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P3 CITY

STUDENTS DECRY MANDATORY MASK MANDATES AT EDUCATIONAL

As the number of Covid cases hit an all-time low in Kashmir, students across various educational Institutes are urging the administration to do away with the compulsory face

THINK

FUTURE OF WORK IS HYBRID

Even before the pandemic, the U.S. workforce increasingly relied on remote collaboration technologies like videoconferencing and Slack. The global crisis accelerated the adoption of these work tools and practices in an unprecedented way. By April 2020, about half



P7 STATE

JAMMU RECORDS SEASON'S HOTTEST DAY AT 35 DEG CELSIUS

Jammu, the winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir, on Wednesday recorded the hottest day of the season at 35 degrees Celsius nine notches above the normal for this



Quote!

The only impossible journey is the one you never begin

- Tony Robbins

NEWS DIGEST

5.2 Magnitude Earthquake Hits Ladakh

SRINAGAR: An earthquake measuring 5.2 on the Richter scale jolted the Union Territory of Ladakh on Wednesday. According to officials, the moderate intensity quake occurred at 5:05pm on Wednesday and had a depth of 110 km, a longitude of 75.18 east and latitude 36.01 north. However, no reports **More on P6**

Man Found Hanging From Walnut Tree

SRINAGAR: A man was found hanging from a walnut tree in central Kashmir's Budgam district on Wednesday. 45-year-old Nazir Ahmad Malik was found hanging from a walnut tree inside a graveyard by some locals in Waragam village of the district. **More on P6**

Leopard Kills Hangul In Tral

SRINAGAR: A Kashmir stag (Hangul) has been killed by a leopard in Tral area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district during intervening night, officials said on Wednesday. An official said that a Hangul was found dead on Wednesday morning in Shikargah area of Tral which had been killed by a leopard. **More on P6**

3 Gamblers Held In Pulwama: Police

SRINAGAR: Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested three gamblers in an input driven raid in south Kashmir's Pulwama district. Acting on a tip-off, a team from Police Station Pulwama raided the house of Zahoor Ahmad Hafiz in Prichoo village and arrested the house owners and two other gamblers **More on P6**



A girl student walks past security men and their armoured vehicles during an encounter in the Nowgam area of the city on Wednesday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

3 Militants Killed In Srinagar Encounter

Were Involved In Sarpanch, ASI; Inspector's Killing: Police

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Police on Wednesday claimed to have killed three Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militants involved in the recent killing of a Sarpanch in the city outskirts, besides two policemen, including an Inspector in Srinagar and south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Police, army's 50RR launched a cordon and search operation in Nowgam area of the city on the basis of specific input about the presence of militants, a police spokesperson said Wednesday. The hiding militants, he said, opened heavy fire upon the search team when they were moving towards the suspected spot.

The joint team, he said, retaliated effectively to the militant fire setting off an encounter.

The spokesperson said that later paramilitary CRPF personnel also joined the operation in which three categorized militants were killed and their bodies were retrieved from the encounter site.

Police identified the trio as Adil Nabi Teli of Pampore, Shakir Ahmad Tantray of Shopian and Yasir Ahmad Wagay of Kulgam.

As per police records, the spokesperson said that the killed militants were active since 2021 and affiliated with Lashkar. The trio, he said, were part of groups **More on P6**

Gunfight Forces Suspension Of Train Service

The authorities on Wednesday suspended train services on the 137-kilometre Banihal-Baramulla rail line following a gunfight in Nowgam area in the outskirts of Srinagar. The decision, sources said was taken following a communication to railway authorities by the police stating therein that "in view of the ongoing encounter at Shankarpora jurisdiction of police station Nowgam Srinagar and **More on P6**

BESIDES, HE WAS ALSO INVOLVED in grenade attack on joint party of Police & CRPF at Barbarshah Srinagar in which one civilian was killed and three civilians were injured."

Go First Resumes Srinagar-Sharjah Flight, Cargo Ops

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Private airliner Go First on Wednesday announced the resumption of a direct international flight as well as the international cargo operations from Srinagar to Sharjah.

Go First, formerly known as GoAir, was the first airline to introduce direct service from Srinagar to Sharjah last year under the air bubble agreement.

Go First Wednesday announced the resumption of direct

international connection and direct international cargo operations from Srinagar to Sharjah, thus reinforcing its gulf operations, a spokesman of the airlines said.

Go First flight G8 1595, after a hiatus due to Covid pandemic, will depart from Sheikh-ul-Alam International Airport in Srinagar at 745 pm and will arrive in Sharjah at 10.30 pm, he said. **More on P6**



Covid-19: Vaccination Drive For Children Begins In J&K

Observer News Service

Srinagar: With an aim to protect over 3 lakh children from Coronavirus infection, the Jammu and Kashmir administration on Wednesday kick-started a vaccination drive for the age group between 12 to 14 years across the Union Territory.

The Covid-19 vaccination drive started in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday

coinciding with Vaccination Day, which is celebrated on March 16 across the country, an official spokesperson said.

He said that after the completion of Covid-19 vaccination of priority groups of higher age, the Health Department launched a vaccination drive for the age group between 12 to 14 years across Kashmir.

In Srinagar, he said, the vaccination **More on P6**



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Govt Restructures State Marriage Assistance Scheme

One Time Financial Help Of Rs 50K Extended To AAY, PHH Ration Card Holders

Observer News Service

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Wednesday restructured the State Marriage Assistance Scheme to provide the benefits to all Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) or Priority Household (PHH) ration card holders with a one-time financial assistance of Rs. 50,000.

The decision to restructure the scheme was taken in the Administrative Council

meet chaired by Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha here on Wednesday, an official spokesperson said.

As per the restructured scheme, he said, any girl of legally marriageable age belonging to the families of Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) or Priority Household (PHH) ration card holders, will be eligible for one-time financial assistance of Rs. 50,000.

"The assistance will be given before her marriage, for which she will be required to apply at least one month in advance to the concerned District Social Welfare Officer," he said.

Giving more details, the spokesperson said **More on P6**

Fire Claimed Over Rs 70 Cr Property In Kashmir Last Year

Auqib Javeed

Srinagar: Kashmir reported last year over 2000 incidents of fire reducing nearly two thousand houses and commercial buildings to ashes, besides causing a whopping loss of over 70 Crore to the people in the Valley.

In the Valley, Srinagar witnessed the highest number of fire incidents, data available with Kashmir Observer reveals.

Deputy Director, Fire and Emergency services (Kashmir) Bashir Ahmed Shah told Kashmir Observer that the city being congested is one of the main reasons that it witnessed the highest number of fire incidents.

According to the data, the department of Fire and



Dept Issues Advisory On Safety Measures

Amid the spurt in fire incidents across Kashmir and particularly in the Srinagar city, the Power Development Department (PDD) has come up with dos and don'ts for the professionals who are still working from home in Kashmir. The department has highlighted some common mistakes that people usually do resulting in fire incidents. **More on P6**

HIJAB BAN

SC To Hear Pleas Against HC Verdict After Holi



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to list for hearing after Holi vacation the pleas challenging the Karnataka High Court verdict which dismissed the petitions seeking permission to wear hijab inside the classroom saying it is not part of the essential religious practice in Islamic faith.

A bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana took note of the submissions of senior advocate Sanjay Hegde, appearing for some students, that urgent hearing was needed keeping in mind the upcoming examinations.

The urgency is that there are many girls who have to appear in examinations, the senior lawyer told the

bench which also comprised Justices A S Bopanna and Hima Kohli.

Others also mentioned, let us see...we will list after the vacations. Give us time, the CJ said.

Some petitions have been filed against the full bench high court verdict on the case in which it was held that wearing hijab is not a part of essential religious practice in Islamic faith under Article 25 of the Constitution. The high court dismissed the petitions filed by a section of Muslim students from the Government Pre-University Girls College in Udupi, seeking permission to wear Hijab inside the classroom.

The prescription of school uniform is only a reasonable restriction, **More on P6**

THE PLEA CLAIMED THAT the high court has failed to note that right to wear a Hijab is protected as a part of the right to conscience under Article 25 of the Constitution.

Situation In J&K Very Good: CRPF DG

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: CRPF Director General Kuldeep Singh asserted on Wednesday that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir is "very good" and is improving further, even as he said 162 militants and Maoists were killed across the country in 2021-22.

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) chief also said 1,500 militants and Maoists were arrested and 750 others forced to surrender in relentless operations by the force in 2021-22, while 12 of its personnel sacrificed their lives and 169 others suffered injuries.

He presided over the "DG parade" ahead of the 83rd Raising Day parade of the force, which is to be attended by Union



Home Minister Amit Shah.

The force will conduct its annual Raising Day parade at the M A Stadium in Jammu on Saturday. This is for the first time the force is observing the occasion outside Delhi-NCR.

"The situation is very good (in Jammu and Kashmir). CRPF is working as an aid to civil authorities **More on P6**

Teenager Who Eloped With Minor Girl Denied Bail

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: A Juvenile Justice Board here on Wednesday denied bail to a teenage boy who had eloped with a 15-year old girl, saying bail would "defeat the ends of justice".

The boy, not even 16 years of age and referred to as a Child in Conflict with Law (CICL) in legal parlance, was alleged to be in "serious romantic and sexual relationship" with the girl who used to live in his neighbourhood.

"Subsequently, they fled to Jammu and stayed in a hotel. Then a friend of CICL called him and told him that his father had been arrested and suggested he come back. He was **More on P6**



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What You Eat Can Reprogram Your Genes – An Expert Explains The Emerging Science Of Nutrigenomics

Monica Dus | The Conversation

People typically think of food as calories, energy and sustenance. However, the latest evidence suggests that food also “talks” to our genome, which is the genetic blueprint that directs the way the body functions down to the cellular level.

This communication between food and genes may affect your health, physiology and longevity. The idea that food delivers important messages to an animal's genome is the focus of a field known as nutrigenomics. This is a discipline still in its infancy, and many questions remain cloaked in mystery. Yet already, we researchers have learned a great deal about how food components affect the genome.

I am a molecular biologist who researches the interactions among food, genes and brains in the effort to better understand how food messages affect our biology. The efforts of scientists to decipher this transmission of information could one day result in healthier and happier lives for all of us. But until then, nutrigenomics has unmasked at least one important fact: Our relationship with food is far more intimate than we ever imagined.

The interaction of food and genes

If the idea that food can drive biological processes by interacting with the genome sounds astonishing, one need look no further than a beehive to find a proven and perfect example of how this happens. Worker bees labor nonstop, are sterile and live only a few weeks. The queen bee, sitting deep inside the hive, has a life span

that lasts for years and a fecundity so potent she gives birth to an entire colony.

And yet, worker and queen bees are genetically identical organisms. They become two different life forms because of the food they eat. The queen bee feasts on royal jelly; worker bees feed on nectar and pollen. Both foods provide energy, but royal jelly has an extra feature: its nutrients can unlock the genetic instructions to create the anatomy and physiology of a queen bee.

So how is food translated into biological instructions? Remember that food is composed of macronutrients. These include carbohydrates – or sugars – proteins and fat. Food also contains micronutrients such as vitamins and minerals. These compounds and their breakdown products can trigger genetic switches that reside in the genome.

Like the switches that control the intensity of the light in your house, genetic switches determine how much of a certain gene product is produced. Royal jelly, for instance, contains compounds that activate genetic controllers to form the queen's organs and sustain her reproductive ability. In humans and mice, byproducts of the amino acid methionine, which are abundant in meat and fish, are known to influence genetic dials that are important for cell growth and division. And vitamin C plays a role in keeping us healthy by protecting the genome from oxidative damage; it also promotes the function of cellular pathways that can repair the genome if it does get damaged.

Depending on the type of nutritional information, the genetic controls activated and the cell that receives them, the messages in food can



influence wellness, disease risk and even life span. But it's important to note that to date, most of these studies have been conducted in animal models, like bees.

Interestingly, the ability of nutrients to alter the flow of genetic information can span across generations. Studies show that in humans and animals, the diet of grandparents influences the activity of genetic switches and the disease risk and mortality of grandchildren.

Cause and effect

One interesting aspect of thinking of food as a type of biological information is that it gives new meaning to the idea of a food chain. Indeed, if our bodies are influenced by what we have eaten – down to a molecular level – then

what the food we consume “ate” also could affect our genome. For example, compared to milk from grass-fed cows, the milk from grain-fed cattle has different amounts and types of fatty acids and vitamins C and A . So when humans drink these different types of milk, their cells also receive different nutritional messages.

Similarly, a human mother's diet changes the levels of fatty acids as well as vitamins such as B-6, B-12 and folate that are found in her breast milk. This could alter the type of nutritional messages reaching the baby's own genetic switches, although whether or not this has an effect on the child's development is, at the moment, unknown.

And, maybe unbeknownst to us, we too are part

of this food chain. The food we eat doesn't tinker with just the genetic switches in our cells, but also with those of the microorganisms living in our guts, skin and mucosa. One striking example: In mice, the breakdown of short-chain fatty acids by gut bacteria alters the levels of serotonin, a brain chemical messenger that regulates mood, anxiety and depression, among other processes.

Food additives and packaging

Added ingredients in food can also alter the flow of genetic information inside cells. Breads and cereals are enriched with folate to prevent birth defects caused by deficiencies of this nutrient. But some scientists hypothesize that high levels of folate in the absence of other naturally occurring micronutrients such as vitamin B-12 could contribute to the higher incidence of colon cancer in Western countries, possibly by affecting the genetic pathways that control growth.

This could also be true with chemicals found in food packaging. Bisphenol A, or BPA, a compound found in plastic, turns on genetic dials in mammals that are critical to development, growth and fertility. For example, some researchers suspect that, in both humans and animal models, BPA influences the age of sexual differentiation and decreases fertility by making genetic switches more likely to turn on. All of these examples point to the possibility that the genetic information in food could arise not just from its molecular composition – the amino acids, vitamins and the like – but also from the agricultural, environmental and economic policies of a country, or the lack of them.

LG Launches New Earbuds At Rs 13,990 In India

IANS

New Delhi- LG Electronics on Wednesday launched 'LG Tone Free FP Series earbuds' at Rs 13,990 in the Indian market.

The earbuds are equipped with a unique and innovative UVnano charging cradle with ultraviolet light that sanitises the earbuds, and kills 99.9 per cent bacteria. "The new model of ALG Tone Free earbuds has been upgraded with innovative features with the unique UV Nano and Meridian Technology.

We are confident, these earbuds will be the perfect solution for audiophiles looking for a combination of hygiene and quality and the very best that audio technology has to offer," Hak Hyun Kim, Director-Home Entertainment, LG Electronics India said in a statement.

The earbuds come with Active Noise Cancellation (ANC), specially engineered to reduce high-frequency noise encountered every day. The enhanced ANC blocks out the external sound by generating an equal amount of anti-noise. The improved driver can effectively detect and cancel noise to create a true high-fidelity experience that allows one to completely immerse in whatever they are listening to, the company claims.

Office of the Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Udhampur

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Notice Inviting E-Tenders

E-NIT-NO: PMGSY/Div/UDH-I/ 01 Of 2021-22 Dated 11-03-2022

Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Udhampur on behalf of The Government of Jammu & Kashmir, invites e-tenders on %age Above/Excess (+) OR %age Below/ Less (-) basis (i.e. on Percentage-Rate Basis) from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt, CPWD, Railways or equivalent and other State Govts up to 5.00 PM on 29-03-2022 for the following work including Defect Liability & Maintenance

S. No	Name of work/package	Name of the PIU	Consstt part (Rs in lacs)	Maintt. Part (Rs in Lacs)	Total (Rs in lacs)	Cost of docu-ment (rs in Lacs)	E/M (RS IN LACS)	Time allowed for const.	Call of tender	Time & date of opening of tender	Class Of Contr.
1	Providing and Laying of Renewal Coat on Road From Darsoo to Gudhar part-I, Package No. JK14-282, Block Udhampur, District Udhampur. Length -8.320 Kms Adv. Cost excluding maintenance but inclusive of GST -Rs. 232.33 Lacs	Udhampur	232.33	27.87	260.20	0.06	5.20	09 Months	1 st	31-03-2022 10:00 AM	Any registered contractor with State PWD/CPW D/ Railways or equivalent qualifying eligibility criteria as provided in the Standard Bidding Documents can tender for the works
2	Providing and Laying of Renewal Coat on Road From Gandala Road Km 3rd to Jakhar, Package No. JK14-298, Block Udhampur, District Udhampur. Length -4.500 Kms Adv. Cost excluding maintenance but inclusive of GST -Rs.121.50 Lacs		121.50	14.58	136.08	0.06	2.72	09 Months	1 st		
3	Providing and Laying of Renewal Coat on Road From Supply Morh Kainthgali road Km 9th RD 200 to Pangara Jagir, Package No. JK14-284, Block Udhampur, District Udhampur. Length-3.825 Kms Adv. Cost excluding maintenance but inclu-		103.14	12.38	115.52	0.06	2.31	09 Months	1 st		

1. (a) The Bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://pmgsytendersik.gov.in> from 06.55 P.M on 16-03-2022 to 29-03-2022 (5.00PM).

(b) The Bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website <http://pmgsytendersik.gov.in> from 05 00 PM on 18-03-2022 to 05.00 PM on 29-03-2022.

(c) A Pre bid meeting will be held on 17-03-2022 at 12.00 Noon in the Office of The Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Udhampur to clarify the issues and to answer questions on any matter that may be raised at that stage as stated in Clause 9 of instruction to bidders of the Bidding documents.

2. Only online submission of bids is permitted, therefore; bids must be submitted online on website www.pmgsytendersik.gov.in. The technical qualification part of the bids will be opened online at 10 AM on 31-03-2022 by the authorized officers. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened online on the next working day at the same time.

The date and time of opening of Financial Bids shall be notified on Web Site <http://pmgsytendersik.gov.in>. This is conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial bids shall be opened accordingly on line on same Web Site at the Office of The Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Udhampur.

3. For Further details kindly visit our website <https://pmgsytendersik.gov.in>.

No: PMGSY/Div/UDh-I/4206-4275

Dated:-11-03-2022

DIPK-19626/21

Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Udhampur.
For and on behalf of The Government of Jammu and Kashmir

CORRECTION

My father's name Mushtaq Ahmad Dar entered in my passport No. M4578219 is incorrect. Now I have applied for its correction. Anybody having any objection may report to the Passport Officer Srinagar within 07 days. After that no objection will be considered.

Basarat Hussain Mushtaq
Date of Birth: 24-01-2002 (Twenty Fourth January Two Thousand Two)
S/o Mushtaq Ahmad Dhaar
R/o Hamza Colony Bemina Srinagar Kashmir 190018. inf

The Jammu And Kashmir State Board Of School Education

BRANCH OFFICE MAGAM

The candidates whose photograph is published in this notice is claiming to have lost the original marks certificate of 11th under Below mentioned particulars

Name : Mubashir Hussain
S/o Mr. Mohammad Ibrahim
R/o Baba Pora Magam

Details of Marks Certificate lost
Secondary School Examination (class 10th)
Roll No 2413417 Session /Year Annual 2018-19

Secondary School Examination (class 12th)
Roll No 32410226 Session /Year Annual 2020

Now the candidate has applied for Duplicate Marks Card. Anybody (if) having any objection may file the same before undersigned with (07) Seven days from the date of publication of this notice. Besides, the original marks card is teated as cancelled.

Sd/ Assistant Secretary
bmg Sub Office Magam

Public Notice

I have lost 10th class Character and Provisional Certificate somewhere. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same . If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Jamia Siraj-ul-Uloom Hillow Imamsahib Shopian within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall b entertained.

Sajid Hussain
S/o Abdul Rahim Danak
R/o Nowpachi Marwah Kishtwar ast

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پی ایچ ای وائٹورکس ڈویژن سرینگر

اطلاع عام

محکمہ وائٹورکس ڈویژن سرینگر عوام الناس کی خدمت و پیشہ کے پانی کی فراہمی کیلئے 24x7 میں مصروف رہتا ہے۔ عوام الناس، ہرکاری و نیم سرکاری محکمہ جات و دیگر تجارتی اداروں سے پڑ زور اپیل کی جاتی ہے کہ وہ وائٹورکس (نلکے فیس) کے بقایا جات کی ادائیگی ایک ہفتہ کے اندر اندر یقینی بنا کر اپنے ذی شعور شہری ہونے کا ثبوت دیکیں بصورت دیگر ان کے کنکشن کاٹ دے جائیں گے اس کے علاوہ ان صارفین سے گزارش کی جاتی ہے جنہوں نے ابھی تک اپنے نلکے کنکشن درج نہیں کرائیں ہیں وہ محکمہ سے رابطہ کر کے جلد از جلد اپنے کنکشن درج کرائیں بصورت دیگر ان کے کنکشن بھی کاٹ دئے جائیں گے۔

DIPK-19555/21

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No: WWVD/

Dated:-



ADC Sgr Imposes Fine On Food Business Operators

Agencies

Srinagar: Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar FazlulHaseeb Wednesday imposed a fine of Rs. 54500/- on various Food Business Operators for manufacturing and selling sub-standard food articles.

In a statement, a spokesperson said that those fined include Edible Oil manufacturing company namely M/S Shree GRG Oil Mill, from Shri Ganganagar, Rajasthan having brand Name “Ulfat Mustard Oil” on whom Rs. 40,000/- has been imposed.

The statement reads that these complaints were filed by Food Safety Officers of District Srinagar after obtaining prosecuting Authority from Assistant Commissioner Food Safety.

“Moreover, 22 complaints against various Food Business Operators who do not adhere to the requirements of Food Safety and Standards Act were prepared for presentation before competent court. These include 4 butchers and 4 milk manufacturing units,” it reads. (KNS)

Students Decry Mandatory Mask Mandates At Educational Institutes

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: As the number of Covid cases hit an all-time low in Kashmir, students across various educational Institutes are urging the administration to do away with the compulsory face masks.

Students from various Institutes said the authorities ask them to wear face masks as they enter the premises of their Educational Institutes.

SahilIbn Sultan a B.Ed. student at Government College of Education said the college administration forces them to wear masks as they enter the college.

“I have taken both the shots of the covid vaccine and I don't feel the need to wear mask at the moment” Sahil said.

“With day temperatures increasing, wearing a mask is nauseating, he added. Students from other Educational Institutes also voiced similar concerns.

“The doctors association has also

suggested that most people in Kashmir can do away with the masks” said Muneer Hussain a student of Cluster University.

“I think it is not necessary anymore” he added.

The Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) had recently suggested that most people in the Valley do not need to wear masks now due to the low number of Covid cases. The association, while referencing Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention guidelines, said that Kashmir is a low risk area now.

Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Monday said most people in Kashmir valley do not need to wear masks under new guidelines.

“Masks can come off in schools too,” said DAK President and influenza expert DrNisarul Hassan.

Dr Hassan said according to new CDC guidelines, people who are living in areas of low Covid-19 levels no longer need to wear masks.

“Under new norms, masks are not recommended if average new cases fall below 200 per 100,000 population, there are fewer than 10 Covid hospital admissions per 100,000 people over the past one week and Covid patients are taking up less than 10 percent of available hospital beds, based on seven day average,” he said.

“If cases exceed 200 per 100,000 people, masks are recommended if new weekly Covid admissions exceed 10 per 100,000 people and patients are taking up 10 percent or more hospital beds based on a seven day average,” he added.

With the UT of Jammu and Kashmir recording negligible number of covid cases, students have urged authorities not to force students to wear face masks.

Meanwhile, UT of J&K reported 17 new positive cases of novel Corona virus on Wednesday, 8 cases were reported from Jammu Division and 9 from Kashmir Division.

DC Oversees Patient Care Facilities At B&J Hospital

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad AijazAsad Wednesday visited Bone & Joint Hospital Barzulla to oversee the patient care facilities in the hospital after resumption of IPD, OPD and emergency surgeries in the premier orthopedic hospital, post the fire incident on March 04.

During the visit, the DC inspected various units of the hospital including Emergency, OPD, diagnostic centers, laboratories and other vital units and took stock of their functioning.

Later, the DC held a meeting with hospital authorities to resolve multiple departmental issues.

While inspecting the removal work of muck and de-

bris from the damaged building, the DC directed the R&B Department to speed up the pace of work and ensure all rubble and muck is removed from the top floor of the damaged building at fast pace so that patient, attendants and hospital staff do not face any inconvenience.

The DC directed all the line Departments including PHE, PDD, R&B and SMC to extend their full cooperation to the Hospital Administration. Besides, in wake of reports about theft attempts of hospital material (scrap/debris of fire incident), the concerned SHO was asked to intensify patrolling around the hospital particularly during night hours to safeguard public property.

Earlier, the DC visited the construction site of an

additional block of Lal Ded (LD) Maternity Hospital being constructed at a cost of Rs 145 crore. The DC inspected the pace and progress of the project.

The General Manager JK-PCC briefed the DC about the physical status of work. It was informed that water sump tank and earth work of the main building has been completed and binding of steel is in progress for raft foundation.

The DC stressed on concerned officers to speed up the construction work and complete the project in a time bound manner.

During the visit, the DC was accompanied by the Chief Planning Officer, Srinagar, Medical Superintendents of Bone & Joint and Lal Ded Hospital and other senior officers.

Handicrafts Department To Provide Impetus To Copper Craft

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Copper Workers Trade Union today called on the Director Handicrafts & Handloom Kashmir, Mahmood Ahmad Shah and put forth their grievances regarding the ban on the machine made copperware.

To promote the genuine handicrafts in general and Copperware in particular, the Director apprised the representatives about the activities of the department on all horizons to promote the authentic handmade copperware. He assured that the task of identifying fraudulent artisans and manufacturers of the copperware by the Quality Control Division shall be taken up on priority.

On prompt directions the machine made copper items were seized by the quality control wing from different areas of the Srinagar city.

Shah reiterated that the department is initiating the hologram labeling mechanism on

handmade copperware items which shall certify the genuine copperware.

Meanwhile, on the spot directions were passed to the officers of the department to facilitate mass registrations of the artisans in the craft concentrated areas. The active artisans shall be supported to form the cooperatives so that they can harness the benefit from the departmental schemes.

The Director briefed the participants that the department is actively following the Geographical Identification (GI) certification of the craft on a war footing basis for the left out crafts of Kashmir. The GI certified crafts have made the crafts more interconnected than ever before and has led to improved product selection and awareness of genuine crafts.

In the meeting, it was also explored that the Department is actively engaged in the procedures to bring the handmade copperware craft along with other crafts in the ambient of GI Act.

Red Cross Kashmir Organizes Blood Donation Camp

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Regional Red Cross Branch of Kashmir today organized a Mega Blood Donation camp in collaboration with Lal Ded Hospital and 'Madad' Foundation at Lasjan, here.

This is for the second time that the mega blood donation camp was held here in which over a hundred blood points were donated by the volunteers of the local area of Lasjan.

The organizers informed that previous year blood donation camp was organised on the same day during which 102 blood points were donated and added that today the target was higher and 120 points were collected.

The volunteers on the occasion told Red Cross officials that they would be ready to donate blood whenever contacted in future.

The camp displayed the message, 'To Humanity through peace, donate blood to serve humanity' to woo participants.

Speaking on the occasion, the senior officer of Red Cross appreciated volunteers for the noble act and underlined that it helps to save precious lives in emergency cases and normal occasions.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Directorate of food, civil supplies & consumer affairs Kashmir

Sub: Appointment o candidates as depot assistant in Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department Kashmir under Hon'ble Prime Minister's special package for Kashmir Migrants and Non-Migrants Kashmiri Pandits

Ref:

1. Administrative department's letter No FCS&CA/Estt/69/2019 DATED 15-10-2021

2. Sr. Superintendent of Police (Hqrs) CIB J&K

3. Sr. Superintendent of police (Hqrs) CID J&K Letter No CIB/VB/2022 /Final/83017-55/DA Dated 24-02-2022

4. Sr. Superintendent of police (Hqrs) CIB J&K Letter no CID/VB/2022/Final/83001-17/DA Dated 24-02-2022

Order No: 309 DFCS&CAK OF 2022

Dated 15-03-2022

Consequent upon the recommendations made by) J&K Service Selection Board communicated vide their letter No. SSB/Secy/Sel/2021/704 6-53 dated 14.10.202) read will, Administrative Department's letter referred to above and subsequent receipt tif satisfactory Character/ Antecedents verification report from Criminal Investigation Department J&K vide letters referred to above, sanction is hereby accorded to the temporary appointment of four ((U) candidates as detailed in the Annexure to this order as Depot Assistants (Class-IV) carrying substantive pay level of Rs.14800-47100 (SL-I) under Hon'ble Prime Minister's Special Package for Kashmiri Migrants and Non-Migrant Kashmiri Pandits.

The appointment of the appointees shall be subject to the following conditions:-a. That the emoluments of the appointee shall be governed under S.O 194 dated 17.06.2020 as evtended vide government order No. 586 JK GAD of 2021 dated 17.07.2021. b. That the appointee shall give an undertaking in the shape of an affidavit to the effect that if on verification, genuineness of the qualification, migrant, domicile and category (if any) certificates from the concerned issuing authority are found fake/ forged, the claim of the appointee for appointment shall be deemed to have been cancelled abi-initio.

c. The salary of the appointee shall be drawn and disbursed by the concerned Drawing and Disbursing after receipt of satisfactory report in respect of documents as- mentioned at (b).

d. The appointment of the said candidates shall he governed by the Jammu & Kashmir Probationer (Condition of service. Pay and Allowances) and fixation of Tenure Rules 2020 notified vide SO. 192 of 2021) dated 17.06.2020.

e. The Interse-seniority of the appointees shall be as per the order as it exist in the select list as communicated by) J&K Service Selection Board

f. The appointment and other terms and conditions shall be governed by SRO 412 OF 2009 DATED 30-12-2009 issued BY Revenue Department,

g. The appointment of the candidate shall be governed by the "New Pension Scheme" notified vide SRO-100 of2009 dated 24-12-2009

h. The appointment is subject lo the outcome of any writ petitions (s), if any, pending before any court of competent Jurisdiction.

the appointees shall report to the concerned Assistant Directors - Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Kashmir as shown against each and shall be allowed to join only on production of the following documents/ certificates (in original) wherever applicable to be verified subsequently:-

1. Academic Qualification certificate(s),

2 Date of Birth Certificate,

3. Domicile Certificate.

A. Health Certificate from the concerned Chief Medical Officer

5. No loan certificate under Self Employment Scheme from DIC concerned and Employment Department

6. Migrant certificate

7. Non-Migrant Certificate (For Non-Migrant Kashmiri Pandits) from concerned Revenue authority

8. Category certificate The appointee who fail to join within a period of 21 (twenty one) days from the date of issuance of this order, shall forfeit his/her riyht and his/her appointment shall be deemed to have been cancelled abi-initio without any further notice as per Circular No 08-JK(GAD) of 2019 dated 04-12-2019 issued by General Administration Department

No: DFCS&CAK/Adm/B-X-25/PMP

Dated 15-03-2022

DIPK-19627/21

(Dr Abdul Salam Mir) KAS

Director, Food, Civil Supplies & CA Deptt Kashmir

Annexure to order no 309 – DFCS&CAK Of 2022 dated 15-03-2022

S. No	Name of the Candidate	Parantage	Address	Category	Shall report to
1	Asmat Bilal	Altat Hussain	Mohalla Trajan Anantnag	ST	Assistant Director Anantnag
2	Shazia Parveen	Intikhab Ali	Mohalla Trajan nderwan Anantnag	ST	Assistant Director Anantnag
3	Akshay Sehgal	Vijay Sehgal	Kagan Ganderbal	OM	Assistant Director Anantnag
4	Sanjay Kumar Koul	Jawahar Lal Koul	Murran Pulwama	EWS	Assistant Director Anantnag

DIAL-EMMA

HELP

TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686

PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883

PDD: 0194-2450213

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155

CAPD: 18001807011

SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

Ambulance: Kashmer EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259

ANANTNAG: 01932-228243

BARAMULLA: 0194-102029

BIJHERA: 01932-228243

PAMPORE: 01933-294132

PATTAN: 01954-293507

QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)

Mughal Road - (Open)

Srinagar- Leh- (Closed)

HIJRI

CALENDAR

13 Shaban

1443

PRAYERS

FAJR

5: 17

ZUHR

12:40

ASR

4:58

Magrib

6:43

ISHA

8: 03

This Day In History

- 1776 - British forces evacuate Boston to Nova Scotia during Revolutionary War
- 1861 - Italy is unified into a single kingdom under Victor Emmanuel II following the campaigns led by Giuseppe Garibaldi.
- 1894 - US & China sign treaty preventing Chinese laborers from entering US
- 1905 - Albert Einstein finishes his scientific paper detailing his Quantum Theory of Light, one of the foundations of modern physics
- 1921 - Lenin proclaims New Economic Politics
- 1924 - Netherlands & USSR begin talks over USSR recognition
- 1924 - Sweden & USSR exchange diplomats
- 1926 - Spain & Brazil prevent Germany joining League of Nations
- 1927 - US government doesn't sign League of Nations disarmament treaty
- 1932 - German police raid Adolf Hitler's Nazi headquarters
- 1934 - Dollfuss, Mussolini & Gornbos sign Donau Pact (protocols of Rome)
- 1938 - The Italian Air Force, in support of Francisco Franco, bombs Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War
- 1939 - Battle of Nanchang between the Kuomintang and the Japanese breaks out (Sino-Japanese War 1937-1945)
- 1943 - Physician Willem J Kolff performs the world's first 'hemodialysis' using his artificial kidney machine, however the treatment is unsuccessful and the patient dies, in the Netherlands
- 1945 - Allied ships bomb North-Sumatra
- 1955 - After Maurice Richard is suspended for the remainder of the season, riots break out in Montreal. 37 people are injured and over 100 are arrested. The following morning, Richard goes on the radio to ask citizens to stop vandalizing
- 1957 - Presidential plane crashes on Mt. Manunggal in Cebu, Philippines killing 25 including Filipino President Ramon Magsaysay
- 1958 - US Navy launches Vanguard 1 into orbit (2nd US), measures Earth shape
- 1959 - Australia & USSR restore diplomatic relations
- 1961 - South Africa leaves British Commonwealth
- 1963 - Eruptions of Mount Agung on Bali, kills 1,900 Balinese
- 1987 - Sunil Gavaskar ends his Test career with an innings of 96 v Pak
- 1988 - Iran says Iraq uses poison gas
- 1992 - 28 killed in truck bombing of Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, Arg
- 1992 - Islamic Jihad truck bombs Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires killing 29
- 1992 - Russian manned space craft TM-14, launches into orbit
- 1993 - 86 killed by bomb attack in Calcutta
- 1994 - Iran transport aircraft crashes in Azerbaijan (32 killed)
- 1996 - Sri Lanka beat Australia by 7 wickets to win the World Cup
- 2000 - The 800+ deaths of members of the Ugandan cult Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God is considered to be a mass murder and suicide orchestrated by leaders of the cult
- 2001 - OPEC decides to cut output by 4% or 1 million barrels per day, effective April 1
- 2003 - British Cabinet Minister Robin Cook, resigns over government plans for the war with Iraq.
- 2004 - Unrest in Kosovo results in more than 22 killed, 200 wounded, and the destruction of 35 Serb Orthodox shrines in Kosovo and two mosques in Belgrade and Nis.
- 2013 - 10 people are killed by a car bombing in Basra, Iraq
- 2014 - The Republic of Crimea is declared
- 2016 - Archaeologists announce discovery of iron age warrior king burial ground with 75 graves 2,500 years old in Pocklington, Northern England

From KO Archives

Lone Refuses To Furnish Bail Bond

Observer News Service

Srinagar- Hurriyat Conference has expressed its deep concern over the failing health of one of its senior leaders, Abdul Ghani Lone, who is under detention from over two months now.

Lone, suffering from many ailments, including that of heart and chest, has been admitted to SMHS hospital. However, reports said that Lone has not been showing any progress.

Lone, it may be mentioned, has refused to furnish a bail bond for his release and he is insisting that he should be released

(Kashmir Observer, 17 March, 1998)

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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K O V I E W

Living with Covid

Just as we were thinking that Covid-19 pandemic is on its way out, its resurgence in China and Hong Kong has taken the world by surprise. Nearly 30 million people have been put under lockdown across China, as surging virus cases prompted the return of mass tests and health officials to city streets on a scale not seen since the start of the pandemic.

China reported 5,280 new Covid-19 cases on Tuesday, more than double the previous day's tally, as the highly transmissible Omicron variant spreads across a country that has, so far, stuck to a "zero-Covid" strategy. But this time China is finding itself struggling to reign in the new outbreak. Although Omicron has turned out to be milder than the Delta variant, it is several times more transmissible. So, its outbreak is difficult to control immediately. At the same time, the spread of Omicron infections doesn't take a toll on the healthcare infrastructure as hospitalizations are fewer and far between. But not necessarily so.

Hong Kong has witnessed a sudden steep spike in cases since December despite being the country least affected by the pandemic over the last two years. Officially, there have been more than 740,000 cases since late December, out of a population of 7.4 million. But researchers at the University of Hong Kong have estimated that 3.6 million people - almost half the population - have contracted the virus. The country has also recorded 4000 deaths, mostly among the elderly, which is the world's highest per capita rate. Similar outbreaks but on a smaller scale have been reported in places like Singapore and New Zealand, which effectively means that the Covid-19 pandemic is not going anywhere.

This brings us to the question of the future of the Covid-19 virus. Over the last two years, the world has been through several successive waves of the pandemic which have infected millions and claimed hundreds of thousands of lives. With the abating of the Omicron wave in India which broke out early this year, there was now a sense of relief across the world. The economies are re-opening. There is a realization that the worst is over and the pandemic is gradually on its way out.

But it is really so, going by the fresh outbreaks in China, Hong Kong, Singapore and New Zealand? Not necessarily. The virus is still potent enough to cause widespread havoc. As of now, it is difficult to imagine what future shape the virus will take. Whether herd immunity will save us? Whether the virus will become endemic in some milder form like our everyday cold. Or whether deadlier variants of the virus are on their way. The current situation in China and Hong Kong gives little cause for confidence. For now, there is no other way to safeguard ourselves but to continue to follow the Standard Operating Procedures.

OTHER OPINION

Growing price pressures: On need to tame inflation

Inflation in India continues on a worrying uptrend with the consumer price index-based reading accelerating to an eight-month high of 6.07% last month, while wholesale prices logged a double-digit increase for the eleventh straight month. February's headline WPI inflation spurted to 13.11%. Retail inflation remained stuck above the RBI's upper tolerance threshold of 6% for the second month, as food price inflation quickened to 5.85%. Households in the hinterland bore a bigger brunt of the burden as price gains measured by the consumer food price index for rural areas surged by 69 basis points from January's level, to 5.87%. Price gains in the key protein source of meat and fish jumped by almost 200 basis points from the preceding month to 7.45%, while nutrient-rich vegetables also logged inflation of 6.13% in February, belying the central bank's prognostication last month of an "expected easing of vegetable prices on fresh winter crop arrivals". And even though inflation in oils and fats eased by more than 220 basis points to 16.44%, there is little room for cheer, given that one can expect a spike again this month in the wake of the abrupt disruption in the supply of edible oils from war-torn Ukraine, which is the largest source of sunflower oil imported into India. With price gains in clothing and footwear, fuel and light and transport and communication all running well above 8% levels, the overall trend in retail inflation is now clearly broad-based across consumption categories and disconcertingly way above tolerance levels.

Also, with the pump prices of fuels yet to reflect the recent upsurge in international oil prices in the wake of Russia's invasion of its southwestern neighbour, transport and communication inflation is certain to climb sharply once state-run refiners reset prices to reflect crude costs. The price of India's crude basket had already risen by over \$20 a barrel since December to \$94.07 last month and with global crude prices currently in uncharted territory on account of the war, and the rupee having weakened by about 2.5% against the dollar since the start of the conflict, it is hard to see any near-term relief on the fuel price front. A glance at last month's producer prices of the energy basket shows inflation in the fuel and power category of the wholesale price index was at 31.5%. And in a sign that manufacturers are no longer able to keep absorbing cost pressures, inflation in manufactured products accelerated to 9.84% presaging more pain for consumers. RBI Deputy Governor Michael D. Patra had last week cited the headroom available for the Government to cut taxes on fuels as a source of comfort on the inflation front. With the RBI's latest consumer confidence survey showing most households reporting further increases in overall spending on essentials and remaining far from sanguine on the prices outlook, policymakers need to act expeditiously to tame inflation or risk it undermining the very growth they are currently focused on supporting.

The Hindu

Between Guns and Roses

J&K's Film Policy and Bollywood's Depiction Of Kashmir

Amir Suhail Wani

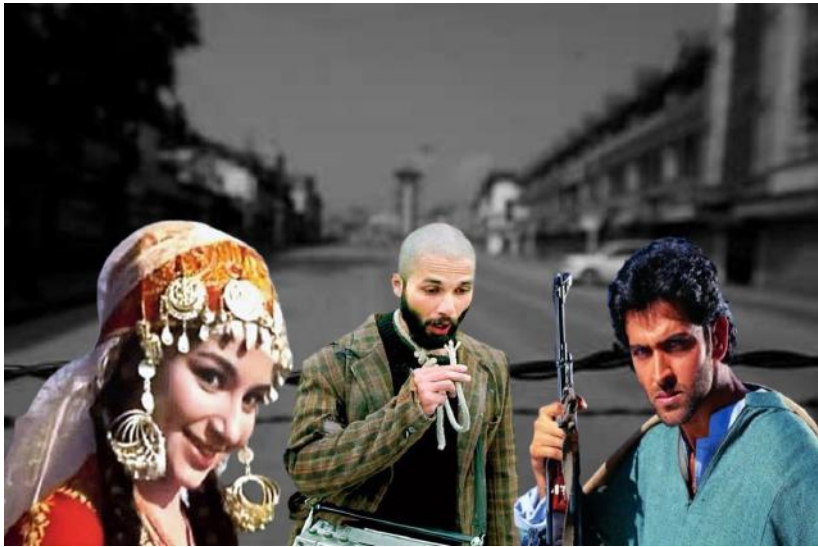
Bollywood rekindles romance with J&K as filmmakers find picture-perfect", read a news report that appeared just a day ago. The chartering of J&K Film Policy 2021, the active intervention, advocacy and appraisal of the honourable governor, pitching Kashmir as the finest destination of filmmakers and roping in bureaucrats, public figures and celebrities to promote Kashmir on the filmmaking map has resurged the interest of stakeholders. The unveiling of Kashmir Files, for better or worse, has reignited the perception of Kashmir and its influence of forthcoming movies on Kashmir shall be the object of interest for cinema lovers, film critics and commoners. But in the midst of all this, while Kashmir continues to serve as the canvas or colour of Bollywood, the question of characterization and portrayal of Kashmir in Bollywood, its people and issues topical to it deserve special revisit and reevaluation.

When Europeans landed in Asian and African countries, they started to reconceptualise the identity, ethos, values, modes of life and existence of the natives. They thought of native cultures as laboratories and juxtaposed the notions they had developed in their homeland. This enterprise was so demeaning and dehumanising that centuries after, the approach was bracketed within the hateful academic adventure of "Orientalism". The Europeans objectified the natives to the point of representatives of inhumanity, barbarism and backwardness. The approach has backfired though and an entire corpus of Oriental literature has come to be received with a pinch of salt and even the genuine and impartial works of Oriental scholars have come under scrutiny. Something similar is shaping the relationship between Bollywood and Kashmir and this calls for an immediate attention lest it translates itself into a snowball effect.

Described as the "Paradise on Earth", Kashmir has been for long a sought after and cherished shooting place for Bollywood players. The decades of 70s and 80s witnessed a boom in Bollywood's influx to Kashmir and films like Kabhi Kabhi, Noorie, Silsila and others, saw the light of the day and further augmented and strengthened the position of Kashmir on film shooting map.

However, the chain of events, as it unfolded in the 1990s, changed the situations in the valley and this led to abandoning of the valley by filmmakers. While Valley came to be vacated by filmmakers, it grabbed the ideas and ideology of Bollywood in other ways. The events unfolding in Valley started to be seen in the backdrop of narrative building and ideological warfare and removed from the paradigm of scenic beauty and filmmaking, the spot came to be seen as the space of violence, bloodletting and aggressive shooting. Let's try to understand how Bollywood has chronologically portrayed Kashmir and what are the cautions that need to be observed in this schema of portrayal.

The earliest engagement and representation of Kashmir in Bollywood movies revolved around the axes of Romanticism and heightened sense of its natural beauty. The key scenes



It is incumbent upon filmmakers to represent their characters with neutrality and without framing them in any value-judgement framework. More important is to shun away the exotic representation and presaged portrayal of people to avoid any misadventures arising from these characterizations

featured lush green rolling hills and verdant meadows, gently flowing streams, snow-capped mountains and nature in all its splendour. The vale was portrayed as a wonderland, far removed from the tensions and turmoil that characterized the rest of India in particular and World in general around these times.

This, in a way, represented the collective subconscious to escape the tragedies that characterised everyday life in search of tranquillity, ecstasy and Utopian ideals of Joy and merrymaking. Prateek Sur, in his article, characterizes this era by saying that "The location was so much in demand that, at a time, there were at least six-seven shoots happening in Kashmir. The number went up more so during the winters when all the locales used to get covered in snow. There was a colloquial saying from that period which stated that the entire film industry used to be chilling together in Kashmir during the winters".

There were both visible and hidden agendas playing behind this emphasis on the scenic and serene aspect of Kashmir and it was driven by the multiple engines of narrative building, economic considerations and political contestations. The grim and gore aspects of abject poverty, underlying political instability and regional uncertainty were brushed under the carpet in these movies. But this representation, characterizing valley by serenity and calm was to change soon and forever and the cascade of events erupting in 90s, suddenly gave way to the portrayal of Kashmir in Bollywood movies that radically differed from the prevalent characterisation.

The first prominent change was that the Valley ceased to be a scenic background and the canvas on which were projected the outside incidents. The incidents, political events in particular, began to occupy the central stage in Bollywood cinematics and the gentle happy-go-lucky attitude of the Kashmiri locals gave way to characters who were shown as potential terrorists.

Very quickly the romance and love gave way to guns and danger.

"The shots of tribal women grazing sheep in the valley were soon changed to heavily armed forces", notes Prateek.

Representation of Kashmiris has thus oscillated from overly passive and generalized to overly aggressive, mirroring India's political discourse of the disputed valley as dangerous. Romance gave way to danger as guns replaced sheep and heavily armed forces replaced tribal women in a politicized narrative twist.

Kashmir's pure white snow now drips with blood. There has been a flurry of Bollywood films from the 1990s onwards keen to capitalize on Kashmir's violence. These films conflated Kashmiris with terrorism and positioned Islam as dangerous threat. Mission Kashmir (2000) offered a tragic revenge narrative where a young Kashmiri man was driven to violence, though the film shied away from depicting the horrors of state-sponsored violence. Also released in 2000 was Fiza, about a Kashmiri family living through the 1993 Mumbai riots where the son joins a terrorist organization.

Similarly, Fanaa (Destroyed in Love, 2006) features a Kashmiri terrorist who ultimately sacrifices his life for his cause. "Director Vishal Bhardwaj extends the trope of a tragic avenging young man in Haider (2014), his critically acclaimed adaptation of William Shakespeare's Hamlet. The film is set amidst Kashmir's insurgency in 1995 and features Shahid Kapoor as Haider, a young student and poet, searching for answers about his father's disappearance and haunted by years of violence between militants and the army. Neither side comes across well, with enforced disappearances and state-sponsored violence depicted in one of the most realistic interpretations of the violence seen on screen to date. Seemingly unable to move on from his haunted past, Haider loses himself to revenge and in the process advances the association of Kashmir as troubled, violent, and unable to escape from itself". Writes Alexander D. Bhattacharya. The later generation films have largely revolved around the conflict and

the issues arising there from. Raazi, a movie released in 2018, is a representative sample from this genre of films. These pictures have swung on the perennial theme of classifying the Muslim subjects of the state as the defining "Other" and an icon of political and security threat for the rest of the country.

Thus, we see the repetition of the archetype of violence, identified with the Muslim subjects of the state, as the dominant theme permeating the oeuvre of Bollywood industry post 90 incidents. The aesthetic objectification of valley during the first wave and the vulgar depiction of people as agents of violence and disorder and thwarting them against the rest of India has created a pandemonium of sorts by paving the way for misrepresentation and mischaracterization of Muslim subjects and by analogy, of the entire valley. This uncensored and uncorrected representation awakens us to the fallacies of film-makers and the first of which is the objectification of people. Films have bereft the native people of their inherent agency of action and have been assigned the character and agency suitable to the theatrics of Bollywood, no matter how anti-polar it stands to the reality. Another error on part of Bollywood has been to posit the natives as ever-serving "Political Other" and what Rene Girard defines as the "Scapegoat of violence". This has significantly defined the attitude and behaviours of people from other cities towards the people from Kashmir and the repercussions thereof have been terrible.

Media can't speak too much of its impartiality and value neutrality. It has a definite, long lasting and sometimes most powerful impact on the psyche of viewers. It thus needs to be careful in its portrayal and representations. This public image and influence of media, and Bollywood in this case, demands high standards of accuracy - historical, political and ideological on part of producers and other men at the helm of affairs. This sense of responsibility demands higher attention when it comes to Kashmir - the place which has already been subject to contestations and negative portrayals. Referring to and benefitting from authentic historical sources, eye-witnesses and authorities - across the religious and ideological divide shall be the task of premier importance in any adventure that aspires to the representation of Kashmir. It is incumbent upon filmmakers to represent their characters with neutrality and without framing them in any value-judgement framework. More important is to shun away the exotic representation and presaged portrayal of people to avoid any misadventures arising from these characterizations. Lest Bollywood wakes itself to these responsibilities, there is an imminent danger of Bollywood seeing itself characterised as propaganda engine and hate mongering industry with reference to Kashmir.

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

The author is a columnist based in Srinagar



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

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Facilitate Drug De-Addiction

A recent study conducted by Srinagar based Institute of Mental Health and Neuroscience (IMHANS) in a Drug De-addiction centre in Srinagar, found that over two-third of patients in the study had started substance abuse in the age group of 11-20 years. The most common substances of abuse identified included nicotine (94.4%), medicinal opioids (65.7%), cannabis (63.6%), benzodiazepines (45.5%), other prescription medications (43.4%), alcohol (32.5%), inhalants (11.1%), and cocaine (7.5%). The study revealed that poly-substance abuse was found in 91.9% of the studied patients. Inhalant use was seen predominantly among adolescents (54.5%) whereas nicotine (50.2%), cannabis (49.2%), alcohol (51.1%), opioids (58.4%), and benzodiazepines (53.48%) were more predominant in the age group of 21 to 30 years. According to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Social Justice and

Empowerment (MoSJE) in February 2019, 600,000 people, i.e. 4.6 percent of the total population of Jammu and Kashmir use opioid drugs, 80 percent of the drug addicts in Kashmir use heroin and morphine.

The problem of drug abuse not only affects the physical, mental and social health of the individuals but it disturbs and burdens the whole family. It also gives great threat to family happiness and creates individual, family, economic and social disorganization.

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The Kashmir disputes such as political turmoil, armed conflict, Militancy, violence, terrorism, psychological distress, unfavorable environmental conditions and rapid socio-economic problems like poor industrial and infrastructural development, mass unemployment, corruption, poverty, underdevelopment etc. have leading a rising number of drug addicts in Kashmiri society.

The use of tobacco, charas, Ganga, cocaine, heroin, opiates cannabis, alcohol and inhalant substances etc. has been growing rapidly among the adolescents in Kashmir. The use of these illicit drugs posing a big threat to humanity, by deteriorating adolescents mentally and physically, damaging family relations, spoiling potentiality, dreams, degrading the social and moral values and becoming a hindrance in shaping their career as well as progress and development of the societies

The measures of drug abuse are critical, because drug use, at its core, is a health issue. Unless we reduce demand for illicit drugs, we can never fully tackle cultivation, production or trafficking. Governments have a responsibility to counteract both drug trafficking and drug abuse, but communities can also make a major contribution. Families, schools, civil society and religious organizations can do their part to rid their commu-

nities of drugs. Businesses can help provide legitimate livelihoods. The media can raise awareness about the dangers of narcotics. We can succeed if we reinforce our commitment to the basic principles of health and human rights, shared responsibility, a balanced approach to reducing supply and demand, and universal access to prevention, treatment and support. This will foster communities free of drug-related crime and violence, individuals free of drug dependence who can contribute to our common future and a safer world for all.

It is high time to save our generation from drug abuse and If we do not take concrete steps now, then after some years, the young generation of Kashmir will be destroyed. Police taking action against drug abuse is not enough. We as a society have to act responsibly.

M Ahmad
abhomet78@gmail.com

The future of work is hybrid – here’s an expert’s recommendations

COVID-19 has changed the way we work.

Alanah Mitchell

Even before the pandemic, the U.S. workforce increasingly relied on remote collaboration technologies like videoconferencing and Slack. The global crisis accelerated the adoption of these work tools and practices in an unprecedented way. By April 2020, about half of companies reported that more than 80% of their employees worked from home because of COVID-19.

That shift was made possible by decades of research into, and then development of, technologies that support remote work, but not everyone uses these technologies with the same ease. As early as 1987, groundbreaking research identified some of the challenges facing women working from home using technology. That included the difficulties of child care, work-home separation and employee growth opportunities.

Since that time, we have learned much more about virtual collaboration. As an associate professor of information systems, I’m interested in what we can expect as we eagerly anticipate a post-pandemic future. One thing stands out: Hybrid work arrangements – that is, employees who do some tasks in the office and others virtually – is clearly going to be a big part of the picture.

One survey from April 2021 shows 99% of human resources

leaders expect employees to work in some kind of hybrid arrangement moving forward. Many have already begun. As just one example, Dropbox, the file hosting service, made a permanent shift during the pandemic, allowing employees to work from home and hold team meetings in the office.

The definition of “hybrid” varies in other organizations. Some workers might be in the office a couple days a week or every other day. Other businesses may require only occasional face-to-face time, perhaps meeting in a centralized location once each quarter.

Either way, research does show many companies fail in their implementation of a virtual workforce.

REMOTE WORK VERSUS IN THE OFFICE

In-office work promotes structure and transparency, which may increase trust between management and workers. Developing an organizational culture happens naturally. Casual office conversations – a worker walking down the hall for a quick and unscheduled chat with a colleague, for instance – can lead to knowledge-sharing and collaborative problem-solving. That’s difficult to replicate in a virtual environment, which often relies on advance scheduling for online meetings – although that’s still feasible with



It’s true that hybrid work faces many of the same obstacles of face-to-face work. Poor planning and communication, ineffective or unnecessary meetings and confusion about task responsibilities happen

enough planning and communication.

But if you look at different metrics, in-office work loses out to working from home. My recent research discovered remote workers report more productivity and enjoy working from home because of the flexibility, the ability to wear casual clothes, and the shortened or nonexistent commute time. Re-

mote work also saves money. There is a significant cost savings for office space, one of the largest budget line items for organizations.

Hybrid arrangements attempt to combine the best of both worlds.

IT’S NOT PERFECT

It’s true that hybrid work faces many of the same ob-

stacles of face-to-face work. Poor planning and communication, ineffective or unnecessary meetings and confusion about task responsibilities happen remotely as well as in-person.

Perhaps the largest issue when working at home: technology and security concerns. Home networks, an easier target for cyberthreats, are typically more vulnerable than of-

fice networks. Remote workers are also more likely to share computers with someone else outside of their organization. Hybrid organizations must invest upfront to work through these complicated and often expensive issues.

With hybrid work, managers cannot see the work taking place. That means they must measure employee performance based on outcomes with clear performance metrics rather than the traditional focus on employee behavior.

Another potential pitfall: Fault lines can develop within hybrid teams – that is, misunderstandings or miscommunication between those in the office and those at home. These two groups may start to divide, potentially leading to tension and conflicts between them – an us-versus-them scenario.

ESTABLISHING A HYBRID ENVIRONMENT

Numerous recommendations exist on the best way to develop a hybrid model. Here are a few of the best ideas.

Meeting too often or with little purpose – that is, meeting for the sake of meeting – leads to fatigue and burnout. Not everyone needs to be at every meeting, yet finesse from management is required to make sure no one feels left out. And meeting-free days can help with productivity and allow employees a block of uninter-

rupted time to focus on complex projects.

Listening to employees is critical to making sure the hybrid environment is working. Continually seeking feedback, through one-on-one conversations, focus groups or human resources surveys, is important too. So is recognizing and rewarding employees with in-person or virtual kudos for their achievements. Performance incentives, such as financial rewards or tokens of appreciation including food delivery, help develop a supportive culture that increases employee commitment.

Finally: Both managers and employees must be transparent in their communication and understanding of hybrid plans. Policies must be in place to define what tasks happen in the office and remotely. Access to reliable communications is essential, particularly for remote work. All employees must receive the same information at the same time, and in a timely manner. After all, whether in the office or online, workers don’t want to feel they’re the last to know.

The author is Associate Professor and Chair of Information Management and Business Analytics, Drake University. The article is being reproduced by arrangements with The Conversation

What Is An Nft And How Does It Work? The ‘Bitcoin For Art’ Explained

Digital images are being sold for thousands of dollars, but critics point to the harm it does to the environment

Adam Smith

Melania Trump, Grimes, Beeple, Logan Paul, the creator of Nyan Cat, and many other artists and celebrities are making huge amounts of money selling the ownership of digital images.

Chris Torres, the artist who first created Nyan Cat, recently ‘minted’ a new GIF of the famous internet meme which sold for over \$470,000 worth of the Ethereum cryptocurrency in February 2020.

Mrs Trump put a “breathtaking watercolor art” for auction entitled “Melania’s Vision”. Priced at \$186, the image is a close-up of the former First Lady’s eyes. It also includes an audio recording of Trump, and a portion of the proceeds will go to “assist children aging out of the foster care system”.

Grimes sold 10 images of digital artwork, the most expensive for nearly \$400,000, to someone who wanted ownership of the online goods.

These artworks are called NFTs, or “non-fungible tokens”, and they exist on a similar blockchain technology to bitcoin as a way to prove “ownership” of them.

On an internet built on spreading images for free over social media platforms, the idea of tying ownership to a specific, single image that one did not create is peculiar – but it is not new.

The idea has exploded into popularity recently based on the rise of cryptocurrency technologies, and the desire for digital artists to have greater ownership – and monetisation options – over their craft.

WHAT IS AN “NON-FUNGIBLE TOKEN”?

A non-fungible token (NFT) means a digital item that belongs to the person that purchased it. In economics, fungibility is the property of a good being interchangeable, or replicable. For example, if you shared a photo from your phone to another person over a text message, the data and image would be replicated.

The NFT does not stop that replication – you could still take a screenshot of a digital artwork, or share a Nyan Cat GIF – but it does show who ‘owns’ an original image – in the same way your passport image also contains your name, age, and an identification number. Simply owning an image of your passport does not make that person you, and the principle applies here for NFTs.

While NFTs exist on a blockchain, like the cryptocurrencies used to buy them, there are a number of other differences: NFTs are indestructible on the blockchain, cannot be divided, and can always be traced back to the original creator.



For some artists, NFTs are a way to make money from digital art. Royalties can be built into the artwork directly, so that each time the artwork is sold the creator receives a cut. For potential meme dealers who want to make money out of the images they create, this can be an attractive prospect

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF NFTS?

The CryptoKitties game, where players traded digital kittens on the Ethereum blockchain, was very popular in 2017. Different cats – or images of cats – had different ‘characteristics’ and users swapped them to collect varieties of different digital animals.

Auction house Christie’s recently conducted its first ever digital art auction with work from Mike Winkelmann, aka Beeple, in a collection called Everydays: The First 5000 Days, which sold for \$69 million (£49.4 million).

CryptoPunks, where algorithmically-generated characters can be purchased

through auction, are also swapped and traded like a more expensive version of Pokémon or trading cards. In the last year, over 6,000 of these characters have been traded for an average price of \$16,000 each.

WHY ARE PEOPLE DOING THIS?

For some artists, NFTs are a way to make money from digital art. Royalties can be built into the artwork directly, so that each time the artwork is sold the creator receives a cut. For potential meme dealers who want to make money out of the images they create, this can be an attractive prospect.

“It gives power to the creator,” Chris Tor-

res, the creator of Nyan Cat, has said. “The creator originally owns it, and then they can sell it and directly monetize and have recognition for their work.”

This is often a criticism that online artists have lamented, with high-profile accounts sharing their creations without payment or attribution on an internet where authorship is not prioritized.

Depending on how easy, or difficult, it is to create artwork, it can also be a fast way for celebrities to make money. Grimes sold \$6 million worth of digital artworks in under 20 minutes.

These artworks have such a high value for the same reason physical art has a high

value – the scarce nature of NFTs, and the thick wallets of people with enough cryptocurrency to purchase them.

Moreover the volatility of the market, where NFTs can surge and drop very rapidly, means that only people with enough disposable income to be protected from a bad investment. This, once again, puts it in favour of the rich.

WHAT ARE THE DRAWBACKS?

The obvious drawback is that, unlike a one-of-a-kind painting or a sculpture, ownership of a digital artwork does not stop anyone else from also ‘owning’ it. You can download the content from Grimes’ Twitter page and ‘own’ it, in that you have a copy that you can distribute.

“I don’t find NFTs enticing as a platform for releasing art on,” v buckenham, a London-based digital artist, told The Guardian.

“The point of owning a piece of art is to look at it and enjoy it – and buying an NFT doesn’t do anything to help you do that. An NFT is just an entry in a fancy database somewhere asserting that you ‘own’ the artwork. The only thing it’s good for is allowing you to sell on that database entry to someone else later on.”

There’s also the environment, which cryptocurrency technology is currently at odds with. It is estimated that the energy used to mine bitcoin is more than that used by entire countries. In a year, bitcoin uses the same amount of electricity as Norway, or nearly three times as much as Apple, Amazon, Facebook, Microsoft, and Google combined.

“The Crypto infrastructure relies mostly on fossil fuels (64 per cent of the world’s electricity: coal 38 per cent, oil and gas 26 per cent). The CO2 emissions, combined with a steady growth of consumption is pushing us towards a climate apocalypse”, French artist Joanie Lemerrier points out in a blog post explaining the reasons they cancelled their crypto-art release.

Defenders will say that a lot of bitcoin’s energy use comes from renewable energy, as well as the fact that bitcoin is finite and cannot be mined forever, but the final bitcoin is unlikely to be mined until around the year 2140.

The race is therefore set between whether the bitcoin network can adapt to environmental concerns before the consequences of climate change – malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea, and heat stress – fully become reality.

The article was originally published by The Independent

HC Allows Reopening Of Nizamuddin Markaz During Shab-e-Barat

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court Wednesday allowed reopening of three floors of Nizamuddin Markaz, where the Tablighi Jamaat congregation was held in March 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic and has remained shut since then, to enable devotees to offer prayers during Shab-e-Barat.

Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri removed the restriction of putting a limit of 100 people at one floor and said it has been agreed that the management of the mosque will ensure that COVID-19 protocols and social distancing will be followed while allowing devotees to enter the mosque to offer namaz.

While Delhi Police had imposed various conditions to be followed during the reopening of markaz on the occasion of Shab-e-barat, several of them were modified during the court hearing with mutual agreement between the police, Delhi Waqf Board and the management committee of the mosque.

The court noted that the ground floor and three other floors of the mosque building will be opened at 12 PM one day prior to Shab-e-Barat, which is on March 18, and will be closed the next day at 4PM.

The court, which was hearing an application by the Delhi Waqf Board seeking to open the mosque in view of Shab-e-Barat

and Ramzan in March and April, listed the matter for March 31 to decide on the issue of reopening the mosque during Ramzan which will begin from April 2.

Regarding the condition imposed by the police that foreign citizens and OCI card holders will not be allowed inside the markaz premises and if some devotee of foreign origin or OCI card holder intends to offer namaz at Masjid Bangley Wali, his identity details along with ID proof will be taken by the management and submitted to the SHO, the management said it a notice will put on the display board at the entry gate specifying this restriction.

While the police, through advocate Rajat Nair, initially said no tablighi activities will be

permitted during the reopening period, it was later agreed between the parties that opening of the mosque will be restricted only for offering prayers.

The court was informed that CCTV cameras have already been installed at the entry and exit points of the premises and the management will ensure that there will be screening of devotees with hand held thermal scanners at the entry point.

As senior advocates Sanjoy Ghose and Rebecca John, representing Delhi Waqf Board and the managing committee of the mosque respectively, initially submitted that the police letter was silent on the arrangement to made during Ramzan, Nair said

the modalities for that will be worked out after Shab-e-barat.

The high court had on March 14, asked the Delhi Waqf Board, represented through advocate Waqeeh Shafiq, to file an application before the SHO of Hazrat Nizamuddin Police Station seeking permission to open the other three floors of Nizamuddin Markaz to enable devotees to offer prayers during Shab-e-Barat and Ramzan.

The counsel for the police had earlier said he has no objection in allowing 50 persons to offer prayers at the mosque's first floor but the opening of the entire mosque cannot be permitted.

He had referred to the high court's April 15, 2021 order by which it had permitted 50 persons to perform

the Namaz five times at Masjid Bangley Wali on the first floor.

The Centre, in its recent affidavit, has opposed fully re-opening the Nizamuddin Markaz and stated that a few people may be allowed to offer prayers on the upcoming religious occasions.

The counsel for the Delhi Waqf Board had earlier said that the mosque, which is under the lock of Delhi Police, should be opened as the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) has now lifted all restrictions that were imposed on account of the pandemic.

Several FIRs were registered under the Epidemic Diseases Act, the Disaster Management Act, the Foreigners Act and various provisions of the penal code in

connection with the Tablighi Jamaat event held at the Nizamuddin Markaz and the subsequent stay of foreigners there during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020.

In its application, the Board has said that last year during these two occasions -- Shab-e-Barat and Ramzan, the high court had permitted prayers in the mosque.

It has said the current strain of COVID-19, Omicron, was not as severe and fatal as the Delta variant and as the conditions have improved, physical hearings of all courts have resumed, schools, clubs, bars, and markets have also reopened, therefore, there is no impediment to direct reopening of this waqf property.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

3 Militants Killed

involved in "several terror crime cases including attack on Police/SF and civilian atrocities".

The spokesperson also quoted IGP Kashmir, Vijay Kumar as saying that the three killed militants were not only involved in the recent killing of Sarpanch Sameer Ahmad Bhat at Khanmoh here but were also planning to attack government forces on the highway.

Teli, he said, along with his associates was also involved in killing of Inspector Pervaiz Ahmad Dar at Nowgam on June 22 last year, and killing of Javid Ahmed Malik at Lurgam in Tral.

"Besides, he was also involved in grenade attack on joint party of Police & CRPF at Barbarshah Srinagar in which one civilian was killed and three civilians were injured," he added.

Similarly, the spokesperson said that Tantray and Wagay were also involved in several cases including killing of ASI Mohammad Ashraf near Police Station Bijbehara, Anantnag on December 22, last year.

"Incriminating materials, arms & ammunition including 01 AK rifle, 03 AK Magazines, 14 AK rounds, 02 Pistols, 04 Pistol Magazines, 06 Pistol rounds were recovered from the site of encounter. All the recovered materials have been taken into case records for further investigation," he said.

The spokesperson quoted IGP Kashmir terming the elimination of "wanted terrorists" as a big success and congratulated the joint forces for conducting successful anti-militancy operation without any collateral damage.

"In this regard, a case under relevant sections of law has been registered and investigation has been initiated. People are requested to cooperate with Police till the area at encounter site is completely sanitized and cleared of all the explosive materials, if any," he added.

Meanwhile, an army spokesperson said that a soldier was injured in the encounter that broke out around 2:05 in the morning.

The operation, he said, began at 1:00 am and concluded at 9:15 with the killing of three holed-up militants inside a residential house.

Gunfight Forces

apprehension of law and order problem, train services may be suspended from Banihal to Baramulla and vice versa." This is for the second time in the last four days train services were affected in the Valley due to gunfight.

On March 11 the authorities suspended services from Awantipora in Pulwama district to Anantnag amid the killing of two militants in Naina Batpora, the area in Pulwama district which falls in the vicinity of Parigam, one of the railway stations in south Kashmir.

Bhatnagar Named

Development Corporation Limited and Jammu and Kashmir Cements Limited (JKCL) besides Jammu and Kashmir Industries Limited (JKI).

CUK Functioning

an elaborate exercise which involves getting Executive Council's nomination, constitution of search-cum-selection committee, advertisement of posts, scrutiny of applications, interaction with the shortlisted candidates, and getting vigilance clearances and approval of the competent authority. Every step is monitored by the government," Sarkar said.

The minister shared that six vacant positions of VCs in central universities were filled in 2019-20 and 2020-21 each while 20 VCs were appointed in 2021-22.

SC To Hear

constitutionally permissible which the students cannot object to, the high court said. In one of the pleas filed in the top court, the petitioner said the high court has erred in creating a dichotomy of freedom of religion and freedom of conscience wherein the court has inferred that those who follow a religion cannot have the right to conscience.

The high court has failed to note that the right to wear a Hijab comes under the ambit of the right to privacy under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. It is submitted that the freedom of

conscience forms a part of the right to privacy, it said.

The plea said the petitioner had approached the high court seeking redressal for the alleged violation of their fundamental rights against the state government order of February 5, 2022 issued under Sections 7 and 133 of the Karnataka Education Act, 1983.

The impugned government order directed the college development committees all over the state of Karnataka to prescribe a student uniform that mandated the students to wear the official uniform and in absence of any designated uniform the students were mandated to wear a uniform that was in the essence of unity, equality and public order, it said.

The plea said the high court failed to note that the Karnataka Education Act, 1983 and the rules made thereunder do not provide for any mandatory uniform to be worn by students.

The plea claimed that the high court has failed to note that right to wear a Hijab is protected as a part of the right to conscience under Article 25 of the Constitution.

It said since the right to conscience is essentially an individual right, the Essential Religious Practices Test' ought not to have been applied by the high court in the case.

Assuming the Essential Religious Practices Test' does apply, the high court has failed to note that wearing of Hijab or headscarf is a practice that is essential to the practice of Islam, the petition said.

It claimed that the high court has failed to note that Indian legal system explicitly recognises the wearing/carrying of religious symbols.

The plea said Section 129 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, exempts turban wearing Sikhs from wearing a helmet and under the rules made by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Sikhs are allowed to carry kirpans onto aircraft.

This public order was passed with an indirect intent of attacking the religious minorities and specifically the followers of Islamic faith by ridiculing the female Muslim students wearing Hijab. This ridiculing attack was under the guise of attaining secularity and equality on the basis of uniform wherein the college development committees prohibited the students wearing Hijab from entering the premises of the educational institutions, it said.

This step-motherly behaviour of government authorities has prevented students from practising their faith which has resulted in an unwanted law and order situation, the plea said.

Meanwhile, a caveat has also been filed in the apex court by another person, who was a party before the high court, seeking to be heard before any order is passed in the matter.

The high court maintained that the government has power to issue impugned order dated February 5, 2022 and no case is made out for its invalidation.

By the said order, the Karnataka government had banned wearing clothes which disturb equality, integrity and public order in schools and colleges, which the Muslim girls had challenged in the high court.

Challenging the February 5 order of the government, the petitioners had argued before the high court that wearing the Islamic headscarf was an innocent practice of faith and an Essential Religious Practice (ERP), and not a mere display of religious jingoism.

The petitioners had also contended that the restriction violated the freedom of expression under Article 19(1) (A) and article 21 dealing with personal liberty.

Go First Resumes

On the return, Go First flight G8 4095 will operate from Sharjah International Airport at 12.5 am and arrive at Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi at 5.10 a, the spokesman said.

He said the airline will operate two flights a week between Srinagar and Sharjah.

The resumption of this sector is poised to boost trade and tourism between J-K and the UAE. The UAE and Srinagar are popular holiday destinations and Go First flights will usher convenient travel options, he said.

These services will also support

burgeoning trade and investment links between Srinagar and Sharjah, he added.

The airline was also the first to sign the agreement with LULU Group of Dubai for the cargo movement from Srinagar to Sharjah. With the extra focus on the Srinagar market, Go First has the vision to make Srinagar a mini-hub for international air travel and cargo, the spokesman said.

Speaking on the development, Kaushik Khona, Chief Executive Officer, Go First said the airline shares a special relation with the region and has had many firsts to its name in J-K.

"We are delighted to resume services between Srinagar and Sharjah, which could steer the economic growth of J-K. This connectivity will play a pivotal role in bilateral exchange trade and tourism between the two regions," he said.

Covid-19: Vaccination

drive was inaugurated by Additional Commissioner Kashmir, Abid Hussain at Govt Girls Higher Secondary School (GGHSS) Rajbagh in presence of Director Health Services Kashmir, Dr Mushtaq Ahmad Rather.

"It was informed that during the drive the population of 336758 children shall be covered across Kashmir Division at 105 planned Session Sites," he added.

According to the spokesperson, the Assistant Director, Family Welfare, Dr Masarat informed that they have a new vaccine "Corbevax" for the 12 to 14 age group to protect children from Covid-19 infection.

In Jammu division, he said, Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar launched the vaccination drive at Gandhi Nagar Hospital here.

Speaking after the launch of drive, he said, Bhatnagar highlighted that as the world was gripped by a deadly pandemic this year, vaccination day holds an important significance this year. Bhatnagar, he said, further added that Covid-19 has made everyone understand the importance of vaccines and their benefits in our lives.

"While highlighting about the significance this day, Advisor Bhatnagar said that this day is primarily celebrated with an aim to create awareness regarding effectiveness of vaccinations to prevent deadly diseases. He added that to dispel the myths regarding covid vaccine, this year's theme vaccination day "vaccine works for all" has been framed," the spokesperson said.

On the first day of this vaccination drive, more than 200 students were administered the Covid-19 vaccine.

Situation In J&K

and is providing its assistance to the local government. The situation has improved a lot and is improving further," Singh told reporters on the sidelines of the DG parade.

Eight contingents of CRPF troops representing different battalions presented a splendid parade, which was followed by enthralling demonstrations by CRPF sports team, the Mallakhamb team and motorcycle stunts by its women dare-devil teams.

"DG parade is like a full dress rehearsal of the main function to address any shortcomings," Singh said.

Asked about the programme of Home Minister Shah, especially reports of him chairing a high-level security review meeting here on Friday, the CRPF DG said, "He has no idea about it." He said this is for the first time that the CRPF Day is being celebrated outside Delhi.

"The central government has directed different forces to organise annual day parades at different places in the country and display show of strength to the people." "It will act as an inspiration and motivation for the personnel as well as the civilian population, especially the youth. It will also help in the national integration work," he said.

Asked about the killing of a CRPF personnel who was at home on leave in Kashmir Valley recently, he said this was the first such incident this year and added the security agencies acted promptly and arrested the culprit within the shortest possible time.

Militants shot dead CRPF jawan Mukhtar Ahmad at his home in Check Chotipora village of Shopian district on

March 12.

"Terrorists also keep a watch who is coming and who is going. He was on leave and was killed but the culprit behind the murder was arrested and the law will take its own course and he will be punished as per the law," he said.

To a question on militants using religious places to hide, he said, "Terrorists do not have any religion...wherever they are, security forces will reach and neutralise them." On the annual Amarnath Yatra, the CRPF DG said it is not appropriate time to comment on the pilgrimage. "When the orders will come, we will act on those orders."

Asked whether he will arrange special screening of 'The Kashmir Files' film for his troops deployed in Jammu and Kashmir, he said, "I have not seen the picture so far. Any picture which is good and works as an inspiration and motivation needs to be watched."

Addressing the parade earlier, the CRPF chief lauded the bravery and courage of his personnel and said the year 2021-22 witnessed the force eliminating 162 militants and Maoists, arresting 1,500 others and forcing 750 more to surrender in various operations across the country.

A huge quantity of arms and ammunition, including 415 weapons, 13,000 rounds, 1400 kg of explosives, 225 grenades, 115 bombs, 615 IEDs, 2400 detonators and 5336 gelatin sticks, worth Rs 3.27 crore and 25,775 kg of narcotic substances were seized during the same period, he said.

He said 12 personnel of the force laid down their lives, while 169 others were injured during the period.

In the past 82 years, the CRPF received 2,309 gallantry awards which is the highest among forces, he said, adding 272 awards, including four Kirti Chakra and nine Shaurya Chakra, were given to the personnel for their service to the nation in 2021-22.

Singh said with 246 battalion and over 3.15 lakh personnel, CRPF is the largest paramilitary force in the world which is performing various duties for the nation like maintaining law and order, providing security during elections and religious festivals.

"New challenges do come with the passage of time and we are focused on modernisation of the force and providing our personnel with latest weapons, bullet-proof vehicles and other equipment to enhance operation capabilities," he said, adding medical assistance compact ambulance were also provided to evacuate injured personnel during anti-terrorism operations.

He said CRPF is also making continuous attempts to provide better living facilities to the personnel and their families. "The central government is alive to the problems being faced by the personnel and providing adequate assistance to ensure better facilities to them."

He also referred to the handling of the situation in the aftermath of the abrogation of Article 370 that provided special status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir and its bifurcation into two union territories in August 2019 and said "both central and J&K governments have lauded the force for maintaining peace in the region." The force has also six women battalions which are deployed across the country, a glaring example of women empowerment, he said.

Govt Restructures

that the scheme requires the concerned District Social Welfare Officer to verify the details of the beneficiary regarding marital status, age and non-availing of benefits under other schemes like Ladli Beti, besides ensuring disbursement of the financial assistance before the date of marriage through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

"To further promote girl child education in the targeted population, the additional eligibility of completing elementary education by the beneficiary before her marriage has been included. However, to provide smooth transition in this regard, a grace period of three years, i.e., upto 31.03.2025 is being provided," he said.

Earlier, he said, the benefits under the scheme were limited only to the girls of marriageable age who figured in the poor girls' survey, especially conducted for this purpose by the Social Welfare Department.

Fire Claimed Over

It further reveals that over 263 structures including 160 shops, eight vehicles and 11 electric transformers got damaged during different fire incidents, while property worth 686.74 lakh got damaged in fire.

After Baramulla, the frontier district Kupwara reported the third highest number of fire incidents in Kashmir.

The data says that over 313 fire incidents were reported in the district in the year 2021.

It further reveals that over 265 structures including 74 shops, four vehicles and 20 electric transformers got damaged during different fire incidents, while property worth 654.31 lakhs got damaged in fire.

South Kashmir's Anantnag district also reported over 253 fire incidents.

Over 177 structures including 30 shops, 13 shopping complexes, four vehicles and seven electric transformers got damaged during different fire incidents, while property worth 505.29 lakhs got damaged in fire.

In Pulwama district of southern Kashmir over 215 fire incidents were reported, while 164 structures including 19 shops, 06 shopping complexes, 10 vehicles and 10 electric transformers got damaged during different fire incidents.

The property worth 813.72 lakhs got damaged in the fire.

In central Kashmir Budgam district over 179 fire incidents were reported. Over 101 structures including 07 shops, 14 shopping complexes and 11 electric transformers got damaged during different fire incidents.

The property worth 450.85 lakhs got damaged in the fire.

The Ganderbal district witnessed over 124 fire incidents. In different fire incidents over 81 structures including 08 shops and 09 electric transformers and 07 vehicles got damaged during different fire incidents.

In south Kashmir's Kulgam over 141 fire incidents were reported. Over 107 structures including 09 shops, one shopping complex, 02 vehicles and four electric transformers got damaged during different fire incidents. The property worth 481.26 lakhs got damaged in the fire.

In north Kashmir's Bandipora district over 141 fire incidents were reported.

Over 107 structures including 14 shops, two shopping complexes, three vehicles and four electric transformers got damaged during different fire incidents. The property worth 238.27 lakhs got damaged in the fire.

At the last comes south Kashmir's Shopian where 104 fire incidents occurred.

Over 92 structures including ten shops, one shopping complex and eight electric transformers got damaged during different fire incidents. The property worth 392.05 lakhs got damaged in the fire.

The Kashmir valley has reported over 2274 fire incidents in 2021 and 2336 incidents reported in 2020. Over 1812 fire incidents in 2019, and 2741 fire incidents in 2018, while 2914 fire incidents were reported in the year 2017 and 3548 fire incidents in the year 2016.

The officials said that many structures got damaged due to fire during different encounters between militants and government forces.

Dept Issues Advisory

The department has primarily called for avoiding overloading outlets in residential buildings. It also appeals to people that the appliances should be unplugged when not in use in order to save energy and minimize the risk of shock and fire.

It further cautioned people against concealing cords under rugs, carpets, doors, and windows.

The department appeals to consumers to regularly inspect the electrical cords and extensions for damage. It also called for prohibiting the plugging of the space heater or fan into an extension cord or power strip.

"Plug in smartly and make sure that cords don't become tripping hazards. The extension cords should be used on a temporary basis," it further suggests.

Teenager Who Eloped

accompanied by his uncle from

Jammu to Kulgam (in south Kashmir) and then they surrendered," the order noted.

The board went through the reports of the Legal Cum Probation Officer (LCPO) of Srinagar associated with the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) which interviewed the girl and the LCPO of Kulgam who interviewed the boy.

"A combined reading of both the reports would reveal that CICL was having a relationship with a prosecutrix but the parents of prosecutrix did not accept the same and were against their relationship which ultimately became a reason for the delinquent behaviour of the CICL. Both would submit that CICL needs proper rehabilitation and counselling so as to bring proper change in his behaviour," the order said.

During the investigation, the girl said she went with the boy after he allegedly threatened to kill her if she did not follow him, it said.

The Board noted that there were certain "aggravating factors", including the removal of the victim without her free will from her lawful guardianship by issuing threats to eliminate her and despite refusal of her parents to approve the alleged relationship.

It said these factors pointed to the fact that the CICL needs reformation of highest degree so as to make him "understand the norms of society and laws of land are to be adhered to".

"The release at this juncture of CICL on bail will not serve the ends of justice. Rather, his placement at Observation Home, Harwan, Srinagar is in his best interest at this juncture as he has shown signs of reformation which shall continue for the time being," it said.

The Board concluded that as the girl is also a child, it is not inclined to grant bail to the CICL at this stage.

"Taking into considerations the nature and gravity of allegations and overall circumstances, the Board is of the opinion that release at this stage of CICL on bail would defeat the ends of justice. Accordingly the instant bail application is dismissed and shall be attached with the Final Report of the instant case. Applicant/CICL may renew his prayer for bail before this Board after the statement of victim is recorded by the Board during the course of enquiry," it said.

Advocate Mir Naveed Gul appreciated the juvenile Justice Board order, saying that the interests of girls need to be protected.

"The order should act as a deterrent to all those who take girls and women for granted," he added.

5.2 Magnitude

of any loss or life or property have been received.

Man Found Hanging

reports said. The villagers, reports said, instantly informed the police.

A police team reached the spot and took the body into their custody for carrying out post-mortem and other medical-legal formalities.

Leopard Kills

The officials said the watch and ward staff posted for protection of the endangered species of deer were not present at the time of the attack.

The animal died after the attack and the leopard had fled from the spot.

"The body of Hangul is in the custody of Wildlife and higher ups will make a decision about what to do with the body of female Hangul," an official from the wildlife department said.

He said that the killing of Hangul has made it clear that there is presence of endangered Hanguls in Shikargah forests of Tral. (KDC)

3 Gamblers Held

from the spot, a police spokesperson said Wednesday.

He identified two other alleged gamblers as Mushtaq Hafiz and Gh Mohidin Bhat.

The spokesperson also claimed recovery of Rs 66500 and playing cards from the spot.

He further said that a case FIR No. 56/2022 U/S 3, 4 of gambling Act has been registered at PS Pulwama and investigation set into motion.

Karan Singh Moves HC, Seeks Vacation Of His Property Inside Dal Lake

Court Seeks MHA, J&K Govt's Response By April 20

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Wednesday issued a notice to Ministry Home Affairs, Government of India and J&K administration on a petition filed by J&K's former Sadr-e-Riyasat and ex-Rajya Sabha member Dr Karan Singh, seeking directions for vacation of his property—Lake Pavilion, popularly known as Kabootar Khana, at Dal Lake Srinagar.

A single bench of Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur issued the notice after hearing senior advocate Syed Faisal Qadiri on behalf 90-year-old son of Maharaja Hari Singh, stating in his plea that the property— 21 Kanals and 19 Marlas— be vacated from security forces as is the absolute owner of it.

The court has issued notice to Union of India through Secretary Ministry of Home Affairs, J&K through Secretary Home Department, Director General of Police, Central Reserve Police Force, Director General, Border Security Force, Director General of Police, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, and Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar. They have been asked to file response by April 20.

Dr Karan Singh said that in 1990 his property was taken over "unilaterally without fixation of any rent or the assessment of rental value" by Border Security Force until 1993.

He said Additional Secretary to Government, Home Department on 15 September 1993 accorded sanction to the grant of rent at Rs. 1464/month for the entire property.

"Between the year 1990-2003, the property was under the occupation of Border Security Force and later it was handed over to Central Reserve Police Force on 11.12.2003, while BSF Water Wing also remained on the property."

Even at this stage, he said neither consent has been sought from him nor was he informed about the

transition of occupancy from Border Security Force to Central Reserve Police Force.

Secretary Home Department, J&K, he said, in terms of its order on 18.07.2006 revised the rates for occupation of land that is appurtenant to a building which is under the occupation of security forces.

"In terms of order bearing no. Home-36 (P) of 2009 dated 16.01.2009 issued by (J&K's Home Secretary) the rates of land under the occupation of the security forces were further revised," he said in the petition.

He further reiterated his stance with regards vacation of the property for personal use and necessary repair and renovation.

He has sought direction to the officials to vacate the property and hand over "free and unencumbered possession of the land" to him.

"Respondents be directed to release arrears in rent towards illegal/unauthorised occupation of the property in accordance with Government Orders dated 18.07.2006, 16.01.2009, 19.01.2012 and any further order passed thereafter in proportion to progressive rise in the value from the date of occupation in favour of (Dr Karan Singh) for the entire property with effect from the year 1990 when the building was taken over by the security forces till the same is handed back."

He has also sought direction to the officials to constitute a committee of experts in order to assess the damage caused to the property Lake Pavilion and accordingly, pay the compensation for damages caused on account of its "unauthorized and illegal occupation".

He said officials be also directed to grant interest at the rate of 18% per annum for withholding the enhanced rentals towards use and occupation of the premises from the day of its occupation till the time the same is handed over back to him. (GNS)

Bihar Resident Found Dead In Rajouri

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A non-local was found hanging in Siot village of Rajouri district on Wednesday, officials said.

Shubh Lal Son of Kapil Dev Sahni, a resident of Hardiyan in Bihar, presently living near civil hospital Siot village of Rajouri,

was found hanging from a tree, officials said.

Police said soon after receiving the information, it rushed to the spot and took the body in possession. "Post mortem examination was conducted in civil hospital of the area with investigation into the matter has been set into motion," police said—(KNO)

GoI Weaponising' Pain Of KPs By Promoting Kashmir Files': Mehbooba

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The aggressive manner in which the Centre is promoting The Kashmir Files' film and weaponising the pain of Kashmiri Pandits makes their ill intention obvious, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said on Wednesday.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief said instead of healing old wounds and creating a conducive atmosphere between the two communities, the Centre is deliberately tear-

ing them apart.

The manner in which GOI (government of India) is aggressively promoting Kashmir Files & is weaponising pain of Kashmiri Pandits makes their ill intention obvious, Mehbooba wrote on Twitter.

Written and directed by Vivek Agnihotri and produced by Zee Studios, the film depicts the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley in the 1990s.

It stars Anupam Kher, Darshan Kumar, Mithun Chakraborty and Pallavi Joshi among others.

Jamkash Unveils Suzuki's Two-Wheeler Showroom In Srinagar



KG Abid Bhat/KO

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The leading automobile dealers of Kashmir, Jamkash on Wednesday inaugurated Suzuki two wheeler dealership (Encash Auto Pvt. Ltd.) at Hyderpora area of the city.

Zonal Head J&K Bank, Syed Shafat Hussain Ruffai was the chief guest of the inauguration event of the showroom located at Hyderpora; Bypass, a statement said.

It said that Vivek Jain, GM Network Suzuki Motorcycle India Pvt.

Ltd, Directors Irfan Ahmad Narwaroo and Aawan Ahmad Narwaroo, GM's and various bankers, customers, eminent personalities were also present on the occasion.

While addressing the customers on the inauguration, Aawan Ahmad Narwaroo said that a variety of bikes and scooters, including ACCESS, BURGMAN, AVENIS, GIXXER and INTRUDER are available at the showroom.

Jamkash Is the fastest growing Dealership in north India and highest in sales and service volume, the spokesperson said.

Jammu Records Season's Hottest Day At 35 Deg Celsius

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Jammu, the winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir, on Wednesday recorded the hottest day of the season at 35 degrees Celsius nine notches above the normal for this part of the season, an official said.

The summer capital Srinagar also recorded a high of 25.4 degrees Celsius which is 10.7 degrees above the normal, a spokesperson of the Meteorological department said.

The official said Katra, the base camp for the pilgrims vis-

iting Vaishno Devi shrine, was reeling at a maximum of 32.6 degrees Celsius.

He said the town in Reasi district recorded the minimum temperature of 18.2 degrees Celsius, which was the highest in any recorded place in the Union Territory.

The minimum temperature in Jammu was recorded at 16.8 degrees Celsius, 2.8 notches above normal, while Banihal town in Ramban district recorded a low of 14.2 degrees Celsius which was 10 degrees above normal.

Srinagar recorded a mini-

mum of 7.9 degrees Celsius, which was 3.7 notches above the normal.

Bhaderwah town in Doda district recorded a maximum of 30.4 degrees Celsius, surpassing the previous high of 30 degrees Celsius on March 31, 2018.

The rising temperature over the past few days, especially in the snow-bound areas of Jammu and Kashmir, has caused early melting of the snow causing concern among the people, especially the agriculturists who fear water shortage in the coming months.

J&K Witnessing Rapid Development, Growth: LG



Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Union Territory Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Wednesday that Jammu and Kashmir was witnessing rapid development and growth under unprecedented reforms and a new vision.

Sinha made these remarks during an interaction with newly appointed Chairperson of J&K Waqf Board Dr Darakhshan Andrabi at Raj Bhavan

here on Wednesday, an official spokesperson said.

Andrabi was accompanied by the new Waqf members- Dr Ghulam Nabi Haleem, Syed Mohammad Hussain, Sohail Kazmi, and Nawab Din.

According to the spokesperson, the LG congratulated Dr Andrabi for her new assignment and extended his good wishes to the new Board members for their five year term of managing the Waqf in Jammu

Kashmir.

While interacting with the delegation of J&K Waqf Board, the LG, he said, observed that J&K is witnessing rapid development and growth under unprecedented reforms and a new vision.

"He impressed upon them to work with dedication & right earnest, and contribute in taking the UT to new heights of socio-economic development," the spokesperson added.

University Of Jammu Signs Pact With Delhi Firm To Set Up Centre Of Excellence Lab

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The University of Jammu on Wednesday signed a pact with a Delhi-based firm Sedulity Solutions and Technologies for setting up a centre of excellence Lab for cybersecurity and cyber forensics solutions, an official said.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) for setting up the Lab at the PG Department of Computer Science and IT was signed with Sedulity Solutions and Technologies, New Delhi,

a spokesperson of the varsity said.

He added that the MoU was signed by Arvind Jasrotia, registrar of the university, and the company's CEO Anup Girdhar. University of Jammu Vice-Chancellor Manoj Kumar Dhar was also present.

Dhar appreciated the head and members of the Department of Computer Science and IT for taking the initiative of industry-academia partnership to the new levels.

He stressed the need to pro-

vide the latest and emerging technologies like cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and machine learning, among students and faculties as it is the need of the upcoming era.

Girdhar emphasised that the MoU will facilitate effective utilisation of the intellectual capabilities of Sedulity Solutions and Technologies in the domain of cybersecurity and cyber forensic activities to fill the gap between industry and academia.

SAUBHAGYA Lightens Up Homes Of Rural Poor In J&K

Over 3.5 Lakh Households' Electrified In UT Under The Scheme

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir has achieved another milestone under Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana 'Saubhagya' with the Union Territory accomplishing the 100 percent target of rural electrification.

The J&K administration has proactively worked in ensuring electrification to every village which is visible from the fact that almost 3,57,405 households have been electrified in whole of the UT. J&K has also received a reward of Rs100 crore from the Government of India for achieving the target of 100% electrification ahead of the timeline.

Jammu and Kashmir is faced with many natural barriers like mountainous terrains and tough topography of the region thus providing energy access in these hard locations was a distant dream just a couple of years ago. For the first time, after 73 years of independence village Saddal of Udhampur district and Ganouri, Tanta village of Doda district saw the light of an electric bulb ending decades of darkness from the lives of villagers.

Remote villages in the Kellar area of south Kashmir's Shopian district had only heard of electricity but Saubhagya scheme lightened up their lives when they witnessed electricity in their homes.

Similarly, villagers in far flung and hilly border areas of Now-

shera sub division in Rajouri are experiencing a big transformation in their lives after receiving electricity under the government's Saubhagya scheme. This area was deprived of power supply from the last seven decades and the scheme.

"We are grateful to the government for launching ambitious schemes like Saubhagya which has made our lives comfortable and convenient in incredible ways. Earlier, our children could not study due to lack of electricity. We had to go to another village to get our mobile phones charged," said Abdul Hamid, a resident from the area.

In 2017, Saubhagya was launched with the objective of achieving Universal Household Electrification in the country through last mile connectivity and providing access to electricity to all un-electrified households in rural areas and poor households in urban areas.

While launching the scheme, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, had pledged to provide access to electricity and work towards equity, efficiency and sustainability in the New Age India.

Under the SAUBHAGYA scheme, Distribution Companies (DISCOMs) organized camps in village or cluster of villages to facilitate on-the-spot filling up of application forms including the release of electricity connections to households. BRSIDES, DISCOMs/Power Departments

also adopted innovative mechanisms like dedicated web-portal and mobile app for collection and consolidation of application form in electronic mode and also capturing process of release of electricity connections.

In another significant move by the government, GARV (Grameen Vidyutikaran) App was launched which aims to monitor transparency in implementation of the electrification schemes, Grameen Vidyut Abhiyantas (GVAs) have been appointed by the government to report progress through GARV app.

Also, mobile apps like 'Gram Jyoti Doot', 'Urja Vistaar' have been devised for fast track release of power connections. 'Saubhagya Rath' in all districts, is being lauded as an innovative practice by the Power Ministry.

Besides, the government has also given the concept of '4 Es' in the revised Tariff Policy which included 'Electricity for all, Efficiency to ensure affordable tariffs, Environment for a sustainable future and Ease of Doing business to attract investments and ensure financial viability.

According to the government data, with 100% electrification target being achieved, the administration's focus is now to provide consistent electricity at affordable rates, power tariff reforms, last-mile connectivity, and electricity connections to all households in rural and urban areas.

G.P Fund Office Concludes Grievance Redressal-Cum-Awareness Week

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Grievance redressal-cum-awareness week organised by G.P Fund Moving Civil Secretariat to redress the Grievances of the G.P Fund subscribers/Ex-subscribers and SLI insurants and to sensitize the subscribers about the various e-services provided by the J&K Funds organization, concluded here, an official spokesperson said Wednesday.

The J&K Funds organisation observed the week long Grievance redressal cum awareness drive from 9th of March to 15th of March, 2022 across all the District Fund offices and Moving Offices across the Union Territory of J&K.

Director General J&K Funds organization, Pervaiz Sajad issued directions for redressing the grievances of the Subscribers during the week and Publicizing the event though print and electronic media.

During the Grievance redressal-cum-awareness week, the Subscribers/Ex-subscribers of Civil Secretariat, J&K and other Moving offices registered their Grievances by personally visiting the office of Accounts officer, G.P Fund Civil secretariat, J&K. The subscribers/SLI Insurants also registered their Grievances on the official e-mail Id provided for the Purpose.

A dedicated cell of the officials of G.P. Fund Civil Secretariat, J&K also attended to the phone calls on a daily basis for registration of Grievances of the subscribers through dedicated Mobile Numbers provided for the purpose.

All the Grievances received during the week were disposed of on the same day/next day.

On the spot redress of the Grievances of the subscribers were also made regarding providing of SMS alert Service to the unregistered subscribers,

Status of FR Cases, Settlement of SLI Maturity Claims ,Providing Status of adjustment of Inward T.E.s, Issuance of Annual Account Statement, Incorrect G.P. Fund Codes.

Further, the Grievances regarding the transfer of G.P Fund Balance prior to 03/2021 of the in-operative subscribers of G.P Fund Moving Civil Secretariat J&K, the subscribers were informed that more than 700 T.E.s conditionally in shape of Ledger cards have been prepared and are being forwarded to the concerned Fund offices where the subscribers are currently active.

The Subscribers were also sensitized regarding the various e-services viz "SMS alert Service" and "Know Your G.P Fund Balance" provided by the J&K funds organization through Print and Electronic media and also by way of hanging of banners at prominent places both at Civil Secretariat Jammu and Srinagar. SMS Alert Service facilitates the subscribers in knowing their monthly credits and debits through an instant SMS while "Know your GP Fund balance" helps the Subscribers in viewing their Year wise G.P. fund balance on JK Funds portal. Subscribers were also informed about the path breaking e-initiatives taken by the J&K Funds organization such as Shifting of manual posting of ledger accounts to real time posting of ledger Accounts and switching to e-TE /Auto T.E. mode from manual T.E.s with effect from 01/04/2021. Special Focus was laid on the deposit linked Insurance Scheme for legal heirs/ registered nominees of the deceased Subscribers.

The Subscribers of G.P Fund Moving Civil Secretariat J&K actively participated and appreciated the unique initiative taken by the J&K funds Organization for redressing the Grievances of the Subscribers/Insurants.

Kansal Condoles Demise Of Info Dept Employee

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Principal Secretary, Information Department, Rohit Kansal on Wednesday expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of Haseena Bano, an employee of Information Department, civil secretariat.

In a condolence message, Kansal lauded the services rendered by the deceased towards betterment of her department. He conveyed sympathies with

the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

Meanwhile, Special Secretary, Information Department, Dr Mushtaq Ahmad, also extended his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

Other officers and officials of the department also expressed sorrow over the demise of Late Haseena and conveyed their sympathies with the bereaved family.

Math Fest For Valley Children At IUST



Observer News Service

AWANTIPORA: To encourage creative thinking and discovery among the school students, the Department of Mathematical Sciences, Islamic University of Science & Technology (IUST) Wednesday organised a Math Festival as part of their ongoing 'International Day of Mathematics' celebrations.

The festival was targeted at school children and included innovative activities on insightful mathematical ideas for more than 150 students from 9th to 12th standard representing several districts of the valley.

The festival was inaugurated by Vice Chancellor Prof. Shakil A. Romshoo, who was the Chief Guest at the event. Prof. Romshoo lauded the efforts of the Department in conducting such unique outreach programmes and said, "Such creative initiatives especially targeted at our community and particularly the new generation is responsible for establishing IUST as a socially responsible institution". While

hoping for such events in future as well, he emphasised the need to conduct research about 'Math Education at the primary level' for inculcating proper understanding of the subject.

Dean Academic Affairs Prof. Manzoor Malik also addressed the gathering and lauded the departments for this distinct festival. He encouraged the young participants to read more expository and interdisciplinary books on Mathematics, which would debunk a lot of myths about the subject.

Earlier, Head of the Department Prof. Fozia Qazi elaborated on fun ways of looking at mathematics problem while introducing the theme of the festival. A key part of the festival was an interactive exhibition on topics like 'fourth dimension', 'math of soap bubbles', 'clock arithmetic', 'estimation of pi', 'rubber-sheet geometry' and 'math in arts and crafts', which saw a highly involved and enthusiastic participation of the school students. Sr. Asst. Prof. Mathematics Dr. Peer Bilal proposed the vote of thanks.

J&K Wins Gold In Women's Team Sabre

Hard work rewarded: Secretary Sports Council



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In the ongoing 32nd Senior National Fencing Championship held at Amritsar, Punjab, J&K Women Team won the Gold medal and created history by being the first fencing team of J&K to secure the first place.

The championship was held from 13th-16th of this month and J&K comprised of ace fencer Shriya Gupta, Anant Samaskshi, Jaspreet Kour and Rishika Khajuria. J&K also added one more medal to the kitty in the individual event when in men's category Vishal Thappar won the Bronze medal.

Congratulating the Fencing Team, Secretary, J&K Sports Council Nuzhat Gul said that our athletes are proving their mettle on the bigger stages and the advantage that the boom in sports infrastructure of J&K has brought is reflected in the incredible performance of our athletes day in and day out.

letes day in and day out.

She said many more training centres are being set up across J&K and the centre for excellence in fencing shall be operational soon besides a similar centre for water sports. She said preparations for bringing these centres at par with international standards are underway and our athletes will benefit immensely from the ventures.

Gull also congratulated the team coach Shottu Lal Sharma for his role in fine tuning the athletes and preparing them well for major events.

Backed by some splendid performance four fencers from J&K have been shortlisted for Asian camp which shall be held for an extended period of two months and fencers will be trained by the best brains of the country in the game. The four players include Shriya Gupta, Riya Bakshi, Vishal Thappar and Mayank Sharma.

GCoE Srinagar Organises One-Day Trek



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Government College of Education (GCoE) M A Road, Srinagar on Wednesday organised a one day trekking programme for the students from Nehru Park to Shankaracharya hills up to the temple.

A total of 55 students including 35 female students and 20 male students accompanied by five officials of the college participated in the trekking programme.

The programme was flagged-off by Principal of the College, Prof. Dr Ruhi Jan Kanth along with the senior faculty member

Prof Rubeena Khateeb.

The students experienced and enjoyed traversing high and difficult terrain tracks in coordination to enjoy the trip.

The trekking started at 10 am in the morning while the group reached the destination at 1pm and culminated at 4 pm.

Besides, the trekkers enthusiastically completed the trek with all zest and zeal to make the said programme very vibrant and successful.

While sharing their experience, students said that it was refreshing and an adventure to take a walk on the Shankaracharya hills.

Ranji Trophy 2021-22: Jharkhand Humiliate Nagaland To Enter Quarterfinal

Press Trust of India

KOLKATA: Jharkhand butchered north-eastern minnows Nagaland in one of the most farcical and lopsided pre-quarterfinals of the Ranji Trophy with a jaw-dropping overall lead of 1008 runs, the highest ever in the history of the national first-class championship.

The eastern India state, best known for producing country's famous captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, didn't break a single rule but effectively made a mockery of the 'Spirit of Cricket' by basically humiliating the opposition for five days before umpires called time on such a sham.

The game was also an indicator of how Supreme Court appointed Justice RM Lodha committee and subsequently the CoA, led by former CAG Vinod Rai, didn't understand the gulf between a proper first-class team and a developmental side from a region where cricket isn't the primary sport.

The match was over as a contest after Jharkhand scored a mammoth 880 in their first innings -- tournament's fourth highest score on an Eden Gardens belter against a Nagaland attack in which five out of seven bowlers were hit for a not so pleasing "hundred".

Nagaland, in reply, were all-out for 289 and the 591-run first innings lead had effectively ended

the game in Jharkhand's favour.

However, the rules suggested that one needed to play till the end of the fifth day unless Jharkhand wanted to enforce follow-on.

To be fair, even their bowlers had bowled for 103.3 overs and hence they batted again and this time for fun send their tailender Anukul Roy to join what was a "batting fest".

Anukul, who had been a longtime Mumbai Indians reserve, helped himself to a 153 in Jharkhand's second innings score of 417 for 6 when umpires Ganesh Charhate and Manish Jain asked players to shake hands.

Jharkhand won the match to qualify for quarter-finals but cricket lost on the day because of a team making use of loopholes of regulations where matches become dead contests after one team takes the first innings lead.

This match became even more unbearable because a Ranji Trophy knock-out isn't four day but a five-day affair.

The result was a match whose records would just be that -- records without impact.

Brief Scores:

Jharkhand 880 and 417/6 in 90.3 overs (Anukul Roy 153, Kumar Kushagra 89, Utkarsh Singh 73; Rongsen Jonathan 3/109). Nagaland 289. Match drawn. Jharkhand qualified for quarter-finals on first innings lead.

ICC Test Rankings: Bumrah Breaks Into Top 5, Kohli Slips To 9th



Press Trust of India

DUBAI: Fresh from his maiden Test five-wicket haul at home, Indian pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah jumped six spots to fourth but struggling star batter Virat Kohli slipped to ninth in the latest ICC rankings released on Wednesday.

Bumrah, who returned with eight wickets in the Day/Night second Test against Sri Lanka in Bengaluru, climbed past Shaheen Afridi, Kyle Jamieson, Tim Southee, James Anderson, Neil Wagner and Josh Hazlewood in the Test rankings for bowlers.

Former captain Kohli, who continued his struggle with the bat and could not convert his starts, dropped four places, but

managed to remain inside the top-10 just ahead of Rishabh Pant who remained static at 10th.

Kohli scored 45 in the opening Test in Mohali, while in the second Test he had scores of 23 and 13. He is yet to score a century since his 136 against Bangladesh in November 2019.

India skipper Rohit Sharma, however, held on to his sixth position to be the best-placed Indian in the batting charts.

The in-form Shreyas Iyer was rewarded for his match-winning 92 and 67 against Sri Lanka as he took a giant leap, advancing 40 spots to be on 37th position in the batting chart.

Sri Lanka Test captain Dimuth Karunaratne jumped up to a career best No 3 after his fight-

ing 107 in the second innings in Bangalore.

In the all-rounders' table, Ravindra Jadeja was displaced from the No.1 position as West Indies' Jason Holder reclaimed the top spot.

Jadeja had risen to No 1 after his 175 not out and nine wickets in the Mohali Test earlier this month.

Ravichandran Ashwin, Shakib Al Hasan and Ben Stokes rounded off the top five in the all-rounders' list.

In the bowlers' ranking, Mohammed Shami climbed up a spot to displace fellow countryman Ravindra Jadeja to 17th. Pat Cummins, Ashwin and Kagiso Rabada have retained the top three spots among the bowlers.

Moved Out Of Russia, Chess Olympiad To Be Held In Chennai Now

Press Trust of India

CHENNAI: The 44th Chess Olympiad, which was moved out of Russia after it invaded Ukraine, will be organised in Chennai later this year, making it the second major global event of the sport to be held in India after the World Championship match in 2013.

The announcement was made by Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin on his Twitter page on Tuesday night.

"Delighted that the Chess Capital of India is set to host the 44th Chess Olympiad! A proud moment for Tamil Nadu! Chennai warmly welcomes all the Kings and Queens from around the world! #ChessOlympiad2022," he said in the tweet.

"It's official now...India will host the 44th World Chess Olympiad 2022 at Chennai!" the All-India Chess Federation added on its Twitter handle.

The All-India Chess federation (AICF) had submitted a guarantee of USD10 million (approx Rs 70 crore) to FIDE to host the tournament. The Olympiad was moved out of Russia after it invaded neighbouring Ukraine on February 24.

The Chess Olympiad is a biennial team event in which teams from some 190 countries compete over a two-week period. It was supposed to take place in Moscow from July 26 to August 8.

The other events that have been moved away from Russia are the first Chess Olympiad for People with Disabilities and the 93rd FIDE Congress.

The last chess event of such stature to come to India was the 2013 world championship clash between Viswanathan Anand and Magnus



Carlsen, the current world No.1.

The invasion of Ukraine has led to a slew of sporting cancellations in Russia with the International Olympic Committee urging member countries to ensure that no events are hosted by the country.

"It's a matter of great pride and responsibility that we are entrusted with and we are committed to make it a grand success. The entire Chess fraternity of the country is ready to come together for this," said Dr. Sanjay Kapoor, All India Chess Federation President.

The AICF Secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan added, "I cannot complain about anything in life now. All the countries of the world now have this great opportunity to come under one roof in the country where Chess was born. My thanks to Thiru M K Stalin the Hon'ble CM to make this dream come true."

The event is held over 11 rounds in both open and women's category with likely participation of over 2000 players. This is a team event with five players and one trainer allowed per team in both the sections.

World Champion Magnus

Carlsen has often turned out to play for Norway and almost every top player of the world is present in this event to represent their country.

India were the joint winners of the gold medal in the last Olympiad that was organised online.

This time the team will be led by Viswanathan Anand who will have the support of P Harikrishna and Vidit Gujarathi for sure.

The other two members are still unclear but young guns like Arjun Erigaisi, Nihal Sarin and some truly special players like B Adhiban, Sasikiran and few others have a strong case.

The final decision for the team selection in open will be taken on May 1 as per AICF rules.

In the women's section, Koneru Humpy will spearhead the challenge with D Harika, and R Vaishali as nearly confirmed participants.

The other two places up for grabs have Tania Sachdev as a strong candidate while Bhakti Kulkarni and few others will try to be part of the team. As host, India will be entitled to field an additional team and this could likely go to juniors or the 'B' team in both sections. The final decision will be taken by AICF on May 1.

World Chess Body FIDE Suspends Russia, Belarus

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: World chess governing body FIDE on Wednesday suspended Russia and Belarus from all its tournaments until further notice due to the invasion of Ukraine, jeopardising the two countries' participation in the 44th Chess Olympiad in India later this year.

FIDE, however, said in individual tournaments of the World Championship cycle, players from these two countries can participate under the world body's flag, Russia invaded Ukraine in February and found support from Belarus.

"Taking into account the current recommendations of the IOC, the FIDE Council suspends the national teams of Russia and Belarus from participation in official FIDE tournaments until further notice," the FIDE said in a statement.

"In the individual tournaments of the FIDE World Championship cycle, players from these countries will be able to participate under the FIDE flag."

The International Olympic Committee had recommended all the sports federations to exclude Russia and Belarus -- which has extended support in the invasion -- from international events, but had left

the final decision to individual governing bodies.

Several international federations have since then banned athletes from Russia and Belarus from their events.

The recently-

concluded Beijing

Winter Paralympics

had also excluded athletes from

these two countries just before

the start of the showpiece.

The 44th Chess Olympiad

will be organised in Chennai

later this year, making it the

second major global event of

the sport to be held in India

after the World Championship

match in 2013.

PAK Vs AUS, 2nd Test

Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan Script Sensational Draw For Pakistan



Agencies

KARACHI: Pakistan captain Babar Azam hit a career-best 196 before the tailenders hung in to escape with a draw in the second Test against Australia on Wednesday.

Veteran off-spinner Nathan Lyon grabbed three late wickets to finish with 4-112 but Pakistan vice-captain Mohammad Rizwan thwarted Australia with an unbeaten 104 off 177 balls to guide Pakistan to 443-7 in a sensational last hour on the final day.

No. 9 batter Nauman Ali successfully defended 18 balls without scoring and saw off the last eight overs with Rizwan after Pakistan had slipped to 414-7.

With 13 overs left in the game, Lyon made inroads into Pakistan's lower order when Babar gloved a catch close to the wicket after defying Australia with his knock off 425 balls over 10 hours.

Left-hander allrounder Faheem Ashraf edged a low catch in the slip off Lyon's next delivery and Sajid Khan also offered a tame catch to Smith before Rizwan and Nauman batted patiently.

Debutant legspinner Mitchell Swepson (0-156) had provided Australia with another chance with 19 balls left in the game, but Usman Khawaja dropped a low catch off Rizwan at short extra cover.

Rizwan raised his deserved century by hitting Lyon for two boundaries on either side of the wicket in the penultimate over before running a single to reach the three-figure mark.

Babar's marathon effort, during which he hit 21 fours and a straight six, was the highest ever by any captain in the fourth innings of a Test match and surpassed Michael Atherton's 185 not out against South Africa in Johannesburg in 1995.

Babar shared two solid stands on the last day, adding 228 runs with Abdullah Shafique (96) and then, after losing Fawad Alam in the second session, batting with Rizwan to add further 115 runs.

It was a remarkable escape by Pakistan at the fortress of its Test venues -- the National Stadium -- when it was out for 148 in the first innings on the third day against the reverse swing of Mitchell Starc and conceded a massive 408-run lead.

Australia then stretched its lead to 505 before declaring its second innings at 97-2, but its bowlers couldn't rattle the confidence of Babar, who batted almost five sessions and denied the visitors from taking a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Babar stayed firm and blunted the reverse swing of experienced fast bowlers Pat Cummins (2-75) and Starc (0-58), while also negating the spin threat of Lyon and Swepson for most of the last day.

Australia had its chances to dismiss Babar but Travis Head and Marnus Labuschagne dropped two sharp catches close to the wicket off Swepson's successive deliveries before tea just after the Pakistan skipper had surpassed his previous Test best of 143 made against Bangladesh in Rawalpindi in 2020.

Cummins got both wickets on either side of the first two sessions after Pakistan resumed on 192-2 with Babar resuming on 102 and Shafique on 71.

Shafique grinded out Australia's bowlers for almost eight hours. When it looked like Pakistan will go unscathed at lunch, Cummins got the breakthrough in the penultimate over.

Shafique, who hit his maiden Test century in the drawn first Test in Rawalpindi, gave a healthy edge to Smith at first slip, who had dropped a sitter when Shafique was on 20 on Day 4.

Babar continued to dominate both pace and spin and also survived the short pacy spells of Starc and Cummins, who couldn't get enough swing to trouble the batters with the second new ball just two overs old when the day began.

The third and final Test begins in Lahore on Monday with Australia's first Test series in Pakistan since 1998 still tied 0-0.

Novak Djokovic, Russian Players To Compete At French Open



Agencies

PARIS: Novak Djokovic will be allowed to play at the French Open even if he is not vaccinated against COVID-19 as long as the coronavirus situation in France remains stable, organisers said Wednesday.

Russian tennis players, including top-ranked Daniil Medvedev, will also be admitted to play in the tournament but as neutral athletes because of the war started by their country in neighbouring Ukraine.

Organisers said there is nothing at the moment preventing Djokovic from defending his title at the clay-court Grand Slam. France this week lifted measures requiring the need to wear face masks in most settings and allowing people who aren't vaccinated back into restaurants, sports arenas and other venues.

"At this stage there is nothing to stop him returning to the courts," French Open director Amelie Mauresmo said at a news conference.

Djokovic was deported from

Australia in January after a legal

battle over whether he should

be allowed to enter the country,

forcing him to miss the Aus-

tralian Open. He told the BBC last month that he was willing to miss upcoming Grand Slam tournaments as well if they required him to get vaccinated.

Djokovic has won the French

Open twice and has a total of

20 major titles, one short of the

record held by Rafael Nadal after

the Spaniard won this year's

Australian Open.

French tennis federation president

Gilles Moretton said that although

Djokovic is now free to play, French

authorities might be forced to introduce

new restrictions if the virus situation

deteriorates before the tournament

starts on May 22.

"It is not up to us," Moretton

said.

"Today there is a little virus

that is going around. We are

quite confident that the lights

are green, but we are all

cautious about what has happened

over the last two years."

Asked whether Russian tennis

players will be allowed to

compete at the tournament in

the light of the war in Ukraine,

organisers said they plan to stick

to decisions suspending Russia

and ally Belarus but allowing

their players to compete as

neutral athletes. (AP)