 Clubs of Karnah are participating in this tournament. This is for the first time that Sports Association Karnah under the aegis of J&K Football Association have started a football tournament which has been welcomed by the fraternity of footballers in general and the people of Karnah in particular," the FA said in a press release on Monday.

## YSS Organises Trekking Camp For Budgam Youth

Every step is being taken to involve youth in sports: Gazanfar Ali



Observer News Service

**BUDGAM:** While speaking about the initiatives of Youth Services and Sports Department, Gazanfar Ali, Director of the Department, said that every possible step is being taken to channelise the sports talent of J&K youth and all such platforms are made available to them which could help them in achieving newer heights of success in the field of games and sports.

While giving an idea about the organization of various sports activities by the Department throughout UT of J&K he said, "The field staff of the Department is leaving no stone unturned in channelising the sports talent at grass root level. Besides traditional sports school

children are made to participate in different kinds of physical and recreational activities and one of such kind of activity was today organised by the at Budgam."

A day-long trekking camp was organised on Monday from TBC Sithaharan Tosamaidan to Shalkan. The said camp was organized by Zonal Physical Education Office Hardpanzu on the directions of District Youth Services and Sports office Budgam.

DYSSO Budgam Masrat Jabeen has appreciated the organising Zone and Activity Section of the DYSSO Budgam for conducting this Trekking Camp. A good number of students and a galaxy of the officials including PEMs, PETs, REKs and NYCs of the concerned zone took part in the camp jubilantly.

## LG Felicitates Young Chess Champion Arushi Kotwal

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** LG Manoj Sinha on Monday felicitated young Chess Champion Arushi Kotwal at Raj Bhavan.

The LG congratulated Ms Kotwal for bringing laurels to Jammu and Kashmir by winning several national and international awards in Chess.

Arushi Kotwal who aspires to be a Grand Master was recently conferred with Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar for her achievements in Chess Championships.

While interacting with Kotwal, the LG gave his best wishes for her



upcoming Chess competitions and assured her all possible assistance from the Sports department of the UT administration.

Arushi was accompanied by her father and her sister. She hails from Bhaderwah area of District Doda.

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