



P3 CITY

EMERGENCY OPERATION THEATRE MADE FUNCTIONAL AT B&J HOSPITAL

The Emergency Operation Theatre at Bones and Joints Hospital has been made operational. A massive fire broke out at Bones and Joints 4th March.

P5 THINK

JOIE DE VIVRE OF BAHAAAR

Editor's Note: Spring is spirit's favourite fuel. There's a reckoning of all seasons that culminates into a compromise in Spring. It is hope and one which announces itself quite visibly after a winter worth of worry. In this part of the world, the word Bahaar, sums



P7 STATE

RESTORE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN J&K: CONGRESS, TMC IN RS

The Congress and TMC on Tuesday accused the central government of bringing in the budget of Jammu & Kashmir without giving heed to the aspirations of people



Quote!

Better a witty fool than a foolish wit

-William Shakespeare

NEWS DIGEST

Karan Singh's Son Quits Cong

JAMMU: Congress veteran Karan Singh's son Vikramaditya Singh resigned from the party on Tuesday, saying it is not able to realise the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He had joined the Congress in October in 2018. In a letter to Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, Vikramaditya Singh **More on P6**

BSF Officer Found Dead In Rajouri

JAMMU: A Sub-Inspector of the Border Security Force (BSF) was found dead on Tuesday inside his camp in Sunderbani area of Rajouri district, officials said. Around 6:00pm Tuesday, the Sub-Inspector Ladup Bomza was found hanging from the ceiling of his quarter in **More on P6**

Rusted Grenade Defused In Kupwara

SRINAGAR: The government forces on Tuesday destroyed a rusted grenade in Awura area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district. The grenade was found lying in the Awura Mir Muqam area of the district by a party of 160 Territorial Army, an official said. Later, the army assisted by police destroyed the **More on P6**

Arms, Ammunition Recovered In Srinagar

SRINAGAR: Police on Tuesday arrested a youth after recovering arms and ammunition from Safakadal area of this capital city, official sources said. They said that a team of police and its Special Operation Group (SOG) personnel from Shopian recovered arms and ammunition from Danamazar Ground. "Three Pistols, **More on P6**

Policeman Killed In Shootout With Militants

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Less than 24 hours after militants shot dead a civilian and injured a non-local street vendor in two separate attacks in south Kashmir, a policeman on covert operation on Tuesday was killed in a brief shootout with militants in Soura area of this capital city.

Selection grade constable Amir Hussain Lone of Hirri Bala in Kupwara was critically injured when a group of three militants moving in a car exchanged gunfire with a covert team of police in Zoonimar area

of Soura on Tuesday afternoon, a senior police officer said. Lone, who received gunshot wounds in upper parts of body including neck, was removed to the nearby SK institute of medical sciences for treatment.

However, after battling with life for several hours, Lone breathed his last at the hospital. "Srinagar police received information that 3 terrorists were roaming in a red colour car. A covert team of police were following them. A brief encounter took place in which a terrorist received a gunshot and one of our policeman also **More on P6**



KO Photo | Abid Bhat

LG Meets Labourers Injured In Twin Attacks

The Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Tuesday visited SMHS hospital to enquire about the well being of the two labourers injured in the twin militant attacks in Pulwama and Tral in south Kashmir. Sinha also met the injured labourers- Bisujeet Kumar from Bihar and **More on P6**

Targeted Killings Remain A Challenge: DGP

Targeted killings will continue to remain a challenge for security agencies till there is a presence of gun and militants in the Valley, Jammu and Kashmir DGP Dilbag Singh said on Tuesday. He also said security forces are alert at the border to foil infiltration attempts of militants. **More on P6**

One-Way Traffic On Ladakh Highway

Observer News Service

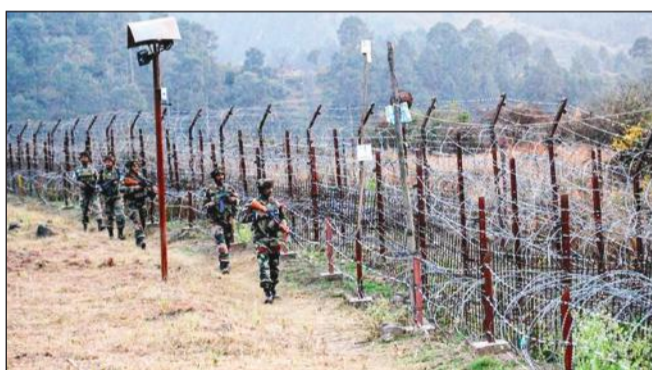
Srinagar: The divisional administration in Valley on Tuesday announced reopening of Srinagar-Ladakh highway for one way traffic from March 25 after a closure of nearly 73 days due to winters. The decision to allow traffic on the strategic 434-km Srinagar-Leh highway was taken in a meeting between Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole and Divisional Commissioner Ladakh, Saugat Biswas on Tuesday, an official spokesperson said.

The meeting, he said, decided to open Srinagar-Leh National Highway for traffic from March 25 with movement of vehicles from Srinagar to Leh on the same day. He said the meeting also decided that

Significant Drop In Infiltration Along LoC: GOI

NEW DELHI: Infiltration from Pakistan has reduced considerably but a significant number of militants remain present in various launch pads in Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir, Lok Sabha was informed on Tuesday.

In written replies to questions pertaining to the situation along the Line of Control (LoC) and international border with Pakistan, ministers of state for home affairs Nityanand Rai and Nitish Pramalk gave details of steps taken by the government in countering the menace of infiltration and dropping of arms and ammunition using drones. Rai told the house that the



infiltration across the LoC has decreased significantly since 2018 in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said in 2021, the figure of

infiltration stood at 34 whereas it was 143 in 2018, 138 in 2019 and 51 in 2020.

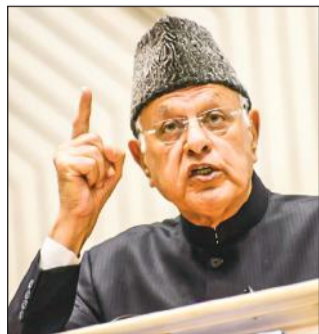
However, there **More on P6**

'370 Revocation Opened Roads For Development'

Article 370's revocation has opened the roads for development in Jammu and Kashmir which for years witnessed zero activity in the sector due to insurgency and lack of efforts of the previous governments to improve the situation, Union Minister G Kishan Reddy said in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday. Participating in debate on the budget of Jammu and Kashmir in the House, Reddy claimed that **More on P6**

'The Kashmir Files' Is Fiction: Sajad Lone

Terming 'The Kashmir Files' film based on the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits a piece of "fiction", Peoples Conference president Sajad Lone on Tuesday alleged the makers of such films would drown the country in hatred. Speaking to reporters after a public meeting in Kokernag in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, Lone said such filmmakers hankered after Rajya Sabha berths. The film, directed by Vivek Agnihotri and starring Anupam Kher, has reignited a debate surrounding the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir Valley. **More on P6**



pandit brothers and sisters had to leave their homes. I would like everything to be investigated properly as to who were the 'parties' interested in ethnic cleansing at that part of the time," Abdullah **More on P6**

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The 'Kashmir Files' Controversy Set Up Truth And Reconciliation Commission: Dr Farooq

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Farooq Abdullah on Tuesday broke his silence on 'The Kashmir Files' movie, which is based on the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley, saying the film was far from reality and nothing but "propaganda" to polarise the nation.

Abdullah, who has been targeted by the BJP over the migration of Kashmiri pandits, also suggested setting up of a 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission' headed by an "honest" person to find out what had happened at that time.

"Whatever happened in 1990 was a tragedy. My Kashmiri

Over 26000 Posts Identified In J&K Govt Departments: MHA

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, Tuesday said that 26330 posts have been identified in various departments in the J&K and taken up for recruitment.

"Presently selection process has been completed with respect to 11,324 Gazetted, Non-Gazetted & Class-IV posts," Minister of State, MHA, Nityanand Rai said in a written reply to a question by parliamentarian Gopal Chinnaya Shetty in Lok Sabha.

He was responding to question whether after abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A, the Government has decided to fill all the vacant posts in Jammu and Kashmir as well as Ladakh.

Rai said the Government has

taken up recruitment drive in a transparent manner for which an Accelerated Recruitment Committee (ARC) was constituted for identifying Gazetted, Non-Gazetted & Class-IV posts and to expedite the recruitment process in J&K.

Regarding Ladakh, he said administration there has taken required measures for filling up of vacant posts. "Some of these measures are: i) 613 District Cadre posts have been filled. ii) 293 vacant posts in Ladakh Police have been advertised. iii) 45 vacant posts of JK Bank have been advertised for candidates from Ladakh and iv) Besides, the UT Administration has tied up with Staff Selection Commission (SSC) for recruitment to UT/ Divisional cadre posts."

Accordingly, he **More on P6**

Tulip Garden To Reopen For Public Today

Traffic Dept Issues Advisory To Prevent Chaos, SSP Blames Lack Of Parking

Aujib Javed

SRINAGAR: As Tulip Garden in Srinagar is all set to reopen on Wednesday, the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic City, Muzaffar Ahmad Shah blamed lack of ample parking space for the traffic chaos along the Dalgate-Boulevard stretch during the much hyped festival.

The Government is scheduled to open Tulip Garden to the public on Wednesday. Every

year Tulip fest creates chaos around the garden and chokes Boulevard road with traffic. The garden is likely to witness huge rush as it was out of bounds for over two years, owing to the outbreak of COVID-19.

In past, the department issued advisory for the people in order to ensure hassle-free movement of vehicles. However, despite it, thousands of people living on the two ends of the Boulevard road, especially Nishat to Dara struggle to reach their destinations in traffic snarls and the commotion it creates.

Speaking to Kashmir Observer, SSP Traffic said that the department will ensure the free movement **More on P6**

Fuel Price Up By 80 Paise; LPG At Record High After Rs 50 Hike

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Petrol and diesel prices were on Tuesday hiked by 80 paise a litre each while domestic cooking gas LPG rates were increased by Rs 50 per cylinder as state oil firms ended an over four-and-half month election-related hiatus in rate revision, fanning inflation fears.

Petrol in Delhi will now cost Rs 96.21 per litre as against Rs 95.41 previously while diesel rates have gone up from Rs 86.67 per litre to Rs 87.47, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

In Mumbai, the petrol price has been hiked by Rs 0.84 per litre to Rs 110.82, and diesel by

Rs 0.86 to Rs 95.

The rates, which differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes such as VAT, are likely to continue to rise over the next few days as state oil firms recoup losses from keeping prices on hold for a record 137 days.

Simultaneously, the price of non-subsidised LPG cylinders has been increased to Rs 949.50 per 14.2-kg bottle in the national capital and Mumbai, and to Rs 976 in Kolkata.

While LPG rates were last revised on October 6, 2021, petrol and diesel prices had been on a freeze since November 4 as five states, including Uttar Pradesh and **More on P6**



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2

Storytelling AI To Improve Wellbeing Of People With Dementia

Press Trust Of India

An Artificial Intelligence (AI) companion for people with dementia is being developed in research involving the University of Strathclyde.

The technology will aid memory recollection, boost confidence and combat depression in people living with Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia.

Memory loss in people with Alzheimer's disease occurs in reverse chronological order, with pockets of long-term memory remaining accessible even as the disease progresses.

While most current rehabilitative care methods focus on physical aids and repetitive reminding techniques, the new project named AMPER (Agent-based Memory Prosthesis to Encourage Reminiscence) will take an AI-driven, user-centred approach and will focus on personalised storytelling to help bring a patient's memories back to the surface, the University said in a statement on Monday.

The research team is led at Heriot-Watt University and the National Robotarium, a partnership between Heriot-Watt University and the University of Edinburgh.

The team was awarded funding by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, part of the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), including 390,000 pounds (USD 514,800) to support work at the University of Strathclyde.

To equip novel technologies with capabilities to deliver personalised reminiscence, knowledge from cognitive and computer sciences need to be combined.

Systems developed to date have failed to deliver person-centred interventions. AI agents with human-like memory such as AMPER will allow recognising, adapting to,



The team was awarded funding by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, part of the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), including 390,000 pounds (USD 514,800) to support work at the University of Strathclyde.

and supporting the ever-changing needs of those affected by dementia.

Dr Mario Parra Rodriguez, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, director of the Applied Cognition Lab and Strathclyde's lead on the project, has developed cognitive-oriented frameworks to equip technologies with capabilities to personalise assessments and

interventions.

He said: People with dementia can often find it difficult to communicate with others. This can create a loss of confidence, which in turn can result in withdrawal and depression.

The aim of AMPER is to assist people in retrieving their memories and we hope this

will help to strengthen people's self-esteem and feelings of belonging, thus leading to better quality of life and prolonging independent living.

The project's long-term vision is to help demonstrate how AI companions can become more widely used and integrated into domestic, educational, health and assistive-needs settings.

Project partners include the charity Sporting Memories, which delivers reminiscence therapy to people with dementia through video footage in day care centre settings, NHS Scotland Neuroprogressive and Dementia Network, Centre for Dementia Prevention, and the Latin American Network for Dementia Research.

Once developed, the AI technology will be accessed through a tablet-based interface to make it more widely accessible and low-cost.

The research team at the National Robotarium plans to separately investigate the use of a desktop robot to determine if there are benefits to be gained by having a 3D representation of a character.

UK Government Minister for Scotland Iain Stewart said: "Alzheimer's disease is one of the cruellest and most challenging diseases anyone can face, so it is very encouraging to hear that AI could help treat some of the symptoms of dementia and improve the quality of life for those afflicted."

"The UK Government is investing 21 million pounds in the National Robotarium to support world-leading research in Scotland with the potential to improve people's lives everywhere."

The project was led by Professor Ruth Aylett and was originally conceived by Dr Mei Yui Lim, both of Heriot-Watt.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Mohammad Iqbal S/o Mohammad Ramzan R/o Peer Bagh Hyderpora intends to apply in the Department of Tourism for registration of my Porposed Travel Unit under name and style "M/s **Shahwaar Greens** situated at Peer Bagh under tourist trade act 1978/82/2011-12. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Deputy Director Tourism Registration. TRC Srinagar, Kashmir within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly mentioned in my Graduation Marks Card bearing Roll No: 58252as Qonsar Saleem While the correct name is Qonsar Saleem which needs immediate correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in Kashmir Univeristy within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. **Qonsar Saleem**
D/o Mohd Saleem Zargar
R/o Malakhnag Anantrag ma

Office of the Assistant Regional Transport Officer, Shopian

NOTICE

Whereas joint application has been received by this office from Mr./ Mrs **Iqbal Kuchay S/o Abdul Razak Kuchay R/o Bongam Shopian** (Party No 1st) as Transferor, (seller) owner of the vehicle Bearing Regd. No. JK22B-8528 Commercial/ Non Commercial) covering under R/P NO: -----

And Mr./ Mrs **Parveez Ahamd Kuchay S/o Jabar Kuchay R/o Bongam Shopian** (Parti No 2nd) as Transferee (purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted vehicle from party No. 1st to 2nd and cancellation of hire purchase agreement with JK Bank Batapora Shopian

Before the case is disposed off on its merits, any body having objection regarding the proposed transfer may file his objection within seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned

No any representation/ objection shall be entertained after stipulated period.

No : ARTO/Spn/1317/ARTO/SPN
Dated 22-03-2022

S/D Asst Regional Transport Officer Shopian

fko

Office of The Regional Transport Officer Kashmir

NOTICE

Where as an application for transfer of ownership has been received from Showkat Ahamd Bhat S/o Mohammad Aslam Bhat R/o Eidgah Srinagar (Transferor) of Altoo 800 bearing registration No. JK01T- 0650 chasis No: 17487 Engine No: 05533 Model 05533 in favour of Shahzad Ahmad Gazi S/O Gaffar Gazi R/O Kangan Kupwara Langate (Transferee).

Now, therefore, it is notified for the information of the general, public that representation/ Objection, if any in connection with proposed transfer will be received within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer to the address of undersigned. No, representation/ objection shall be considered unless it is made writing it is made in the aforesaid period.

NOJK-RTOK 2743
Dated: 22/03/2022
FKO
Sd/- Regional Transport Office, Kashmir

PUBLIC NOTICE

My DOB has been wrongly written in my school records as 12-02-2009 while my correct DOB is 10-11-2011 which needs immediate correction. If any body having any objection in this regard he/ she may file his/her objection in the office of the Govt. Middle School Mullashulla Zone Beerwah Budgam within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Imran Hussain Ganie
S/o Fayaz Ahmad Ganie x

PUBLIC NOTICE

My DOB has been wrongly written in my school records as 12-02-2009 while my correct DOB is 10-11-2011 which needs immediate correction. If any body having any objection in this regard he/ she may file his/her objection in the office of the Govt. Middle School Mullashulla Zone Beerwah Budgam within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Tajamul Gutzar Ganie
S/o Gutzar Ahmad Ganie x

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OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

NOTICE

Whereas an application has been recieved from one. Shri : Umar Maqsood Rather S/o: Maqsood Ahmad Rather R/o: Wagam Chadoora Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04F 5176 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S J & K Bank Ltd B/U Ranger Chadoora .

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.7074
Dated 22/03/2022
Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam Kashmir



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

NOTICE

Whereas an application has been recieved from one. Mrs : Zahida Parveen W/o: Bashir Ahmad Khan R/o: Galwanpora Sebda Budgam Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04F 1692 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S J & K Bank B/U Budgam.

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.7068
Dated 22/03/2022
Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam Kashmir



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

NOTICE

Where a application for transfer of ownership has been recieved from one. Shri : Ghulam Mohammad Ganie S/o: Mohammad Kabir Ganie R/o: Wagoora Suthsoo Kalan Chadoora (Transferor) of M Cycle. Vehicle bearing registration number JK04A - 6731. Chasis number 72818 Engine no. 56043 Model 2007. in favour of Shri.. Shabir Hussain S/o. Abdul Rehman Gojri R/o Shahzadpora Chattergam (Transferee)

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer.

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.7076
Dated 22/03/2022
Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam Kashmir



از دفتر تحصیلدار سوناواری

اشتہار بمبراد آگاہی ہر خاض وعام

ہر خاض وعام کو بذریعہ اشتہار حد اطلاع کیا جاتا ہے کہ موضع صوفی پورہ عثم میں اوقاف کے 30 درختان سفید ہائے جو کہ

بجلی کے 33KV کے نیچے آتے ہیں کی بولی مورخہ 26 مارچ 2022۔ بوقت۔ 11 بجے موقع پر پکاری جائے گی۔ خواہشمند افراد

وقت اور تاریخ مقررہ پر بذات خود تشریف لاکر بولی میں شرکت کر سکتے ہیں۔ بولی بذیل شرائط پر ہوگی۔

۱۔ کامیاب بولی دھندہ کو موقعہ پر ہی بوقت اختتام بولی پوری رقم بولی ادا کرنے ہوگی۔

۲۔ آخر غریزہ کار کو اختیار ہے کہ بلاوجہ بتائے بولی کو منسوخ کر سکتا ہے۔

DIPK-19890/21

تحصیلدار سوناواری

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENIGNEER

ESTATES DIVISION, SRINAGAR.

B

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

E-TENDER NIT NO. 193/XEN/EDS/2022 OF 03/2022

Executive Engineer Estates Division Srinagar on behalf of L.T. Governor of Union Territory J&K invites tenders by E-tendering on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Registered Civil Contractors with Union Territory J&K /CPWD/Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works.

5. No.	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (Amt In Rs)	Time of Comp letion	Class of Contractor	Major Head Of Account
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Replacement and Repairs of Existing CGI Sheets at Civil Secretariat Srinagar.	2.21lacs	200/-	10 Days	DEE	2216-Non Plan
2.	Replacement and Repairs of Existing CGI Sheets at Civil Secretariat Srinagar.	2.50 lacs	200/-	10 Days	DEE	
3.	Re-modeling of Bathroom and Kitchen including other allied works to Set No 39-B at Budshah Flats Srinagar.	2.21lacs	200/-	10 Days	DEE	
4.	Re-modeling of Bathroom and Kitchen including other allied works to Set No 20-B at Budshah Flats Srinagar. (U-Shaped Block)	2.43 lacs	200/-	10 Days	DEE	
5.	Renovation /Repairs of Ceiling including Re-modeling of Kitchen with other allied Works of Govt. Quarter No. J-50 at Jawahir Nagar Srinagar (Part A)	2.20 lacs	200/-	10 Days	DEE	
6.	Restoration of Defunct Disposal System by way of laying of PVC pipes & Construction of Man-holes at ACB Head Quarter Peer Bagh Srinagar.	0.97 lacs	200/-	07 Days	DEE	
7.	Making Signage's at various locations at Tulsibagh Srinagar.	0.64 lacs	200/-	10 Days	DEE	
8.	Repairs / Renovation / Remodeling of Set No. B-105 at New Phase Tulsibagh Srinagar.	1.86 lacs	200/-	10 Days	DEE	

Position of Funds:

Position of Funds:

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	19-03-2022
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	22.03.2022 from 10.00 AM.
3	Bid submission Start Date	22.03.2022 from 10.00 AM.
4	Bid Submission End Date	28.03.2022 upto 3.00 PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	28.03.2022 at 3.05 PM. In the office of Executive Engineer Estates Division, Srinagar.

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan under Major Head-0216/ Revenue (others) in favour of Executive Engineer Estates Division, Srinagar (tender inviting authority) (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer Estates Division, Srinagar (tender receiving authority).

3. All Bidders has to submit Bid Security Declaration Form Instead of Earnest money as per the circular of Finance Department (Bid Security Declaration Form is as per Annexure "A" below).

4. The 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of advertised cost as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR within 02 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work/DLP is over.

5. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer Estates Division, Srinagar (tender receiving authority).

6. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.

7. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

7.1. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.

7.2. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get "Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)" as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.

7.3. The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.

7.4. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.

7.5. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the technical bid.

Note:- Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

8. The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.

9. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer Estates Division, Srinagar (The date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer Estates Division, Srinagar must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The original Treasury Challan (cost of tender document), and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of contract.

10. Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.

11. Price escalation and Taxes:- The rate quoted by the bidder shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.

12. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on Estates e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.

DIPK-19880/21

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Estates Division, Sgr.

No. - E-Tender/NIT/EDS/946-56/2022 /T-1
Dated:- 19-03-2022

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Emergency OT Made Functional At B&J Hospital

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: The Emergency Operation Theatre at Bones and Joints Hospital has been made operational. A massive fire broke out at Bones and Joints 4th March.

The fire had caused massive damage to the Hospital and the patients was ferried to other hospitals for treatment. The Out Patient Department services were started for patients from 7th March.

Medical Superintendent Bones and Joints Hospital MianSuhail told Kashmir Observer that the restoration of the Emergency Operation Theatre has been a collective effort and it has been made operational with the help of other Departments and officials from the administration.

"It has not been one man's job. It has been a collective effort", he said.

"The Emergency Operation Theatre has been made function from Monday and it is functional 24x7" he added.

However, he clarified the main Operation Theatre was not damaged during the fire incident.

Rs 46K Recovered From Erring Shopkeepers

Agencies

Srinagar: The Enforcement Squad of Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) today recovered a penal sum of Rs. 46,200 from 37 erring shopkeepers, besides eight wholesale poultry/mutton shops were also sealed for violation of the E.C.Act.

The action was taken by the teams of FCS&CA in view of the complaints that poured from different sections of the society regarding illegal enhancement of rates of poultry and other products.

On the occasion, the Enforcement squad spread out the teams in two zones of Srinagar City to conduct market checking. During the market checking 102 business establishments were inspected in different areas of Srinagar City like Lakhriyar, Soura, Buchpora, Pantha Chowk, Bemina, Lawaypora, Umer Abad etc.

It was given out that the drive will continue in the same passion in future as well and whosoever found violating the norms will be brought to justice.(KNS)



Srinagar Shootout: Security Personnel patrol street at Zoonimar following a brief encounter with militants in which a Cop was killed. KO Photo/Abid Bhat

LG Meets Ukraine Returned MBBS Students

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today met MBBS students of the Kashmir valley who have returned from Ukraine, at Raj Bhavan on Tuesday.

The students while interacting with the Lieutenant Governor expressed gratitude towards the government for their evacuation from the war hit country.

They also expressed their appreciation to Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for the safe return of Indian students from Ukraine under "Operation Ganga".



During the interaction, the students raised concerns regarding their studies in view of the prevailing situation in Ukraine and also shared with the Lieutenant Governor the stories of their evacuation.

They requested the Lieutenant Governor to accommo-

date them in medical colleges of J&K and other parts of the country for further studies.

The Lt Governor while interacting with the students assured them of all possible support by the government. Central and the UT Government is working on a policy to help Ukraine returned

students to complete their studies in India, said the Lt Governor.

The students who met the Lieutenant Governor include RasikMuzaffar, IdfarManzoor, SamreenMushtaq, Bilkeesa Akhter, Neehar Noor, Khadim Hussain, Amir Hamid, and Shiraz Khan.

DC Reviews Works In Progress For Amarnath Yatra

Agencies

Srinagar: In order to review the pace of works in progress forAmarnathYatra (SAN-JY)-2022, a meeting of senior officers of Police and Civil Administration was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad AljazAsad here on Tuesday at Meeting Hall of DC Office.

The meeting was attended by SSP Traffic, Muzaffar Ahmad, Additional Deputy Com-

missioner, Srinagar, Dr Syed HaneefBalkhi, Superintendent of Police(Headquarter), Arif Ahmad, Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Yaseen Lone, Joint Commissioner SMC, Riyaz Ahmad, Deputy Director Fire & Emergency Services, Bashir Ahmad, Chief Medical Officer, Srinagar, DrJameel, besides AD FCS&CA, Executive Engineers of R&B, I&FC, and PHE.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner said that due to Covid-19 pandemic de-

cline this year the number of Yatries is expected to be very high.

The DC directed the officers to expedite the works undertaken to augment the accommodation for temporary halt at transit camp in Pantha Chowk in wake of expected huge footfall for the yatries paying obeisance at holy cave and passing via Srinagar route. He asked for intensified preparations for the basic amenities at the transit camp.

SMC Organizes Workshop For Zonal Resource Persons

Agencies

Srinagar: After signing of MoU between SMC and Premji Azim Foundation andPraja Azim Foundation , Srinagar Municipal Corporation organized a five day workshop for Capacity of Building of all Zonal Resource Persons of Srinagar City .

Commissioner SMC Mr Athar Amir Khan was the Chief Guest on the occasion. He formally inaugurated the five day workshop and said the training session is imperative and will strive towards improving the education scenario in all SMC's Schools.

He said that all Zonal Resource Persons must derive maxi-

mum benefits from this five day training session to pass on the educative skills to the people so that they can further develop and shape up their personality.

Joint Commissioner SMC Syed Abul Qasim while formally welcoming the gathering opened up the introductory session.

MrBijoy Shankar Das from Azim Premji Foundation in his lecture said the objective of this session is to know the significance and The representatives of Azim Premji Foundation who gave lectures on the occasion were Vikas Chandra Roy, MsJwariaSaleem and MrTi Rang RangSanamie.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my driving license bearing DL No: JK-0320170002479 Now I have applied 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 ARTO ANANTNAG within a period of seven days from the date of Publication of this notice. After that no Objection shall be entertained.

Name:- Rayees Hussain Sheikh
S/O :- Mohd Hussain Sheikh
R/o: Ranipora Anantnag

rna

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for information of general public that I, Ex No 13759301N Ex. Hav name Ghulam Nabi Bhat Unit : 17 JAK RIF R/O: Kawarigam , Tehsil & District : Anantnag (J&K) have changed the name of MOMEN GULAM to MOMEN GHULAM as mentioned in school records.

Anybody having any objection in this regard may kindly be intimated to JAK RIF Record office ,C/O 56 APO or ZilaSainik Welfare Office at Batmaloo ,Srinagar (J&K) within 07 days (Seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.

13789301N Ex Hav
Ghulalm Nabi Bhat
VPO: Kawarigam ,Anantnag (J&K)

rna

اعظہار لائق

میں مسی عبد الرحمان ڈار ولد نور محمد ڈار ساکنہ ڈوہ پورہ کھنڈیل انت ناگ ہر خاص و عام کو ذرا مختصر مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ میرے پسران نامی حفیظ ڈار ولد عبد الرحمان ڈار ۲۲ ریش احمد ڈار ولد عبد الرحمان ڈار ساکنہ ڈوہ پورہ کھنڈیل انت ناگ پچھلے دو سال سے مذکورہ کے گھر سے بے دخل کیا گیا ہیں۔ عوام الناس سے گزارش کی جاتی ہے کہ اگر ان کے ساتھ کوئی لین دین ہوگا تو وہ اس کے خود مدار ہوگے ان کی نافرمانی پر میں نے ان دونوں پسران کو اپنے مقتول و غیر مقتول جائیداد سے بے دخل کیا ہے۔ لہذا اگر کسی بھی شخص کو ان کے ساتھ کوئی بھی لین دین ہوگا تو دونوں خود مدار ہوگے۔ مذکورہ خود مدار پھر ہائے۔

اختر عبد الرحمان ڈار

9596523309 فون نمبر: ولد نور محمد ڈار ساکنہ ڈوہ پورہ کھنڈیل انت ناگ

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NAME:- Mohd Altaf Dar
S/O :- Gh Qadir Dar R/O:- Monghall Anantnag

rna

Gurgaon Based Doctor Looking for Medico Life Partner

A respectable Sunni Muslim family from district Nuh, Haryana is seeking matrimonial proposal from a pretty Muslim girl having an MBBS degree for their convent read 26 year old MBBS doctor son settled in Gurgaon NCR for medical business.

Contact Person: Hussain
Cell No: 9813044624

DIAL-EMMA

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-245092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200



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



HIGHWAY STATUS



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



HIJRI
CALENDAR
19 Shaban
1443

PRAYERS

FAJR	5: 08
ZUHR	12:40
ASR	4:58
Magrib	6:48
ISHA	8: 08

This Day In History

- 1919 - 8th Congress of the Russian Communist Party re-establishes a five-member Politburo
- which becomes the center of political power in the Soviet Union. Original members Vladimir
- Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Joseph Stalin, Lev Kamenev and Nikolai Krestinsky
- 1920 Perserikatan Communist of India (PKI) political party forms
- 1921 - Germany announces it will be unable to meet its Great War reparation payments
- 1931 -Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev embrace the gallows during the Indian struggle for independence. Their request to be shot by a firing squad is refused.
- 1933 - Enabling Act: German Reichstag grants Adolf Hitler dictatorial powers
- 1936 - Italy, Austria & Hungary sign Pact of Rome
- 1936 - Physician Joseph G. Hamilton injects a leukemia patient with a sodium radioisotope, the first intravenous injection of a human with a radio-isotope
- 1940 - All-India-Muslim League calls for a Muslim homeland
- 1940 - The Lahore Resolution (Qarardad-e-Pakistan or the then Qarardad-e-Lahore) is put forward at the Annual General Convention of the All India Muslim League.

From KO Archives

Vajpayee Swears By Secularism

Vows To Create Ne Work Culture

New Delhi- Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today declared that his coalition government will initiate speedy internal liberalisation of the economy, allow upto Rs 1,500 crore of foreign direct investment in states in the power sector and strive to create a new work culture.

The government is committed to speedy internal liberalisation of the economy, freeing it from all the growth-hindering bureaucratic and government controls, 72-year-old Vajpayee said in his first broadcast to the nation.

Vajpayee said in the turbulence of the world markets and in the new emerging regime of the world trade organisation, India's principle responsibility should be to safeguard and, promote the country's interest.

Asserting that a major area of focus will be restructuring centre-state relations and decentralising financial and administrative powers to states, he said as a first step, the government will urgently devise legal and executive changes so that decision can be taken directly by states in regard to sectors such as power. Even in regard to foreign direct investments upto, say, Rs. 1,500 crore, he said.

In his broadcast, the Prime Minister said we must restore the credibility of public life and public institutions, making them once again reliable and independent pillars of state.

Noting that the country must give up the harmful path of confrontation, he said my government is unequivocally committed to the concept of secularism... we treasure it.

Stressing that his government would reach out to talent across the country, Vajpayee said it shall strive to create a new work culture, a world class working environment so that the best remain here to build our country, so that those who are now working elsewhere return, and put their prodigious acumen to work for their country.

The Prime Minister said he would personally monitor programmes for doubling female literacy within ten years, vastly improving medical care for daughters and mothers, protecting self-respect for women and empowering them politically through reservation in parliament and State Assemblies.

On relations with India's neighbors, Vajpayee said the BJP-led coalition will strain every nerve to accelerate the trend in the last few years to improve relations with neighbouring countries.

We are determined to be friend with all—and precisely because we happen to be the largest country, we shall be all the more sensitive to the aspirations and needs of our neighbours that applies to Pakistan as much as to our other neighbours, he said. (PTI)

(Kashmir Observer, 23 March, 1998)

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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K O V I E W

Fraught situation

Nearly a month after the Russian invasion, more than 3.5 million people have fled Ukraine, in an exodus that has led to Europe's worst refugee crisis since World War II. Poland has taken in the lion's share — more than 2.1 million — followed by Romania with more than 540,000 and Moldova with more than 367,000. If anything, this shows that the war is getting worse by the day. After the initial success, Russia, according to reports in the western media, is finding it difficult to make progress in the war. Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, is yet to fall and the government of Volodymyr Zelensky remains very much in command. This shows that the Ukrainian forces bolstered by the abundant western military aid have been able to stall the Russian war machinery.

But it is unlikely that Russia will back down, nor is likely that NATO will. That is, unless Russia is able to comprehensively defeat Ukraine. The war has become an existential crisis for both sides. One which blinks first will be the defeated party. This makes the situation scary and prone to develop into a world war if the parties on both sides don't see the reason and take steps to de-escalate the situation by addressing each other's genuine concerns. But this seems unlikely to happen in the near future. There has been no talk of any dialogue between NATO and Russia so far.

Only Zelensky has called for a dialogue with Russia. In fact, Ukrainian president has been plumping for a summit with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin. Zelensky on Monday said his country would be "destroyed" before it surrenders its cities to Russian forces, but said that the direct talks with Putin as the key to ending the war.

On the other hand, US president Joe Biden has warned that Putin was considering using chemical and biological weapons in Ukraine as he held talks with European leaders on what he called Moscow's increasingly "brutal tactics". On Monday, a Russian missile strike reduced a shopping mall in Kyiv to rubble, killing eight people.

So, the war seems set to go on for now. And this is happening at a time when the world economy was gradually recovering from the debilitating fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic, a once-in-a-century event. The countries were slowly opening up and letting the economy function normally. International travel was also returning to pre-pandemic levels. The resumption of economic activity was important to restore the millions of jobs lost to pandemic. If the war drags on in Ukraine, the world economy is likely to come under severe stress again. Skyrocketing oil prices will also wreck the European economy. Therefore it is incumbent on the world to come together to resolve the crisis in Ukraine and find a solution that addresses the concerns of all the parties involved.

O T H E R O P I N O N

A Matter of Quad

The unexceptionable point made by Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Le Yucheng in his barely-veiled attack on the Quad — the grouping consisting of India, Australia, Japan and the US — was this: "No country should pursue its so-called absolute security at the expense of other countries' security." He drew a parallel between the situation in Ukraine — according to him, a result of "the NATO strategy of eastward expansion" — and the several provocations perceived by Beijing in the Indo-Pacific. The analogy does not hold. After all, it is China that has become an assertive power in the region and beyond, often at the "expense of other countries' security". US forces and allies have been a presence in the region since the end of the Second World War, and unlike NATO, the Quad is not a military alliance. As a former ambassador to India and rising star in China's foreign policy establishment, Le may understandably be taken seriously in Delhi. But it is important to note that amid recent geopolitical developments, India's foreign policy priorities and the ties fostered with members of the Quad are holding fast.

The Quad is a response to China's rising ambitions, which have manifested in the form of occupying islands and trying to control sea lanes in the Indo-Pacific, as well as its activities along the Line of Actual Control with India. On the other hand, as recently as February 4, China and Russia declared a "no-limits" partnership, effectively creating an alliance where they would back each other's plans in Ukraine and Taiwan. In other words, China may be doing precisely what it is accusing the West and countries in the Indo-Pacific of doing. Le's offensive against the Quad also comes on the heels of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's summit-level meetings with the prime ministers of Japan and Australia this week. With both countries, the level of bilateral economic cooperation and strategic convergence has only deepened: Japan has committed to investments of about \$4.2 billion over five years and Australia too is likely to unveil new projects and investments in India. Both visits took place following reports of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's offer to visit India.

New Delhi must engage in talks with Beijing, while, as it has done so far, looking out for its best interests. It is also clear that China continues to be seen as the primary challenge by the Quad. Both the Japanese and Australian prime ministers have reportedly discussed the situation in Ukraine with PM Modi, and have not insisted that India echo their position. New Delhi has also reiterated that China's belligerence — whether on its borders or in the Indo-Pacific — stands in the way of a thaw in ties with Beijing. No amount of grandstanding by China changes that reality.

The Indian Express

Vision For Universal Vaccine
What Will It Take To Make A Universal Covid Vaccine?



ERICA OLLMANN SAPHIRE
AND EDWARD SCOLNICK

Since this protein is so prone to mutation, making it harder for the body to recognize in future variants, a more universal vaccine must target parts of the virus that are shared among several viruses in the family — often essential components that are less likely to mutate

As California emerges from Omicron, other places are again in lockdown or facing record caseloads after trying and failing to avoid the variant. Many of us who did everything right, getting every shot and booster and avoiding crowds, nonetheless got infected.

COVID's persistence could push us toward a concession to just live with the virus. But that seems defeatist, and is perilous. Highly infectious variants erupted from parts of the world that still have low vaccination rates and high population density. New research finds accelerated cognitive decline and cardiovascular problems after even mild COVID infections. Over a dozen animal species are now known to be infected with SARS-CoV-2, setting the stage for new mutations. We need a new approach, now, to defeat future waves of this virus and other viruses that might emerge.

That points to a lifelike, durable, broadly protective vaccine. What will it take to develop one? It will be a tough road, but it's possible. Success will require two principles that the world has not yet sufficiently grasped in fighting this virus: a focus on the long term over the short term, and a sustainable structure and support for collaboration.

Workers in PPE overalls guard an entrance to a community under lock down on Thursday, March 17, 2022, in Beijing. A fast-spreading variant known as "stealth omicron" is testing China's zero-tolerance strategy, which had kept the virus at bay since the deadly initial outbreak in the city of Wuhan in early 2020. (AP Photo/Ng Han Guan)

One challenge is that there are so many viral sequences the vaccine has to protect against, arising not only from emerging SARS-CoV-2 variants, but also from the multitude of other coronaviruses that may yet spill into humans. The first-generation mRNA vaccines, which teach the body to recognize the spike protein part of the virus and mount an immune response, encode a viral strain that no longer circulates. Since this protein is so prone to mutation, making it harder for the body to recognize in future variants, a more universal vaccine must target parts of the virus that are shared among several viruses in the family — often essential components that are less likely to mutate.

Unfortunately, these parts are often less noticeable by the immune system. Science has since found better ways to prompt a more effective immune response to the spike protein, and better ways to engineer and display that protein itself, but finding the right combination of the different strategies will take coordination.

And we're not sure if the mRNA format, which emerged as a vaccine strategy after decades of development, is best against the next new pathogen, compared with other vaccine approaches such as using nanoparticles that allow more options for vaccine formulations, weakened or killed viruses, or viral vectors that contain a greater variety of molecules and may trigger protective viral-sensing mechanisms.

To handle these complexities, we'll need all kinds of experts — including in developing novel vaccine formats to elicit an effective, long-lasting immune response and in understanding the vaccine components that cause immune cells to spring into action. We need experts that understand how antibodies don't just inactivate the virus, but also recruit an army of complementary immune cells to clear the pathogen from the body. We also need experts in preclinical models to help us understand which vaccine candidates to advance to human trials, and how to gauge their success. And we need experts in large-scale vaccine production, cost and distribution logistics.

Each of these hurdles will be addressed by distinct groups of scientists, each working in a different discipline and at a separate site. The right vaccines probably won't be made by one group or company alone but will result from a concerted effort of many approaches that overcome different variables. So globally, researchers will have to collaborate on the scale and style of the Manhattan Project to build a lasting solution. Since researchers have already arrived at better solutions than the approaches in early 2020, they have plenty to start with. Many labs are already pursuing different routes to a universal vaccine.

The scientific enterprise, however, is built on competition, not mass collaboration without regard to your individual career. Competition has benefits: It encourages innovation, driving us to get results faster and to deliver a better result or product than that of our competitors. The downside is the lack of sharing — of results, samples and crucial insights. Competition for limited funding and the need to publish results first can lead to siloing and a focus on rapid results instead of thorough ones.

It is easy to call for sharing and coordination, but that call will go ignored without structures to support and encourage researchers. Both of us know this firsthand: We've been involved in building large, multidisciplinary collaborative efforts among competitors to untangle research problems no single lab could attempt alone. This required creating and revising systems to develop and evaluate competing ideas or treatments simultaneously, backed

by data-driven machine-learning approaches that evaluated results on a level playing field. These approaches made it possible to understand why some antibodies were protective and others weren't, and what laboratory experiments best identified those treatments that would be successful in people.

Our collaborative approaches worked because they set up individual labs to succeed, while also contributing to the greater good. Participating lab researchers needed to have publishable papers come out of the projects, so that contributing their time and effort would advance their career instead of costing it. They also needed protection of their intellectual property, so they were able to participate and share, alongside funding to support work on a greater scale or depth than their current funding sources would permit.

Companies that gave access to their researchers and supplies, meanwhile, needed tangible benefit: They would receive valuable data that they could use for new drug filings, and the consortium's work would open new doors for their products. The federal and philanthropic funders of these projects also received strong bang for their buck: a body of knowledge that bridged barriers and advanced the field as a whole.

Motivating philanthropic and federal funders will be essential to develop longer-lasting, broadly protective vaccines. Since vaccines typically don't make much money — a good lifelong vaccine might be administered once, and for much of the world it needs to be donated — federal governments and large philanthropic organizations have to front most of the investment.

They may not feel motivated to continue right now: While earlier in the pandemic the U.S. government and other funders were driven by a sense of immediate crisis, now the focus is on widespread reopening. They may be less willing to prevent what now feels like a potential crisis. Funding and interest in developing vaccines for 2003's SARS-CoV-1 dissipated after that virus went away; in 2020, we could have used that knowledge and the drugs that would have resulted.

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

Erica Ollmann Saphire is president, CEO and professor at La Jolla Institute for Immunology. Edward Scolnick is core member emeritus at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard and former head of R&D at Merck Research Laboratories

Students should be taught provisions under law for digital offences from the school level itself. It is imperative to have an all-hands-on-deck approach to ensure that we give a safe internet to women.

Ameera Shah



OBSERVER
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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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Respecting Women Online

COVID-19 has pushed people to the digital universe, now, more than ever. This, however, does not mean that this proliferation has been entirely positive. With more people on the internet, it has also become a vulnerable space. It is especially true for women.

Women face a number of issues online. Stalking, trolling, harassment and blackmailing — to name a few.

Trolling, out of all these, is often brushed under the carpet and is trivialised. This trivialisation of trolling helps no one and is absolutely unacceptable. In a country like India, there is every chance that digital abuse can translate into physical harm. Women are already in danger here and add to that the access that

internet gives to possible offenders.

Therefore, we must find ways to collaboratively call out abusive handles and ensure the safety of women on the internet. Additionally, vocal women need to be supported and protected because they're always at the receiving end of hate. Moreover, those who aren't aware of how to use internet safely, should also be edu-

Joie de Vivre of Bahaar

EDITOR'S NOTE: Spring is spirit's favourite fuel. There's a reckoning of all seasons that culminates into a compromise in Spring. It is hope and one which announces itself quite visibly after a winter worth of worry. In this part of the world, the word Bahaar, sums up the feeling. A free and flowing release of syllables — Bahaar.

In Kashmir, a place full of stories dug into the ground and pain closeted in alleyways, spring forces people to hope again. Every year, spring in Kashmir is so beautiful that it puts all misery into perspective. Even if the optimism is uncritical, it is still a gift for endurance and a food for survival.

Much like many corners of the world, Kashmir too had its festivals of spring which got stifled in the politics of this place. Yet, through people's experience and rejoicing, the celebration survives.

Idyllic Mundane

Photos by Faisal Bashir for KO

This year, the winter went away in a jiffy and spring arrived unabashed — glorious in its colours and joie de vivre. Although temperatures have set worried frowns on people's faces, spring has managed to nudge everyone's lips on both ends for a big smile.

Here's a collection of pictures from Kashmir to show this vitality spread out in mundaneness.



A Maruti 800 is seen climbing through reinvigorated green routes, circled by blossoms in Chadoora, Budgam



Schools have started after a break of over three years following the Abrogation of Article 370 and the subsequent covid lockdown. In the picture, a school bus makes its way through a blossoming trees — spreading out a floral welcome carpet for kids



A Kashmiri boy rides his bicycle through an Almond orchard in Budgam



A Kashmiri shepherd with his herd of sheep in a Mustard field in Pulwama



A farmer sprinkles a generous share of fertiliser in a mustard field in Kakapora, Pulwama

Blossoming Badam Waer

Photos by Aabid Bhat for KO

Badam Waer (Almond garden) in Srinagar's downtown is behind the famous Hari Parbat fort. It holds a special place in the hearts and memories of most downtown dwellers. While some have stories from childhood where spring festivals were held every year, others recall a desolate view of the garden when it was only frequented by those who remembered.

Now, following work by J&K Bank, the garden has been re-fashioned for visitors. It still manages to invite early risers who have made this place their therapeutic heaven. Apart from this, during the early days of spring, the garden hosts innumerable visits from people who stop by to enjoy the feast of almond blossoms.

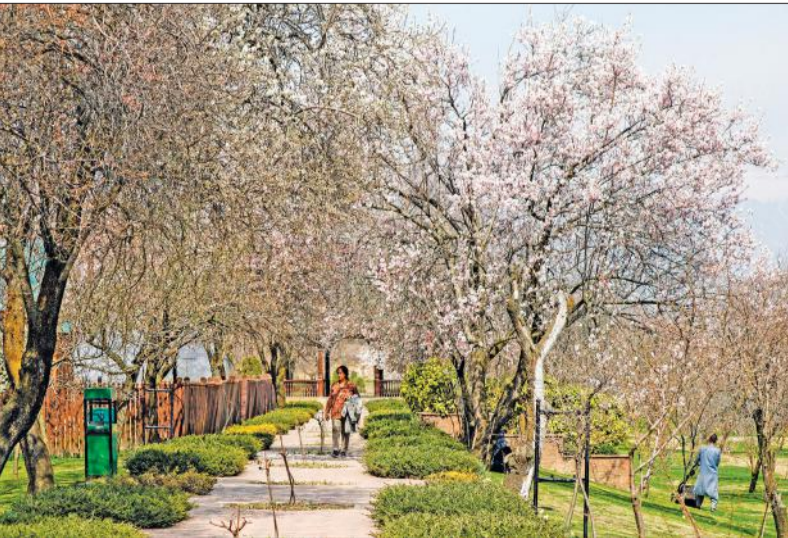
Following is a collection of clicks that give us a closer look into the most loved petals



A butterfly sits on an Almond blossom in Badam Waer



A closer look at an almond blossom with a bokeh of blossoms



A visitor walks through a path in the famous almond garden in Downtown Srinagar



A gardner is seen mowing grass in Badamwaer, Srinagar



A bee rest and hovers over a pink blossom — quite spectacularly

Policeman Killed

sustained critical injuries. He was taken to hospital where he attained martyrdom,” Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar told reporters at the wreath laying ceremony of the deceased cop.

He said it was a Lashkar-e-Taiba group travelling in the car.

“Basit, who took as commander after Mehran’s killing, and Rehan besides another militant were in the car. We are tracking this group and will neutralise them soon,” Kumar said.

The IGP also said that this group was responsible for the recent killings, including in Budgam.

When asked about the sudden spurt in militant attacks, Kumar said that the forces were also carrying out operations.

“So far this month, we have neutralised 11 hardcore terrorists, 12-13 of them have also been arrested. Our operations are on,” he added.

Soon after the shootout, reports said, a huge contingent of Special Operations Group (SOG) personnel and paramilitary CRPF men carried out a series of search operations in Zoonimar and the adjoining areas. However, no arrests were made when the last reports came in.

In a statement issued here this evening, a police spokesperson said that the militants managed to escape from the spot after the shootout taking the advantage of huge rush of commuters. “Police have registered a case in this regard under relevant sections of law. Investigation is vigorously in progress,” he said.

Politicians React
Meanwhile, several mainstream leaders condemned the killing of policeman and expressed solidarity with the bereaved family.

“Deeply saddened by the dastardly killing of Amir Hussain of the JK Police. We are fast turning the dignity of human lives into a statistic. And that is very dangerous. My condolences to the family. May Allah give them strength to bear this loss,” Peoples Conference chief Sajad Lone said on Twitter.

The National Conference said, “Deeply saddened by the demise of 30-year-old SSGT Amir Hussain who lost his life in a shootout at Zoonimar, Soura (Srinagar). May Allah grant him a place in Jannat and give his loved ones enough strength to face the days ahead.”

Apni Party chief Altaf Bukhari said the cycle of violence was despicable and served no cause.

“Condemn the killing of a policeman in a brief shoot out in Srinagar today. My heart goes out to his family & loved ones. This cycle of violence is despicable and serves no cause. It only leaves behind inevitable loss and adds to our sufferings,” he tweeted.

LG Meets Labourers

Muhammad Akram from Bijnoor, Uttar Pradesh and assured them of the best possible health facility for their treatment, an official spokesperson said.

While condemning the attacks on civilians, he said, the LG asserted that the government is determined to “eliminate terrorism and perpetrators of despicable terror attacks will be brought to justice soon”.

Earlier, the spokesperson said that Principal, GMC Srinagar, Prof. Samia Rashid briefed the LG about the condition of the injured and the health-care facilities being provided by the hospital.

Sinha was accompanied by Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K. Pole; Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz; Medical Superintendent SMHS hospital, Kanwaljeet Singh and other senior officers of the health department.

Targeted Killings

“When was not targeted killings a challenge? This (targeted killings) challenge is always there until there is presence of gun, terrorists and involvement of Pakistan,” Singh told reporters here.

“Terrorists and their mentors are present everywhere. Such incidents (grenade attacks and targeted killings) take place due to their (terrorist) activities,” he said.

The DGP said J and K Police has been quick to solve incidents of targeted killings and action as per law has been taken against the guilty.

“A large number of terrorists have been neutralised,” he added.

Replying to a question on infiltration, the police chief said the border grid is alert to foil any such activity. “Any such attempt (from across the border), will not be allowed.”

The DGP was talking to reporters after handing over keys of motorcycles and scooters to policemen and policewomen for undertaking patrolling along the borderline in Jammu, Samba and Kathua district, besides in the city.

Singh also flagged off border patrol and women helpline vehicles.

“Through CSR initiative, Hero MotoCorp has provided bikes that will be used for border patrolling and for women’s squads in the cities,” he said.

Rs 27000 Crore

ground, I hope a minimum of six to seven lakh people will get employment, he said.

Speaking to media at SKICC here after attending the Gulf Countries

investment summit, Sinha said a huge change has started in the J-K in the last two years.

“Especially if I talk about investment and industrial business, a new industrial scheme was created by the Government of India for J-K wherein a proposal of having Rs 28,200 crore as incentives was kept, he said.

The LG said J-K has the better industrial incentive scheme compared to the rest of the country which has resulted in an increased interest in J-K by the businessmen across the country.

Sinha said after Narendra Modi became the prime minister, a new era of friendship started between India and the UAE.

I think, it is for the first time that India’s head of state has twice or thrice visited the UAE and created a new environment of cooperation, Sinha said.

The J-K LG said during the Dubai Expo in January, the J-K administration interacted with many businessmen and invited them to visit J-K so that they could see with their own eyes and explore the investments here.

We interacted today and specified several issues and areas. We have identified their concerns and we have assured them that their redressal will be done in a minimum time period especially in the hospital and medical education, real estate, hospitality, food processing cold storages and cold chains, and education, he said.

Sinha said the delegates were very important people as many of them were CEOs of big companies.

The discussions have been very good. We will now try to take it to the conclusion very soon, he added.

He said the administration has taken steps which have started to show results.

I think it will result in increase in the business and employment generation. The industries and commerce department has made several efforts to take J-K’s horticulture produce, handicrafts and crafts across the world. I am sure we will get huge success in this sector as well. The UT is at a transformative stage where prosperity will come, employment opportunities will come, and people will live in a peaceful coexistence, Sinha said.

Later, taking to Twitter, Sinha said during his address at the summit, he highlighted the scope for J-K and GCC companies’ economic cooperation to make the “paradise on earth” as the most beautiful investment destination in the world.

The visit of CEOs of top companies, entrepreneurs, start-up representatives, exporters in J&K is an expression of confidence of the industry leaders in the potential for business cooperation between J&K and Gulf countries, he said in a series of tweets.

The LG said India’s relationship with Gulf countries is being translated into a vibrant, revitalized economic partnership with J-K that will not only diversify our export basket but will also create a conducive environment for expansion of the existing trade.

We have worked with a coherent framework in last 2yrs to harness immense natural resources, economic potential of J&K. Under guidance of Hon’ble PM Sh Narendra Modi & Hon’ble HM Sh. Amit Shah, we’ve also worked out a blueprint to unlock investment flows from compliance & restrictions, he said.

We promise to provide global standard end-to-end facilities for the businesses, skilled workforce, transparent and hassle-free regulatory mechanism and creation of necessary infrastructure wherever required, Sinha said.

He said since the Dubai Expo visit, many foreign companies from UAE have announced long-term plans for J-K. We are ready to take relationship to a qualitatively new level and strengthen our economic partnership .

Gulf Delegation

of making investment in Kashmir, he said, Let me tell you very seriously, we are not here to waste the time. We came here for something. We took a step, there is a step we are taking now and there is a step which we are going to take in the future very soon.”

The visiting businessman noted that the investments in J&K would be beneficial for both the countries -- the UAE and India -- and especially for Jammu and Kashmir .

To a query if the group was of the opinion that there was potential for investment in J&K, Alshaibani said “yes, it is. It is 100 per cent”.

Another member of the delegation, and the CEO of the Century Financial Group, Bal Krishen, said the delegation has come to J&K with a clear mind.

“They (the members of the delegation) see opportunities in J&K. A businessman sees only profits and they see opportunities and profits here. For this, they have come here with a pure and clear cut mind to invest here and create jobs,” he said.

Will Generate

and Rawalpura F-04 in Srinagar will now get round the clock quality power supply without any scheduled curtailment.

“We are committed to quality and reliable power supply to every household. I urge people to install smart meters and support the government’s efforts in bringing reforms in the power sector,” Sinha said.

Pertinently, on March 21, the LG

had announced zero scheduled power curtailment to 6603 households in the areas of Jammu where smart meters have been installed.

While interacting with the media persons, the LG, as per the spokesperson reiterated government’s commitment to generating 3400 MW power in the next four years, making J&K UT self-sufficient in the power sector.

Sinha, he said, also claimed that no serious efforts were made to exploit the power generation potential in the past.

“However, power generation being targeted for the next four years will be equal to the cumulative capacity installed during the last 7 decades,” the LG added.

One-Way Traffic

only light vehicles shall ply initially on the highway on the pattern of odd-even basis.

On the occasion, Div Com Kashmir said that one way traffic from Srinagar to Leh shall ply on odd days while from Leh to Srinagar traffic will ply on even days.

He added that from next week there shall be no movement of transport on Fridays.

The cut off time for vehicles from Kashmir side shall remain 6 am at Sonmarg, Ganderbal side and 8:30 am from Kargil side at Meenamarg.

The meeting further decided to establish health check up centers, establishment of joint control room, traffic check posts, positioning of recovery vans, operation of weight bridges to restrict overloading of vehicles besides allow movement of only antiskid chained vehicles.

Regarding any advisory of weather and avalanche, concerned officers were asked to share information on a daily basis.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners of Ganderbal and Kargil Chief Engineers of R&B, MED, BEACON & VIJAYAK; Regional Transport Officer, Kashmir; SSP Kargil, SSP Ganderbal, SSP Traffic Ladakh, DSP Traffic Rural Kashmir and Executive Director NHIDCL.

Significant Drop

was a word of caution as the minister informed the house that “as per inputs, a significant number of suspected terrorists remain present at various launch pads in Pakistan/ Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK)”.

Pakistan and India have been observing a ceasefire along the LoC for over a year now.

He said the government has adopted a multi-pronged approach to contain cross-border infiltration which includes multi-tiered deployment along the international border and LoC, border fencing, improved intelligence and operational coordination, equipping security forces with advanced weapons and taking proactive action against infiltrators.

In reply to another question on launch pads and infrastructure built across the border, Pramaik said the government regularly reviews the security situation along the LoC and takes precautionary measures for thwarting any move by threat elements including the militants.

“However, information sought being a sensitive operational matter concerning national security, cannot be divulged in the interest of national security,” he added.

Replying to a question about use of drones for delivery of ammunition by militants along the international border, Pramanik said the border guarding forces are well equipped to neutralise threats emanating from misuse of drones by rogue elements including militants.

“An incident of use of drone to deliver ammunition was noticed and the drone was neutralized in Punjab along Indo-Pakistan border in 2022,” he said and added that anti-drone systems have been deployed along the border to tackle such situations.

In addition, border guarding forces have taken various preventive as well as precautionary measures to counter drones which include framing of standard operating procedures for countering drone, adequate deployment of troops and patrolling, and deployment of surveillance equipment.

370 Revocation Opened

for many years the region did not see any tourism-related activity as tourists and even the government officials wanted to keep a safer distance from the region.

He said the situation has improved drastically after the repeal of Article 370 as the central government has taken various initiatives to encourage the overall development in the region, including developing tourism opportunities and road-related infrastructure.

Reddy said the number of tourists in March this year stood at around 1.13 lakh, which was three times the total number of tourists who arrived in UT in 2019.

“In the next three months, there is no availability of rooms everything is sold out did you ever thought this would happen Due to the abolition of Article 370 and improvement in situation, people are now wanting to visit the place,” he said.

He said the Modi government has taken many steps to improve the situation in the UT.

Reddy said the number of flights has been increased to both Jammu and Srinagar and also the road condition between Jammu and Srinagar has been improved leading to less travel time for delivery trucks and the general public.

“There was a demand pending for a tunnel under the Zojila pass for 50 years but previous governments did not take action...Today we are investing Rs 5,000 crore on it Earlier the completion data was 2026 but after Modi Ji took stock of the situation, we expect it to be complete in 2024 itself,” the minister noted.

Reddy also stated that the construction of rural roads was in full swing in the region.

He said the UT administration has pulled out all stops to generate employment for the youth.

Reddy said every month, union ministers have to report to the PMO for the steps taken for the development of the UT.

“Jammu and Kashmir has begun a new journey it is transitioning from terrorism to tourism during previous governments it used to be terrorism and now it is tourism earlier there use to be stone pelters now there are students on computers...Earlier there was corruption now there is accountability,” he said.

The minister said earlier people used to burn the tricolour but now they are hoisting it atop their houses.

“So it’s a march from separatism to nationalism we are working for the development of the region ,” Reddy said.

He said things were changing in the region and some of the reports by international publications, which painted a different picture, were incorrect .

D P Vats (BJP), Abdul Wahab (IUMML), K R N Rajesh Kumar (DMK), Ramnath Thakur (JDU), and Jugalsinh Mathurji Lokhandwala (BJP) also participated in the discussion.

Over 26000 Posts

said 829 UT/divisional cadre posts have been referred to SSC. “District Staff Selection Board, constituted under Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Act is already in place for recruitment to vacant district cadre posts,” he said in the reply.

“All the concerned Requisitioning Authorities have been directed to send the requisition of vacant Direct Recruitment quota posts to respective Recruitment Agencies.” (GNS)

Set Up Truth And

said in an interview to the PTL.

To a pointed question that the movie had shown him at the helm of affairs, the veteran National Conference leader said, “I had tendered my resignation. It was Farooq Abdullah who had objected to the release of five terrorists in exchange of the daughter of the then Union Home Minister (Mufti Mohammed Sayeed).

“Did anyone listen to me? I had warned them that this will boost the morale of terrorists but unfortunately, there were no takers in the government in Delhi. Everyone knows whose government was at the Centre who had extended the outside support,” Abdullah, who is the Lok Sabha member from Srinagar parliamentary constituency, said.

The former chief minister alleged the movie is “pure propaganda” and was being deliberately hyped by people with vested interests to polarise the nation. “The movie is far away from reality and it is only to polarise the nation and let me tell the nation today that it is not a healthy development,” he said.

Abdullah said his son Omar Abdullah, who has also been the chief minister of the erstwhile state, had been advocating the setting up of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission from the day he took over the office.

“Let us have it now. Get an honest person to head the Commission and let us investigate each and everything and after that, if I am guilty, the law will take care. Farooq Abdullah does not believe in fooling people,” an agitated Abdullah said.

He said that his party has been demonised by the filmmakers for failing to protect the Kashmiri pandits. “But unfortunately, the facts speak the other way round. It was my Lok Sabha MP Pyare Lal Handoo who raised the issue of Kashmiri pandits in Lok Sabha. The debate is very much preserved in the Parliament library.

“It was my government that brought an Act in 1997 The Jammu and Kashmir Migrant Immovable Property (Preservation, protection and Restraint on distress sales). We meant business and not propaganda,” he said.

The former chief minister also highlighted that it was his government that had opposed the release of three dreaded militants in 1999 in exchange of passengers of hijacked Indian Airline plane during the tenure of the BJP government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

“There were no takers whenever I objected rightfully,” Abdullah said, adding “the immediate repercussion of the wrong decision was that we saw an attack on Jammu and Kashmir assembly and later on Parliament”.

Abdullah said that he is not ready to take the blame for others’ misdeeds.

The Kashmir Files

Punjab, went to the polls.

LPG prices had gone up by close to

Rs 100 per cylinder between July and October 6, 2021, before criticism halted the monthly revision in rates.

Non-subsidised cooking gas is the one that consumers buy after exhausting their quota of 12 cylinders at subsidised or below market price. However, the government pays no subsidy on LPG in most cities and the price of the refill that consumers, including the poor women who got free connection under the much-talked Ujjwala scheme, undertake is the same as non-subsidised or market price LPG.

This is the highest rate ever that subsidised LPG users will pay. The non-subsidised rate had peaked at Rs 1,241 in January 2014, but at that time, the government provided as much as Rs 600 per cylinder subsidy.

The direct LPG subsidy was stopped by the central government from May 2020. A small sum is paid to cooking gas users in the far-flung areas to compensate for higher freight.

The resumption of fuel price hikes has fanned concerns of stoking inflation, which is already above the targeted 6 per cent level.

The Opposition parties were quick to attack the government on the price rise, with Congress, TMC and Left parties forcing adjournment of proceedings in the Rajya Sabha.

“Congratulations to PM Modiji for achieving his ‘target’ of Rs 1,000 per LPG cylinder in most parts of the country. There will now be daily ‘Vikas’ in petrol and diesel prices as well. The only affordable things under Modi Govt are communalism & Hatred. Everything else is expensive.” Leader of the Opposition in the Upper House Mallikarjun Kharge said in a tweet.

Slamming the price hikes, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav said: “Another gift of inflation from the BJP government for the public.. LPG cylinder in Lucknow is close to Rs 1,000 and in Patna above Rs 1,000! Elections over, inflation begins”.

TMC’s Saket Gokhale said with dealer commissions and GST, a cylinder now costs Rs 1,000. “Kerosene prices doubled in just 10 days. When asked in Parliament, govt is flustered. In India, hate films are tax-free while hunger of poor is taxed”.

Both LPG and auto fuel prices had been on a freeze despite the cost of raw material spiralling, first because of demand returning with economies globally - rebounding from the pandemic-induced slowdown, and then due to the Russia-Ukraine crisis.

A 5 KG LPG cylinder will now cost Rs 349, while the 10 kg composite bottle will come for Rs 669.

The 19-kg commercial cylinder now costs Rs 2,003.50.

Since June 2017, petrol and prices are to be adjusted daily in line with the benchmark international rate in the preceding 15 days. But, rates have been on the freeze since November 4, 2021, just after the Modi government cut excise duty on petrol by Rs 5 per litre and that on diesel by Rs 10 a litre to bring down rates from record-high levels. Most state governments too lowered local sales tax or VAT.

Before these tax reductions, petrol price had touched an all-time high of Rs 110.04 a litre, and diesel came for Rs 98.42. These rates corresponded to Brent soaring to a peak of USD 86.40 per barrel on October 26, 2021. Brent was at USD 82.74 on November 5, 2021, before it started to fall and touched USD 68.87 a barrel in December.

International oil prices started rising again this year and jumped to a 13-year high of USD 140 per barrel earlier this month. Brent was trading at USD 118.59 per barrel on Tuesday.

To compound things, the Indian rupee tumbled to a record low of 77 per dollar.

India relies on overseas purchases to meet about 85 per cent of its oil requirement, making it one of the most vulnerable in Asia to higher oil prices.

The twin blows of oil prices, already up more than 60 per cent this year, and a weakening rupee may hurt the nation’s finances, upend a nascent economic recovery and fire up inflation.

Petrol and diesel prices need to be increased by up to Rs 25 a litre for fuel retailers to cover the losses they incurred when they kept rates on hold despite a rise in the cost of raw material, industry sources said.

Diesel sold to bulk and industrial consumers had already been raised by about Rs 25 per litre, indicating that there is a gap between retail pump prices and their actual economic value.

The basket of crude oil that India buys rose above USD 128.24 per barrel on March 9, according to information from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) of the oil ministry.

This compares to an average of USD 81.5 per barrel price of the Indian basket of crude oil at the time of freezing of petrol and diesel prices four months back.

But, oil companies are not expected to pass on the entire loss in one go, and they will moderate it - raising rates by less than a rupee a litre every day.

International oil prices have been on the boil ever since Russia put its forces on the Ukraine border last month. They spiked after it invaded the central Asian nation on fears that oil and gas supplies from energy giant Russia could be disrupted, either by the conflict in Ukraine or retaliatory western sanctions.

While Western sanctions have, so

far, kept energy trade out, a prospect for a full embargo of Russian oil and products is leading to the latest rally in international oil prices.

Tulip Garden To

of traffic and chalk-out a route-plane. “But you need to understand that we have certain limitation—there is only one road, the parking is not sufficient. The visitors park their vehicles on the road, which results in traffic mess,” SSP Shah told Kashmir Observer adding that “So within the parameters whatever we can do we will do it and ensure smooth flow of traffic.”

He further said that from Nehru Park, there is no parking slot for the tourists.

When asked whether the department has taken the issue with the administration. He said “I have already informed them. It is their mandate to develop the infrastructure.”

The top traffic cop said that to ensure hassle free public movement on boulevard stretches during that period, the department will issue a proper traffic advisory.

“But let me tell you, the rush will pick-up gradually. It’s not like everyone will come on the first day of opening the Tulip garden,” he added.

When asked whether there will be any route plan for the residents and the school going children, he said “there will be inconveniences for the people but we will ensure that the traffic will be no traffic jams,”

SSP Shah further added that there will be no issues for school going kids as they go to school in early morning and come back to school during evening when there are no traffic jams.

According to reports, more than 1.50 lakh to 2 lakh people visit the Tulip Garden every season. This year, the department is planning to keep the garden open till mid April in order to woo more tourists.

Meanwhile, the traffic Police city on Tuesday issued an advisory in view of the festival.

It said that the one way traffic will be implemented from 10: 00 AM till 06:00 PM

“Due to the expected rush of people; there are chances of congestion and for the convenience of people and to avoid congestion, One-Way traffic shall be regulated,” the advisory reads.

It said that the people intending to visit Tulip Garden shall adopt Lal Chowk -Dalgate- Boulevard Road-Tulip Garden and on their return they shall adopt Nishat-Foreshore-Habak-Dargah-Khanyar route to reach respective destinations.

Likewise, motorists intending to travel from Harwan-Shalimar-Nishat and other adjacent areas towards Lal-chowk are requested to travel via Foreshore- Hazratbal route instead of Nishat-Boulevard road axis to reach their respective destinations.

The advisory further added that the motorists intending to travel from Gulbagh-Zakoor-Naseembagh-Habak and adjacent areas shall adopt Habak - Dargah- Khanyar route to reach Lal Chowk instead of Foreshore

“Visitors are advised to park their vehicles at designated parking places only and avoid parking their vehicles on roadside. Wrongly, parked vehicles will be towed.\,” the advisory cautions.

Karan Singh’s

wrote, “I hereby tender my resignation from the party membership of the party - Indian National Congress (INC) with immediate effect.”

The elder son of Karan Singh and grandson of last Dogra ruler Maharaja Hari Singh further said, “It is my belief the INC is unable to realise and reflect the sentiments and aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Vikramaditya Singh had joined the PDP in August 2015 and was a member of the state Legislative Council. He resigned from the party in October, 2017, saying it wasn’t possible for him to continue with the PDP which “disregarded the demands and aspirations of Jammu region”.

BSF Officer Found

Sunderbani area, officials said. The deceased hails from West Bengal.

A police officer told a local news agency GNS that inquest proceedings have been launched into the death of the BSF officer.

“Post-mortem has been conducted at Sub-district Hospital Sundarbari. After completion of legal formalities, the body has been handed over to BSF authorities,” he said.

The officer said that suicide was “definitely a possibility” but police investigation “will cover all other angles”.

Rusted Grenade

explosive without causing any damage, the official said.

Confirming it, a police official told a local news agency GNS that the grenade was rusted and seemed to have been lying there for a considerable time.

Arms, Ammunition

six magazines, 30 pistol rounds, and four hand grenades were recovered from the spot. Also, one person identified as Kaiser Zahoor Khan, resident of Nowpora Safakadal was arrested,” sources told a local news agency KDC.

They further said that investigations into the case were going on.

3 Held For Throwing Grenade On CRPF Camp In Shopian

SRINAGAR: Three people were arrested in connection with a grenade throwing incident in Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said on Tuesday.

Police based on reliable sources picked up one suspect, identified as Fazil-bin-Rashid, a resident of Melhura in Shopian, in connection with the incident, a police spokesman said.

During questioning, Rashid disclosed that he was working with one active militant namely Basit Ahmed of Frisal Kulgam who was linked with proscribed outfit LeT (TRF). On his instructions, he threw a grenade at Babapora camp of CRPF on March 19 in which one CRPF Jawan was

injured, he said.

The spokesman said Rashid disclosed that he lobbied the grenade as a task given by Ahmed in order to join militant ranks.

During further questioning, he disclosed the name of another accused person, identified as Qaiser Zahoor Khan, Nowpora Safakadal, Srinagar. On Khan's disclosure, incriminating material, arms and ammunition including three Chinese pistols, six magazines, four grenades and 30 rounds were recovered, he said.

All the three accused persons involved in the "terror crime" have been arrested and further investigation is on, the spokesman added.

5000 Kanal Of Encroached Land Retrieved In Bandipora

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: The Revenue Officers of the district under the over-all supervision of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmad have adopted a very strict approach against illegal occupants and the eviction drives have been intensified during last 03 months across the district resulting in eviction of about 1200 Kanals of Kahcharie land, 1900 Kanals of State land, 1000 Kanals of Custodian land and 750 kanals of Migrant land.

The DC hailed the efforts of the field officers of Revenue Department and other law enforcing agencies, including police that en-

sured the retrieval of the land. He called for adopting zero tolerance for encroachment and urged the officers to identify the encroachment and retrieve it immediately.

He said that the encroachers wherever occupying the state land, Kahcharie and other land should vacate it immediately and not compel the administration to conduct anti-encroachment drives and initiate other legal action.

Dr Owais sought support and cooperation of the general public and PRIs for retrieval of encroached land so that the same can eventually be utilized for building of public amenities/ infrastructure.

Kulgam Tops Monthly Public Health Sector Rankings By Health Dept

Observer News Service

KULGAM: Based on 14 Key Performance Health indicators for the month of February, the District Kulgam has bagged the first rank in J&K with overall District score 77.25.

The objective of Janani Suraksha Yojana is to reduce maternal mortality rate (MMR) and neonatal Mortality rate (NMR) through promotion of institutional deliveries.

Under this programme with its proper implementation, the district Kulgam has made a significant progress as the percentage of institutional deliveries is 99.67 percent with manifold decrease in maternal deaths to total deliveries.

As per the official figures under Sehat Scheme, 64 percent Golden or Sehat-cards have been issued to individuals in Kulgam, covering 90 percent of the families.

In a bid to give a fillip to awareness about cancer prevention and the need for its early detection, the district Kulgam implemented various programmes and screened over



11 percent of the total population.

The District has achieved 100 percent immunization target of total target population.

Moreover the district has witnessed 30 percent reduction in referrals from its institutions.

As per District Good Governance Index (DGGI) of J&K, under the Public health sector, nine key indicators are identified looking at the outcomes like Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), immunization achievement, etc. Measuring the performance of these critical indicators and comparing between the districts provides opportunity to design targeted intervention in lagging districts.

DC Shopian Reviews Land Acquisition Status For Highway Project

Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: In order to complete the land acquisition process for NH-444 project in a set timeframe, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian Sachin Kumar Vaishya on Tuesday chaired a meeting of officers at Mini-secretariat Arhama, here.

The meeting discussed in detail the present status of land acquisition process besides steps required to remove all bottle necks for timely completion of

the process.

The DC impressed upon the concerned officers and officials to complete the process of land acquisition within days.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mushtaq Ahmad Simnani; Assistant commissioner Revenue, Shahbaz Ahmad Bodha; Tehsildar Shopian, LDM, Executive Engineer R&B 1st Division Srinagar, Naib Tehsildars and other concerned officers and officials.

Restore Legislative Assembly In J&K: Congress, TMC In RS

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Congress and TMC on Tuesday accused the central government of bringing in the budget of Jammu & Kashmir without giving heed to the aspirations of people of the Union Territory and pressed for restoring the legislative assembly there.

Initiating the debate on the budget of Jammu and Kashmir in Rajya Sabha, Congress member Vivek K Tankha alleged that there is complete administrative paralysis in the Union Territory due to the absence of an elected government.

"People from all parts of the country discuss the budget. But Jammu and Kashmir people will not participate in the discussion. Besides the four members from Jammu & Kashmir are also not there in the House to discuss the budget as there is no (legislative) assembly there," he said.

Tankha told the House that in the last five years and 254 days, there was either Governor's rule or President's rule and no legislature to discuss their budget.

"In legislative assembly... people put (forth) their aspirations or views which ultimate-

ly provides feedback to the government. A lot of schemes (to meet those aspirations) are made," he stated.

"Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are part of the country. Crores of people live there. They have aspirations and a vision. If we pass the budget (of the state) without listening to aspirations of the people then you can imagine their pain," he said and called for restoring the legislative assembly in J-K.

He also highlighted that the budget has proposed to "lower" the allocations for higher education, cultural and power development.

"The meeting of minds to set the priority (for the state) is not possible because the people don't have their representatives (in the House)."

He suggested that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who moved the budget for consideration and returned to Lok Sabha, should visit Jammu and Kashmir without her officers so that she gets a "realistic feedback about the aspirations or views" of the native people.

Echoing similar views, Trinamool Congress' Md Nadimul Haque said that this budget has not reflected the socio-economic conditions of Jam-

mu and Kashmir.

He claimed that there was 22 per cent unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir against the national average of seven per cent.

He also quoted a report of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation and said that among the educated people the unemployment rate is 46.3 per cent in Jammu & Kashmir and every second educated youth is unemployed there.

He also alleged that big contracts for developmental and other works had gone to outside firms which resulted in a rise in unemployment in local youth.

The TMC member stressed the need to provide greater allocation for tourism infrastructure in view of tourist inflow there.

He said, "Please stop this... Speak to the local people. Accept the reality. Keep the promises made in the House and outside it, and restore democracy in Jammu and Kashmir."

However, BJP member Anil Jain defended the government while participating in the debate and said that GST and stamp duty collections are rising in the state, indicating an economic growth uptick.

J&K Logs 7 New Corona Cases

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir registered on Tuesday seven fresh cases of novel Coronavirus even as no fatality was reported from the Union Territory during the last 24 hours.

According to officials, Kashmir Valley detected five new cases of Covid-19 while two others were reported from Jammu division.

In the Valley, Srinagar registered four new cases of virus and Baramulla one, officials said. The remaining eight dis-

tricts of the Valley, including Budgam, Anantnag, Kupwara, Pulwama, Bandipora Kulgam, Ganderbal and Shopian reported no fresh cases of Covid-19.

In the winter capital, officials said, Jammu reported two new cases of Coronavirus while no new cases were detected in the remaining nine districts of Doda, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Ramban, Poonch, Kathua, Reasi, Samba and Udhampur.

"Moreover, 19 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 13 from Jammu Division and 06 from Kashmir Division," they added.

Also, the officials said that the death toll due to pandemic remained unchanged at 4750 in J&K- 2327 in Jammu division and 2423 in the Valley as no fresh fatality was reported during the last 24 hours.

Kansal Launches 'Centre for Essential Skills' At IIT Jammu

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Principal Secretary, Higher Education & Information Department, Rohit Kansal on Tuesday launched the Centre for Essential Skills (CES) here at IIT Jammu.

Speaking on the occasion Kansal reiterated that the J&K Government is "committed to supporting institutions like the IIT Jammu and others who are willing to take efforts in improving employability of our youth."

While complimenting the IIT on their initiative in establishing a Centre for Essential Skills, he hoped that the Centre would offer necessary not just life-skill courses but also courses in personal finance, communication and such other needs. He also complimented the IIT for making the resources of the Centre open not just to the students of the Institute but to all other institutions of the UT as well.

Referring to studies by McKinsey and others, Kansal said that in the new world of works, soft skills like communication, empathy and complex decision making are increasingly gaining currency. He maintained that with the coming of mechanization and automation the lower order, repetitive, and lower cognitive jobs are on decline.

He stated that higher order cognitive skills along with soft skills are the benchmarks for job aspirants. He emphasized that developing life skills outside of an



academic curriculum will also improve the entrepreneurial potential of the youth which will further strengthen our cause of nation-building.

The Chairman of Board of Governors, Sharad Kumar Saraf who was also present on the occasion felicitated the founding Deans of the institute whose immense contribution towards the development of this institution in its nascent years was applauded by him.

The Director of the IIT, Manoj Gaur said that the Centre for Essential Skills (CES) is a digital resource, which will offer several courses on its portal that will be open for anyone to apply. Elucidating further he said that the portal will be live in a week's time & details will be found on IIT Jammu's official website.

The CES is running 2 minor certification programmes for non-IIT Jammu students namely, Transportation Engineering and Hydraulics and Water Resources Engineering. CES is set to open 9 more courses in the next few days, that will be open for all to apply.

Dr Amitash Ojha, Head of Department further elaborated that

the CES will offer courses across disciplines as well as open-ended (generic) courses that are suitable for the students. Beyond technological courses, some of the courses will promote Indian languages, culture awareness, Indian arts, music and craft. These courses will be taken up by outstanding local artists, writers, and craft persons.

The course may be taught bilingually with the use of mother tongue where ever possible. Some of the technological cutting-edge areas in which courses will be floated are Artificial Intelligence (AI), 3-D Machining, Big Data Analysis, and Machine Learning, in addition to Genomic Studies, Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, and Clean Energy with important applications to health, environment, and sustainable living. All courses will be designed by the experts of the domain keeping in mind the value addition to student knowledge. There will be a bunch of courses that will teach essential skills. The nature of the course and its content will decide the credit associated with a course, it could be a 0.5 credit course or a 3 credit course

WORLD WATER DAY

RTI Movement Holds Awareness Camp At Sopore



Observer News Service

SOPORE: With an aim of creating awareness on conservation of water & water bodies, the Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement in collaboration with Municipal Council Sopore and Central Auqaf Committee Tarzoo organised an awareness camp in Tarzoo area of Sopore on Tuesday.

Chairman RTI Movement Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat gave a detailed presentation on conservation and preservation of water bodies especially the Wullar lake and Jhelum river. He spoke about the importance of world water day which is commemorated on March 22nd every year.

He said solid and liquid waste are a great threat to water bodies in Kashmir and appealed to people to undertake in house composting of kitchen waste and other biodegradable waste. "Wullar and Jhelum are the

two water bodies that are under threat due to solid and liquid waste accumulation. I urged upon Municipal Council Sopore to undertake scientific waste management in the area as per MSW Rules 2016" said Dr Raja Muzaffar.

President of MC Sopore Masarat Kar said that water was of great importance for sustenance of human life, she assured the local Auqaf Committee that a scientific waste management plant would be set up in the area soon. Vice President MC Sopore Mohammad Yousuf Radoo assured residents of Tarzoo that Sopore Municipality would look and explore an alternate area to create a scientific landfill site for waste management. CEO MC Sopore Tariq Reshi, RTI Movement District Coordinator Sirajuddin Salam, Patron Central Auqaf Committee Tarzoo Ajaz Ahmad Dar and Chairman Abdul Subhan also spoke on the occasion.

IUST Hosts 2-Day Virtual International Conference

Observer News Service

AWANTIPORA: 2-Day Virtual International Conference on 'Sustainable Development and Technological Innovation' commenced on Tuesday at Islamic University of Science and Technology.

The virtual conference is being organized by the Department of Management Studies IUST with themes revolving around ICT, tourism, health, leadership, capacity building, institutional change management, sustainable habitat, green technology and alternative economic paradigms.

During the inaugural session, Head Department of Management Studies Dr Asif Iqbal Fazili, welcomed all the dignitaries and participants to the conference, concisely summed its purpose and emphasized the long-standing tradition of the department in organizing workshops and conferences for the benefit of faculty and research scholars.

While addressing the conference Vice Chancellor IUST Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, highlighted the challenges faced by the nation with regard to sustainable development. He averred that India is at a crucial juncture in its economic history, which encompasses a trade-off between economic development and sustainability.

He listed the challenges for the country that seeks to become the third largest economy by 2030 while also pledging to attain carbon neutrality by 2070. He also outlined the specific technological challenges that humanity finds itself up against such as: scalability of scarce resources such as electricity to deprived remote regions in the populous continent of Asia and Africa, the endeavor to make renewable energy sources cost-effective, the sustainable reduction of ecological

risks and the achievement of the extensive SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) of the UN.

He highlighted the initiatives such as the Climate Action at the National level as well as the attempts made at Islamic University of Science and Technology (already in place or in process of completion) such as rainwater harvesting, use of solar panels, plastic free campus and digital paperless university communication. Prof. Romshoo also opined that these measures that seem incremental at a micro level have the potential to bring about transformation through cumulative impact.

Prof. Shabir Bhat who was the Guest of Honour for the occasion underscored the economic and social repercussions for humanity if efforts were not mobilized in the direction of sustainable development.

He congratulated the department on having organized a conference on a topic of relevance and currency given the turbulence of the times and pointed out the salience of innovation as a driver of change. He urged institutions of higher learning to take an active stance as hubs of innovation and change under NEP-2019.

Prof. Mohammad Amin-ul-Islam from the Faculty of Applied and Human Sciences, University of Malaysia Perlis during the keynote speech shared his erudite thoughts on the significance of technological innovation in the present era of Convergence given the rise of Industrial revolution 4.0. The rise of cyber physical systems, artificial intelligence, internet of things, blockchain, robotics has imparted volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA) to the economic, societal and political facets of human existence. He prophesied that the survival of humanity is contingent upon its ability to innovate while keeping in mind the needs of posterity and ecology.

Certificate Course On Organic Agribusiness Management Begins At SKUAST-K

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A two-month online industry-oriented professional certificate course on 'Organic Agribusiness and Management' for SKUASTK of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir commenced here.

The training is being conducted by the Indian Institute of Plantation Management (IIPM) Bengaluru under the World Bank-ICAR funded National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) for the institutional development of SKUAST-K.

The inaugural function of the certificate course was presided by Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K. Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, in presence of the Director, IIPM, Dr VG Dhanakumar, Faculty, IIPM, Dr K Narendran, OSD to Vice Chancellor and Co-PI NAHEP SKUAST K, Dr Azmat Alam Khan, Dean FoA, Prof. Raihana Habib Khan, Coordinator of the training, Dr Naveed Hamid, and participants of

the training programme.

Speaking at the inaugural function, Director IIPM said there is huge scope for collaboration between the two institutions for the benefit of the students. Dr Azmat Alam gave a brief detail about the proactive approach towards organic farming and the organic vision of SKUAST Kashmir. He briefed the audience about a few major initiatives that SKUAST K has taken to bring organic culture to the region and is striving hard to collaborate with the premier institutes for strengthening the various activities within the university to have a positive impact on society. Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth put light on the importance of such collaborative programmes and the impact on the development of the students. Dr Naveed Hamid thanked the various officers from both the Institutes for providing the student with a great platform where they can share their ideas and brainstorm to build a base for organic agribusiness startup culture in the university.

Oukhoo: Pencil Village Of India' Writes Its Own Growth Story

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Oukhoo village in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, popularly known as 'Pencil Village of India', writes its own growth story as it supplies 90 per cent of the raw material to country's pencil manufacturing units besides exporting it to 150 countries with the handholding of J&K government.

Earlier, India used to import wooden supplies from countries

like China. But since 2010 local entrepreneurs decided to make use of Kashmir's famous poplar trees, a peculiarly supple wood which makes it best suited for manufacturing of pencils. The poplar wood grows best in the valleys of Kashmir where the moisture content is ideal and the weather conditions allow the wood to remain soft during the tree's growth.

The government announcement regarding resumption of offline

classes has rekindled the hope of better business for Manzoor Ahmad Alai (45), owner of one of the biggest pencil slate making factories in Oukhoo after disappointment writ large on his face during the Covid period. In 2011, after Alai toured Jammu to learn about skills of making of wooden slats, from which pencils are sliced out, he set up a unit in Oukhoo with assistance from Hindustan Pencils, a leading pencil manufacturer and exporter of India.

Soon, others followed Alai's example and more slat-manufacturing units came up.

"This spring has again brought spring in our lives too. The schools, colleges have opened up again. We are now racing supply against demand from big brands across country. Most of my workers from outside J&K have returned back and rest of them also joining us in some days to cater to the demand," Jubilant Alia said, "Government has

facilitated us. We now want round the clock electricity to accelerate our production."

The village came into the limelight after Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, mentioned its success story in his monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat', where he had spoken at length about "Pencil Village of India". He had said that Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir is emerging as a hub for pencil manufacturing.

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