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P5 STATE

MAGAM ERUPTS OVER QASEM SOLEIMANI DESECRATION

Protests erupted in central Kashmir on Tuesday after an Indian Army soldier allegedly torched a portrait of slain Iranian commander Major General Qasem Soleimani.

P7

LIVING IN ASIMOV'S WORLD?

"Evolutions are imperative in every domain, but scholastic refinements should be limited to physical classrooms where students could interact with instructors comprehensively. If we do not succeed in preserving physical classrooms, there is the possibility of technological



P11 SPORTS

BCCI RELEASE REVISED DATES FOR SRI LANKA SERIES

The BCCI on Tuesday announced a revised itinerary for the home series against Sri Lanka, beginning February 25, confirming that the Twenty20 series will be played



Quote!

Judge a man by his questions rather than his answers

- Voltaire

NEWS DIGEST

Engineer Falls In ACB Net

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau on Tuesday arrested an engineer while allegedly accepting a bribe in Kupwara district here. The ACB, acting on a complaint, | [More on P10](#)

Woman Injured In Leopard Attack

SRINAGAR: A 54-year-old woman was injured after she was attacked by a leopard in the Wakura area of Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Tuesday evening. | [More on P10](#)

Drug Peddler, Thief Booked Under PSA

SRINAGAR: Authorities on Tuesday booked a drug peddler and a burglar under Public Safety Act in Kupwara district of north Kashmir. A police officer said that the PSA orders were passed by | [More on P10](#)

Car Crashes Inside Tunnel, Driver Injured

SRINAGAR: A car crashed inside Banihal-Qazigund in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday in which the driver of the car was injured. Reports said a car travelling from Jammu to Srinagar crashed inside the tunnel | [More on P10](#)

No Corona Death In J&K For Second Day

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir registered on Tuesday 314 fresh cases of novel Coronavirus, while no death was reported from the Union Territory for the second consecutive day.

According to the officials, Kashmir Valley reported 126 new cases of Coronavirus while the remaining 188 were detected in the various districts of Jammu division, taking the number of people infected since the outbreak of pandemic in J&K to 451330.

In the Valley, officials said, Srinagar reported the highest 63 fresh cases of virus, Budgam 22, Kupwara 13, Baramulla 10, Ganderbal 6, Anantnag 5, Kulgam and Pulwama 3 each and Bandipora 1. Shopian district in south Kashmir reported no new cases of Covid-19.

In the winter capital, officials said, Jammu detected a maximum of 67 new cases of Coronavirus, Doda 52, Kathua 20, Udhampur 14, Ramban 10, Rajouri and Samba 9 each, Kishtwar 6 and Reasi 1. Poonch district detected no fresh cases of virus.

"Moreover, 937 more COVID-19 | [More on P10](#)

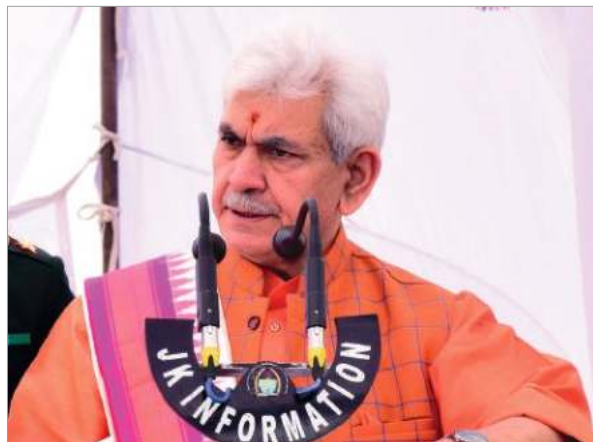
PM To Preside Launch Of Industrial Investment In March: LG

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will preside over the groundbreaking ceremony of the launch of industrial investments worth 20,000 to 25,000 crore rupees here next month, Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha said on Tuesday.

He sought cooperation of the people to the efforts of his administration to usher a new dawn of peace, prosperity and development under the leadership of Modi in the Union Territory.

Someday back, I have requested the Prime Minister to preside over the groundbreaking ceremony of the launch of industrial investment to the tune of Rs 20,000 crore to Rs 25,000 crore. He has asked us to complete the formalities and expressed willingness to be among the people of Jammu and Kashmir to preside over the function by March, the Lt Governor said.



Sinha was speaking at a function organized at Bajalta here to inaugurate 20 power projects completed at a cost of Rs 48 crore to provide better power supply to consumers in five districts of Jammu, Udhampur, Poonch, Rajouri and Reasi districts.

He said within the next one-and-a-half-year, two major projects will be completed to make Jammu and Kashmir self-reliant in the power sector.

Lauding the Union Home Minister Amit Shah for the industrial investment scheme for Jammu and Kashmir, he said an industrial investment worth Rs 25,000 crore was expected but the scheme is such that we are confident that there will be an investment of over Rs 70,000 crore in the next couple of years for which we need electricity and land.

He said the government land available | [More on P10](#)

A NEW DAWN WILL USHER IN J&K. Under the leadership of Prime Minister the industrialists have shown their interest and a lot of jobs will be generated. We have made necessary changes in our laws while Rs 1 lakh crore worth road and tunnel projects are in progress to provide modern infrastructure."

Colleges Reopen In Kashmir After Long Break

Agencies

SRINAGAR: After a gap of nearly two months, the colleges in winter zones of Jammu and Kashmir divisions reopened on Tuesday for physical academic activities.

The officials of Higher Education Department said that there was a good footfall of students in almost all colleges of the valley and winter zones of Jammu division.

Jubilant scenes were seen outside almost all the colleges which reopened today and students were excited to attend the classes physically.

"Online classes were very little fruitful to us. Sometimes, the high speed internet blockade added to our miseries. We couldn't comprehend what was being lectured



online as technical cuts always spoiled the very purpose of online lectures," Amina, a student said. She said that | [More on P10](#)

Islamic University To Reopen Today

The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) will re-open on Wednesday after the winter break. The university has decided to resume offline course work in all Departments/Centres/Colleges with effect from the 21st of this month, in accordance with the Jammu and Kashmir government directive to educational institutions in the UT, an official spokesperson said. He said that the University began offline teaching and examinations on campus in | [More on P10](#)

Kashmiri Student In MP Booked Over WhatsApp Post

Press Trust Of India

NEEMUCH (MP): A case of sedition has been registered against a minor college student from Jammu and Kashmir, studying in Madhya Pradesh's Neemuch city under a central government's scholarship scheme, for allegedly posting an 'objectionable' video regarding the 2019 Pulwama suicide attack, an official said on Tuesday.

In the video, shared by the student on WhatsApp and Instagram and which has also surfaced on other social media platforms, he has allegedly termed the Pulwama militant attack, in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed on February 14, 2019, as "an act of revenge for the Babri demolition and some other incidents", the official said. The in-charge principal

of the Neemuch-based PG College, where the student is enrolled, on Monday came across the objectionable video, which was seen by other pupils as well, and approached the police, Superintendent of Police (SP) Suraj Kumar Verma said.

After taking cognizance of the matter, the Neemuch City Police Station in-charge seized the student's mobile phone and other equipment and they are being examined for any other objectionable contents, he said.

The student is aged below 18 and action is being taken as per law after registering the case under relevant Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections, the SP said.

The police have registered an FIR against the student under 124A (sedition), 153A (promoting enmity) | [More on P10](#)

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16th February, 2022

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United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)
Representative & Country Director, India

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SRINAGAR**

Expert's Take On When Covid Can Be Said To Have Entered Endemic Stage In India

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Unless India sees four weeks of low and stable numbers of COVID-19 cases with only minor fluctuations, the disease cannot be considered to be entering the endemic stage, noted virologist Dr T Jacob John said. He also said the endemic phase of COVID-19 is expected to last many months and it is "most unlikely" that another variant with higher transmissibility than Omicron and greater virulence than Delta will emerge. The third wave of COVID-19 in India has been plateauing. The number of cases started declining after January 21, when 3,47,254 infections were reported. As of Tuesday, India's daily COVID-19 cases have remained below one lakh for nine consecutive days.

Mr John said the term endemic is meant to qualify a pattern. "When case numbers in a community are plotted on graphs, the pattern of rise, peak and fall represent epidemic (or outbreak) and case numbers as a horizontal steady state are called endemic. When an epidemic pattern repeats, we call each a wave." "So unless we see four weeks of low and stable numbers with only minor fluctuations, we cannot call the valley as endemic just as yet," Mr John told PTI. "Omicron wave is receding so fast that in a few more days we may reach the valley, but we will wait for four weeks to be sure of endemic prevalence," he said. Asked what can be expected in the coming months, the former director of the Indian Council for Medical Research's Centre of Advanced Research in Virology said it cannot be predicted, but only speculated. "My intelligent guess: we will



slip into an endemic phase for many months without any more waves with Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta or Omicron. It will be most unlikely that yet another variant that will spread faster than Omicron and more efficient in immune evasion than Delta or Omicron will emerge," Mr John said. "However, just as Omicron surprised us, another weird variant could surprise us yet again," he warned. He also said that during the endemic phase, some will be infected, sick, hospitalised and even die. Mr John cautioned that without high vaccination coverage, small waves may recur perhaps once a year or once in a few years, modulated by vaccination coverage in all age groups. "We have vaccines. For all current vaccines, two doses plus a booster are the minimum schedule. Additional boosters will be

decided on future information," he added. Dr Chandrakant Lahariya, a physician-epidemiologist and executive director of the Delhi-based Foundation for People-Centric Health Systems, said it is of limited relevance from the perspective of the general public whether COVID-19 has become endemic in India or not. "This is a discourse which will continue for a while. From the perspective of interventional epidemiology, which focuses on operational solutions, India soon, in a few weeks, would be at a stage where everything should be fully open." "That point onwards, people would have to adapt to the new way of living with the virus depending upon their level of risk. But because of COVID-19 nothing should be stopped," Mr Lahariya told PTI. To facilitate a smooth transition,

he said, there is a need to start a socio-political discourse on what is normal and how to ensure maximum safety. "This would mean improved ventilation in closed spaces, additional protection for high-risk populations, phasing out of the mask mandate -- first for children and then for adults. Unless this societal discourse is started, things would be delayed," he added. Mr Lahariya said pandemics end with a socio-political consensus to arrive at an agreement of what a society would like to call endemic. "What is important to remember is that pandemics start with a pathogen. In this case, due to the virus. They end with a socio-political consensus to arrive at an agreement of what a society would like to call endemic. Therefore, when a setting reaches endemicity is not going to be a binary of pandemic or endemic," he said.

DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR

Tel-0194-2474234 Fax -2482032 – email: - kashflori@rediffmail.com

GIST OF e- Tender Notice No. 59 of 2022

Dated: - 14/02/2022

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K UT, e-tender is invited from interested parties/persons for Operation of Food Vehicle for the Badamwari Park of Floriculture Department Kashmir as per details given below:

The participants have to quote their bid amount in the concerned BOQ: -

	Period of contract	Reserve Bid (Rs. in Lakhs)	Value of security deposit	Cost of tender document
1.	02 months (March and April 2022)	30,000.00	3,000.00	200/- in the shape of e-challan

The bidding document (s) consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, terms and conditions and other details can be seen/downloaded through the Departmental website www.dirflorikmr.in / www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

1.	Period of downloading of bidding document	14.02.2022 from 03:30 PM to 24.02.2022 up to 02:00 PM
2.	Bid submission Start Date	14.02.2022 from 04:00 PM
3.	Bid submission End date	24.02.2022 up to 02:00 PM
4.	Date and time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	26.02.2022 at 02:00 PM

The security deposit money exceeding 2% shall be adjustable towards approved bid amount in favour of the successful bidder. The CDR's of the bidders who offer below the reserve bid shall be forfeited. In case of any eventuality, the date of opening will be considered on any other convenient working day.

Sd/-
Accounts Officer,
Member Secretary

DIPK-18120/21

Apps, AI Translator, Marker Pens At Beijing Olympics, Overcoming The Language Barrier



Agencies

Beijing: Businesses at the Beijing Olympics are getting around the language barrier by using high-tech apps and a smartphone-like device to translate from Mandarin Chinese and keep the tills ringing. Though China's "zero COVID" policy has stopped the influx of sports fans who would normally be cheering on their favourites, there are still thousands of athletes, coaches, journalists and technicians in China with money to burn. "In the past few days, we have had more customers, and we've relied on this smartphone to translate when communicating with customers," ice cream shop assistant Wang Jianxin told Reuters. He did so by speaking into a smartphone and the device quickly translated his words before reading them back in a soft female voice. With staff and volunteers often wearing masks and visors, communication can be difficult, and Mandarin has little in common with languages like the English, German, Norwegian, French and Russian spoken by many Olympic competitors. Thankfully, help is at hand in the form of devices like the iFLYTEK Jarvisen, an artificial intelligence (AI) smart translator developed in China. "I thought the app worked very well, it seemed to work perfectly. She (the waitress) answered, it said the same thing I said," Team USA media attache Nicki Hancock told Reuters after ordering lunch at the Green Dragon restaurant. Manager Lu Juanli has seen a few raised eyebrows as guests have received unexpected menu advice, with "mushroom"

being translated as "fungus" among other anomalies.

"Some of our dishes have rather colourful names, so there are some inaccuracies in the translations, which makes customers rather interested. It's very funny," she said.

With staff and volunteers often wearing masks and visors, communication can be difficult, and Mandarin has little in common with languages like the English, German, Norwegian, French and Russian spoken by many Olympic competitors

Non-Mandarin speakers use marker pens to highlight the dishes they want on the plastic menus, and verbal communication is done through a translation device. Though the apps and devices are working well for many, there are still things that get lost in translation. "Once we had an experience when we wanted 'cow milk'," German journalist Frank Schneider explained at the ice cream parlour where Wang works. "But the English 'cow' was understood as 'cough', which led to some confusion -- people here are most afraid of corona (COVID-19) and coughing is one of the symptoms. (But) all in all, it works pretty well," he added.



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24/7
9484100200 / 01942404000

KASHMER in Collaboration with HELP Foundation

Before the Hon'ble Court of Additional District and Sessions Judge At Sopore

Caveat Petition No.22

In the case of:

1. Ali Mohammad Bhat
S/o. Late Ghulam Rasool Bhat
R/O. Bomal Tehsil Zaingeer Sopore

2. Taja Begum w/o. Ab. Ahad Dar
D/O. Late Ghulam Rasool Bhat
R/O. Bomal At present Seer Jageer Sopore

3. Fata Begum W/O. Gh Hassan Bhat
D/O. Late Ghulam Rasool
R/O. Bomal Tehsil Zaingeer Sopore

4. Ayesha Begum W/O. Ab. Majeed Bhat
D/O. Late Ghulam Rasool
R/O. Bomal Tehsil Zaingeer Sopore

5. Dilshada Begum W/O. Bashir Ahmad Lone
D/O. Late Ghulam Rasool
R/O. Bomal at present Logripora Tehsil Zaingeer Sopore

(caveators)

v/s
Public At Large

(Non-Caveator)

In the matter of:
Caveat petition under section 148A of civil procedure code for providing right of prior audience to the caveators before passing any order if the non-caveator/or from anybody from the public may choose to file any proceedings against Caveators before this Hon'ble Court.

Caveators through counsel
Adv. Aasif Abdullah & Associates
Advocate at additional district at sessions court sopore

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NIT to resume offline classes from Feb 21

Observer News service

Srinagar, Feb 15: National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar is all set to resume offline classes for post-graduate courses and B.Tech 8th-semester students of all branches from February 21 onward.

Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Najeeb-ud-din said in a recently held meeting under the chairmanship of Director NIT Srinagar and other officials. It was decided to resume the academic activities of PG courses and B.Tech 8th semester of all branches from 21st February onward.

"The decision regarding resumption of academic activities of other semesters will be taken later, in view of prevailing Covid19 situation," he said adding that Ph.D. research scholars of the Institute were already working in offline mode.

Prof Najeeb-ud-din further said all students who are reporting on 21st February to the college campus for attending offline classes are mandated to bring a vaccination certificate and negative RTPCR report along with them.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Sehgal said all arrangements have been finalized in view of the resumption of offline classes from next week.

"The academic activities of other semesters will be resumed in a phased manner. We ensure that all COVID19 precautionary measures should be adhered to so that there will be no risk of spreading infection at the campus," he said.

Amar Singh College resumes offline classwork

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Like all other colleges of Jammu and Kashmir, Amar Singh college Srinagar on Tuesday also resumed offline classes after several months following decline in Covid-19 cases across the Union Territory.

An official of the college that Amar Singh College witnessed an enthusiastic approach from the faculty and students on reopening of the college.

"The college administration has put in place all the necessary arrangements right from the entry point. Members of the Discipline Committee, Health and Hygiene Committee and all the faculty members could be seen scanning the students with thermal scanners, checking the vaccination certificates, so as to ensure that no student enters the campus without vaccination," he said .

He said that sanitizers have been kept at several places to ensure hand hygiene by both faculty members and students.



Amid dip in Covid-19 cases, colleges reopened in Srinagar on Tuesday. Students dressed in uniforms and carrying vaccination certificates were seen thronging their institutions in Srinagar.Pic Abid Bhat

DC Chairs Technical Session On Issuance Of Land Passbooks

Observer News service

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 14: In connection with initiative launched by the J&K Government, to issue land passbooks to the lawful land owners, a Technical Session was held for the orientation of Revenue Officers at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex here today under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar Mohammad Aijaz Asad.

The Technical session was attended by Sub Divisional Magistrate east, Owais Mush-taq, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Raies Ahmad, all Tehsildars of the District and other concerned.

On the occasion, a live Tehsil wise demonstration was held to give technical knowhow to the Tehsildars with the online system.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC asked all the Tehsildars to ensure that information regarding the user friendly and robust system is spread among the public.



The DC said it is a landmark initiative taken by the J&K Government to provide Land Passbooks to the lawful land owners to further improve the service delivery, enhance transparency and accountability in the Revenue System.

He said in Srinagar, Chan-napora Tehsil has been chosen as a pilot Tehsil under which 58000 owners of the Land shall be provided Land Pass books. He asked all the Tehsildars to

submit details about the number of Land owners in each Tehsil and simultaneously ensure the updation of all the Revenue records including Jamabandies, Girdawaries, Shajra Kat etc are done before issuing Land Passbooks.

The DC also asked officers to ensure accurate and up-to-date Revenue record entries in the Land Passbooks being issued to the land owners.

The DC said Under the Digital India Land Record Modern-

ization Programme (DILRMP), the Revenue Department has scanned voluminous Revenue records and placed them in the public domain under the 'Apni Zameen Apni Nigrani' for people's scrutiny.

The DC said the first-of-its-kind trilingual land passbook being issued to the legal owners of land have been written in Urdu, English and Hindi languages as a measure to further improve service delivery, enhance transparency and accountability to fill the information vacuum and promote people's ease of access to the revenue record.

With regard to removal of encroachments, the DC directed the Tehsildars to strengthen intelligence bases and activate official machinery for identification and timely removal of encroachments in the district. He urged them to work with added zeal and dedication to ensure a transparent, prompt and efficient system for delivery of Revenue services to the public.

DC visits Transit Camp for Amarnath Yatra at Panthachowk

Observer News service

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 15: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Tuesday visited Yatra Transit Camp at Panthachowk to review the progress of works undertaken to augment the accommodation for halt of devotees expected to participate in annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2022.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Rakesh Balwal, Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Athar Amir, SSP Traffic, Muzaffar Ahmad accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the visit.

On the occasion, the DC reviewed the facilities that shall be put in place during the forthcoming annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2022.

The DC was apprised that at present holding capacity at Yatra Transit Camp Panthachowk is of about 2500

Yatrics.

The DC directed the Superintending Engineer Public Works Department to go for further capacity addition by 3-4 times of existing holding capacity.

He earmarked the nearby land for setting up prefabricated accommodation to increase holding capacity to about 6000 Yatrics during annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2022.

The DC asked the Superintendent Engineer R&B to take up the immediate works for black topping of the approach road and ground at the Transit camp Panthachowk.

He also directed the authorities of the PHE Department to make all necessary arrangements for ensuring water supply at the camp so that Yatrics do not face any problem during their halt at the camp. He asked Executive Engineer PHE to work out

a plan so that use of tankers is minimised and adequate permanent supply of water is made available at the site.

For ensuring proper sanitation and adequate arrangements for public convenience facilities at the camp, the Commissioner SMC was told to keep sufficient staff at the camp to maintain sanitation and proper cleanliness in and around the transit camp.

He was also asked to ensure early operationalization of public convenience units.

Regarding parking facilities, the SSP Traffic briefed the DC about the arrangements being made for parking of buses ferrying the Yatrics.

Similarly, SSP Srinagar apprised the DC about the proposed security arrangements being made with regard to expected heavy foot-fall of the Yatrics during the annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2022.

Attendant alleges nurse of using foul language at SKIMS

Agencies

Srinagar: An attendant has lodged a complaint after a Nurse allegedly created a scene, used abusive language in a ward at Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences Soura.

The Complainant has not only demanded a thorough probe into the incident but also has requested Medical Superintendent SKIMS to initiate action against the 'foul-mouthed' Nurse.

In his complaint to Medical Superintendent SKIMS, the complainant Dr Farooq Ahmed Kaloo it is shocking that a Nurse who is supposed to help and have sympathy with the patients and attendants used abusive language and created a scene in presence of doctors.

The Nurse in question is posted at the Radio Oncology Ward of State Cancer Centre at SKIMS.

"On the intervening night of Feb 14 and 15, the attendants of a female patient (bed no. 1) The Radio Oncology Unit sought help from the Nurse to get the drug administered to a critically ill patient with a broken back, writing in pain."

"The two lady attendants needed the Nurse's help to position the patient properly, but little did they know that the nurse on duty was not only intemperate and lacking sympathy and empathy but also a pugnacious lady with an extremely foul mouth."

"The Nurse didn't like being called during night hours, though she was on duty in the ward. She screamed and used offensive and abusive language to the annoyance of every patient and attendant in

the Ward shouting at the top of her voice that this (helping the attendants in administering a drug or using a medicament) was not her duty. It took the shocked attendants time to calm her down and get rid of her. The pugnacious Nurse did not care even for the doctors on duty who tried to intervene."

The complainant in his complaint has requested the Medical Superintendent to have the incident

On the intervening night of Feb 14 and 15, the attendants of a female patient (bed no. 1) The Radio Oncology Unit sought help from the Nurse to get the drug administered to a critically ill patient with a broken back, writing in pain

inquired properly through a team of seasoned officers and remove the intemperate and foul-mouthed Nurse from the sensitive duty of attending the terminally ill patients.

"In fact, she does not deserve to be in the service of SKIMS. After hearing the two attendants and others I am more than convinced that such persons do not deserve to be in the noble profession of nursing," the complainant in his letter has written.

When Kashmir Observer tried to reach out Director SKIMS for their version, he didn't receive the calls despite repeated attempts.

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
- BIJHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

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



PRAYERS

FAJR	5: 51
ZUHR	12:45
ASR	4:36
Magrib	6:18
ISHA	7: 40

This Day In History

- 1917 - 1st synagogue in 425 years opens in Madrid
- 1918 - Lithuania declares independence from Russia & Germany (National Day).
- 1923 - Allies accept Latvia's occupation of Memel territory.
- 1927 - US restores diplomatic relations with Turkey.
- 1929 - KID-AM in Idaho Falls ID begins radio transmissions.
- 1932 - 1st patent for a tree issued to James Markham for a peach tree
- 1934 - Austrian Civil War ends with the defeat of the Social Democrats and the Republican Schutzbund.
- 1940 - British search plane finds German supply ship Altmark, used to accommodate allied sailors from vessles sunk by the Graf Spee, off Norway.
- 1942 - German submarines attack Aruba oil refinery
- 1943 - World War II: The USSR reconquers Kharkov.
- 1945 - US forces land on Corregidor, complete conquest on March 3
- 1945 - Venezuela declares war on Nazi Germany
- 1948 - Miranda, famous moon of Uranus, photographed for 1st time.
- 1959 - Fidel Castro becomes the 16th Prime Minister of Cuba after overthrowing Fulgencio Batista
- 1961 - China uses its 1st nuclear reactor
- 1961 - US satellite Explorer 9 is launched
- 1965 - Pegasus I launched to detect micro-meteors
- 1966 - France performs underground nuclear test at Ecker, Algeria
- 1968 - Beatles George Harrison, John Lennon and their wives fly to India for transcendental meditation study with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi
- 1978 - 1st Computer Bulletin Board System (Ward & Randy's CBBS, Chicago)
- 1982 - Assembled STS-3 vehicle moves from Vandenberg AFB to launch pad
- 1989 - Egypt, Iraq, Jordan & North Yemen form common market

From KO Archives

Tower Blasts Deepen Power Crisis

Qazigund Fault Forces Extra Shedding

Observer News Service

S RINAGAR: Power supply to the valley seemed to take a turn for the worse this evening with possibility of total darkness looming in event of blasted transmission towers near Banihal town collapsing under the impact of heavy snowfall in the region. Authorities were keeping their fingers crossed in anticipation of the damaged towers withstanding heavy snowfall or fierce winds. They were under stood to be charting desperate contingency measures, including temporary restoration, to tide over the grim situation arising out of the blasts. The picture would be dear by tomorrow.

According to reports, mysterious blasts reportedly triggered by some 'unidentified persons' on Sunday and Monday morning damaged the double circuit 132-KV Udhampur-Srinagar transmission tower in 220-KV Kishenpur Pampore transmission tower in Banihal area. All the four legs of the 132-KV tower are damaged while the 220-tower, though standing, has tumbled towards one side. Their total collapse can cut off the entire power import to the valley, leaving it with a mere 70 megawatts (mw) - 50 mw from Uri project and 20 mw from other power stations - barely sufficient for the essential loads only.

When contacted, the power development commissioner, Vinod Sharma, told Kashmir Observer this evening a of engineers led by a superintending engineer visited the spot yesterday and, after collecting some equipment, left Udhampur again today to start restoration of the damaged towers, possibly tomorrow. Strengthening of the 220-KV tower and re-erection of the 132-KV tower would be taken up simultaneously. He said it would require a minimum of three days to effect the repairs.

Meanwhile, Sharma said, extra curtailment was resorted to in the valley this evening following a snag in one of the circuits of 220-KV transmission line between Qazigund and Wanpoh. With a big question marie banging over the 17-hour relief in six days provided to the valley consumers last week, the availability of energy is likely to be badly disrupted. At present, the power import has come down to 230 mw which includes 50 mw from Uri project. The availability had] gone up to 350 mw last week, mainly due to fall in demand, facilitating the 17-hour relief.

Sharma said one of the double circuit 132-KV Udhampur-Srinagar transmission line had been in a state of disrepair for the past two years. This leaves the department with only one circuit of this line besides the 220-KV Kishenpur-Pampore transmission line to import power to the valley. However, Sharma insisted the valley was getting "more than 55 per cent" of the available power against Jammu's 45 per cent. He attributed the longer spells of darkness in Kashmir to tighter con-sump turn" compared to Jammu region's load.

It may be recalled two transmission towers of both 132-KV and 220-KV lines at Qazigund were blasted in similar circumstances on the night between January 13 and 14 last year followed by blasting of 400-KV tower at Kuptora near Wagooria in Budgam district a day later. The power supply to the valley was disrupted for more than a fortnight till the temporary restoration equipment was airlifted from Delhi for erect the damaged towers. Curiously, the blasts have been taking place only in winter.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 16 February, 2001)

Public Notice

The mother's name of my ward namely Mohammad Annas has been wrongly written in school records as Laila Bilal while as the correct name is Qurmullah Ashraf which needs immediate correction . If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Scholar's School Natipora Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Qurmullah Ashraf
M/o Mohammad Annas

mko

Public Notice

The mother's name of my ward namely Arbeena Bilal has been wrongly written in Matriculation Examination Certificate under Roll No 18151272 as Umrum Ul Laila while as the correct name is Qurmullah Ashraf which needs immediate correction . If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the Concerned School within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Qurmullah Ashraf
M/o Arbeena Bilal

mko

Goa Records 79% Voting In Assembly Polls



Press Trust Of India

PANAJI: Goa on Monday registered a very high voter turnout of 78.94 per cent in polling for the 40 Assembly seats which passed off peacefully with no untoward incident reported from any part of the state which witnessed a multi-cornered contest, officials said.

They said this was preliminary voter turnout and the final figure may cross 80 per cent as electoral fate of 301 candidates were locked in EVMs which will be opened on March 10 for counting. To check the spread of COVID-19, voters were provided hand gloves at polling stations.

Addressing a press conference, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Kunal said the highest voting was registered in the Sankhalim constituency in North Goa at 89.61 per cent, while the lowest voter turnout was 70.20 per cent at Benaulum in South Goa.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant is the BJP candidate from Sankhalim.

The poll officer said the overall voter turnout stood at 78.94 per cent.

"This is a tentative percentage of voting, while the exact data would be available later. The voting percentage may cross 80 per cent after adding votes polled through ballot papers," CEO Kunal said.

Over 11 lakh people were eligible to cast their votes. They include 9,590 persons with disabilities, 2,997 aged over 80 years, 41 sex workers and nine transgenders.

The Vasco constituency had the

highest number of 35,139 voters, while the Mormugao seat had the lowest number of voters at 19,958, he said.

Kunal said "13,150 postal ballots were issued and a total of 12,546 people voted through postal ballots." He said polling was held at 1,722 booths, of which 105 were manned by only women personnel (also called 'pink booths') and eight by differently abled persons.

The CEO said 80 candidates had criminal antecedents, which were published in the media before the voting as per a Supreme Court mandate.

A senior police official said the election was conducted in a peaceful manner and no serious complaint of any malpractice was received.

He said three FIRs related to different incidents were registered during the day.

In one of the incidents, the car of a person, who is related to a political leader, was set on fire at Bicholim, while at Sanvordem a person was found with cash, the police official said.

He said the total cash seizure was 6.06 crore during the period of code of conduct which came into force in early January.

Besides, liquor worth 3.57 crore was also seized during the period, the official added.

Earlier in the day, Chief Minister Sawant claimed the BJP will win more than 22 seats in the 40-member Assembly and said he will continue to hold the top post if his party forms the next government in the coastal state.



Karnataka Girls Tell High Court

'Hijab An Innocent Practice Of Faith, Not Religious Jingoism'

Press Trust Of India

BENGALURU: The Muslim girls who have moved the Karnataka High Court against the ban on Hijab argued on Tuesday that wearing the headscarf was an innocent practice of faith and not a mere display of religious jingoism.

They also requested the full bench of the HC to make a lee-way to attend classes with headscarves as the court's interim order had suspended their 'fundamental rights'.

Dwelling on Article 25 of the Indian constitution before the bench, senior counsel Devadatt Kamat, appearing for the Muslim girls from Udupi pre-university college, said the article speaks about 'freedom of conscience'.

"This (freedom of conscience) has a lot of depth in that term. The essence of Article 25 is it protects the practice of innocent faith and not a mere display of religious identity or jingoism," Kamat told the full bench of the High Court comprising Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi, Justice J M Khazi and Justice Krishna M Dixit, constituted to hear the Hijab row following commotion and violence on campuses as it turned out into a Hijab versus saffron row.

IT IS AN extra-legal authority, which is now endowed with the power to prescribe the uniform," the lawyer argued.

Article 25 deals with "Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion".

The Muslim girls have challenged the Karnataka government's February 5 order which restricted students from wearing cloths that could disturb peace, harmony and law and order.

According to the counsel, wearing Rudraksha or putting a Nama (Tilak or vermilion on the forehead) was similar innocent faith as people who put it feel protected by the divine and a connect with the creator.

"To counter that (Hijab), if somebody wears a shawl (saffron shawl), they will have to show whether it is a display of religious identity alone or is it something more. If it is sanctioned by Hinduism by our Vedas, Upanishads, our scriptures, our lordships are duty bound to protect it. If not, then the Article 25 does not protect," Kamat argued.

The senior lawyer also cited Sonali Pillai case where she

had challenged in the court the school's order restricting her from wearing a nose ring stating that if they allowed it the school will become 'a parade of the horrors'.

The girl won the case in the court of law, Kamat said.

Stating that the an innocuous practice of wearing head scarf and not changing the uniform was a facet of freedom of speech and expression, he sought an exemption to wear headscarf as it was in line with right to freedom of speech and expression.

Kamat also questioned the argument of the government banning clothes that could lead to commotion saying that it was an impermissible argument.

He pleaded before the bench not to continue its interim order restricting the students from wearing Hijab or saffron scarves as it 'suspends the fundamental rights' of the Muslim girls.

Arguing on behalf of Muslim girls, advocate Ravi Varma Kumar said his clients were restricted entry on December 28 citing code of conduct of the institution. According to him, the government has not yet taken a decision on the uniform dress code, Kumar further said the government order on February 5 did not speak about Hijab per se.

Sanctions Must Be Lifted, Says Iran Amid Ongoing Nuclear Talks

Agence France-Presse

TEHRAN: Iran on Monday said an agreement to revive a 2015 nuclear deal with world powers was "at hand", but insisted that sanctions be "truly lifted" through ongoing talks in Vienna.

After months of on-off negotiations, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell added to hopes of a renewed deal.

"I strongly believe an agreement is in sight," he said on Twitter, after a call with Iran's foreign minister.

"The moment has come to make an ultimate effort and reach a compromise," Borrell said, in his dual capacity as coordinator of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the deal agreed between Iran and world powers in 2015.

But Iranian President Ebrahim



Raisi, receiving Irish foreign and defence minister Simon Coveney on Monday, said that "sanctions must be truly lifted" in the ongoing negotiations to revive the deal in the Austrian capital.

"The rights of the Iranian people must be respected," he added. The talks involve Iran, Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia di-

rectly, and the United States indirectly.

The 2015 deal offered Tehran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear programme, but the US unilaterally withdrew in 2018 under then-president Donald Trump and reimposed stiff economic sanctions, prompting Tehran to begin rolling back on its commitments.

Army Chief Holds Talks With Saudi Arabian Commander



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Army Chief General MM Naravane on Tuesday held extensive talks with Commander of Royal Saudi Land Forces Lt Gen Fahd Bin Abdullah Mohammed Al-Mutair with a focus on expanding bilateral defence and military ties.

Lt Gen Al-Mutair was also accorded a guard of honour at the South Block lawns before the talks.

"Lieutenant General Fahd Bin Abdullah Mohammed Al-Mutair, Commander, Royal Saudi

Land Forces, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia called on General MM Naravane #COAS & discussed ways to further enhance the bilateral defence cooperation between the two countries," the Army tweeted.

The defence and security ties between India and Saudi Arabia have been on an upswing in the last few years.

The Chief of Army Staff visited Saudi Arabia in December 2020 in the first-ever visit by a head of the 1.3 million-strong Army to the strategically important Gulf nation.

Indonesia Teacher Gets Life In Jail For Raping 13 Students, Impregnating 8



Agence France-Presse

BANDUNG, INDONESIA: An Indonesian court Tuesday sentenced a teacher to life in prison for the rape of 13 students, in a case that has drawn national attention to sexual abuse in some of the country's religious boarding schools.

Bandung district court in West Java found Herry Wirawan guilty of raping 13 female students, all minors, and impregnating at least eight of them.

During the trial, it was revealed he had raped the children -- many from poor families attending the school on scholarships -- over five years.

The pattern of abuse came to light when the family of a female student reported Wirawan to the police for raping and impregnating their teenage daughter last year.

The revelations have sparked national outrage, with a senior government official saying President Joko Widodo has paid special attention to the case.

Prosecutors had asked for chemical castration and the death penalty for the accused.

Wirawan, 36, arrived in court in handcuffs and kept his head down as judge Yohannes Purnomo Suryo Adi sentenced him to life in prison.

He had asked the judge for leniency to allow him to raise his children.

The court also said restitution for victims will be paid by the government.

Chairman of National Child

Protection Commission Susanto told AFP that Tuesday's verdict meant that "justice for the victims has been served."

More than 25,000 Islamic boarding schools -- known as "pesantren" -- are dotted across Indonesia, with nearly five million students living and studying in the dorms.

Teaching is often regimented -- students attend regular classes during the day and continue Koranic studies and Islamic teachings into the evening.

The Bandung rape case has shone a spotlight on the problem of sexual abuse in some of the schools, with 14 out of the 18 cases reported to the National Child Protection Commission last year taking place in pesantren.

Last year two teachers at a boarding school in South Sumatra were arrested for sexually abusing 26 male students over the course of a year.

And in 2020, a boarding school leader in East Java was sentenced to 15 years in prison for sexually assaulting 15 female students.

President Joko Widodo last month called on parliament to approve a bill on the "elimination of sexual violence", which seeks to combat sex crimes and provide justice to victims, including in cases of marital rape.

The bill was drafted in 2016 but has run into delays, with Islamic groups complaining it promoted promiscuity and conservative lawmakers calling for it to criminalize extramarital sex and LGBT relationships.

SHORT TAKES

Lalu Convicted In Rs 139-Cr Treasury Case



RANCHI: A special CBI court on Tuesday convicted Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) supremo and former Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad in the Rs 139.5 crore Doranda treasury embezzlement case. The quantum of punishment would be pronounced on February 18, a CBI counsel said.

The court had on January 29 completed hearing arguments in the case and reserved its verdict. Prasad had earlier been sentenced to 14 years in jail in four other fodder scam cases.

"Lalu Prasad has been convicted. The quantum of punishment will be pronounced on February 18," the CBI counsel said. The court of Special CBI Judge SK Shashi had completed the hearing against 99 accused including Prasad, which was under way since February last year. Arguments on behalf of the last accused, Shailendra Kumar, were completed on January 29. All the accused had been ordered to be physically present in the court on the day of the verdict.

Of the original 170 accused in the case, 55 have died, seven have become government witnesses, two have accepted the charges against them and six are absconding. Apart from Prasad, former MP Jagdish Sharma, the then Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairman Dhruv Bhagat, Animal Husbandry Secretary Beck Julius and Animal Husbandry Assistant Director KM Prasad were the main accused. The Rs 950-crore scam relates to fraudulent withdrawal of public funds from government treasuries in various districts of undivided Bihar. -PTI

Man Who Married 14 Women In 7 States Arrested In Odisha



BHUBANESWAR: A sexagenarian who allegedly married 14 women in seven states in a span of 48 years was arrested in Bhubaneswar on Monday, police said.

It is also alleged that the man who hails from a village under Patkura police station in Odisha's Kendrapara district took money from these women before fleeing. The arrested man, however, denied the charges.

The accused had married for the first time in 1982 and took a second wife in 2002. He fathered five children from these two marriages, Bhubaneswar Deputy Commissioner of Police Umashankar Dash said. Between 2002 and 2020, he befriended other women through matrimonial websites and married them without knowledge of the other wives, Mr Dash said.

The man was staying in the Odisha capital with his last wife, who was a school teacher in Delhi. She, somehow, came to know of his earlier marriages and lodged a complaint with the police. He was arrested from his rented accommodation. On the modus operandi of the accused, the DCP said he used to target middle-aged single women, mostly divorcees who sought companionship on matrimonial websites. Later he acquires their money before abandoning them. - PTI

Assam Specialty Tea Auctioned At Record 99,999 Per Kg



GUWAHATI: A specialty tea from Assam's Dibrugarh district was on Monday auctioned at 99,999 per kg, a record price fetched for the second time in two months for such a high-end variety of the commodity from the state, officials said. 'Golden Pearl' tea, owned by AFT Techno Trade, went under the hammer at Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC), he said.

"Assam Tea Traders bought one kg of the specialty tea at 99,999," GTAC Secretary Priyanuz Dutta told PTI. The handmade delicate variety of the commodity was produced at Nahorchukbari at Lahowal, near the Dibrugarh airport, Tea Association of India's Assam unit Secretary Dipanjol Deka said.

"The rare variety was offered in sale number 7 and lot number 5001 of the day at the auction," he said. 'Manohari Gold' from Manohari tea estate was sold at 99,999 per kg at the GTAC on December 14 last year.

This was the highest price fetched in tea auction in the country, the official said. In August 2021, 'Golden Needle', manufactured by Donyi Polo Tea Estate of Arunachal Pradesh, and 'Golden Butterfly' of Dikom Tea garden of Assam were sold at 75,000 per kg in separate auctions. -PTI

Advisor Khan Asks LMD To Create Awareness On Consumer Rights



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Khan on Tuesday directed the

Legal Metrology Department to conduct awareness programmes in rural and far flung areas to educate consumers about their rights and duties besides informing traders about selling of good quality and exact quantity goods to the consumers.

Advisor Khan passed these directions while reviewing the working of Legal Metrology Department, an official spokesperson said. Commissioner Secretary, Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Zubair Ahmed was also present.

Controller, Legal Metrology, M K A Drabu, gave a detailed presentation highlighting status of implementation of various schemes and programs by the department.

According to the official spokesperson, Advisor Khan took stock of revenue realization by the department besides enquiring about the number of inspections carried out to safeguarding the interests of consumers.

It was informed in the meeting that the department has realized Rs.203 lakh as fee for authenticating the accuracy of weighing and measuring instruments. Besides, an amount of Rs.140 lakh has been realized as composition money from 4469 erring traders under different provisions of law.

Advisor emphasized the need for fixing targets as per the actual establishments in the market. He directed the officers to ensure that after identifying the establishments in rural area, which are presently not covered by the department, should be covered for inspections within a month's period. He asked for according special focus to far flung area so that poor people get value for their hard earned money.

Advisor directed the officers of Metrology and Oil Marketing Companies for conducting joint inspection so that system may be streamlined and common masses are benefited.

Advisor directed for conducting consumer awareness programmes in rural and far flung areas to educate consumers about their rights and duties. Similarly, traders must be made aware about selling of good quality and exact quantity goods to the consumers, he added.

He was informed that the department has made substantial progress on minimising regulatory compliance burden. Hewas further apprised that Legal metrology is among the leading departments to comply action plans under Business Reform action plans. Advisor directed for streamlining the system of online applications for departmental licences.

The meeting was also attended by all Joint Controllers, Deputy Controller and Assistant Controller of both the divisions.



MAGAM ERUPTS OVER QASEM SOLEIMANI DESECRATION

Army Officer Apologises, Asks People to Maintain Calm

Observer News Service

MAGAM: Protests erupted in central Kashmir on Tuesday after an Indian Army soldier allegedly torched a portrait of slain Iranian commander Major General Qasem Soleimani.

As part of ongoing Army census in Kashmir, the soldiers of Army's 2 Rashtriya Rifles on Tuesday entered a residential house at Malbuchan village in Budgam district.

"They lifted a portrait of Soleimani from the wall of the house and later set it ablaze," eyewitnesses and officials said.

The torching of Soleimani's portrait angered the villagers, triggering massive protests which soon spread to the town centre of Magam on Srinagar-Gulmarg highway. Angry protesters even clashed with the police and paramilitary personnel, reports from the area said.

Soleimani, a revered figure among Shia Muslims for his key role in securing sacred Islamic sites in West Asia from ISIS and mobilising resistance against American occupation was assassinated by the US drone strike in 2020 when he was traveling to Iraq. The portraits of iconic Iranian general adorn Shia homes and habitations the world over.

"The Army soldiers desecrated our martyr Soleimani during



Army officer visited the area and apologised for desecrating the picture of Qasem Soleimani.

a census. Army has to apologise otherwise protests will continue," said a protester.

A police spokesman later said that allegation against security forces at village Malbuchan in Magam was being "enquired into" and that the situation was "under control."

Army officer visited the area and apologised for desecrating the picture of Qasem Soleimani.

Commanding Officer 2 RR, Colonel Raman later visited the area and apologized on behalf of his subordinate to the agi-

tated people gathered there.

"I appeal all the people to maintain calm," the officer said.

The Army officer was accompanied by Sub District Magistrate, Pattan. The officer also raised the photograph of the slain Iranian military commander evoking loud slogan-eering from the crowds.

Deputy Inspector General of Police, Central Kashmir Sujit Kumar said that the "issue has been sorted out and the situation is normal now."

Railways Makes Breakthrough In Ambitious Kashmir Project

Press Trust Of India

BANIHAL/JAMMU: The Northern Railways has achieved a line and level breakthrough of the longest 12.758 km tunnel between Sumbar and Arpinchala station on the Katra-Banihal section under the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, an official said on Tuesday.

The breakthrough was achieved on the T-49 tunnel, which is going to be the longest tunnel of the Indian Railways surpassing the 11.2 km-long Pir Panjal tunnel constructed by USBRL on the Banihal-Qazigund section.

The South portal of tunnel T-49 is located in the picturesque Sumbar village at a distance of 45 km from district headquarters Ramban at an altitude of 1,200 metres, while the North portal is located near Arpinchala village in Khari Tehsil at an altitude of 1,600 metres, he said.

He said the T-49 tunnel has two tubes -- one is the main tunnel and the other is the escape tunnel. It has been constructed using a modern drill and blast technique called the New Austrian Tunneling Method.

He said the cross-section profile of the tunnel is modified to give it a horseshoe shape.

In order to facilitate construction of the longest tunnel, three adits -- Umihal Adit, Hingni Adit and Kundan Adit -- have also been constructed. The tunnel has a ruling gradient 1 in 80 and a designed speed of 100 Kmph, the official said.

An adit is a horizontal or near-horizontal passageway to a larger underground excavation for the purposes of ventilation, water removal, or auxiliary entrance.

As per the international standards, he said, the escape tunnel constructed parallel to the main tunnel is connected by cross passages at an interval of 375 metres to facilitate rescue and restoration work.

The work of construction was entrusted by Northern Railways to M/s IRCON International limited which has assigned works in two packages to Messrs HCC and Messrs AFCONS, the official said.

The HCC is executing the work on the 5.1 km stretch length from the south portal and AFCONS is executing the work on the 7.658 km stretch from the north portal.

Several challenges were en-

countered in the course of construction such as shear zone, perched aquifer, and highly jointed rock mass, rock problems of squeezing and high ingress of water, the official said.

During construction activities of the tunnel, the local population was employed by agencies for various works, which has changed the overall socio-economic landscape, he mentioned.

Of the proposed 272-km-long USBRL project, 161 km has already been commissioned and operationalised in phases, with the first phase of the 118-km Qazigund-Baramulla section commissioned in October 2009, followed by 18 km Banihal-Qazigund in June 2013 and 25 km Udhampur-Katra in July 2014.

The work on the intervening stretch of 111 km between Katra and Banihal is under progress, the official said, adding the Katra-Banihal section is traversing through the hilly terrain of the lower Himalayas, where geology is a major challenge.

It has several major bridges. Long tunnels are under different stages of construction, the official said.

DC Shopian Discusses Formulation Of District Capex Plan 2021-22

SHOPIAN: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Sachin Kumar Vaishya on Tuesday chaired a meeting regarding the formulation of District Capex Plan, 2021-22 and also reviewed the progress and achievements made under last year's plan at Mini Secretariat Arhama, here.

The Chief Planning Officer, Shopian, Khurshed Ahmed Khatana, SE, R&B, SE, PHE, Ex. Engineers, AEES, ACD, CMO, CEO, JKPC and other senior officers of the concerned departments apprised the DDC about the expenditure made so far under District Capex and the status of work projects.

The DC asked the officers to formulate the plan well in due consultation with their higher authorities of the district. He said that the main focus of the developments must be an outcome in terms of benefit to the public.

He emphasised that the District Development plan should include only such works that address the issues faced by the common people.

The DC directed the concerned to expedite the pace of

works to ensure cent percent utilization of funds released and also development to achieve the physical targets.

The utilization of funds shall be in a proper manner and the deadline should be strictly adhered to, the DC added. Moreover, he instructed them to remove all identified bottlenecks for smooth and speedy execution of the projects/schemes.

Highlighting the importance of timely completion of projects, DC stressed upon the concerned to ramp up the pace of works on undertaken projects for their timely completion and without compromising the quality standards.

The DC also assured the concerned of full support for sustainable and holistic development in the district.

He directed the officers to work in convergence mode with others for consolidation of funds so that jobs created under MGNREGA etc. are utilized in ongoing developmental works.

During the meeting, the DC was given detailed progress of the works taken up under the District Capex Plan 2021-22.

DC Kupwara Reviews Implementation Of Self Employment Schemes

KUPWARA: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Imam Din on Tuesday convened a meeting of concerned officers to review the implementation of self employment schemes under Mission Youth in the district.

Addressing the meeting, the DC stressed upon the officers to ensure maximum coverage of unemployed youth of the district under different schemes of

Mission Youth for generation of self employment avenues.

He directed them to work in close coordination and help the youth in getting enrolled under various ambitious schemes of the Mission Youth.

ADC Kupwara, Ghulam Nabi Bhat; Dy. Director Employment, CAO, CAHO, DSHO, besides, officers from DIC, Bank and other concerned attended the meeting.

Court Rejects Bail Of 'Faith Healer', Sent To Judicial Custody

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A local court in north Kashmir's Bandipora district on Tuesday rejected a bail plea of a faith healer arrested for allegedly duping women of cash, jewellery and other valuables.

According to reports, the court of Judicial Magistrate Bandipora rejected the bail application of the accused, who was earlier granted bail on January 08.

The instant application was moved by APP seeking cancellation of interim bail granted to the accused / non - applicant by the court vide order dated 08-01-2022 in the FIR no 25/2021 US 420, 452, 380 IPC on the grounds that the accused is also involved in other FIRs of same nature in various other police stations.

Objections were called from other sides who filed objections to the instant applications. The counsel for the accused resisted the instant application on the ground that prosecution has filed a misconceived and false application.

"The alleged act of the accused is not only against an individual but it is offense against the whole society, which is very serious in nature, because we are living in a society where

people especially women folk have a lot of faith in PEEK BABAS, but when this faith is violated / exploited by some fake persons, then it strikes at the core of our faith," the court observed.

"Prima facie it seems that the accused has been repeating the same offence again and again and even he has been successful in his misconceived adventure" reads the order.

The accused has been granted bail in all other FIRs, but time and again he has been repeating those offences not only in his parent district but cases of similar nature have been reported against him in other districts also.

"Thus, keeping in view, the behavior and the track record of the accused and the fact as to how he has been exploiting the faith and innocence of women in carrying out his mala - fide intentions, I am of considered opinion that such accused is not entitled to the concession of bail and therefore the instant application deserves to be allowed, which is accordingly allowed by cancelling the interim bail granted in favour of the accused by this court vide order dated 01/12/2021."

Accused has been sent to judicial custody at District jail Baramulla--(KNO)

DC Anantnag Holds Meeting On Reopening Edu Institutions

ANANTNAG: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr Pi-yush Singla on Tuesday chaired a meeting here regarding the arrangements and preparedness for reopening of educational institutions in the district.

At the outset, Dr Singla said that the education system was affected by the global pandemic and after a gap of two years educational institutions can resume normal functioning. However, necessary precautions must be taken on the ground and there should be no laxity in ensuring adherence to COVID Appropriate Behaviour.

All the institutional heads were directed to ensure that social distancing is observed on campus and appropriate rosters are formulated to achieve this. Adequate hand sanitizers and hand wash facilities must be available on all campuses.

Chief Medical Officer, Anantnag was directed to facilitate random screening of students and conduct testing on a regular basis.

The DC said that teams are being constituted at district level to maintain strict vigil in this regard and the heads of the institutions must ensure the directions are implemented on ground in letter and spirit.

SSP Anantnag deliberated on issues related to maintenance of law and order. It was decided that disciplinary committees will be constituted at the institution lev-

el. Further, the heads of institutions will maintain a nominal roll of the students enrolled at the institution and make arrangements to ensure that outsiders are not allowed inside the campus. The heads of institutions were also directed to install CCTV cameras in the campuses.

Dr Singla emphasized that attendance and punctuality both for staff and students is essential. He said that the institutions shall frame detailed activity plans including debates, seminars, sports activities and the institutions must be abuzz with activities to channel the energy of students in a fruitful manner.

He said that educational institutions are the formative institutions and play an important role in shaping the personality of the students and the staff should facilitate this through academic and co-curricular activities.

Several Principal's of GDCs assured the DC that necessary facilities are present on the campus and they are well equipped to start the academic session. They assured that they will fully cooperate and ensure the directions are adhered to.

The meeting was attended by SSP, ADC, CMO, CEO, Principal GDCs, Principal ITIs, Principals Polytechnic College and Principals of Higher Secondary schools among others.

1000 Govt Schools In Jammu Create 'Happiness Zones'

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Acknowledging the importance of mental health, especially in the post Covid 19 pandemic scenario, more than 1000 Government schools of Jammu Division have created Happiness zones to provide safe and psychologically comfortable spaces within the school premises where students can talk about their feelings and emotions unhesitatingly and in a confidential manner, officials said Tuesday.

These Zones are created as per directions of the Ministry of Education endorsed by Administrative Department School Education, an official spokesperson said. He said more such zones will be created in winter zone schools as the schools reopen after vacations.

"In a first of its kind initiative, Directorate of School Education Jammu has directed all the Schools of Jammu Division from Middle to

Higher secondary to create such happiness zones to provide psychosocial support to students as per Manodarpan guidelines. Trained Faculty Counsellors working in Counselling Cells of these schools are rendering their services in these zones," he said.

MANODARPAN, as per the official spokesperson, is an initiative of the Ministry of Education (MOE) Government of India (GOI) aims to provide psycho-social support and counselling to students for their mental health and well-being during the Covid 19 outbreak and beyond. The Covid pandemic is not only a serious medical concern but also brings mixed emotions and psycho-social stress for all.

"Counselling cell DSEJ is organizing regular capacity development programmes, webinars for Teachers in collaboration with reliable institutions like NIMHANS Bangalore, Department of ICPS, BCPA, Department of Psychiatry



GMCs to develop counselling skills in teachers," he said.

According to the spokesperson, the Principal Secretary School Education Department B.K. Singh has emphasised creating a stress free atmosphere in schools. He recently visited a few of such happiness zones and enquired in detail about the counselling services being provided in schools.

Dr Ravi Shankar Sharma, Director of School Education Jammu stated that students coming to schools after such a long gap may experi-

ence a heightened level of stress, anxiety, and fearfulness along with a wide range of other emotional and behavioural issues due to COVID situation. We need to be prepared to offer students a healthy and psychologically safe environment to safeguard them. Happiness of the child is directly linked with academic outcomes and to improve attention, retention of students we have to ensure mental health, safety and security of students.

Dr. Romesh Kumar Sharma, in charge Counselling cell said that

constitution of happiness Zones in schools will create a culture of individualized guidance and counselling in schools. He added that creation of Happiness zones in schools will go a long way in ensuring overall well-being of students besides providing psychosocial support to them.

Pertinently, Directorate of School Education Jammu through its Counselling Cell has undertaken a lot of initiatives for mental health and well-being of the students.

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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K O V I E W

High Stakes Polls

As expected, Uttar Pradesh polls are turning out to be very polarizing in nature. First, it was Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath saying the election was a contest between 80 percent and 20 percent which was interpreted as a communal dog-whistle. The religious composition of the Uttar Pradesh population is 80 percent Hindus and 20 percent Muslims. Adityanath has since backtracked on the statement saying he was not referring to religion at all. However, the BJP has tried to advance a development agenda as well and also promised freebies to the farmers. In a statement, the union home minister Amit Shah promised farmers that they would not have to pay electricity fees for five years in case the BJP wins the polls. On its face, it seems a deft strategy on the part of the saffron party to woo farmers who have otherwise been alienated from the party following the enactment of controversial farmer laws. The union government later withdrew the laws after farmers in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh determinedly protested against them for a year. Two phases of the polls have already been held in the UP and according to home minister Shah, the Samajwadi Party has received fewer votes.

There are several more phases to go and it is difficult to say which way the election will go. From the looks of it, the Samajwadi Party led by redoubtable Akhilesh Yadav appears a strong contender. Many political analysts are predicting Yadav's victory, even though the opinion polls held last month have indicated that the BJP would retain the power. An ABP-CVoter poll showed that the BJP will again win in the UP but not without the party losing over 100 seats it won in the last state elections. In Punjab, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Congress (INC) are locked in a neck-and-neck fight, but without either hitting the majority mark. Goa, on the other hand, is set to go the BJP's way.

Be that as it may, the ongoing polls in Uttar Pradesh are of profound significance not only for the future of the state but also for India as a whole. In UP, the election is high stakes contest between the BJP led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Samajwadi Party. Congress and Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party are not considered in the reckoning. At stake is not only the mundane question of who rules UP over the next five years but where India is headed as a country. A win for a party other than the BJP will go some way to arrest the disarray among opposition parties and give them the confidence to stand up to the overarching persona of PM Modi. But a victory for the BJP will yet again reinforce the political invincibility of Modi and further power his political cult. The election outcome will be announced on March 10 and we can't help but keep our fingers crossed.

OTHER OPINION

More Mischief

Freedom of the press is not just important to democracy; it is democracy. Those words from the iconic American broadcast journalist, Walter Cronkite, who was often dubbed the 'most trusted man in America', are particularly relevant in India today as the news media faces fresh constraints in the world's largest democracy. The Press Information Bureau has finalized new rules under which journalists can lose their accreditation if they act in a manner "prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the state, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality". The bureau – the government's interface with the media – can also suspend the accreditation of reporters and editors if they are charged with a "serious cognizable offence". Accreditation, available only to experienced journalists after rigorous background and security checks, allows access to many public offices and policymakers. That access is an important ingredient in enabling reporters to independently unearth or confirm facts and expose lies and wrongdoing by those in power. Simply put, media accreditation represents a recognition that facilitating a free press to function is central for a democracy to truly thrive.

Yet, under the new rules, it is the government that will decide whether a journalist has run afoul of its interpretation of national security considerations or morality. A ruling administration can bring charges against a media professional to justify the suspension of accreditation. This is dangerous and is likely to be misused by those in power – whichever political formation they might subscribe to. The growing crackdown on journalists in Kashmir portends the dark future of the news media across India if these new accreditation rules take root. Editors and reporters in the Valley have been arrested and charged on national security grounds for being critical of government policies. Often, the evidence cited against Kashmiri journalists has involved little more than social media posts that question New Delhi's military-led approach to the region. The new accreditation rules could have a chilling effect on the ability of journalists to challenge the government, since doing so could mean the risk of losing access vital for their livelihood. Governments do not do the news media a favour by allowing journalists to do their job. A free press is the vaccine that helps immunize countries against the excesses of their rulers. And no vaccine can work if its antibodies – journalists – are rendered toothless.

Telegraph India

The Return Of Global Inflation



CARMEN M. REINHART
CLEMENS GRAF VON LUCKNER

WASHINGTON, DC – Inflation has come back faster, spiked more markedly, and proved to be more stubborn and persistent than major central banks initially thought possible. After initially dominating headlines in the United States, the problem has become a centerpiece of policy discussions in many other advanced economies. In 15 of the 34 countries classified as AEs by the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook, 12-month inflation through December 2021 was running above 5%. Such a sudden, shared jump in high inflation (by modern standards) has not been seen in more than 20 years.

Nor is this inflationary surge limited to wealthy countries. Emerging markets and developing economies have been hit by a similar wave, with 78 out of 109 EMDEs also confronting annual inflation rates above 5%. That share of EMDEs (71%) is about twice as large as it was at the end of 2020. Inflation thus has become a global problem – or nearly so, with Asia so far immune. The primary drivers of the inflation spike are not uniform across countries, particularly when comparing AEs and EMDEs. Diagnoses of "overheating," prevalent in the US discourse, do not apply to many EMDEs, where fiscal and monetary stimulus in response to COVID-19 was limited, and where economic recovery in 2021 lagged well behind the AE rebound.

Moreover, the pandemic-induced bust-and-recovery patterns differ markedly across country income groups, with recovery being defined as an economy's return to its 2019 level of per capita income. About 41% of high-income AEs met that threshold at the end of 2021, compared to

vanced and developing economies alike is global supply chains, which continue to be severely affected by the events of the past two years. Transport costs have skyrocketed. And unlike the oil-based supply shock of the 1970s, the COVID-19 supply shocks are more diverse

ONE DEVELOPMENT THAT IS common across advanced and developing economies is the increase in commodity prices alongside rising global demand. As of January 2022, oil prices were up 77% from their December 2020 level

28% of middle-income EMDEs and just 23% of low-income countries. But the disparity between advanced and developing economies is even greater than this comparison suggests, because many EMDEs were already experiencing declines in per capita income before the pandemic, whereas AEs were mostly at new highs. While many EMDEs have marked down their estimates of potential output over the past two years, there is little to suggest that their inflationary pressures are driven primarily by overheating in the aftermath of significant policy stimulus.

One development that is common across advanced and developing economies is the increase in commodity prices alongside rising global demand. As of January 2022, oil prices were up 77% from their December 2020 level. Another major issue affecting ad-

and opaque, and therefore more uncertain, as the World Bank's most recent Global Economic Prospects stresses.

In EMDEs, currency depreciation (owing to lower inflows of foreign capital and downgrades of sovereign credit ratings) has contributed to inflation among imported goods. And because inflation expectations in EMDEs are less anchored and more attune to currency movements than in AEs, the passthrough from exchange rates to prices tends to be faster and more pronounced.

Another important factor is food price inflation. During 2021, 12-month increases in food prices exceeded 5% in 79% (86 out of 109) of EMDEs. While AEs have not been immune to rising food prices, just 27% of them experienced price hikes exceeding 5%. Worse, food price in-

AS THE old saying goes, "A stitch in time saves nine." In the meantime, the resurgence of inflation will continue to reinforce inequality, both within and across countries

flation also generally hits lower-income countries (and lower-income households everywhere) particularly hard, which makes it tantamount to a regressive tax. Food accounts for a much larger share of the average household consumption basket in EMDEs, which means that inflation in those economies is likely to prove persistent. Today's higher energy prices will translate directly into higher food prices tomorrow (through higher costs for fertilizer, transport, and so forth).

Although most EMDEs no longer have fixed exchange rates – as they did during the inflation-prone 1970s – the scope for "truly independent" monetary policy in small open economies remains limited, floating exchange rates notwithstanding. The risk of them importing inflation from the global financial centers is not some relic of the past.

Indeed, the most salient feature of today's inflation is its ubiquity. In the absence of global policy options to resolve supply-chain disruptions, the task of addressing inflation is left to the major central banks. While the US is poised to undergo a modest tightening (by historical standards) in 2022, this is unlikely to be sufficient to rein in price growth. As Kenneth Rogoff and I document in a 2013 paper, much of the inflation persistence of the 1970s stemmed from the US Federal Reserve's tendency to do too little, too late (until Paul Volcker's arrival).

To be sure, a more timely and robust policy response from major central banks would not be good news for EMDEs in the short run. Most would experience higher funding costs, and debt crises could become significantly more likely for some. Nonetheless, the longer-term costs of delaying action would be greater. Because the US and other advanced economies failed to tackle inflation quickly during the 1970s, they ultimately needed far more draconian policies, which led to America's second-deepest post-war recession, along with a developing-country debt crisis.

As the old saying goes, "A stitch in time saves nine." In the meantime, the resurgence of inflation will continue to reinforce inequality, both within and across countries.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer . The article was originally published by Project Syndicate The authors are Chief Economist of the World Bank and is an economist at the World Bank

OBSERVER
MAIL

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The Dehumanization Of Humankind

This practice of objectification is causing serious damage. In our time we, the modern people, are becoming a lot more interested in things and non-living objects than whatever is alive and natural. We are turning everything into objects, be it concrete or abstract, by throwing away the liveliness in it; this objectification does not exclude even our friends and family. Our obsession with machines and gadgets has reached the level where the trees, the rivers, the sky, our friends, families -- none of them can draw our attention any longer like they once did. When at home, after a long day, we now prefer to look at our phones instead of talking to our parents or family members. Scrolling on social media, looking at pictures and videos of other people -- which hardly represent who those people are -- seems more appealing to us than the living beings that are present just next to us. When on a tour, the natural sight of the mountain or the sea fails to satisfy us. The pristine beauty of nature cannot prevent us from succumb-

ing to our constant urge to bring out our smartphones or cameras, and spend our precious time taking pictures instead of enjoying the scenery with our own eyes. We choose to see nature through the camera lens. Our interest is in transforming the beauty of nature into an object called a picture, so that we can show them to others as evidence of our being there. The pictures and videos have become more likely to win our primary attention instead of the subjects of those pictures or videos. Our enthusiasm for robots knows no limits, and we are researching assiduously so that robots become more humane, ironically; not realizing that this entire process of humanizing robots itself is mechanizing us, humans, and turning us into automatons. We are trying our best to make robots of other animals as well, although, at the same time, forcing actual living animals -- of blood and flesh, that roamed on this planet for thousands of years -- to go extinct, for instance the tigers. All of these are taking place at the expense of mother nature and all her children, all that lives. Our passion

for lifelessness has grown much stronger than our passion for life. Very recently, in my village a photographer died a tragic death of hypothermia on a street ; he lay on the street for nine long hours, but nobody cared. People would certainly have noticed if it had been an iPhone 13 Pro Max, perhaps. The modern-day civilized automatons are indifferent to life, but attracted to machines like magnets. Our children, parents, fiancée/fiancee have also become some sort of commodities to us which can be used for consumption in one way or another. One can often see parents boasting about the academic or some other success of their child, comparing them with other children, flaunting how much they love their son or daughter. The entire notion of comparison in terms of better or worse should come into play when one is dealing with some nonliving thing. How can one life be qualitatively better than another? However, the success of one child can be better or worse than that of another, for that success is measured based on some abstract objects, mostly numeri-

cal values. Hence, it is quite clear that those parents are not very interested in their child who is a living being; rather, their concern is for his or her "success" which has no living structure. If that little child was not so successful, the scenario would have been entirely different; the parents wouldn't have anything to show off about their child to others, as they didn't love him or her for who he or she is. The subject of their love is not their child, as is expected; rather his or her so-called lifeless success. We have transformed everyone and everything into some sort of instrument with properties that have use-value. Here, that child is an instrument to gain vague status. We human beings no longer present ourselves for who we are, rather what clothes we put on, what cars we ride, our bank balance, the apartments we live in, the restaurants we dine in, the universities we went to, the grades we have achieved -- all these get prioritized at our expense. The objectification or the commodification has no end in sight.

Mool Raj

“WITH THE EMERGENCE OF COVID-19 STUDENTS confessed that they are comfortable with online, or virtual lectures but after genuine results, there was a terrible decline in traditional intelligence and exemplary excellence. The scent of physical classrooms cannot ever be replaced with virtual classrooms

Living In Asimov’s World?

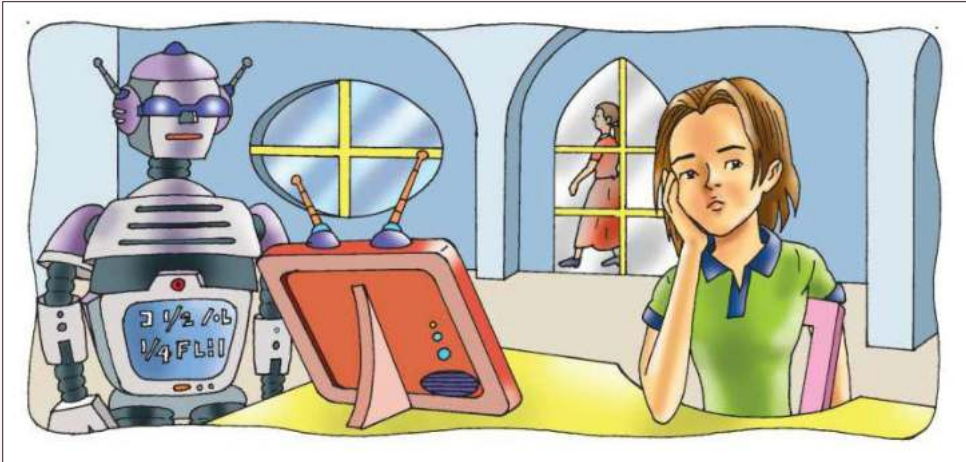
Remembering Isaac Asimov’s ‘The Fun They Had’ In Our World



“ I STILL REMEMBER THE way Margie thought about old times when there were teachers in the form of humans. She remembered how her grandfather’s grandfather played with the kids in the neighborhood and the good thing was they recognized themselves

IMTIYAZ AHMAD SHAH

“Evolutions are imperative in every domain, but scholastic refinements should be limited to physical classrooms where students could interact with instructors comprehensively. If we do not succeed in preserving physical classrooms, there is the possibility of technological productivity.” Isaac Asimov was a great science-fiction writer and an erudite clairvoyant who pushed science fiction beyond its rims. He rationalized everything quite realistically about future schools and virtual classes. Everything is going according to what he had predicted. In the world we live in, our kids have become victims of the virtual realm. There is no doubt that the world is advancing rapidly as far as the technological revolution is concerned, but at the same time, things are worsening and ameliorating our customary intellectualism to zero. We went to a lot of trouble to regain awareness of our artistic recreations, understanding dexterity, and the essence of the teacher-student relationship. While interacting with students of grade 9 – I came through a lesson formulated by Issac Asimov under the title ‘the fun they had’ and the lesson took me far from my governed vision because opportunism, certainty, and plausible declarations are sufficient for us to know the general realities. Having taught the whole lesson and to my great amazement, the students were startled to know what would happen in the future. Prior to this, they had no idea what forthcoming academics and classrooms would look like? With the emergence of COVID-19 students confessed that they are comfortable with online, or virtual lectures but after genuine results, there was a terrible decline in traditional intelligence and exemplary excellence. The scent of physical classrooms cannot ever be replaced with virtual classrooms. Asimov spoke about the reality of futuristic schools and how mechanical teachers could



easily replace physical teachers. The schools would resemble abandoned structures, faded rainbows, and wild as wounded barracudas. Students would become hefty tech-savvy products of the mechanical world. Not only that, there will be no books or libraries. The social connection would disappear and there would be no friendship on earth. Students would hardly recognize each other apart from their brothers and sisters. It is clear that we will face drastic changes in almost every area, particularly in the education sector. There are widespread disappointments in mechanical and virtual classrooms. As always, in class, we interact with various students and ask them for help. We laugh, yell and travel with them whenever the bell rings. In a futuristic school, each camp would be governed by gadgets and robots of high technology. The lessons would be stored according to the level of the student, and there would be virtual libraries where students could have access to millions of books in one fell swoop. I still remember the way Margie thought about old times when there were teachers in the form of humans. She remembered how her grandfather’s grandfather played with the kids in the neighborhood and the good thing was they recognized

themselves. This is a serious concern that may take us nowhere. At present, we feel worthy and stable under the protection of technological savagery, but it could soon prove us wrong. We are in danger of losing our natural understanding and purity as we become associated with mechanical teachers. We have programmed these mechanical teachers, and they can never be our promising teachers, friends and caretakers. These gadgets can never comprehend our natural programming. We have invented such gadgets, and we empower them to govern us. We are providing them opportunities to teach us, doesn’t it sound nasty? The world can prove Asimov just at some point in the future, or we can say that we are advancing to chaos and descent. Things are evolving rapidly and we are merely spectators. We need to stop and begin to conserve our natural and traditional institutions. We must revive physical classes and teach our children more about physical classes instead of virtual classes. Let us not allow Asimov win the race, let not his prophecies govern us. In conclusion, we have to look at this as a matter of priority.

The writer is a student of English Literature and an independent scholar

The loft walls are painted in brilliant pink, on the upper floor of a house nestled in a cozy Dallas suburb. Bright cupcakes, cute pastries, and party favors pepper a burnished stall specially designed by a social media event planner. Balloons with “It’s a Boy!”, fill the back corner of the room. Gift bags with the names of all those in attendance sit on a table near the front door. The guests arrive. The women have manicured nails, sparkly white teeth, ritzy clutches, and shiny heels. A few don hijabs. The men aren’t as flashy, but they are exemplary corporate types: button down shirts with rolled up sleeves, a nice watch perhaps, with boat shoes or loafers. A Botox injection fills their upper lips—effective enough to amplify their curvaceous smiles but stealthy enough to avoid too much attention. Unlike their forebears, when these folks go abroad for work, they style themselves as expats – never immigrants. Also interspersed among them are doctors, rising high priests of academia, accountants, and musicians. Some of them are running in elections on a platform of inclusivity and equity for various disadvantaged communities, confident in their ability to fit their religious convictions into the manifestos of the local Democratic (or Labour) machine. When these figures win, they commemorate their success as the first Muslim in America or Britain to have won a seat on the city council. Or the ten-person school board of a sparsely populated county in the Colorado Rockies (and perhaps one day, in the far-off locales of Northern Ireland). Or some permutation thereof. Some guests arrive as couples, bringing dolled up infants who bear greater resemblance to thespian barbies than they do to human babies. When these infants mature into toddlers and young children, the posturing becomes even more extravagant—private schools, weekend little leagues, and curated playdates. Despite the purported celebration of Muslim diversity—of claiming to add a new dimension to American social and political life—every single act in the name of inclusion becomes adjusted to damning, irresistible conformity. Their political sympathies lie with the likes of Bernie Sanders or Jeremy Corbyn, as they attempt to generate copious

The Mashallah Muslims

Shahrukh Khan



amounts of passive income by investing in real estate in a moment of profound economic inequality. They rally in support of the disabled and against body shaming while simultaneously advocating so-called modest fashion—somehow always advertising the clothing products in the form of slender Instagram influencers. They pride themselves in building brands that ethically source sustainable goods and services as they rejoice in their admission to institutions and affiliation with prominent public figures that they may otherwise harbor exceptional disgust for. Embedded in the gaiety of their conversations are words that have a long history in the Islamic world, but ones that have recently been permuted to fit the flavor of the newly emergent lifestyles that American and British Muslims inhabit. “Mashallah” enjoys special popularity. Mashallah is a compliment of sorts (and literally means “what God has willed”). The word is used to express happiness about or gratitude for something. For example, it’s common courtesy to say Mashallah when

“ULTIMATELY, the Mashallah Muslims become entirely exchangeable with other products—or minority groups—in a bazaar of multicultural representation.

someone shares good news or an achievement. It is the present tense corollary of “Inshallah” (“if God has willed”). The usage of Mashallah today is quite alien to how the Muslims of yesteryear—from the marauding horsemen of the Central Asian steppes to the meek fishermen living in sleepy villages on the banks of the Niger—used it. The word was never implicated in a thoroughly commercial infrastructure. It can be said that Mashallah

was tied to a desire for salvation on the Day of Judgment. To exercise loyalty to Allah and commitment to prophetic example. Sometimes, Mashallah was an attempt to avert the notorious wayward gaze, a call for divine protection against potentially feeling jealous or lustful when faced with the happiness of another. Now Mashallah has come to stand in for and celebrate occurrences and accomplishments that fit squarely into a representative politics and pluralistic society that selectively incorporate elements of Islam. Elements that satisfy the predicates of liberal political rule. The circumstances in which the materially-inspired Mashallah is deployed have ripened into a celebration of the precise qualities of human life that Muslims seeking acceptance in Western democracies so frequently criticize. Mashallah is not simply—or even any longer—a linguistic act of worship. Mashallah is a convenient marker of social differentiation and prestige. It’s a kind of sexy that makes rounds in hip hop videos and Bollywood songs.

At some point “sameness infects” the Western Muslim, and she no longer maintains the distinction for which contemporary multicultural politics gives her importance. [1] And so, keeping relevant requires giving uniquely Muslim acts, words, and cultural artifacts a new meaning utterly inexplicable to most Muslims in the world. Hence, the beliefs, values, and norms that spanned the vast social and theological universe of Muslim experience for centuries are—like the Muslims who embodied them—buried in the past. Consulting the moral resources of the past is often cast as an act of swimming in irresponsible and misguided nostalgia, but it can be useful in addressing the many problems—war, inequality, famine—that now the Mashallah Muslims not only contribute to but benefit from as well. These Muslims fill the ranks of companies that enthusiastically call upon them to strive for professional excellence, ones that nourish their career mobility. These Muslims are encouraged to remain authentically Muslim—to pray in the designated quiet room, have their foreign-sounding names pronounced correctly, and feature in the employer’s latest marketing brochure. In return they are expected to contribute to the development of more effective supply chain dynamics and organizational efficiencies that may end up relieving Muslims in the Global South of their jobs at the neighborhood toy factory. For so many, one of the most important questions is whether any of this is good or bad. But that’s the wrong question to ask. These newly emergent sensibilities associated with Mashallah will stubbornly persist and spread. As Muslims bring their aspirations into the fold of mainstream Western societies in seeking acceptance, their ambition—and the practices and norms that distinguished them to begin with—is disabled, trademarked, and fed back into the commerce of mass reproduction. The pursuit of acceptance becomes “the only natural, decent, and rational one.” [2] Ultimately, the Mashallah Muslims become entirely exchangeable with other products—or minority groups—in a bazaar of multicultural representation.

Traversing Tradition

Study Sheds Light On How Personal Commonalities Can Foster Closeness Of Political Views

Agencies

It is natural to feel close to people who are similar to us, especially those who share our interests or partake in related activities. This natural feeling of closeness can be funnelled to reduce political differences and increase consensus on conflictual political topics. That was the discovery made by an international team of researchers led by Dr Stefano Balietti.

Dr Balietti is a social scientist from Heidelberg University who uses computer-based methods to study human group behaviour. The study, conducted with the participation of US researchers from the University of California in Santa Cruz, Microsoft Research in New York and the University of Pennsylvania, was published in the journal PNAS.

In the online study with participants from the United States the scientists investigated the circumstances under which people change their own attitude towards a certain topic. According to the study, having points in common helps people to move towards one another, even in the case of extremely divisive political issues and despite strong personal convictions.

"Scholars have long assumed that the informal, respectful exchange between individuals with differing political views contributes to strengthening trust in democracy and avoiding societal division. That is particularly true regarding discussions between people who are friends and come from a similar social background.

"Conversely, when people are suddenly



confronted with the political view of strangers, as particularly happens in the social media, the resultant discussions often take a negative turn," explained Dr Balietti, a researcher at the Alfred Weber Institute for Economics of Heidelberg University and a fellow at the Mannheim Centre for Euro-

pean Social Research (MZES).

With their study, Dr Balietti and his colleagues explored the question of whether individuals change their attitude towards polarising political issues on the basis of personal commonalities, even if they are not acquainted.

The researchers drafted an online experiment on the focus topic of inequality and redistribution of wealth. The first phase began with asking the participants about their personal characteristics, their political leanings and the topic of the experiment. They then composed a short, ar-

gumentative essay in order to persuade "a friend" to assimilate their attitude regarding inequality and redistribution.

A second phase was carried out around six months later with a new group of participants. With the aid of an algorithm, they were allocated to a partner from the first cohort of the experiment based on incidental similarities like age, gender, interests or characteristics, as well as their attitude to the focus topic. They received a computer-generated social media profile of their partner, showing what they had in common, and then read their essay. In the last stage the researchers again asked the two partners about their view of the focus topic and how close they felt towards one another.

"Surprisingly, both participants with strong convictions and those with mild convictions changed their opinion about the focus topic in the direction of the opinion of their partner - independently of their political leanings. This led to a decline in polarisation and, overall, an increase in support for redistributive policies," Dr Balietti reported.

If the two partners felt close based on shared personal features, the probability of assimilating the opinions of their partner rose by 86 per cent. In the long term, the researchers want to discover whether this mechanism based on random similarities can also be used to design social media platforms to counteract hate and disinformation and to foster a respectful exchange of opinion and subsequent consensus-building.

Study Says People With Similar Musical Preferences Bond Well Worldwide

Agencies

People all over the world are known to bond over movies, book preferences, even the way they prefer to work. Research involving more than 350,000 participants from over 50 countries and 6 continents has found that links between musical preferences and personality are universal.

The findings suggested that music could play a greater role in overcoming social division, as well as offering currently untapped therapeutic benefits. The study was published in the 'Journal of Personality and Social Psychology'.

Ed Sheeran's song 'Shivers' is as likely to appeal to extraverts living in the UK as those living in Argentina or India. Those with neurotic traits in the US are as likely to be into Nirvana's 'Smells like Teen Spirit' as people with a similar personality living in Denmark or South Africa. Agreeable peo-

ple part of the world likes the same music as introverts elsewhere, that suggests that music could be a very powerful bridge. Music helps people to understand one another and find common ground."

His study explained why personality traits were linked to musical styles. The researchers accurately predicted that extraversion, which is defined by excitement-seeking, sociability, and positive emotions, would be positively associated with contemporary music that has upbeat, positive, and danceable features. Similarly, they were not surprised to find that conscientiousness, which is associated with order and obedience, clashed with intense musical styles, which is characterized by aggressiveness and rebellious themes.

But one finding was proving to be more puzzling. Greenberg said, "We thought that neuroticism would have likely gone one of two ways, either preferring sad music to express their loneliness or preferring up-



ple the world over will tend to like Marvin Gaye's 'What's Going On', or Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper's 'Shallow'; while national borders cannot stop open people from re-playing David Bowie's 'Space Oddity' or 'Nina Simone'. But it does not matter where a conscientious person lives, they are unlikely to enjoy 'Rage Against the Machine'.

These are the kind of assumptions supported by new research led by Dr David Greenberg, an Honorary Research Associate at the University of Cambridge and a Postdoctoral Scholar at Bar-Ilan University.

Across the world, without significant variation, the researchers found the same positive correlations between extraversion and contemporary music; between conscientiousness and unpretentious music; between agreeableness and mellow and unpretentious music; and between openness and mellow, contemporary, intense and sophisticated music. They also identified a clear negative correlation between conscientiousness and intense music.

Greenberg, who wore many hats as a musician, neuroscientist, and psychologist, said, "We were surprised at just how much these patterns between music and personality replicated across the globe. People may be divided by geography, language and culture, but if an introvert in

beat music to shift their mood. Actually, on average, they seem to prefer more intense musical styles, which perhaps reflects inner angst and frustration."

"That was surprising but people use music in different ways - some might use it for catharsis, others to change their mood. So there may be subgroups who score high on neuroticism who listen to mellow music for one reason and another subgroup which is more frustrated and perhaps prefer intense music to let off steam. We'll be looking into that in more detail."

The researchers also found that the correlation between extraversion and contemporary music was particularly strong around the equator, above all in Central and South America. This could suggest that climatic factors influenced musical preferences and that people in warmer climates tend to have personality traits which make them more likely to prefer rhythmic, danceable music.

Greenberg, who continued to perform as a professional saxophonist, had a very diverse playlist which was typical of people who scored high on openness. He said, "I've always loved jazz and now I'm also really into the music of different world religions, which makes perfect sense based on my personality traits."

‘Lifetime Of Knowledge Clutters Memories Of Older Adults’

Agencies

We often rummage through our brains to remember that 'tiny bit of information' that has the potential to absolutely turn our situation around. When a person tries to access a memory, his brain quickly sifts through everything stored in it to find the relevant information. But as we age, many of us have difficulty retrieving memories. A new study has an explanation for this.

In a review published in the journal 'Trends in Cognitive Sciences', researchers proposed an explanation for why this might be happening: the brains of older adults allocated more space to accumulated knowledge and had more material to navigate when attempting to access memories.

While this wealth of prior knowledge can make memory retrieval challenging, the researchers said, it had its upsidess - this life experience can aid with creativity and decision-making.

Researchers Tarek Amer of Columbia University and Harvard University, Jordana Wynn of Harvard University, and Lynn Hasher of the



University of Toronto looked at several behavioural and neuroimaging studies, which showed that older adults had difficulty suppressing information that was no longer relevant and that when searching for a specific memory, they often retrieved other, irrelevant memories along with it. The studies also showed that when given a cognitive task, older adults relied more heavily on previous knowledge than younger adults did.

While the researchers focused primarily on the difficulties that these cluttered memories might pose, they also highlighted a few situations in which these crowded memory-scapes may be useful. "Evidence suggests that older adults show preserved, and at times enhanced, creativity as a function of enriched memories," the researchers wrote. They further hypothesized that older adults may be well served by their prior knowledge when it came to

decision-making, where they could pull on their accumulated wisdom.

With continued study and increased understanding of how memory works in older adults, researchers were hopeful that they may be able to find new ways to help them. They wrote, "It is possible that the increased binding and richer encodings of older adults can even be leveraged to improve older adults' learning and memory."

‘Men With High Body Fat May Be At Risk For Osteoporosis’

Agencies

In a new study, researchers have found that men with high body fat may be more likely to break a bone than those with normal levels of body fat.

The findings of the research were published in the Endocrine Society's 'Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism'.

Most studies have shown positive or neutral effects of body fat mass - the weight of fat in your body - on bone health. Lean mass is the entire weight of your body, including organs, skin and bones, minus the fat. Health care providers often assume people with higher body weight have high bone density and are at low risk of fracture, and these patients are less likely to be screened for osteoporosis.



"We found that higher fat mass was related to lower bone density, and these trends were stronger in men than women," said Rajesh K Jain, MD, the University

of Chicago Medicine in Chicago, Illinois. "Our research suggests that the effect of body weight depends on a person's makeup of lean and fat mass and that high body

weight alone is not a guarantee against osteoporosis."

The researchers analysed the bone mineral density and body composition data of 10,814 people under 60 years old from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) 2011-2018. They found a strong positive association between lean mass and bone mineral density in both men and women. Conversely, the fat mass had a moderately negative association with bone mineral density, especially in men.

"Health care providers should consider osteoporosis screening for patients with high body weight, especially if they have other risk factors like older age, previous fracture, family history, or steroid use," Jain said.

Tamara Vokes of the University of Chicago Medicine is the co-author of the study.

JKSRLM: A Mission For Promoting Self-Employment Among Rural People

JKSRLM provides training, financial support to SHGs to make them self sufficient



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), a poverty alleviation project implemented by Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India is focusing on promoting self-employment and organization of rural people especially poor. The basic idea behind this program is to organize the poor into Self Help Groups (SHGs) and make them capable for self-employment.

In Jammu and Kashmir this programme is being operated as the Jammu-Kashmir State Rural livelihood Mission (JKSRLM).

The SRLM aims to reduce poverty in the J&K by building strong grassroots institutions of the poor, engage them into gainful livelihood interventions and ensure appreciable improvement in their income on a sustainable basis. This programme also aims to enable poor to think positively about himself and his family and reap all the benefits of government schemes which ultimately helps him to live a life full of contentment, happiness, and dignity.

JKSRLM's mandate is to reach out to 66% of the rural population across the 125 blocks of Jammu and Kashmir and to provide them sustainable livelihood opportunities and nurture them so that they come out of poverty and appreciate a honourable quality of life. The core values

which guide all the activities under JKSRLM are inclusion of the poorest and substantial role of the poorest in all the process, transparency and accountability of all processes and institutions, proprietorship and key role of the poor and their institutions in all the stages – planning, implementation and monitoring and lastly community self-reliance and self-dependence.

In J&K, there are number of projects running under JKSRLM in which Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP) and Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP) are making remarkable progress.

MKSP is a sub-component of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-NRLM (DAY-NRLM), with an aim to empower women in agriculture. Its objective is to strengthen small agriculturists through promotion of sustainable agriculture practices like Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture (CSMA), Non-Pesticide Management (NPM), Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF), Pashu-Sakhi Model for doorstep Animal Care Services and Sustainable Regeneration and Harvesting of Non-Timber Forest Product.

Additionally, the focus of MKSP is on capacitating the smallholders to adopt sustainable climate change resilient agro-ecology, eventually creating a pool of skilled community professionals.

Dir Agri inaugurates AAS, Farm Machinery Bank at Bandipora

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal Tuesday inaugurated first of its kind Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer (AAS) in the District Soil Testing Laboratory (DSSL) of Bandipora. The lab will provide state of the art soil testing facilities to the farmers of the concerned district.

The Director congratulated the department and said that the introduction of these latest facilities at DSSL will hugely benefit farmers and Agri-entrepreneurs of Bandipora district. With the inauguration of AAS at DLSC Bandipora, the department is making every possible effort to make the latest and advanced soil testing facilities available to farmers, he added.

Iqbal said the analysis of soil is a critically important branch of environmental monitoring, the list of harmful chemicals is growing therefore a full spec-

trum of analytical technologies with the most accurate and sensitive analysis is needed.

Chief Agriculture Officer Bandipora, Mohammad Mujtaba Yahya gave a detailed presentation of the progress on the implementation of various centrally sponsored schemes in the district. He also apprised the Director regarding various innovative interventions taken up by the Department in the district.

Yahya said that the Department has already achieved the target of soil testing /issuing of soil health cards to the farmers this year and has issued 7437 soil health cards to the beneficiaries.

Later, the Director visited intensive vegetable development cluster Shahtulpura Shadipora Sumbal and inspected various blocks of the vegetable cluster. He also distributed farm machinery including two tractors among the farmers.

The Director also inaugurated Custom Hiring Centre in sub division Sumbal of district Bandipora.

Despite Rising Inflation, RBI Unlikely To Hike Rates Till August: Report

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Despite retail inflation rising to 6.01 per cent in January, and likely to remain elevated till April, a foreign brokerage report expects RBI to leave key policy rates unchanged throughout the first half of 2022.

Swiss brokerage UBS Securities India sees the policy to change only from the second half wherein the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) may deliver a 50 basis points hike in the second half starting from the August policy.

The official data released on Monday showed that retail inflation spurted to a seven-month high in January at 6.01 per cent, but lower than the previous high of 6.26 per cent in June 2021.

Wholesale inflation stayed in double-digits at 12.96 per cent. The government also revised upwards the CPI inflation for December 2021 to 5.66 from 5.59 per cent.

Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das had said the rise in inflation was primarily due to statistical reasons, especially in the third quarter of FY22, and the same base effect will play in different ways in the coming months.

Das had said the RBI has already factored in high inflation numbers in its recent bi-monthly monetary policy, and retail inflation in January above



6 per cent "should not surprise or create any alarm".

RBI expects retail inflation to soften to 4.5 per cent next fiscal year, while projecting it at 5.3 per cent for 2021-22 and based on this it had left all the key rates unchanged and retained its dovish stance.

Tanvee Gupta-Jain, the chief economist at UBS Securities India said, the latest numbers are on the expected line and the uptick was largely driven by an adverse base effect and continued supply-side constraints.

Core inflation remained sticky at 6 per cent versus 6.1 per cent in the previous month, reflecting gradual pass-through of higher input cost to the consumers.

She also said price pressure in rural areas is higher at 6.1 per cent than in urban areas which were marginally lower at 5.9 per cent.

She expects retail inflation to remain elevated in the 5.5-6

per cent range until April given the massive spike in commodity prices, especially oil, supply-side disruptions along with rising input costs pressures which will keep inflation higher over the coming months.

Though CPI will remain elevated until April 2022, before easing towards 5 per cent from the June quarter, when oil prices are likely to begin to fall on rising supplies, she expects the MPC to keep the repo rate unchanged till the first half of FY23, before delivering the first hike in the August policy and a cumulative increase of 50 basis points hike in the second half.

She said UBS expects that over the next two-three months, supply is likely to remain constrained and the macro backdrop, given the China stimulus, will remain supportive and a material impact of crude prices falling will be visible over the next 6-12 months.

Initiate Next Generation Reforms To Improve Ease Of Doing Biz: FM Tells Sebi

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday asked Sebi to initiate the next generation reforms to improve the ease of doing business and also be prepared to deal with possible market turbulence in the wake of actions by the US Federal Reserve.

Addressing the board of Sebi, Sitharaman appreciated the initiatives taken by the regulator and emphasised the need to take further steps to reduce compliance burden, cost of market intermediation apart from more measures to strengthen investor protection.

She also asked the watchdog to further boost the corporate bond market and also develop green bond market in the context of increasing focus on ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) investments.

Sebi has to "initiate next generation of reforms to improve ease of doing business and be prepared for the possible market turbulence on account of US Fed actions," Sitharaman said.

The minister's remarks come against the backdrop of the Federal Reserve deciding to tighten its monetary policy after a long period of easy money regime and its actions could



impact fund flows into emerging markets, including India.

Sitharaman addressed the board of Sebi in the national capital on Wednesday for the first time after the presentation of the Budget on February 1, according to a release. Sebi Chairman Ajay Tyagi briefed the minister about the major trends and outlook for Indian securities market, including fund raising activities and increased participation of individual investors.

He also apprised the finance minister about the status of implementation of last year's Union Budget proposals pertaining to the capital market.

Further, Tyagi highlighted the enhanced activity of fund raising through capital market to support the overarching

objective of Union Budget towards capital formation in the economy.

After the presentation of the Budget every year, it is customary for the finance minister to address the boards of Sebi and RBI.

Anand Mohan Bajaj, Additional Secretary at Department of Economic Affairs; M Rajeshwar Rao, Deputy Governor at Reserve Bank of India; K V R Murthy, Joint Secretary at Ministry of Corporate Affairs and V Ravi Anshuman, Professor at Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, attended the meeting.

Whole Time Members of Sebi -- S K Mohanty and Ananta Barua -- and other senior officials of the regulator were also present at the meeting.

Exports Jump 25.28% To \$34.5 Bn In Jan; Trade Deficit Widens To \$17.43 Bn



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: India's exports in January rose 25.28 per cent to USD 34.50 billion on account of healthy performance by mainly engineering, petroleum and gems and jewellery sectors, even as trade deficit widened to 17.43 billion, according to data released by the commerce ministry on Tuesday.

Imports grew by 23.54 per cent to USD 51.93 billion during the month under review.

Trade deficit, difference between imports and exports, stood at USD 14.499 in January 2021.

Cumulatively, exports increased by 46.73 per cent to USD 335.88 billion during April 2021-January 2022, from USD USD 228.92 billion in the corresponding period a year ago.

Imports during the April-January period expanded by 62.65 per cent to USD 495.75 billion. Trade deficit stood at USD 159.87 billion during the ten-month period as against USD 75.87 billion in the same period a year earlier.

According to the data, gold imports in January 2022 dipped by 40.52 per cent to USD 2.4 billion. Crude oil imports rose by 26.9 per cent to USD 11.96 billion in January.

Exports of engineering, petroleum and gems and jewellery in

January 2022 increased by 24.11 per cent, 95.23 per cent and 13.64 per cent to USD 9.2 billion, USD 4.17 billion and USD 3.23 billion, respectively.

Pharmaceuticals exports, however, dipped by 1.15 per cent to USD 2.05 billion in January.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Vice President Khalid Khan said that going by the current rate of growth, India will exceed USD 400 billion exports target for this fiscal.

FIEO President A Sakthivel, however, said that imports clocking USD 51.93 billion during the month with a growth of 23.54 per cent, is a point of "concern and should be analysed".

The data also showed that the estimated value of service export for January stood at USD 26.91 billion, exhibiting a positive growth of 54.95 per cent over the same month last year. Imports rose by 60.32 per cent to USD 15.83 billion.

"The estimated value of services export for April-January 2021-22 is USD 209.83 billion, exhibiting a positive growth of 25.31 per cent vis-a-vis April-January 2020-21 (USD 167.45 billion)...imports for April-January 2021-22 is USD 121.16 billion exhibiting a positive growth of 27.69 per cent vis-à-vis April-January 2020-21 (USD 94.88 billion)," it said.

Separation Of Chairperson, MD Positions At Listed Cos Will Be Voluntary: Sebi

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: In a significant move, markets watchdog Sebi on Tuesday decided to implement the requirement to separate the positions of Chairperson and Managing Director at listed companies on a voluntary basis and not make it mandatory for now.

The development also comes against the backdrop of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently saying the regulator should hear if Indian companies have a view on the matter even as she made it clear that she was not "giving a diktat".

The top 500 listed entities were required to split the roles of Chairperson and Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer before the April 2022 deadline.

Sebi cited "rather unsatisfactory level of compliance achieved so far" as among the

reasons for the latest decision, which came after its board meeting on Tuesday.

Initially, the listed entities were required to separate the roles of Chairperson and MD/CEO from April 1, 2020 onwards. However, based on industry representations, an additional time period of two years was given for compliance.

"Considering rather unsatisfactory level of compliance achieved so far, with respect to this corporate governance reform, various representations received, constraints posed by the prevailing pandemic situation and with a view to enabling the companies to plan for a smoother transition, as a way forward, Sebi board at this juncture, decided that this provision may not be retained as a mandatory requirement and instead be made applicable to the listed entities on a voluntary basis," it added.



SHORT TAKES

'Register 1000 New Cooperative Societies'

JAMMU: Secretary Cooperative, Yasha Mudgal, Tuesday chaired a meeting to review working of the department.

Secretary stressed for rationalization of staff, strengthening of three tier structure of Cooperative Societies, expediting registration of Cooperatives Societies in general besides Tourism Cooperatives, Women Cooperatives, SC, ST and ALC Cooperatives in particular.

She asked the officers to achieve the target of registration of 1000 new Cooperatives Societies earmarked by the Lt. Governor. She also directed the Deputy Registrar Cooperative Societies to work for registration of at least one cooperative as a model cooperative at district level which will act as an umbrella Cooperative having linkages with other small scale Cooperatives to boost up their business activities.

Regarding merger of Cooperative Acts, Registrar Cooperative Societies J&K informed that a committee shall be constituted to examine the issue and furnish the recommendations in this regard so that the same are submitted to Law Department for vetting.

Secretary directed the Registrar Cooperative Societies (RCS) to furnish a project proposal to the administrative department regarding establishment of Superbazaars in every district headquarter. She asked to engage one Chartered Accountant for existing functional Super Bazaars at Jammu and Kashmir.

Rupee Surges 28 Paise To Close At 75.32 Against US Dollar

MUMBAI: Snapping its five-session losing streak, the rupee surged 28 paise to close at 75.32 against the US dollar on Tuesday amid signs of easing Russia-Ukraine tensions.

A recovery in domestic equities and weakness of the greenback overseas further helped the domestic currency, analysts said.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened on a weak note at 75.60 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 75.31 and a low of 75.72. It finally settled at 75.32, a rise of 28 paise over its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee had slumped by 24 paise to close at an over nine-week low of 75.60.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.37 per cent to 96.01.

On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 1,736.21 points or 3.08 per cent higher at 58,142.05, while the broader NSE Nifty jumped 509.65 points or 3.03 per cent to 17,352.45.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, was trading 2.76 per cent lower at USD 93.82 per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors remained net sellers in the capital market on Monday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 4,253.70 crore, as per stock exchange data. (PTI)

Gold Gains Marginally; Silver Slumps Rs 440

NEW DELHI- Gold in the national capital on Tuesday gained marginally by Rs 32 to Rs 49,619 per 10 grams, capping gains with correction in global gold prices and rupee appreciation, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal settled at Rs 49,587 per 10 grams.

Silver, in contrast, declined Rs 440 to Rs 63,474 per kg from Rs 63,914 per kg in the previous trade.

The Indian rupee closed 29 paise higher at 75.31 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday.

In the international market, gold was trading 0.5 per cent down at USD 1,861 per ounce. Silver was trading marginally lower at USD 23.65 per ounce.

"Spot gold prices for 24 carat gold at Delhi held up by Rs 32 capping gains with correction in global gold prices and rupee appreciation," Tapan Patel, senior analyst (commodities) of HDFC Securities, said. (PTI)

Sensex Claws Back Lost Ground With 1,736-Pt Leap

MUMBAI- Equity indices staged a stellar comeback on Tuesday after suffering their worst losses in a year in the previous session as bargain hunters piled into energy, finance and IT stocks amid signs of easing Russia-Ukraine tensions.

European markets clambered up following reports that some Russian troops near Ukraine were returning to their bases, which could de-escalate tensions between Moscow and the West.

A strengthening rupee further bolstered sentiment, traders said.

Recouping the previous day's losses, the 30-share BSE Sensex surged 1,736.21 points or 3.08 per cent to end at 58,142.05. This was its biggest one-day jump since February 1, 2021.

Likewise, the NSE Nifty soared 509.65 points or 3.03 per cent to settle at 17,352.45.

On the Sensex chart, all 30 shares closed with gains -- with Bajaj Finance, SBI, Bajaj FinServ, I&T, Titan, Wipro and Asian Paints rallying as much as 5.13 per cent.

"A ray of hope that tension between Russian and Ukraine is de-escalating, prompting a smart recovery in global equities. The domestic market followed the trend as oil prices edged lower.

"India's CPI inflation for January rose to 6.01 per cent, breaching RBI's tolerance level due to high food inflation and low base effect, this will be a point of concern for domestic market in the near-term," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. (PTI)

'Superb Response To Govt's Semiconductor Manufacturing Push'

MUMBAI- Union Minister for Electronics and IT Ashwini Vaishnaw on Tuesday welcomed the "superb" response from the industry for the government's semiconductor manufacturing initiatives.

Speaking at the IT industry grouping Nasscom's strategic review press conference, Vaishnaw also exhorted the industry to "double down" on its efforts.

The Union Cabinet had on December 15 approved a Rs 76,000-crore scheme for promoting semiconductor and display manufacturing which focuses on giving capital support and production-linked incentives to the industry. The decision had come amid growing realisation of the dependence of the country on imports from countries like China, and also amid disruptions in the global supply chain which have deeply impacted the auto industry.

Vaishnaw's comments came a day after the minerals and natural resources-focused Vedanta announced a pact with contract manufacturer Foxconn on the semiconductors front. In the past, the Tata Group has also evinced interest in the area.

"Very happy that within such a short time frame, superb response has been received from the semiconductor industry participants," Vaishnaw said. (PTI)

Jammu Admin Holds Coordination Meeting Of All DCs & SSPs

Reviews Enforcement Of Minor Minerals' Rates, CAB, SRO-43 & Land Related Issues Of Police Dept

Agenceis

JAMMU: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Dr Raghav Langer and Additional Director General of Police Jammu zone, Mukesh Singh on Tuesday co-chaired a coordination meeting of Deputy Commissioners, Senior Superintendents of Police to review measures taken by them to curb illegal extraction of minor minerals, implementation of Covid SoPs and resolving land and other related issues of Police Department.

The meeting was attended in Div Com office in person by SSP Jammu, Chandan Kohli; Director Geology and Mining, O P Bhagat; Assistant Commissioner

General Jammu, Additional Commissioners with Div Com, Assistant Commissioners and other concerned officers, while Deputy Commissioners and SSPs of other districts of division participated in the meeting through video conferencing.

While reviewing mining related issues, the Divisional Commissioner instructed the DCs, DMOs to develop an effective mechanism to keep a close check on illegal mining and take legal action against the perpetrators. He asked for holding District level multi department task force meetings periodically for reviewing the enforcement measures.

The ADGP also directed the SSPs to activate Nakas, ensure

random checking of GST bills, colour coding forms and also provide Police assistance to the officers whenever required.

The Div Com asked for proper demarcation of mining blocks after it was informed that the same has not been done in some districts. The DMOs, Revenue officials were asked to ensure that mining is done within demarcated space.

The Div Com also directed that the District level task force including DCs, DMOs to randomly conduct field visits to the notified mining blocks to check form A and issue show cause notices to contractors in case of violations, if any. He further asked to devise multiple measures to check illegal mining like

activation and strengthening of Nakas, installation of CCTVs etc.

The Div Com also instructed the DCs to ensure that there was no overcharging of minerals from the public.

The officers also reviewed pendency of SRO 43 cases in the districts and directed the Deputy Commissioners to send a consolidated list of cash compensation for further proceedings.

Meanwhile, the Div Com and ADGP also reviewed implementation of Covid appropriate behavior in the districts and the DCs, SSPs apprised about the status of fine collections.

The status of issuance of warrants under Public Safety Act and their execution was discussed in

detail in the meeting.

Later, the officers also discussed in detail the pending land issues of the Police department regarding establishment of Police Stations, Police Posts, Housing Colonies, accommodation etc.

The Divisional Commissioner instructed the DCs to expedite the process of preparation of revenue papers, follow all the land acquisition, requisition cases of Police so that the requisite land was transferred to the Police department for various departmental purposes.

The Div Com and ADGP highlighted the importance of institutions of DC & SSP in a district and exhorted all officers to work in close coordination.

Chairman SSB Chairs 198th Board Meeting Of JKSSB

Several Withheld Recommendations Of Various Candidates Released By The Board



JAMMU: Chairman, J&K Service Selection Board, Khalid Jahangir today chaired 198th Board meeting of J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB) here to consider various matters pertaining to release of withheld recommendations of candidates for several Division cadre/District cadre posts of different departments and other related issues.

The meeting was attended by Mohammad Shafiq Chak, Nazir Ahmad Khwaja, Pritam Lal Atri, Harvinder Kour, Ashiq Hussain Lily, Narayan Dutt; Members of SSB; Controller of Examinations, Ashok Kumar; Secretary SSB, Sachin Jamwal; Special Secretary Law, Jang Bahadur; Administrative Officer Jammu, Manta Rajput and Under Secretary, JKSSB, Harjinder Singh.

During the meeting various agenda items related to release of withheld recommendation of candidates for the Division/District cadre posts of Sub-Inspector, Commercial Taxes (State Taxes Department), Assistant Compiler(Finance Department)posts, Depot Assistant and Class-IV under PM package for Kashmiri Migrants and Non-Migrant Kashmiri Pandits, release of withheld recommendations of Candidates for the post of Panchayat Accounts Assistant

(District cadre) and cancellation of the candidature of candidates for the same posts were brought for consideration of the Board and appropriate decisions were taken thereon, after due deliberation.

During the meeting the board approved release of withheld recommendations of nine candidates for the posts of Sub-Inspector Commercial Taxes (Sales Taxes Department), 11 candidates for the post of Assistant Compiler(Finance Department), 16 candidates for the post of Depot Assistant and eight candidates for the post of Class-IV under PM package for Kashmiri Pandits and Non-Migrant Kashmiri Pandits, after they submitted the requisite documents meeting/fulfilling various shortcomings /deficiencies with respect to eligibility for the concerned advertised posts.

Moreover, the Board also decided to declare candidature of seven candidates as not eligible for the post of Account Assistant Panchayat due to non-possession of requisite prescribed qualification / eligibility criteria on or before the prescribed Cut-off date after issuing several Notices and providing ample opportunity to the candidates to submit the requisite documents.

CBI Questions TMC MP Dev In Connection With Cattle Smuggling Case

Kolkata: The Central Bureau of Investigation on Tuesday questioned Trinamool Congress MP and actor Deepak Adhikari, who is popularly known by his screen name Dev, for around five hours in connection with its probe into a multi-crore cattle smuggling racket operating along the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal, a source in the agency said.

The actor-turned-political appeared before CBI sleuths at the agency's Nizam Palace office here at around 11 am, he said.

"Dev was interrogated in two sessions and asked about his possible involvement in the case. Officers tried to find out whether Enamul Haque, the prime accused of the case, was known to him or not. The actor was also quizzed on whether he

received any gift from him," the CBI source told PTL.

The MP's statement would be verified with the findings gathered by the officers of the central agency during the investigation, he said.

Dev's name had surfaced several times during interrogation of those accused in the case, the source said.

The TMC MP from Ghatal in West Bengal's Paschim Medinipur district claimed that he cooperated with the CBI officials during the questioning.

"I will not be able to tell you much about the interrogation. They asked me whether I know one particular person or not. My statement was recorded. I do not think they (CBI) will call me again," the actor told reporters before he left the CBI office.

Students Of College Of Art Start Online Petition Against Merger With Ambedkar University Delhi

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: A section of students of College of Art has started an online petition to Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal and Delhi University vice-chancellor to stop the merger of the college with city government-run Ambedkar University.

The Delhi University was informed that the office of L-G has in principle approved the merger of College of Art (CoA) subject to its de-affiliation from the varsity.

Meanwhile, the varsity has not approved the de-affiliation with its executive council opposing the move. The online petition said Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD) does not have reservations for Scheduled Tribes from outside Delhi.

"The fee structure of AUD is three to four times more than the current structure of CoA. Student-training



in fine arts is already expensive and if the College of Art merges with AUD, students will face a major crisis and won't be able to afford the education," it said.

The petition also said that students of College of Art were not asked or informed by the faculty members about the merger.

"This act is totally undemocratic and highly unethical. The students of this college have a right to influence the process of decision-making regarding the college. We live in a democracy, not a monarchy.

Same should go for College of Art, Delhi," read the petition.

The admission process for 2021-22 academic session could not be held due to the tussle over de-affiliation.

"We demand to stop the de-affiliation process and want that the Delhi University direct the College of Art administration to immediately start the process of admission for the academic year 2021- 2022 and fill all the seats of BFA and MFA courses under the affiliation of University of Delhi," it said.

"Therefore, we also demand from honourable Lieutenant Governor of Delhi and respected Vice Chancellor of Delhi University to take all steps to stop the attempt of Delhi Government to merge College of Art with Ambedkar University, Delhi," it added.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

No Corona Death

patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 445 from Jammu Division and 492 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 during the last 24 hours.

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

PM To Preside

with the industries department is being allotted to investors who have deposited the fee and submitted the detailed project reports and the process is likely to be completed by February 20 in the run up to the groundbreaking industrial investment ceremony.

A new dawn will usher in J&K under the leadership of Prime Minister the industrialists have shown their interest and a lot of jobs will be generated. We have made necessary changes in our laws while Rs 1 lakh crore worth road and tunnel projects are in progress to provide modern infrastructure, he said.

Seeking cooperation of all sections of the society, he said. You have to support the government efforts to make the atmosphere conducive. I assure you of economic development, progress and social justice.

He said the government is fulfilling the aspirations of all sections of the society and I am saying it with confidence that we are moving forward to ensure accountability, transparency and responsive administration.

Terming electricity a prerequisite for economic development, the Lt Governor said J&K has a lot of capacity for power generation which was not fully tapped over the years, while the distribution and transmission system was also in a very bad shape.

After I took over, we started work in a systematic way to improve distribution and transmission and also made attempts to tap resources for power generation with the whole hearted support of the central government. We have 3500 Mega Watt power available and by 2024, another 2500 MWs will be added, he said, adding that within the next one-and-a-half years, two major projects will be completed which will make J&K self-reliant in the power sector.

He said out of 128 sub-projects taken under Prime Minister's Development Package to improve transmission and distribution system, 134 were completed and rest of the 54 are being completed by March end.

Sinha said his administration is making attempts to provide relief to the people of both the divisions of Kashmir and Jammu who used to suffer due to power outages during winter and

summer.

Providing electricity to the consumers is the responsibility of the government but the people have also a responsibility to pay their bills on time. We are installing electricity meters and they need to support the department as there is no option to give free electricity, he said.

However, the Lt Governor said his administration will have a sympathetic view of the condition of the poor and the farmers.

Wishes 'Good Sense'

their work which they have done over 70-75 years. The whole country is proud of them," the LG told reporters on the sidelines of a function here.

He was responding to a question about media reports that Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao had said he would like to know the truth about the surgical strike.

"God should give good sense to such people so that they have good opinions about the country and the Army," Sinha said.

On protests and filing of objections by associate members over a draft proposal of the Delimitation Commission that was set up to redraw the assembly seats of the Union Territory, he said India is a democratic country where everyone is free to speak.

"The Election Commission is a constitutional body and the Delimitation Commission works in accordance with the delimitation act enacted by Parliament. We have a democracy and a Constitution which gives everyone the freedom to speak," he said.

Sinha said that if the associate members have any objection, they should file it before the commission. The report will be out in public domain and if an ordinary person feels that there is a mistake, he should also raise his objection, the LG said.

"This is the beauty of our democracy," he said.

'Electricity Theft

cutting down losses and reporting the offenders to the authorities.

The LG made these remarks while inaugurating 20 Power distribution projects costing Rs 41 Cr at Bajalta, here, an official spokesperson said. The LG, he said, maintained that these projects will address peak season shortage and ensure sustained economic activities.

"Our aim is to make the power department of J&K UT self-sustaining and reduce power theft which is proving to be cancer for this sector," Sinha said, as per the spokesperson

"I appeal to the people to help the administration in controlling theft, reducing wasteful consumption, cutting down losses and reporting the offenders to the authorities," he added.

Terming the installation of smart

meters as the need of the hour, the LG, as per the spokesperson said that the move will ensure that people of J&K get good quality & reliable power; address the needs of poor, rural areas, agriculture and industrial sector, and usher in an era of uninterrupted power supply.

Highlighting the remarkable progress attained by the UT in power sector, Sinha, he said, observed that the unprecedented achievements in power generation, transmission & distribution sectors in the last one year have completely overhauled J&K's power infrastructure which remained dilapidated for several decades.

"The government is planning to invest Rs.12,000 Cr for capacity augmentation, upgrading the transmission and distribution systems to remove all supply constraints, strengthen electrification assets and deliver electricity through underground wires in the capital cities of Jammu & Srinagar," the LG said.

"The UT Government is working on detailed plans in a systematic manner for achieving reliable, quality, and sustainable power supply. We will generate 2500 MW additional electricity by 2024 to ensure energy security for the people of J&K UT," he added.

According to the spokesperson, the LG said that last year 60 MW capacity augmentations were achieved in the region. By March 31 this year, he said, additional 200 MW capacities will be added in our energy basket.

"We are addressing the shortage of infrastructure with renewed vigor with focus on inclusiveness and bridging divides. Our growth model has multi-dimensional objectives to produce a wide-spread flow of benefits, ensuring access to essential services for all sections and expansion of quality employment," Sinha said.

"For the first time in decades, the Government is focusing towards capacity augmentation of Grid Sub-stations in J&K, with augmentation work on 21 Sub-Stations completed last year and another 21 will be completed by 31 March, 2022. Work on upgradation of Gladni Grid sub-station which is considered as the Mother Grid station of Jammu division will also be completed by next month," he added.

Moreover, the LG, as per the spokesperson said that 134 out of 188 sub-projects of power transmission and distribution have been completed and the remaining 54 are in the final stage of completion.

"New projects worth Rs 400 crore were started for strengthening the transmission sector," he added.

The LG also said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid a solid foundation for a better future, rapid economic and sustainable growth of Jammu and Kashmir, the Lt Governor said.

"The present dispensation with its

citizen-centric policies and reforms in every sector has empowered the people of the UT. We have also changed the Land use policy to empower farmers. Gair Mumkin Khad land issue has been resolved to benefit the people of the UT," Sinha said, as per the spokesperson.

The LG, he said, congratulated the officials of the Power Development Department, and the people of the region for the new power projects.

1,000 Register

more pilgrims between 200 to 300 in numbers are in pipelines and hopefully they all will be included.

He said that so far no pooling of the number of the pilgrims who will leave for Hajj has not been shortlisted and it will be done most probably in the next 10 to 20 days.

About the fresh guidelines, he said that no new guidelines have been received as of now from the Saudi government.

Mir said that as of now it has not been decided that the last date of submission of forms/ registration will be extended or not but as of now those around 300 pilgrims are in the pipeline.

"In case the competent authority takes a call to extend the date of registration by some more days it will be announced for the good of all," the Hajj officer said.

Earlier, the Hajj officer informed that separate guidelines for Hajj this year will be issued once the Saudi government releases them given the Omicron variant infection threat.

The Hajj officer had said that all the pilgrims mandatorily must be vaccinated and before leaving for Hajj here they will undergo COVID-19 testing.

"Two vaccines of India including Covishield and Covaxin as approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO) are the acceptable vaccines for Hajj this year," the Hajj officer had said.

"We don't accept the registration forms of pilgrims who are not vaccinated. It's mandatory and a priority in the ongoing situation," he said.

Regarding the Hajj guidelines, he had informed that during Hajj the Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) issued by the Saudi Arabia government will be exercised and as of now the native SOPs are in place including the online registration process given the Omicron variant.

He also informed that in the year 2019, around 17,000 pilgrims had registered for Hajj.

Compared to the figures in the ensuing year the number of pilgrims has come down given the infection scare across the globe and Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Both J&K and Ladakh recently have reported a huge spike in daily infection cases in the ongoing 3rd wave of a pandemic while the cases since past one

week have gradually declined.

Colleges Reopen

this first-time experience of online classes was more than a disaster as there were more losses than the gains during the entire period.

Insha, another college student, said that attending academics physically after a huge gap was joyous as she was able to meet her friends and witness lectures offline.

"Moreover, remaining confined to four walls was mentally disturbing. We badly needed this opportunity to resume classes offline. We hope that there is no untoward incident which would hamper normal work in colleges," she said.

Pertinently, the Jammu and Kashmir higher education department on December-23 announced winter vacation for all degree colleges of Kashmir division and winter zones of Jammu division from December-27-2021.

Islamic University

October 2021, but shifted to online teaching during the winter break.

During a meeting chaired by Vice Chancellor, Prof. Shakil. A. Romshoo, the spokesperson said, it was resolved that all the faculty members of the University will resume their duties on Feb 16, though online teaching will continue as usual until offline class work resumes from 21st Feb.

"Furthermore, all the Principals and departmental Heads were instructed to ensure that COVID Appropriate Behaviors are strictly enforced on campus in accordance with all appropriate protocols, UGC guidelines and government advisories," the spokesperson said.

He further said that only students who have had both the vaccinations doses will be permitted in the classrooms, and the university has established a system for random testing and screening of the students, faculty and other staff to prevent the spread of COVID on campus.

Kashmiri Student

between different groups) and other relevant provisions of the IPC.

College in-charge principal VK Jain said the student, who hails from Jammu and Kashmir, has been admitted in BCom First Year under a special scholarship scheme of the central government.

The college management immediately informed the police after it came to know about the objectionable video, he said.

Senior officials of the state Higher Education Department and the district collector were also apprised about the issue, Jain said.

He said there was no tension in the college.

Engineer Falls

laid a trap during which Ghulam Hassan, a junior engineer in the rural development department, was caught red-handed while accepting Rs 8,000, an official said.

A spokesman of the ACB said the complainant had alleged that Hassan had been inordinately delaying the bill for the work executed by him under MGNREGA and 14th Finance Commission at Kunanposhpura village in Trehgam block of Kupwara.

He had been demanding Rs 8,000 as his commission from the complainant.

Upon receiving the complaint, prima facie offence under section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, was found made out. Consequently, a case was registered at ACB police station, Baramulla. Subsequently, a trap team was constituted and it caught Hassan red-handed, the spokesman said.

Hassan was arrested and taken into custody by the ACB team, he said.

Woman Injured

Locals said that a leopard attacked an elderly woman Asha, wife of Bashir Ahmad of Wakura village, resulting in injuries to her.

Soon after the incident he was soon rushed to a nearby hospital for advanced treatment where doctors referred her to SMHS hospital for advanced treatment.

Wildlife Ranger Feroz Nazir said that they have launched a search after people spotted a leopard roaming.

"A team has been rushed to the area that will take all the measures for necessary intervention," he said—(KNO)

Drug Peddler,

the Deputy Commissioner following a dossier signed against them by SSP Kupwara., according to news agency GNS.

The alleged drug peddler who has been booked under the legislation has been identified as Irshad Ahmad Lone of Kauri Trehgam.

Under PSA, the government can detain a person without trial, in some cases upto two years.

The burglar booked under the PSA has been identified as Basharat Ahmad Khan of Batpora Hyama. As per the police officer, Khan is a notorious thief and his detention under PSA along with that of Lone had become imperative to prevent them from acting detrimental to the interest of the society.

Car Crashes

after it went out of the driver's control.

"The car hit an exhaust fan inside the tunnel injuring driver Roshan Lal. He was referred to the government medical college hospital in Anantnag district by doctors at sub-district hospital Banihal.

RUGBY INDIA SYMPOSIUM FOR EXCELLENCE

KIIT & KISS Are Home Of Rugby In India: Rahul Bose



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: KIIT has set a milestone in promoting Rugby in its domain. Not merely promoting but the efforts by founder Dr. Achyuta Samanta have breathed a huge stimulus to pitchfork this sport in Odisha.

Till the other day when Rugby was seen as an alien activity in the sports repertoire of Odisha, KIIT could inculcate the enthusiasm among many youngsters to take to these sports who ultimately did wonderfully well to uplift the sports in the state's sport arena.

Both nationally and internationally KIIT did it, starting its journey almost 17 years back. A Rugby player of high repute, President of Rugby India, Rahul Bose, a famed Bollywood actor, today remains an ardent lover of KIIT'S endeavour behind Rugby.

The two-day Rugby India Symposium for Excellence (RISE) concluded at KIIT Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar on 14th February 2022. Speaking at the Symposium, Rahul Bose, President Rugby India said, "Odisha in particular and KIIT and Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) in particular are home of Rugby in the country. KIIT and KISS

have been relentlessly supporting and promoting Rugby since 2005." Bose praised Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT and KISS for his contributions towards the promotion of the game and taking it to the international level.

Addressing the symposium, Dr. Samanta said, KIIT is not only supporting Rugby but also providing support and promoting other sports and sportspersons in a big way. Today KIIT is on its way to becoming the sports hub of the world, he added. KIIT & KISS the mention triggers two things up in the mind. Sports and education and this journey go on since.

As many as 27 State Rugby Association office bearers attended the symposium, which deliberated on the roadmap on the promotion of Indian Rugby Football. Various aspects like financial and technical assistance to the State Associations as well as expectations of Rugby India from them were discussed in detail. Among others, Gerald Antony Prabh, Secretary – Rugby India; Nasser Hussain, CEO- Rugby India; Priyadarshi Mishra, President, Odisha Rugby Association, Upendra Mohanty, Secretary, Odisha Rugby Association and Dr. Gaganendu Dash, Director, Sports, KIIT and KISS were present on the occasion.

Inter Block District Level Competitions Begin In Budgam



Agencies

BUDGAM: District Development Commissioner Budgam Shahbaz Ahmed Mirza on Tuesday inaugurated inter block sports event today, under various sports disciplines at Sports Stadium Budgam. The event was organised by Youth Services and Sports Department Budgam. As many as 500 students from different sports activities from all 17 blocks will take part in four different sports activities.

Speaking on the occasion, the DDC while hailing and appreciating the efforts of District Youth Services and Sports Officer Budgam said that Budgam District has distinction in contributing and making possible participation of 82000 children in different sports activities at UT level during last year. He said our children have enormous talent and potential which they demonstrated at national and international level competitions by

winning many medals.

Keeping in view the enthusiasm and interest the boys and girls of the District having towards sports activities, the DC said, that District Administration will develop one play field in every panchayat and if there is land available, the play field will be developed in every village.

The DC on the occasion stressed on the participating players that apart from sports activities, players shall participate in the panchayat cleanliness drives, drug de-addiction workshops and other socio development activities.

Earlier in her welcome address the Youth Services and Sports officer Budgam thanked DC Budgam in making all sports related events organized by DYSS Budgam at all level a success.

She said due to relentless efforts and strong mechanism, the DYSS received appreciative remarks on account of mass participation of students in sports activities. (CNS)

Sports Ministry To Fund International Competitions For Wrestler, Shooters and Weightlifters

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Sports Ministry on Tuesday announced that it will fund foreign exposure trips and upcoming international competitions for wrestlers, shooters and weightlifters.

The wrestlers are set to compete in two competitions in the new season – Bulgaria (Feb 17-20) and Turkey (Ranking Series, Feb 24-27). 10 wrestlers in each of three categories – men's freestyle, women and Greco Roman – compete in international events.

"A total of 20 men's wrestlers across the Freestyle and Greco-Roman categories will be taking part while 10 coaching staff will accompany them. The women's wrestling contingent, meanwhile, consists of 10 wrestlers and five support staff," the ministry said in a release.

Tokyo Olympics medallists Ravi Dahiya and Bajrang Punia will compete in the Turkey event.

"A total of 11 Women's Wrestlers and a total of 23 Men's



Wrestlers will be participating," the ministry said.

"While the women's contingent will have 5 coaching and support staff, the men's contingent will comprise of 11 coaching and support staff."

The Indian Weightlifting team will participate in Singapore from February 23 to 28. Tokyo Olympics silver medallist Mirabai Chanu will be a part of the 24-member contingent.

The government has also approved the participation of a 33-member Indian Shooting team in the ISSF World Cup Cairo, Egypt, from February 25 to March 8.

BCCI Release Revised Dates For Sri Lanka Series

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The BCCI on Tuesday announced a revised itinerary for the home series against Sri Lanka, beginning February 25, confirming that the Twenty20 series will be played before the two Tests.

Originally, the two-Test series was planned before the T20s but the BCCI has made the change following a request from Sri Lanka Cricket.

"Sri Lanka will first play the T20I series comprising three matches followed by a two-match Test series, which will be a part of the ICC World Test Championship, 2021-23," said the BCCI in a statement.

It was widely reported that the T20s against the Lankan side will take place before Test matches in Mohali and Bengaluru and the cricket body has now confirmed it.

Virat Kohli is expected to play



his 100th game in Mohali from March 4-8.

The second Test will be played in Bengaluru from March 12-16 and will be a day-night affair. The last pink ball Test played in India, in Ahmedabad last, ended inside two days with England crumbling on a rank turner.

The first T20 will be played in Lucknow on February 25 before the teams travel up the hills to Dharamsala for the second and

third game on February 26 and 27.

With the schedule announced for Sri Lanka series, the BCCI is expected to name the Test captain, a post which was left vacant in the wake of Kohli's unexpected resignation a day after India lost the Test series in South Africa.

Kohli ended his tenure as India's most successful Test captain with 40 wins, 11 draws and 17 losses in 68 Tests.

ARIF KHAN
WINTER OLYMPICS 2022
EVENT SCHEDULE
SLALOM

ARIF KHAN will be back in action at the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics today, with his two runs scheduled in the Slalom event. The first run will take place at 7:45 AM, while the second will be at 11:15 AM.

China Crafts A Carefully Curated Slate Of Olympic Spectators

Agencies

BEIJING: A spectator's single clap echoed through the mostly empty National Aquatics Center after the British curling team knocked a Swiss stone out of position, a difficult move that usually would trigger cheers from fans.

The spectator looked around at the audience of about 200, surrounded by thousands of vacant seats, and stopped clapping.

Halfway through ten sets of curling, as teams shouted in Russian, Norwegian, Swedish, French, Dutch and Italian, the crowd shrank further when more than half stood up and left for another event: The souvenir shop had opened.

Skiing, skating and the other competitions take place before a global TV audience, but limited crowds see them in person after China, which is enforcing strict anti-virus controls, decided against selling tickets or allowing spectators to come from abroad.

Instead, organizers said they would invite 150,000 people including schoolchildren, diplomats, businesspeople and what the organizing committee called "winter sports enthusiasts." This was somewhat of a departure from the Tokyo Games last summer, where pandemic protocols kept most venues all but empty.

An Associated Press journalist was among a handful of Beijing-based reporters invited by the Foreign Ministry to watch the curling on Monday.

Organizers have given few details, but foreign chambers of commerce and employees of companies that are Olympic sponsors said they received invitations to the Feb. 4 opening ceremony.

People who attended the ceremony and sports events were required to receive a third dose of an anti-coronavirus vaccine as a booster, present two negative virus tests before events and take two more tests afterward.

Joerg Wuttke, president of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China, said he was invited but couldn't attend



because it was too early to receive a booster. Wuttke said he would watch on TV.

The American Chamber of Commerce in China said it sent a delegation to the opening ceremony. The British Chamber of Commerce in China said it had been asked to share invitations with its network.

Spectators are issued N95 masks and arrive at venues aboard buses as volunteers in blue parkas and white hats wave.

Guards check foreign passports or Chinese identity cards. Spectators are required to show a smartphone app that tracks their movements and health condition. They pass through metal detectors and are scanned for the coronavirus's telltale fever.

Cameras, computers, pens, selfie sticks or food and drink from outside are forbidden.

Inside sports venues, spectators are kept in areas separate from athletes, reporters and sports officials. They are as little as six meters (20 feet) away but are in areas dubbed "the bubble" that are supposed to have no contact with outsiders.

During the curling competition, spectators were separated by empty seats. In an anti-coronavirus measure, signs in competition venues tell spectators in Chinese and English, "NO CHEERING."

At the souvenir shop, plush toys of Olympics mascot Bing Dwen Dwen and children's clothes were sold out, but paperweights shaped like curling stones, binoculars and Olym-

pics-themed clothing, jewelry and pins were available.

In an email response to questions, the Beijing organizing committee said spectators would be organized by their communities, employers and winter sports associations.

Gao Jia, an employee of a sponsor, received a ticket to the opening ceremony. She said attendees gathered at a hotel for a security check, were taken to the Olympic Park on Beijing's north side and walked three kilometers (two miles) to the National Stadium.

"We were quite tired, but the excitement offset all of it," she said. "When we got inside, everything had turned blue. We felt, wow, it was all worth it."

Gao said afterward she was required to stay home for one week. She asked that her company not be identified by name.

Employees at other companies that are Olympics sponsors including Bank of China Ltd. and social media platform Sina Weibo have said they were offered tickets.

One woman wrote on Sina Weibo that her company received three tickets and more than 70 employees applied for them. The posting didn't identify the company and the user didn't respond to a message from AP.

At the end of Monday's curling, Britain, Canada, Denmark and Sweden had defeated Italy, Norway Russia and Switzerland to advance to the next round.

The teams quietly left the ice to a smattering of applause in the nearly empty arena. (AP)

Australia Hammer Sri Lanka, Seal T20I Series



Agencies

CANBERRA: Glenn Maxwell and Aaron Finch shared a 50-run third-wicket stand to guide Australia toward a six-wicket win in the third Twenty20 cricket international on Tuesday, clinching the five-match series against Sri Lanka with two games to spare.

The T20 World Cup champion Australians won the toss, decided to bowl and restricted Sri Lanka to 121-6. Fast bowler Kane Richardson returned 3-21, including two wickets in his first over.

In reply, the Australians reached 124-4 in 16.5 overs, with Marcus Stoinis (12 not out) hitting the winning runs for the second consecutive game to give Australia a 3-0 series lead.

Maxwell led the scoring with 39 from 26 deliveries, surviving dropped catches on 0, 9 and 22, and captain Finch scored 35.

In the absence of Wanindu Hasaranga, the No. 1-ranked bowler in T20 international cricket, Maheesh Theekshana led the Sri Lankan attack with three wickets for 24 runs.

He took a wicket with the first ball of Australia's innings, getting Ben McDermott to edge to slip after a deflection from the wicketkeeper's glove.

He had makeshift opener Ashton Agar out lbw for a run-a-ball 13 in the fifth over to make the total 26-2 and then had Maxwell caught in the outfield to break up Australia's half-century partnership for the third wicket.

Australia won the first game by 20 runs and the second in a

Super Over in Sydney on Sunday after the scores were level at the end of the regulation overs. Sri Lanka scored 18 in the last over of that game to gain some confidence but, after scoring 17 in the first two overs at Canberra's Manuka Oval, struggled against the Australian bowling attack.

"No positives today. Yet again, poor start," Sri Lanka captain Dasun Shanaka said, lamenting his team's top-order batting woes. "Throughout the series, it's been a major concern. We were 20 runs, 30 runs short in this game."

The Australians made three changes for the match, with batting veteran Steve Smith sidelined because of the concussion he sustained in a fielding mishap late Sunday and bowlers Pat Cummins and Adam Zampa rested.

Agar came in for Zampa and Mitch Starc returned in place of Cummins.

Allrounder Daniel Sams replaced Smith, taking a stunning catch inches inside the boundary rope to complete the dismissal of dangerous opener Pathum Nissanka off Maxwell's bowling as Sri Lanka slipped to 40-4 in the eighth over.

"The depth is one thing that we're trying to expose a little bit more, and shuffling guys around to get some more information on the depth of the squad," Finch said, reflecting on Australia's preparations for a T20 World Cup title defense later this year. "Really good signs."

The fourth and fifth games will be played in Melbourne on Friday and Sunday. (AP)

ICC Women's World Cup Winner To Pocket USD 1.32 Million

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: The winners of the upcoming ICC women's World Cup in New Zealand will pocket a cash prize of USD 1.32 million, which is double the amount that was awarded to the victors of the 2017 edition in England.

The overall prize money pot has also seen an increase of 75 per cent, with the eight teams taking home a share of USD 3.5 million which is USD 1.5 million more than the previous edition, the ICC said on Tuesday.

The runners-up will take home USD 600,000, which is USD 270,000 more than India were rewarded in 2017 for finishing second best.

The two losing semi-finalists will earn USD 300,000 each while the four teams who exit at the group stages will be awarded USD 70,000 -- up from the USD 30,000 prize from the previous edition.

Every group stage win will also earn the teams a reward of USD 25,000 per victory from a total pot of USD 700,000.

This marks an increase in the prize money during the Wom-

en's Cricket World Cup for consecutive editions.

The prize money between the 2013 and the 2017 edition witnessed a tenfold increase, going up from USD 200,000 to USD 2 million.

England, who were crowned the champions on their home turf, took home USD 660,000 after beating India by nine runs to claim their fourth title.

In the 2022 edition, a total of 28 group stage matches will be played in a round-robin format, with each team playing each other once.

The four sides with the most points will then advance to the semifinals.

A victory will carry two points while a draw, a tie or a no-result will see them walk away with a single point.

The matches will be played across six venues with the tournament opener taking place between hosts New Zealand and West Indies at Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui on March 4.

The final will be played at Hagley Oval in Christchurch on April 3.

Christian Eriksen Marks 30th Birthday By Playing Game Again

Agencies

LONDON: Christian Eriksen celebrated his 30th birthday on Monday with his first game action since suffering cardiac arrest at the European Championship.

The Denmark playmaker featured in a practice match for Brentford, the London-based Premier League club he signed for last month to resume his playing career.

Eriksen had an assist for a goal in the match against Southend which was played without any fans and Brentford said he came close to scoring himself during his hour on the field.

The last time Eriksen was involved in a game was the June 12 European Championship meeting with Finland when he said he was "gone from this world for



five minutes" after collapsing.

After being fitted with an implantable cardioverter defibrillator days after the incident, Eriksen had to be released by Inter Milan in December due to rules in Italy preventing athletes from competing with an ICD.

The former Tottenham player has passed the required medical checks and cleared to play in the Premier League with the ICD. (AP)

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