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P3 CITY

IN PHOTOS | HEAVY SNOWFALL THROWS LIFE OUT OF GEAR IN KASHMIR

- Life was thrown out of gear in Kashmir on
- Wednesday as most areas of the valley received
- snowfall the season's first heavy fall in the plains -
- disrupting flight and railway operations and leading
- to the closure of the vital Srinagar-Jammu national

P8 SPORTS

IPL FOUNDER LALIT MODI FIGHTS LEGAL CHALLENGE IN UK COURT





Ge Quote We choose our joys and

sorrows long before we experience them.

- Khalil Gibran

"

NEWS DIGEST

Two 'Militant Associates' Held In Baramulla

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested two militant associates of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) from Baramulla district of north Kashmir. Police received specific information through reliable More on P6

5 Gamblers Arrested In Raid: Police

SRINAGAR: Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested five gamblers in a raid in Habba Kadal area of this capital city. Cops from Police Station Shaheed Gunj lead by SHO carried out a raid at Habba Kadal Chowk and More on P6

JKPSC Postpones Prosecuting Officer Exams

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission on Wednesday postponed prosecuting officer (Main) Examination due to inclement weather. "It is for the information of all the eligible candidates who are appearing in the Prosecuting officer (Main) More on P6

Ladakh Reports **35 New Covid Cases**

LEH: Thirty-five more people tested positive for COVID-19 in Ladakh, pushing the infection tally to 27,902 in the Union Territory, even as the number of active cases fell off to 305, officials said on Wednesday. They said Ladakh has recorded 228 coronavirus- More on P6

Heavy Snowfall Cripples Normal Life In Kashmir Air, Surface Traffic Hit; Valley Plunges Into Darkness

Auqib Javeed

SRINAGAR: Two women were injured and over six structures damaged as Kashmir Valley witnessed season's heavy snowfall on Wednesday disrupting air and surface traffic, railway operations, besides causing waterlogging and power outage.

DC SRINAGAR OVERSEES SNOW CLEARANCE,

In wake of overnight Snowfall in the district, the Deputy

morning toured various areas around the Srinagar city

Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad today

POWER RESTORATION IN SRINAGAR

Most parts of the Valley, including capital city Srinagar received moderate to heavy snowfall which started in the night, officials said. The areas in the higher reaches of the Union Territory received very heavy snowfall -- around two feet or more, they said.

The officials said Srinagar the summer capital of the union territory - recorded about eight inches of snow till this morning. The authorities pressed men

and machinery into service to clear the snow off the roads, many of which, such as those leading to hospitals and other vital installations, are being cleared on priority, the officials said.

Train service between Baramulla and Banihal was suspended this morning due to the accumulation of More on P6



Dangling Cables & Loose Live Wires of Smart City Srinagar

X

All 41 Flights

Il flights scheduled to

international airport were

operate at Srinagar

cancelled due to heavy snowfall

and low visibility on Wednesday.

operate but snowfall forced their

cancellation. The visibility at the

Director, Airports Authority of

India, Srinagar, Kuldeep Singh

said that 41 flights were to

airport dropped More on P6

Grounded

 \blacktriangleright rinagar, declared as SMART CITY still has dangling cables and electric wires strung up from everv electricity pole, lamp post and even buildings posing a danger to human life and giving the city an Ugly look. With the fresh overnight snowfall on Wednesday hundreds of decaying electric poles even crashed and wires fell on snow covered ground posing danger to passers by and motorists. It's time electricity wires are laid underground. It's also important for places like Kashmir not only for aesthetic reasons but because during winters, ice build-up on the power lines makes them too heavy to be carried by poles or towers increasing their chances of failure.

Heavy Snowfall Plunges Valley Into Darkness

Zaid Bin Shabir

ashmir was plunged into darkness by the heavy overnight snowfall that caused extensive damage to transmission towers, power lines, poles and over a hundred transformers, prompting a massive restoration work by the



he Jammu-Srinagar National Highway will remain closed on Thursday due to a huge landslide at Cafeteria Morh. continuous shooting stones at many places between Ramban and Banihal and snow accumulation between

NAVYUG Tunnel and Qazigund,

officials said on

Essential Services Being Restored On War-Footing: Div Com

SRINAGAR: The Divisional Kashmir. Commissioner Pandurang K Pole said on Wednesday that all the essential services are being restored on a war footing basis for the convenience of the people. He informed that plain ar-

eas of south Kashmir received 2 to 3 feet snow while central Kashmir received 1 to 1.5 feet and north 0.5 to 1 feet, besides hilly areas received 2 to 4 feet snow which affected normal life and services, an official spokesperson said.

Pole, he said, maintained that the Mechanical Engineering Department completed 70% snow clear-Department ance under Priority Phase-I while PWD cleared snow from all the roads falling under its jurisdiction.

"Besides, Div Com informed that apart from 5 to 6 percent water supply lines which have been affected, all other Water Supply Schemes are functional. He said that the affected WSSs will be restored soon for which men and machinery has been put on work," he added.

Regarding the power scenario, the Div Com as per the spokesperson said that 20 to 25 percent power lines have been affected due to snowfall and the Divisional Administration was working to restore electricity to the affected areas by evening.

"Div Com further informed that no casualty has been reported till now due to the Snow and said that all the hospitals More on P6

圙 Universities **Postpone All Exams**

he University of Kashmir. Central University of Kashmir besides Cluster University Srinagar postponed their scheduled exams for Wednesday in view of prevailing inclement weather conditions across Kashmir valley. "All UG/PG/ Professional examinations of the Kashmir University N



ammu Kashmir Service Selection Board postponed 'document verification' for Class-IV posts scheduled for Wednesday. "In view of the inclement weather conditions prevailing in Kashmir Valley, Document Verification for Class-IV posts scheduled on N

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Is Omicron Leading Us Closer To Herd Immunity Against Covid?

Associated Press

Washington- Experts say it's not likely that the highly transmissible variant or any other variant will lead to herd immunity.

Herd immunity is an elusive concept and doesn't apply to coronavirus, says Dr. Don Milton at the University of Maryland School of Public Health.

Herd immunity is when enough of a population is immune to a virus that it's hard for the germ to spread to those who aren't protected by vaccination or a prior infection.

For example, herd immunity against measles requires about 95% of a community to be immune. Early hopes of herd immunity against the coronavirus faded for several reasons. One is that antibodies developed from available vaccines or previous infection dwindle with time. While vaccines offer streng protects

with time. While vaccines offer strong protection against severe illness, waning antibodies mean it's still possible to get infected even for those who are boosted.

Then there's the huge variation in vaccinations. In some low-income countries, less than 5% of the population is vaccinated. Rich countries are struggling with vaccine hesitancy. And young children still aren't eligible in many places.

As long as the virus spreads, it mutates helping the virus survive and giving rise to new variants. Those mutants such as omicron can become better at evading the protection people have from vaccines or an earlier infection. Populations are moving toward herd resistance, where infections will continue, but people have enough protection that future spikes won't be as disruptive to society, Milton says.

Many scientists believe COVID-19 will eventually become like the flu and cause seasonal outbreaks but not huge surges.



Populations are moving toward herd resistance, where infections will continue, but people have enough protection that future spikes won't be as disruptive to society."

Researchers Use Orange Peel-Derived Hydrochar For Biofuel Precursors

Press Trust Of India

team of researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mandi has used hydrochar derived from orange peels as a catalyst to convert chemicals sourced from biomass into biofuel precursors

According to the team, the research will help develop biomass-based fuel to overcome the socio-political instabilities associated with dwindling petroleum reserves.

The findings of the research have been published in the journal 'Green Chemistry'.

"One of the driving interests among the renewable energy community is the development of relatively clean and energy effi-



the researchers for biomass con-

version reactions is hydrochar. It is

typically obtained by heating the

biomass waste (orange peels in

this case) in the presence of water

cient processes to convert biomass into useful chemicals, including fuel," said Venkata Krishnan, Associate Professor, School of Basic Sciences, IIT Mandi. The simplest and most low-cost through hydrothermal carbonization process.

"The use of hydrochar as a catalyst for biomass conversion is attractive because it is renewable and its chemical and physical structure can be altered for better catalytic efficiencies," he added.

Krishnan said the researchers were able to synthesize the biofuel precursors under solventless and low temperature conditions, which decreases the overall cost of the process and also making it environment friendly, attractive from an industry point of view. "They heated dried orange peel

powder with citric acid under pressure in a hydrothermal reactor (a lab-level 'pressure cooker') for many hours. The hydrochar that was produced was then treated with other chemicals to introduce

acidic sulfonic, phosphate and nitrate functional groups to it. "We used these three types of catalyst to bring about hydroxyalkylation alkylation (HAA) reactions between 2-methylfuran and furfural, compounds that are derived from lignocellulose, to produce fuel precursors," explained Tripti Chabter precares explained

Chhabra, research scholar. The researchers claimed that this is the first comparative study in which the three types of acid functionalization have been assessed. They also performed green metric calculations and temperature programmed desorption (TPD) studies to gain deeper insights into the catalytic activity of sulfonic, nitrate and phosphate functionalized hydrochar derived from orange.

Can Genetic Testing Help Evaluate Risk Of Heart Disease

IANS

S researchers have launched a clinical trial in which genetic testing is used to identify men and women at risk of developing heart disease based on the makeup of their DNA.

If proven effective in clinical trials, this form of genetic testing may be adopted globally to prevent heart disease - the number one killer in the world. "This should be the last century of heart disease," said Robert Roberts, Medical Director of Cardiovascular Genomics for Dignity Health hospital in Arizona.

Throughout the duration of the study, the researchers will collect DNA samples from approximately 2,000 men and women aged between 40 and 60 with no known history of heart disease. The DNA samples will then be analysed to determine if the participants have genetic markers known to cause heart disease.

Once the DNA genotyping is completed, the team at Dignity will evaluate each participant's genetic markers to determine if they have a low, medium or high chance of developing heart disease.

Other health and lifestyle factors will also be considered when determining the participants' risk of heart disease. These include hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol and whether the participant smokes or is physically active, among others.

"I am hopeful that through the results of this study we will be able to save even more lives in the future by implementing genetic testing for early prevention of coronary artery disease as routine clinical application. This approach would represent a paradigm shift in the prevention of this disease," Roberts said. Previously, studies have found strong DNA links to heart attack. Research has shown that high cholesterol levels from birth can be caused by a common genetic condition called familial hypercholesterolemia (FH). It can lead to a high risk of coronary heart disease from an early age, and some estimates suggest that by the age of 70, one in every two patients with FH would have had a coronary heart disease event.

Daily Activities Like Washing Dishes Reduce Heart Disease Risk In Senior Women'



s a person ages, their bodies start reacting to all the stress and work they've put it through, throughout their younger days. As a result, an older person's body is more susceptible to illnesses. For older people, running or brisk walking is not the only way to reduce the risk of heart disease. Simply performing routine activities, referred to as daily life movement, including housework, gardening, cooking and self-care activities like showering can significantly benefit cardiovascular health. A recent study observed the impact of daily work on cardiovascular health.

The study was published in the 'Journal of the American Heart Association'.

A multi-institutional team led by researchers at the Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science at University of California San Diego led the study and studied the impact of daily life movement to cardiovascular disease risk. Compared to women with less than two hours per day of daily life movement, those women with at least four hours of daily life movement had a 43 per cent lower risk of cardiovascular disease, 43 per cent lower risk of stroke and notably, a 62 per cent lower risk of cardiovascular disease death.

"The study demonstrates that all movement counts towards disease prevention," said first author first author Steve Nguyen, Ph.D., M.P.H., postdoctoral scholar at the Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health. "Spending more time in daily life movement, which includes a wide range of activities we all do while on our feet and out of our chairs, resulted in a lower risk of cardiovascular disease."

Researchers used a machine-learning algorithm to classify each minute spent while awake into one of nive behaviours: sitting, sitting in a vehicle, standing still, daily life movement, or walking or running. Daily life movement encompasses activities occurring when standing and walking within a room or patio, such as when getting dressed, preparing meals or gardening. As part of the Women's Health Initiative Objective Physical Activity and Cardiovascular Health study, researchers measured the physical activity of nearly 5,416 American women, who were aged 63 to 97 and who did not have heart disease at the start of the study.

Participants wore a research-grade accelerometer for up to seven days to get accurate measures of how much time they spent moving and, importantly, the types of common daily life behaviours that result in movement and are not often included in prior studies of light and moderate-tovigorous intensity physical activity. Those prior studies typically focused on intensity and duration of activities like running and brisk walking while the current study measured smaller movements at varying intensity during activities like cooking. Cardiovascular disease continues to be the leading cause of death among both women and men in the United States with rates highest in adults aged 65 or older. In this study, 616 women were diagnosed with cardiovascular disease, 268 with coronary heart disease, 253 had a stroke, and 331 died of cardiovascular disease. "Much of the movement engaged in by older adults is associated with daily life tasks, but it

may not be considered whream inc tarvity. Understanding the benefits of daily life movement and adding this to physical activity guidelines may encourage more movement," said senior author Andrea LaCroix, Ph.D., M.P.H., Distinguished Professor and chief of the Division of Epidemiology at the Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health. 0194-240-4000 Kindly cooperate and make it a Success!

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Two Residential Houses Damaged In Sonwar Blaze

Agencies

Srinagar: Two residential houses were damaged in a fire incident at Palpora, Sonwar area of Srinagar in the intervening night of Tuesdav-Wednesdav.

According to Official sources two residential houses belonging to three families namely Mohammad Farooq Parray, Farooq Ahmad Parray and Bilal Ahmad Parray were gutted in a fire incident at Palpora area of Sonwar.

They said that the fire was controlled by F&ES department with the help of locals and there was no loss of life or injury to any in the incident.

Meanwhile, local police has registered a case in this regard and investigation has been started. (KNO)

JKPSC Reschedules PO Main Examination

Observer News service

SRINAGAR: In view of the inclement weather conditions, the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) has rescheduled the today's paper of Prosecuting Officer (PO) [Main) Examination-2021 to Friday, 25th February, 2021.

In this regard, a notice issued by JKP-SC reads, "It is for the information of all the eligible candidates who are appearing in the Prosecuting officer [Main) Examination2021, that due to inclement weather, Paper VI (Special Law-I) scheduled for today, ie.23.02.2022 is hereby postponed and shall now be held on Friday. 25.02.2022 from 10.00 AM to 01.00 PM. The venue for the Examination shall remain the same"

Commissioner SMC Tours City, Takes Stock Of Situation

Agencies

Srinagar: In view of heavy snowfall, Commissioner SMC Athar Amir Khan on Wednesday visited various administrative wards in Srinagar City to review snow clearance drives since wee hours.

The Commissioner visited Hazratbal, HMT, lawaypora, Khanyar, Batamaloo, Karan Nagar, SMHS hospital, CD Hospital, Barzulla, Lal Chowk, Rambagh, JawaharNagar, Rainawar and other areas and took stock of the situation. He was accompanied by other officers of the Corporation and he passed instructions to the concerned that there should be no lack in snow clearance drives as it has to be swift and prompt snow removal exercise throughout the city.

Clearing snow from payements



DC Srinagar Oversees Snow Clearance, Power Restoration In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In wake of tion in the district. overnight Snowfall in the district, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad AijazAsad today morning toured various areas around the ing areas Srinagar city to inspect Snow-clearance operation and take first hand assessspect the Snow clearance measures for hassle free

ment of other arrangements put in place to deal with challenges from the apart from looking into prevailing weather situapower supply. The DC also visited

power Grid Station Be-The DC visited various mina and took stock of the areas of the City including Dalgate, TRC crossing, Jerestoration works. He was hangir Chowk, Batamaloo, informed that current load Bemina and other adjoinis around 400 MW and that power supply will be re-He also visited SMHS, stored by evening from all Lal Ded hospitals to infeeders of Srinagar.

On the occasion, MD KPDCL. Chief Engineer, Distribution, Chief Engineer Transmission apprised the DC about the measures undertaken for early restoration of power supply.

Besides, Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, FazlulHaseeb, Besides, Chief Planning Officer, the DC was accompanied by Senior officers from MED, PWD. PHE, SMC, PDD, UEED and other Departments

7 Houseboats, 6 Shikaras Submerge in Dal, Chinar Bagh Waters

movement of ambulances

Agencies

Srinagar: At least six houseboats in Dal Lake and one at Chinar Bagh were submerged on Wednesday after a fresh snowfall across Kashmir.

Official sources revealed that six houseboats including HB New Simla, HB Honey Moon, HB Bangkok, HB Young Mar-mandie, HB Holly Wood and HB Kings Throne got submerged at Dal Lake. They said that a house

boat at Chinar Bagh belonging to Favaz Ahmad Darma, son of Abdul Aziz Darma of Chinar Bagh was partially submerged. Moreover, several Shikaras got submerged at the world famous Dal Lake amid heavy snowfall in Srinagar in the early morning hours. Reports said that at least half a dozen Shikaras



Mohammad AijazAsad toured Dal Lake areas here to oversee the damages caused to the houseboats and Shikaras due to overnight snowfall.

The Deputy Commissioner, who was accompanied by, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Dr Syed HaneefBalkhi visited Dal Lake areas via motor boat to inspect the houseboats and Shikaras. which got sunk due to snowfall during the intervening night of 22nd February.

occasion On DC directed the Revenue



This Day In History

1389 - Battle at Falköping: Danes defeat King Albert of Swe-

1528 - János Szapolyai, disputed king of Hungary, and Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent sign treaty

1739 - Battle of Karnal: Army of Iranian ruler Nadir Shah defeats the forces of the Mughal emperor of India, Muhammad Shah

1875 - The SS Gothenburg hits the Great Barrier Reef and sinks off the Australian east coast, killing approximately 100, including a number of high profile civil servants and dignitaries Henrik Ibsen

- 1881 De Lesseps' Company begins work on Panama Canal
- 1881 China and Russia sign the Sino-Russian Ili Treaty.
- 1895 Cuban war for independence begins
- 1918 Estonia declares independence from Russia 1924 - Mahatma Gandhi released from jail

1942 - The "Battle of Los Angeles" takes place, a series of antiaircraft engagements over the city in response to a rumored but false Japanese attack. It would last until the morning of the following day.

- 1945 Egypt & Syria declare war on nazi-Germany
- 1945 Manila freed from Japanese
- 1945 Egyptian Premier Ahmed Maher Pasha is killed in Parlia ment after reading a decree
- 1948 Communist Party seizes complete control of Czechoslovakia
- 1949 Israel & Egypt sign an armistice agreement
- 1955- Pact of Baghdad signed between Iraq & Turkey
- 1968 US troops reconquer Hue Vietnam
- 1969 Mariner 6 launched for Mars flyby to study planet's atmosphere
- 1971 Algeria nationalizes 51 percent of French oil concessions
- 1974 Pakistan officially recognizes Bangladesh 1977 - US President Jimmy Carter announces US foreign aid

embankments, it has to be ensured that the interiors of the residential areas are to be kept in focus simultaneously for snow clearance. He said.

"Besides, men and machinery including snow clearance vehicle robots, snow loaders, SMC has pressed into service snow ploughs for swift and prompt snow clearance drives.

Commissioner personally monitored and reviewed snow clearance from vital roads, link roads, at hospitals, places of worship, city center and major markets. (KNS)

the Shikaras.

Moreover,

Srinagar,

Commissioner

due to heavy snowfall in Srinagar

In the incident, no loss of life or injury has been got submerged at Dal Lake reported, they said, adding

officials to assess the damages and furnish the details at an earliest. Asad assured the affected house-boat owners and Shikarawalas that all that the locals as well as of-

possible assistance will be extended to them from ficials are on job to dewater the Administration/SDRF Deputy Team. (KNO)

will consider human rights

- 1979- War between North & South Yemen begins 1983 - USSR performs underground nuclear test
- 1984- Irag resumes air attack on Iran
- 1995 The Corona reconnaissance satellite program, in existence from 1959 to 1972, is declassified.
- 1997 South Africa announces it is constructing largest modern day blimp
- 1997 Oatar inaugurates the world's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) exporting facility and formally launches Qatar Liquefied Gas Co.
- 1999 A China Southern Airlines Tupolev TU-154 airliner crashes on approach to Wenzhou airport in eastern the People's Republic of China, killing 61.
- 2008 Fidel Castro retires as the President of Cuba after nearly fifty years.
- 2010 Sachin Tendulkar scores the first double century in One Day International cricket
- 2010 Europe risks a double-dip recession after bad results emerge from France, Germany and Italy, it is reported today; the Eurozone only grew by 0.1% in the last quarter of 2009
- 2011 Final Launch of Space Shuttle Discovery (OV-103).
- 2013 Raúl Castro is elected to a second term as the President of Cuba

From KO Archives

Chinese Militants Die In Kashmir: Report

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI - Indian troops shot dead four Uighur militants from China's north western Xinjiang province in Kashmir last month, the Hindustan Times reported Wednesday. According to the report, be¬fore they died of their injuries,

two Uighurs admitted they were trained by pan-Islamic jihad groups in Pakistan's Baluchistan province. The militants also admitted they had infiltrated into Kash-

mir from Paki¬stan-controlled Kashmir with a group from the Lashkar-e-Taiba group, the newspaper said. The militants were in Kashmir to observe "Lashkar's ongo-

ing anti-India operations and then to head for Chechnya, the report said.

Information obtained from the militants was passed on to Chinese assistant foreign min-ister Wang Yi, who visited the Indian capital for the second round of the Sino-Indian secu¬rity dialogue earlier this month, the newspaper reported.

During talks, the Indian delegation called for joint ef-forts to combat Islamic funda¬mentalism, the news report said. Xinjiang separatists — mainly ethnic Uighur Muslims -

have been involved in fre-quent and bloody clashes with the Chinese authorities in re¬cent years. Uighurs, who speak a Turkic language and make up a

large part of Xinjiang's popu-lation, have been linked to deadly bombings as well as ri¬ots, most notably clashes in January 1997 which according to independent sources left as many as 100 dead.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 24 February, 2001)

City Residents Urge PDD To Streamline Old, Dangerous Wiring

Agencies

Srinagar: Even after passage of seven decades, Kashmir's power infrastructure continues to remain far behind compared to other parts of the country as seen on Wednesday. The night-long spell of heavy snowfall did not only result in power breakdown in entire Valley but took the lid-off of Power department's tall claims of improving power infrastructure as in majority of Srinagar areas high tension and low tension (HT<) lines were seen hanging, almost touching the ground.

Locals of Srinagar areas complained that at many places in old Srinagar the Power department hasn't even replaced the wooden electric poles which poses a great risk on normal days let alone during snowfall. "Thank god, there is no electricity, otherwise, this junction would lead to accidents in our area," said Lateef Ahmed, a resident of RajouriKadal area of old Srinagar.

He said that Power department makes tall claims about improving power infrastructure but on ground nothing concrete has been done. "The government claims that smart metering is must to prevent theft, but how can smart meters help when just a nightlong snowfall plunges entire Kashmir

into darkness," said Gowhar Bhat, a resident of FatehKadal area of Srinagar. He said that his father and grandfather has been telling him about erratic power supplies in Kashmir during winters. "What has changed, I believe nothing.

tion on them, they are touching rooftops, shops and even main road some places," they said, adding that at some places HT lines have fell on ground.

In congested areas of Srinagar that include Gonikhan, Maharajabazar, Hari

City dwellers say HT< hanging close to rooftops, shops; demand underground wiring in Sgr; Wherever feasible, we will propose underground wiring; vulnerable areas first choice: MD KPDCL

Look at the way wires are hanging at the main transformer," he said. "We oppose installation of smart meters only because we are not getting proper electricity. Night-long snowfall collapsed entire power department. Srinagar, the capital city is having no power supply despite claims made by power department. A few inches of snow turned entire power infrastructure upside down across Kashmir.'

A group of women in Nawabazar area of Srinagar said that power has been the first causality in Kashmir whenever snowfalls here. "Why government doesn't lay underground cables inside of keeping the HT/LT lines hanging. These lines pose a great risk to life and property as due to snow accumulaSingh High Street, Sarai Bala, Barbarshah, HabbaKadal, KaniKadal, Shaheed Gunj, Nowhatta, BohriKadal, Hawal, Zadibal and other areas, locals said that there is haphazard wiring of HTs and LTs while transformers are just three feet above the ground. "Power infrastructure should have been first priority. Can Power department tell us what has changed in past 70 years," asked an elderly Haji Ghulam Qadir Rather, of BohriKadal area of city

While Srinagar district along with majority of areas across Kashmir reeled under darkness in the wake of heavy overnight snowfall, Zafran Colony area of Pantha Chowk also suffered as main tower at Balhama got damaged due to the snow accumulation. Many residents, however, questioned the power department's ill-planning stating that the Balhama receiving station was recently inaugurated and how come the newly installed tower collapsed. "Wasn't it properly installed," a resident asked. "It fell on two vehicles and damaged both. Why there is no check at the time of installation as to whether these towers can bear the snow impact."

Majority of Srinagar residents told KNO that smart metering can wait and power department should focus on laying underground power lines to avoid huge damages caused to it after every snowfall.

"In a place, where snowfall is regular feature of every winter, underground power lines can help save power department millions of rupees, which otherwise are spent on repairing damaged grid stations, power lines, transformers etc every winter," they said.

Managing Director Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KP-DCL) DrBasharatQayoom said that it is not proposed as of now to go for underground wiring of all transmission lines in Kashmir. "But yes, wherever it is feasible, we will definitely propose underground wiring. Our primary focus remain vulnerable areas first," he said. (KNO)

Send your write ups and feedback at editpage.ko@gmail.com



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Elusive Dialogue

akistani Prime Minister Imran Khan has said he would like to have a televised debate with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to resolve differences between the two neighbours. He said this in an interview to a Russian television channel on the eve of his visit to Moscow where he will meet the Russian president Vladimir Putin. This is the first visit by a Pakistani leader to Russia in more than 20 years. Khan said it would be beneficial for the 1.7 billion people in the subcontinent if differences could be resolved through debate.

India, hasn't responded to Khan's offer yet. Bur one change that has happened in both the countries is that the mutually antagonistic rhetoric has reduced. New Delhi's demand, now used with a little subdued force, is for Pakistan to stop terrorism in Kashmir. There is hardly anything that has been said beyond this. But there has been one redeeming difference: the anti-Pakistan rhetoric has drastically reduced in the country, and that too during ongoing Assembly elections. Ditto on Pakistan's side.

If anything, this alone is an indication that something has been brewing between the two neighbours. Or one could say, was brewing. There hasn't been any statement from either country recently that indicates some form of an engagement is ongoing between them. Instead, Islamabad that has been so far most vocal about outreach to New Delhi has also gone silent.

But after re-affirmation of the 2003 ceasefire agreement in February last year, the two neighbours have failed to build on the goodwill. There have been no further measures, nor does it look likely there will be in the near future. New Delhi seems in no hurry to do this. If anything, this only goes on to show that India feels little pressure to relent. The unmistakable signal to Pakistan is to temper its expectation about the extent to which India can accommodate it on Kashmir. As always, India wants terrorism to be the central issue and wants Pakistan to stop supporting militancy in Kashmir. Pakistan doesn't accept it backs terrorism.

Anyways, if last year's figures for infiltration and the killings of foreign militants in Kashmir are anything to go by, Islamabad has held back from supporting the local militancy. New Delhi is not going to reverse the revocation of J&K autonomy. It remains to be seen whether it restores statehood anytime soon. A sustained, meaningful dialogue between the two countries has the potential to lead to a positive outcome. So, the neighbours should restore it sconer than later.

Only Suffering For Women?



Amir Suhail Wani

hould people be concerned about what others do on a moral plane and is there anything that legitimises people to infringe upon and criticise the choices that others make? A straightforward and a rationally sound answer to this question should have sounded like "No, People should rather mind their own business". But that answer, no matter how sound and healthy it sounds, doesn't sound musical to all ears and there are people who will oppose this position tooth and nail and claim for themselves the position to criticise and condemn others, their choices and preferences. While this tendency to judge others and to question their choices cuts across the spectrum, but it too has been observed that it is mostly the girls and women who are preyed upon in this sport. On the one hand, the instances of domestic violence, sexual harassment at workplaces, in public transport and elsewhere go unabated.

On the other hand, a section of people are looking for reasons, no matter how trifling and instances no matter how insignificant to troll, abuse, stalk and even assault girls – be it in virtual social space or mundane physical world. What girls wear, how they carry themselves around, what choices they make and what aspirations they choose to follow, everything is subjected to public and social scrutiny and this exercise is undertaken by those who don't share even the remotest link/connection to the girl subject to criticism. Social media warriors seem to derive a sort of strange masochistic pleasure by trolling and bullying girls and making unwelcome entries into their lives.

The portrayal of people and society as such is not an attempt at demonization (sentation of society wholesale but it is indeed an attempt to awaken ourselves to the malicious elements dwelling our society, hijacking the lives and liberties of people in general and women in particular. The incidents of violence against women – both virtually and physically have been a recurring phenomenon. Experts have opined that mostly these incidents of violence and abuse go unnoticed and women keep suffering exploitation, of different magnitudes and natures. The closest of relatives have been now and then reported harassing girls and these incidents have been time and again brushed under the carpet. But two stark and gore examples from previous days have established the gravity of the problem and signalled the scale and spectrum of abuse and trolling faced by women. In the first instance of this despicable attack was the acid attack on a girl, shock waves were sent across the board as news of this incident spread like a wildfire.

like these, but their isolated nature doesn't mean that one turns a blind eye to these devastating incidents. These incidents are to be evaluated and plugged based on the intensity of destruction they cause in a singular event and the criminal precedent they set for others to imitate and follow. With this incident surfaced the quantum of vulnerability that girls/women are susceptible and the audacity with which perverted minds can

C THE people and society as such is not an attempt at demonization or misrepresentation of society wholesale but it is indeed an attempt to awaken ourselves to the malicious elements dwelling our society, hijacking the lives and liberties of people in trespassed all codes of ethical and moral conduct. Abuses were hurled, religious commitment of girls was called into question and all boundaries of privacy, freedom of will and conscience obliterated. As if the ordeal wasn't enough, the girl had to separately appear in an interview clarifying her position on her dress code, ideology and non-observance of Hijab. This is a radical position bordering insanity, fuelled by the pseudoscholarly understanding of religion. To operate behind the veneer of religion, lends impunity to these perpetrators who misconstrue religion and derive pleasure of sorts while criticising others behind the facade of ethics and morality.

When one contemplates the prerequisites of human existence as a social creature, one is driven to the concepts of liberty, equality and dignity. In absence of these guarantees, human life becomes, like the lives of other animals, one driven by biological necessities and also constrained by the same. It is only in presence of these essential values of liberty and equality that man attains the limits of his possibilities, potentials and becomes a creature of benefit for himself and the world at large. But it is here that one encounters a disturbing and penetrating question and that is the issue of guaranteeing these rights both to men and women. What is often seen is that in any discourse of liberty and emancipation, it is men who have occupied the centre stage and around whom the discourse has revolved. Narratives, paradigms and worldviews were formulated and promulgated taking man as the referent and standard. Women have been historically left on the margins and peripheries and their social construction has always been undertaken under the presumption of treating them as others.

What has been more tragic is that women were

OTHER OPINON

It's War

t is not every day that the world witnesses the planning of an invasion on television. On Monday, the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, ordered his troops to enter parts of eastern Ukraine controlled by Kremlin-backed rebels, effectively launching what most nations will view as an invasion of a sovereign country. That followed a televised meeting of Russia's national security council where Mr Putin asked his top officials to share their views on what he ought to do, after insisting that the West had refused to address his concerns. Russia has laid out what it claims is a legitimate reason for sending its troops into eastern Ukraine. Moscow claims that the government in Kiev has perpetrated "genocide" against the Russian-speaking population of that part of Ukraine even though no evidence has been made public. The rebel-backed 'governments' of Donetsk and Luhansk recently asked Russia to recognize them as independent states. Mr Putin did so on Monday after his officials had previously said Moscow had no intention of recognizing the so-called Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic. Once it had acknowledged these militia-held territories as sovereign entities, Moscow said it was merely sending "peacekeeping" troops there at the request of the rulers of these regions – not invading them.

Yet, even many of Russia's close friends will find it difficult to accept Mr Putin's move as legitimate. No other country recognizes the rebel governments in eastern Ukraine. China and India, close friends of Russia despite their own differences, have longstanding positions against secessionist movements, driven by their own domestic challenges. What China will welcome – and India will not – is a distracted United States of America, which will now be forced to refocus its attention on Europe, as opposed to the Indian Ocean. Meanwhile, Western sanctions against Moscow will hurt the global economy and India's trade and defence partnership with Russia. Could all of this have been avoided? For the past three months, the US and Russia have engaged in calculated theatre, using information warfare to advance their negotiating positions. The US president, Joe Biden, has repeatedly warned of an imminent invasion of Ukraine, and Washington and London have both deliberately shared intelligence assertions with reporters to suggest that Mr Putin is planning false flag operations to create a pretext to invade. But both sides have treated the escalating crisis with a sense of inevitability - rather than any meaningful concessions to avoid war. The result shows.

Telegraph India

The girl is presently fighting for her eye-sight and carrying the scars – physical and mental –that might stay with her for her entire life. Previously too there have been isolated incidents

OBSERVER

MAIL

general and women in particular

run into their lives and destroy it the way they want to. The spectres of acid attack that took place at Hyderpora a few years ago haven't faded from our memories, but the tragedy we face is that these incidents aren't stopping and now and then crop up here and there. What compounds human anguish and hatred to this magnitude that doing away with all marks of civility and humanity, one stoops down to the level of animals and commits horrendous violence against fellow humans? This is a question to be addressed jointly by parents, the education system and the society if we want to steer our youth in a constructive direction.

In a more recent and still more shocking incident, a storm took over social media when the twelfth standard topper appeared in an interview without a head cover or what is termed as Hijab in religious parlance. Those deeming the unveiled appearance of the girl for the interview subjected to subalternity and deprived of their agency. They were even deprived of their right to speak for themselves and inevitably it were men who defined them, their agency and their identity. Marginalised and pushed to peripheries as women were, so their agency and presence couldn't but show marginal presence in history and the discourse emerging there from. It is true that myriad forms of violence and abuse stemming against women derive their legitimacy from the social-construction of women and the manner in which society perceives their agency. In an attempt to eliminate the malice of violence and abuse against women, it is essential to conceptualize their existence as social agents. It is also important to call upon legislation the promulgation of women specific ordinances to further their rights and to provide them a shield against the abuse and violence they are subjected to.

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

The author is a writer and columnist based in Srinagar

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

MAIL YOUR LETTERS

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PDD Employees On The Frontlines

ITH the onset of winters and heavy snowfall several essential services are interrupted annually here in Kashmir. During these harsh colder months we also observe a department facing enormous flak from the people for not being able to ensure their services to the subscribers, which to an extent is completely understandable and justified. Yes, I am talking about the Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department, a department which always remains on the receiving end of the blows from the people for providing erratic power supplies to Jammu and Kashmir, when a major proportion of it is being produced here and more production avenues are being explored and worked on. Although this is an acceptable fact that the higher officials of this department face genuine criticism but, there is a section of employees who are paid meagre amount of wages after months while they leave no stone unturned to discharge their duties. Pictures of daily wage workers of the PDD department surface on the internet often, showing them on the top of electric Iron poles in snow and rain trying to restore the power in areas affected by snow. Another side of these pictures is their financial sustenance, serious injuries and even deaths of such workers while fulfilling their duties due to electric shocks. Unpaid wages and the lack of regularisation of their jobs, and the Minimum Wage Act not being implemented, is hurting casual labourers in Jammu and Kashmir, especially

those in the PDD. They not only suffer due to the apathy they receive from the government alone, their families also have to go through an enormous amount of pain and trauma at a time when such a hard-working daily wage worker is rendered physically disabled for life or if such a worker dies on the field. A person employed as a casual labourer is entitled to receive a meagre amount of Rs 225 as their daily wage, many workers have a disdain towards the government claiming that their meagre wages are paid to them after months in installments. Meanwhile, the government's promise of implementing the Minimum Wage Act in the UT of J&K has not seen the light of day. PDD workers have been demanding the implementation of SRO 381 (part of Recruitment Rules) which

promises the regularisation of daily wagers who have completed seven years in the department.

Around one lakh casual labourers – daily wagers, need based workers and others – have been engaged in different departments including PDD

The Minimum Wage Act if implemented in Jammu and Kashmir will ensure an amount of Rs 520 on a daily basis to the workers. These unsung heroes deserve appreciation and acknowledgement of their efforts from us, while the government should also acknowledge their high risk job and implement The Minimum Wage Act which can raise their wages and ensure some sort of financial stability of their household.

> Sadam Sheikh sadamshk@rediffmail

Kashmir Observer[™] 055 Kashmir Observer[™]

IN PHOTOS Heavy Snowfall Throws Life Out Of Gear In Kashmir

Abid Bhat

ife was thrown out of gear in Kashmir on Wednesday as most areas of the valley received snowfall - the season's first heavy fall in the plains - disrupting flight and railway operations and leading to the closure of the vital Srinagar-Jammu national highway, officials said.

Most areas of the valley received moderate to heavy snowfall which started in the night and was going on when last reports

came in, they said. The areas in the higher reaches of the Union Territory received very heavy snowfall -- around two feet or more, they said. The officials said Srinagar - the summer capital of the union terri-

tory - recorded about eight inches of snow till this morning. The authorities have pressed men and machinery into service to clear the snow off the roads, many of which, such as those leading to hospitals and other vital installations, are being cleared on priority, the officials said.

































Dangling Cables & Lose Live Wires Of Smart City Srinagar

Abid Bhat

rinagar declared as SMART CITY still has dangling cables and electric wires strung up from every electricity pole, lamp post and even buildings posing a danger to human life and giving city an ugly look. With the fresh overnight snowfall on Wednesday

hundreds of decaying electric poles even crashed and wires fell on snow covered ground posing danger to passers by and motorists. It's time electricity wires are laid underground. It's also important for places like Kashmir not only for aesthetic reasons but because during winters, ice buildup on the power lines makes them too heavy to be carried

News

Kashmir Observer Model Construction Construc

MD NHIDCL Calls On LG



Observer News Service

IAMMU: Sh. Chanchal Kumar. the newly appointed Managing Director, National Highways Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd today called on Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, and discussed with him about the ongoing and upcoming projects of NHIDCL in J&K.

Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary J&K, was also present during the meeting.

The MD apprised the Lt Governor that NHIDCL is mainly involved in the upgradation of NH-244 which serves as alternative connectivity between

Jammu and Srinagar, and 4 laning of Jammu-Akhnoor Road. He informed that NHIDCL has 12 ongoing projects in Jammu region costing around Rs 5200 crore, and four ongoing projects in Kashmir region worth Rs 10,300 crore. He further informed that important and strategic upcoming projects in J&K including Jammu-Akhnoor (Package 1), Jammu-Akhnoor (Package-3 B), Sudhmahadev-Dranga Tunnel, and Singhpora-Vailoo Tunnel (under Sinthan Pass) are likely to be taken up. Appreciating the efforts made by NHIDCL in building

Lt Governor impressed upon the Managing Director NHIDCL that all the ongoing projects work be monitored closely so that they are completed in time. During the meeting, the MD

also mentioned that UT administration has rendered full assistance in land acquisition cases and various statutory clearances. While interacting with the team of NHIDCL, the Lt Governor assured all support to the NHIDCL from the UT government for successful implementation of their future projects of strengthening the Highways network in J&K.

Comm Secy Visits Kupwara, Reviews Ongoing Dev Works Under RDD Sector Asks For Completion Of All Ongoing Works Within Stipulated Time Frame

Observer News Service

KUPWARA: Commissioner Secretary, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj, Mandeep Kaur, today visited Kupwara district and convened a high level joint meeting of officers and DDCs/BDCs to review progress on ongoing development works being executed under Rural Development department- all under District and UT CAPEX Budget 2021-22 and all Centrally sponsored schemes.

District Chairman Development Council, Kupwara, Irfan Sultan Pandithpori; Vice Chairman District Development Council, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir; Deputy Commissioner, Imam Din; Director RDD, Kashmir, Director Finance RDD, Director Rural Sanitation, Director Panchayati Raj, Addl. **IKRLM**, Mission Director

Additional Secretary RDD and PR, besides DDC members, BDC Chairpersons, district officers attended the meeting. Exhorting upon the elected

representatives to work proactively, Commissioner Secretary asked the grassroot leaders to involve themselves at the formulation of plan at all levels so as to discharge their mandated duties proficiently.

Regarding staff shortage in the district, Kaur assured that new Block Development Officers will be posted soon as per requirement.

While reviewing MGNREGA, she gave clear cut instructions to the concerned officers for ensuring completion of all the ongoing works before the end of fiscal year. She laid special emphasis on displaying the list of all approved works under different schemes of the department

separately."

reads a tweet.

Two 'Militant

Sheeri.

JKSSB Postpones

arately", it further read.

person said Wednesday.

23.02.2022 at JKSSB camp office

"Fresh dates shall be announced sep-

sources that an unknown militant

group from Khachadari, Zehanpora

were using illegal arms and ammuni-

tion against police and other security

forces in the main town to disturb the

peace and law & order, a police spokes-

Police, Army's 46RR and the personnel of SSB 2nd battalion and CRPF 53bat-

talion established many checkpoints

within the jurisdiction of Police Station

"Among them, one Naka was es-tablished on Zehanpora-Khadniyar

link road and during checking one

Scooty bearing registration number

JK05A- 9328 which was coming from

Zehanpora with pillion ride was no-

ticed moving in suspicious circum-

On noticing the naka party, the

spokesperson said that the duo tried to

flee away from spot, however the alert

party apprehended both the persons

criminating materials including 40 live

"During their personal search, in-

Acting on the information, he said,

Rambagh Srinagar (Kashmir based

candidates) is hereby postponed",

on Panchayat Information Board (PIB) at Panchayat Ghars. She clarified that not every work, undertaken at the Panchayat level under MGNREGA, has to be in 60:40 ratio, however, the ratio is to be maintained strictly at block and district level. Emphasizing on gearing up

the pace of works in Panchayats, she asked the XEN concerned to start the blacklisting process for all the contractors who do not finish their projects within the stipulated time frame so that development works are not affected. She also asked them to optimally utilize the first quarter of the financial year for speedy execution of sanctioned development works so that the funds are not lapsed.

Kaur added that capacity building programmes for PRI members would be conducted to sensitize the representatives with the functioning of government schemes at the grassroot level.

The meeting was also informed that many abandoned government buildings have been identified which will be made functional as Panchayat Ghars. She asked the Assistant Commissioner Panchayat to take complete ownership of schemes and program lated to Panchayati Raj. Secretary schemes and programmes re-

stressed upon ensuring internet connectivity in all the Panchayats in view of present online system of government functioning and other related activities.

Earlier, Chairman DDC highlighted various issues being faced by the Rural Development Department and the District Development Council.

Deputy Commissioner briefed the meeting about the developmental profile of the district.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Heavy Snowfall

snow on the railway tracks, the officials said.

The 300-km Jammu-Srinagar highway was closed as besides snowfall, it received heavy rains resulting in shooting stones at a few places, they said.

Traffic was barred on either side of the highway, the officials added.

According to reports, nearly half a dozen residential houses-one in Srinagar, others in south Kashmir districts were damaged due to the snowfall.

Two women identified as Arifa Banoo and Jana Begum were injured after their sheds collapsed in Pulwama district. Also, a family in Awantipora Tehsil had a narrow escape after a walnut tree fell on their residential house today morning.

Meanwhile, the rain and snowfall witnessed a gradual decrease from Wednesday afternoon, and the weather improved significantly in the evening onwards.

Overall improvement is most likely from Thursday onwards. After this spell, there is no forecast of any major rain/snow till the end of this month, the Met office said.

The authorities have appealed to people to not move out of their homes unless absolutely necessary.

Snow clearance machines of MED (mechanical engineering department) and other departments are clearing the snow mechanically and manually from the main roads since early morning, but due to continuous snowfall. the roads are very slippery and there are chances of accidents, the authorifooting basis," he added.

National Highways in J&K, the

Pole, as per the spokesperson appealed to people not to park their vehicles on the road sides so that the Mechanical Engineering Department, PWD, SMC and other departments will not face any hindrance during Snow clearance.

"Besides, he further appealed to people not to throw snow of their lawns on the streets or lanes as it creates difficulties for the people and Snow clearing teams," he added.

Heavy Snowfall

Development Department (PDD) According to reports, the heavy snowfall of the season led to power outages across the Valley, including this capital city on Wednesday.

The snowfall that started around midnight weighed down tree limbs and encrusted power lines. At least 8 towers suffered damages in Pantha Chowk and Balhama area of the city outskirts.

it, 220 MegaWatt Besides Transmission Line also suffered damages at Kralwari area of Budgam district, while three towers carrying 132KV transmission line from Mir Bazar area of Kulgam district have also been damaged by heavy snowfall.

Meanwhile the officials have said that only 40 percent of the total damage in the power supply has been restored and the work on the rest was being carried out.

"Due to heavy snowfall the power load in Kashmir had fallen down to 220 MW against a normal load of 1500 MW in the morning." Chief Engineer, PDD. Aijaz Ahmed Dar. told Kashmir Observer.

under darkness since early morning. Across the Srinagar city, hundreds of power Poles were seen damaged and power lines dumped on the ground due to heavy snowfall

As per Chief Engineer, the power supply to the majority of the Srinagar city was restored by evening. "However, in other districts like Anantnag, Shopian, Kulgam and Ganderbal, the restoration would take a bit longer due to excessive damage on 11 KV and 33KV power supply by snowfall." Dar told Kashmir Observer.

It is pertinent to mention here that since early morning, the Power Development Department had pushed its men and machinery to restore the electricity. However, the heavy snowfall had hampered their work.

"Out of 1031 feeders in the Kashmir valley, 850 feeders were out either because of fault or non-availability of grid." Dar said. "Till evening, we've restored 200 feeders and the rest of the feeders are currently being fixed. We've more than 35,000 Direct Transmission's in Kashmir and I guess about 150 transformers have been damaged due to snowfall. But, the exact figures are yet to be estimated."

Dar further said, "We're hopeful that the power supply in the entire Kashmir, including the major faults, will be restored by tomorrow evening.' Meanwhile. the Divisional

Commissioner Kashmir P K Pole has said that all the essential services are being restored on war footing in

Kashmir valley. "All the essential services are be poned due to inclement weather. The restored on war footing in Kashmir valley following heavy snowfall since Tuesday," Pole said. "20 to 25 per cent power lines have been affected due to snowfall. Divisional administration is working to restore electricity to the affected areas by evening." All 41 Flights

below 400 metres and the continuous snowfall hampered the snow clearance operations.

As per airlines, the passengers will be adjusted in the next available flights. While weather is set to improve as per the forecast by the local meteorological department, the Director AAI expressed hope that all flights will operate tomorrow. He said that snow clearance operation was going on.

Banihal Highway

Wednesday. "People are requested not to under-

take any journey on Jammu-Srinagar NHW tomorrow," the Jammu and Kashmir traffic police said.

The highway is the lifeline of the Kashmir valley and the main road link connecting it with the rest of the country.

Kashmir-bound trucks carrying essential supplies and other vehicles pass through this highway.

Mughal Road, Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri Road and Kishtwar-Sinthan Road are also closed for vehicular movement in view of snow accumulation. (Agencies)

Universities Postpone

scheduled to be held on February 23, 2022 (Wednesday) have been postponed in view of the inclement

weather conditions," said Controller of Examinations Dr Majid Zaman, in a statement. He said fresh dates for the postponed

papers will be notified separately. rounds of AK-47 were recovered from "All End Semester Examinations their possession," he said. scheduled for today have been post-

He identified the duo as Imtiyaz Ahmad and Muneer Ahmad both resi-

stances," he said.

tactfully.

investigation is in progress," he added. **5 Gamblers Arrested**

apprehended five gamblers from the spot, a police spokesperson said. He identified the accused as Farooq Ahmad Goojri, Reyaz Ahmad Khan, Waseem Ahmad Rah, Bashir Ahmad Mir and Tanveer Ahmad Bhat.

In the raid that was carried out on specific information, the spokesperson said that an amount of Rs 1, 04,000 was seized from the alleged gamblers.

"In this connection case FIR No. 13/2022 U/S 13 Gambling Act was registered in Police Station Shaheed Gunj and investigation taken up," he added.

JKPSC Postpones

Examination 2021 that due to inclement weather, Paper VI (special Law-I) scheduled for today, i.e.23. O2.2O22 is hereby postponed and shall now be held on Friday. 25.02.2022 from 10.00 AM to 01.00 PM," the JKPSC said in a notification.

"The venue for the examination shall remain the same," it added.

Ladakh Reports

related deaths so far, comprising 168 fatalities in Leh and 60 in Kargil.

No death due to COVID-19 was reported from the Union Territory on Tuesday, the officials said.

On the bright side, 51 more patients recovered from the virus and were discharged from hospitals in Ladakh. Of these, 43 were discharged in Leh and eight in Kargil, they said.

The number of COVID-19 recoveries has reached 27369 in Ladakh, they said. Of the total of 35 fresh cases from Union territory, all such cases were reported from Leh district, according to the officials. A total of 1,519 sample reports in Ladakh were found coronavirus negative, they said. Of the total active COVID-19 cases in Ladakh, Leh accounts for 268 and Kargil district 37

ties said in an advisory. (With agency inputs)

Essential Services

are functional while entire medical and paramedics staff is available in hospitals to render their duties and services," he said.

"He said all essential services are being restored on priority and on a war

"700 MW which is upto 45% of the total load, has already been restored and the rest of the 800 MW are currently being fixed. All the minor damages will be fixed in the next three to four hours. And we're expecting that 1000MW will be restored by late evening today," he added.

Notably, Kashmir region is reeling

concerned students be informed accordingly", said a statement from Central University of Kashmir.

Controller Examinations Cluster University Srinagar in statement said "All the examinations of Cluster University Srinagar scheduled on 23rd February, 2022 have been postponed due to inclement weather. Fresh dates for postponed papers shall be notified

dents of Khachadari Zehanpora.

The spokesperson also claimed that during preliminary investigation, the arrested duo confessed that they are working for LeT (TRF) and involved in transportation of illegal arms and ammunition used to carry out attacks on Police/SFs.

"Accordingly, a case under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Sheeri and further

YouTube KO

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$\frac{K_{ASHMIR}O_{BSERVER}}{Thursday | 24.02.2022}$

SNOW FURY Authorities Defer School Reopening Preparations



Agencies SRINAGAR: In view of heavy

"The Heads of all schools of district Srinagar were advised to start advance preparations for re-opening of schools," an offi-

"However, due to the prevail-

snowfall, the concerned authorities of Srinagar district on cial said. Wednesday deferred preparation of reopening of schools in

Kashmir valley. The authorities earlier had asked the concerned school au- the HOIs are directed to ensure thorities to start preparations preparations in advance well for reopening of schools from before 28-02-2022," the official February-24.

Security Jail

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kash-

mir government on Wednesday

approved over 300 kanal of land

department for the construction

of high security prison where

inals" will be lodged.

spokesperson said.

"treasonous and insurgent crim-

The decision to transfer 148

Govt Transfers 300

Kanal Land For High

ing weather conditions, the exercise of preparations may be deferred by one day. But said–(KNO)

Govt Okays Policy For Promoting Foreign Investment In J&K

Observer News Service

JAMMU: In a significant decision, the Jammu and Kashmir government on Wednesday approved the policy for promotion of foreign investment in the industrial sector in the Union Territory.

The decision was taken during the Administrative Council meeting held here under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, an official spokesperson said Wednesday. LG's Advisors Farooq Khan and Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Meh-ta besides LG's Principal Secretary Nitishwar Kumar attended

the meeting. According to the spokesperson, the new policy is based on the guiding framework on FDI issued by the Government of India be regulated by the J&K Industhrough the RBI and DPIIT and will be valid for the next 10 years. 2021-30, whilst, such units will The policy, he said, aims to fa- also be eligible for benefits, in-

minimum of 51% foreign stakes. "The policy also provides for identifying parcels of land in various industrial estates to be given exclusively to industries with foreign investments including vertical rise premises in the

form of multi-purpose buildings/complexes, with plug and play facilities," he said. The spokesperson said that the land allotment process will trial Land Allotment Policy,

Policy 2021-30 and New Central Sector Scheme for the industrial development of Jammu and Kashmir.

"For optimal utilization of land resources and to provide integrated services to multiple players, the policy also envisages the establishment of multipurpose complexes for foreign investment by developing IT tower projects through private players in Sempora, Pampore and Exhibition Ground, Jammu. These towers will house different business activities and will form a part of the 'Induscilitate large foreign investments centives, and support under the trial Complex for Foreign Invest-greater than Rs.100 crore with a Jammu and Kashmir Industrial ment'," he added.

"Additional AYUSH Health and

Wellness Centers are being set up

to meet the increasing demand for

Ayurvedic and other Indian sys-

tem of medicine facilities in rural

"Today, J&K is one of the best

"We are also moving ahead to

records of the patients," he said

and urban areas," the LG said.

Govt Committed To The Goal Of Health For All: LG

DHs, and CHCs & PHCs across the UT, an official spokesperson said.

Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Tata Memorial Hospital and Government Medical College Jammu for technical expertise and academic support for developing modernized cancer care facilities.

tribute towards further strengthening of the healthcare system.



enjoying medical care facilities in big cities and abroad while the majority of the population did not have access even to ordinary health care facilities. With the commitment to public health, we ensured high-quality healthcare for all," the LG said.

He said that the Prime Minister

Hon'ble PM rolled out SEHAT companies like Tata Memorial scheme and brought every citizen under the health care safety Hospital and Apollo Hospitals, net. Before 2019, there were only his government was introducing fundamental changes to ensure 129 health and wellness centers across Jammu and Kashmir. 1275 the best healthcare to the people new health and wellness centers of the UT. have been set up in two years," provide facility for online appoint-

"In the backdrop of global pan- ments and digitization of medical emic research uman know



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Asserting that his gov-ernment is committed to the goal

sisters living in far-flung areas. Sinha made these remarks while laying foundation stones for various state-of-the-art health infrastructure projects at GMCs,

The spokesperson said that the LG launched a social security scheme for employees under the National Health Mission and also handed over ex-gratia cheques of Rs 10 lakhs each to the NoKs of the deceased employees of NHM. The LG, he said, maintained that the augmented facilities will con-

"I&K Covernment is commi



FLIGHT CANCELLATIONS

Srinagar Passengers

Getting Shafted By

Airlines, Alleges Omar

SRINAGAR: National Conference (NC) vice president Omar Abdullah Wednesday alleged that air passengers to Srinagar were getting "shafted" by airlines after Kashmir were cancelled due to of heavy snowfall. snowfall, and people "told to re-

all airlines.

"This is how passengers to celled today & people who had paid ?3000/4000 for their seats handle.

are told to rebook. Suddenly the same flights are being quoted at ?12,000/?14,000. Day light robbery & no government intervenes," Abdullah tweeted.

All 41 flights to and from the Srinagar airport were cancelled all the day's flights to and from due to bad weather in the wake

However, responding to Abdullah's tweet, the airport However, airport authorities authorities said the options for said the options for refund and refund and rescheduling "at rescheduling at no extra cost no extra cost" for all the flights for all the flights cancelled on cancelled has been offered by all Wednesday has been offered by airlines.

The affected passengers may please contact the respective Srinagar are getting shafted airlines call centre for refund or by airlines - all flights got canport said on its official Twitter

CS Asks IT Department **To Expedite Roll Out Of UT Dashboard**



day asked the department to UT," the spokesperson said. speed up the development of UT dashboard and 'your mobile that going forward the scope our office' app to enable J&K to go fully digital in next three months.

velopment of UT Dashboard, an secretaries of a few identified

JAMMU: The Chief Secretary, Dr. stop viewing/monitoring plat-Arun Kumar Mehta on Wednes- form for all the schemes in the

Mehta, he said, also stated and sweep of the dashboard can be further enhanced by adding more schemes and services He made this comments in a including the deliverables as-

meeting held to review the de- signed to all the departments. Earlier IT Secretary, Prerna official spokesperson said. The Puri, the spokesperson said, meeting was attended by the made a small presentation on the progress achieved in devel

kanal land in village Dambra of Kathua district along with the transfer of state land measuring 160 kanal 4 marla to the Prisons Department for construction of high security prison in the district, was taken in the Adminislage Firsal in Kulgam district. trative Council meeting chaired by Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Wednesday, an official

In the meeting, LG approved ployment of teaching and nonthe proposal of Revenue department to transfer various parcels recruiting agencies.

The construction of High Se- en to the transfer of land meacurity Prison for lodging trea- suring 02 kanal and 05 Marla in sonous and insurgent criminals favour of Health & Medical Eduaims at meeting the security cation Department for construc-

harpora in District Pulwama.

Once completed, the institution

vour of Revenue department for construction of a police post at Newa in Pulwama district. "The new police post in the local area will keep a check on ille-

in district Kathua to the prisons gal activities, security-related incidents, and will allow the police to respond to any law and order situation and natural disaster in a timely manner," he added.

According to the spokesperson, the government approved the transfer of land measuring 63 kanal 4 marla in favour of Higher Education Department for construction of a new Government Degree College in vil-

The decision, he said, aims to provide quality higher education opportunities to students of the region and boost emteaching staff through various

"Moreover, approval was giv-

of health for all, the Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Wednesday that his administration is determined to ensure that the new health facilities in various districts promote social equality and its benefits reach our brothers and

In presence of LG, he said, , a

Sinha said.



requirements of the region and tion of a health centre at Jawastrengthening the national security," the spokesperson said.

of land for public purposes.

Besides the prison, the AC, he will provide modern medical said, also approved the transfer facilities to the people of the of land measuring 5 Kanal in fa- area," he added.

DGP Directs Formation Of Cyber-Crime Investigation Teams

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: To avert the growing of well-trained officers shall be trend of cyber crimes, Director formed to handle cyber-crime General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Dilbag Singh on Wednesday issued a circular, directing the formation of teams of welltrained officers to handle the

cyber-crime investigation. The circular, forwarded to Special Director General of Po-General of Police, Jammu Zone, languages.

investigations in their respective units and wings, a police spokesperson said. He said the circular also directed for observance of 'cyber awareness day' on the first

and Inspector General of Po-

lice, Kashmir, reads that teams

lice, Crime, Additional Director lated frauds in all vernacular

Wednesday of every month to create awareness on cyber re-

J&K Logs 100 Corona Cases

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported on Wednesday 100 fresh cases of novel Coronavirus while one more person succumbed to the infection in the Union Territory during the last 24 hours.

According to officials, Kashmir Valley reported 30 new cases of Coronavirus while the remaining 70 were detected in various districts of Jammu division, taking the number of people infected since the onset of pandemic in J&K to 452647.

In the Valley, officials said, Jammu and 2423 in Kashmir. Srinagar registered the highest 12 new cases of virus, Budgam 6, Baramulla 5, Anantnag 3 and two cases each in Kupwara and Bandipora. The four districts of Jammu Division and 92 from

and Shopian detected no new cases of Covid-19. In the winter capital, officials said, Jammu registered a maximum of 29 fresh cases of Coronavirus, Doda 25, Kathua 6, Ramban 4, Udhampur 3 and one case each in Rajouri, Samba and Poonch. No cases were reported from the twin districts of Kisht-

war and Reasi. Also, the officials said that one more person succumbed to Covid-19 related complications in Jammu division on Wednesday, raising the death toll in the pandemic to 4748 in J&K-2325 in

"Moreover, 182 more CO-VID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 90from Pulwama, Ganderbal, Kulgam Kashmir Division, they added.

ted to the goal of health for all. edge and technical intervention We are determined to ensure that the new health facilities in an explosive pace that was unvarious districts promote social thinkable even a decade ago. We equality and its benefits reach are devoting greater attention our brothers and sisters living in far-flung areas." Sinha said.

The MoU with Tata Memorial Hospital for academic & technical collaboration will help in developing ultra-modern tertiary cancer care facilities & technical expertise to faculty, paramedical staff and integration of State Cancer Institute into National Cancer Grid, Tata Memorial Centre," he added.

Expressing his gratitude to-wards the Prime Minister Nathe health sector of Jammu and Kashmir, the Lt Governor, as per

rendra Modi for transforming son said that the new health inthe spokesperson said that the health infrastructure, creation of healthcare infrastructure has human resources in the UT. and changed dramatically since 2014. help the health department to healthy lifestyle.

Admin Orders Probe Into Self-Immolation Bid During Demolition Drive

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Wednesday ordered an inquiry into a selfimmolation bid by a 27-year-old man during an anti-encroachment drive in Ganderbal district a tional District Development Com-

the tehsildar concerned for "mishandling the matter".

Irrigation and Flood Control Department had launched a demolition drive against illegal constructions along the water bodies.

the banks of the Sindh stream, Amir Hamid Shah came from behind an illegal structure, climbed on its roof and set himself on fire in protest.

The flames were doused by the

Paying his heartfelt tributes to in healthcare is increasing at all health workers who sacrificed their lives while selflessly serving others, the LG, as per the spokesperson said that he stand with to medical education and 1897 their families. medical education seats have

"Request has been made to the Central Government regarding been increased in the last two the compensation to the remain-To effectively confront the ing families of NHM employees," the LG said, adding "We are challenges of human resources in the health sector, the LG, as per grateful to our doctors, nurses the spokesperson said that his paramedics, ASHA & Anganwadi government is also setting up 10 workers and vaccination team on the ground who are working "This will go a long way in relentlessly and sincerely in the overcoming the shortage of nursfight against global pandemic. I believe their efforts will continue The LG, as per the spokesperwith renewed energy and focus," According to the spokesperson, frastructure at CHCs and PHCs the LG urged the medical fraternity to complement government's will strengthen rural public efforts to make J&K Nasha-Mukt, and also raise awareness about

service oriented departments including IT secretary.

The spokesperson said that the objective of the portal will be to monitor the progress of various development schemes/ activities of the government departments and will enable single point view/oversight to the top echelons of the J&K Gov-

ernment. tion of the schemes will be assessed on real time basis based tors identified/set out by the re-

spective departments. the dashboard a real time one on Umang app on this app.

oping the dashboard and outlined the steps being taken to roll out the initiative and 'your

mobile out office' app. "Prerna said 'your mobile our office' app is in the final stages of the development and will be rolled out shortly," he said.

"She said that in the beginning this app will be enabled to provide only five services on He said that the implementa- line on end to end basis and the number of the services will be extended going forward based on the key performance indica- on the lessons learnt in the process," he added.

According to the spokesper-'The Chief Secretary asked son, Mehta asked the departthe IT department to integrate ment to launch 'your mobile our the DGGI dashboard with 50 in- office' app within 15 days with dicators and 140 data points be- 5 services to begin with. The CC, sides also incorporating the 55 he said, advised the department beneficiary oriented schemes to also explore the possibility of with the UT dashboard to make providing 200 services available

BJP President Meets Former NC Leader Bukhari In Jammu

from the party and join BJP.

ing for the welfare of Pahari's

him, I have come to have tea

and know his welfare, the BJP

leader told reporters after

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir BJP president Ravinder Raina Wednesday met former on minister Mushtaq Ahmad Shah Bukhari here, a day after he resigned from the basic membership of National Conference over the issue of Scheduled Tribe status for Pahari speaking community.

The meeting gave rise to speculation that Bukhari, a two-time MLA from Surankote constituency of Poonch district, is joining the saffron party even as Raina said he enjoys family terms with the elderly politi- meeting the 75-year-old leadcian and his meeting with him er at his residence here. was just a courtesy call .

Raina said Bukhari has al-In a related development, ways worked for the welfare a video has gone viral on soof the people, especially of the cial media purportedly of a Pahari community, and in the telephonic conversation be- national interest. When asked tween National Conference whether he invited him to join president Farooq Abdullah and the BJP, he said he is our leader a party worker on the issue who was hurt by his party (NC). of Bukhari's resignation with We respect him and he remains former chief minister mak- very close to our heart.

ing it clear that the party has In the viral video, an unknown been projecting the demand of National Conference worker, ap-Pahari community for a very parently from the Pahari comlong time and that Bukhari munity, termed Bukhari's decihas some personal interest to sion to leave the party as a wrong safeguard and is projecting the one and was seen seeking perspecial status demand for his mission from Abdullah to meet community to justify his exit Bukhari to ensure his return.

It is God's grace he left the Bukhari is a political stalparty. There is no need to go wart and soul of Pahari comto him as we do not need such munity I have seen him worktype of people, Abdullah said.

Abdullah referred to his infrom my childhood and since teraction with Bukhari before we enjoy family terms with his resignation and said when we talked against the Scheduled Tribe status to Pahari community. From (former prime minister) Indira Gandhi till date, we have been projecting the demand of

the community. He (Bukhari) might have got some promise from him (Raina) to safeguard some personal interest.

Bukhari had on Sunday chaired a convention by the Pahari Tribe ST Forum here which saw over 350 delegates in attendance with Raina as the chief guest.

incident was caught on camera

in 10 days.

Taking cognizance of the media

Khurshid Ahmad Shah, JKAS, Addi-

missioner, Ganderbal, is appointed

The inquiry officer has been

The order also stated that the

years," he added.

new nursing colleges.

es" Sinha said.

and was doing the rounds on social media, prompting the police to urge people not to share the clip. reports of the unfortunate incident of alleged self-immolation in Ganderbal district on February 22,

day ago. It also ordered the transfer of

as an enquiry officer to enquire Following many complaints, the into the whole episode," stated an order by Divisional Commissioner of Kashmir Pandurang K Pole. asked to furnish his findings with-

During a demolition drive along

tehsildar of Ganderbal has been transferred with immediate effect and his services kept at the disposal of the deputy commissioner

of Bandipora "owing to mishanlocals and police personnel. The dling the issue".

SPORTS



Press Trust of India

MELBOURNE: Australia's interim coach Andrew McDonald on Wednesday advocated the importance of the IPL, saying the upcoming edition of the lucrative league will be a nice build up for his team as it defends its T20 World Cup title on home soil later this year.

"Oh, no doubt. I think the quality of the IPL can can coexist with our preparation for our plans for T20 World Cup, and there was no greater example than Josh Hazlewood. Going to the IPL before the World Cup, getting a nice build in getting a nice lead-in," McDonald said during a virtual press conference just days ahead of Australia's departure to Pakistan.

Australia is set to embark on a historic tour of Pakistan after 24 years where they will play a full series, involving three Tests beginning March 4 in Rawalpindi, followed by three ODIs and a one-off T20 International.

Interestingly, McDonald's statement came a day after it was reported that Australia's star players, including David Warner, Josh Hazelwood and Pat Cummins, will miss the start of the IPL despite skipping the limited overs series against Pakistan, which is set to coincide with the lucrative T20 league.

for the series in Pakistan, starting March 4-25, but will be skipping the limited overs assignment, beginning March 29. The dates of the upcoming IPL are yet to be announced but is expected to begin in the last week of March

According to McDonald, the advent of IPL has accelerated cricket and has taken the game to an altogether different level. .. so yeah, there's great benefits to be had, but playing at that level, being exposed, those conditions and the conversations that happen within the IPL franchises, you know, all the

countries converging on one. "I've said this before that, you know, 2008 was almost the moment where the game accelerated and it was played differently. "I think that was really

through the coming together of ideas, nations mixing with each other, players mixing coaches mixing. And it took the game forward. We're seeing an exciting product ever since.

'So,we're excited by our guys playing there. We want more, more players playing and if we can to get that exposure," Mc-Donald, who was associated with IPL teams, Royal Challengers Bangalore and Rajasthan Royals in coaching capacities in the past, added.

The ICC men's World T20 is set Warner, Hazelwood and Cum-mins are part of the Test squad to be hosted by Australia from Oc-tober 16 to November 13 this year.

IPL Founder Lalit Modi Fights Legal Challenge In UK Court

Press Trust of India

LONDON: A former Indian model-turned-investor, Gurpreet Gill Maag, has filed a legal challenge in the High Court in London seeking damages amounting to millions of dollars from Indian Premier League (IPL) founder Lalit Modi over alleged deceit and breach of contract.

Judge Murray Rosen QC is presiding over the trial, which opened in the Chancery Division this week, to determine whether



"Further, the Maags



JKFA Postpones 29th Annual C'ship Due To Bad Weather

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Football Association (JAKFA) Annual Championship has been for time being. Fresh fixtures Turf TRC.

postponed till further notice. will be issued after the weather 'The Ist phase of 29th Annual conditions improve," the JKFA Football Championship 2021- said in a statement.

22 has been postponed due to The Day 1 of the 1st Phase on Wednesday announced that its heavy Snowfall in the valley started Tuesday at Synthetic

Real Kashmir's North Kashmir Football Academy Launched



Observer News Service statement.

SRINAGAR: Real Kashmir FC have launched its first-ever academy outside Srinagar in north Kashmir's Pattan area.

"Real Kashmir kick started its be scouted for the first time as promote the development of and teenagers under the age football at the grassroots level," of 13 and 15 were divided into experience," Sandeep Chattoo, the Snow Leopards said in a two categories. Throughout the RKFC chairman said.

training RKFC will be providing "Children thronged to the all the facilities including the stadium excitedly and shownecessary equipments for the cased their skills under the training," the statement added. guidance of the coaches. Young talent from North Kashmir will first football academy in north part of RKFC's program by the because football, after all, has

"Taking the Srinagar club to other areas of Kashmir's interior also brings positive feelings Kashmir's Pattan on Monday to club's coaches. Young children brought so much positivity to the state. It's been an amazing

Olympics Say Goodbye To Asia After A Star-Crossed Run

change how it was viewed.

Kamila Valieva.

Suryakumar Yadav, Venkatesh Iyer Make Massive **Jumps In ICC T20I Rankings**



Press Trust of India

DUBAI: The Indian middle-order duo of Suryakumar Yadav and Venkatesh İyer on Wednesday made huge gains, climbing to 21st and 115th spot respectively, in the latest ICC men's T20I rankings for batters on the back of their impressive showing to No. 17. against the West Indies.

Both the batters enjoyed a sensational series against West Indies, which India had swept 3-0.

Suryakumar was India's highest run-getter in the series while Iyer was second.

The performances helped Suryakumar climb 35 paces to 21st while Iyer made a massive jump of 203 spots to 115th.

KL Rahul dropped two places to be sixth while senior batter Virat Kohli remained static on

10th in the batters' list.

No Indian featured in the top 10 of the bowlers and all-rounders' list.

West Indies' lone warrior with the bat, Nicholas Pooran, moved five places to No.13.

The recently-concluded T20I series between Australia and Sri Lanka also caused some movement in the rankings.

Australia's Ashton Agar broke into the top 10 rankings for bowlers, and currently sits at number nine.

Sri Lanka's Maheesh Theekshana's rise in T20I cricket reflected in his rankings as wellhe attained a career-high rating of 592 after climbing 12 places

In the Test rankings, India's new skipper Rohit Sharma held on to his sixth spot while Kohli was one place behind on seventh.

Senior spinner Ravichandran Ashwin and pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah were the two Indians in the top 10 of the bowlers' list in second and 10th place respectively.

Ashwin also held on to his second spot in all-rounders' chart alongside compatriot Ravindra Jadeja who is third.

Following the first Test between New Zealand and South Africa, Kyle Jamieson and Tim Southee moved up a place each to occupy the No.3 and No.5 spot respectively, with the former attaining a career-high rating of 825.

Neil Wagner's exploits with the bat and ball saw him scale four spots to No.13 in the allrounders' rankings.

BAN vs AFG 1st ODI

Bangladesh Recover From 45/6 To Beat Afghanistan



Agencies

closer to its seventh straight ODI victory

CHATTOGRAM: Afif Hossain and But Afif and Mehidy rose when Mehidy Hasan combined for a na- it mattered most. Their strategy to tional record 174-run partnership play with caution and aggres

Modi made false representations to secure investment for a worldwide cancer treatment project dating back to April 2018.

Modi has denied the allegations through written evidence and is also expected to make oral submissions during the course of the trial to counter the claims.

According to court documents, Maag-owned special purpose vehicle (SPV) Quantum Care Ltd was pitched an attractive investment offer at a meeting at the Four Seasons Hotel in Dubai for Modi's specialist cancer treatment company Ion Care.

The court was told: "In summary, the Maags' (Gurpreet and husband Daniel Maag) evidence is that Mr Modi informed them during the meeting that a number of well-known and influential individuals had agreed to act as 'patrons' of Ion Care, had agreed to participate in its management (as 'leaders') and had also made substantial financial commitments to the business, amounting to some USD 260 million.

Modi told them that a number of influential individuals and celebrities had agreed to act as 'brand ambassadors' for Ion Care." Being socially acquainted with Londonbased Modi, Maag - domiciled in Singapore – was invited to invest in a first "friends and family round" of fundraising for USD 2 million. Her company Quantum Care went on to invest USD 1 million on November 14, 2018, and the remaining USD 1 million was not invested as Ion Care's business never got off the ground.

However, Maag says this meant losses for her as she was unable to invest that sum in other businesses.

The scope of the trial, estimated to last into next week, is to determine the question of "causation", with the quantification of any damages to be addressed at a separate and subsequent stage. Gill's Quantum Care is seeking repayment of the balance of its investment made into Ion Care in November 2018, amounting to USD 800,000 plus interest.

Delhi Capitals Confirm Agarkar's Appointment

Press Trust of India

officialy appointed as the assistant coach of IPL franchise Delhi Capitals.

Ås reported by PTI on Tuesday, ries against Sri Lanka beginning on Thursday.

"I am very excited to be part of Delhi Capitals squad for this name, has represented Kolkata season," Agarkar said, on the development in a team statement.

He is looking forward to work with captain Rishabh Pant and head coach Ricky Ponting.

"I have been lucky enough to ing Coach).

be a player and to be returning in a different capacity. It's obvi-

NEW DELHI: Former India pacer ously very exciting. We have a Ajit Agarkar was on Wednesday young and terrific squad led by one of the most talented players in the world – Rishabh Pant.

"And the coach Ricky Ponting has been a legend of the game. Agarkar will join the team after Looking forward to working his completing his commentat- with them, can't wait to get ing duties for India's home se- started and creating some special memories."

The 44-year-old, with 288 ODI and 58 Test wickets to his Knight Riders and Delhi Daredevils in the IPL. He joins the Delhi Capitals coaching staff of Ponting, Pravin Amre (Assistant Coach) and James Hopes (Bowl-

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BEIJING: The Olympics have said goodbye to Asia after a star-crossed run, and it's unclear when they'll be back after the continent hosted four of the last eight Games.

The earliest the Summer Games could return is 2036, and the favorite could be the world's most populous country not China, as you might expect, but India. India's population is expected

to overtake China's 1.4 billion in the next decade, and it is lobbying for the western city of Ahmedabad to be the host city for 2036, with events elsewhere, including New Delhi, the capital. "India is in a race for hosting

2036," Narinder Batra, president of the Indian Olympic Committee, told The Associated Press. He offered few other details. In a show of support, the IOC has scheduled the annual meet-

ing of its full membership for next year in the western Indian metropolis of Mumbai. It's a signal the courting has begun.

Delivering the pitch: Indian IOC member Nita Ambani, who is married to Mukesh Ambani. the chairman of India's multinational conglomerate Reliance Industries. The family fortune has been estimated at \$100 billion. As it did with China, the IOC usher in democracy.

can envision India as a new frontier that will yield deeppocketed sponsors, television the IOC. This includes a staterights deals and generous government support.

Departing Asia means returning to familiar terrain: the Summer Games in Paris in 2024, the 2026 Winter Games in Milan-Cortina, and the 2028 Summer

Games in Los Angeles. Brisbane is also lined up for the 2032 Summer Olympics, a return to Australia 32 years after Sydney. Brisbane is certain to add

cricket to its sports menu and, of the just-finished Beijing Games of course, it would stay in place centered on human rights abuses for India, where the sport has the that also dogged Beijing in 2008.



FIREWORKS LIGHT UP THE SKY over Olympic Stadium during the closing ceremony of the 2022 Winter Olympics, Sunday, Feb. 20, 2022, in Beijing. (AP Photo/Jeff Roberson)

world's most fervent following. Add in the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro. This was another non-The Asia focus started with the 2008 Beijing Olympics, a grand traditional stop that caused probcoming-out party that many lems. It saw the organizing comhoped would change China. Inmittee face bankruptcy and Carlos stead, China used to Games to Nuzman, the head of the committee, convicted of corruption, mon-The Asia run enriched the ey laundering and tax evasion. The IOC with lucrative billion-dollar former IOC member is appealing. sponsorship deals with China's "The IOC I think is viewed as a

Alibaba and Japan's Toyota, put villain globally at this time, and down roots in the world's most they have to do something to change their image," said Robert populous continent and featured a return to South Korea 30 years Baade, a sports economist at Lake after the 1988 Seoul Olympics Forest College outside Chicago. were credited with helping to "I'm not sure that's going to happen at any time soon." Asia has also generated con-

Baade is the co-author of "Gosistently bad public relations for ing for Gold: The Economics of the Olympics," a study that looks sponsored doping scandal from at the costs and benefits of the the 2014 Sochi Winter Olym-Games

pics that lingers and surfaced "It's these little things, the fivestar hotels, the elitism, the priviagain with allegations in Beijing against Russian figure skater lege that the IOC displays – and its eurocentrism," Baade added.

There was IOC vote-buying Christophe Dubi, the Olymlinked to the award of the Tokyo pic Games' executive director, Olympics, which forced the resacknowledged India has exignation of the head of Japan's pressed strong interest, but de-Olympic Committee, Tsunekazu clined to name other countries Takeda, and a diplomatic boycott that have. Several Chinese cities have been mentioned as possibilities, along with Jakarta, Indonesia, Seoul and others.

in an unbroken seventh-wicket stand as Bangladesh recovered from a 45-6 to beat Afghanistan by four wickets in the first one-day international on Wednesday.

Both players hit their careerbest knocks in the process to frustrate Afghanistan. Afif posted an unbeaten 93, his maiden 50-plus output, and Mehidy added 81 not out as Bangladesh raced to victory with seven balls to spare after Afghanistan was bowled out for 215 in 49.1 overs.

Afghanistan's spin trio of Rashid Khan, Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Mohammad Nabi – described by Tamim labal as world's best — could take only two wickets, with Afif and Mehidy keeping them at bay. Playing only his second ODI,

pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi left Bangladesh 18-4 as Afghanistan appeared to have closed the game. Mujeeb (1-32) took the wicket

of Shakib (10), who was the only one of Bangladesh's top six to reach double digits.

Rashid Khan (1-30) then claimed the wicket of Mahmudullah with a half tracker, edging Afghanistan for big total. (AP)

served them well and frustrated Afghanistan as the evening dew largely kept the Afghan spin trio ineffective.

Afif cut Rashid for a single to reach his half-century off 64 balls. Mehidy pulled pacer Yamin Ahmadzai for boundary through square leg to bring up his second half-century off 79 balls.

Farooqi, who finished with 4-54, came back in his second spell hoping to provide the breakthrough but he was also denied as Afif and Mehidy finished the game in style with the former pulling Gulbadin Naib for a boundary though mid-wicket.

Najibullah Zadran earlier struck a superb 67 off 84 to give Afghanistan's total respectability. Mustafizur Rahman finished with 3-35 while Shakib Al Hasan, Taskin Ahmed and Shoriful Islam took two wickets each. Mustafizur broke through with the wicket of Rahmanullah Gurbaz (7) and then Shoriful and Taskin got into the act, reducing Afghanistan to 102-4. Najibullah and Nabi shared

a 63-run partnership for the fifth wicket as Afghanistan appeared set

Salzburg Hit By 15 COVID **Cases Among Players And Staff**

Agencies

SALZBURG: Austrian champion Salzburg cancelled training on Wednesday after reporting 15 coronavirus cases among players and staff.

Salzburg didn't specify how many of the cases were players but said some players had "rather light symptoms" and that everyone involved is in isolation.

The outbreak comes a week after Salzburg drew 1-1 with of their last-16 meeting in the Champions League. The second leg is March 8 in Munich.

"We are currently still ready to train and to play," sporting di- 17 points and is next in action rector Christoph Freund said in against LASK Linz on Sunday.



a statement. "However, now we have to track further develop-Bavern Munich in the first leg ments among the non-infected players very closely, together with our medical department, and react if needed." Salzburg leads the Austrian league by