# KASHMIR OBSERVER

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P7 STATE

**5TH CRAFT SAFARI TRAVERSES DOWNTOWN** 

Recognised as the UNESCO's Creative City in the field of Craft and Folk Art, Srinagar today witnessed the fifth craft Safari. The Safari Started from Ranawari and included a team of the officers from the Handicrafts and Handloom



**TOXIC, TORTUROUS, TREACHEROUS:** INSIDÉ KASHMIR'S WRONGED WEDLOCK

When Sumaiya first held her baby she had never imagined that she would be all alone, sitting on a hospital bed with a newborn in her arms and loneliness around. Even though the maternity ward in a government hospital where she gave birth



P7 STATE

**MERCURY PLUMMETS AFTER RAINS LASH PLAINS** 

Rains lashed plains in Jammu and Kashmir, bringing drop in day temperature on Tuesday. A meteorological department official said that Srinagar, the summer capital



Quote !

It always seems impossible until it's done

-Nelson Mandela

### NEWS DIGEST

#### **Commercial LPG Prices** Hiked By Rs 105

NEW DELHI: The price of commercial LPG, used by hotels and other commercial establishments, was on Tuesday hiked by Rs 105 to its secondhighest level but rates of subsidised gas sold to households remained on freeze. More on P6

#### **Militant Associate Held In Sanat Nagar**

SRINAGAR: Police on Tuesday claimed to have arrested a militant associate of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Sanat Nagar area of the city outskirts. A top police officer told GNS that a militant was arrested along with ten magazines of More on P6

#### **Tractor Crushes 2 Brothers To Death**

SRINAGAR: Two brothers were killed on Tuesday when a tractor ran over them in central Kashmir's Budgam district, 19-year-old Sajid Ahmad Dar and his younger brother Abrar were critically injured on Tuesday afternoon when a tractor ran over them at Sama Mohallah More on P6

#### **Army Hands Over PcK Youth To Police**

WArmy on Tuesday handed over a Pakistan-controlled-Kashmir resident, apprehended by it along Line of Control in Poonch district, to police. An army official said that the person, namely Dilshan son of Mohammad Saveed, a resident of Hajira, was taken for questioning after More on P6



If Not

Contact Circulation Incharge: Irshad Ahmad: 7006276927

# **Kashmiri Students Caught In Ukraine War Walk Home**

49 Students Reach Moldova, Romania Amid Gunfire; Air Raids



**Zaid Bin Shabir** 

**SRINAGAR:** As the Government of India's Operation Ganga—to evacuate stranded studentsin Ukraine comes under sharp focus, many Kashmiri students have managed to leave the turbulent country for

Moldova & Romania on their own, apparently without any official support.

Pertinently, three different groups of 49 Kashmiri students have managed to crossover into Moldova and Romania, after being caught up in the middle of air raids

and fierce fighting in Kharkiv, Sumy, Kyiv and Odessa cities. On February 28, these 15

Kashmiri students were all ready to leave for Moldova before their tryst was cut short by an unpredictable round of blasts. This was a final call for these young More on P6

YOU KNOW, THE EMBASSY HAS LITERALLY done nothing for us. There were no buses for us. We had to catch a cab for Moldova on our own. The world should know how we managed to reach Moldova. We have no money and no help was forthcoming."

### **Establishes Helpline**

he Jammu and Kashmir government has established a helpline for the students and residents of the Union Territory stuck in war-torn Ukraine, facing Russian invasion. According to an official spokesperson, the Divisional Administration Kashmir has established a helpline in this capital city for those residents and students of Kashmir who are stuck in Ukraine. "They and their families are informed to contact on phone More on P6

#### **PM Modi Holds Fourth High-Level Meeting On Ukraine Crisis**

rime Minister Narendra Modi called a high-level meeting this evening on the Ukraine crisis, his fourth since Sunday, official sources said. The meeting comes as the situation in the war-hit country worsened, with one Indian student also losing his life in shelling in Kharkiv as Russian troops advanced deeper into Ukraine. PM Modi has More on P6

# **LG Takes Note Of** 'Irregularities' In PMUY Scheme



Food & Supplies **Dept Ordered To** Probe, Submit Report By March 3

**Auqib Javeed** 

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday ordered an inquiry into the irregularities of much talked Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala (PMUY) scheme in central Kashmir's Budgam district.

According to an order, a copy of which lies Kashmir Observer, J&K Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha had ordered Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs to probe the matter and file the report by 03 March 2022.

The complaint about the alleged irregularities was filed by Budgam based RTI activist. Mushtaq Ahmad Lone.

"This has reference to an enclosed complaint received in this Secretariat on 26.02.2022 through email ID: timushtaq4@gmail.com regarding the improper functioning of PM UJJWALA Scheme in District Budgam. The complainant has also provided relevant links in the said email to support his allegations," the order reads.

It further says, "In this context, I am desired to request you to kindly get the matter enquired thoroughly and send a report to this Secretariat by More on P6

IN DISTRICT BUDGAM OUR GROUP went to several villages to see whether beneficiaries have received the subsidized gas or not but on the ground we were told that people had to pay for this free LPG,"

### 616 Indians Return From Ukraine On 3 IndiGo, Air India Express Flights

Indian nationals who were stranded in Ukraine due to the Russian military offensive, officials said. On Tuesday, two flights were operated India Express. India began the evacuation of its citizens from Ukraine's also operated Bucharest-Delhi service via Istanbul with More on P6

hree evacuation flights from Romania's capital Bucharest and western neighbours such as Romania and Hungary on February 26. Hungary's capital Budapest came to India on Tuesday with 616 Private Indian carriers have brought back 2,012 Indian nationals in nine special flights till now. Air India Express operated the Bucharest-Mumbai flight via Kuwait with 182 Indian nationals. IndiGo operated Budapestby IndiGo while one service was operated by Tata Group-owned Air Delhi flight via Istanbul with 216 Indian nationals. India's largest carrier

### **Work On Transit Accommodations For KP Employees In Full Swing: Govt**

**Press Trust Of India** 

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir administration is working for speedy completion of transit accommodations for migrant employees in the valley, an official of the Relief and Rehabilitation Department said on Tuesday.

Around 920 kanal (115 acres) of land has been identified and transferred to the Department Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRRR) at 19 locations for construction of transit accommodations in

prime minister's

package for Kashmiri migrants announced in 2008 has two major components. One is provision of 6,000 jobs for youths and the other is provision of 6000 accommodation units for employees. Over 4,000 migrant employees have already been selected and appointed in different departments and over 1,000 odd units have been completed.

"The administration of Jammu and Kashmir is expeditiously working towards speedy completion of transit accommodations so that they are made available to migrant employees," the official said. He said that More on P6

### Me'raj-e-Alam Celebrated With Religious Fervor

**Observer News Service** 

Srinagar: Despite rains and cold conditions, thousands of devotees on Tuesday thronged shrines and mosques across Kashmir Valley to offer special prayers on the occasion of Me'raj-e-Aalam.

According to reports, the biggest congregation on Me'raje-Aalam, (the night of ascent) when the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) ascended to the heavens, was held at the Hazratbal shrine where thousands of devotees both men and women converged to have a glimpse of the sacred relic of the Prophet five-time during the day.

Notably, Muslims every year celebrate on 27th of Rajab (Hijri calendar), the Isra and Me'raj, the two parts of a Night



An elderly man holds his skull caps in supplication as the head cleric (not in the picture) displays a relic believed to be from the beard of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at the Hazratbal Shrine on Me'raj-e-Alam on Tuesday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Journey that prophet took during a single night around the year 621. Within Islam it signifies a physical journey. During Me'raj, the command

for five daily prayers (Nimaz) was also given to the Prophet of islam. Local administration had made special arrangements and traffic was More on P6

### **Discuss Water Treaty**

India, Pak Meet To

**Press Council Of India** 

**ISLAMABAD:** A 10-member Indian delegation has arrived in Pakistan for the annual meeting of the Permanent Commission on Indus Waters (PCIW) and the two sides will discuss among other topics arrangements about flood flow information during the current season and finalise future programmes, meetings and inspections.

The delegation, headed by the Indian Commissioner for Indus Waters, arrived here via Wagah border on Monday to attend the annual PCIW meeting being organised by the office of Pakistan's Commissioner for Indus Waters under obligations of the Indus Water Treaty-1960, the Dawn newspaper reported. More on P6

### **Traffic Resumes On Kashmir Highway**



**Press Trust Of India** 

JAMMU: The Jammu-Srinagar national highway was opened for traffic Tuesday after a daylong closure owing to a massive landslide in Udhampur district, officials said.

While light motor vehicles were allowed from both sides of the highway this morning, heavy vehicles were moving only from Srinagar to Jammu. Road clearance operation in the landslide-hit area was

Explosives were used to blast boulders which had completely blocked the highway at Dewal near Samroli on Monday.

### Cylinder Blast Injures 2 Kids, 9 Others At MCCH Anantnag

**Observer News Service** 

SRINAGAR: At least 11 people, including two children were injured on Tuesday after a gas leak triggered a cylinder blast at the Maternity and Child Care Hospital (MCCH) in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

According to officials, the cylinder exploded on Tuesday afternoon at the ticketing counter at MCCH Anantnag, leaving as many as 11 people, including two minors, 6 attendants and 3 employees

All the injured, the officials said, were removed to the Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag for treatment. The condition of all the injured is stable.

The injured have been identified as Fayaz Nazir of

Malknag and Sahil Raina of Bijbehara (both employ-Muhammad of Srigufwara, Sahil Khaliq of Warwan, Bittu Singh of Palpora Kulgam, Juniad Ahmed of Kokarnag, Zakir Tariq of Kachwan, Manan Javaid of Malknag, Rehana Farooq of DK Pora and mother-daughter duo Bilkesa Akhtar and Ruby Manzoor, both residents of DK Pora Anantnag.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr Piyush Singla has ordered a probe into the incident by an ADC level officer and has also asked them to submit the report within 7 days, an official spokesperson said.

Singla, he said, also announced that the government will bear medical expenses of the injured.

#### J&K Logs 55 Fresh **Covid-19 Cases**

**Observer News Service** 

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported 55 fresh Covid-19 cases even as there was no death due to the virus in the last 24 hours, officials said on Tuesday.

They said 29 of the fresh cases were reported from Jammu Division and 26 from Kashmir Division, taking the overall tally to 453052.

Giving district wise details, the officials said Srinagar reported 17 cases, Baramulla 3, Budgam 0, Pulwama 0, Kupwara 4, Anantnag 0, Bandipora 2, Ganderbal 0, Kulgam 0, Shopian 0, Jammu 23, Udhampur 1, Rajouri 0, Doda 0, Kathua 2, Samba 1, Kishtwar 0, Poonch 1, Ramban 0 and Reasi 1.

There was no death reported in the last 24 hours, they said. So far 4748 persons have succumbed to the virus-2325 in Jammu and 2423 in Kashmir. Besides, they said, More on P6

### **Andrabi To Head Waqf Board** 4 More Members Appointed To Maintain

**Gol Picks Darakshan** 

**Religious Assets Of** Muslims In J&K

**Agencies** 

SRINAGAR: Nearly two-anda-half years after reorganization of the erstwhile State of Jammu & Kashmir, the Government of India has nominated five persons from diverse backgrounds as members of the Waqf Board for J&K Union Territory.

In a significant step towards the constitution of the Waqf Board in Jammu & Kashmir, the Union Minority Affairs Ministry has appointed five persons as members of the body entrusted with maintenance of religious properties



According to a notification, Dr. Darakshan Andrabi has been appointed as chairperson of the Board. The notification states that Andrabi has been appointed under clause (a) of sub-section (1) of section 14 of The Waqf Act-1995.

According to the notification, Syed Muhammad Hussain has More on P6

No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)

# 7 Daily Habits To Improve **Your Life, Starting Today**

Ashley Richmond | Mind Cafe

"Each person's task in life is to become an increasingly better person." - Leo Tolstoy

Daily habits are the secret to constantly improving ourselves. If self-improvement is built into our daily routines, there's no way we won't succeed. Such habits don't need to be complicated or time-consuming. Simply taking some time each day to work on

provements down the line. Here are 7 such habits that, when repeated daily, will guarantee suc-

yourself will lead to huge im-

1. Wake Up at the Same Time, Ev-A good life starts the minute you

Literally.

Waking up at the same time every day is one of the best ways to support your sleep, which will subsequently improve your health, your mental wellbeing, and your ability to execute in every other facet of your life.

2. Reflect

Life is constant iteration. You try something, see if it works, and do better next time. Every aspect of your life follows

this. Relationships. Business. Fit-

ness. Nutrition. Try something. Then reflect. Then try to be 1% better next time. Success becomes inevitable if you follow this pattern.

If you make time to read every day, your life will change. Reading is direct access to someone else's mind. Their thoughts, their experiences, their successes and failures. We can access all of this and leverage it to improve our own lives.

If you want to do something, chances are someone has already figured out the best and worst ways to do it. You can save years and possibly decades just by learning from others.

4. Meditate

If we want to live a good life, we need to take care of our minds. If you want to be content, let alone be happy and actually thrive, you need to make time for stillness ev-

Meditation provides deep access into your mind and significantly improves self-awareness. These are crucial skills to cultivate. You also learn to recognize thoughts that otherwise go unnoticed, and can achieve a true sense of equanimity.

No matter your age, gender, or goals, you should be doing some

form of resistance training. It may be as potent a health habit as walking, which we'll cover be-

Resistance training doesn't need to be "lifting weights". It could be doing some bodyweight movements, or working with resistance bands, or using the machines at

the gym. The key is to load your muscles on a regular basis.

This will keep your body healthy and functional for a long time to come.

6. Walk

You need to walk more. While 10,000 steps is an arbitrary number, it has merit. We need to be walking way more than we currently are if we want to live a healthy life.

Aiming for 10,000 steps per day is a good place to start.

It's also important to move for a minimum of two minutes every hour, but more ideally, every half

Park further away from the store entrance, take the stairs, go for a quick walk around the block after dinner. All these little efforts will

7. Get Outside

We need daylight exposure. So many people spend all day inside. In fact, most people spend 93% of their time inside. Daylight exposure provides feedback to our bodies about what time of day it is, which subsequently optimizes every aspect of our health.

Furthermore, artificial lights can actually harm our health. LED lights appear to be the most harmful form of light, due to the imperceivable flicker these lights produce.

Try to get outside as much as possible, and if you do have to sit inside, try to sit near a window.

Start improving your life, today. If you want to live a healthy, happy, and successful life, there's no time to waste. Implement some habits that will support your ultimate goals, repeat them every day, and you won't fail.

How long are you going to wait before you demand the best for yourself?" — Epictetus

### درخواست منجانب عبدالجبارمير ولدعبدالغني ميرساكن تحكوهل تخصيل كربري بمراد حصولRBA سرٹفدیٹ تجق صادب<sub>ه</sub> حمیدوقلید ضوان تحت سی ار 144,294,375 اشتهار بمرادآ گاہی ہرخاص وعام معامله مندرجه عنوان الصدر میں درخوست سائل دفتر مذامیں ٰ زبر کاروائی ہےاس نسبت پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول مطلوبہ نقوالات ریکارڈ طلب کے گئے جس سے عہاں ہوتا ہے کہ سائل سائلہ کو تھل میں رہائش پذیر ہے۔ محمنیہ کی سالانہ آمدنی بربان ہے۔ 144000 ہے کمنبہ بذیل افراد پر شمل ہے عبدالجبار سربره 70 زمینداری 12000 آمدنی سکےعلاوہ کوئی بھی افراد کمینہیں ہٹلایا گیاہے سرٹفیکیٹ زیر بحث اجرءکرنے میںا گرکسی شخص مااشخاص کوکوئی عذر بااعتراض ہونو وہ اپناعذر بااعتراض ساتھ یوم کے اندر پیش کریں۔میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذریااعتراض قابلِ قبول نہیں ہوگاہ

تضمون درخواست منجانب: \_ عادل غنی وعاصف غنی ولدعبدالغنی نجار ساکنه هرده بغرض حصول SC سرٹفیکییٹ اشتہار بمرادآگاءی ہرخاص وعام۔ معامله مندرجه عنوان الصدر میں سایل نے ایک درخواست بغرض حصول SC سرٹفیکیٹ فِتر ہٰذا میں پیش کیا ہے۔اس بارے میں عملہ فیلڈ سے رپورٹ طلب کیا گیا جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سابل کا کنبہ دھ ھذا میں گزشتہ پندرہ سالوں سے رہائش پذیر ہے سائل کی مہانہ ر نی 19300 ہے اورسایل کا کنبہ بذیل ہے۔

ash k

نائب تحصيلدار

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|-------|------------|-------|---------------------------|---------|
|       | تر کھان    | 50سال | عبدالغنى نجار ولدثنا ولله | 01      |
|       | گھر بلوکام | 48سال | ظريفه بيكم زوجه عبدالغني  | 02      |
|       | زرتعليم    | 25سال | عاصية غنى دختر عبدالغنى   | 03      |
|       | زرتعليم    | 23    | عاول غنی پسر              | 04      |
|       | زرتعليم    | 18    | آصف غنی پسر               | 05      |

ں کےعلاہ اورکوئی افراد کنمیہ نہیں ہتلایا گیاہے ۔ لہذاز پر بحث سرٹفکیٹ اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کوکوئی عذریااعتراض ہوتو وہ سات دن کےاندراندرا نیااعتراض معہ جوبات پیش کرے۔میعاد گذرنے بعد کوئی عذریااعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

### **Study Analyses How To Reduce Bad Behaviour At Work**

Office Of The

**Zonal Medical Officer** 

PHC Hardaponzoo Block Khan Sahib Budgam

**Dasti Quotation** 

Dasti quotations are hereby invited from the concerned parties / firms / agencies (licensed / Ap-

proved) for the purchase of below mentioned items from Trks/issk/hdf FUNDS ON AND WHEN

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The undersigned reserves the right for accepting or reecting any quotation without any reason for the

benefit of hospital and patient care. Other details/ items, conditions and specification of the items

can be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours. The rate should be ncluded

According to a new study, people who can self-reflect and regulate their moral behaviour are more likely to bounce back after a failure rather than deviate from their 'moral compass' and misbehave.

It is well known that people do not always act in accordance with their own standards regards what is right and wrong. Moral disengagement is a psychological concept that helps explain how people may routinise misbehaviour, rule-breaking and wrongdoing without feeling guilty or seeing the need to make amends.

Moral disengagement can become a powerful, progressive and transformative process through which self-sanctions are gradually diminished until misbehaviour is normalised and can be routinely performed with little concern for the consequences. The study was published in the journal

'Group & Organisation management'. The researchers have investigated the role of moral self-efficacy--a set of beliefs that individuals have about their capabilities to both self-reflect and self-regulate moral be-

No: 618/PHC/hp/2022

The items are mentioned as under

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11. 12. 13.

14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19.

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21.

BMG

**Emergency medicine** 

Foetal doplor BDL

Stationery items

Lab equipments

B.p apparatus

Stethoscope

Steel racks

X-ray films

Pulse oximeter

ECG rolls

Steel Almirah

Gas Bukharies

Furniture

**Furnishing** 

Laboratory reagents & items

Endoter for dental section

Minor repairs of hospital

Exide battery XP 100 for Ambulance and repair (minor)

Makintosh sheet and other items related to labour room

Dust bin polythene bags for biomedical waste

Spare parts for ECG & x-ray machine

The first dimension referred to beliefs about a person's own ability to self-reflect on past moral failures and anticipate how to do better going forward. The second referred to beliefs in their capabilities to self-regulate moral behaviour and do the right thing when tempted or under pressure.

The authors said the results show both moral self-efficacy dimensions lessen the possibility of misbehaviour and wrongdoing becoming routine at work.

"Although self-efficacious individuals are in general more self-regulated and motivated to behave in line with their standards, this does not mean they are morally infallible," said Dr Roberta Fida, of UEA's Norwich Business School. He continued, "However, we show that highly morally efficacious individuals are more likely to 'bounce back' after a failure, and learn from their mistakes, rather than routinise misbenaviour and repeatedly de viate from their moral compass. Rather, they have the resources to restore their moral compass, to mindfully re-engage morally and are therefore less likely to continue justifying and engaging in wrongdoing.'

Dated 01-03-2022

**Zonal Medical Officer** 

PHC Hardaponzoo Block Khan Sahib Budgam



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**HEART ATTACK** 

میں مسمی عبدالرحمان میری ولدعبدالغنی میر ساکنه بند پوره خیربگ اننت ناگ ہرخاص و عام کو بذریعہا خیام طلع کیا جا تا ہے کہ میراپسرنا می اعجاز احدمیر ولدعبدالرحمان میرسا کنہ یے یورہ خیریگ جو <u>200</u>1 میں ہمارے گھر سے نکل گیا اور تب سے آج تک اس کی کوئی انتہ پیتنہیں میں ۔اس دوران اس نے بہت سارے غلط کا م بھی کئی ہو نگے جس کا وہ خودذ مہ دار ہے ۔ سننے میں آیا ہے کہ اس نے اپنے دوست حضرات سے کچھ نفذی لین بھی کیا ہوگا۔جس کا وہ خود ذمہ دار ہو نگے عوام الناس سے گذراش کی جاتی ہے کہ اس کےساتھا گرکوئی کاروبارکیا تووہاس کےخودذ مہدارہو نگے ۔اوراس کی نافر مانی پر میں اس کواپنی منقول وغیرمنقول جائداد سے بے دخل کرتا ہوں لہذااس کے ساتھ کوئی بھی لین دین کرنے پرجمیں ذمہ دارنہ کھبرائے۔ انستھر عبدالرحمان میر

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#### Facial drooping/ numbness · Rapid & Shallow Breathing Paint or discomfort in the jaw, neck, or back Arm weakness /numbness Pain or discomfort in arms or shoulders · Racing Heart Speech slurring (confusion · Irregular Heartheats Sudden severe headache

Feeling weak, light headed, or faint

Chest pain or discomfort

TRAUMA/HEAD/CHEST OR ABDOMINAL INJURY OR SEVERE MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS CALL CRITICAL CARE AMBULANCE 24/7

د مهاور تنفس کی بیار یوں کی علامتیں

**ASTHMA ATTACK** 

**BREATHING TROUBLE** 

Inability to Breathe

· Difficulty Talking

· Lips Turning Blue

💸 سانس لينے ميں دقت ہونا 💠 بات کرنے میں رکاوٹ 💠 تیزلیکن گهری سانس نه لے پانا 💠 ول کا تیزی ہے دھڑ کنا 💠 دل کابے ترتیبی ہے و حز کنا 💠 لبول كاخشك ہو جانا ول کادورہ پڑنے کی علامتیں

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💠 سينے میں در داور بے چينی 💸 كمزورى محسوس كرناه سر كالمكالكنااوربي بوش بونا 💠 بانبنایا جبرُ ول، گردن اور بیشه میں بے آرامی کا حساس 💠 بازول یاکند هول مین در دیابی آرامی کااحساس 💠 پينه آنا 💠 سانس کا تیزی ہے لینا سٹر وک کی علامتیں

STROKE SYMPTOMS

· Balance loss/Dizziness

Eyes(Vision change)

Time to Call

💸 توازن قائم ندر کھ پانا/ غنود گ 🗫 آ تکھوں سے ٹھیک سے ندد کھے بانا 💠 چېرے ميں کچھ حرکت محسوس کرنا/ سُن ہونا 💠 بازومیں کمزوری/سُن ہونا 💠 بولنے میں ہکلانا... کچھ بھی ٹھیک سے نہ سمجھ یانا 💠 چانک شدید سر در د ہو نا 💸 یمی وقت ہے ایمبولنس بلانے کا

ٹراما/سر کی چوٹ/سینے پر چوٹ غیر معمولی زخم پاکسی بھی حادثے کا شکار

فورى طور مدد كرنے والى ايمبولنس كوبلاية 24/7 © 9484100200 / 01942404000

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### **District Admin Srinagar Holds Farewell** For Ajaz Ahmed Dar

**Observer News Service** 

RINAGAR: The District Administration Srinagar today organized an impressive function at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex, here to bid warm send off to Chief Engineer, Distribution, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL), Ajaz Ahmad Dar, who retired on February 28, after rendering 38 years of Service.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad AijazAsad presided over the function, while Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Syed HaneefBalkhi, Additional Deputy Commissioner, FazlulHaseeb, Joint Director Planning, Mohammad Yaseen Lone, Assistant Commissioner, Nazool, Sandeep Singh Bali, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Raies Ahmad Bhat, besides other senior officers of District Administration were also present in the farewell function.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar lauded the contribution of



Ajaz Ahmad Dar, as Chief Engineer KPDCL and acknowledged his services in taking important measures in power restoration particularly during snowfall. The Deputy Commissioner said during his tenure as Managing Director KPDCL, Aijaz Ahmad Dar as Chief Engineer gave his every effort to provide better service to the people and performed to the best of his capabilities in the public service delivery.

Deputy Commissioner also praised the contribution of Superintendent Engineer, KPDCL, Hilal Ahmad Sheikh who was also present on the occasion and attained the superannuation on February 28

The Deputy Commissioner wished both the officers happy, healthy and prosperous post retirement life and hoped that the experience and expertise of both the officers shall remain guiding the KPDCL in its better functioning.





## **Div Com Greets People On** Me'raj Aalam, Mahashivratri

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole today greeted the people on the auspicious occasion of Me'rajAalam and Mahashivratri being celebrated together today with fervour and gaiety across the nation.

On the occasion, Div Com paid obeisance at Shri Shankaracharya temple and performed Hawan during which he prayed for peace and prosperity of Jammu and Kashmir and entire nation.

He said these festivals teach brotherhood, unity and harmony among diverse communities. He also said that all the facilities have been made available for the convenience of devotees at Shankaracharya and various other temples.

SMC Mayor also visited Shankaracharya temple and interacted with devotees and extended his greetings and best wishes to them.

On the occasion, he said that a good number of local and non-local devotees have visited the temple and said that he expects the number will increase in coming years. Mahashivratri was

also celebrated by the local Hindu Community at other temples in Srinagar including Shri Hanuman Temple, Shri Ganpatyar Temple etc.

### **DHSK Reviews Healthcare** Arrangements In Srinagar

**Observer News Service** 

Srinagar: On the eve of Shab-e-Miraj and Mahashivratri, Director Health Services Kashmir (DHSK), DrMushtaq Ahmad Rather on Tuesday visited Hazratbal Shrine and Shankaracharya Temple to take a first-hand appraisal of medical facilities being provided to devotees

the religious places, the director prayed for Covid free Kashmir. He was accompanied by Chief Medical

Officer (CMO) Srinagar, DrJameel Mir and BMO Hazratbal, besides other concerned officers and officials of the health department.

DrMushtaq said that all medical facilities have been made while a 108 ambulance along with doctor and paramedical staff was deputed at Shankaracharya Temple for any kind of medical emergency.

ical staff of the health department to take utmost care of devotees so that they don't face any inconvenience on these auspicious occasions.

Officials of Dharmath Trust and NGOs appreciated the visit of the director and interacted with him. The director assured them full medical care support.

Shab-e-Miraj and Mahashivratri were celebrated across Kashmir with fervor and gaiety during which people thronged both the places and

#### While paying obeisance at both The director took first-hand appraisal of medical facilities being provided to devotees at both the placprayed for humanity. es and directed doctors and paramed-

### 5th Craft Safari Traverses Downtown

**Observer News Service** 

Srinagar: Recognised as the UNES-CO's Creative City in the field of Craft and Folk Art, Srinagar today witnessed the fifth craft Safari. The Safari Started from Ranawari and included a team of the officers from the Handicrafts and Handloom Department including its Director, Intellectuals, Academic Scholars, Journalists, Tour operators, Students and people from other fields.

The starting point of the safari was the Pottery unit of Mohammad Rafiq Kumar. The group was mesmerised to see the craft. The participants were made aware about the efforts that the Department is making to revive the pottery craft.

Rain failed to stop the march of the team to the Silverware unit of Shamim Ahmad who has more than 30 years spent in the art of creating fascinating handcrafted silver ornaments.

Shamim, a master artisan associated with creating antique designs and classic silverware patterns, his collections are exported and admired by connoisseurs across the globe.

After traversing the lanes and by lanes the team then reached to the Wood Carving



unit of Farooq Ahmad Gadyari, whose unit is an epitome of ornamental and delicate craft process that is unique to Kashmir.

The products of the unit present visually interesting effects with carving intricacies and varied designs. The motifs on the wooden artifacts are inspired from the various natural wonders of Kashmir, Chinar leaves, Vine leaves, flowers like Lotus and Rose.

Then afterwards the elegant treasure of Copperware was witnessed by the team in the unit of Mohammad Ashraf Najar. Copperware has been an indispensable commodity in Kashmir since ages and the artisans associated with this particular craft are known for their work of engraving and for making household and decorative products. The designs have evolved a level up in the copperware as more people are showing interest in copper utensils owing to their benefits.

The team felt nostalgic at the Namda unit of Mohammad Sidiq. Felting the wool rather than weaving it, makes Namda unique. The participants were taken aback after realizing the processes that make a complete Namda.

### **CIC Operators Demand** Regularization, Seek LG's Intervention

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: The Community Information Centre (CIC) Operators working in Rural Development Department (RDD) of J&K UT have appealed to the J&K Lieutenant Governor administration to get their services regularized.

CIC Operators working in Rural Development Department Monday made an appeal to LG Manoj Sinha to fulfil their long-pending demand of regularization.

CIC Operators Association President NoorulNaeem Siddigi said that hundreds of CIC operators are working in Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj Department have been pressing for the demand of regularization for since eighteen years.

"For past two decades, we have been working on meagre salaries. We were appointed in RDD as CIC operators in 2004 on a contractual basis on a salary of Rs 5500 per month. It was enhanced to 10,000 in 2010", Noorul-Naeem said. Since then there has been no hike in our salaries, he added.

Mir Mushtaq who works as a CIC operator said after rendering our services for almost two decades, we are still not being regularized.

"We have surpassed the of appointment and we can't apply elsewhere for

The CIC operators appealed the Lieutenant Governor Manoi Sinha to intervene and regularize the services of CIC Operators working in the Rural Development Department.

They expressed hope, the Lieutenant Governor led administration will regularize their services and increase monthly remuneration.

### The Jammu And Kashmir **Board Of School Education**

**New Campus Bemina Srinagar** 

I have passed/appeared in Secondary School Examination (Class-10th)under Roll No:. 18151272 Session: 2019-20 Year 2020 through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. Due to the error committed by the concerned School/parent, my Mother's Name has been recorded with the Board as Umrum ul Laila while as actual Mother's Name is Ourmullah Ashraf

Now, I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. New Campus Bernina. Srinagar, if any person has any objection in this regard, may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven

days from the date of Publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained.

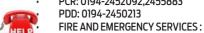
Name: Arbeena Bilal F/N: Bilal Ahamd Karam M/N Qumullah Ashraf DOB 11-03-2004

Residence: Garden ane near Dhar Srinagar Natipora Sriangar

(north) Srinagar Jammu and Kashmir 190015

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2479488,2452222,2452155 CAPD: 18001807011

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QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

#### **HIGHWAY STATUS**



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



#### **PRAYERS FAJR** 5:38 **ZUHR** 12:43 **ASR** 4:45 Magrib 6:29 **ISHA** 7:49

### **This Day In History**

1865 - British newspaper "Morning Chronicle" begins pub-

lishing 1968 - USSR launches space probe Zond 4; fails to leave

1972 - NASA launches its Pioneer 10 space probe to Jupiter 1978 - Soyuz 28 carries 2 cosmonauts (1 Czechoslovakian)

to Salvut 6 1983 - Compact Disc recordings developed by Phillips & Discourage (1983)

Sony introduced. 1984 - Iran offensive against Iraq fails

1989 - 12 European nations agree to ban chlorofluorocarbon production by 2000.

1991 NC State Chris Corchiani becomes 1st NCAAer to get

1991 - UN votes in favor of US resolutions for cease fire with

1995 - Space shuttle STS-67 (Endeavour 8), launches 1997 - Saudi Arab billionaire Prince al-Waleed bin Talal aqui-

res 5% of Apple 1997 - Soyuz TM-24 returns to Earth (Russia) 1998 - Data sent from the Galileo spacecraft indicates that

Jupiter's moon Europa has a liquid ocean under a thick crust of ice.

2002 - U.S. invasion of Afghanistan: US conventional forces first deployed as part of Operation Anaconda 2004- War in Iraq: Al Qaeda carries out the Ashoura Massa-

cre in Iraq, killing 170 and wounding over 500 2004 - Rosetta space probe is launched by the European

Space Agency to study comet 2011- One of cricket's great upsets; Kevin O'Brien scores fast-est century in World Cup history off 50 balls (ends 113 off 63)

to help Ireland beat England by 3 wickets in Bangalore 2014 - President Vladimir Putin receives unanimous approv-

al from Russia's parliament to send troops to the Ukraine 2016- Longest non-stop scheduled commercial flight by disatos A380 flips 14 200km (8 824 mile

Auckland in 17 hours, 15 minutes 2016 - Oldest known land fossil (Tortotubus - 440 million years old) from Gotland, Sweden, revealed by British scientists

2016 - US astronauts Scott Kelly and Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko return to earth after nearly a year (340 days), setting an ISS record

### From KO Archives

### Pak Asks India To Allow Hurriyat Visit

Agence France Presse

SLAMABAD - Pakistan has again demanded India respond to its long standing invitation to allow Kashmiri leaders to visit Islamabad for talks to kickstart a formal peace dia¬logue Reiterating Pakistan's dismissal of India's latest exten-

sion of its so-called ceasefire in Kashmir. Foreign Secretary Inam-ul Haq said Pakistan's invitation to the Hurriyat lead-ers was still on the table "I am not sure what these talks will begin, but a long

as long as Kashmir dispute is not resolved according to the wishes of Kashmiris people, this region will and it difficult to have a durable peace," he said in a speech at the Institute of Stra¬tegic Studies.

Pakistan has responded to the ceasefire by offering; "minimum restraint" along the Line of Control and withdrawal of some of its troops from the area.

In November it also invited India-based Kashmiri separa¬tist leaders from the All Party Hurriyat Conference for talks in Islamabad New Delhi has not opposed the idea but so far it has not

is¬sued the necessary travel docu¬ments to the Hurriyat "India has not made any headway to conduct tripartite

talks" involving Pakistan. India and the Hurriyat, a government spokesman said. A team of US congressmen currently in Pakistan, hav-

ing visited India earlier in the week has also urged India to allow the Hurriyat to travel lo Islamabad. Haq reminded India and the international community that it was the Hizbul Mujahideen, one of the most powerful

militant outfits fighting to oust the Indi¬ans from Kashmir, who offered the first ceasefire He said the Hizb's two-week ceasefire, which ended in Au¬gust, was short-lived "because of Indian attempts to

divide the Kashmiri people" The Hizb has stuck by its demand for three-way talks in¬cluding India. Pakistan and the Kashmir as well as an Indian troop reduction in the Muslim majority state.

(Kashmir Observer, 02 March, 2001)

### MD SBI Ashwani Bhatia Visits J&K Bank CHQ

**Observer News Service** 

Srinagar: Managing Director, State Bank of India (Corporate Banking & Global Markets) Ashwani Bhatia today paid a courtesy visit to the J&K Bank Corporate Headquarters. The distinguished guest was warmly welcomed by the Bank's MD & CEO Baldev Prakash, Executive President Sunil Gupta and other senior management executives of the Bank.

He was accompanied by General Manager SBI (Rupee Market) Samir Sawhney, Head ISD (SBI Mutual Fund) Pradeep Singh and other officers.

While appreciating the MD & CEO Baldev Prakash and his top management team for whole-hearted welcome and hospitality, MD SBI Ashwani Bhatia wished them well on the auspicious occasions of

MahaShivratri&Shab-i-Meiraj. Recalling the times when he

first came to Kashmir after joining SBI, he said, "Coming back to Kashmir is always a pleasure, for its beauty never fails to surprise the visitor.'

Lauding the Bank's motto of 'Serving to Empower', MD SBI stated that it touches upon the very core of banking - which is service. He emphasized upon the

need for all the banks to adapt to the rapidly-shifting landscape of financial services towards complete digitalization.

Earlier, expressing his deep gratitude to the visiting dignitary, MD & CEO J&K Bank Baldev Prakash said, "Since I have had the privilege of working under vour able leadership at SBI, I feel greatly honoured to welcome and receive you here. My colleagues in management also feel elated to have with us- one of the leading figures in banking and financial landscape of the country, a thorough professional and a great human being."

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#### KO VIEW

### Polls Apart

he all-important state of Uttar Pradesh has just two more phases to go and the outcome is due to be announced on March 10. So far voters in 292 out of 403 constituencies of Uttar Pradesh have voted, which is 70 percent of the electorate. But so far it is not clear which party has an edge. But many analysts see the BJP returning to power with the Samajwadi Party led by Akhilesh Yadav breathing down its neck. So, the 111 seats which are yet to go to polls will be critical in deciding the winner.

Congress, on the other hand, has decided to go solo in the state and is contesting on all 403 Assembly constituencies. Unlike last Assembly election when it was part of a Mahagathbandhan with the SP and the BSP, Congress ruled out any pre-poll alliance with political parties. This was a big decision considering that Congress has not been doing well in Uttar Pradesh for three decades now. The Congress also announced that 40 percent of the party's tickets will be reserved for women this time. According to Congress general secretary and incharge of the polls in Uttar Pradesh, Priyanka Gandhi, the "politics of hate" can be changed by more women joining politics. Whether this would make any difference only the election outcome will tell.

But for now it appears that it would be difficult to completely dislodge the BJP. An ABP-CVoter poll in December showed that the BJP will return to power in the UP but not without the party losing over 100 seats it won in the last state elections. In Punjab, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Congress (INC) are locked in a neck-and-neck fight, but without either likely to hit the majority mark. Goa, on the other hand, is set to go the BJP's way.

However, it would be the UP election that are the centre of political attention. Its outcome, as the home minister Amit Shah earlier said, largely decides who rules in New Delhi. The BJP thus would leave no stone unturned that it gets back to power in the state even if it loses a small chunk of seats. For Congress, it would be equally important to put up some decent showing in the state to stay in the reckoning for 2024 national polls. The UP polls would also be a litmus test for caste-based parties like the SP and the BSP. The rise of Hindutva has swallowed most of their vote-bank. It will be interesting to see how these parties fare this time around.

### OTHER OPINON

### **Counting The Costs:** On Ceasefire Talks And **Sanctions On Russia**

aturday's announcement by the U.S., the U.K. and European allies, including France and Germany, of a raft of 'further restrictive economic measures' to increase the costs on Russia for its invasion of Ukraine has just raised the risks of a more widespread economic fallout from this war. With a view to further isolating Russia from the international financial system, the Western allies decided to block 'selected' Russian banks from the SWIFT messaging system that banks and financial institutions use to validate and complete international payment transactions. They also resolved to impose restrictions on the Russian central bank's ability to access and deploy the country's 'war chest' of an estimated \$630 billion in foreign exchange reserves. The immediate impact of these moves on Russia's economy and financial markets have manifested in a sharp depreciation in the value of the rouble - the currency tumbled almost 30% intra-day to a record low against the dollar in Asian trading on Monday and has weakened about 26% so far in 2022. They also forced the country's central bank to more than double its benchmark interest rate to 20%, the highest in almost two decades, and impose controls on capital flows. Russia's largest lender Sberbank found its European arm facing a run on its deposits, which the European Central Bank warned could lead to the unit's 'failure'. With Russians waiting in long queues outside ATMs on fears of likely cash shortages, the country's citizens face the real prospect of runaway inflation.

But the economic costs of Vladimir Putin's unilateral decision to embark on what he called a 'special military operation' to describe Russia's all-out invasion of its western neighbour last week are already being felt worldwide. European banks and companies with significant business exposure to Russia have taken a beating on the bourses given the extent to which the sharp escalation in the sanctions is certain to hurt their operations and revenues. And though the Western allies have carefully avoided any mention so far on closing the tap on Russia's massive exports of oil and gas that contribute substantially to the country's current-account surplus, concerns about possible disruptions to shipments from the world's second-largest producer of oil have pushed the price of Brent crude futures well above \$100 a barrel. With most large European economies majorly reliant on energy supplies from Russia, the spectre of rising energy costs fanning a bruising acceleration in inflation in Europe and worldwide is very real. At a time when a durable recovery from the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic is yet to take hold, the war initiated by Russia, and the consequent sanctions on it, especially if widened to cover countries that seek to bypass the sanctions regime, pose a challenge to the global economy that Rabo Bank's economists projected could be 'so bad' as to be unquantifiable. Expedient negotiations to end the conflict are the only way forward.

The Hindu

### Russia-Ukraine War

# **Wanton West**



Jonathan Cook

ow convenient for western leaders that every time another country defies the West's projection of power, the western media can agree on one thing: that the foreign government in question is led by a madman, a psychopath or a megalomaniac.

At a drop of a hat, western leaders are absolved of guilt or even responsibility for the terrible events that unfold. The West remains virtuous, simply a victim of the world's madmen. Nothing the West did was a provocation. Nothing they could have done would have averted the disaster. The US may be the most powerful state on the planet by

far, but its hands are apparently always tied by a deranged, implacable foe like Russia's Vladimir Putin. Putin, we are told, is not advancing any rational - from

his perspective - geopolitical or strategic interest by invading his neighbour, Ukraine. And so no concession could or should have been made because none would have prevented him from acting as he has.

The West, meaning foreign policy hawks in Washington, gets to decide when the timeline of events started, when the original sin occurred. The compliant western media give their blessing, and our hands are washed clean once again.

The subtext - always the subtext - is that something must be done to stop the "madman". And because he is irrational and a megalomaniac, such action must never be framed in terms of concessions or compromise - that would be appeasement, after all. If every enemy is a new Hitler, no western leader will risk a comparison with Neville Chamberlain.

Instead, what is needed urgently, western politicians and media agree, is the projection - whether overtly or covertly – of yet more western power and force.

### **Unmitigated catastrophe**

The US and British invasion of Iraq nearly two decades ago is a particularly pertinent and telling counterpoint to events in Ukraine.

Then, as now, the West was supposedly faced with a dangerous, irrational ruler who could not be made to see sense and was unwilling to compromise. Saddam Hussein. western leaders and their media insisted, had allied with his arch-enemies in al-Qaeda, the perpetrators of the Twin Towers attack of 9/11. He had weapons of mass destruction, and could launch them towards Europe in 45 minutes.

Except, none of that was true - not even the madman bit, Saddam was a hard, cold, calculating dictator who, like most dictators, kept himself in power through a reign of terror over his opponents.

Nonetheless, the western media faithfully amplified the tissue of evidence-free claims - and patent lies like that preposterous alliance with al-Qaeda - concocted in Washington and London to usher in the illegal 2003 invasion of Iraq.

United Nations inspectors could find no trace of stockpiles of Iraq's former biological and chemical weapons arsenal. One, Scott Ritter, went unheard as he warned that any possessed by Saddam would have turned to "harmless goo" after many years of sanctions and inspections.

The improbable 45-minute claim, meanwhile, was not based on any kind of intelligence. It was lifted straight from a student's speculations in a doctoral dissertation. Iraq's invasion by the US and Britain was not only illegal, of course. It had horrifying consequences. It led to the likely deaths of around a million Iraqis, and spawned a terrifying new kind of nihilistic Islamism that destabilised much of the region.

Those interests, of course, were largely concealed because they were so ignoble, flagrantly violating the socalled "rules-based order" Washington claims to uphold.

But despite being an unmitigated catastrophe, the US-led invasion of Iraq was no more "irrational" than Putin's current invasion of Ukraine. Washington's neoconservatives advanced what they regarded as US geopolitical interests and a strategic vision for the Middle East.

What the neoconservatives wanted was variously to control Iraq's oil, to eliminate regional pockets of resistance to its own and its client Israel's hegemony in the Middle East, and to expand the region as an economic market for US goods and weapons.

Saddam fell into the trap set for him because he was equally motivated by his own narrowly defined "rational" self-interest. He refused to admit he had no meaningful weapons systems left after the western sanctions and inspections regimes because he did not dare to look weak, either to his own population or to hostile neighbours like Iran.

The western media's refusal to consider the real motivations on either side - the neoconservatives' in Washington or Saddam's in Iraq - made the 2003 invasion and the suffering that followed all the more inevitable.

### THE WEST alone defines what 'rational' means - and on that basis, its enemies can always be dismissed as deranged and evil

### Spheres of influence

The same predilection for the simple-minded "madman" narrative has once again pushed us squarely into another international crisis. And once again, it has served as a way to avoid examining the real background to, and reasons for, what is happening in Ukraine and wider eastern Europe.

Putin's actions – though potentially no less disastrous than the US-led invasion of Iraq, and certainly as illegal - are also rooted in his own "rational" assessment of Russian geopolitical interests.

But unlike Washington's reasons for invading Iraq, Putin's grounds for threatening and now invading Ukraine were not concealed. He has been quite open and consistent about the rationale for years, even if western leaders ignored his speeches, and western media rarely cited anything more than his most tub-thumping, jingoistic soundbites.

Russia has realistic objections to the behaviour and bad faith of the US and Nato over the past three decades. Nato, we should remind ourselves, is primarily a creature of the Cold War, a vehicle for the West to project an aggressive military posture towards the former Soviet Union under the cover of a "defence" organisation.

But following the USSR's dissolution in 1991, the western military alliance was not disbanded. Quite the reverse. It grew to absorb almost all of the former east European states that had belonged to the Soviet bloc and it made a new bogeyman of Russia. Western military budgets climbed year by year.

Russia expects a so-called "sphere of influence", in the same way that the US demands one. What's been going on instead for the best part of 30 years is that the US, as the world's sole superpower, has expanded its own sphere of influence right up to Russia's doorstep. Like Washington

Putin has the nuclear arsenal to back up his demands. To ignore either his claim for a sphere of influence or Russia's ability to impose it by force if necessary is either hypoc-

That too paved the path to the current invasion.

#### **Cold war mentality**

But Putin has other reasons - from his perspective - to act. He also wants to show the US that there is a price to be paid for Washington's repeated broken promises on security arrangements in Europe. Russia dissolved its own military alliance, the Warsaw Pact, after the fall of the Soviet Union in a sign both of its weakness and its willingness to reorder its relations with its neighbours.

The US and the European Union had a chance to welcome Russia into the fold, and make it a partner in Europe's security. Instead the Cold War mentality persisted even more in western capitals than in Moscow. The West's military bureaucracies that need war, or at least the threat of it to justify their jobs and budgets, lobbied to keep Russia at arm's length.

Meanwhile, eastern Europe became a large, and profitable, new market for western arms makers. That paved the path to this crisis too.

And finally, Putin has every incentive to deal more decisively with the eight-year festering wound of a civil war between anti-Russian, Ukrainian nationalists and ethnic Russian fighters from the Donbas region, in Ukraine's east. Even before the current invasion, many thousands had died. Ukrainian nationalists want entry into Nato so it is sucked into the Donbas bloodbath on their side - fuelling a war that could spiral out of control into a direct confron-

and militant Ukrainians that will be no simple matter. The invasion is intended as a shot across the bows to dissuade Nato from moving its high-wire act into Ukraine.

tation between Nato and Russia. Putin wants to show Nato

Western leaders were warned of all this by their own officials way back in 2008, as a leaked US diplomatic cable reveals: "Strategic policy considerations also underlie strong opposition to Nato membership for Ukraine and Georgia. In Ukraine, these include fears that the issue could potentially split the country in two, leading to violence or even, some claim, civil war, which would force Russia to decide whether to intervene."

But even now, the West is undeterred. It is losing no time in pouring yet more weapons into Ukraine, further fuelling the fire.

#### **Dangerous caricatures**

None of this, of course, means Putin's actions are virtuous, or even wise. But for some his invasion of Ukraine looks no more irrational or dangerous than Nato's decades of provocative moves against a nuclear-armed Russia.

And here we get to the nub of the matter. The West alone defines what "rational" means - and on that basis, its enemies can always be dismissed as deranged and evil.

Western media propaganda only serves to deepen these trends in humanising, or otherwise, those caught up in events.

As the Arab and Middle Eastern Journalists Association observed at the weekend, much of the coverage has been blatantly racist, with western commentators noting with sympathy that those fleeing Russia's invasion of Ukraine, unlike apparently those displaced by western invasions of the Middle East, are "like us", "civilised" and don't "look

Similarly, there is a stark contrast between the celebratory reporting of a Ukrainian "resistance" making improvised bombs against the advancing Russian army and the media's routine demonisation of Palestinians as ists" for resisting Israel's decades of occupation.

Equally, US global dominance means it dictates the military, political and diplomatic framework of international relations. Other countries, including potential rivals like Russia and China, have to operate within that framework.

That forces them to react more often than act. Which is why it is so critically important that the western media report on the events fully and honestly, not resort to easy tropes designed to turn foreign leaders into caricatures and their populations into heroes or villians.

If Putin is a madman, like Iraq's Saddam, Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, Syria's Bashar al-Assad and Afghanistan's Taliban leaders before him, then the only solution is the use of force to the bitter end

In global power politics that potentially translates into a third European "World War", the overthrow of Russia's government, and Putin's trial at The Hague or his execution. The "strait-jacket" strategy. Which is precisely the catastrophic destination towards which western leaders, aided by the media, have been pushing the region over the past three decades.

There are far less dangerous ways of resolving international crises than that - but not so long as we keep peddling the myth of the "madman" enemy.

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

The author is the the author of three books on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and a winner of the Martha Gellhorn Special Prize for Journalism. His website and blog can be found at: www.jonathan-cook.net



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### **Fertility Rate Decline**

■HE total fertility rate in J&K among women has slipped below the replacement-level by 0.6 percent as per the National Family Health Survey. The report published in KO recently highlighted the survey report and had many wondering about the reasons behind this decline.

As per the National Family Health Survey data for 2019-21, the fertility rate in J&K has slipped down to 1.4 percent in the 2019-20 NFHS-5 survey from 2.0 percent in the NFHS-4 2015-16.

Many factors are responsible for this decline. While physiological reasons play a huge role in your biological functioning, psycho-social issues do not have to be ignored either.

Sure, people here have a tendency to only focus on the issue of women's infertility but there's a lot more at play than just the women. We must realise that fertility is a concern for men as well as women. One cannot merely say that "late marriages" have led to this. We cannot underplay some aspects and overplay others.

There's a dire need to educate women as well as men about their reproductive health. Why else are we seeing a whooping 80% of C-sections in the valley. Do we only have a 20% chance

at normal deliveries?

Doctors here need to play honest and educate women and men about their bodies. This must be done from the very beginning. We must also realise that social factors that may have pushed some men and women towards infertility should also be addressed with a holistic point of view.

Shaheen Mir

### HE BEHAVIOUR OF HER HUSBAND STARTED TO DRASTICALLY

change toward her. He started to misbehave with her. Sumaiya did everything in her power to make the marriage work for six years and she would have done it for the rest of her life if her husband hadn't left eight months pregnant Sumaiya all alone in that rented apartment

# Toxic, Torturous, Treacherous

## Inside Kashmir's Wronged Wedlock

Tabia Masoodi, Al Misda Masoom

HEN Sumaiya first held her baby she had never imagined that she would be all alone, sitting on a hospital bed with a newborn in her arms and loneliness around.

Even though the maternity ward in a government hospital where she gave birth was bustling with the contrasting sounds of crying babies and their happy relatives, Sumaiya was staring into space, lost in her thoughts trying to comprehend the uncertainties that her future holds.

The new mother was jolted back into reality when her baby cried, only to be lost again. This time she raised a flurry of questions in a comatose state: "Why are marriages in our society so uncertain and turn into unending torture, especially for women? Why can't husbands divorce their wives without causing them harm and keeping them hanging?

Sumaiya had fallen in love with her college-mate Usmaan and to her joy, he reciprocated her feelings. They were inseparable in college.

"Like any love story, ours was also made of promises and dreams," says Sumaiya, with moist eyes. "I dreamt of a happily ever after.'

After settling their respective careers, they wanted to get married but to their dismay Usmaan's parents refused stating that she does not match their financial

Sumaiya's family was also not in favour because they had two daughters to marry off before her. They feared it would cause a hindrance in finding a match for them and society would question their

But the lovers left no stone unturned to make their parents understand. From cajolery to heated discussions, they did everything but it was all in vain.

"When our parents didn't agree we were left with just one option," says Sumaiya, with a pang of guilt in her tone. And that option was to elope and marry against the wishes of their parents.

Sumaiya started her new life in a rented apartment far away from everyone she once held dear. In the initial days of her marriage, everything seemed close to perfect and Sumaiya couldn't ask for more until one day everything started to disintegrate.

The behaviour of her husband started to drastically change toward her. He started to misbehave with her. Sumaiya did everything in her power to make the marriage work for six years and she would have done it for the rest of her life if her husband hadn't left eight months pregnant Sumaiya all alone in that rented apartment.

"My husband never wanted a child and forced me to abort the first two times. But the third time when I resisted he left me," says Sumaiya. "He threatened me the first two times that if I didn't do as told he would refuse to accept me as his

Perplexed with the situation, Sumaiya decided to take legal help. She appointed a lawyer and sought his advice on the further course of action. The lawyer advised her to deliver the child and afterwards they would file a case for maintenance of the child.

"When her baby was six months old we filed a case," said Irshad Ahmad, her lawyer. "But Usmaan denied that Sumaiya was his wife.'

Sumaiya and her lawyer moved to another court and filed a civil suit to prove that she was Usmaan's wife and the ba-

"Whenever there is a matrimonial dispute, children suffer a lot. In this case, particularly Usmaan denied that he was the child's father and as much emotional damage it caused, there are other implications as well. For instance, the child needs a domicile certificate, only a father can provide that," says advocate Irshad. Seven years of uncertainty, frustration

and anger later, Sumaiya was finally delivered justice.

"When I first went to a lawyer I was eight months pregnant and when the case settled my child was eight years old. It is a lot to process and handle," says tearful Sumaiya.



Even though the uncertainty ended in Sumaiya's case, it's not true for every matrimonial dispute.

Arfa has been in an uncertain marriage for more than four decades and it is still

In the first year of her marriage, she had this instinct that her husband Mushtaq shame, I had another reason to stay in this marriage," says Arfa. "After the incident, a month later or so, he apologised and wanted to take me home. So, I thought he had changed. But nothing ever changed."

After Arfa went home, things were better on and off. And in this course of time, aging to build a stable family except the youngest daughter.

While the elder two got a chance to es-

cape physically from the traumatic situation because of their higher studies, the

The uncertainty in the Arfa's household raised three disturbed individuals. All the children are married now and man-

nothing but a living hell for her. But she still holds a belief that a woman is nothing without her husband. From physical to verbal abuse and hu-

years now and these ten years have been

miliation she has been continuously suffering. Even though her family has been telling her to end her suffering, she is herself reluctant stating that her children need their father and her position will be reduced in society.

"I know it's a dead-end and he will never change but I don't see any other way for me. It is easy for everyone to talk," expresses Heena. "As foolish as it sounds, there is always a hope though."

At the beginning of her marriage, everything seemed dreamy but just within a few months, Heena's husband Altaf started to behave indifferently. Heena at first did not understand the cause behind this indifference. But then someone from her in-laws told her that he wanted to marry someone else and is still in contact with her. Hearing this, Heena was

"I just cannot understand why he married me then," asks Heena. "What was the need of this suffering and ruining my

Heena gathered some courage to confront her husband and asked him if he was cheating on her. But Altaf denied any such allegations. He was furious.

Heena poured her heart in front of her family and told them about everything that has been happening to her. But she did not let them take any step fearing that he might divorce her.

"We want to confront him and his family but she never lets us," says Rukaiya, Heena's elder sister.

Due to the stressful situation, Heena even lost her child. She miscarried her first child. In all this, one thing has always remained consistent - Heena never for once left her husband's place, no matter how many atrocities she faced

Living with Altaf was never a paradise for Heena. The constant stress lurking in her life has endangered the lives of her children. After losing her first baby, she first delivered a baby boy and then a baby girl. But Heena's both babies were born premature and had a very less chance of survival.

"I've always been alone in my prob lems," she says. "Altaf has never provided me with support as a partner."

In the last ten years of her marriage, whenever she has felt ill, her husband was never there to take care of her. "Altaf has never taken care of my sister. He has always left her to die," says Heena's sis-ter. "He never provided her with medication and a proper living."

Mental health specialist, Wasim Kakroo talks about the children raised under the shadow of bad marriages.

Just providing physical comfort is not enough for a child to grow, he says. "If children have seen the dispute between the parents for years it becomes a part of their personality. These children can develop Borderline personality disorder. If the dispute has been continuing for years and the children are too young it is counted as an adverse childhood experience. It is emotional abuse."

In a day, Wasim provide consultation to at least ten patients and among these five to six have emotional disorders whose roots can be traced back to the disturbing childhood due to the matrimonial disputes.

"There needs an acceptance in the society that such happenings lead to a life-long trauma and emotional abuse and it needs medical help," says Kakroo.

Today, while Arfa's and Heena's children have to live with this disturbing situation, Sumaiya's story differs a bit in this aspect.

After getting divorce, she never imagined that she would have to fight for her "I had to again file the maintenance

case over my son's father," says Sumaiya.

"But it didn't stop there. For the sake of my child, I was forced to file another case on that man when he denied access to all those necessary documents which a father needs to provide for their children. It feels like I have spent half of my life in court seeking justice for myself and my son. Unfortunately, I was part of mar-

riage made in hell and suffered severe

consequences for it."

WHENEVER THERE IS A MATRIMONIAL DISPUTE, CHILDREN

suffer a lot. In this case, particularly Usmaan denied that he was the child's father and as much emotional damage it caused, there are other implications as well. For instance, the child needs a domicile certificate, only a father can provide that,"

was cheating on her. And not long before the instinct was proven right.

Like many nights Arfa was once waiting for her husband to come home. It was almost midnight and there was still no sight of him. As the clock ticked 12, Arfa stood up from her couch and left she delivered her first child. Mushtaq was not only a careless husband but was also a negligent father.

"I had accepted my fate that my marriage is in shambles and will remain so but he was the same with our three children as well," recounts Arfa in a dejected youngest daughter lived with her mother and was continuously witnessing the situation. Due to this she developed trust issues and carried them with her into her own marriage.

However, to her relief, her husband proved to be supportive and under-

**MARRIAGE** 

fundamental unit of

exception. But in lakhs

unsuccessful as well.

**66** Maerthi kaednam

husband's place after

death)," says Heena.

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in search of her husband. Following her hunch, she reached exactly the place and found her husband with another woman in her house.

Even though Arfa always had a doubt witnessing the incident shook her to the core. Heartbroken, she left the place and went straight to her mother's home. "My sister came at 1 in the night with a deathly pale face creating a gloomy environment in the household," says Irfan, Arfa's youngest brother.

Arfa could not comprehend the situation and was perplexed in taking any decision. Due to societal pressure and the common notion that it would bring shame to her and her family, Arfa did not ask for a divorce.

"With all the reasons of society and

Mushtaq never for once took the responsibility of his children and provided for them. The entire responsibility fell on Arfa's shoulders. The only relief at the point was that she was a government employee and was able to manage all the responsibilities but the unstable lifestyle took a toll on her children. They had to constantly move in and out of their home. With that came shouting, fights and unending ache and longing for a place that could provide them with constant comfort.

"With everything that our mother did for us, it is highly appreciable, but it would have been better if she had taken a firm stand and left that man," says Shugufta, Arfa's eldest daughter.

standing. He helped her to see the other side of the coin.

"When children are not rehabilitated they take the insecurities and emotional trauma into their own marriages," says Wasim Kakroo, consultant psychologist, centre for mental health services. "The cycle of abuse continues.'

Mushtaq and Arfa are now grandparents but the uncertainties and disputes are still unresolved between them.

Marriage is considered a fundamental unit of any society and Kashmir is no exception. But in lakhs of successful marriages, a few thousands are unsuccessful as well.

"Maerthi kaednam (I will only leave my husband's place after death)," says Heena. Heena has been married for over ten

# **Indian Students Stare At Uncertainty Over Completing Medical Course In Ukraine**

**Press Trust Of India** 

**NEW DELHI:** Uzaif Rabbani is spending his days in a bunker in Ukraine's Kharkiv amid a fierce Russian offensive, hoping for evacuation, but as the fourthyear medical student waits, he like many from India, is worried if he will ever be able to complete his education.

However, government officials said a meeting will soon be held to discuss the issue with all stakeholders, keeping in view the extraordinary situation in Ukraine. The matter will be looked into "sympathetically", they said.

Uzaif Rabbani's situation is shared by many Indian students enrolled in medical courses in institutes in the war-torn country.

"I have to complete four years to get my medical degree. Once I am evacuated, I will have to think of what happens next. I hope the government allows a special provision to migrate to any Indian college and continue my education there," Uzaif Rabbani told PTI over phone from Kharkiv, where a student from Karnataka was killed in



shelling on Tuesday morning.

Though his daughter is back home from Ukraine, Nidhi Yadav's father worries whether she will be able to resume her studies in Kiev.

"I don't know what will happen next. I took a huge loan to send her to Ukraine in hope that she will become a doctor, but now things have worsened. There is no clarity on whether the situation will return to normal, whether she will be able to resume her education, will she have to explore other options here," the father of the first-year

medical student said.

The new rules of the Foreign Medical Graduate Licentiate regulations state that MBBS aspirants can take up to 10 years to complete the programme.

They also state that besides the minimum course work tenure of 4.5 years, candidates need to intern for two years, including 12 months in the foreign medical institute where they are studying and another year of supervised internship in India.

The MBBS programme in Ukraine lasts for six years, and being much affordable in

comparison to that in private medical colleges in India, it is a popular choice among Indian students.

"As of now, there are no norms and regulations under the National Medical Commission to accommodate medical students, who were studying abroad and had to return to India midway, in Indian medical colleges in between an academic session," a health ministry official told PTI, on the condition of anonymity.

"However, keeping in view such extraordinary situations, the Indian government will look into the matter sympathetically. A meeting to discuss this issue with all stakeholders is likely to take place soon," he said.

Sahil, a medical student at the Poltava State Medical University in Ukraine, is one of those who has returned after spending four years there.

"Getting out of a war zone was the first thing on my mind but what happens next? I hope the government gives us some clarity on this and our years of effort and money doesn't go waste," he said.

Depleting food stock and long queues for water are adding to the trauma of stranded Indian students in the war-hit nation, while they await evacuation amid reports of some being roughed up by security personnel and spending freezing nights out in the open.

As Indian and Ükrainian authorities on Monday described the situation as "complex" and "very difficult" in terms of evacuation of people, the students, joined by their parents, appealed to the Indian government to expedite efforts to evacuate them.

### Ukraine Guards Beat Up Indians Trying To Flee War Zone, Says Student

**Press Trust Of India** 

GUNA (MADHYA PRADESH):
A medical student who returned to her home in Madhya Pradesh's Guna district from Ukraine earlier this week claimed that Ukrainian guards were beating up Indian students who were fleeing the

war zone.
Videos of a purported security officer hitting a student had gone viral a couple of days ago as the stranded students tried to reach Ukraine's western borders after Russia launched an invasion of the country.

Shruti Nayak, a third year MBBS student at Ivano National Medical University, reached her home in Guna after being evacuated by an Air India flight.

The situation in Ukraine is very bad, she told reporters.

"Ukrainian guards were harassing Indian students who were fleeing the war zone and even beating them up," she claimed.

"I am fortunate enough that I reached India and now meeting family members," she said. INDIAN

Ms Nayak had booked a return ticket for February 16, but the flight was cancelled.

She then booked a ticket for March 3, but it too got cancelled, she said.

Ms Nayak then traveled 400 km on a bus to reach Romania on February 26 and the government there helped Indian students, she said, while also thanking the Indian government.

She boarded a special Air India flight for evacuees on February 27 from Romania and reached New Delhi at 6.30 pm IST the same day.

#### CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

#### **Kashmiri Students**

doctors that the Russian attack in Ukraine will intensify in the coming days.

"All 15 of us watched out of our apartment building and there was literally fire all around. Russia has finally stepped up its attack on Odessa port city," said Zafar Malik, a Kashmiri student who along with 14 other Kashmiri students has managed to cross into Romania through the Moldova border.

And then, as the dawn broke in the heavily bombed city of Odessa on Monday these Kashmiri students began an ardous journey of 233 kilometers amid curfew and shelling towards safety.

"This journey is full of dangers but we will undertake it to escape a certain death," Malik told Kashmir Observer before leaving for the Romanian capital, Budapest.

On Monday, the Indian Embassy had also issued an advisory for students to "leave Kyiv urgently", however, it had issued no such advisory for students who were stranded in other regions—Sumy, Kharkiv, Odessa and Lviv—that had seen an escalation of Russian attacks for past two days.

Even though the embassy had issued no such warning for students in other parts of Ukraine, Zaffar and his friends were forced to leave on their own as shortage of food & money beside the growing attacks had started to take its toll on them.

"You know, the Embassy has literally done nothing for us. There were no buses for us. We had to catch a cab for Moldova on our own. The world should know how we managed to reach Moldova. We have no money and no help was forthcoming," said Zafar, while traveling in a self arranged bus to Budapest.

Pertinently, another group of four Kashmiri students has also managed to cross into Moldova from the worst hit Kharkiv without any help from the embassy.

"On Monday morning, we were forced to defy curfew and travel to a train station which is almost 4 kms away from our shelter in Kharkiv. The embassy hadn't even been able to arrange a bus service upto that train station. We had to walk four kms to reach that train station," Shahid Habib, who had managed to cross into Moldova on Tuesday morning, told Kashmir Observer.

Students seem to be angry at the embassy officials for not having an evacuation plan ready even days after war broke out. "Before leaving, we tried to contact embassy officials but there was no response from them. So, we decided to leave without any further delay."

Shahid further added, "On the same morning, the Ukrainian army had called for a strict curfew.

Announcements were made that any person found out on the roads would be considered an enemy. The Government had ordered its army to shoot at sight. That fear was nothing less than the one created by falling missiles and the empty food stalls at supermarkets."

On Sunday, Shahid and his other three friends had seen media news which claimed Russia will intensify attacks on Kharkiv from Monday. "Before finally leaving Kharkiv, we had tried to leave the city two times before but we could not due to a strict curfew. But on Monday, it was a do or die situation and somehow we managed to escape".

Last week, several news agencies reported that more than 200 students from Jammu and Kashmir pursuing various courses are currently stranded in different cities of Ukraine.

"We passed through Alchivasky street, Puchkinska, Unouskat, central Uninok and Wokhzal where a red alert had been sounded, before finally catching a train to Odessa. Had we died, the embassy would have blamed us but luckily as we reached Moldova safely, the embassy takes credit for 'evacuating' us," Shahid Habib said.

As per Shahid, it took them almost a day to reach the Moldova-Ukraine border.

"Thousands of people who had managed to leave Ukraine were already waiting for their turn to cross into Moldova. It took us three hours to cross into Moldova. At the border, Ukrainians are allowed to enter the country with hassle free procedures while foreign students have to go through a tough passport check. I personally haven't seen any embassy official on the Ukraine-Moldova border," he said.

Notably, another group of 30 Kashmiri students has also managed to leave Ukraine and reach Moldova from where they're expected to cross into Romania where the Indian government has arranged a special flight for evacuation. "We're thankful to Indian students based in Moldova. They helped us to cross into Moldova and have also arranged transport services for our travel to Budapest," a Kashmiri student can be heard saying in a video shared on social media.

Notably, as of now, no Kashmiri student has found space in the special flights that are carrying hundreds of Indian students from Budapest to India.

It is expected that these Kashmiri students will reach Budapest on Tuesday night and will be evacuated to India on Wednesday.

### J&K Govt Establishes

number 01942457312 and 01942473135 for any assistance from the government," the official spokesperson said.

### **PM Modi Holds**

asserted that his government's top priority is to ensure safety and evacuation of Indian students.

### 616 Indians Return

218 Indian nationals. Meanwhile, IndiGo sent four planes, two to Budapest and two to Rzeszow in Poland, to evacuate Indians. SpiceJet also sent a plane to Kosice in Slovakia for evacuation on Tuesday.

Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia had said on February 27 that around 13,000 Indians, mainly college students, are currently stranded in Ukraine.

Ukranian airspace has been shut down since February 24, when the Russian government started its military operations against the country.

In first Indian casualty in the war in Ukraine, a student from Karnataka was killed in shelling in Kharkiv city on Tuesday morning. External Affairs Ministry confirmed

the death of the Indian in a tweet.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asked the Indian Air Force (IAF) to evacuate Indians stranded in Ukraine due to the Russian military offensive against that country, sources said on Tuesday.

Indians are travelling by road to Ukraine's borders with Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland etc, from where they are being taken by the Indian government officials to airports for evacuation flights.

The Indian Embassy in Ukraine on Twitter advised all Indian nationals,

including students, to leave Kyiv urgently on Tuesday itself, preferably by available trains or through any other means available.

#### **LG Takes Note**

03.03,2022 positively, for perusal of higher authorities," Phase one of this scheme was

launched in May 2016, benefiting poor families across the country with free LPG connections. The second phase of Ujjwala Yojna was launched in August 2021 by PM Modi

wherein free LPG connections would be given to one crore poor families across India.

A new Ujjwala connection consists of a free cylinder and gas stove and is sanctioned in the name of females of

the households enlisted in the SECC-2011 survey list.

However, there were allegations of irregularities in various districts of Kashmir, including the Budgam district.

According to reports, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) and other audit agencies in the past have continuously raised concerns vis-a-vis implementation of Ujjawala Yojana in some areas pointing towards diversion of subsidized cylinders, non availability of installation records & pre-installation check-ups, lack of validation checks etc.

In the letter written to LG, Lone had mentioned that how Ujjwala scheme is marred by large scale corruption in Jammu & Kashmir that needs to be thoroughly probed.

"In district Budgam our group went to several villages to see whether beneficiaries have received the subsidized gas or not but on the ground we were told that people had to pay for this free LPG," Lone wrote to LG.

The areas where the people have been asked to pay money for this scheme include Gogji Pathri, Wangwas, Kutbal Jadan, and Chalyan Choontinad village of Chadoora district Budgam.

The RTI activist further claimed to have witnessed large scale bungling in the scheme in Draggar village of Khansahib tehsil

"The local gram sabha has passed the resolution also to probe the issue. People have been made to pay Rs 900, Rs1500, Rs 2000 or Rs 3000 for this free gas. Some people who have not been provided the free gas after filing forms, on their names free gas has been issued but the same has been sold to some other people," the letter to LG reads.

The Yojana connection comes with provision of 12 LPG refills per year linked with back ended subsidy @ Rs 1600/year.

### **Work On Transit**

on the directions of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the construction of transit accommodations has been taken up in a mission mode.

The official said private land was to be acquired for the accommodations in the initial phase but due to cost escalation and time constraints, a decision was taken in 2019 to acquire state land to speed up the construction work.

During the winter season, he said the construction work in Kashmir division remains suspended between November and the end of February, shortening the working season. The work's progress has also suffered

due to COVID-19 but during the third

wave of the pandemic, the work continued at a good pace, the official said.

Administrative approval has been accorded to all construction works to be carried out at the 19 locations, paving way for the completion of the tran-

sit accommodations, the official added.

Presently, construction is in full swing at seven locations comprising 1,792 units, he said.

The official said work has been allotted in the case of 384 units, while work allotment is in final stages in case of 2,360 units. The tendering process has also been initiated for another 1,392 units.

About 76 per cent of the construction at Wandhama in Ganderbal district and 90 per cent of the work at Sheikhpora in Budgam district have been completed, the official said.

#### Me'raj-e-Alam Celebrated

manned to ensure smooth movement.

Similar congregational prayers were held in many other shrines in the valley include Khanqah-e-Mualla, Ziyarat Syed Saib Sonwar, Ziyarat Makhdoom Sahib, Jinab Sahib Soura, Aasar-i-Sharief Shahri Kailshpora and Aasar-i-Sharief Lal Bazar.

National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah also offered Asar congregational prayers at Asar-e-Sharief Dargah Hazratbal, following which he also had a glimpse of the sacred relic. (With agency inputs)

### India, Pak Meet

The meeting is scheduled for March 1-3 in Islamabad. The Indian delegation's visit was earlier scheduled for mid-January, but it was postponed at the request of India due to COVID-related restrictions.

The Indian delegation entered the country via Wagah border (Lahore) and then reached Islamabad. The delegation, headed by Indian Commissioner P.K. Saxena, includes three female officers, a senior official of the office of Pakistan's Commissioner for Indus Waters was quoted as saying in the report.

This is the first time since the signing of the treaty that three female officers will also be part of the Indian delegation, which will be advising the Indian Commissioner on various issues during the meeting.

The delegation will comprise Saxena's advisors from the Central Water Commission, the Central Electricity Authority, the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation and the Ministry of External Affairs.

The Pakistani official said the participants are set to discuss arrangements regarding communication of advance information about flood flows during the current season, maintenance of free flow of water into Sutlej river and finalisation of future programmes, meetings and tours and inspections.

The meeting is taking place amid the chill in bilateral relations over the Kashmir issue. The participants, under the agenda

items of the meeting, will also finalise and sign a record of the last PCIW meeting.

There is no plan for any field visit/

There is no plan for any field visit/inspection by the Indian delegation members during their stay in Pakistan as they have come to participate in the meeting only, the official said.

Besides objections already under

discussions over 1,000MW Pakal Dul and 48MW Lower Kalnai hydropower projects, Pakistan has also expressed concern over the construction of 10 hydroelectric power projects Durbuk Shyok, Nimu Chilling, Kiru, Tamasha, Kalaroos-II, Baltikulan Small, Kargil Hunderman, Phagla, Kulan Ramwari and Mandi.

Therefore, all these projects have been made part of the PCIW meeting during which the Pakistani Indus water commission's team, headed by Syed Muhammad Mehr Ali Shah, will reiterate its objections and seek reply/ justification from the visiting Indian delegation, explained the official.

Moreover, both countries will also resume talks on Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai projects, he added. Since annual meetings, under the

treaty, are to be held before March 31 each year, alternately in the two countries, the Pakistani delegation had paid a two-day visit to New Delhi from March 23 to 24 last year.

During the meeting, the participants discussed Pakistan's objections to the

designs of Pakal Dul, Lower Kalnai and other hydroelectric projects, including 19MW Durbuk and 24MW Nimu-Chilling plants, and other data-related issues.

The Indian side had shared some information/documents related to

Kalnai hydropower projects with Pakistan. It had agreed on getting the site of the controversial KishanGanga hydropower project inspected by Pakistani

1,000MW Pakal Dul and 48MW Lower

experts, the report said.

According to the treaty, India has been given the right to generate hydroelectricity through run-of-the-river projects on the western rivers subject to specific criteria for design and operation.

The pact also gives the right to Pakistan to raise objections to designs of Indian hydroelectric projects on the western rivers. Pakistan has raised objections on the design of these projects.

India, however, asserts that the design of the project is fully compliant with the provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) and certified by the Central Water Commission and the Central Electricity Authority, the apex organisations of the country in the field of water resources and power.

Under the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) signed between India and Pakistan in 1960, all the waters of the eastern rivers - Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi - amounting to around 33 million acre feet (MAF) annually is allocated to India for unrestricted use.

The waters of western rivers - Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab - amounting to around 135 MAF annually have been assigned largely to Pakistan. India is permitted to construct the run of the river plants on western rivers with limited storage as per criteria specified in the treaty.

Under the provisions of Article VIII(5) of the Indus Waters Treaty, the Permanent Indus Commission is required to meet regularly at least once a year, alternately in India and Pakistan. The last meeting of the Commission was held on March 23-24 2021 in New Polisi

### J&K Logs 55

148 Covid-19 patients—51 from Jammu and 97 from Valley— recovered during the time. So far 447690 people have recovered, leaving the active case tally at 614—375 in Jammu and 239 in Kashmir

They said there was no new confirmed case of mucormycosis (black fungus) reported today. So far 51 black fungus cases have been confirmed in J&K, the officials said. They also informed that 6805 doses of covid-19 vaccine were administered during the time in J&K.

### **Gol Picks**

been nominated as member of the Board under clause (C) of sub-section (1) of Section 14 of the law governing constitution of Waqf Boards in States and UTs. Under this clause, one person from amongst Muslims, who has professional experience in town planning or business management, social work, finance or revenue, agriculture and development activities, is nominated as member of the body.

As per the notification, Dr. Ghulam Nabi Haleem and Sohail Kazmi have been appointed as members of the body clause (d) of sub-section (1) of section 14 of the law.

Under this provision, one person each from recognised scholars in Shia and Sunni Islamic Theology are appointed as members of the body.

The Centre has also nominated Nawab Din (Regional Director Survey and Land Records, Udhampur) as member of the body under clause (e) of sub-section (1) of section 14 of the Waqf Act.

As per this provision, one Muslim officer not below the rank of joint secretary to the state government is appointed as member of the body.

It is worthwhile to mention that the laws governing Waqf properties in Jammu & Kashmir were repealed in August 2019 through the Jammu &

Kashmir Re-organisation Act.
The central Waqf law was also made applicable to J&K UT from October 31,

### 2019-(KNO) Commercial LPG

The price of a 19-kg commercial cylinder has been hiked to Rs 2,012 from Rs 1,907, according to price notification from state-owned fuel retailers.

This is the second-highest rate, after Rs 2,101 per cylinder in December 2021.

LPG rates are revised on the 1st of every month based on the price of benchmark fuel in the previous month. However, the price of domestic cooking gas LPG, sold to households, has not been changed since October when it rose to Rs 899.50 per 14.2-kg cylinder.

The hiatus in those rates came after criticism from the Opposition over prices being hiked by Rs 90 in the previous six months.

Just like LPG, petrol and diesel prices too have been on a freeze since early November 2021.

## It is being speculated that fuel prices will be hiked once assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh and four other states end next week. (PTI)

### Militant Associate AK-47 by police in Sanatnagar area.

A case has been registered in this regard and investigation has been taken up, the police officer added. (GNS)

### **Tractor Crushes 2**

Shalabugh in the central Kashmir district, reports said.

The incident, reports said, occurred when the tractor skidded off the road and ran over the two youths.

The injured brothers, reports said.

The injured brothers, reports said, were removed to the public health centre (PHC) Pirpora for treatment. However, the doctors there referred them to District Hospital Ganderbal where doctors declared them brought dead.

A case in this regard has been registered and investigation taken up, an official said

#### official said. **Army Hands Over**

being detained by a party from Nangi Takri in Mankote sector, close to the fence.

"After necessary questioning, the person has now been handed over to police for further investigations, the official said. (GNS)

### **Snow Clearance Operation In Last Phase On Leh Highway**



**Press Trust Of India** 

**KARGIL:** Snow clearance operation along the Srinagar-Leh national highway is in the last phase and efforts are on to open the 434 km-long strategic road as soon as possible, BRO officials said on Tuesday.

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is maintaining the highway which usually remains closed during winters due to heavy snowfall in the 3528 m-high Zojila Pass, a high mountain pass that runs through the Kashmir valley to Ladakh.

BRO's Project Vijayak Chief Engineer Ashish Gambir said the snow clearance operation is going on in full swing in the Zojila Pass and the road would be opened as soon as possible.

He gave this assurance to Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC)-Kargil Chairman and Chief Executive Councillor Feroz Ahmad Khan during a meeting here, an official spokesperson said.

Gambir said only a stretch of 2-3 km is left to be cleared of snow from Srinagar side and the highway is all set to reopen shortly. It was closed for vehicular traffic in Janu-

The spokesperson said the chief engineer also briefed Khan about the BRO projects being executed in Kargil district.

Gambir said the recently announced bypass from Drass to Pushkum via Shimsha Kharboo is in tendering process and work will start soon on the project, the spokesperson said, adding this road is expected to decongest and minimise traffic in Kargil and Drass towns.

He also said the work on Kargil to Batalik road is already underway, while the survey on the Hambutingla tunnel is complete and further process will be carried out soon.

On Khangral to Sanjak road realignment, the spokesperson said the BRO and the Kargil Revenue Department decided to conduct a joint survey on the project. Accordingly, the CEC assured it will take up the issue with the UT administration.

The spokesperson said Gambir assured that local workers who have labour cards as per MGNREGA will be engaged in Project Vijayak on

MGNREGA workers currently get wage of Rs 214 per day, while the BRO project will give them at least Rs 600 per day, he said.

### **Review Of NABARD Funded Projects Held At SKUAST-K**



**Observer News Service** 

**SRINAGAR:** A meeting to review thanked NABARD for supportthe NABARD-funded projects at Sher-e-Kashmir University of total financial outlay of 1.17 crore Agricultural Sciences and Tech- under the Farm Sector Promotion nology of Kashmir was jointly Fund and urged Principal Investiheld by the Vice Chancellor, gators to work with more zeal to SKUAST-K, Prof Nazir Ahmed realise the project objectives in a ager, NABARD J&K, Dr AK Sood.

The meeting was held in hybrid mode with Vice Chancellor SKUAST-K, Director Research Associate Director Research, Prin- for effective monitoring of the cipal Investigators of NABARD projects. He urged for docufunded projects operational at SKUASTK and Kashmir based NABARD officers attending it NABARD Kashmir Manohar Lal from Vice-chancellor Secretari- appraised the Principal Investiat, SKUAST-K, and CGM NABARD and Iammu based NABARD offi- PMIC meetings, documentation cers attending same from NAB- of project activities etc.

ARD Regional Office Jammu.

Chancellor SKUASTK ing as many as 12 projects with a Chief General Man-time-hound manner He honed for continual support from NABARD.

> CGM NABARD while expressing satisfaction over the progress of NABARD projects called mentation of the project activities and success stories. DGM gators about timely conduct of

### **J&K Bank Gives Warm Send Off** To Its President Ashraf Ali Malik



**Observer News Service** 

**SRINAGAR:** J&K Bank gave a warm send-off to Dr Ashraf Ali Malik, who superannuated on Ali has played a significant role Monday as the Bank's President in devising various policies of and Chief Vigilance Officer, after the bank besides providing the serving the institution for over thirty-three years.

The Bank's MD & CEO, Baldev Prakash presided over the farewell function that was attended by Executive President Sunil Gupta, Presidents Rajni Saraf, Chetan Paljore, Narjay Gupta, Peer Masood Ahmad and Syed Rais Maqbool, Vice-presidents and other senior officers of the bank at the bank's Corporate Headquarters.

one of the topmost management positions in the J&K Bank, Ashraf Ali had a wide-ranging experience in the banking law and practice and was currently heading the Bank's Law Department besides holding the charge of Chief Vigilance Officer.

the bank, the MD & CEO said "With just over two months of interaction with the top management here, I could see Mr. Ashraf robust and requisite legal framework for the Bank's operations. He has been very articulate in the domain of his expertise."

"On behalf of the bank, I wish him a healthy and happy life post-superannuation", he added.

Ashraf Ali expressed his gratitude to the Bank's leadership and his fellow colleagues on the occasion and said, "I am highly thankful to the bank's leadership for their guidance and support Rising through the ranks to through-out my career in this great institution. I will always cherish the affection that I have received from my fellow colleagues at different positions and places throughout my journey."

"Even after retiring from the active services of the bank, I will continue to extend my ad-Lauding his role as one of the vice and guidance whenever top management executives of required by the bank", he added.

# **Mercury Plummets After Rains Lash Plains**



Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Rains lashed plains in Jammu and Kashmir, bringing drop in day temperature on Tuesday.

A meteorological department official said that Srinagar, the summer capital of J&K, received 1.5mm of rain from 0830-1730 hours. From 10.8°C on Monday, the maximum (day) temperature dropped to 7.8°C.

However due to overnight cloud cover, Srinagar recorded a rise by 2.8°C in night temperature with mercury settling at minus 3.4°C against last night's 0.6°C.

Qazigund had 1.2mm of rain during the time while as it maximum of 7.6°C and low of 1.2°C on the previous night, he said. Kokernag, also in south Kash-

mir, had had 0.4mm of rain and recorded a low of 0.5°C against minus 2.6°C on the previous night, the official said.

rain and recorded a low of minus 3.5°C against minus 6.8°C last night, he said.

Gulmarg received 1.4mm of rain and recorded a low of minus 4.5°C against minus 8.0°C on the previous night, he said.

The night temperature was 1.3°C below normal for this time of the year in the famous resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, he said. Kupwara town in north Kash-

mir received 2.6mm and recorded a low of 3.3°C against minus 1.9 °C on the previous night, the official said. While 'Chillai Kalan', the 40-

day long harshest period of winter ended on January 30, and 20-day long 'Chillai Khurd' culminated on February 19, Kashmir is presently under the grip of 10-day-long 'Chilla Bachha'.

in south Kashmir, had 0.9mm of The temperature was 0.7°C above normal for the J&K's winter capital during this time of the year, he said.

Banihal recorded a low of 5.4°C, Batote had a minimum of 5.6°C while Bhaderwah recorded a low of 3.9°C, the offi-

Ladakh's Leh recorded a minimum of minus 7.2°C against last night minus 12.8°C on the previous night while automatic Kargil station at recorded a low of minus 11.2°C. Drass, the second coldest place in the world after Siberia, recorded a low of minus 14.7°C, against 22.0°C on the previous night, officials said.

"Fairly widespread light rain/TS/snow is expected over Jammu and Kashmir in next 24 hours," the official said. He said there is forecast for "isolated to scattered light rain/snow, Jammu recorded a low of THs." He said there's no forecast ght, the official said. 12.3°C against 7.9°C on the pre- of any significant weather till Pahalgam, the famous resort vious night, the official said. March 5, he added. (GNS)

### **Herath Celebrated With Religious Gaiety**

**Agencies** 

**SRINAGAR:** The Mahashivratri. the marriage anniversary of Lord Shiva and Goddess Uma, which is most important festival of the Kashmiri pandits "Herath" was on Tuesday celebrated with religious fervor and gaiety in the Kashmir valley

The members of the community were seen visiting temples, particularly Shankaracharya on the hill top of Takhat-e-Sul man, since early this morning to pay obeisance.

Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole paid obeisance at Shri Shankaracharya temple and performed Hawan during which he prayed for peace and prosperity of Jammu and Kashmir and entire nation.

He said these festivals teach He also said that all the facilities have been made available for the convenience of devotees at Shankaracharya and various other temples.



and extended his greetings and best wishes to them.

On the occasion, he said that brotherhood, unity and harmo- a good number of local and ny among diverse communities. non-local devotees have visited the temple and said that he expects the number will increase in coming years.

ebrated by the local Hindu nity members in 90s. (GNS)

numan Temple, Shri Ganpatyar Temple etc.

People were seen greeting each other on the occasion of 'Salaam', a Persian word for greeting after night long prayers. Muslims and members of other communities also greeted their Kashmiri pandit brethren who didn't mi-Mahashivratri was also cel- grate along with other commu-

AWAM KI AWAZ

### **LG Praises Uri Resident For His Suggestions On Financial Literacy**

**Observer News Service** 

JAMMU: The Union Territory Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha in his 10th episode of public outreach programme 'Awam ki Awaz' praised the suggestions of Uri resident, Mohd Iqbal Badana regarding the financial literacy among

The LG has appreciated Iqbal for coming forward with his suggestions and said that financial literacy is pivotal in efficient management of resources by the people, an official spokesperson said Tuesday. The LG, he said, assured in his

talk show that government is alive to such mass awareness programmes and is on the path of making all the people aware about

Earlier Iqbal, who hails from remote area of Choolan from Uri Subdivision had suggested that humans need all types of knowledge especially the financial know-how at grassroots level for better management of its resources to make



He believes that as far as J&K is concerned there is a meagre knowledge of financial management among the masses that is preventing them from taking any steps to maximize their wealth. He says that in order to progress in a real sense, imparting financial literacy among masses at large scale is prerequisite.

Giving the roadmap, Iqbal postulates that it can be achieved by conducting awareness camps at panchayat and block level. He suggests to conduct such camps in colleges and higher secondary schools to acquaint students about the possible ways of earning livelihoods with their available avenues and

He adds that this knowledge will

reduce the anxiety among youth as they would get insights to invest their resources and skills in a best possible manner.

Iqbal suggests assigning this task to some Resources Persons (RPs) for imparting knowledge of financial management at block or panchayat level for a better outcome. He adds that university students studying the Financial Management courses should also be encouraged to play their role in this direction.

Iqbal paid his gratitude to Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha for giving consideration to his suggestions. He says, "I'm highly thankful to LG Sahib for incorporating my suggestion in his address". Exuding hope he says, "It is a great honour for us to have availability of such a platform to present our views even to Lieutenant Governor".

He also opines that the program Awam ki Awaaz is a great platform by which common people can share their suggestions and can become part of policy making for the first time in the history of J&K.

### **RTI Movement Hails LG's Decision To Regularize PDD Daily Wagers**

**Observer News Service** 

SRINAGAR: Chairman J&K RTI Movement Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat has hailed the decision of the Government for regularization of 12000 casual employees of JK Power Department.

far appealed to the Government other casual and consolidated for regularisation of other daily employees especially those wagers as well, especially the working in the health departconsolidated health workers ment. The consolidated emwho work on very meagre wages from the last many decades.

decision of the Government for and Govt must not forget the regularizing services of 12000 same "he added.

power department casual employees. These employees were rendering exemplary services during harsh weather conditions in J&K and we appreciate the decision taken by LG Manoj Sinha," Dr Muzaffar said.

"We appeal that the Govt In a statement Dr Raja Muzaf- must also regularize services of ployees such as sweepers, drivers have done commendable "RTI Movement welcomes the job during COVID 19 pandemic

### **2 Udhampur Students Return Home From Ukraine**



**Observer News Service** 

UDHAMPUR: Two students of Udhampur district, who were studying in war torn country Ukraine, have reached home safely, even as another student is still stranded there, an official spokesperson said Tuesday.

He said that on the direction of Deputy Commissioner, Udhampur Indu Kanwal Chib, Tehsildar Udhampur Amit Verma today visited the residence of

the three students.

Sallan Talab area of Udhampur

The Tehsildar also met with Arjun Singh, father of Aheena Raiput, who is doing MBBS in Ukraine & has returned to her home at Phangial village.

The Tehsildar also met Sanjay Kumar, father of Stuti Kashyap who also returned safely from Ukraine.

The visiting officer assured the families of all possible support from district administration.

He apprised the family mem-The visiting officer met with bers about the tireless efforts Vijay Kumar, father of Parul Ma- being made by the Central Govhajan, who is still stranded in ernment for safe evacuation of Ukraine. Parul is a resident of the students

### **Court Rejects Bail To Drug Peddler From UP**

Says Menace Of Drugs Has Assumed 'Alarming Dimension'

**Agencies** 

**SRINAGAR:** Observing that the menace of drugs has assumed 'alarming dimension', a court here has dismissed bail plea of a drug peddler from Uttar Pradesh who was arrested last month.

"As per the police rei liable for commission of offence which carries a maximum of punishment of 10 years," the court of 1st ence and attempted to flee away additional sessions judge, Ajay Kumar Gupta, said, adding, "No doubt the alleged offence is not punishable with death sentence or with imprisonment for life and, therefore, the embargo laid in section 437 for grant of bail is not attracted in the present case yet bail cannot be granted on that solitary ground."

Keeping in view the facts and circumstances of the case at this stage, the court said that it has been prima facie established by the Prosecution that the accused is involved in a serious and heinous offence having severe punishment.

"The offence committed by the accused has great effect upon the society at large as menace of drugs has assumed alarming dimension and has severely affected the younger generation," the court said, adding, if the accused persons will be granted bail at this stage it will certainly erode the confidence of general public in criminal justice system." Subsequently, the court rejected central jail Srinagar. (GNS)

bail plea of the accused, underling that it was important for larger pub-

"Thus, if in such type of offences the accused is granted bail, it will certainly affect the larger interest of public," the court said, adding, "The general public will lose its faith in criminal justice system. Such type of accused is not entitled to the discretionary jurisdiction of the court for granting the bail."

As per prosecution, Police durng naka checking at Radio Kashmir applicant-accused has been found crossing Srinagar found a suspicious person on February 4. Upon noticing under section 18/15 of NDPS Act, the Naka party, the prosecution said, the man tried to conceal his presfrom the spot. However he was tactfully apprehended and a plastic bag was recovered from him, the prosecution said. "Upon searching the plastic bag it was found that the person had kept poppy-straw in it," prosecution said. "On preliminary investigation the person disclosed his name as Rohit Kumar son of Durash Chander of Amethi Hardui U.P.

> "Actually the person was involved in drug trafficking who illegally would procure the drugs and was smuggling the Poppy-straw outside the state and selling the same for huge prices.'

Subsequently, police filed a case (FIR No.08/2022) under section 8/15 NDPS and further investigation set into motion.

"During the course of investigation, weight of contraband material i.e., (Poppy-straw) was conducted in presence of witnesses, weighing 8 KG 600 Grams," prosecution said. The accused is currently lodged at

### Transforming J&K

### Har Gaon Haryali: A Remarkable Step For Sustainable Development, Climate Justice

**Observer News Service** 

SRINAGAR: Sustainable development is an approach towards development and growth by using resources in a way that allows them to renew or continue to exist for future generations, an official spokesperson said Tuesday.

In this context, he said, the government of Jammu and Kashmir has launched remarkable initia-

suration with the National Forest Policy 1988 and the Jammu and Kashmir Forest Policy 2011 which envisages afforestation on all degraded and denuded lands in the union territory within and outside forests. Spelling out broad contours

mir drive itself is in commen-

of this initiative, Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, remarked that the 'Green Jammu tive 'Har Gaon Haryali' program and Kashmir' campaign aims at in consonance with the vision of creating people's movement at 'Green Jammu and Kashmir' drive a massive scale with involve-2021 to ensure sustainable de- ment of all stakeholders parvelopment and promote climate ticularly village panchayats, justice across the Union Territory. women, students, Urban Local The Green Jammu and Kash-bodies, NGOs and civil society.

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